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AUGUST '26

Auckland's
lifestyle
magazine.

THE LIFE ISSUE

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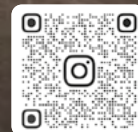


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FROM THE EDITOR



AN ODYSSEY

I recently had to attend a hearing for a dispute that was, to the neutral observer, so absurd it was astonishing it had been allowed to proceed that far. In order to avoid any unpleasantness, I'd previously decided on a course of action that I believed to be the proper thing to do, but which – just as astonishingly – turned out to weaken my case legally. Luckily, common sense prevailed, but not without me learning a valuable business – and legal – lesson. Would I make the same decision again? Absolutely. For as much as you must make difficult calls in life, especially in roles of leadership, you must still be able to look at yourself in the mirror and square your actions with your morals.

But hey, that's life.

That's Life also happens to be the name of our main feature this August, a collection of stories that – among others – pay tribute to the profession of midwifery, shine a light on retirement, and honour the history of Father's Day.

It's been many, many years since I read *The Odyssey*, but having recently watched Christopher Nolan's adaptation, it occurred to me that the story is as much about fatherhood as anything else. My boys are at an age where they believe I'd have no trouble slaying a cyclops or pulverising Poseidon, but for now, they seem just as impressed with me being able to magically pull a pineapple lump from behind their ear. The monsters can wait.

Enjoy the issue.
Jamie

verve

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WHAT'S INSIDE



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Patrick and Suzanne are standing together, smiling. Patrick is wearing a dark suit and Suzanne is wearing a dark top. They are both holding gold medals that say "No. 1 NATIONAL TOP PERFORMER 2025".

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Elevated Living

Perched high above the city on more than a hectare of beautifully landscaped grounds, this exceptional residence delivers the rare combination of complete privacy, effortless luxury and remarkable convenience.



Offering views across the Auckland skyline to the Waitakeres, it's a home that feels a world away, yet sits a short drive from downtown.

Constructed from enduring masonry and weatherboard, the 488sqm, three-level home has been designed to balance sophisticated entertaining with everyday practicality. Four generous bedrooms – including two luxurious ensuites – multiple living areas, and a designer kitchen complete with butler's pantry provide ample space for families, professionals or those who simply appreciate room to breathe. An elevator servicing all three levels adds another layer of comfort, making this an ideal lock-and-leave home without compromising on scale or elegance.

The current owners purchased the property as their forever home – and it shows. Considerable investment has gone into every detail – from the freshly repainted exterior to the meticulously landscaped gardens, mature planting and automated irrigation system that keeps the grounds looking immaculate all-year.

Wake to breathtaking sunrises as the city comes to life below, then unwind in the evening as the sun sets over

the rolling hills of the Waitakeres. Whether entertaining friends or enjoying a quiet morning coffee, the ever-changing panorama provides an extraordinary backdrop to daily life.

Despite its elevated sense of seclusion, the location remains exceptionally connected. Riverhead Forest, boutique vineyards, West Coast beaches and Westgate's growing retail precinct are all within easy reach, while Auckland's city centre is a comfortable commute.

Perhaps the most compelling aspect of this offering is its timing. Circumstances have changed, and the vendors are now relocating overseas. Their motivation to sell is genuine, presenting a rare opportunity to secure an immaculate, move-in-ready estate.

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1 of 1



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THE WONDER OF...

Wellington & the Wairarapa

In the legend of Maui hauling up North Island from the ocean during the creation of Aotearoa, the Wellington region represents both the head and the mouth of the fish.

The analogy is fitting for a city revered for its cuisine, craft beer and coffee culture. Some claim that the world's southernmost capital cradles more bars and eateries per capita than New York City! A big claim from a small city that also claimed the title of New Zealand's capital from Auckland in 1865. Best of all, many of its best sites and attractions all sit within walking distance – can any other capital be crossed on foot in under half an hour?



IMAGE: MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND TE PAPA TONGAREWA; SUPPLIED

TE PAPA TONGAREWA

Wellington's centrepiece, Te Papa, is a six-floor waterfront museum that could swallow an entire day or two. The name roughly translates as "box of treasures" — fitting for one of the world's leading interactive museums, opened in 1998 as a waharoa, or gateway, into the nation's natural and cultural riches. The enormous building sits atop rubber-and-lead shock absorbers allowing it to move 40cm in an earthquake, with enough reinforcing steel to stretch all the way to Sydney! Highlights include hundreds of thousands of fossils, the world's largest colossal squid specimen (4.2m, close to 495kg, caught near Antarctica in 2007), and a carving-adorned marae surrounded by Pacific treasures, with the national art gallery above. A rooftop area up top offers sweeping views over Wellington Harbour.

IMAGE: TE PAPA, WELLINGTON
PHOTOGRAPHY: CAMILLA RUTHERFORD
COURTESY OF 100% NEW ZEALAND PUREIMAGE: SOLACE IN THE WIND, MAX PATTE
PHOTOGRAPHY: SEBASTIAN SCHUSTERIMAGE: NIKAU PALM SCULPTURE, IAN ATHFIELD
PHOTOGRAPHY: PATRIK STEDRAK / ADOBE STOCK

STATUESQUE

Wellington's public art is scattered throughout the city, easy to string into a self-guided route from the waterfront to Cuba Quarter. Start at 'Per Capita' on Cable and Tory Streets, steel portraits by Cathryn Monro. Past Te Papa, find 'Solace in the Wind' (the "Naked Man") by Max Patté, and '4 Plinths' which are rotating sculptures every two years. Further on, 'Albatross' by Tanya Ashken tumbles water at Whairepo Lagoon, while Len Lye's 'Water Whirler' flings jets in Frank Kitts Park. South, cross the 'City to Sea Bridge' to Civic Square, then Cuba Street's 'Bucket Fountain' and, further on, on Karo Drive, Regan Gentry's 'Subject to Change'.

IMAGE: BUCKET FOUNTAIN, GRAHAM ALLARDICE
PHOTOGRAPHY: SHRIRAM NAGARAJAN



IMAGE: LOGAN BROWN RESTAURANT AND BAR; SUPPLIED



IMAGE: JANO BISTRO; SUPPLIED

THE CAPITAL'S TABLE

Wellington's dining scene was already famed for its inventive menus and bold attitude – and now a few Michelin stars can be added to the list. Central Wellington establishments Jano Bistro, Ortega Fish Shack and Logan Brown were three out of the 14 restaurants across Wellington, Auckland, Christchurch and Queenstown to recently be recognised.



IMAGE: HAVANA COFFEE WORKS
PHOTOGRAPHY: CAMILLA RUTHERFORD
COURTESY OF 100% NEW ZEALAND PURE



IMAGE: GARAGE PROJECT
PHOTOGRAPHY: PIVOT PHOTOGRAPHY
COURTESY OF 100% NEW ZEALAND PURE

It's no secret that Wellington is also New Zealand's craft beer hub, earning it the nickname Craft Beer Capital. The city's brewing scene has produced some of New Zealand's most inventive and internationally recognised names, its enthusiasm for all-things-ale culminating each year in Beervana, the country's premier craft beer festival.

THE COFFEE TABLE

Wellington's coffee scene traces to the 1950s, when milk bars and coffee houses became gathering spots for poets, writers, and artists – a spirit still very alive especially in the bohemian Cuba Quarter today. Brewing is treated as an artform here, with acclaimed baristas and boutique roasters known for their distinctive blends, carefully sourced beans and commitment to quality. Flight Coffee and Peoples Coffee are among the capital's best.

ISLAND LIFE

In Wellington Harbour, Matiu/Somes Island is a Māori-owned, DoC-maintained, predator-free sanctuary where native bush shelters birdlife, tuatara, and weta, alongside the remains of old pā sites. Its Loop Track winds past World War II-era buildings, a lighthouse, and scenic lookouts.



IMAGE: MATIU SOMES ISLAND
COURTESY OF WellingtonNZ



IMAGE: THE ESCARPMENT TRACK, TAKING IN SWEEPING VIEWS OF THE SPECTACULAR KĀPITI COASTLINE AND KAPITI ISLAND FLYING SAUCER, COURTESY OF WellingtonNZ

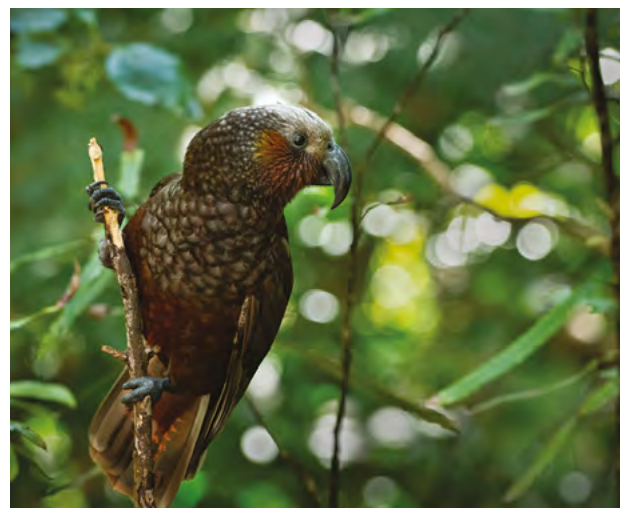


IMAGE: NEW ZEALAND KĀKĀ
PHOTOGRAPHY: JANICE / ADOBE STOCK

Just north of Wellington, off the Kāpiti Coast, the iconic Kāpiti Island is another predator-free nature reserve and one of the country's most important bird sanctuaries. This former whaling station is now home to a remarkable array of rare species, including the kōkako, the little spotted kiwi, the kākā, and the takahē – few places in Aotearoa offer such a strong chance of encountering these fabled birds in the wild. The surrounding waters teem with seals and dolphins, with the occasional orca passing through.

WAIRARAPA

East of Wellington, the verdant Wairarapa boasts rolling, rural landscapes stitched by vines and framed by rugged mountains and endless skies. With a climate reminiscent of Burgundy, vineyards produce warm pinot noir, elegant syrah, and herbaceous sauvignon blanc, while hot summers yield refreshing pinot gris and aromatic riesling. In 2023, Wairarapa was also recognised as an International Dark Sky Reserve.

At its heart sits historic Martinborough. The once unassuming colonial settlement is now a delectable base for exploring boutique vineyards on foot or by bike.



IMAGE: CASTLEPOINT, WAIRARAPA COAST
PHOTOGRAPHY: STEFAN MOKRZECKI / ADOBE STOCK

visitzealandia.com

Travel Through Time

Walking into Zealandia Te Māra a Tāne is like stepping back in time.

To a time when the dense ngahere/forest was filled with native birdsong, tuatara roamed the land, and the forest floor teemed with ancient frogs, mokomoko/lizards, and wētā (including palm-sized giant wētā).



PHOTOGRAPHY: EMIR DE SOUZA, KĀKĀ



This sanctuary, just minutes from Wellington CBD, is a world leader in its approach to conservation. Its 8.6km mammalian exclusion fence was specifically designed to keep out the biggest threats to the many native species that have been reintroduced to Wellington after a century long absence. These include kiwi pukupuku/little spotted kiwi, takahē, tuatara, kākā, pepeketau/Hamilton's frog, hihi/stitchbird, and tieke/North Island saddleback. Zealandia has a bold 500-year regeneration vision for the valley,

and after just 26 years, it's well on its way. Nature is resilient, given half a chance.

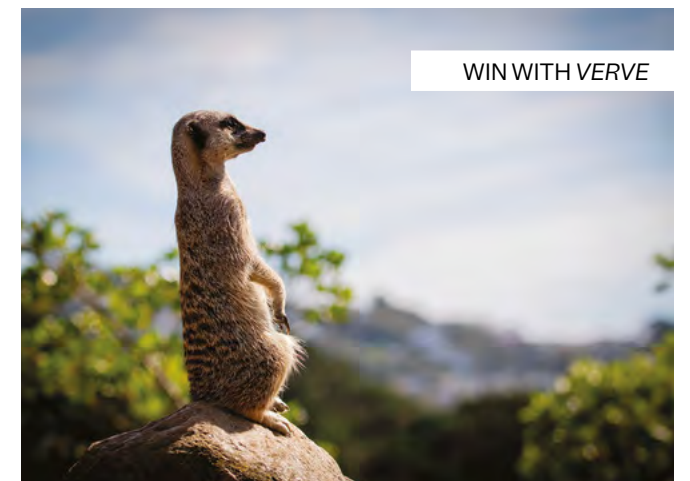
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Breathing Life

Since the dawn of time, women who helped bring new life into the world have been respected as healers, community leaders, and keepers of ancient knowledge.

However, they were also, at times, feared, persecuted and accused of something far more sinister: witchcraft.

The roots of midwifery stretch back around 40,000 years, to the Palaeolithic era, when women supported each other through childbirth, building knowledge through observation, experience and generations of shared wisdom. By the time of antiquity, Egyptian and Greco-Roman midwives were legitimate, paid professionals, until men muscled in and folded midwifery under male-run medicine. In China, midwives leaned on qi, yin-yang, and wuxing principles for millennia, passing knowledge mother-to-daughter in home settings, with no textbooks required.

Later, Colonialism added its own dark chapter: in 17th-century America, enslaved African women were forced to train and work as midwives until 19th-century male physicians pushed them out in favour of formal obstetrics.

Across Africa, traditional midwives never really left.

Māori midwifery tells its own rich story, one that's rooted in traditional knowledge. Because birth carried such deep tapu, it didn't happen just anywhere - women laboured in whare kōhanga - purpose-built sacred shelters set apart from everyday life, which were often burned afterward. Guiding them were kaiwhakawhānau, practitioners carrying generations of

knowledge, who combined massage and herbal remedies to support both mother and whānau throughout. According to Te Ara, "mothers sang oriori to their babies - lullabies which told whakapapa, legends and tribal history".

Perhaps the most notorious historical myth that everyone knows - the witch one - is one that is less clear than the legend suggests. Nearly 4,000 people were accused of witchcraft in Scotland between 1563 and 1736, and popular memory has long painted midwives as prime targets of the gallows and the fiery stake. When Professor Nicola Ring of Edinburgh Napier University dug into the archives in 2021, though, the real number was smaller: just 142 cases tied to healing or midwifery work, and only 19 explicitly involving midwives.

One of them was Agnes Sampson, still remembered as "one of Scotland's best-known witches" and "a renowned midwife". Historian David Harley pushes back even harder on the myth, arguing that midwives were rarely singled out and that a "few spectacular cases have been mistaken for a general pattern".

From feared "witches" to trusted professionals, the story of the midwife is ultimately one of resilience - and the enduring power of women's knowledge and wisdom.

In the Name of the Father

More than 4,000 years ago, a young Babylonian named Elmesu is said to have carved a message for his father into a clay tablet, wishing him health and a long life.

Though not a Father's Day message as we know it today, it certainly represents a seemingly innate desire to honour those who raised us. The modern Father's Day tradition, however, is a much more recent invention.

While Mother's Day had already begun gaining popularity in the United States, the idea of a dedicated day celebrating dads took longer to cement. The first known Father's Day service took place on 5 July 1908 at a church in Fairmont, West Virginia, honouring the 362 men killed in the previous December's explosions at the Monongah coal mines. A solemn memorial rather than a celebration, and it did not immediately become an annual event.

But the movement gained momentum the following year thanks to Sonora Smart Dodd, a woman from Spokane, Washington. One of six children raised by a widower, Dodd believed fathers deserved the same recognition that mothers were receiving and so approached churches, businesses, the YMCA and government officials to build some support. And she sure succeeded. On 19 June 1910, Washington State held America's first statewide Father's Day celebration.

The tradition slowly spread - though not without controversy. In the 1920s and 1930s, some campaigners argued that Mother's Day and Father's Day should be replaced with a single Parents' Day, believing both

parents should be honoured together. Public rallies were held in support of the idea, but the movement failed to gain momentum.

The Great Depression played a significant role in the commercialisation of the day as struggling retailers promoted it as an opportunity to buy gifts for dads, then the second world war added a patriotic element to the celebration with advertisers encouraging Americans to use the occasion to honour fathers serving in the military.

The first Father's Day in Aotearoa took place at Auckland's St Matthew's Church on 14 July 1926, with the first commercial advertising for gifts published in the *Auckland Star* the following year.

Today, Father's Day is celebrated around the world, although not always on the same date. In many Catholic countries, including Italy and Spain, fathers have traditionally been honoured on 19 March - St Joseph's Day - celebrating Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, a feast that dates back more than a thousand years. In 1935, Australia moved its celebration to the first Sunday of September, and New Zealand followed.

Whatever the date, and wherever the celebration, the sentiment remains unchanged since that 4,000-year-old clay tablet was first carved - a mark of appreciation for the men that have helped shape our lives.

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The Priestess of Possibility



PHOTOGRAPHY: STEVEN SEBRING
COURTESY: PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE NEW ZEALAND

Patti Smith may be a punk icon, a poet, an artist and an inspiration to generations, but speak to her for five minutes and you're reminded she is, above all, a seeker... and at 79, she's still as curious, restless and creative as ever.

“Even the small things – a scrap of paper on a pavement, a stranger humming – can open something in you.”

Patti Smith greets every question with a mixture of mischief and philosophy. “I’ve never believed in finishing lines,” she says. “You just keep walking. Sometimes the road’s rocky, sometimes it’s smooth, but it’s all the same journey.”

For someone so revered – a pioneer of punk poetry, author of *Just Kids*, performer of timeless, spine-tightening songs – she remains astonishingly humble.

“I never thought I’d be doing this in my 70s,” she smiles. “As a young woman I imagined I’d burn out early. But the fire stayed; quieter sometimes, but still warm.”

It’s a trajectory few could have predicted back in 1975 when her debut album *Horses* helped ignite the New York punk scene, fusing Rimbaud-inflected poetry with raw garage rock. Five decades on, that album’s 50th anniversary has been marked with reissues and sold-out shows, while Smith continues to release new work – including recent recordings with the New York-based Soundwalk Collective – and tour steadily with her band. She’s also a lauded memoirist – her first of three (so far!), *Just Kids*, published in 2010, won the National Book Award.

“I fill notebooks like some people fill shopping trolleys,” she laughs. “I’m working on poems, fragments, maybe another memoir. I don’t really decide what becomes a book; the work tells me when it’s ready.”

Touring, too, remains central.

“The stage is my home. I love the faces – young fans discovering me for the first time, older ones who’ve been with me since the Hotel Chelsea days. It’s a conversation across generations.”

Despite her legendary status, Smith speaks openly about self-doubt.

“Every new project demands courage,” she admits, “but I’ve never been afraid of vulnerability. That’s where the art lives.”

Ask her what keeps her grounded and the answer comes instantly: her family.

“My children saved me many times,” she says, referencing son Jackson, daughter Jesse, and another daughter she placed for adoption when she was 19, but later reconnected with.

“They’ve taught me patience, humour, the beauty of letting things grow at their own pace.”

Her partner, the late Fred ‘Sonic’ Smith, remains a spiritual presence.

“I still talk to him,” she says. “I still feel guided.”

As for the future, Smith’s eyes light up.

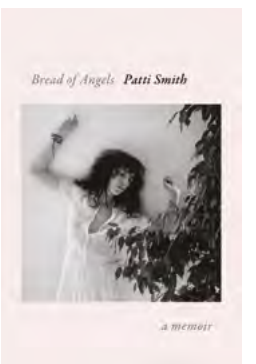
“I’m excited. Isn’t that lovely? To be this far in and still excited? I want to keep touring, keep writing, keep showing up for people. The world is difficult right now, but music... music tells the truth.”

In typical Patti Smith style, she ends on a note that feels like a blessing.

“If I have a message, it’s this: stay awake to the world. Even the small things – a scrap of paper on a pavement, a stranger humming – can open something in you.”

And then, she adds: “Inspiration doesn’t shout; it whispers.”

Available now a radiant new memoir from beloved artist and writer Patti Smith, *Bread of Angels*, published by Bloomsbury.



Sexuality and Ageing

WORDS —
ILIL LUNKRY



Somewhere along the way, we absorbed the idea that sex has a use-by date – that retirement means quietly retiring from intimacy too. Real life tells a different story.

Desire changes shape as we age, but change isn't decline. For some, later life brings more comfort in their own skin and more permission to explore pleasure. For others, desire has gone quiet – worn down by hormonal shifts, health bumps, or a relationship that's shifted.

That said, the transition isn't simple. Illness, medication, surgery, and an unfamiliar body can get in the way of feeling desirable. These are common human experiences, not personal failures.

REFRAMING WHAT SEX MEANS

Much of this work isn't about new positions or techniques – it's about loosening old expectations. Many of us grew up with a narrow script for what sex 'counts' as, often centred around performance. That script often stops fitting as bodies change.

Letting go of it opens things up. A changing body isn't a broken one – there's room to explore touch and closeness that had no space up to now. For many, this is where things genuinely widen: a fuller menu of what intimacy can look like, not a narrower one.

Masturbation is worth naming plainly, too. Many older adults carry quiet shame around solo sex, shaped by decades-old messaging about what sex *should* look like. Reframing self-exploration as a normal, healthy part of sexual wellbeing can open the door to rediscovering what actually feels good.

Bodies change, honestly

For many men, erectile dysfunction becomes part of the picture with age – through hormonal shifts, medications, or prostate surgery. It's common, and it touches confidence and identity.

Women go through their own shift with menopause: hormones can lower desire (though sometimes the opposite happens), and thinning vaginal tissue can bring discomfort with penetration or make orgasm harder to reach.

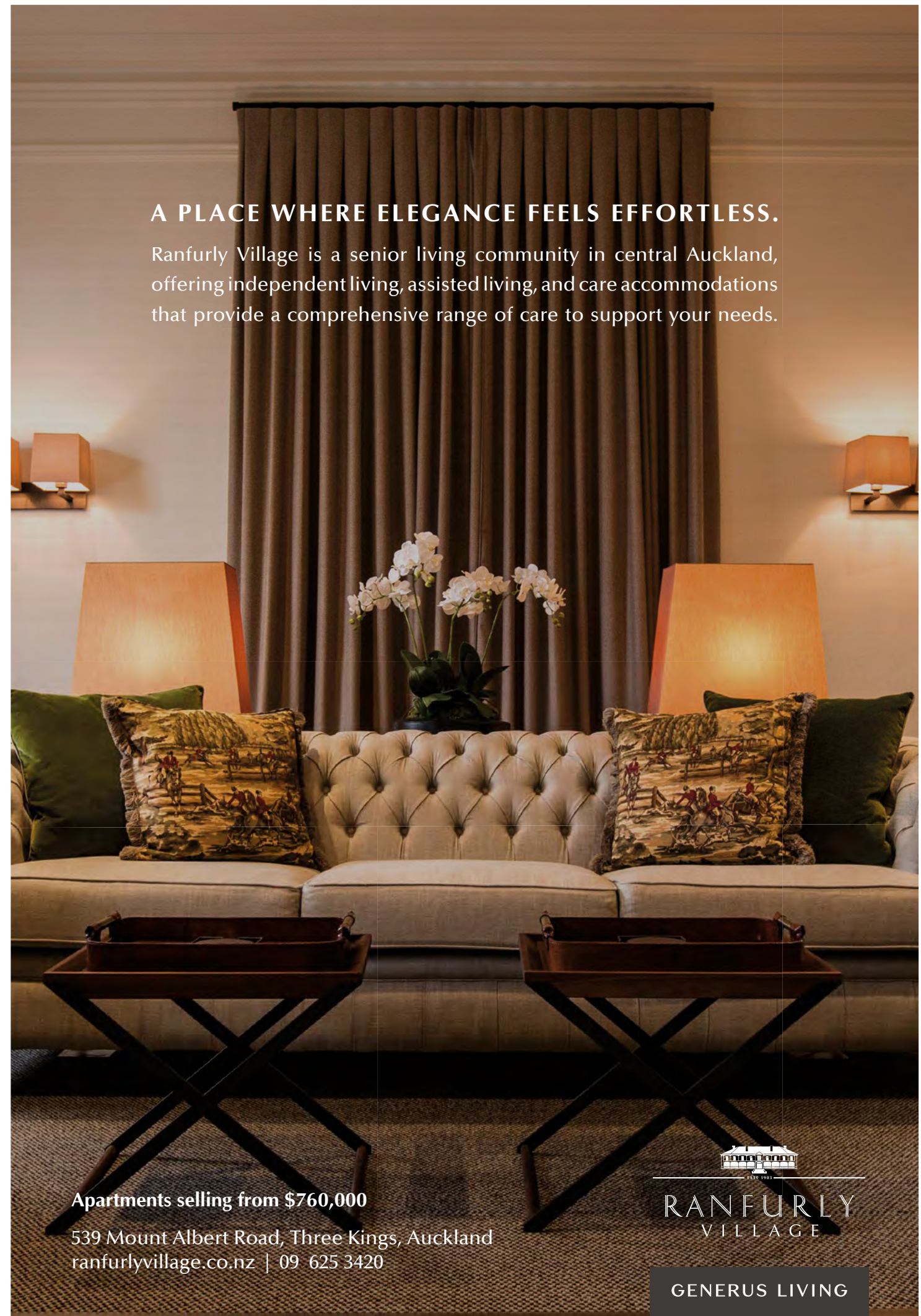
Rather than an ending, these changes can be a catalyst to explore intimacy beyond a narrow script of what sex should involve: what's possible now? I promise you, much more than you imagined!

Ageing doesn't erase sexuality – it asks us to get curious about it again, with more self-knowledge and less pressure.

Ilil Lunky is a Somatic Sexologist and Intimacy Coach. Discover more at ilil-lunky.com

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We spend years building a life – buying a home, raising a family, growing our savings and planning for retirement. Yet one of the greatest gifts we can leave our loved ones isn't financial, it's certainty.

A well-prepared estate plan can provide clarity, reduce stress and help ensure your wishes are carried out.

I already have a will. Isn't that enough?

A will is an excellent start, but it's only one part of the picture. As life changes, legal documents should too. Marriage, children, retirement, property ownership or business interests are all good reasons to review your plans.

What else should I have in place?

Most people should also consider Enduring Powers of Attorney – someone they trust to make decisions on their behalf if they become unable to do so. If

relevant, trusts, business succession and investment assets may also need careful planning.

When should I review my estate plan?

Every few years – or whenever life changes. A regular review helps ensure documents still reflect your wishes and your family's needs.

Planning ahead isn't about expecting the worst – it's about giving the people you love confidence, clarity and peace of mind.

Stainton Chellew provides practical legal advice to help individuals and families protect their legacy through thoughtful succession and estate planning.

Contact Victor Mechkov
victor@sclawyers.co.nz
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Construction is well underway. Plans and pricing will be available from August 2026, with first residents expected mid-2027.

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Maternal Instincts

Can a necklace help you better understand your emotional wellbeing?

Auckland entrepreneurs Ashlee Rose and Kristy Taylor believe it can.



The two mums are the founders of TAKE.IN, a wearable technology company preparing to launch what they describe as the world's first biofeedback necklace designed to help people better understand and regulate their emotional state through breath awareness.

Combining jewellery design, wearable technology and research into the nervous system, the necklace measures breathing patterns and provides feedback intended to help wearers recognise how stress and emotion influence their breathing throughout the day.



The idea emerged after the founders identified what they saw as a gap in the growing wearable technology market. While many devices focus on fitness, productivity and performance metrics, they wanted to create something centred on emotional wellbeing.

"People are overwhelmed with data, but still feel stressed and disconnected," says Ashlee. "We want to make breath awareness as fundamental to wellbeing as movement."

Their approach is supported by a growing body of research exploring the relationship between breathing, emotional regulation and brain function. Studies suggest people experiencing higher levels of anxiety are often less accurate at recognising internal body signals, including their breathing, which may contribute to interpreting normal bodily sensations as signs of threat.

Research has also found that slow, controlled breathing can activate the body's relaxation response, helping shift the nervous system into a calmer state associated with improved emotional regulation.

Rather than simply tracking those patterns, the TAKE.IN necklace is designed to encourage users to become more aware of them. Guided breathwork sessions and behavioural insights are intended to help build long-term awareness and healthier responses to stress.

Kristy emphasises the aim is to make emotional regulation more accessible rather than adding another layer of health data.

"We're not trying to optimise people – we're trying to help them regulate," she says. "This is jewellery designed with intention. Something that supports how you feel, not just what you do."

Available in gold-plated, polished stainless steel and dark grey anodised finishes, the TAKE.IN Breath Intelligence Necklace is now available for pre-order, with the first deliveries expected in November 2026. Find out more at takein.co.nz

Luxury Retirement Living

The Foundation is about retirement without compromise. It is a place for you to enjoy your retirement years with security, vitality and engagement. Abbott Residences are now open, introducing a new collection of one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments in the heart of Parnell.

Contact us today to book a private tour of our new show apartment and experience The Foundation's immense potential first-hand.

Apartments priced from \$1,825,000
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thefoundationvillage.co.nz | 09 869 3947

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thefoundationvillage.co.nz

A Vision Realised

Our vision for The Foundation was to create a world class haven of refinement, sophistication and care for seniors – a place to feel energised, at home and rewarded in your later years.

The Abbott Residences are now open, adding their own distinguished layer to this story. The show apartment is available to view by private appointment, offering a first look at these beautiful residences.

The one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments combine classic design with contemporary finishes, creating a refined canvas for personal expression. Generously proportioned interiors feature full-height windows, double glazing, and high ceilings, enhancing natural light and a sense of space, while integrated air-conditioning ensures comfort throughout the year.

Chef's kitchens, sculleries, and full laundry rooms support a practical, clutter-free lifestyle with every detail carefully considered to elevate daily living. State-of-the-art security has also been a priority in the design with secure underground parking and keyless entry.

Atop of Abbott Residences, residents can enjoy a rooftop terrace with expansive views of the city and harbour. An elevated sanctuary serves as the perfect backdrop for sunset drinks, casual gatherings, or quiet moments of reflection.

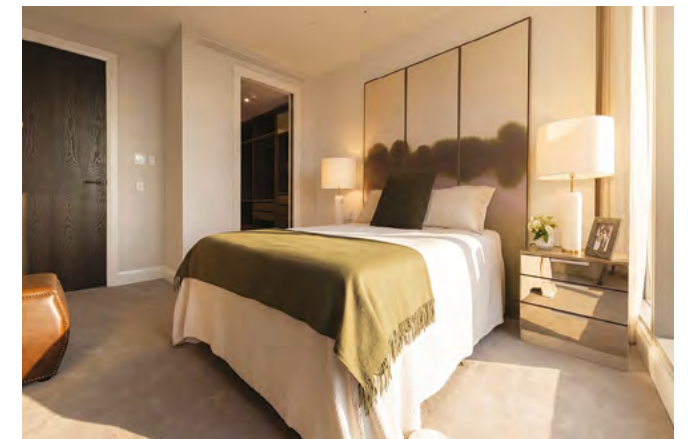


Beyond Abbott Residences, residents have exclusive access to Pearson House, a fully restored 19th-century architectural treasure overlooking the Domain. Pearson House features a stylish eatery, Maddington on the Domain, offering an uplifting setting to gather with family and friends. The original colonnade has been brought back to life, seamlessly linking the Drawing Room and Reading Room. Upstairs has been redesigned to house a luxurious boutique cinema, billiard room, lounge, an art studio, cardio studio and wellness suite.

Generus Living, the group behind The Foundation, has been deliberate in crafting an environment where every detail counts. This meticulous attention is what ensures the precinct isn't just beautiful, but deeply liveable, too.

Contact us today to book a private tour of the show apartment and experience The Foundation's immense potential first-hand. Apartments priced from \$1,825,000.

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Finding Farewells

Funerals are changing.

While traditional services remain deeply important for many families – particularly for religious or cultural reasons – a growing number of New Zealanders are choosing more personal, less formal ways to farewell a loved one.

“Probably one of the most significant changes has been the noticeably broader preference for less formality,” explains Michael Powell, general manager at Davis Funerals.

But whatever form a farewell takes, the purpose remains the same.

“It’s important to remember that funerals are for the living to come together to remember the loved one they have lost,” continues the funeral director. “The very act of coming together is a valuable first step to accepting the death and beginning to manage the inevitable grief journey ahead.”

How do you help families capture the personality, passions and memories of someone when creating a meaningful farewell?

A good start is to work with the funeral director to organise an event – aka a funeral or farewell – providing an opportunity for families, friends and those who have known the person who has died to share memories, renew acquaintances and support each other. Some use photographs or belongings and memorabilia to decorate the casket and venue. The use of photos, video, favourite music all further personalise the experience. Beyond the funeral or farewell urns, headstones, ash and fingerprint jewellery, handprints, bookmarks, service sheets, and memorial books are but a small number of ways in which memories can be kept alive.

What are some conversations families could have earlier that can make things easier when the time comes?

Fortunately for many people living in New Zealand today, the once taboo topic of death and funeral planning is becoming a discussion that is being recognised as important. As a funeral

director, I have witnessed many instances over the years where a death has occurred and due to a lack of planning it has left those left behind with absolutely no idea of what to do – and additionally unable to necessarily meet the costs. By contrast, we see many instances where the person who has died has left instructions, in some cases pre-planning their funeral. This is a growing trend that ensures everyone involved can take comfort knowing that a plan is in place, often with funds set aside to meet the cost of their farewell.

A good start is to ask a family member a question as simple as: “What would you like us to do if something was to happen to you?”. Alternatively organise a time to meet with a funeral director for a no-obligation discussion. A funeral director can provide guidance, discuss service options, and provide a cost estimate. For many, knowing what to do and understanding the likely cost helps them shape a plan that feels right.

Are there common misconceptions about grief or the funeral process that you wish more people understood?

Many academics have developed models to try and explain grief. For a long time, the most relied upon was Elisabeth Kubler-Ross’s five stages of grief which suggested people had to move through denial, anger, depression, bargaining and finally, acceptance.

It’s now more commonly held that grief is not a linear series of steps and is perhaps better described through the dual process model of grief (Stroebe and Schut, 1999) which defines grief as being a journey that sees people move backwards and forwards between focussing on their loss but equally focussing on everyday life – and that it’s perfectly okay to have good days and bad days.

“It’s important to remember that funerals are for the living to come together to remember the loved one they have lost.”

Taking a more practical approach, it’s important to remember that there is never closure. Grief will always be present, but managed well and with the right support, people accept their grief and loss and learn to live with it.

Auckland is one of the world’s most culturally diverse cities. How has that influenced the way Davis approaches funerals and supports different communities?

The Davis team considers it a privilege to look after families from many different cultural and religious backgrounds. Adding to the mix is the ever-growing rise of culturally mixed families; which in turn often further challenges the traditional beliefs and practices. But it’s also important to support people and provide guidance and information ahead of a need existing. To meet this challenge, we firmly believe in driving a community outreach programme and in many cases sponsoring events and activities in communities. An example of this would be our ongoing sponsorship of the Talanoa programme run by Totara Hospice. Beyond, the companionship, fun activities and lunches that the programme provides to Pasifika and Māori families, it enables connection, which in turn enables people to ask questions, seek advice and overcome fears and concerns that they might have.

But it doesn’t stop there. Over the last few years, we have and will continue to broaden the cultural mix of our team. People look to us for support when they engage our services. We want to ensure wherever possible we can do everything we can to make a difficult time easier.

How are things like livestreaming, digital memorials or online tributes changing the way families connect and grieve?

Whilst livestreaming has been in existence for many years now, increased access to technology and improved internet performance have seen continued growth in the uptake and use of these services. The Covid era may be for many becoming a more distant memory; however, it was during the days of the lockdowns that we really saw the value that livestreaming can provide. For many families, if they had not been able to use this



PHOTO: MICHAEL POWELL

technology, the opportunity to farewell, and see their loved one last time would not have been possible.

Recognising the cost of print media, and reduced readership of physical newspapers, we are seeing more people turn to social media and digital platforms. Digital media gives the public and funeral homes the opportunity to assume the role of publisher, enabling a careful and individually curated communication to be published online, as opposed to the traditional paper notice that provides basic facts and where often the primary driver for grieving families is reducing word count to keep costs down.

An example of the emergence of how digital platforms are changing the landscape are the emergence of platforms such as remembered.co.nz or our very own free-of-charge obituary site davisfunerals.co.nz/obituaries.

What qualities make someone a great funeral director, and what has it taught you about life?

Funeral directors are there to help keep things together for people and families at a time when things are falling apart. A funeral director must possess a high level of patience and empathy, have exceptional organisation skills, and must be honest and reliable beyond reproach.

As a funeral director, I have learnt many things, and even years on I’m still learning. If one thing was to stand out, it is the value of time and presence. Life is short – loss reminds us that our time here is limited and can change in an instant. Stop sweating small things – minor daily annoyances lose their power and importance. And be present. We learn to cherish ordinary moments and pay attention to the people right in front of us.

Visit davisfunerals.co.nz for more information.

dyingmatters.co.nz

Life & Death

Dying Matters is a service that was born from personal experience.

"After losing my husband Steve when he was just 47, I realised how unprepared we are for death and how little we talk about it until we're in the middle of it," says Deborah McCullough, founder of Dying Matters.

"That experience led me to train as a death doula and create Dying Matters, with the simple aim of helping people approach the end of life with more knowledge, more choice and less fear."

Deborah and her team help people have conversations that matter, capture their choices and create meaningful end-of-life experiences that reflect who they are.

What does a Death Doula actually do?

A death doula provides emotional, practical and compassionate support to people who are dying and those who love them. Every journey is different, so our role is shaped by what each individual and family need. That might mean helping someone have difficult conversations, planning an end-of-life celebration, creating legacy projects, advocating for them, sitting quietly at the



bedside, providing information, or simply being a calm, reassuring presence.

One of the greatest gifts a death doula offers is their time. While doctors and nurses provide essential clinical care, a death doula is there to support the person and their family in all the moments in between. We help people understand their choices, navigate the unfamiliar territory of dying and feel less alone. When people feel informed and supported, fear often gives way to confidence, allowing them to focus on spending precious time together.

Your first service, MyDyingPlan, encourages people to capture their dying choices for their final days. What are the biggest misconceptions people have about this?

The biggest misconception is that planning for death is only for older people or those who are seriously ill. The reality is that we will all die one day. None of us knows when that will be, which is why planning is something every person should consider, regardless of age or stage of life.

Another misconception is that talking about death is morbid or somehow makes it happen. I believe the opposite is true. Having these conversations brings peace of mind. It gives the people you love the confidence of knowing they're making decisions based on what you want.

MyDyingPlan isn't about focusing on death. It's about making sure your voice is heard, your values are respected, and your family are clear on what to do for you.

How does MyDyingPlan differ from a traditional will, and why are both important?

A will and MyDyingPlan work hand in hand, but they serve very different purposes.

A will comes into effect after you've died. It deals with your assets, your estate and the legal matters that need to be taken care of.

MyDyingPlan is for while you're still living. It captures the experience you want to have while you are dying; how you would like to be cared for, what medical directives you have chosen, who you want around, and practical details that make an incredibly difficult time easier to navigate for those caring for you.

I often say a will looks after your belongings, while MyDyingPlan looks after you and your people. Both are acts of love.

Instagram: [dyingmatters_nz](#)
Facebook: [Dying Matters NZ](#)

 **DyingMatters**



IMAGE: DYING MATTERS COFOUNDERS
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www.claydens.co.nz for more info.

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Running 'n' Retirement

Group fitness offers so much more than just the physical benefits; it provides an opportunity to connect with others, build friendships and create a sense of community, while helping people stay strong, independent and able to enjoy the things they love — now and for years to come.

“The wonderful thing about aquatic fitness is that it’s an exercise where each individual is able to work at their pace, and within their capacity,” says Kiri Price, running coach and Deep Water Running instructor at AUT Millennium. “Being in deep water means there’s no loading through the joints, often enabling people to move in ways that are just not possible on land. It’s a very inclusive and non-competitive format of exercise and the beauty of being submerged in water also means that no one can see what you’re doing!”

For those looking for a different challenge, HYROX-inspired pool-based training offers a more dynamic endurance and



strength-focused workout that can also be adapted to suit individual abilities and goals, making it an accessible option for older adults wanting to build fitness, confidence and resilience.

“Exercising in deep water can be as hard or as easy as you want it be,” adds Kiri. “I’ve got clients who come for their mental as well as physical health – exercising releases endorphins that make you feel better, make you smile!”

Visit autmillennium.org.nz to find out more.

It Isn't Always “Just Heartburn”

Almost everyone experiences heartburn from time to time. After a large meal or a spicy dinner, that familiar burning sensation in the chest can seem like nothing more than an inconvenience. But when reflux becomes frequent, it may be your body’s way of telling you that something more significant is happening.

Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD) occurs when stomach acid repeatedly flows back into the oesophagus. Common symptoms include heartburn, acid regurgitation, chest discomfort, chronic cough, hoarseness, excessive throat clearing, or a sensation of food sticking. While medications can provide excellent symptom relief, they do not always identify the underlying cause or detect damage that may already have occurred.

Long-standing reflux can lead to inflammation, narrowing of the oesophagus, or a condition called Barrett’s oesophagus, where the lining of the oesophagus changes over time. Although Barrett’s oesophagus does not usually cause additional symptoms, it is recognised as a risk factor for

oesophageal cancer. Fortunately, when detected early, appropriate surveillance and treatment can significantly reduce this risk.

Not everyone with reflux requires further investigation. However, symptoms that persist despite medication, difficulty swallowing, unexplained weight loss, anaemia, or recurrent vomiting should be discussed with your GP. Depending on your individual situation, an upper endoscopy (Gastroscopy) may be recommended. This simple procedure allows a specialist to examine the oesophagus and stomach directly, diagnose the cause of symptoms, and identify problems at an early stage.

If reflux is affecting your quality of life or has become a regular part of

your routine, don’t ignore it. Speak with your GP or specialist about whether an assessment is appropriate. A Gastroscopy offers peace of mind for patients and their whānau by providing the opportunity to detect and treat important conditions before they become more serious.

At Waitemata Endoscopy, we’ve been working hard to reduce wait times, and can offer most standard Gastroscopy and Colonoscopy appointments within seven working days of receiving a referral. We accept GP, specialist, and self-referrals via our website.

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Mr Suheelan Kulasegaran
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The Legal Side of Retiring

A five-point checklist.

dawsonslawyers.co.nz

Retirement planning tends to focus on money and lifestyle, but there is a legal side too. It's one that's much easier to sort while life is calm rather than in the middle of a health scare or a family crisis. Here are five things we suggest ticking off.

1. Review your will

If your will is more than a few years old, it may not reflect your life now. Grandchildren arrive, property gets sold, executors move overseas. Retirement is also when many people restructure their assets, and a will written for your old circumstances can produce odd results. Read it, and if anything makes you pause, update it. If you do not have one, the law decides who gets what, and that formula might not actually be what you want.

2. Put an enduring power of attorney (EPA) in place

EPAs let someone you trust make decisions if you cannot. There are two kinds: one for property, and one for personal care and welfare. The common mistake is waiting. EPAs can only be set up while you have capacity, and if you lose it first, your family faces a slower and more expensive court process to be appointed instead. If you do one thing on this list, make it this.

3. Look at how your property is owned

Whether your home is owned jointly, as tenants in common, or through a trust, changes what happens when one of you dies. Many couples do not know which applies to them. This matters, especially in blended families where each partner wants to provide for their own children.



4. Ask whether your trust still earns its keep

Plenty of family trusts were set up decades ago for reasons that no longer apply. Trusts come with ongoing obligations and costs, and the law around them has tightened. Some are still doing a valuable job. Others are just admin. A review will tell you which yours is, and winding up a trust that has outlived its purpose can simplify life considerably.

5. Talk to your family

Not a legal document, but the step that prevents most disputes. If your family knows what you have decided and why, there are fewer surprises later. You do not need to share every detail. Even a broad conversation about who your executors are and where the documents live can save real stress.

When to do it

Now, ideally. None of this takes long, and most of it stays done for years once sorted. If a retirement village move is on the horizon, do the review first, since selling the family home changes the picture.

We help East Auckland families with this, every week. If your paperwork needs a tidy-up, give us a call at Dawson's Lawyers.

Claire Endean - Director/Lawyer
dawsonslawyers.co.nz / 09 272 0002
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Experience Northland through the people who proudly call it home.

Meet New Zealand's only commercial coffee grower and discover the passion behind this pioneering northern enterprise while overlooking the spectacular Karikari Peninsula. Step inside a remarkable private property to learn the story of Friedensreich Hundertwasser and visit his final resting place. Enjoy sunsets at Omapere, fish and chips in Mangonui and two nights at the iconic Duke of Marlborough in Russell.



Stewart Island & the Deep South (February & March 2027)

See Stewart Island and the Deep South through the eyes of the locals.

Meet Nadia Lim and Carlos Bagrie at Royalburn Station and gain rare insight into life on one of New Zealand's most celebrated high-country farms. Taste handcrafted spirits in Cardrona, discover Stewart Island's wild beauty with knowledgeable locals and relive the nostalgia of the Kingston Flyer. Then meet Perry and Tracey Reed at their spectacular Toiroa Heads farm and uncover the wildlife and rugged beauty of the Otago Coast.



Dansey's Pass (Central Otago) (8 - 12 March 2027)

Discover the people keeping Central Otago's rich heritage alive.

Meet the resilient farmers who call Central Otago's rugged high country home, then explore spectacular backcountry landscapes on a 4WD journey rarely available to visitors. Enjoy lunch with acclaimed gardener Jane Faulkner at Clachanburn, whose remarkable garden has featured in leading New Zealand home and garden magazines. Stay at the iconic Dansey's Pass Hotel and uncover the heritage, characters and timeless landscapes that define this remarkable region.

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Skin health as part of the weight loss journey.

Weight loss is often framed as a finish line – a number on the scales, a reshaped silhouette, a long-awaited goal achieved. But at Clinic 42, we see it differently.



True transformation isn't just about losing volume; it's about restoring balance. As the body changes, the skin must be supported to adapt, regenerate, and thrive. Because the reality is this: maintaining your skin throughout the journey is far more effective – and far more elegant – than attempting to repair it afterwards.

Rapid or significant weight loss can leave the skin struggling to keep pace. Elastin and collagen – the fundamental building blocks responsible for firmness, structure, and resilience – naturally decline over time, and even more so when volume is lost quickly. The result can be laxity, fine wrinkling, and a hollowed or fatigued appearance, particularly in the face, neck, and décolletage. Rather than waiting for these changes to settle in, a bio-regenerative approach supports the skin proactively, encouraging it to rebuild from within.

We now also understand that the GLP1RA injections like Wegovy directly affect the fibroblast cells, resulting in decreased collagen, elastin and hyaluronic acid formation. So, it is not only the effect of the weight loss resulting in a negative effect on the skin, but also the injectable product itself.

This is where next generation injectables are redefining cosmetic medicine. Unlike traditional fillers, which simply replace lost volume, bio-regenerative treatments stimulate the body's own collagen and

elastin production – a slower, more refined process that delivers natural, enduring results.

Sculptra has long been considered a cornerstone in this space. Working deep within the dermis, it gradually stimulates collagen synthesis, working on the fat cell and fibroblast to restore volume subtly over time while improving skin quality. It is particularly beneficial during weight loss phases, helping to prevent the hollowing that can occur in areas such as the cheeks and temples.

Similarly, Structura a more recent innovation is designed to regenerate superficial facial fat, combining structural support with regenerative stimulation. Designed to enhance both form and function, it integrates seamlessly into a treatment plan focused on maintaining skin architecture as the body evolves.

But skin health is not only about structure – hydration and cellular vitality are equally essential. Prohilo, often described as an injectable moisturiser, spreads beneath the skin to improve hydration, elasticity, and overall radiance. It acts as a catalyst, awakening the skin's own regenerative processes while delivering a lit-from-within glow that complements facial contour changes.

For those seeking advanced tissue repair, polynucleotides bring an exciting

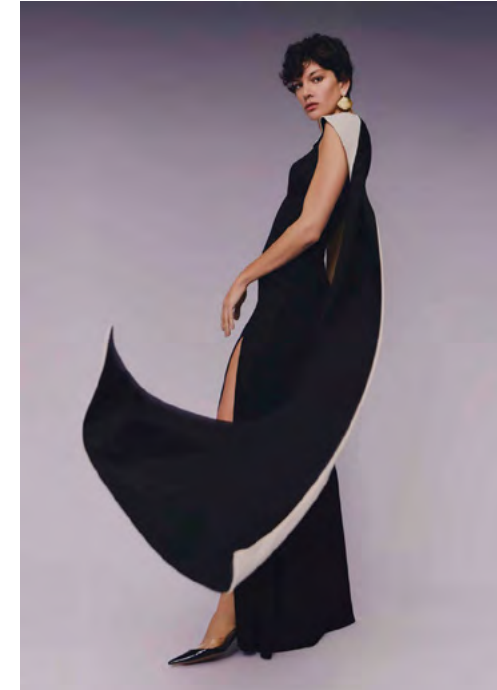
frontier. Derived from DNA fragments, they work at a cellular level to promote healing, improve elasticity, and enhance the skin's natural resilience. Particularly effective in delicate or thinning areas, they offer subtle yet profound rejuvenation over time.

What unites these treatments is a philosophy: enhancement over correction, maintenance rather than overhaul. By integrating bio-regenerative injectables into your weight loss journey, you are not simply responding to changes – you are anticipating them. You are supporting your skin to adapt in real time, preserving harmony between face and body.

The result is not a transformation that feels abrupt or artificial, but one that unfolds seamlessly. Skin remains luminous, contours stay soft yet defined, and confidence grows alongside physical change.

Because the future of cosmetic medicine isn't about chasing youth – it's about cultivating longevity. And when it comes to weight loss, the most beautiful results are those that respect the journey every step of the way.

If you would like to discuss treatment or are ready to start your treatment journey with Clinic 42 you can book online or by contacting them at 09 638 4242 or reception@clinic42.co.nz



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Modes & Memories

For more than 40 years, Modes has helped women dress for every chapter of life.

From milestone moments to once-in-a-lifetime celebrations, what one wears also becomes part of the memory.

It might begin with a school ball gown, followed by a 21st birthday dress, a



wedding gown, and, years later, an elegant mother-of-the-bride ensemble. It's not uncommon for three generations of the same family – grandmother, mother and daughter – to be shopping together for a special occasion all at once.

Modes has also dressed clients for events around the globe, from destination weddings in Tuscany and tropical escapes to black-tie occasions, including visits to Buckingham Palace. "Whatever the setting, the focus remains the same," says founder Diane Stephenson, "finding an outfit that feels as special as the moment itself."

Drawing on collections sourced from around the world, the boutique caters to a wide range of styles, sizes and budgets. An in-house workroom allows garments to be tailored for the perfect fit, while

accessories including wraps, fascinators, jackets and hats can be carefully coordinated to complete the look.

Modes knows that choosing an outfit is about more than fashion. It's about confidence, quality and dressing appropriately for the occasion. Whether celebrating a new beginning, marking a major milestone or attending a farewell, Diane and her team offers the experience and expertise to ensure every life event is met with style and grace.

"In 40-plus years one learns a lot about quality, style and appropriateness for the event," adds Diane. "Such information and skillset are invaluable."

*Book an appointment.
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~ o d e s*

Beyond Beauty

The truth about labiaplasty – a conversation women are finally having.

What is labiaplasty?

Labiaplasty is a procedure that reduces the labia minora. While often thought of as cosmetic surgery, most women choose it to relieve physical discomfort, irritation during exercise, or difficulties with clothing and intimacy.



Who is a good candidate?

Every woman is different. The best candidates are women whose anatomy causes symptoms or who feel self-conscious. The decision should always be personal – not influenced by social media or unrealistic beauty standards.

Is it becoming more common?

Yes. As conversations around women's health become more open, more women feel comfortable seeking advice. Increased awareness has helped reduce the stigma surrounding intimate procedures.

Is recovery difficult?

Most patients return to desk-based work within a week. Swelling is expected initially, while exercise and sexual activity are usually avoided for around a month.

WORDS —
DR KATARZYNA MACKENZIE,
PLASTIC SURGEON

Will anyone be able to tell I've had surgery?

The aim is a natural result that respects each woman's anatomy. Once healed, scars are typically very discreet.

What is the biggest misconception about labiaplasty?

That it's purely about appearance. In my practice, women seek surgery because they experience physical discomfort or limitations in everyday life.

What advice would you give someone considering labiaplasty?

Start with a consultation. A good plastic surgeon will explain your options, answer your questions honestly, and help you decide whether surgery is the right choice for you. The goal isn't perfection.

Head to visageplasticsurgery.co.nz



Creative Revival

The Learning Connexion (TLC) School of Creativity & Art
Winner of Creative Gold at the 2026 Wellington Gold Awards.

Suppose we have all heard the famous quote, "creating is the essence of life". It's a nice thought, but life gets so busy you can't possibly find the time or space to sit down and make something. But if life doesn't end at 50, neither does your creative spirit, and The Learning Connexion wants to help that spirit flourish.

When that spirit needs a break, a refresh, or a total overhaul, our Study from Home programme is the first port of call. With full-time and part-time study available, this programme can fit easily in a busy lifestyle at your pace, in the comfort of your own home. Each student is assigned a Creative Kaiako (mentor) to guide you through the journey that entwines the self to

creativity and expression. We offer three intakes per term – perfect for any kind of calendar.

Whether you're discovering your creative abilities for the first time, or reigniting an ongoing spark, The Learning Connexion has what you need to reintegrate your creative spirit.

Rediscover the importance of having creative outlets. Find us, discover yourself on the way.

tlc.ac.nz

Our Home Sweet Home

By: Noel and Suzanne, Keith Park Village

We have been living in Independent Living for two years, since June 2024. In that time we have watched Keith Park grow from a few buildings to a wonderful vibrant Village. There is caring staff and management always about should you need help with anything. Our residents are an energetic fabulous group of people, some of who have become firm friends. Also, meeting up with others from our past life. Our move to Keith Park Village was one of our smartest. Our days are busy the way we like it. Involving ourselves with many of Keith Park Village activities. Exercise classes, Pilates, Line Dancing, Bowls walking group, gardening group. Just to name a few. Happy Hour each Thursday. We have a great cafe in the evening. Village, or walk to one of the many close by. Our favourite is "160" De Havilland. We enjoy the many walking tracks, mostly all flat easy walks. Our favourites are walking the Coastal walk to Catalina Wharf or off to Scott Point. We are all lucky to have the amazing "Te Kori Park" behind our beautiful Village. This park is well pathed for short walks. Our Village and Hobsonville never disappoints.

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our 11 villages across Auckland.

Call 0800 000 290 or visit ryman.co.nz

RYMAN
It's all taken care of



IMAGE: JOSH EMMETT PICTURED AT ONSLOW

Sky's the Limit

Founded by chef Josh Emmett and Helen Emmett, Onslow has established itself as one of Auckland's most celebrated dining destinations.

It's also New Zealand's only home of Krug champagne – and one of only a select number of Krug Ambassadors globally – which saw the restaurant recently host recent the Krug x Music dinner, an exclusive collaboration with Maison Krug that explored the relationship between champagne, gastronomy and sound.

The five-course dinner, created by Emmett, saw each course paired with a different Krug champagne, and accompanied by an original musical composition designed by Maison Krug to heighten the tasting experience.

"I love my role as a Krug Ambassador," the legendary chef tells Verve. "Creating a menu to pair with their champagnes is such a joy and a privilege."

"I especially loved pairing the Krug Rosé. The structure from the pinot noir allowed us to work with beautiful New Zealand produce like roast Cambridge duck and preserved Cromwell cherries."

From high-end menus to high altitude ones, Josh has also recently taken on the role of Culinary Ambassador for Air New Zealand, creating dishes designed to represent Kiwi cuisine to travellers around the world. But cooking at 35,000 feet brings its own unique challenges.

"There is a lot to consider when creating dishes to be enjoyed in the skies," he says. "Eating at altitude, with cabin pressure, lower humidity and background noise, changes how we experience flavour, so you have to think carefully about every element of a dish, from seasoning through to texture, acidity and balance."

For Josh, the most important consideration is always the passenger.

"What does someone genuinely crave when they're flying across time zones? What might a frequent traveller want to eat on the second leg of a long-haul journey? Those questions really shape the way the dishes are developed," he says.

"For many guests, Air New Zealand provides their very first taste of our country, so I want the menu to reflect the quality, creativity and character of New Zealand cuisine."

With the arrival of the Michelin Guide in Aotearoa, Josh believes the country's food scene is entering an exciting new chapter.

"For New Zealand to have a presence in the Michelin Guide is hugely important. It puts us firmly in the global conversation," he says.

continues over page



"I think it will encourage talented chefs working overseas to see New Zealand as a destination, while also giving young chefs and restaurateurs here the confidence to realise their dream of owning and operating a Michelin-rated restaurant in New Zealand."

While Josh's career has taken him from Michelin-starred kitchens overseas to some of New Zealand's most acclaimed restaurants, his passion remains rooted in creating experiences – whether in a restaurant, at home or in the sky.

"Another part of my role that I really enjoy is designing restaurant spaces and building brands. I love the visioning and design side of creating something from the ground up. Helping shape the future of hospitality is also incredibly important to me. Developing and training the next generation of chefs and restaurant owners is critical to the future of our industry, and it's our way of giving back to something we're incredibly proud to be part of."

He recalls childhood memories of "baking at home on the farm where I grew up".

"We had chickens, so there was always a steady supply of eggs, and with a real sweet tooth I had free rein in the kitchen to bake whatever I wanted – and more importantly, eat it! Making

my first pavlova and discovering the science behind cooking, why cakes rise and how ingredients work together, completely fascinated me."

As for creating the perfect dining at home experience, he insists that planning "is the key to being a successful host".

"Set the table well ahead of time and make sure you have all the right serving dishes and equipment ready, so nothing is left to chance. Cook something you're comfortable with and have made before, rather than trying something completely new."

Drinks – including well-thought-out non-alcohol ones to accommodate everyone – are also an important part of creating the right atmosphere.

"Plan the drinks in advance as well. Set up a drinks station with garnishes, glassware and plenty of ice. If you're serving cocktails, pre-batch them. Then, when guests arrive, you can simply shake and pour for a bit of theatre. Guests always respond well to that!"



Table Talk

The dining room is more than just a place to enjoy a meal – it's where birthdays are celebrated, stories are shared, and friends linger long after dessert has been served.



Resene Black White



Resene Bokara Grey

The right colour palette sets the tone, creating a space that feels welcoming, relaxed and effortlessly connected to its surroundings.

In the contemporary Long House (page 64), crisp whites are balanced with dramatic charcoal accents, while warm timber and abundant greenery soften the overall aesthetic, blurring the line between indoors and out.

Fresh neutrals such as **Resene Black White**, a warm, soft white with gentle creamy undertones, create a bright yet inviting backdrop that reflects natural light and enhances the home's sense of openness. Paired with **Resene Bokara Grey**, a deep charcoal with subtle warmth, the architectural details gain depth, definition and timeless sophistication. Together, these colours create a striking contrast while allowing natural timbers, statement lighting and carefully curated furnishings to take centre stage.

Whether your style is modern, classic or somewhere in between, the right Resene paint colours create a dining space that encourages people to slow down, gather and enjoy good food and great company.

Resene ColorShops and the Resene website offer a comprehensive array of options visit [resene.co.nz](https://www.resene.co.nz)

Laying Down the Law



Nigella Lawson on a life spent shattering conventions...

The revered chef has long stood as an enigma in the food world. With no formal training in gastronomy, she has ascended the ranks, earning the adoration of countless fans around the world.

Her paradigm shifts and the legacy she has crafted – often by breaking kitchen etiquette – are some things often forgotten, as her heritage as a television chef is almost taken for granted.

And despite the 66-year-old's vast influence she often shies away from titles and, in particular, the term 'celebrity chef'.

"I've never been comfortable with that one," she says.

"I feel it places more emphasis on the 'celebrity' than the 'chef'. While I'm grateful for the platform and the love I've received, my main drive has always been the food and the stories it tells. Adding 'celebrity' to it somewhat detracts from that genuine narrative."

She has, she says, "always tried to approach food with an intense passion and curiosity": "From my days penning thoughts about dishes to showcasing them on television, it's always been about sharing the joy of food."

Her evolution from food writer to global culinary icon was anything but conventional. After beginning her career as a journalist – including a stint as deputy literary editor of *The Sunday Times* – Lawson entered the food world through writing rather than the professional kitchen. Her 1998, *How to Eat*, rejected the traditional cookbook format, blending recipes with personal essays and reflections on the pleasures and realities of home cooking. "I wanted to make food and my slaving passion for it the starting point," she penned in that debut book.

"Over the years, I believe I've grown more confident in embracing my own style," she continues, "celebrating both the simple and the exquisite, but always authentic to what I truly feel."

It's hard to imagine the culinary landscape without the indomitable presence of Nigella. Her approach to cooking and presenting food is unlike any other. Before Nigella, many female chefs on television seemed to emphasise their professionalism, often styling themselves in ways that downplayed their femininity. It was almost as if in order to be taken seriously in the largely male-dominated world of cuisine, they had to fit into a certain mould.

Enter Nigella, who shattered this image with a hammer of authenticity.

"In a world where culinary television was often seen through a predominantly male lens, I wasn't aiming to champion the voice of the female foodie," the Londoner admits.

"It wasn't about replacing one with the other, but about celebrating the richness of experiences and flavours that women bring to the table. I believe every dish tells a story, but it was high time more of these tales were told by women."

Embracing a 'sexy food' image, Nigella didn't shy away from indulgence, but rather relished in the sensuality of food – its textures, flavours and the sheer joy it could bring.

"If I can encourage someone to trust themselves more in the kitchen and find joy in the act of cooking, then I feel I've succeeded."

Nigella's Breakfast Bars

SERVES: 8

This breakfast bar recipe is gluten-free, dairy-free and enough seeds to make you start sprouting.

I've used no sugar, but before you start thinking this is virtuously sugar-free (which I could claim it to be), remember that the sweetness that comes from the dates is, in essence, sugar, though certainly it's unprocessed and full of fibre at the same time.

Make these bars at the weekend, and you'll be set up for the week if you're someone who needs to grab-and-go in the morning.

TOP TIP:

You can use sunflower seeds in place of flaxseeds, or half and half rather than all flaxseeds, and you can also use puffed rice (gluten-free if needed) or buckwheat flakes in place of cornflakes. In theory, cornflakes (and oats) should be gluten-free, but if crucial, make sure it's stipulated on the packet.

If you can't get hold of medjool dates, then use 350g pitted dried dates and up the water to 400ml. And they'll take about 10, rather than 5, minutes to cook until they're soft enough to mash to a purée.

INGREDIENTS:

250g medjool dates
2 tsp ground cinnamon
75g goji berries
75g pumpkin seeds
150g brown flaxseeds
50g cocoa nibs
25g chia seeds
25g cornflakes (gluten-free if required)
100g organic porridge oats (not instant), gluten-free if required

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 180C and line the bottom and sides of a 20cm square tin with baking parchment.

Pit the dates and tear them with your fingers into a small saucepan, add the cinnamon, cover with 325ml cold water, bring to the boil and let bubble for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat, and beat with a fork until you have a rough purée.

Put all the remaining ingredients into a large bowl, add the date mixture and mix until everything is combined. I wear a pair of disposable vinyl gloves for this.

Squidge into your prepared tin and bake in the oven for 30 minutes, until firm and set, and golden on top and darker around the edges. Leave to cool in the tin before cutting into pieces.



Keeping It Local

When James and Janene Draper opened the first Farro store in Mt Wellington in 2006 with just 12 staff members, their vision was a simple one – to create a supermarket that celebrated the very best of artisan food in Aotearoa New Zealand.



IMAGE: FARRO 20TH BIRTHDAY ORANGE & PISTACHIO CAKE WITH SWISS BUTTERCREAM & ROASTED RHUBARB

Twenty years on – and with an eighth store set to open in Newmarket later this year – Farro's greatest legacy may not be the stores themselves, but the local producers, artisans, chefs and makers whose products have found an audience thanks to its shelves, who “with our team and loyal customers, have helped shape the food community we know today”.

Long before many of today's artisan brands became household names, Farro was backing small businesses with big ambitions “help their foodie dreams come true”. For countless food makers, the journey from a weekend farmers' market to a Farro shelf became the first major step towards wider success.

Among them is Monty & Sons, whose handmade Wairarapa pasta first appeared at Farro when the business was still finding its feet. “Farro gave Monty & Sons a shot when we were just getting started,” says founder Monty Petrie. “Putting a small Wairarapa pasta maker on the shelf was a punt, and Farro backed us.

“Farro doesn't just sell good food, they shape what good food means in New Zealand. Grateful to be part of that journey.”

The stories often extend beyond business to genuine friendships. Wild Wheat founder Andrew Fearnside still remembers the early days: “Janene would often call me on weekends, desperate because they'd sold out of bread at Lunn Ave. I'd rush over whatever we had spare.

“It has always been my goal to make sourdough everyone's regular family loaf, not just a special treat. Being a key bread supplier at Farro has enabled us to reach a far greater audience and hopefully inspire change in the way people eat sourdough.”

For Sue from Over the Moon, the partnership has been equally transformative.

FARRO LIMITED-EDITION HAMPER GIVEAWAY

One special Farro hamper brims with products from some of their most longstanding suppliers, with beloved NZ brands like Maison Therese, Bennetts of Mangawhai, Fresh as, and Village Press.

WIN this limited-edition hamper, along with Farro's new look tote bag – yummy! To enter visit vervemagazine.co.nz, click **WIN** then follow the directions.



IMAGE: FARRO 20TH BIRTHDAY EVERYDAY TOTE

“We've grown together over the years, with Farro championing artisan New Zealand cheese and helping establish our premium brand,” she says. “Their support has provided a valuable platform for new products, introduced us to discerning customers, and become a genuine partnership that has contributed to our long-term growth and stability.”

To mark its milestone, Farro has created seven exclusive collaborations with further local favourites including Daily Bread, Little 'Lato, Urbanaut, and Allpress Coffee, alongside a special anniversary hamper featuring products from some of its longest-standing suppliers.

The celebrations continue on 15 August, when every Farro store will host a birthday showcase featuring tastings, supplier demonstrations and birthday cake, giving customers the chance to meet many of the makers behind the products. Twenty years after opening its doors, Farro has shown that championing local producers isn't just good business, it's helped shape New Zealand's thriving artisan food culture.

“We've truly grown up together,” says Mandy, founder of Mandy's Horseradish. “There is something special about walking into a Farro store – happy 20th birthday, Farro, and here's to another fabulous 20 years!”



WIN WITH VERVE

flat white.



PHOTOGRAPHY: JAKE GREEN

World Cup

Born in Dunedin and now based between London and Lisbon, Celeste Wong – better known as The Girl in the Cafe – has built an international reputation as a barista, author, judge and coffee storyteller.

Named one of London's top five baristas by the *Financial Times*, she has taken her passion for the perfect cup from behind the café counter to the global stage.

Her fascination with coffee was sparked by "the taste and the culture, and the feeling of being connected to this whole expanding world I hadn't known was there," she tells *Verve*.

"What pulled me in wasn't just chasing the perfect cup so much as realising coffee was a doorway. Every bean had a place, a person and a story behind it, and the more I learned the bigger the world got, not smaller. That's what hooked me, and honestly it still does."

What does it actually take to make an exceptional coffee – science, artistry, intuition, or a combination?

All three. But one is missing. The skill is knowing when to lean on which. There's real science underneath it, ratios, extraction, grind, temperature, and you can't fake that part. But once the fundamentals are solid, the artistry and intuition are what make a coffee feel like something rather than just taste technically correct. The best coffee people I know hold the technical knowledge lightly. After a lot of practice and experience, they know the rules well enough to stop thinking about them. But the missing ingredient which makes an exceptional coffee is passion.

Your book, *Coffee Creations*, encourages people to experiment with coffee at home. What do people often get wrong?

Two opposite mistakes, funnily enough. Some overcomplicate it, chasing gadgets and gimmicks when the basics would serve

them far better. Others under-invest in the things that genuinely matter: fresh specialty beans, a decent grinder, and a set of scales. Grinding well and actually weighing your coffee will do more for your cup than almost anything else. Great coffee at home isn't about being fancy, it's about being consistent.

Why do you think coffee holds such a special place in our everyday lives?

Because it's rarely only about the coffee. It's the pause, the ritual, the excuse to sit with someone, or with yourself, for 10 minutes. In a day that asks a lot of us, it's one of the few small things that stays entirely yours. Everyone is cutting things out at the moment, but coffee is the one thing I'd tell them to keep. It's linked to more health benefits than almost anything else you could drink, and even good decaf counts. It tastes incredible, and it's good for you. What's not to love? Plus, it connects people. It's a beautiful thing to watch. That's the part I never tire of.

Does New Zealand's coffee culture deserve more recognition internationally?

Yes, though I'd say it's already quietly earned it, whether or not it gets credited. New Zealand punches well above its size. The expectation that even a small-town cafe will do a decent coffee isn't normal globally, and I don't think Kiwis always realise how spoiled they are. Having travelled a lot, I've become very aware of how bad service and hospitality can be elsewhere. New Zealanders are good at it without seeming to try, which is the hardest version to pull off.

What New Zealand did brilliantly – along with Australia – was cement a strong coffee culture ahead of the curve, recognise

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PHOTOGRAPHY: JAKE GREEN

its importance, and take pride in it as a craft. That passion travelled. It drove real change overseas, certainly in the UK, where I lived through the early third wave years that arrived well after Australia and New Zealand had done the groundwork. The flat white is the obvious example. Most of the world had never heard of one until we brought it there, and now it's on every menu going.

But information moves fast now. People travel, they research, they share everything, and other parts of the world have not only caught up but in some areas gone further, particularly in brewing technique, green sourcing and roasting. Espresso started in Italy. New Zealand took the method and built a culture of its own around it. Now others are taking that method, along with some of our coffee culture, and building something of their own again.

A coffee standing at a bar in Rome is still unbeatable and it has nothing to do with extraction. It's an experience rather than a standard, and what New Zealand built is a standard you can live with every day. Both are worth having.

What's your favourite coffee memory?

Two, and they're very different. The first is my gateway drink. I write about it properly in the book, so I won't give it away here. But it was a bohemian little place in Dunedin, bands playing, very late at night, and I was out with my older siblings and their friends. I was far too young to be awake, far too young to be in that venue, and certainly far too young to be drinking coffee at all. That was most of the appeal. I felt grown up and slightly naughty, and I've never quite lost the association between coffee and being let into a bigger world.

The second is where I actually learnt to make it. The Strictly Coffee Company, a wonderfully retro place in Dunedin, busier than anything I can imagine now. Every day at 2pm we'd sit down under this enormous vintage photograph of Queenstown,

the original founding owners, my first coffee mentor and me, and I'd make everyone traditional cappuccinos and be judged on them. I was the newbie, so it was a daily test. It was also the best training I ever had, and the place that ignited my passion for coffee.

After so many years immersed in coffee, what still excites you about the industry, and what's next?

What still excites me is that coffee keeps opening up. We're heading into a genuinely experimental era and the ceiling keeps lifting. And the connection never gets old. It's the one constant across every version of my career.

As for what's next, a few things at once. Some cafe consulting, ongoing work with individuals and brands I believe in, and something more personal I'm writing. I'd love to get my web series and podcast going again, and I'm always open to the right people to make that happen. I'm also auditioning for film and television, which has always run alongside the coffee and which I'd like to give more room. I split my time between London and Lisbon, and in June 2027 World of Coffee comes to Lisbon for the first time ever, which feels like the two halves of my life meeting in one place. I fully intend to be involved somehow.

And I'll always come back to New Zealand for the right project, coffee or acting. I've been lucky enough to be back for some film work recently, which was a joy. Any excuse, really. My family and my best friend have long since worked out that a work trip means I stay much longer than I need to, and none of us are complaining.

Celeste's book, Coffee Creations, is available at Time Out Bookstore and The Urban Studio in Auckland, and in Dunedin at University Book Shop, Otago, or order it online. Find out more at thegirlinthecafe.co.uk



PHOTOGRAPHY: STEVE RYAN

ESPRESSO MARTINI RECIPE

People go crazy for Espresso Martinis. Some people who don't even like coffee LOVE these cocktails.

Why wouldn't they? They're sweet but balanced and have a kick that makes them fun! It's hard not to get excited about an Espresso Martini. If you are hosting or going to a dinner party, you can extract some espresso earlier in the day and store it in the refrigerator ready for cocktail hour. Generally, you'll need to extract 30ml of espresso per cocktail. If it is hot, add it to the shaker first to allow it to cool with the ice. This recipe makes one cocktail.

INGREDIENTS:

Ice cubes
1 double shot of espresso
50ml vodka
30ml coffee liqueur
15ml Simple Syrup
3 coffee beans, to garnish

METHOD:

Fill a cocktail shaker with ice, add the coffee, then add the vodka, coffee liqueur and syrup. Shake very vigorously to make sure you get a thick foam on top. Strain into a glass and garnish with the quintessential 3 coffee beans on the thick foam.

Some fun variations on the classic...

Chilli Espresso Martini:

Add 1 small, or ½ a large, chopped red chilli to the shaker with the other ingredients and strain out with the ice.

Garnish with slices of fresh red chilli, rim the glass with chilli powder or flakes, or add a whole chilli to the edge of the glass for extra flair.

Vanilla & Apple Brandy Espresso Martini:

Substitute the vodka with apple or cider brandy and add a drop of vanilla extract. Garnish with apple slices and a dusting of ground cinnamon.

Rum & Lime Espresso Martini:

Add ½ teaspoon of ground cardamom and 15ml lime juice. Substitute the vodka with spiced rum, such as Captain Morgan. Garnish with a dusting of ground cardamom or cardamom seeds.

Recipes from *Coffee Creations: 90 delicious recipes for the perfect cup* by Celeste Wong. Published by Mitchell Beazley octopusbooks.co.uk

Verve's Coffee Picks



ACME CUPCO
The Mini Bobby is a small mug with big ideas. At 110ml it rounds out the Bobby lineup alongside the medium and large sizes. Same easy shape, just scaled down, it fits all Acme mini saucers. Perfect for espresso, piccolos, fluffies and small hands with big opinions. A nice way to let everyone in on the ritual. Available now in Kokako 002 blue, Kawakawa dark green, and classic Milk white.

acmecups.nz



ALTURA
Altura Coffee is proudly 100% New Zealand owned and operated. Every batch is roasted to a carefully developed profile to enhance the beans' unique flavour and complexity. They also offer a premium range of locally roasted coffee beans, world-class Profitec and Rancilio espresso machines, and a wide selection of coffee accessories.

Discover more at alturacoffee.co.nz



BIALETTI
MOKA EXCLUSIVE INDUCTION
Since 1933, Bialetti, inventor of the original Moka pot, has been bringing authentic Italian stovetop coffee to homes around the world. The Moka Exclusive Induction reimagines its iconic octagonal espresso maker for all cooktops including induction. Available in Grey and Desert, in 3- and 6-cup sizes at bialetti.co.nz



CHIASO COFFEE ROASTERS
Independent and family-owned, Chiasso Coffee has been roasting exceptional coffee since 1997. Every bag of Chiasso Premium and BioGro-certified organic coffee is roasted fresh each week, guaranteeing outstanding flavour and freshness. Nationwide delivery is available across New Zealand, or visit the Devonport micro-roastery to experience the Chiasso difference firsthand.

chiasso.co.nz



ATOMIC – SINGLE ORIGIN ROTATION
New Single Origin Rotation from Atomic. The standout is the new anaerobic Rwanda which brings vibrant layers of Ambrosia apple, black forest, and ripe blueberry, balanced by a rich body and an endless finish. Landing this August, catch it pouring on batch filter at their new-look Kingsland cafe.

atomiccoffee.co.nz



COFFEE LAB
Sourced from the Haru Wachu farm in Ethiopia's Uruga District at 2,000 metres above sea level, this Grade One Guji Heirloom coffee is naturally processed using anaerobic fermentation, delivering vibrant tangerine and strawberry notes with a long, sweet finish. Medium-light roasted. Available in-store or online at coffeelab.co.nz



COFFEE LAB
From Costa Rica's renowned La Minita Tarrazú Farm, this medium-light roast is grown at 1,800 metres above sea level using a washed process with mountain water. Expect notes of milk chocolate, nectarine, maple and cocoa. Ideal for espresso or plunger. Available in-store or online at coffeelab.co.nz



ELEVATE YOUR BREW
Rise is the coffee add-in more and more Kiwis are reaching for. Flow State's smooth, malty blend of Lion's Mane and Cordyceps stirs straight into your morning brew, no mushroom-y aftertaste, just clean, steady energy. It sharpens focus, smooths out caffeine's highs and lows, and helps your cup carry you further, without the crash.

flowstate.nz



LA MARZOCCO
Create new rituals with the La Marzocco Linea Micra and Pico. Handcrafted in Florence, La Marzocco brings the artistry of Italian espresso into your home, from quiet morning coffees to evenings shared with friends. Weave a touch of luxury into your daily life – pick your colour and create your dream home espresso set up.

nz.lamarzoccohome.com



MOCCAMASTER SELECT – A DAILY LUXURY
Transform your coffee ritual with the Moccamaster Select, the newest model in the world's most iconic brewing range. Featuring a half/full brew switch and a swift six-minute cycle, it delivers a perfectly extracted carafe of coffee.

Handcrafted in the Netherlands from premium, sustainable materials, every machine is designed and built to last. Elegant in design, consistent and precise in operation – the Moccamaster Select elevates coffee into a daily luxury worth savouring.

Coffee for one or coffee for a crowd.
moccamaster.co.nz

Verve's Coffee Picks



MOJO COFFEE

NEVER RUN OUT OF GREAT COFFEE

Enjoy freshly roasted coffee delivered to your door with a Mojo subscription. Every fortnight, receive two bags of their signature Classic Mojo blend – smooth, creamy and full-bodied, with notes of raisin, toffee, and spiced cocoa. Prefer more flexibility? Choose their weekly subscription and pause anytime. Shop online today at mojo.coffee/collections/coffee-subscription



RABBIT ISLAND COFFEE CO.

YIRGACHEFFE MICROLOT

Before coffee became your morning ritual, it was growing wild in the Ethiopian highlands. Today, that story continues on the Māpua Wharf, Nelson. One sip, and you'll understand why some coffees are worth finding.

rabbitislandcoffee.co.nz



ROCKET COFFEE

Roasting coffee down an alley in H-town since '95. We roast sweet and interesting coffee from a variety of origins. From fine tuned espresso blends to floral and fruity filter roasts.

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SEGAFREDO ZANETTI

Segafredo Zanetti takes time-tested Venetian roasting techniques handed down through generations and combines them with technological innovations backed by years of scientific research. Their passion for insatiable research has allowed them to keep up with the times, while keeping their foundations firmly rooted in our history. You can enjoy an authentic taste of Italy at home. Take your shot.

segafredo.co.nz



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The little JL 06 might be just what you're looking for, whether it's a relaxing weekend coffee or the kick-start you need before the workday. They've partnered with Havana Coffee Works on this offer, pairing the machine with their Kickstart blend – the perfect combination for great coffee at home. Visit tigercoffee.co.nz to explore their wide range of coffee equipment, from home setups to office solutions.



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Beauty Picks

Cold weather calls for rich serums and even richer shades.

From cushiony balms to brick-toned lips, this edit is made for the months that bite back.



Aēsop
Antithesis Body Cleanser
Characterised by the warmth of black pepper and the coolness of coriander seed, this formulation explores the beauty of contrast.



MECCA MAX
Multiplayer Mode Shaping Sticks
Whether you're heading into the office, out for dinner in Britomart or doing your makeup in the Uber, Multiplayer Mode Shaping Sticks are designed for soft sculpting made simple.



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Introducing Clinique's new Daily Calm range, bringing together skincare and makeup specifically designed for sensitive skin.



Shark
SpeedStyle Pro FLEX Hair Dryer System
Designed for high performance in a compact design that flexes for easy storage, without compromising power.



arké skincare
The Bed Balm
A rich, restorative balm infused with clinically proven peptides, vitamin A, omegas and essential fatty acids that supports skin renewal while you sleep.

iS Clinical
GeneXC Firming Eye Gel
A clinically formulated eye treatment designed to visibly firm, smooth and brighten the delicate eye area while delivering essential antioxidant protection.



Vichy
Liftactiv Collagen Specialist 16 Bonding Serum
A lightweight, fast-absorbing anti-ageing serum, suitable for all skin types, highly concentrated in dermatological actives.



Bespoke
Luminosity Revive & Refine Serum
This all-in-one formula brightens, hydrates, and refines skin texture while targeting fine lines, pigmentation, sun damage, and congestion.



MECCA MAX
Off Duty Blush Stick
These satisfyingly creamy blush sticks tick all the boxes: they come in eight poppy shades, are deliciously buttery yet dry to the touch, and melt into the skin in seconds.

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The Long House

WORDS
GRAHAM WOOD
PHOTOGRAPHY
ELSA YOUNG

Multidisciplinary designer Mia Widlake and her artist husband Rui Alves have given an architect's former home a new lease of life.



Left: The front door entrance to The Longhouse is approached via a gravel-covered, leafy courtyard.

Right: The dining room, which opens up almost entirely to the garden, is part of an extension of the house Mia planned with her sister-in-law architect. The dining table is surrounded by a mismatched selection of dining chairs which combine vintage finds and new chairs. The server, like many of the surfaces throughout the house, displays items from Mia's "collection of curiosities". "I like sculptural, interesting, unusual things," she says.





Get the look
with Resene



Resene Rice Cake



Resene
Colorwood Natural



Resene Blue Charcoal

Left: In the kitchen, the floors are tiled in slate laid in a herringbone pattern, complementing the monochrome surfaces and cabinetry. The space is beautifully "held" by green courtyards on both sides, making it feel as though the gardens come right inside and the rooms extend to the boundary walls. Trees and plants fill the interiors with a dappled, jungle-like green light. A vintage metal hardware cabinet adds character to the refined monochromatic finishes. The interior, passages and courtyards are deftly woven together, becoming natural extensions of each other through tall windows and doors.

Below: Behind the kitchen, a scullery with charcoal countertops and timber cabinets provides a concealed space for washing up and other practicalities.





Get the look with Resene



Resene Black White



Resene Half Grey Friars



Resene Nero

Above: Unlike the rest of the interiors, the walls of the family room are black. "A lot of samples end up in our house," Mia says. They add to the calming palette of monochromes with natural textures, colours and patterns inherent in the materials she favours, like stone, timber, leather and metallics. An abundance of indoor plants brings the outdoors in, which also contributes to the sense of calm and harmony.





Left and above: The bedrooms open directly into the garden and each could have an en suite bathroom. The architect was careful to keep in mind the natural light and proportions of the original rooms so that their character remains. "The openings are exactly as they were," says Mia. "I just put new windows and doors in."

Despite the initial impression of slickness in Mia's interior designs – the palette of monochromes, charcoals and smoky, moody tones – the real magic lies in the layers and layers of detail she works into them. As both a collector and a furniture designer, her house is filled with vintage items collected over a lifetime.

Design of August

This month, we're drawn to raw beauty, weathered wood, honed granite, industrial metal, and a palette of warm, grounded neutrals.



Refined Living

Artwood East Round Coffee Table

Blending raw materials with refined craftsmanship, the East Round Coffee Table showcases the beauty of natural elm timber paired with rustic iron detailing. Its sculptural form and industrial influences create a distinctive piece that adds depth and character to any living space. refinedliving.nz



Refined Living

Elmwood Elm and Iron Bar Stool

The Elmwood & Iron Adjustable Stool brings together natural elm timber and iron detailing in a refined industrial design. With its adjustable height and beautifully balanced materials, it offers a stylish and versatile seating solution for modern interiors. refinedliving.nz

Trenzseater

Vittoria Figerio Brivio Sofa

The Brivio modular sofa is characterized by a markedly contemporary design and luxury finishes. Its classic and essential forms are enhanced by the extra-large volumes of the seat cushions that lie on a fine leather-covered base. trenzseater.com



Source Mondial

JORI Daydreamer Lounge Chair

Relax in absolute comfort. This lounge chair is just as generous and perfect to snuggle into as its successful counterpart the Daydreamer reclining chair. Its organic design gives it a youthful look. The separate footstool adds a great deal of flexibility, and the back can be steplessly adjusted with the handy lever. This gives lounging a dynamic dimension. sourcemon dial.co.nz/jori



Mr Ralph

Fixed Fergus with 60cm Metal Shade

The perfect solution for a lower ceiling height! Mr Ralph metal shades are classic and timeless - their simple form looks beautiful and provides an important function. mrralph.co.nz

Jardin

Calvi Table

This square table is sociable by design and perfect for hosting large gatherings of friends and extended family - or simply enjoying lunches and dinners with your loved ones on the patio or terrace, or even in the dining room. jardin.co.nz



Kovacs Design Furniture

Marley Lounge Chair

The round swivel base and angular arms lend classically proportioned character to a space. An unpretentious metal finish is powder-coated, leaving the door open for endless colour combinations. kovacs.co.nz



Design Italia

Revello Small Side Table

A subtle yet elegant metallic touch to any room. Its compact size makes it perfect for smaller spaces while maintaining the functionality and style that define the Revello collection. designitalia.co.nz



Jardin

Dining Room featuring: Bellevie Table, Luxembourg Chair, Moon! Lamp

Gather around the Bellevie Table, where timeless design invites lingering laughter. Pair it with iconic Luxembourg chairs for enduring comfort, while the portable Moon! lamp casts a warm, wireless glow. This trio creates an effortlessly chic dining space, perfect for hosting unforgettable moments that stretch long into the evening. jardin.co.nz



Refined Living

Bellagio Black Leather Armchair with Black Frame

A beautiful balance of luxurious leather and contemporary form, the Bellagio Armchair reflects exceptional craftsmanship and attention to detail. Designed for both comfort and style, it adds a refined presence to modern interiors. refinedliving.nz

lahood.co.nz

Understated Elegance

Inside Lahood's installation at the Double Courtyard House.



Nestled in the coastal dunes of Te Arai, northeast of Auckland, the Double Courtyard House by Roberts Gray Architects is a study in quiet luxury. Designed to age gracefully alongside the regenerated dune landscape, every material was chosen with care and intention. The automated blinds and custom curtains supplied by Lahood® Window Furnishings were no exception.

Early planning for seamless results
The brief was beautifully simple: barefoot luxury, lock-up-and-leave practicality, and a material palette that Roberts Gray Architects Director Jimmy Gray describes as "luxurious but honest, soft, texturally rich and warm".

Lahood joined the project during the planning stage to ensure the window furnishings carried that same quiet refinement through to completion.

As Clayton Sceats, Lahood director, explains, "It was always about restraint and precision - recessed blinds, flush ceiling tracks, and integrated automation, all considered from the outset so the detailing could sit naturally within the architecture."

Blinds made to disappear
Throughout the home, Lahood roller blinds with Somfy automation manage the considerable solar demands of this exposed coastal site while preserving uninterrupted views. Each blind sits within a fully recessed ceiling pocket, leaving no visible interruptions when retracted. When lowered, a sunscreen fabric in Jersey, a warm muted tone, filters UV glare while maintaining the connection to the surrounding dunes.

Curtains adding softness
In the lounge, custom curtains by Lahood in James Dunlop's Drift in Tussock, a durable, textured polyester-linen blend, are hung with an inverted pleat to sit discreetly on flush recessed powder-coated tracks. Left unlined, the fabric gently filters light, creating a soft ambience while helping protect furniture and flooring during the months the home sits empty. In the bedrooms, a second track carrying James Dunlop Quantum FR lining allows the rooms to transition from softly filtered daylight to restful blackout.

The Outcome
"The invisible finish of the automated blinds means the house can be fully opened to the views," says Jimmy Gray. "And the curtains bring an extra level of softness to the space."



The result is a home where the window furnishings quietly complement the architecture, demonstrating what becomes possible when they are considered an integral part of the design vision rather than simply a finishing touch.

To discuss your next residential or commercial project, visit the Lahood showroom at 104 Mount Eden Road, call 0800 LAHOOD, or visit lahood.co.nz

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Designing Green

Architectural design is progressive.

WORDS —
PAUL LEUSCHKE

I recently attended a talk on recycling and sustainability on the building site. While I think it's a good idea, it's not new. While its once again in vogue, it has been quietly ongoing.

Greta Thunberg mistakenly accused the older generation of taking away her generation's future. I believe it is she who is taking away her generation's hope for the future.

I'm amazed at man's ability to change, re-invent, modify, adapt for the future good. The oil crisis of the 1970s was overcome by fuel injection, drilling deeper, and computers.

Instead of jettisoning fuel over the ocean when approaching an airport and joining a queue of spiralling aircraft before landing at the airport, computers now allow planes to just land, saving fuel, and the oceans.

Yes, we really used to do that!

We all accepted the dual flush on our toilet cistern. Developed in Australia as a water-saving device after drought, it

is now a global standard. Originally the buttons were 12 litres and six litres. That changed to six litres and three litres. Now its four and a half litres and three litres.

Wondered why you sometimes need a double flush? And is four-and-a-half litres enough to transport your donation through the public drainage system to its destination?

Your tap has gone from 12 litres to 14 litres to now five litres per minute.

Showers went from 14 litres to 16 litres per minute to now being seven and a half litres to nine litres per minute and heading towards six litres per minute.

Take that, Watercare bills!

Air-conditioning units used to be so noisy neighbours complained. Now you need to go outside to check they are running as they're so quiet. With better engineering and refrigerant, they are 40% more efficient than several years ago.

Household appliances are now so efficient I was told by a visiting energy

expert if Germany unplugged their old second fridges in the garage there would be enough power saved to power Belgium for a year.

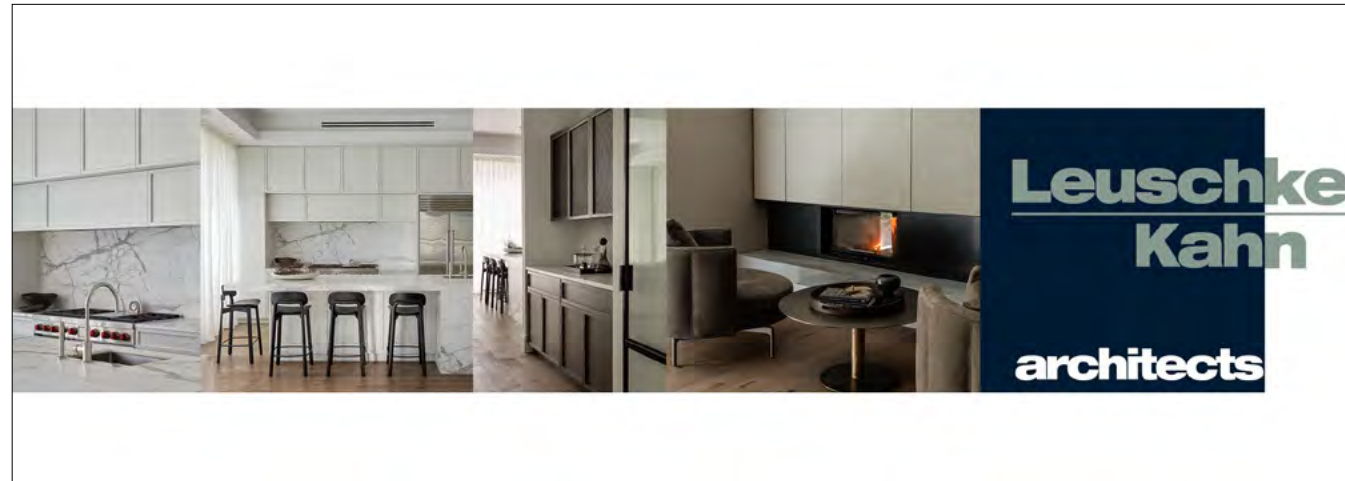
Singapore is lowering city temperatures by greening their city with street trees and green roofs – and it's working. A pleasant environment, less reliant on air-conditioning. Other cities around the world are following suit.

Voltaic paint is being developed in Melbourne, Toronto, and the UK. It's some years away from becoming commercially available but imagine powering your house with the paint on your roof or powering your car with its body paint.

Japan has just developed a plastic which dissolves in sea water leaving behind no micro plastics.

And on the good news goes.

paul@leuschkekahn.co.nz
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Elegance Materialised

lahood.co.nz



Image Double Courtyard House, Sam Hartnett

For over 40 years Lahood has been the name behind transformational window furnishing solutions. We combine expertise in design, colour and texture to transform rooms, create mood and enhance people's lives with a touch of elegance.

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For those who have invested in gold and silver bullion, the true worth of your holdings may be greater than you realise.

Beyond market value, precious metals represent foresight, legacy, and long-term security – assets chosen with care and intention.

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Commonwealth Vault offers a considered next step: ultra-secure, privately owned safe-deposit boxes housed within their purpose-built College Hill facility in Auckland. Designed to the highest international standards, the vault provides discreet access, uncompromising security, and peace of mind that simply cannot be replicated at home.



In times of financial uncertainty, gold and silver are trusted safe-haven assets. Ensure your investment is safeguarded with the security it deserves.

Safe-deposit boxes are available both for rental and purchase, giving you the flexibility and control over how your assets are secured. Because when your wealth is this valuable, protecting it properly now and for the future, is not a luxury, it's essential.

To find out more visit commonwealthvault.co.nz
30 Hargreaves Street, St Marys Bay

continuous.co.nz

Continuous Group

Upgrade your boundary with Barracuda's stylish metal fencing – where function meets sharp design.

Ideal for screening wheelie bins, hiding unsightly areas, or creating privacy from neighbouring properties, these fences deliver a clean, architectural finish that lasts. Made from high-quality steel, they're low-maintenance and built for modern Kiwi homes. Whether you're a DIY enthusiast looking for a supply-only option or prefer a full professional install, we've got you covered.

Explore the range at barracuda.net.nz/steel-fencing



AUGUST Box Office



IMAGE: TEENAGE SEX AND DEATH AT CAMP MIASMA

KATSEYE: WILD HEARTS
12 August

From the intense pressure of Dream Academy to chart-topping viral success, audiences will experience the highs, setbacks, sacrifices, and breakthrough moments that transformed Katseye on their path to global pop stardom. Praised by the likes of *The New York Times*, *Vogue*, and *Rolling Stone*, Katseye has earned acclaim for their relentless dedication to their craft and electrifying live performances. As one of pop's most exciting emerging global acts, the group continues to solidify its place as a worldwide force.

TEENAGE SEX AND DEATH AT CAMP MIASMA
20 August

After years of slapdash sequels and waning fandom, the *Camp Miasma* slasher franchise is handed over to an enthusiastic young director for resurrection. But when she visits the original movie's star, a now-reclusive actress shrouded in mystery, the two women fall into a blood-soaked world of desire, fear, and delirium. A new kind of horror remake, starring Hannah Einbinder and Gillian Anderson.

INSIDIOUS: OUT OF THE FURTHER
20 August

A young mother raising her daughter in the house she grew up in who discovers she can travel into The Further, the purgatorial realm of lost souls at the heart of the *Insidious* universe. When something evil comes after her, Gemma discovers an ability that changes everything: she doesn't just enter The Further, she can bring what lives there back to the real world. Once the demons realise her power, our world becomes their playground.



IMAGE: THE DOG STARS

THE DOG STARS
27 August

Set in a post-apocalyptic world in which a virus has wiped out most of humanity with survivors being terrorised by roaming scavengers called 'Reapers'. The film tells the story of Hig (Jacob Elordi), a young pilot who, together with a military survivalist, Bangley (Josh Brolin), has carved out an efficient but isolated homestead in a brutal post-apocalyptic world. But when Hig receives a mysterious radio transmission, he ventures into the unknown in search of the hope and humanity he still believes exist.

lunalodge.co.nz

Luna Lodge Wānaka

Luna Lodge Wānaka offers stylish boutique accommodation just minutes from the lakefront and town centre.

Newly refurbished, it blends contemporary comfort with alpine practicality, featuring beautifully designed rooms, smart amenities and facilities for ski, bike and outdoor adventures. The perfect base for exploring Wānaka's wonders!

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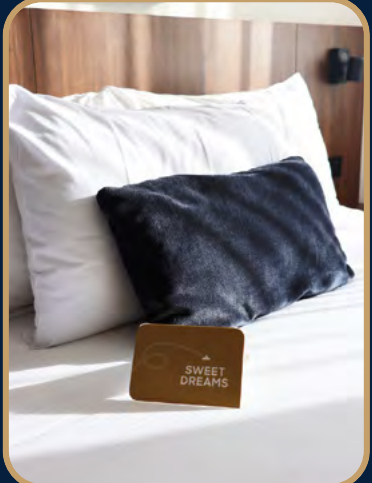


JETPARK HOTELS

Let's face it – the thought of planning an international holiday probably isn't top of mind right now.

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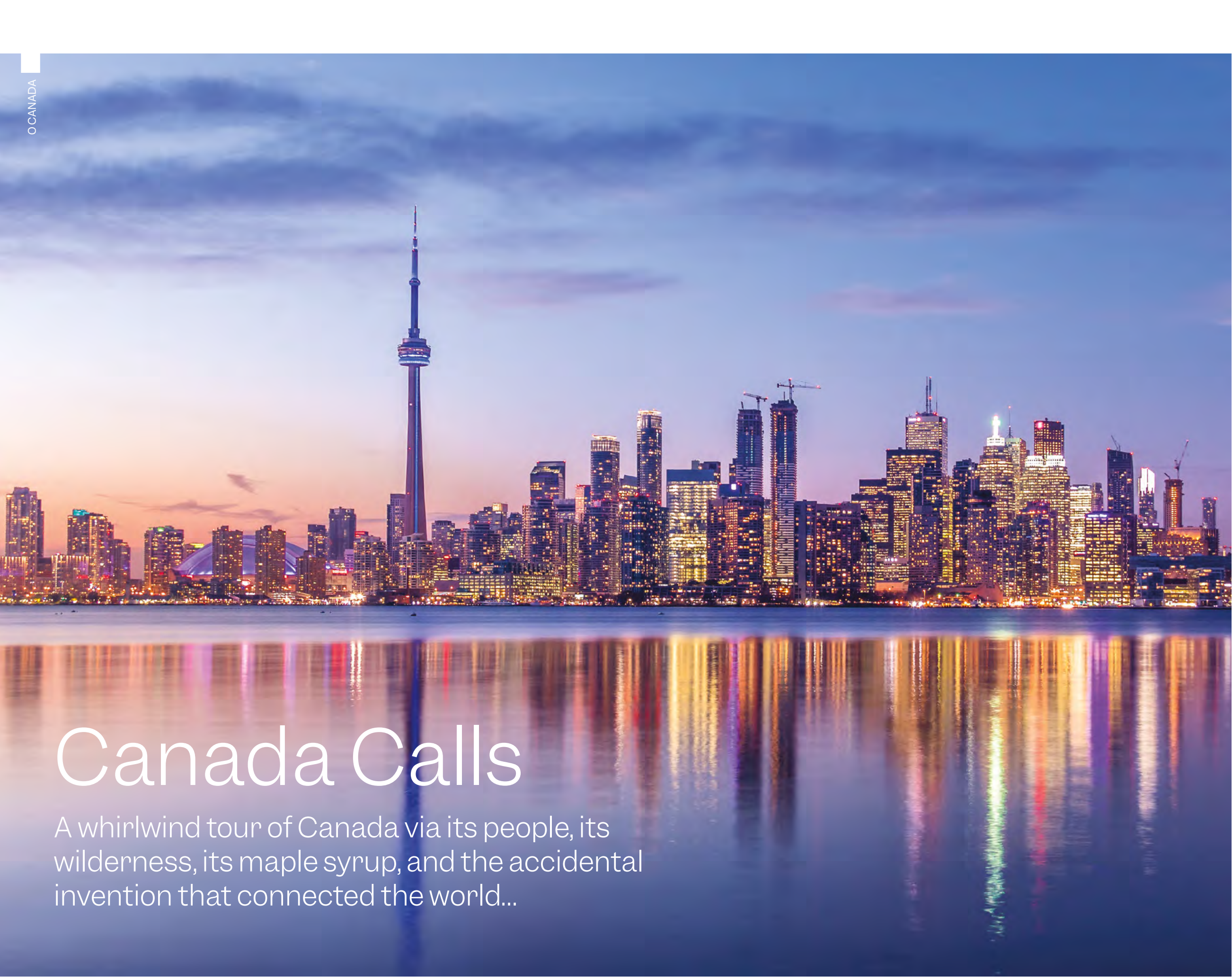


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Canada Calls

A whirlwind tour of Canada via its people, its wilderness, its maple syrup, and the accidental invention that connected the world...

IMAGE: TORONTO SKYLINE
PHOTOGRAPHY: DIEGO GRANDI / ADOBE STOCK

FIRST PEOPLE

Human presence dates back up to 30,000 years in Canada with the first arriving via a land bridge from Asia. Norse explorer Leif Erikson briefly reached Newfoundland around 1000 AD. French and British colonisation began in the 1500s, sparking conflicts over land and fur trade that culminated in British control after the French and Indian War, though French influence endures. Confederation formed in 1867 and full independence followed in 1931.

Today, Canada is a nation of many cultures. Roughly half the population descends from British and French settlers, followed by waves of other European and Asian immigrants. Indigenous peoples make up about 4%, with Inuit concentrated in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Many Native Canadians remain on ancestral lands, and Indigenous art holds a prominent place in national culture.

CITY LIVING

Though 90% of Canada's land is uninhabited wilderness – second only in scale to Russia's – 82% of Canadians live in cities. Toronto, arguably its most cultured urban centre, was once named by *Vogue* as having the world's second-coolest neighbourhood (behind Tokyo).

Nearly half of Toronto's three million residents were born abroad, and the city's warmth toward calling immigrants, known simply as "newcomers", defines its character. There's a Little India, Chinatown, Greektown, Koreatown, Portugal Village, and two Little Italys! Over 150 languages are spoken, and indigenous heritage is celebrated.

Beyond its diversity, Toronto offers plenty of highlights like climbing the 553-metre CN Tower, wandering the Distillery District's cobblestone lanes, or marvelling at dinosaur skeletons inside the Royal Ontario Museum.

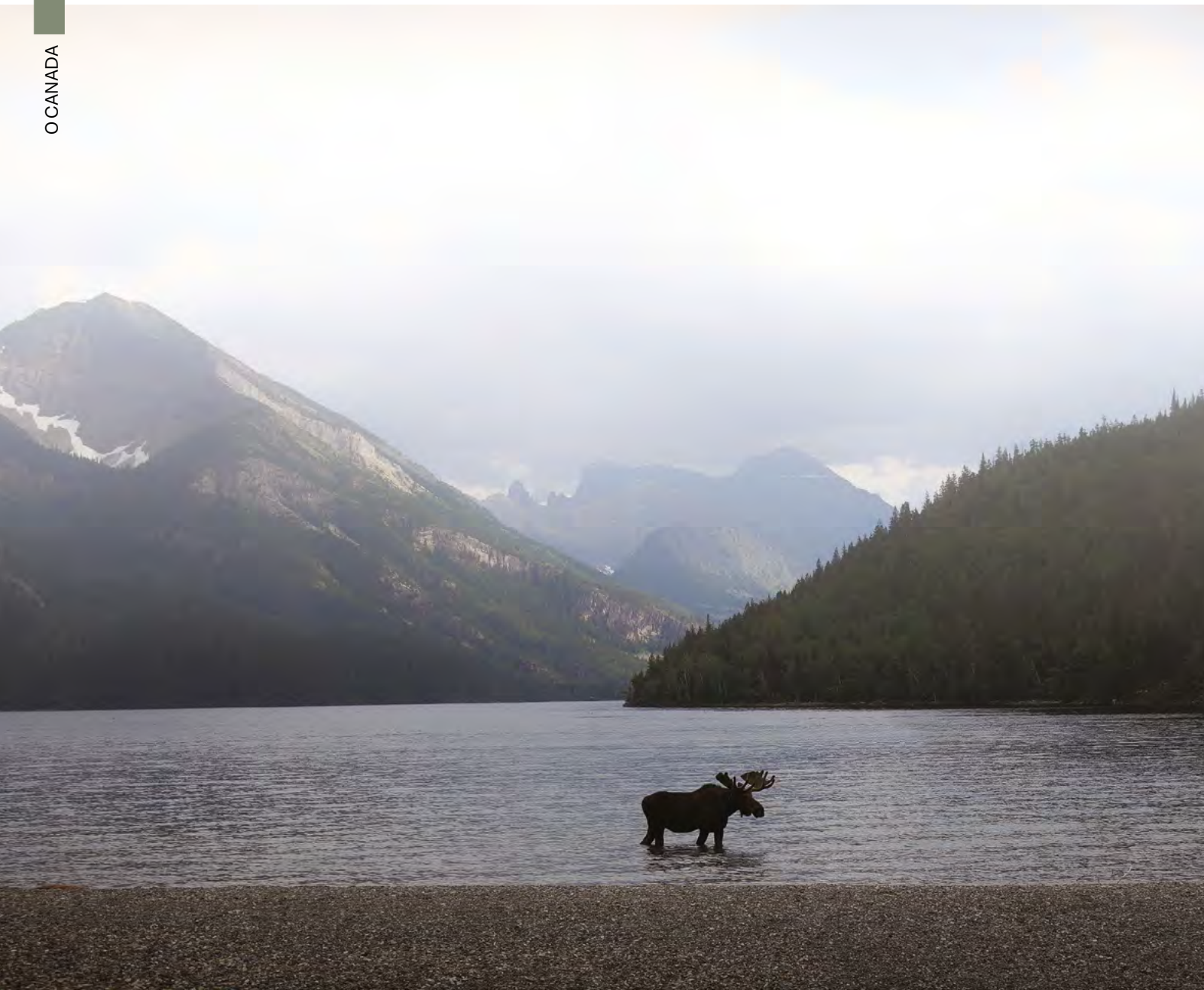


IMAGE: ALBERTA, CANADA
PHOTOGRAPHY: HDSIDEDSIGN / ADOBE STOCK



IMAGE: CHURCHILL, MANITOBA
PHOTOGRAPHY: CHERYL RAMALHO / ADOBE STOCK

WILDLIFE

From bears and wolves to bison, pronghorn, and caribou, Canada's forests, prairies, and tundra teem with life, while its lakes hold a fifth of the world's fresh water. The moose population – estimated to be at least 500,000, possibly double – is more than half the global total. Featured on Ontario and Newfoundland's coats of arms, they're endangered in Nova Scotia amid climate change and disease. Churchill, Manitoba earns fame as the polar bear capital.



IMAGE: KLUANE NATIONAL PARK, YUKON CANADA
PHOTOGRAPHY: MARTIN CAPEK / ADOBE STOCK

WILDERNESS

Spanning an area of 9.98 million square kilometres across six time zones, Canada boasts the world's longest coastline at over 200,000km. Within this vast landscape, Parks Canada protects 37 national parks and 11 reserves across every province and territory. Here are some of the highlights...

Kluane National Park and Reserve

Kluane National Park holds 17 of Canada's tallest mountains, with more than half permanently under snow and ice. Kathleen Lake offers car-accessible paddling, while hikes like the Kokanee Trail reveal Dall sheep, mountain goats, and grizzlies. The nearby Thechàl Dhàl Visitor Centre adds extra viewpoints and context.

Cape Breton Highlands

The Atlantic coast's first and most iconic national park spans 235,000 acres of unique boreal and temperate forest. Its crown jewel, the Cabot Trail, offers a scenic drive along dramatic cliffs and coastline, with stops ranging from accessible hikes to unforgettable bakery detours.

continues over page



Yoho National Park

Yoho, a Cree word expressing awe, perfectly mirrors the majesty of this Canadian Rockies park famed for its soaring peaks, vast glaciers, stunning waterfalls, and even fossils – hence its Unesco status. Can be enjoyed by road or trail and is home to bears, deer, wolves, and more.



IMAGE: MONOLITHS, MINGAN ARCHIPELAGO NATIONAL PARK RESERVE
PHOTOGRAPHY: JULIE / ADOBE STOCK

Mingan Archipelago

This park's nearly 1,000 islands line the Gulf of St. Lawrence, drawing minke and humpback whales as well as nesting puffins and terns. Its shores boast the world's largest concentration of 500-million-year-old erosion monoliths. It's remote, but worth the trek by kayak or boat tour.

Rocky Mountain House

Technically not a national park, this National Historic Site traces Canada's fur trade – from First Nations origins to the 1821 merger under the Hudson's Bay Company. For 76 years, until the last fort was abandoned in 1875, trappers exchanged pelts for imported goods here.

Today, Parks Canada blends history with hands-on experience by way of trails past archaeological remains and stays in trapper cabins or tipis. The site partners with Indigenous communities on activities like baking bannock bread, and drum performances. Visitors also learn about David Thompson, celebrated as one of history's greatest mapmakers, who charted vast stretches of North America from this very outpost.



IMAGE: FLOCK OF ATLANTIC PUFFINS, MINGAN ARCHIPELAGO
PHOTOGRAPHY: ANNE RICHARD / ADOBE STOCK

Gros Morne

Granite mountains, valleys, and freshwater fjords showcase continental drift at this Unesco site. Adventurous hikers tackle the Long Range Traverse, a multi-day trek National Geographic ranks among the world's best hikes. The 499-kilometre Viking Trail winds through the park to L'Anse aux Meadows, home to thousand-year-old archaeological remains and a recreated Viking settlement.



IMAGE: WESTERN BROOK POND IN GROS MORNE NATIONAL PARK
PHOTOGRAPHY: IBRESTER / ADOBE STOCK

MAPLE STAPLE

Sugar maples, native to eastern Canada, have symbolised the country since the 18th century, appearing on coins and soldiers' uniforms before the leaf's official 1965 adoption on the national flag.

Indigenous peoples pioneered maple sap harvesting long before European settlers turned up, using tapped trees, handmade buckets, and freeze-separation techniques to produce syrup used as sweetener, medicine, and currency.

Today, Canada supplies around three quarters of the world's maple syrup, with Quebec alone producing about 90% of the national total. Every spring, 'sugaring-off' season peaks with the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival in Ontario which draws tens of thousands annually and earned a Guinness World Record in 2000 for single-day attendance: 66,529 people, run by 2,000 volunteers. Beyond such festivals, maple syrup drives real economic weight – a multi-billion-dollar industry rooted in Indigenous tradition and still central to Canadian identity each spring.



IMAGE: MAPLE FOREST, LAURENTIAN MOUNTAINS, QUEBEC
PHOTOGRAPHY: IEVGENII / ADOBE STOCK

CONNECTED CANADA

Alexander Graham Bell is famous for inventing the telephone in 1876 – a story that connects to Canada. Bell's family emigrated from Scotland to Brantford, Ontario in 1870, where he conducted much of his early research. While the first intelligible telephone call happened in Boston that in March of that year, Bell made the world's first long-distance call

on August 10, 1876 – from Brantford to nearby Paris, Ontario. Ironically, he wasn't even trying to invent the telephone but was looking to perfect multi-message telegraphy. It was driven partly by a promise to marry Mabel Hubbard, the daughter of the man funding his research who would only promise to give his blessing once Bell had finished the project!

The Luxury of Taking Time

with Rocky Mountaineer

Some destinations are best explored through movement. Others deserve to be experienced slowly. The Canadian Rockies belong firmly in the latter category.

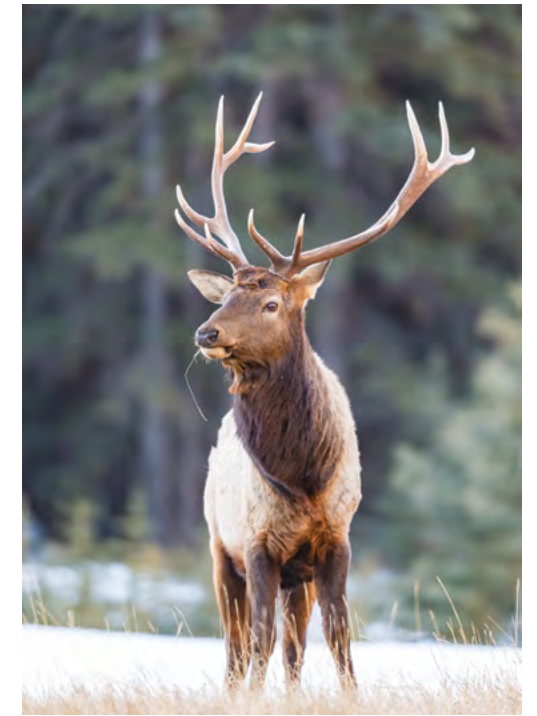
A landscape of towering peaks, glacier-fed lakes, ancient forests, and expansive valleys, this remarkable region inspires a sense of awe that photographs alone rarely capture. One of the best ways to experience it is aboard Rocky Mountaineer, where the journey unfolds at a pace allowing you to fully appreciate the beauty surrounding you.

From the comfort of a glass-dome coach, guests witness an ever-changing canvas of natural wonders. Morning light dances across alpine lakes. Rivers carve their way through rugged canyons. Wildlife moves quietly through untouched wilderness. Snow-capped mountains rise dramatically from the horizon, creating scenes that feel almost cinematic in scale.

Rocky Mountaineer embraces the luxury of taking time. Travelling by daylight only, every moment is designed to showcase the landscapes that Western Canada is famous for. The experience is equally defined by its hospitality. Attentive hosts provide commentary and share stories that connect you to the places you are travelling through. Regionally inspired cuisine celebrates the flavours of Western Canada, while beautifully appointed coaches create an atmosphere of understated sophistication and comfort.

Yet perhaps the greatest luxury is the opportunity to simply sit back and absorb the scenery. There is no need to navigate winding mountain roads or focus on logistics. You are free to savour each spectacular moment as it unfolds beyond the window.

Rocky Mountaineer offers more than transportation. It offers a chance to experience one of the world's most beautiful regions from a refreshing perspective. It is a journey defined not by how quickly you arrive, but by everything you experience along the way.



WHY TRAVEL WITH ROCKY MOUNTAINEER

- Travel through the heart of the Canadian Rockies aboard custom-designed glass-dome coaches.
- Enjoy unobstructed views of mountains, rivers, canyons, forests, and wildlife.
- Experience regionally inspired cuisine and exceptional onboard hospitality.
- Travel exclusively during daylight hours to maximize sightseeing opportunities.
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- Enjoy a seamless journey that combines comfort, storytelling, scenery, and service.

WE RECOMMEND

World Journeys can tailor make an itinerary pairing a *Rocky Mountaineer* journey with further Canadian exploration. Spend a few days exploring charming mountain towns, hiking among alpine scenery, staying at a bear-viewing lodge or even embarking on a cruise after your rail adventure.

For details contact your travel agent, or World Journeys 0800 117311 worldjourneys.co.nz

About Town

What's hot and happening around
Tāmaki Makaurau...

KŌANGA FESTIVAL

10-20 September

Te Pou Theatre

Kōanga Festival returns to Te Pou Theatre for its 12th year, showcasing Māori and Pacific performing arts. Named for spring's new growth, it champions bold new voices through theatre, music, spoken word, comedy and visual arts, culminating in the beloved free Whānau Day.

koangafestival.nz

ATOMIC!

15 August

Auckland Town
Hall

Boh Runga and Julia Deans headline Atomic!, Aotearoa's ultimate femme rock supergroup, returning this August. This all-star lineup of acclaimed, award-winning musicians celebrates the best of women in pop rock – Blondie, Eurythmics, Pretenders, Kate Bush, Florence and Madonna – for one unmissable night of powerhouse performances.

aucklandlive.co.nz



IMAGE: ATOMIC!
PHOTOGRAPHY: REEF REID

AUCKLAND MUSHROOM FESTIVAL

12-15 August

K' Road

The inaugural Auckland Mushroom Festival transforms Karangahape Road into a four-day celebration of fungi. Expect mushroom-focused dining, public art, panel talks with foragers and scientists, free whānau activities, a costume parade and a giant puffball closing party – celebrating Aotearoa's 20,000-plus fungi species and hidden underground networks.

aucklandmushroomfestival.com



IMAGE: AUCKLAND MUSHROOM FESTIVAL, OTTO, MUSHROOM RISOTTO



IMAGE: NEW ZEALAND FASHION WEEK, CLAUDIA LI

NEW ZEALAND FASHION WEEK

18-22 August

Shed 10,
Queens Wharf

New Zealand Fashion Week, presented by Giltrap Group, returns to Auckland's Shed 10. Expect runway shows, designer activations, panel talks and cultural moments celebrating established and emerging Kiwi talent – fashion lived from runway to street, connecting the industry with fashion lovers across the city.

nzfashionweek.com

CIRQUE ALICE

28 Aug – 6 Sep

The Civic

Direct from the USA, *Cirque Alice* brings *Alice in Wonderland* to life for a limited Auckland season. From the creators of Cirque du Soleil's *Mad Apple*, *The Illusionists* and *Le Noir*, world-class circus stars defy gravity in this high-energy, gravity-defying spectacle for all ages – bigger, wilder and more stunning than imagined.

aucklandlive.co.nz

TRIBE VINYL CLUB

6 August –
2 October

40 Fort Street

TRIBE Auckland Fort Street launches TRIBE Vinyl Club, a new monthly listening series celebrating analogue sound. Held at Sienna in partnership with Real Groovy, expect vinyl-only sets, music-inspired cocktails and relaxed community vibes – an intentional listening experience for enthusiasts and casual fans alike this winter.

tribehotels.com



IMAGE: TRIBE AUCKLAND, FORT STREET, LISTENING STATION

JOB BY SILO THEATRE

3-20 September

Q Theatre

There's been an incident. She's a tech girlie with a heavy tote bag; he's the therapist deciding if she's safe to return to work. A simple evaluation spirals into power, panic and doubt. Straight off Broadway, JOB sent TikTok and Reddit into a frenzy – funny, devastating, impossible to walk away from. The less you know, the better.

silotheatre.co.nz

TOFIGA FEPULEA'I

15 August

Te Paepae
Theatre

Topp Prize winner Tofiga Fepulea'i's nationwide tour sees him reviving beloved characters Aunty Tala, Uncle Sam and Master Tavita. Joined by rising online star Laban Miller, the Laughing Samoans alum promises his biggest, funniest show yet from this Samoan-Kiwi comedy icon.

nzicc.co.nz

Picture Perfect

After a career in the fast-paced world of fashion, Laura Tait found herself drawn to a slower rhythm shaped by gardens, seasons and the simple beauty of flowers.

Today, from Pūhoi Farmhouse, she combines her eye for composition with a deep appreciation for nature, creating evocative botanical photographs and a space designed to inspire connection and calm.

“We were very lucky that the farmhouse was cared for beautifully by the previous owners, but like any old house it needs an awful lot of maintenance – the list is endless,” she tells Verve. “I have learned that you cannot do it all at once, if things start to fall apart it is okay to only be able to do the emergency stuff.”

The artist describes trading Auckland for a rural life as a “slow burn that turned into a calling”, and then finding the Puhoi property made the decision easy.

“My husband Andy and I had talked and dreamed about a property like this,” she says, “For me at first it was about planting fruit trees, getting chickens and growing veggies, I had no real gardening knowledge and didn’t know much at all about growing flowers other than to go to the garden centre and bring home punnets that had a short life in the garden.”

But Laura soon found the digging, the seed sowing, the egg collecting, the fruit picking, and, of course, “photographing flowers I’d grown myself” to be beyond rewarding.

“It’s hard work but I wouldn’t change it for anything,” she continues. “I do love fashion and have been fortunate to work in the fashion industry photographing designer collections as a freelance photographer while also working on the gardens so in a way I have been able to keep my feet in both worlds.”

And what has the farmhouse taught her?

“The saying ‘if you love what you do then you never have to work another day in your life’ really is true. I can’t wait to get into the garden. That is my perfect day and on a summer evening we will take our portable speaker out, play music and



have a glass of wine as bees and butterflies float past our heads, the scent of roses fills the air; chickens rustle around the garden beds and our dogs snooze at our feet.”

Working so closely with flowers has also changed the way she thinks about the passage of time.

“I am so aware of the changing seasons and how fast they go by. And I am not happy about ageing, just because I feel I am in a race against time, I started this later in life and am just starting to really get a feel for the imagery I’m creating and I have so much to do.

“But I have a deep sense of gratitude that comes with being in a position to do this,” she adds. “I am fully aware that I am very fortunate and I don’t let a day pass without putting in the hard work. Every day we get to be here is a gift.”

The garden has taught Laura that things take time, too.

“It does not have to be perfect. Soil health is extremely important, weeds are okay. Think about your pollinators, the garden is a place that is filled with life, under the soil... and above.”

To see Lauras work visit puhoifarmhouse.com

In Bloom

Julia Holderness's solo exhibition *Botanical Correspondents* was developed in response to the artistic legacy of 19th-century botanical artist Emily Cumming Harris (1837-1925). Exhibition opens at Sanderson Gallery August 26th.



“I’m drawn to stories and figures from the past, especially where there are questions and gaps,” Julie tells Verve. “That’s usually the signal that there’s enough space for my own speculations and imagination to enter.

“*Botanical Correspondents* explores Harris’s life and practices, her prolific paintings of indigenous flora presented across a series of installations. Alongside paintings and objects, there is a video work and reimagined furnishings, including a freestanding screen and Victorian inspired textiles.

“There are many correspondents and voices within the exhibition: Emily, myself, and the writers of the wall labels. Together they create a web of attention, care, and shared understanding across time, place, and thought.”



ARTWORK: JULIA HOLDERNES, CAMPBELL ISLAND FLOWERS - CAMEO, 2026

Your exhibitions begin with hours of real research. At what point does the research stop and your imagination take over?

I don’t think there’s a clear handover. Research and imagination weave together throughout the process. The factual material gives me a framework and a sense of authenticity, but eventually the work begins asking for things that a straight historical account can’t provide. That’s when my speculative gestures emerge. I like the point where the boundary between what is real and what is imagined becomes slightly uncertain, inviting the viewer to question both.

Has motherhood affected your artistic approach?

Motherhood has changed both the practical reality of making work and the way I think about it. Time became more precious, so I’ve learnt to work more efficiently, intuitively and to trust my instincts rather than waiting for ideal conditions. It has also deepened my awareness of care, inheritance, and the ways knowledge and stories are passed between generations.

I’ve also started an after-school art club. It provides a little extra income, but more importantly, it’s a way of ensuring artmaking remains a regular part of what I do with my boys. Through these sessions I’ve revisited materials I hadn’t used for years and experimented with new ones alongside the children. Their curiosity and openness is so wonderful to be around. That spirit of experimentation has enriched my own practice.

Your studio is at the back of your garden in Christchurch. How does that setting influence your work?

It’s really just a lovely way to break up my day. My ‘brain breaks’ might be picking out a few weeds or doing a quick job in the vegetable garden. It also keeps me connected to the very distinct seasons we have here in Ōtautahi and it’s been useful for my Emily Harris project that my garden has so many natives. Gardens are a way to practice close observation.

Do ideas usually arrive attached to a particular medium, or does the story come first and the materials follow?

I often keep coming back to ceramic, textiles, print and painting – and I want my shows to have that mix. I like the ideas and visual language to spread across different sorts of objects. I think that’s become my style.

When someone spends time with one of your exhibitions, what’s the feeling you hope stays with them?

I hope they leave feeling curious. For someone to walk away wondering whether something they saw was real or imagined – or with a renewed sense of wonder about the complexity, dedication, and resilience of Emily Harris’s Victorian art practice. Then I feel the work has done its job.

See Julia's exhibition *Botanical Correspondents* at Sanderson Gallery from 26 August - 13 September.

Art of August

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LUCY KENNEDY

A collection of Auckland's best exhibitions, bringing together standout works and emerging voices from across the city's best spaces.

ARTSPACE AOTEAROA
CRIT: Art learning since 1987
Group Show

18 July — 26 September

This exhibition explores how artists, educators, and communities have learned inside, beside, outside, around, and against institutions in Aotearoa and beyond since the late 1980s. Rather than presenting a single model for the future of art education, CRIT brings together many different ways of learning, making, and being together.

292 Karangahape Road
artspace-aotearoa.nz



ARTWORK: O TAWHAO MARAE IN CONSTRUCTION, 1984,
COURTESY OF TE WĀNANGA O AOTEAROA, ARTSPACE



ARTWORK: ERICA VAN ZON, *TOUCH TANK*,
2026, MELANIE ROGER GALLERY



ARTWORK: JESSICA PEARLESS, *SELF MARQUETRY [COPPER]*, DEPOT ARTSPACE



ARTWORK: JOHN PULE, *WE ARE WAITING FOR THEM*, 2026,
GOW LANGSFORD

SANDERSON CONTEMPORARY
Botanical Correspondents
Julia Holderness

26 August — 13 September

In *Botanical Correspondents*, Holderness' research considers and responds to the work of Emily Harris, one of Aotearoa New Zealand's first professional woman artists. Emily Cumming Harris (1837-1925) is best-known for painting the indigenous flora of Aotearoa, producing hundreds of artworks in her studio in Whakatū Nelson. One hundred years after her death, her remarkable paintings continue to captivate audiences and invite them to contemplate the beauty of the natural world. In this exhibition Holderness responds creatively to her life, work and artistic practices.

2-4 Kent Street, Newmarket
sanderson.co.nz

GUS FISHER GALLERY
Phone Tree
Lucy Meyle

29 May — 22 August

Through drawing, casting and intricate lacework, Lucy Meyle's *Phone Tree* centres around moth traps that lure 'pest' species with pseudo-pheromones and catch them in nets or on sticky paper. Through this project, Meyle adapts these surveillance and control devices for humorously different ends, reframing them as narrative holders which are interfered with by the moths themselves. Rather than destructive tools for determining the presence of a pest, in Meyle's work the moth traps serve as inadvertent collectors of moth memory, drama, and dreaming.

74 Shortland Street
gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz

MELANIE ROGER GALLERY
Various Aquaria
Erica van Zon

30 July — 22 August

Erica van Zon turns to the aquarium as both subject and system — an enclosed ecology of circulation, display, and controlled life. Rather than presenting aquariums as serene or purely decorative, *Various Aquaria* emphasises their constructedness. Light refracts unevenly; forms hover between clarity and distortion; species appear suspended in a carefully maintained instability. The works hold a subtle tension between attention and control, care and containment. At the same time, this exhibition remains attentive to van Zon's broader interest in humour, slippage, and re-seeing the everyday.

444 Karangahape Road
melanierogergallery.com

DEPOT ARTSPACE
Paintress
Jessica Pearless

22 August — 23 October

A Devonport local, *Paintress* celebrates Jessica's longstanding relationship with the DEPOT, having had her first exhibition at the gallery in 1999 as a first year student at ELAM, University of Auckland. The exhibition is part of DEPOT's 30th Anniversary programme for 2026. Working across geometric abstraction in painting, sculpture and site-responsive installation, Pearless examines the enduring relevance of abstraction in art. Through carefully constructed surfaces, spatial interventions and textile based works, *Paintress* considers painting as an embodied act of making.

28 Clarence Street, Devonport
depot.org.nz

GOW LANGSFORD
the first incision I saw
I dreamed no more
John Pule

1 August — 5 September

John Pule's upcoming exhibition *the first incision I saw I dreamed no more* presents a body of recent paintings and works on paper shaped by memory, spirituality, and lived experience in Niue. Layered with vivid colour and symbolic imagery, the works continue Pule's deeply personal exploration of identity, environment, and ancestral knowledge. Both painterly and poetic, these works reaffirm Pule's singular ability to merge autobiography, mythology, and place into a richly evocative visual language.

4 Princes Street, Onehunga
gowlangsfordgallery.co.nz

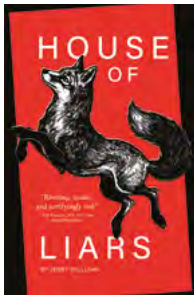


ARTWORK: JULIA HOLDERNESSE,
KARAKA BERRIES STUDY, 2025,
SANDERSON CONTEMPORARY

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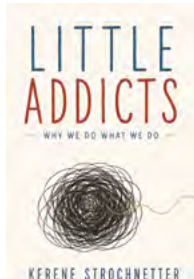
Cloud Ink Press, RRP \$35



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After being injured in the line of duty, former Detective Inspector George Simpson has hung up his police badge. But when a beautiful stranger confronts him with a gun, he is soon embroiled in a complex case involving two rival gang leaders. This debut crime novel is wonderfully entertaining with just the right mix of memorable characters, a pacy plot, mystery and action, and a side of romance.

McKenzie Publishing, RRP \$38



LITTLE ADDICTS
Kerene Strochnetter

In this readable and relatable book, the author explores the hidden patterns behind the behaviours we repeat that are not serving us well. It's about the small addictions that negatively impact our lives, like overthinking, perfectionism and people-pleasing. Using a blend of neuroscience and psychology, this book helps you better understand yourself and make positive change. The author keeps it real and offers practical suggestions.

Mindful at Work, RRP \$30

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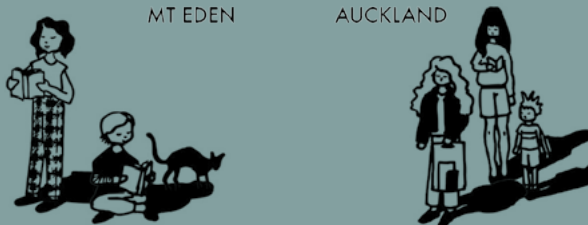
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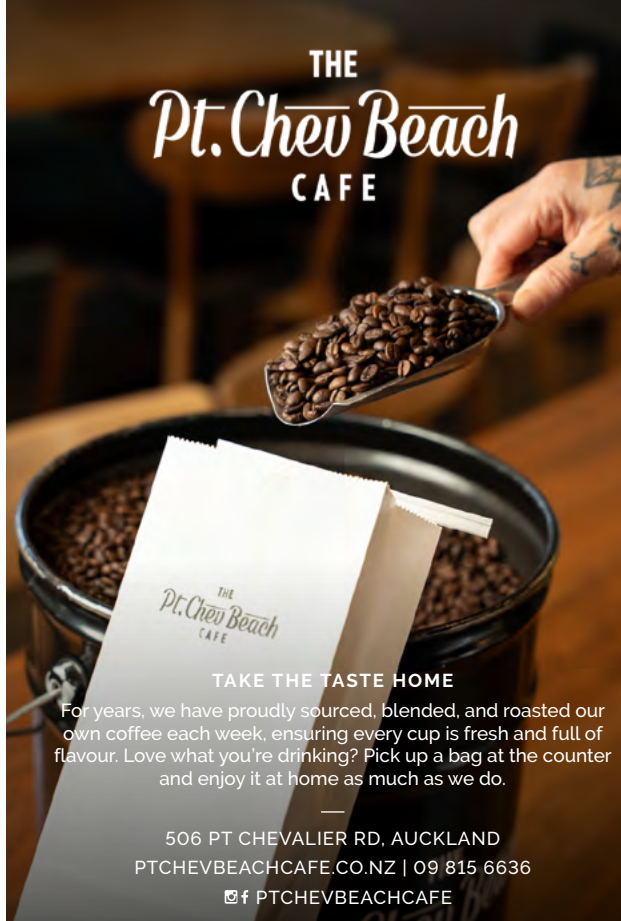
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