

Li*v*

APRIL 2015

Inside
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SOLUTIONS
& MORE

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QUESTIONS
ANSWERED**

by
expat **LIVING**

MCI(P) 185/072014

A photograph of the Marina Bay Sands hotel in Singapore at sunset. The three towers are illuminated with a warm, golden light, and the sky is a mix of blue and orange. The building's reflection is visible in the water in the foreground.

DISCOVER MORE AT ASIA'S PREMIER LUXURY RETAIL DESTINATION

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There are many things I've grown to love and appreciate about life in Singapore – great weather, affordable travel getaways and yummy food are just a few of them.

Then there's the local shopping and design scene. You don't have to wait till you head home to shop – it's just about knowing the best spots and those “hidden gems”, which is why here at *LIV* we enjoy doing the legwork and putting together all those shopping spreads for you! On that note, flick to page 46 for this month's jewellery and accessory finds. (I've earmarked a few for myself!)

Recently, Unika boutique caught our eye for its cool designers, its cute little shop-front and its great location opposite Great World City. Founder Nira Dror Shoshani, who hails from Israel, brings something different to the market with an eclectic mix of jewellery, shoes and clothing that reflects her own pared-down and effortless style. Turn to page 24 to read about her story.

Another thing we've focused on this month is skincare. Most of us go through times when our complexions look a little, well, the worse for wear; but instead of waiting for the phase to pass, you could move out of it by taking some expert advice and maybe trying a new clinical facial (page 31).

Finally, I want to say a big thank you for your support of *LIV* so far – it's always lovely to receive your emails and messages. Keep them coming!

COVER STAR



Nira wears:

Face: Make Up Forever HD Foundation and Concealer, Bobbi Brown Blusher in Antigua, Bobbi Brown Eye Brightener
Eyes: Maybelline Hyper Curl Volume Express





Mascara, Suratt Beauty Smokey Eye Baton in Fume Brun, Suratt Beauty Eye Shadows in Soie, Idealiste and Truffle & Chocolate

Lips: Rimmel Lip Liner #4 Indian Pink, Too Faced Melted Long Wear Lipstick in Fuchsia

Photography by Michael Bernabe
Hair and makeup by Kelly Bilimoria, kellybilimoria.com

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EDITOR'S PICKS



Bracelet, CW Jewels (a darling charm bracelet adds the perfect touch of whimsy)



Pop lipstick, Clinique (for pigmented colour that lasts all day)



Travel journal, Kikki K (a little travel diary for jotting down memories and brainwaves)



Shoes, Aldo (gladiator tie-ups with a block heel = a match made in heaven)



Crochet dress, Topshop (because crochet should be here to stay)



Tummy & Love handles?
So long and farewell.

Cellulite & Saddlebags?
How about see you *never*.

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BEAUTY NEWS

Renewed and Recharged

We're excited about Estée Lauder's new cream, which incorporates black diamond truffle extract, a rare element touted to energise skin cells and promote the skin's natural age-fighting abilities. Totally luxe to use and invigorating too, the **Re-Nutriv Ultimate Diamond Transformative Energy Creme** (\$720) also contains a lifting combination of peptides, green algae and Vitamin C.



Perfect Pairing

Following the launch of Clinique's Sonic System Purifying Cleansing Brush last year, here's its perfect partner: the **Foaming Sonic Facial Soap** (\$38). Formulated with glycerine, a humectant that prevents dryness, the oil-free cream transforms into a foam suitable to cleanse all skin types. Used with the cleansing brush, it gently removes makeup, dirt and excess sebum, revealing smoother, clearer skin. We call that teamwork!

Eye Power

They say your eyes are the windows to the soul; we definitely want them to look younger and brighter. Say hello to a better-looking under-eye area with Biotherm's **Aquasource Total Eye Revitalizer**, a gentle eye gel that smooths out lines caused by dehydration and lightens dark circles. It's formulated with the same hydrating agents as their already popular Aquasource line, and is enriched with a special combination of cooling, de-puffing, lightening and blurring complexes. **\$69 for 15ml.**



Under The Sea

Have a change from your regular black eyeliner: try Make Up Store's brand new **Oceanotopia** range. The signature look is a delicate and slightly metallic mint on the eyes, set against dewy, shimmering skin. This ocean-inspired collection will add a splash of colour to your face, while still giving a light and natural finish – perfect for fresh-faced evening looks. **Available in stores now.**



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THE LATEST SKINCARE TREATS

Darkness, Begone!

Lancaster's innovative **365 Anti-Dark Spot Corrector Serum** (\$85) contains a Vitamin C derivative, daisy extract, red algae extract and liquorice, which work together to regulate the creation of melanin within the skin. This corrects dark spots and uneven skin tone, making your complexion look brighter and more luminous. **Available at Sephora ION and Tampines 1.**



Zit Buster

Spots, pimples, zits; whatever name you give them, no one likes having them. Now you can defend your skin with Eucerin's new **Dermo Purifier** range, which targets the four main causes of acne: excess sebum, formation of comedones, abnormal growth of bacteria and inflammation. We tried the Acne & Make-up Cleansing Water, a micellar cleansing water that left our skin feeling clean, zingy and refreshed. **Priced from \$21.90 to \$29.90 and available at leading pharmacies.**



Hello Hydration

Give your skin some loving care with Nivea's new **In-Shower Skin Conditioner**, a rinse-off body lotion that acts as a moisturiser in the shower. It provides intense hydration that lasts for most of the day, and application is so fuss-free – just slather it on, wait a few seconds and rinse it off. **\$29, available in three formulations for normal, dry and dull skin.**

Nurtured and Nourished

L'Occitane's sweet-smelling **Almond Youthful Body** collection consists of an innovative Youth Complex: a blend of smoothing proteins, stimulating buds and regenerating native cells derived from the almond tree. This collection promises to leave your skin velvet-soft immediately and to rejuvenate it over time. We're not saying no to that! **Available in 100ml at \$76 and 200ml at \$91.**



Just Natural

The team at newly opened Nila Aromatherapy Bar believes in the healing therapy of aromatic plants and essential oils to not only make you look better, but feel better too.

Is it paraben-free? Does it have artificial colouring? What about chemical fragrances? Over time, we've become much more savvy about our skincare, and these questions often run through our minds before we invest in new products.

One failsafe way of really knowing what you're using on your skin is to customise your own product, which is something Nila Aromatherapy Bar, founded by Adeline Lim, specialises in. It offers a bespoke custom-blending service, creating blends of essential oils that will address your individual skin needs or wider health needs – whether that be eczema, the signs of ageing, or even migraine problems.

Nila Organic Face Cream (\$48 for 100ml)

This cream is rich in antioxidants, with aloe leaf juice, apricot kernel oil, Sambucus nigra fruit and rosemary extracts to hydrate and restore elasticity.

Nila Organic Argan Oil (\$108 for 50ml)

Rich in skin-nourishing essential fatty acids (omega-6 and 9), antioxidants (vitamin E) and anti-ageing polyphenol, this facial oil moisturises dry, itchy and irritated skin while regulating sebum production in oily and blemish-prone skin.

Nila Organic Camellia Japonica Oil (\$180 for 100ml)

Camellia japonica oil is one of the most treasured secrets of the geisha – it's light and rich in oleic acid and vitamins A, B, D and E, as well as skin-nourishing essential fatty acids (omega-3, 6 and 9). Its molecular weight is almost identical to that of our body's sebum, so it's absorbed exceedingly quickly. Geishas typically use camellia oil as a natural skin whitener and a nourishing hair oil.



Nila Organic Aloe Face Serum (\$48 for 100ml)

Rich in aloe leaf juice, bearberry and calendula extracts, this organic serum nourishes and brightens skin, while minimising fine lines and wrinkles for a youthful, glowing and firm complexion.

Nila Organic Night Cream (\$58 for 100ml)

An antioxidant-rich cream with aloe leaf juice, sweet almond and macadamia oils, Sambucus nigra fruit, calendula and rosemary extracts, to revitalise, moisturise and protect against dehydration.

Anti-ageing essential oil blend (\$100 per 10ml or \$10 per ml, to be blended into your unscented serum, face oil and cream)

A skin-rejuvenating blend of frankincense, rose, myrrh, lavender, sandalwood and Helichrysum to maintain firmness and delay the onset of fine lines and wrinkles.

Visit Nila Aromatherapy Bar at #03-25 Shaw Centre, 1 Scotts Road

FASHION NEWS



DAPPER CHAPS

Attention, ladies! Did you know you could pick up an array of snazzy, laid-back styles for your man at Island Shop? Its spring collection sees the return of classic summer shades (think blue, plus earthy hues and creamy whites) – we're especially keen on the breezy linen shirts and cool Bermuda shorts. Prices from \$79.90 to \$99.90. #02-11 Tanglin Mall, islandshopinternational.com.

VINTAGE INSPIRATION

Club Monaco's spring collection is a blast from the past, combining style elements from the seventies with a contemporary twist. We adore the laidback yet stylish vibe – definitely worth checking out. #B1-41/47/48, Takashimaya.



BACK TO NATURE

Pandora has done it again: its latest release is an understated gem. Celebrating nature with sweet meadow flowers and fluttering butterflies, this series speaks of new life and new beginnings. Expect the same hand-finished, detailed quality together with the fresh elements of springtime. Any of these pieces would make a darling gift for a friend or loved one. #B2-77, The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands.



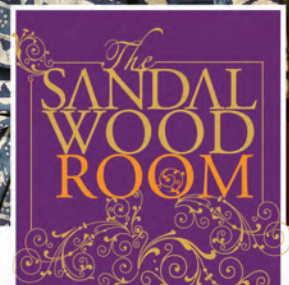
SUSTAINABLE STYLE

Show your love for Mother Earth with H&M's new Conscious Exclusive collection for spring 2015. Look out for recycled sequins and beads – a design first for the range – and the use of other sustainable materials to create elegant yet edgy pieces. Inspiration has been taken from around the globe, including Japanese draping and African embellishment. Available in stores now.

#BeaFusionista

Bohemian warrior *meets* ethnic beauty.
Hand-woven organic khadi dress
with indigo blue Shibori scarf & jacket.
Tribal-art inspired silver jewellery.

bluinsights.com



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FASHION WEEK FRENZY

Formerly Audi Fashion Festival, the newly named **Singapore Fashion Week (#SFV)** is back in May for its ninth edition.

This year, we're thrilled to hear that none other than the iconic Diane Von Furstenburg will be opening the shows. Named the most powerful woman in fashion by *Forbes* in 2012, her fashion-forward interpretations of the wrap-dress and her signature prints are loved the world over, and we can't wait to see her latest designs strutting down the runway.

And thanks to a new partnership with the Council of Fashion Designers America (CFDA), we can also expect a showcase from more acclaimed designers – previous years have seen of garments from the likes of Prabal Gurung, Carolina Herrera, Oscar de la Renta and Zac Posen take the stage.

What's more, this fashion event is really pushing exposure for Singapore designers, aiming to launch them into the global marketplace. With partnerships with UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) and e-tailer Net-a-Porter, we're sure to see our local design talent stocked up there with the big names soon!



Courtesy of DVF, Thomas Whiteside



DVF Spring/Summer 2015



Singapore Fashion Week will be held from 13 to 17 May at Tent@Orchard, Ngee Ann City Civic Plaza, 391A Orchard Road. For up-to-the-minute news, keep checking [facebook.com/singaporefashionweek](https://www.facebook.com/singaporefashionweek) and singaporefashionweek.sg.



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MORE DASH THAN CASH

This month's stylish buys for under \$200



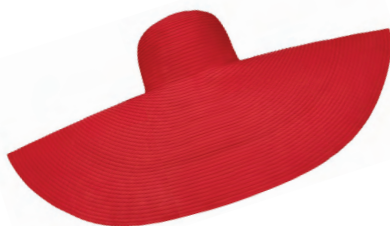
What do we want from a lipstick? Rich, pigmented colour, a smooth application and good staying power. Clinique's new Lip Pop range ticks all of our boxes. **Clinique, \$33 (available from 20 April).**



Our obsession with dainty jewellery continues, and these woven earrings in sterling silver with 18-carat rose-gold plating are timeless chic. **Taula, \$79.**



Khaki is undoubtedly one of the shades of the season; this cool but comfy knit dress features a beautiful knitted neckline. **Zara, \$59.90.**



Protect yourself from premature ageing with a good hat – these from Global Babe can travel in your handbag, and will protect your face, shoulders and décolletage. That's some seriously glamorous shade! **\$125 to \$150, globalbabe.com.**



Super-high-waisted, stretchy (so they keep their shape) and ultra-comfy, a pair of good ol' Joni jeans is a wardrobe staple. **Topshop, \$89.90.**



Every girl needs an oversized tote to carry her daily essentials – and this bright blue number will take us from office to poolside. **Homanz, \$160, available at Gnossem.com.**



Crafted in light, airy linen with an elegant revere collar and belted waist, this dress from the new Ines de la Fressange collection is good reason to hurry off to the Japanese chain. **Uniqlo, \$59.90.**



There's something about VS products that just makes you feel sexy – let's hope the new range of shampoos, conditioners and styling sprays will deliver catwalk-worthy locks. **Victoria's Secret, \$24 to \$30.**



Declutter your cosmetic bag with this compact kit, which includes a full-size eyeshadow palette in universally flattering earthy tones, plus a versatile peachy blush and lipstick in travel size. **Lunasol, \$77.**

MEDICAL AESTHETICS PHYSICIAN, DR. VICKI LEONG INTRODUCES

The New Face Lift

EnerJet- The revolutionary needleless face lift



"The EnerJet Face Lift is minimally invasive, proven, effective and produces long lasting results. It has helped many of our patients achieve improved contours, skin tightening and a refreshed visage in one transforming treatment."

- Dr. Vicki Leong *MBBS (Australia), B Med Sci (Australia), Dip Dermatology (United Kingdom), Dip Family Med (Singapore)*

Australian and United Kingdom trained Medical Aesthetics physician, Dr. Vicki Leong of Nu. Reflections Medical Aesthetics brings a new rejuvenating treatment to town.

EnerJet Face Lift is a revolutionary treatment which helps to achieve a lifted and refreshed visage, without the use of heat energy, needles or surgery. Currently popular in the United Kingdom and other parts of Europe, as well as Korea, Nu. Reflections is the pioneer clinic in Singapore to provide this treatment.

The EnerJet Face Lift uses a proprietary pneumatic technology to precisely deliver micro droplets of Hyaluronic Acid into the dermis of the skin. Upon contact, the Hyaluronic Acid pierces through the skin and spread laterally. This causes micro trauma which kick starts the process of skin remodelling, and collagen and elastin synthesis.

Dr. Vicki says, "We are have developed a precise pattern to deliver the treatment, and have seen some fantastic results."

Dr. Vicki explains that the unique pattern helps the skin achieve collagen contraction, as well as skin thickening in the desired vector. This results in a more lifted, yet natural appearance.

What's the 'Ouch Factor'?

Topical anaesthetics cream is applied prior to treatment to ensure comfort, and most report minimal or no pain at all.

Is there any downtime?

The treatment area is mainly in the hairline, post treatment swelling and redness are. Most of our patients are able to continue their normal activities immediately after the procedure.

Who can have the treatment?

Anyone who has concerns with **sagging skin** can consider having this treatment. Dr. Vicki will assess each patient individually to detail the expected outcome according to the patient's current condition.

How many sessions will I need?

Everyone has different needs depending on your condition. But you can expect improvements with each treatment. Clinical research states that the result lasts 12 months after 3 consecutive treatments done 1 month apart.

How long does it take?

The treatment itself can be completed in 20 minutes. You should allocate a total of 1 hour for consultation as well as local anaesthetics cream to work.

Can this technology treat anything else?

We have also achieved very good results in the treatment of **depressed acne scars**. Acne scars are notoriously difficult to treat. Whilst lasers work from top down to 'resurface' the skin, EnerJet can be seen as working from bottom up. The micro droplets of Hyaluronic Acid cuts through scar tissues like in subcision, then filling it with new collagen. Multiple sessions may be required depending on the skin condition.

EnerJet can also be used in **skin thickening** for hands, neck and décolletage rejuvenation.



Nu. Reflections Medical Aesthetics

Available at **Nu. Reflections Medical Aesthetics**
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SHIP + Save

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Living in a city full of malls and stores, where shopping is practically a national hobby, you'd think that finding clothes for different shapes and sizes would be a breeze, right?

So why is it that we often go into a store envisioning a wonderful shopping experience, credit card in hand, only to find the sizing so frustrating that we leave empty-handed? Buying from international stores online is an option, but overseas shipping can cost a bomb.

Thankfully, through PacMe, you can now shop at your favourite US-based stores online. Not only does PacMe forward your packages, it will consolidate and repack them for you too, reducing overall volume and saving you money.



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So how does it work? Simply sign up at pacme.com (using promo code "expat" to snag a free account). You will receive your dedicated mailbox number at the PacMe warehouse immediately upon signing up so you can start shopping straight away. Before buying your item, enter your PacMe address in the shipping field at the checkout, then sit back and relax while your purchases are received, sorted and stored until they all arrive.

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Once all of your shopping has arrived, PacMe will cleverly pack everything into one shipment as tightly and carefully as possible, and then send it off to you using your service of choice – PacMe partners with all the shipping carriers. The best discounts start at around 15kg, so make sure you fill up that shopping cart!

Now the big question: where to shop?

Popular choices of course include Macy's, Nordstrom and Saks, but we've scoured the net to find some other little gems you may not have heard of that offer fabulous size ranges, from petites to plus size.

Eloquii

An online plus-size clothing store featuring women's fashion and accessories. eloquii.com

Eloquii



eShakti

This site is a favourite for its vast selection of sizes, ranging from 0 to 36 waist, and for all heights from petite to tall. It doesn't ship internationally, but you can buy through PacMe and your registered US address. eshakti.com



eShakti

Old Navy

Did you know that Old Navy sells the majority of its plus-sized items online? It has a terrific selection of well-priced items, with tall and petite sizes too. oldnavy.com

Talbots

With lots of business casual options (up to a size 24 waist), Talbots is great for classic pieces. Petite, plus size and petite plus size are available too. talbots.com

Hips & Curves

This specifically plus-size site has corsets, bras, panties and other sexy goodies made especially for curvy gals. hipsandcurves.com

Zappos

This is a go-to US online shoe retailer known for its excellent customer service, easy-to-use website and amazing selection. Sizes go up to 12. zappos.com

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GET THE LOOK

Tangerine Queen

This vibrant spring colour is set to rule the roost this month – many celebrities rocked orange shades during the awards season. If you find it a difficult colour to wear, try tangerine accessories with white and deep-blue hues. It's the perfect way to brighten up your wardrobe.



Caitriona Balfe



Solange Knowles



Emily Ratajkowski



Jennifer Hudson



Maggie Gyllenhaal



Sarah Hyland



Crepe three-quarter-sleeve dress, Zara, \$109



Crochet overlay dress, Topshop, \$109



Bag, Dorothy Perkins



Espadrille loafers, Charles & Keith, \$53.90

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STYLE HUNTER

Sometimes, the best place to look for your next outfit inspiration is out on the street.

Kelly Hong

Dress: Osmose
Bag: Furla
Shoes: Daphne
Glasses: Loewe

Kelly's dressed-up office look is ultra-sleek and feminine. Sheer panel detailing adds a touch of sassiness to her little black dress, whilst a belt cinched her waist and a statement necklace pulls the look together. We love the unexpected pop of colour from her bright pink bag, too.



GET THE LOOK



Zara



Gucci



Furla



Charles & Keith



We ask a LIV reader what makes her working wardrobe tick...

Frog Michaels,
blogger at changmoh.com and freelance writer

“A typical day for me starts with a breakfast meeting at Jones The Grocer in Dempsey, often with brands keen on collaborating with changmoh.com. Afterwards, I try to squeeze in a few hours of writing before lunch. The afternoon may involve a call to an editor to chat through an article I’ve written or have coming up and, if I can, I try to do some work, however little, on my forthcoming book. The afternoon is all about the kids. I try hard to squeeze my work in to the small window I have when they’re both at school!

During the week, I don’t have to be too formal in my choice of clothing for my job, but equally I need to look appropriate. I haven’t worn a formal suit for about 15 years; I’m not sure I even own one anymore! One fail-safe that I drag everywhere with me is a pashmina; air-con can be brutal here in Singapore – and besides, it has the added benefit of smartening up whatever you’re wearing.

My favourite outfit for a meeting is coral jeans paired with a luxe navy blue crepe top – it’s by In Good Company, a local brand that I can’t get enough of. I carry a jacket in the car too, in case I need to smarten up, and I always wear wedges or heeled shoes. When I’m just working from home, I confess that pyjamas are my all-time favourite writing clothes, and when I’m playing with the children, it’s shorts and a T-shirt, I’m afraid!

I’m very inspired by how the French dress: they have excellent staples that they change and tweak with accessories and fun seasonal items that don’t cost the earth. Style-wise, I’ve learned to love classic staples, and my current obsession is with beautiful fabrics – they make all the difference to how you feel and look. Because of my pale skin tone, black makes me look washed out, so I opt for navy instead and pair it with a bright splash of colour like frog green or pillar-box red. It’s also beautiful with white.

In terms of favourite brands, In Good Company delivers on so many fronts: quality of fabric, style and cut.

The clothes look like they might hail from Japan or even France, but they’re designed and made right here in Singapore. I also love a sun hat – the UV rates in Singapore are among the highest in the world – and I always have a Global Babe fold up “strong hat” in my bag and car: they protect your skin and make you feel ultra-glamorous.

Netaporter.com is great for blow-the-budget pieces and their sales are legendary. I prefer to shop online than to trawl the stores, and these chaps, as well as JCrew, are my go-to for online shopping. I also love second-hand bargains. To buy and sell pre-loved stuff, I head to Robe Raiders (roberaiders.com). I popped in the other day and came away with a beautiful vintage Celine jacket in brown with gold buttons.

I do miss charity shopping and thrifting from back home in England – but my way around this is to just wait until I’m next back in the UK. I picked up a long black Jaegar coat from Oxfam when I was in Oxford over the summer, and it was worth the wait! ”



In Good Company
at Digital Fashion
Week 2014



Orange strong hat
by Global Babe

I’ve learned to love classic staples



Topshop

Zara

One Of A Kind

Situated in a sweet little shophouse directly opposite Great World City, **Unika** boutique, founded by long-time expat NIRA DROR SHOSHANI, has a distinctive charm all of its own. *LIV* chatted with Nira about her love for independent Israeli design and minimalist style.



Photography by Michael Bernabe
Hair and makeup by Kelly Bilimoria, kellybilimoria.com
Direction and words by Susannah Jaffer

“
This place has a
nice neighbourhood
feel to it
”

Why the name Unika?

I chose it because I wanted to express the boutique’s support of unique designers in a very simple way. The word Unika has a Japanese influence, actually, a culture I’m heavily influenced by and absolutely love.

How did you start up your business?

After four years of living in Singapore, I moved to Shanghai, where I met a designer who created really beautiful leather bags – the brand is called Label 88. We became good friends, and when the time came for me to move back here, we agreed I would bring the bags back to sell in Singapore. This is how the idea of starting a company bringing in independent designers came about.

I participated in fairs around the island for three years, almost every month, and after feedback from customers I realised a need to add to the bags with jewellery and other accessories. I then got in contact with designers who I liked back in Israel, to introduce them to the Singapore market – and I haven’t looked back.

The response to the items was so positive that I eventually decided to go for a more stable location with a shop-front – and I’ve been here for

two years. I chose this shophouse because it suited the nature of the brands – it would have clashed with the products to go into a mall full of mass fashion. They are quite exclusive and we don’t stock many pieces of each design; plus, this place has a nice neighbourhood feel to it.

I agree – this shophouse is just perfect!

Thank you. Before I opened the shop, my customer base was mainly expats; they love the boutique because they can find the kinds of designs they are used to seeing back home – in Europe, for instance. I was also exposed to a lot of expat shoppers at the fairs. Now, being across the road from Great World City I get a lot of local shoppers coming through too, with the office crowd popping in to browse during their lunch breaks and after work.

Are all the collections sourced in Israel?

By and large, yes – aside from Label 88, which is a Dutch brand, and some shoes I stock, which are from a French label. I actually bought them from a boutique when shopping back home; after I’d purchased my third pair, I thought they definitely needed to be stocked in the boutique!







66

I wanted to strip things back to the essentials

99

On average, I bring in new accessories every ten days to two weeks. For the clothes that come from Israel, which has four seasons, it's usually every two months.

By the way, I love your pared-down personal style!

Thank you. I have quite a minimalistic dress sense, and to a certain extent the collections at Unika reflect that. I feel that these are items women like me can choose for everyday wear. One of the driving factors behind my opening the business here was that, after living in Asia for 11 years, I noticed that a lot of what was around me was quite loud, colourful and bright. I found myself craving something more plain and casual; I wanted to strip things back to the essentials.

Do you have any favourite pieces?

Label 88 have very cute sling bags that you can wear across the body

or as a clutch – great for days out, concerts and festivals, or when you're running around with the kids and need your hands to be free. You can even accessorise them with the leather key-rings we stock.

The handmade clog shoes – you can wear them throughout the day and then dress them up for the evening; the mid-heel is comfortable but still gives you height.

Another fab brand is Kisim – its bags were made famous when one of them was featured in the *Sex and the City* movies. They are very simple, but show beautiful attention to detail.

When it comes to handbags, the trend here a few years ago was to just pick up a well-known international designer, but I'm slowly seeing that change. Through Unika, I'm trying to show that you can get fantastic quality through a unique collection of independent designers – and it's great to see so many ladies going that route. 📌

Visit Unika at 42 Zion Road or shop online at unikadesigners.com.



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SKIN DEEP

What does your skin really need to look its best? The types of products you use count, as does your skin type and your lifestyle, including what you eat and drink – and let's not forget genetics. For up-to-date solutions to an array of common skin problems, *LIV* spoke to some of the doctors and specialists who work in this field here in Singapore.



Facing Up To Acne



Acne is not just a teenage problem! If your skin's breaking out well into your twenties, thirties and even forties, then be assured – you're not alone.

So, just what really causes acne? Dermatologist DR ANG CHEE BENG explains. "Acne is a condition that develops in and around the hair follicle and the surrounding oil-producing glands. These sebaceous glands produce sebum, and this is where all the major events that cause acne happen."

Although the exact cause is unknown, this is what we do know about the formation of acne:

- People with more severe acne produce more sebum than others – this could be genetically or environmentally determined.

WHY DO WE GET SPOTS?

Hormones – These are one of the main reasons that acne can flare up around puberty, as well as later in adult life or for premenopausal women.

Diet – High-glycaemic diets can spike blood glucose levels, triggering a series of hormonal changes that can cause outbreaks. Some reports have also shown that eating dairy products can increase acne severity.

Environment – Polluted environments and contact with certain industrial chemicals like chlorinated hydrocarbons can cause acne in skin that comes in contact with the chemicals.

Stress – This is another factor that can exacerbate acne and increase inflammation.

- Excess sebum can block the oil glands, producing blackheads, or whiteheads that are also called comedones.
- Bacteria situated within the hair follicle beneath the sebum blockage release chemicals that act upon the sebum, breaking it down and in the process releasing other chemicals.
- These chemical reactions result in inflammation and redness, producing those classic red bumps (clinically known as papules and pustules).

Acne Scarring

“In some individuals,” says Dr Ang, “this reaction is so severe that it gives rise to bigger lesions that we call nodules and cysts – these are the type that can give rise to scarring, be it sunken scars, pits or hardened, raised swellings.”

In less severe cases, acne leaves red or brown pigmented marks that, he says, understandably still cause distress for many patients. The main goal of most clinical acne treatment should be to prevent these scars from developing in the first place.

When should you take action?

It’s better to treat acne earlier rather than later – it would be a mistake these days to wait to “outgrow” bad skin. Considering the number of treatments available, there is no need to suffer in silence.

“It’s better to treat acne earlier rather than later – it would be a mistake these days to wait to outgrow bad skin. ”

WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

The treatment prescribed depends on the type and severity of the acne.

FOR MILD ACNE

Topical treatment:

- Benzoyl peroxide (a topical antiseptic).
- Salicylic acid (also present in a number of cleansing products).
- Topical antibiotics such as clindamycin or erythromycin, or a combination of these with benzoyl peroxide or with a steroid preparation.
- Topical treatment is also prescribed to treat residual scarring. This may consist of chemicals such as vitamin C, hydroquinone and azelaic acid.

FOR MODERATE ACNE

Oral treatment is the first remedy for mild to moderate acne, and consists of antibiotics such as the tetracycline group or erythromycin. More severe cases could warrant the use of oral isotretinoin or oral contraceptives. In addition, you could try lasers or light therapy (IPL, blue light or red light) to target acne-causing bacteria, red marks, sebum production and scarring.

FOR SEVERE ACNE

Once scars have formed, treatment is more difficult; it involves the use of ablative lasers (for example, CO2 fractional lasers) or non-ablative lasers. These could be combined with minor surgery to remove deep scarring.

To make an appointment, contact Ang Skin at 6353 3851. #06-51 Block D, Mount Alvernia Medical Centre, 820 Thomson Road. angskin.com.sg

Super Facials

These clinical facial treatments target specific skin concerns, including uneven tone, blemishes and ageing.

#1 Ultra-Superficial Ultherapy

This is for you if:

you suffer from acne, scarring or loose skin

An occasional peel, whether chemical, abrasive or laser, can reveal a fresher and more radiant complexion. Deeper peels yield more dramatic results, but are also associated with a longer recovery time, especially when skin is broken. The fractional CO2 laser, which works by removing the top layer of skin, has been the gold standard for a number of years now – but a treatment that can significantly improve your skin without any breakage or downtime would be an attractive option.

The new ultra-superficial Ultherapy treatment does just that. It's an aesthetic treatment that stimulates collagen in the deepest layers of the skin, effectively taking care of superficial wrinkles and improving the appearance of acne marks – and what's even better: you could have it done during your lunch break.

This is a new offshoot of traditional Ultherapy technology, which has been successfully used to tighten and lift sagging visages. It uses focused ultrasound to deliver several thousand spots of energy at exactly 1.5mm under the skin in the deep dermis, and causes collagen remodelling to take place whilst the skin's surface remains intact.

One of the great things about this new medical advance is that it's much more comfortable. This is because the usual anaesthetic creams work well at the depth that the ultra-superficial transducer fires at.

This is the kind of technological improvement that Dr David Loh, one of the pioneers in aesthetic medicine in Singapore, embraces. "I've seen the development of aesthetic technologies from the IPLs and lasers since the late 1990s," he tells us. "Ultherapy has been a wildly successful non-surgical technology for tightening skin and lifting sagging faces. I've been operating it since 2009, and have treated countless patients safely and effectively. I'm totally confident – and excited – about this new ultra-superficial application of Ultherapy."

For an appointment, contact David Loh Surgery at 6733 9114. 541 Orchard Road, #11-01 Liat Towers. davidloh.sg

#2 ELOS-Plus Triniti Total Face Rejuvenation

This is for you if:

you have uneven pigmentation, wrinkles or sagging

This new clinical facial treatment combines three of today's most effective procedures to treat multiple concerns in one hit, and works to correct skin pigmentation, sagging, wrinkles and pore size, all with an improved safety profile and comfort level, and zero downtime.

- The first application uses light energy combined with radiofrequency (RF) to target pigmented lesions, improving the tone and appearance of the skin.
- The second application uses a gentle pulsed infrared light and bi-polar RF to target deeper layers of the skin to stimulate long-term collagen production, resulting in a visibly firmer appearance after even just one treatment.
- Finally, the third application uses a combination of fractional diode laser with bi-polar RF to target more superficial texture concerns, such as static wrinkles and pore size. =

Most people find the treatment comfortable, we're told, with only sensations of mild heat or tingling, and it doesn't require the use of a topical anaesthetic. Any mild redness disappears after a few hours.

This treatment is for younger people looking to improve their overall complexion, or for those who wish to slow down the appearance of ageing. Best results are usually seen after three or four treatments, undergone three to four weeks apart.

For a consultation, contact Nu.Reflections at 6235 5333. 123 Penang Road, #05-12 Regency House. nu-reflections.com





#3 The Hollywood Facial Rejuvenation

This is for you if:

you want your skin to glow

This medical facial will get your skin looking red-carpet-ready, and with no downtime. It creates a glowing, even skin tone, gives a boost of hydration to plump up the skin's texture and repairs blemishes. The glow factor is immediate, and will last for at least two weeks. It's recommended you have the facial just before an event, or every month for a sustained glow.

For the first step, you'll be given a microdermabrasion treatment with an infusion of hyaluronic acid. This both exfoliates and plumps up the skin's surface thanks to the hydrating properties of hyaluronic acid.

The second step is called laser genesis – this increases blood circulation, resulting in a rosy hue. It also shrinks pores and reduces acne scarring.

The final step is a glycolic peel – this brings out a glow, while smoothing the skin's texture and reducing the appearance of scars and blemishes in a double hit.

For an appointment, contact The Lifestyle Clinic at 6733 0788. 1 Orchard Boulevard, #16-03 Camden Medical Centre.

#4 Photo Facial

This is for you if:

you want to get rid of dark spots, broken capillaries and sun damage

Photo facials are a quick, non-invasive and effective way of slowing down the ageing of our skin. They use intense pulsed light-based technology (IPL) to rejuvenate the complexion by lightening dark patches and treating broken capillaries and the signs of sun damage. The light also stimulates collagen production for firmness and resilience.

This treatment takes around 20 minutes and has minimal or no downtime. Six initial sessions are recommended at one-month intervals, and once every two to three months thereafter.

For more information, contact The Aesthetics Centre at 6820 3308. #003-15 Great World City, 1 Kim Seng Promenade. anitasoosay.com

The Beauty of Botox and Fillers



Verne Maree explores two popular cosmetic procedures for treating ageing skin

After five or six years of semi-regular “facial injections” – one of the popular euphemisms for Botox and other minimally invasive line-smoothing treatments – I’m a firm fan of the genre. My job, lucky me, keeps me in touch with new developments and with all sorts of health and beauty professionals, including DR WONG CHIN HO.

As a certified plastic surgeon, Dr Wong has an anti-ageing armoury that offers everything from composite facelift surgery, cosmetic rhinoplasty (or nose-job) and breast augmentation, reduction or reconstruction, through to the whole gamut of non- and minimally invasive procedures, including injectables like Botox and fillers. He can even give you a dimple!

“We now understand that beauty is not skin deep, but bone deep”

– Dr Wong Chin Ho

Lift me up

For treating lines, Botox is best used on the upper face, says Chin Ho: around the eyes and on the forehead. Personally, I’m not so bothered about lines; what I like is the subtle brow lift that Botox can create.

Lifting the brow with Botox really is an art, he agrees, and different practitioners do it differently. Essentially, it involves injecting and deactivating the brow depressor muscle or *orbicularis oculi*, so allowing the brow elevator muscle at the top of the forehead to do its job more effectively. He also injects in a line down the middle of the forehead, which somehow “tricks the brain”. The series of injections takes a couple of minutes and is really quite bearable, especially if you gabble a bit to take your mind off it.

Though he’s a fan of Botox, Dr Wong thinks that its ability to lift the brow ability is somewhat oversold. For the bit of excess skin on my upper eyelids, he would rather recommend surgery. To make his point, he shows me three photos of one of his patients: after one week, after two weeks and after three months. The effect is remarkable, yet looks quite natural; definitely something to think about.

Fill me in

Four or five years ago, a lovely doctor injected a little facial filler to soften my naso-labial folds: the lines that run from the sides of the nose to the corners of the lips and tend to deepen with age. Told to expect the effect to last up to a year at most, I’m surprised and pleased that the lines still haven’t come back.

I only wish that Botox would linger longer than a measly four to six months. But I wonder: what if you *weren’t* happy with your filler and it *didn’t* wear off as predicted? No problem, says Dr Wong – it’s reversible. There’s an injectable “antidote” called Hylase that swiftly dissolves hyaluronic acid fillers.

“The thinking about fillers has advanced a lot in recent years,” he explains, “and that’s because we now understand that beauty is not skin deep, but bone deep.”

It can help two distinct groups:

- Firstly, **younger people** with a specific concern relating to a weakness in their facial bone structure, such as eye bags or sunken eyes; this can even be regarded as a form of congenital premature ageing.
- Secondly, **older people** with age-related deflation, sagging and bone resorption, especially around the eyes and on the cheekbones. For them, filler can be used not only to fill creases and to lift sagging, but also to correct age-related skeletal deficiencies.

The Beauty of Botox and Fillers

Less is more

Fillers are best used in moderation, however, “Where ageing and sagging is significantly advanced, using a lot of filler will not produce a harmonious outcome; the patient risks looking bloated.” says Dr Wong.

The right treatment for you depends on your specific concerns, and what you want to achieve, he says. “After a certain age, and if you’re looking for profound rejuvenation, a composite facelift is your best avenue. You simply won’t get significant results from injectables, or from radiofrequency, laser and other minimally invasive treatments.

The message to take home? Non-invasive modalities do help, but there are other effective options, too.

For an appointment, contact W Aesthetics at 6570 2528. #08-42 Mount Elizabeth Novena Specialist Centre, 329563, waesthetics.com



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Tried and Tested

This month, *LIV* readers test-drive brightening products with a view to reducing dark spots and patches and illuminating their complexions. Read on for the results.

Etude House Pearl Aura Brightening Essence, \$32

What you liked: This seemed to be something different and it promised great benefits. Also, it was easy to use.

Final verdict: As it made my face very sticky for a long time after application, and over the time period didn't show any brightening benefits, I felt that it did not deliver.

Score: ★★★★★
Georgina Bullworthy, 36

Neutrogena Clinical Fine Fairness Radiance Essence, \$45.90

What you liked: I found the cream non-greasy and easy to apply, and a little went a long way. I also liked its light fragrance.

Final verdict: This lovely product has made a subtle difference to my sun-ravaged skin, after using it for just ten days at night, after cleansing and before moisturising. I'll continue to use it.

Score: ★★★★★★
Nicola Hunter, 52



Vichy Meta Whitening Essence, \$85

What you liked: This is a lovely, pearly emulsion that is neither greasy nor sticky. The easy pump-action applicator means no wastage or spillage, and the product was absorbed easily into my skin.

Final verdict: After a few days, I've noticed that my skin tone looks more even and perhaps given time I will see some lightening of the dark spots. I'll buy it again if I continue to see improvement.

Score: ★★★★★★
Anu Sharma, 40



Philosophy Brighten My Day Emulsion, \$75

What you liked: I really liked the light texture of this product and how it made my skin feel fresh. It definitely helped to wake my face up. I also enjoyed the subtle, clean fragrance, especially as I have sensitive skin.

Final verdict: Despite enjoying the feeling of the product and its scent, I haven't noticed any physical changes to my skin. Due to its lightness, I wouldn't recommend it for people with dry skin.

Score: ★★★★★★
Lucy Waring, 27



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The Life Guru

Lifestyle advisor Juliana Mamoni weighs in on key worries and concerns.

German-Ghanaian expat Juliana Mamoni wears many hats. A former menswear designer (she studied in Milan under a former assistant to Gianni Versace), she is now a lifestyle consultant offering services including styling and nutritional advice. Here, she shares her responses to some of the most commonly asked questions that have come up in her consultations.

Q I'm overweight, and battling to find clothing in my size really knocks my confidence. What styles would you suggest to make the most of myself?

Chantal, 35, housewife and mother of two kids

A There are a lot of sleeveless shift and sheath dresses and other linear fashion cuts on the market that can look fantastic regardless of size. What matters is that the clothes you are wearing both feel comfortable and make you feel good. Instead of focusing on your weight, choose clothing that emphasises the parts of your body you love, such as your shoulders or arms. I believe that, as a rule of thumb, you'll always be well dressed as long as you feel good in your clothes – remember, what ultimately makes you beautiful is your soul and your personality, and your actions show the world who you are and what your potential is.

Q I'm really struggling with my wardrobe. How can I find my own sense of style?

Lisa, 45, entrepreneur and mother of two teenagers

A Usually, we get to know what styles suit us best by the time we're in our forties, but that certainly isn't the case for everyone. The important thing is not to be led by trends. Instead, try to make purchasing decisions based on what looks best for your body shape, face shape, colouring and so on. It's key to invest in well-cut, higher quality items, instead of cheaper trend-led or seasonal pieces, which can quickly fall off the fashion radar. Also, when it comes to your wardrobe, it's important to be realistic – don't feel pressured to look like a superwoman in 12-centimetre heels if your lifestyle requires flats!





Q What is the best way to present myself at the office and avoid attracting negative attention from my peers?

Lingling, 35, scientist

A Unfortunately, quite a few women in high positions – especially in male-dominated industries such as science and tech – fear that looking “too attractive” will mean they aren’t taken seriously on a professional level. Style and image continue to play a crucial role in career strategies, however; Let’s face it, how you look says a lot about you, and in the workplace you need to make sure that how you present yourself reflects what you want others to think about you. When you dress well, you command the respect of your peers and communicate the kinds of business opportunities you’d like to have. Focusing on appearance as part of career strategy may sound superficial – we should be judged for our intelligence and experience, not our style; however, when you look good you feel great, which tends to make you feel far more authoritative, too. Some tips to help you enhance your overall professional image include investing in good suits (don’t be afraid to use a tailor), buying quality not quantity, carrying good accessories and never wearing scruffy shoes!

Q I seem to be tired all the time; how can I feel more energetic and less lethargic?

Tina, 42, mum of three

A First of all, give yourself a pat on the back: it’s no easy feat raising three kids! But you should definitely find ways to feel more energetic. Personally, I feel exercising regularly and in the morning does wonders for energy levels throughout the day. Watch out, though – early signs of vitamin or mineral deficiencies may include unusual fatigue, loss of hair, skin rashes, sores and a pale tongue – if you have any of these symptoms, check with your GP about having blood tests done to monitor your iron and vitamin D levels.

Q Although my food intake has not increased and I eat very healthily, I’ve gained one to two kilograms. What’s going on?

Marion, 38

A Eating the right amount of food at a certain age is very important. Our dietary needs change as we get older, and our need for calories actually decreases. At the same time, we need more key nutrients such as calcium, vitamin B12 and D, especially the combination of calcium and D3 for women, as we tend to lose bone density much earlier than men. Between the ages of 35 and 50, our levels of oestrogen and progesterone start to change too, and in order to control those changes we need to be more conscious of our diets. Choose antioxidant-rich foods – think colourful veggies and fruits such as berries, beetroots and tomatoes. That, combined with regular exercise, should get your weight back down.

For a full lifestyle consultation or private workshop, get in touch with Juliana Mamoni at info@jmamoni.com.

BEAUTY 101

Brush up on your skills with makeup guru KELLY BILIMORIA's guide to brush etiquette.



Kelly Bilimoria,
pro makeup artist,
kellybilimoria.com

Synthetic or Natural Bristles: The Scoop

Makeup brushes today come with either natural or synthetic hairs, or with a mixture of both. **Natural bristles** are typically animal hair – goat, badger or squirrel hair, for example – and **are best for using with powder products such as blushers, bronzers, eye shadows** and so on. This is because the bristles move freely, so you can pick up enough product in one swipe to blend it on to the skin beautifully. They are a little bit trickier to clean than synthetic ones, though.

Synthetic brushes are manmade, usually from nylon or polyester, and dyed cream or brown. They tend to be more pocket-friendly, and you can find them just about anywhere in a range of prices and styles. They are easier to clean and **work well for applying cream and liquid makeup such as foundation, concealer, cream blush or lipstick** – this is because the hairs tend to come together, making them perfect for precision application.



Foundation: Clinique Foundation Brush, \$39

Powder: MUFE Kabuki Face Brush #124, \$85



Eyeshadow (Normal and Domed): Bobbi Brown Eye Sweep, \$51



Eyeshadow (Crease): NARS Precision Contour Brush #44, \$46



Eyeliner: Tarte Etch & Sketch Double-ended Bamboo Liner Brush, \$27



Blush: MUFE Double-ended Sculpting Brush #158, \$95

Create Your Perfect Kit

All the tools
you'll need

Cleaning Up

Whichever brushes you prefer, here's how to protect your investment by keeping them bacteria-free.

Quick clean

Spray brush-cleaner on to a tissue and sweep the brush back and forth to remove the makeup.

Try: Sephora Brush Cleaner, \$10.

Deep clean (for extra dirty brushes!)

1. Add a drop of shampoo to half a cup of lukewarm water.
2. Swirl your brush around in the cup.
3. You may have to rinse the brush and repeat the technique a few times to clean all the old makeup off your brush.
4. If you feel it needs something more, try swirling the bristles on a bar of soap or adding more shampoo to create a lather; then rinse well.
5. Once you think the brush is clean, gently squeeze out the excess water and dry it flat on a clean towel for at least two or three hours.



INSIDER TIPS:

- If your brushes have a metal band on them, do not get this area wet – it can lead to rusting that could eventually destroy your brush!
- If your brushes start to feel a bit stiff or prickly over time, try massaging a tiny bit of hair conditioner into the bristles and rinsing them in warm water. Dry them flat to bring back that soft, luxurious feel.



Jewel Box Update

LIV's top picks of current jewellery trends.

Sterling silver cuff plated in 18-carat yellow gold, \$185, Taula



Multi-gemstone necklace, \$165, Lustre



Citrine and amethyst earrings, \$120, Lustre



Necklace, \$165, Kadambari



Ellen three-strand necklace with tassel and heart, \$195, Stones That Rock

Necklace, \$145, Kadambari



Hippie Chic

Channel a bohemian vibe with bangles, tassels and semi-precious stones

Adore Me gold bracelet by Joy Jewellery, \$599, available at Embrace Jewellery



Three-tone pendant with chain, \$228, available at Embrace Jewellery



Esther three-piece stack bracelets, \$45, Stones That Rock



14-carat gold-filled necklace with jade pendant, \$390, paired with 14-carat gold coin wire necklace, \$380, Amedes

Multiflores pendant with silver chain by Jorge Revilla, \$228, available at Embrace Jewellery

Cyan long pendant, \$430, Swarovski

Turquoise pendant with amethyst accents, \$65, Lustre

Perfect Pendants

These classy necklaces will take you from day to night

Aqua chalcedony silver pendant, \$106, Taula

Pearl's Dream necklace by Elizabeth Stone, \$109.90, available at Embrace Jewellery

Chain necklace, \$124, and rose gold-plated pendant with rose quartz, \$329, Thomas Sabo

Stack 'Em Up

For the woman who feels that one just isn't enough, adorn yourself with multiples

Seven new love bracelets by Joy Jewellery, \$439, available at Embrace Jewellery



Tags of Life gold-plated brass rings, \$50, Polysemy



Imperfections to Stack, sterling silver bangles plated with gold and black ruthenium, \$120 for a set of three, Polysemy



Ring sets, \$40 each or \$100 for three, Stones That Rock



Cubist ring set, Swarovski, \$255



Bezel-cut small square rings, \$48 each, Embrace Jewellery



Stockists:

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Embrace Jewellery
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Kadambari
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Lustre
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Stones That Rock
For stockist locations, visit stonesthatrock.com

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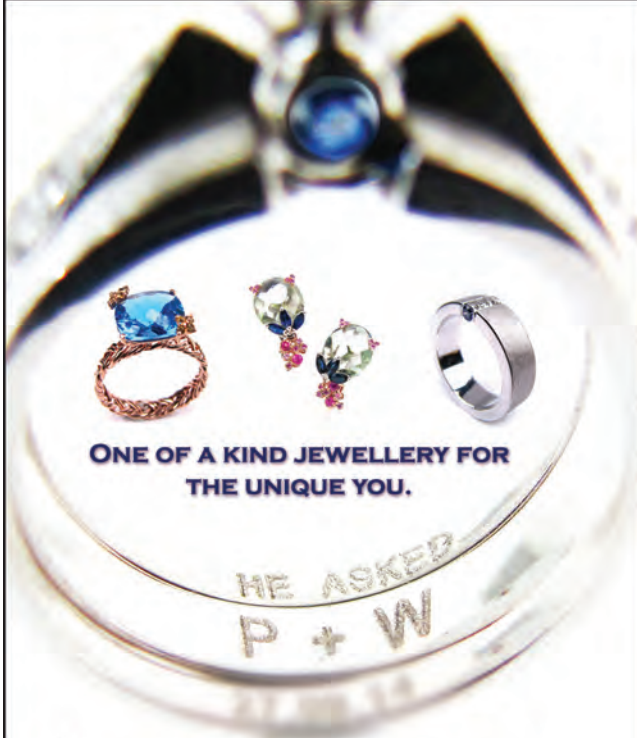
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Armani Exchange, \$199



Emporio Armani, \$2,439

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Tiffany & Co., price on request

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SUPPORTING LOCAL

Edit Lifestyle hosted the very first #Blogmeetsg, a networking platform for brands and bloggers to connect, at its chic yet comfy boutique on Tanglin Road. Dainty nibbles included handmade chocolates by Leela's Chocolates. Guests took home a Hat of Cain Panama hat and other goodies from the participating local and independent brands.





LUXURY DEFINED
 Salvatore Ferragamo held a preview of its Spring Summer 2015 collection at its flagship store in Paragon, followed by a private session with celebrity stylist Keith Png, who gave his take on the latest trends and shared some everyday styling tips. Guests also enjoyed gourmet treats by award-winning pastry chef, Janice Wong.





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Living

GIVEAWAYS

Each issue, we team up with brands to give away gorgeous items to our readers. Here's what you could win this month!



ANNIVERSARY GIFT

In celebration of its 20th anniversary, Bioderma is giving away 10 bottles of its ever-popular Sensibio H2O cleansing water. This dermatological micellar water is easy to use. It contains highly purified water, along with a special biomimetic active ingredient to cleanse and purify the skin without affecting its moisture balance or PH level.



SKIN-CLEARING SET

Eucerin's Dermo Purifyer range fights acne, breakouts and blemishes at their source. We're giving away a full set, including the Make-up Cleansing Water, the soap-free Cleanser, the Active Concentrate (a refreshing, skin-refining serum), the scrub and the Active Night Care.

To enter either of these giveaways, visit expatliving.sg/competitions

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