

# verve

DECEMBER '24 / JANUARY '25

An uplifting  
monthly election  
of life, style and  
happenings.



With Laneway heading to town, we begin summer celebrations early with a trip to Waiheke and a tour of awesome Kingsland. Also this month, we visit the world's great museums and galleries, and get some festive feels from Germany.



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# FROM THE EDITOR



barely hesitates in making the call. "Hey, what's up?" says the affable dad when he hears his son's voice.

"Not much," comes the reply. "I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate you."

"What.... why... why did you say that?" says the father, his voice clearly cracking with emotion. "Thank you."

It is those pauses within the dad's response that carry the most clout. He's clearly not used to such an open, vocal display of love from his son, but is clearly appreciative of it – literally beyond words.

## THE SIMPLE THINGS

A reel recently popped up on my social media feed that appeared to begin as a street prank, with an overly confident guy armed with a microphone approaching a pair of cocky teenage lads. Holding out the mic, the guy asks one of the teens if he's game for a dare, to which he responds in the affirmative. "I dare you," says the guy, "to call your father and tell him that you appreciate him."

There is an unmistakable split-second of confusion in the boy's eyes, but he

Sorry, so goes the famous song, seems to be the hardest word; but when was the last time that you told someone how much you appreciate them? And if now isn't prime time to do it – with the season of goodwill to all on the horizon – then when is?

Think of it as our own pay-it-forward movement.

Enjoy the issue. Merry Christmas. And very best wishes for the new year.

Jamie



## ARNA

As we wrap up the year with the final issue of *Verve*, I'm grateful to be part of the team that brings you this inspiring, innovative, and creative magazine. This season is my absolute favourite, spending special times with family and friends. Wishing you all a rejuvenating break and festive celebrations as we look forward to the exciting opportunities a new year brings. Happy holidays everyone!

# verve

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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS

from the team at *Verve*



## FRAN

As summer beckons, hopefully with sunshine aplenty and perhaps a glass of rosé in hand, I'm reminded of the joys of the season: beach days, fun, festivities, and time spent with loved ones.

For many, Christmas is a magical time, but for our hardworking retailers and hospo heroes, it's among the busiest and most critical. It's been a challenging year for them, yet they've shown incredible resilience, investing in our communities to ensure we have access to unique and thoughtful offerings.

This Christmas, I'm committed to shopping local and championing businesses that make our neighbourhoods special. Many of these wonderful retailers can be found on the gift pages of this issue; I hope they inspire you to visit and support them, too.

To our team, clients, advertisers, and readers – thank you. It's a privilege to celebrate the season with you. Wishing you all the very happiest of holidays, and a brand-new year filled with possibility.



## JUDE

December is a month I hold dear – it's not only my daughter's birthday, but mine as well. It's a special time when I celebrate with many wonderful friends, though sadly, a couple of them are no longer with us. Life truly is precious, and it serves as a reminder to cherish those around us, speak our truth, and savour every moment.

I wish everyone a joyful and memorable holiday season, with time for relaxation and celebration. I'll be living my dream, as usual, at the beach – relaxing, enjoying delicious food, and celebrating the simple joy of breathing! (Yes, that's a term I often use when I check in with friends: "Are you still breathing?" It seems to take on a whole new meaning as we get older!)

I am truly grateful for each and every day.

Happiness, always.



## PAM

Summer is here and how uplifting it feels as this year has been an extraordinarily challenging year for me health wise, and one I'd rather forget! But on the upside, *Verve* continues to grow. It is such a beautiful magazine to work on, made all the more fulfilling thanks to feedback from clients who always say that each issue is even more stunning!

I wish to take this opportunity to thank my *Verve* colleagues, the wonderful portfolio of clients that I so enjoy working with, and to our loyal readers for their ongoing support.

Wishing you all a fabulous Christmas and well-earned break – we all deserve it.



KATE

The past year has been a journey full of unexpected twists and turns. I've come close to completing a build project of my own, which has been both challenging and rewarding. Despite the hurdles, I've stayed positive, learning valuable lessons along the way. Balancing it all has helped me reflect on what truly matters – finding meaning in the chaos and appreciating the small moments. It's been a year of growth, resilience, and self-awareness!

Roll on Christmas! I'm excited to spend it this year with my niece, who's on her OE from the UK, and my mother-in-law – who seems to be on a forever OE!

And lastly, a huge thanks and a very happy Christmas to the team at Verve. I'm grateful for the creative energy and teamwork that make each issue something special – it's truly a joy to be a part of. Well done!



AIMEE

Christmas came early for me this year, as soon as jonquils started popping up around the isthmus like honey-coated popcorn. Every week since has been an advent calendar of floral treats as spring bursts into life, preparing the soil for summer.

This season, get your hands in the earth, walk barefoot on dewy grass, and take a moment to bask in the beauty of our shared world – and the sentient beings we journey with. See you on the flipside.



CHRISTINE

The year has passed relatively smoothly for me, for which I am grateful. Now is the time to look forward to a happy summer holiday season and reflect on the year that was.

Wishing Verve readers a wonderful Christmas and new year, plus special thoughts to our hardworking, dedicated team who 'get it done' every month.



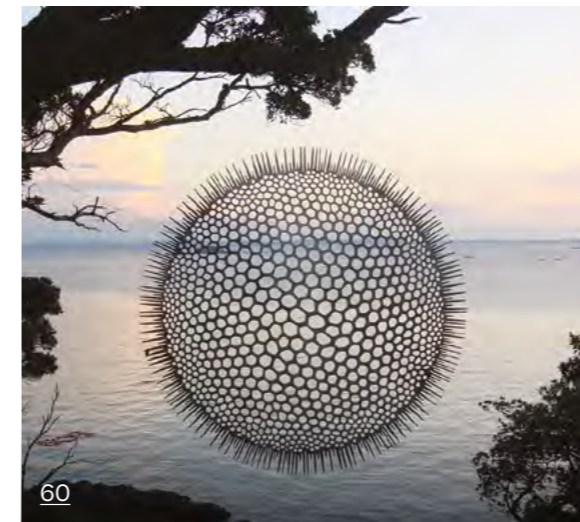
DANI

Merry Christmas and happy new year everyone! Thank you to our clients, contributors and readers for making another of Verve possible, and a special mention to Jude and Fran for celebrating 20 years of publishing! It's been an incredible year, filled with travelling, doing work that I love and spending time with family and friends. Here's to an even better 2025, and a long summer.



YAMIN

Happy holidays! It's been an incredible year for Verve, and I'm deeply honoured to be part of it. From celebrating 20 years to leaving Grey Lynn for Kingsland, I'm immensely grateful to Fran, Jude, and everyone at Verve for the opportunities and unforgettable experiences. Here's to an exciting new year ahead!



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# Ashbury Heights Lifestyle Village, Whangārei



Artist impressions only

Announcing Ashbury Heights, a new premium Qestral lifestyle village in the lovely suburb of Maunu, Whangārei. The opening of the expansive single storey resthome/hospital and first stage of houses is scheduled for next month.

Register your interest now with Lynn.  
Phone 027 430 4622 or Email [lynn.h@ashburyheights.co.nz](mailto:lynn.h@ashburyheights.co.nz)



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# Hybrid Shines Bright

WORDS –  
TIM WARREN

I love the opportunity for the first drive of any car, so I headed to Peugeot early for the brand-new 3008.

A few hundred meters into the drive, I was already impressed. Having driven the smaller 208 and 2008, I enjoyed the French design flair, and the 3008, as a mid-sized SUV, continues that trend with elevated style and size.

This GT spec adds leather and premium touches to an already well-appointed cabin. It's the first car on a new platform that supports future drivetrains, this one with a 100kW 1.2L three-cylinder hybrid. Like its smaller relatives, it delivers efficiency and drivability in a capable package.

The design starts out with the go-kart-inspired small steering wheel, making the combined driver instrument and center screen easy to view. The compact wheel feels fabulous; you wonder why steering wheels are usually so big these days. A compact console screen simplifies accessing settings, avoiding menu hunting. Cabin materials balance quality with practicality, and unique touches, like the marle fabric stripe and an entertaining matte-reflective dash, create a distinctive atmosphere. Speaking atmosphere, wait till you hear the astonishing sound system!

The front seats are superbly comfortable with features like lumbar control, bolster adjustment, massage, and ventilation – rare for this price bracket, though they are an upgrade. They even have bolster

adjustment for extra support on corners or more comfort on long trips. The back seat offers decent legroom, great headroom, and their own ventilation controls.

Driving modes include Sport, Normal, and Eco, which I enjoyed tweaking to suit my trip. I flicked into Sport on the motorway on-ramp and Eco most of the time. Surprisingly, it has descent control and slippery surface modes for mud, sand, and snow. It's dashing outside too, with a bold fast-back look, elevated stance, and Peugeot's signature light fangs. The glitter blue paint and 19-inch rims complete its confident appearance, while boot space is copious, with tie-downs exactly where you'd expect.

The 3008 drives easily, with precise steering and a quality ride. Assisted driving features, like adaptive cruise and lane holding, work seamlessly. Parking and maneuvering were effortless, and its incredible fuel economy, with over 700km of range per tank, is hard to fault. It's a highly featured vehicle with an impressive five-year warranty. The list of things I like is long, and the only thing I didn't like was having to return it at the end of the evaluation!

*Allure from \$57,980.  
GT: \$62,480 + \$4,500  
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## PEUGEOT NEW 3008 HYBRID



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KINGSLAND + MORNINGSIDE

# Crowned Cool

Auckland's nonchalant, leather jacket-wearing sister neighbourhoods, are hip, rebellious and creative.



The Portland Public House | [theportlandpublichouse.co.nz](http://theportlandpublichouse.co.nz)  
Or just 'The Portland' to its mates, is the place to go for live music, open mic nights, quiz nights, cocktails and delicious pub grub! 463 New North Road, Kingsland

Don't just take our word for it, London's *Time Out* once ranked the area in the top 50 coolest neighbourhoods in the world.



#### A swamped Eden

Kingsland's most prominent landmark – and New Zealand's largest stadium – Eden Park, springs from former swamplands formed atop 30,000-year-old lava caves created by Ōwairaka/Mount Albert and Maungawhau/Mount Eden. The site would later become known as Cabbage Tree Swamp owing to the abundance of cabbage trees (obviously). In 1902, looking across the sprawling marshland from Kingsland Road, a young, visionary cricketer by the name of Harry Ryan thought it would be the ideal setting for a cricket ground – and so the first sporting tenant was the Kingsland cricket club. For the first few years of its existence, the spot could only be used during the summer months as it would flood to the point of becoming a lake during winter.

#### A kingdom is born

In 1841, around 1,200 hectares of land was gifted to the government by Āpihai Te Kawau, rangatira of local tribe, Ngāti Whātua. Over the following years, land around the area began to be traded and a suburb began to take shape. Kingsland Road – formerly Cabbage Tree Swamp Road – was one of Auckland's first roads, while the longer New North Road follows the route of an old Māori walking track that stretched to the Whau River. Kingsland's first railway station was built in 1847, and the first tram from Auckland arrived in 1903, terminating at the Page Building near the present-day train station. Across the street, in 1914, Arthur Page and his brother Charles built the Portland Building – now home to Verve HQ, and the Portland Public House, one of Auckland's coolest bars!

#### A walk through history

Today of course the suburbs are known for their ever-expanding offerings of eateries, bars, and breweries, alongside boutique stores, barbers, salons and tattoo studios, with many of these fashionable establishments residing in Kingsland's historic buildings. Kingsland's Heritage Trail allows visitors to learn of the suburb's past via smartphone technology and plaques with QR codes affixed to iconic buildings and points of interest. It takes about 40 minutes to complete.



STREET ART: MILARKY.COM

## CRAFTY - IN THE HOOD



The Kingslander | [thekingslander.co.nz](http://thekingslander.co.nz)

Come game day, go be part of the electric atmosphere at The Kingslander, catching the action live and loud on the big screens while enjoying tasty eats and refreshing drinks. It's the home of UFC, boxing, rugby, league and cricket right in the heart of eclectic Kingsland – only a stone's throw from Eden Park and a one-minute walk from the train station.

470 New North Road, Kingsland



Morningcider | [morningcider.co](http://morningcider.co)

Morningside is a land full of locals that live on the bright cider life. Its good folk are proud of their cool, bustling neighbourhood and epic street art. The Morningcider gang launched Auckland's first cider bar, Side Hustle, smack in the heart of the 'hood, along with NZ's first urban apple orchard. They love cider, and love that you love it too.

16 McDonald Street, Morningside



Saint Leonards | [saintleonards.co.nz](http://saintleonards.co.nz)

They put their hearts and souls into making the best beer possible – then created the best environment for you to enjoy it! Saint Leonards beer is available exclusively at their gorgeous garden bar, to be enjoyed in the shade of a lovely herb garden. The choice the beer choice is plentiful and always changing, so expect new tastes with every visit.

394 New North Road, Kingsland



Urbanaut | [urbanautbeer.com](http://urbanautbeer.com)

The HQ of Urbanaut Brewing Co is the home of fresh beer enthusiasts and party professionals! The brewery is open Tuesday-Sunday for beers, burgers, brewery tours and rad times, with an ever-changing tap line-up of delicious beers brewed onsite, plus a fridge full of special releases and classic favourites for you to take home. Drop in and vibe out.

597 New North Road, Kingsland



# Marking His Territory

WORDS —  
JAMIE CHRISTIAN DESPLACES



Among Aotearoa's most talented of artists, Kairau 'Haser' Bradley is celebrated for blending graffiti with Māori art, crafting distinctive works that pay homage to both his heritage and his artistry.

PHOTO: JAMIE MCCREADY

"I grew up very immersed in Māori culture," Haser tells Verve. "Whakairo (carving) was one of my dad's many skillsets, and I was involved in kapahaka for a large portion of my childhood. Like many things, once I found graffiti, everything else in my life took a backseat."

Raised in Auckland's western suburbs, the Ngāpuhi artist's practice reaches from well beyond those early urban canvases to corporate settings and exhibitions throughout Australasia, North America, Asia, Europe, and the UK.

"In 2018, I moved to London, and it was the first time in my life that I thought to myself 'this is not my home,'" he recalls. "It challenged many of my morals."

**Have you noticed a growing interest in Māori art overseas?**

"I think it's still at a very surface level. Things like the haka and tāmoko are usually how someone will begin a conversation around Māori culture. Visually, orally, and spiritually, it's such a beautiful culture and you can tell that people want to engage with it, but they are also very cautious around cultural protocols and appropriation, so I take it upon myself to guide them through that process and, from there, point them in the direction of the answers that they seek.

"There is a growing interest and desire to have Māori representation across the globe. It's very rewarding to see those that have been representing in this space for generations finally getting the recognition they deserve, as well as shining that same light on the rest of us down here that are waiting for our chance to bloom."

*continues over page*



PHOTO: ALLAN CARPENTER

“It is not my intention to be destructive, I just enjoy the adrenaline and the mission that goes into painting graffiti.”

Upon returning to Aotearoa in 2020, Haser “found himself” back home in Pakōtai, where, sitting at the foot of “our Maunga Te Tārai O Rahiri” he told himself: “This is where I am from. This is home.”

It was a moment of self-reckoning that, he says, both caught him by surprise, and “changed my creative journey”. “Because I had spent more than two-thirds of my life immersed in graffiti, exploring the limits and the boundaries of this craft, I didn’t want to put this aside as I introduced Māori motif back into my practice,” continues the artist. “Instead of taking a traditional approach to Māori art, I pushed it through the lens of my graffiti practice. This has allowed me to build a body of work unique to me, that pays homage to both my urban and indigenous backgrounds.”

#### How has western Auckland informed your work?

“West Auckland certainly has its own DNA that is both visually and stylistically obvious. The nature of west Auckland is embedded in me, and I have always claimed Westie status. West Auckland had its own breed of graffiti writers in the 90s and early 2000s so naturally these were the artists that I looked up to. Before the internet arrived and mixed up our inspiration feed, there were still regional styles that were distinctive to suburbs, cities, and countries. There are still elements that are specific to west Auckland’s take on graffiti that are still present in my work.”

#### Can you tell us how your Kingsland piece (previous page) came to be?

“I was approached by some local business owners who were curating some murals in that space. As soon as I saw the site, I knew exactly what I wanted to paint there. I was already working with a Māori-inspired alphabet and felt that the height and length of the of that wall would fit the letters of Kingsland perfectly. I wanted it to be a tribute and landmark for the residents of Kingsland. It’s in an open lot, so it’s only a matter of time before something is built in front of it, but while it’s there, I want it to be bold.”

Boldness is a theme often associated with Haser’s art – and through its heart you’ll often see traditional shapes such as koru. “The core of my work regarding my Māori-inspired practice is the koru,” he continues. “I try not to look through Māori art like it’s a dictionary that I pull from. Instead, I wait for some of these things to present themselves in my work which is usually influenced by the story I’m trying to convey. Recently, patterns like poutama and taniko have made themselves present in my work.”

Though Haser’s father was often “creating and painting”, growing up, the artist says that he was more drawn to sport. “At the age of 11, I got my first glimpse of graffiti. It wasn’t anything glamorous – mostly scribbling my name on walls – but it was exciting.”



Over the following couple of years, Haser’s dedication to his new-found craft became “consuming”, and in 2004 he formed a small graffiti crew with “likeminded artists”.

“Both my brother and I chased professional careers,” he goes on, “mine came in the way of design, while my brother took a traditional workforce approach to become a car painter. After years of dedication to our trades, we both stepped away and pursued fulltime art careers. My brother is now a practising tattooer, moko artist, and muralist. We’ve both evolved and matured, and, where we once saw competition in each other, we now influence each other’s journeys, striving to be the best that we can be.”

#### Were you regularly in trouble during your early graffiti days?

“I like to think that I was absolutely committed to the culture, and so, of course, there was always going to be some resistance from the law. But I have always been very aware of the consequences that come with this life and have face them head on. As adolescents, I think that we are less concerned with rules and naturally want to test boundaries so there was a time when I found myself in the presence of the police more often than I wanted to be. It is not my intention to be destructive, I just enjoy the adrenaline and the mission that goes into painting graffiti.”

Though graffiti is a culture that “demands bravado and a callous-like ego”, Haser insists that he still finds it in himself to be “mindful and understanding”: “The cultural practice

around manaakitanga is embedded in me. This was hugely influenced by my elders who were always mindful of taking care of our family, our community, and our environment.”

#### Do you also feel a great sense of responsibility when creating works that depict Māori culture?

“Absolutely. But through the guidance of kōrero and wānanga (deliberation) I’m able to navigate this space with my head held high. My work is not made with the intent to profit, or to say what Māori art is and is not, but an honest journey that I share because I believe that it is important that people have as much opportunity as possible to develop a connection with who they are and where they come from.”

Regarding his studio practice, “which is what usually ends up on a community wall”, the artist says that the most recurring themes are “my fear of love, a place for my people, and my hope for a better world”. I ask Haser if he believes that art should always carry a political or cultural message, and he says that it should simply reflect the artist making it.

“It’s important to note that art should be fun as well,” he adds. “An outlet and a therapeutic exercise to feed our creative minds and free ourselves from our daily routines and frustrations. I speak about cultural and political issues because I see the need for more love and growth in spaces that mean a lot to me. But I also paint graffiti because it keeps me artistically stimulated and excited without having to take a stand.”

# A Real Community

Brother and sister Tim and Rachel Hawes believe that their family business is about more than simply selling properties – it’s about *“trust, and truly understanding what matters most to our clients”*.



“Locals looking after locals’ and ‘The Locals are in your corner’ aren’t just taglines, they embody our commitment to putting your best interests first every time,” says Tim. “For us, great real estate isn’t just about transactions – it’s about caring, connection, and community.”

“While every client’s needs are unique, the top five reasons our locals give as to why they keep coming back to us are that we are friendly, approachable, genuine, knowledgeable and experienced,” Rachel tells *Verve*.

Indeed, with a combined 50-plus years’ experience between them – including more than 15 years as owners of Kingsland’s only real estate agency – few know the business better than this multi award-winning family.

**What are some important things for homeowners to keep in mind when prepping their property for sale?**

Sit down with your trusted local real estate professional early – well before any physical refreshing it’s vital to ensure all

paperwork is up to date and reflective of any changes done by you or previous owners. These issues can take weeks or months to resolve and can lend a hand to ensure titles, LIMs and any council files are in order and there’s no last-minute surprises.

First impressions are everything. There are only seconds both online and in person to make an impact, so getting things presented as perfectly as possible from day one is essential. Timing is also everything! Real estate success is about supply and demand so if you can plan ahead, choose a time to sell that reduces your level of competition in the marketplace.

“...it’s hard to walk around the village without bumping into someone for a friendly chat.”

**What are things buyers often overlook when purchasing property in Kingsland and its surrounds?**

The relaxed and friendly vibe in our community. Although there’s been loads of changes over the past 20 years, the unpretentious, cool but not too-cool-for-school attitude is alive and well. Neighbours know each other and it’s hard to walk around the village without bumping into someone for a friendly chat.

Also, how fantastically convenient Kingsland is! A 10-minute Uber and you’re in the CBD; just over 20 minutes and you’re at the airport. Motorway access, the city cycle path, and the trains and buses make getting around the city a breeze. So many of our sales are to people moving up or across the neighbourhood – once you’re part of this community it’s a hard place to leave!

## Ray White Kingsland



We wouldn’t be here without the support of our community and valued clients.



**Tim Hawes**  
021 482 601



**Alyssa Cullen**  
022 177 6738



**Mark Prunty**  
021 224 4055



**Jo Pickering**  
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## We’re in your corner.

The Locals Limited Licensed (REAA 2008)

**What’s your favourite aspect of the industry?**

It might sound corny but it’s definitely the people. We get to be part of people’s lives at really key moments. It can be a long journey with people over many years as they make changes, or respond to changes, so working through their options and weighing it all up to figure out how to get the best outcome for them is always the end game.

**How long does it typically take to close a deal these days, given the current market?**

Ray White NZ does an amazing job of collating information, so we always have those numbers at our fingertips. For the month of October, it was sitting at 25 days to sell an auction property and 48 days for other types of marketing. Trade Me also report days on their site regularly, and for our local suburbs that was sitting at an average of 41 days for October.

**As a long-standing member of the Kingsland business community, how do you support or contribute to the local neighbourhood?**

Rachel has been part of the Kingsland business group since its inception in 2006 and worked with the then Business Society to successfully engage the business community to vote for Kingsland to become a formal Business Improvement District. She has been treasurer and secretary in her time and is on the board for the BID to this day.

With regards to being a contributing part of the community we’ve always focused on local schools and have had a very long-term relationship with Mt Albert Primary supporting and sponsoring their fundraisers and events. Tim has two girls at the school and is on the Board of Trustees, so we’re as involved as we’ve ever been now! We sponsor and assist with local events such as the Finch Street Fiesta Street Party and Neighbours Day

where the residents of Brewster and Malvern get together. We have been involved in and sponsored Neighbours Day each year since their inception – these are hosted and organised by Crave in McDonald Street. We’re also sponsors of the annual Business Bowls competition at Rocky Nook Bowls and enjoy taking part in the summer series.

**What are your favourite places to grab a coffee or a meal around Kingsland?**

We make sure we spread our love and dollars! For takeaway coffees, it’s got to be Atomic – our faces are way too familiar there! For a brunch or sit-down coffee, we love Kingsland Social, and for dinner, Taiko and Canton Cafe are hard to beat. For afterwork drinks, we’re really spoilt for choice, whether it be watching the game or some late-night fun with Citizen Park, Portland Public House, or the latest high street opening, Full Time Sports Bar and Eatery.

**What do you personally most love about being part of this community?**

Although there’s so much to love about our area, we’d have to say that the people are our favourite thing! Countless times a day we run into people we’ve known for years and have been involved in their lives at key moments. They start as clients and now are friends and we see them in our streets, at the cafes, at the pub or at the school fair. These relationships are the reason we do what we do.

437 New North Road, Kingsland  
Tim Hawes 021 482 601  
Rachel Hawes 021 485 778  
rwkingsland.co.nz

# Healing Hands

Discover Auckland's hidden gem, located upstairs of Loft Hair in Morningside, for luxurious facials, massages and more.

Based in the heart of Morningside, next door to CKB and inside local favourite salon, Loft Hair. After only three years, Megan has already made a name for herself thanks to her attention to detail and a carefully curated treatment menu of services. Client favourites include bespoke facials, Hawaiian lomi lomi massage, and lash lifts and brows!

Her renowned 'healing hands' and personalised attention ensure every client receives treatments tailored

to their needs and goals. Experience bespoke treatments that enhance your natural beauty, along with expert skincare advice. Megan Wood, with her California roots, Ritz Carlton Hawaii Resort & Spa experience, and 20 years of professional education, is dedicated to your wellbeing, guaranteeing you'll leave feeling refreshed, glowing, and confident.

1/2 Gordon Road, Kingsland



# Sun's Out, Vases Out

We catch up with Liv Wakem, founder of Kensal Flowers.



**What drew you to into the world of floristry?**

When I left school I didn't really have a clear view of what I wanted to do. I'd always had a love of flowers but never considered it as a career. I moved to London at the end of 2012 and thought it would be the perfect chance to pursue a different life path so signed up to a two-week floristry course to see if it's what I wanted to do. It was.

**Tell us about your time in London.**

After working for a few months at three very different flower shops, I was so fortunate to get a full-time job at Scarlet & Violet. Five years on and I was managing the shop, 10 florists and four full-time drivers. It was chaos but I loved it! If you're ever in London do pop in there - it's magical.

**What do you think sets your work apart from others in the floral business?**

We just source the most beautiful seasonal flowers we can. We love to support local growers which means we have access to super fresh flowers - most cut that very morning! - and also specialty flowers that aren't available to all florists through the flower auction. No two Kensal bunches are ever the same which sets us apart.

**Your absolute favourite flower?**

Oh, that's hard. Each season has its favourites. Right now, people are going crazy for peonies, but I would rather have a small bunch of sweetpeas in a vase. Dahlia season is amazing - they come in so many shapes and colours. But then there is cosmos - just a vase filled to the brim with wispy cosmos brings so much joy. I can't choose!

**What's one floral tip that everyone should know?**

Always have a good collection of vases on hand and don't 'over-vase' your flowers. Whenever we host workshops and talk about vase choice, people really hold onto this piece of advice. Your flowers should be 1.5 times the height of your vase. So, if you have a very tall vase, you'll be needing some amazingly tall blossom or branches to balance it out. Sometimes smaller is actually best.

**It's that time of year. Do you have any creative tips for incorporating fresh flowers into Christmas decor or gifts this year?**

Christmas in this hemisphere is a lovely time for flowers, but also tricky as the weather can get so warm - not complaining! If you are hosting, make sure to keep your flowers somewhere cool and keep the water topped up so

they last over those festive days. It's also quite lovely to include a little flower into your wrapping, tucking it under the ribbon.

**Kingsland has such a buzzing community - what are some of your go-to spots?**

Kingsland is such a hub in the evenings! Nanny's Eatery is right across the street from us, and you can smell the Jamaican jerk chicken - delish! The Portland Pub has a great burger special between 4-7pm, just \$8 for any burger. If you want a fun BYO, Canton Cafe is a stalwart of New North Road. Jaan does an amazing falafel kebab, it's takeaway only so perfect for us while we're working.

**What's the best part of having a business in Kingsland?**

It's a great central location for us, we can get to most parts of the city pretty easily for deliveries. But it's such a great, supportive community. We've been here for six years now and have no view to move!

507b New North Road, Kingsland



**BLACK PINEAPPLE COCKTAILS**  
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"Because life's too short to drink sh\*t drinks!"



Tonic Room | [tonicroom.co.nz](http://tonicroom.co.nz)

Tonic Room, founded in 2014 by naturopath and medical herbalist Heidi Billington, combines holistic wellness and green beauty in a modern, luxurious setting. Heidi's passionate about creating a calming, welcoming place where visitors' questions can be answered within a confidential and reassuring space.

465 New North Road, Kingsland

# EAT - IN THE HOOD



Kingsland Social | [kingsland.social](https://kingsland.social)

Enjoy a coffee, breakfast, brunch or lunch at Kingsland Social every day. One of the neighbourhood's most family-friendly establishments, you can bring your children, grandchildren and dogs while you relax read the paper or a book. Expect amazing food with quality ingredients courtesy of iconic chef, Phil Clark.

462 New North Road, Kingsland



Papa's Italian Eatery | [papas1.co.nz](https://papas1.co.nz)

From hearty pasta dishes to hot stone pizzas, each meal is crafted with love and care. As a cornerstone of the neighbourhood, Papa's is more than just a restaurant – it's a place where families gather and memories are made. Papas is a kitchen run by two chefs of Māori/Aotearoa origin – which is reflected in their dishes. This Auckland institution has been in business for 40 years!

61 Sandringham Road, Kingsland



Tiffin | [tiffin.co.nz](https://tiffin.co.nz)

Tiffin Indian restaurant was founded on two core principles: that the right mix of ingredients could create unforgettable dishes; and that the right customer service could create unforgettable experiences. Tiffin is home to premium Indian cuisine that has been savoured by locals for many years. They use only the freshest ingredients and apply authentic traditional cooking methods to produce mouthwatering delicacies.

598 New North Road, Kingsland



Taiko Kingsland | [taiko.co.nz](https://taiko.co.nz)

Located in the heart of Kingsland, right beside the train station, Taiko's experienced Japanese chefs serve a range of authentic dishes to be accompanied by Japanese beer, fine wine and sake. Taiko has been renowned for its stunning presentations and fresh sushi and has previously been named one of the Top 50 Restaurants of the Year by Metro – and we certainly agree!

460A New North Road, Kingsland



RayWhite

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7 New Bond Street



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\*Just a few of Robyn's memorable and recent Kingsland sales, she holds the area price record for Kingsland and multiple street price records.

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Robyn Ellson, Ray White Mt Eden

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# A Family Affair

The Kennedys take a road trip aboard VW's glorious campervan, the California Ocean.



## **Dad!**

As a child in the early 70s, I remember my uncle's old VW Kombi. It was the most exciting thing in the world to hear him approaching - the unmistakable clatter of his Kombi climbing the steep laneway to my grandparents' house! He would leap out like a circus performer and the hot mechanical oily animalness of the thing would fall suddenly silent. The privilege and wonder of being able to utilise this great machine and the freedom and hope and that it represented

was wonderful. So, I couldn't wait to now share this California Ocean adventure with my wife and children, too.

Unlike the Kombi, the performance is fabulously smooth - the turbo-diesel engine and seven-speed automatic gearbox deliver a seamless performance. What's conveyed is a capable powertrain with agency to deliver everything that's needed, and the attractive mag wheels and their mid-profile tyres render a tangibly enjoyable road-feel

“Beyond the highway, its practicality excels. Not only is it able to be driven like a car, but it also comfortably sleeps four.”

to the driving experience. The passing-lane performance of the California Ocean simply and silkily extends the business-as-usual cruising competence and is so smooth that it feels almost like a continuously geared electric machine. Getting to the campsite is enjoyable, safe, smooth, and connected for everybody.

Beyond the highway, its practicality excels. Not only is it able to be driven like a car, but it also comfortably sleeps four, and delivers fully in the urban environment, perfect for trips to the supermarket, collecting friends from the airport, or heading to lunch. It attracts plenty of positive comments as well.

This camper brims with neat features, with heaps of storage and the likes of digital touchscreens. Having an old-school 'yankable' floor-mounted handbrake is a particularly lovely touch.

## **Mum!**

I don't really consider myself a 'car person' - or any vehicle for that matter! - but how I enjoyed our couple of days with the California Ocean. Everything is so well thought out, cute, and easy to use. The pop-up bed up top opens with a touch of the button, and the 'downstairs' bed appears with a simple pull of a strap.

As well as being a smooth drive, it is super spacious, with plenty of leg room front and back, as well as boasting plenty of surprises in its nooks and crannies! I was really surprised by how easy it is to drive; it didn't feel like a van and was easy to manoeuvre in smaller spaces.

## **Big sis!**

The upstairs sleeping space is surprisingly nice! I always feared that these would be like little hot air pockets with little ventilation, but the fly-screened unzippable windows on three sides make it breathable, cool, and comfortable. I found the mattress soft and the headspace ample (with feet towards the back of the car).

I am notorious in our family for feeling car sick so was pleasantly surprised to feel a bit less so due to the extensive leg room in the backseat (also aided by wide windows). It also has its own adjustable table which was very helpful for some impromptu NCEA study as we drove.

It can often be a pain trying to get music sorted when you're on the road, but the California Ocean's system was not too finicky, and the touchscreen was instantly connected to my phone and very workable. I also loved the great views of the countryside through the generous windows all around!

## **Little bro!**

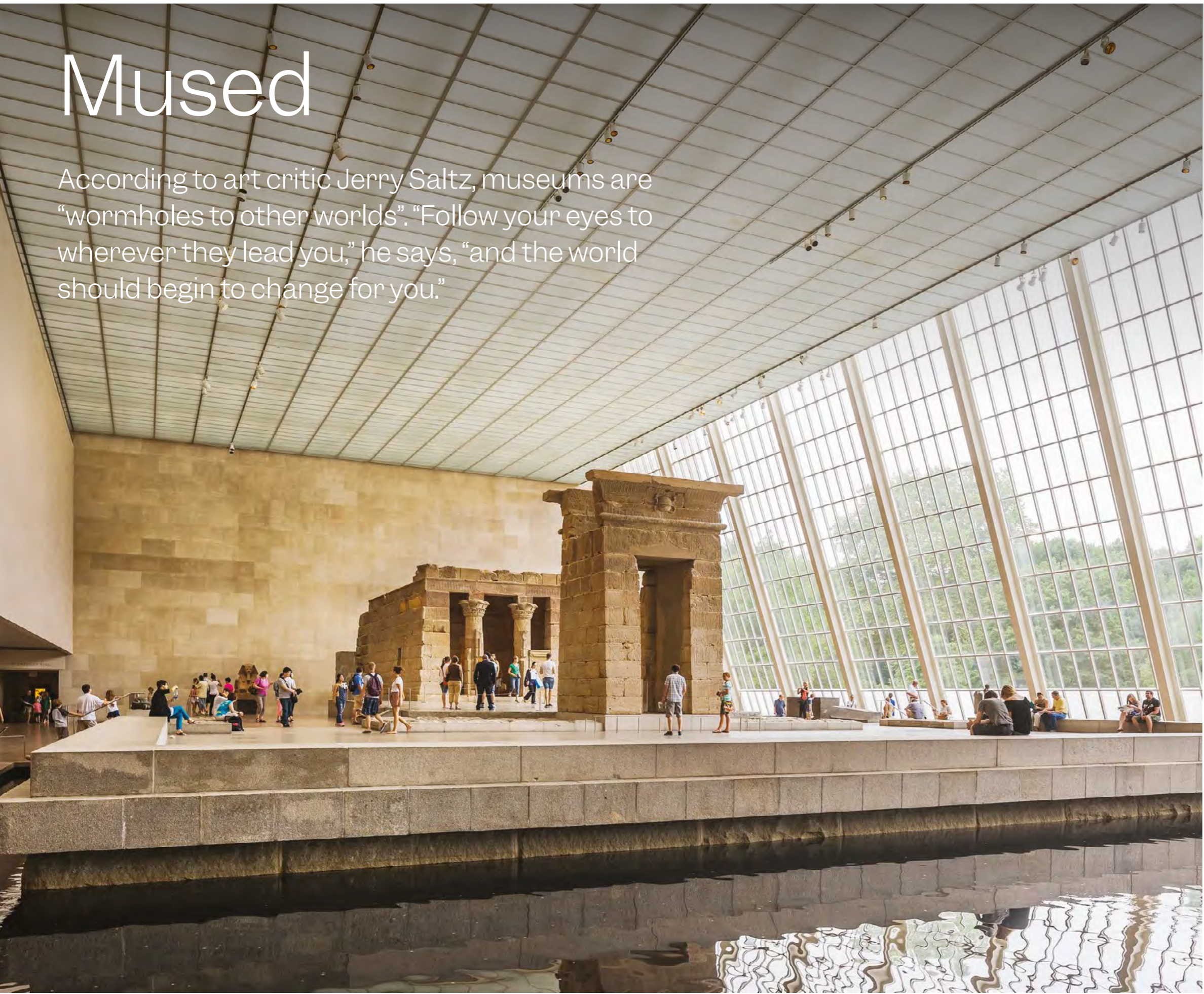
My first thought was that it's like a Transformer how the whole roof top goes up to make a bedroom! Riding in the front is very comfortable, and the seat has armrests. And the control panels and touchscreens are like you would find in a spaceship!

To find out more visit [volkswagen.co.nz](http://volkswagen.co.nz)



# Mused

According to art critic Jerry Saltz, museums are “wormholes to other worlds”. “Follow your eyes to wherever they lead you,” he says, “and the world should begin to change for you.”



PICTURED: THE MET, NEW YORK

And so, over the following pages, we celebrate some of the world's greatest museum and gallery spaces, and chat with some of the passionate people behind them.

## The Met

New York, USA

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, commonly referred to as The Met, is among the most revered museums in the world. Established in 1870, it's the largest art museum in the Americas, home to a two-million-strong collection and welcoming more than six million visitors a year. Some of its pieces are 5,000 years old, a timeline that spans from Ancient Egypt to Picasso.

Dr Maia Nuku is the first indigenous Pacific person to hold a curatorial position at The Met, overseeing 2,800 works of Māori and Pacific art which comprises taonga from 20,000 islands and around 1,800 different cultures and language groups. “The artworks range from ancestral treasures created three to four hundred years ago, to contemporary artworks produced just last year,” she tells Verve.

### Can you tell us how Pacific artifacts and art are curated and presented at The Met?

Highlights of our Oceania collection include monumental architecture from the diverse cultural groups of New Guinea and a spectacular range of ceremonial sculpture from the coastal archipelagos that surround it. These exceptional artworks tell a wealth of stories relating to origins and ancestral power, performance and initiation.

The collection covers such a deep tranche of Oceania – in terms of space, and ancestral or historical time – that we can present the collection within an overarching conceptual framework grounded in Indigenous perspectives. I hope our international visitors come away with a deepened understanding of Oceania, using the art as a key to unlock the unique coordinates of Pacific cultures and unpack its political and colonial histories.



PICTURED: OCEANIC GALLERIES, THE MET, NEW YORK

**How do you see the role of museums like The Met in fostering cultural exchange between New Zealand and other countries?**

We offer an important international platform to showcase the arts of Oceania – and profile the narratives that are at the center of the Pacific experience. That is meaningful in a city like New York where the United Nations and Forum for Indigenous Peoples convene regularly. The museum receives over six million visitors a year, many of whom have never encountered Māori or Pacific art before, so the Oceania collections play a huge role in leveraging interest in the region, and raising the profile of our arts and cultures which has exponential economic and political impact. I also believe the *taonga* heighten the opportunity to lead a global conversation about stewardship of resources, of the ocean and its islands.

**What kind of feedback have you had regarding Māori exhibits?**

Audiences find the art dynamic and engaging. It is a delight to see artists, scholars, historians, and schoolkids engaging with Māori and Pacific art in a very direct, unfiltered way. In 2023, we organised a touring exhibition of 130 highlights from our collection of Oceanic art 'The Shape of Time: Art and Ancestors of Oceania from the Metropolitan Museum of Art'. The artworks travelled to China and the Gulf – and audiences were completely intrigued by the art acknowledging that it was completely unfamiliar to them. They were captivated and keen to understand and learn more.

Three Māori friends accompanied me to open the exhibition. The response to their participation in the opening ceremonies and workshops was phenomenal. These artworks were amazing cultural ambassadors for Aotearoa and the Pacific, and it was incredible to witness.

**Are there any upcoming exhibitions or events that you can share?**

In spring 2025, we will unveil new galleries for the arts of Oceania within a 40,000-sq-ft wing in the southwest corner

of the museum. It's the culmination of almost 10 years of planning and development so it's an incredible feeling to be in the final stages of this major renovation project and I'm really excited for the opening! Our collection of Oceanic art is newly presented in a light and uplifting setting with refreshed displays that are exciting and engaging. The monumental scale and soaring ceilings of the newly designed space feels majestic. It is light due to an impressive threshold window that looks out onto Central Park. The art feels dynamic and fresh, reflecting the rich history of creative expression and innovation that is emblematic of the region. Even the 18th and 19th century artworks look and feel contemporary!

The galleries will be animated with the voices of Māori and Pacific artists and cultural practitioners who have shared their knowledge with us, recording stories, chants, poems and songs pertinent to specific works in the collection. As curator, I have chosen to foreground Indigenous perspectives throughout the galleries – so that visitors can get a sense of the unique ways that Māori and Pacific peoples navigate the world and think about life.

This *mahi* is a continuation of *Te Maori* – the landmark exhibition that The Met hosted in 1984 which established significant new precedents for consultation and shared decision-making between Indigenous communities and museums. I'm always thinking of the importance of this legacy, ever since I joined the museum.

*Maia* was the recipient of the 2023 Kea World Class New Zealand Supreme Award. Her book, *Oceania: The Shape of Time, is out now.*

## National Museum of Anthropology

Mexico City, Mexico

Mexico's most visited museum, the National Museum of Anthropology was built in 1964 to showcase the nation's ancient works. Within the museum's 23 permanent exhibit halls shine iconic artefacts such as the Sun Stone – or Calendar Stone – which depicts the five consecutive worlds of the sun from Aztec Mythology, and the enormous Olmec heads which are believed to represent the rulers of Olmec – Mexico's first major civilisation.

## Natural History Museum

London, UK

Millions of years' worth of history awaits by way of 80 million specimens at the Natural History Museum, one of the most prestigious institutes in the world. Opened in 1881 in a purpose-built Romanesque cathedral, unmissable attractions include a huge diving Blue Whale skeleton named Hope; prehistoric fossils, volcanic simulations and artefacts explaining human evolution; the Darwin Centre; and a tropical butterfly house. The *Wildlife Photographer of the Year* is among its most popular regular exhibitions.



PICTURED: NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON



PICTURED: VAN GOGH MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM

## Van Gogh Museum

Amsterdam, Netherlands

Dedicated to the life and works of the great Vincent van Gogh, this museum houses the world's largest collection of his letters, paintings, and drawings. Pieces range from his early, unrefined portraits of peasants in his homeland through to his later years in France. Among the most famous paintings on display are 'Sunflowers' and 'Wheatfield with Crows', finished shortly before his suicide. There are also works by contemporaries like Gauguin and Monet.



## Museum of Memory and Human Rights

[Santiago, Chile](#)

Positioned in the Chilean capital, the Museum of Memory and Human Rights honours the thousands of victims that suffered imprisonment, torture, and death under the appalling dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet which stretched from 1973 to 1990. The museum, which aims also aims to promote human rights and democracy, is a striking piece of architecture, most notably its glorious copper facade.



PICTURED: MUSEUM OF MEMORY AND HUMAN RIGHTS, SANTIAGO



PICTURED: HAKONE OPEN-AIR MUSEUM, HAKONE

## Museum of Latin American Art of Buenos Aires

[Buenos Aires, Argentina](#)

This iconic institution, usually referred to as Malba, is dedicated to contemporary Latin American art, including paintings, sculptures, and drawings, as well as a substantial film and photography archive. Prominent permanent collections include works by Diego Rivera and Frida Kahola, and the modern, airy building also hosts regular world-class exhibitions from overseas, too.



PICTURED: MUSEUM OF EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES, CAIRO

## Museum of Egyptian Antiquities

[Cairo, Egypt](#)

Usually simply referred to as the Egyptian Museum, this is truly one of the world's most magical attractions, housing a host of ancient artefacts including treasures of Tutankhamun. The museum opened in 1902 in the heart of Tahrir Square, designed by the French architect Marcel Dourgnon, and is home to the world's oldest and largest collection of Pharaonic antiquities. An extraordinary journey through Egypt's rich history.

## The Pretoria Art Museum

[Pretoria, South Africa](#)

Opened in 1964 at a time when other regional museums were working to assemble European art, the Pretoria Art Museum's sole focus is to promote local art. Its permanent collection ranges from 17th-century pieces to contemporary works by legendary South African artists like Pieter Wenning, Henk Pierneef, Frans Oerder, Anton van Wouw and Gerard Sekoto. The museum also offers educational programmes and receives plenty of visiting exhibits including urban art, sculptures, prints, and ceramics.

## The Palace Museum

[Beijing, China](#)

In terms of sheer scale at least, this one's by far the most impressive on the list. The Unesco-listed Palace Museum, more commonly referred to as the Forbidden City, sits within 3.5km of citadel walls within China's capital, and is the country's largest and best-preserved collection of ancient buildings and artefacts – bigger than both the Vatican and the Kremlin. It's history spans six centuries, and it was home to 24 emperors.

## Hakone Open-Air Museum

[Hakone, Japan](#)

Positioned in Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park, this open-air museum's purpose is to promote sculpture to the public. The scenic, undulating surroundings – dotted with streams, trees and ponds, and with panoramic sea and mountain views – serve as the ideal, immersive backdrop to admire abstract works by local and international artists. The contemporary museum also houses both sculptures and paintings, including a hall dedicated to Picasso.



PICTURED: FORBIDDEN CITY - PALACE MUSEUM, BEIJING



PICTURED: TRICERATOPS: FATE OF THE DINOSAURS AT MELBOURNE MUSEUM. PHOTOGRAPHY: EUGENE HYLAND. SOURCE MUSEUMS VICTORIA.



PICTURED: MELBOURNE MUSEUM AND ROYAL EXHIBITION BUILDING. PHOTOGRAPHY: NAOMI ANDRZEJESKI. SOURCE MUSEUMS VICTORIA.

## Melbourne Museum

Melbourne, Australia

The incredible Melbourne Museum precinct is home to the renowned Museums Victoria Research Institute, the UNESCO World Heritage listed, Victorian-era Royal Exhibition Building, and IMAX Melbourne – with the largest screen in the southern hemisphere! Positioned in Carlton Gardens, Melbourne Museum showcases an array of exhibits including natural history, First Peoples cultures, science, and technology.

New Zealand-born Lynley Crosswell is the CEO and director of the parent body Museums Victoria. “Across our museums, we had 3.7 million visitors last year,” she tells Verve. “That puts us around number 11 in the world for museums. Today, you really need to give people an experience.”

Standout experiences at Melbourne Museum, Australia’s home of dinosaurs, include Horridus the *Triceratops*, Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, and innovative exhibitions such as the upcoming *Antopia* that reveals the hidden world beneath our feet by allowing guests to ‘shrink’ to the size of an ant!

**Is technology playing an ever-greater role in the museum and exhibition space?**

Technology is there to enhance the narrative, it’s really important to remember that. These digital, immersive experiences are ubiquitous around the world now. It’s all

about working out how to combine the science, the research, the collections, the history, and the culture in ways that are innovative and creative. Within Victoria, our organisation is the largest provider of education outside of the Education Department. We engage with every local government area across the state.

**Can you tell us about the Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre?**

First Peoples’ living history and culture is very much at the heart of our practice. I’m genuinely humbled by – and appreciative of – the support and guidance from the community and the elders – we also have the board subcommittee the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee. The centre itself is all about Aboriginal Australian culture here in Victoria, and beyond. Mid-next year we’ll be opening a new exhibition – our largest, permanent exhibition ever staged – that will be a multi-sensory experience that celebrates biodiversity with a First Peoples’ narrative which will offer a whole new dimension to give a more holistic insight.

**As well as community collaboration, do you also work with other Australian and international museums?**

Yes, frequently. We work really closely with the Natural History Museum in London – we’ve had a couple of exhibitions out from them recently. We’re also in the initial stages of



PICTURED: CHILDREN'S GALLERY AT MELBOURNE MUSEUM.  
PHOTOGRAPHY: TINY EMPIRE COLLECTIVE. SOURCE MUSEUMS VICTORIA.



PICTURED: BUNJILAKA ABORIGINAL CULTURAL CENTRE AT MELBOURNE MUSEUM. PHOTOGRAPHY: TINY EMPIRE COLLECTIVE.  
SOURCE MUSEUMS VICTORIA.



PICTURED: LYNLEY CROSSWELL, MUSEUMS VICTORIA CEO AND DIRECTOR.  
SOURCE: MUSEUMS VICTORIA.

A highlight is heading to the top of the dome – which you reach via a gallery that tells the history of the building with some beautiful objects from the first exhibition of 1880.

co-development of an exhibition with them and soon we're hosting one from Auckland. These collaborations are really important because we're at the bottom of the planet!

**And you even have a UNESCO World Heritage site by way of the Royal Exhibition Building?**

That is just such a wonderful experience. A highlight is heading to the top of the dome – which you reach via a gallery that tells the history of the building with some beautiful objects from the first exhibition of 1880. The height of the dome is around eight stories, with a lovely perspective of the gardens and all the way out to Port Phillip Bay. And afterwards you can have a Devonshire tea. During the warmer months, there's the opportunity for sunset viewings.

**Presumably the IMAX isn't just for Hollywood movies?!**

You can visit IMAX Melbourne or have a joint IMAX-museum experience. During Covid, we acquired a glorious *Triceratops* fossil, whom we've called Horridus. It's the world's most complete and finely preserved *Triceratops*, so well preserved that the contents of its last meal were still in there! We've been able to scan the skull cavity and then 3D-print the brain – which is really very small! So, researchers have finally been able to understand how it walked and moved and other interesting things. Horridus is in one of the galleries on the ground floor, and you can then go and see an IMAX movie about how this creature roamed the Earth.

**What's your favourite part of the museum?**

That's like picking a favourite child! But there is a really special place in the Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre that is Bunjil's Nest. Inside there is a kinetic sculpture of Bunjil, who is an eagle-like Creation ancestor, and you can hear about Bunjil's story as you watch the beautiful image gently moving. It's incredibly profound and moving.

**And finally, what are you most looking forward to for next year?**

As well as *Antopia*, we have a major new permanent exhibition opening which I think will be the one of the finest examples of a contemporary natural history gallery anywhere. The other one that we're really excited about is *LEGO® Star Wars: The Exhibition*. We have over eight million LEGO bricks and there will be some incredible objects from the movie. The world-first premiere will be right here in Melbourne, and we will of course utilise the moment to talk about galaxies and star systems and engage with science and the natural world.

**Need we ask when that one starts?**

May the fourth, of course!

*Museums Victoria offers guided tours of Melbourne Museum and the Royal Exhibition Building, where you can find out more about iconic collection items, the history of Victoria, and the history of the museum itself. Find out more at [museums.victoria.com.au/museums-victoria-tours](https://museums.victoria.com.au/museums-victoria-tours).*



This uber-cool and thoroughly contemporary beach house celebrates its position on the banks of Plettenberg Bay's Keurbooms Lagoon in the best way possible. Warmed from the outside by the balmy Plett sun and from within by the vibrant energy of the family that lives here, the home is a seaside sanctuary of the highest order.

WORDS —  
SALLY RUTHERFORD

PHOTOGRAPHY —  
GREG COX

# THE DUNE HOUSE



Despite its very sleek modern lines, the Dune House – with its weathered wood cladding, organic textures and nude palette – merges effortlessly with the flow of the natural dune landscape it occupies.

Previous page: Part of the requirements when building the home was that it should look as though it had been extruded from the dune. To this end, the vertical wood cladding has weathered naturally to a silvery hue that matches precisely the tone of the surrounding indigenous grasses and shrubs.

Left: Weathered wood panelling and sliding louvred steel shutters filter the light flooding into the generous open-plan spaces in The Dune House via enormous windows, which frame the striking views in every direction.

Above: The open-plan living space has a wonderful flow that serves this very sociable family to perfection, and striking views of the lagoon and the ocean beyond.



No holiday here is complete without the entire family – plus a generous dollop of friends of all ages.

Left and above page: The inviting pool deck – complete with heated saltwater pool and hot tub – is cool and relaxing. There are masses of seating options, from the built-in banquette to the rattan hanging chairs, butterfly chairs and loungers. The large refectory table and benches are perfectly positioned for alfresco meals in the dappled shade of the slatted-wood pergola.

This page: The streamlined built-in galley kitchen in the open-plan upstairs living space is so sleek and streamlined you almost don't notice it. Displaying all-white crockery and grouping glasses and items of similar textures allows the open shelving to appear blissfully uncluttered. Grey stone floors echo the cool stainless-steel table, while the pale wooden cabinetry and dining chairs add warmth and Scandi chic.

Right page: The kitchen opens to the outdoor living space via a large island with Hans Wegner Wishbone-inspired bar chairs. This is where everyone gathers for the morning, and David commands the kitchen, handing out pancakes and 'hangover' omelettes.

**Get the look with Resene**

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- Resene Twine
- Resene Grey Nickel





**Get the look with Resene**

- Resene Essential Cream
- Resene Green Home
- Resene Colorwood Rock Salt

Left: There is a clever simulation of a four-poster bed in this double guest bedroom in which diaphanous curtains are suspended from metal rails flush with the ceiling.

This page: Each en-suite bathroom has a totally private alfresco shower – sheer luxury.



# Colour Trends 2025

In 2025, colour trends for modern homes are set to embrace nature, individuality, and innovation, creating a balance between calmness and bold statements.

Resene's palette offers perfect matches for these themes, blending timeless neutrals with those more adventurous hues.

Nature-inspired tones will dominate interiors and exteriors, reflecting a growing connection to the environment. Expect to see greens like Resene Bitter and Wasabi, alongside earthy browns such as Leather and Sambuca. These hues bring a grounding effect, echoing forest and earth tones.

Muted, warm tones such as dusty pinks and soft terracotta are making a sophisticated comeback. Resene Dust Storm and Copper Rust create spaces that feel both elegant and comforting.

These shades work beautifully with natural light, adding warmth and depth.

For those drawn to moody sophistication, deeper jewel tones will shine. Gorgeous blues like Resene Rip Tide and purples like Deep Koamaru are ideal for statement walls or colour drenching, where a single hue envelops an entire space, including trims and ceilings.

Finally, neutrals with a twist offer versatility. Resene Half Tea and Thorndon Cream provide subtle warmth, pairing effortlessly with bolder shades for a contemporary look.

These trends align with a broader focus on blending functionality with aesthetic appeal, catering to a desire for spaces that feel both personal and timeless. By utilising Resene's eco-friendly paints, homeowners can embrace and enjoy these trends in a sustainable manner.



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# Build & Construct

buildandconstruct.co.nz

When weighing up options as to what builder to contract for your next renovation, it's important to choose someone who can adapt with the project. Enter Harry Clark and Nick Hern, a salt-of-the-earth pair of carpenters whose shared passion for quality craftsmanship and honest hard work, has, over the years, evolved into a thriving business. We sat down with the boys and had a yarn about what makes them tick...

## What inspired you to pursue a career in carpentry and building?

**N:** I was drawn to carpentry because I've always had a passion for working with my hands and creating something that's both functional and beautiful. There's something really satisfying about seeing a project come together from the ground up and knowing that you've put in the work. It's more than just a job, it's about turning ideas into realities.

**H:** For me, it's about building things that last. Carpentry gives you a chance to create something meaningful and durable. There's pride in the craftsmanship and the hard work that goes into every build, and that's what initially inspired me and keeps me going.

## How do you balance functionality with aesthetics when designing a new space?

**N:** It's about understanding what the client needs from the space and then combining that with materials and a design that looks great. We



focus on creating spaces that aren't just beautiful but practical to live in. Functionality is just as important as the visual appeal, and we always aim for that balance.

**H:** I'd say we approach each project with the idea that every detail matters. A home can be visually stunning, but it needs to work with the client's day-to-day lifestyle. We make sure the layout and materials support that function while delivering a polished look.

## What's the most rewarding project you've worked on, and why?

**N:** One of the most rewarding projects was a custom home we built for a family who'd been dreaming about it for years. Seeing their reaction when they walked in for the first time was priceless. It's moments like those that remind you why you're in this line of work.

**H:** I'd have to say a large-scale renovation we did on a heritage property. It was a challenge to keep

the original charm while upgrading the structure, but the end result was worth it. It's rewarding to preserve a piece of history while modernizing it for the next generation.

## How do you manage client expectations and ensure open communication throughout a project?

**H:** Communication is key from the start. We're upfront about potential challenges and timelines, and we encourage clients to ask questions at every stage. The only issues that can't be resolved are the ones not discussed.

**N:** Exactly. We make sure our clients are informed every step of the way, so there are no surprises. It's about transparency, which builds trust.

## What trends are you noticing in home renovations and builds right now?

**N:** We're seeing a big trend in open-plan living spaces and indoor-outdoor flow, which is perfect for Kiwi lifestyles. Clients are also asking for more natural



materials, like timber and stone, that bring warmth and texture to the space.

**H:** I'm definitely seeing a lot more interest in warm, earthy colours – people are moving away from the all-white look and leaning toward shades that feel cosy and grounded. Lighting's also a big focus now, with clients wanting options that are flexible, like dimmable lights and a mix of soft and direct lighting. It really helps create a space that feels welcoming and can shift to fit different moods or activities.

## How do you handle challenges, such as budget constraints or unexpected issues during construction?

**N:** It's all about planning and flexibility. We work closely with our clients to set a realistic budget upfront, and if unexpected issues arise, we make adjustments while keeping the client informed. Open dialogue keeps things running smoothly, even when there are bumps in the road.

**H:** We approach every challenge with a solution-focused mindset. Budget constraints don't have to mean compromise on quality; we can often find creative ways to meet the budget without cutting corners.

## Can you share some insider tips on how to choose the best materials for a project?

**N:** Start with quality over cost. Cheap materials can lead to bigger issues down the line. We always recommend investing in durable, trusted materials,

and we're happy to guide clients in selecting the best options for their needs.

**H:** Also, consider the maintenance required. Some materials may look great initially but might require more upkeep. Choosing low-maintenance materials can be worth it in the long run for both durability and aesthetics.

## What advice do you have for homeowners considering a major renovation or custom build?

**H:** Planning is everything. The more thought you put into what you want and need from the space, the smoother the process will go. A clear vision helps us bring your ideas to life effectively.

**N:** And don't hesitate to ask questions. The better we understand your expectations, the more tailored our work can be. A major renovation is a big investment, so don't rush any decisions.

## How do you see the carpentry and building industry evolving over the next few years?

**N:** I think we'll see even more emphasis on sustainability, with green building practices becoming standard. We're also likely to see smarter home designs that integrate technology seamlessly.

**H:** Agreed, and I'd say the demand for skilled craftsmanship will continue to grow. People are looking for quality and longevity, and builders who can offer that will be in high demand.



*Build & Construct is a New Zealand-based carpentry business that specializes in renovations, extensions, and new builds. They focus on delivering high-quality craftsmanship and transparent communication throughout the building process. A member of the New Zealand Certified Builders Association, Build & Construct offer services for a wide range of construction needs, from new homes to smaller projects like decks and fences.*

To connect with the boys email [info@buildandconstruct.co.nz](mailto:info@buildandconstruct.co.nz).



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Whole-Home Comfort

# Whisper -Quiet

In today's high-end homes, the demand for both comfort and elegance is redefining climate control.

Bulky, wall-mounted heat pumps are being replaced by sleek, centralised ducted air conditioning systems that blend effortlessly into your interior design. At the heart of this transformation is the KX Micro Series by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, offered by OneAir. Designed for discerning homeowners, this revolutionary system ensures perfect comfort all year round, with whisper-quiet performance and a design so discreet, you'll barely know it's there.

#### Discreet Design

Unlike wall-mounted heat pumps, the KX Micro series takes a minimalist approach. With indoor units installed into ceilings, only slim, stylish grilles remain visible on your ceiling or walls, preserving the aesthetics of your living spaces. Even with minimal design, the system can deliver perfect temperature control throughout your home. Additionally, the KX Micro series is also compatible with advanced zoning technology, allowing you to tailor the comfort of your home. Turn off unused rooms to conserve energy or give individual rooms their own temperature controls, ensuring every family member enjoys their ideal environment all year round.

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Gone are the days of oversized outdoor units dominating your external wall. The KX Micro boasts a compact outdoor unit measuring just 845mm in height - nearly half the size of traditional systems - making it ideal for under-deck installations or other discreet locations. And with a single-



fan design that greatly reduces operating noise, you and your neighbours can enjoy serenity without compromising indoor comfort performance.

#### Built to Perform, Designed to Last

The KX Micro series reflects Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' legacy of engineering experience. Designed to perform in the most demanding environments on earth, every system is crafted to ensure reliability and comfort, no matter where you live in NZ. With commercial-grade components at its core, the KX Micro delivers outstanding performance and durability, offering peace of mind for years to come.

#### Recognised Excellence

Following on from its inaugural award in 2023, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries has repeated its accomplishment in 2024 and won the Consumer NZ magazine's People's Choice award for Heat Pumps this year as well. This accolade reflects the brand's commitment to quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction, making the KX Micro a reassuring choice for discerning homeowners.

*Ensure your home's interior comfort doesn't compromise its style. Contact OneAir today for your personalised free consultation and quote.*

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Warkworth Ridge is a fully master-planned, future-focused neighbourhood developed by Templeton Group. Templeton Group prides itself on creating places where people want to live, and the team is driven by a wealth of experience and a meticulous attention to detail, turning property into places that inspire, serve and endure.

As a local at Warkworth Ridge you'll be able to enjoy the area's natural beauty,

amazing beaches and community of artisans, winemakers and foodies that make the area a fantastic place to live. With the tranquil Warkworth village just moments away, and the brand new billion-dollar 'holiday highway' which offers a smooth 30-minute drive back to the city when required, you'll find everything you need and want for an everyday, easy lifestyle.

It's artisan living at its finest.

Be part of this exciting new community. With sections selling fast from \$495K, don't miss out.

[warkworthridge.co.nz](http://warkworthridge.co.nz)



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done right first time, and don't settle for anything less. Choose from a range of painted coil or lifelong copper, using Continuous Spouting for your next resput or new build project will ensure a rainwater system that is not only functional but meets even the most complex of designs.

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# Home Truths

with Pene Milne



**Pene Milne is an exceptional real estate agent with New Zealand Sotheby's International Realty. She has 23 years of being a trusted advisor in the Auckland property market and is renowned for her professionalism and deep industry expertise. As we wrap up the year and embrace the festive season, we catch up with Pene to find out what makes her tick.**

**If money were no object, what's the one dream home feature or design piece you'd invest in?**

I would seek a spacious one-level apartment with views, a large well-equipped kitchen, and a laundry that incorporates a home drycleaning and steam appliance. I have such a place listed for sale, and it exudes calm and tranquillity – with all the modern make-my-life-easy components.

**What do you love most about selling real estate, and how does it influence your work?**

It's always the people. Those new connections every day and waking up not knowing what is likely to happen. That requires me to be well organised. I love selling and being able to help bring solutions to challenges. It's a big

deal for everyone selling such a major asset, and I'm asked to work for them, regardless of price point, to make that rollercoaster ride a little smoother.

**How do you usually celebrate Christmas?**

Christmas Eve became my tradition with my children when they were young. It was special to have dinner, open gifts, reflect, and have an easier fun day on Christmas Day, but still together. With them now adults, the restfulness on Christmas Day is just as important for them now, so relaxation is the theme.

**A handy shortcut for holiday entertaining?**

I'm not sure that there is a handy short cut! Unexpected drop ins are a delight, to just go with the flow. It's about the company we have, not the platter on the table. I hate waste, so I have what I have, and don't stock up 'just in case'.

**If you weren't living in Auckland, where else in the world would you like to be?**

I have a few favourites – from Sicily to the Big Island in Hawaii to the smaller Greek islands. But in the end, despite not being quite a warm enough climate for my liking, Auckland wins big time!

**What's your top tip for striking a balance between work and relaxation in such a busy industry?**

The hours are not for the faint hearted, and taking longer breaks are the only way I really get relaxation and distraction. Exercise is critical for me, and as important most days as any meeting or task I might have.

**Best time to sell... and to buy?**

Some homes do have a best month or season, but most, to be honest, can be sold when suits the seller best. For buyers, fortune favours the brave! My question is simple – why wait? If price is right, make the move and be decisive – it tends to displace other buyers.

**Property market predictions for 2025?**

It will slowly change as mortgages continue to come off short terms and buyers are free to lock in lower rates. But while prices haven't surged, they are on the move, and this is the time to buy. Suddenly, people will wake up later in the year and realise the moment has passed. Fortune favours the brave.



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# Beyond Building

WORDS –  
PAUL LEUSCHKE

Architecture is not just a building.

Everyone in the media runs stories on 'I designed my own house myself'. Yes, you did, but it's just a collection of rooms, four walls, a door, and a couple windows. Must have a window on each wall. Or I designed the house with a little help from my architect friend.

I had an architectural designer work for me. Much to his horror I called him a draughtsman. After his Christmas holidays he told us that when he started working with us, he thought we were mad, the way we spoke about houses. Apparently over the holidays he had pulled out his previous house designs and realised how farcical they were, just a collection of rooms under a roof. Shows you that a year in an architect's office can educate you into thinking differently.

I think generally architects are regarded as weird by the public, as we push the boundaries, we make changes from the status quo. We reflect the new technology or new lifestyle. Happily, these become the norm some years later.

Sadly, many housing companies are building the same house that they built 50 years ago. Moving on seems to be a slow process. Ensuites, internal access, media rooms, sculleries, and covered outdoor spaces have been added, but usually to an old plan with the same roof shape and previous facade.

I'm always amused how people want the same house they grew up in but have a brand-new car, the latest TV, every new appliance, everything new, except the

house. Why is this? Is it what they really want? Or is it that that is all that's on offer to them?

Architects are concerned with orientation, sun, views, the connection of rooms, the feel of rooms, the proportions of rooms, the material finishes of rooms, the use of rooms and special efficiency. Most architects aren't arrogant or elitist, with our clients, we just lead the charge for change and advancement.

[paul@leuschkekahn.co.nz](mailto:paul@leuschkekahn.co.nz)  
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# Design of December



BoConcept  
Santiago dining table with Seoul dining chairs



ECC  
14P by BOCCI



BoConcept  
Tone Mirror



Ghidini 1961  
Campana Brothers - Tornado Vase



LyZadie  
LETSWEAVE Round Dining Table



Ghidini 1961  
Flirt Collection - Gil&Luc Vases in brass



BoConcept  
Princeton Chair



ECC  
Gira Lamp by Santa & Cole



LyZadie  
FLOW Trivet



LyZadie  
BLACKTREEFERN Candelabra



Kovacs Design Furniture  
Lincoln settee



Resene  
Mata Hari Wallpaper  
Collection 37866-1

## A WALK THROUGH

## W A I H E K E



IMAGE: WILD ESTATE

Walk it, bike it,  
bus it, tour it...  
the Waiheke  
world is your  
oyster!

**Wild Estate:** from archery to laser claybird shooting to gumboot throwing – and more! – Wild Estate is “the most fun you can have with your clothes on”. And that’s before you get to their outstanding wines, boutique beers, and one of the island’s most imaginative restaurants.

**Adventure:** the jewel of the Hauraki Gulf is an adventure capital to boot. EcoZip adventures offer the chance to explore the island canopy by way of three 200m dual flying fox ziplines; elsewhere there are the ample opportunities to take in the wonder of Waiheke from a kayak or SUP.

**Island paradise:** rolling green hills, native forests, strings of vines, and olive groves all bordered by heavenly beaches lapped at by crystal clear waters (Waiheke translates as ‘trickling waters’). Oh, and its very own microclimate! It’s like Aotearoa’s greatest hits all squeezed onto one island.

**Hop aboard:** Foxy Lady Charters offers the island’s largest charter boat, able to host up to 18 guests and visit the isolated coves and crannies of the island that most don’t get the chance to see. Enjoy local produce and your own private swimming spots.

**Ēkōsauna:** bringing a touch of Scandinavia to the Hauraki, the ingenious ēkōsauna offers “eco-luxury on the go” by way of mobile sauna and ice baths. Rejuvenating thermal therapy like no other, it can be experienced at a bach or a beach, with a promise to connect you to both yourself, and nature. What’s more, 5% of their profits go to supporting the vital work of non-profit Whaleology.

**Kiwi:** okay, so the cute wee critters aren’t on the island just yet, but keep your fingers crossed! It was recently announced that a permit application submitted by Save the Kiwi, Ngāti Paoa, and Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki to introduce a new population of our feathered icon is under review by the Department of Conservation. If the permit is approved, remote Te Matuku Peninsula has been identified as the release site.

**Explore:** navigate the island’s plethora of hiking trails, visit the vineyards by bike (we recommend e-bikes, the island’s hillier than you think!), or take a stroll through the Waiheke Museum and Historic Village. When you’re done on land, those rich waters beg to be explored with a snorkel mask as well.

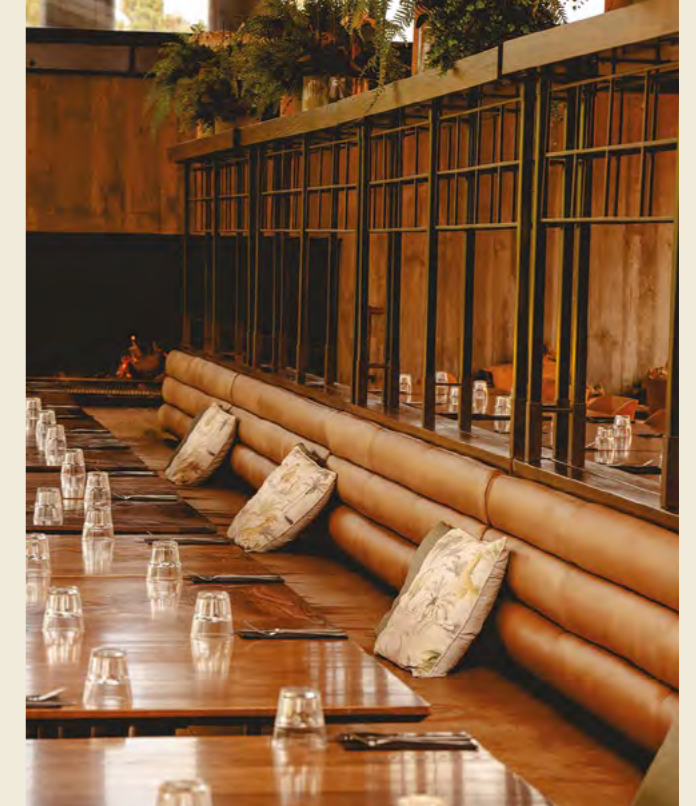


IMAGE: WILD ESTATE

## I S L A N D

**Island shopping:** since 1975, the Ostend Market has showcased Waiheke’s fun, creative, eclectic and vibrant community spirit by way of stalls that sell everything from international foods, handmade skincare products, arts, crafts, jewellery, and everything in between! Operates Saturdays 8am-1pm.

**Studio Ten81:** the island has long lured creative souls to its shores – apparent by the abundance of awesome galleries. This fine art establishment specialises in works sculpted from clay, bronze, wood, and glass, as well as paintings and prints. The father-and-son team aims to “showcase high-quality local artworks, support and foster local talent, engage the community with enriching art events and experiences, and attract tourists with unique New Zealand-made art and merchandise”.

**Location, location, location!** It’s almost hard to fathom that such a haven awaits so close to the downtown of our Supercity. Only a 40-minute ferry ride, you can even take your car over there thanks to Sealink. Or, if it’s a really special occasion, why not splash out on a helicopter!

**Awaroa Organic Vineyard:** recognised as Waiheke’s most-awarded small vineyard, their less-than-five-hectares of land hosts natural springs and native bush and organically grows all grapes for the Awaroa label. Plus, they offer olives and preserved olives from their onsite grove, too.

**Nudist:** though not under any formal designation, the eastern end of Palm Beach is an unofficial nudist beach. Known as Little Palm – or even Nudie! – Beach, it sits in a wee private bay at the western end of the sands, separated by rocks.

**Drink and dine:** from world-class wineries to boutique brewing to olive grove tours and eateries serving seafood plucked straight from the local waters, few other New Zealand destinations offer such a range of premier drinking and dining options in such a compact and spectacular setting. Walk it, bike it, bus it, tour it... the Waiheke world is your oyster!





BAYLEYS WAIHEKE

# Island Life

WORDS —  
MILLY NOLAN

*Verve* explores the world of real estate on Waiheke Island with Bayley's Waiheke Branch Manager Mark Spitz, and Jacob Heatley-Adams, Licensed Real Estate Agent specialising in residential, lifestyle, and waterfront properties.



Waiheke itself offers a mix of residential, lifestyle, rural, and commercial properties.

**Mark, can you tell us a bit about Bayleys Waiheke and its unique position in the real estate market?**  
Bayleys Waiheke is part of the Auckland group of 18 offices spanning from Pukekohe in the south to Coatsville in the north. What sets us apart is our unified approach – one example with Waiheke being such a standout location, we have over 250 agents who refer buyers and sellers to us.

As part of Bayleys Real Estate Limited, we have access to an unparalleled network of resources, expertise and tools, not just locally but nationally and internationally.

Waiheke itself offers a mix of residential, lifestyle, rural, and commercial properties. It's a dynamic, eclectic market, and we pride ourselves on being able to cater to every aspect of it.

**Jacob, you're originally from the United Kingdom, how did you end up in Waiheke?**

Our family came to New Zealand to tour in a camper van in 2019. It was supposed to be a nine-month adventure, but Covid changed everything. When the borders

closed, we found ourselves staying on Waiheke during the lockdown, and we fell in love with the island. After a couple of years back in the UK, we made the decision as a family to relocate to Waiheke permanently.

Having been in real estate for over 17 years, I was keen to continue the successful career that I had built, so once I qualified for my New Zealand real estate licence, Bayleys was a natural fit. Their collaborative team dynamic and their expansive marketing reach – including partnerships with Australia's McGrath Real Estate and Knight Frank International. Having worked alongside Knight Frank in the UK, I knew how powerful the partnership with Bayleys would be for me and our clients.

It's been a dream come true to work here and be part of this wonderful community.

**Jacob, you've now become quite involved in the Waiheke community. How does that influence your approach to real estate?**

Community is everything on Waiheke. From helping run the Sea Scouts sailing

It's a 35-minute ferry ride from our country's biggest city but feels like a world away.

programme to supporting the surf lifesaving club, I've thrown myself into island life of which I feel incredibly privileged to be a part of. It's a two-way street – when you give back, the community embraces you. That's a big part of why I love my work here. I get to engage with locals and newcomers alike, helping them find homes or properties that fit into this vibrant lifestyle. Every property here has a story as do the people behind them, and being part of that journey is very fulfilling.

**What's special about Waiheke Island from a real estate perspective?**

Mark: Waiheke is unparalleled. It's a 35-minute ferry ride from our country's biggest city but feels like a world away. The island's natural beauty is stunning, with its vineyards, olive groves, and picturesque beaches. There's also the vibrant community and the influx of visitors during the summer months when the population can close to triple. Selling real estate here means connecting people to a lifestyle – whether it's a cosy bach, a luxurious waterfront home, or a working vineyard.

**What qualities make Bayleys Waiheke a standout in the Waiheke real estate market?**

Mark: It's a combination of experience, resources, and our commitment to clients. Our team has over 150 years' collective real estate experience, which is unmatched on the island. We also leverage Bayleys' national and international network, giving our clients access to a far-reaching pool of potential buyers. Beyond that, we handle properties of all kinds – from charming original baches to multimillion-dollar estates – ensuring we're there for clients at every stage of their property journey.

**Can you give us a sense of the current market conditions on Waiheke?**

Mark: The market is certainly active, but it's a hardworking one. Transactions are taking a bit longer, but Bayleys' decades of experience help us navigate these fluctuations. We've been around since 1973, weathering everything from financial crises to market booms. Our agents are well prepared and adaptable, which allows us to continue delivering great results for our clients.

**Finally, what's your message to anyone considering buying or selling on Waiheke?**

Jacob: Whether you're looking for your first Waiheke home, an investment property, or your dream vineyard, Bayleys is here to guide you. We're deeply connected to the island and equipped with the resources and expertise to make your property journey smooth and rewarding. Waiheke isn't just a place to live – it's a lifestyle, and we're passionate about helping people discover that.

Mark: I'd add that Bayleys is about relationships. We're here for the long haul, supporting our clients throughout their property journeys. For us, it's not just about the sale – it's about making sure that we continue those longstanding bonds that are formed with our clients and that they enjoy every aspect of island life.

*For more information about Bayleys Waiheke, visit their office at 145 Ocean View Road, Oneroa, or explore current listings at [bayleys.co.nz/waiheke](https://www.bayleys.co.nz/waiheke).*

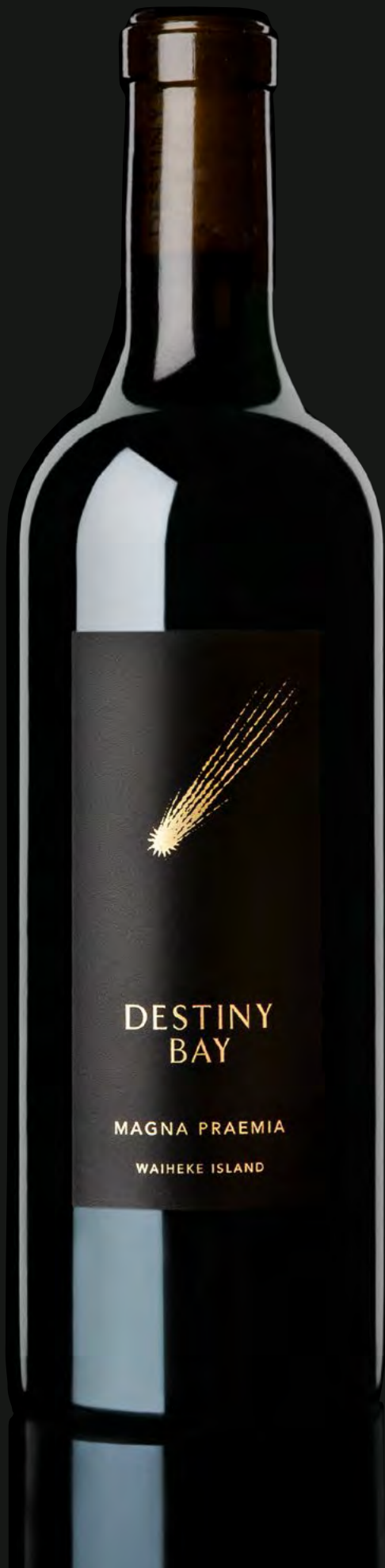


# Simply the Best

My journey into property management started some 20 years ago with a real estate company here on Waiheke Island.

“POWERFUL AND STRUCTURED...  
LIKE A FRANK STELLA SCULPTURE”

The Magna Praemia 2019  
99 points -James Suckling



[www.destinybaywine.com](http://www.destinybaywine.com)



**After the closure of this business, I decided to launch my own company: Waiheke Best Rentals & Property Management. Fifteen years later, here I am!**

My love of this business comes from dealing with clients from all walks of life. I see my position as a property manager thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding. For me, property management is about getting the job done, doing my best, keeping issues as uncomplicated as possible, having an excellent rapport

with everyone, and always ensuring the lines of communication remain open, transparent to provide a positive outcome for all. We keep up to date with any changes in the renting industry. Waiheke Best Rentals is a family-owned business, my husband Neil works within the property maintenance industry and between the two of us we make a rather good team, complementing each other's skills. Together we deliver the best customer service to our owners and tenants by getting things done efficiently.

Delivering the best customer service is paramount for my business, with 'family values' at its core. Respect, loyalty, accountability, and reliability are four more values that add to the quality customer service offered to achieve the best possible outcomes for all parties.

Having a close relationship with owners, contractors and the tenants enables me to understand their needs and cater to them in a way that ends in a win-win outcome for everyone. In the end, we are all people that want the same things: respect and understanding. Both respect and understanding are free, and, when given without hesitation, promote positive relationships. A little kindness goes a long way.

The business focuses on long-term rentals, with some owners and tenants

having been with us for a number of years, whilst we also welcome new owners on board. While the property rental business can be sporadic at times, my aim is to work hard behind the scenes to find the right property for the right tenants. Experience is the difference because we care.

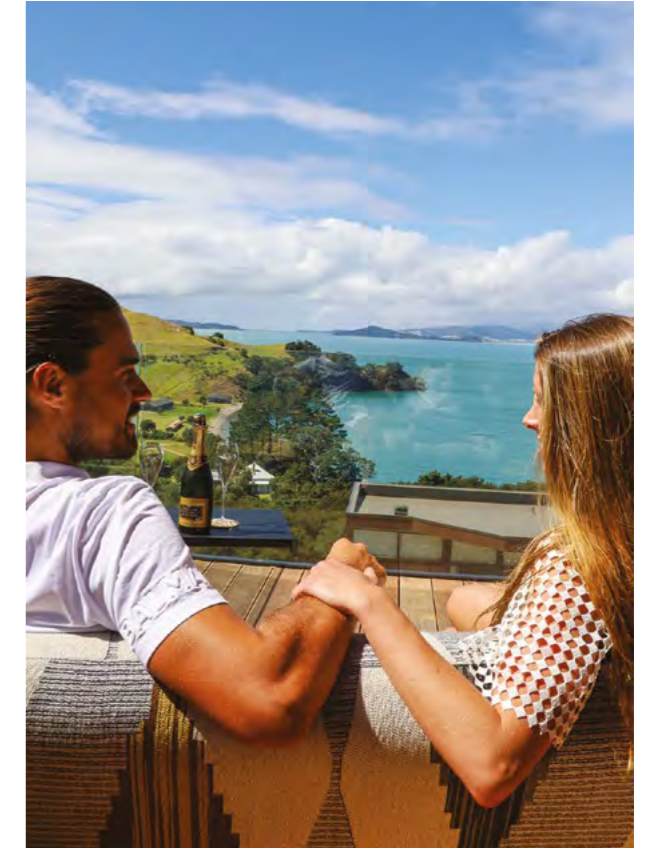
After celebrating a milestone birthday earlier this year, it's time for me to focus on other interests in my life. Working alongside me for this past year Oksy has brought with her fresh and new ideas in how we can develop the business moving forward.

To reflect on my day after work you'll see me walking around this beautiful island I get to call home. Walking gives me a chance to think through solutions, and enjoy the scenery whilst getting some exercise.

Let's chat! Call me at Waiheke Best Rentals and Property Management if you're interested in renting your property with us. We'd love to meet you.

*And remember my philosophy:  
"In a world where you can be anything... be kind."*

*Nelly Toia 021 542 124  
Waiheke Best Rentals  
& Property Management*



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*\*Terms and conditions apply. This offer is for direct rates only, excludes public holiday bookings and is subject to availability. All bookings must be made by 31 March 2025 for stays until 30 June 2025.*

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The Ultimate Summer's Day at

# Man O' War

This summer, discover Auckland's ultimate day trip with Man O' War.

Whether you're chasing adventure, looking to unwind over a long lunch, or seeking a unique escape off the beaten path, Man O' War offers the perfect summer getaway. From exploring an untouched kauri forest to savouring world-class wine and coastal-inspired menus, there's something for everyone.

Conveniently located 90 minutes from downtown, the scenic journey is part of the allure. On arrival at pristine Man O' War Bay, Forest Flight, Waiheke's



newest eco-conscious adventure awaits. This zipline and ancient kauri forest walkway is a journey like no other. After checking in at the Forest Flight Experiences Centre, a short, picturesque drive through vineyards and farmland leads to the Eastern End Viewpoint. At 210m above sea level, this lookout offers breathtaking, panoramic views across Waiheke and beyond.

Other than a short 50m walk up to the lookout, it's all downhill from there. A gentle descent via three separate ziplines and connecting boardwalk immerses you in lush, native forest with the Hauraki Gulf as your backdrop. Weave above and below the towering canopies while passionate guides share the rich history and ecology of the area. Featuring a comfortable full suit and hands-free harnesses that keep you forward-facing, Forest Flight is perfect for a range of ages and fitness levels, and an unforgettable experience to share with friends and loved ones.



Forest Flight ends just steps from Man O' War's renown beachfront Tasting Room & Restaurant. Here, you can settle in and spend the afternoon sampling their iconic wine collection with a guided tasting or paired with seasonal menus that celebrate the best of coastal-inspired dining. With a popup garden bar and lively summer entertainment lineup, you'll never want to leave.

*Make this summer one to remember with a visit to Man O' War. Bookings for Forest Flight and restaurant reservations are recommended during the busy season, so plan ahead to secure your spot. Visit [forestflight.nz](http://forestflight.nz) or [manowar.co.nz](http://manowar.co.nz) for details and to book your adventure.*

# Dining in Paradise



Seven years ago, a spontaneous conversation sparked the beginning of a remarkable journey for the owners of Arcadia, a much-loved restaurant in Palm Beach on Waiheke Island.

"My husband came home from work and said, 'Do you want to open a restaurant? I know the perfect location,' owner Rebecca Fowler tells Verve. "I said, 'Why not? Let's give it a go!'"

That leap of faith quickly turned into a labour of love, with her husband, Daniel – a skilled chef – taking charge of the kitchen, and Rebecca – with a background in front-of-house management and corporate life – overseeing the guest experience. Their entrepreneurial adventure coincided with another milestone – starting a family. "When you open a business, why not get pregnant with your first child?" says Rebecca with a chuckle. "But don't stop there; let's



have two! What a ride it has been, and still is. We wouldn't change a thing. The community and our customers have fully embraced us and our children."

#### The Arcadia Experience

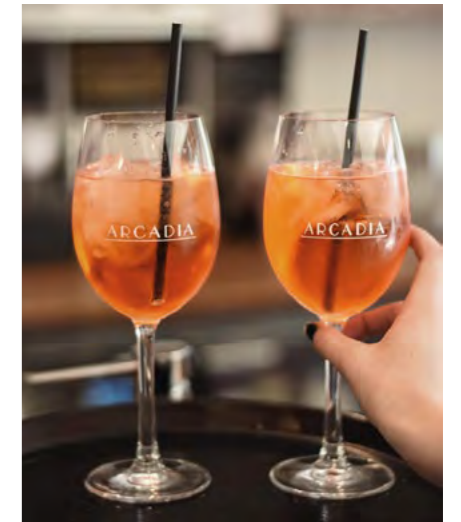
Named after the Ancient Greek Arcadia – which symbolises an idyllic, harmonious place – the restaurant sure lives up to its name.

"We felt that the meaning epitomises both the restaurant and Palm Beach," Rebecca explains. "Guests can expect an experience that blends culinary creativity, warm hospitality, and a serene setting."

Arcadia is more than a place to eat; it's a space where moments are savoured, and connections are fostered. The menu reflects Daniel's passion for fresh, seasonal ingredients, crafted into dishes that delight and surprise. The ambiance is equally inviting, with every detail designed to make visitors feel at home. Whether you're indulging in a leisurely lunch or celebrating a special occasion, Arcadia offers a slice of paradise.

#### Discover Palm Beach

Located on Waiheke Island, Palm Beach is one of New Zealand's hidden gems. With its golden sands, crystal-clear waters, and tranquil vibe, it's a destination that invites relaxation and exploration: "Palm Beach is incredibly special. It's where people come to unwind, recharge, and enjoy the simple beauty of nature."



The beach's charm perfectly complements the ethos of Arcadia.

"We're so lucky to be part of this community and to share what makes Palm Beach unique with everyone who visits."

#### A Perfect Pairing

Together, Palm Beach and Arcadia create a magical combination. The natural beauty of the beach and the warm, welcoming atmosphere of the restaurant offer an experience that lingers in your memory long after you've left.

So next time you're on Waiheke Island, don't just visit Palm Beach – stay for a meal at Arcadia. It's a family's dream brought to life, and they can't wait to share it with you.

WE-AR.com

# Harmonious

Inspired by yoga's philosophy of interconnectedness, WE-AR is more than a clothing brand – it's a way of living at one with the world.

Founder Jyoti Morningstar sets herself a dual design constraint that considers how clothes make you feel as well as how they look - she produces timeless pieces like organic yoga leggings and luxurious cashmere cardigans that blend comfort, individuality, and sustainability.

From a commitment to mindful design to sharing transparent impact data, WE-AR ensures every detail aligns with its eco-conscious values. Their KIN loyalty programme rewards customers with perks, priority access, and exclusive treats, building a gratitude circle between the brand and its community.



WE-AR reflects the vibrant, laid-back spirit of Waiheke Island. Whether in-store or online, WE-AR invites you to embrace sustainable style and live sun-kissed and connected to the natural world. "We all love being in our Waiheke store because everyone who comes in is

so relaxed and happy." says Jyoti. "It's as if the first breath of fragrant Waiheke air lets people's nervous systems reset, and they just melt into the fun of island life."

114 Ocean View Road, Waiheke



Plant Potions | [plantpotions.nz](http://plantpotions.nz)

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stonyridge.com

# Stonyridge Summer

WORDS –  
MARGOT CORRY

PHOTOS –  
JORDAN TAKA-SMITH

As a devoted wine enthusiast, I've long dreamed of visiting the great Chateaus. But while a flight to France might not be on the cards just yet, I've found a world-class alternative much closer to home. A quick, scenic 35-minute ferry ride transports me to a wine lover's paradise – Waiheke Island, home to Stonyridge Vineyard and its celebrated Bordeaux blend, Larose.

For those who share my passion, you'll know Larose isn't just a wine; it's a legend. It was the 1987 vintage

that catapulted Waiheke onto the international stage, earning the "Island of Wine" its well-deserved reputation. Today, that same pioneering spirit thrives at Stonyridge, a vineyard that effortlessly combines timeless sophistication with a relaxed island charm.

There's a quiet confidence about a place that's been at the top of its game for over three decades. From the moment you drive up and spot those dusty pink walls and lush vines, you know you're in for something special. It's a setting that invites you to linger over long, leisurely



lunches with friends, savouring fresh, unfussy dishes that stay with you long after the plates are cleared. My latest indulgence? Their South Island Wild Cockles with cream corn, coriander oil and grilled kumara sourdough, perfectly paired with the 2022 Luna Dorada Chardonnay – a match made in heaven.

What truly sets Stonyridge apart is its ability to evolve while staying true to its roots. Their new casual deck and lawn offering showcases head chef Sam Campbell's love of all things seafood; with Kiwi classics like whitebait fritters (on buttered bread, of course!), crispy squid tentacles with sriracha mayo and even fish and chips for the little ones.

No summer on Waiheke is complete without catching one of Stonyridge's iconic sunset sessions. Whether it's a local DJ spinning laid-back tunes or a headlining act like Carl Cox or Fatboy Slim, there's no better place to soak in the island vibes as the sun dips below the horizon.

Who needs a European escape when this slice of paradise is waiting just across the water?

80 Onetangi Road,  
Waiheke Island  
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Awaroa Organic Vineyard  
[awaroa.co.nz](http://awaroa.co.nz)

Tucked away on Waiheke Island, this boutique vineyard offers organic wines crafted with care for the land. Enjoy tastings, antipasto platters, and serene garden views just 25 minutes from the ferry.

324 Waiheke Road



Onetangi Beachfront Apartments  
[waihekeisland.co.nz](http://waihekeisland.co.nz)

Discover your perfect beachfront escape—choose from six fully appointed rentals with curated amenities and serene sea or garden views, ideal for creating unforgettable memories on stunning Waiheke Island.



[space] art gallery  
[spaceartgallery.co.nz](http://spaceartgallery.co.nz)

Established in 2013 [space] art gallery showcases nine Waiheke artists. Visitors are welcomed by the artists themselves, including painters, sculptors, ceramicists, and jewelers. Visit them in the heart of Oneroa Village.



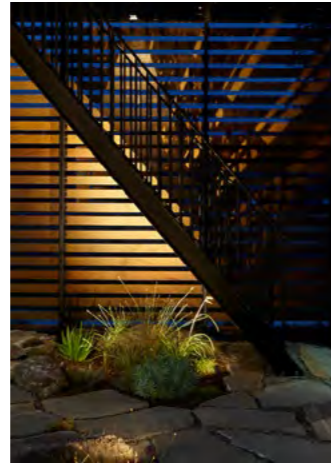
ēkōsauna  
[ekosauna.nz](http://ekosauna.nz)

ēkōsauna offers rejuvenating thermal therapy on Waiheke Island with a mobile sauna and ice baths. With weekly sessions, private hire, and wellness packages, it's the ultimate nature-inspired spa experience.



PlaceMakers Waiheke  
[placemakers.co.nz](http://placemakers.co.nz)

Based on Waiheke, PlaceMakers has everything you need for summer projects. From decking and fencing to kitchens and heating, their range ensures your home is ready for barbecue season and beyond.



Tim Feather  
 Landscape Architect  
[tfla.co.nz](http://tfla.co.nz)

Tim Feather Landscape Architecture merges artistry and environmental care, crafting sustainable landscapes inspired by New Zealand's beauty. With 30 years' experience, Tim creates outdoor spaces that honour and nurture nature.



## Walk on the Wild Side

Billed as “the most fun you can have with your clothes on”, Wild Estate invites you to take a walk on the wild side during your Waiheke adventure. This is the island's coolest winery, offering an experience unlike any other.

At The Untamed Winery they showcase every facet of their uniquely “wild” offering. From wild cuisine to daring experiences, every aspect of one's visit is designed to ignite the senses and encourage you to let go and be your free, natural self.

The array of onsite, team-building, and friendship-enhancing activities includes archery, laser claybird shooting, gumboot throwing, and more. That's before you even get to sample their “rare as hen's teeth” wines – sold exclusively at the venue – alongside their creative cocktails and craft brews.

Their daring approach extends to the kitchen too, with a “wild menu” catering to every mood and appetite. Dare to be different and let your Wild taste adventure begin!

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# Gin With a View

**Verve sits down and raises a glass with Liz Scott who co-founded Waiheke Distilling Co with her husband, Glen.**

**How did your gin journey begin?**

Over one too many gins! As a husband-and-wife team with backgrounds and interests in distilling, property, and botanicals we sought a business that would enable us to craft an artisan product in a beautiful setting that could be shared with others. Whilst crafting gin in this rugged and relatively remote landscape is logistically challenging, we're rewarded by an exceptionally clean and pure spirit that captures the essence of Waiheke.

**What do you most love about gin?**

That it's a beautiful, versatile spirit that can be enjoyed simply with tonic or soda on a lovely summer afternoon, but when the sun goes down can star in an array of opulent cocktails. We love that gin making allows us to explore the concept of showcasing the garden in a glass.

**Why do you think it has become such a popular drink in recent years?**

Gin has a fascinating history and lends itself to many varied cocktail creations. The boom in craft gins really took off when boutique distilleries were able to experiment with local botanicals to craft bespoke blends that represented their provenance.

**Could you tell us about interesting ingredients and/or gin making techniques that you employ?**

We use macadamia in our distillation, giving a lovely, silky and almost creamy mouth-feel. We also use a vegan-friendly base ethanol as opposed as to a whey base. Most of the citrus is harvested from the property, the rainwater is collected on-site and the large spray-free, bee-friendly botanical garden is our ideas factory for our blends and perfect serves.

## Waiheke's Award-winning Craft Distillery & Garden Bar

Where Summer Memories are Distilled

Escape to our slice of paradise, where artisanal gin and vodka meets breathtaking island vistas. Set on the serene Eastern side, our distillery invites you to discover the art of craft spirits through intimate tastings and behind-the-scenes tours.

Savour our signature G&Ts and masterfully crafted cocktails in our sun-drenched garden bar, paired perfectly with authentic Napoli pizzas fresh from our oven. Indulge in locally harvested island

oysters, garden-fresh salads, and abundant sharing platters showcasing local delicacies. Private events and venue hire available.

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Catherine Carbajal | BAppSc, MEnvMgt  
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# Summer Living



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3. Design Warehouse Ozzie Outdoor Fibreglass Stool
4. Design Warehouse Gigi Outdoor Large Round Ottoman
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# Guten Tag!

Christmas markets to historic Cologne and a couple of treats in between...

## Christmas Markets

There are few more romantic Christmas images than the traditional market, adorned with glowing fairy lights and awash with sounds of laughter, an air of excitement and the scents of mulled wine, mistletoe, and gingerbread treats. The traditional Christmas market, now held in cities around the world, most probably originated in Germany. Dresden proudly proclaims itself as home of "the oldest Christmas market in Germany", running continuously since 1434. Fun fact: the Christmas tree tradition originated in Germany, too.



## Mercedes-Benz Museum

Located in Stuttgart, the Mercedes-Benz Museum, is a cultural landmark that, according to its architects, "unites the past, present and future" of the iconic automobile. The incredible museum – itself a work of art – is navigated via a pair of double helix pathways that intertwine through a central atrium. One route winds through a collection of vehicle displays, the other past historical exhibits.



## Tiger and Turtle

On Duisburg's Magic Mountain awaits the incredible "walkable rollercoaster" that is Tiger and Turtle. A world first, the functional, hilltop art installation rises to 20 metres, affording visitors the chance to see from Duisburg city centre along the Rhine as far as Düsseldorf. Come nightfall, the attraction becomes even more magical when 880 LEDs trace the twists and turns of the steel sculpture which was created by artists Heike Mutter and Ulrich Genth.



## Cologne

Cologne is one of Germany's oldest cities, first founded by the Romans, and now home to one of the world's finest gothic buildings: the Unesco World Heritage Site of Cologne Cathedral (above) which took an astonishing 600 years to build. The city is also famed for its beer brewing and as the birthplace of the famous fragrance that is Eau de Cologne, which literally translates as "water from Cologne" – it was believed at the time that if drunk it would ward off the bubonic plague!

# Dresden-Style Christmas Stollen

Saxony

**SOAKING TIME:**  
12 hours

**COOKING TIME:**  
1 hour

**PREPARATION TIME:**  
30 minutes  
(make 1 week in advance)

**RISING TIME:**  
1 hour 30 minutes

**MAKES:**  
2 loaves

## Ingredients

### For the fruit mixture:

Scant 1 cup/100g chopped almonds  
1 ¼/250g zante currants  
1 ¼/250g raisins  
⅓ cup/50g candied lemon peel, minced  
⅔ cup/100g candied orange peel, minced  
½ cup/120ml rum  
2 drops bitter almond extract  
1 vanilla bean  
½ unwaxed lemon, zested  
½ unwaxed orange, zested

### For the dough:

⅔ cup/150 ml milk  
⅔ cup/90g yeast  
⅓ cup/80g honey  
4½ cups/520g cake flour  
2⅔ cups/300g plain (all-purpose) flour  
2 eggs  
2 egg yolks  
1¼ cups/400g butter, softened  
Flour, for dusting  
1½ tsp salt  
Butter, for greasing  
Flour, for dusting  
1 cup/250g clarified butter, melted  
1 cup/200g vanilla sugar

## Directions

**For the fruit mixture:** The previous day, mix the almonds, currants, raisins, peels, rum, extract, seeds from the vanilla, and grated zests in a bowl. Cover with plastic wrap, soften overnight at room temperature.

**For the dough:** Heat the milk until lukewarm. Crumble the yeast into the milk and stir to dissolve. Mix the yeast and milk with the honey and 200g (1¼ cups) cake flour to a thick dough. Cover and rise in a warm place for 15 minutes. Add the remaining flour, the eggs, egg yolks, and 100g (scant ½ cup) butter to the starter.

Knead into a dough with an electric mixer or a stand mixer with a dough hook. Gradually knead the butter into the dough, until it becomes elastic. Dust with flour and cover with plastic wrap. Let rise at room temperature for 1 hour, until doubled. Knead in the fruit, nuts and salt.

Grease two stollen molds with butter and dust with flour. Preheat the oven to 220°C/Gas Mark 7. Divide the dough in half and shape into thick ovals. Use a rolling pin to flatten a little, starting from the middle, then fold the thinner edges in to the centre. Lay the loaves seam-side up in the molds then close. Let rise for 15 more minutes.

Lower the oven to 175°C/Gas Mark 3¼, and bake for 50-60 minutes. Take the stollen out of their molds, let cool a little, and brush all over with butter while still warm. Dust with sugar and let cool completely. Wrap with aluminium foil and **rest for 1 week in the refrigerator.**



Recipe extracted from  
*The German Cookbook* by  
Alfons Schuhbeck, published  
by Phaidon, RRP \$90.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DANIELLE ACKEN

# Frisian-Style Plum and Cream Pastry

Friesland

**PREPARATION TIME:**  
30 minutes

**COOKING TIME:**  
30 minutes

**MAKES:**  
8 portions

## Ingredients

450g frozen puff pastry  
Flour, for dusting  
Scant ¼ cup/40g caster sugar  
Scant 1 cup/250g plum butter  
1 pinch ground cinnamon  
2 cups /500ml double cream  
2 Tbsp icing sugar

## Directions

Lay the two individual puff pastry sheets side by side and let thaw. Preheat the oven to 210°C/Gas Mark 6½.

Halve the pastry sheets. Lay one half sheet over the other, brush with water, then roll out over a lightly floured work surface to make two 30cm squares. Cut out two 28-30cm discs and lay each on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Prick each disc several times with a fork. Brush one sheet with water and sprinkle evenly with 20g sugar. Bake for 12-15 minutes, or until golden brown.

Shortly before baking the other disc, brush it with water, sprinkle with the remaining sugar, and cut into 8 equal sections. Separate the sections slightly, leaving a small space between them. Bake the same way as the first disc. Let both discs cool.

Shortly before serving, mix the plum butter with the cinnamon and spread an even layer over the first whole pastry disc. Whip the double cream with the sugar to stiff peaks, put into a pastry bag with a starshaped nozzle and pipe a thick even layer of the whipped cream over the plum butter. Cover the cream with the second pastry disc cut into sections. Slice into individual portions and serve immediately.



Recipe extracted from  
*The German Cookbook* by  
Alfons Schuhbeck, published  
by Phaidon, RRP \$90.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DANIELLE ACKEN



# Of Dreams and Fairytales

Join us on a magical, mysterious tour through Germany's forested mountain landscapes as we visit some of the country's most enchanting castles....

## **Neuschwanstein Castle**

One of the dreamiest structures to be found anywhere on Earth, Neuschwanstein Castle – or Schloss Neuschwanstein, as it's called in German – translates as New Swan Stone, named after the medieval tale *Swan Night* – a fitting moniker given its cloud-kissing hilltop position in the Bavarian Alps. The castle, famed

for its white limestone exterior and contrasting blue turrets served as inspiration for the Sleeping Beauty Castle in Disneyland. Construction of the castle began in 1868, commissioned by King Ludwig II of Bavaria. Travellers visiting Neuschwanstein Castle must get tickets from the nearby village of Hohenschwangau.





#### Eltz Castle

Positioned in its evocative namesake forest, Eltz Castle is regarded as among Europe's most beautiful. The 900-year-old structure – remarkably unaffected by the continent's countless wars – has been in the same family since its inception, with many of its original furnishings still there. Eight 35-metre towers rising from the massive rock upon which it is perched add to its medieval fairytale magnificence, while inside awaits European artworks, suits of armour, and treasures of silver and gold. The surrounding Eltz Forest is also an official nature reserve.



#### Heidelberg Castle (above)

A striking symbol of German history, Heidelberg Castle comprises magnificent ruins that rise defiantly above the Neckar River. The fortress's foundations were first laid in the early 1200s, and over the following centuries underwent numerous additions and renovations due to damage through wars, fires, and even massive lightning strikes. By the late 1600s, the castle was left in a state of ruin and over the next couple of centuries its beautiful, crumbling remains came to be admired as a symbol of romanticism. By the 19th century, the national monument had become a bone fide tourist attraction, and today attracts around one million visitors per year.

#### Lichtenstein Castle (right)

Often referred to as the 'fairytale castle of Württemberg', Lichtenstein Castle balances above an 800-metre cliff face on the edge of the Swabian Alps. The castle – whose name translates as 'shining stone' – was built in the mid-19th century under the orders of King Frederick's cousin Count Wilhelm von Urach, and inspired by the 1826 novel, *Lichtenstein*, by William Hauff. The castle, still owned by descendants of the count, casts a shadow over the ruins of a medieval castle a few hundred metres away.





**Hohenzollern Castle** (*above*)

Hohenzollern Castle occupies a vast hilltop position in the Swabian Alps. The site's original castle, built in the early 11th century, lasted around 400 years before being completely destroyed following a near-year-long siege, while parts of its replacement fortress remain among the current incarnation which was built in the mid-19th century. Hohenzollern was inspired by the Gothic Revival styles of France and England, and, in 1945, briefly became the home of the former Crown Prince Wilhelm of Germany, son of the last German monarch, Kaiser Wilhelm II. Now it hosts a plethora of events and exhibitions, including one of Germany's most beautiful Christmas markets.

**Sigmaringen Castle** (*right*)

The most dominant feature of its namesake town, Sigmaringen Castle also overlooks the Danube River and is the largest of the Danube Valley castles (a grouping which includes Austrian castles and a Unesco site). The original Sigmaringen Castle was constructed in the 11th century and underwent various expansions and renovations throughout the centuries, growing into the grand palace complex that remains today. A merging of medieval and Renaissance architecture, it also houses impressive artworks and historical artefacts, including one of Europe's largest collections of weaponry.



# Castles of Transylvania

Here, the real intrigue lies beyond the dramatic mountains, medieval towns, rural villages and ancient fortifications that dot the landscape.

Transylvania is a fascinating cultural and historical region of central Europe, home to some of Romania's UNESCO World Heritage Sites. But what has drawn travellers over the years is more about Transylvania's association with Bram Stoker's "Dracula" who was said to have been based on the notorious Vlad the Impaler.

Commonly known as Dracula's Castle, Bran Castle is just one of several impressive castles in the region, explored aboard the luxurious Danube Express train on its "Castles of Transylvania" itinerary.

Travelling from Istanbul through Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary, this is a journey through history aboard a private, luxurious hotel-on-wheels. In-depth excursions at every stop include Tsarevets Hill & Castle in Bulgaria's ancient capital, the stunning Peles Castle with its fine art, and of course the 14th century Bran Castle, perched atop a 200-foot-high rock.

Other highlights include Istanbul's Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia, the fortified medieval town of Sighisoara with its Burgher houses and cobbled streets, and a spectacular puszta horse show in Lajosmizse.

Of course, the train itself may well be the ultimate highlight. You may find it difficult to leave...

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December / January

# Easy, Tiger

In 2014, Porsche launched the highly regarded Macan, their first compact luxury crossover, lauded as “the first compact SUV that is also a sports car”.

Ten years on and the German giants have launched the second generation: an all-electric offering that promises to turn heads – in silence...

It's all rather fitting given that company founder-to-be Ferdinand Porsche began his automotive journey by building one of the earliest electric car incarnations way back in 1898, then, two years later, created the first ever 4WD by adding four electric wheel-hub motors to the Lohner-Porsche racing car.

“The new Macan is the first model that we are electrifying from an existing, established product identity,” says Michael Mauer, Vice President Style Porsche. “Every new sports car has to be very clearly recognisable as part of the Porsche product family and the model in question, but also has to be perceived as ‘the new one.’”

It's immediately obvious that this elegantly undulating vehicle is a Porsche personified, a muscly Macan, a work of beauty. The Macan – which, incidentally, comes from the Indonesian word for tiger – is available in four electric models: the Electric, the 4 Electric, the 4S, and the Turbo. Verve is issued with the Macan 4, its Ice Grey Metallic paintjob atop shimmering 21-inch wheels adding to its uber-coolness.

Boasting a drag coefficient of 0.25, good luck finding a more streamlined SUV – and that's apparent as soon as you press the pedal. The Macan 4 accelerates from a standstill to 100km/hr in 5.2 seconds – not bad for a family SUV – while the Turbo does it in only 3.3 seconds.

(Spoiler alert: the spoiler remains hidden in the tailgate unless activated by either speed or the infotainment screen.)

So aesthetically, that's all boxes ticked.

Inside feels refreshingly minimalistic and roomy with a pair of luggage compartments and increased interior space. There are heaps of nice touches, like an integrated LED light strip that runs seamlessly along the cockpit and doors to provide both ambient lighting and visual communication when, for example, you change the driving mode or receive a driver assist notification. Also, come nightfall, the open, pillarless doors cast an illuminated Porsche sign onto the pavement below. We also loved the panoramic sunroof up top, too.

The 100kWh battery promises a very respectable 613km, and it can be charged from 10% to 80% in a little over 20 minutes at a fast-charging station. Up to 240kW of energy can be recuperated via the electric motors while driving.

The Macan 4 has steel-spring suspension – the Turbo, air suspension – and both are equipped with the Porsche Active Suspension Management (PASM) electronic damping control, enhancing both performance, and comfort.

Testing the self-parking function was among the most nerve-wracking 20 seconds of our lives – every single cell of your body implores you to keep your hands on the steering wheel of a \$168,400 vehicle! But, of course, like the rest of this magical ride, it works perfectly.

“We didn't set out to make an electric Porsche,” we were told when collecting the keys. “We just set out to build a Porsche that happened to be electric.”

Job done.

Find out more at [porsche.co.nz](https://www.porsche.co.nz).

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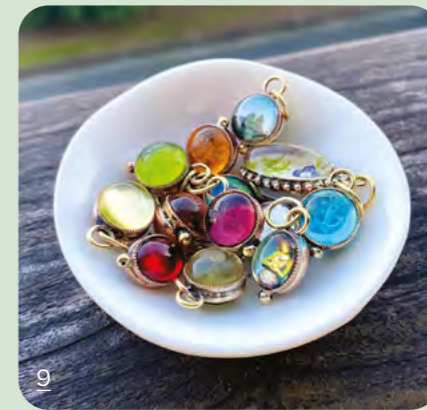
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1. Reefton Distilling Co, Little Biddy Gin 2. Artefact Centrepiece Candleholder 3. COAST Marine Bean Nautilus - the ultimate outdoor beanbags for the boat and beach this summer, available in a multitude of colours from \$649. Made in NZ. [coastnewzealand.com](http://coastnewzealand.com) 4. COAST Cabin Bag - choose your colour and embroidery options from \$549 5-6. Spoil your pooch this year with a little luxury from Mr Soft Top 7. For the perfect gift for your whisky-loving loved one, head to [gflabels.co.nz](http://gflabels.co.nz) to find out how to personalise a bottle of Glenfiddich, the world's most-awarded single malt. 8. The all-occasion always-perfect Jens Hansen Golden Kiwi \$2190 [jenshansen.co.nz](http://jenshansen.co.nz) 9. Lisa Hoskin Miniature Sandblasted Charms \$85-\$95 10. Assortment of summer rings available at the Lisa Hoskin showroom 11. Lisa Hoskin Swiss Topaz & diamond cocktail ring \$2980 12. Strangely Normal Strangely Normal Kanji Black The year of the Dragon. Japanese rayon, Made in NZ, custom fit available.



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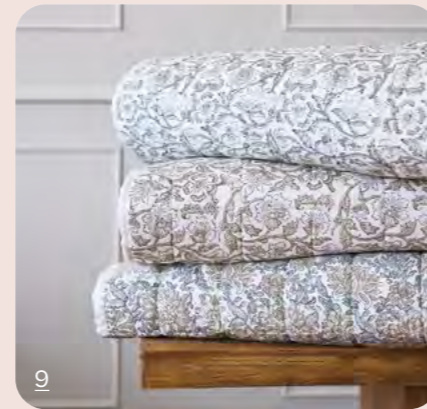
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1. [Lily Griffin](#) Sakura Double Blossom Earrings 2. [Lily Griffin](#) Silver Statement Confetti Earrings 3. [Lily Griffin](#) New Flutter Hoop Necklaces 4. The Diamond Solitaire Pendant by [LOVE IN A JEWEL](#) will safely hold your Loved One's Ashes behind the diamond forever. 5. The [LOVE IN A JEWEL](#) Love Note Collection will safely hold your handwritten note inside forever. Choose from a variety of designs in gold with diamonds. Beautifully packaged and ready to give, complete with polaroid photos showing the note of love held inside. 6. [No.1 Family Estate](#) Marlborough 75 Cocktail Kit 7-9. [French Country Collections](#) Christmas range has been curated to sprinkle homes with warmth and festive charm. Their curated collection includes twinkling tea light houses, traditional decor and loveable Christmas characters. There is something to suit everyone and every corner of the home. Available online and at their Newmarket and Ponsonby stores. [www.frenchcountry.co.nz](http://www.frenchcountry.co.nz)



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Discover the taste of New Zealand's West Coast rainforest with Little Biddy Gin - Classic. Crafted with fresh West Coast rainwater filtered over revered pounamu, and native botanicals hand foraged directly from the Reefton rainforest. A distinctive gin that embodies the natural beauty and flavours of New Zealand. Perfect for gifting – take a bottle to share with family and friends this Christmas, or pop one under the tree!



Ironclad Co. | [ironcladpan.com](http://ironcladpan.com)

Ironclad Co., New Zealand's premier cast-iron cookware brand, offers the perfect Christmas gifts for eco-conscious home cooks, professional chefs and outdoor enthusiasts. Backed by their unique Three-Generation Guarantee, their non-toxic cookware is free of harmful PFAS chemicals, ensuring a healthy, eco-friendly choice that will last over 100 Christmases. Timeless quality, guaranteed. Prices start at \$89.



Day & Age | [dayandage.co.nz](http://dayandage.co.nz)

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Their custom-designed, hand-set Diamond Tennis Bracelets will turn heads with shimmering sparkle from all angles. Contact them for any gemstones, carat weight, metal, or style preferences. Select from natural diamonds, coloured gemstones or lab-grown diamonds. Starting at \$3,520 incl. GST.



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CHRISTMAS GIFTS For Her INSTORE & ONLINE

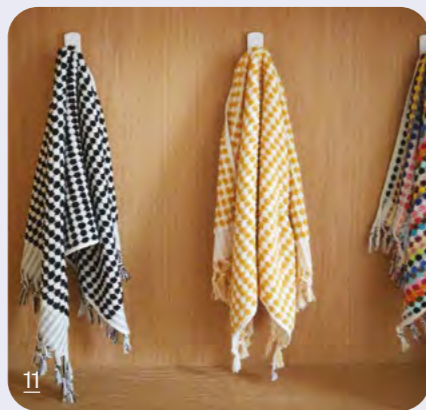


1. Made in Mada Gemma Bag 2. HairFlair Paris Milano Crochet Bag 3. Zjoosh Ruby Palma Cross Body Bag 4. Zjoosh Addison Slouch Tote Chocolate 5. Zjoosh Ruby Sports Cross Body Bag Navy 6. Zjoosh Cloud Tote Bag 7. Prene The Aubrey Bag

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T&Cs apply. 1 dove, per shop, per day.



# For the Love of Linen

Verve sits down with the delightful Rima Tellis, founder of the loveliest of linen stores, Iralra.

How would you describe Iralra in a few words, and what was the inspiration behind it?

Iralra is the feeling of home – wrapped in love, rooted in nature, and made to last. It's a celebration of life's simplest, most beautiful moments. As a family-owned business, every part of Iralra reflects who we are and the values we hold close.

Can you tell us a bit more about your products?

Our bedding and clothing are inspired by the rugged beauty and gentle hues of New Zealand. Each duvet cover, quilt, and dress is crafted with premium European flax natural linen, finished with hand-stitched details, and designed to last a lifetime.

What makes Iralra's linen bedding and clothing unique in today's market?

Iralra isn't just about selling products – it's about storytelling. Each piece is designed with values of quality, sustainability, and connection to nature at its core.

What do you hope customers feel when they experience Iralra products in their home?

A sense of sanctuary. Iralra is about creating spaces that feel restful, where everyday moments feel special and tied to something bigger, something uniquely Aotearoa.



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Silly Qs | [sillyplayco.com](http://sillyplayco.com)

Silly Qs is a fun and engaging family game designed for 5-10-year-olds and their families. Packed with giggles and backed by scientific research, it encourages supportive family interactions that build confidence and resilience in children. With Silly Qs, creating those meaningful connections is easy – and fun! Each quirky illustration is hand-drawn by Kiwi artist and illustrator Kyla K, adding a unique touch to the game. It's the perfect gift for friends and family to keep everyone entertained during the summer holidays.

Proudly made in Aotearoa New Zealand, RRP \$36.



THE LUXE EDIT | [theluxeeditonline.com](http://theluxeeditonline.com)

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Apostle Hot Sauce | [apostlehotsauce.co.nz](http://apostlehotsauce.co.nz)

Create your own custom Holy Trinity gift set! Choose your favourite three Apostle 150ml hot sauces, beautifully packaged in a stunning box with elegant gold lettering. The perfect gift for someone special or as a treat for yourself. Located on the Kāpiti Coast, Apostle draws inspiration from the wonderfully diverse culinary landscape of Aotearoa, they use the very best of local flavours to create something entirely unique and delicious.



The Wool Pot | The Wool Bag | [thewoolpot.com](http://thewoolpot.com)

Introducing The Wool Bag – a collaboration by celebrity chef Nadia Lim and wool advocate Polly McGuckin. Designed for stylish, sustainable living, this \$99 all-purpose bag is crafted from 100% felted wool, featuring a durable, anti-pilling design developed with a textile doctor. Tested rigorously over a year, it's lightweight, spacious, and naturally insulating – perfect for groceries or everyday use. Available with Forest Green or Navy Blue lining, The Wool Bag brings luxury and practicality to your daily routine.



IMAGE: TIME OUT BOOKS, MT EDEN - PHOTOGRAPHY JANE USSHER

# Celebrating Independence

*Bold Types* is a celebration of 32 of Aotearoa's best independent bookshops, giving space for the owners to tell their own stories.

Verve sits down with co-author and publisher Deborah Coddington to find out more.

**Congratulations on the publication of such a beautiful book, with such a worthwhile topic. We were surprised to read that some publishers were unmoved by the idea... have you heard from any of the doubters since?**

Thank you. I don't blame the doubters. I had a very clear picture in my head of the finished product, but I found that difficult to explain. It turned out for the best because Ugly Hill Press was born - named after the road I was brought up on in Hawke's Bay. Now I have five books on the market with four more in production.

**How do you think independent bookstores contribute to local communities?**

Good indies have staff who know their books, are well acquainted with their customers, and can assist buyers choose the right book. They take special joy in that task - it's one of the treats of bookselling, matching people with books.

**Are there bookstores that you found particularly inspiring?**

Obviously, Hedley's Books in Masterton - I dedicate *Bold Types* to the late Alex

Hedley because 50 years ago when I was a 21-year-old lonely new mum Alex reignited my love for books. Hedley's is Aotearoa's oldest bookstore still in the same family. But all the stores in this book are inspiring in their own ways.

**Did you learn anything new about the industry while compiling this book... and about yourself?**

I'm always finding out that I don't know what I don't know. I'm grateful I owned a bookshop before I published this book, for obvious reasons. Having a bookshop made me a better person. Also, if I knew how much multitasking is involved in publishing, I possibly would have thought twice about doing it! But maybe not. I'm pretty impulsive, and it is good fun making beautiful books.

**Have you had much feedback from the readers, and any messages for potential readers out there?**

I'm stunned by the positive reaction. Jane Ussher is one of Aotearoa's premier interiors and portrait photographers, so I'm thrilled to see her work, yet again, appreciated by a wide audience. I hesitate to tell readers what to do, but without bookshops, there would be fewer writers, designers, printers, editors, reps, and so on.

**How do you think independent bookstores are shaping the future of publishing, and are you hopeful for their future?**

I think indies stock those esoteric books which bold publishers take a risk. My philosophy in publishing is 'books with attitude, with enduring content'. I want Ugly Hill Press books to be beautifully written, and beautifully designed. I'm hopeful because there will always be other optimists in the future who agree and seek out indie stores to look for such publications.

**WIN a copy of *Bold Types*, visit [vervemagazine.co.nz](http://vervemagazine.co.nz) for details.**



PHOTOGRAPHY: ESTHER BUNNING

## HERE'S TO READING



Book Box | [bookbox.co.nz](http://bookbox.co.nz)

Book Box is New Zealand's premier book subscription service, delivering personalised monthly reads for adults, young adults, and children. They handpick books based on your interests, favourite authors, and genres, with selections ranging from bestsellers to timeless classics. Perfect as a gift or a treat for yourself, every box comes with free nationwide delivery. Join the thousands of happy readers they've been delighting since 2018 – your next great read is just a subscription away!



Dorothy Butler Children's Bookshop | [dorothybutler.co.nz](http://dorothybutler.co.nz)

A bookshop that's truly a place of delight and wonder for both children and adults alike. They have a fantastic range of the best in children's literature as well as a great selection of quality toys, puzzles and games. Let them help you find the perfect book or gift for the children in your life. They look forward to seeing you soon!



Scorpio Books | [scorpiobooks.co.nz](http://scorpiobooks.co.nz)

Established in 1976, Scorpio Books is an Ōtautahi Christchurch institution. Their huge range of high-quality, carefully curated books; the wooden shelves and comfy chairs; and their friendly, knowledgeable team of readers make them a sought-out destination for locals and visitors alike. And if they don't have what you're looking for and it's still in print, they'll order it in for you especially.



The Women's Bookshop | [womensbookshop.co.nz](http://womensbookshop.co.nz)

Crossing the line since 1989! Thirty-five years later they continue to flourish, with loyal customers who love the warm friendly atmosphere and outstanding service. The store has always promoted and celebrated the lives and voices of women, as well as the LGBTQI+ community, running fabulous events, most famously their annual Ladies' Litera-Tea. Their online service sends out dozens of books daily all over the country.



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To find out more about how we can care for you and your baby, call our team or visit our website.

# The Gift of Recovery



Christmas is often associated with alcohol.

But for an alcoholic who can't control their drinking, it can be a difficult time for both them and their loved ones.

This year, recovering alcoholic, Linton Simmons, will be raising a glass of Christmas cheer to a fulfilling new life in sobriety.

As a former guest of The Retreat NZ turned member of staff, Linton's youthful binge drinking spiralled into daily blackouts that culminated in job losses, hospital visits and arrests.

"I was completely powerless to stop. I just about lost anything of meaning in my life," he says.

A close friend researched The Retreat and Linton completed the alcohol rehab's 30-day residential programme in February. He was introduced to the 12 steps of recovery and tools for living in sobriety.

"Most significantly, it taught me that recovery was attainable, and I could get sober," says Linton. "A definite standout was building connections and friendships with fellow alcoholics - likeminded people who understood me."

He continues to stay closely connected to The Retreat in its sober living community and by helping fellow recovering alcoholics. He is close to completing the 12 steps of recovery with his sponsor and attends up to five recovery meetings a week, two of which he helps to run.

"My life is completely different and only for the better," he says. "I have managed to rebuild family relationships, physically I'm the fittest I've ever been, and I've seen a huge improvement in my mental health. I'm a keen boxer and hiker - hobbies weren't possible whilst I was in active addiction."

This holiday season he will remain close to The Retreat and practising his programme of recovery daily, including service such as taking a living sober group at The Retreat with its guests.

"Last Christmas, I was at the peak of my drinking," says Linton. "The only plan I had was getting drunk and I only cared about where I could get my next drink. I had no tools, let alone any idea of how to stay sober."

As an alcoholic's drinking affects both them and their loved ones, his recovery also means a lot to his family.

"I put my family through a lot," Linton continues. "They are very proud of the progress I've made and the new life I'm leading. For my parents especially, alcohol took away their son and in sobriety they've got him back."

This Christmas he will be enjoying quality time with his family and his partner's family in Auckland.

"Being sober means being present, which means I can actually enjoy and remember Christmas! If I had continued drinking, I'd have died or ended up in prison," adds Linton. "I am extremely grateful for The Retreat and all of the incredible people who work there. The support has been tremendous, and it provided the foundation for my recovery."

theretreatnz.org.nz  
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Tried skin care invented by a celebrity?  
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# New Dawn



The last two decades have seen the cosmetic industry enter a new phase.

As younger patients have engaged more and more, there has been an increased focus on prevention, and the range of treatment options available in this area has developed and expanded.

The shift in cosmetic medicine towards biostimulators and regenerative medicine fits perfectly with Clinic 42's longstanding ethos.

While this may seem like a contemporary approach to some practitioners, Clinic 42 has always strived to provide long-term plans for their patients and have avoided following passing trends in treatments, or over-treating patients, no matter what their age.

This is something that the doctors at Clinic 42 have also passed on to their team, and the nurses that they provide standing order cover and training to throughout New Zealand, via the Clinic 42 Academy programme.

Wanting to feel current can often lead patients to trying treatments they have heard about via social media that may not be suitable for them, or deliver their desired results, or enhance their natural features.

Traditional firmer HA fillers are ideal for providing structural volume that

naturally deteriorates as we age, these are best used deeper in the dermis, sometimes directly on the bone or at the ligament attachment point.

Regenerative products are ideal for younger patients who don't yet need re-volumisation or to layer over the top where thinning skin may be an issue. They encourage our own cells to work at maximum capacity, restoring elastin, collagen and adipose fat, giving tissue back its robust bounce and glow and disguising any underlying structural work that may have been done.

While you may be able to integrate a trend into your closet, injectables are still a prescription medicine or medical device (dermal fillers are often classified as class III medical devices) that you are trying to integrate into your body! They require a thorough assessment, consultation and advice from an experienced cosmetic doctor or nurse.

How well the product will integrate and whether it will be visible requires expert skill in clinical treatment, access and knowledge of product ranges, and experience working with a variety of patient types.

As mentioned earlier, one of the most critical factors that dictates the choice

of product and method of treatment is your skin's thickness. Which is why a stepped approach or a treatment plan can be integral to getting the best results.

This doesn't mean you can't start making small changes now. The best place to start is often with a free nurse consultation so that you can understand all options available. From there you can make an informed decision on whether you want to proceed and work out a timeline that best suits you.

You need patience, trust, and to acknowledge that it's a process, that your look will continue to evolve over time, and that simultaneously you will be ageing too. However, with expert guidance from the team at Clinic 42 you can maintain a refreshed and rejuvenated look.

Visit [clinic42.co.nz](http://clinic42.co.nz) to book or find out more information; or contact the team on 09 638 4242.

DERMAL FILLER, Medical Device Class III to smooth facial wrinkles and folds, correct facial wrinkles and folds, correct facial atrophic scars, restore or enhance the lips, or restore facial volume. Dermal filler has risks and benefits. Ask your doctor if dermal filler is right for you. For product information, check with your doctor or the supplier.

## World Luxury Spa

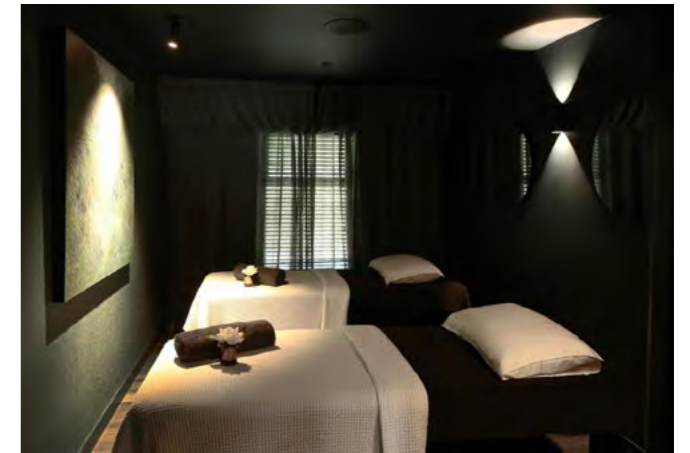
When you think of the world's luxury spas, certain names come to mind like Aman, Six Senses, The Ritz-Carlton and Waldorf Astoria. All have been recognised by the World Luxury Spa Awards.

I've visited several over time and have been inspired by the example they set. So, I'm delighted to tell you that Sa-Ni has joined their number, winning three awards for the Australasia & Oceania Region for Best Luxury Traditional Thai, Best Interior Design, and Best Luxury Urban Escape.

It takes an entire team - designers, management and expert therapists - to ensure that every client enjoys and benefits from a treatment that meets their personal needs.

Capturing the essence of traditional Thai treatments  
What thrilled me most was winning the award for luxury Traditional Thai spa. It says that our therapists have not only captured the essence of traditional Thai treatments, they have done so in a luxurious and refined setting.

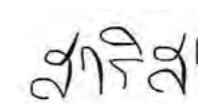
An immersive and luxurious experience  
The award for best interior design reflects the attention to detail that is the hallmark of my partner, Nigel McKenna. He has



created an elegant environment using natural materials blended with aesthetic elements that make possible a truly luxurious experience, engaging all senses.

The beauty of an elegant solution  
The award for best luxury urban escape shows how an elegant solution creates its own form of beauty. Sa-Ni is not a secluded retreat in a stunning natural environment. It sits beside K' Rd, an accessible location, but a challenging one in which to create an oasis of tranquillity and meditative calm.

Thank you for indulging me this month. I usually try to offer advice in this column, but this news was special to me, and I wanted to share it.

  
Sarisa



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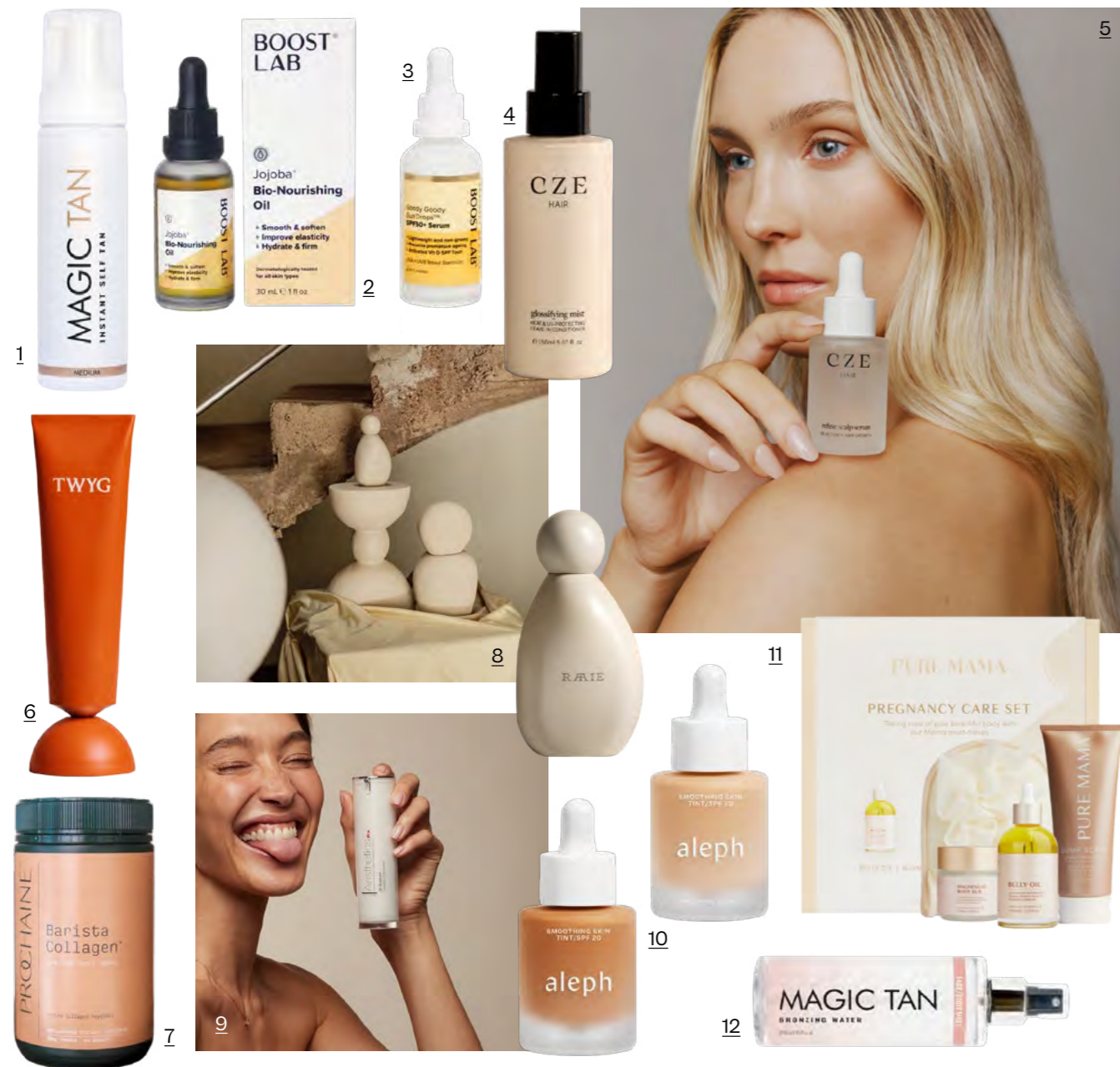
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# Two-minute Tofu – Four Ways

This is by no means an original recipe but rather my take on Japanese Hiyayakko tofu or Chinese Liangban tofu – dishes that have been around for centuries.

It's the perfect way to pump up the protein when you're seeking a light and no-fuss meal, especially on a hot day. This is a dish that's best served cold, but a few minutes out of the fridge doesn't do it any harm either. Serve with plain rice or noodles, and any of the salads featured in this book. There are so many ways you can make this easy, light and fresh dish. It starts the same way every time – a block of silken tofu and a 2:1 ratio of soy sauce to sesame oil. Sometimes you add some spice, sometimes you add some crunch, or preferably both.

## INGREDIENTS

### Sesame, soy and crunchy chilli

1 block soft or silken tofu  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil  
1 heaped tablespoon of crunchy bits from a jar of chilli oil  
2 spring onions, sliced

### Sesame, soy and peanut

1 block soft or silken tofu  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil  
1 heaped tablespoon of roasted peanuts, chopped  
A few Vietnamese mint leaves

### Gochujang

1 block soft or silken tofu  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil  
1 teaspoon gochujang paste  
1 heaped tablespoon fried onions  
A few coriander leaves

### Lemongrass

1 block soft or silken tofu  
2 tablespoons panko crumbs  
1 teaspoon minced lemongrass  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil  
A few Vietnamese mint leaves

## EPIC TIPS

There are endless ways to bring crunch to this humble dish. As well as the suggested chilli oil, roasted peanuts, fried onions and fried panko, you could use sesame seeds, spring onions, roasted slivered almonds or chopped roasted cashews.

You could also add fresh herbs like Thai basil, Vietnamese mint, coriander or shiso.

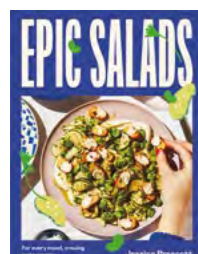
## DIRECTIONS

Place a block of soft or silken tofu in the bottom of a shallow bowl or dish. You can leave it whole, slice it, or cut it into bite-sized cubes. Just remember, silken tofu is delicate so handle it with care.

Choose your dressing, then whisk the ingredients together. Before dressing, check the tofu to see if any water has collected into the serving dish and if so, gently pour this away or pat with a paper towel.

For the lemongrass variation, fry the panko crumbs and lemongrass with a lick of oil over on a medium heat for a couple of minutes, transfer to a bowl and set aside.

Cover the tofu with the dressing, then add herbs and your crunchy bits. Enjoy.



Recipe extracted from *Epic Salads* by Jessica Prescott, published by Hardie Grant Books, RRP \$65.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ROCHELLE EAGLE



# Haloumi Chickpea Salad

SERVES 2-4

This was my go-to salad at the time of writing this book. It's hearty and filling and so, so moreish, and the leftovers keep well in the fridge for days – so well, in fact, that I made three notes in this recipe draft about how good the leftovers are!

## INGREDIENTS

### Dressing

1 quantity of The GOAT dressing  
- recipe on page 128

### Salad

Olive oil, for cooking  
½ teaspoon cumin seeds  
½ teaspoon coriander seeds, lightly crushed  
1 cup (200g) medium-grain rice  
1 teaspoon salt  
2 cups (70g) kale, stems removed and finely chopped  
200g haloumi, cut into 0.5-1 cm wide slabs  
1 Lebanese (short) cucumber, seeds removed, diced  
1 × 400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
⅓ cup (40g) flaked or slivered almonds  
3-4 tablespoons dried cherries  
Handful each of flat-leaf parsley and dill  
Lemon juice, to serve

That being said, no matter how much salad is left over, there is never any left-over haloumi, because no matter how full we are, we always manage to finish it all. If this is you too, be sure to cook extra, especially if feeding a crowd.

## DIRECTIONS

To cook the rice, place a lick of olive oil in the bottom of a saucepan set over a medium heat. Add the cumin and coriander seeds and cook for a couple of minutes, until fragrant. Add the rice, salt and 2 cups (500ml) of water, then cover with a lid. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a low heat and cook for 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and leave to sit, covered, for 5 minutes. Add the kale, stir, and sit for another 5 minutes so the kale can wilt a little before spreading onto a baking tray and allowing to cool. You can also do this ahead of time.

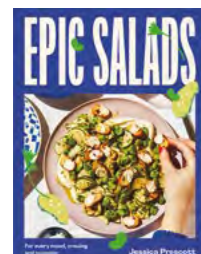
To cook the haloumi, heat a small amount of olive oil in a large, flat-bottomed frying pan over a medium heat. Once the pan is hot, add the haloumi and cook for approximately 3 minutes until golden brown on the underside. Flip, and cook for a further 3 or so minutes, then transfer to a chopping board and allow to sit for a minute before cutting into squares, approximately 1cm in size. (You can go bigger if you like, but the smaller they are, the more mouthfuls of glorious haloumi you get.)

When ready to serve, transfer the cooled rice and kale to a large mixing bowl. Add the cucumber, chickpeas, almonds, cherries, most of the herbs and most of the dressing and stir until well combined. Transfer half the salad to a serving dish and top with half the haloumi. Repeat with remaining salad and haloumi, then drizzle with the remaining dressing. Garnish with remaining herbs and a generous squeeze of lemon.

### Swaps

If you're not a fan of kale, try rocket or spinach, which also work well in this salad. Add these greens at the same time as the chickpeas, cucumber, etc., after the rice has cooled.

Olives, capers, pickles and tomatoes all make excellent additions, as does coriander instead of dill, roasted pumpkin instead of haloumi, or toasted pine nuts instead of almonds.



Recipe extracted from *Epic Salads* by Jessica Prescott, published by Hardie Grant Books, RRP \$65.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ROCHELLE EAGLE



# Root-to-Leaf Beet Salad

SERVES 3-4

The beauty of this salad is that it uses (almost) the entire vegetable. Rather than throwing them away, the glossy green leaves of the beet act as the leaf in this salad – cool, right?

Beetroot leaves are delicious, good for you, and hold up for a few days in the fridge, even when coated with dressing. The earthy beetroot, hefty lentils and sweet currants pair beautifully with The GOAT dressing, with the maple walnuts bringing a welcome crunch.

## INGREDIENTS

### Dressing

1 quantity The GOAT dressing  
- recipe on page 128

### Salad

1 bunch beetroots, leaves intact and in good condition  
½ cup (95g) dried beluga lentils  
½ red onion, very finely chopped  
Handful (30g) currants  
Large handful mint leaves dill fronds, to garnish  
1 cup (100g) Maple walnuts  
- recipe on page 128

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 200-220°C and bring a small saucepan of water to a boil.

Trim off the beetroot leaves and set aside. Scrub the beetroots clean and wrap each beetroot individually in aluminium foil, then cook on a baking sheet for 50-60 minutes, or until they can be easily pierced with a fork. Allow to cool before rubbing the skins off with your hands (you can use gloves for this if you want to avoid pink hands), then cut into bite-sized wedges.

When the water is boiling, add the lentils and cook for 15-20 minutes. Drain and rinse under cool water. Shake off any excess water, and set aside.

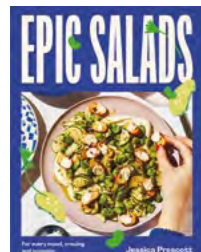
Cut the stems off the beetroot leaves and discard. Stack around ten leaves on top of each other then cut into strips, approximately 2cm wide. Wash twice, then spin dry.

To serve, combine the cooked lentils, red onion, currants and greens in a large mixing bowl and stir through half the dressing. Place half the salad on a serving platter. Top with half the cooked beetroot wedges and maple walnuts. Repeat with remaining salad, beetroot and walnuts, then drizzle with the rest of the dressing and top with mint leaves and dill fronds.

Serve as is, or with an array of other delicious salads.

### Swaps

If you can't find beetroots with their leaves attached, worry not. Baby spinach, rocket, sorrel or kale can all be used in their place - kale will hold up best if you're planning to eat this over a couple of days.



Recipe extracted from *Epic Salads* by Jessica Prescott, published by Hardie Grant Books, RRP \$65.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ROCHELLE EAGLE



# Lemon Ricotta Pasta Salad

SERVES 3-4

For a recipe with so few ingredients, this pasta salad packs a punch.

The bright, lemony ricotta and the sweetness and crunch of maple walnuts pair perfectly with the bitter radicchio and the freshness of parsley and spinach, creating a simple yet flavourful affair that's lifted by a classic and dependable balsamic dressing. It's a minimalist's dream.

## INGREDIENTS

### Dressing

1 quantity basic balsamic dressing

### Salad

300g dry pasta  
125g ricotta  
Juice and zest of 1 lemon  
1 garlic clove, microplaned  
50g parmesan cheese  
½ fennel bulb, sliced paper thin, some fronds reserved  
2 large handfuls (60g) radicchio, leaves torn  
2 large handfuls (60g) flat-leaf parsley, chiffonade  
1 cup (100g) Maple walnuts  
- recipe on page 128  
Chilli flakes, to serve

## DIRECTIONS

Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to the directions on the packet. Drain and shake dry, then toss in 3 tablespoons of the balsamic dressing. Set aside to cool.

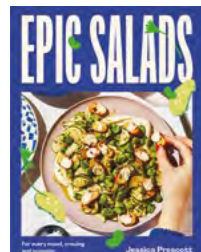
Combine the ricotta with the lemon juice and zest, and the garlic. Set aside.

Add the parmesan to the cooled, dressed pasta and stir to combine. Add the fennel, radicchio and most of the parsley and the maple walnuts to the pasta and stir to combine.

Place half the pasta in a serving dish. Dot with teaspoons of ricotta and then top with the remaining pasta and ricotta. Top with remaining herbs and walnuts, add chilli flakes to taste, then drizzle with additional balsamic vinaigrette

### Swaps

This also works well with halved grape tomatoes, olives, capers.



Recipe extracted from *Epic Salads* by Jessica Prescott, published by Hardie Grant Books, RRP \$65.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ROCHELLE EAGLE



## The GOAT Dressing (greatest of all time)

Makes approx. 250ml

### INGREDIENTS

80g soft goat's cheese  
100g Greek yoghurt  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
Pinch of salt  
1 teaspoon lemon zest  
1 heaped tablespoon chopped dill  
½ garlic clove, microplaned

### DIRECTIONS

Put the goat's cheese and yoghurt in a small mixing bowl and use a fork to break down the cheese and slowly work it into the yoghurt. Once combined, add the oil, a little at a time, stirring well after each addition to ensure the dressing doesn't split. Add the salt, lemon zest, dill and garlic, and stir to combine. Use immediately, or store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 1 week.

## Maple Walnuts

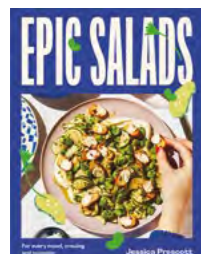
Makes 1 cup

### INGREDIENTS

1 cup (100g) walnut halves  
2 tablespoons maple syrup  
1 tablespoon salted butter

### DIRECTIONS

Lightly frying walnuts in a little maple syrup and salted butter is the perfect way to transform any salad from average to epic. Place the walnuts, maple syrup and butter in a large frying pan over a medium heat and cook for 5 minutes, stirring often, until the walnuts are golden brown. I like to use a silicone spatula to move all the maple butter goodness around and over the walnuts, ensuring they're really well coated. Spread in a single layer on a piece of baking paper and scrape all the excess maple butter over the top of them. Allow to cool for 10 minutes.



Recipe extracted from *Epic Salads* by Jessica Prescott, published by Hardie Grant Books, RRP \$65.

PHOTOGRAPHY: ROCHELLE EAGLE

# Taste & Drink

Wine columnist and connoisseur DENNIS KNILL gives his views on two wines from Brancott Estate.

Until the early 70s, Marlborough was a sheep-grazing region with little else to offer but growing fruit and vegetables. Enter Ivan and Amanda Yukich, two Croatian immigrants who were first to grow grapes in 1973 under the Montana label (now Brancott). With their first vintage a mixed success, most of the grapes were replaced with sauvignon blanc. In 1979, their first vintage was bottled which changed the face of Marlborough forever.

To reflect the true individuality, Brancott's latest Letter Series of Reserve wines are handcrafted from grapes grown on the southern side of Wairau Valley. Here are two well-priced wines that will not disappoint.

'23 Brancott Estate Letter Series O chardonnay; RRP \$27.

Fresh citrus fruit is underlined with French oak and a rich creamy texture which makes for the perfect food and wine match. Pair with seafood, sushi, risotto, and veal.



'20 Brancott Estate Letter Series B sauvignon blanc; \$27.

A clean and fresh wine balanced with ripe citrus and herbaceous flavours complimented with a crisp acidity. Serve with salmon, chicken, turkey, and leafy salads.

# Let's Eat Out

DENNIS and ROSAMUND KNILL

Amongst an oasis of eateries in Commercial Bay, Origine plays it straight with a collection of timeless dishes that give a new meaning to French cuisine.

Celebrity chef Ben Bayly seems determined to let his cooking shine, giving provincial dishes a contemporary slant – resulting in a seriously good French restaurant with a menu that reads like *Larousse Gastronomique*.

For starters the kitchens repertoire includes freshly shucked oysters (\$7 each); duck and black truffle parfait (\$10 each); French onion soup, oxtail toastie and gratinated cheese (\$26); shaved cold salmon, citrus, crème fraiche and chives (\$26); venison tartare, tarragon mayo; and a crisp agria wafer (\$28). For mains there's mushroom risotto teamed with truffle espuma (\$38); braised wagyu beef cheek bourguignon, leeks and potato puree (\$40); woodfired Chatham Island blue cod with scampi bisque and pickled turnip (\$49); and, for devoted carnivore, a 500g wood fire-roasted rib of beef for two, served with potato puree, mustard, red wine jus and salad (\$95). Sides include fries (\$12); garden salad (\$12); and wood fired purple carrots (\$14).

Carefully designed desserts include berry soufflé with crème fraiche sorbet (\$22); Valrhona dark chocolate tart with compote of caramelised pears (\$21); apple tarte tatin profiterole with chocolate ganache calvados and caramel sauce (\$20); and vanilla crème caramel with poached rhubarb and sorbet (\$22).

The wine list is studded with curiosities and an array of rare treats by the glass and bottle.

And the verdict? Although the menu does not have a solid range of French dishes, there are no outrageous combinations, just fresh seasonal produce intelligently plated. Knowledgeable floor staff and a casual atmosphere complete the experience.

Menu: 8.5; cuisine: 9; wine list: 9; service: 8; decor: 8; value for money: 8.5.

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## Christmas at The Terraces



Tucked away within St Andrew's village, The Terraces restaurant is still pushing the boundaries of sophisticated dining across the Eastern Bays wider community.

"We're bringing back fun, old-school dining, with intimate service from staff who really care about what we are looking to achieve," says hospitality manager, Lloyd Lewis.

This upcoming festive season is proving to be no different, with affordable set menus on offer for those looking to celebrate the holidays.

On offer from 1-23 December is a three-course set Christmas menu – available for both lunch and dinner – for \$58 per person.

"Christmas Eve is always one of the busiest lunches of the year," explains Lloyd, "with the large round tables accommodating up to 10 guests being in especially high demand. It is also one of the most fun days, with a great atmosphere and a wonderful menu selection to choose from."

New Year's Eve is another popular night for those wishing to celebrate without

having to endure huge crowds of late-night revellers. Head chef Ranjit Badwal provides an exciting menu, using fine French caviar and the freshest produce on the market.

"Come and enjoy a cocktail beforehand and toast the New Year in style with a glass of champagne!"

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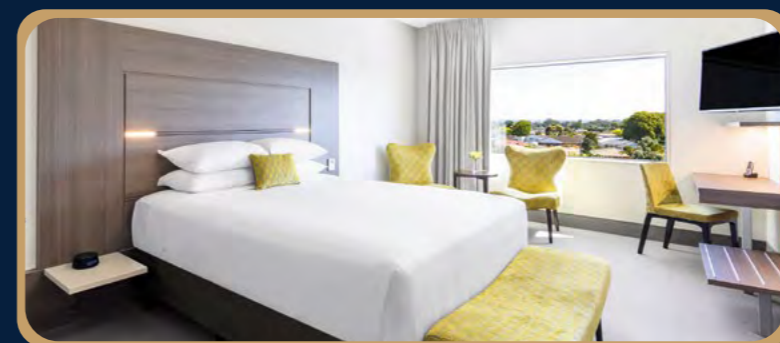


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## The Art of Graham Young 2025 Calendar

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# Classical Christmas

Audiences will delight in an exquisite staging of *La bohème* by Puccini, the Australasian premiere of *The Monster in the Maze* by Jonathan Dove, free summer concerts, and a very special Auckland Arts Festival collaboration, *Toiere*. We talk Christmas with four artists from NZ Opera's 2025 season.

Visit [nzopera.com](http://nzopera.com) for tickets and full details on the new season.



Baritone Joel Amosa performs in NZ Opera's free Opera in the Park summer concerts on 25 January at Glover Park, St Heliers, and 1 February at Auckland Botanic Gardens. He will also star in in *The Monster in the Maze*, next September.

### Christmas morning: early bird or late sleeper?

Early bird to ensure breakfast is ready for the fam.

### Favourite way to unwind?

Enjoying free time with my young daughters: playgrounds, bike rides, dog parks, barbecues, and then TV!

### Who inspires you most?

My wife, Maia Amosa. A soprano by trade and a full-time mum of two.

### Holiday signature dish?

My grandma's pineapple pie. A Samoan staple and a secret recipe.



Soprano Sarah Mileham performs in NZ Opera's free Summer of Opera on 25 January at Glover Park, St Heliers, and 1 February at Auckland Botanic Gardens.

### One thing on your Christmas wish list this year?

A portable steamer for all my ballgowns that travel with me to singing competitions across New Zealand!

### Lucky charm or ritual before performing?

I always have to do a prayer, have a Bach Rescue Pastille for stress relief, and read a good luck text from my mum.

### If you had to spend Christmas anywhere in the world?

I feel split - my dad is from England, my mom is from Korea, and I've always lived here! I'd say my family house in the Bay of Plenty.



Soprano Emma Pearson performs as Musetta in NZ Opera's highly anticipated season of *La bohème*, playing in all three major NZ cities, May-July 2025.

### Favourite summer activity?

Swimming at Omaha Beach and picking strawberries with my son at Matakana Berry Co.

### If you could sing together with anyone...

I can't wait to sing with my friend, Sam Dundas, who is playing Marcello in NZ Opera's *La bohème*.

### Favourite festive tradition?

I love making my family an enormous trifle with extra mascarpone.

### If you could sing one festive song with a full orchestra?

What a fun question! 'The Little Drummer Boy', with bagpipes!



General director of New Zealand Opera, Brad Cohen, conducts the Auckland season of *La bohème*, opening 29 May 2025.

### Christmas morning: early bird or late sleeper?

Early bird always! Morning swim or ride if possible, then join the festivities.

### Favourite way to unwind during the holidays?

Sitting by water, surrounded by nature, somewhere quiet and remote.

### If you could only listen to one piece of music this holiday season?

'The Shepherd's Carol' by John Rutter

### If you could conduct one festive song with a full orchestra?

'All I Want for Christmas Is You' - but only if Mariah Carey is the live soloist!



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# The Art of December

CURATED BY –  
AIMÉE RALFINI

During this quieter season, galleries across the city present thoughtfully curated exhibitions that invite viewers to slow down, engage deeply, and find inspiration in the stillness. This summer immerse yourself in creativity at one of the following creative spaces...



ARTWORK: HANNAH MAURICE, BLUEBELL, COURTESY OF HONEYMOON STUDIO

As the bustling energy of the year winds down, Auckland's art scene takes on a reflective and tranquil tone, offering a perfect antidote to the summer heat.

## SHOP 21

### *Toropapa, Jasmine*

Hannah Maurice,  
Benedict Maurice

On until –  
11 December

*Toropapa, Jasmine* is a compelling body of work by Hannah and Benedict Maurice that explores the nuanced relationships we have with flowers – finding them, picking them (or choosing not to), and the tension between weeds and taonga. It reflects on themes of protection and behaviour, grappling with feelings of guilt, moments of benediction, and the simple act of making the most of what's available.

Shop 21, The Strand Arcade, Queen Street  
Follow the artist on  
Instagram: @honeymoonseastudio

## MELANIE ROGER GALLERY

### *Summer Clouds*

Group Show

11 – 21 December

Melanie Roger's annual summer exhibition offers a selection of works by the gallery's esteemed roster of artists, complemented by contributions from specially invited guest artists. The exhibition, on view throughout the summer break, embraces a dynamic and fluid approach, with potential adjustments to the curation ensuring a fresh and evolving experience. In January, viewings are available by appointment, with regular gallery hours resuming from February.

444 Karangahape Rd, Newton  
melanierogergallery.com

## TE TUHI

### *Vidéo Club: Screening Programme*

Anouk Nier-Nantes,  
Émilie Pierson,  
Marina Smorodinova

On until –  
22 December

Te Tuhi is proud to partner with the French contemporary art fund FRAC Champagne-Ardenne for the second international edition of *Vidéo Club*, a project fostering connections in moving image practice between France and Aotearoa New Zealand. This season, Te Tuhi presents three captivating video works by artists Anouk Nier-Nantes, Émilie Pierson, and Marina Smorodinova, offering a unique glimpse into contemporary moving image art from France's Grand Est region. The exhibition runs throughout most of the summer season. The gallery will be closed from 23 December until 3 January.

21 William Roberts Road, Pakuranga  
tetuhi.art

## TWO ROOMS

### *Forest of Dreams*

Judy Darragh

31 January –  
1 March

*Forest of Dreams*, featuring Judy Darragh, opens for public preview on 30 January, from 5.30pm-7.30pm. Christchurch-born Darragh is celebrated for her vibrant sculptural assemblages, video works, collages, photography, and poster art. Rising to prominence in the 1980s, her distinctive style – marked by eclectic iconoclasm and sharp wit – offered a spirited critique of the era's materialism and free-market reforms. Her works are held in major public collections across New Zealand. Two Rooms closes for Christmas on 21 December, and reopens on 14 January.

16 Putiki Street, Grey Lynn  
tworooms.co.nz

# Trust Talk

Is your family trust  
still serving a purpose?



With the introduction of the Trusts Act 2019 (the Trusts Act) bringing many changes to trust law, many people are considering whether a trust is still right for them. Here are three questions to consider when evaluating whether your trust is a useful asset planning tool.

#### Why did you establish the trust?

Did you establish your trust decades ago when you owned a business and wanted to protect your assets from creditors? You may have been told that forming a trust would protect your assets if you need rest home care or if you enter into a relationship.

It is important to assess whether the reasons you established the trust still exist or are still valid reasons for having a trust.

#### Are you aware of the provisions of the Trusts Act?

If you are a trustee of your trust or someone else's trust it is important that you are familiar with Trusts Act and your duties as a trustee. There are now mandatory and default duties that trustees must carry out. These are set out in the Trusts Act but may have been modified by the Trust Deed. Your trust may still be a useful tool but you may need to make some amendments or upskill yourself to ensure you are complying with the Trust Act.

#### Are you comfortable with providing trust information to beneficiaries?

The Trust Act creates a presumption that "basic trust information" be disclosed to all beneficiaries of the trust. "Basic information" includes; the fact that a person is a beneficiary of the trust, the name and contact details of the trustee, and

the right of the beneficiary to request a copy of the terms of the trust or trust information. Beneficiaries can also request financial information.

It used to be common practice to include a large number of potential beneficiaries in a trust deed. Many of our clients are surprised to learn that their trust deed include the spouses of children and grandchildren as discretionary beneficiaries.

There are many factors that your legal advisor will consider when advising you on whether your trust is right for you. If you would like an assessment of your trust, contact us to book an appointment with one of the team at Dawsons Lawyers.

Claire Endean – Director/Lawyer  
[dawsonslawyers.co.nz](http://dawsonslawyers.co.nz) | 09 272 0002

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📍 28 Waimarie Street, St Heliers, Auckland

📞 [thehelier.co.nz](http://thehelier.co.nz)





thefoundationvillage.co.nz

# Pearson House:

A heritage treasure restored.

The Foundation recently celebrated the official opening of Pearson House, a beautifully restored 19th-century architectural gem that now serves as the gateway to the village.



Situated on Titoki Street, overlooking the Auckland Domain, Pearson House is a Category 1 Heritage Listed Building. Originally constructed in 1926, this Neo-Georgian masterpiece has undergone a \$17-million upgrade that includes seismic strengthening and meticulous refurbishment. Now revitalised, it promises longevity for generations to come and provides village residents with an unparalleled living experience.

#### A Vital Link to the Past

Designed by the renowned architectural firm Gummer and Ford, Pearson House was originally a residence catering to blind servicemen returning from the first world war. Its purpose-built design ensured visibility for the blind in Auckland society, establishing the building as a significant part of the city's landscape.

Over the decades, Pearson House has been a symbol of resilience and cultural value. The recent restoration preserves this legacy, with Generus Living collaborating closely with Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga and Auckland Council to ensure the conservation work respected its historical integrity.

Heritage New Zealand's Senior Conservation Architect Robin Byron praises Pearson House as an outstanding example of 1920s Neo-Georgian architecture. She says: "Its original purpose as a facility for blind returned servicemen has been thoughtfully echoed in its new role, offering modern amenities while honouring its heritage."



#### A New Era for Pearson House

The upgraded Pearson House is now a central feature of The Foundation's luxury lifestyle village, serving as its private club and offering a sophisticated retreat for residents, their families and friends. The building seamlessly integrates history and modernity, blending heritage architecture with contemporary functionality.

The refurbishment brings new life to key spaces, including the reinstatement of the original colonnade, elegant Drawing Room and Reading Room. The ground floor now houses an eatery, Maddington on the Domain, while the upper level features a boutique cinema, billiard room, lounge, art studio, cardio studio, and a wellbeing suite.

Generus Living director Graham Wilkinson describes Pearson House as an uplifting space that enhances the cultural fabric of The Foundation. "The Parnell precinct, with its rich history and enviable location, is incredibly special," he says. "Pearson House is a tangible link to the past, and its preservation ensures this remarkable property continues to inspire."

#### Excellence in Design

The interior design, led by award-winning Stewart Harris of Macintosh Harris, reflects the building's Neo-Georgian roots. Harris's vision incorporates richly textured elements that link traditional aesthetics with contemporary elegance.

"I imagined how one would journey through the spaces, making it an uplifting experience with bursts of light, colour, and



texture," Harris explains. He achieved this through carefully curated wallcoverings, artworks, chandeliers, and furniture.

Peddlethorp leads The Foundation's master planning and were lead architects on the restoration of Pearson House, supported by heritage architects, Salmond Reed. Salmond Reed played a key role in design development and structural upgrades, focusing on seismic strengthening while respecting the building's heritage. This included the innovative restoration of four chimneys, which were disassembled, reinforced with lightweight earthquake-safe materials, and reassembled to maintain their historical appearance.

#### The Foundation Vision

Pearson House is a cornerstone of The Foundation's multi-stage development, which will accommodate over 250 residents upon its completion. This visionary project includes luxury residences that complement the historic and contemporary architectural features of the village.

The Nathan Residences, the first stage of the development, opened in October 2023. The next stage, Abbott Residences, will open in the second half of 2026, furthering The Foundation's goal of creating a harmonious blend of luxury, heritage, and sustainability.

The Foundation is part of the Generus Living Collection. Graham Wilkinson emphasises: "Generus Living is committed to sustainable development, ensuring that modern buildings complement the historic charm of properties like Pearson House and the adjacent Jubilee Building."

#### A Legacy Reimagined

Pearson House stands as both a symbol of Auckland's heritage and a beacon of modern living. Its restoration showcases the best of architectural preservation, sustainable development, and community-focused design.

By breathing new life into this iconic building, The Foundation has ensured that Pearson House remains a vibrant part of Auckland's landscape for generations to come.



  
**THE  
FOUNDATION**  
 PARNELL

## Luxury Meets Location

The Foundation is without doubt, one of the most sought-after retirement locations in Auckland. The restoration of Pearson House, a private club for residents is now complete. This historic building includes a stylish eatery, boutique cinema, art studio, wellbeing suite and billiards room.

To view the plans for Abbott Residences, or to arrange a private tour, please make an appointment with Bev Dyson.

541 PARNELL ROAD

THEFOUNDATIONVILLAGE.CO.NZ

09 869 3947

## Lucy's Corner

This month, Verve's star reviewer **LUCY KENNEDY** heads down *Memory* lane.

### MEMORY

Written and directed by Michel Franco  
 2023 – rated R (US) - in theatres now!

Saul's memories are fractured, unreliable, and lost. Sylvia's are ever-present, haunting, and far too persistent. These two broken, struggling people form an unlikely bond in Michel Franco's gut-wrenching film, *Memory*. Sylvia (Jessica Chastain) is a single mother, recovering alcoholic, and social worker. Her relationship to her memories is one fraught with trauma and strife, to the extent where we the audience question the reliability of our protagonist. Saul's (Peter Sarsgaard) early onset dementia has essentially stripped him of his privacy, independence, and, to an extent, his identity. When Sylvia is offered a position to care for Saul, the two begin to heal together in Franco's cinematic world of pale winter light, tableau-esque compositions, and quiet domestic spaces that reflect the thoughtfulness of the film.



IMAGE: MEMORY

The incredibly successful portrayal of these characters by Chastain and Sarsgaard present deeply complex characters that don't fall flat - they truly feel like real people, grappling with significant and intense issues. The film feels similar to a psychological thriller at times, with its emphasis on the instability of its main characters and the inherent uncertainty that accompanies memory. However, this film is a drama that will raise questions about the importance of memory and its distortion, how it shapes us as people, and how it informs our perception of life. *Memory* presents an examination of a connection between two people and the healing nature of human connection. By the time the credits roll, you'll be aching to give Saul a hug.

Instagram: @lucykennedyreviews



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For an enrolment pack please contact Felicity Lister.

E: [enrol@baradene.school.nz](mailto:enrol@baradene.school.nz)

T: 524 6019 ext 713



# Box Office



IMAGE: A COMPLETE UNKNOWN

## A COMPLETE UNKNOWN

23 January

New York, early 1960s. Against the backdrop of a vibrant music scene and tumultuous cultural upheaval, an enigmatic 19-year-old from Minnesota arrives in the West Village with his guitar and revolutionary talent, destined to change the course of American music. Timothée Chalamet stars and sings as Bob Dylan in James Mangold's *A Complete Unknown*, the electric true story behind the rise of one of the most iconic singer-songwriters in history.

## THE ROOM NEXT DOOR

January 1

Ingrid and Martha were close friends in their youth, when they worked together at the same magazine. Ingrid went on to become an autofiction novelist while Martha became a war reporter. Eventually, they were separated by the circumstances of life. After years of being out of touch, they meet again in an extreme but strangely sweet situation. Based on the novel *What Are you Going Through* by Sigrid Nunez and starring Tilda Swinton and Julianne Moore.

## ANORA

26 December

In this Cannes Film Festival Palme d'Or-winning love story from Sean Baker a Las Vegas sex worker gets her chance at a Cinderella story when she and a young Russian oligarch fall for each other. However, when news of their impulsive marriage reaches his homeland, his parents make moves to get their union annulled.

## A REAL PAIN

26 December

Mismatched cousins David (Jesse Eisenberg, who also writes and directs) and Benji (Kieran Culkin) reunite for a tour through Poland to honour their beloved grandmother. The adventure takes a turn when the pair's old tensions resurface against the backdrop of their family history.

## WE LIVE IN TIME

23 January

Almut (Florence Pugh) and Tobias (Andrew Garfield) are brought together in a surprise encounter that changes their lives. Through snapshots of their life together - falling for each other, building a home, becoming a family - a difficult truth is revealed that rocks its foundation. As they embark on a path challenged by the limits of time, they learn to cherish each moment of the unconventional route their love story has taken, in filmmaker John Crowley's decade-spanning, deeply moving romance.

## ALL WE IMAGINE ASLIGHT

26 December

In Mumbai, Nurse Prabha's routine is troubled when she receives an unexpected gift from her estranged husband. Her younger roommate, Anu, tries in vain to find a spot in the city to be intimate with her boyfriend. A trip to a beach town allows them to find a space for their desires to manifest.

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# What's On in December

WORDS —  
BELLA SAMPSON



IMAGE: AT LANEWAY, CHARLI XCX - PHOTOGRAPHY HARLEY WEIR

## CHRISTMAS ON QUEEN ST

1 – 21 December

Auckland CBD

Celebrate the season on Queen Street every Thursday to Saturday. Enjoy family-friendly pop-up shows, comedians, musicians, magicians, craft stations, and giveaways. Don't miss Santa's Enchanted Forest and the iconic Smith & Caughey's animated windows based this year on *The Adventures of Hutu & Kawa*.

[heartofthecity.co.nz](http://heartofthecity.co.nz)

## THE HOLIDAY IN CONCERT

21 December

Kiri Te Kawana  
Theatre

This season, enjoy *The Holiday* in a new way with the Auckland Festival Orchestra performing Hans Zimmer's score live alongside a screening of the film. A delightful, one-of-a-kind experience for all fans of this classic romcom.

[ticketmaster.co.nz](http://ticketmaster.co.nz)

## AUCKLAND GIN FESTIVAL

31 January

The Cloud

Auckland Gin Festival invites you to sip and savour the best craft gins from Kiwi and Aussie distillers! Tickets come with unlimited gin samples (sensibly, of course!), basic mixers, a tasting glass, and a tote bag. Chat with distillers, expand your knowledge with masterclass sessions and enjoy gourmet bites from Auckland's best food trucks.

[aucklandlive.co.nz](http://aucklandlive.co.nz)

## SARAH MILLICAN

1 – 4 February

Kiri Te Kawana  
Theatre

Award-winning UK comedian Sarah Millican is back with *Late Bloomer*, her latest show. Known for her wit and relatable humour, she dives into her journey from a quiet child to the bold woman we know and love today. Millican delivers laughs and heart.

[ticketmaster.co.nz](http://ticketmaster.co.nz)

## LANEWAY

6 February

Western Springs

Whether you're celebrating Brat Summer or are after 'stranger things' from this iconic genre-spanning festival, Laneway has you covered. Featuring a huge line-up of the globe's most exciting artists including Charli XCX, Clairo, DJO, and more.

[premier.ticketek.co.nz](http://premier.ticketek.co.nz)

## JACK WHITEHALL

25 January

Spark Arena

The Netflix *Travels with My Father* duo, comedian Jack Whitehall and his father, Michael, bring a hilarious new chapter of their journey to our shores. Expect tall tales from their time abroad, family secrets, and heartwarming reflections from Jack's latest adventure, becoming a parent to the newest Whitehall.

[ticketmaster.co.nz](http://ticketmaster.co.nz)

## NEW YEARS

31 December

HI-SO

If you're looking for somewhere to ring in 2025, HI-SO has you covered. With their delicious menu of nibbles and artisanal cocktails, fantastic local DJs, and stunning views from the 16th-storey rooftop bar. Countdown to midnight with sweeping views of Auckland and Waitemata Harbour.

[eventbrite.co.nz](http://eventbrite.co.nz)

## MOTAT'S CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

10 – 13, 15 – 18 &  
20 – 23  
December

MOTAT

For 12 magical evenings MOTAT will transform into a festive wonderland, inviting whānau and friends to enjoy a magical night out. Visitors can explore Santa's workshop, join in outdoor games and lolly-making or savour delicious kai from the food truck market. Live music, carol singers and the return of te rākau Kirihimete nui, the grand Christmas tree, rounds out a night of unforgettable, festive fun.

# Gift Giving

Novels with broad appeal.

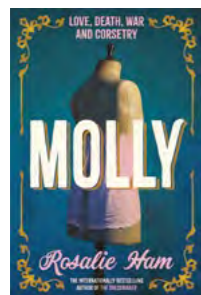
WORDS – KAREN MCMILLAN, bestselling author  
karenm.co.nz | nzbooklovers.co.nz



**RIVER SONG**  
Di Morrissey

In the country town of Fig Tree River, Leonie, Madison, Sarita and Chrissie build friendships when a New York composer brings them together to stage a local musical theatre production. However, their lives are further changed when they purchase a winning lottery ticket. But will this massive windfall bring about their dreams or disaster? The 30th novel from this bestselling author is a delight.

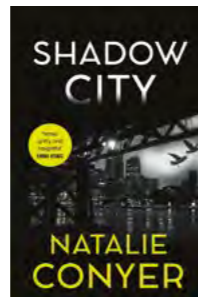
*Pan Macmillan, RRP \$39.95*



**MOLLY**  
Rosalie Ham

The bestselling novel *The Dressmaker* was made into a movie starring Kate Winslet, and now Rosalie Ham has published the prequel. Molly Donnage's corsetry business is beginning to take off in 1914, as she marches with suffragists for better conditions for women everywhere. But as war looms, Molly's dreams waver until something unexpected happens. This is a darkly humorous novel of love, death, war and societal change.

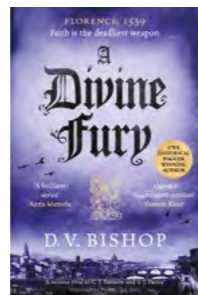
*Picador, RRP \$37.99*



**SHADOW CITY**  
Natalie Conyer

Sergeant Jackie Rose joins forces with veteran detective Schalk Laurens, who visits Sydney from South Africa to see his daughter. But he's also trying to track down a missing teenager. Jackie is investigating the death of another young woman, and the cases seem to be linked. Their investigation exposes corruption and crime that prey on vulnerable youngsters. It's gritty crime fiction at its best.

*Echo Publishing, RRP \$36.99*



**A DIVINE FURY**  
D.V. Bishop

An NZ Booklovers Award winner, DV Bishop returns with his latest atmospheric crime novel set in Renaissance Italy, featuring the unforgettable protagonist Cesare Aldo. Set in Florence in 1539, Cesare discovers a murdered body beneath Michelangelo's statue of David. When more bodies appear, it is clear a killer is stalking the citizens of Florence. Can Cesare stop the killer before they strike again? Superbly page-turning.

*Pan Macmillan, RRP \$37.99*

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# You've Got to be Kidding

WORDS —  
JAMIE CHRISTIAN DESPLACES



In 2020, Lego launched its first 18+ labelling aimed at adults who may have otherwise felt embarrassed about buying the iconic toy. It was a shrewd move.

“Though Lego has evolved so much, fundamentally it has not changed since 1949.”

The bigger - and pricier - Lego kits include an \$800 *Lord of the Rings* set and a *Titanic* replica that costs \$1,200. In just four years, the 'grown-up' collection has ballooned to more than 140 sets, around 15% of the available total sets in the USA, for example. There is no hard data on the number of adult Lego collectors around the world, but, according to the data intelligence group Circana, the 'kidult' segment has long outpaced the children's category within toys.

“There's a fairly new term online: AFOL, which stands for 'adult fans of Lego,' collector Thomas Oliver tells *Verve*. “Lego sets are categorised by age, and in the past, boxes would say, for example, 'ages 5-8' or '6-12'. There usually seemed to be an upper limit, but it seems that Lego came to realise that there was a huge demographic that was adult, and the promotional images contain smiling adults building these complex sets.”

Between 2019 and 2022, kidults' sales contribution to the toy segment grew from 23.4% to 28%. Across the UK, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, its market value stands at more than \$8 billion, with Lego - the world's bestselling toy - accounting for a good chunk of that. Though the overall toy industry shrunk by 7% in 2023, Lego's revenue grew by 2% to a dizzying \$16 billion - helped in no small part by those AFOLs.

Thomas says that like most kids, his love of Lego began when he was around four, and “hit its peak” aged 12. “During high school and then university, I lost touch with it, but then rediscovered the passion when I finished uni,” he continues. “Since then, it has never really diminished. Whilst my fascination for it peaked when I was 12, my passion for it is no less now than it was then. The main difference is that I can afford to buy it myself, which is rather dangerous!”

I ask what Thomas finds so appealing about those famous plastic bricks and figures.

“Though Lego has evolved so much, fundamentally it has not changed since 1949. I love how that signifies foresight, perfection, and genius. It's like the Fender Stratocaster - they just got that right in 1954, and it remains the quintessential electric guitar. That level of timelessness to me is astounding.” The analogy is an apt one for Thomas, who is a musician. His recording studio's Lego collection serves as a point of fascination, and inspiration, too.

“The best place to create is a place where the pressures of the outside world are removed,” he adds. “Think about the way kids create. They don't care what anyone thinks. A friend of mine named Rose recently asked, 'Have you ever seen the way a child will dress themselves if given free reign? It's wild!' Well, this principle applies to my studio. Artists arrive and are immediately surrounded by Lego, and it subconsciously connects them, regardless of their age, to that inner child who doesn't think about the market, the label, the target audience, or the radio stations their work could be pitched to. They subconsciously become the artist who just *creates* because they love to create. And I believe that is where most of the best music - and other art - comes from.”

As well as helping to discover that forgotten creative inner-child, building Lego offers a plethora of other benefits - as pointed out by Abbie Headon in her book, *Build Yourself Happy: The Joy of LEGO Play*, which has more than 50 tips and activities designed to aid mindfulness.

*continued over page*





According to psychotherapist Melissa Lapidés, Lego play induces a calming effect on the brain much the same way that painting and arts and crafting activities do, capable of inducing a meditative state, and decreasing anxiety. “When you’re focusing on creating something, you’re pointing your mind in the direction of what you’re creating,” she writes for *Well+Good*. “This doesn’t leave room for unwanted thoughts to penetrate your brain.”

To further aid relaxation, the toy company has even produced its very own album, *LEGO White Noise*, with tracks that comprise the likes of the sound of Lego bricks being clicked together or poured from a giant tub. Available to stream on all major platforms, it is surprisingly satisfying!

“Another thing I love about Lego is how it inspires people of different cognitive

persuasions,” continues Thomas. “Some kids just love to let their imaginations run free, building spaceships with tractor wheels and piloted by pirates, while others will meticulously follow the instructions and then display their creation in a cabinet and admire its perfection.”

Kids, says Thomas, generally think that his hobby is “cool straight away”, while the adult reaction is a lot more varied. “Some think that it’s funny, and others just don’t get it,” he reveals. “But the majority love it, because it empowers them to feel more connected to their own sense of wonder and fascination. We all want to feel more connected to that childlike wonder we lose through social conditioning and expectations. So, I’ve observed that when people see my love for Lego, then they feel more comfortable letting their adult guard down. And that’s a beautiful thing.”



#### ALL AT SEA

On 13 February 1997 the *Tokio Express* cargo ship was struck by a rogue wave only 30km into its voyage to New York from the Netherlands, causing 62 shipping containers to tumble into the sea. Included in the spill were around five million Lego pieces, many of which were, ironically, ocean-themed, and which are still washing up on European shores more than 25 years later. Known as the Great Lego Spill, it’s the worst toy-related environmental disaster of all time, but one that still attracts beachcombers hoping to snag what are some of the rarest Lego items out there.

#### FACT BUILDING

- The Lego company was founded in 1932 by Danish carpenter Ole Kirk Christiansen, all toys were originally made from wood
- The name Lego is an abbreviation of the Danish leg godt, which means ‘play well’
- In 1946, Christiansen bought his first plastic injection moulding machine
- Lego expands to the German market in 1956
- Lego’s wooden toy production is discontinued following a warehouse fire in 1960
- Lego can move following the introduction of the Lego wheel in 1962!
- At the end of the 20th century, Lego is named ‘Toy of the Century’
- When the modern Lego brick was created in 1958, there were four colours: red, yellow, blue, white... and transparent. Since then, there have been 200 colours
- Lego minifigures are the world’s largest population, numbering more than four billion. There are also around 80 Lego bricks for every person in the world
- If the number of Lego bricks sold in an average year were placed end to end, they would reach more than five times around the world
- The Lego company has passed from generation to generation, and is still owned by the Kirk Christiansen family

# Asking the Deeper Questions

WORDS BY—  
RAWAN SAADI

Kiran Patel has been a documentary filmmaker for 10 years, documenting stories nationwide and, throughout it all, he's learned to ask the deeper questions.



Now he's inviting people to spend time in the director's seat. His new card game, *Deeper Questions*, encourages people to dive past small talk and uncover meaningful conversations with strangers and loved ones alike.

He also runs the creative community space, MoveSpace, on Dominion Road, a "labour of love for music recording, filmmaking and other creative projects". As a result of these experiences, Kiran has seen the value of learning about people by asking deeper questions.

"I first started considering the idea of a card game a few years ago after a very fulfilling interview for a documentary about Dominion Road" he tells *Verve*. "I was able to see the painful, happy, successful and disappointing pieces of a person's story which helped form who they came to be."

He also realised that, despite having spent so much time asking strangers profound questions, he'd never asked them of his own parents.

"So, I launched a Kickstarter campaign to help create and market *Deeper Questions*, estimating that it would take three weeks to reach the \$10,000 goal," reveals Kiran. "To my surprise, it only took 27 hours!"

Within two weeks of launch, *Deeper Questions* had raised \$17,000, with 480 preorders.

Kiran is thrilled to see that his idea is fulfilling a collective desire for people to build deeper connections in a safe space, which he calls "vulnerability with safety": "It can be intimidating to ask personal questions out of the blue.

However, when everyone has prepared themselves to play a card game designed for thoughtful conversations, they feel more comfortable slowly opening up."

The game is versatile – able to accommodate groups of up to eight, or a couple on a date. Questions (like 'Tell me about a moment you'll treasure forever') are designed to evoke positive memories and create stronger connections.

"By answering these questions about yourself or your past," says Kiran, "you are getting to know yourself a little better, too."

Kiran has already received positive feedback from friends and acquaintances who have tested the game out. He was happy to see families and couples uncovering details about each other's lives that would have otherwise been left unsaid. "One friend told me that they had found out what their partner's first impression of them was before they were together."

He says that as amazing as it would be to see the game having large-scale success, Kiran would be happy even if 350 people bought the game: "This would be the equivalent of one person a day having a meaningful conversation over one year."

With Christmas around the corner, this could be the perfect opportunity for you to give the gift of a deeper conversation!

*The game is now open for pre-orders which are set to be delivered by early December, just in time for the holiday season. Find it at [askdeeperquestions.com](http://askdeeperquestions.com).*



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