

MOST WANTED
**TRUE
GEMS**
*Spring's all-
eyes-on-me
accessories*
page 3

FIRST PERSON
**BEING
MARILYN**
*"There's always something
attractive about looking as
though you're not trying."*
page 6



BOOKS
**HIGH
STYLE**
*Upgrade
your fashion
library*
page 7



THE KIT

BEST OF EVERYTHING

*Your guide to the good life kicks off with
a stylish visit to Vegas, where spring's
glitziest gowns shine on the fabled Strip*
page 4

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GIVENCHY



MOST WANTED
Set in stone

For summer, designers mined the wellness-crazed age for jewellery inspiration, which resulted in a bevy of crystals hanging from necks and lobes in their raw form: Massive geode medallions dangled from equally oversized chain links at Givenchy; rock candy drop earrings shone at Stella McCartney and an architectural crystal capelet wowed at Maison Margiela. Possessing healing powers or not, these gems are the cure for any feeble 9-5 uniform. —Jillian Vieira

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FASHION
THE HOUSE THAT Z BUILT
Zac Posen went through a bit of a rough patch and—spoiler—he came out of it better than ever

BY VERONICA SAROLI

It's an age-old story: A meteoric success is followed by a mighty crash in fortunes. And it's a cycle Zac Posen knows well, as recounted in the documentary *House of Z*, which premiered in Canada at the Hot Docs Film Festival this month. "He was a 21-year-old kid shot up in the air...it's a long way to fall. And he did," says Sandy Chronopoulos, the film's Toronto-based director, alluding to Posen's brash aughts public image. Buoyed by friends like Naomi Campbell, Natalie Portman and Claire Danes wearing his clothes and the grandeur of having Sean Combs as an investor, Posen let his persona eclipse the brand integrity of crafting beautiful garments. In the documentary, fashion critic Robin Givhan recalls attending Posen's Spring 2008 collection that ended with five overly poufy dresses. "I remember this editor saying to me, 'Why are we all here?' And my response was, 'I have no idea.'"

Today, wearing an artisanal Japanese-indigo-dyed shirt and a tailored suit before a screening of the documentary in Toronto, the 36-year-old designer explains that these days

he's happiest in the kitchen—a cookbook is coming out in October—and tending to his garden. "Cooking is my fashion detox," Posen says in a New York drawl. It's a reprieve from his demanding schedule of creating 16 annual collections for his eponymous label and Brooks Brothers, which he insists he couldn't do without a supportive team. "You're not going to get every designer to talk about that. For a long time that was like a faux pas in fashion: to talk about your team," he explains with a flash of youthful drollery. "Are we supposed to believe that Phoebe Philo doesn't have a huge design team? Well she does."

Posen is refreshingly open about the industry—from vendettas to smoke-and-mirrors productions—but what's most telling is when he says he feels like his best self: "When I'm in the ocean." He declares the hardest part about being involved in *House of Z* was letting go of creative authority, but the ocean is a different story. "I love that feeling of loss of your control. I like going underwater and just feeling the movement of the earth." Posen has waded through troubled waters, but he sounds like he's doing just fine now.

POSEN'S FAVOURITE THINGS



Best feeling: "When I'm in my studio alone, draping. That's when I feel fulfilled inside."



Best travel destination: "Japan: aesthetics, style and process are so deeply respected. The country is deeply rooted in the preservation of culture, nature and the future. It's everything."



Best luxury: "Being able to have good produce."



Best way of letting go: "I make and tailor probably 40 to 50 suits a year for myself. Every two years I take half, if not all, of them and bring them to Goodwill or Dress for Success."



Mark your calendar
Attention beauty buffs: Set your iCal for Nordstrom's Spring Beauty Trend Event at Yorkdale Shopping Centre on May 27 at 8 a.m. (pre-show starts at 7 a.m.). Enjoy a runway show featuring the season's hottest colour trends, news on the latest launches from luxe brands, a tote bag of deluxe samples and mini makeovers. Tickets are \$20 (redeemable for beauty purchases).

PARTY PREP
A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

How musicians are prepping for the Canadian Opera Company's annual fundraiser

BY VERONICA SAROLI

The Canadian Opera Company's Operation fundraiser takes place at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, where partygoers and performers alike will schmooze, revel and engage in "a night of curiosities." All proceeds from the bash go to the Ensemble Studio, a training program for emerging musicians. We asked three of its members to share how they'll be getting ready for the party.



DANIKA LORÈN, SOPRANO

Most excited for: "Definitely the fashion. Toronto has a well-dressed opera scene, so I have very high expectations."

Pre-party ritual: "I do a lot of my own sewing and embellishing, so I'm usually finishing up part of my ensemble last minute. But when I have the time I like to go old school and take my sweet time in front of a well-lit mirror with some hot rollers and French jazz. Maybe some wine if I'm not singing. It's all horribly romantic, and I absolutely love it."

Backstage beauty tips: "Priming is more important than it feels. Make sure you wear a long-lasting, no-smudge lip colour. A well-defined eyebrow is everything. Always use a setting spray, especially if it's going to be a good (warm) party."



LAUREN EBERWEIN, MEZZO-SOPRANO

Most excited for: "I can't wait to see how wonderfully curious people are! I plan on letting my freak flag fly. I hope I'll find myself among kindred spirits."

Party prep: "Rehearsing! I'll be performing throughout the evening and I can't wait to make my Operation debut alongside this year's special guest, Kiesza. My pre-party ritual entails a long steam shower and putting on makeup while jamming to happy dance music."

I'll be wearing: "The evening's theme 'a night of curiosities' has my mind ringing with a cacophony of curious outfit ideas. I'm in the midst of hand-painting a skirt and crafting excitingly alive jewellery pieces made with flowers."



HYEJIN KWON, PIANIST

Most excited for: "I can't wait to see Kiesza perform. Operation is an amazing event every year because it has created a space for original and exciting musical collaborations. Last year's pop-opera mashup between Dragonette and soprano Ambur Braid blew me away."

I'll be wearing: "I'm not a 'little black dress is best' kind of a gal. I have to wear so much black professionally that when I get the chance to party on my own time, I'll definitely pull a bright-coloured outfit out of my closet."

Backstage beauty tips: "I lean toward a natural, simple makeup style, which comes in handy as a pianist. I've picked up a few things here and there, though, especially with how important it is to highlight the eyebrows, cheeks and lips."

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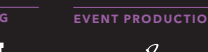
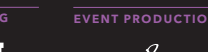
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SHOT ON LOCATION AT
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Choose your adventure

The best kind of Vegas jaunt combines modern comforts with nostalgic classics—take your pick and have a swinging time

BY RANI SHEEN | PHOTOGRAPHY BY NORMAN WONG | FASHION DIRECTION BY JILLIAN VIEIRA

Las Vegas has always been a playground for adults, an oasis of indulgence in contrast to its serene Mojave Desert surroundings. In the 1940s and '50s it owed its success to a taste for the illicit: gambling, prostitution and a certain seedy glamour. But while you can still try your luck at a blackjack table any hour of the day or night, in recent years something about the Strip has shifted. Of the nearly 50 million visitors who flocked to this hive of hedonism last year, there were more first-timers, and more younger, diverse visitors who are as or more interested in dining, clubbing, cultural experiences and shopping as they are in gambling. The city has answered that demand with new hot spots alongside the classic hidden gems. Here's where to stay and play, whether your taste runs toward contemporary cool or retro glamour.

STAY

New: Linq

The Linq is pared down and modern, offering options for friends travelling together such as bunk bedrooms. Centrally located and easily recognizable by its massive High Roller Ferris wheel that offers a 30-minute ride of stunning views over the strip and surroundings, the hotel also features an open-air strip of lively restaurants and bars such as Gordon Ramsay's new fish and chips spot and a rare non-drive-through outpost of beloved burger joint In-n-Out. caesars.com/linq

Classic: Flamingo

The pink-mirrored glass facade of the Flamingo is a glittering landmark on the Strip. Though it's a new iteration of the original, built in 1946 by mobster Bugsy Siegel, it's definitely a classic, and you'll feel at home in your pin-up-inspired one-piece by the tree-lined Beach Club Pool flanked by stone flamingo fountains squirting into the water. caesars.com/flamingo-las-vegas

EAT

New: Harvest

Roy Ellamar, the Hawaii-born chef at Harvest, is bringing the farm-to-table, vegetable-forward trend to a town hardly known for its healthy eats. The menu is constantly updated to reflect what's in season, whether it's grown

in the herb garden on the premises or at the nearby Blue Lizard Farm. Staples include farro porridge made with foraged wild mushrooms and black truffle and rotisserie chicken brined in ale and perfumed with hay smoke. bellagio.com/restaurants/harvest

Classic: Golden Steer

Founded in 1958, Golden Steer proudly declares itself the oldest steakhouse in Vegas. While there have been some updates, you can feel the ghosts of its former patrons—Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, the entire Rat Pack—as you walk into the dining room with its glossy black or red leather circular booths. Dine on veal marsala, oysters Rockefeller or—what else?—dry aged, bone-in rib eye with a twice-baked potato. goldensteerlasvegas.com

SEE

New: Seven Magic Mountains

What you don't expect to see 10 miles out of town: seven stacked towers of enormous neon-painted boulders, bold and bright against the sandy desert tones all around and Jean Dry Lake in the distance. Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone created the installation, which has visitors flocking to marvel at (and Instagram) it. For more free art, swing by downtown Las Vegas to check out the many impressive murals by artists such as Banksy and Shepard Fairey. sevenmagicmountains.com

Classic: Neon Sign Museum

You have to join a tour to peruse the "bone-yard" of treasures at the Neon Sign Museum—its wares are too precious to risk a visitor stumble during an over-enthusiastic selfie. Standouts include signs from such defunct hot spots as Golden Nugget and Binion's Horseshoe, and the gorgeous pastel "in love" sign from the Moulin Rouge designed by Betty Willis, who also created the famous "Welcome to Fabulous Vegas" sign. neonmuseum.org

DRINK

New: Fizz

When it's too tiresome to wait for the bartender to notice you, hit up the Moët & Chandon vending machine at the art-filled, golden-toned

Fizz lounge, envisioned by its creative director David Furnish, Elton John's better half. The sparkly stuff is stretched to capacity in champagne cocktails such as the dark-cherry-infused Fizz Noir, Fizz Velvet featuring Aperol and rhubarb bitters, and the Fizz Deluxe, which blends Hennessy Richard cognac with Dom Perignon Rosé Champagne and 24K gold flakes. fizzlv.com

Classic: Peppermill Las Vegas

Time has no meaning once you're ensconced in a red or purple velvet booth beneath the mirrored ceilings and profusion of fake flowers at the Peppermill lounge, est. 1972. (If the room looks familiar, you might have seen it cameos in *Casino* and *Showgirls*.) Twenty-four hours a day you'll find people from all walks of life gazing upon the sunken firepits and sipping on such classic refreshments as a Melon Ball, Velvet Hammer or Singapore Sling. peppermilllasvegas.com

BEAUTIFY

New: Sahara Spa & Hammam

You'll feel a million miles away from the chaotic Strip at this hushed, serene spa tucked away on the 14th floor of the Cosmopolitan hotel. Drift off during the Turkish-inspired Hammam Soap Ritual, which takes place in the cavernous hammam on a slab of warm stone and involves a eucalyptus-scented steam, a tingly cleanse in which foamy suds float down onto every inch of your body, a scrubdown with a traditional Kesse mitt, and a slathering of fizzy body butter. cosmopolitanlasvegas.com/spa

Classic: Atomic Style Lounge

Make like a golden-age-of-Hollywood star and pay a visit to downtown Las Vegas's Atomic Style Lounge for a pre-night-out pin-up do like victory rolls or a hot roller set. With ties to the Viva Las Vegas Rock-ably weekend and regular local shopping and mingling nights, it offers a pretty way to connect to the past. Wander over to Vintage NV in the nearby Container Park complex and pick up an outfit to match. atomicstylelounge.com; downtowncontainerpark.com

BEST OF EVERYTHING

In Las Vegas, more is more. We sought out the most OTT things you can do in the city where fun rules supreme.

1. Take a private yoga class with friends atop a red-rock mountain in Valley of Fire State Park, a 20-minute helicopter ride from the Strip. maverickhelicopter.com/heliyo
2. Shop in peace while enjoying a private viewing of a lambent James Turrell art installation in Louis Vuitton's private suite at Shops at Crystals, an all-luxury mall where Tiffany & Co. is the most affordable store. simon.com
3. Meet pop princess Britney Spears, tour her backstage then take in her all (okay, some) singing, all-dancing show from a stage-side VIP table with a bottle of Moët & Chandon Imperial—all the more precious as her Piece Of Me residency ends this December. caesars.com/planet-hollywood
4. Order hangover-busting Reviv IV vitamin booster injections to your hotel room, delivered and administered by a registered nurse. revivme.com



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FIRST PERSON
FASHION DREAMS

Novelist *Heather O'Neill* considers Marilyn Monroe's enduring appeal and rebellious spirit while wearing the star's off-duty uniform for a week

You might think of Marilyn Monroe as someone with extravagant tastes in fashion. Onscreen, she was the glamour goddess of Hollywood, often dripping in sequins, diamonds and fur. So I was surprised to read that—frustrated by trying to fit her voluptuous figure into the nipped waists of the day—she couldn't bear the corseted constraints of 1950s fashion. Instead, she made herself a uniform to wear every day, conventional style be damned. In her off-camera life, she wore almost exclusively black slips that she had made by the same tailor and rarely brushed her hair, preferring to pop out the door with ragged, lovely bed-head like a little girl on Christmas morning.

Part of what makes Marilyn so endlessly appealing is her easy confidence in how she looked. In the early '50s, when a nude photo became public, she shrugged off the controversy by responding that she had been broke and needed \$50. She was comfortable in her own skin. But who she was inside that skin has always been an enigma. Having been, for all intents and purposes, an orphan, she had no family traits, no inherited values, no suppositions about who she should be. Her persona was carefully constructed



“There was something very decadent about wearing the same outfit every day for a week. I threw that slip over my head and I was done.”

Left: We imagine Marilyn Monroe imagining a glam version of her off-duty uniform. Below: novelist Heather O'Neill copping Marilyn's singular style.

from borrowed traits—it captured the world's gaze, distracting them from knowing or judging her true self. She was her own marvellous creation.

As a novelist, I understand the amount of creativity, intuition and observational wit required to create a character that an audience loves and gravitates toward. When I was younger, I was self-conscious about fashion and spent forever choosing my outfits, worrying about what my clothes said about me. Lately, though, I find I'm less and less concerned about it. Earlier this year, I was on a month-long tour for my latest novel, visiting libraries and universities and bookstores. I had been wearing academic-looking outfits, suit jackets and pussy-bow blouses, and cocktail dresses. When I got home to Montreal, I was exhausted by publicly performing the role of myself. I wanted to sleepily disappear from the world, Marilyn Monroe style—to lie in bed, half-dressed with my pets and a paperback novel.

And so, I started experimenting with Marilyn's style uniform. I stopped blowing out my hair, so I had Marilyn-Monroe-type curls; I had been eating room service, so I had a sort of buxom quality. I bought a few black slips at a large retail store in the mall that has heaps of clothes in messy piles and bins. I pulled one on and immediately felt like changing my name to Bibi, possibly because the slip's sloppy elegance made me feel as though I should be pouring a cocktail and lounging by the pool.

There was something very decadent about wearing the same outfit every day for a week. I threw that slip over my head and I was done. I wore it walking the dog, to the university library, to the bank, to the movie theatre. I wore it to a meet a friend at a café, who complimented me on it. “I'm going for a 1950s exhausted sex siren who had a cocktail too early and stayed up at night reading Sylvia Plath,” I explained.

“You do look kind of wealthy,” she mused. “It makes you look like you don't give a damn what anyone thinks.”

There's always something attractive about looking as though you're not trying. Marilyn understood that. She knew that a black

dress never goes out of style, that it's beyond style. It's the ideal time-travel outfit: You could turn up in the 17th century looking more or less okay; you could travel anywhere in the future and women will still be wearing black dresses, especially when the world is overpopulated and we all live in small pods and keep our few clothes in a paper lunch bag.

There was some part of Marilyn that was trying to escape from the world. She thought it moved too fast. But when she put on her uniform, she was no longer Marilyn Monroe, the publicly adored masterpiece. She was an artist in her workshop dreaming about ways to see the world. As for me, I came home from the café, sat down at my desk, my silk dress now covered in dog hair and coffee drips, said adieu to the real world and began writing a new character, someone sort of like me, but not quite.

THE UPGRADE
SPIFFYWHIFFY

For vanities that need some sprucing up, a dressed-to-the-nines flacon is just what the decorator ordered. Pick your poison: something more over-the-top, like velvet, or a tuft of violet faux fur or a minimalist bottle set slightly askew. The dazzling juice inside the glass is really the icing on the cake. —*Veronica Saroli*



ANNICK GOUTAL TENUE DE SOIRÉE EAU D PARFUM, \$100 (30 ML), THEBAY.COM. KENZO WORLD, \$125 (75 ML), SEPHORA.COM. AERIN GARDEN ROSE COLOGNE, \$198 (200 ML), ESTEELAUDER.CA. HERMÈS EAU DES MERVEILLES BLEUE, \$114 (50 ML), HERMÈS.COM. DOLCE & GABBANA VELVET CYPRESS, \$271 (50 ML), DOLCE & GABBANA, 111 BLOOR ST. W., TORONTO

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES (MONROE)

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MARC CAIN ON THE MONOCHROMATIC LOOK

So what's new this season? Bold hues combined with polka-dot prints came together on the catwalks of Berlin Fashion Week. Announcing the beginning of Fall/Winter 2017, collections are showing a laid-back, easy-to-wear style with a couture touch. Strong colours like fire-red, fuchsia and nightshade embrace the monochromatic trend of the season.

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MOOD SWING

What led three Canadian women to put their health first and make the professional leap into the wellness world

AS TOLD TO RANDI BERGMAN



GRAYDON MOFFAT, 52, TORONTO
Founder of plant-based beauty brand Graydon Skincare and former chef and yoga instructor

“My connection to therapeutic plants goes back a long way. I was blessed to spend my childhood visiting lavender and rosemary fields in France because my dad had been transferred to Paris and every weekend my parents would take a road trip. But as a teen, I struggled with eating disorders, anxiety and panic attacks. Eventually, I realized I needed to create a balanced life, and once I began to commit to my wellbeing through the power of healing foods, everything started to shift. I moved to L.A. and worked as a chef to support my art school studies and soon after, I got a ‘real job’ in packaged-goods marketing. Working in a traditional environment wasn’t easy for me, but I learned a lot of important business skills.

When I married my former husband and became a mom, I decided to become a yoga instructor. I offered my clients a few skincare products to use during their practice that I had made in my kitchen. Making those products was therapeutic—it was like creating the recipes that I loved dreaming up as a chef. This led me to start Graydon Skincare. I struggled with leaving my prospering yoga practice, and with small-business challenges like a lack of work/life balance, but my business gives me incredible pride. I have a real passion for nutrient-dense superfoods grown and cold-pressed in Canada, such as raspberries, kale and maple water. I’ve been nicknamed an “ingredient anthropologist,” so I’d like to live up to that name by sourcing ingredients from around the world. I’m on my way to Peru to research superfoods for a new serum—I can’t wait to meet the medicine woman in the village. A journey to wellness can take time, but it just takes one change to open the door to other healthy decisions.”

GRAYDON'S WELLNESS TIP
“I review a ‘gratitude list’ in my head before going to sleep.”



DAL SUMAL, 43, DELTA, B.C.
Yoga instructor, meditation and holistic nutrition student, former parole officer

“Most yoga teachers can’t say they got their start in Correctional Service Canada. But that’s where I worked for 16 years as a community-based parole officer in the Vancouver area. The job had many rewards, but workloads were heavy and job-related stress was a daily reality. I also had two children at home, and I often found I had little flexibility to spend quality time with them.

Shortly after being hired, I was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis, which isn’t surprising given that I had suffered many stomach ailments as a teenager, and had a new highly stressful job. I also had anxiety issues that reared their ugly head now and again. I was proud of the service I provided to a population that is often treated as a lost cause, but working with troubled, high-needs clients took its toll, and I eventually decided I needed to make a change. I wanted to figure out how to make myself more physically and mentally well.

I had no idea what career path to take, but I had always admired my yoga teachers. Yoga had shifted so many things for me in my life, and I decided that sharing these gifts with others would be an honour.

For two years, I worried about whether I had made the right choice because I viewed my old job as being so ‘important.’ I questioned whether I was helping people enough by teaching them yoga. But over time, I realized I was. My students’ relaxed, smiling faces and words of gratitude were proof enough.

As women, I think we often struggle with how to have a purpose outside of family responsibilities. We give so much of ourselves, often to the detriment of our physical, spiritual and mental wellbeing. But if we are not well, nothing matters.”

DAL'S WELLNESS TIP
“Daily probiotics are a must!”



SASHA TONG, 38, TORONTO
Founder of natural fragrance brand Lost & Found Apothecary, senior fashion producer on *eTalk* and *laineygossip.com* columnist

“About three years ago, I was in a lot of pain and discomfort. My dry, burning eyes were starting to wave the white flag. I went to specialists and they basically shrugged their shoulders and told me to deal with it. That turned into a full-body meltdown—I wasn’t sleeping, my hormones were out of whack. I was down in the dumps, too, having unsuccessfully tried to get pregnant for years.

It’s been a battle to get back to feeling better. I don’t want to discredit the medical community, but my experience with naturopaths and spirit healers showed me the value of exploring a holistic approach. I learned transcendental meditation and I practise mindfulness. I’ve learned that there are many different avenues to healing.

Starting Lost & Found Apothecary has been a big part of my healing process, too. I launched it when I was truly lost and I made a few scents based on how I was feeling. While I was making Breakup, a complicated sexpot kind of scent, I was listening to “I Feel it All” by Feist, and I really was feeling it all—all those intensely sad feelings you get at the end of a relationship, with the flipside of wanting to feel desirable again. Burn is a combo of my favourite incenses for when I need a moment of calm. I’m a one-woman show, so it takes some time for me to make each bottle with patience, a personal touch and love. Currently I balance my producer and writer jobs with Lost & Found, but while there is a lot of work involved, it feels liberating. This venture started from a passion to find some joy in my life again, so the fact that it has turned into something more means it doesn’t feel like work at all.”

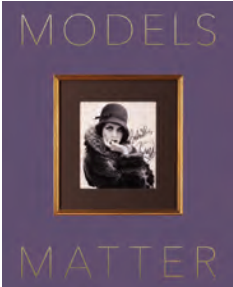
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