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October 2014

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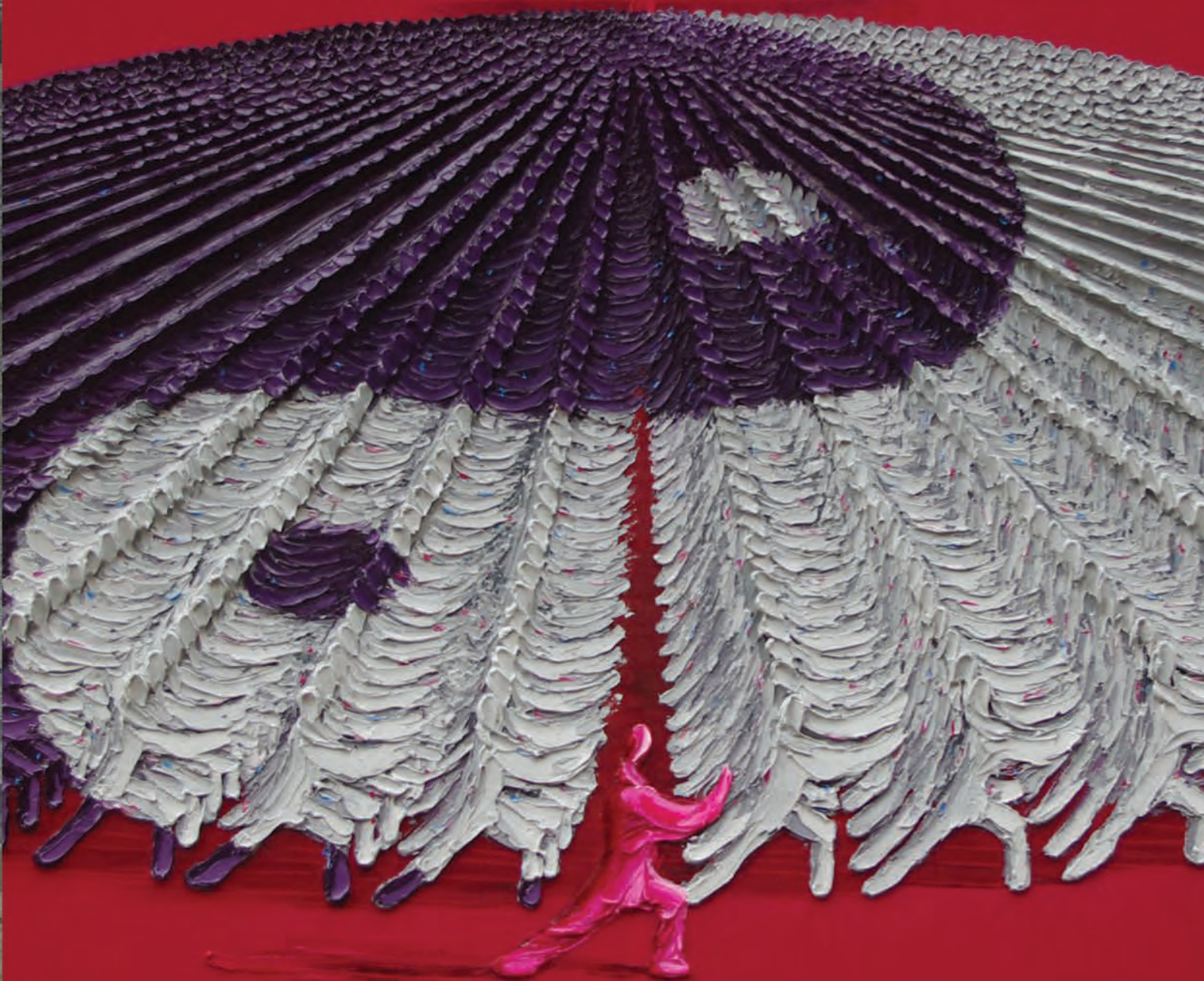
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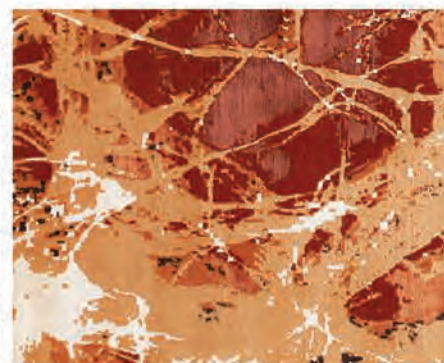
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Editor's Letter

Well, it's been a bit like Animal Planet at our house this month, with the highlight being when I had to fish the foster kitten out of the toilet!

We got home latish one day to find daddy dog, Riley, had slipped a disc or something; he couldn't stand on his back legs and kept yelping. So we found a 24-hour vet and rushed him down there, soothing him as we went.

It was a bit like taking the car to the mechanic: we put him on the ground to show the incredible pain and discomfort he was facing, and he trotted off down the corridor as happy as Larry! A shot of anti-inflammatory and a hefty bill later, we were on our way home. The next day the same thing happened; another vet, no solution, but he was completely better by day three.

While being at home to mother him on the second day, I heard the kitten (that we are fostering until it's big enough to be adopted) meowing very loudly. So I thought I'd better feed him, as the longer you leave him the louder he gets.

I walked into the bathroom where he spends most of the time (because otherwise we lose track of him or someone stands on him). There he was, looking up at me from the toilet bowl, with his mouth wide open. His face was just above the water level. I scooped him up and wrapped him in the hand-towel and held him to me. It's the quietest he has ever been and his heart was pounding.

Anyway, he survived and is flourishing – we won't tell the SPCA, will we?

Two days later, puppy Luke was completely listless and wouldn't eat (and he's normally a little pig). We just gave him love and attention, and he recovered after a few days!

Dogs are very "in vogue" in our office at the moment. You'll hear discussions about toilet training, behavioural issues and periods – and then you realise they aren't talking about children.

The other thing in vogue is hair and beauty; we've been talking a lot about which mascara, foundation and hair product to use – in this climate, especially. So we've decided to splash out to create our own beauty and fashion supplement, adding all kinds of extras to our regular features, giving it a redesign, and making it much cooler. Susannah and the team have done a fabulous job creating *LIV*, and we really hope you enjoy it! Do let us know what you think about it on Facebook.

Happy reading!



Rebecca

REBECCA BISSET
Editor-in-Chief

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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.

EVENTS CALENDAR

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HOW TO SELL YOUR OLD STUFF

Looking to sell off items online or in the magazine? Post all the details and photos by hitting "Post a Notice" on the homepage (middle left).

EXPAT LIVING EVENTS

COFFEE MORNING:

Thursday, 30 October

TIME: 10.30am to 12pm

Registration from 10am

THEME: How to spot the best jewels, and insure them

VENUE: The Jewel Box

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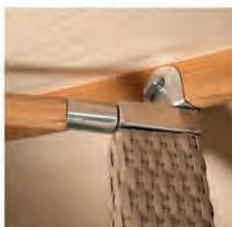
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SHAKESPEARE RETURNS

"The course of true love never did run smooth" is an oft-quoted line from the Shakespearean comedy, **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. Next month, Singapore audiences will have the chance to enjoy a production directed by the acclaimed Dominic Dromgoole, artistic director of the UK's Shakespeare Globe Theatre, and complete with Renaissance costumes and replica staging. 13 to 16 November. Esplanade Theatre. Tickets from Sistic.



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HALLOWEEN HORROR

Planning to celebrate Halloween by hosting a party, or looking for fun and scary events to attend? Bread Talk has released a fun Halloween range of sweet treats this year; and check out our Halloween roundup, starting on page 120.



FILM FORUM

Often told through the eyes of victims, the **Human Trafficking Film Forum** presents incredible stories of tragedy, courage and hope. It aims to combat modern-day slavery by raising awareness about the abhorrent global trade in human misery. Four films will be shown on the evenings of 24 and 25 October, including *Dancing Boys of Afghanistan* and *Not My Life*. The Arts House, 1 Old Parliament Lane. Find out more at www.emancipasia.org/events. Take the survey at www.slaveryfootprint.org to understand your own slavery footprint.

LEND A HAND

While not all of us have the time to volunteer, there is another way to contribute to charity. Why not book a seat or a table for **Tabitha** and the **Nokor Tep Foundation's** Annual Gala Dinner on 7 November at Conrad Centennial Hotel? Their achievements include the continuing construction of Nokor Tep Women's Hospital, Cambodia's first hospital for women, and Tabitha's 20-year anniversary. Email info@tabithasingapore.com. ▼



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ARCHIFEST 2014 (1-11 OCTOBER)

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WILD RICE BALL (3 OCTOBER)

Themed "Creatures of the Night", the 13th edition of this popular ball will be presented by Hublot, and will feature performances from theatre talents Hossan Leong and Pam Oei, a Midnight Safari concert, as well as a special appearance by acclaimed West End diva Ria Jones – the youngest actress ever to play Eva Perón in *Evita*. **Shangri-La Hotel Island Ballroom. For more details and table prices, email riceball@wildrice.com.sg.**

UPLIFTING SUPPORT (4 OCTOBER)

More than 650,000 unwanted bras have found their way to the chests of needy women through the efforts of **Uplift Project**. Second-hand and new bras are donated to



Exhibition: Shia Yih Ying

underprivileged women and distributed through NGOs and women's organisations, ensuring culturally appropriate distribution and fitting services. **Donate your bras on 4 October at *Scape, The Ground Theatre, 2 Orchard Link, from 11am to 4pm. swapndrop.asia**

VILLA DELLE ROSE FAIR (9 OCTOBER)

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EXHIBITION: THE FOZDAR COLLECTION (10 OCTOBER – 1 NOVEMBER)

This exhibition presents the private collection of 16th-to-19th-century Indian miniature paintings of one of the sons of the late women's rights activist Shirin Fozdar. (She founded the Women's Charter of the Singapore Council of Women, charter instituted in 1961.) **Galerie Belvedere, 140 Hill Street. galerie-belvedere.com**

EXHIBITION: SHIA YIH YING (10 OCTOBER – 2 NOVEMBER)

Throughout her 20-year career, artist Shia Yih Ying has been portraying the world around her through vivid visual stories, often populated with imaginative characters juxtaposed with the subjects that inspire her. **Chan Hampe Galleries, #01-21 Raffles Hotel Arcade. Free admission. For enquiries, call 6338 1962.**



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Exhibition:
Presence by Val



ILLUMI NATION

**EXHIBITION:
PRESENCE BY VAL**
(10 OCTOBER – 2 NOVEMBER)

The exhibition features 30 bronze sculptures that pay homage to the powerful notion of existence or presence. Each of artist Val's sculptures is a powerful affirmation of the presence of life, continuing her narrative on the inspiration behind her art.

REDSEA Gallery, 10 Dempsey Road. For more information, visit www.redseagallery.com.

**SENTOSA
SPOOKTACULAR 2014**
(11 OCTOBER – 1 NOVEMBER)

For Halloween this year, Sentosa Spooktacular returns bigger and better with all 40,000 square metres of Fort Siloso transformed into a horror village, Laddaland. Tread through the pathway of horror of your choice; each one lasts 20 to 30 minutes.

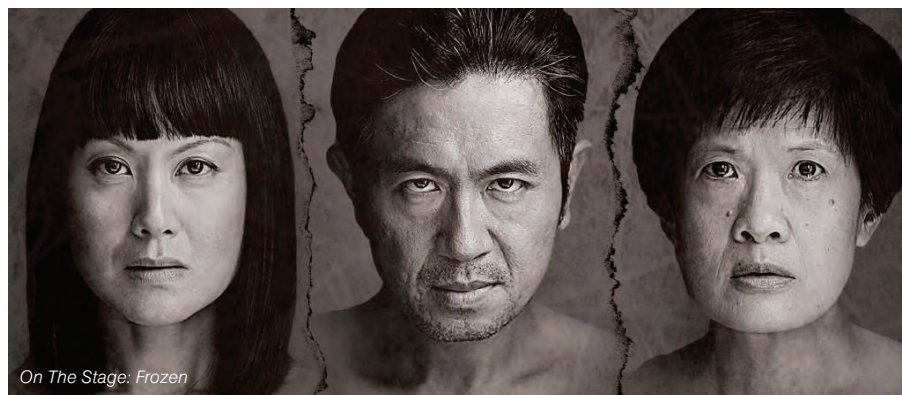
Tickets available from www.spooktacular.com.sg.

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(11 OCTOBER)

Asia's first glow-in-the-dark paint party! Three of the world's top DJs, Bingo Players, Dada Life and Martin Solveig, will fire up the night with their pulsating beats, while bursts of glowing paint transform party-goers into a canvas of electric neon by the sea. **For tickets, visit** www.illumination.asia.

**SINGAPORE JEWELLERY
AND GEM FAIR**
(23-26 OCTOBER)

The largest fine jewellery event in the region, this four-day fair will sparkle with a stellar cast of international fine jewellery manufacturers and wholesalers displaying a stunning array of exquisite designs. **Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre.** For more information, visit www.singaporejewellerygemfair.com.



On The Stage: Frozen

ON STAGE: FROZEN
(23 OCTOBER – 9 NOVEMBER)

Winner of the prestigious Barclay Award for Best New Play, and nominated for four Tony Awards, including Best Play, "Frozen" is a powerful, bold and haunting psychological thriller, described by *The Guardian* newspaper as "a Comedy of Terrors... a big, brave, compassionate play about grief, revenge, forgiveness and bearing the unbearable." **Esplanade Theatre Studio, tickets from Sistic.**

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**SINGAPORE LYRIC OPERA:
THE MERRY WIDOW**
(24-26 OCTOBER)

Written by populist Austro-Hungarian composer, Franz Lehár, and first performed in 1905, this operetta was Lehár's most celebrated. The plot tells of a widow who inherits millions from the death of her husband, and her country's endearing, albeit comical, quest to find her a suitable spouse in a bid to keep her fortune within the country. **Tickets from Sistic.**

MARIAH CAREY LIVE
(24 OCTOBER)

The five-time Grammy-award winner is set to perform to a sell-out crowd in Singapore. **Singapore National Stadium. Tickets available from www.sportshubtix.sg, all SingPost outlets and the stadium box office; prices range from \$248 to \$998.**

ZOMBIE RUN 2014
(25 OCTOBER)

The Zombie-infested three- to five-kilometre obstacle course returns to Singapore for its second edition, on the Grand Lawn, West Coast Park. **Register for this fun run at www.runforyourlives.asia/sg/.**

**EXHIBITION:
ABORIGINAL ART**
(29 OCTOBER – 29 NOVEMBER)

ReDot Fine Art Gallery presents exceptional works from a leading Australian Aboriginal-owned art centre, Papunya Tula Artists. This year it will be hosting dual solo shows, simply titled after the participating artists, Bobby West Tjupurrula and Katarra Butler Napaltjarri. **ReDot Fine Art Gallery, #02-06 Tanjong Pagar Distripark, 39 Keppel Road. redotgallery.com**

**SCC INTERNATIONAL
RUGBY 7S**
(31 OCTOBER – 2 NOVEMBER)

The 67th Singapore Cricket Club International Rugby 7s promises to feature world-class teams along with upcoming new and professional club sides. Fans can look forward to the likes of former champions the Penguins (2010 winner) from the UK, Daveta (2011 and 2012) from Fiji and Australia's Randwick (1993) as they battle for the coveted Ablitt Cup at the Padang. **For tickets, visit www.ticketbooth.com.sg. For more information, visit www.sccrugbysevens.com.**



Zombie Run 2014

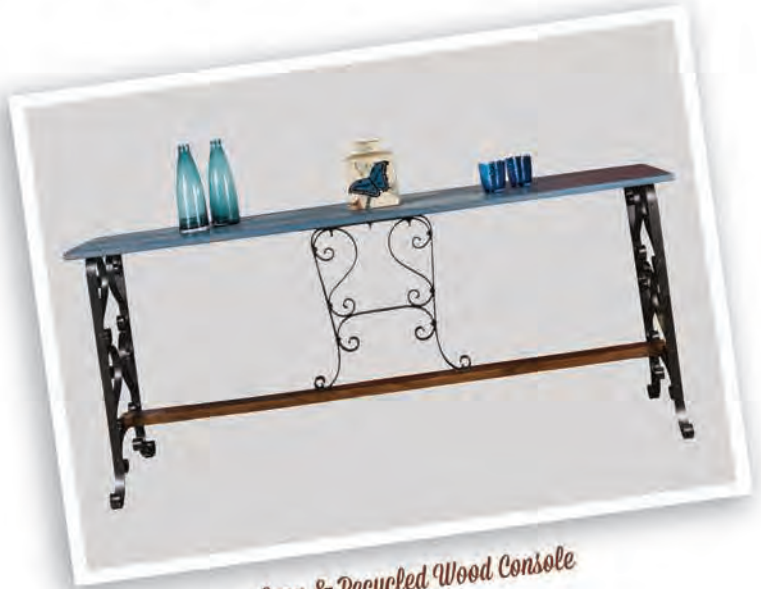


SCC International
Rugby 7s

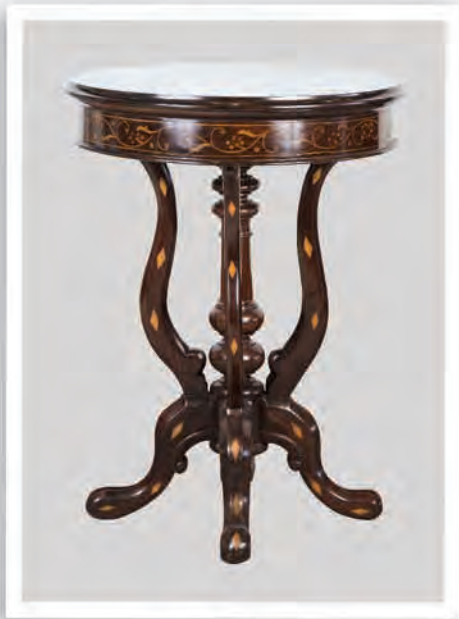
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CALENDAR

Plan Ahead

NOVEMBER 2014

CLARE HAXBY OPEN STUDIO

(1 NOVEMBER)

Artist Clare Haxby has gained a strong reputation for creating bold, vibrant scenes of Singapore's landmarks, culture and heritage, using her trademark multimedia style. Her work has been exhibited at The Fullerton Hotel and The American Club, amongst others. Originals as well as limited-edition prints will be available for purchase. **41 Malcolm Road.** For more information, visit www.clarehaxby.com.



BOUTIQUES FAIR 2014

(6-7 NOVEMBER)

This popular fair features over 100 vendors of gifts, fashion and accessories, home décor, art, antiques and more.

The Pit Building, 1 Republic Boulevard. Free parking.

BILL BAILEY LIVE IN SINGAPORE

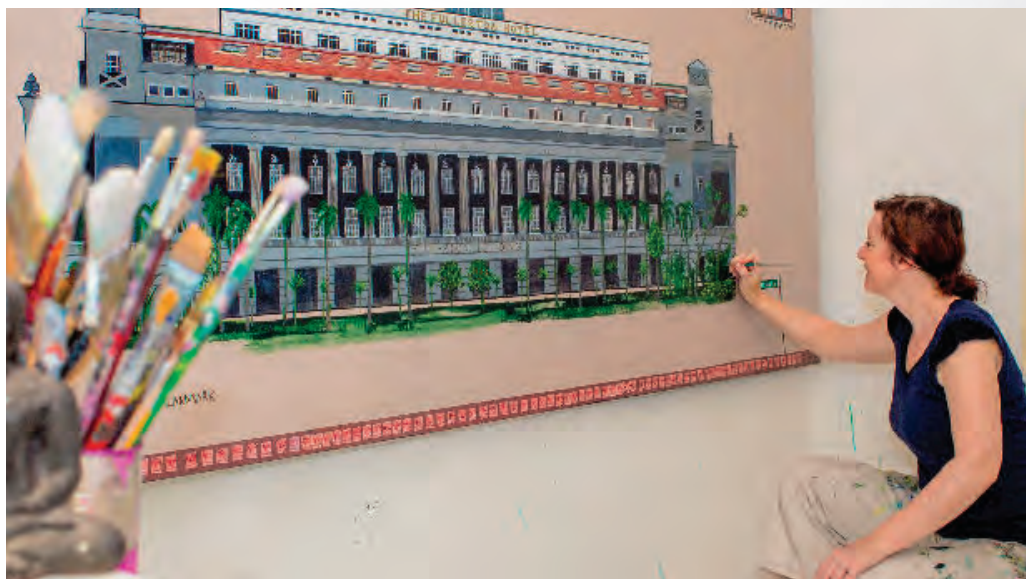
(17 NOVEMBER)

Bill is best known for his stand-up shows, his sell-out tours and his TV appearances in shows such as *QI* and *Black Books*, in which he played the increasingly deranged ex-accountant Manny Bianco, opposite fellow comic Dylan Moran. **University Cultural Centre Hall, NUS.** Tickets from Sistic.

FESTIVAL: ADULT PLAYGROUND

(8 NOVEMBER)

Adult Playground is a huge outdoor festival that brings together sports and music. Think of it as an active alternative to a regular Saturday routine of shopping, sleeping, and virtual surfing. **Siloso Beach, Sentosa.** For more information, visit www.adultplayground.com.





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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 letting us know how one of our travel articles has helped her, **Arunima Chatterjee** wins a bottle of champagne.

China with Baby

We'll be travelling soon to Shanghai, Xi'an and Beijing with our eight-month-old baby, so I was delighted to come across your website post, "How to Travel in China with a Baby". It was a wonderful read that helped me overcome my stressful apprehensions. Thank you!

Arunima Chatterjee



Just Perfect

I want to say thank you to Marie-Hélène van Houten for hosting the *Expat Living* Styling Brunch at her store, The Past Perfect Collection. Her presentation on interior designing was so interesting and informative, and she is clearly passionate about her business.

Julie Keates



Living Lego

I loved your July issue home feature titled "Marina Bay Cool", about Harry Dewhirst and Veronica Kopacikova's apartment. Especially, I thought their Union Jack table-top made out of Lego bricks was fabulous. On the basis that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, could you ask them to let me have their graphic designer's plan and details regarding the number of bricks so I can replicate this myself?

Pamela Myktowych

Ed: We'd love to help, but unfortunately the couple no longer have those details. All we can suggest is that you ask another designer to draw something up for you, using a similar table as your base. Good luck!

Missing Miss Manners

I always looked out for Kristen Graff's "Oh, Behave!" column (on how to mind your P's and Qs, even when others don't), but now it seems to be missing from the magazine. I hope she hasn't retired for good!

Brenda Furley

Ed: Kristen did take a break for a while, but in response to reader demand we'll be bringing the column back from next month. Anyone with a question on manners or etiquette – especially relating to life in Singapore, should send it to katie.roberts@expatliving.sg.

Email us at info@expatliving.sg

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Subscribe to *Expat Living* this month and receive an Expat Kitchen hamper worth \$70, including an Expat Kitchen voucher to the value of \$50 and a Kids' Cooking Kit worth \$20. Available for the first 100 new subscribers.

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SCENE AROUND TOWN

Recent events, openings & parties



The Lightness of Seeing

Brilliant Chinese artist Deng Cheng Wen's solo exhibition titled "The Lightness of Seeing" was hosted by Ode to Art Gallery in its space on Level 4 of the Raffles City Convention Centre. Deng himself led a tour of his "Blind Walking" series, described as an outstanding collaboration of realism and abstract representation.

Clockwise: The artist Deng with Ode to Art owner Jazz Chong; Juliet Zhu and Christina Hindle; Joanne Low and Elisa Everarda; Luca Ricciardelli and Alan Ardy



A Stylish Morning

We recently hosted an *Expat Living* styling brunch for readers at The Past Perfect Collection showroom, where experts offered inspiration for home décor and personal fashion choices; styling tips came from Elliot of Elliot James Interiors, Ines from Dream Factory by Ines Lignon and Marie-Hélène van Houten, owner of The Past Perfect Collection. Delicious strawberry bubbles were provided by Merchants Wine Cellar, and a scrumptious buffet spread by Luxe Catering.



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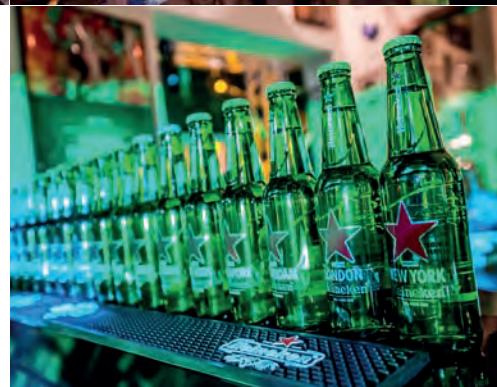
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Party Around the World

Heineken hosted its inaugural Heineken Cities Festival at Club Street and Ann Siang Hill in celebration of the brand's latest campaign, Cities of the World. The urban festival featured performances from samba drummers, break-dancers, international DJs and other artists.



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Luxe Launch

Guests came together to celebrate the launch of the Minotti by Marquis Interiors 2014 collection at the Marquis Interiors showroom, where they sipped prosecco and had the chance to see and touch the elegant creations by renowned designer Rodolfo Dordoni. The showroom was complemented with Culti home fragrances and the latest gold television set from Loewe, which displayed footage of the Minotti launch in Milan.



From top left to bottom right: Parthiben, Jereme and Kenneth Wong; John Tan, Parthiben, Azmi Salleh, Bobby Goh, Goh Thian Min and Norah Kamsari; Rachel Fong, Huda Karim, Betty Wong, Narelle Yabuka and Cheryl Tang; Ivy Koh, Elin Kim, Amanda Chin, Hsin Wen, Jigger Jerez, Jaein Kin and Willie Yogatama; Nura Muhamid, Nan KP and Nune S.; Cathy Dou and Sebastian Loh; Satawat B., Esther Liew, Vivien Koh and Anne Lin; Kim Foo, Wong Heang Fine, Terence Goon, Jean Wee and Sharon Wu; Kim Foo, Fanny Cuandi, Patricia Alpay and Elizabeth Zhang; John Yang and guest, Trina Ang and Kenneth Koh; EL Sales Manager Karin Galley, and Rachel Foong



Festive Return

The Singapore International Festival of Arts (SIFA) celebrated its momentous return with a gala opening at the newly refurbished Victoria Theatre. Hosted by Arts House Limited chairperson, Christine Ong, and CEO Lee Chor Lin, the night included a performance of the opera *Facing Goya*, one of 12 shows featured in the festival. President Tony Tan Keng Yam and his wife Mary Tan were in attendance, along with many other distinguished guests.

Clockwise: Alan Chong, Betty Chen and Christine Lim; Ong Keng Sen, President Tony Tan, Mary Tan, Yeoh Chee Yan, National Arts Council's Chief Executive Officer, Kathy Lai, and Philip Green; Lee Chor Lin, John Kennedy, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, Lawrence Wong, and President Tony Tan; Edmund Cheng and Mr and Mrs Geok Khim Goh





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WHAT'S NEW

Hot shops and what to buy right now



Fancy Flames

With Christmas fast approaching, you may be hankering after the warm glow of an indoor fireplace but without the heat. **Di Legno** is now stocking heat-free Opti-myst fireplaces made by **Glen Dimplex**. Water is atomised to create a fine mist and lifelike flame and smoke effect, and LED inner glow logs are used for added authenticity. Check them out at **188-186 Tanjong Katong Road**, or go to dilegno.sg for more information.

MUSIC TO OUR EARS

Sonos, the wireless home hi-fi manufacturer, has teamed up with the IT support gurus at **Geek Team (geekteam.asia)** to help you stream music into every room in your home. Sonos provides the hardware, and Geek Team gets it synced and working – and irons out any other IT issues you might also have while they're there. Even better, all Geek Team customers will receive five percent off Sonos products until 31 October; just call **6631 8447** to arrange for the discount. For more info on Sonos, go to www.sonos.com.



BEAUTY ON THE OUTSIDE

There's hope for any balcony and outdoor space with Skyline Design's new collection of outdoor furniture. It includes comfy love seats for smaller spaces in its Mankani (*pictured*) and Cassina brands, and the Madison bar set in the new wicker colour, **mink**. Check it out at **Roops, 85 Defu Lane 10, #06-00, Ever Expanding Building**, or go to skylinedesign.com.sg.

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3M has combined style and function with its new polarising task light, the LED5000. Aimed at reducing eyestrain and glare by as much as 80 percent, the lamps come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Find out more by calling **6450 8888**, or visit www.3mpolarizinglight.com.sg. ▼



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On the



Waterfront

*By Amy Brook-Partridge;
photography by Michael Bernabe*

It's been four years since we first met with KATHY DUNDERDALE. Back then, she and her family – husband Ian and children Chloe and Alex – were six years into their Singapore stay and living in a three-storey house in Coronation Road. Now they live in a Sentosa condo and have a 44-foot sailboat in the marina.



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The living room style is predominantly white, modern and clean, with pops of colour. For Kathy, the main feature is the view, with the bustling traffic of boats and planes across the waves.

arrive at Kathy and Ian's Sentosa Cove waterfront condo and am whisked directly from the lift into their living room, with its panoramic views across the water. "The landscape changes so much when you look out – it's like a moving canvas," says Kathy. "You can sometimes spot your friends out there on their boats, and it's just amazing when you see the lightning shows across the water."

The family's aquatic interests don't stop at sitting on the balcony and watching the boats go by, or indeed the lightning strike. Kathy and Ian invested in a two-bedroom, 44-foot Jeanneau sailboat, *Vesper 7*, after moving to The Cove five years ago.

"Ian ordered the boat without knowing how to sail; but when he puts his mind to something he just does it, and he took the courses and passed his exams before the sailboat arrived," says Kathy. "Getting a boat is definitely a lifestyle choice. It's an investment that has to be maintained, as when you live on the sea, things disintegrate fast. The trade-off is that we get to sail every weekend."

Landed interests

With the help of daughter Chloe, an art history graduate, Kathy and Ian have become dedicated art collectors. "Dad began collecting purely what he liked, but he has now progressed towards making the collection better," says Chloe. Kathy and Chloe show me their most recent acquisition, a large piece by Indonesian artist, Heri Dono. "This was one of his last mixed-media pieces, as he has now moved on to sculpture. We worked with Equator Art Projects at Gilman Barracks to acquire this piece," Chloe explains.

The apartment is covered with an eclectic mix of artwork and accessories – unsurprising, as Kathy herself has lived the expat life for 35 years in a multitude of different countries. The family's most recent move from Coronation Road saw her sell and give away some pieces of furniture, put other pieces in storage, and call on designer Chloe Elkerton who now runs E&A Interiors to furnish the Sentosa condo. The result is an interesting mix.

Kathy also conducts her Jin Shin Jyutsu practice from her treatment room in the apartment, and has a strong base of regular clients. "I've been doing this work now for 15 years. The progressive Singapore medical community is increasingly looking for complementary therapies," she tells me. Jin Shin Jyutsu, she explains, is a highly refined form of acupuncture that can release the cause of acute and chronic conditions, restore emotional balance, increase energy and calm the body.

Home Style

When I ask Kathy about her personal style, she says she's completely down the middle. "I can be classic Chanel up and down, but then I can also be boho. Some days I'll be very pearly and put together, and other days more relaxed." This style is reflected in her surroundings, too, and that – mixed with the rest of the family's interests and influences – makes for a fascinating home.



Blue sea views are reflected in the colours used in the master bedroom, and in the large mirrored console along the wall.

The boat

"We didn't want anything too big as we would just be going out on her on the weekends. She's two years old, has a light interior that's all custom-made, and a great sound system. It's so nice to be out there on the sea; it's relaxing and calm, and it's your little home. The vistas are amazing when you sit out on deck, and we've had plenty of fun weekends sailing, even participating in the Neptune Regatta – a race to the Equator – last year." – *Kathy*



The name

"We named the boat *Vesper* 7 for many reasons. We're big James Bond fans – we've seen every Bond movie hundreds of times. Our parents' favourite cocktail is the Vesper martini, which James Bond introduces to the character Vesper Lynd in *Casino Royale*. The Latin word *vesper* means evening, which is when we intended to use the boat the most. The name also relates to the actress Eva Green, who played Vesper Lynd, and who went to my university, The American University in Paris. Finally, because there's another boat named Vesper in Singapore, she got the number 7, as in 007."

– *Chloe*



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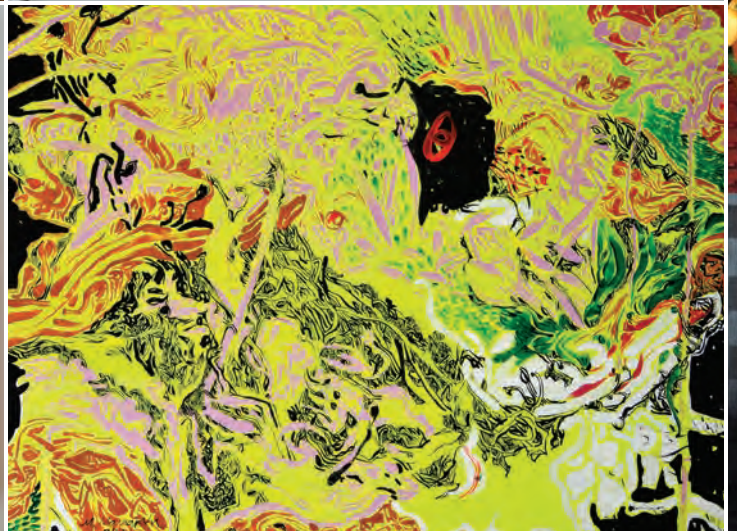
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“If you’re going to invest in mixed media or paper, you need to accept it may be affected by mould; to try to prevent that happening, it’s essential to frame it in the right way.”

– Chloe



Counter clockwise fom top right:

The Dunderdales acquired this picture, *Five O'Clock*, by Russian artist Anna Berezovskaya, from REDSEA Gallery. “The value of her work has exploded since we got this piece,” says Chloe.

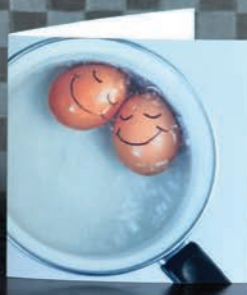
Untitled-Red by Om Mee Ai, oil on canvas. The artist also created the pepper sculpture outside ION Orchard.

Floating Cloud by Tay Bak Chiang, ink and pigments on rice paper.

Traditional Dancing 2 by Nguyen Hong Son, lacquer on wood.

One of the last mixed media pieces by Indonesian artist Heri Dono, before he turned to sculpture.

“I love this colourful picture by Filipino artist M. Maungkun. This piece, *Summer Time*, is one of four depicting seasons. It was initially the colour I liked, but then I started to see the other things in there; monkeys’ faces, eyes, people in the trees; it’s so much more than just the colour. As it’s in my treatment room, I often look at it. The eye doesn’t just rest on one thing.” – Kathy





Recommendations

Chan Hampe Galleries
6338 1962 | chanhampegalleries.com

E&A Interiors, Chloe Elkerton
6702 4850 | eandainteriors.com

Equator Art Projects
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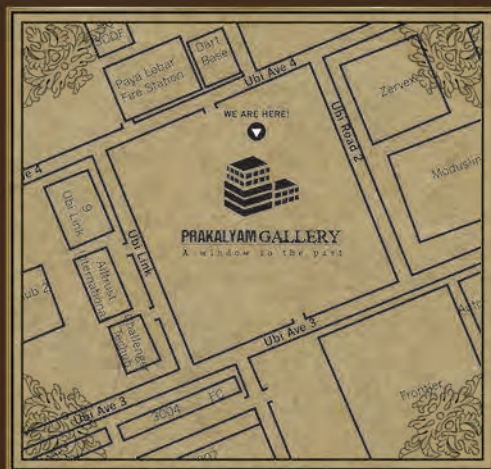
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ON DISPLAY

By Jade McLean

If your favourite knickknacks and accessories are plonked on a shelf collecting dust, read on to get tips and advice from the experts on displaying them, from the new and funky to the more traditional.

Singapore is a veritable goldmine as far as furniture is concerned, so there are plenty of beautiful shelves, consoles and other display units to choose from. Whether you're going for a chic European look or a more natural, Asian feel, the perfect piece to show off that special something is out there waiting for you.





A funky take on shelving, available from Lifestorey

Contemporary Ideas

If you enjoy trawling around Great World City, then you've no doubt stumbled across **Lifestorey**, and it's really worth visiting the huge Lifestorey showroom on Tai Seng Street to view a much wider choice of products.

"We source from all over the world and have a very good mix from Europe, including from Denmark, Italy and Germany; we also feature local designers," says business development manager **Lawrence Yong**.

"We currently have a very versatile Danish collection called Muuto – New Nordic. You can stack its individual cubby shelves any way you like. Because they're modular, you can keep adding to or taking away from your structure, depending on the size of your space."

Lawrence uses the Flynt brand in the store's current collection as another example of great display furniture. Now manufactured in Indonesia using tropical wood (after the French company realised its wood wasn't holding up in our humid climate), the furniture has a raw, industrial look, and is finished with old-fashioned fridge handles on the doors of its consoles.

"The tricks I use to highlight the accessories in our store are mainly to do with colour," says Lawrence. "When we place accessories on a shelf, we try to use something large as a focal point, with smaller things surrounding it. If you have a lot of white, put bold pieces in between. Similarly, if you have bright walls or a brightly coloured shelving unit, you should display accessories with muted colours, otherwise they will be clashing all over the place."



Lifestorey's modular shelving can grow as your collection grows



Large Pieces

If you're lucky enough to have a large space that dwarfs small furniture, **Nirvana Gallery** has some perfect pieces that are not only big but would fit nicely into a more rustic environment, such as an original colonial house.

"Most of our furniture is from Burma, because we have a factory there. Our artwork is from Indonesia and Mexico," says store manager Thomas Tan, who uses large teak benches to display the work.

Contrasting with the vibrancy of the colours in the paintings, the dark-wood benches are great for holding colourful accessories. It's important, he feels, to have a nice piece of furniture on which to display a piece and make it the centre of attraction.

Nirvana has an extensive collection of solid rosewood, teak and *thinwin* furniture, including tables and benches made from huge chunks of bark and trunk. They're an unusual and stunning way to showcase something special, and they even work as display pieces on their own; the furniture is about as rustic as you'll find.

"Wood makes us feel closer to nature," says Thomas. "An unfinished-looking concrete floor complements our wooden furniture well. If we put carpet down, it wouldn't really work."





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Pure Interior's bookcases create a talking point in any room

Creative Cubbies

Shelving units are an obvious choice for storing accessories and the like, but rather than settling for something run-of-the-mill, why not opt for one of the many creative pieces on the market at the moment? For instance, **Pure Interior** carries some interesting cubby shelves that can be used to divide your room and display accessories.

The key to an eye-catching display, says the Pure Interior team, is colour. For example, using all red accessories on grey shelves can create a beautiful ensemble; similarly, white and black pieces on white shelves. Keeping to one colour prevents a cluttered feel and helps make your cubbies the focal point of the room.

Architect and interior designer **Paula Ferraresso** from Kemistry of Style works alongside Pure Interior in selecting its pieces and styling its showroom. She shared a few of her display tricks with us.

"If you put a nice piece in a boring place, you can't always feel the difference between that piece and another. First, decide on what you want your focal point to be in the room. If you want to

emphasise the effect of an object, you could place it in front of a mirror, or make sure it's well lit, or even put it on a glass shelf. You should also place it near other objects that bring out the best in it."

Paula points to the current European trend of buying 1980s or even 1940s

pieces and putting them in a classic environment, though it's not so simple in Singapore where there's a shortage of retro or vintage furniture shops. "You can have colourful plastic pieces inside a classic interior; it just takes some skill to mix old and new in this way."






Simple Solutions

Another way of highlighting something special is to place it on something simple. **Teak Avenue's** Burmese pieces are solid, well made and fairly basic, some with rough, unfinished edges that give a more rustic look.

If you're looking for a display cabinet with glass doors, shelving units or a high console to discourage little hands from reaching for your special things, you'll find an extensive range here.

Managing director **Win Ko Ko Thaug** says, "I use a teak display cabinet with an enclosed glass case to display important pieces, with a mirror and glass shelving, so there's no dust. Your art is better enhanced if it's displayed simply. People often prefer their timber furniture to be simple, as it makes them feel closer to nature.

"Teak is renowned in Asia for its beauty and durability. All of my pieces are solid, and I try to make their designs very plain so that they fit with any interior. I've found that certain rustic pieces are particularly popular."

Maintenance is easy, too; the protective coating that Ko uses means that a quick wipe with a damp cloth is all that's required to clean them. "Everything here is designed for both indoor and outdoor use, and can last 30 to 40 years in any weather. Our strong points are the quality of the wood and the all-natural colours. I don't use any colour adjustments. You can also feel that it's natural." 

◀ *Teak Avenue's cabinet with glass case is a simple and practical storage solution.*

▼ *This console from Teak Avenue is both natural and durable.*

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At Home with TUYET-MAI & HUNG PHAM

By Amy Brook-Partridge;
photography by Michael Bernabe

A husband-and-wife team tells us about moving to Singapore and explains how they maintain a harmonious relationship while running their lacquer home décor business together.

Having begun their expat experience in 1995 with an assignment from their home country France to Hong Kong, the Phams spent the subsequent 19 years living in a variety of Asian countries. It's unsurprising, then, that Tuyet-Mai and Hung's four-bedroom River Valley apartment is crammed full of interesting and eye-catching Asian furniture and accessories. The pieces range from large Vietnamese lacquer pictures to furniture acquired during stints in Guangzhou, Vietnam and Shanghai.

The couple is of French-Vietnamese descent; Hung left Vietnam when he was two years old, and Tuyet-Mai when she was 11. They both lived in Paris. "Our parents were in the medical profession, and we hung out in similar circles. We didn't actually know each other as children, but met later at a party," explains Tuyet-Mai.



After Hong Kong came postings to Guangzhou, Shanghai, Vietnam and Shanghai again, before they arrived in Singapore in August last year. Along the way, they had three children. Son Khoi (17) was born in Hong Kong, elder daughter Mai-Khanh (15) in France, and Mai-Khue (5) in Shanghai.


The family chose this four-bedroom apartment close to Orchard Road as their Singapore home; Tuyet-Mai says its safe and central location were deciding factors. "We'd lived in a house for many years, but we felt that it was time to move back into an apartment. It's so much easier when you go away; you just lock the door and walk away. You don't have to shut up the whole house," she explains.

"We need a big space as we have a lot of furniture, so we didn't mind moving into an old condo because we knew we'd get more room."

From the family room window, Tuyet-Mai points out the views of the back of Takashimaya, and of course Orchard Road. Despite the plethora of shopping, bars and restaurants close by, the couple are still spending most of their time working on their business venture. "We haven't had the chance to enjoy Singapore much yet, and any spare time we do have is spent with the children."

Working together

Tuyet-Mai set up Mai Home Décor in 2006 while the family was living in Vietnam. She started off with lamps, only more recently adding other accessories and furniture. "Lacquerware is something very well known in Vietnam; it involves an ancient technique, and I like the fact that the pieces are handmade. The concept we had for our products was to have decorative lamps that can bring style to your home," she says. The lamps in their own home are a mix of Art Deco, contemporary, and Chinese influences. All sit neatly against their own furniture.

Deciding to bring his 20-year career with a Swedish multinational to an end, Hung recently joined his wife to help build up their business. The obvious question is: what is it like working together as a married couple? "We share everything and we talk about everything," says Tuyet-Mai. "Hung takes care of the strategy and I work more on the commercial and clientele side. There are definitely things that he does much better than me. I couldn't handle the business on my own anymore, so having him 100 percent here with me is really helpful." 

The lamps fit high safety standards, and even the lampshades are flame retardant.

Clockwise from top left:

The Stella, \$870.

The Voyage, \$355.

The Acapulco, \$230.

The Dome, \$250.




Left:
Mai Home can customise its lamps and furniture with any one of these different lacquer colours and patterns.

The lowdown on lacquer

Lacquer is the sap from the lacquer tree (*Toxicodendron vernicifluum*), which grows only in East Asia. To harvest it, grooves are cut in the bark, and the sap that oozes out is then collected in bowls. Next, the sap is put into large bamboo barrels that are sealed so as to be airtight, and left for several months in a cool, dark, airy place. The resin settles into layers that are separated and filtered to remove impurities.

To lacquer an object, it is coated with layer upon layer of lacquer, each layer left to dry for about two days. The finished products are extremely hardy and durable.

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LAMPS & LIGHTS

1 Driftwood lamps from \$235, **Barang Barang**, #03-343 Marina Square, 6338 7040 **2** "Egg" lights with intricate flower patterns, sourced from a colonial mansion in Gujarat circa 1920s, ideal for both indoor and outdoor use, **Treasures of the Raj**, 19 Tanglin Road, #03-28, 9173 5041, tot.pw **3** Basico Redor lamp, made from an old wooden cart wheel, with linen shade, **Gallery 278 by Esco Leasing**, 278 River Valley Road, 6737 2322, gallery278.com

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4 Crystal curtain, can be used as a pendant or ceiling-mounted light, available in two sizes, **Lightcraft**, 131 Jalan Sultan, 6297 6658, lightcraft.com.sg **5** Norm 03 by Normann Copenhagen is an organic, modern lamp that casts a sculptural light over any dining table, **Danish Design**, 100E Pasir Panjang Road, #08-01 Century Warehouse, 6270 8483, danishdesignco.com **6** Nautical rope gyroscope chandelier, made from marine-grade rope wrapped in a steel frame, available in different sizes, **Taylor B. Fine Design**'s new Lighting Gallery, 43 Keppel Road, #04-02 (under the AYE on-ramp), 9177 0004 or 9651 0700 **7** Orange lamp, \$85, **FairPrice Antique**, 315 Outram Road, #01-10 Tan Boon Liat Building, 6270 2544, fairpriceantique.com **8** Industrial-finish ceiling lamp with gold-leaf inner lining, **In Situ**, 238 River Valley Road, 6733 7307, insitu-sg.com **9** Evergreen Copper by Northern Lighting, height-adjustable pendant lamps in different sizes, colours and materials, **Danish Design**, 100E Pasir Panjang Road, #08-01 Century Warehouse, 6270 8483, danishdesignco.com

9





10 Clear glass pendant, **Lightcraft**, 131 Jalan Sultan, 6297 6658, lightcraft.com.sg **11** Knan lamps, available in two award-winning designs, Maekai and Kaitong, plywood, **Mountain Teak Furniture Gallery**, 315 Outram Road, #07-02 Tan Boon Liat Building, 6224 7176, mountainteak.com **12** Madam Stolz pendant light in copper and wood, **Make Room**, 315 Outram Road, #10-01 Tan Boon Liat Building, 9113 1274, make-room.net **13** Natural Gen collection (*gen* is Chinese for root), made from solid wood, every piece is unique and comes with birdcage lamp, **Just Anthony**, 379 Upper Paya Lebar Road, 6283 4782, justanthony.com **14** Silk lanterns, \$25 to \$80, **FairPrice Antique**, 315 Outram Road, #01-10, Tan Boon Liat Building, 6270 2544, fairpriceantique.com





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15 Sculpture table lamp in horn and chromed brass, **PURE Interior**, 2 Alexandra Road, #01-01 Delta House, 6534 9043, pureinterior.com.sg **16** Sevrans floor lamp in gemilina wood, \$885, **Arthur Zaaro**, 5 Eunoss Avenue, 8A Level 2 Henry Design Centre, arthurzaaro.com **17** Aluminium lamp with hand-woven, open-weave aluminium barrel shade, \$300, **Modern Eclectic**, 120 Lower Delta Road, #01-14 Cendex Centre, 6273 2204, moderneclectic.com **18** Iron scroll table lamp, in mango wood with cotton pleat shade, **Singapore Trading Post**, 102F Pasir Panjang Road, #02-04 Citilink Warehouse, 6274 0511, singaporetradingpost.com **19** Tall candelabra, wrought-iron, late 1800s, wired and restored, **Prakalyam Gallery**, #01-09 Vertex, 33 Ubi Avenue 3, 6635 4741, prakalyamgallery.com **20** Dalton floor lamp, in burnished wood-tone finish with aged bronze metal detail, **Treasure Trove**, 19 Tanglin Road, #02-47 Tanglin Shopping Centre, 6235 8514, ttrove.com.sg



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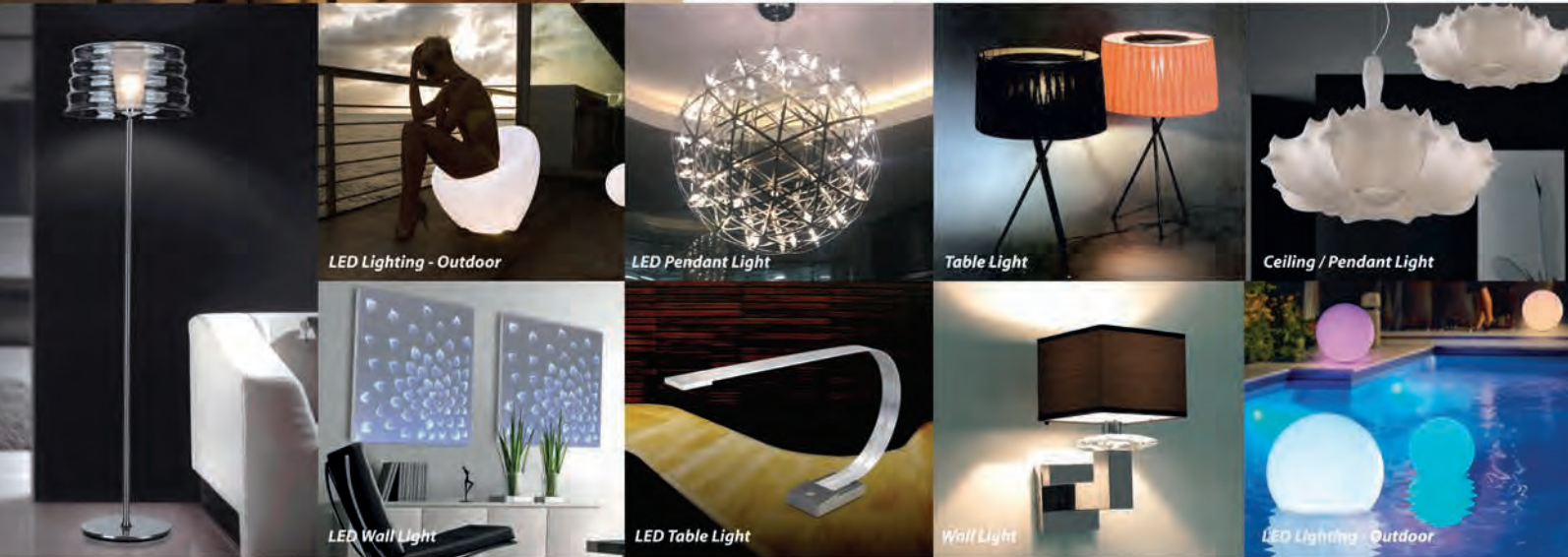


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21 & 22 Table lamps, price on request, **Arete Culture**, 63 Hillview Avenue, #09-08 Lam Soon Building (by appointment only), 9878 8154, areteculture.com **23** Table lamp, \$275, **Mai Home**, 30 East Coast Road, #02-21 Katong V, 6348 6390, maihomedecor.com **24** Hand-painted porcelain lamps from China in a variety of colours, from \$280, **Woody Antique House**, #01-05 Block 13 Dempsey Road, 6471 1770, woodyantique.com **25** Skov floor lamp with bleached longan-wood twigs, **Gallery 278 by Esco Leasing**, 278 River Valley Road, 6737 2322, gallery278.com **26** Chinese porcelain lamp, clean design with cream silk shade, **Artful House**, 315 Outram Road, #08-04 Tan Boon Liat Building, 8112 6127, artful-house.com **27** Shangri-la lamp bases in beautiful natural wood, suit either tall or short shades, **Barang Barang**, #03-343 Marina Square, 6338 7040

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28 Philippi double-U tea-light holder, stainless steel, spectacular for a Christmas dinner setting and all year round, **Luxodec**, 68 Orchard Road, #05-10 Plaza Singapura, 6884 7527, luxodec.com **29** Jonas Merian biscuit-tin lamp that brings colour and history into the home, \$267.50, **Journey East**, 315 Outram Road, #03-02 Tan Boon Liat Building, 6473 1693, journeyeast.com **30** "Paper bag" tile-motif tea-light holders, \$15 to \$27, **Originals**, 896 Dunearn Road, #02-03 Sime Darby Centre, 6471 9918, originals.com.sg **31** Birdcage chandelier, made for a popular US brand, rustic hand-wrought iron with precision-cut faceted crystal glass pendant, **Taylor B. Fine Design**, 43 Keppel Road, #04-02 (under the AYE on-ramp), 9177 0004 or 9651 0700 **32** Dubai hurricane lamp, **Danish Design**, available in stainless steel and glass and in four different sizes, from \$225, **Teak & Mahogany**, 100E Pasir Panjang Road, #07-02/03/04 Century Warehouse, 6273 8116, teakandmahogany.com



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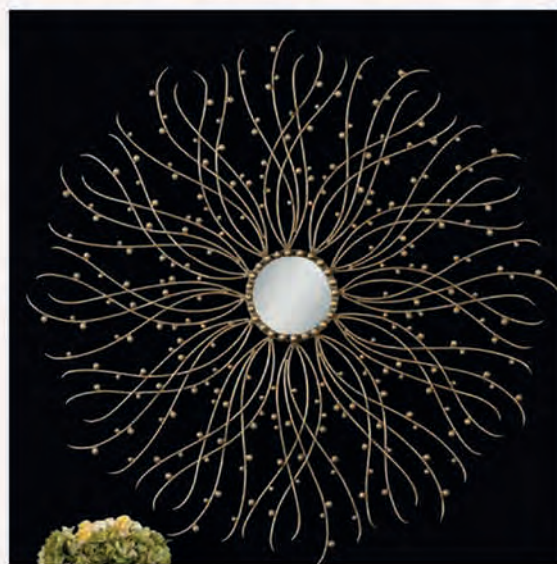
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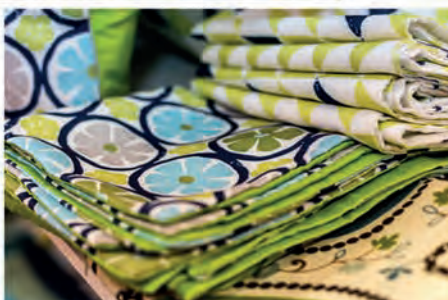
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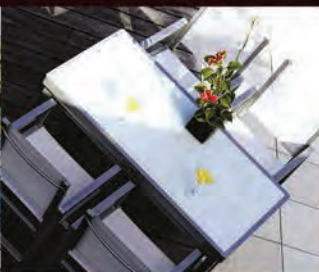
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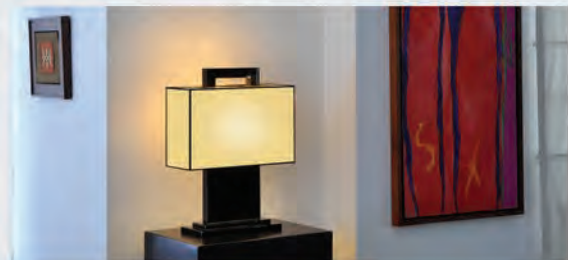
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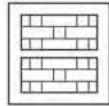
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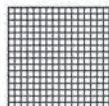
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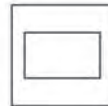


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Sitting comfortably with hands resting protectively on her pregnant tummy, Terri-Anne Leske glows with the healthy radiance that is synonymous with women in particular stages of pregnancy. She explains that this four-bedroom Siglap house was the first and only property they viewed, after two years in a tiny River Valley condo, and that it's an ideal fit for their growing family. The family has settled easily into a more relaxed lifestyle since moving to the East Coast in March.

"The house is perfect," says Terri-Anne. "While the kitchen is the star attraction for me, my two-year-old twins Eli and Olivia love having so much space in which to race around; they didn't have that in the condo."

Terri-Anne favours classic black-and-white, and in the living area she has grouped a Domicil sofa with single white chairs by Camerich. The distinctive lamp is by Kare from Le Article, and the framed Hermes scarf was a gift from Tom. "I tend not to wear scarves, but it's beautiful, so I thought, why not show it off in a frame."



Terri-Anne is from Australia, and it was coincidentally an Aussie architect who renovated the house. Among its features is an open and airy kitchen, ideal for this cooking enthusiast. "I love to leave the front and back doors open, so the kids can run through while I'm cooking; it works well for all of us."

Spread across three levels, the house has a light and spacious ground floor with kitchen, living and dining rooms. "This downstairs space is great for dinner parties; with the children tucked up in bed, we can be as loud as we want without disturbing them. The outdoor area has a barbecue, and it's nice to sit outside in the cooler months," she says.

The middle level has an open-plan family area, the twins' bedroom and the master bedroom. On the third level are another two bedrooms and a helper's room. "Relocating to a house was important to help me feel settled, and to rid myself of that temporary, itinerant sentiment I felt while living in the condo," she says.

Terri-Anne and her stockbroker husband Tom moved to Singapore in

2012. It was a challenging time. "We married, found out we were pregnant on the last day of our honeymoon in Paris, and moved to Singapore within the space of about six months. I was 20 weeks pregnant when we arrived here from Port Melbourne, and we only viewed Singapore as a short two-year stay," she says.

"The twins were born nine weeks early, and at the same time I was adjusting to life in a new country and culture, I'd left my career, and I was trying to make friends. But since overcoming those early challenges we've established friends, revelled in the travel opportunities and decided to stay on longer. We've seen the great benefits of living here and are really taking advantage of them now," she says, nominating travel, domestic help and the children's education as three major pluses.

Last year, she launched her blog, Carrotsticks and Cravings, an expression of her love for cooking and writing recipes. "I needed to do something that didn't revolve around my

marriage and my kids. It's something for *me* – especially now the kids are a bit bigger and sleeping better. I also wanted something to show for my time here, and I hope people get some inspiration from it."

Terri-Anne learnt to cook from her talented mother in Bermagui, a picturesque town on the South Coast of New South Wales where she grew up. It's clear she has taken the baton and run with it. For the twins' second birthday, Terri-Anne baked a total of eight cakes to create a train for Eli, and a tiered princess cake for Olivia. But despite this diligence and creativity, she admits that making a good pavlova in Singapore is still a challenge on account of the humidity.

She's also keen to pass on the cooking impulse to her kids; during this pregnancy, she has found herself in the kitchen constantly. "Now the twins are two, they are beginning to show an interest in my cooking. And because the kitchen is open, they can help with mixing and measuring. I hope they can learn from me."



Memories and mementos are framed and hung on the dining room wall, including antique magazine covers bought on honeymoon in Paris. The clear dining chairs are from Fred Lives Here, the white Hay chairs are from BW Furniture and the Asian-inspired buffet and large mirror are both from Woody Antique House in Dempsey. Terri-Anne likes to mix and match modern and antique furniture.

HOME



Terri-Anne is keen to pass on the cooking impulse to her kids; during this pregnancy, she has found herself constantly in the kitchen and baking up a storm.



Shelves line the double-height family living area on the second floor, furnished simply with lounges from Domicil; a turquoise trunk from The Shophouse and a wool Hay rug from BW Furniture add splashes of colour. It leaves plenty of play-room for the twins and their toys. While Terri-Anne shipped her beloved cooking and kitchenware from home, and Tom his barbecue, they purchased the majority of their furniture in Singapore.

The twins share a room, and when it was time to transition from cots, Terri-Anne purchased sturdy beds from Ni-Night in Joo Chiat Place. The teepee was a gift from the twins' grandmother, and the multicolour felt ball rug in Nepalese wool is by Hay, also from BW Furniture.





Above:
"The master bedroom is huge; I don't know what to do with all the space. There's an office area and a big walk-in wardrobe, and unlike in the condo we actually have room to spare. The bedside tables and lamps are from Crate and Barrel in ION; they order them from the US."

Recommendations:

Barbie Girls ("home-delivery produce, including salmon")
thebarbiegirls.com

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Carrotsticks and Cravings
 (Terri-Anne's food blog)
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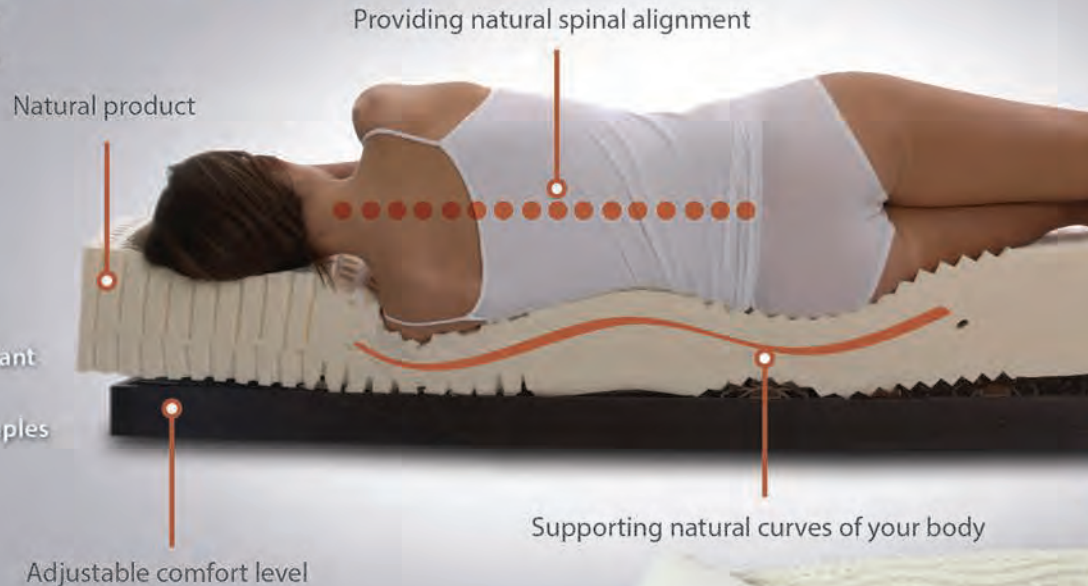
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MARKET Update



DEBORAH LAW

*Executive Director,
Expat Realtor*

While the debate continues as to whether the government should tweak some of its cooling measures, luxury apartment prices that were holding their own have finally started to soften. Luxury developers are now looking to bulk buyers as well as offering discounted prices and ABSD (Additional Buyer's Stamp Duty) rebates to boost dwindling sales.

Although luxury purchases by foreigners have been steadily falling (the first half of 2013 saw 36 luxury units sold; the same period in 2014 just 14), there is optimism that this might improve with recent price-softening in this market segment. Times are tough for developers; their profit margins have approximately halved as take-up rates

continue to fall island-wide and construction and financing costs increase.

Continuing downward pressure on rentals is assisted by a reduction in the influx of foreigners and more supply. There's noticeably less demand for properties that rent at above \$10k a month, as cost-conscious companies step away from corporate leasing – preferring to give their employees set packages with which to plan their own accommodation, schooling and car hire. Employees are therefore seeking to save costs by choosing less expensive accommodation. A note to tenants: it's a great time to lock in a good deal.

In the next issue, look out for my tips to landlords and sellers on how best to move their properties in such a market.

Hot Properties



Be the owner of this prime luxury villa in the sky. Winner of the FIABCI Prix Excellence award in 2013, this penthouse embodies luxurious living, boasting loads of floor space on a single level.

Top furnishings and a fabulous roof terrace for entertaining give you the best of both worlds: a 270-degree view of MacRitchie Reservoir Park's greenery, and being just a short drive from Orchard Road, the CBD and Novena MRT station and shops.

Pinnacle of Prestige

\$11M SALE
Size: 4,715 sq. ft
Bedrooms: 5
Type: Condo
District: 11



Suite Life

\$3.9K RENT
Size: 1,292 sq. ft
Bedrooms: 2
Type: Condo
District: 4

Take advantage of great rental prices with this brand new, fully furnished two-bedroom show-flat penthouse in Siglap. Exquisitely decorated, its 450-square-foot private roof terrace makes it perfect for a couple, or young professionals who enjoy entertaining. Just a short stroll away from the popular Upper East Coast Road shops, cafés, bars and restaurants, and close to East Coast Parkway and all it has to offer, this unit has much appeal.



Sitting Peachy

\$11.5K RENT
Size: 3,318 sq. ft (built),
5,846 sq. ft (land)
Bedrooms: 5+1
Type: Bungalow
District: 15

This beautiful and well-presented house is located on the East Coast in the ever-popular prime area of Meyer Road. Spacious, and with a private garden, this family bungalow also has room for a pool. Boasting a large, open living and dining area which looks onto the garden, a spacious bright kitchen, renovated bathrooms, large bedrooms plus a helper's room, it ticks all the boxes.

It's close to East Coast Parkway, Marine Parade and Katong 112 malls, and an abundance of restaurants, bars and coffee shops, as well as the ECP, MCE and KPE motorways.

If you see a property that interests you, whether it's in these pages or somewhere online or even in the newspaper, call us FIRST! We can connect you with the agent and guide you through the process, right up to the end of the contract, and at NO COST.

Email us at property@expatrealtor.net or call **6255 1027** for more information.

Sunshine Coast Sanctuary Living, QLD Australia



This stunning sustainable home is the ultimate family retreat. Built in 2009 by an expat family of 6 this spacious home is set amongst lush gardens bordered by magnificent eucalyptus trees overlooking the iconic glasshouse mountains. The location offers privacy with the convenience of two excellent private schools and Buderim village within a 10min drive. A great selection of amazing surf beaches are only a 15 minute drive and Brisbane is an easy 1 hour commute away. If you desire the healthiest of lifestyles, fine educations and a glorious climate for your family then this designer home will provide the perfect holiday get away or your new home haven where you have the space to combine work and pleasure.

For a virtual tour of 18 Mountain Top Court, Buderim, visit mcgrath.com.au/222165 and click on the video icon.

For property information
please contact:

Damien Michael
+61 413 024 124
damienmichael@mcgrath.com.au

Chris Pace
+61 417 196 600

Buderim Office
+61 7 5450 8000





Double Take

Location: Batam
Island, Indonesia
From \$140,000 for
two bedrooms (POA)
Bedrooms: 2 to 4
Type: Chalet
Tenure: Membership
lease



Two privately owned and occupied chalets are for sale; they can be sold together or separately. Located in the tropical setting of Nongsa Point Marina in Batam (only a 35-minute ferry ride from Tanah Merah ferry terminal), each chalet has a spacious living room, a dining room, an open kitchen, two bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms, plus impressive views of the beach, Singapore and Malaysia.

Nongsa epitomises resort living and provides owners with a choice of marina berths; it's a yachting gateway to the Riau Islands, and offers easy CIQ (customs, immigration and quarantine) clearance with offices located at the marina.

Facilities at the marina clubhouse include a tropical pool, a bar, restaurants and hotel concierge services. It's a five-minute scenic walk from Turi Beach Resort and its additional facilities, including an infinity pool, restaurants, a spa and a beach sports club. The nine-hole Tamarind golf course is located within the resort, while the popular 18-hole Palm Spring golf course and Montego Bay are a ten-minute drive away.

Berkshire Beauty

£1.55M SALE
Location: United Kingdom
Built area: 4,260 sq. ft
Bedrooms: 5
Type: Landed detached
house

This is an excellent opportunity to purchase a substantial and impressive detached house in the commuter belt of London, just a few hundred yards' walking distance from Gerrards Cross town centre and railway station. Enter into the world of the sweeping driveway, triple garage block, pillared entrances, ivy-covered arbours, private lawns, terraces, tall hedging and mature trees.

This fine home features a split-level design with generously proportioned accommodation, a large, central, full-height reception hall, and landings from which all rooms lead.

The property has double-glazed windows throughout, with leaded light insets at the front.

As the sellers reside in Singapore, they may be contacted directly.



If you see a property that interests you, whether it's in these pages or somewhere online or even in the newspaper, call us FIRST! We can connect you with the agent and guide you through the process, right up to the end of the contract, and at NO COST.

Email us at info@expatrealitor.net or call **6255 1027** for more information.

HAVEN ON THE SUNSHINE COAST

This Queensland home is stunning and sustainable, and the ultimate family retreat set amongst beautiful private gardens overlooking the iconic Glass House Mountains. Located only ten minutes' drive away are excellent private schools and Buderim village.

Amazing surf beaches are close by, and Brisbane is an easy one-hour commute from your door. For the healthiest of lifestyles, fine education and a glorious climate, this designer house could provide a wonderful holiday getaway or be your new home, with abundant space to combine work and pleasure.

Offers over A\$2.45M will be considered.

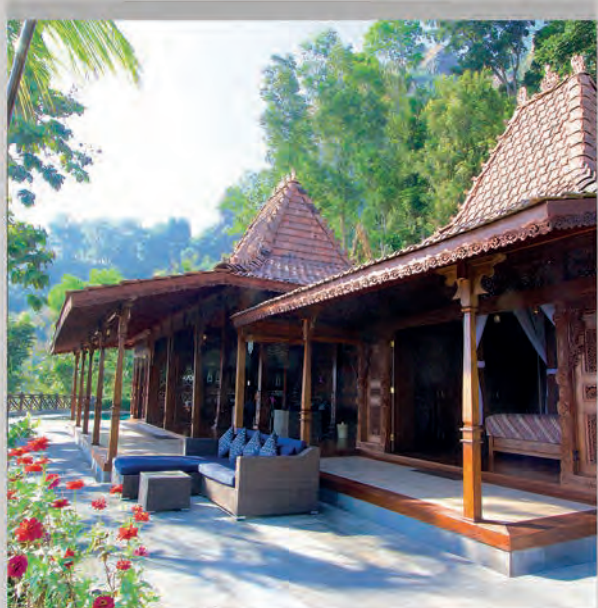


Directory

Contact Damien Michael at McGrath Estate Agents Buderim
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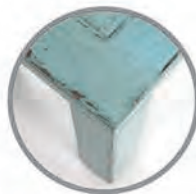


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Bornholm Dining Set 90 x 180cm



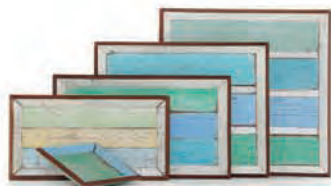
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Bornholm Bar Stool
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Bornholm Dining Stool
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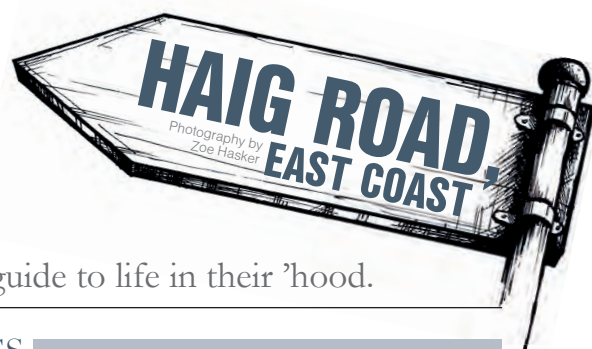
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STREET TALK

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



THE SPECIFICS



NAME: JESS ARROGANTE
FROM: Sydney, Australia
OCCUPATION: Full-time mum



What street do you live on?
 Haig Road.

Exact words you tell a taxi driver to get home?
 "Haig Road, please, Uncle – on Katong Shopping Centre side."

What's the name of your neighbourhood?
 Tanjong Katong.

Closest MRT station?
 Paya Lebar on the green line, or Dakota on the yellow line.

How long have you lived here?
 One year.

Why here?
 East Coast offers great value for money, fresh air and amazing food.



THE SCENE

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

Another condo opposite.

The closest store to your front door is:

Singapore Post and the Peranakan Village Food Centre on Tanjong Katong Road.

The unofficial uniform of your street is:

School uniforms; there are students from high school, primary school, preschool and international schools all clustered in the vicinity.

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

Amitabh Bachchan (if you know a bit about Indian movies).

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

Head to Joo Chiat for all sorts of food, or Paya Lebar for Malay flavours.

If you're missing home, you:

Head to East Coast Park for the beach, picnics and cool, summery breezes. This is the closest I feel to Sydney, in terms of similarities (container ships aside).

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

Joo Chiat for food, or a picnic at East Coast Park.

You'd swap houses in a second with:

Independent House on Mugliston Road; I'm blown away by how big and beautiful it is.

A common myth about your neighbourhood is:

There's no myth about the food; it's good!

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

A loud thunderstorm, with lightning that feels like it's going to strike our windows. And my daughter ready for a feed.

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

A private party at the condo opposite.





THE SUPERLATIVES

Your hands-down favourite neighbourhood food joints are:

328 Katong Laksa: "simply the best" laksa.

Tian Tian Hainanese Chicken Rice at Joo Chiat: some of the best chicken rice.

Rabbit Carrot Gun: good coffee and a homey feel.

Ayam penyet at City Plaza, Paya Lebar: simple but great Indonesian food.

House of Seafood on Tanjong Katong Road: local-style crab dishes.

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

The man who stands on one side of the park next to the condo and recites opera every morning!

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

Joo Chiat Complex, Geylang Serai market and some hidden gems in Roxy Square.

The guiltiest pleasure in your area is:

Madeleine's Original Portuguese Egg Tarts on Tanjong Katong Road, and Ritz Apple Strudel Pastries on East Coast Road.

One thing you'd never change is:

The local and welcoming feel of the neighbourhood.

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

The pedestrian bridge crossing East Coast Road that connects to Roxy Square; make up your mind, is it an escalator or stairs?

The city gives you \$5 million to soup up your street:

I would love more stroller-friendly paths plus a few more traffic lights along Tanjong Katong Road and Marine Parade.

What's in a name?

Haig Road connects Changi and Geylang Roads with East Coast Road. It's named after Field Marshal Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British expeditionary forces in France in World War I. In the early 19th century, the road was part of a large coconut plantation. Whitewashed government quarters, used by soldiers during the Japanese occupation, are a low-key feature of Haig Road, near Jalan Tembusu.

Around the 1950s it was known as Kampong Serani, a reference to the many Eurasians living in the village (the word Serani refers to Christians), and a landmark for taxi drivers and trishaw riders. 📍

WHAT'S THE WORD ON YOUR STREET?

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



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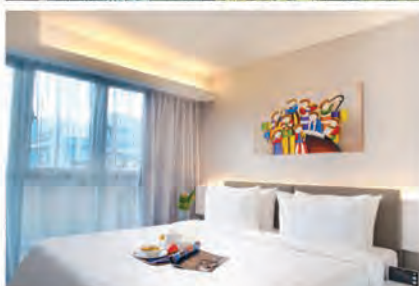
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Life & Family



WHAT'S NEW

Latest updates for parents & children



Style and Poise

Good habits last a lifetime, and **Dream Factory by Ines Ligron** will get your children on the right track. At Dream Kid and Dream Youth sessions, children from six years learn to walk with confidence, project an engaging personality and develop their unique style. Parents will be thrilled with the results. Says one mother, Kate: "Isabel hasn't stopped talking about it, and she even wore her hair down for the first time in a year – all thanks to the Dream Team!" 76A Peck Seah Street, The Pink Door. **6221 0774 | dreamfactory.sg** ▲

DANCE DANCE

There's plenty to dance about at **Tanglin Arts Studio**. Everyone from kids to adults will find a class to suit, be it ballet, tap, jazz, hip-hop, jazz-freestyle, acrobatics, all-boys classes, Glee Club or Zumba. Phew! As well as dance technique, teachers focus on developing children's creativity and passion for dance. Students who like a challenge can also choose to participate in the competition team. Tanglin Arts Studio, 100 Turf Club Road #01-02, Horsecity Block M. **6479 0304 | tanglinartsdancestudio.com** ▲



SPOOKY SURPRISES

Go-Go Bambini's Halloween party will be a spooktacular night of fun. Not only is there trick or treating, kids can get involved in a treasure hunt, try glitter tattoos, eat fun food and of course, play in the indoor playground. There will be a best costume competition too, so come dressed as your favourite character. Parents are not forgotten either; the GGB Bistro Bar and Café will be open, for refreshments while the kids have a blast. 31 October from 5pm to 7pm. **For tickets, call 6474 4176 or email info@gogobambini.com.** ▲

KIDS' GYM AT LOEWEN

The nine-metre tumble-track trampoline is just one exciting feature of the recently opened **Sky Gym** at Loewen Gardens. Gymnastics offers children many benefits, from fitness and flexibility to confidence and discipline. Sky Gym will offer a range of programmes geared toward the development of children from 12 months to seven years in a fun and non-competitive environment. All sessions are run by qualified coaches. 75A Loewen Road, Loewen Gardens. **6255 4230 | skygym.sg**



7

**The American Association of Orthodontists
recommends the first orthodontic check-up by
7 years old.**

Is your child 7 yet?



Dr. Catherine Lee
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www.DrCatherineLeeOrthodontics.com

WINNER BAG

What's all the fuss about a baby bag? Winning the Red Dot: Product Award has afforded the **Lässig Green Label Neckline Bag** celebrity status, and even an exhibition spot in the Red Dot Museum for a year. The funky denim bag with bright straps is designed to fit everything that parents on the go could possibly need: changing mat, insulated bottle holder, water repellent wet pocket and removable compartment for storing jars – plus, there are handy hooks for use with a stroller. \$269. Find stockists at www.lassig.sg. ▲



GO PLAY!

New from **Johnson & Johnson** are Baby Active Fresh bath and powder, perfect for active kids getting stuck into outdoor play and sports. The products work in tandem to keep kids fresh, help prevent pesky body odours, and prevent chills caused by cooling sweat. From \$3.45 at supermarkets and pharmacies.



EASY EXPRESS

Pigeon conducted joint research with KK Women's and Children's Hospital to study breastfeeding mothers of different races in Singapore. The findings were used in determining the best design for new breast pumps to allow mums to express and store milk with ease. Three new products from the 50-year-old Japanese brand are available: the Electric Breast Pump Pro, the Electric Breast Pump Portable and the Manual Breast Pump. Find them in department stores and baby product shops, from \$79.90. pigeon.com.sg ▼



Stylish Sling

If you've got a baby on the way or you've just become a mum, the **Je Porte Mon Bébé** from France is a soft, adjustable sling which is comfortable in the tropical weather and, importantly, easy to use. The sling, also known as the Little Wrap Without Knots, is reversible and made from dual layers of viscose, in a wide range of colours. Baby Slings & Carriers, 39 Jalan Pemimpin, #06-01 Tai Lee Building. 6397 6691 | babyslingsandcarriers.com



KEEPING HOUSE

To celebrate its tenth anniversary, **A-Team Amahs & Cleaners** is thanking *Expat Living* readers for their support, with a discount of up to \$50 on part-time maid, babysitting and house cleaning services. Offer valid until 31 December. Call 6100 6131. a-team.com.sg ▲



More Bilingual Classes

The **Canadian International School** will offer additional classes following the successful launch of its new bilingual Chinese-English programme. Children from the age of four have the opportunity to become fluent communicators in both Chinese and English, giving them a competitive edge in tomorrow's job market. New classes will open for students aged seven in January 2015, and for students aged eight and nine in August 2015. To find out more, register for the next open house at www.cis.edu.sg/openhouse; 2 October at Tanjong Katong Campus, 30 October at Lakeside Campus. cis.edu.sg/bilingual ▲



FAIRY-TALE BIRTHDAY

Does the thought of throwing another big birthday with invitations, entertainers and party bags send shivers up your spine? A birthday break in a quirky location should appease any child who loves to celebrate their big day. Check out **Airbnb's** creative accommodation choices in a range of amazing locations, including an "Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe" experience in New Zealand, and a delightful tree-house in San Francisco. airbnb.com.sg ▲

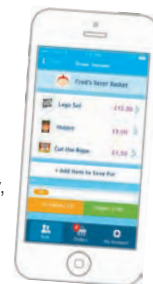
NEW FACE AT SJII

New Principal at **SJI International Elementary School**, Kevin Hannah, brings with him years of experience, and a child-centred approach. Originally from Western Australia, Kevin has worked in Jakarta, London, Kuala Lumpur and, for the past seven years, All Hallows Preparatory School in Somerset in the UK. Kevin is enthusiastic about maintaining excellence in the school's curriculum – which includes Singapore Maths, the International Primary Curriculum and daily Mandarin lessons – while developing the school's sports and arts programmes. sji-international.com.sg ▲



VIRTUAL PIGGY BANK

Want to keep track of the kids' pocket money, but without the hassle of doling out coins from your pocket or emptying piggy banks onto the floor? RoosterBank is a fun and educational website with benefits for kids *and* parents. Kids can watch their hard-earned pocket money grow, and they can accrue rewards and prizes for saving. Parents can follow how much has been given and spent, while teaching children to save and spend responsibly. And there are no cash deposits, so you stay in charge. roosterbank.com ▲

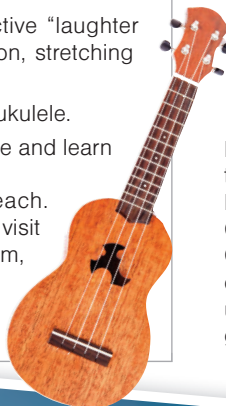


Lifelong Learning

Want a change of scenery, a breath of fresh air and a chance to learn something new? We've rounded up a selection of activities with no ongoing commitments, that won't break the bank, and that offer a chance for you to expand your mind and skill set.

1 Launched last month, **Laneway Learning** hosts cheap, fun evening classes in anything and everything. It was started in Australia two years ago in the belief that people have a desire to keep learning, but often find traditional courses too expensive, too long, or too much like their day job. Here's what's on offer in October:

- "Laugh your worries away": fun, interactive "laughter yoga" exercises mixed with relaxation, stretching and breathing exercises.
 - "Let's uke": an introduction to ukulele.
 - "Landscape in a bottle": create and learn the basics of terrariums.
- Classes are generally \$20 each. To check dates and register, visit singapore.lanewaylearning.com, or call 8660 8960.



2 **The People's Association** is a Singapore institution that offers low-cost community learning across a mind-boggling array of subjects. It's cheap and easy to join (you'll also get a PAssion Card) and opens up a whole world of learning at venues across the island. Just one example, from literally hundreds of options is learning how to whip up local hawker favourites. Dishes vary, and can include Hokkien prawn mee, mee siam and chilli crab. 21 October, 7pm to 9.30pm at Tampines West Community Centre. 9 November, 2pm to 5pm at Hougang Community Centre. For more details and to sign up, visit www.one.pa.gov.sg or call into your local Community Centre.



3 Hit the streets with **Baobab Photography** for a photo walk. Get tips on what to shoot and how to get more creative with your photography while exploring Singapore's diverse neighbourhoods.

- Discover Geylang on 15 October, 9.30am to 11am
- Deepavali in Little India on 21 October, 6.30pm

No experience necessary; just bring a digital camera. \$50. baobabphoto.com.



4 Immerse yourself in all things literary at the **Singapore Writers Festival**. Workshops, author talks and literary walks will be held from 31 October to 9 November. Check out the full programme and buy tickets at www.singaporewritersfestival.com.

5 The **Academy of Literary Arts and Publishing Singapore** runs short courses, workshops and master classes in publishing, writing, reading and storytelling. Local and international trainers are established professionals from the literary arts and publishing fields. Upcoming courses include:

- Impressive marketing plans: capture the value of marketing activity and present it positively and professionally, even with limited resources. 6 November, 9.30am to 5.30pm, \$320.

Register at www.alap.bookcouncil.sg.

6 Many country associations offer tours and classes for members and non-members. The **Scandinavian Women's Association** is a rallying point for Norwegian, Swedish, Danish and Finnish women. Check out what's on offer, including a feng shui tour and a spirit medium tour, at www.swasingapore.com.sg.

7 **Kranji Farmers' Market** is a chance to really go local: find out what food is grown in Singapore, buy freshly harvested veggies, eggs, fruit and herbs, plus handmade crafts. There's kids activities too. 2pm to 7pm. 4 to 5 October. Nyee Phoe (Gardenasia), 240 Neo Tiew Crescent. Stay up to date at www.facebook.com/farmersmarketsg.





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www.cis.edu.sg/scholarships

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To celebrate our 25th birthday, CIS is launching an attractive scholarship programme for students who display outstanding academic ability. These scholarships will provide successful candidates with an opportunity to benefit from a world-class educational programme, facilitated by highly qualified faculty members. Students in Grades 4 to 11 are invited to apply.



HOW TO

Whether you celebrate Halloween or not, there's no denying it's an evening steeped in history harking back many centuries. Today, while the date still symbolises witchcraft, death and fear for some, it seems that more and more people see it as a chance to have fun dressing up, carving out pumpkins and begging for candy. If you're one of those people, here's a roundup of how and where to celebrate Halloween in Singapore, from costume shops and party hints to events.

HALLOWEEN

By Katie Roberts

5 COSTUME SHOPS

COSTUME CITY

Here's your chance to be any superhero you want, be it Batman, Spiderman, Wonder Woman or even The Incredible Hulk. Rentals from \$90.

#09-03 Henderson Industrial Park
6270 1722 | mycostumecity.com

COSTUMES AND MASCOTS

Don't want to splash the cash? Costume rentals start at \$50 for three days.

779 North Bridge Road
6299 0882

COSTUMES 'N' PARTIES

There's plenty for everyone, including vampire, witch and zombie costumes for grownups, and bumble bee, shark and superhero outfits for kids up to 10 years old.

73 Kampong Bahru, #01-01
62248742 | costumes-n-parties.com

MOEPHOSIS

Choose from 20,000 rental costumes with costume ambassadors on hand to help create the perfect look. Made-to-measure costumes available.

84 Joo Chiat Road
6345 8731 | moephosis.com

NUMBER 1 COSTUME COSTUME

You won't be stuck for choice here, with over 50,000 costumes and 4,000 accessories, including movie heroes, villains and more. Rentals start at \$60 for a standard costume, accessories from \$10.

General Magnetics Building Level 2,
625 Lorong 4 Toa Payoh
6333 9440 | number1costumecostume.com.sg



5 PARTY HINTS

1. In Singapore's heat and humidity, wearing that eye-catching Chewbacca costume might not be such a good idea. Stick to a lightweight costume: no fur, full masks, plastic or leather.
2. Pumpkins are easy enough to find in wet markets, Cold Storage, FairPrice and most other grocery shops. Don't carve out your pumpkin too early as the heat will wilt it in just a couple of days, and the smell isn't too pleasant either.
3. Looking for different decorations to style the Halloween house, aside from fake cobwebs, banners and skeletons? Try putting plastic spiders over doorknobs and in treat buckets, or get some grey card and make tombstones to place in the front garden.
4. A scarecrow is easily made from old clothes stuffed with paper and propped on a broom handle; finish the look with a spooky mask.
5. Lit candles indoors create atmosphere. Buy in bulk at IKEA, or for specifically themed Halloween candles try Yankee Candle in Great World City.

TRICK OR TREAT?

Halloween has evolved into a community-based event, but some people don't acknowledge or celebrate it at all, due to religious beliefs or cultural indifference. So, it's best to make sure your trick-or-treaters don't go knocking on their doors. If there are no decorations to be seen and no pumpkins in the window, it's safe to assume that those indoors won't be giving out too much candy.



JUST FOR KIDS

A spooktacular night of fun at Go-Go Bambini's Ultimate Halloween Party. There'll be trick or treat, treasure hunts, glitter tattoos, food and indoor play. 31 October, 5pm to 7pm. Dempsey Hill. Limited tickets. Call 6474 4176 or email info@gogobambini.com.

Try the Forest Adventure course after dark, with Halloween creatures playing trick or treat. Limited to 30 participants. 25 October. From 6.45pm. Bedok Reservoir Park. \$40 for a one hour Kids' Course and Snigglehunt "Halloween" treasure hunt. Bookings essential. Call 8100 7420 or email info@forestadventure.com.sg.



5 PARTY PRODUCT SHOPS

DAISO

How can you argue with a store where everything is \$2? That includes decorations, pumpkin treat-holders, and an array of toys to give as treats for kids who come knocking. Daiso has seven stores in Singapore, including in VivoCity, Parkway Parade and Plaza Singapura. 6376 8065

SPOTLIGHT

Well-known as a craft mecca, Spotlight sells all manner of decorations, fancy dress, table dressings and all the arts and crafts materials you could ever want or need. Level 5, Plaza Singapura, 68 Orchard Road. spotlight.com.sg

TOYS R US

Pick up your costumes, masks, makeup and other props here. Various locations, including Tampines Mall, VivoCity and Paragon. toysrus.com.sg

GROOVY GIFTS

This shop sells plenty of decorative fare, from skulls to spiders and frogs. But best of all are the tricks and gags on offer, including prank tape, fangs, fart bombs, squirt rings and cockroaches. #02-03 Cluny Court, 501 Bukit Timah Road. 6875 0430 | groovygifts.com.sg

PARTY CITY

The outlets in both Holland Village and Raffles City stock everything you could need for a spooky party, from table covers, cups and plates to plenty of tricks. partycity.sg

THE BEST EVENTS

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS – HALLOWEEN HORROR NIGHTS 4

The Minister of Evil promises to unleash a reign of terror and scare innocent bystanders – be prepared for a frightening night. 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 31 October and 1 November. 7.30pm to 1.30am. halloweenhorrornights.com.sg

SENTOSA SPOOKTACULAR

Who dares to walk the five dark and creepy trails, where tortured creatures come out to play? 19, 25, 26, 31 October and 1, 2 November. 7pm to 11pm. Fort Siloso, Sentosa. spooktacular.com.sg

RACE THE DEAD

Brace yourself for a 3.2km night walk with the dead (scary actors, actually) waiting at every turn. 31 October, 5pm to 11pm. Sentosa Island. Join the after-party at Zouk until 4am. Registration essential. racethedead.sg

ZOMBIE ALERT

The fame of the original zombie run, started in the US, has spread, with people all over Asia now vying to run through a zombie-infested route laced with demanding obstacles. 25 October. West Coast Park, from 12 noon to 8pm. runforyourlives.asia/sg



WOODLAND THRILLS

Forest Adventure opens at night for a special Halloween experience, complete with scary creatures playing trick or treat. Head torch supplied. Limited to 30 participants. 25 October, 6.45pm. Bedok Reservoir Park. \$50. Booking essential. Call 8100 7420 or email info@forestadventure.com.sg.

HALLOWEEN AT CLARKE QUAY

Find haunted bars, freakishly outrageous themed parties, wandering ghouls and spine-tingling concoctions, as Clarke Quay hosts another Halloween. Come in costume for free club entry, discount drinks and prizes. 31 October. 10pm till late. Clarke Quay Central Fountain Square. Free. clarkequay.com.sg



FRIGHT NIGHT

Don a costume for a night of food, fun and fright at The American Club. 31 October, 7pm to 10pm. For members and guests. Reservations call 6737 3411 or email concierge@amclub.org.sg.

THE BEST DINNERS

WHODUNIT

White Rabbit plays homage to the greatest crooks, criminals, investigators and spies. Come dressed as Sherlock Holmes, James Bond, Dick Tracy, Columbo, Magnum P.I., Austin Powers, the CSI team or even the whacky Scooby Doo gang. 25 October. 39C Harding Road.



6473 9965 | thewhiterabbit.com.sg



DINNER TO DIE FOR

Restaurant St Pierre hosts a deliciously macabre evening with a nine-course menu of dishes inspired by psychopathic cannibal Hannibal Lecter. Paired with Italian wines. 31 October, 7.30pm. \$168. 31 Ocean Way, #01-15 Quayside Isle.

6438 0887 | saintpierre.com.sg

Asia's Largest Pre-School spanning 200,000 sq ft

EtonHouse sets new standards in early years environment design. The first IB (International Baccalaureate) pre-school in Singapore has moved to its new campus that offers an innovative and high quality environment with a beautiful blend of indoor and outdoor spaces.

Designed by specialists in early childhood, the environment is thoughtfully considered to ensure that our community of learners are given the opportunity to engage with a diverse range of materials and build meaningful relationships with each other. The school offers the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) for children from 18 months to 6 years of age.

EtonHouse

Open House

25th October • 10am – 3pm

RSVP: 6252 3322

- Highly qualified international and local educators
- Renowned bilingual Mandarin programme
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Artist impression

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NOTICEBOARD

Births, engagements and weddings plus items for sale

FAMILY NEWS



Phoebe Eleanor Bo Ashworth arrived on 18 April to the happiness of parents Fay and Stuart, and big brother Harry Edgar Apollo.



Karino Gauthier and Mike Wright were delighted to welcome their son, Henry Wright, born on 10 May.



Sophie Elise Michelle was born on 9 June, to excited first-time parents Kim and Simon Berber.



Proud parents Judy Ong and Keng Song Ng welcomed daughter Zann on 22 June.



JUST HAD A BABY? NEWLY MARRIED? RECENTLY ENGAGED?



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



CONGRATULATIONS

All readers whose babies are featured on this page will receive a photography session with award winning Littleones Photography. Kate & Emily, plus a complimentary framed image worth \$52 (www.littleonesphotography.com). Winners will also receive an ABC derm hamper from Laboratoire Dermatologique Bioderma, worth \$85.

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littleones
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CLASSIFIEDS

Harley Davidson Softail Heritage 2009

Selling this awesome piece of Milwaukee iron with plenty of accessories. It's LTA-approved, with Jekyll and Hyde pipes and saddlebags. Price on request.



Interested? Email joachim@steffenfamily.com

Whitewashed cupboard

Good quality, strong cupboard from the Netherlands for sale, with a lot of space for clothes and toys. There's a small dent on top of the cupboard, but this can be fixed with a little white paint. Matching bookshelf also for sale. Asking \$140 for the cupboard and \$50 for the shelf.



Interested? Email maaikevanooststroom@hotmail.com

Gently used hold-all

Dark blue, small enough for hand luggage yet large enough to hold a laptop and all you need for a day trip. Strong over-the-shoulder strap and back zip so it can fit over the handle of a suitcase and be pulled along. Almost-as-new condition. Collect in Holland Village. Asking \$30 or nearest offer.



Interested? Email edwina.thomas.987@gmail.com

L'Equip juicer



L'Equip 480-watt mini-juicer for sale. Universal motor generates speeds of up to 10,000 RPM for fast, efficient results. The patented pulp-ejection system eliminates clogging, and it has a food chute with pusher, high-quality stainless-steel bowl, blade, basket and dispensing spout.

Interested? Email wells135@gmail.com

Expat leaving sale

Items for sale include a black lacquered Chinese wedding cabinet (\$800), synthetic wicker two-seater swing pod with green cushion (\$350), faux leather club chair from John Erdos (\$200), and plenty of plants from \$20 to \$50. All in good condition; self-collection from Sembawang.



Interested? Email audreywang74@gmail.com

For more, go to www.expatliving.sg and click Noticeboard.

To post an ad, email your text and a photograph if available to noticeboard@expatliving.sg. It's free!

Looking for a job? Check our new online listings, www.expatliving.sg/all_joblistings



New Opening

Bath & Body Works' first Orchard Road store, at Takashimaya Shopping Centre, opened in August with a multitude of dreamy scents. This is the American brand's second store in Singapore; the first is located at Marina Bay Sands.



Happy Runners

With no official race winner, Color Runners only had two simple rules to follow – wear white and get bright. Ranging in age from two to 80 years, about 18,000 runners completed the 5km Color Run on Sentosa. Dubbed “the happiest 5km on the planet”, the race's Singapore incarnation boasted the largest number of participants in Southeast Asia.



Kicking It

The Sarah-Grace Sarcoma Foundation's Kick Sarcoma health initiative brought the community together to create awareness of this deadly cancer in Singapore. A night of music, “Classically Kick Sarcoma”, at the official residence of the Australian High Commission, featured the cream of Singapore's young award-winning classical musicians.



SOAR



PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

Quadcopters, land-mine detectors, retro-arcade games, and brick films. Students at Singapore American School don't have to wait until college to dream, design, program, and build prototypes. They can do it now thanks to innovative program offerings ranging from Little Engineers for kindergartners to Robotics Science for high schoolers. At SAS, students develop the skills they need to prepare for the future and soar.



International Competition

Robotics competitions take our students to Hong Kong, Taiwan, Canada, and the USA. Competition isn't just for sport; students learn how to meet deadlines, work under pressure, and never give up.



Improving Lives

The SAS Robotics Club added service to their mandate, teaching Cambodian children at a foundation school how to make robots and prepare for a competition in Singapore.

WWW.SAS.EDU.SG

Singapore American School CPE Registration Number: 196400340R Registration Period: 22 June 2011 to 21 June 2017



SINGAPORE AMERICAN SCHOOL



Charity Sale

The annual Stork's Nest Family Sale raised \$6,250 from sales of new and nearly new baby- and child-related items. Organised by the team from the Facebook parenting support group, Stork's Nest Singapore, it raised funds for the StarPALS charity that supports children with life-limiting conditions.

Photos by Amber at Click-oh! Photography





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Siglap : 689 East Coast Road S(459056) Tel : 6243 1978



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EMAIL : info@jhkim-singapore.com

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CPE Registration No: 200607850N Validity Date: 26 Apr 2011 - 25 Apr 2015

Perfect Shot

More than just happy snappers, these four professional photographers nominate their favourite images for us, and explain how they achieved the perfect shot.



BAOBAB PHOTOGRAPHY SCHOOL

Photographer: Karen Lucas

This was taken during last year's photography tour to the Angkor temples around Siem Reap and the nearby village communities. We'd just arrived and were the only visitors at Preah Khan, a fabulous temple to explore and photograph at dawn, and we noticed the pretty sunrise over the surrounding countryside. After I explained which technical settings to use to capture the scene, I noticed that all the photographers were lined up and realised they'd make a great silhouette. I asked them to turn sideways and *voilà!* – a great souvenir for everyone.

A low ISO of 320 helped to ensure great image quality and a wide aperture of f4 blurred the background. I underexposed by -2 stops to make the silhouettes darker and added a Cloudy White Balance to boost the yellows and oranges of the sky. For the finishing touch, I increased contrast and vibrancy in Lightroom.

Over the course of nine trips in the past seven years, I've fallen in love with Cambodia, its incredible temples and amazing people. Sharing this special place with a great group of people who love to travel and love to take photos is the highlight of my year, and this photo is a lovely reminder of how photographing in Cambodia is full of happy surprises and great moments.

We teach a range of photography classes for all levels and offer yearly photography tours to Myanmar, Bhutan and Cambodia. When I'm teaching, especially on a tour, I spend most of my time helping with technical settings, explaining how to best use the available light and demonstrating how to get more creative with shots. We make a final photo book with everyone's best shots after the tour!

6402 3802 | baobabphoto.com/school

SEALEY BRANDT PHOTOGRAPHY

This image was taken at my studio. I was commissioned by a client to produce an acting portfolio for her daughter and this is just one out of the series that I love.

My speciality is shooting with black-and-white film, as the grain in negative film is beautiful – very different to digital. All my prints are printed in Australia at my father's old lab. I have samples of both printing methods to show clients prior to the shoot so that they can decide which they prefer.

With 30 years of experience, I never need to re-touch and rarely need to crop any of my images as I get the shots I want in the camera every time. In saying that, I do offer re-touching services when digital format is chosen, if that's what a client wants or needs. If you make a person feel great in front of the camera, though, the image will always be good, as their beauty comes out and their personality shines.

This image is one of my favourites. I love the in-between moment and how her strength is portrayed. It makes me stop and look at it every time. This is typical of my photographic work. I have been photographing people for over 30 years, and, most importantly, families and children for 15 years. I also love to travel to unusual places, photographing the landscapes and the people, and the way they live. Images from Mongolia that I shot last year document the vast lands of that country and were recently shown at a photo fair in Milan, Italy. I'm also exhibiting at the Milan Image and Design Art Fair at Singapore's Marina Bay Sands from 24 to 26 October.

9005 3487 | sealeybrandt.com



MICHAEL GRONOW PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographer: Michael Gronow

“This is a photo of my son, James, taken in the studio at the end of last year. I'm constantly trying out new poses or lighting setups and James is often a good test subject (after the odd bribe or two!).

I use up to four lights when taking portraits of children. For this photo, I used two lights in a slightly unusual setup. James is sitting on a chair with a black wall close behind him. The main light is a large soft-box, very close to James and to the right of the camera. On the left of James (out of shot) is a large, black foam-board to strengthen the shadows on that side of his face. Another light is placed behind this foam-board, and angled so that it bounces a small amount of light off the black wall and back onto the very right of James' face. This gives the portrait a much more three-dimensional look. The photo was converted into black-and-white using Photoshop.

I have a few tricks up my sleeve to get natural smiles out of children, and this shot really encapsulates James' personality, which is why it is one of my favourites.

It is typical of the type of photographs of children and families taken at the studio. The other side to my business is specialist makeover photography for women, as well as headshots and business portraits.

9366 5972 | gronowphotography.com



LITTLEONES PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographers: Kate & Emily

“This image, taken in Batu Batu, Malaysia, was commissioned by a client who was travelling from the UK to celebrate her 30th birthday. The two children were initially not keen to sit on the sand as it got between their toes, but we soon got them comfy on a big soft beach towel and had snacks at the ready!

We waited until the end of the day to get the soft sunset light. Working with a zoom lens we created the beautiful 'bokeh' effect in the background. There was very minimal post-production work, only removing a few grains of sand.

Emily and I are a sister team and both love what we do. I know only too well how fast time flies and small people turn into big people, and I treasure my own children's baby photographs.

We are experienced in working with children and spend time getting to know the family so everyone is comfortable before the shoot. This ensures we get the natural photographs we are known and loved for.

Our passion and talent is taking real, beautiful and timeless images for families to keep and treasure forever. We specialise in maternity, newborn, children and family photography, whether it be classic studio images or capturing the essence of Singapore on location.

6440 7567 | littleonesphotography.com



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Indicators for choosing a Quality International School

Jacqueline McNalty, Head of Early Years and PYP Coordinator at GEMS World Academy (Singapore), runs through seven of the key indicators for choosing a quality international school.

The quality of your child's education will impact his or her future, so it's important that you choose schools wisely – you'll never regret the time you invested in making the right decision. Educational research has shown that high-performing schools have a number of common characteristics.

1. AN EXPERT TEACHING TEAM

Quality teachers and teaching are by far the most salient influence on student outcomes, regardless of gender or background; this is backed up by local and international evidence-based research. GEMS World Academy (Singapore) places a high priority on ensuring that classroom teachers identify and address the learning needs of individual students and tailor classroom activities to levels of readiness and need. Our quality educators have high levels of professional accountability, taking personal and collective responsibility for improving their students' learning and their own teaching methods.

2. A CLEAR AND SHARED FOCUS

Effective schools have a clear, shared mission and vision resulting from common beliefs and values; everyone knows where they are going and why. The focus is on a consistent, positive direction for all involved. GEMS World Academy (Singapore) mission is to develop inquiring, reflective and caring learners who have the knowledge, skills and character to take action to create a better, more peaceful world. Supported by highly qualified staff in world-class facilities, our diverse international community is encouraged to develop intercultural understanding and respect.

3. HIGH STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Effective schools are driven by a deep belief that every student is capable of inclusive learning. GEMS World Academy (Singapore) provides a learning environment that is safe, respectful, tolerant and inclusive, and that promotes intellectual rigour. Students in GEMS schools are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study, across the arts, sports and academics. Children in GEMS schools continue to perform up to 14% above international averages.

4. EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

School leadership can have a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Effective leaders create cultures of high expectations, provide clarity about what teachers are to teach and students are to learn, establish strong professional learning communities and lead ongoing efforts to improve teaching practices.

5. QUALITY CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENTS

Research reinforces the relationship between a quality curriculum and strong student outcomes. GEMS schools have a coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that ensures consistent teaching and learning expectations and a clear reference for monitoring learning across the grade levels. The curriculum offered at GEMS World Academy (Singapore) is a rigorous course of study that focuses on holistic excellence.

GEMS Education, a leading K-12 private school operator worldwide, has just opened its first GEMS World Academy (GWA) in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Initial enrolments include Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 5 (ages three to 11); in the future, the school will continue to Grade 12. Instruction is in English; other languages taught are Mandarin and Spanish. The school is currently applying for candidacy approval to become a full IB school.

6. FREQUENT MONITORING OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

High-performing schools have procedures in place to encourage a school-wide, shared responsibility for student learning and success, and to encourage the development of a culture of continuous professional improvement that includes classroom-based learning, mentoring and coaching arrangements. A high priority is given to the school-wide analysis and discussion of systematically collected data on student outcomes. Teaching is adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress. Assessment results are used to improve instructional programmes.

7. HIGH LEVEL OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

High-performing schools actively seek ways to enhance student learning and wellbeing by partnering with parents, training institutions, local businesses and community organisations. At GEMS World Academy (Singapore), parents and families are recognised as integral members of the school community and partners in their children's education. The GEMS "3-a-Day" Parent Engagement Program encourages parents to focus on student learning through daily discussions and sharing. Through the GEMS Learning Gateway (GLG), parents have access to information about their child's progress, and digital portfolios of learning are available to share with families.

Avondale's New Leader

Joining **Avondale Grammar School** this month as Principal is HELENA SOBULIS. She makes the move to Singapore after nine years as Vice-Principal at Walford Anglican School for Girls, a leading independent school in South Australia.

Tell us about your motivation to move to Singapore. Will you be moving with family?

I've always found Singapore to be an exciting and vibrant city with a rich cultural diversity that makes it a microcosm of the world. However, the main attraction for the move is Avondale Grammar School. It embodies all the values that I hold dear as an educator, with each child being valued and respected as an individual. My husband Adrian, who also enjoys Singapore, works in the resources industry in Queensland and will regularly commute between Brisbane and here.

Is it a big change of pace from Adelaide?

Adelaide is not as quiet as it first may seem, although rush hour is certainly not the same as rush hour in Singapore! However, having also lived in Houston, Texas, I am used to fast-paced city living as well.

Have you worked in Asia before?

I'm fortunate to have travelled extensively in Asia. Representing the Council of International Schools, I visited Hong Kong and Vietnam as part of the school accreditation programme. I travelled regularly to Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei to meet with students who were interested in studying in Australia, and I accompanied a student group on a fascinating three-week tour of China.

Tell us about your career background in Australia.

I've had the good fortune to work in leading independent schools in Australia, with responsibility for the strategic and operational aspects of the schools as well as curriculum development. I've also played key advisory roles in education at State and National levels, and I keep abreast of best practice in school leadership through my membership of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders.

What educational practices do you plan to implement?

I'm passionate about personal development for all staff. Our goal at Avondale Grammar School is to achieve and maintain world-leading education performance. Our aim is to stay amongst Australia's leading schools so that we match the very best educational standards.

Avondale attracts teachers of the highest quality and their teaching practice is the greatest force for achieving our goal. We place tremendous emphasis on supporting our teaching staff to build on the strong foundations for continuing outstanding student performance.

We will continue to instil in our students excellent communication skills, strong literacy, numeracy and academic skills and a passion for learning.



What do you do in your spare time?

As an avid fan of the arts, particularly the performing arts, I regularly attended cultural festivals in Adelaide and plan to take advantage of the rich cultural life of Singapore. I'm currently learning to play the piano, but it's rather a slow process! I strive to stay fit with light gym work and Pilates classes. The remainder of my spare time is spent writing my doctoral thesis about cross-cultural childhood experiences, which I hope to complete while living here.

Singapore is renowned for its food. Do you like eating out?

Yes, much more than cooking! I love seafood; black pepper crab is one of my favourite dishes – I've been known to stop over in Singapore on my way to Europe just to order it! And I look forward to sampling different international cuisines, especially while dining al fresco in balmy Singapore evenings. 🍴

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MOVING BLUES

Are you sure your kids are happy?

Undertaking an international move is a necessity for many families – especially when a parent gets an offer they can't refuse. Although stressful, it's often a big adventure for the grownups and a chance for a fresh start. Unfortunately, instead of our kids being equally enthusiastic, some of them have to be dragged kicking and screaming across the globe. What should one do in these cases? We spoke with **Dover Court Preparatory School's** Director of Educational Services, DR MAUREEN ROACH, and Regional Commercial Manager, RICHARD DAVIES, to find out what types of challenges our kids might face.

Do children of different ages cope differently?

Maureen: Yes, they do, and it's important for schools to watch out for the signs. Some children become quiet and withdrawn, others tearful; sometimes behavioural difficulties are displayed; work standards can temporarily decline; others have frequent stomach aches, headaches and other minor symptoms that cannot be explained medically.

Richard: It's interesting; it seems to be the 12- to 15-year-olds who suffer most, because at that age they're developing strong friendship groups. In my experience of moving around to each of our schools, they're always located in really cool cities with lots to do, so the students generally settle in quickly.

The new curriculum and the grade or year that the child is going into can also cause disruption. Lots of parents think that if they're sending their kids to a British school, it'll be the same as the one

back home. While there are going to be consistencies, the curriculum and topics they study can be vastly different. That can cause problems in the upper years, especially if you're a student moving school halfway through your GCSEs, as you may not have the same choices. It's important, first and foremost, to understand the curriculum.

What about age differences within each class?

Richard: In an international context, age difference in class is not awkward or unusual for kids. Moving from the US curriculum to the British is a great example, because the British curriculum is a 13-year curriculum and the US one is a 12-grade curriculum. The equivalent of the US Grade 2 is Year 3 in the British system. So when an American family moves to the British system their child should not go from Grade 2 to Year 2. It can cause a bit of confusion.

Different countries also start term at different times of year, don't they?

Richard: Yes, most Australian schools start in January and finish in December. That can cause issues in terms of equivalency and age-appropriateness. The British schools are based on age-appropriateness and they're very clear about what level a child should be performing at, according to their age. Here we assess the child to see if they're capable of being in their age-appropriate year, because our priority is to try to put children of the same age together. If we find that the child has been in the grade below and it's not the right thing to do, then we'll put them in the year below – we do that after complete consultation with the parents, though.



10 WAYS DOVER COURT HELPS NEW CHILDREN ASSIMILATE

"We think it's important for all children to feel part of the school from the word go," says Maureen. Dover Court welcomes new students in myriad ways, including the following:

1. The class teacher meets every child on an individual basis the day before school begins.
2. For the first week of term, staff form a welcome committee on the front steps to greet all children and take them individually to their classrooms.
3. Thereafter, they are welcomed by name each morning at the school entrance. If they still require it, they are accompanied to their room, or if they are more independent they are "buddied" with a friend.
4. Each new child is linked up with a buddy who has been in the school for some time and who knows its routines.
5. With younger children, issues of new friends, leaving behind other friends, grandparents, pets, and so on are addressed in Circle Time.
6. At playtime, the school council members set up play areas, approach children who may be alone or looking sad, and invite them to play.
7. At Upper Junior and Senior levels, topics of friendship, loss, grief and change are addressed through PSHE at tutor group time.
8. The entire Senior Department is taken to a residential camp within the first few weeks, where sessions on team building and facilitating friendships are held.
9. If children present themselves regularly at the nurse's station with headaches, stomach ache or other concerns, this is carefully monitored; the principal will chat with the child about his or her feelings about the new school, life in Singapore, missing friends, grandparents, pets, and so on.
10. Parents are alerted as sometimes these feelings may not be manifested or noticed.

Maureen's tips for parents

- Discuss with your children the things that will be similar to home in the new location, and those that may be different.
- Assure them that the people they are leaving behind will be there when they return to their home country.
- Remind them that, through email, Skype and other online platforms, they will be able to keep contact with friends and family, talking to them regularly and seeing them onscreen.
- Let them know if grandparents may be able come over to visit them on holiday, and talk about the fun of acting as a guide to their visitors in the new country. 🇸🇮

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Charlie Kentish with his classmates at Upper East Coast

White Lodge Upper East Coast celebrating Book Week

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Skills for a SECURE FUTURE

With so many deserving charities calling out for help, it's inspiring to hear about an Indian-based organisation determined to self-fund its initiatives through the talents of the very people it aims to help.

By Katie Roberts

Ladli is an outreach programme of i-India, an NGO established in 1993 that turns around the lives of impoverished and severely disadvantaged children who would otherwise have little chance of getting ahead. Working on a shoestring, Ladli is determined not to rely on charity, but rather to prove it can be a viable business, while training, paying and equipping participants for a bright future.

Ladli started out small, selling the jewellery and handicrafts made by its participants at fairs and exhibitions. But through support in Singapore and Norway, it has expanded to the point where it now produces clothing and jewellery under contract for retail and wholesale companies.

Filling retail and wholesale orders not only reaps financial benefits, it achieves Ladli's aim of empowering and educating the young adults and mothers at four vocational training centres in and around Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan. As well as opportunities to earn a fair wage, participants have access to formal education, counselling and medical care. It's a win-win situation for some of India's incredibly poor, marginalised young people who started with nothing.



Ninety-five percent of participants attend regular schools; some have gone on to colleges to study nursing, textile design and information technology

KARIN SCHULTE is a founding member of Street Child Project (SCP) in Singapore, a society that raises awareness of i-India and Ladli. Now a voluntary adviser to Ladli and SCP, Karin answered our questions about the great work being done.

Tell us how Ladli works.

The alternatives for the street youth and children who attend Ladli are begging, child labour – even prostitution. At Ladli, however, they learn to design jewellery, garments and handicrafts – all valuable skills in Jaipur. The Ladli environment is fun, safe and relaxed.

As many as 95 percent of participants attend regular schools, and some have gone on to colleges to study nursing, textile design and information technology. At the two boys' centres, they learn sewing and fabric printing, while the focus of the two girls centres is on jewellery-making. Jaipur is famous for its semi-precious gems.

Regardless of their ability and output, everyone enrolled at Ladli receives regular, fair incentives that are saved into individual bank accounts; plus, they get advice on good saving practices and wise financial habits. The concept of the Ladli programme is to empower participants through skill enhancement and financial security, with a taste of independence and ownership.

Shocking factory fires in Bangladesh last year turned the world's attention to the inhumane conditions in which many consumer products are made. They underlined the importance of ethical sourcing. Tell us, can consumers purchase from Ladli with confidence?

Some international clothing companies manufacture in countries with very low labour costs, where price pressures are

Spotlight on Ladli

- Enrolment: 200
- Annual budget: \$85,000, approximately 75 to 80 percent of which is generated from sales, exhibitions and fundraising events
- Staff employed: 13
- 95 percent of participants receive formal education in school and colleges, as do their children
- 70 percent live in i-India's shelter homes for orphaned and homeless children
- 40 percent of participants have saved up to \$2,000 in personal bank accounts
- After receiving basic financial literacy education, the female groups at Ladli now have ATM cards

ladli.org



the main driver of inhumane working conditions, low pay and long working hours.

Ladli is not a production or manufacturing unit; rather, it's a social enterprise that promotes ownership, community, and a friendly working and learning environment. Participants receive fair incentives and profit shares; social workers are on hand for mentoring, education, and imparting life skills; meals, health checkups, recreation and entrepreneurial support are provided. As owners themselves, participants

share the revenue, in the form of funding for education, which benefits their overall development, improves living standards and, importantly, extends the programme to reach other disadvantaged youth and women.

Over the past nine years, the organisation has established a project for domestic and overseas visitors and volunteers who want to engage in ethical tourism and fair trade, and to understand its positive and innovative approaches to the creation of social justice. Anyone interested in getting involved can email me at **ks@karinschulte.com**.



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66 The concept of the Ladli programme is to empower participants through skill enhancement and financial security, with a taste of independence and ownership

Tell us about some Ladli success stories.

Mahaveer (22) joined Ladli a number of years ago and studied tailoring. His first contact with i-India was via its street school programme. He belongs to a nomadic community whose main occupation is working on construction sites or begging. Now working full time at Ladli teaching and training new students, Mahaveer's skills provide him with a regular income that supports his family. Importantly, he has his own bank account and savings programme.



Tulsi (22) joined Ladli when she and her three siblings lost their parents. Through her work, she has been able to save money and is now studying nursing. She recently married a man who works with i-India's Child Helpline.

Hailing from one of the poorest slum areas of Jaipur, **Santosh** (21) has been involved with Ladli and i-India since 2000. She lost her parents in a road accident and was brought up by her elderly grandmother. Childhood polio and lack of proper medical treatment relegated her to walking with crutches. Unable to perform tasks on her own, she was plagued by guilt and distress at being a liability for her family. Under Ladli's outreach initiatives, Santosh received counselling and gained self-confidence by learning skills in jewellery-making and handicrafts. Now working at Ladli, her regular income and savings have allowed her to assist her poor family with daily food and health care, and she is saving money to invest in a secure future.



Where can we buy Ladli-produced products here?

Ladli is currently working with the brands Baliza, Stones That Rock and Tamarind Living. It hopes to expand the number of its clients, both here in Singapore and in other countries, to ensure Ladli's self-sufficiency. This is a unique way for the NGO and its participants to create value, and, they hope, secure income for reinvestment.

Baliza (balizapartners.com)

available at Simone Irani Boutique

Stones That Rock (stonesthatrock.com)

Tamarind Living

available online at www.etsy.com/shop/tamarindliving

Some popular items can be bought direct from **Ladli** at www.ladli.org.

The launch of Ladli


Ladli was started by i-India and operates as a social enterprise. i-India is a non-profit NGO based in Jaipur. It started in 1993 and now reaches approximately 4,000 children daily through its street schools programme, residential homes, child helpline and vocational centres such as Ladli. There are 130 local staff members on modest salaries; over 95 percent of donated funds are dedicated to its programmes. The Street Child Project has been raising awareness for i-India and Ladli for a number of years now.

streetchildproject.com

i-indiaonline.com



Find out more

Ever wondered how much the workers that sew those ridiculously cheap T-shirts available in the big clothing retail stores get paid for their efforts? Or how sequined garments can be so cheap, despite the intricate work required to create them? Consumers looking for answers about where products are made, and under what conditions, can check online to see if a particular company has an ethical sourcing policy. Alternatively, visit one of the many independent websites that help recommend companies that are doing the right thing; these include goodforus.info, goodguide.com, ethicalconsumer.org and csrhub.com. 



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Volunteer for Life

– at home with Rosanne Woodmansee



Australian ROSANNE WOODMANSEE's initial interest in Singapore's culture, history and way of life became a passion, and then a job, and in due course her own relocation support business – Five Foot Way Connections. And it all started with volunteering, as **Verne Maree** discovers.

The Woodmansees invested in this two-level Eastwood penthouse about seven years ago, Rosanne tells me. We're chatting over a cup of vanilla tea in the living room, sitting on 1930s lounge furniture that came from the antiques store at 51 Craig Road. You may have seen the sign above its door that famously warns: "We buy junk and sell antiques. Some fools buy and some fools sell."

Fortunately, husband Steve shares her taste for old and eclectic objects, and many of the *objets d'art* and knickknacks on the walls and elsewhere

were picked up during his travels in the region. It was Steve's career that brought the family from Sydney to Southeast Asia, first to Penang in 2001 and then to Singapore in 2005.

"I loved Penang," says Rosanne. "I found it liberating. I'd never in my life imagined myself being so self-sufficient in a strange culture. As I wasn't allowed to work there, and the children were still fairly young – 13, 11 and 4 – I joined the International Women's Association (IWA) and made the most of my newfound free time."

Gina (now 16), the youngest of three daughters, is the only one left at home.

Fashion designer Emily (25) lives and works in Melbourne, while Laura (23) is pursuing her art studies in Berlin.

"Looking back," Rosanne reflects, "I realise how many doors volunteering has opened for me. Starting in Malaysia – and even back in my children's preschools in Australia – it has allowed me to meet so many different kinds of people that I would never have had the chance to meet otherwise. Whatever you do tends to open new doors. Editing the monthly IWA newsletter, for example, prompted me to join writers' groups when I came to Singapore."



How easily did you adjust to Singapore?

I took someone's advice to join two organisations: the ANZA writers' group and the Prime Time professional women's association. As an active member of the ANZA group for over four years, I made a number of good friends. And through them, I was introduced to the Friends of the Museums (FOM) and its writers' group.

I'll admit, it took me a year to feel fully at home in Singapore, but at FOM I again found the kind of multicultural, multiracial and diverse group I'd enjoyed mixing with in Penang. At first, I resisted doing the docent (guide) programme, because I didn't like speaking in public, but Agnes Gros convinced me to do it, if only to help me understand what I was seeing during my travels in the region. She was quite right, as I discovered later, when she and a couple of others visited Penang with me, to help me set up an FOM study tour there. They explained to me things I'd been looking at for years but never understood.

Soon after that, I joined the 14-week docent programme for the Peranakan Museum in Armenian Street and became a volunteer guide. That experience has been one of my great joys, really, as have the friendships that have sprung from it.

Do you still volunteer as a guide?

Since 2010, I've been a volunteer guide for the Preservation of Monuments and Sites Board – at the Istana on open days, in Telok Ayer Street and in Phillip Street; and now that Lau Pa Sat has re-opened after restoration I take walking tours there, too.

They're simply wonderful sites, each with a fascinating story. Knowing how they came to be, who designed them and who the communities were that used them – and being able to share all this knowledge – makes me feel more connected with Singapore, and less like a transitory guest.

What led to your setting up Five Foot Way Connections in 2011?

My business is aimed at helping newly arrived expats settle into Singapore, so it was a natural progression from my work



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as the Australian High Commission's community liaison officer. In that role, I had supported the diplomats and their families, advising them on practical matters such as schooling, how to make the most of the many social opportunities here, arranging exploratory walks and helping them to settle in.

Tell us more about your work.

As a cross-cultural and daily living training consultant, I provide many of the services I used to provide to the Australian diplomats and their families.

Before my clients even get here, I need to assess their family situation to see where they're most likely to need help. For some, it's schooling; and for a jet-lagged parent who is visiting for a couple of days just to look at schools, it's a boon to have someone like me drive them around, put what they hear and see into a context that they will understand, even help to interpret a strong accent.

Talking about the hiring of a helper can be a big conversation. I often recommend a pre-arrival teleconference on the practical and personal aspects of this decision.

You probably know as much as anyone about schooling in Singapore. How did that happen?

Again, part of my Australian High Commission role was to develop and maintain a schools register. That opened the way for me to write the chapter on education for the comprehensive Living in Singapore guide (published every two years by the American Association): in 2010, in 2012 and for the recently published 2014 edition.


Its focus changes over time, as circumstances here change. The latest edition, for example, has a new section on local school education for expat children, much more information on special needs education and support, and also a section on training and empowerment courses for helpers.



What is your best advice to newcomers?

Join an organisation! Don't just rely on your or your working partner's business colleagues, or on the school network, for friends and activities. Have something for yourself, something that excites you and that you could become passionate about.

Connect with like-minded people, ones you can call on when the going gets tough. Practice and, if necessary, relearn the skill of making friends. You may have lost it, especially if you've lived for many years in the same community, surrounded by family and your old school friends.

Finally, become a volunteer – that's the *kaya* on the toast! 

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RENTING A BOAT OR YACHT IN SINGAPORE

By Ashley Rogers and Rachael Wheeler

It might not be the first thing that comes to mind after a busy week in the city, but renting a boat in Singapore is surprisingly easy. Getting a bunch of pals together and throwing a party on board is one cracking (and affordable) way to spend a Saturday afternoon, weaving through the ships and enjoying Sentosa's fireworks as the sun comes down.

There are also companies that whisk you away from Singapore and around other islands for a few days; imagine jumping aboard on a Friday evening and waking up off the coast of Malaysia on Saturday morning. Fancy that? Thought you might! Check out the following shortlist of rental companies, below, and what to expect in terms of crews, catering, equipment and more.

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STERN: Rear of the boat (typically where the motor is located)

BOW: Front of the boat (where the anchor is)

SPINNAKER: A special type of sail, usually large and colourful, for sailing downwind

BOOM: The pole that attaches perpendicular to the mast – but mind your head, it swings in the breeze **!**

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With this meeting, Liam learned the reality of war and that among his schoolmates is a real-life survivor and hero. He saw that attitude triumphs over adversity, and is now more inspired to help others in any way he can. Liam's met another hero at UWCSEA—himself.

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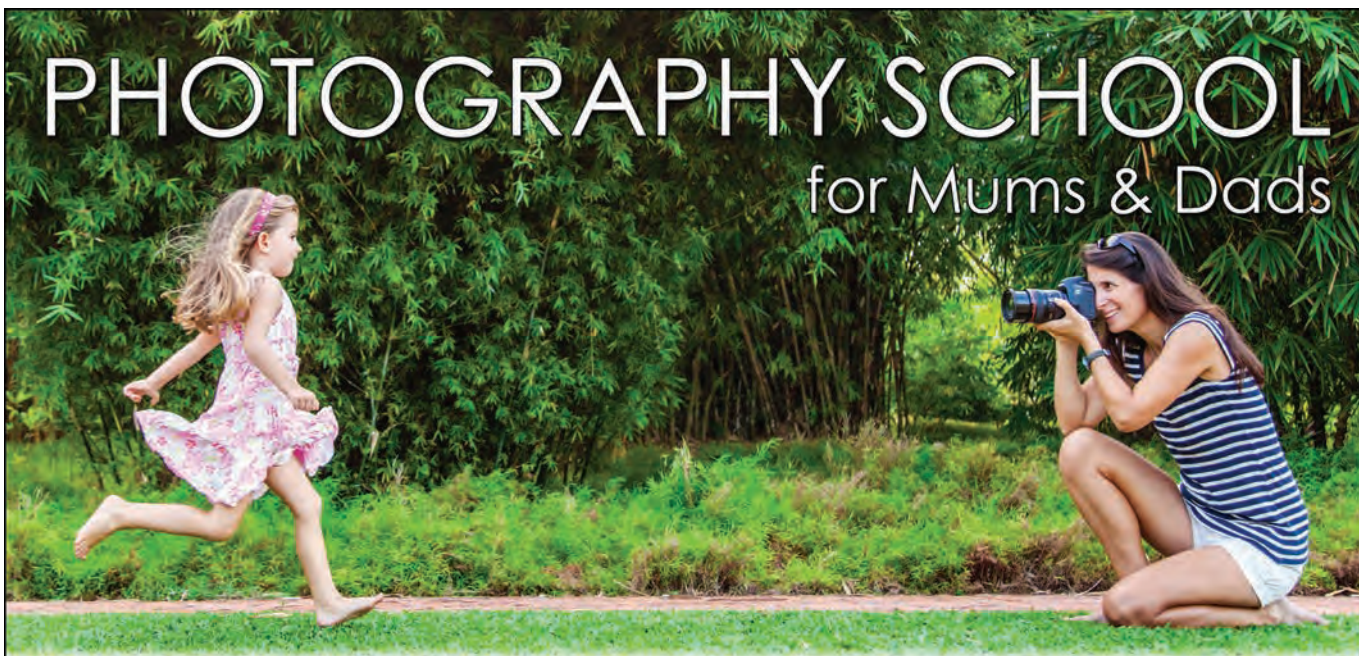
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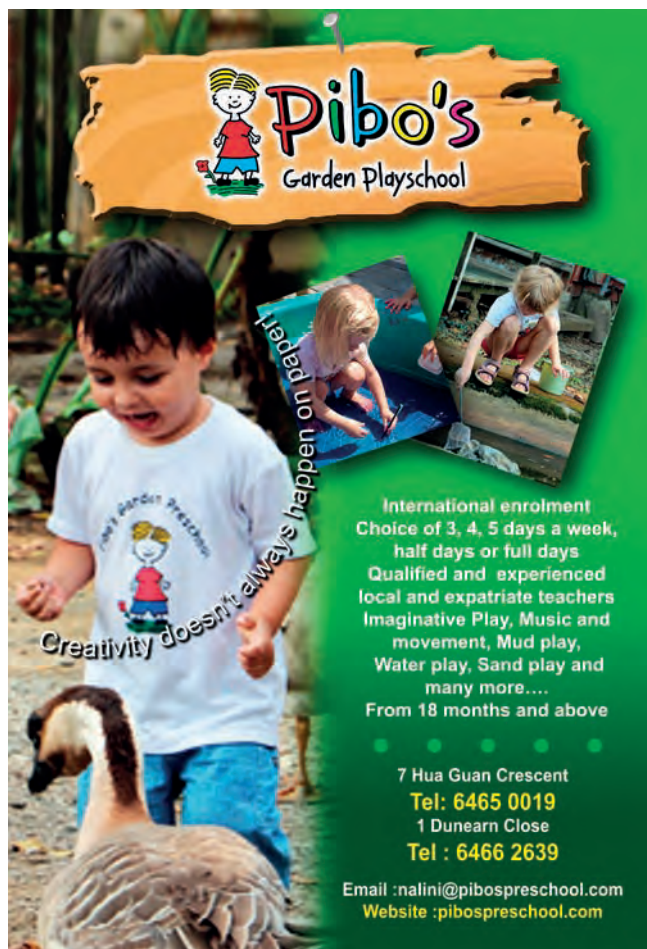
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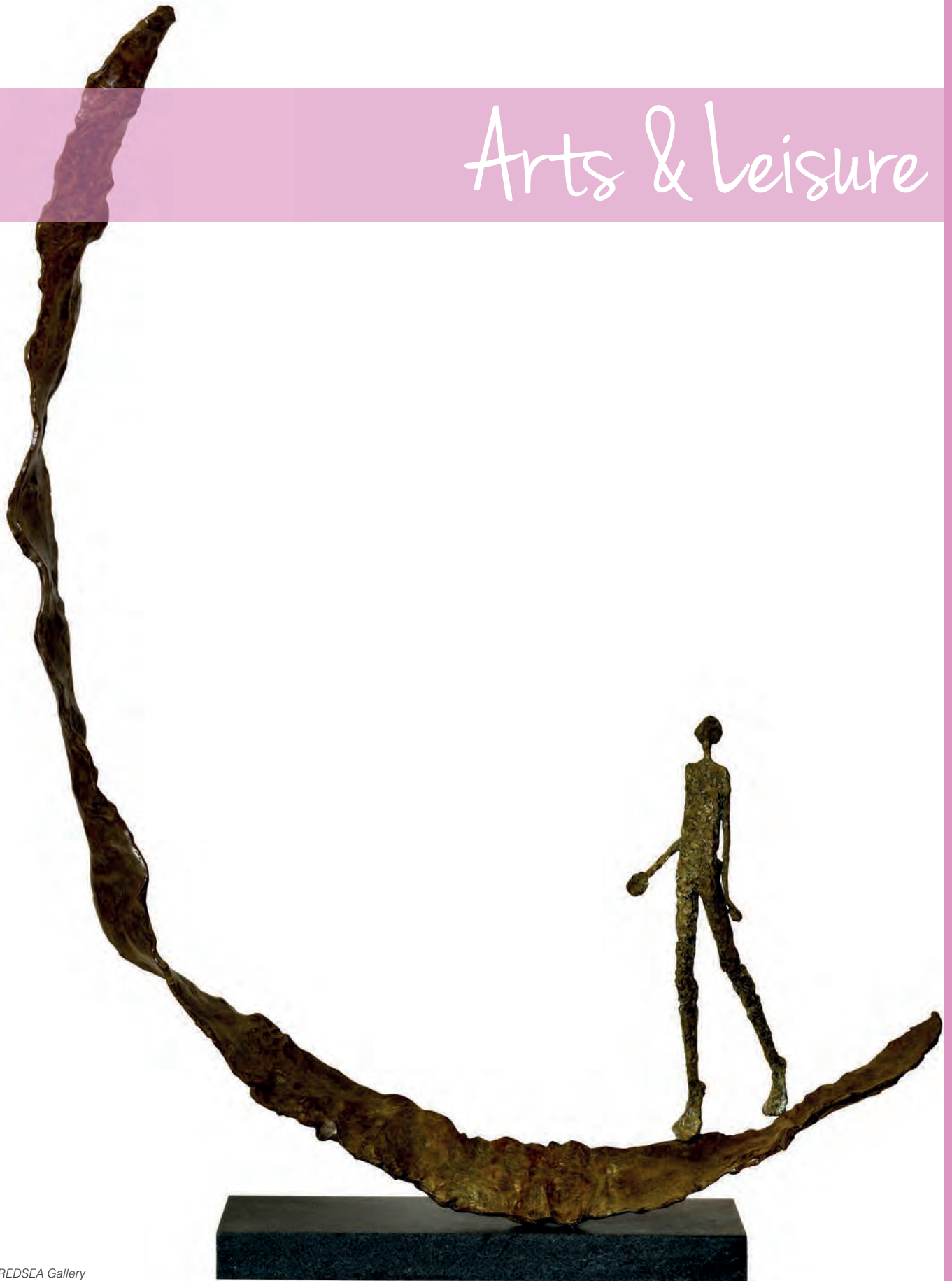
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Arts & Leisure





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Whether you're a long-time enthusiast or simply a newbie to the art world, there are plenty of galleries and shops here in Singapore, with artworks to suit all tastes. We asked four *EL* readers for the scoop on where they snagged their favourite pieces.

Appreciating Art

Kate Lawes Meier, UK and New Zealand

With my ten-year wedding anniversary approaching, I wanted to find something unique, bespoke and stylish to give to my husband, and I knew that a canvas from C+S Art Prints was the perfect option. For us, art is about an 'experience' where we have some sort of emotional connection to how the artist's interpretation of form, colour and shape make the piece distinctive, or where we have met the artist and have been privileged to develop an insight into his or her motivations and techniques. We love eclectic pieces, and it all comes down to what 'hits' us when we see art.

We first saw C+S Prints at an art exhibition a couple of years ago here in Singapore. Cristina from C+S is incredibly talented and, from the onset, she was able to guide me through the process of creating a special piece. I chose a striking 56 x 120 canvas – black with white text – that encapsulates our 'story', starting with where my husband and I first met, followed by places, events, homes and, most importantly, the arrival of our three children.

Cristina was meticulous and discerning when working with the text I gave her, so as to ensure that the final layout was perfect. It was as if she had known us for years and the nuances of text sizing and placement were spot on.

What I love most is that it's such a distinctive, personalised piece in terms of content, and its stylish layout. It hangs in our family room, where we all spend lots of time together. It's our focal point; it captures our attention at just the right times and we end up having funny chats with the children and visitors about events and moments that it reminds us of.

C+S Art Prints
16 Dempsey Road, #01-01
csartprints.com





Evguenia Nekrassova, Ukraine

When my friends told me there was a Russian art gallery in Singapore, I was delighted and just had to visit it. I got the chance to go for the first time when 11.12 Gallery held one of its exhibitions. I loved the interesting works by talented artists, and I also really liked the warm and friendly ambience. The gallery owner, Elvira Sharova, welcomed me graciously and I felt comfortable walking around looking at the art on display; since then, I have become a frequent visitor.

In the past, I visited many art fairs and galleries but found it very difficult to find a piece I really liked. Therefore, I only had family photos and kids' drawings on the walls at home. But, after visiting 11.12, I wanted to buy a painting for my apartment.

Elvira knew exactly what I was looking for, and showed me *Transformation*, a beautiful painting by

Maria Semenskaya. I fell in love with it the moment I saw it. It has vibrant colours, and the girl in the painting reminded me of my sweet daughters. I just love it – in fact, it's my dream painting, and it now occupies a central place in our living room.

My whole family loves the painting, and it has inspired us to explore the art world. I would say that 11.12 Gallery opened my eyes to Russian art and converted me from an art admirer to an art collector; I hope to buy more from the gallery in the future.

11.12 Gallery
36 Armenian Street, #04-02
6636 7738 | 11-12gallery.com



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Embrace Culture With Style



Chantal Waddington, Australia

My husband and I love colour in our home and tend to choose pieces that resonate with us and our experiences, or have some significance to where we are living at the time. We love vintage travel posters, and try to collect them from special places we have visited on our travels over the past ten years. I also love colourful, expressionist images of people, cultures and lifestyles.

We don't normally seek out particular stores or galleries. Rather, when we see something we like, we grab it – which is what happened when I visited Singapore Trading Post for the first time; I was delightfully impressed and loved the eclectic selection of homeware, souvenirs, gifts and everything in between. The mix of old, colonial and modern-inspired pieces made for a real treasure trove.

I had been looking for something special for my husband's 40th birthday, and found a really striking painting there; it's a bold and colourful piece with a modern, Art Deco take on the street outside of the Peninsula Hotel (now, the Peninsula Excelsior Singapore) circa the 1950s, with guests arriving via trishaw and in vintage sports cars. I love the vibrant colours and the story it tells; that juxtaposition of Singaporean culture and the 'high end' way of life that the hotel and its guests portray is still evident today here in Singapore.

While there were few spaces left in our home, I was able to hang the piece directly above my husband's armchair, on a wall that's pretty much perfect for it; the colours are bright enough to catch the eye when entering our apartment.

Singapore Trading Post
102F Pasir Panjang Road, #02-04 Citilink Warehouse
6274 0511 | singaporetradingpost.com

Catarina Longman, Brazil

I first became familiar with artist Patricia Cabaleiro's work when a friend of mine did an art workshop at Cabaleiro Atelier and Art School two years ago. Then, when Patricia exhibited her work at the Embassy of Brazil in Singapore earlier this year, I fell in love with and bought a painting called *Meditation IV*, acrylic paint and mixed media on canvas.

I love the lively colours and the energy it sends out. The shapes and colours can be interpreted as many things, and that's another thing I enjoy about abstract art. It's a happy painting, and I like that for my home. It hangs in my living room, facing the dining table; it was an empty wall and the artwork fits perfectly there – it really brightens the room.

I like many different art forms and don't follow art trends; I buy what I genuinely like – pieces that inspire me somehow. Apart from Patricia's painting, I have picked up small pieces from my travels in Asia, and I have some artwork from my aunt, Ana Longman, who is a great artist from my hometown, Recife; she does paintings on porcelain, as well as lithography.

I also own a small ceramic sculpture by Francisco Brennand, a famous artist from Pernambuco, as well as a Chinese painting on rice paper from Deise Cavalheiro, another Brazilian artist based in Singapore. I was thrilled to be able to add Patricia's *Meditation IV* to my collection of meaningful pieces.



Cabaleiro Atelier and Art School
Block 5 Westbourne Road, #01-02
9620 4997 | cdem.com.sg

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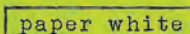
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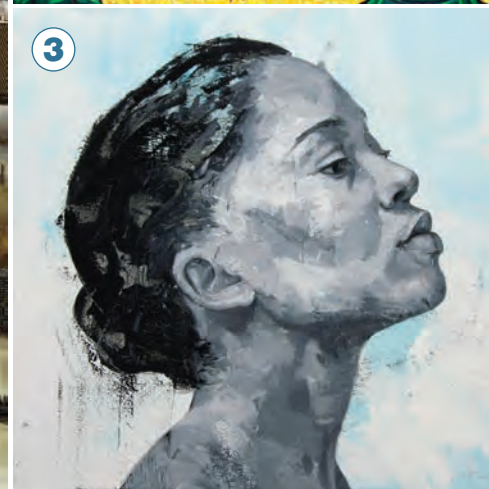
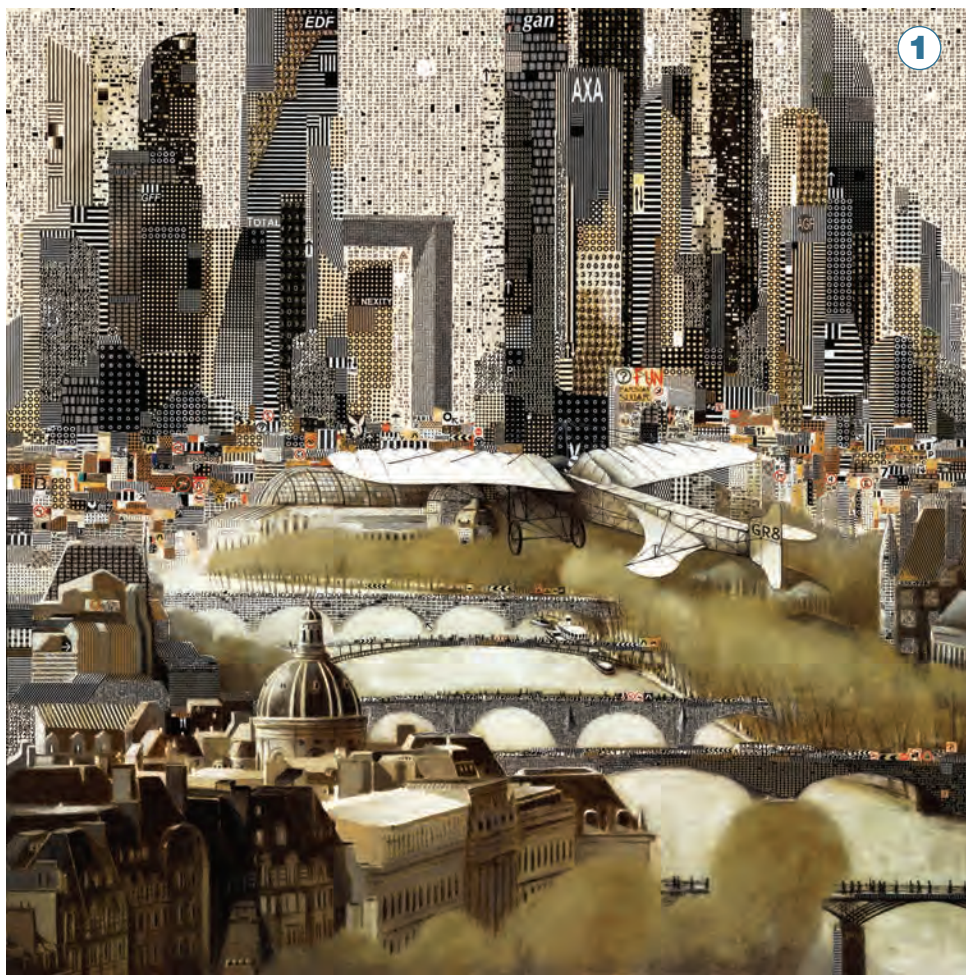
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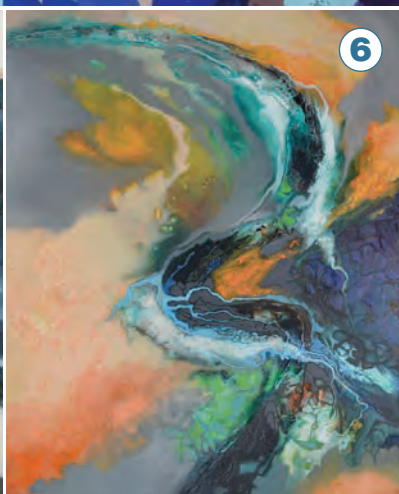
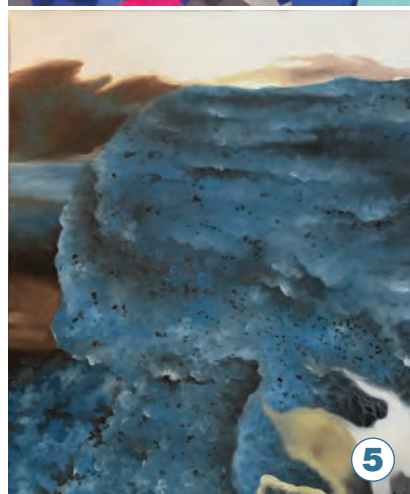


Art Aplenty

From modern mixed media and *objets d'art* to figurative portraits and abstract landscape paintings, there are works of art to suit all tastes. Here's a selection of some of our favourite pieces from galleries in Singapore and beyond.

1 *Paris* by Studio 30, acrylic on canvas (120cmx120cm), \$12,000; **11.12 Gallery**, 50 Armenian Street, #01-02, 9758 6804, 11-12gallery.com **2** *Golden Sky (Lotus)* by Ana Tzarev, oil on canvas (195x195); **Ana Tzarev Gallery**, 24 West 57th Street, New York, US, +1 212 586 9800, anatzarev.com **3** *Otomys* by Lionel Smit, hand-finished archival print (61x61), \$1,560; **OTOMYS**, 9672 6712, otomys.com





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GILI ISLANDS
ORCHARD ROAD
HO CHI MINH
BOTANICAL GARDENS
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DRINKS WITH L&J
TAKASHIMAYA
ARAB STREET
CHINATOWN
ALEXANDRA PARK

4 *MediAction in Blue* by Patricia Cabaleiro, acrylic on linen, \$3,800; **Cabaleiro Atelier & Art School**, Block 5 Westbourne Road, #01-02 Wessex Estate, 9620 4997, patriciacabaleiro.com **5** *Reflection*, **Arete Culture**, 63 Hillview Avenue, #09-08 Lam Soon Building, 9878 8154, areteculture.com **6** *Desert Floods* by Astrid Dahl, mixed media (including acrylic, texture paste and gold leaf), \$8,000; **Astrid Dahl Studio Gallery**, 36B Hong Kong Street, Holly Building, Level 3, 8383 1642, astriddahl.com **7** *Mess* by Deng Cheng Wen, oil on canvas (160x140); **Ode to Art**, 252 North Bridge Road, #01-36E/F Raffles City, 6250 1901, odetoart.com **8** Biscuit tin lamp by Jonas Merian, upcycled vintage biscuit tin, \$267.50; **Journey East**, 315 Outram Road, #03-02 Tan Boon Liat Building, 6473 1693, journeyeast.com **9** Bespoke medium canvas by C+S Art Prints; customisable, \$250 to 550; **C+S Art Prints**, 16 Dempsey Road, #01-01, 9188 6197, csartprints.com

ON THE STAGE

From live music and magic to dance and drama, there are plenty of productions to keep you entertained this month.

LIVE PREVIEW



A Festival of Footwork

Back for its ninth edition, the **da:ns festival** presents renowned works by some of the most accomplished choreographers in the world, including Tony Award-winner Matthew Bourne (UK), The Royal Ballet's Wayne McGreogor (UK) and the "Queen of Flamenco", María Pagés (Spain). During the 11-day festival, audiences have the opportunity to experience nine different ticketed productions that incorporate a range of dance forms – from ballet to pole-dance to traditional Indonesian, Thai and Filipino dance. Highlights include *I*, *Carmen*, a fresh take on the famous femme fatale tale, explored through flamenco dance; the anatomy-defying production, *FAR*; and a contemporary interpretation of the classic ballet, *Swan Lake*. Tickets from Sistic and the Esplanade box office. See it from 9 to 19 October at the Esplanade Theatres on the Bay, 1 Esplanade Drive. For the full festival line-up, visit www.dansfestival.com.

Hope and Heartbreak



Drawn together by horrific circumstances, three individuals – the mother of a missing child who has retreated to a state of "frozen hope", a psychiatrist with a controversial theory on serial killers, and a loner with a deadly obsession – embark on a tangled, twisted journey, uncovering one another's skeletons along the way. A shocking and sensitive study of the fragile human psyche, ***Frozen*** is a haunting, emotional thriller that explores the meaning of grief, hope, retribution and forgiveness. Nominated for four Tony Awards, this psychological drama by Bryony Lavery is sure to resonate with audiences and stay with them long after they've left the theatre. See it from 23 October to 9 November at the Esplanade Theatre Studio. Tickets from Sistic. pangdemonium.com

Jazz Royalty Returns

Renowned American jazz guitarist and composer **Pat Metheny** returns to Singapore this month to perform his signature brand of jazz fusion, as part of the Mosaic Music Festival; he last visited the Lion City back in 2006. The 20-time Grammy winner's trademark sound involves elements of progressive, contemporary and Latin jazz, and post-bop, with strong influences from Brazilian music and pop. Known for incorporating innovative technologies and developing new instruments and guitar models, Pat has continued to redefine the genre throughout his career. 27 October at the Esplanade Concert Hall. Tickets from Sistic and the Esplanade box office. mosaicmusicseries.com



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Written by ALFIAN SA'AT Music by ELAINE CHAN



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An Enchanting Evening

After entertaining audiences here with *Incanto* last year, Swedish illusionist Joe Labero is back with another awe-inspiring show, ***A Night of Magic at Raffles***, which promises a fresh batch of mesmerising illusions and death-defying tricks. Whether you believe in magic or not, one thing's for sure – you can count on an entertaining night out. See it until 28 October at the Jubilee Hall at Raffles Hotel, 1 Beach Road. Tickets from Sistic. labero.se



Musical Merriment

If you fancy some opera served with a side of laughs, this one's for you. Franz Lehár's ***The Merry Widow*** – one of the most celebrated and successful operettas of its kind – hits the stage this month, offering both music and merriment.

The operetta, which premiered in Vienna in 1905, tells the story of widowed heiress, Hanna Glawari, and her countrymen's attempt to keep her riches within the principality of Pontevedro by finding her the right husband – namely, Count Danilo, an embassy diplomat. As the comical plot unravels, all does not go according to plan. Famous songs such as “Vilja Lied”, “The Merry Widow Waltz” and “You'll Find Me at Maxim's” will be performed by international opera singers from the UK and Australia, as well as local singers, and the production will also feature the Singapore Lyric Opera Chorus and the Singapore Lyric Opera Orchestra. See it from 24 to 26 October at the Esplanade Theatre. Tickets from Sistic. esplanade.com

Make Way for the Queen

Based on the 1994 movie, *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, the Tony Award-winning stage version, ***Priscilla, Queen of the Desert the Musical*** tells the story of three eclectic friends who hop aboard a battered old bus named Priscilla in search of friendship and self-discovery, and end up finding more than they ever dreamed of. This funny, uplifting show features over 500



dazzling costumes, 200 colourful headdresses and a plethora of dance-floor favourites to sing along to. Tickets from Sistic. See it from 16 to 26 October at Resorts World Theatre. rwsentosa.com

Living on the Edge

Behind every National Geographic story is an explorer who travels to the wildest places on the planet to bring back epic tales of adventure and discovery. This month, audiences of all ages have the chance to hear stories firsthand from one such explorer, Bryan Smith, when he heads to Singapore for ***Extreme Adventure on the Edge*** – part of the National Geographic Live presentation series. Adventure-seekers, travel lovers and adrenaline-junkies alike can look forward to fascinating, behind-the-scenes footage from Bryan's assignments, as he recounts extreme feats in the world's most challenging environments – braving the raging whitewater in British Columbia, paddling steep rivers in India and sharing space with grizzlies in Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula, where throngs of voracious mosquitos are also rampant. Tickets from Sistic. 9 October at 7.30pm at the Esplanade Concert Hall, 1 Esplanade Drive.





All Aboard

Party animals, prepare – there's a mega music festival on the horizon. Next month, music fans can set sail with **It's the Ship**, a five-day, four-night international music festival at sea – the first-ever in Asia. Embarking from Singapore, Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas* cruise-liner will cross the straits of Malacca to tropical Langkawi for a beach party of epic proportions, featuring performances by international and regional headliners including hip hop artist, Lil' Jon, and indie and electro-pop acts like Crookers, Chvrches, Rave Republic and Alex Metric, among others. More fun includes on-board rock-climbing, ice-skating and a dip in one of the ship's 10 pools. For reservations and details, visit www.itstheship.com.

FOR KIDS



Stick Around for This One

Stick Man is a quirky tale with a title character who is first mistaken for just an ordinary stick, then taken far away and used for all sorts of things, from a flag mast to a cricket bat, and from a snowman's arm to firewood (well, almost!). Eventually, a very lost Stick Man wonders if he'll ever make it back to his wife and children in the family tree. Passing through all of the seasons and culminating in a Christmas celebration, this touching and witty production, complete with live music and instruments, is sure to delight both kids – especially aged three and above – and their grownups, no matter the season. See it from 9 to 12 October at SOTA Drama Theatre, 1 Zubir Said Drive. Tickets from Sistic. aba-productions.com



A Barking Good Time

This month, youngsters can look forward to joining **Hairy Maclary and Friends** for canine capers and animal adventures, as they jump off

the pages of the much-loved children's series and onto the stage in this live production featuring live music, singing and colourful costumes. Kids can meet characters like Hercules Morse, who's as big as a horse, Bottomley Potts, who's covered in spots, Schnitzel von Krumm with the "very low tum" and Scarface Claw, the toughest tomcat in town. See it from 10 to 12 October at the Drama Centre Theatre, 100 Victoria Street, National Library Building. Tickets from Sistic. aba-productions.com

Fairytale Mash-up

The folks over at I Theatre have dreamt up a new family-friendly musical, **Hop and Honk**, which puts a fresh spin on two beloved classic fairy-tales, merging them into one. Audiences aged four and up can look forward to songs and laughs as characters from *The Frog Prince* and *The Ugly Duckling* work together to overcome obstacles, dodge danger and help one another along the way. See it from 29 October to 15 November at the Drama Centre Theatre, 100 Victoria Street, National Library Building. Tickets from Sistic. itheatre.org



ON THE SCREEN

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



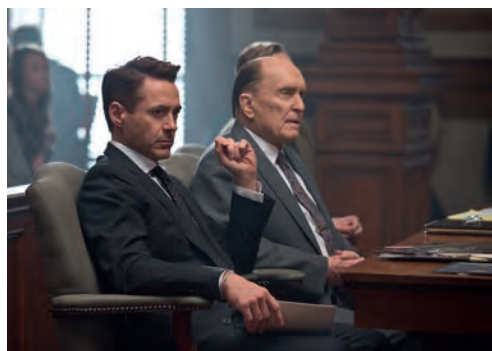
BIG SCREEN

Left Behind

This apocalyptic thriller centres on a small group of survivors who are left behind after millions of people suddenly vanish and the world is plunged into chaos and destruction. Ray Steele (Nicholas Cage), the pilot of a jumbo jet, must calm his hysterical passengers and land his damaged plane, all the while wondering whether or not his daughter and wife (Lea Thompson) are safe. Opens 2 October at Cathay Cineplexes.

The Judge

Starring Robert Downey Jr and Oscar winner Robert Duvall, this drama tells the story of Hank Palmer, a big city lawyer who returns to his childhood home, where his estranged father – the town's judge – is suspected of murder. Hank sets out to discover the truth and, along the way, reconnects with the family he walked away from years before. The all-star cast also features Vera Farmiga, Oscar winners Billy Bob Thornton and Melissa Leo, and *Gossip Girl*'s Leighton Meester, among others. Opens 16 October at Golden Village cinemas.



Good People

This thriller follows Tom (James Franco) and Anna (Kate Hudson), who, after falling into severe debt, discover that their murdered neighbour has left behind a stash of cash – \$400,000 worth – and decide to take the money to pay off their debts. However, they soon find themselves the target of a deadly enemy, and that's when very bad things start happening to good people. Opens 9 October at Cathay Cineplexes.



The Best of Me

Based on the bestselling novel by Nicholas Sparks, *The Best of Me* tells the story of Dawson (James Marsden) and Amanda (Michelle Monaghan), former high school sweethearts who are reunited after 20 years apart, when they return to their small town for the funeral of a beloved friend. Their bittersweet reunion reignites their love, but the very forces that initially drove them apart pose even more serious threats than before. Opens 6 November at Golden Village cinemas.

The Good Lie

Based on the true story of the "Lost Boys of Sudan" – the 26,000 young men who fled to refugee camps during the Second Sudanese Civil War (1983 to 2005) – this drama stars Reese Witherspoon as Carrie, a no-nonsense woman who agrees to open her home to four Sudanese refugees and help them start over in the United States. The film, which is already getting some Oscar buzz, recalls the largest resettlement of its kind in American history, when, in 2001, the US resettled close to 4,000 "lost boys" in America. Opens 23 October at Cathay Cineplexes.





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SMALL SCREEN

Young Hollywood's Greatest

This programme gets up close and personal with the biggest stars in Hollywood, featuring "best-of" celebrity moments through clips of candid interviews and behind-the-scenes footage done in a top-seven countdown format – categories include "the greatest" action stars, and next generation superstars and heartthrobs. Premieres 25 October on RTL CBS Entertainment HD (StarHub Channel 509; SingTel mio TV Channel 318).



FOR KIDS

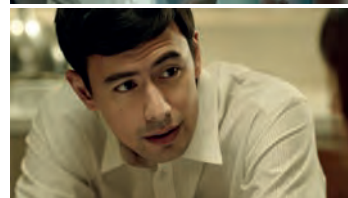


Halloween Treat

In honour of All Hallows' Eve, Disney Channel has a full line-up of spooky fun and adventure in store, including film favourites and all-new episodes from hit shows like *Austin and Ally*, *Pair of Kings*, *Jessie*, *Good Luck Charlie* and *Lab Rats*. It all starts with *Toy Story of Terror!* at 12 midnight, followed by *Phineas and Ferb Halloween*, *Gravity Falls*, *Art Attack Halloween Special* and the popular *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*. 31 October on Disney Channel (StarHub Channel 312).

Grace

Set in present-day Asia, this new, four-part mini-series – an HBO Asia original – unravels the story of a father whose terrible mistake condemns his family to unspeakable horrors. The show takes a look at the Asian concepts of family, sacrifice and vengeance, and promises to give viewers quite a fright. We asked *Grace*'s GEORGE YOUNG – a British lawyer-turned-actor of Malaysian-Chinese and Greek descent – what we can look forward to.

What can we expect from *Grace*?

Oh, wow – without giving anything away, it's a modern tale that focuses on the repercussions of one man's actions; the sins of our fathers coming back to haunt us. It's a modern, Greek tragedy with an Asian twist, which, I realised, is very much my kind of thing, being half-Greek and half-Chinese!

The horror series is set to conclude with the last two episodes premiering back-to-back on Halloween night. How scared should we actually be?

Just settle down, get nice and comfy, dim the lights a bit and let us take you on a ride – that way, when it happens, it happens. I wish everyone could see me grinning right now...

Tell us about your character, Charles.

Charles is married to Lisa, the eldest daughter of the Chan family – the focus of this tale we've woven for you this Halloween season. Charles works in the Chan family business, and is trying to provide for Lisa and their future baby that's well on its way at the start of the series. If Charles gets a little cynical at times, it's because he's tired, so cut him some slack please, dear audience; I'm very protective of him.

What was the best thing about filming the series in Singapore?

I've been filming here for three years now, so for me it was seeing how – in that short span of time – Singapore has reached the international stage in terms of production values and studio space. To have so much talent – both international and home-grown – come together in one glorious, new soundstage to make something all of us feel is very special is, well, very special indeed. The environment and what we created here in Singapore brought us all together – from a bunch of actors playing a family to actually becoming one. I can't wait for you to see it.

Grace premieres 17 October at 10pm on HBO/HBO HD (StarHub Channel 601).



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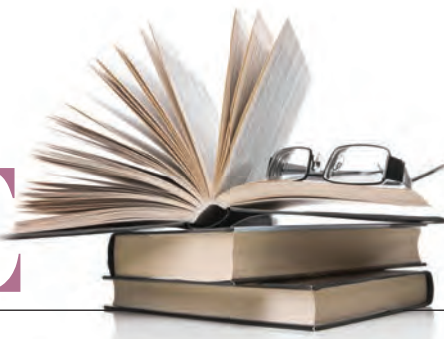


OFFICIAL RADIO



A SunVic Production

ON THE PAGE



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

Smokescreen

Khaled Talib

Signal Press | 331 pages

This extraordinary thriller starts in a Cairo souk, where the disguised Ambassador of the US to Singapore and the mysterious old man X hold a covert meeting about a supposed Israeli plot to assassinate the Israeli Prime Minister during his approaching official visit to Singapore.

Who's their inside man? One Chan Boon Seng, smilingly villainous chief protocol officer of the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To take the rap for the assassination, he's singled out Eurasian Jet West, a local lifestyle magazine editor and modest watch-collector who's had the temerity to apply for a licence to publish an independent newspaper. ("Jet knew that women dug his good looks." And his first appearance is in a mauve jacket. Yes, mauve.)

Complete with a Bond-style string of attractive female characters, only a couple of whom manage to survive the ingeniously murderous exploits of Chan's tame killer, the schizophrenic psychopath Fung, the plot zings from Singapore to the Israeli desert and Jerusalem's old Muslim quarter, Buenos Aires, South Australia's Murray River, Chan's Indonesian island fortress Pulau Jakaba, and perhaps a couple more.

It's enjoyable to follow the plucky Jet evading capture in various familiar places, be it in his flashy black Miata, atop a stolen police bike or on foot. He drops into a Tourism Board soirée at Sands Sky Park, (almost) dines at the Alkaff Mansion, finds temporary sanctuary in St Andrew's Cathedral belfry during a blistering action sequence through the colonial district, and visits an underground Chinatown opium den run by a Brummie* ex-broker-turned-passport-forgery.

Jake Needham, author of two novels set in the police and security services of Singapore, says *Smokescreen* is "nearer to the truth of that closely controlled little country than you might believe", and that it's "a gripping and creepy tale of how governments can rig the way we all see the world".

However true that may be, this could be a cracker of a movie, one to rival *Saint Jack*. Would permission be granted, this time?

* Native of Birmingham, England.



Verne Maree

The Forbidden Game – Golf and the Chinese Dream

Dan Washburn

Oneworld | 320 pages

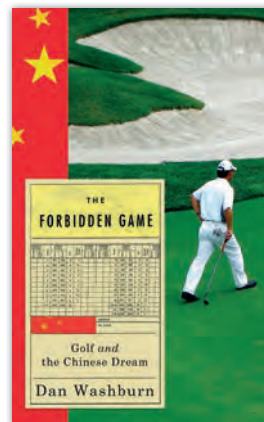
I played golf in China for the first time back in 2001, next to the Ming Tombs on the outskirts of Beijing. As we drove along the laneway to the clubhouse, half a dozen villagers leapt out from behind trees and approached the car. They were wielding second-hand golf balls that they'd found in the surrounding vegetation and were selling in a clandestine fashion. We bought a dozen or so, and promptly hit them straight back into the out-of-bounds areas, where they would be collected again, and sold again.

At the time, the course we played on was one of only a tiny handful in the country. And it was empty. Yet golf, long considered taboo in China because of its bourgeois connotations, was about to boom. Hundreds of new courses would soon open up across the country, and more and more locals would seize upon the opportunities presented by this growth to seek their fortunes – and not just by selling second-hand balls.

It's this boom – and more than a few subsequent busts – that Dan Washburn documents in his fascinating account. The book revolves around the stories of three vastly different men: Wang, who finds his lychee farm under threat from a massive golf course development; Martin, an American course construction manager who unexpectedly winds up at the forefront of China's golf scene; and Zhou, a peasant whose life follows a bizarre trajectory from security guard to professional golfer.

You don't have to be a fan of golf to enjoy the book, because it's about so much more: rural land rights, corruption, rich versus poor, the environment, and people pursuing dreams. In short, Washburn uses the sport as a window to shed light on all the big issues that China has faced in its meteoric rise.

Shamus Sillar





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WRITERS' FESTIVAL

Themed "The Prospect of Beauty", the 2014 Singapore Writers Festival (SWF) will be celebrating beauty in writing, literature, and the world around us. It features award-winning writers Raymond E. Feist, Karen Joy Fowler, Paul Muldoon and Naomi Wolf, alongside Singaporean and other Asian writers. Join the panel as they debate the notion of aesthetics, especially unrealistic ideals of female beauty; the tensions between pristine nature and development; and the pursuit of truth, freedom and justice.

Dates: 31 October to 9 November

Venues: Singapore Management University's Campus

Green, The Arts House, the National Museum of Singapore, the Singapore Art Museum, the National Library, School of the Arts, Molly Roffey's Irish Pub and Centre 42.

More info: singaporewritersfestival.com



AUTHOR INTERVIEW: Sarah Mounsey

Australian primary school teacher and Singapore expat, Sarah Mounsey, won a bronze medal for her Paw Prints books in the Moonbeam Children's Book Awards in the category for best picture book series. A member of the ANZA (Australia-New Zealand Association) Writers' Group, she has three boys, whom she thankfully notes were not the inspiration for her very, shall we say, *lively* characters.

Why did you self-publish?

Friends from the Singapore Society of Children's Book Writers seriously encouraged me to do so. I'd hoped to be published by a traditional publisher, but publishing houses can get hundreds of submissions every month, and may only publish two picture books in the year.

As printing costs in Singapore are a lot lower than in Australia or England, the risk was lower. It was both exciting and daunting to have complete creative control over my books.

What's involved in the process?


A lot of work! You take on so many roles, including editor, marketer, salesperson, small-business administrator and public speaker. For the editing, I'm lucky to have experienced friends who help me.

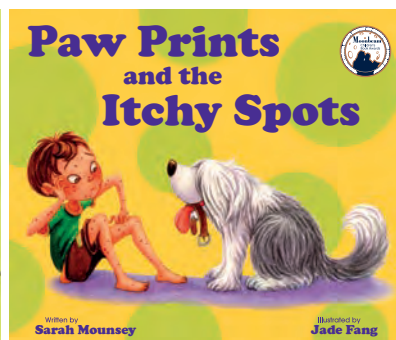
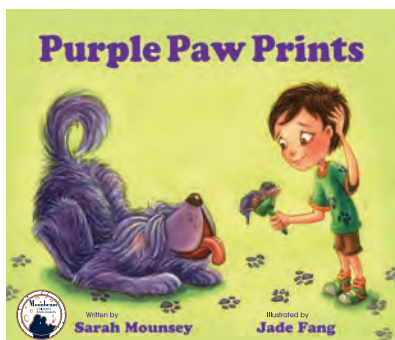
After registering my business, Brindal Books, I applied for an ISBN number and got quotes from printing companies. I then looked online to find an illustrator, and found the wonderful Jade Fang. We hardly ever meet up while working on a book together, but are constantly emailing each other.

When the artwork is complete, my graphic designer works with me to lay out the text and prepare the cover. For *Paw Prints and the Itchy Spots*, we tried over 25 different colour combinations for the cover, and three different illustrations! Then final edits are done and the book is sent to print.



Who is your distributor?

I work with the brilliant Closetful of Books (closetfulofbooks.com), and my books are available in bookstores throughout Singapore, including Bookaburra, Kinokuniya, Playdate Books, Woods in the Books and Tango Mango. They are also sold at Ni-Night and at Groovy Gifts. For signed copies with a personal message from me, you can order through my website, www.sarahmounsey.com. 





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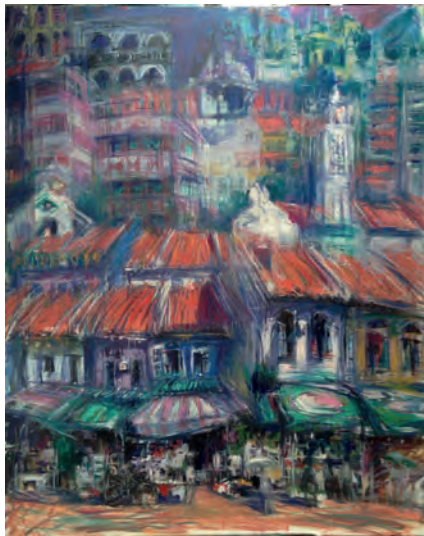
ON THE WALL



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

Changing Cityscapes

Using bold brushstrokes to create abstract depictions of local shophouses, streets and skyscrapers in Singapore, Malaysian artist Chanker is known for exploring rapidly changing urban landscapes. In his new body of work, **Forming the City**, Chanker shifts his gaze beyond the streets of Singapore to other locales across Asia – including Sri Lanka, Japan and Cambodia – capturing the architecture and character of each. He leaves human figures out of the compositions, allowing for the psyche of each city to be conveyed through its spaces, reflecting local values, histories and sociopolitical influences. See it at Chan Hampe Galleries, 328 North Bridge Road, #01-21 Raffles Hotel Arcade. chanhampegalleries.com



Making Sense of Things

Spanning the fields of art, phenomenology, philosophy and cognitive psychology, the Asian contemporary art exhibition, **Sensorium**



360°, moves beyond vision to “see” the world through the other senses. It presents works from artists in Southeast Asia and beyond, each one dedicated to a specific sensory experience and, while the five senses of sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell are the most commonly known, the exhibit explores others, such as the ability to detect movement, pain, balance and even time – physiological capacities that are vital in enabling us to navigate the world around us. Experience it until 19 October at SAM, 71 Bras Basah Road. singaporeartmuseum.sg

Sculptural Poetry

This month, REDSEA Gallery takes a walk on the existential side with **Presence**, an exhibition by Bangkok-based French sculptor, Val, whose works of “sculptural poetry” pay homage to various notions of being. Each of the artist's 37 contemporary bronze works features one or more human figures amidst a larger structure, giving voice to her exploration of the human condition in the vastness of the universe; each is a powerful affirmation of the presence of life and the many expressions and moments that come with it. For example, *Paternité* (Fatherhood), offers a glimpse into a special, shared moment between father and child, while *Une Vie* (A Life), muses on a life full of dreams, hardships, questions and expectations. See it from 9 October to 2 November at REDSEA Gallery, 9 Dempsey Road. redseagallery.com



11.12 Art Gallery



Studio 30 ' Transformation ' Mixed media, canvas, 100 x 100, 2014



Wilmer Place, 50 Armenian Street, #01-02
www.tl-12gallery.com | +65 9758 6804 | elvira@tl-12gallery.com



Photography Focus

The fourth biennial **Singapore International Photography Festival (SIPF)** is on from 3 October to 30 November, featuring exhibitions, workshops and fringe activities at various art galleries and spaces throughout the city. Here's a look at some of the highlights.

The 4th SIPF Open Call Showcase

This open call gave international, emerging and established photographers the chance to submit their most exciting work, without any thematic restrictions. The showcase presents 400 of these works – shortlisted from thousands – by 48 photographers from 23 different countries. See it from 3 October to 30 November at the National Museum of Singapore, 93 Stamford Road.

Coastline by Zhang Ziao



Milan Image Art Fair

In conjunction with SIPF, Milan Image Arts (MIA) Singapore will hold Southeast Asia's first Milan Image Fair – an international art fair dedicated to photography and video. Geared toward art lovers and collectors – with an emphasis on educating the new, young collector base – the fair will feature contemporary works from both up-and-coming and known artists, including Singapore-based Australian photographer, Sealey Brandt. Known for her black-and-white portraiture photography, Sealey will exhibit a collection of silver gelatin prints from her travels to Mongolia, as well as a collection of children's portraits.

The fair will also offer seminars, workshops and round tables that cover topics ranging from the history of the photographic image to curatorship, and collecting and displaying photographic works. 22 to 25 October at Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre, 10 Bayfront Avenue. miafair.it



A Guide to the Flora and Fauna of the World by Zhao Renhui

An Ocean of Possibilities

SIPF collaborated with Noorderlicht International Photofestival in the Netherlands for this themed open call, which explores notions of challenging the status quo and searching for a path less travelled. The partnership gives selected artists the opportunity to display their works at both international festivals. See it from 31 October to 28 December at ArtScience Museum, 6 Bayfront Avenue.



Postman by Maleonn

Flux Realities: A Showcase of Chinese Contemporary Photography

Featuring over 60 images from seven Chinese photographers, this exhibition highlights each artist's individualistic, creative approach and personal experience of China's modernisation. They explore consumerism and globalisation while excavating the memories buried beneath skyscrapers and factories, and examine the torn fabrics of tradition while contemplating the meaning of memory. See it until 2 November at ArtScience Museum, 6 Bayfront Avenue.

Festival passes can be purchased from eventbrite.com or at the festival office. For a full line-up of events and activities, visit www.sipf.sg.



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COMING UP

Wallet-friendly Art

Back by popular demand, the **Affordable Art Fair** returns next month for the second time this year. The November edition will give art fans the opportunity to purchase contemporary works from over 100 international galleries, and across a wide range of media. The best part? All works will be priced between \$100 and \$10,000. 20 to 23 November at F1 Pit Building, 1 Republic Boulevard. affordableartfair.com



Punk Rock Revival

In honour of its 10th anniversary, French fashion brand, **agnès b.**, is presenting a special exhibition featuring a selection of behind-the-scenes photographs from some of the major players in the 1970s punk scene, including The Clash, The Sex Pistols and Generation X, among others. Working closely with legendary music photographer Sheila Rock, the fashion label curated 28 photos from Rock's *Punk+* book to make up the **agnès b. Punk+ Photo Exhibition**; each photo plays a role in chronicling the key shift in British street fashion during the punk movement, and offers insight into the revolutionary fashion phenomena that went on to reinvent music culture and art. The photos are available for purchase, and a selection of books, vinyl records and accessories are also on sale at a pop-up store located within the exhibition space. See it from 1 to 26 October, 12 to 9pm daily, at The Substation Gallery, 45 Armenian Street. substation.org



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Book and lyrics by
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Junior Claus Holiday Programme

Dates 17 - 21 Nov 2014, 24 - 28 Nov 2014 **Duration** 2 hours 30 mins **Time** 10am – 12.30pm **Price** \$388

Join Junior and his friends this ho-ho-holiday in their quest to save Christmas! Blaze through a blustery blizzard, race with some rollicking reindeer and charge down a chimney with cheer to bring back the Christmas spirit!

Don't miss this exciting week of drama, art and craft, music, and a ticket to SRT's The Little Company production of *Junior Claus* for your child, plus an exclusive meet-and-greet session with the cast and a backstage tour of the theatre, all culminating in a performance by your child at the end of the week for friends and family.

Recommended for 4 – 6 year-olds. Book your slot via SISTIC, or for more information, visit www.srt.com.sg.

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ON THE COURT

What's on in Singapore's sports scene this month and next



Don't-miss matches

This month, the best tennis players in the world will serve up plenty of excitement when they compete in the **BNP Paribas WTA Finals Singapore** at the brand new Singapore Sports Hub's Indoor Stadium. Look forward to watching the biggest tennis stars, including Maria Sharapova, Serena Williams and Li Na, battle for the Billy Jean King trophy and a prize of US\$6.5 million. In addition to seven days of singles and doubles matches featuring the world's best players, catch some of the all-time greats, including Martina Navratilova, as they compete in the Legends tournament, as well as the Rising Stars rivalry featuring the next generation of tennis stars. 17 to 26 October at Singapore Sports Hub. Tickets from www.sportshubtix.sg. wtafinals.com

More sports

In addition to the first-ever WTA Finals in Southeast Asia, Singapore is playing host to a variety of other sporting events these days. Here's a handful of tournaments to look forward to.

BASKETBALL

Singapore Slingers vs Saigon Heat

The Slingers get to show off their hoop skills in this home game against fellow ASEAN Basketball League team, Saigon Heat. Tickets from www.sportshubtix.sg. 1 October at OCBC Arena, 1 Stadium Drive.

FOOTBALL

Brazil vs Japan

Football fans can see Brazil and Japan in a friendly match at the recently opened Sports Hub. Tickets from www.sportshubtix.sg. 14 October at the National Stadium, 1 Stadium Drive.

The Castlewood Liverpool Masters



A team of former Reds players – Liverpool legends – will face off against several of Singapore's local football heroes in a one-off match. Tickets from www.ticketbooth.com.sg.

sg. EL readers can use the code MFA2014 to get a 10 percent discount on tickets. 15 November at Jalan Besar Stadium, 100 Tyrwhitt Road.

RUGBY

Asia Pacific Dragons vs Maori All Blacks

This match pits New Zealand's Maori All Blacks against Singapore's Asia Pacific Dragons team. Tickets from www.sportshubtix.sg. 15 November at the National Stadium, 1 Stadium Drive.

The SCC Rugby 7s



The 67th edition of the Singapore Cricket Club International Rugby 7s will feature world-class teams around the globe, including former champions Daveta (Fiji), Randwick (Australia) and the

Penguins (UK), as they compete for the Ablitt Cup. Other teams include the Singapore Barbarians and the Singapore National Team, as well as new teams like Grenoble University Rugby from France and the People's Liberation Army from China. 31 October to 2 November at the Padang (Connaught Drive). Tickets from ticketbooth.com.sg. 

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Gifts & Goods Galore

Whether you're looking to get a jump-start on your holiday shopping or simply fancy a day out with some girlfriends, there's something for everyone at **The Fair**, a bazaar featuring a wide array of handcrafted gifts and products – from home décor, art and furnishings to clothing, accessories and children's items. Now in its 15th year, The Fair features over 100 vendors, including local and expat artists, and designers from Australia, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and more. We got a sneak preview of some of the finds at this month's marketplace event on 29 October.



Shore-ly Unique

Neetta Home Décor offers products handcrafted from mother-of-pearl, capiz, sigay and other gorgeous shells from the shores of the Philippines, Neetta's home country. The reasonably priced collection includes everything from trays, bowls, serving sets and vases to lamps, mirrors, frames and candleholders. neettahomedecors.com



Get a Grip

Lava Vella creates artisanal home accessories including intricate doorknobs, rustic handles, hinges, keyhole plates and hooks, among other attractive fittings. All pieces are made from 100-percent brass in Java, Indonesia, and designed to add distinctive touches throughout the home. Prices start at \$16.

[instagram.com/lavavella](https://www.instagram.com/lavavella)



Bring on the Bling

Specialising in semi-precious gemstone jewellery, **Lustre Jewellery** boasts a collection of necklaces, rings and earrings, handcrafted by artisans around the world using stones like red onyx, rose quartz and moonstone. All items are priced under \$300, with most pieces in the range \$65 to \$185. [facebook.com/lustresingapore](https://www.facebook.com/lustresingapore)

Convertible Clothing

The Elegant Bohemian's signature "Zand Amsterdam" skirt is both reversible and adjustable, and can be worn four different ways. Created by Singapore-based Jane Darby-Day when she found herself in need of a casual, lightweight cotton skirt for travelling, the "wrap, snap and go" design sells for \$130. [facebook.com/TheElegantBohemianbyJaneDarbyDay](https://www.facebook.com/TheElegantBohemianbyJaneDarbyDay)



Match Your Mood

Available in four different sizes – including clutch and larger shopping bag styles – each Italian-made **Bi-Bag** has a clear PVC exterior with a detachable lining that can be switched with other print designs – there are over 100 to choose from, which means you can customise the one bag to suit your every outfit and mood. Prices range from \$110 to \$250. [facebook.com/bibagsingapore](https://www.facebook.com/bibagsingapore)

Quite a Steel

Siamstyle, a collection of stainless steel homeware, offers everything from hammered metal cutlery, wine holders and bowls to cheese boards, cake stands and holiday ornaments. Designed by Jo Roper, the beautifully crafted goods start at \$15. [facebook.com/public/Jo-Roper-Siamstyle](https://www.facebook.com/public/Jo-Roper-Siamstyle)



For the diary

Can't make The Fair this month? Not to worry – you can catch the next one. Here are the dates.

- Friday, 21 November from 10am to 7pm at the Pan Pacific Hotel, 10 Claymore Road.
- Thursday, 11 December from 10am to 7pm at the same venue.

Visit The Fair on 29 October from 10am to 7pm at Pan Pacific Orchard, 10 Claymore Road. fairsandbazaars.com



COMING SOON

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Due to popular demand, the *Expat Living* Reader Awards are back! Vote for your favourite hairdressers, spas, retailers, gyms, airlines, brunches and more for the chance to win fantastic prizes and honour the best businesses in Singapore.

LOOK OUT FOR NOVEMBER'S EDITION FOR MORE DETAILS

Time to Shine

in conversation with
Starr Wood



Verne Maree chats with Singapore-based author STARR WOOD about his stunning debut novel, *Once Upon a Timepiece*, how he came to be a published writer, and where he got such a fabulous name.

What appeals to you about short stories, and why do you think they've become so popular again?

I find the form fascinating. Different from the novel, it's a very natural form of human communication: the story told around a table, or a campfire. It has a sort of brevity and conciseness that reflects how humans communicate anecdotes about their real lives, how they describe their world, and I find that very satisfying.

Also satisfying is the discipline required. The compression that comes with stripping out everything that's not essential makes the short story a very potent way of expressing thoughts and ideas – more powerful, in some ways, than longer forms of fiction. Many writers regard short stories as the most difficult to write.

Various theories have been put forward to explain the resurgent popularity of the short story form. One is the proliferation of writing courses, which encourage people to write short stories as a way of learning the craft. Another is the growing number of competitions, for which the prizes are becoming richer.

What does one call the form of *Once Upon a Timepiece* – a novel comprising a collection of short stories – and how unusual is it?

It's a "short story cycle", a book of short stories that are all linked in some way. While it has been done before, it hasn't been done a lot. Typically, an author might write a set of stories that describe a community, with each story told from the perspective of a different character living in that community. James Joyce's *Dubliners* is a great example.

My book is unusual in that the people and their stories are all linked by a thing, the watch, rather than by a community;

and they're linked chronologically in that the stories, or chapters, follow consecutive months of a particular year. The book is set in the year 2012, it starts in January, and ends in December. The characters in each story are strangers, but they're all linked by an antique gold watch that passes between them.

Collections of linked short stories can be found all through history. Take *The Decameron*, by the 14th-century Italian writer Giovanni Boccaccio, comprising 100 tales told over 10 days by 10 young people who have left their plague-ridden city and retreated to the countryside. Other examples are Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and the legendary *One Thousand and One Nights*, set in Persia.

Where did you get the idea for *Once Upon a Timepiece*?

I'd had the ideas for some of the stories brewing in my head for a long time. In fact, I'd written some of the stories long before the book idea came about. So I had a lot of the material already. And then I was struck with the idea of putting them together.

I wanted to express some thoughts about the connectivity between people, the links that join people in ways they don't see. We often walk through our lives without really recognising the links that connect us; indeed, often those links are entirely unseen.

The other big theme in the book is time, how time influences people and how we perceive the impact of time on our lives. Hence, the importance of the watch being the object that passes between the stories. The two ideas – connectivity and time – go together in interesting ways: as time flows, it links both people and disparate events together.

The book has a playful approach. There's a twist in each tale – I hope not a gratuitous twist, but one that brings significance to what's gone before.

When did you start writing?

From the age of 15 or 16, my first aspiration was to be a novelist. One of the reasons I went into journalism was because I thought it was the closest

thing to being a novelist, but I no longer think that's true.

Journalism is about explaining things as simply as you possibly can, so that people understand them; it's all about "telling" a story in a straightforward way. By contrast, the golden rule of fiction writing is "Show, don't tell." You want readers to figure it out for themselves, which is ultimately a deeper and more meaningful reading experience.

With a wife and three children, how and when do you write?

It's not easy. The other golden rule of writing is "Writers write", so if you want to be a writer, that's what you have to do, preferably every day. Most days, I get up at 5am and write from 5am to 7am, before the family is up.

Like many people in Singapore, I travel a lot – about four times a month, so I spend a lot of time in airports and hotel rooms. *Once Upon a Timepiece* was written in at least 11 or 12 countries. I wrote one story almost entirely while sitting on the floor of Mumbai airport, waiting for a delayed flight.

How did you go about getting your first book published?

As any writer will tell you, it's a hard and soul-destroying process, full of rejections, so you have to be patient and persistent. I think the most sensible route is to find a literary agent, as I did. Luck plays a big part, too. Not all that gets published is good, and not all that is good gets published.

What are you working on now?

Like most writers, I have at least four or five different books in different stages of progress. For about 14 years, I've been working on a historical thriller set in fifth-century Sri Lanka – breaking all the rules that you should write about what you know!

I've now completed the first draft, but it's been a 17-year passion project, a

labour of love.

Another of my works in progress has a similar concept to *Once Upon a Timepiece*, in that it revolves around an object that changes hands, linking the people and their stories. It's set in a pub in the UK, and the linking object is a coin: someone uses it to buy a drink, another puts it in the vending machine, another loses it in a bet, and so on. Each of the characters gives you a different perspective on the community, and those different perspectives combine to tell a bigger story.

There's no shortage of ideas, just a shortage of time to realise them!

How do you come to have such a wonderful name?

Starr is actually my middle name. The family name, Starr Wood, goes back nine generations to Captain Starr Wood, an English sea captain who is famous for his adventures and skirmishes with the French navy in the English Channel. Starr was the first name of the eldest son in the Wood family for the next seven generations, until my father decided that with me it would become a middle name. So my actual first name is Justin, but I write under Starr because it's a bit more unusual. 📖





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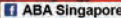
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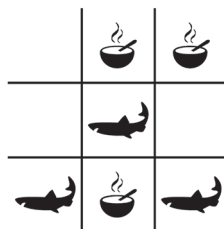
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Wine & Dine

Tacos from Robertson Quay's Super Loco

WHAT'S NEW

The latest trends in food and wine



IN HOT WATER

There's nothing like finding your \$12 tub of raspberries covered in mould the day after you bought them, especially after you took great pains to wash, dry and refrigerate them. The good news is that one tiny tweak to your routine may change this. New research shows you can significantly prolong the life of your berries by rinsing the fruit in hot water rather than cold. In a process called thermotherapy, rinsing berries, grapes and stone fruit in water of temperatures ranging between 45 and a whopping 63 degrees Celsius (or 113 to 145 degrees Fahrenheit) staves off mould for days.



Float this Idea

Singapore is short on space, yet full of hawker's centres. So why not float a few out to sea? That's the idea being proposed by Spark Architects – the masterminds behind a floating hawker centre, called **Solar Orchid**, made up of solar-powered hawker station pods that would pop up in a variety of locations and formats around the city. No word on whether this is a go or not, but sources say that plans are being made to have this project ready in time for SG50, the big bash in honour of Singapore's 50th birthday next year.



EASIEST ORDER EVER

Once you get used to big tables of communal food à la Asian style, the Western practice of "pick one meal from the menu" seems unnecessarily cruel. That's why **Halia at Raffles Hotel** is introducing a communal menu where diners can feast on Euro-Asian dishes that are shared by the entire table. Choose either the light (\$160, serves four) or the hearty option (\$270, serves four), and feast on dishes like wild honey goats' cheese mousse, chilli crab dip, minced beef "Zhajiangmian" (where the noodles are replaced with long vegetable strips), twice-cooked spatchcocked spring chicken, and much more. A definite crowd-pleaser. Raffles Hotel #01-22.

Call 9639 1148 or visit www.thehalia.com/raffles. ◀



SUPERFOOD SITDOWN

If you're looking a little bit drab lately, consider the food you are putting in and on your body. Foods rich in nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and antioxidants can do wonders for your skin and hair, whether you are eating them or applying them directly to your body. Join medical nutritionist Karin G. Reiter of **Nutritious & Delicious** for an anti-ageing workshop to learn all about superfoods to add to your daily diet, how to make natural skin and hair masks at home, and strategies to boost your daily nutrient intake. 27 October at 8pm. **To sign up, email karing@nutritiousndelicious.com or visit www.nutritiousndelicious.com.** ▲



Chip Clip

Meat is expensive and can be hard on the arteries; the meat industry is also a major producer of greenhouse gases. That's why some say the future of sustainable protein is in insects, including three Harvard grads who just launched **Chirps**, a brand of chips made up of ground beans, rice and cricket powder. Each bag is gluten-free, naturally low in fat and contains more protein than an egg. Two billion people in the world already eat bugs – so take your pick: sea salt, hickory BBQ or aged cheddar?

Brunch This Month: COCOTTE



We're really patting ourselves on the backs this month. It's not every day that you discover a place that's all French fare, all free-flow and priced under \$50. Taking cues from San Fran's famed State Bird Provisions restaurant (which, incidentally, ripped off the idea from Chinese dim sum carts), the entire brunch at Cocotte is served from trolleys that roll from table to table, dishing up French toast, *poutine* (Quebec-style fried potatoes), bacon and spinach quiche, duck *confit* and *cèpes* tarts, roasted pork collar and grass-fed Tasmanian flatiron steak. This brunch is for those who like quality over quantity – but make no mistake, you will leave absolutely stuffed (no one leaves without seconds of the roasted chicken, carved tableside, and the French onion soup "sandwiches"). Desserts, too, are phenomenal; they include crème brûlée, key lime curd and homemade banana bread topped with candied walnuts, caramel pecan sauce and house-made ice cream. It's truly the lazy man's bubbly buffet, but with better food and cheaper prices. Consider this weekend's plans made. Saturdays and Sundays, 12pm to 3pm. \$49 (for food only) and \$89 (for free-flow Prosecco). 2 Dickson Road, Wanderlust Hotel.

Call 6298 1188 or visit www.restaurantcocotte.com.

REVOLVING DOORS

- Keong Saik Snacks has been renamed **The Study**
- **Canele** is officially a thing of the past – the last remaining outlet of this French patisserie, located at Shaw House, has closed

SPOOKTACULAR TREATS

Visit Market Place & Jasons for the widest range of ghostly goodies and terrifying treats! You, your children and all your fellow trick-or-treaters will be in for an enjoyable surprise.



- Katong Market Place @ 112 Katong Basement 1
- Paragon Market Place @ Paragon Shopping Centre Basement 1
- Tanglin Market Place @ Tanglin Mall Basement 1
- Raffles City Market Place @ Raffles City Shopping Centre Basement 1
- Hillview market Place @ 4 Hillview Rise HillV2 #02-07



- Jasons @ Orchard Towers #01-01
- Jasons Ion @ ION Orchard #B4-17
- Jasons @ Sentosa Quayside Isle #01-26
- Jasons @ ToT 896 Dunearn #01-01A



SIP BEFORE YOU SPEND

There will be over 300 wines available for tasting and more than 70 winemakers from around the world at **Singapore Wine Fiesta 2014**. Hosted by The Straits Wine Company, the event features free master classes every 45 minutes and an opening night wine-pairing dinner at The Fullerton Bay Hotel. 23 to 26 October. Clifford Square (beside The Fullerton Bay Hotel). Tickets are \$55 each (\$228 for the wine dinner). sistic.com.sg



SWEET DEALS

Singapore Restaurant Week is shaking things up this time round. From 25 October to 2 November, over 100 participating restaurants will offer three-course meals (from \$25 to \$55), where one or more courses showcases an inventive use of chocolate – we're not just talking dessert, either. And on 18 and 19 October, there will also be a **Kids' Restaurant Weekend** for the first time, with three-course menus (from \$15 to \$30) tailored especially for children. (Parents, you can opt for the Restaurant Week menu one week early or order à la carte.) **Book a table now at** www.restaurantweek.sg.

HIGH CLASS CULINARY

If only there was a Pinterest-like website dedicated solely to food – and someone would teach us how to make the beautiful creations pictured in the photographs... right here in Singapore. Think you know where we're going with this? There is exactly that, now that *The Kitchen Society* has opened. Housed in a conservation shophouse along River Valley Road, the company offers cooking classes (everything from choux pastry to cake decorating and banana salted-caramel cheesecake), recipes galore and an online store for high-quality cooking products from brands like WMF, Silit, Kitchenaid and Magimix. 11 Kim Yam Road. thekitchensociety.com



EYE CANDY

This one is definitely not for the faint of heart. Book a spot – if you dare – at Saint Pierre's nine-course **Hannibal Lecter-themed Halloween dinner** with dishes like "Open your eyes, Clarisse" (an eye-ball shaped appetiser of hen egg *confit* with black truffle puree, Campari jelly and bellota ham, *shown here*) and more, all paired with fine Italian wines. \$168 per person. 31 October at 7.30pm. Communal seating. 31 Ocean Way, #01-15 Quayside Isle. **Call 6438 0887 or email** info@saintpierre.com.sg.





SEA HERE

The dish shown here is called *branzino alle olive* – sea bass rubbed with a black olive tapenade and wrapped in Parma ham, accented with sweet piquillos sauce and spinach. It's the creation of **Dolce Vita's** new chef, Omar Bernardi, a northern Italian who is spicing up the menu with dishes like handmade spaghetti with bottarga and prawns, gratinated zucchini flowers stuffed with milk ricotta, and a chilli-infused pineapple carpaccio. Try them at all at Mandarin Oriental's fifth-floor Italian restaurant, complete with a panoramic view of Marina Bay Sands and the Singapore Flyer. 5 Raffles Avenue, Marina Square. **To book, call 6885 3500 or email mosin-dining@mohg.com.**



HELLO KITTY

Japan's famous "cat cafés" have been around for a while, so it wasn't too much of a surprise when Singapore's first, Neko No Niwa, opened last year in Boat Quay. A passing trend? Perhaps not.

Singapore's second kitty coffee shop is now open for business. At Chinatown's

The Company of Cats, all cats are rescue animals – either born on the streets or abandoned by their owners – and have been adopted by the café. Plus, a portion of the company's profits goes to Animal Lovers League, a shelter for homeless animals. \$14 to enter (includes one soft drink). 6B Mosque Street (2nd floor). thecompanyofcats.sg



TUESDAY HEAD-TURNER

Turn your typical Tuesday on its head with oysters, champagne and live jazz at **The Powder Room**, located on the mezzanine of the CBD's The Black Swan. Every Tuesday, the lounge brings in sultry jazz quintet, The Steve McQueens, as the perfect backdrop to its collection of signature cocktails, wines, whiskies and gourmet bar snacks. Tuesdays, 5pm to 1pm. 19 Cecil Street. **Call 8181 3305 or visit www.theblackswan.com.sg.**





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the TASTE TEST

This month:
CORNER HOUSE
SUPER LOCO
DER BIERGARTEN
NINETY FOUR
NUTMEG & CLOVE

We sample the island's newest restaurants,
so you can decide whether to follow suit

Corner House

Singapore Botanic Gardens
1 Cluny Road, Nassim Gate
6469 1000 | cornerhouse.com.sg

Lately, I've dominated more than a few water cooler discussions with details about Corner House's **Cocoa Pebbles** dessert – a dish that would look more at home on the rolling lawns of the restaurant's Botanic Gardens location than on a dessert plate. Stop reading and take a look; dewy granite Alpaco chocolate mousse “stones” support meringue mushroom outcrops on a sprinkling of chocolate soil with a hidden spoonful of lemon curd underneath.

Gimmicky? Perhaps for some, but I loved it. Maybe it was the surroundings – the historic black-and-white bungalow that was the 16-year home of Les Amis Group's famed Au Jardin (it closed earlier this year) – or maybe it was the fact that the dessert pays homage to the late resident EJH Corner, who held fungi in special regard during his tenure as assistant director of the Botanic Gardens back in the 1930s and 1940s.

This house – and its history – mean that the new occupants have massive shoes to fill. Luckily, executive chef Jason Tan wears a size 12. The France-trained Singaporean combines skills acquired at the helm of Marina Bay

Sands' Sky on 57 with a pastry chef nabbed when Guy Savoy closed earlier this year, to prepare a cuisine dubbed “gastro-botanica” – a fancy way of saying, “let the plants do the talking”.

The emphasis on produce over protein is never more apparent than in the **carabinero prawn** starter, where, despite the name, tomatoes get top billing. The much bolder **oignon doux des Cevenne** pulls the onion from the realm of lowly aromatic to the main stage; it's onion done four ways, each as exciting to the palate as to the plate. (This restaurant has perfected the art of food presentation.) Perfectly slow-poached **Maine lobster** is partnered with *riso* pasta, rather than a heavier risotto, and complemented with aged Comté, Manjimup black truffle from Australia, delightfully crunchy pan-seared buckwheat crackles, and a glass of 2011 Pontcin, a crisp Côtes-du-Rhône Viognier.

Four and six courses are \$98 and \$148 respectively; gastronomes should let the kitchen show its chops with the eight-course Discovery Menu (\$248).

Monica Pitrelli



Oignon doux des Cevennes – onion prepared four ways (an onion shell encasing sous vide egg, onion puree and black truffles; a Parmesan onion confit tart; dehydrated onion chips; and a “tea” of onion emulsion with caramelised onion broth and Earl Grey tea)



Super Loco

60 Robertson Quay,
#01-13 The Quayside
6235 8900 | super-loco.com

I'll be honest: hailing from Southern California, it's been hard for me to fathom paying more than \$10 for "street-style" Mexican; but I've found an exception in the form of Super Loco. Though the new riverside eatery shares some menu items with its über-popular sister restaurant, Lucha Loco, it has plenty of signature specialties in its own right. Count on Lucha favourites like red-snapper-filled **taco de pescado** (\$11); **elotes** (\$8) – Mexican grilled corn – and **flautas** (\$18); and look for newbies like **tostadas de atún** (\$16) – tuna, chill-mayo, mint and lime; spicy **enchiladas con pollo** (\$22) with paprika cream and roasted salsa; and **ceviche de pulpo** (\$20), a generous portion of octopus with smoked paprika and squid ink.

Save some room for cinnamon-dusted **Super Churros** (\$12) with chocolate, orange and mescal sauce, and other desserts like **helado de maíz dulce** (\$6), a salted-caramel and sweet-corn ice cream topped with caramel popcorn.

The bar offers a wide selection of tequilas and mezcals, as well as margaritas, wines, beers, sangria and specialty cocktails. Our favourites were the **Passionfruit Smashito** (\$18) – vodka, passionfruit and vanilla nectar – and the refreshing **Paloma** (\$17) – Don Julio Reposado tequila, Aperol, grapefruit and lime juice, and soda.

This taqueria's ambience comes from strings of festive lighting and vibrant colours – think hot pink and aquamarine – that capture Mexico City's street-style spirit, and you can't help but want to wander in for some *comida y cocteles*. And, the fact that there's a take-away counter serving late-night tacos, *cervezas* and soft-serve ice cream definitely sweetens the deal. You can bet I'll be back for more.

Amy Greenburg



Enchiladas con pollo with paprika cream and roasted salsa



Ceviche de pulpo – a delicious blend of octopus ceviche, smoked paprika and squid ink

MUST-TRY DISH: *Taquitos de plantano* – sweet, barbecued plantains, spiced black beans, tomato salsa and crema.



Oven-roasted, crispy pork knuckle
with beer gravy, mashed potatoes and sauerkraut

Der Biergarten

48 Prinsep Street

9630 3079 | biergarten.com.sg

Free of fuss and hipster pretensions, Der Biergarten has stripped German eating back to basics with simple, traditional food and, of course, quality beer. For maximum atmosphere, sit outside in the laid-back beer garden on busy Prinsep Street, a spot from which to watch the world go by, with some serious comfort food. We'd recommend sharing a couple of dishes for mains: the **roast pork knuckle** served with beer gravy, creamy mash and sauerkraut (\$24/\$48), alongside the **Guinness beef cheek** (\$22). The cheesy, more-ish **Bavarian pasta spätzle** (\$12) and the unusual **mushroom fritters** (\$10) are both excellent with a draft beer – try Paulaner or San Miguel. To finish, the chef does a reasonable **apple strudel** (\$13). There's pool and live music upstairs on Monday, Friday and Saturday from 8.30pm, but go knowing you'll gleefully bust any carb-free resolutions.

Katie Roberts



OCTOBERFEST PLANS?

This year, five-piece band Anton and the Funny Guys flies in from Germany to play Singapore's Oktoberfest, appearing at Der Biergarten on 16 October. Throughout the month, there's a \$68 set menu and a special Paulaner Oktoberfest draught, brewed and brought in especially from Munich.

BARTAB

Ninety Four

94 Club Street
8180 0347 | ninetyfour.sg

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: Lovely warm interior with high industrial ceilings, rustic brickwork and spacious seating.

THE CHOSEN ONE: Any of the martinis (\$16, choose from apple, lychee or vodka), as well as the Bubble Gum shooter – a combo of Southern Comfort, crème de banana, grenadine and milk. Bailey's lovers should not leave without trying the Squashed Frog (\$28 for two).

THE CHEAPSKATE: \$12 for a full pint from a range of Archipelago draught beers.

BITE ON THIS: The thin-crust pizza *rucola e prosciutto* (\$28.80) is the perfect snack to share after a round (or two) of cocktails, while the spaghetti carbonara (\$20.80) is rich and full of flavour.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE? Part of the BLVD group, which also runs a number of bars and restaurants in the city area, this casual bar and bistro opens up seating by the roadside, alfresco style, every Friday and Saturday.

Susannah Jaffer



Nutmeg & Clove

17 Ann Siang Road
6423 9885 | facebook.com/nutmegandclove

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: Modern Chinese, trendy, city crowd.

THE CHOSEN ONE: The sweet, strong and terribly more-ish Singapore Sling (\$20) includes spiced, hibiscus-infused London dry gin, cherry Heering, Bénédictine DOM, *goji* and red date syrup, and a mix of orange cream citrate and old time aromatic bitters. It's aged in a barrel for two weeks, then served in a Chinese cup and placed in a little wicker rickshaw lined with monkey nuts. If you have friends in town, this is the place to bring them for a sling; not only is their concoction far better (and cheaper) than the other place that famously sells them, but it's wonderfully quirky – and you still get to throw nuts around.

THE CHEAPSKATE: Draught Kirin goes for \$10 per glass; wine starts at \$11.

BITE ON THIS: The Atlantic codfish croquettes (\$12), with smoked cream cheese, crispy anchovies and smoked vinegar powder, are a must-try. But be warned, you'll probably fight over these six little bundles of deliciousness, so order two plates.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST: This is a local place with local flavours – you'd be forgiven for walking past as the name is written in Chinese over the door. Ann Siang used to be a nutmeg and clove plantation, so many of the drinks here use these spices as well as others typically found in Southeast Asia. The menu is divided into four eras – Trading Post, Crown Colony, Sovereign State and Metropolis – signifying the changes that the country has been through over the years. The drinks in each of the eras are based on beverages that were popular at the time. Head bartender and resident mixologist, Kai, from Taiwan, came third in the world in the Best Bartender competition, and was judged best in Asia Pacific. The man is a wizard.

Jade McLean



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CATTLE CALL

We posed five rapid-fire questions to three meat suppliers in town. Here's the result.

HUBER'S BUTCHERY

I just received two last-minute RSVPs for my dinner party on Friday night. How fast can you deliver to me?

Order before 12 noon, and we will deliver the next day.

I've got \$100 to spend on a steak dinner for two – what should I buy?

Two 300-gram Australian wagyu ribeye steaks with a marbling score of 6/7 will cost you about \$82.80. For the same quality and size, you could expect to pay around \$250 in a restaurant.

Did I say \$100 – I meant \$25! Point me in the right direction.

Go for a big 300-gram Australian grass-fed sirloin steak. That would leave you with \$3.40, which you can use to buy a nice steak butter in flavours like café de Paris, garlic and herb.

I don't want anything with antibiotics or hormones, or anything that was corn-fed. What do you recommend?

Our certified 100-percent organic beef from Australia. The livestock grazes on pasture totally free from synthetic chemicals, herbicides and pesticides. The animals are also free from antibiotics and growth hormones, and the cattle do not feed on corn, grain or animal, agricultural or industrial by-products. They eat only grass and hay – the things, we believe, that cattle are meant to eat. This means the beef possesses the full mineral, nutrient and omega-3 fatty acid profiles of typical green-pasture-raised animals.

How are you different from the rest of the pack?

The MeaThesaurus guide on our website has loads of information about beef, from diagrams and safety guides to tips on grilling, barbecuing, pan-frying, stir-frying, roasting, boiling, braising, stewing – even sous vide cooking. Plus, our butchers are more than happy to assist with recipes, tips and suggestions when you order in the store, so that you know what to do with your purchases once you get home.



THE FISHWIVES

If we have it in stock, we can arrange delivery to you on the same day.

Buy a packet of Pure Black eye fillet steaks – there are two in a pack – for \$27.50, and a bottle of Terrace Edge Pinot Noir for \$55, and you'll still have change left over.

That's easy. Buy a packet of stir-fry Pure Black beef at \$16 or a piece of porterhouse steak (enough for two people) at \$20.50, and serve with rice and veggies. A tub of hummus or red pepper dip at \$6.50 to have with a drink first would be a nice touch, too.

Our Pure Black grass-fed beef products and our lamb products from New Zealand are all hormone- and antibiotic-free, pasture-raised and delicious. The beef comes mainly from smaller farms in Victoria, Tasmania and the southeastern corner of South Australia, while the lamb comes from Gisborne on the east coast of New Zealand's North Island.

We are the only people in Singapore selling Pure Black beef from Tasmania. We are also the only company selling MUD Australia Ceramics, which is beautiful handmade homeware and kitchenware that is perfect for cooking and serving your meat.

THE BUTCHER

If you order by 4pm on Thursday, you can add anything you like for your Friday night dinner party.

Buy two 300-gram eye fillets from The Butcher's own Angus Pure or Arrawatta Trinity suppliers. You simply won't find better steak anywhere. You would still have enough to buy a bottle of Dust Kickers Barossa Shiraz to top off the meal... grab a bunch of flowers for extra brownie points!

Buy one of our great grass-fed sirloin steaks and ask the butcher to cut it into two 200-gram steaks.

Close your eyes, spin around three times and point to any of our products. Cows eat grass, sheep eat grass – why feed them anything else? We deal with small processors and can show you on a map where our farmers live. It's all grass-fed, and it's all great.

We know who our farmers are and we know how our products are raised. And we have some great Aussie products – exclusive small goods like black pudding and double-smoked bacon, and biodynamic and organic cheeses from small, independent, award-winning cheese makers that you simply won't find anywhere else.

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18A Dempsey Road
hubers.com.sg

The Fishwives
#01-04A Cluny Court, 501
Bukit Timah Road
thefishwives.com

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Steakhouse

How much cash are you willing to spend for a little cow? Here are some spots that will either bless you or bust your wallet right open.

HUNT



SAVVY SAVER

BELLE BY BEAUJOLAIS

1 Ann Siang Hill

6224 2227 | beaujolaissg.com/belle

THE OCCASION: A great first date spot or something to spice up regular weekend dinners with your spouse. Try to nab one of the two tables on the balcony that overlook the activity on busy Club Street – it's a great people-watching spot. The atmosphere is casual and upbeat, with black-and-white tablecloths and vintage décor complementing the modern European menu. Recently opened, Belle is the prodigy of Beaujolais, a Club Street landmark since 1988.

THE ONE TO ORDER: Cote de Boeuf, a one-kilogram, Australian grain-fed, thick beef cut with grade-five marbling. Good for at least two people, it's cooked the French way; grilled for at least 20 minutes and finished in the oven, depending on your "doneness" preference. Served sliced on a board with fries, salad and a choice of sauces, it's a hearty dish, perfect to satisfy any red-meat craving.

THE OTHERS: Knowing the steak is coming, start with a simple serving of New Zealand mussels (\$20) cooked in a *pomodoro* sauce. To finish, the white chocolate lava cake (\$12) is an excellent twist on the milk chocolate version. A lighter option is the lychee jelly (\$12) with lemon sorbet. Both are delicious.

THE OUTLAY: If you're watching pennies and waistlines, three people could easily share the Cote de Boeuf (\$100), making it good value. The other steak option is the T-bone, which at \$48 is priced for one person; other mains hover around the \$25 mark. There's also Stella draught beer and decent wines at respectable prices. I think we could become regulars.

Katie Roberts

A three-course lunch for \$21? Yes, this is unbeatable value, available weekdays from 12 noon to 3pm. The menu changes; it currently features a salad, a rack of lamb and white lava cake.

BEDROCK BAR & GRILL

96 Somerset Road

#01-05 Pan Pacific Serviced Suites

6238 0054 | bedrock.com.sg**SPLURGE**

THE OCCASION: Orchard Road is riddled with fast food joints and run-of-the-mill chains, so searching for post-splurge sustenance is often tricky. When you're famished from a day of shopping or looking to reward your man's patience for trawling around the malls with you, Bedrock Bar & Grill is a great option.

THE ONE TO ORDER: If you're hunting as a pack, I recommend you tuck into the Tomahawk Steak, an on-the-bone chunk of prime ribeye weighing in from a hefty 1.6kg to 2.5kg (and priced at \$96 per 400g). This grain-fed F1 wagyu from Australia is Bedrock's pride and glory. If you like your meat a little leaner, try the USDA prime tenderloin (\$89 for 240g), which is packed with flavour.

THE OTHERS: Vegans will feel surprisingly at home here, with the grilled, meaty mushroom "Steak" Diane and truffle fries (\$32) a popular choice.

For dessert, the apple crumble for two (\$25) is an all-time favourite, thanks to its oven-baked apples, walnut streusel and over-sized scoop of vanilla ice cream; it's so good you'll find it difficult to put the spoon down.

THE OUTLAY: If your wallet's already taken a knock from the shops, the prices here are bound to add insult to injury; but servings are hefty, so you could skip appetisers. Groups would do well to home in on the "For the Table" options: the rack of lamb (\$129) and twice-cooked beef ribs (\$98) will feed three or four people. And make your pennies go further during the generous happy hour stretch from Monday to Saturday – between 3pm and 9pm, you can enjoy one-for-one on selected beers, house wines and spirits.

Leanda Rathmell

SAVVY SAVER

BLACK ANGUS STEAKHOUSE

1 Tanglin Road,
#01-08 Orchard Parade Hotel
6734 1181 | blackangus.com

THE OCCASION: An early dinner with the kids. The service is speedy, and the booths intimate, ensuring a relaxing yet not too drawn-out meal (little darlings won't tolerate highchairs for too long, of course) at this cosy American-style steakhouse.

THE ONE TO ORDER: My husband is a man who likes a good steak (preferably from Morton's) so it was questionable how this relatively cheap steak meal (with steamed veggies and a choice of mash, jacket or fries) would go down. The eight-ounce USDA tenderfoot filet mignon (\$54; one ounce of beef is around 30 grams) – all natural, air-flown, “dry aged to perfection” steak was, he says, faultless, and a completely clean plate was a testament to that. And, it was excellent value for money – about a quarter of the price of his favourite place.

THE OTHERS: Who can resist a colossal battered and fried onion, shaped like a desert flower? Not us. This is an American favourite, and it was done well here with a lovely, tangy Wild West dip. The Bourbon Street pecan pie was average, but the Florida key lime pie really hit the spot, despite the meringue having been replaced by fresh cream. Being a big fish-eater, I went for the pan-fried cod seabass with mango salsa, which was flaky, flavourful and also cooked to perfection.

THE OUTLAY: Prices here are pretty reasonable, considering the portion sizes. You'll need a big appetite if you're going to take a starter (ranging from \$8.50 to \$23) as well as a main (steaks from \$34 to \$66). The set lunch is a great deal – for around \$25 you get a starter, main, side order and dessert with a soft drink – though you'll need to plan for a siesta after this one!

Jade McLean





Maori Lakes NZ 150-day
grain-fed fillet

SPLURGE

SALT GRILL & SKY BAR BY LUKE MANGAN

ION Orchard, #55-01 and #56-01 | 6592 5118 | saltgrill.com

THE OCCASION: A carnivore's birthday or an anniversary splurge, but there's a good choice of other modern Aussie fare, too, including vegetarian dishes. Or pop in for pre- or post-prandial drinks and perhaps tapas in the eyrie-like Sky Bar, one level up and with a stunning vista. (No, in fact, better book ahead.) High ceiling-to-floor windows give spectacular views from the 55th storey of ION Orchard, so best book a window table.

THE ONE TO ORDER: Served table-side, the wagyu tri-tip, from Mayura Station on the Limestone Coast of South Australia, is – like all the beef on the menu – free-range farmed. We're assured that the wagyu is raised very similarly to how it's done in Japan. Today's cut is terrifically tasty and winsomely tender, thanks to an immaculate pedigree and a marble score of 9+. It's served with baby zucchini, caramelised onion, parmesan polenta, cherry tomato and red wine jus. It's fun experimenting with the selection of mustards provided, too. (What? No Colman's Hot English?)

THE OTHERS: Signature appetiser sashimi of kingfish with marinated ginger and shallots and goat's milk feta is a winner, or try the elegant tea-smoked quail with almond cream, prunes, grilled shallot and sorrel. Lovers of fillet will enjoy the 200g Maori Lakes NZ 150-day grain-fed fillet, topped with béarnaise sauce and served with giant and tender spears of grilled green asparagus.

THE OUTLAY: Appetisers are in the range \$31 to \$42, and mains start from about \$50. The wagyu cut of the day is "market priced", and it's \$75 for the fillet. With views like this, though, you're getting dinner *and* a show.

Verne Maree



Outback's version of surf and turf, its sirloin and shrimp main course

OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE

Orchard Gateway
277 Orchard Road #04-01 (also on Millenia Walk)
6702 6842 | outback-sea.com

THE OCCASION: A brief respite from a quick shopping trip and the perfect spot for a lunchtime girlie catch up. Bag a booth by the window for good views of Emerald Hill and Orchard Road.

THE ONE TO ORDER: The ribeye (\$37.90). This comes with a decent amount of marbling through its eight ounces. It's seasoned with Outback's secret blend of 17 different seasonings. Whatever's in it, it tastes good, and if you like it, you can buy it. The ribeye, as with all of Outback's steaks bar the striploin (which is from the US), is from Australia, and is grain-fed, dry-aged Angus beef.

THE OTHERS: Although the flavours of our shared starter of crab cakes (\$15.90) were good, the two patties came with a little too much grease and not enough crunch on the outside. The spicy remoulade, however, was delicious. The other main of sirloin and grilled shrimp (\$34.90) came with juicy corn on the cob and a pot of coleslaw, which was freshly made – a rarity here. Dessert, the "chocolate thunder from Down Under" (\$14.90), was an enormous, warm chocolate brownie with vanilla ice cream, cream and chocolate sauce. This was the only time conversation halted completely.

THE OUTLAY: Prices range from \$27.90 for the six-ounce sirloin to \$39.90 for the steak and ribs combo. The restaurant also offers lunch specials from Monday to Friday, starting at \$12.90 for a grilled pork chop with Aussie fries (more thickly cut than French), the soup of the day and a glass of soda.

Amy Brook-Partridge

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SPLURGE

Japanese steak, shown here "naked" – without the accompanying ginger soy sauce, sudachi wedge, sea salt and spicy yuzu kosho

FAT COW

1 Orchard Boulevard
#01-01/02 Camden Medical Centre
6735 0308 | fat-cow.com.sg

THE OCCASION: A birthday treat for the steak-lover in your life who also has an affinity for Japanese fare. If they've never tried Japanese steak, even better, as the first bite of steak of this calibre is nothing short of a paradigm-shifting meat-eating experience. Private tables are available, but the best place to chat up the chefs about the meal you're about to embark on is at the U-shaped counter around the open kitchen.

THE ONE TO ORDER: The Japanese steaks – any of them. These steaks contain more fat than Aussie and American steaks – *in a good way*; rather than being marbled in thick bands, the fat is dotted throughout, buckshot style. The tiny pockets melt into the meat when cooked, producing some of the best bites of steak that I've ever had the pleasure of eating. The

grade A3 sirloin is fantastic, but consider upgrading to Iwate prefecture A5 ribeye if you have the means. Or go for the *omakase* tasting platter for a side-by-side taste test of Japanese, Aussie and US steaks. Each plate comes with roasted ginger soy sauce, a *sudachi* wedge, a mound of sea salt and a quarter thimble of *yuzu kosho*, a powerfully spicy citrus sauce, allowing you to dabble in different flavour contrasts as the meal progresses.

THE OTHERS: Since the meat is so rich, go light around the edges. Start with the house sea bream speciality, an unbelievable combination of raw fish and black truffle, with *konbu* and chives added in for good measure. The *momotaro* salad is a sliced Japanese tomato with spicy *mizuna* (Japan's version of arugula) and ginger *ponzu*

– so simple, yet so divine (try finding tomatoes like this at your local grocer). The red bean *obanyaki* (lemony pancakes with braised red beans and pink *sakura* floss) is an interesting end to the meal, though I'd be just as happy with one scoop of the artisanal *yuzu* ice cream next time.

THE OUTLAY: Japanese steak of this quality doesn't come cheap; expect to pay between \$90 and \$150 for 150 grams for the meat alone. The prices of sides and starters run the gamut – the heavenly sea bream is \$38, while a bowl of homemade udon is a humble \$9. Veggie sides, like eggplant glazed in honey miso and sake, lime and butter-braised mushrooms, cost between \$10 and \$15.

Monica Pitrelli



French toast
Nutella

SAVVY SAVER

HIPPOPOTAMUS RESTAURANT GRILL

6 Raffles Boulevard #01-204/205 Marina Square
6338 5352 | hippopotamus.com.sg

THE OCCASION: A quick bite before the cinema or a fuss-free shopping break with the kids. This conveniently located and fun eatery is a no-frills dining experience that is ideal if you just want good quality food, quickly and affordably.

THE ONE TO ORDER: The highly flavoured wagyu flank (200 grams, \$32.90) from Australia is a delicious cut from the abdominal muscles of the cow. It tends to be bright red in colour as it comes from a well-exercised part of the animal, and is best sliced against the grain for tenderness. Being a huge meat-lover, I ordered this steak rare and it was melt-in-the-mouth, accompanied perfectly by the pepper sauce.

THE OTHERS: The Hippo 5th Avenue burger (\$17.90) combines a thick juicy beef patty with onions, salad and crispy strips of bacon. If you still have room for dessert, the French toast Nutella (\$7.50) is something special, a perfect sweet treat for the kids!

THE OUTLAY: For the quality of the steaks, this is a well-priced restaurant. Expect to pay anywhere from \$30 to \$40 for your steak, which includes two sides and a sauce.

Natalie Whittell 



Wagyu flank
(500 grams)



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THE GREAT RECIPE SWAP

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

CRISPY CORNFLAKE-BAKED FISH Serves 3



Shar Kay, Singaporean

"I'm married to an American, and we have two lovely young daughters who are my inspiration for adopting a healthier cooking style without compromising on taste and texture. I write all about my cooking adventures on my blog, www.delishar.com."



Ingredients:

- 2 fillets of halibut, about 600g cut into 2.5 inch pieces
- 1 egg
- 3 tbsp milk
- ¼ cup all purpose flour
- ½ tsp garlic salt
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp dried parsley flakes
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp shredded parmesan cheese
- 2½ cups cornflakes, crushed in a Ziploc bag
- Oil or cooking spray

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 220 degrees Celsius.
2. On a plate, mix salt and pepper, garlic salt, onion powder and parsley into the flour. Beat the egg and milk together in a bowl.
3. Place the crushed cornflakes and cheese on another plate and mix well.
4. First coat fish with flour mixture, then dip in egg mixture, then coat in cornflake mixture.
5. Place fish pieces on an oiled baking pan a few centimetres apart.
6. Bake on the lower rack for 12 to 15 minutes until the fish flakes easily. Serve alongside crispy green salad.

LEMON DRIZZLE CAKE Serves 8



Mary Lobb, British

"Lemon drizzle cake is a tea-time classic that's super-simple to make, even at short notice. It also travels well, so it's great for picnics. The topping is very tangy and has a satisfying crunch, but you can also experiment with frosting and glaze toppings."

Ingredients:

Cake:

- 100g softened butter
- 150g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 150g golden caster sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 6 tbsp milk
- finely grated rind of a large, unwaxed lemon

Icing:

- juice of a large lemon (use an extra lemon if you like the topping really zingy)
- 100g golden caster sugar

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius / gas mark 4. Line a tin (approx. 20cm x 20cm) with baking parchment, or use a loaf tin.
2. Tip all the cake ingredients into large mixing bowl and beat for two to three minutes until mixture drops easily off a spoon. Spoon the mixture into the tin and flatten it with the back of a spoon.
3. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes until it's golden and a toothpick comes out clean.
4. Beat together icing ingredients and pour over the cake while still hot.
5. For squares, cool in tin before cutting; otherwise, allow to cool and turn out as a loaf.



If we publish your recipe in our magazine, you'll be adding a great cookbook to your bookshelf. This month it's **Baked Delights**, the perfect cookbook for discovering the world of baking. Interesting recipes range from an exciting sweet centrepiece to "pie pops", innovative cookies and homemade sweets. 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, send an email titled Great Recipe Swap to Beate at contribute@expatliving.sg with your recipe, a photo of yourself, and a few words about your dish. Thanks, Chef! 🍳



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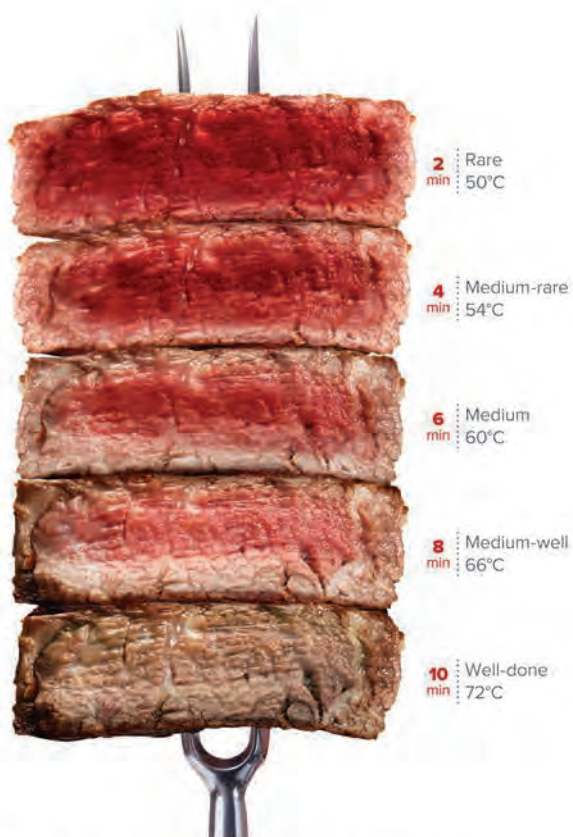
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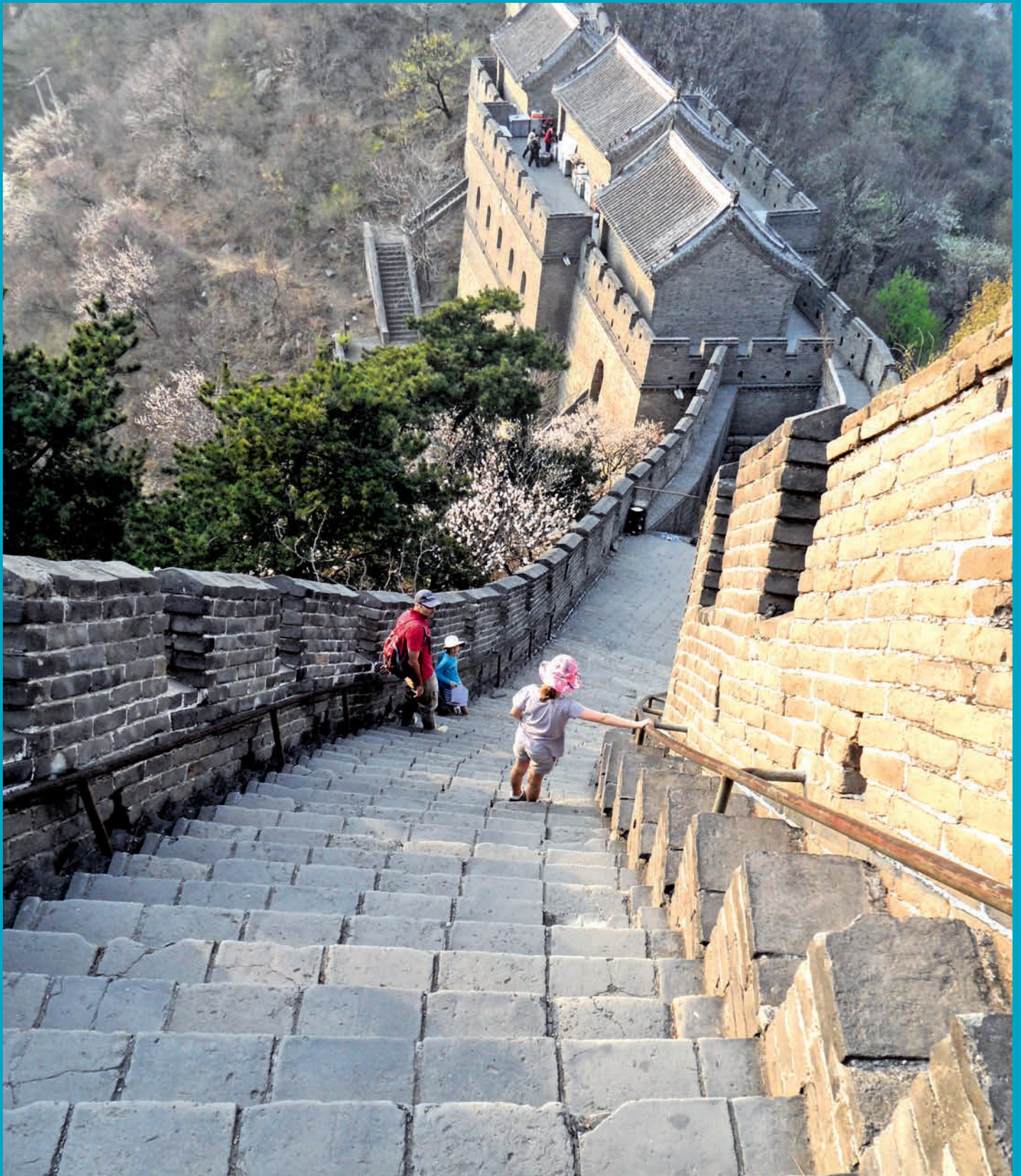
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SKIING IN STYLE

YTL Hotels has launched a new collection of luxury resorts, hotels and residences. The **Kasara** brand will be made up of properties in Asia and beyond, including Niseko Village Townhouse. Located within Niseko Village, YTL's award-winning ski resort at the foot of Mount Niseko Annupuri in Hokkaido, the collection of townhouses will embody authentic Japanese charm with contemporary elegance, in the heart of Asia's hottest skiing destination. The first phase of Kasara Niseko Village Townhouse opens in December this year. kasara.com/nisekovillage ▲

PLANE GRIPES

Topping the list of **flyer complaints** in a recent TripAdvisor survey on air travel were uncomfortable seats and limited legroom, with 61 percent of travellers listing these as frustrations. Next on the list came flight delays and cancellations (50 percent) and the price of tickets (50 percent). Crying children rounded out the top five (42 percent), and more than half of the 1,200 respondents said they would pay to sit in a child-free section of a plane. As for improvements in air travel, ease of booking ranked number one, with 63 percent of people giving a tick to advances in the purchasing process. ▼



SAFARI WITH A DIFFERENCE

Here's a chance to experience African wildlife close-up, while supporting conservation efforts. **Vision Africa Wildlife** runs several projects that volunteers can participate in, including the Thsipe Rhino Project and the Umkwali Cheetah Project. Each one aims to create safer environments for animals (including fighting the problem of poaching) and to bring local communities together. Activities can include tracking rhinos in the morning and evening, fence checks, border patrols, animal darting for collaring, and monitoring or researching animal behaviour. visionafrica@mweb.co.za
visionafricawildlife.co.za

YACHTING AND JETTING

According to luxury aviation company, Private Jet Charter, Sardinia is becoming a magnet for the world's rich and famous. In particular, Costa Smeralda on **the island of Olbia** is taking on the French Riviera in the glamour stakes, thanks to its white sand and turquoise water. (Sardinian beaches are sometimes used as stand-ins for the Caribbean in commercials.) Private jets fly into Olbia airport, from where it's a 10-minute limousine transfer to the superyachts moored in Olbia's harbour; Cannes, Nice, Monaco and St Tropez are popular destinations for the yachts and their owners. If you fancy a slice of this life, do some exploring at www.yachting-pages.com and www.privatejetcharter.co.uk. ▼





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A Holiday with *History*

By Rebecca Bisset

Exploring a little bit of everything – old and new, grand and simple – on a short break in Siem Reap.

Did you know that tourists started trickling to the Angkor temples and ruins around Siem Reap as early as 1907? By the mid-1920s there was a proposal to construct five hotels throughout French Indochina to host what was turning into a flood of visitors. They even continued to come during the Great Depression, with 1934 alone recording 2,817 tourists, mostly from America but also Europe.

Aside from the temples, hunting was a big attraction; right up until the 1950s, Cambodian “game” included wild buffalo, bears, elephants, tigers and panthers. Thank goodness it’s all about photography safaris today – I doubt if there’d be many of the big game animals left to hunt, even if someone wanted to.

For me, the appeal of Siem Reap is not just the nearby temples, but also the fact that everything is in one area, mostly within walking or *tuk tuk* distance. The markets are cheap and the haggling



Michaela at Angkor Wat



isn't aggressive. The beer and food is (mostly) cheap. And the place has got a little buzz all of its own. So when my eldest daughter and I decided to have a weekend away together, I thought Siem Reap would be the perfect place: a bit of culture, a bit of history (which she studied at school), and some shopping and eating!

On previous trips, I had stayed in four-star and no-star (\$15 a night) accommodation respectively; both were great. This time I opted for something different: Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor. The hotel had recently sent some lovely images through to *Expat Living*, and one of our editors, Katie, stayed there on a previous trip, so I thought as a treat it would be nice to stay somewhere special. The original hotel opened in Siem Reap in the early 1930s, and my daughter and I were both excited about staying in a place so full of history.

On arrival, the hotel – which is a creamy yellow colour – didn't seem as “manicured” as the Raffles in Singapore. Yet it's still grand. Based on the “palace” hotels of Europe of that period, with its raised portico, shutters and balconies, it's also linked by gardens to the current royal residence of Siem Reap. The hotel is superbly maintained inside and has a real “old world” feel. We were absolutely wowed when we were upgraded to one of the two suites; Hilary Clinton had stayed in it recently while in Cambodia on a diplomatic visit. How's that for “historic”?



The pool



Ta Prohm



Banteay Srei



Bayon in Angkor Thom



Ta Prohm

The suite was so big that my daughter and I decided to sleep in the same room as the bedrooms were so far apart – there was a huge living-cum-dining room in between the rooms. The beds were very firm, though, so I'm not sure how "Hils" would have got on. There's also a large, deep veranda, so it does feel like you're staying in a separate villa. The hotel's huge swimming pool is only a couple of hundred metres away, set behind frangipanis and other plants.

Raffles is only eight kilometres from Angkor Wat, and it's easy to get there by *tuk tuk* or car – or bicycle, if you're really keen. We passed quite a few tourists on bikes in the dark at 5am – we weren't sure if they were brave or stupid. Regardless of whether you want to cycle or walk, I wouldn't recommend going on a long visit to the temples in July; the heat was pretty stifling, even when we were on the way back from our first tour at 7.15am. We were very grateful for the nice cold towels the driver provided us with at regular intervals (e.g., as we came through the airport, as we entered the hotel, and every time we got back in to the car after sight-seeing – brilliant!).

After watching the sunrise at Angkor Wat, we spent about a further hour there, mainly looking at the stories carved into the stone walls. While it was interesting enough for my teenager, the need for breakfast did get in the way of further exploration. And although the tour guides are always good, ours was a little too chatty for 5am. We needed time to wake up!

Private dinner at the Bayon





The master bedroom at the villa

It was so good to be able to come back to the luxury of Raffles and a really wonderful breakfast (Champagne included in this) before we set off on our next adventure. This time it was to the Bayon and Ta Prohm ("the Tomb Raider temple"); I can't decide which is my favourite – the stone faces at Bayon are so beautiful, but the way nature has worked its way through the ruins at Ta Prohm and the colour of that temple's stones really fascinate me.

Later we had quite a long session at the museum; it's worth getting the individual headphone sets so you can go at your own pace. There are also ceramic, silk and silver shops that are worth popping into; I spent a fortune on a couple of pieces and I'm not sure if I paid too much or not! The markets are definitely value for money – lots of silver jewellery, cool baggy "elephant" pants that are the uniform of Cambodian tourists, and nice crockery and artefacts. Always shop at night – it's much cooler.

There are plenty of massage places and we had a fabulous foot massage, fish spa and then pedicure, all for about \$10. The quality of the food varies; on Pub Street we had a great meal the first night and an awful one the next. My advice is wait until you see where others are eating – if it's empty, avoid it. The food at the hotel was excellent and I wish we had had dinner there on the second night; lunch on the first day was excellent and very reasonably priced.

A *tuk tuk* from Raffles to the middle of town is around three to five dollars; you can ask them to wait for you or SMS them when you're ready, but there are always plenty around. I always pay them more – in my way, that's my "charity". And I always try to buy a book or two from the children selling them on the streets. *First They Killed My Father* is written by a lady who is now a lawyer living in the US. She was seven, I think, when the Khmer Rouge marched her and her family out of Phnom Penh, and the book is all about those years



High Tea at the Conservatory, Raffles

in the Killing Fields. This time, I bought the follow-up, *The Lucky Child*, which surrounds her reunion years later with the few members of her family that had survived. It's fascinating and kind of scary that things like this are still going on in the world. You'd think we would have learnt by now!

This part of the world witnessed all kinds of things over the last century: with the Japanese military presence in the late 1930s and early 1940s, tourism went on hold; but there was a recovery, and the years between 1955 to 1965 witnessed huge growth and modernisation – Jacqueline Kennedy and Princess Margaret were amongst the visitors then. The 1970s and 1980s saw prospects dive again, but since the mid-1990s the region – and the hotel – have been on the up. Raffles International Ltd took over the property in 1996, and Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor opened at the end of 1997 with 131 rooms, about twice the original number.

The hotel has seen lots of interesting guests in its history – will it end up seeing you, too? This is a great place for a break – a short break, that is: two or three nights will do. And if you enjoy it, you can always go back again – like me. 🇰🇷



The Royal Gardens in front of the hotel

SilkAir and Jetstar fly direct from Singapore to Siem Reap, though the schedules aren't daily.

For Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor reservations, call +855 63 963 888 or visit raffles.com/siem-reap.

Tours can be booked through the hotel or through Country Holidays in Singapore (countryholidays.com.sg).

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Where to Go *This Christmas*

On the first day of Christmas, we're hoping our true love gives us tickets to a fabulous holiday somewhere in the region or beyond. And to narrow the destinations down a bit, here are four festive suggestions from bespoke tour operator **Lightfoot Travel**.



BEACH – Phuket

While definitely not off-the-beaten-path, Phuket tops our list of Christmas beach destinations largely for its accessibility and weather – sunny skies and minimal rain. There are dozens of family-friendly resorts and romantic boutique hotels, and if you're travelling as a group, fully staffed private villas provide excellent value for money. There really is nothing better than concluding each day with sundowner cocktails by the pool, followed by a delicious in-villa dinner with friends and family, prepared with the freshest of local ingredients.

Why go: Great weather, range of activities and day trip options, sophisticated dining scene

Where to stay:

Families – Six Senses Yao Noi
Couples – Trisara
Villa – Shanti at Jivana



CULTURE – Sri Lanka

This tiny teardrop-shaped island packs a huge holiday punch in terms of things to do. Start by visiting the Cultural Triangle, for its stunning archaeology and mountaintop temples. Next, hop on one of the old British trains as it winds its way through magical hill country dotted with tea plantations and colonial hill stations. Then head down to the southern coast for some beach time, making sure to stop and explore the Dutch fort at Galle. Sri Lanka's diverse landscape is incredibly safe to travel through with your private guide. Meet warm and friendly people, and for the foodies out there, savour their fresh seafood curries and world-famous dhal.

Why go: Great meeting point for families or groups of friends coming from both Asia and Europe or America, superb private villas

Where to stay:

Families – Leopard Safaris
Couples – Ceylon Tea Trails
Villa – Pointe Sud





SKI – Niseko or Whistler

For a short-haul ski holiday in Asia, Japan's Niseko takes the cake. Fantastic powder and beautifully appointed apartments and chalets alongside a great selection of restaurants and bars see people return year after year. Due to limited holiday availability in Niseko, however, Canada's Whistler is also increasing in popularity among those who don't mind the longer flight. The resort has two mountains connected by a peak-to-peak gondola, slopes for all abilities, a fantastic ski school, a charming village with excellent restaurants, and some of the friendliest people we've encountered.

Why go: Niseko – amazing powder, convenience; Whistler – variety of terrain, great Christmas atmosphere

Where to stay:

Niseko – Ki Niseko, Shiki Niseko

Whistler – Four Seasons Whistler, Fairmont Whistler



ALL-ROUND – South Africa

South Africa provides a mix of safari, city, wine country and beach, and when you throw in amazing southern hemisphere summer weather it makes for a pretty epic holiday. Start with a few days in Cape Town hiking Table Mountain and the Cape of Good Hope, and visiting Robben Island. Next, head to stunning wine country to visit fine vineyards, before driving the famous Garden Route and spending a few nights in the coastal town of Hermanus. Lastly, embark on a safari in the north of the country, learning not just about the Big Five (elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard), but all the other little animals that make up the area's magnificent biosphere.

Why go: Sheer range of activities, some of the world's best wine and exceptional dining

Where to stay:

Cape Town – Kensington Place

Wine Country – Delaire Graff Estate & Spa

Hermanus – Birkenhead House

Safari – Ant's Nest 



Lightfoot Travel specialises in family holidays, honeymoons, corporate travel and short breaks to destinations across the world. To create your own tailor-made itinerary, contact them at 6438 4091 or visit www.lightfoottravel.com.



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DESTINATION CHINA:

HOW TO HIT THE HOTSPOTS

From the Wall to the Warriors, China has something to offer every visitor. Here's our guide to making the most of your time in the Middle Kingdom.

*By Katie Roberts and
Monica Pitrelli*



SEE

China's capital is a sprawling mega-city of 21 million people and five-and-a-half million cars (not all on the road at the same time, thanks to the "odds and evens" number-plate system). But it's a city of contrasts: away from the wide boulevards lined with grand, statement buildings, which feel more akin to a European capital, are the narrow, grey **hutongs**, or traditional neighbourhoods.

Many of these historic warrens are within walking distance of two of Beijing's best-known sights: the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square. The central area that includes these landmarks is one of just a handful that tourists should concentrate on. Others, a taxi ride away, include the shopping and night-life enclave of **Sanlitun**, the art galleries of quirky **798** district, and the renowned **Summer Palace**.

Though many hutongs were demolished a decade ago in the rush to modernisation, the 25 that remain standing are protected. One of these is **Wudaoying**, close to the Forbidden City and home to the **Drum Tower**, once the city's time-keeper. While many residents have sold and moved out to high-rise developments, there's a certain feel to the hutongs that no apartment complex can replicate.

The narrow lanes, high walls and large, forbidding wooden doors conceal quaint courtyards shared by residents, often extended family. Also shared, by tourists and residents alike, are the public toilets. (Warning: the low

partitions do not allow much privacy.)

An intriguing custom to follow when passing through the doorway of a home or temple is to avoid standing or stepping on the wooden threshold, known as "the edge of difficulty". It's meant to keep out the evil spirits, who have no knees and cannot jump.

Kids will be fascinated to meet some of the personalities who call the hutongs home, but a guide is essential for translation. Retired cricket-trainer (the insect, not the bat-and-ball sport), 64-year-old Mr Liu, welcomes people into his home for insights into the thousand-year-old tradition of cricket-fighting. He proudly shows off the champion status of his crickets, and the accoutrements required for breeding them. There's even a tiny wedding chamber and, of course, coffins. Hugely popular, the fights are legal, though gambling on them is illegal.

Eating dumplings for lunch and riding a rickshaw through the narrow alleys is a fun way to take in the pace of hutong daily life. Stunning **Lama Temple**, **Houhai Lake** and **Beihai Park** are all easily accessible from Wudaoying, and a boat ride across the lakes of Houhai or Beihai at sunset is highly recommended.

In a half day it's possible to take in **Tiananmen Square** after a self-guided visit to the enormous 73-hectare **Forbidden City** (40 RMB, S\$8). Get kitted out with an audio guide (an additional 40 RMB), which kids above

TIP: Seeing any city with a local resident as guide can make for a more meaningful – and less stressful – experience. The ultra-professional team at Bespoke Beijing offers set and customised itineraries around Beijing with knowledgeable and caring guides who speak excellent English. (Frank and Michael are highly recommended.) While the tours are not cheap, they do maximise the Beijing experience. bespoke-beijing.com

eight years will enjoy, and be prepared for walking, walking and more walking. The "city" itself is 750 meters from east to west, and 960 meters from north to south. There are reportedly 9,999 rooms, the moat is 52 metres wide and there are 308 copper pots that were used to hold water for fire-fighting.

Once you've finished in the Forbidden City, if it's a clear day and you've still got some stamina, walk directly across the road from the northern exit to the lookout in **Jingshan Park**. The view over this part of Beijing is stunning and you will understand, seeing the size of the Forbidden City, why your feet are throbbing.

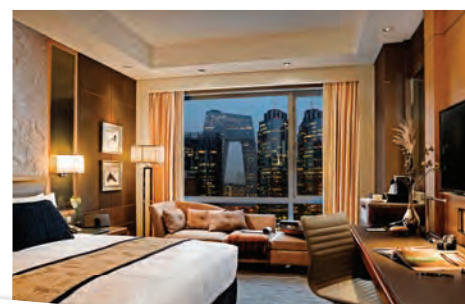
It's probably sensible to visit Tiananmen Square before all of this (it's directly across from the southern entry point), but if you're happy to retrace your steps, or hail a taxi, it's interesting to see the square at sunset, when the Chinese flag is lowered by soldiers in a patriotic ceremony.

Hotel Highlight: Kerry Hotel Beijing

KID-FRIENDLY

CALLING ALL KIDS Located in the ultra-modern CBD district, littered with corporate offices and the eccentrically designed CCTV Tower (nicknamed “underpants” by locals for obvious reasons), the Kerry Hotel is geared up for families and energetic kids. Unpretentious and ultra-comfortable, this five-star Shangri-La offshoot has a new adventure and sports centre.

ROOM Contemporary comfort is probably the best description for the 486 rooms decorated in soothing silver and grey tones with sumptuous furnishings and soft carpet underfoot. Nothing has been forgotten: complimentary mini-bar, BOSE sound dock, Nespresso coffee machine, rain



shower, bathroom mirror with built-in television, and a toilet that eerily seems to second guess every (ahem) movement. Guests on Club Floors are entitled to 24-hour access to the 18th-floor Club Lounge with complimentary cocktails and canapés every evening. Breakfast is served there daily, too.

RESTAURANTS: As the first Beijing restaurant with an open kitchen, Kerry's Kitchen is renowned for its huge buffet breakfasts, easy lunches and a dinner selection of international favourites. To satisfy a craving for the legendary Beijing dish, Peking duck, visit The Horizon where Chef Yuan Chao Ying grills the finest farmed ducks over jujube wood for a crispy, melt-in-the-mouth experience. For night owls, Centro is a popular bar with live music.

RECREATION Within the hotel, Kerry Sports is a state-of-the-art gym with fitness classes and a 35-metre swimming pool. The best bit, as far as kids are concerned, is the Adventure Zone. Children from six months to 12 years will burn off energy on the challenging slides, soft play equipment and high-quality toys.

RATING This is a brilliant hotel with something for every member of the family, and unbeatable value for a five-star property. Within easy reach of the hotel are the Silk and Sanlitun markets and the embassy district. The Forbidden City is about a 15-minute taxi ride. From S\$300 per night.

thekerryhotels.com





Hotel Highlight: **LUXURY** Aman Summer palace

Aman Summer Palace is a tranquil shelter from the bustle of Beijing, though just one wall away from one of the city's biggest attractions.

LOCATION: It is located in northeast Beijing – about 40 minutes by car from the city centre – in a walled compound to the east of the famous Summer Palace. A wall separates the hotel from the former imperial living quarters inside the palace.

LOOK: Think weeping willows, bamboo-lined stone paths, painted corridors and Chinese courtyards. The hotel blends seamlessly with the imperial architecture of the Summer Palace – as it should: many of the buildings are over 100 years old. There are no lifts, no signs of any kind, no grand ballrooms and no tour groups. It's a quiet, regal place – a place to reflect after days spent battling legions of tourists at the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square, a place where you can expect to dine, swim and stroll in peace.

LUXURY: Rooms boast carved Chinese walls, gabled ceilings, fine Chinese porcelain and Bose speakers from which emanate the soft sounds of mandolin strings. Chinese tea, baked goods and complimentary mini-bar drinks are replenished daily. There are only 50 rooms and suites, though guests can still enjoy private Pilates



TIP:
Hotel guests get private access to the Summer Palace through a secret door that links the two properties. Not only do you avoid entrance fees and queues, but you can go before or after official opening times to escape the crowds.

classes (with or without Reformer machines), a grand spa experience, a luxury gym workout and a nightly film in the hotel cinema. Three on-site restaurants offer traditional Chinese (including an absolutely exquisite platter of Peking duck), French and *kaiseki*-style Japanese fare. Breakfasts are, of course, made to order.

LASTING IMPRESSIONS: A few things not to miss at Aman Summer Palace: afternoon tea on the terrace of the lotus pond, learning Chinese calligraphy in the Cultural Pavilion, participating in the daily tea ceremony, and enjoying a morning picnic of *viennoiseries* and smoked salmon on the palace grounds before the gates open to the general public. amanresorts.com



Photos by Amanresorts



WHAT IS THE SUMMER PALACE?

Building of the former summer home of the Chinese imperial family was started in 1153 and not completed until the mid-1700s. It was abandoned in the 1920s and 30s after the fall of the last emperor, and renovated from head to toe before the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics. The site – which is dominated by the man-made Kunming Lake – features gardens, former imperial living quarters and a temple, and is now one of Beijing's main tourist draws.

Summer Palace

THE GREAT WALL

It's a wall steeped in legend, myths and, well... shockingly steep inclines. It's also one of the biggest tourist attractions in the world.

SEE

Popular sections of the Great Wall include:

- *Badaling* – the most visited section of the Wall. Just 80 kilometres away, it's the closest to Beijing, completely renovated (for better or worse) and outfitted with wide, well-paved granite paths and handrails, making it easier to climb than most sections. It's also the spot of choice for big tour operators (which are known to make frequent pit-stops at souvenir factories along the way).
- *Mutianyu* – Less crowded than Badaling, though still popular with independent travellers and smaller tour companies. Cable cars shuttle tourists from the base to the top of the mountain for spectacular views. To get down, you can hike, jump back on the cable cars or opt for a wind-in-your-hair toboggan ride, which will ruin forever the thrill of the luge on Sentosa.

mutianyugreatwall.net

- *Simatai* – The two-hour-plus drive from Beijing deters most tourists, as do the plunging cliffs, jagged ridges and super-steep watch towers. The charm of this section of the wall is that it's largely un-renovated, though major parts of this section are now closed exactly for this reason.
- *Jinshanling* – Starting point for a steep 7km hike to Simatai that takes from three to four hours for the reasonably fit.
- *Huanghuacheng* and *Jiankou* – These sections are strictly for those with hiking boots and a healthy relationship with heights; stretches are steeper and bricks are looser along these unrestored parts of the wall.
- *Other parts* – a group called Beijing Hikers (beijinghikers.com) organises tours to more remote parts of the wall. This is a decent option for strong-backed tourists who loathe weak-backed ones.



STAY

HOW LONG?

If you have limited time, then a day trip is your only option. However, while you'll check the box and get plenty of photos to splash across social media on a one-day visit, we recommend

staying overnight at the Wall, if possible. This allows you to go to different parts of the structure at different times of the day to fully experience this great historic landmark.

WHERE?

House: Opened in 2006, The School House is a sustainable tourism enterprise that provides employment for village residents, enabling them to stay put, rather than head to Beijing to find work. Long-term American expat Jim Spears and his enthusiastic business partners have transformed a former school (it closed when the local population shrank) into a glass-blowing enterprise and a restaurant that champions locally produced food. In March this year, Michelle Obama and her daughter lunched here and visited the Wall, amidst tight security.

They've also restored eight disused village houses into comfortable visitor accommodation that retains traditional features. Best explored on foot, the area offers numerous walks around Mutianyu, taking in the orchards and a new visitor centre. It also produces artisanal, natural and sustainable products.

There's a steep track to a wild section of the Wall, which abuts the more touristy part. Here, a solitary experience on a crumbling, unrestored wall awaits. Depending on the time of year, you'll experience spring blossoms, blazing autumn leaves or winter snow. Stay for the quiet that descends when the tour groups leave in the afternoon; by 8pm there's not a sound to be heard nor a person to be seen on the streets of the village, in stunning contrast to Beijing.

Grandma's House is a two-bedroom house with kitchen, laundry, two bathrooms and large enclosed garden, perfect for a family. Other houses are larger, and feature gorgeous interiors and views of the Great Wall. Houses start from 2,800 RMB per night. theschoolhouseatmutianyu.com

Hotel: The Brickyard is a 25-room lodge and spa close to Mutianyu. Rooms have a modern rustic feel and feature a glass wall and outdoor terrace with spectacular views of the Great Wall. There is an onsite restaurant that offers free breakfast and coffee, tea and homemade cookies throughout the day. Transportation is available (though not at all times of the day) to and from Mutianyu, which is about ten minutes away. brickyardatmutianyu.com

Farmhouse: William Lindesay is a British Great Wall researcher who has been walking and writing about the Wall for decades. His company, Wild Wall, organises excursions to unofficial and remote sections of the wall through weekend trips (including guided hikes with two nights' accommodation in a farmhouse and meals) to longer camping-style, point-to-point "extreme" hiking adventures. wildwall.com

GETTING THERE: Popular options include taking a public bus, booking a tour, dishing out a few more dollars for a private guide or seeking something offbeat, like travelling via chauffeured sidecar. We've heard rave reviews about Beijing Sideways; you'll just want to make sure the air quality is good enough for your nasal passages to travel comfortably without a windshield. beijingsideways.com

TIP: Violet and Kong also provide day tours (including the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Jingshan Park, the Summer Palace and other famous sites), offer transportation to and from airports and train stations, and can book train tickets to Xi'an and other cities before you arrive in Beijing. Full-day tour rates start at 1,100 RMB. To read customer reviews, see "Beijing Private One-day Tour Guide Violet" on TripAdvisor. boutiquetour.com

If you decide to stay at the Wall for a few nights, round-trip transportation can be booked through companies like **Violet and Kong**, a husband-and-wife team of licensed tour guides with great English skills and a knack for promptly replying to emails. Round-trip transport from Beijing to Mutianyu starts at 800 RMB.

THE MYTH THAT WON'T QUIT

The Great Wall is the only man-made structure that can be seen from space. FALSE!

Debunked time and time again, this myth is so ingrained in popular culture that astronauts, including Neil Armstrong, have reported being asked this question at *nauseum*. Recently, high-tech equipment has been able to detect the wall – and other objects – from low orbit, but the fact remains that the human eye cannot detect the Great Wall from space.



Grandma's House

XI'AN

GETTING THERE: Xi'an is over 1,000 kilometres from Beijing; a high-speed train service that opened in December 2012 can get you there in 5.5 hours. High-speed trains depart from both cities ten times a day; those who prefer to take their time can choose an overnight sleeper trains. Direct flights are around two hours.

STAY: We recommend a two-night stay (which allows for visiting the Terracotta Warriors and a full day

in Xi'an) at the **Crown Plaza Xi'an**, an upscale, relatively new hotel with reasonable rates, good service and very comfortable rooms. It's located in Xi'an's tallest building, the Shaanxi Xinxin Tower, not far from the CBD and city walls, making it a popular choice with business and leisure travellers alike.

SEE: The Terracotta Warriors are, of course, the main draw to this city of eight million people. The excavation sites are located east of Xi'an and can be viewed in a few hours, leaving time to tour the Tomb of Emperor Jingdi, snake through the narrow alleys and food stalls of the

TIPS: When touring the terracotta soldiers, skip the ticketed tram service to the excavation site; the walk is short. Bypass the audio tour and opt for a private guide instead. At the site, tour the pits in reverse - 3, then 2, then 1 - to save the best pit for last. Don't miss the small on-site museum, which tells tales of the atrocities that occurred when the tomb was being built - namely, the thousands of artisans that were killed to preserve the secrecy of the tomb's location.

Muslim Quarter, walk or cycle atop the old Ming city walls (now fully restored) and stop for a drum show at the Bell Tower.



BOOKING A GUIDE: Tailor-made Xi'an

Tours is a small group of professional guides offering city tours of Xi'an, along with hiking, biking, hot springs, countryside and three-day Taoist pilgrimage experiences, too. Get an overview of the city in the Xi'an "Essence" tour, the company's popular one-day tour to see the Terracotta Warriors, the city wall and the Muslim Quarter. Transportation to and from the train station can be arranged (even on days you are not touring with them), and the guides, in our experience, have above-average English skills. xianprivatetours.com

DID YOU KNOW?

The terracotta soldiers protect the tomb of Qin Shi Huang, which is said to be a palatial underground cavern filled with jewels, rivers of mercury (ground tests in the area show mercury levels 100 times higher than normal) and Indiana Jones-style booby traps. For a number of reasons, the tomb has yet to be excavated. For now, you'll have to settle for a photo of the grassy mound that covers it, located 2km from the terracotta soldiers' excavation site.



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View of the Bund from the Pudong Shangri-La

SHANGHAI

SEE

Many families travelling with children bypass Shanghai in favour of Beijing, because it has fewer landmark tourist sights. But this cosmopolitan city of 23 million has much to entertain young minds. Given that Singapore already offers children great waterparks and zoos, there's not much point spending time at similar attractions when there are some of the world's tallest buildings and unique neighbourhoods to explore.

Though the landmark 468-metre **Oriental Pearl Tower** in Pudong is no longer the city's tallest building (it was overtaken by the Shanghai World Financial Centre in 2008), it does house the impressive **Shanghai History Museum**. Through models, dioramas and special effects, it lays out the story of the city from its beginnings as a village 1,000 years ago to global prominence in the 1930s, along with its present-day obsession with skyscrapers.

Also in Pudong is the semi-completed **Shanghai Tower**; at 632 metres, or 121 storeys, it will become the world's second-tallest building when it is completed next year. Across the **Huangpu River** (which is crisscrossed by 10 tunnels

and 10 bridges) is the 1.5km riverfront promenade known as the **Bund**. Whether you walk, drive or take a boat cruise to see its 25 century-old buildings, it's handy to have a guide or a brochure with information about each building.

The labyrinthine **Yu Garden** is one of the city's biggest attractions. Separated into small courtyards by dragon-shaped walls, the gardens were built in 1559 in traditional style and overflow with wooden pavilions, koi ponds, pagodas, stunning trees and a 12-metre-high rockery.

In complete contrast are the European **concessions**, designated areas of the city that were granted to foreign countries in the 1800s. Shanghai operated as a treaty port, which meant that foreign countries had their own jurisdictions; the respective neighbourhoods subsequently developed strong cultural identities. Taking a self-guided walking tour around the tree-lined back streets feels, at times, like strolling through a European city.

Many people head for **Xintiandi**, where upmarket boutiques and restaurants have gentrified the traditional 19th-century *shikumen* houses. (*Shikumen* is a traditional Shanghainese architectural

style marked by grey- and red-brick walls and arches.) Ironically, this lavish commercial area was also the location of the First Congress of the Chinese Communist Party.

In Shanghai's rush to modernity, traditional handicrafts have thankfully not been forsaken. At the **Museum of Arts and Crafts**, visitors can watch dozens of artisans at work, including jade- and wood-carvers, paper-cutters, embroiderers, jewellers and painters. Housed in a stately 100-year-old French mansion with sweeping staircases, it's a place to find authentic souvenirs; the artisans will intrigue curious children, too.

Amongst the myriad shopping and tailoring options, it's hard to beat the **AP Markets** in the basement of the **Shanghai Science and Technology Museum**.

Directly accessible by the Metro station named after the museum, the markets are the place to bargain hard for knock-off goods.

TIP: Visit the warren of laneways known as Tian Xi Fang, a bohemian mix of studios, cafes and quirky shops all hemmed inside narrow alleys teeming with atmosphere. Whether you're shopping or not, it's a unique neighbourhood to get lost in.



PRICELESS BUND VIEWS

Hotel Highlight: Pudong Shangri-La

Some would argue it's better to look at the Bund, rather than the opposite outlook of Pudong's futuristic buildings. The 950-room Shangri-La was Pudong's first luxury hotel and sits comfortably in Shanghai's top 10 hotels according to TripAdvisor.

ROOM Request a river-view room for a priceless outlook of The Bund; it's stunning enough by day, but really comes into its own when lit up at night. The rooms are elegant with subtle Oriental touches in the wallpaper and art, complemented by crystal chandeliers and marble bathrooms. Horizon Club guests enjoy L'Occitane toiletries in their rooms, plus 24-hour access and complimentary services at the Horizon Club Lounge on the 32nd floor.

RESTAURANTS There are 11 restaurants and bars in the Pudong Shangri-La, including Japanese and Chinese eateries, a wine bistro and Jade on 36, the signature restaurant and bar. Yi Café features 10 lively show kitchens and a cosmopolitan food selection for the huge buffet breakfast (there's even a map, it's so big) – don't miss it.

RECREATION Alongside the award-winning spa, CHI, there are two swimming pools, two health clubs and an outdoor floodlit tennis court.

RATING The promise of high tea in the Lobby Lounge, an elegant Michelin-star dining experience, or a long hot bath, makes the Shangri-La a welcome respite from the frenetic pace of a city that doesn't sleep.

shangri-la.com





Zhujiajiao village

Day Trips from Shanghai

HANGZHOU

It's the home of China's famed West Lake, a domestic tourist magnet and an area of natural beauty (when the smog cooperates, of course). Of China's 72 lakes, this is the most popular. Catch misty scenes of *tai chi* being performed on the water's edge at sunrise, drink a cup of *longjing* tea made with leaves plucked in nearby plantations, tour the many temples and monasteries that dot the area, and book a seat at *Impression West Lake*, a spectacular outdoor performance directed by Zhang Yimou, the mastermind behind the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics opening and closing ceremonies. Stay in the remains of a 300-year-old tea village next to one of area's most sacred temples, Longyin Si, by booking a stay at Amanfayun. amanresorts.com

WATER VILLAGES OF THE YANGTZE RIVER DELTA

On the edge of Shanghai's urban sprawl, a dozen or so ancient villages line the small lakes and waterways of the Yangtze River delta. **Zhujiajiao** is pleasant enough to warrant a half-day trip, though be aware that anything authentic has long disappeared, and most of the quaint town shops now sell food and souvenirs. Still, the old Ming- and Qing-dynasty architecture, including that of bridges across the narrow canals, is atmospheric, and many visitors take a leisurely boat ride. This is a domestic tourism magnet, so it's best to visit late in the afternoon on a weekday. Take the hour-long bus ride from People's Square in central Shanghai, or arrange a car and driver.

SUZHOU

Trace the steps of artists, scholars and Chinese high society through gardens, canals and arched bridges in this picturesque town. Express trains can get you from Shanghai to Suzhou in less than 30 minutes. Highlights include the West Garden Temple, the Taoist Temple of Mystery, and an hour-long boat ride around the outer canal every evening starting from the Renmin Bridge.

NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

1. VISA

Citizens of Singapore, Brunei and Japan don't need a visa for a stay of less than 15 days. All others require a visa. The simplest way is to book an appointment time online (visaforchina.org), print off the application form and present it with all supporting documents at the China Visa Application Service Centre located at 80 Robinson Road, #16-01/02/02A. Call 6226 2358. Fees vary according to nationality, visa type and processing times.

2. AIR QUALITY

There are several smartphone apps that give real-time PSI readings of air quality in major Chinese cities. High levels of air pollution can aggravate bronchial, sinus or asthma conditions. A pollution reading of 300 and above is considered extreme; several cities including Beijing regularly exceed this number. For more information, visit www.aqicn.info.

3. WATER

Buy bottled water; don't drink from the tap.

4. INTERNAL TRAVEL

Even the Chinese recommend avoiding internal flights in favour of comfortable and safe train travel. For tourists, the fastest options are the bullet trains which crisscross the country at speeds of up to 300kph. Beijing has four enormous train stations; make sure you know which one your train departs from, and allow plenty of time for the airport-style security checks. The high-speed train from Beijing to Shanghai arrives promptly (to the minute, in fact) in five hours. An adult ticket in economy class is about S\$150. Kids under 150cm are half-price. Foreigners need to buy tickets through a train-ticketing agency, or in person at a station. Check this website for tips: www.seat61.com.

5. TRANSFERS

To avoid hassle when arriving at or leaving a city, whether at an airport or a train station, book as many transfers ahead of time as you can.


6. TRAFFIC

Congestion in major (and many minor) Chinese cities can be a bit of a mind-boggle, especially in Beijing (the worst traffic jam *in world history* is said to have occurred here in August 2010, when a 62-mile-long jam took a full 12 days to clear). Plan plenty of travel time, especially to airports and train stations.

7. INTERNET CENSORSHIP

Can't live without Facebook? You'll learn to here, as this site and many others, such as Google (including Docs, Maps and +, though email works sporadically), YouTube, Yahoo, Twitter, *The New York Times* and many others, are completely blocked on the mainland. Censorship like this is why the 1989 Tiananmen Square "Tank Man" photo – one of the most iconic images of all time – remains largely unknown in China.

8. CROWDS

Get to tourists spots early. China's population is 1.2 billion, so don't expect too many moments of quiet contemplation. Try to avoid the annual "Golden Weeks" (national holiday periods) of Chinese New Year, and the first weeks of May and October, when most Chinese are travelling, either to home to be with their families, or to visit famous sites. 

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HONG KONG

LONG WEEKEND:

3 HALF-DAY HIKES AND 1 HAPPENING HOTEL

Never one to spend an excessive amount of time in shops, SHAMUS SILLAR instead gets acquainted with Hong Kong's great outdoors – plus a newish and notable boutique hotel – on a recent three-day visit.

THE HIKES

Hong Kong Trail

(Sections 2-3)

Location: The Peak and Pokfulam Country Park

Length: 15-20 km
(around four hours)

Level: Easy to moderate

What is it?

The Hong Kong Trail is a 50km walking track that meanders around the forests and ridges of Hong Kong Island. It's divided into eight sections; Section 1 starts at Victoria Peak ("The Peak"), whose famous panoramas have been attracting visitors since the mid-1800s. Each section can be tackled individually or you can devise your own route that takes in several sections at a time. I did the whole of Sections 2 and 3, together with some bits of 1 and 4.

What's good about it?

Singapore might be one of only two cities in the world that has a rainforest within its city limits – Rio de Janeiro is the other one – yet not even it can rival Hong Kong as far as an immediate contrast between towering steel-and-glass cityscapes and dense, lush forests is concerned. I was lucky enough to get a misty morning, too, which only heightened the distinction.

Who's doing it?

It depends on the section; close to the Peak, you'll find plenty of tourists and locals (especially couples); further along the trail, runners training for long-distance events.

What's at the end of it?

If, like me, you finish at the end of Section 3 or 4, you'll find yourself on the south side of Hong Kong Island. Plenty to do here: get on a junk in Aberdeen, explore up-and-coming trendy district Wong Chuk Hang, or get a bus further east to Stanley to see the markets and grab some lunch.



How do you get there?

You can get to the Peak on the famous Peak Tram; it's a fun start to the day. I actually walked up from Central instead – quite a steep climb, but a great way to get the heart pumping for the kilometres ahead. Lan Kwai Fong to the Peak is around 15 minutes. To get to the start of Section 2, I followed Pokfulam Reservoir Road for 10 minutes.



"Dragon's Back"

HONG KONG TRAIL (Sections 8)

Location: Shek O Country Park, on the eastern side of Hong Kong Island
Length: 8-9 km (around three hours)
Level: Easy to moderate



What is it?

It's been 10 years since this stunning path on top of the southeastern peninsula of Hong Kong Island was named Asia's best urban hiking trail by *Time* magazine. A lot of boots have trudged along its undulating hills since then, including around a zillion on the day I did it. It was a public holiday, though, so I should have seen it coming; you could almost hear the dragon groaning from the weight.

What's good about it?

Happily, the crowds don't matter. You still get glorious, unimpeded views of the South China Sea and Hong Kong Island's various bays and beaches – especially from Shek O Peak (284m).

Who's doing it?

Weekend sightseers, community groups, families. Try a weekday morning if you prefer a bit of solitude.

What's at the end of it?

The beach! There are two options: you can either stop at Big Wave Bay, known for its decent surf break, or continue on to Shek O, where families enjoying late afternoon barbecues and ball games are the order of the day. There are plenty of places to eat, drink and buy provisions at both villages.

How do you get there?

Easy options include driving or taking a taxi (around HK\$150 from Central). If you're relying on public transport, follow these steps:

- Go on the MTR Island Line from Central to Shau Kei Wan (20 minutes).
- Take Exit A3, then board bus 9 from Shau Kei Wan to To Tei Wan.
- The stop is 11 stops or 6km along the route, on Shek O Road near To Tei Wan village. Ask the bus driver or a fellow passenger if you're not sure where you are.



Maclehose Trail

(Section 3)

Location: New Territories

Length: 10km

(around four hours)

Level: Moderate, with a tricky ascent at the beginning



What is it?

The Maclehose Trail is a famous 100km walking track that cuts through the middle of Hong Kong's New Territories. The first of its 10 sections begins in the east, not far from Sai Kung, and the Trail then follows an east-west direction (with plenty of meandering) before ending up in Tuen Mun. You can tackle any or all of the sections; the prettiest is probably Section 2 with its stunning coastal views, but because I'd done that on an earlier visit, I opted for Section 3 instead.

What's good about it?

The Maclehose Trail is a world-class walk – and an eye-opener for anyone who equates Hong Kong with hundreds

of high-rises clustered around a harbour. Highlights of Section 3 include woodlands, meadows and streams, plus several testing hills. (The first one is a real thigh-burner.) A few wild cows will block your path from time to time, adding an extra challenge.

Who's doing it?

Maybe I got lucky, but I didn't pass a single person on Section 3 of the trail. The inclement weather may have helped, but I think even on a good day you're going to have this part of Hong Kong largely to yourself if you make the effort to get here.

What's at the end of it?

Section 3 finishes kind of in the middle of nowhere, but at least there's a bus

stop on the quiet country road so you can get back to Sai Kung (bus 99, 15 minutes). Before returning to the city, grab some plates of dim sum in one of the waterfront restaurants of Sai Kung, or go on a boat trip.

How do you get there?

A taxi from Central would likely cost HK\$300 to \$400; public transport is your best option, though it takes around an hour.

- MTR Central to Choi Hung; change to the green line at Mong Kok (20 minutes)
- Exit C at Choi Hung, then Minibus 1A (every four minutes) to Sai Kung Pier (20 minutes)
- KMB bus 94 to Pak Tam Au bus station, start of Section 3 (20 minutes)



TIP: Visit www.discoverhongkong.com for pdf maps and other info on all three of these hikes.

THE HOTEL

Family-owned Ovolo launched in 2002 and has become one of Hong Kong's larger independent hotel and serviced apartment operators, with a half-dozen or so properties in Hong Kong and Australia. I gave their flagship hotel, Ovolo Central, a spin; here are three things that impressed me about it.

Freebies

If you like a hotel that exudes a spirit of generosity, you'll love Ovolo. There's free stuff galore here, including a "Loot

Bag" waiting on the main console of your room. Mine was filled with packets of chips and chocolates, and a rabbit-shaped lollipop. It might only be a few dollars worth of stuff – a small percentage of the room rate (which starts at around the S\$300 mark) – yet it's still a welcome treat after half a day of international travel.

Need something to wash it all down with? The mini-bar is free, too – yes, including all the miniature bottles of spirits. And if that's not enough booze to kick-start your holiday, Ovolo's Happy Hour, 6pm to 8pm, is also free, with cold beers, wines and snacks served in the lobby.

Other freebies include daily breakfast at adjoining Café Ó – more modest than

a huge hotel buffet but still fresh and filling – and free Wi-fi, not only in the room and the public areas of the hotel, but also out and about in Hong Kong itself, via a "Y5Zone pass" that allows access in various shopping malls, coffee shops and fast food outlets.

Quirks

The hotel's sense of playfulness starts with the wording on the terms and conditions of the Wi-fi usage: "DO NO EVIL". It's evident in Ovolo's online presence, too: take a look at www.ovolohotels.com for a very different spin on a regular hotel website. And when I stayed over Easter, there was an in-house competition that involved locating a pair of "bunny ears" that were stashed in your room, then putting them on, taking a photo, and Instagramming it; the prize was a night's stay at any Ovolo hotel. (There are five in Hong Kong and one in Melbourne.)

Basics

Freebies and quirks are all well and good, but often they're a ruse to hide the fact that a hotel doesn't get the simple things right. Not the case with Ovolo; it fully deserves its high TripAdvisor ranking for Hong Kong. The location is ideal: perched just above popular nightspot, Lan Kwai Fong, and within walking distance from the Airport Express station at Central, provided your bag is light enough to lug. The rooms are excellent; all have the same 35-square-metre layout – you just choose between an Executive Suite and a "Super Shiny Room", which has more extras thrown in. And the staff are happy and helpful – not only in dealing with any issues you might have during your stay, but also before you arrive, emailing comprehensive notes about your booking, a map of how to get to the hotel, recommendations of nearby bars and restaurants, a list of Hong Kong apps you should download before your visit, and a Cantonese "survival guide". 🇭🻜

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Whale of a Time:

Exploring Sri Lanka's South Coast

Looking for ideas for a Sri Lanka itinerary? We asked the team from **Lantern**, a boutique beach hotel on the country's southwest coast, to provide some insights into how you can make the most of your holiday time.

A destination on the rise. That's the view that many people have of Sri Lanka, and it comes as no huge surprise when you read about how much the island has to offer. The southern coastline is especially rich in great travel experiences, and it makes an ideal destination for a five- or seven-day Sri Lanka break.

Lantern is a six-room luxury hotel located right on the beach between the southern towns of Mirissa and Matara. It's well positioned as a base for some fabulous day trips, from the famous Galle Fort to a plethora of nature reserves and farms.

Of course, you don't have to drag yourself away from the property if you don't want to; and Lantern's 23-metre freshwater pool with accompanying swinging





daybeds overlooking the sea will definitely make it hard to leave. But those guests who do tap into their adventurous spirit will be rewarded. Here are five trips that can be arranged during a stay at the hotel.

Elephants

Yala National Park has been the most celebrated wildlife park in Sri Lanka for over a century. It's an ideal place to spot the "big four" of Sri Lankan wildlife: the elephant, the sloth bear, the elusive leopard and the wild buffalo.

Diving

The ocean off the village of Weligama is known for its fantastic shallow reefs and spectacular underwater rock formations and marine life; snorkelling

is ideal here, as is diving – especially for first-timers, as the bay is protected by the reef.

Tea

Handungoda is a 200-acre estate comprising tea, rubber, cinnamon, pepper and coconut plantations. It's a 15-minute drive from the coastal town of Koggala; in fact, Handungoda may be the closest tea plantation in the world to the sea.

Whales

Situated between the cities of Galle and Matara, Marissa is the best place for watching blue whales, sperm whales and spinner dolphins. April to November is considered the peak viewing season for these animals.

Mangroves

A boat safari on picturesque Koggala Lake provides a chance to view a huge array of plant and animal species, including lotuses and lilies that are highly prized in local Ayurvedic medicine, along with kingfishers and eagles, and purple-faced leaf monkeys.

Lantern is a 90-minute drive from Colombo International Airport. Multiple airlines fly direct from Singapore; the flight takes around 3.5 hours. Visit www.thelanterngroup.co for more information about the hotel or to make a booking. 



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DR CHENG SHIN CHUEN

Consultant Surgeon

General, Vascular & Endovascular Surgery

Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department 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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Calling all four-eyes! If you've got some old specs lying around, here's your chance to do some good. **Gift of Sight Singapore**, an organisation focused on providing better vision to those in need, works with local schools, volunteer groups and eye specialists such as Jerry

Tan Eye Surgery to educate and provide eye-screening services to disadvantaged communities. From now until 31 October, get a \$10 Pharmaplus gift certificate when you donate your used spectacles at Pharmaplus (1 Orchard Boulevard, #01-04 Camden Medical Centre); all pre-owned spectacles will be distributed to underprivileged people throughout Southeast Asia. For more details, visit www.giftofsight.sg or www.pharmaplus.com.sg.

Attention to Prevention



This just in: the preventative HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine, **Cervarix**, has recently been approved for a two-dose administration

for girls in Singapore aged nine to 14 years. The vaccine, meant to prevent infections caused by common cancer-causing HPV types 16 and 18, has, until now, been administered only in three doses to women above the age of 15. The new dosing schedule is an alternative to the three-dose programme, with the idea of protecting more girls from cervical cancer through an easier implementation schedule.

According to doctors, cervical cancer has a well-understood pre-cancerous stage, unlike many other cancers, and, while screening picks up pre-cancers in women who already have HPV, preventative measures like Pap smears and vaccinations – in addition to routine screenings – are key to providing ongoing protection. In fact, Cervarix has proven 100 percent effective in protecting against pre-cancerous lesions caused by HPV 16 and 18 when given to girls who have not yet been exposed to the viruses. To learn more, visit www.gsk.com.

Celebratory Specials

GET FIT FOR LESS



In honour of its first anniversary, **Radiance PhysioFit** is offering special promotional packages to kick-start your health. A one-stop health and fitness destination, the gym provides in-house physiotherapy services, along with personal training, prenatal programmes and group fitness classes like Zumba and Muay Thai, all under one roof. From now until 31 December, sign up for a 12-month membership (\$1,920) and receive up to \$360 worth of freebies, including two personal training sessions, a 30-minute sports massage, vouchers to use at Radiance PhysioFit's café and access to on-going promotions for training and physiotherapy. Those who sign up for a six-month membership (\$1,110) will score a personal training session, a sports massage and café vouchers, among other perks. Additionally, group class packages have been introduced; 20 sessions for \$450 and 10 for \$240. #01-02 and #02-02 AXA Tower, 8 Shenton Way. **6822 1618 | radiancephysiofit.com.sg** ▲

YOUR BODY IS A TEMPLE



Body Temple is turning 10! To celebrate, the women's only health and fitness hangout – known for its holistic personalised training and nutritional guidance services, plus group yoga, bootcamp and the popular Body Blitz Challenge – is offering a 10 percent discount to anyone who purchases a 10-pack personal training package (usual price \$1,050) during the month of October. In addition,

Body Temple's Facebook fans have the opportunity to win a package of 10 group sessions, valued at \$250. For details, visit www.facebook.com/BodyTempleSingapore. 75 Loewen Road. **9100 8714 | bodytemple.com.sg**

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Dr. Imran Nawaz
MBBS (S'pore), FRCS (Edin), FRCS (Glasg), FAMS
Medical Director
The Vein Centre

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Coming Up



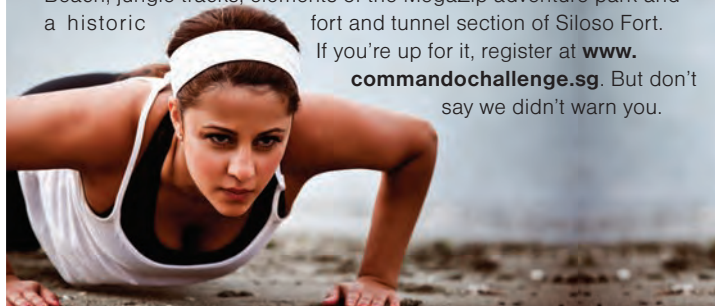
Eat, Play, Dance

The inaugural **Adult Playground** will fuse fitness, food and music, all in the name of fun. The outdoor festival will feature a line-up of local musicians and 22 sporting activities on both land and water, from human foosball and dodge-ball to floating lily pads, NERF Super Soakers, Slip-and-Slides and a water-based hamster wheel; and playtime's not complete without cocktails from the beach bar, sorbet popsicles and health-conscious grub from gourmet food trucks. 8 November at Siloso Beach, Sentosa. Tickets from www.adultplaygroundsg.peatix.com. ▲

GO COMMANDO

If you're looking for a serious challenge, this one's for you. Based on the physical tests that win soldiers entry into elite military units, the **Commando Challenge** will have you crawling through mud, coping with water obstacles and more. Though Special Forces training isn't necessary, you are expected to confront your fears and push yourself to the limit. Choose from Saturday (15 November) night's Commando Course, which involves 12 military obstacles on a 5K off-road course, and the super-demanding Extreme Commando, which includes 28 military obstacles on a 5K, off-road course – both end with a party at the finish line. Meanwhile, the Teen Commando on Sunday 16 November features 8 military obstacles along a 2.5K off-road course. All three routes are on Sentosa, incorporating Siloso Beach, jungle tracks, elements of the MegaZip adventure park and a historic

fort and tunnel section of Siloso Fort. If you're up for it, register at www.commandochallenge.sg. But don't say we didn't warn you.



GET GLOWING

Back for its second year, the **Illumi Run** is a non-competitive 5K run where participants – equipped with LED wrist-bands and glow-in-the-dark shutter shades, among other glowing paraphernalia – make their way through themed music zones while being splashed with special “glow water” for a night of neon fun. Complete with dancers and DJs, and a full-blown bash at the finish line, this party on the run will take place on two separate nights – 27 and 29 November – flagging off at 8pm each evening at the F1 Race Village. Register at www.illumirun.com.



BIKE FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Looking for a dose of culture and fitness that's also for a good cause? Then you'll love the ninth annual **Angkor Wat Bike4Kids** race, a bike ride that benefits four Cambodian charities working to protect children and prevent human trafficking. With a choice of 17, 30 and 100K race routes, the event is open to all ages and fitness levels, and takes participants around the entire Angkor Wat complex. 6 December. Register at www.bike4kids.org.



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RUNNING COMMENTARY: *Marathon Man*

With the Singapore Standard Chartered Marathon just a couple of months away, **Verne Maree** talked to former elite triathlete **BEN PULHAM** about running a faster marathon.

Ben firmly believes that humans are born to run long distances. Having run “obscene amounts” as a world-class triathlete, right up to 2008 – upwards of 160km in a big week, on top of cycling and swimming – he’s a poster boy for that argument. Though Ben no longer races, he now teaches others how to do it.

Fortunately for those of us who enjoy it, running is something you can probably carry on doing for a long, long time, if you train safely. “Just the other day, I heard about an 82-year-old Canadian, Ed Whitlock, who ran a 3:41 marathon! At his age, that’s mind-boggling.”



How long does a seasoned runner need to prepare for the marathon?

To do what we call a focussed build-up, you should allow at least 16 weeks, possibly 20 if you’re not very conditioned.

When training for a marathon, distance is all-important, right?

Not exactly. At Journey Fitness Company (journeyfitnesscompany.com), we have a unique training philosophy, what we call a “smart approach”. Most vital is allowing enough time for training.

We don’t care so much about distance; instead, our approach is based on two key factors: time, and heart rate. When you run for the prescribed durations, and at heart rates that are optimal for you, your body will self-correct, and you’ll get the training you need – be it on the flat, on a hilly course, on sand or wherever. Working on distance and pace, as most people do, is a sure-fire way to get hurt. Our way is not only very effective, it’s also the safest way to train.

How important is the weekly long, slow distance run (LSD)?

Sufficient LSD running is crucial for aerobic training, and yes, the weekly LSD run is the most important. Why? During the marathon, you get over 99 percent of your energy from your aerobic system; less than one percent comes from your anaerobic system.

Most people think they need to train their anaerobic system, that training at a fast pace will help them race faster. Actually, almost no one is limited by the

speed they’re able to run at; what actually holds us back is our inability to sustain that speed. To run faster, you need to improve your aerobic speed and your aerobic strength, and you’ll achieve that by running within the correct heart rate zones.

I chucked away my heart rate monitor years ago, because it told me I was working too hard – despite what I regarded as an easy pace. Was that a bad move?

Yes, it was. Like you, some of our clients do feel demoralised at first. They complain that keeping to the prescribed heart rate zone feels too slow, that they’re going little faster than a walk.

We explain to them that this is a sign of an aerobic dysfunction, one that will be fixed over the course of the next few weeks. As their bodies adapt to the correct training, they will in time get a lot faster – and isn’t that what we all want?

Sounds too good to be true! Can you give us an example?

One of our clients is an ex-professional Aussie Rules player, who came to us quite fit in his own way. Having started off at a 6:30 (minutes per kilometre) pace for his long run, after a month – literally! – he was down to 5:30, at the same heart rate. Through our programme, he lost 8kg and is now doing his LSD runs at 5:00. What’s more, instead of being sick all the time, he’s in the peak of health.

Another good example is the 50-year-old Australian who flew in to see us a couple of years ago. At that time he was

a 3:45 marathoner, so a pretty good athlete. Eighteen months later, in November 2013, he ran the New York Marathon in a cracking 3:02.

That's phenomenal! But I'm still not clear on how the physiology works.

Simply put, the intensities you train at determine the majority of your benefit. To sustain your pace over the distance of a marathon, you need to be burning fat, not carbohydrates.

If you do your training at too high an intensity, you teach your body to burn carbohydrate and to accumulate lactate. At lower training intensities, you teach it to burn fat and to clear lactate. Our method will fix this aerobic dysfunction, enabling you to run faster, perhaps much faster, while using the same effort.

We start with a fuel-efficiency test, checking your metabolism to see what proportion of carbohydrate and fat you're burning. Then we do a lactate test, to determine the lactic acid concentration in your blood. From that, we can determine your lactate threshold and your optimal heart-rate zones, and provide you with a programme that's tailored to make you faster. **31**



OCTOBER

2

Bloomberg Square Mile Relay, sunset, 1M, Promontory@Marina Bay

11-12

North Face 100, 100/50/25/13K

11

Tumble Rumble Run, 10am, Woodleigh

12

Chua Chu Kang B.I.G. Farm Walk and Run, 7am, Brickland Road

18

Passion North Run, 4pm, 8/4.5K, Yishun

25

Run for Your Lives, Singapore, midnight

26

Newton Challenge, 5am, 32/18K, Big Splash

31

Monster Ultra 200, 9pm, 200K in 48 hours, MacRitchie Reservoir

NOVEMBER

1

Puma Night Run, 6pm, 10K, Sentosa

2

CSC Run by the Bay, 7am, 10/15K, The Float @ Marina Bay

Singapore Airlines Charity Run, 7am, 300m/5/10K, F1 Pit Building

9

Great Eastern Women's Run, 5.30am, 5/10/21.1K, The Float @ Marina Bay

16

Run for Hope, 7am, 3.5/10K, Promontory@ Marina Bay

23

Swissôtel Vertical Marathon, 6.30am, 73 storeys, Swissôtel the Stamford

DECEMBER

7

Standard Chartered Marathon, 5am, 750m/10/21/42K

14

Banana Relay, 7.45am, 4K laps, Sengkang Riverside Park

28

MR25 Ultramarathon, 5 x 10K in 12 hours



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Singapore 329563

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.

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By Verne Maree

With year-round summer weather, world-class schools, home help and a host of recreational activities for all ages, Singapore can be a kind of heaven for families. But heaven can swiftly turn into hell when illness strikes, wherever in the world you find yourself.

We are living in the tropics, after all. As I write this, two members of our editorial team are woman-down with the dreaded dengue, and a good 50 percent of us – including me – have fallen prey to the virus at some stage. Katie and Rachael are just two more to be added to the 13,208 cases recorded by the MOH in the first half of this year. Children, on the other hand, are more susceptible to hand, foot and mouth disease, which notched up 13,938 victims in the same period.

The good news? This little island is blessed with some of the best and most medically advanced health care that money can buy.

Every family needs a GP, of course, and there are thousands to choose from. To find one with an approach – both medical and cultural – that gels with your needs and beliefs, personal referral is generally the way to go.

But the health care you choose for yourself and your family doesn't have to start and end with conventional GPs, dentists and specialists, however essential they are to us. Not only more familiar modalities such as nutritional medicine, osteopathy and homeopathy are readily accessible, but perhaps less-known ones such as TCM (Chinese Traditional Medicine), too. There's a wealth of healing out there.

Here's some advice on some family-related health issues – from A for asthma to G for gestational diabetes mellitus.



IS FOR ASTHMA

Little can be more distressing than the wheezing of a child who is struggling for breath. An osteopath like DAVID TIO recognises the important role of anti-inflammatory medication and broncho-dilators in the treatment of asthma, especially in acute attacks, while working in conjunction with other health care practitioners with the long-term aim of decreasing the patient's dependence on medication.



How can babies and children benefit from osteopathy?

A key principle of osteopathy is that structure governs function, and we know that many health issues faced by babies and children today might be due to imperfections in their body structure. Many of these imperfections arise in babies that do not undergo natural childbirth, where the contractions of the vagina help form the child's muscular-skeletal structure.

In osteopathic hospitals across Europe and the US, babies receive their first osteopathic check up and treatment the moment they are born. This is to minimise subsequent health problems, not only asthma-related but also feeding and sleeping difficulties, colic, reflux, eczema and even autism.

How does cranial osteopathy help babies?

This key treatment involves making very fine adjustments to the skull and spine, which affect the parasympathetic nervous system and hence, functions like breathing and digestion. All the osteopaths at Osteopathic Treatment Centre are well-versed in this technique. In fact, some were directly trained by Dr John Upledger, who developed cranial osteopathy. No child is too young for osteopathic treatment, which is gentle and safe.

How can osteopathy help relieve asthma?

It helps by working on all aspects of the breathing mechanism, including the ribs, the spine, the diaphragm and other muscles of breathing. It also works on the nerve control of the chest as well as blood and fluid supply to the bronchi and lungs. Osteopathy can also play an important preventative role in the care of someone who is suffering from asthma.

Osteopaths recognise that the functions of the human body are inherently linked and can affect each other. With this in mind, the osteopath gently works with the body structure, to enhance and improve the mechanics of breathing by:

- freeing restrictions of the chest and ribs
- relaxing the respiratory muscles
- improving lymphatic draining from the lungs and air passages
- enhancing blood supply to the chest region

Other areas of management include the formulation of an individual exercise programme – with emphasis on breathing exercises – and the avoidance of aggravating factors. We also provide advice on diet, posture, lifestyle and first aid measures during an attack.

Osteopathic Treatment Centre
#12-02 Tanglin Shopping Centre
19 Tanglin Road
6734 6440 | osteopathy.com.sg



IS FOR BLOOD

Blood tests may be required for all manner of ailments. While no one particularly enjoys the experience, for a child – especially a sick child – the idea of drawing of blood via a sharp needle, not to mention the associated pain, can be frankly terrifying.

According to DR GARY KEONG KEAN SENG of Nichii International Clinic, one of the commonest reasons for doing a blood test is to assess the cause and severity of an infection in a child with fever. Occasionally, a test for electrolytes like sodium can help assess the severity of dehydration in a child with a diarrhoeal illness.

Nichii International Clinic has its own in-house phlebotomy (blood-taking) service, with doctors and nurses trained to take blood on the premises. For a harried parent with a sick child, not having to make the trip to the separate clinic or lab is a boon.

The doctor agrees that it is always a challenge to obtain a blood sample from a child. “Not only is the child afraid of pain from the needle prick,” he explains, “but an unfamiliar environment – particularly if it’s the child’s first visit to the clinic – is enough to cause significant anxiety and distress.”

“It’s helpful to first establish rapport with the child and to communicate in a calm and gentle manner,” says Dr Keong. “In the case of an older child, an explanation of the procedure and the reassurance of minimal discomfort is important to

Scared of the needle?

Six ways to help your child get through it:

- Tell the truth, but keep it simple.
- Don’t tell them too far in advance.
- Explain that it will help him or her get better.
- Use your iPad, a favourite story or a song to distract from the imminent prick.
- A hysterical child may be best left in the medical team’s care. Step outside, or withdraw to a corner while maintaining eye contact.
- Comfort and give your child a treat, be it a lollipop or the promise of a favourite toy or activity.

allay any fears.” A more anxious child may also benefit from the application of a local anaesthetic cream, typically applied 20 minutes before blood-taking.

Does the relatively smaller size of a child’s blood vessels present a challenge? “Yes,” he replies. “Hence the need for medical personnel like ours who are experienced with little ones.”

“It’s both satisfying and rewarding to treat ill children, restore their health and see them laugh and play again,” says Dr Keong. “Another important part of our job is to manage their parents’ concerns and expectations, and to restore calm and order to what can often be a stressful situation.”

Nichii International Clinic
350 Orchard Road
#10-00 Shaw House
6511 9300 | nichii-icl.com.sg



IS FOR CHILDHOOD SKIN DISORDERS

It's almost impossible to stop a child from scratching a worrisome itch – which, of course, only aggravates the problem, leading to infections (like impetigo) and even scarring. Dermatologist DR LIM KAR SENG answers a few questions.

What are some of the more common childhood skin conditions that you see?

In babies, that would be **heat rash**. Usually presenting as red spots over the neck, back or even face, they often resolve on their own after a day or two. Occasionally, we also see **food allergies** manifesting as rashes – usually from the age of one, when the baby's diet starts expanding.

In children of primary school age, we are more likely to see skin infections such as **viral warts** or **molluscum**. These are transmitted via physical contact, probably at school. And for adolescents, **acne** represents the biggest skin issue.

What can parents do at home? When is it time to take a rash to a doctor, and how do you treat the various childhood skin conditions?

For a **heat rash**, I'd recommend keeping the baby cool; applying moisturiser might help, too. However, for a rash that's

persistent or very recurrent – flaring up every week, say – then do see a doctor, as it may be more than a simple heat rash.

Viral warts should be treated as soon as possible, before they spread to other areas or even to the child's siblings and friends. Unfortunately, it can take a long time to get rid of persistent warts, even with medical treatment. For **molluscums** that are not actively spreading, I would advise leaving them alone and monitoring them for any change, as they often go away on their own. If you note a rapid increase in the size and number of spots, do seek medical attention, because they can spread like wildfire.

Tell us about impetigo.

Caused by excessive scratching, impetigo is a **bacterial skin infection** that is quite common in kids between the ages of two and 10. They present with a weepy rash with yellowish discharge or crusts. Left untreated, it can spread to the other areas of the body. If the affected area is localised and superficial, treatment with a good antibacterial wash and topical preparations would suffice. However, should the infection be deeper or more widespread, then one would require oral antibiotics.

The Dermatology Practice
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one place, or already has a fear of dentistry.

"Fear of dentistry exists in both children and adults," he says. "In these cases, good bonding, communication and trust are important in order to get the necessary treatment done. And when I'm dealing with a little one, having good parenting skills helps me to get him or her to cooperate during the process."

As part of Aesthete Smilestudio's **Total Senses Concept**, he adds, the clinic does not look, smell, feel or taste like the traditional dental clinic. Pleasant, comfortable and painless treatment is a key goal, together with an emphasis on good preventive dentistry. The clinic is powered by state-of-the-art technology.

Whatever age you may be, he stresses, do go for regular checking and cleaning. Good preventive dentistry is affordable and painless. Delaying early preventive dentistry often leads to a need for advanced dental treatment that can be costly and painful – both in terms of the treatment experience and on the pocket, too!

Aesthete Smilestudio
#02-04 Clifford Centre
24 Raffles Place
6438 3811 | aesthetesmilestudio.com



IS FOR DENTAL

Many an adult has an unreasonable fear of dental treatment, often brought on by a traumatic childhood experience. (Those brain-piercing drills were enough to put one off forever.) Thanks to today's high-tech, painless treatments, your child doesn't have to suffer in this way. Healthily functioning teeth and a lovely smile should be everyone's birthright, believes DR THEAN TSIN PIAO, and instilling good dental habits at an early age is vital.

Parents should start bringing their child to the dentist from the age of two, he says, for regular check-ups and cleaning. Depending on need, the kinds of **treatments** he provides to youngsters include everything from the extraction of baby teeth to fillings, fissure sealants, root canal treatment and even orthodontics.

Dr Thean agrees that there can be special challenges in treating a child, especially one who doesn't want to sit in



IS FOR EAR INFECTIONS

Ever heard of “Singapore ear”? (No, neither had we.) Ear infections are common in moist, humid environments, says ENT specialist DR JEEVE KANAGALINGAM. Let’s find out more.

The most common cause of ear pain is an infection.

This could either be a middle ear infection (*acute otitis media*) or an ear canal infection (*acute otitis externa*). Sometimes, mainly in adults and only very rarely in children, ear pain may be caused by a problem elsewhere. This “referred” pain can be caused by dental infections, inflammation of the jaw joint or arthritis of the neck.

What are the signs of ear infection in a child?

Middle ear infections cause sudden pain, causing the child to wake up during the night, crying in distress. They may run a fever, and may tug at their ear.

Ear canal infections, on the other hand, tend to come on gradually. There is usually a visible foul smelling discharge from the ear, and the ear lobe may be red and painful when touched.

Middle ear infections are common, and most children have a couple of infections in early childhood. Often, they follow on from a common cold, and are bacterial. Some are so mild that they may even go unnoticed!

Ear canal infections (*otitis externa*) can be caused by swimming – particularly long periods in the water during a beach holiday – and may be due to bacteria or fungi. Fungal ear infections are often intensely itchy and may continue for many weeks. Common in the tropics, this infection is often called “Singapore ear”!

To treat middle ear infections that are not associated with a high fever, recent research suggests that a good painkiller such as Ibuprofen may be most helpful. Antibiotics are often not necessary, except in children under the age of two, or in severe cases. **Ear canal infections** are best treated with antibiotic eardrops and keeping the ear as dry as possible. In severe cases, you may need to consult an ENT surgeon and have your ear canal cleaned of discharge and debris.

Temporary hearing loss may follow a middle ear infection.

If you think your child’s hearing seems poor several weeks after an infection has passed, do consult your family doctor. Glue ear (*otitis media* with effusion) is common in preschool children and can lead to speech and language delay.

The ENT Practice
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IS FOR FAMILY PRACTICE

DR CHARYU NARAYAN, who trained in paediatrics and neonatology in the UK, is now part of the international team of GPs at CHI Health.

As a family doctor, how different is your workload in Singapore, compared with the UK?

Interestingly, it has changed from mainly chronic disease management in the UK to seeing more acute illness here, both in adults and children. Viral illnesses – coughs, colds and gastroenteritis – constitute the majority of issues at our clinic. Other common illnesses are hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) in younger children, and skin infections.

Children, including newborns, are seen for developmental checks, concerns from parents and for routine as well as travel vaccinations. A high fever in kids raises concern about dengue and chikungunya – both mosquito-borne illnesses found in Singapore. With in-house testing available at CHI, we are able to speed up diagnosis and management.

Influenza circulates all year round and as families travel frequently, it can be imported from their place of travel, as can typhoid and malaria.

On another note, I also frequently come across psychological issues and anxiety depression in children and adolescents. The stress of moving away from the home country, adjustment to new schools and a new culture may be responsible for these conditions becoming manifest. I must mention seeing a spectrum of eating disorders in teenage girls, too.

Which other childhood ailments that you see are associated with living in the tropics?

Mycoplasma infection deserves a mention and presents with a cough, mild fever and fatigue lasting longer than a usual cold. Some people are able to fight off the infection without medication but I see children in whom the infection causes missed school days and low levels of energy. This group may need a course of antibiotics and follow up if they have a lung infection.

Parasitic infections and bacterial gastroenteritis cases linked to food hygiene and sanitation are often seen following holiday travel in the Subcontinent.

The absence of a winter in Singapore is a plus for asthmatic children whose symptoms are worse in cold weather, but I've observed that haze pollution triggers breathing problems in children. Dust mites – a common allergen here – are also a trigger.

What attracted you to paediatrics and neonatology in the first place?

It's a unique branch of medicine that requires interaction with the child *and* the family. Even though it's heartbreaking to see children suffer, it's also great to see them bounce back after illness – and amazing to see them grow and develop over the years.

As physical and psychological health are so closely interwoven, a good rapport with one's paediatric patients can make all the difference in making them better. As a GP seeing children in a private practice like CHI, I have more continuity and contact with them than I would have as a hospital doctor, and I find that personally satisfying.

CHI – Complete Healthcare International
45 Rochester Park
6776 2288 | chi-health.com.sg



IS FOR GESTATIONAL DIABETES

A diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) is one of the *last* things a pregnant woman wants to hear, and it affects a surprising 18 percent of pregnancies. Fortunately, says endocrinologist DR FOO JOO PIN, the outcome for both mother and child can be good, as long as the mother works closely with her endocrinologist to achieve and maintain good glucose control. Early diagnosis and active intervention are key!



What is GDM and what causes it?

GDM is defined as any degree of glucose intolerance that either starts or is first recognised during pregnancy. It happens because pregnancy-related hormonal changes cause the body to develop resistance to insulin, causing blood sugar levels to rise. If the body is unable to produce more insulin to overcome the resistance, the resistance will progressively worsen over the course of the pregnancy.

How is it picked up?

This is a silent disorder that can only be detected via an oral glucose tolerance test. Your gynaecologist may recommend you to do the screening test, on the basis of your risk factors for diabetes. That said, many women who develop gestational diabetes have no evident risk factors. In fact, US authorities have recommended that all pregnant women be screened for gestational diabetes.

What are the risks to mother and baby?

Left untreated, it can result in serious complications. GDM in early pregnancy can cause birth deformities in major organs such as the heart and central nervous system, and a higher risk of miscarriage. It also causes excessive growth of the baby, increasing the risk of birth trauma.

Who might be more susceptible to GDM?

If you're overweight prior to becoming pregnant, or have a history of pre-diabetes, or a family history of diabetes, or previously gave birth to a big baby or a stillborn baby, your chances are higher.

How is it treated?

Treating GDM involves dietary and lifestyle intervention. Very often, though, insulin is required to control the blood sugars to optimal levels. Many women have a fear of injecting insulin, but they shouldn't – modern insulin therapy can be really easy, convenient and pain-free nowadays. **A**

Specialist Endocrine Clinic – for Diabetes, Thyroid and Hormones
#04-03 Camden Medical Centre
1 Orchard Boulevard
6735 4066 | specialistendocrine.com

AT HOME WITH SUZY WALSHAM

– ONWARDS AND UPWARDS!

Photography by Michael Bernabe

Especially upwards! During the more than eight years she has lived in Singapore, SUZY WALSHAM has won many of our top road races multiple times. But it's her achievements in the burgeoning field of stair-racing that are really putting her on the global map, as **Verne Maree** found out when she visited the friendly Aussie at her home on the 30th floor of an East Coast condo.

In fact, Suzy is the record-breaking fifth-time winner of the gruelling Empire State Building Run-up, the world's most famous stair-race.

"She only married me because I had an apartment in one of Singapore's tallest residential blocks," grins Suzy's husband David. That can't be the only reason, I think to myself; he makes a great cup of coffee, too. They started dating about six years ago when they both worked for Symantec, she as an accountant and he in a sales role; and she moved in with him when they became engaged two years later.

Expat Living showcased this big, airy apartment way back in 2007, as David reminds me. Its beguiling view of sea and ships is completely unblocked — so rare. "My décor consultant agreed that I didn't really need a water feature," he jokes.

Six months after the birth of their son, who is now 4, Suzy returned to work on a part-time basis. "It's hard to juggle work with family," she agrees, "especially as David travels a lot." It helps that much of what she does is global project work, and so fairly flexible.

"Unfortunately," she adds, "my son is not a good sleeper. If it were not for my amazing helper, I would not be able to train the way I do."

What distances do you run?

For me, the 10K feels like a marathon, because I'm actually a middle-distance track runner, having started athletics at the age of seven. I'd never even raced 10K until I moved to Singapore for my work in 2006, shortly after running for Australia in the Commonwealth Games.

Nowadays, I'm trying to fit road races around my stair-racing, and with so many races on the local calendar, there



are sometimes clashes. My first race here was the very first Great Eastern Women's 10K, which I won.

I also won the Standard Chartered 10K in 2006 and 2007, and the half-marathon in 2008. I was injured in 2009, and pregnant in 2010. Last year, it clashed with the lucrative Hong Kong ICC stair-race, which was also the final of the Vertical World Circuit; and it's the same this year, so I won't be taking part.

So far this year, I've done the Hong Bao 8K, the 2XU Compression Run 10K, the JP Morgan Corporate Challenge (5.6K), and the NTUC 10K and the Shape 5K on 17 August. I'll be doing the Great Eastern 10K in November, too.

What do you like about stair-racing?

I'm quite injury-prone, and racing on the stairs suits me because there's less impact. It's more strength-based, and I can do it even if I am injured.

It's great that there's now a world circuit, and because I'm doing well I get invited to a lot of races; this gives me the opportunity to travel, often with sponsored flights or accommodation.

Why do you think there's such a growing interest in stair-racing?

It's something different, and it's something anyone who lives or works in a high-rise building can relate to. But it won't be a spectator sport until they bring in cameras and real-time timing facilities.

As most stair races are done in time-trial format, you don't even know who has won until after the race organisers have worked it all out. A few, like the Empire State Building in New York, are pack-starts – which the media love as it's easy to identify the winner. For safety reasons, there are generally no more than ten elite competitors at the start.

In 2009, however, I got slammed into a wall at the start of the New York race and remained injured for most of the rest of the year. That's the most famous stair-race of them all, though, so I'm glad I went back, and I was delighted to win it this year for a record-breaking fifth time.

Where else does stair-racing take you?

There's the SkyRun Messe Turm in Frankfurt, the ICC building in Hong Kong, the Shangri-La in Beijing, and the new Torch Hotel in Doha. They've also resurrected the Sydney Tower Run, which is a really odd race: you're going right up the middle of the tower, next to the lift.

Also challenging is the big one in Bogota, Colombia, which attracts about 5,000 participants. Here, the altitude is the real killer: you're 2,700 metres above sea level even before you start climbing! Just carrying my bag through the airport, I was struggling for breath. I'm not very good at altitude.

You've won the Singapore Vertical Marathon up the 76-storey Swissôtel eight times, right?

Yes. It's not the highest – I complete it in just under eight minutes, compared with about 12 minutes for the Empire State Building.

Being right-handed, I'm stronger on a clockwise staircase. Luckily, I have a friend who lives at another high condo on the East Coast, where I can train anti-clockwise; and another who lives at a condo that's more than 60 storeys high, for a longer climb.

For a professional stair-climber, living in Singapore is a big advantage. My friends in Europe often have to train on a 20-storey building, and need to travel a long way even for that.

When and how do you train?

I start at 5.30am, before the family wakes up. Getting my son ready for school adds on at least half an hour to my morning; it's always: "Just five minutes more with my trains, Mum!" It's a constant negotiation. I'm not getting enough sleep to recover properly from training, and I must admit I'm exhausted right now.

Because I'm injury-prone, I'm doing more cross-training: twice a week in the condo gym. I train on the stairs twice a week, and I run three or maybe four times a week, including a Sunday morning 17K. The flatness of East Coast Park suits me, but I also like Bedok Reservoir, because of the gravel surface; it's easier on the joints and it's well marked.

For a hill session, I like to go to Mount Faber. I pass the cyclists sometimes, and it's fun to see the look on their faces!




Suzy's Recommendations

True Fitness,
"a one-stop fitness stop"

Core Concepts,
"weekly physio maintenance from Cindy Tan"

Chiropractic Works,
Dr Gary Tho "every three or four weeks"

Nike,
"my sponsors" 

For a professional stair-climber, living in Singapore is a big advantage.

Being BREAST AWARE

By Amy Greenburg



In honour of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we asked gynaecologist and obstetrician, DR CHRISTOPHER NG of GynaeMD Women's and Rejuvenation Clinic, to educate us on the terrible disease and how we can detect it as early as possible.

What are the risk factors for breast cancer?

They include family history (inherited mutated genes), personal history, increasing age, obesity, alcohol consumption, radiation exposure, early menarche and late menopause, having your first child after the age of 35, having never been pregnant, and excessive hormonal exposure – especially women who undergo hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for longer than five years after menopause. Any woman is at risk of developing breast cancer, but those with these risk factors are in greater danger.

What are the symptoms that women should look out for?

Breast lumps, skin changes, including pitting and dimpling, change in breast shape, bloody nipple discharge and nipple inversion.

What's a mammogram?

During a mammogram, each breast is compressed between two plates to flatten and spread the tissue for a few seconds. Though it can be uncomfortable for a moment, it's necessary in order to produce a good quality, readable mammogram.



The goal of mammography is to detect breast cancer, and in the earliest stage possible; when caught early, localised cancers can be removed without resorting to mastectomy (breast removal).

What forms of screening are used to diagnose breast cancer?

The most effective and proven method to detect breast cancer early is an X-ray of the breasts, or mammogram, and this can be combined with an ultrasound scan of the breast in some cases. Women are also encouraged to examine their own breasts on a monthly basis, after their periods have ended – although this is not considered as accurate as mammography.

So, how often should women undergo mammograms, and at what age should they start?

Women aged 40 and above should go for a screening mammogram once a year until they reach menopause, after which screening mammograms are recommended every two years.

The Age Quandary

In recent years, there has been controversy over when and how often women should go for mammograms – while some cancer doctors argue that yearly mammograms are only necessary for women above 50, other experts maintain that mammograms should be performed from the age of 40.

Nevertheless, the majority of doctors agree that women under 40 do not need yearly mammograms unless they're at high risk, with strong family histories of breast or ovarian cancers. In fact, according to Cancer Research UK, mammograms are more difficult to read in younger women because their breast tissue is denser. There's also little evidence that regular mammograms for most women under 40 reduces deaths from breast cancer.

What preventative steps, if any, can be taken?

Maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle, limit alcohol consumption and avoid overexposure to long-term hormonal therapies; women can go on HRT to relieve their menopausal symptoms, as long as it's for less than five years. Those women with a very strong family history of breast cancer who have tested positive for the breast cancer gene mutation may choose to undergo a prophylactic mastectomy; they may also choose to have their healthy ovaries removed (prophylactic oophorectomy) to reduce the risk of both breast and ovarian cancers once they have reached menopause.

Dr Ng recommends that, in addition to breast screenings, women should have a general screening once a year for peace of mind, and for the early prevention or detection of any diseases. His clinic offers a GynaecMD Pelvis, Breast and Bone Package for women 40 and above, and for those who are menopausal; the package involves a pelvis ultrasound, mammogram and blood cancer markers, and an evaluation of bone mass density. According to Dr Ng, this examination is very beneficial in that it allows for any benign breast lumps or cysts to be observed; if they appear suspicious, they can be removed or the patient can be referred to a breast surgeon for a second opinion; similarly, any fibroids and cysts that are discovered can be monitored.

GynaecMD Women's and Rejuvenation Clinic

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Check Yourself

Whether or not women should do breast self-exams has become a subject of debate in recent years, as the issue of accuracy has been called into question. However, one thing's for sure: the more aware of your body you are, the more likely you are to notice if something's out of the ordinary, and potentially harmful. It's important to know how your breasts normally look and feel, and being in the habit of checking for any abnormalities can be a valuable means of keeping tabs on your breast health, even if you do visit the doctor for regular exams. According to John Hopkins Medicine, 40 percent of diagnosed breast cancers are detected by women who feel a lump, so establishing a regular breast self-exam routine is crucial. For a step-by-step guide to conducting a breast self-exam, visit www.breastcancer.org.

The Stats

- According to World Cancer Research Fund International, breast cancer is the most common cause of cancer-related deaths among women globally, with more than 450,000 deaths each year, and accounting for about 14 percent of all female cancer deaths.
- According to the Health Promotion Board, breast cancer is the most common cancer among Singaporean women.
- Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among Australian women, according to the National Breast Cancer Foundation in Australia. It's estimated that, in 2014 alone, 15,270 women in Australia will be diagnosed with the disease.
- According to Cancer Research UK, the lifetime risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer is one in eight for women in the UK, where it's the most common form of cancer. The same goes for women in the US, says the American Cancer Society (ACS).
- The ACS projects that around 232,670 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in the US this year, and about 62,570 new cases of carcinoma in situ (the earliest form of breast cancer) will be detected; sadly, an estimated 40,000 women will die this year from the disease in the US.
- Although breast cancer is often thought to be a disease of the developed world, almost 50 percent of breast cancer cases and 58 percent of deaths occur in less developed countries, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).
- In 2012, Belgium had the highest incidence of breast cancer, followed by Denmark, France and The Netherlands, according to World Cancer Research Fund International.
- According to WHO, breast cancer survival rates vary greatly worldwide, ranging from 80 percent or more in North America, Sweden and Japan, to around 60 percent in middle-income countries and below 40 percent in low-income countries, mainly due to a lack of early detection programmes in less advanced countries. 

THE GREAT DEBATE

By Amy Greenburg



Breast cancer screening has been a source of controversy for decades, with some medical experts and patients questioning whether the benefits of mammography outweigh the risks. Currently, most women use mammography as their main form of routine screening, while other methods like magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) are typically conducted only for further evaluation, or in conjunction with mammography, particularly for those women at high risk. Though most major health organisations have concluded that mammography is a valuable screening tool, others maintain that MRI is more effective and should be primarily conducted even for those women with an average risk of developing breast cancer. Here's a look at the not-so-black-and-white debate.

Density and false negatives

The debate over the age at which women should start screening for breast cancer is controversial, partly because younger women have denser breasts, which makes it difficult to interpret mammograms in women below 50, or below menopausal age. After menopause, the breast's glandular tissue is replaced by fatty tissue, making mammographic interpretations more accurate. As a result, mammography isn't generally considered an effective technique for younger women.

The age issue aside, women with denser breasts are usually encouraged to undergo MRI or ultrasound screenings as mammograms don't always pick up cancers hidden by the dense tissue, producing false negatives – when mammograms appear normal even

though breast cancer is present, creating a false sense of security and a possible delay in cancer diagnosis.

While it's true that MRI has been shown to rule out the presence of cancer to a high degree of certainty, making it an excellent tool for screening – particularly for patients at high genetic risk or those with dense tissue – many experts point out that MRI can miss some cancers that would be detected by mammography; while MRI is considered to be more sensitive, mammography is considered to be more specific. Breast surgeon **Dr Georgette Chan**, for instance, recommends MRI scans only in combination with mammograms for certain groups of patients, including young women with dense breasts, those with a strong family history of breast cancer and those with breast implants.

According to Dr Chan, recent advances in the field of mammography make the screening process even more effective. One example is **3D mammography** (tomosynthesis), which is an extension of a digital mammogram. "The breast is compressed once and the machine takes many low-dose x-rays as it moves over the breast," she explains. "Then, the images are combined to give a three-dimensional picture. This method uses more radiation than the standard two-view mammogram, but it may see problem areas more clearly and may possibly find more cancers."

False positives

Some medical experts and patients feel that, when taking into account the frequency of false positives – when mammogram findings that look like cancer turn out to be benign – and the potential for causing unnecessary distress, the risks of mammography offset the benefits. This is because many women who receive false positive results become upset and fearful about the possibility of having breast cancer, and must return for anxiety-inducing follow-ups and testing.

On the other hand, this may be outweighed by the possibility of detecting cancer in its early stages. According to Cancer Research UK, many women understand that mammography is likely to pick up cancers at an early stage when treatments work best, and they find having regular screenings reassuring.

In addition, many experts note that, while mammography may not be perfect, MRI is not a perfect tool either. According to Dr Chan, MRI scans create more false positive results than mammograms do, because the scans are more detailed. “There is a lot of overlap between normal and abnormal tissue,” she says. “Even the timing of the scan in relation to the menstrual cycle can make a difference because of the hormonal influence. More false-positive results may mean more unnecessary biopsies and patient anxiety.”

Over-diagnosis

Also central to the debate is the concern of over-diagnosing early cancers and unnecessarily treating tumours that wouldn’t have affected a woman’s health during her lifetime. Since there’s no way to tell which cases of cancer will go on to become invasive breast cancer, causing illness or death, almost all cancers are treated, which means some women are unnecessarily treated, or “over-treated”, with radiation and invasive procedures.

Radiation

Like normal x-rays, mammography uses ionising radiation to create images that are then analysed for any abnormalities. According to the US-based Susan

G. Komen cancer organisation, while the radiation exposure during mammography can increase the risk of breast cancer over time, this increase in risk is very small. Nevertheless, the concern over exposure to small doses remains, and it’s up to the individual to make that choice for herself.

Other considerations

Many women refuse an MRI based on the claustrophobic sensation, and the length of time the procedure takes. According to Dr Chan, MRI scans are more uncomfortable, as the patient must lie on her belly for 30 to 45 minutes, as opposed to a few minutes of discomfort during a mammogram. She also notes that MRI requires an intravenous injection of a dye via IV for better visualisation, making it more of an invasive procedure. However,

some feel that MRI is less uncomfortable than mammography – it really depends on one’s own comfort level.

To each her own

The verdict? It’s still complicated. It’s true that there is growing evidence that breast MRI in combination with mammography, compared with mammography alone, can increase detection of breast cancer in certain women at high risk; and although there are some risks involved with mammography, forgoing mammograms altogether can be risky. In the end, however, it really comes down to each individual speaking with her doctor and weighing the benefits and risks based on her specific circumstances, including her genetic risk of cancer and her breast density, among other factors.

SURGICAL TREATMENTS FOR BREAST CANCER


According to Dr Chan, most patients begin their treatment with surgery. “The goal is to remove the cancer and check the lymph node status in the axilla, or armpit,” she says. “The tumour profile needs to be studied to individualise other therapies that may be required following surgery. The type of surgery really depends on the size and the position of the tumour.”

For small tumours, a wide excision of the tumour – known as **breast-conserving surgery** – can be done, followed by several weeks of radiation treatment. “The advantage here is that the majority of the normal remaining breast can be preserved,” says Dr Chan.

For larger tumours, on the other hand, or those involving the nipple, conserving the breast may not always be possible. In this case, a **mastectomy** (breast removal) may be a safer bet. “Usually, patients who have undergone a mastectomy do not require further radiation therapy,” she says.

RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

For patients who need a mastectomy, Dr Chan says she usually offers breast reconstruction surgery, which aims to rebuild the breast mound. In fact, she says, 80 to 90 percent of her mastectomy patients opt for breast reconstruction, which can be done either at the time of the mastectomy or a few months after chemotherapy or radiation therapy has been completed.

“Reconstruction not only physically rebuilds the breast mound – making it easier for the patient to wear her clothes and even a swimsuit – but it also rebuilds her self-confidence and does wonders for her self-image,” says Dr Chan. 

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Dr Quah Hak Mien

MBChB, M.Med (Surgery), FRCSEd, FAMS (General Surgery)
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Move It, Baby!

Listen up, ladies – the days when pregnancy was considered a time to “take it easy” are over. Turns out it’s important to stay active with a bun in the oven – which is why Radiance PhysioFit has introduced a special prenatal programme where you can get fit and have some fun. Designed and led by physiotherapist, KATHERINE MACFARLANE, the eight-week course provides both physical and psychological benefits for mums-to-be. Here’s what FitBumps entails.



If a woman's not exercising regularly before she's pregnant, should she start during pregnancy?

In most cases, absolutely! There is no time in a woman's life where she will benefit more from being fit and active than during pregnancy, and her childbearing years in general. Pregnancy is not a disease, and women shouldn't spend nine months treating it as such. In fact, it's recommended that pregnant women get at least 30 minutes of exercise per day, which can usually be continued right up until labour. Though exercise can be more challenging during pregnancy, the benefits for both mother and child can far outweigh any potential negative side effects.

So, what are the advantages?

Common pregnancy-related complaints of fatigue, lower extremity swelling and circulatory problems are reduced with exercise. Also, exercise can prevent excessive maternal weight gain, improve blood sugar control in women with gestational diabetes and even play a role in the prevention of gestational diabetes. Remaining fit and active helps a woman maintain her cardiovascular fitness and strength, which will benefit her during labour. In fact, there's some evidence that weight-bearing exercise during pregnancy can reduce the length of labour and decrease delivery complications. In addition, pelvic floor exercises during pregnancy, and in the immediate postpartum period, may reduce the risk of future urinary incontinence.

And don't underestimate the psychological benefits of getting active, and taking control of your health and your pregnancy. Psychologically, active women experience less insomnia, stress anxiety and depression.

What does the FitBumps programme involve?

Radiance FitBumps is a flexible, group-based course for pregnant women who wish to increase their knowledge of all things pregnancy, exercise and physio-related. The programme includes a bootcamp with 60 minutes of physio-led exercises designed to make mums-to-be sweat, as well as whole body strength training, low-impact aerobic-style exercises and core-based Pilates-style movements. Since hormonal changes lead to an increase in joint laxity and hypermobility, we designed the exercises to strengthen muscles without placing extra stress on joints.

The course also involves weekly, 30-minute educational talks on different topics, including back care and pelvic floor and postpartum exercises, with take-home materials.

KATHERINE'S tips

- Wear comfortable clothing that will help you remain cool
- Wear a bra that fits well and gives lots of support
- Drink plenty of water to help keep you from overheating and dehydrating
- Make sure you consume the extra daily calories you need during pregnancy
- Empty your bladder before exercising; the combination of increased fluid intake and the pressure of an enlarged uterus can lead to urinary incontinence



ABOUT RADIANCE PHYSIOFIT

Radiance PhysioFit is a one-stop fitness destination offering a wide range of gym equipment, personal training, group exercise classes like Zumba and Muay Thai, and physical training programmes for men and women of all ages and fitness levels – plus a health-conscious café for a post-workout bite. Uniquely, Radiance offers in-house physiotherapy services – professional assessment, diagnosis and treatment – for those concerned with mobility and general health.

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enquiries@radiancephysiofit.com.sg



Twelve-year-old GRACE CONLAN fell in love with football four years ago, when she was selected by her school to compete in an athletics tournament. She volunteered to be goalkeeper, and hasn't left the position, or the pitch, since. Now, Grace – who names American goalkeeper and gold-medallist, Hope Solo, as an inspiration – plays in **JSSL Singapore's** all-girl Super League team in the under-12 (U12) age group. We spoke to the British-born athlete about her recent trip to the world's largest junior football competition, what it's like playing football for JSSL and her passion for the sport.

By Amy Greenburg

Tell us about your trip to the Gothia Youth World Cup in Sweden.

Our trip to Gothenburg was amazing. JSSL sent nine teams, making us the largest international club from outside Europe to compete there. We played our first matches on the Monday and won all of our group stages with scores like 11-0 and 5-2. By Thursday, we'd reached the quarterfinals, which was where we'd been knocked out the previous year; we were really determined to get past that point this time. We ended up winning and moved on to the semis the next day, where we played a Canadian team and won again, pushing us all the way to the finals.

On Friday, we played the finals in a small stadium, which was an incredible experience. There was a great turnout – and great support – from all the JSSL Arsenal teams that attended. Unfortunately, we lost against a Swedish academy; they were amazing. Even though we didn't win, everyone went home smiling because we all knew that we had just come second in the world's biggest junior football competition against 41 girls' teams from all over the world.

That must have been very exciting. How much did you have to practise for the tournament?

Our regular training is two days a week, but for Gothia we practised for two hours, four times a week. Closer to the competition, we trained for three hours, five times a week.

What's your favourite part about playing in the JSSL leagues, and what do you love most about your team?

I love playing on a girls' team with such talented, lovely players; not to mention our amazing coach, Coach Gavin, who was the reason we made it to the finals in Gothia. I have learnt so much since I first joined, and am a completely different player now.

What I love most about my team is that they are all so supportive and friendly. We train hard, but also have lots of fun – and if I let in a goal they don't blame me or get upset. We play well as a supportive team, and that really brings us together both on and off the pitch.

What else do you like to do for fun?

Aside from loads and loads of football, I love to play basketball. I'm really into my sports, but I always love a good day out with my friends.

About JSSL

With over 180 teams and more than 1,600 children enrolled island-wide, JSSL (Junior Soccer School and League) Arsenal has become the largest youth soccer league in Singapore for both boys and girls. In fact, a new league format kicked off this past September, with new elite girls' leagues introduced for age groups U9, U11 and U13 to compete in the Super League against top teams from other soccer schools.

JSSL's Super League is made up of the top nine competitive teams in age groups eight to 16, while its Championship Leagues are for development and fun, with teams for age groups six to 16. For more information, visit www.jssl-arsenal.com or call 6348 5780. 



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Dr Jeeve Kanagalingam

BM BCh (Oxford), MA (Cambridge), MRCS (Eng),
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Dr Ben Ng Jen Min is an **Endocrinologist and Specialist in Internal Medicine** with an interest in Diabetes Mellitus, Thyroid and Parathyroid disease and Osteoporosis. He trained in the United Kingdom and has worked for 16 years in the National Health Service in the UK and since 2011 in Singapore. He is an accredited specialist in both countries.

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Dr Gerald Tan is a MOH board-certified urologist with over 17 years of clinical experience. He completed a 2-year fellowship in da Vinci® roboticsurgery for prostate cancer at Weill Medical College, Cornell University, New York, and is internationally renowned for his expertise in minimally invasive robotic surgery for prostate, kidney and bladder diseases. He has received numerous top local and international awards for clinical and academic excellence, and was named the Outstanding Young Urologist of Asia by the Urological Association of Asia in 2012.

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- Hemorrhoids (Piles)
- Colon Cancer and Colon Polyps
- Gallstones
- Pancreatitis

LIVER DISEASES:

- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
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- Liver Cirrhosis
- Liver Cancer (HCC)

SCREENING:

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- Colon Cancer
- Liver cancer

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Dr. Andrea Rajnakova, PhD

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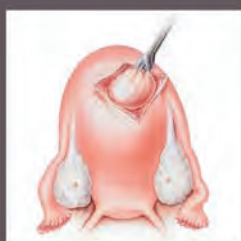
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• Drug & Poison Information Centre	6423 9119
• New Mothers' Support Group (NMSG)	nmsg-singapore.com
• Samaritans of Singapore	6220 7758
• SOS Hotline	1 800 221 4444

Property

• Expat Realtor	6255 1027 expatrealtor.net
• Property Guru	6238 5971 propertyguru.com.sg

WEBSITES

Entertainment

- eventshub.sg — Information on cultural and entertainment events
- sistic.com.sg or ticketbooth.com.sg or showbizasia.com — Online bookings for events
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Food & Groceries

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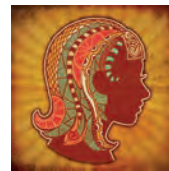
June 21 – July 21

Being an intuitive water sign, you're tuned into the emotional highs and lows triggered by the lunar cycle. So while you'll understand the combination of intense feelings and, often, sudden changes triggered by eclipses on October 8th and 23rd, others won't. This means playing the guru role, helping them deal with their reaction to events, both practical and emotional. While you, too, could be on edge, you'll instinctively understand that for whatever is going, something better is coming your way.

**LEO**

July 22 – August 22

Sometimes even superb offers or opportunities aren't recognisable, at least initially. These first appear in late September. If you bypassed them then, fortunately they'll reappear in other forms during October's first half. Risky as agreeing when short of facts seems, it's best and allows you to learn from experience. Ironically, with the ideas planet Mercury retrograde from the 4th to 25th, the minor errors typical of this period could be informative. By the month's close, you'll be agreeing to unanticipated yet thrilling arrangements.

**VIRGO**

August 23 – September 22

No amount of analysis will make sense of both changes in existing arrangements and unexpected developments. Accept that, and you've overcome October's biggest obstacle. Unaccustomed as this easy-going attitude is, it allows you to take advantage of sudden, thrilling but unsettling events. Similarly, with your ruler Mercury retrograde from the 4th to 25th, you'll face errors but, here too, they'll be as informative as they are annoying. Also, since constant changes undermine your usual mega-organisation, simply go with the flow.

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.

STARS

**LIBRA**

September 23 – October 22

Although the Libra New Moon, on 24 September, casts numerous perplexing situations in a fresh perspective, it's too early to commit to plans. Between the actual circumstances involved shifting and your own questions, you'll change your mind often, and so will others. The trick is to view October as a journey in which your understanding of circumstances grows. If you must commit, ensure arrangements are flexible. This will allow you to proceed with plans while focusing on exploration and what you can learn.

**SCORPIO**

October 23 – November 21

Even you, with your remarkable ability to combine canny observation with intuition, could find you're unable to make sense of events. Some seem thrilling, others confusing and a few worry you. Since things won't come together until after the pivotal, if not life-changing, Scorpio eclipsed New Moon on 23 October, regard any plans until then as tentative. Meanwhile, focus on decluttering your life. This will both clear the way for what's to come and, as important, mean you're relieved certain things are going.

**SAGITTARIUS**

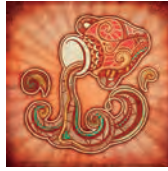
November 22 – December 20

You'll recognise the potential in the thrilling if unsettling events currently reshaping your life. Others, however, will question them. Discuss these with certain individuals whose views you respect, ignore those who're overly cautious, but always remember that, ultimately, what's next is up to you. However, with the ideas planet Mercury retrograde from the 4th to 25th, minor errors could mean rethinking even simple plans. The trick, therefore, is to trust your instincts but finalise nothing until things are calmer, later in the year.

**CAPRICORN**

December 21 – January 19

Being a down-to-earth Capricorn, you try to keep a clear distinction between life's practicalities and more emotional situations. And you try to avoid allowing those feelings to influence decisions about your activities, objectives or career. Yet with October's two eclipses, on the 8th and 23rd, causing shake-ups that require fast action yet heighten everybody's feelings, you may need to make commitments based on your instincts more than fact. Proceed, but organise arrangements so you can rethink them in the future.

**AQUARIUS**

January 20 – February 17

Sometimes what's best in life appears in unexpected ways or, as is likely now, seems a disruption. Thus, as you begin October, you'll be analysing but also anxious about the events triggered by late September's stunning alliance between the bountiful Jupiter and your ruler Uranus. However, because this occurs twice more in 2015, you're just beginning a thrilling cycle of good fortune and growth. Knowing that, explore everything, make plans if necessary but, most of all, make your exploration your priority.

**PISCES**

February 18 – March 19

Unsettling as the events triggered by eclipses on 8 and 23 October may be, your intuition will be correctly saying they're in your best interests. The problem is, certain individuals disagree, and many of them play an important role in your life. Listen to their concerns and, if necessary, act on them. But ensure arrangements can be rethought when things change, as they will. Meanwhile, consider carefully what plans you'd organise, since by the month's close, that's exactly what you'll be doing.

FOR OCTOBER

By Shelley
Von Strunckel

**ARIES**

March 20 – April 19

Not only does the Aries Full Moon on 8 October bring both feelings and events to a peak, it's an eclipse, which indicates both sudden changes and breakthroughs. Knowing that, instead of acting swiftly, review the facts and consider your options at length. This may require patience. However, the resulting insights could lead to rethinking both your plans and long-term priorities. More importantly, you'll have time to learn about the people and places currently broadening your horizons – often in wonderful ways.

**TAURUS**

April 20 – May 20

Sudden and often unsettling as changes in your way of living or working may be, they're actually about progress. The problem is, with the communication planet Mercury retrograde between the 4th and 25th, the inevitable minor errors will lead to confusion. Knowing that, focus on learning from both current and past mistakes, whether personal, or involving family, activities or career. What you learn will prove informative about those changes, so much that by October's close, you'll be embracing them enthusiastically.

**GEMINI**

May 21 – June 20

Exciting as developments in late September may be, turning them into lasting plans could prove challenging. Rather than plunge into arrangements, take it slowly. And explore everything, including the things that seem unappealing. Why? While certain ideas won't work, those you'd questioned initially might. Should you make plans, ensure that, should circumstances or your priorities shift, changes can be easily made. Those who're annoyed by delays initially will soon be grateful, since they, too, will be making numerous last minute changes.

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The Gloop Man Cometh

By Dave Fox

The shopkeeper pounces, with an enthusiasm normally reserved for over-excited poodles.

"Excuse me!" he pants at me and my wife, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Can I ask you a question?" is my least favourite question in the world. The follow-up is never, "Would you like a free weekend in Bali?"

So my standard answer to "Can I ask you a question?" is "No." But on this day at the mall, something goes terribly wrong. We hesitate long enough for him to launch his follow-up: "Where are you from?"

When a salesperson asks where you are from, he does not care where you are from. He is creating an illusion of friendliness so he can sell you stuff.

I try to walk away, but Kattina commits a tactical error. She confides we are American and have lived in Singapore for three years.

"I have a gift for you!" the salesman announces because – ooh, how lucky! – he has special gifts for Americans who have lived in Singapore for three years. He hands us each a microscopic tube of Bubble Dream Body Lotion.

"Okay, let's go," I mumble, grabbing Kattina's arm.

But it's too late. The salesman has attacked my wife with a squeeze bottle. He is now rubbing lavender-scented gloop on her and telling her to come into his shop.

"I will wash your hands for you!" he says.

Huh?! Since when has it been appropriate for a guy to approach random couples and offer to wash the female's hands?

"You too!" he says, moving toward me. "I will wash your hands too!"

"No!" I tell him. "Lavender makes me nauseous."

"I have something else then," he says. And although my wife, who knows I am fantasising about biting this man's nose off, tells him to back off, it's no use. He squeezes something non-lavender onto my hand and drags us by our wrists into his boutique, exclaiming, "I will make your hands as soft as a baby's skin!"

We have no choice but to enter the store. If we don't go to this man's sink, his gloop will remain on us for several more minutes until we can locate a public sink. And I don't think it's legal to wash gloop into public sinks in Singapore.

So we follow him into his shop where slathers me with a second concoction – a soapy, salty mix – then tells me to rinse, which I do frantically.

"How does it feel?" he asks. "Smooth like a baby, yes?"

I don't know. Salty and slimy? Is that how a baby's skin feels? Possibly, in which case, I am more at peace than ever with our decision not to have children.

I rub my hands together vigorously in an attempt to de-gloop myself. I do all I can to splash the excess gloop all over his countertop.

He reaches for a third tube – some sort of *après*-gloop. "Now let me just put on some..."

"We have to go!" I say, and Kattina has my back. "My husband doesn't like gloop," she says, fearful we might end up on Stomp: "*Ang mo with gloopy hands bites salesman on nose.*"

Before he can gloop us a third time, we find the only dignified solution we can think of. We rub the excess gloop off on our shirts and make a desperate sprint for the MRT.



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Dave Fox is a Singapore-based writing coach and a freelance travel and humour writer; visit www.globejotting.com for more.

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