THE KIT

TORONTO STAR (01.27.2022

for the new year: Plan a fantasy trip for the "after," drape yourself in buttery knitwear and turn your bedroom into a five-star hotel

Survival strategies

Carried knitwear at your bedroot a five-sta



Power

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6 VITAMIN



Why vitamin C and probiotics are more than just beauty buzzwords

MARCELLE 10% VITAMIN C + PROBIOTIC SERUM, \$39.95

If you're a skincare enthusiast you already know that vitamin C is one of the best, research-proven ingredients you can use in your daily routine. It's a potent antioxidant, beloved by dermatologists for its ability to decrease pigmentation, encourage collagen production and reduce inflammation. Newer to the skincare scene are probiotics, which strengthen the skin's microbiome—the invisible ecosystem of bacteria—ensuring that the skin barrier can protect itself against the elements for healthy-looking, resilient skin. But what happens when you combine the two?

No sweats zone

Renée Tse makes a case for expanding the WFH wardrobe vocabulary beyond the pandemic sweatsuit

You've probably got the WFH look down to a T: Business on the top, French terry on the bottom. But with social distancing mandates stretching on, slipping on those same old sweatpants can be downright demoralizing. So in the spirit of looking and feeling great this year, we put together three ensembles that are as chic as they are cozy.

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CARDIGAN, \$2,533, FARFETCH.COM

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EVERLANE

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Great escapes Four brilliant new books to whisk you



away from it all

Our American Friend by Anna Pitoniak It begins with an invitation: Would Sofie, a middling White House journalist, like to meet with the First Lady—in private? Sofie's about to quit her job, burnt out after covering a cynically dysfunc tional presidency. But the expensively clad, blank-faced First Lady is an intriguing enigma. She offers Sofie unfettered access to write her biography, starting with her father's role in the KGB. It's the scoop of the century, but soon Sofie senses she's being drawn into something much bigger—and more dangerous—than she'd bargained for.



No Land to Light On by Yara Zgheib After years of struggle, including escaping a civil war, Hadi and Sama are finally building an approximation of the American Dream: their own home in Boston, their first child on the way. Then comes Hadi's father's death, his trip back to Svria and the travel ban that tears the couple's world apart overnight It's the gripping, intimate story of a nightmare in which a father cannot return to the country where his son has just been born, and a piece of paperwork becomes an almost insurmountable obstacle.



nown experts in skincare, Marcelle has defined itself by Increased efficacy

K Serum, one of the first serums on the market to combine the power of vitamin C and probiotics, while being suitable for all skin types donors, phthalates, mineral oil, fragrance and others. The result is universal formulas that provide improvements, regardless of age, skin type or concern. Here's why the new 10% Vitamin C + Probiotic Serum belongs in your routine:

Radiant, smoother skin

Vitamin C is a brightening agent thanks to its antioxidant properties, which offer a number of benefits to every skin type; improving cally proven—from the first application, skin is more hydrated and radiant. After 28 days of use, imperfections appear reduced, skin it makes an excellent everyday skincare ingredient.

offering hypoallergenic, fragrance-free and dermatol- Fact: to be effective the vitamin C concentration of a serum ogist-approved products since 1874. Now, the brand is needs to be between 10-20%. Also a fact: higher concentrations unveiling its newest innovation: the 10% Vitamin C + Probiotic can trigger irritation, especially for sensitive skin types. To minimize irritation and maximize benefits, Marcelle's 10% Vitamin C + Probiotic Serum includes a 10% concentration of vitamin C. At including sensitive. And while the brand has always been aligned this percentage, effectiveness is ensured while reducing the risk with the values of the clean beauty movement—effective formulas of irritation. It's also stabilized, so it's as effective as pure vitamin C that don't compromise on safety-more recently the company has but unlikely to degrade due to light, oxygen and heat, thus giving been developing their products without parabens, formaldehyde it a longer shelf life. You'll reap the corrective and illuminating rewards by preventing dullness and minimizing the appearance of imperfections.

A more balanced complexion

The invisible ecosystem of bacteria that lives on the surface of your skin, also known as the microbiome, provides protection from environmental aggressors such as pollution, smoke and harsh weather conditions. For skin to be able to best protect the skin's natural glow, evening skin tone, reducing the appearance itself, it needs plenty of good bacteria, known as probiotics, of fine lines and wrinkles—the list goes on. The results are clini- to keep this delicate ecosystem happy. In this serum, the addition of probiotics reinforces the microbiome to keep skin resilient and fresh. Probiotics also lend a soothing effect, thus appears smoother and skin tone is more even. With its ability to helping sensitive skin tolerate vitamin C better. The combitackle a variety of skincare concerns from dark spots to fine lines, nation of these two powerhouse ingredients equals a recipe for brighter, stronger skin. It's beauty without compromise.

biz casual with a pair of crepe trousers that offer

night in the dining room



THEORY SHOES



Celebrate the

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wrappy scarf

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from Fendi's LNY

Tie it around your

neck, wear it in

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a sophisticated touch.

FENDI SCARF, \$250 FENDI.COM

This red carnelian and 18k yellow gold pendant features a golden tiger engraving on the back. It's

an exquisite lucky charm for the new year but also

a jewellery piece to be treasured for years to come.

BIRKS NECKLACE, \$2,888,

Alexander McQueen's

shiny Lunar New Year

treatment. The metallic

red tone is cool enough

to catch someone's eye

but timeless enough to

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wear all year round.

at a family reunion dinner,

Curve bucket bag got the

your hair or wrap it around your

with an exclusive

MERIT SHADE SLICK IN CARA CARA, \$31, MERITBEAUTY.COM

DESKTOP TO DINNER If you're craving the struc-CAPPUCCINO-RUN CHIC There's nothing more ture of a proper waistband and zip, ease back into low-key luxe than head-to-toe knits. Ace the formula with a sleeveless merino-blend bodysuit and relaxed ribbed pants. Make it a three-piece ample leg room. Dial up the coziness with a chunky colour-block sweater. Add a pearly hair clip and a situation by throwing on a sumptuous cashmere pop of berry lip colour and you'll be ready for date cardigan-and a slick of tinted lip oil-when you step out for a breath of fresh air.

(VIRTUAL) BOARDROOM READY Fact: Going monochromatic will instantly make you look put together, even if the pieces are casual. Go all in for a cream-on-cream look with a sleek elongated vest bouclé wide-leg pants and fluffy slippers. Add gold earrings and a serving of mascara and no one will mistake you for a staycationer.

∢

EMME PARSONS

MEJURI EARRIN \$165, MEJURI.CC

COS VEST, \$135, COSSTORES.COM

ILIA LIMITLESS

LASH LENGTH-ENING MASCARA \$37, SEPHORA.CA

VINCE PANTS, \$510, NET-A-PORTER.COM



A Thousand Steps

by T. Jefferson Parker A coming of age story set in the Age of Aquarius—but make it Agatha Christie, with a bit more LSD than usual. Matt is 16, growing up in 1960s Laguna Beach, where hippie caravans flock in search of good vibes. man. But Matt is only interested in one thing: Finding out what happened to his missing sister, whom local police are dismissing as just another lost teenager drawn to finding peace and love farther afield. Matt has doubtswhich grow stronger when the body of another teenage girl washes up on the beach nearby..



When We Lost Our Heads by Heather O'Neill

We generally just "add to cart" immediately when we see Giller Prize-nominated author Heather O'Neill's name on a book cover. This one is a chilling, fascinating story set in 1873 on Montreal's Golden Mile, home to the city's wealthiest families. A sunny sugar baron's daughter and a charismatic newcomer begin an intense friendship that takes a rather dark turn, setting off a series of events that will haunt the two girls into adulthood, long after their families separate them. It's twisty, turny and monstrously clever. -Sarah Laing

Lucky streak Lunar New Year is upon us, and surrounding yourself with new things to reap good fortune ahead of the holiday is one of the season's most

exhilarating traditions. Shop Renée Tse's picks of the best limitededition Year of the Tiger collectibles



Freshen up your makeup routine with this top-selling blush, embossed with a celebratory tiger and packaged in a festive red and gold case. LAURA MERCIER BLUSH COLOR INFUSION IN

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hydrated and smooth

For mothers of the lockdown era like Olivia Stren, heaven is a vacation from responsibility. a solo voyage to somewhere far, far away

Almost

uring the past two years of rolling lockdowns and school closures, the main form of travel I allowed myself to fantasize about was the trip that my 6-year-old son, Leo, would make to school when it finally reopened. I dreamt of that 10-minute journey, the way I might once have envisioned going to the Galapagos. When the morning came last September, and I finally watched Leo toddle off with his first-grade classmates, out of my care, it was one of the most singularly thrilling moments of my life. Fellow parents gripped the fence, wept silently, high-fived or cackled in a vaguely maniacal free-at-last sort of way. There was a post-war celebratory vibe to the scene, a pageant of grief and relief lit by that kind of autumnal sunshine that sparkles like Moët Chandon. Some parents were even moved to clap at Flora Farms. During the long and twisty drive there, as they beheld their children enter the school building, in the way airline through cactus-ornamented, chihuahua-coloured dunes, passengers applaud the pilot post-landing-applause for not dying? In the I'll admit to feeling vaguely resentful at being exiled from age of COVID, a bricks-and-mortar classroom is basically the new Four heaven. And since I've been involved in constant food prep Seasons (for parents, at least).

Then, in the briefest window before Omicron reared its wretched head, I was invited to visit an actual Four Seasons on Mexico's Baja Peninsula. Alone. I hadn't experienced the anticipatory pleasure of international travel a 10-acre organic farm at the foothills of the mountains, a in years, much less a vacation from maternal responsibility. I accepted immediately, gratefully and reflexively, the way a drowning

person might reach for a piece of driftwood. I had often heard about Cabo, its glamour and its constant flow of Kardashians (the Cabo San Lucas private jet airport, I gather, is busier than Heathrow). But when I arrive at Costa Palmas, on the peninsula's deserted East Cape, I find it startlingly and thrillingly empty, steeped in a luxuriant, almost lunar silence.



This is not the sort of place you frankly ever want to leave, but I do because I am signed up for a cooking class for the past six years, I'm not feeling particularly keen to

spend my time away from home chopping vegetables. I change my mind swiftly upon arrival. At Flora Farms,

I find the place startlingly and thrillingly empty, steeped in a luxuriant, almost lunar silence.





StriVectir

Suddenly, the trip feels more interplanetary than cross-border. I may as well in an old Western. Turtles with backs as black and ridged have booked a sojourn in space. as overripe avocados lounge around a pond the colour of

The new Four Seasons Resort at Costa Palmas is perched on a three- molten emeralds. The gardens are lush with baby papayas kilometre expanse of untouched coastline on the Sea of Cortez. Vast and (presumably learning what it means to be a papaya) and blanched, the beachscape is framed only by the distant spectral silhouette towering nopal, touristed with hummingbirds and Los of the Sierra de la Laguna mountain range. As I take in the scene, I think about how Brené Brown said the only revenge against overwhelm is "nothingness." On her Unlocking Us podcast-podcasts, of course, serving as field of Bermuda grass. I join the cooking class, and we the preferred method of mental escape of house-locked mothers every- make tamales and salsa in a molcajete made of volcanic where-Brown quoted American scientist and mindfulness expert Jon rock, and drink wild hibiscus juice as noonday sunshine Kabat-Zinn's definition of overwhelm as "the all-too-common feeling that filters through the pink oleander. our lives are somehow unfolding faster than the human nervous system and psyche are able to manage." Check. This suddenly seems the ideal setting interview with 95-year-old comedy legend Mel Brooks, for my convalescence.

When I return to my lounger perch, I listen to an who has just released his memoirs, All About Me: My

Angeles-based Instagrammers in crop tops. Maroon 5

singer Adam Levine married model Behati Prinsloo on the

Animating the emptiness is an expanse of sea and sky, locked in an eternal competition for which is bluer, as if the ghost of Frida Kahlo were as you feel, goes the adage, and I've lately been feeling at perpetually painting them the same shade of cobalt as her famous Casa least 87, so I feel invested in any wisdom Brooks might Azul in Mexico City. A convention of yellow butterflies career through the impart. "I'm so grateful to be able to eat scrambled eggs salt-and-sage-scented air, sunlit palms rustle like sequinned skirts, and and toast for breakfast, and sometimes a roast beef sandfrangipani, white and gleaming as tiny petalled moons, bloom in beds of wich for dinner," he says. "I'm so happy that I still have deep-green glossy leaves. I sense something exotic and faintly familiar— something of an appetite." Perhaps it's because of the pleasure? A renewed sense of myself as a person with tastes and capacity for gluttonous day I've just enjoyed, but it seems to me that enjoyment? A wander through the property, past lemon trees and towering no wiser statement has ever been made. Life comes down cactus, takes me to an onsite James Perse boutique, the low-key luxury to the importance of appetite, of desire. In these years T-shirt brand. In fact the whole resort—its refined minimalism, its earthy of privations and scarcity, we've had to adapt to—and palette of cactus and dune—looks like it could be the result of a collab adopt—a lack of desire. Normalizing the not-wanting is between James Perse and, say, *Don Quixote* author Miguel de Cervantes.

am here for four full days. Parenting, and pandemic parenting in particular, nothing quite like travel to kindle all the appetites—for has a way of fracturing time into stingy pellets-made for tasks and snacks and activity-negotiation and fights over screen time. I'd like to say that I immediately savour this unfenced wilderness of time and space, using it my husband and son and find that I actually miss them, a to meditate on the Big Questions. But when I take to a beach lounger and rare and pleasurable sensation. If travelling alone is about stare at the horizon, I find myself reflecting more on whether to order the the people you don't spend time with (i.e. the ones that aguachile or the heart-of-palm salad for lunch. (I choose aguachile: shrimp live in your house), it's also about the ones you unexpectbrightly dressed in chiles, lime and coriander.) I feel weirdly destabilized by edly do meet. I find myself having a glass of Mexican wine the freedom, as if I'm struggling to acclimatize to life on the outside. When I return to my suite, a soak in my spectacular sea-facing, freestanding bathtub helps ease the transition.

spa, like a petite paradise within a heaven for an extra level of reward. Here, Rivera's grandson, and how she met her second husband, I enjoy a superb facial involving a procession of wildflower-infused Tata a descendant of Portuguese royalty, riding English saddle Harper serums, masks and oils. My skin, having spent the past couple of in Guadalajara. years busily acquiring new worry wrinkles and stress-induced eczema (what

a delight!), emerges feeling as silky as the local frangipani.

Remarkable Life in Show Business. You are only as old the survival game, our only move. But I realize that what

But the real extravagance here comes in the form of space and silence. I I've been longing for most was longing itself, and there's experience, colour, newness.

> Especially solo travel. Another novelty: I call to talk to with Patricia Mendoza, the unofficial painter laureate of Los Cabos, at her San José del Cabo art gallery. In the span of about 15 minutes, she tells me about her three

As if just being here weren't spa treatment enough, there is also an actual marriages, the time she took a fresco lesson with Diego

I think of this colourful conversation the following week when I'm back in captivity (I mean home), standing in a playground in the shabby greyness of a Toronto winter. This pandemic has produced more waves than the Sea of Cortez: Schools are once again closed, we're back in lockdown, but I occasionally superimpose the colours and flavours of my trip on the visual, literal, psychic dullness. While navigating a particularly difficult virtual grade 1 math class (it's no Four Seasons), I do my own arithmetic: How many more days of this madness? I throw myself a life raft of hope: Maybe I'll go back to that beach one day soon. Or maybe I'll want to go somewhere else? I'm so happy I still have something of an appetite.

From top: Kilometres of untouched coastline on the Sea of Cortez; the earthy refinement of the new Four Seasons Resort Los Cabos at Costa Palmas: a soak with a sea view; the colourful cooking class at Flora Farms; the writer communing with local turtles.

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hen the word "wellness" first appeared in the English language, circa 1650, it essentially meant "the opposite of illness"—a concept the term encompasses now. But even the earliest documented use of the term framed it as a buzzword. "Pray, what is meant by wellness and unwellness?" an aristocratic woman named Dorothy Osborne asked her husband, a diplomat, in an undated letter around 1655. "You never send me any of the new phrases of the town," she chided, the 17th-century equivalent of accusing him of gatekeeping the best memes.

Some 400 years later, there's a good chance you still feel the same way about wellness, the most diluted and overused-to-the-point-of-utter-meaninglessness trend of our time. While the basic definition remains—if you're not ill, you're well-the ways we define wellness change all the time. Ten years ago, wellness meant doing CrossFit and chugging Splenda. Five years ago, it involved Whole30, a spiralizer and as much turmeric as your

Golden Mylk Latte could take. And now? Well, given this is a \$5 trillion market that's projected to shoot to \$8.8 trillion by 2025, according to the simple definition that's a far cry from the amorphous, slippery non-profit Global Wellness Institute, it's almost certain your CBD pillow spray and candle meditation setup are about to be relegated to the same cultural wasteland as skinny jeans and mermaid curls.

So what does await us in that next promised land wellness trends always call us to? Well, since crystals are apparently out, we tapped experts in the industry for their best guesses at what the biggest 2022 wellness trends are going to be.

A caveat: If something has been working for you, making you feel good, we're not here to tell you to stop doing it because it's "out." (It would be like telling you to start plucking your eyebrows again because skinny brows are back. We see the fortune you spent on Latisse, and we could never.) In the words of those tarot readers (trend alert!) that have been taking over your TikTok lately: Take it as it resonates.

While the basic definition remains—if you're not ill, you're well—the ways we define wellness change all the time.

Room service

There's just something about a fabulous hotel: the robe, the sheets, the uninterrupted sleep. While your passport waits in a drawer, make your bedroom your getaway with inspiration from three must-book properties





TREND: THE "TOUCHLESS SPA" You don't need to be a trend forecaster to get why people might be hesitant about having a stranger get close to them right now. "Clients want that spa-like feeling without a lot of contact," says Dr. Aliya Visram, a chiropractor, acupuncturist and co-founder of Wellbe wellness centre in Toronto. That explains the growing popularity of "touchless" services like cold-plunging and cryotherapy, salt rooms, float pods and infra-red saunas that you enjoy completely alone. Equally popular are DIY treatments that can be done at home. "The shift from going somewhere to feel good to at-home self-care is the number 1 trend we're seeing," Visram says. "Getting a massage has turned into self-massaging with a device like a Theragun." She notes that tools like "ear seeds," which you can place yourself for "acu on the go," and gua sha stones for DIY massage have become top sellers for Wellbe's wellness store, Bloom Balance.

TREND: GENTLE MOVEMENT We've come a long way from the era when high-impact fitness classes like SoulCycle or CrossFit reigned supreme. "Walking is the new running," says Visram. "We're all leaning into more grounding forms of activity, like getting into nature." She's traded her own OrangeTheory membership for the routine of walking her kids to school and doesn't see herself going back to working out in a sweaty room with a crowd of other people. "I even think we're transitioning out of yoga," she says, which is quite something coming from a former Bikram instructor. "A lot of my patients aren't doing it as much as they used to, and if they do have a practice, they're doing it on their own, in the comfort of their own home."

TREND: SELF-CARE 2.0 While this buzziest of terms isn't going anywhere, expect its definition to evolve in 2022. "We used to think of self-care as taking a bath and lighting a candle, and while we still love that, this kind of self-care goes deeper," says Rebecca Coleman, social media marketing manager for The Wellness Show, which draws 20,000 people and more than 200 exhibitors to Vancouver annually. "We're seeing more and more people reflecting on the inner work, going to therapy, learning about their attachment styles and trying to heal themselves from childhood traumas," she says, adding that this is the biggest trend she's noticed ahead of the 2022 expo in late March.

A collective approach to this healing is something Visram has noticed among the Gen Z staffers at her clinic. "There's a shift from self-care to community care. Instead of connecting with friends over drinks, they're doing things like meditation or going on walks together for a shared healing experience."

TREND: INTUITIVE EATING "I'm seeing my clients shift from restrictive eating practices like juice cleanses and raw vegetable diets to more intuitive and mindful eating," says Visram, who's been on her own journey with food over the past year, moving from counting macros to "allowing" herself to eat things that she would have felt guilty about before. "They're things that actually are good for your body and feel good emotionally," she explains. "It's less diet-y, more 'this feels good right now so I'm going to

explore this.'" Hello, TikTok food influencer Emily Mariko and the return of white rice to white women's collective good graces.

> TREND: MUSHROOMS There's a hot new ingredient that's about to have a chokehold on us: mushrooms, specifically the red reishi variety. "Mushroom adaptogens are very hot right now," says Coleman, placing them in the broader category of "herbal pharmaceuticals" that have been used for centuries in Ayurvedic and Traditional Chinese Medicine. "The red reishi mushroom contains the highest concentration of phytonutrients such as beta-glucans and triterpenes or ganoderic acid, adaptogens that help to improve the body's ability to cope with stress and support our immune system." Reishi is already popping up everywhere from gummies to teas and promises to become as ubiquitous as CBD is now. Everyone's talking about anxiety and overwhelm," says Visram, linking this ingredient's popularity to a larger focus on emotional wellness. And she points to another mushroom-related trend of a more psychedelic variety. "Microdosing is becoming a big thing," she says, referring to the practice of consuming small amounts of psilocybin mushrooms (the 'magic" ones) on a daily basis, in tea, smoothies or chocolate. "It takes the edge off and gives people the opportunity to be in the moment rather than running through the rat race in your brain."

TREND: PECAN OIL Pecan oil is in a way heir to the skin- and hair-nourishing oil cult built by argan, which once felt so new but is now utterly ubiquitous. "Pecan oil is rich in vitamins E and A and antioxidants," explains oleman, who's a big fan of the serums, balms and edible oils made by B.C.-based Indigenous-owned brand Nuez Acres, which uses pecans sustainably grown on one of the co-founder's family farm in Mexico.

TREND: SKINIMALISM "Simple, clean skin and natural beauty is having a real moment," notes Coleman, who has been tracking interest in facial yoga-exercises that stimulate lymphatic drainage-and "slow beauty," which prioritizes sustainability and ethical ingredients. Visram reports that her clients are also abandoning their 12-step skincare regimens in favour of a few efficacious products and rituals like dermal rolling and facial cupping. "I find most people aren't doing as much Botox," says Visram. "It's a less-is-more vibe."

TREND: HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY Nice knowing you, rose quartz! As crystals

fade from the spotlight, what Visram describes as "holistic spirituality" is taking their place. "My patients are talking about getting tarot read-

ings and how the moon or Mercury retrograde might be affecting how

they're feeling," she says. "Manifestation and journalling have been a

huge trend on TikTok," adds Coleman, noting that these practices have

folded in self-care routines as a way of processing the stress of the past

two years—and, you know, taking a break from social media, including

the aforementioned platform that's set many a wellness trend as it had

to Sta



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its own meteoric rise over the pandemic.

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TROPICAL PUNCH Infusing lighthearted glamour into South Beach, the aptly named Goodtime invites guests to fully indulge in Miami's vices. It's no wonder Pharrell Williams, eternal purveyor of good vibes, is behind the endeavour: a palm-dotted pastel fever dream that could easily serve as the backdrop to a Wes Anderson film or the most fun weekend ever. Capture the mood with a pink and mint palette, rattan nightstands and a few Floridian accents, and pretend you're lazing by the candy-striped pool as a DJ spins your cares away.





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