

# verve

An aerial photograph of a tropical villa. The central feature is a large, rectangular swimming pool with clear blue water. To the right of the pool is a wooden deck with a circular table and chairs. The villa has a grey tiled roof and is surrounded by lush greenery, including palm trees and various shrubs. The scene is captured from a high angle, showing the shadows of the trees on the sand and the pool's edge.

FEBRUARY '25

An uplifting  
monthly election  
of life, style and  
happenings.

This February we take a trip to Rarotonga's regal Te Vakaroa Villas, as well as a journey through Japan. We also celebrate Ponsonby, Pride, and Valentine's Day, and lots more things that we love.

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# FROM THE EDITOR



PHOTO: LEO, JAMIE & TOMMY

## THINGS WE LOVE

A bit like the film *Sliding Doors*, the Burnt Toast Theory dictates that seemingly minor mishaps – like burning your toast in the morning – are the universe’s way of diverting us away from misfortune – or towards more positive outcomes – later in the day. I recently had a ‘burnt toast’ moment which led me to a bus stop that I had never been to before and will likely never visit again. Right there, gently shivering beneath the summer breeze, was a postcard.

In stark contrast to the glorious shot of a sun-drenched New Zealand landscape, heartfelt text revealed the death of the writer’s mother. The writer and her friend, who lives in England, clearly had history and clearly had been struggling to maintain contact for some time. The next day, I popped the postcard into a postbox, reflecting on how I had, through a ‘burnt toast’ moment, possibly become a minor thread in the fabric of a friendship that connected continents and possibly even generations. The postcard was signed off with ‘All my love...’

‘Love’ is the overriding theme of this February issue. It is, after all, the month of both St Valentine and Pride, and we have explored both over the following pages. Lucy Kennedy’s splendid profile of 60s icon Pattie Boyd, the woman who married both George Harrison and Eric Clapton and inspired some of rock’s most iconic love songs, also invites us to consider what it means to be a muse and the morality of borrowing from someone’s essence in the name of art.

Alas, anything can sour, but all good in this world begins with love – whether it be composing a ballad, publishing a magazine, or sending a postcard to an old friend on the other side of the world.

Enjoy the issue.  
Jamie

# verve

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# Ashbury Heights Lifestyle



**The Ashbury Heights Care Centre, in Whangārei,  
is now open.**

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

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Photo: Nicolas Matheus

Fermob Luxembourg Collection in *Pesto*





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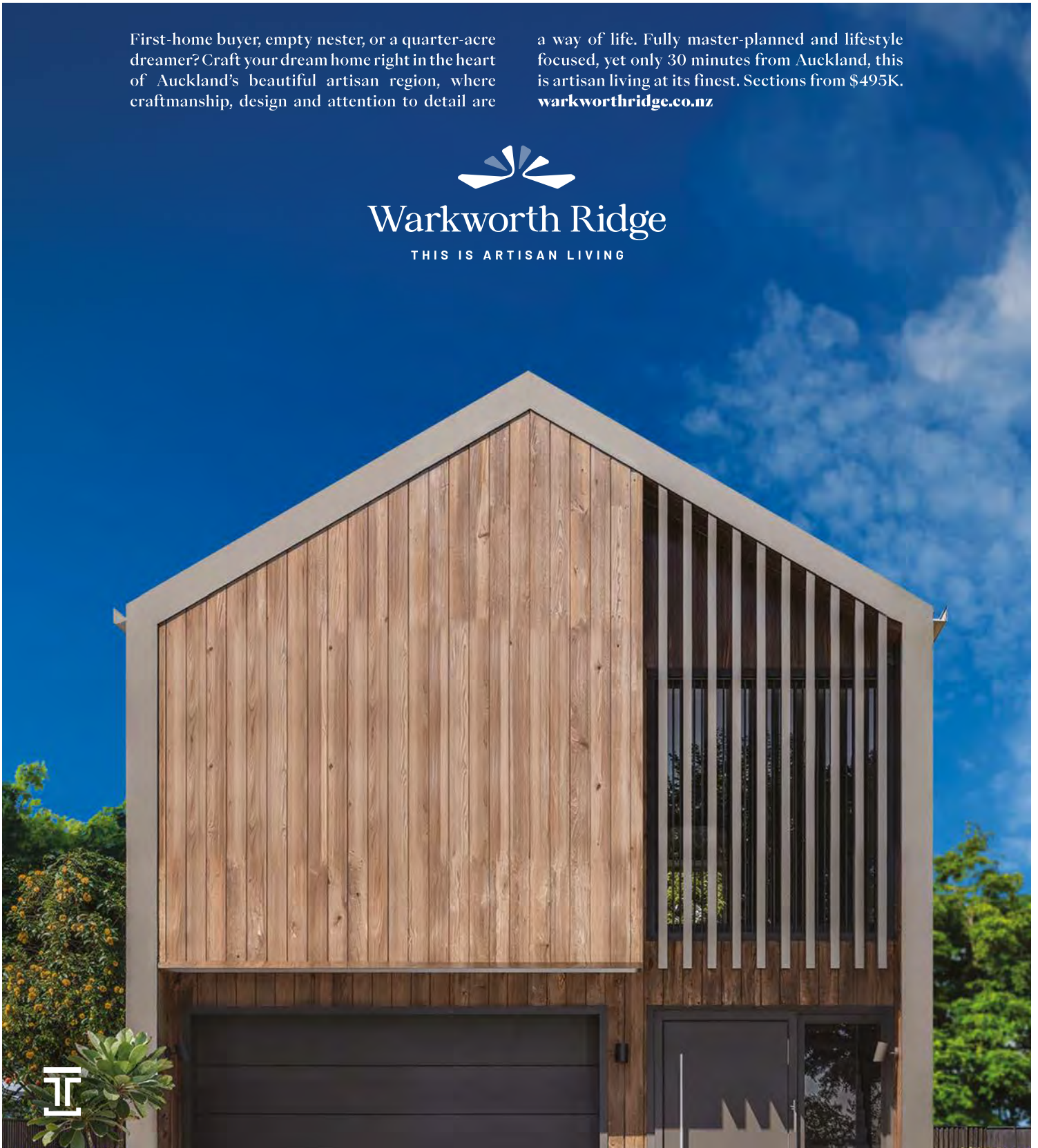
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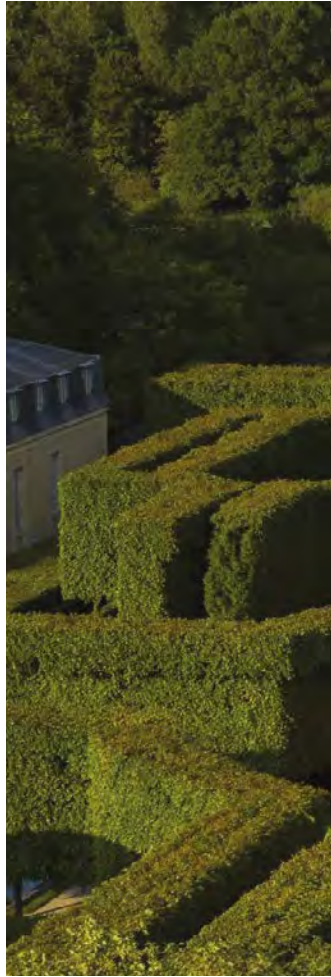
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# Architects of Love

“Architecture should speak of its time and place, but yearn for timelessness,” so said architect Frank Gehry. And what could be more timeless than love?

While love has inspired innumerable works of art, poetry, and songs, its influence on architecture can often be forgotten. Here are some examples of architecture that was truly built from the heart.



PICTURED: CASTELLO DI TORRECHIARA, ITALY

**TAJ MAHAL, INDIA**

There's no greater or more famous monument to love than the Taj Mahal in Agra. The magnificent, majestic, marble masterpiece was built by Emperor Shah Jahan in the mid-17th century to serve as a mausoleum for his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal.

The awe-inspiring structure features intricate carvings, inlaid gemstones, and a stunning symmetrical design that reflects in surrounding pools. Elevating its elegance even further, the Taj Mahal's facade glows from various shades of pink through to ivory depending on the time of day or night – and even on the type of moon. The "jewel" of Muslim art in India, the Unesco World Heritage Site is described as "the greatest architectural achievement in the whole range of Indo-Islamic architecture".



**CASTELLO DI TORRECHIARA, ITALY**

Perched atop rolling hills in Italy's Parma, Torrechiara Castle – or *Castello di Torrechiara* – was built in the mid-15th century by married nobleman Pier Maria Rossi for his lover, Bianca Pellegrini. The Renaissance-era castle served as both a fortress and a romantic retreat, with features including frescoes depicting the couple's love story alongside mythological and historical figures and a sprawling terrace offering spectacular vistas of the Parma valley. Considered one of the most important examples of Italian castle architecture, this storybook structure boasts not only practical, military strength, but stands as a timeless monument of devotion, where love and history are etched for eternity into its stone walls.

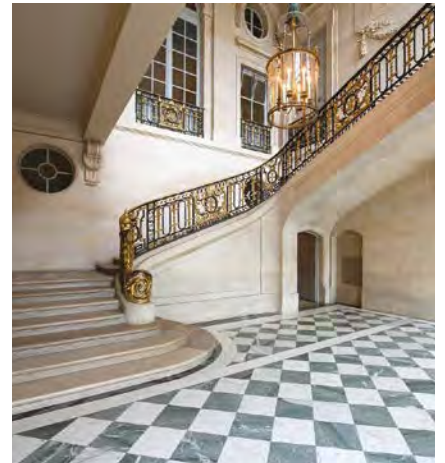


PICTURED: THE PETIT TRIANON, FRANCE



**PETIT TRIANON, FRANCE**

The striking ochre-toned Petit Trianon House, located on the grounds of the Palace of Versailles in France, is an elegant neoclassical château which was completed in 1768 for Louis XV as a retreat for his mistress, Madame de Pompadour. Later, Louis XVI gifted the building to Marie Antoinette, who, looking for a refuge from the rigidity of court life, transformed it into a private sanctuary. She redesigned the surrounding botanical gardens into then-fashionable Anglo-Oriental ones. Following the French Revolution, the Petit Trianon became a



hostel, and the abandoned gardens very nearly turned into allotments. Napoleon restored both the palace and the gardens to their former glory, initially for his sister, Pauline, and later giving it to his second wife, Empress Marie-Louise. Then, in 1867, Empress Eugénie, wife of Napoleon III, transformed the Petit Trianon into a museum honouring Marie Antoinette. She also curated the first-ever exhibition dedicated to the former queen.



PICTURED: UFO HOUSE, PUERTO RICO

### UFO HOUSE, PUERTO RICO

Like something from a science fiction filmset, the UFO House is a flying saucer-like structure inspired not by love... but a broken heart.

Perched atop of a Puerto Rican hilltop, the home not only flashes as if ready for launch but even emits the iconic tones from the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. The house was built by retired industrial arts teacher Roberto Sanchez Rivera, 40 years after he was dumped as a teenager by a girlfriend who believed that “he’d never amount to anything”. Romantic Roberto would send her love letters with little UFOs drawn around the edges, promising his girl that one day he would build her her very own spaceship home.

The house took 10 years to build and incorporated some unusual methods to create its effects – like using dollar

store salad bowls for light fixtures around its base. Roberto also chose a very specific, elevated site. “He wanted to do it in a certain spot,” his partner, Maria Martinez, told the *New York Times*. “So that if she were to travel, she would see it day in and day out and regret those words.” Apparently, it worked, and his ex-girlfriend did ask for him back. But it was too late. “He had drawn pictures of this house in 1978 and shown them to his friends, and people thought he was crazy,” added Maria. “He wants to show everybody he was able to accomplish his dreams.”





# Valentine's Gift Guide

Sweeten their day with a gift that *actually* shows you get them—chic, stylish, and straight from the heart.

1. [Karen Murrell](#) Lipstick in 34 Passion
2. [Emma Lewisham](#) Sunceutical SPF 50 Mineral Face Crème
3. [Emma Lewisham](#) Sunceutical SPF 50 Mineral Body Crème
4. [Boost Lab](#) Essential Collagen Balls with 2D Hydro Serum
5. The [LOVE IN A JEWEL](#) Diamond Solitaire Pendant will safely hold a handwritten love note inside forever. Beautifully packaged and ready to give, complete with polaroid photos showing the note of love held inside. A gift like no other.
6. [mesoestetic](#) age element antiwrinkle eye contour
7. [mesoestetic](#) age element brightening eye contour
8. [Jens Hansen](#) Solitaire Vine Engagement Ring in Yellow Gold
9. [Tronque](#) Mini Kit & Cosmetic Bag
10. [SKIMS](#) Super Cropped Long Sleeve in Limited Edition Ruby

# LOVE SPREADS

PRIDE AND VALENTINE'S DAY MEANS FEBRUARY TRULY IS THE MONTH OF LOVE...



## ST VALENTINE

You might love it, you might hate it, but you certainly can't escape it – so what's the story behind the person behind the internationally recognised day of love? A true international man of mystery, there are a few theories as to St Valentine's identity, with one of the most plausible being he was a third-century Roman priest named Valentinus known for ministering to persecuted Christians in defiance of the Emperor Claudius. He was beheaded on 14 February, and the date has been reserved for the Feast of St Valentine – or Valentine's Day – ever since it was first inaugurated by Pope Gelasius I in 496 AD.

## WHY WE KISS

Kissing on the lips may not be as common as you think – a study of 168 cultures published by the American Anthropological Association found that less than half of all societies kiss on the lips in a romantic sense (excluding parent-child kissing). But for those that do, why do they do it? Well, no one knows! Some theorise that it is an evolutionary bonding action that stems from pre-mastication food transfer – that is when our ancient ancestors pre-chewed food for their infants before directing it to our mouths. Others argue that it is a feel-good reflex associated with breastfeeding, or that it evolved as a way of assessing potential mates through the exchange of chemicals like pheromones through our mouths.

## TILL DEATH DO US PART

Humans aren't the only creatures that smooch, there are plenty of animals that exhibit their own versions of kissing-like behaviour such as moose and squirrels that brush their noses against each other and turtles that tap heads. Bats, chimpanzees, and bonobos kiss so similarly to us that they even sometimes use their tongues! There are also several species that mate for life including grey wolves (the pack male and female alphas), beavers, and gibbons. Around 5% of all mammal species (excluding humans) form monogamous relationships, but when it comes to birds, most mate for life. The parasitic flatworm *Diplozoon paradoxum* takes commitment to a whole new level – as larva, they cannot reach adulthood without permanently cojoining with a fellow specimen!

Various studies around the world show that seniors may be Netflix-and-chill-ing way more than many of their younger counterparts...

#### RANDY RETIREES

Various studies around the world show that seniors may be Netflix-and-chill-ing way more than many of their younger counterparts, with nearly half of individuals aged 60 years and older reporting being sexually active, and 10% of those aged 90 and above. Rates of STIs in UK rest homes have risen so sharply that experts are calling for older folk to be taught about safe sex. And it's a similar situation in Aotearoa where there have been cases of sex workers having been called in to rest homes. "...If somebody is seen to be intellectually competent then they are entitled to have sexual relationships with adults of their choice," Massey researchers told the *NZ Herald* after a four-year study of the rest home industry. "They're also entitled to use their money, so this can be a very contentious issue for families about how older people are spending their money..." The report recommended we learn from examples in America, Canada and Scandinavia, where intimacy and sexuality issues are addressed transparently to protect "people's rights and safety".

#### LOVE PLAYING

Sex dolls have become so realistic that last July a headless one which had somehow made its way on to a Taranaki beach led to a local woman to call the police believing she had found a human corpse. Chinese scientists and engineers have said that 2025 will see the development of "a next-generation sex doll that can interact vocally and physically with users" using ChatGPT-like technology. Things have certainly come a long way since the 28,000-year-old polished stone discovered in a German cave that is believed to be the world's oldest known sex toy!

#### SCIENCE OF THE HEART

Love is, of course, really a matter of the brain more than the heart, proven to activate the neurotransmitter dopamine stimulating all manner of pleasure centres – and also raises our levels of the stress hormone cortisol! "It's fairly complex, and we only know a little about it," Richard Schwartz, associate professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, tells *The Harvard Gazette*. "There are different phases and moods of love." As for 'love at first sight', a 2017 study concluded that it was a thing so long as there was "a strong physical attraction" (obviously!), but not necessarily a precursor to long-term commitment



# Something in the Way She Moves

WORDS —  
LUCY KENNEDY

Ensnared in a love triangle with Eric Clapton and The Beatles' George Harrison, Pattie Boyd was the inspiration behind of some of rock's greatest love songs.

**She was also a photographer. A model. A 60s icon. The ultimate muse.**

It was in 1964 that Pattie first met George. Fatefully, George first met Eric that year too. Pattie and George were introduced on the set of the Beatles film *A Hard Day's Night* and though he was at first rejected – Boyd was dating the photographer Eric Swayne – a week later, Pattie was single, and the two went for dinner, marking the start of an epic, fraught, and complex 10-year relationship. That same year, the Yardbirds, with Eric Clapton on lead guitar, supported the Beatles at a Christmas show in London, and Clapton and Harrison became good friends. Naturally, they spent more and more time together. Which meant Pattie spent more time with Eric, too.

## ALL THINGS MUST PASS

George and Pattie married in 1966. Three years later, the Beatles released the Harrison-penned masterpiece, 'Something', a smooth, swooning, poignant ballad described by Elton John as "one of the best love songs ever, ever, ever written". 'Something' has since been covered by over 150 artists, including Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley... and even Eric Clapton! However, despite such public declarations of heartfelt love, the marriage became strained, with Pattie lamenting that her husband "wanted to spread his wings and

take advantage of being the handsome, famous, rich guy he was, and see how the girls felt about him".

The year after 'Something' was released, Pattie received a mysterious letter explaining how much the sender adored her and asking if she still loved George. It was signed simply, 'E'. Pattie wrote it off as fan mail – until a late-night phone call from Eric Clapton asking if she'd received his note. "George was recording a lot and not really paying me much attention," Pattie later recalled, "and so Eric came sneaking in."

The letters, which continued throughout their 14-year relationship, were auctioned off by Boyd through Christie's in London in 2024. Among the most touching is a hand-drawn heart on the titular page of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* – Boyd's favourite book – and signed by Clapton with the note: "My love is yours."

## GOT ME ON MY KNEES

1970 was also the year Eric played Pattie 'Layla' for the first time. The soaring, seven-minute epic is famed for its howling vocals, impressive riff, and not-so-subtle lyrics: "Like a fool, I fell in love with you. You turned my whole world upside down... Layla, I'm begging, darling please." Due to the song's title – and lyrics – most listeners likely don't realise that Pattie Boyd was the inspiration behind this iconic song as well.

## She went on to take incredible, evocative images of the Beatles, of herself, and of life in the 60s.

The story behind that is that while in the South of France with Derek and the Dominos, Eric Clapton was given a 1950 painting by Émile Théodore Frandsen called 'La Fille au Bouquet'. He adored the depiction of the beautiful blonde woman with an intriguing, red-lipped smile, and christened her Layla after the 7th-century Arabian tale *Layla and Majnun* – a story of forbidden love. And so, he gifted the painting to Pattie.

"He said he wanted to play something for me, and it was 'Layla,'" remembers Pattie. "It was so beautiful and magical, there was such a passion and energy in the song." The same day that 'Layla' made its private debut, the pair attended a party hosted by Robert Stigwood (manager of the Bee Gees and Cream), and George Harrison was there. Clapton turned to George and said, "I have to tell you – I'm in love with your wife." To which George simply asked Pattie, "Are you going home with me, or him?" She picked George, and wouldn't lay eyes on Clapton for another four years.

### TURN OUT THE LIGHT

In 1974, Pattie left George following his affair with Ringo Starr's wife, Maureen Starkey Tigrett, which she called "the final straw". Eric and Pattie rekindled their romance leading to the penning of another classic ballad, 'Wonderful Tonight'. The lyrics, which famously detail private domestic moments perfectly encapsulate Clapton's yearning – he'd waited a decade for her to escape her unhappy marriage and finally, they were together. The song opens with Clapton quietly watching Pattie get ready for a night out, leading her to ask, "Do I look alright?" *And I say, "Yes, you look wonderful tonight."* Respect, appreciation, and love shine.

Four years after their reunion, Eric invited Pattie to join him on tour for his album *Slowhand*. It turned out to be a difficult time, riddled with alcoholism. Taking a break, Pattie moved in with

friends and family in America, only to receive a call from Eric... asking her to marry him.

They married in 1979, and George attended, alongside Ringo Starr and Paul McCartney – the three even played together onstage creating an almost-complete Beatles reunion (the rumour was that John Lennon was accidentally left off the guest list, though it was widely thought he wouldn't have attended anyway). George approved of Pattie and Eric's relationship to the point of even calling himself "the husband-in-law"!

It would be Pattie's second 10-year relationship with a famous musician, and it would unfortunately end much the same way as the first. Eric Clapton went on to cheat with Italian actress Lory Del Santo, compelling Pattie to walk away in 1987. She had been in the limelight, on a man's arm, for more than 20 years, and was, in her own words, sick of being "Mrs Famous".

### MORE THAN A MUSE

Pattie Boyd is primarily known for her marriages and the fabled music that she inspired. As we rush to define her in relation to the men who were in her life nearly 40 years ago, it is too often glossed over that she was an artist in her own right? A model initially, she became increasingly interested in what went on behind the scenes and so bought herself camera and would ask the photographers for tips in between shoots. She went on to take incredible, evocative images of the Beatles, of herself, and of life in the 60s.

The idea of the muse is an ancient and romantic one – but is it ethical? To take and take, to create in this way, inspired by the essence of someone else? Does the muse get to have a say? Pattie certainly doesn't get why she's labelled a muse – as she asks: "What have I done to inspire George Harrison?"

# In the Name of Love



**Relationship therapists Verity Thom and Nic Beets have been a couple since their late teens. Making love last, they tell Verve, has been “a personal quest as much as a professional interest”.**

## **What are the most common issues that couples face?**

The classic answer to this question is sex, money, parenting, division of labour, and boundaries with others. But the real issues are in how people handle the inevitable differences in all those areas. Understand that you must work by collaboration and consensus; be accountable for your own unhelpful behaviours; and realise that your relationship will only make you happy if you let it make you grow.

## **Do you see generational differences in the way people seek intimacy or navigate relationships?**

The meteoric rise of dating apps is a generational shift which has had a huge impact. In terms of how people navigate relationships, there certainly are changes. There’s generally more acceptance of diversity, both in terms of individuals – like gender or orientation – and also in terms of type of relationship like open and polyamorous relationships, and blended families, for example. People having more choice to be who they are and love in a way that works for them is a good thing.

## **What do people most misunderstand about relationships?**

Relationships don’t start out strong,

they start out easy. You build strength by dealing with challenges. Intimacy, openness and vulnerability get *harder* with time, because your partner’s opinion of you becomes increasingly important. Good communication is dependent on emotional maturity. Self-awareness and self-control are more important than being a good talker.

## **What about your work do you wish people better understood?**

Many fear that talking will make things worse. Yet what is going on in you and in your relationship is already there – you have a choice how you deal with it. Ignoring problems just makes them fester and get worse.

## **If you could share one piece of advice with everyone about intimacy and connection, what would it be?**

Emotional intimacy requires tolerating vulnerability. The secret lies in knowing how to manage the inevitable anxieties your differences raise. A good relationship requires that you know yourself and are willing to risk sharing vulnerably while being able to show care in how things are for your partner. If you can’t do both of those things, you have work to do.

## **Do people often have misconceptions about what love should feel like?**

Our media depict love as a powerful force that sweeps you off your feet. It’s not always like that, it can sneak up on you, too. Also, that’s only the initial stage of love – it’s a hormonally induced

trip that lasts a few months. Then, love is much more about consistency of actions and choices than feelings. So many people complain “it shouldn’t have to be this much work”. Wrong! Like any worthwhile enterprise, you won’t get the payoff if you don’t do the mahi.

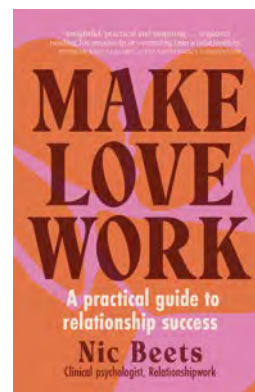
## **What’s the one piece of advice you think everyone should know about love?**

Work on yourself, not your relationship – and certainly not your partner! There’s no such thing as a relationship – there are just two people trying to get along. You can only control yourself, so make sure you’re putting your effort where you’re likely to get some reward.

## **Are there any universal truths about love that apply regardless of culture, age, or relationship style?**

That’s one for an anthropologist!

*Nic’s book, Make Love Work, is out now.*



# Paradise Perfected in Rarotonga







**Winning the prestigious 'Best South Pacific & Oceania Luxury Architectural Design Hotel' at the World Travel Awards says it all about the stunning Te Vakaroa Villas in Rarotonga.**

From the moment you arrive, a sense of calm descends, and you know that you're about to experience something special. This boutique resort features just six air-conditioned villas, each thoughtfully designed to blend luxurious comfort with the natural beauty of its surroundings. The gated villas are set directly on the beachfront of Muri Lagoon.

Between your villa's private balcony or patio and the coral beach, warm lagoon waters, and the distant crashing waves of the reef lies a serene, manicured lawn and a heated infinity pool with a jacuzzi. Open the floor-to-ceiling sliding doors, and you're met with breathtaking Pacific views. Whether you lounge with a tropical cocktail or sink into the peaceful ambiance, every moment aches with indulgence.

#### **The Villas**

The ground-floor, one-bedroom villas offer private access, complete with a fully equipped kitchen stocked with coffee, tea, and cooking essentials, along with a washing machine and dryer. The bathrooms exude luxury, with complimentary Matakana Botanicals toiletries, while the lounge provides pure linen soft furnishings, a large TV, and a sound system. Some villas feature a romantic four-poster bed, complemented by 100% high-thread-count cotton bedlinen, plush robes, and an outdoor shower (available on request).



## With everything you require right at your fingertips, you'll find there's no need to leave.

The two-bedroom villas, spread across two upper levels, boast spectacular views from the lagoon to the ocean. Each villa includes ensuite bedrooms with the same premium bedlinen and robes, 2.5 bathrooms stocked with Matakana Botanicals toiletries, and a fully equipped kitchen. Guests also enjoy a dedicated laundry area, a dining space for six, and a spacious sitting room with luxurious linen furnishings, a large TV, and a sound system.

### Dining and Design

Both the architecture and interior design, created by the renowned Laurence Sumich of Sumich Chaplin, are a testament to understated elegance, seamlessly blending comfort with the resort's lush, tropical setting.

A daily tropical breakfast of croissants, fresh fruit, and coffee is delivered right to your door. For other meals, enjoy room service from the nearby Sails Restaurant, stroll along the beach to discover waterfront dining, or explore casual cafes, fish shacks, and restaurants just a short walk away.

### Must-dos

For those looking for adventure, the options are endless. Step through the gate to the beach and snorkel or kayak in Muri Lagoon. Take a boat trip to explore the vibrant waters, or rent a car on-site to visit local markets, pristine beaches, and the island's historic township. Feeling extra adventurous? Book a flight to Aitutaki to witness its breathtaking lagoon.

When the day winds down, return to Te Vakaroa's tranquil oasis. Take a dip in the heated infinity pool, relax in your villa, and let the beauty of the Pacific surround you. With everything you require right at your fingertips, you'll find there's no need to leave.

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Valid 01 March 2025 to 31 March 2026*

# Star-crossed

## Love

Stardome is Auckland's gateway to the universe, offering immersive, presenter-led shows that showcase the wonders of space.

The state-of-the-art 360-degree planetarium is also kitted out with the most comfortable recliner seats in town!

This Valentine's Day, embark on a breathtaking journey through the cosmos, discovering enchanting tales of love woven across the night sky. The evening features an ethereal solo harp performance by Auckland Philharmonia Aspiring Musician, Harrison Chau, making for an unforgettable night of celestial romance.

For an even deeper dive, the Zeiss Telescope Experience lets you and a small group observe deep-space objects through our fully automated telescope. (Plus, throughout the year, we host sci-fi movie nights, Pink Floyd laser shows, and more.) But on Valentine's Day, it's all about love stories written in the stars. Book early as spaces are limited, and this magical evening is not to be missed!

*Discounted tickets for Starlight Explorers. Ages 16+*



Written In The  
Stars

## Valentine's Day at Stardome

Discover enchanting tales of love woven across the night sky accompanied by a solo harp performance

Friday 14 February 2025  
Shows at 6.30, 7.45 & 9pm \$25/\$18



670 Manukau Rd, Epsom, Auckland  
[www.stardome.org.nz](http://www.stardome.org.nz)



# Beacon of Pride

Hāmiora Bailey, executive director of Auckland Pride, takes a break from putting the finishing touches to this year's festival to sit down with *Verve*.

**Can you tell us a little about yourself and how you came to be involved with Auckland Pride?**

I'm a proud mokopuna (grandchild) from Ngāti Huarere and Ngāti Porou Ki Harataunga and grew up in the Coromandel Peninsula. I first came to be involved with Auckland Pride in 2021, when I took up a six-month contract as the Kaiwhakahaere Takatāpui to deliver an opening event and pop-up Māori offering within the 2022 festival.

**How has Auckland Pride evolved over the years, and what developments are you most proud of?**

Although Auckland Pride was officially founded in 2013, the organisation's roots are found within Hero, a world-leading destination festival that prioritised the visibility and fundamental human rights of our Takatāpui and Rainbow Communities throughout the 1990s. Our role now is within the wider arts ecology, supporting our membership who make up our festival as event organisers, and to support our Rainbow Service Providers who continue the important work needed for our communities year-round.

I'm really proud of our small but mighty team in helping our event organisers through expressions of interest processes, wānanga and festival delivery to demonstrate and grow healthy and sustainable production methodologies, creating key resources and building career building pathways within our Owned Programmes, Pride Elevates, Pride Develops, Vector Lights for Auckland Pride, Te Timatanga, and the Robert Lord Residency.

**Which artists are you most excited about featuring this year?**

I'm particularly excited about Xin Ji's Body Story as part of our Pride Elevates programme at Q Theatre Loft. In this debut solo work, the story of Xin's body unravels through moments where the emotional and physical collide. As queer people, our bodies are often politicised, and I think this work offers exploration and affirmation for the power of the human spirit and our collective responsibility for kindness and respect.

**Can you tell us about the relationship between the festival and the Ponsonby community – and the wider Auckland LGBTQI+ community?**

The relationship is both rich and deeply rooted in the history of Auckland's Takatāpui and Rainbow Communities. Ponsonby has long been seen as a centre for queer life in Auckland, historically home to early queer meeting places, cruising sites, flats, bars, and clubs, many of which were crucial to the development of the city's queer culture and activism.

In the 1970s and 1980s, dedicated venues like the Aquarius Society and the KG Club helped solidify Ponsonby's place as a focal point for the Takatāpui and Rainbow Communities, offering not only social spaces but also platforms for political and social activism. These spaces were integral to the development of the wider queer scene in Auckland, offering support, visibility, and solidarity during a time when Takatāpui and Rainbow people faced significant social and legal discrimination.

In the 1990s, The Birdcage became a well-known bar in Ponsonby that welcomed and celebrated the Takatāpui and Rainbow Communities, adding to the area's legacy of inclusive spaces. Today, Ponsonby remains a vital location for the festival, serving as both a cultural and social anchor for the community. The Auckland Pride Festival draws on this rich

history, celebrating the diversity, resilience, and activism of the Takatāpui and Rainbow Communities while continuing to build connections between past and present queer spaces.

While Ponsonby has long been known as a key spot for queer activities, as our office is on Karangahape Road, it is in the connection of these historic sites that we recognise Karangahape and where we stand today as the vibrant wellspring for Auckland's Takatāpui and Rainbow communities. For decades, K' Road has been the gathering place where people of all genders, sexualities, and identities come together, whether at queer-friendly bars, art spaces, or iconic venues. This area has witnessed the evolution of the Rainbow Community and has become a symbol of resistance, creativity, and solidarity. It is a space where everything from activism to drag shows and queer art exhibitions are celebrated, making it a natural and essential part of the Auckland Pride story.

**What are your long-term hopes for the Auckland Pride Festival, and where do you see it in five or ten years?**

Our goal as a team in the next five years is to move Auckland Pride to new premises and create a community hub at the historic 510 Karangahape Road, which once was the Pink Pussy Cat Club - if you know, you know! Outside of festival delivery, we offer STI and HIV testing every first Thursday of the month, help emerging and underrepresented artists grow their initiatives and apply for funding, and support grassroots organisations through pastoral support - alongside producing residencies, site responsive works and live events. We are quickly outgrowing our humble tari (office) at 281 Karangahape Road, and with our amazing team we have been able to double our membership in the 10 months we've been working together.

To do this we need to continue to refine our processes, systems and ways of working, grow our donor and patron base, and deepen our relationship with our members. We do not believe that having a bigger festival means having a bigger festival, and so, to be able to arrive into our aspirations of our community hub, our focus is to lay the foundation of a sustainable organisation.

# Ponsonby Footprints

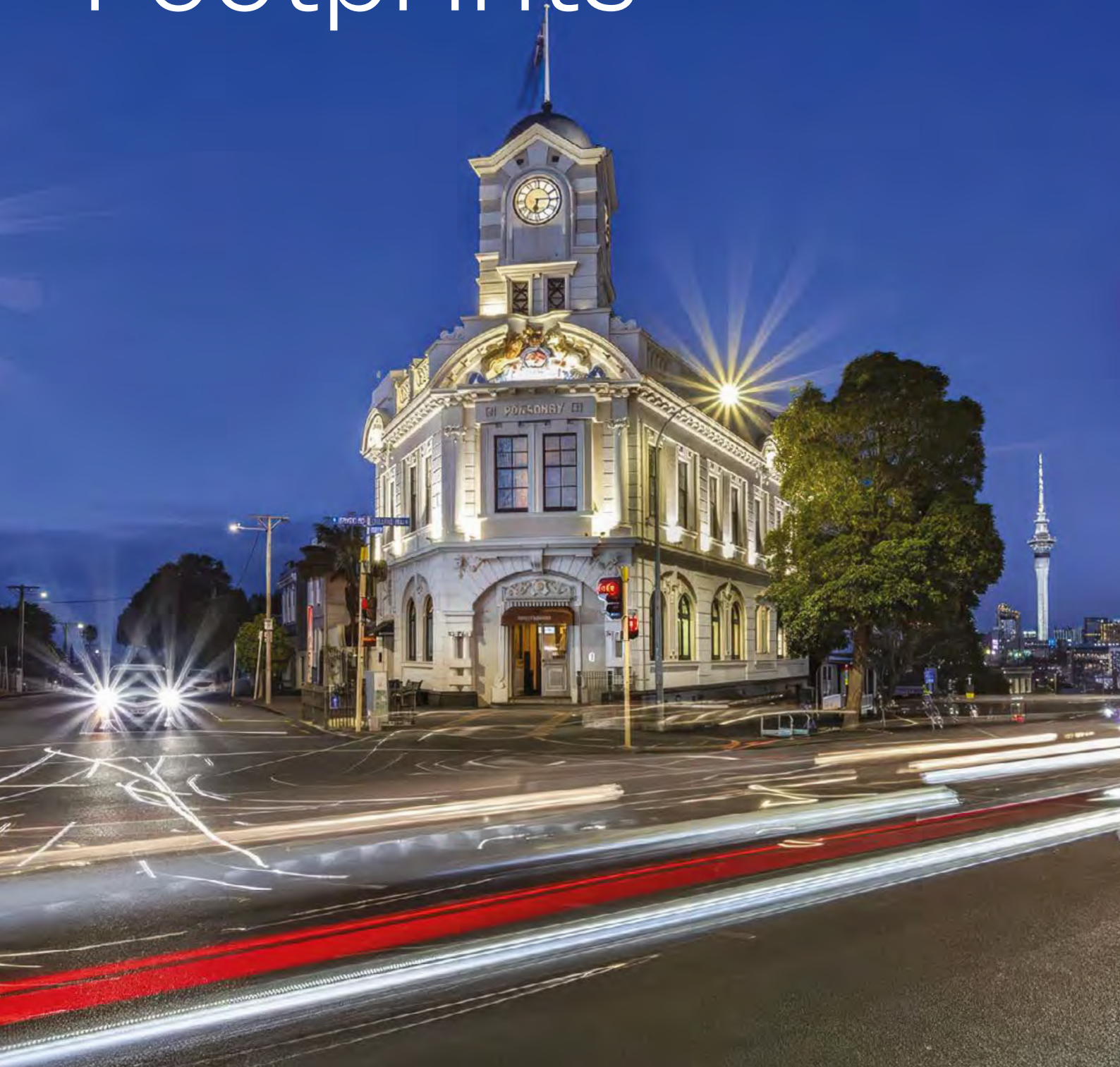




IMAGE: COURTESY OF GAJA, PONSONBY CENTRAL



IMAGE: COURTESY OF PONSONBYCENTRAL.CO.NZ

A hive of enticing eateries, beautiful boutiques, and vibrant bars and cafes, Ponsonby Central serves as a microcosm of what makes its namesake neighbourhood Auckland's – many would say Aotearoa's – most stylish suburb.

#### THE PONSONBY RIDGELINE

The Ponsonby ridgeline marks a traditional Māori transport route and walking track that ran from Mount Eden/ Maungawhau through Newton Gully/Te Uru Karaka to pa sites overlooking Okaa present day Victoria Park. The ridgeline is known as Te Rimutahin in te reo, which translates as 'the lone rimu tree', believed to be a reference to an ancient tree that grew from the intersection between present day Ponsonby and Karangahape Roads. For generations, Māori – and later Asian and Pacific Island communities also – dominated the creative and diverse, if somewhat dilapidated, suburb that was once known as *Dedwood*. The neighbourhood is credited with birthing the nation's reggae scene.

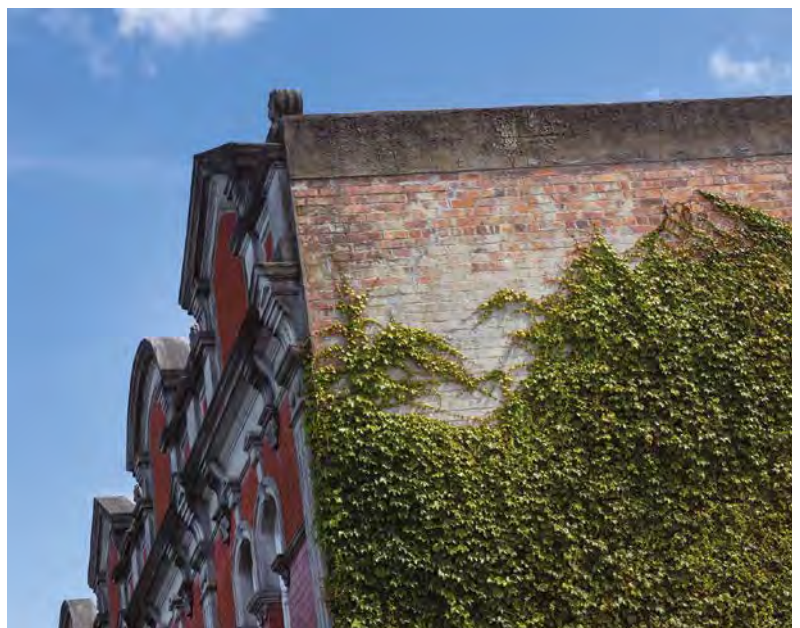




IMAGE: COURTESY OF GENERAL COLLECTIVE

**PONSONBY COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Ponsonby Community Centre was originally built in 1897 as an infant school. In 1970, it incorporated Aotearoa’s first inter-cultural marae, officially opened by Mr MacIntyre, Minister of Māori and Island Affairs, and also hosted the nation’s first Citizen Advice Bureau and first Tongan pre-school. Rooms there have been named after notable locals like seaman, waterside and trade unionist Johnny Mitchell, and dancer Freda Stark who was a star of Auckland’s Wintergarden cabaret and nightclub during the second world war, earning the nickname ‘Fever of the Fleet’ by US troops stationed here.

**WESTERN PARK**

At the top of Ponsonby Road, Western Park, opened in 1879, is one of the city’s oldest green spaces, blossoming with established pūriri, tanekaha, karaka, rimu, pōhutukawa and Morton Bay fig trees. Just a short stroll in and it’s almost impossible to imagine that such a shady oasis exists so close to the bustling streets, with hilly, winding paths passing sports areas and a colourful playground replete with one of the city’s best and biggest flying foxes! As equally memorable as the woodland are the distinctive sculptural artworks by John Radford semi-buried in the grass near Ponsonby Road (Verve interviews John on page 32).

**THREE LAMPS**

*Dedwood* was a name originally bestowed upon the Three Lamps junction at Ponsonby, Jervois, College Hill and St Marys Roads, after a farm on Shelly Beach Road. It changed to Ponsonby in the 1870s – there are a handful of contenders who it may have been named after, including Major-General Sir Henry Ponsonby who was Queen Victoria’s private secretary at the time. Three Lamps served as the departure point for horse-drawn buses to the city centre, with waiting passengers using the lamps’ stone base as a bench, and politicians using it as soapbox. The spot blossomed thanks to the development of surrounding stores, the post office, and a hotel that later became the Gluepot, Auckland’s coolest live music venue that hosted performances by the likes of Hello Sailor and Mick Jagger. Midnight Oil’s Peter Garrett leapt so that high he headbutted a hole into the ceiling during one legendary performance.



IMAGE: HOTEL PONSONBY, 1 SAINT MARYS ROAD, PONSONBY

**HOTEL PONSONBY**

Now home of Hotel Ponsonby, the Heritage-listed post office building opened in 1912. The handsome structure certainly has many a story to tell, including being the site of a world first for a capital crime when Dennis Gunn was convicted of killing Postmaster Augustus Braithwaite in 1920, based almost entirely on fingerprint evidence. Gunn’s fingerprints matched those found on cash boxes and a gun believed to have been used during the robbery. Though Gunn held his hands up to the robbery, he claimed that an accomplice had killed the post office boss. The jury didn’t think so and Gunn was sentenced to death by hanging.





**PONSONBY ROAD ♥ SAT 15<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY**

AUCKLAND RAINBOW PARADE from 7.30pm

JOIN US

Love  PONSONBY

# Parklife

Unveiled way back in 1998, the TIP sculptures at the top of Ponsonby Road are undisputed Auckland icons.

WORDS —  
JAMIE CHRISTIAN DESPLACES



**Three buildings sinking into – or erupting from? – the lush green grass of Western Park serve as an ever-relevant comment about the city’s changing landscape.**

“Inspiration for the TIP sculptures came from me seeing the destruction of many aesthetic old buildings,” John tells me over a takeout coffee under the park’s shade. “A decade and a half later I got the opportunity to design a sculpture for Western Park.”

Following extensive research of library and museum photography archives, John created “caricatures” of the buildings rather than exact replicas of them.

“Some elements are a bit exaggerated, other things are played down,” he continues. “Behind you, over there, that chimney stack is curving, like it’s made from jelly. What’s it doing? Is it pointing to something? Is it collapsing under its own weight? There are unusual elements that I’ve included that are just part of the work.”

**Like the inscription that says: ‘Birds used to stand here and watch people far below’?**

“That idea came from meeting Les Harvey [the creator of Parnell Village]. I liked him. When he was a kid, he’d climb out of the window of the three-story pub that his parents owned, scrambling over slate roofs around the city centre. I also loved to climb – trees and buildings. I still do! It’s a wonderful experience.”



However, John freely admits that his admiration for historical buildings is a romantic rather than realistic one.

“These building that I have based these works on are a bit risky in their structural design. I own an apartment in a building that will survive a large earthquake. Look, that would crush a family car,” he says, motioning towards a sizeable concrete chunk of ornamentation adorning the corner of one of his sculptures. “I’ve got little fondness for them in practical terms, what I’m in

love with is the length of our past they represent.”

Most buildings way back then had coal-burning fireplaces, and the air quality in the city was bad.

“So bad, that this park we’re sitting in was created as a ‘lung of the city,’” says the artist. “It’s a living tree museum.”

Again, this came at a cost. John goes on to talk passionately about the dwellings that were razed to make way for the park,

as well as the 14,000 homes that were cleared in the surrounding suburbs in the 1950s and 60s to allow for the motorway developments. “How do you even attempt to express the pain, the trauma of displacement of those families that got a knock on their doors from the Ministry of Works from the government?”

John has strong personal links to Ponsonby, too. His maternal grandparents were Josip and Mara Babich of the winemaking family: “One of my fabulous aunts, Ivy Cibilich, and the equally fabulous Uncle Tom Cibilich, had a fish shop called Gulf Fisheries in Three Lamps that’s long since been demolished.

“I remember Mum driving us to Ivy and Tom’s shop along Ponsonby Road when I was a kid. The road surface was a continuing series of massive concrete slabs with no asphalt seal. The tyres would jolt as you crossed each joint between the slabs, almost sounding like a heartbeat. A few years back they were doing some Ponsonby Road resurfacing, and they had stripped the asphalt back and I was surprised to see that the concrete slabs still exist under the seal. The heart’s still there.”

Just like those slabs, John will be forever linked to Ponsonby through his own – far more meaningful – concrete works. It must, I say, fill him with immense pride.

“I just want to acknowledge what a gift this park is, and how lucky I am to have had the opportunity to be part of it,” he says. “I’ve sat in my car at the intersection and seen kids walking with their parents across the park and the kids will break free and run up the slope of one of the sculptures and run down again. Forget historic references, or the representation of complex, obsolete architectural forms – for them, it’s just something to climb on! To this day, I’m still so consistently pleased with people’s reactions to them.”



Gusto Italiano | [gustoitaliano.co.nz](http://gustoitaliano.co.nz)

Focusing on fresh, handmade pasta and traditional woodfired pizza, Gusto Italiano, established in 2007 in Three Lamps, is a neighborhood local. Open six nights till late, and lunches Thursday to Sunday, with an upstairs function space.

Reservations: 09 361 1556

azabu.



## VALENTINE'S DAY AT AZABU

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14

Say I love you with this unforgettable dining experience win a dinner for two. Enter at [vervemagazine.co.nz/win](http://vervemagazine.co.nz/win)  
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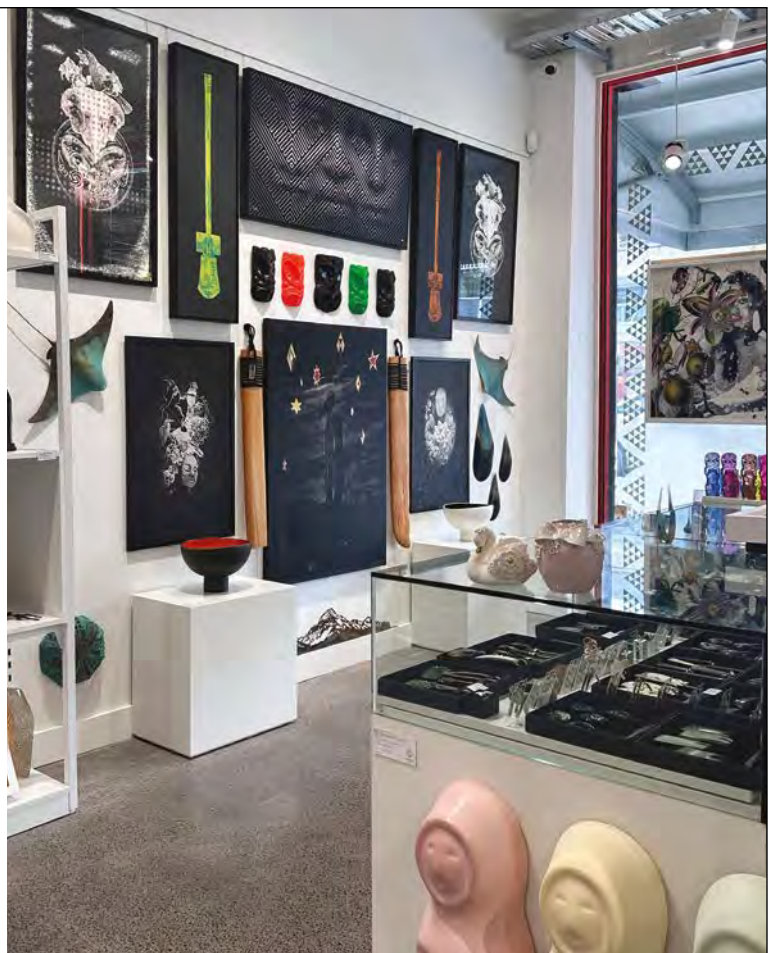
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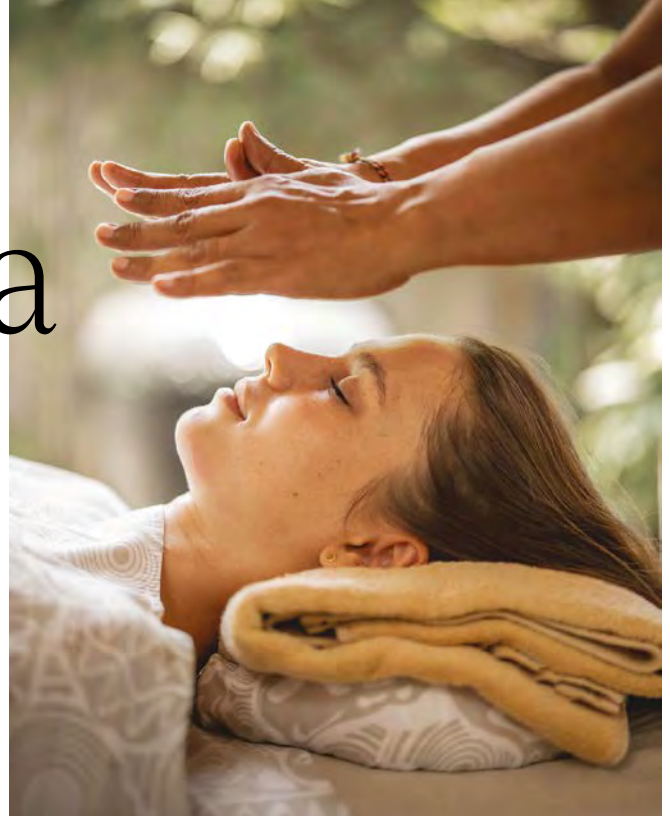
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# Spring Spa

PONSONBY

The city's fringe's chicest selfcare destination.



The Ponsonby strip's most elevated space for beauty and selfcare, Spring Spa is the name on every local's lips when it comes to premium facials, superlative manicures and pedicures, and truly transformative massage experiences.

Unabashedly contemporary and with locations across Bali and Aotearoa, the Spring Spa concept was the work of Ina Bajaj, founder of award-winning, luxury spa destination East Day Spa. In each of its casual-meets-cool destinations, Spring offers an innovative blend of east meets west, where modern technologies meet traditional techniques in a sleek, peaceful environment.

Created to relax and pamper from head to toe, Spring's Ponsonby location offers

an extensive menu in the city's coolest suburb; from massage to facials, to your weekly nail appointment. There is also a carefully curated, luxury retail offering populated by world-leading brands such as Augustinus Bader, U BEAUTY, CODAGE Paris, Votary, and Margaret Dabbs, many exclusive to Spring and loved by their discerning city fringe clientele.

Spring is also the official spa partner of European skincare phenomenon Augustinus Bader, which is a favourite with the likes of Victoria Beckham, Cate Blanchett and Andrew Scott before red-carpet events. Available exclusively in New Zealand at East Day Spa and Spring Spa, the Augustinus Bader Methode Facial uses elements from the pioneering,

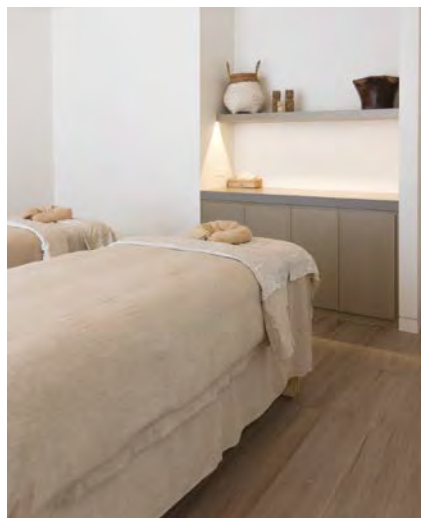
science-backed luxury product line along with customised fascia massage to stimulate cell rejuvenation and bring a glow like no other.

With no one star of the show when it comes to massage, Spring's Hot Stone Massage using heated volcanic stones is the ideal choice when you're looking for the perfect way to relax and unwind, while the Traditional Balinese Massage is a nurturing ritual using long flowing strokes and pressure point therapy. Traditional Eastern Reflexology is popular with those who love to experience the transformative powers of the centuries-old practice under the magical hands of the talented team of Spring Spa therapists, and perfect when paired with a pedicure.

Beauty extras like brow and lash treatments, hair removal, and tanning are also popular, whether booked alone or alongside relaxing modalities such as facials and massage for an extended Spring Spa experience that transports you immediately to Bali's healing shores.

Whether your goal is to be cocooned in calm, a skin health reset, or a perfect pedicure before an island getaway, Spring Spa Ponsonby is always a good idea.

[springspa.com](https://springspa.com)



# On the Nose

Treena Nixon is the founder and in-house perfumer at Miller Road Fragrances which has grown from creating home fragrances to providing bespoke perfume-making experiences for all.

## What sparked your passion for fragrance, and how did this lead to the creation of Miller Road?

I've been drawn to fragrance for as long as I can remember – from my grandmother's orchard and Mum's fragrant garden to the early days of fragrant potpourri and the warm glow of scented candles. The idea to create my own candles came to me when I saw beautiful New Zealand-made candles and thought, 'If they can do it, so can I.' Curiosity led me on a transformative journey, including certification from the prestigious Grasse Institute of Perfumery, and to creating Miller Road in 2013. Miller is my maiden name!

## How can fragrance influence one's mood, and are there particular Miller Road scents that you'd recommend for specific moments?

I firmly believe fragrance has the unique ability to evoke memories and influence your mood. One of my favourite scents is New York which transports me straight to a Manhattan jazz bar. Lime + Basil + Mandarin is refreshingly energising, Spa is truly soothing, and our newest scent Matakata Bay, makes me feel a sense of calm – like being at the beach with my family.

## Valentine's Day is all about romance and connection – how can Miller Road help elevate this special day?

It's the perfect time to create lasting memories together. Our 2.5-hour Fragrance Workshop is a wonderful activity for couples. It's intimate, creative, and lets you design a bespoke scent that reflects your unique connection. I may be biased, but I believe all our products make beautiful, meaningful gifts to celebrate any occasion.

## What do you love most about being part of the Ponsonby neighbourhood, and how does the vibrant community inspire your work?

I absolutely love being part of the Ponsonby community. It's such a lively, vibrant neighbourhood, and the locals have been so welcoming since we opened. We're still finding our way here, but we're excited to get more involved in the community



this year and continue building those connections that inspire everything we do.

## What sets your creations apart from mass-produced alternatives?

Our fragrances are designed with care, using premium ingredients to ensure they're long-lasting and rich in depth. Each Miller Road scent tells a story and evokes a feeling, allowing clients to connect on a deeply personal level. They're all hand-poured right here in Auckland, and we take a lot of inspiration from the feedback and preferences shared during our workshops. Plus, we offer a bespoke option for those who want a truly unique and personal scent.

## Do you have a personal favourite scent or range?

That's tough because I love them all for different reasons! My go-to scents have been New York as well as Fragrance Primer 3.3 and 3.9 – the primers are perfect for everyday as they're subtle and don't interfere with other fragrances we are working on in the lab. Matakata Bay may be my current favourite – it's inspired by a beautiful bay filled with personal memories of peace and happiness. A sea salt, pineapple, musk, and vanilla – like a little escape in a bottle.

## Do you have any new products or projects that Verve readers should look forward to?

The future of Miller Road is incredibly exciting! We're always growing, exploring new ideas. While I can't share too much just yet, there are some wonderful projects on the horizon that I can't wait to unveil. Stay tuned!

CLIENT SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT

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

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As a close-knit, established accounting firm that has been situated in Ponsonby for the last 30 years, Webster & Co has worked tirelessly to deliver on their motto, 'Value for Money'. Bruce Webster has been at the heart of it, supplying value for money for over 50 years – and some clients have stuck with him for the full 50!

Located at 58 College Hill, Webster & Co's charming old villa is recognisable by its iconic red door. It has always been imperative that clients receive relevant and correct advice that looks beyond the stock standard answer. With their

friendly team of 13 you know that you're guaranteed great service and excellent advice from this family-run business.

Some of the areas that they specialise in are listed below, but please do not hesitate to contact them via email or telephone, or feel free to pop in in person.

Areas of speciality include:

- completion of Financial Accounts and Taxation Returns
- advising on best taxation and corporate structures for businesses, rental properties and property protection
- completion of GST Returns
- instructing clients on the use of Xero, MYOB and other software, or using cashbooks and manual systems
- general financial and taxation advice
- completion of Fringe Benefits and Interest Withholding Returns
- completion of PAYE returns each month or advice
- completion of budgets and cash flows as requested
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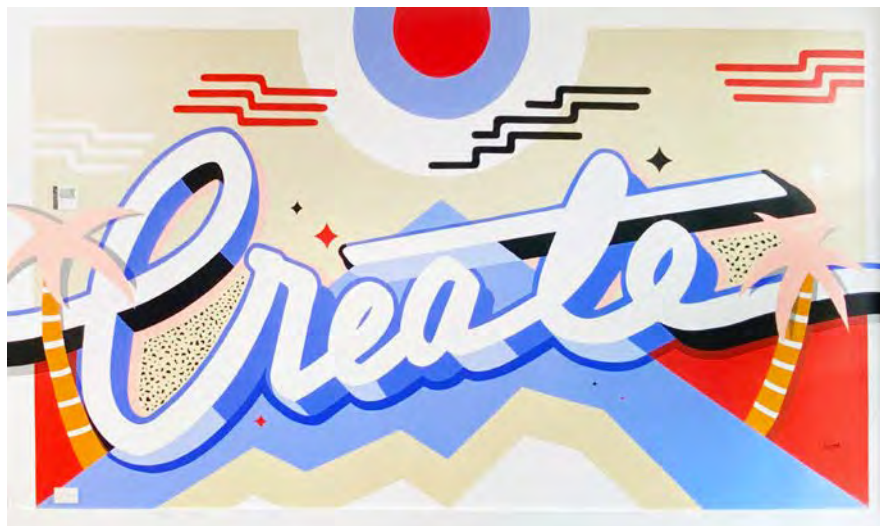


# WHAT'S ON STUDIO ONE

## TOI TŪ

### ARTWORK:

HOLLY ROCK | @HOLLY\_\_ROCK



### AUCKLAND PRIDE FESTIVAL

#### BEINGS: Tātou Tātou, Léon Bristow & Frances Carter

19–28 FEB | OPENING EVENT: 19 FEB, 5PM

BEINGS: Tātou Tātou is a photography exhibition, part of a larger kaupapa, to showcase authentic representation of BIPOC, Rainbow, and Disabled identities, and champion the rich and unmatched storytelling we bring to media spaces. Tātou tātou – nothing about us without us.

#### Embroidery for Crafty Queers with Von Ridgley

9 FEB 12PM–3PM | FREE

Join tutor Von for a fun embroidery workshop and create a personalised pride patch.

#### PRIDE Poetry Speakeasy & Open Mic

12 FEB 5–7PM

Celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Samesame but Different Queer Writers' Festival with the PRIDE Poetry Speakeasy and Open Mic. Hosted by Nathan Joe with guest poet Michael Giaccon.

*All workshops suitable for beginners. For more info or enrolment, contact [info@studioone.org.nz](mailto:info@studioone.org.nz) or head to [studioone.org.nz](http://studioone.org.nz).*

### HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

#### JS Carving Workshop with Jim To'o Stretton

29 MAR 11AM–4PM | COST: \$100

Pacific carver Jim To'o Stretton connects with Pacific heritage through storytelling and carving. He'll teach techniques to create your own designs, and carve unique pieces.

#### Weekend Clay Workshop with Val Ong

22 & 23 FEB | 10AM–3PM | COST: \$295

Two-day beginners workshop covering wheel-throwing, hand-building, and trimming techniques. Explore clay-making basics or get guidance on personal projects.

#### Typograffiti with Holly Rock

22 MAR | 11AM–4PM | COST: \$70

Learn stylised hand-lettering with graffiti artist Holly Rock. Develop your own lettering style and apply it to a letter, word, or phrase on canvas using spray paint.

#### Crystal Creations with Yoko Onishi

23 MAR | 1PM–4PM | COST: \$70

Create unique crystal pendants using micro macramé techniques. Choose between wrapping a crystal point or a flat stone.

### Casual Drop-In Arts Session

1 MAR & 5 APR | 2–6PM | FREE

Join our Casual Drop-In Art Making group for school leavers (17+). Enjoy a relaxed environment with access to galleries, studios, and art classes. Explore clay sculpting, drawing, and painting with guidance from artist Tanja Nola. Sessions are free and no booking required – just drop in and create!

### EVENTS

#### Visit, Create, Make Open Day

15 MAR | 10AM–3PM

Join us for an Open Day featuring creative workshops, pop-up exhibitions, and performances at your local community arts hub. Try printmaking, drawing, ceramics, and more with local artists and makers. Explore and experience hands-on creativity at Studio One Toi Tū!

### AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL

#### Artists on Artists Exhibition

6–23 MAR | OPENING: 7 MAR, 5PM

A group exhibition where each artist is the subject of another artist's work. Like links in a chain, follow the artworks to see how each artist has captured another artist. Featuring established and emerging artists from Aotearoa.

# Sticky Fingers



# The ultimate hot weather indulgence has likely been around for far longer than you realise – but how long depends upon what you think constitutes ice cream!

The popular legend goes that ice cream was invented in Ancient China and brought back to Europe by Italian explorer Marco Polo, but there is no evidence to back this claim. To the contrary, the Roman Emperor Nero is known to have enjoyed feasting on ice sweetened with fruit and honey around 1,200 years before Polo's birth.

Chilled treats have been around for at least 6,000 years, with Mesopotamian nobles known to have kept them in ancient icehouses along the Euphrates River, while the Greeks were selling ice on the streets of Athens as far back as the fifth century BC. The first reference to a combination of ice and dairy (buffalo milk) comes from China's Tang dynasty.

In 1851, Jacob Fussell became the "father of the wholesale ice cream industry" by establishing the first ice cream mass production facility using manually operated churns in the USA. Far closer to home, four years later the first commercial ice-making machine was patented in Australia by engineer James Harrison.

"The earliest known advertisement for ice cream, on 27 January 1866, Mr James Osgood, proprietor of Wellington's Empire Hotel in Willis Street, advised his patrons that ice cream will be served at Lunch and Dinner," says Chris Newey of the New Zealand Ice Cream Association. "Made with ice that had been commercially harvested from a frozen lake in New England and shipped half-way around the world!"

By the turn of the 20th century, ice cream factories and American-style ice cream parlours began popping up around Aotearoa – the Marble Bar in Wellington promised "an appetising array of fancy ice cream, which strike pleasingly on the palate".

New Zealand's first waffle-cone novelty, The Trumpet, was launched by Tip Top in 1964, accompanied by a legendary advertising campaign leading to two million of the treats to be sold in its first month! Today, though the classic confection is most likely most associated with the USA, it is Kiwis who lead the world in consumption, averaging over 20 litres per person, according to 2023 data from Euromonitor International, a market research company. (The United States ranks fourth, with 13.1 litres.) We've also become pretty adept at making it, too. In 2010, Tip Top produced the the world's first novelty ice cream wrapped in marshmallow – the Memphis Meltdown Rocky Road.

"One of our key differentiators is that New Zealand producers have access to ample fresh dairy ingredients – milk, cream and powders formulated to perfection make some of the creamiest ice cream there is," Kristy Gil, president of the New Zealand Ice Cream Association, and executive director of Appleby Farms Ice Cream, tells *Verve*. "Almost all of our cows are grass fed which helps in the production of amazing milk. New Zealand does grow plenty of grass!"

*continued over page*

“In New Zealand, one of summer’s great pleasures is known as real fruit ice cream...”

It’s not just about cream – Kiwis are also credited with inventing the real fruit ice cream. “In New Zealand, one of summer’s great pleasures is known as real fruit ice cream...” writes Priya Krishna for the *New York Times*. “The dessert, which likely originated in the country’s berry orchards, has become a national favourite over the last few decades, prized for its freshness and simplicity. In the United States, it’s just beginning to catch on...”

We’re not immune to concocting some unusual scoops either, with flavours such as bacon and bourbon ripple, and blue cheese having graced the Annual New Zealand Ice Cream Awards.

But that stubbornly popular – and, some might argue, dull – vanilla still remains among our best-selling cones. “Very much like the rest of the world vanilla is one of our most consumed flavours,” adds Kristy. “One of the reasons for this is that vanilla pairs well with all sorts of desserts both at home and in the hospitality sector, and is also used for real fruit ice creams and milk shakes.”

And as for the most unusual flavour that Kristy’s ever encountered?

“That would have to be salmon and dill,” she says. “That was certainly not a favourite!”

#### THE ICE AGE

- Chilled refreshments like sherbet gain popularity in the Arab world from the 8th century (sherbet comes from the Turkish term for a broad category of sweetened drinks, often cooled with snow from storehouses), and it is discovered that adding salt helps keeps things cool.
  - Ice cream and sherbets were likely first made in Italy in the early 1600s and recipes soon spread throughout Europe. King Charles II of England is served ice cream in 1672.
  - In 1660, Sicilian entrepreneur Francesco Procopio dei Coltelli began serving cream ices to Parisian high society at his Café Procope, which remains in operation today.
  - Thomas Jefferson develops a taste for it while serving as a diplomat in Paris in 1784, the same year that George Washington buys a mechanical ice cream maker.
  - President James Madison’s wife, Dolly, serves ice cream at her husband’s second inaugural banquet at the White House in 1813.
  - The ice cream sundae is said to have been invented in 1881 at Berners’
- Ice Cream Parlor in Two Rivers, Wisconsin – though the claim is disputed.
- Waffle cones make their debut at the St Louis World Fair in 1904.
  - The first chocolate-coated ice cream bar, the I-Scream Bar, appeared in the USA in 1919.
  - Tip Top is established at a Wellington store in 1936, the first to specialise in ice cream and milk shakes. An instant success, it soon expanded throughout the country.
  - Peters Ice Cream built New Zealand’s first mechanically refrigerated truck in 1937.
  - Kāpiti Ice Cream is founded in 1984, initially to produce cheese by using “the finest dairy in the world”. As the business grew, there was a surplus of fresh cream – and from that, the legendary ice cream brand is born.
  - Supermodel Rachel Hunter stars as The Trumpet Girl in a 1985 TV ad when she was 16.
  - Five years later, the first New Zealand Natural ice cream franchise opens.

# Island Flavour

The multi-award-winning Island Gelato Co. turns 11 and celebrates summer with delicious seasonal flavours, and something new.

Verve sits down and gets the latest scoop from one of the two founders, Ana Schwarz.

**Can you tell our readers what makes Island Gelato so special?**

It really boils down to our people and their endless passion for flavour, texture, freshness, and colour. We're on a mission to produce the best possible gelato that can be made. Everything in our gelato is high quality, honest, and delicious!

**We hear you've bagged some awards to back up those claims?**

Yes, and it feels special to be recognised. In 2024, our Rich Chocolate flavour jointly won Supreme Champion for Dairy products at the Outstanding NZ Food Producers Awards, along with three gold medals and two silvers. At the NZ Ice Cream &

Gelato Awards, we scooped up seven golds and four silvers, plus four gold medals at the NZ Artisan Awards.

In 2023, we had a special surprise being ranked by the Financial Times in the UK as one of the world's greatest 25 ice cream stores.

**What new flavours are available this summer?**

We're serving seasonal flavours of Cucumber Yuzu Sorbet, Strawberry Sorbet and Plum Sorbet, plus a new flavour, Matcha Latte Gelato has just arrived.

**Sounds yummy! Where can we find them?**

Find us at the CBD Ferry Building, Westfield Newmarket, Ponsonby, Mission Bay, and Waiheke Island. We're also available in Farro, and online.



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# The Sweet Spot

We cool off with Hayley McRae, who co-founded award-winning Scrunchy Millers ice cream shop with husband Mike.

## Is there a story behind your catchy name?

When I was six years old, my parents were opening a new restaurant and looked to me for name inspiration – from nowhere Scrunchy Millers popped from my mouth. I have remembered the name for all these years and vowed if I were to open my own business, I would call it Scrunchy Millers!

## What are some of your most popular flavours... and any unusual ones?

Two of our most popular gelato flavours are Ferrero Rocher and Sweet & Salty Caramel. As for sorbetto, Feijoa and Black Doris Plum are customer faves. Our summer special, Gin & Orange, has also been a huge hit. Slightly more unusual flavours include Fig & Ginger, and Liquorice.

## What sets your ice cream shop apart from others?

We're unique in that we serve Real Fruit Ice Cream plus the full range of Charlies' award-winning gelato and sorbetto. We serve 10 flavours of Real Fruit Ice Cream year-round, plus seasonal favourites like kiwifruit, watermelon and feijoa.

## Can you tell us a little bit about your partnership with Charlies Gelato?

Charlies Gelato is a Matakana institution. We're incredibly proud to be working with the best of the best and supplying their handcrafted, artisanal gelato and sorbetto. Also, you couldn't wish for better people to partner with than Charlies' owners Andrew and Tania.

## Award winning gelato and sorbetto

Hand crafted by the iconic Charlies Gelato of Matakana. Find their full range of over 50 flavours at Scrunchy Millers. Scrunchy Millers is also the home of Auckland's best Real Fruit Ice Cream.



Charlies Gelato, 17 Sharp Rd Matakana  
Scrunchy Millers, 1 Shakespeare Rd Milford & 49 Victoria St West Auckland CBD

# Going Local in Tokyo

WORDS —  
DENISE STEPHENS



First-time visitors to Tokyo gravitate to the bright lights and towering skyscrapers of *Shinjuku* and *Shibuya*. Here crowds throng shopping malls and train stations, and the pace is hectic and sometimes overwhelming.





But here is another side of Tokyo, found in the low-rise neighbourhoods where locals live.

On my last visit I stayed in Otsuka, an older neighbourhood to the north. While it's only a few stops from Shinjuku, the atmosphere is much more laid back. At OMO5 Tokyo Otsuka by Hoshino Resorts, a modern Japanese-style hotel, guests are encouraged to explore the neighbourhood – or *kinjo* in Japanese. In the lobby, a Go Kinjo map is displayed prominently on the wall, with tried and tested recommendations from the hotel staff for dining and shopping.

A walk through the maze of streets surrounding Otsuka station reveals some typical sights. On a neighbourhood tour led by OMO5 Tokyo Otsuka staff, our first stop was the Tenso shrine, established 700 years ago and located on a suburban backstreet. Two sacred ginkgo trees, male and female, have stood here for 600 years, their leaves turning gold each autumn. While Tokyo's famous Meiji shrine is usually crowded with tourists, the only other people we saw at Tenso were there to worship the Shinto gods. Our guide, Mai, explained that the faithful come to Tenso to pray for love and childbirth.

Otsuka is full of small shops selling Japanese specialties. Across from the hotel, queues form daily outside Onigiri Bongo whose famous rice balls are handmade to order, with a choice of over 50 fillings. We stopped at a confectioner where the older woman behind the counter gave me a dorayaki pancake – freshly made, soft and fluffy. The dorayaki are sandwiched together with home-made pastes in flavours such as red bean, white bean, and sesame

Further on, I spotted a cute-looking shop selling daifuku mochi (rice cakes) with a fruit centre. Strawberries are often used, but this shop offered a selection of seasonal and exotic fruits like pineapple, mandarin, and dragon fruit. I came back the next day for a closer look and decided to try a melon daifuku. This tasted delicious, with a soft, pillowy texture. Turning back towards the hotel, we walked alongside tram



tracks that were lined with roses in full bloom. Over 500 different varieties create a kaleidoscope of colour each May and October. The route of the Tokyo Sakura Tram winds its way through northern Tokyo, a nostalgic reminder of another era. The tram is especially popular in spring for viewing the cherry blossoms along the route, however a tram trip is worth doing at any time of the year.

The full route takes nearly an hour, but there are shorter trips from Otsuka. A couple of stops away at Higashi-Ikebukuro, Sunshine City has the Pokemon Mega Centre and an observatory with sweeping city views. Koshinzuka in the other direction is a good starting point for a walk along Sugamo Jizo-dori, a street of shops catering to Tokyo's seniors that is sometimes called "Harajuku for grannies". While the lucky red underwear was definitely not to my taste, I found some interesting traditional food shops.

In the evening, I joined the bar-hopping tour which headed back to the streets I'd visited earlier. We started at a small tempura restaurant with a few counter





PICTURED: RIKUGIEN GARDENS

seats and two low tables. The elderly husband-and-wife team have been turning out tempura for decades, so I opted for their set meal. While it was being prepared, they chatted to me, with hotel guide Kana acting as translator. After learning where I was from, they asked some unexpected questions about New Zealand life as they prepared the meal. Did I watch rugby? Enjoy barbecues? And eat sheep? The food started coming over the counter, dish after dish of light, crispy tempura. White fish was first, followed by prawn, onion, eggplant, and finally pumpkin.

We said our goodbyes at the tempura restaurant, and headed to an izakaya, or Japanese pub. It was larger than the tempura restaurant, full of locals who'd come for after-work drinks. I opted for simple chicken and spring onion skewers, a classic yakitori dish that arrived sizzling about 15 minutes later.

The evening ended back at OMO5 Tokyo Otsuka, where the bar offered a spring sake affogato to celebrate the season. Salted cherry blossom garnished the vanilla ice cream, with sides of tart strawberry sauce, and red bean paste from the confectioners we'd visited

earlier. A carafe of spring sake from Akita was ready to be poured over the ice cream.

The next day I explored a little further afield. Two stops along the Yamanote line from Otsuka, Komagome has two beautiful gardens. Kyu Furukawa has a formal rose garden and a western style mansion, both designed by an English architect, with a traditional Japanese garden further down the hill. The annual spring festival was in full swing, the air filled with the fragrance of roses in full bloom.

The Japanese garden was quiet and I had it almost to myself. I followed a path around the central pond, over a stone bridge across a stream. The garden was green and cool, a contrast to the vibrant colours of the roses above.

Nearby Rikugien is one of Tokyo's most famous gardens, known for its cherry blossom in spring and foliage in autumn. During these seasons, opening hours extend into the evenings with the trees lit up to highlight the colours. Rikugien can get very busy then, although it's always a lovely green space to visit, and one I keep returning to.

Rikugien was built around 1700 as a private garden for the fifth Tokugawa shogun. The name means "six poems garden" and the landscaping was designed to show 88 scenes from famous poems. It's a classic example of a Japanese strolling garden, with man-made hills and woods surrounding the pond.

After nearly two days in and around Otsuka experiencing the ambience of this older neighbourhood, it was time to leave. Otsuka was an ideal base for exploring Tokyo, well connected enough to visit major sights while being a relaxing local home to return to.

*Denise Stephens was hosted by Hoshino Resorts at OMO5 Tokyo Otsuka.*



# Kara-age

Fried chicken with sweet chilli sauce

SERVES 4

**Preparation:**  
15 minutes

**Marinating:**  
1 hour

**Cooking:**  
6 minutes

## Ingredients:

600g boneless chicken legs (2 thighs)  
3 tablespoons plain flour  
3 tablespoons cornflour  
Oil, for frying

## Marinade

6 tablespoons sake  
1 garlic clove, grated  
5g fresh ginger, grated  
1 teaspoon sea salt  
1 teaspoon raw sugar  
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil  
Pepper

## Sauce

2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon apricot jam or marmalade  
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil  
½ tablespoon miso paste (brown or red)  
1 tablespoon mirin  
½ garlic clove, chopped  
1-2 teaspoons chilli powder  
1 tablespoon rice vinegar  
2cm leek (white part), finely chopped

## Directions:

Cut each chicken leg into about 6 pieces (the top into 4 pieces and the drumstick into 2 pieces).

Mix all the marinade ingredients together in a bowl. Add the chicken pieces and massage the marinade in a bit. Marinate for 1 hour.

Mix all the sauce ingredients together in a bowl and set aside.

Mix the flour and cornflour together on a plate. Put the chicken on the plate and flour the pieces well. Heat a 3cm depth of oil to 170°C in a deep frying pan. Drop the chicken pieces into the oil and fry for about 4 minutes. Increase the temperature to 180°C and cook for a further 2 minutes or so. Check if the chicken is cooked by piercing it with a skewer; if the liquid that comes out is transparent, the chicken is cooked.

Drizzle with sauce and serve.

## Tip

It is very important to use the chicken leg and not the breast. It is the fat and the skin that make this dish so tasty and moist. Also, the result is much better with free-range chicken.

## Vegan Version

Replace the chicken with rehydrated soy protein (large pieces) or seitan, marinating it the same way as for the chicken.



Recipe extracted from  
*Japanese Home Cooking*  
by Maori Murota, published  
by Murdoch Books, RRP \$55.

PHOTOGRAPHY: HACHETTE LIVRE (MARABOUT)



# Shoyu Ramen

Tokyo-style ramen

SERVES 4

**Preparation:**  
15 minutes

**Cooking:**  
5 minutes

## Ingredients:

1.6 litres (6½ cups) ramen meat broth  
280–320g dried or fresh ramen noodles

## Seasoning

180ml (¾ cup) cha-shu marinade  
1 tablespoon oyster sauce  
2 tablespoons malted or nutritional yeast  
Salt

## Toppings

2 handfuls bean sprouts, blanched in boiling water for 1 minute and well drained  
4 eggs to make ajitsuke tamago, then cut in half  
8 rashers cha-shu marinated pork  
1 spring onion, thinly sliced  
½ nori sheet, cut into 4 rectangles  
Pepper  
Ra-yu (optional)

## Directions:

Prepare the soup. Pour the broth, cha-su marinade, oyster sauce and yeast into a saucepan. Heat over medium heat and season with a little salt to taste.

In a large pot of boiling water, cook the noodles according to the packet instructions. Drain well and divide into four large bowls. Pour the hot soup over the noodles, add the toppings and serve immediately.

## Tip

If you buy Chinese noodles at an Asian grocery store, choose the thin, slightly yellow noodles. However, homemade noodles will always be better!



Recipe extracted from  
*Japanese Home Cooking*  
by Maori Murota, published  
by Murdoch Books, RRP \$55.

PHOTOGRAPHY: HACHETTE LIVRE (MARABOUT)



# Strawberry Daifuku

Strawberry and anko mochi

MAKES: 4 rice cakes (mochi)

**Preparation:**  
35 minutes

**Cooking:**  
12 minutes

## Ingredients:

### Filling

4 strawberries  
120g anko (red bean paste)

### Mochi paste

70g glutinous rice flour\*  
75ml (1/3 cup) water  
10g (2 teaspoons) white (granulated) sugar

For working the dough  
potato starch or cornflour

*\*This recipe does not work with normal rice flour. Glutinous rice flour can be found in Asian or Japanese grocery stores (called 'mochiko' or 'shiratamako' in Japanese).*

## Directions:

Prepare the filling. Wash the strawberries, pat dry and hull. With wet hands, form four balls of anko. Flatten them to form four small rounds, place a strawberry in the middle of each and close the rounds to enclose the strawberries.

Prepare the mochi dough. Mix the rice flour and water together well in a bowl that fits in a steamer basket. Add the sugar and mix. Heat water to prepare the steamer, place the bowl in the steamer basket and cook for 12 minutes on high heat. At the end of the steaming process, remove the bowl from the steamer basket. Mix the paste with a silicone spatula while it is hot. It is a little difficult at first, then the dough becomes elastic after 1 minute.

Liberalily sprinkle a clean surface with potato starch. Place the mochi dough on the starch and coat well. Always make sure to have starch on your hands as the dough sticks as soon as it touches a surface without starch. Cut the dough into four pieces. Flatten each piece to get four rounds, removing any excess starch from the palm of your hand. Place an anko and strawberry ball in the middle of each round of mochi paste. Fold the dough over the ball and pinch to close securely. Turn the daifuku upside down with the closed side underneath. Eat the same day.

### Microwave mochi dough

Put the mixture in a glass bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Cook for 2 minutes at 600W. Mix the dough well using a silicone spatula. Cook again for 2 minutes, then mix well.



Recipe extracted from  
*Japanese Home Cooking*  
by Maori Murota, published  
by Murdoch Books, RRP \$55.

PHOTOGRAPHY: HACHETTE LIVRE (MARABOUT)







# A Journey Through Japan

The award-winning Wendy Wu Tours is one of Aotearoa's best Asian travel specialists, and top of everyone's list should be a trip to the Land of the Rising Sun.

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"All our unique itineraries are full of great activities," Managing Director Paul Dymond tells *Verve*. "Most tours include a ride on the amazing bullet trains, or *Shinkansen*. Our guests also always love making traditional washi paper, participating in traditional

tea ceremonies, and trying their hand at making sushi. One of the most sought-after experiences is going to see the snow monkeys in Yudanaka, where they live in the coldest conditions of any monkey in the world."



### **What are your top three highlights of the country?**

I seem to get a new top three every time I visit Japan! My first highlight would have to be The UNESCO Village of Shirakawa-go, famous for its traditional thatched wooden houses and mountainous surrounds. The area is full of traditional activities and outdoor pursuits and is very photogenic any time of year. Beppu and the surrounding area on Kyushu Island is another favourite. It is known for its thermal areas and is one of the best places to experience natural hot springs and bathing facilities, known as onsen. There are also many small towns, where they encourage visitors to dress in traditional kimono while visiting the historic sights. Lastly, I really enjoy exploring Tokyo. With over 30 million people, the city has endless secrets to uncover, from small, 12-seater restaurants or sake bars to historic geisha areas and some amazing shopping districts.

### **And three road-less-travelled destinations?**

Kanazawa is a great place to visit – it's home to Kenrokuen Gardens, one of the three great gardens of Japan. For a traditional spiritual experience, staying over for one night at a Koyasan Monastery is a great immersive experience with the monks. Art lovers should head out from Osaka to Naoshima for a few days – it's known as the Art Island, with some great Japanese galleries and outdoor art displays.

### **Which food and drinks should no visitor leave without trying?**

There's so much amazing food and drink that I could write for days! Japanese cuisine has even been classified as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. The trick is to try the local specialities. On my last visit I had grilled freshwater eel at the foot of Mount Fuji. Yakitori is a really fun eating experience, where you keep ordering skewers of food, that are cooked over coals. Good yakitori restaurants will be busy, noisy, and the air full of interesting smells. Trying the local sake is a must. Sake is a sacred drink made from fermented rice and is seen used as a gift to the gods. Every region has its own variety, and tastes can vary widely.

### **Can you tell us about interesting accommodation options?**

I would encourage everyone to stay a night in a traditional ryokan, which is a guest house with a private *onsen*. They are usually in picturesque areas, and a great way to connect with nature, while soaking in hot pools.

### **What are the essential cultural dos and don'ts that travellers need to be aware of?**

Do speak quietly in public, especially on public transport; bow when greeting people; take your shoes off before going inside houses, traditional restaurants or when you see a sign. And follow all rules.

Don't blow your nose in public; leave food on your plate; or mix plain rice in a bowl with your other food – if the rice is served in a separate bowl, it should be eaten plain. Rice is a sacred food in Japan. Also, showing public displays of affection or sticking your chopsticks in your rice and leaving them there should be avoided.

### **Are there any specific festivals or cultural events you recommend visitors experience?**

Cherry blossom is an amazing time, but very busy. I love the autumn leaves in November, the colours are out of this world. If you are lucky enough to be in Japan when sumo is on – between May and September – then it is definitely worth trying to get tickets. The city of Takayama has a Matsuri festival where floats made over 350 years ago are pulled through the streets to celebrate spring and autumn.

*For more information on Japan and Wendy Wu Tours' unique itineraries, visit [wendywutours.co.nz](http://wendywutours.co.nz)*

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# Fluid Form

## TRENDING

Spotted on FashionTok, the traditionally worn Hakama pants are being reimagined by brands as a everyday essential. Here's how we're styling them.



1. [Issey Miyake](#) Off-White Coiling Bag 2. [Muji](#) Cool Touch Broadcloth Short Sleeve Shirt 3. [Maison Margiela](#) Brown Tabi New Ballerina Flats 4. [Auralee](#) Summer Cashmere Knit Crew Neck Cardigan 5. [Auralee](#) Super High Gauge Sheer Rib Boat Neck L/S Tee 6. [Muji](#) Double Layered Hakama Pants 7. [Sacai](#) Matelasse Twill Mix Pullover 8. [Sandy Liang](#) SSENSE Exclusive Black Flower Power 2.0 Scrunchie 9. [Miu Miu](#) Tyre Technical Fabric and Suede Ballerinas 10. [Issey Miyake](#) Yellow Twist June T-Shirt

# Bocconcini

MAKES 6–8 BALLS

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup cashews (once soaked this will become 1½ - 1¾)  
100ml water  
¼ cup tapioca starch  
1 tablespoon nutritional yeast  
2 teaspoons flaky sea salt  
¼ cup coconut oil  
Juice of 1 lemon  
1½ teaspoons agar agar

## DIRECTIONS

Soak cashews in enough fresh water to cover them overnight, or for at least half an hour in boiling water. Drain.

Place all ingredients except for the agar agar into a blender and blitz until very smooth. Taste and add salt if needed. At this point you have a liquid cheese.

If you're making pizza, simply pour a little cheese sporadically in circles on your base to create buffalo-style bursts of cheesiness. Or pour as a cheesy layer in lasagne.

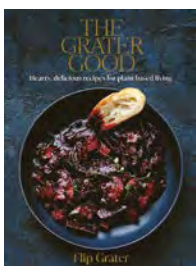
### To set into bocconcini balls:

Prepare an ice bath and 6–8 squares of plastic wrap.\*

Pour the mixture into a heavy-based pan. Add agar agar and heat gently, whisking continuously until starting to bubble. Switch to a silicone spatula and keep stirring to avoid the mixture sticking to the bottom, until it thickens and becomes stretchy. You'll notice it will start moving as one lump rather than a liquid. At this point take the pan off the heat and spoon a little of the mixture into the centre of a plastic square. Form into a ball and twist (or tie off) to hold in place.

Pop your wrapped ball into the ice bath and repeat with remaining mixture. If using ¼ cup of cheese for each ball you'll get 6 balls. Place the ice bath into the fridge and leave to set for at least 2 hours. Once set, remove plastic and place balls into heavily salted water (brine) and keep in the fridge for up to 10 days. (Mix 1 tablespoon of salt for every cup of water you use to make the brine.)

*\*You can use anything strong and non-porous for this step. Compostable plastic wrap works great or reuse any kind of soft plastic or fabric you have – simply use small rubber bands to hold the spheres.*



Recipes from *The Grater Good* by Flip Grater, published by Koa Press. Hardcover, \$44.99.

PHOTOGRAPHY: TONIA SHUTTLEWORTH



# Moroccan Baked Aubergine

SERVES 2

## INGREDIENTS

10 cherry tomatoes  
⅓ cup Amazigh harissa  
1 aubergine  
½ cup tangy 'yoghurt' sauce

### To garnish

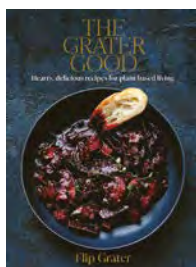
2 teaspoons toasted pine nuts  
½ teaspoon toasted cumin seeds  
bunch fresh coriander  
bunch fresh mint

## DIRECTIONS

Place cherry tomatoes (and chillies, if making harissa) into an oven preheated to 200°C. Sprinkle with a little salt and olive oil and roast for 25 minutes until soft and taking some colour.

Remove tomatoes and set aside. Place chillies into a mortar and pestle or blender and follow harissa recipe.

Cut aubergine into 2 halves lengthwise. Score diagonally with a sharp knife and spread harissa across each surface, reserving some for serving. Roast aubergine halves (in the lower half of your oven) for 40-45 minutes, until soft. Remove from the oven, spread with a little reserved fresh harissa, drizzle with 'yoghurt' sauce and top with toasted pine nuts, cumin seeds and fresh herbs.



Recipes from *The Grater Good* by  
Flip Grater, published by Koa Press.  
Hardcover, \$44.99.

PHOTOGRAPHY: TONIA SHUTTLEWORTH





# Fudgy Brownies

## MAKES 1 LARGE SHEET TRAY

Chef Max has created this rich, delicious fudgy treat which is incredibly popular with our customers.

Here at Grater Good we feel strongly that brownies have to be fudgy – cakey brownies can ‘get in a bin’ – or go be cake.

## INGREDIENTS

2 flax eggs (6 tablespoons water mixed with 2 tablespoons ground flaxseed)  
¾ cup raw sugar/coconut sugar  
½ cup coconut oil (melted)  
¼ cup warm water  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
¾ cup cocoa powder  
1 cup almond flour  
½ teaspoon sea salt  
¼ teaspoon baking soda  
⅓ cup freeze-dried raspberries  
¼ cup dark choc chips

## Top

⅓ cup dark choc chips  
1 tablespoon freeze-dried raspberries

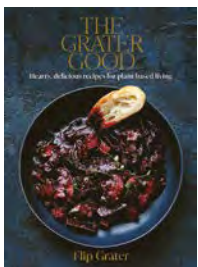
## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 160°C. In a large bowl add flax eggs, raw sugar and coconut oil, mix until combined. Add water and vanilla extract. Add cocoa powder, almond flour, sea salt and baking soda and mix. Add the raspberries or any other flavours you wish. Combine, until fully incorporated. Stir in choc chips.

Pour into a greased pan and bake for 35 minutes.

As soon as it comes out of the oven add the second measure of choc chips on top of the hot brownie to melt it, and spread it over the surface. Then sprinkle the raspberries over the top and cool completely.

You can top with anything you like if you don't have freeze-dried fruit - melted chocolate, cocoa powder, walnuts...



Recipes from *The Grater Good* by Flip Grater, published by Koa Press. Hardcover, \$44.99.

PHOTOGRAPHY: TONIA SHUTTLEWORTH



# Taste & Drink

Wine columnist and connoisseur DENNIS KNILL gives his views on two new wines from Camshorn.

In Marlborough's Waipara Valley lies the sun-trapped vineyard of Camshorn Winery. Perfectly sheltered, with rich clay and gravel soils to match, Camshorn is nestled between the rolling hills of Teviotdale offering protection from the cool westerly winds to create a unique climate that's perfect for wine growing.

Originally a Suffolk sheep farm, today Camshorn Winery carries the land's history both in its name and labels, but also inside the bottle where you will find modern winemaking at its best.

Here are two of their wines that have lots going on for the price.

**'22 Camshorn pinot noir; RRP \$22.**

Bright and clear in colour, with rich and fruity aromatic flavours and firm tannins that dominate the palate all make for good drinking. Pair with lamb cutlets, roast duck, pork, and veal.



**'22 Camshorn chardonnay; RRP \$19.**

Plenty of fresh fruit that's fragrant, mouth-filling and savoury, and with a light acidity for a well-rounded finish. Serve with salmon, chicken, turkey, and leafy summer salads.



# Let's Eat Out

DENNIS and ROSAMUND KNILL

In a city that hasn't been friendly to hotel restaurants, Tapestry is a survivor and up to the challenge of punching out dishes that shine.

The confidence displayed by this smart inner-city brasserie is the direct result of a well-oiled kitchen under the stewardship of executive chef, Jonny Roullier, head chef, Luiz Pereira, and their kitchen team, with a new menu that continues to lead the way with classy dining that has been at the forefront of the Auckland scene for decades.

Small plates of ceviche (\$29), tiger prawns (\$26), clams (\$29), or beef carpaccio (\$29) are perfect starters. The chefs' expanding repertoire aims more than ever for the wow factor with large plates of veal cordon blue (\$42), free range chicken (\$42), BBQ lamb rump (\$45), confit pork belly (\$44), market fish (\$44), and aromatic fish stew (\$48). Carnivore's will be in their element with a meaty selection of aged grills of eye fillet (\$47), sirloin (\$43), scotch fillet (\$55), tomahawk (\$105), and T-bone (\$119); with a selection of sides (\$15 to \$18).

Desserts (\$18) lend truth to the cliché of save the best until last, with legendary sweet pleasures of pina colada coconut mousse, cheesecake, black forest cake, and affogato. The beautiful presentation and delicate combination engage all the senses effortlessly without the usual ingredient overload.

The wine list is a hard-hitting collection of local and imported vintages at prices that encourages the real joy of dining out.

And the verdict? This inner-city diner plates classy dishes showcasing all the technical skills expected from superstar chefs. Trends come and go like the tide, yet decades on, Tapestry remains timeless. Service is sharp and friendly.

**Menu: 9; cuisine: 9; wine list: 7.5; service: 9; decor: 7.5; value for money: 9.**

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# Grounded in Excellence

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“A rich interior palette elevates the home to another level of luxury...”

This modern family home for a couple and their three teenagers transforms a 500-square-metre site into an architectural beach resort, with seamless connection between the outdoor pools, sunroom and expansive living spaces resulting in an effortless holiday vibe.

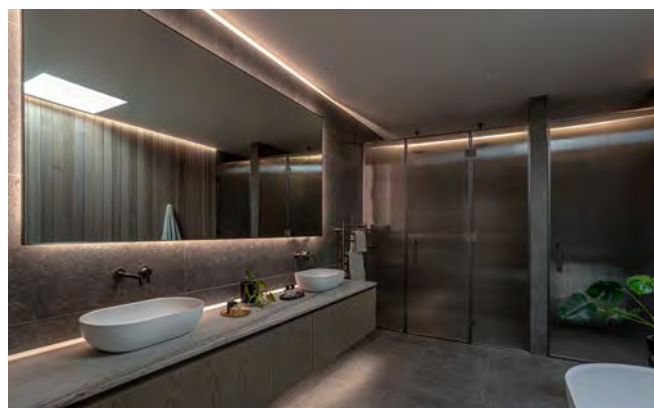
Functionally, the home is subtly split into public and private spaces. A glazed void defines the double-height entrance and circulation spaces, whilst connecting the expansive lounge-kitchen-dining space to the upper-floor bedrooms, which have been separated into adult and teenager spaces by the double-height space over the kitchen.

A rich interior palette elevates the home to another level of luxury: stone tiled bathrooms with fluted glazed shower screens, American oak flooring, Negresco quartzite benchtops, and a floating timber staircase all pair beautifully with the concealed lighting which gives a warm, relaxed feel as the sun sets. Externally, long-lasting finishes have been used to give the home a sense of permanence and longevity. Board-finished concrete panels frame the entrance space and street front, with panels of cedar to soften, whilst the floating upper floor is accentuated with white plaster.

At Smith Architects, we believe in the transformative power of thoughtful, sustainable, and innovative design. Our Auckland practice draws inspiration from the unique character of Aotearoa while embracing the challenges and

opportunities of a rapidly evolving global landscape. Our approach is centred on collaboration – working closely with clients to craft architecture that exceeds expectations, reflects individuality, and enriches the spaces it inhabits. From bespoke residential homes to ambitious urban developments, our diverse portfolio demonstrates a commitment to design excellence across all scales and typologies. Founded on the values of creativity, responsibility, and

adaptability, Smith Architects integrates disciplines to deliver cohesive and future-focused solutions. By combining architectural vision with leading-edge tools and a dedication to sustainability, we create designs that balance beauty, function, and purpose. With a studio culture grounded in exploration and excellence, our experienced team ensures every project is both a journey and a legacy – connecting people to places, and places to the future.



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN WILLIAMS

# Whispered Designs

WORDS –  
PAUL LEUSCHKE

Architecture is subtle.

**Melbourne's Brighton Beach, famous for its brightly painted bathing boxes, has a new Surf Life Saving building and an associated cafe.**

The buildings are halfway down the slope from the road to the beach and so sit quietly in the landscape. They're clad in unpainted timber with vertical screen battens and tall glazing. It's human scale.

The two separate buildings form a viewing deck at the top and an amphitheatre with concrete stairs and seating that connects to the beach below.

The buildings are quiet, thoughtful and judging from the number of people using them, successful.

Being low tide and a little overcast, we went to the cafe where we had a family

discussion on why the interior of the cafe was a disappointment.

The language of the buildings is vertical. The seaward wall of the cafe accessing the deck was expected to be full height, glazed doors. Instead, the doors were approximately 2.2m high with a prominent steel lintel above them. Instead of the expected full height glazing the wall was dominated by a horizontal beam cutting the wall into two.

It killed the feeling of height and of openness. We felt enclosed. It didn't live up to our expectation.

Judging from the large steel structure in the building, I assume the beach endures high winds during the winter months. The near-horizontal beach trees also pointed to strong winds having forced

them to grow in high winds. However, the ceiling height was not that tall, and the deck doors could have been full height.

I don't want this article to be a criticism of the very fine and successful building but use it only as an example of the subtlety of architecture.

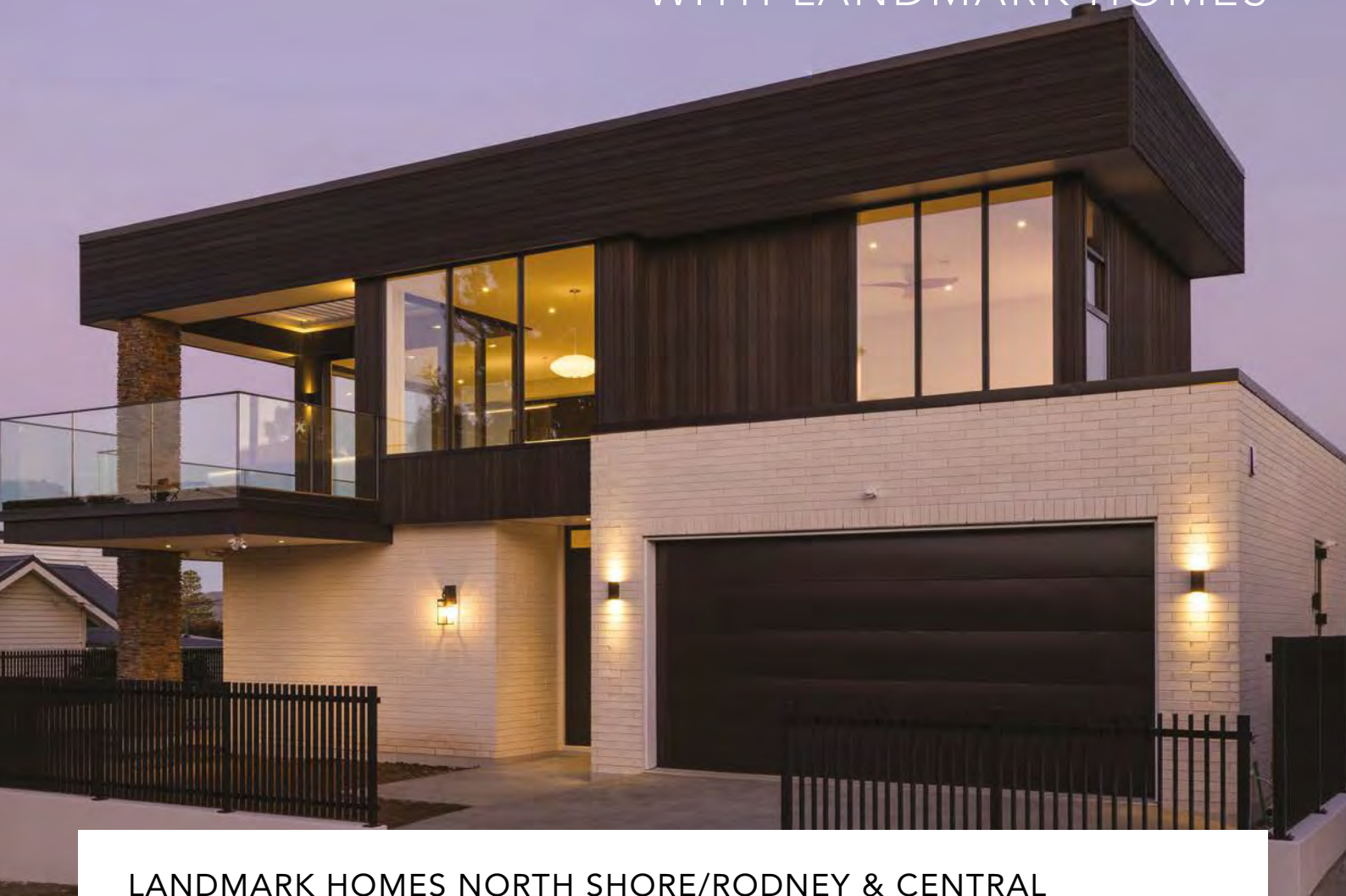
We all assume an expectation of a space or house from the outside and feel disappointed on inspection where that expectation isn't met. On the other hand, we are thrilled when the space or house interior meets or exceeds that expectation.

[paul@leuschkekahn.co.nz](mailto:paul@leuschkekahn.co.nz)  
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**BARFOOT & THOMPSON**



# Cliffhanger

Cape Town architect Stefan Antoni's new abode combines rawness and sophistication in equal measures to orchestrate a powerful experience of its spectacularly beautiful setting, all the while making a home for close-knit family life.



WORDS  
GRAHAM WOOD

PHOTOGRAPHY —  
GREG COX

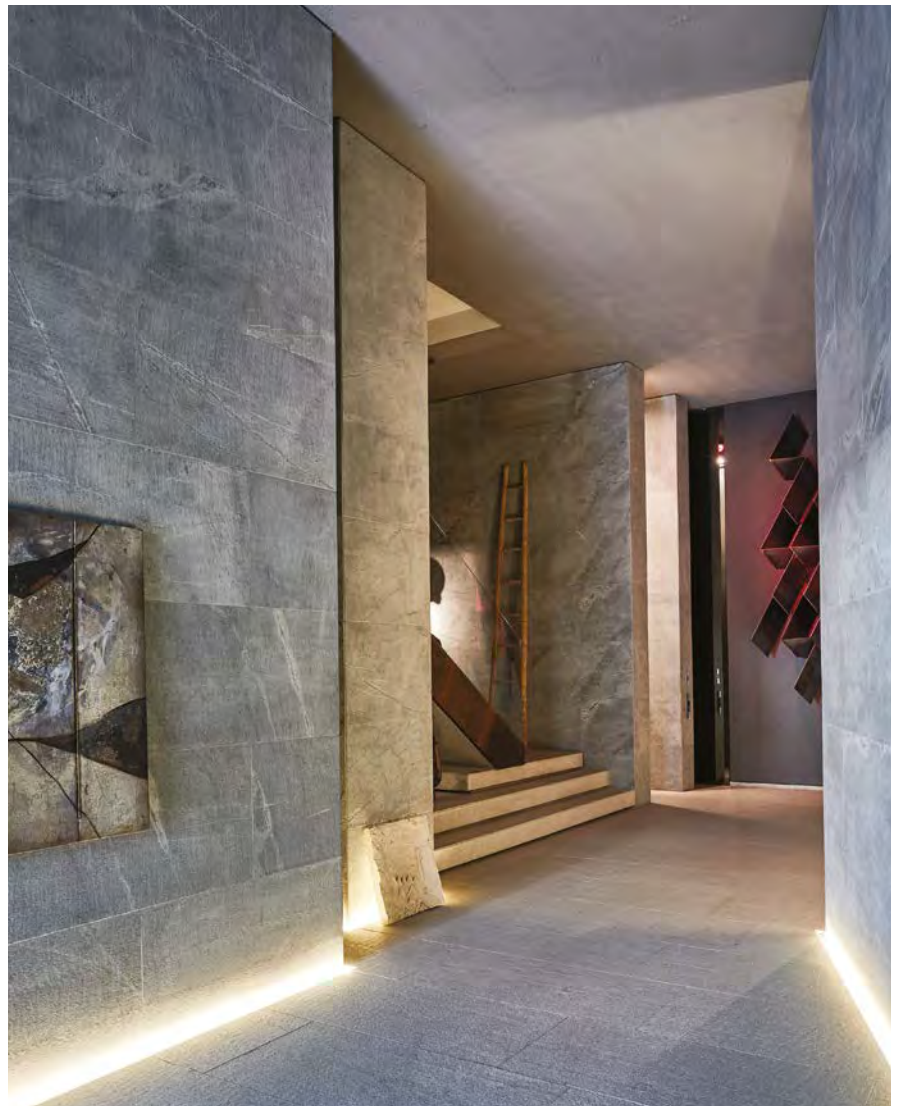




The facade of the house is clad in a finely perforated composite aluminium screen, which is folded open at points to allow the windows to peep through horizontal slots. The laser-cut pattern on the screen was inspired by the fynbos and mountain vegetation of the natural landscape behind the house.

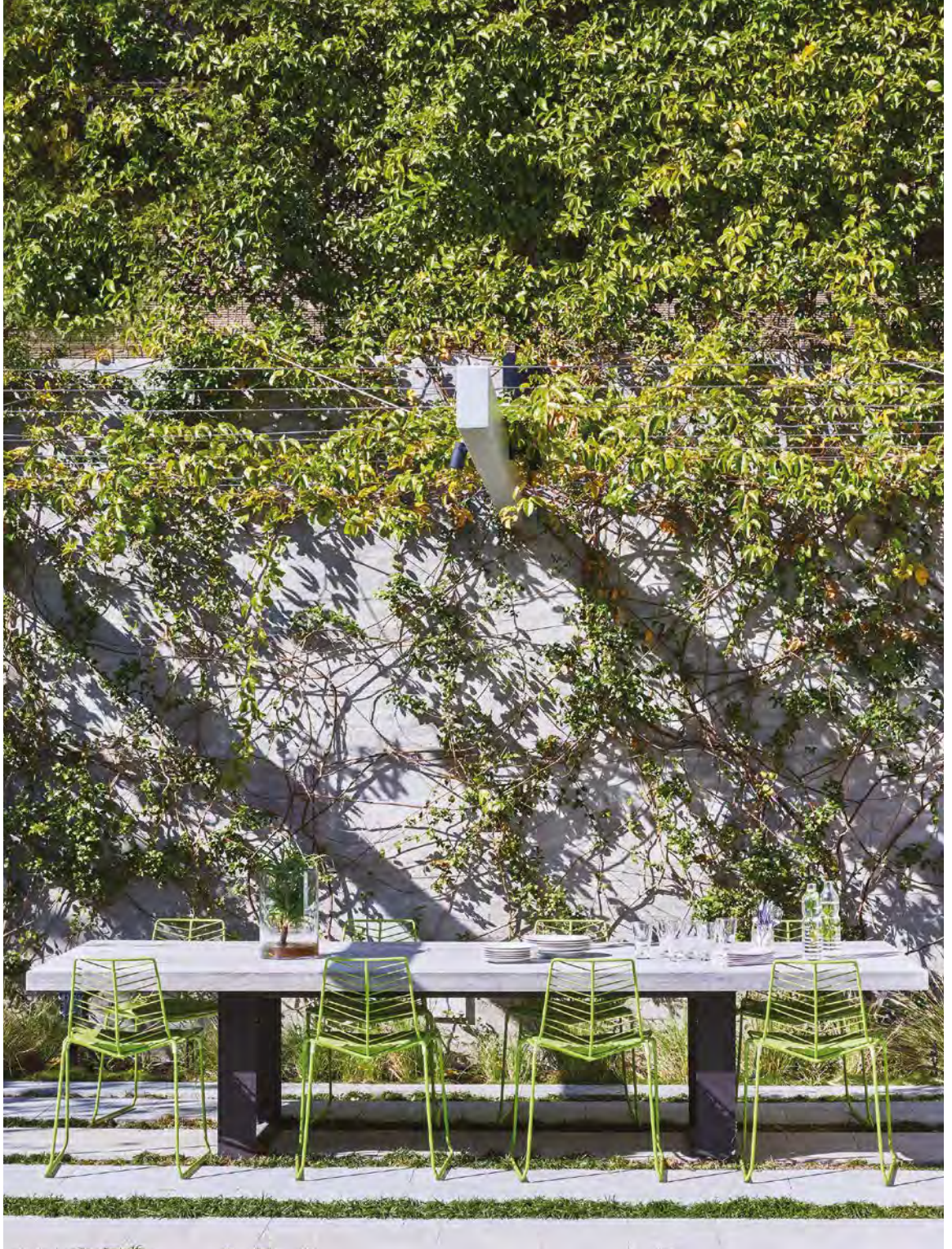
Left: The aluminium screen unifies the building and creates a sculptural presence – the 'fins' of the folds also creating a sense of mystery. The garages and entrance are on the ground level.

Right: The entrance hall is a deliberately cave-like, primal space, with faceted stone walls of matte silver-grey granite reminiscent of ancient buildings and monuments. It signifies the beginning of a journey, a prompt, as Stefan puts it, "to submit to the experience of the building and let it take you on its journey".









#### Get the look with Resene

- Resene ConcreteWash Whitewash
- Resene Silver Sand
- Resene Foundry

Previous page and left: On the top level of the house, the open living space includes the kitchen, dining room, lounge and bar lounge. The courtyard garden behind the living area connects the house with the mountainside to the north-facing Lion's Head. With the glass sliding walls stacked away, this pavilion-like space allows the presence of the mountain to flow down into the courtyard, through the living space, out onto the balcony and out over the rim-flow pool to connect with distant views of the Atlantic Ocean.

Above: The grassy courtyard at the back of the house on the north side creates a rare (for Clifton) north-facing garden and lawn for sports and games, as well as an outdoor eating area sheltered from the wind.

This page: The poolside area is 'held' by a bar lounge, which is cantilevered over the pool, sheltering the outdoor poolside deck from the wind. The way in which the volumes slide into and over each other and the rim-flow pool creates a sense of weightlessness and endless space where the architecture gives way to the immensity beyond.

Right page: The outdoor dining area in front of the living area is sheltered by a planted pergola and showcases panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean.

The outdoor dining pavilion showcases panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean.









**Get the look with Resene**

- Resene Quarter Silver Chalice
- Resene Bison Hide
- Resene Tapa

Left and above: The master bedroom enjoys endless ocean views from the balcony. The en-suite bathroom forms part of an open-plan arrangement in the bedroom, and also features beautiful ocean views. The granite-clad bath features an ethanol fireplace. "The idea is that in winter, when you lie in the bath, you have a little strip of flame next to you," says Stefan.

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# Perfect Blinds

Choosing the right window blinds can be a little daunting with so many options available.



With over 40 years' experience in custom curtains and blinds, Lahood® Window Furnishings take the stress out deciding which blinds are right for your space and style.

## The right blind for you

How to decide which blinds are the right ones for you? Whilst Lahood's consultants will guide you to the perfect choice, here's a closer look at some popular options and how they are best used.

Roller blinds are a great choice if you prefer a sleek, contemporary look and they work well in most rooms. Choose from blackout fabric for complete darkness - perfect for bedrooms, light-filtering fabric for a softer ambiance in areas such as living rooms - or sunscreen fabric that reduces glare while keeping your view - so, perfect in kitchens.

Shutters add timeless elegance and architectural value to your home while providing exceptional functionality. Their adjustable louvres give you precise

control over light and airflow, while their durable materials (timber, Polysatin® or aluminium) stand up well to long-term, daily use. They have customisable styles (hinged, bi-fold and sliding) to suit all sizes of windows and doors but are particularly good for high-moisture areas like bathrooms and kitchens.

Cellular blinds (honeycomb) are a smart option for energy-conscious homeowners. The innovative honeycomb design traps air, creating a layer of insulation that helps keep your home cool in summer and warm in winter. This same structure also absorbs sound - ideal for bedrooms and living areas where comfort and quiet are priorities.

Venetian blinds provide excellent control over light and privacy. By tilting their slats, you can precisely manage how much light enters the room and at what angle. Aluminium and Woodmates venetians are a durable, low-maintenance choices for kitchens and bathrooms, while timber venetians bring a warm, natural touch to studies or living rooms.

## Exclusive offer this February

*Exclusive to Lahood, get 15% off their extensive range of Luxaflex blinds, shutters, and motorisation this February (Ts&Cs apply). To learn more visit Lahood's showroom at 104 Mount Eden Road or book a complimentary in-home consultation at [lahood.co.nz](http://lahood.co.nz).*



# Design of February



Brokis  
Double Medium Pendant





Woka Lamps  
Modern Elegant Floor-Lamp  
with a Big Carton-Shade



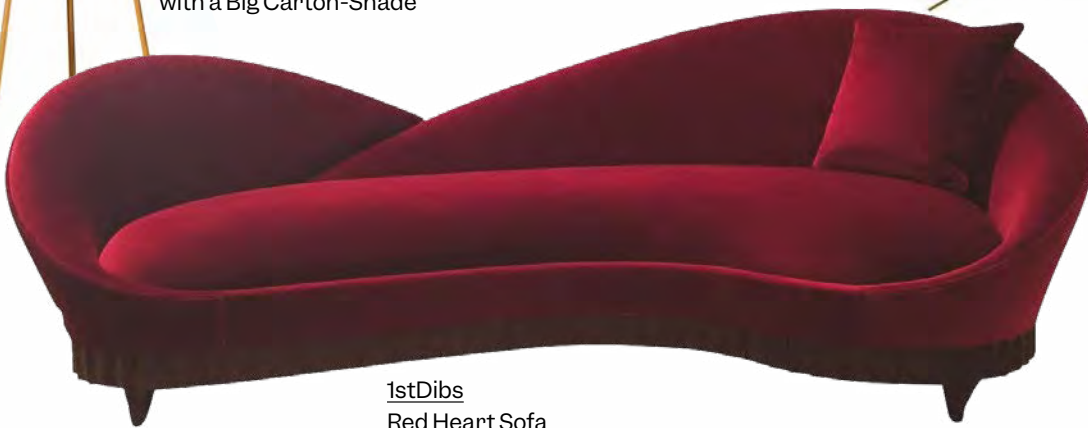
Marie Burgos Design  
Milo Bean Ottoman



KOKET  
Eternity Chandelier



Aaron Saxton  
Furniture  
Entrance or Passage  
Way Large Starburst  
Door Hardware Kit



1stDibs  
Red Heart Sofa



1stDibs  
Pouf Kidman, Red Velvet Fabric



Ghidini 1961  
Dusk Dawn Table Lamp



Kovacs Design Furniture  
TED Chair



KOKET  
Spellbound Peacock Feather Cabinet



Resene  
Eden Wallpaper Collection J98202

# Cool Colours

Looking for a refrigerator that can be tailored to suit your colour scheme?

Samsung has a model available with front panels you are able to customise using Resene colours that fit your decor. This clever collaboration between Samsung and Resene allows you to personalise one of your most used kitchen appliances to perfectly complement your kitchen's aesthetic. And it looks truly fabulous.

Beyond its fresh, standout appearance, this must-have refrigerator is designed with functionality in mind. It features spacious compartments and adjustable shelving, providing ample storage for your groceries. Advanced cooling technology ensures your food stays fresh for longer, while the energy-efficient design helps reduce your household's environmental footprint.



For those who love interior decor and enjoy creating in their kitchens, the Samsung Bespoke refrigerator with Resene colour options offers a novel way to express personal style. It's more than just an appliance; it's a statement piece that brings both form and function to the heart of your home.

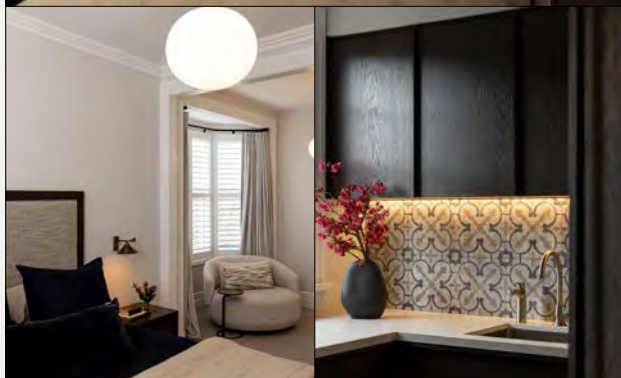
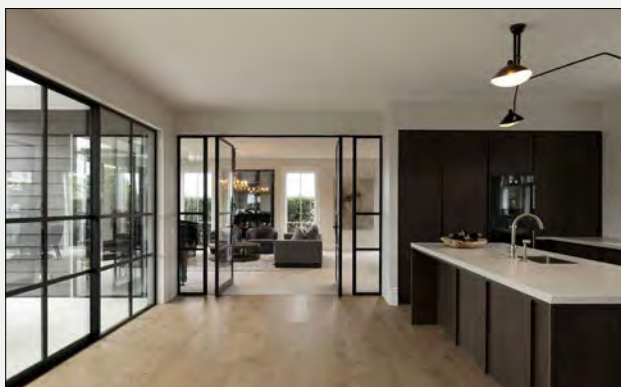
Visit [resene.co.nz/samsung-bespoke/](https://resene.co.nz/samsung-bespoke/) to learn more and get top tips for choosing a colour for your appliance.

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\* Conditions apply

# All Yours

**Emma Stallworthy (pictured), founder of Your Reformer, is on a “mission to make reformer pilates more accessible” – and it’s a mission that has been embraced by the public, celebrities, influencers, and professional athletes around the world.**

“We do this by delivering exceptional quality hardware – in the reformers and the accessories – coupled with an OnDemand suite of products that provide solutions to both home and commercial customers,” she tells *Verve*.

“As a business, we commit to staying agile, and continually improving our systems, products, team, and overall offering. Our consumers and partners expectations regularly shift over time, and we want to ensure we remain relevant for them.”

## **What sets Your Reformer apart from other pilates equipment providers businesses?**

As our products are a luxury item and an investment in your wellbeing, we understand a high level of brand trust is required. We foster this through our

strong brand reputation for transparency, fast response times, and a dedicated support team.

We have a passion for design and style, always innovating and evolving. One of our core business values is *kaizen*, which is a Japanese term meaning constant change and improvement daily.

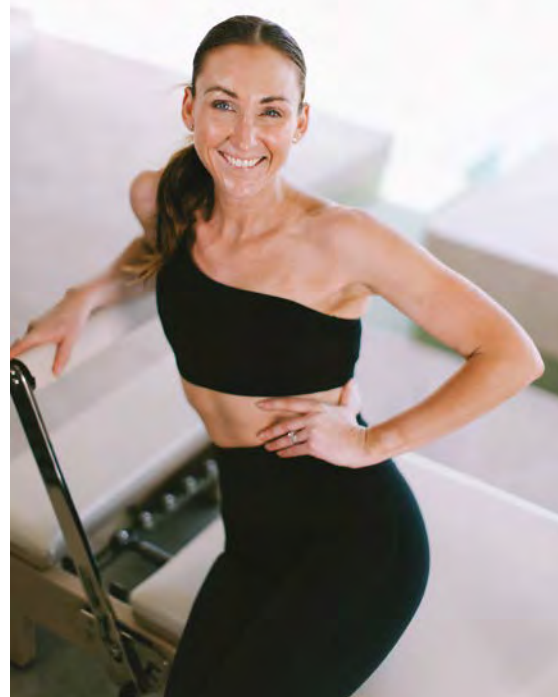
## **How do your software offerings enhance the pilates experience?**

On-demand classes are crucial for building a community. Plus, we actually want people using our machines, because we know there are so many benefits to a regular pilates practice for a broad range of clients.

We invest significantly into this area, not just in the videos we produce, but also in the platforms we deliver the content also. We currently have over 700 classes which we will continue to add to over the next 12 months and beyond.

## **What’s your daily routine like?**

I’m not perfect at always finding balance. Obviously, my kids come first, so I try to give them present time with me and ensure they feel loved, nurtured



PHOTOGRAPHY: SALLY GOODALL

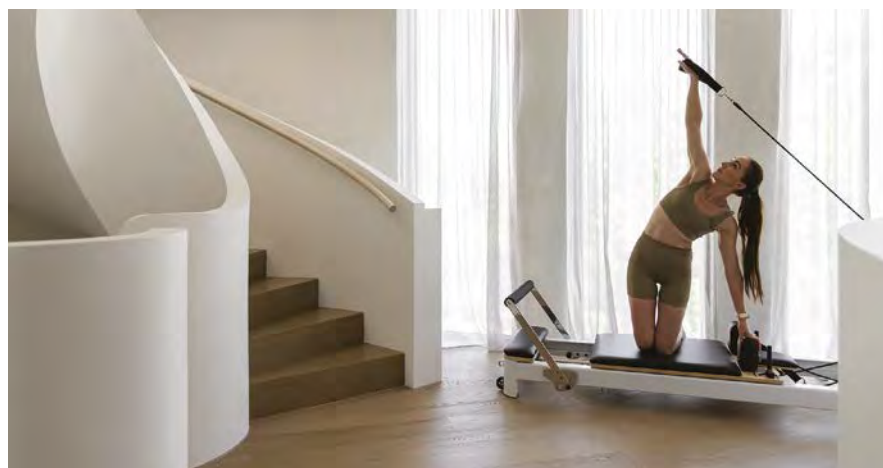
and inspired. From there it’s about prioritising who and what needs me at work, then making time to move my body, connect with my husband, and have some downtime with a shower, cup of herbal tea and one of my fave podcasts or television shows. Our new puppy Bonnie is an early riser, so I’ve also been enjoying a morning walk with her!

## **For someone new to pilates, what advice would you give to help them start their journey?**

Pilates is about self-practice, it’s not competitive. Reformer in particular provides such inclusivity, particularly for a beginner with many options and variations of exercises to provide ease or more support, and then as confidence and experience increases, the progression is right there and accessible to always keep you challenged and forever changing. Know that as a beginner, pilates is a humbling movement – even the best of instructors are still finessing their form!

## **What do you love most about seeing people incorporate reformer pilates into their lives?**

I love that reformer pilates provides something for everyone. There is such a long list of benefits that regular practice can realise, and I am inspired with how it can literally transform lives, both physically and mentally. My most favourite is the increased body confidence, and the positive way someone holds themselves.



PHOTOGRAPHY: TIMOTHY KAYE

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# Pelvic Power



## EMSELLA provides a non-surgical improvement for incontinence.

EMSELLA utilises HIFEM® (high intensity focused electromagnetic) energy to cause pelvic floor muscle stimulation completely non-invasively, similar to contractions you perform when doing a Kegel exercise. What makes this treatment effective is the in-depth penetration and stimulation of the entire pelvic floor area. A single session brings thousands of intense contractions that you'd be unable to do on your own. These contractions are very helpful when it comes to muscle strengthening and re-education.

The pelvic floor is a group of muscles, ligaments, and connective tissues that construct a supportive hammock at the base of the pelvis. This structure spans from the pubic bone at the body's front, extends to the tailbone at the rear, and stretches laterally between both sitting bones.

This pelvic floor holds significant responsibility in providing support to the pelvic organs, which include the bladder, cervix, uterus, and rectum. It plays a crucial part in managing the functionality of the urinary and digestive systems. The pelvic floor muscles act in unison to sustain continence and regulate the passage of urine and faeces.

Furthermore, these muscles contribute to sexual function, aiding in the support of the clitoris, urethra, and vaginal opening in women. During sexual arousal, rhythmic contraction and relaxation of the pelvic floor muscles enhance the pleasurable sensations associated with orgasm.

Various factors that can lead to the weakening or damage of the pelvic floor include:

- pregnancy
- childbirth
- menopause
- obesity
- chronic constipation
- other specific medical conditions

This can result in pelvic floor dysfunction and related conditions like urinary incontinence, faecal incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse, and pelvic pain when these muscles become impaired or weak. Infections, prostate cancer treatment and stress can also have a negative impact on intimate health.

Traditional solutions for pelvic floor dysfunction often involve surgery, medication, and pelvic floor exercises like Kegels.

### How long is the treatment and how many sessions do I need?

EMSELLA treatments typically last around 30 minutes, and most patients require a series of six sessions to achieve optimal results.

### What does the treatment feel like? Is it painful?

During the treatment, you will remain fully clothed and sit on the EMSELLA chair. EMSELLA then generates electromagnetic waves that stimulate your pelvic floor muscles, causing them to contract and relax rapidly. The sensation is often described as mild tingling or buzzing and is not painful or uncomfortable.

### How fast will I see results?

You may observe improvement after a single session. The results will continue to improve over the next few weeks.

### Who is the right candidate for EMSELLA?

Men and women who experience urinary incontinence or other pelvic floor disorders may benefit from this treatment.

Early intervention can aid in preventing the condition from deteriorating and enhancing your overall quality of life.

If symptoms persist see your healthcare professional.

Cost of six sessions: **\$1,250.**

*If you're interested in making an appointment for Emsella or any of our other treatments, visit [clinic42.co.nz](http://clinic42.co.nz) or contact 096384242 or [reception@clinic42.co.nz](mailto:reception@clinic42.co.nz).*

BTL EMSELLA is designed to provide deep tissue electromagnetic stimulation and intended to provide pelvic floor muscle strengthening for treatment of genitourinary system incontinence, urinary incontinence after radical prostatectomy, female sexual dysfunction, erectile dysfunction and pelvic pain syndrome in male and female patients. All medicines, medical devices and treatments carry benefits and risks. Individual results may vary. For details on precautions & side effects consult your healthcare professional. Always follow any instructions provided in terms of treatment aftercare. Supplier BTL Medical Technologies Pty Ltd, Auckland. PP3704

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

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**NONIE**

# What's On in February

WORDS —  
BELLA SAMPSON



IMAGE: AUCKLAND LANTERN FESTIVAL



**SUMMER IN THE SQUARE**

**1 – 25 February**

Aotea Square

This summer, Aotea Square hosts a vibrant mix of performances and culture, from the energetic Latin Fiesta to AfroFest's explosive rhythms. With free workshops, food trucks, and family-friendly fun, there's truly something for everyone.

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

**AUCKLAND LANTERN FESTIVAL**

**13 – 16 February**

Manukau Sports Bowl

Celebrate Chinese New Year and the Year of the Snake with over 500 stunning lanterns, dazzling fireworks, cultural performances, and 60 delicious food stalls. This year, the festival will be held at a new, larger location. Register online for free tickets.

[universe.com](http://universe.com)

**THE PRINCESS BRIDE**

**14 February**

Silo Park

Fall in love with *The Princess Bride* all over again, under the stars, at this free outdoor screening! The timeless fairy tale has it all, sword fights, giants, an evil prince, and just the right amount of romance. Head in early for trending food trucks and live music ahead of the film.

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

**FLEETWOOD MAC BY CANDLELIGHT**

**14 February**

Kiri Te Kawana Theatre

A magical evening bathed in the warm glow of candles and melodies awaits, celebrating the timeless music of Fleetwood Mac. West End singers and a live band perform beloved songs like The Chain, Dreams, and Go Your Own Way. This enchanting show reimagines iconic hits in a truly unforgettable way.

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

**AN EVENING WITH ELIZABETH GILBERT**

**15 February**

Auckland Town Hall

Join the bestselling author of *Eat Pray Love*, Elizabeth Gilbert, for an inspiring evening of love, mercy, and self-discovery. With heartfelt stories and potent insights, Gilbert shares her wisdom on healing, creativity, and embracing life's challenges.

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

**AUCKLAND PRIDE FESTIVAL**

**February**

The festival brings together art, performances, parades, and community events celebrating love, creativity, and connection. From thought-provoking shows to vibrant celebrations like Big Gay Out and the pride parade, this festival highlights the richness of Aotearoa's LGBTQIA+ communities. Check out the packed event calendar online.

[aucklandpride.org.nz](http://aucklandpride.org.nz)

**SIX THE MUSICAL**

**27 February**

The Civic

Forget history books, HERstory hits the stage in this globally celebrated, award-winning musical where Henry VIII's exes tell their side of the story. Winner of 35 international awards, including two Tonys, these queens turn 500 years of history into a pop-powered phenomenon.

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

**MERCURY BAY ART ESCAPE**

**First two weekends of March**

Coromandel

Get an insider's look into the creative world of 46 artists this March during the Mercury Bay Art Escape! Visit artists' studios across the stunning Eastern Coromandel Peninsula, discover new works, and purchase directly from the creators. An unmissable experience for art enthusiasts!

[mercurybay-artescape.com](http://mercurybay-artescape.com)

# Forever First

For Dianne Cartmer the decision to move into Summerset St Johns – becoming the first ever resident to do so – was an unexpected, yet easy one.



PICTURED: DIANNE CARTMER

“Moving into a retirement village was the last thing I thought I would ever do; it was simply never on my radar,” says Dianne. “I’d had a small stroke in August last year and my son, Steve, suggested I move closer to him. The original plan was for me to buy a house in the area. However, I wasn’t impressed with any that we saw.”

Another fruitless house hunt led them to visit the St Johns sales office.

“The scale model of the village meant that I could see the layout. I said straight away, ‘I have a good feeling about this.’” Dianne has worked in real estate and property development for decades, so buying off the plans didn’t faze her. “I sold all the sections of the subdivision I lived in, and I had to review all the designs of the homes, too. I know what to look for in terms of design and quality. St Johns really is architecturally designed. I was amazed that everything, from the carpets to the fixtures, is exactly to my taste. A lot of the design there is like my home now.”



Maintenance was a factor in her decision also. "I was having to outsource everything. From tending the garden to washing the house to cleaning it, it was tiring me out. Not needing to maintain anything is really appealing."

While moving house at any stage can be daunting, Summerset's moving specialist, Anna Irvine, organised Dianne's.

"I have received spectacular care and attention from Anna. She visited me and we discussed what I would keep. She drew up a plan of the placement of it all. The packers came the day before I moved, then the next day the truck transported everything, and it was unpacked for me in my new home. They even sent cleaners for my old house."

Now settled into her new apartment, Dianne feels right at home.

"Summerset St Johns has definitely provided me with the retirement lifestyle I have been looking for and more. I was welcomed in by a great team to a place that I am proud to call my forever home."

*If you'd like to take a look around Summerset St Johns, give our sales team a call on 09 950 7982 or visit us at 180 St Johns Road, Auckland*

# Box Office



IMAGE: I'M STILL HERE

## MOZART'S SISTER

13 February

For the first 16 years of her life, Mozart's sister shared equal billing with her brother. Musical partners and collaborators, Wolfgang Mozart and Maria-Anna Mozart played together before kings and queens and were the talk of Europe. So, what became of her? Forced to withdraw from public life because she was a woman, a stunning new investigation explores why she was retired and what happened to her music.

## I'M STILL HERE

20 February

Brazil, 1971. Brazil faces the tightening grip of a military dictatorship. Eunice Paiva, a mother of five children, is forced to reinvent herself after her family suffers a violent and arbitrary act by the government. The film is based on Marcelo Rubens Paiva's biographical book and tells the true story that helped reconstruct an important part of Brazil's hidden history. From acclaimed filmmaker Walter Salles, and Brazil's entry into the 97th Academy Awards.

## BIRD

20 February

Franz Rogowski (*Disco Boy*) and Oscar nominee Barry Keoghan (*Saltburn*) star in this Palme d'Or-nominated drama from Oscar-winning filmmaker Andrea Arnold (*American Honey*). Twelve-year-old Bailey (Nykiya Adams) lives with his brother Hunter (Jason Buda) and his father Bug (Keoghan), who raises them alone in a squat in northern Kent. Bug doesn't have much time to devote to them and Bailey, who is approaching puberty, is looking for attention and adventure elsewhere.

## NENEH SUPERSTAR

20 February

Twelve-year-old Nene simply wants to dance ballet – but, as a Black girl attempting to find a foothold in a historically white cultural milieu and secure the support that her talent clearly merits, the obstacles she faces seem overwhelming. This crowd-pleasing feature by writer-director Ramzi Ben Sliman follows Neneh as she enters a ballet boarding school where most administrators and teachers persist in believing that Black women have no place onstage as part of the classical repertoire. With encouragement from her patient father, Fred, and under the watchful gaze of teacher and legendary dancer Marianne Bellage, Neneh finds herself – and her place – in this inspiring story about overcoming systemic disadvantages on the path to artistic achievement.



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## 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.

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09 869 3947

# The Art of February

CURATED BY—  
AIMÉE RALFINI



**ARTWORK:** 'WORK NO. 3779', 2011-2023, MARTIN CREED – COURTESY OF MICHAEL LETT

The Art of February presents a dynamic mix of exhibitions celebrating diverse artistic practices.

Highlights include Kathryn Tsui's intricate weaving, Roseanne Bartley's jewellery exploring language, Stanley Palmer's stunning landscapes, and cross-cultural works like Indigenous baby vessels at Objectspace. From ceramics at the Portage Awards to Martin Creed's conceptual art, there's something for everyone. Don't miss the chance to experience these inspiring shows this month.

**MASTERWORKS GALLERY**

Kathryn Tsui and Roseanne Bartley

8 Feb – 1 March

Opening  
Sat 8 Feb

Two solo shows respectively, by artists Kathryn Tsui, who works in hand-weaving and beading, and Roseanne Bartley who is a jeweller, and explores the relationship between language and jewellery.

*71 Upper Queen Street, Eden Terrace*

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

**OBJECTSPACE**

**Architecture of Aroha**

Gunvor Guttorm, Berit Kristine Andersen, Guvsám, Inga Ravna Eira, Tanya Reihana White and Jasmine Te Hira

On until  
16 March

Architecture of Aroha presents two objects that hold important cultural significance, the wahakura and the gietkka, baby sleeping vessels from Māori and Sámi communities respectively. The wahakura and gietkka do not exist purely as objects. Rather, they are part of an intricate constellation of knowledge, design and spirituality. Their design reflects a deep understanding of the natural world. For each, materials are sourced locally thus echoing the rhythms of the environment and showing the connection between all aspects of life and land for Indigenous peoples.

*13 Rose Road, Grey Lynn*

[objectspace.org.nz/exhibitions/architecture-of-aroha](http://objectspace.org.nz/exhibitions/architecture-of-aroha)

**TE URU**

**Portage Ceramic Awards**

Wendelien Bakker, Raukura Turei, Terry Bell, Ted Kindleysides and 36 other artists

On until  
23 Feb

The Portage Ceramic Awards is an annual exhibition of contemporary ceramics in Aotearoa. The award was established in 2001 and embraces the rich history of working with clay in West Auckland. Portage 2024 includes 42 works by 40 artists, some of whom are well-established and have been finalists in the Portage many times before. For others, this is the first time entering the awards or exhibiting their work. Finalist works range from intimate functional objects to large-scale ephemeral installations.

*420 Titirangi Road, Waitakere*

[teuru.org.nz/products/portage-ceramic-awards-2024](http://teuru.org.nz/products/portage-ceramic-awards-2024)

**MELANIE ROGER GALLERY**

**New Work**

Stanley Palmer

On until  
22 Feb

New work by renowned New Zealand painter Stanley Palmer continuing an exploration of his beloved Aotearoa in this new series of oil paintings. This exhibition will feature eight new works including depictions of Karamea, Great Barrier Island, Chathams, Great Mercury Island and more. Also included will be a small, and very limited selection of printmaking. These are quintessentially New Zealand places captured by one of our most admired landscape artists. This is Palmer's ongoing love letter to Aotearoa.

*444 Karangahape Rd, Newton*

[melanierogergallery.com](http://melanierogergallery.com)

**MICHAEL LETT**

**Like Favourite Socks in a Drawer**

Martin Creed

On until  
1 March

"I went to an art shop and I did not know what brushes to get, so I got a multi-pack. I do not know what is best. Nothing is best. It could be anything. I want everything to be in it. I want to do something without judging or choosing. One cannot judge. It is always artificial. Nothing is best. Things are whatever they are really. Everything really is what it is. In these paintings the different colours can live together in a chord, like a happy family, like the three bears, like flying ducks, like favourite socks in a drawer, like sweet layers of a cake, like steps on a staircase to heaven. A step pyramid is solid and easy to understand. It is a safe structure that is not going to fall down. It is trustworthy. You can see how it is built. The steps are hopefully leading to the top, and you can enjoy the colours on the way up. In a blobby, soupy, ill-defined world it can be helpful to put your ducks in a row."

– Martin Creed, 2025

*312 Karangahape Road,*

*Cnr K'Road & East Street*

[michaellett.com/exhibition/martin-creed-2](http://michaellett.com/exhibition/martin-creed-2)



Wonderful Waiheke House Tour | 6-7 March  
[waihekeartgallery.org.nz/events/events](http://waihekeartgallery.org.nz/events/events)

Calling all lovers of grand design! Book your tickets now to tour some special Waiheke homes featuring dramatic architecture, enviable artwork collections, and stunning views in one of the most beautiful places in the world – picturesque Waiheke Island. One-day tickets start at \$95 (self-drive), with the option to add bus transport and/or lunch at The Heke or Casita Miro. Proceeds support Waiheke Community Art Gallery. Head online for more info or to purchase tickets.

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# The Art of Graham Young

## 2025 Calendar

Featuring 12 of Graham's latest paintings that capture the familiar yet often overlooked places around New Zealand.



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# New Year, New Estate Plan

## Navigating 2025's busy beginnings.

As the echoes of the holiday cheer fade away, and the calendar flips to 2025, the arrival of the new year brings a flurry of resolutions and fresh beginnings. In the hustle and bustle of the year already off to a brisk start, it's easy to get swept up in the momentum of life's demands. However, amidst this chaos, there lies a crucial yet overlooked goal that's deserving of our attention: your estate plan.

Your estate plan is a roadmap for the future, ensuring that your loved ones are provided for. As we navigate through a busy 2025, taking a moment to assess and update your estate plan becomes a powerful way to safeguard your legacy and secure a foundation for the uncertainties that lie ahead.

### What makes a good estate plan?

A well-crafted estate plan ensures that your assets are protected and your needs met during your lifetime and, once you have died. An estate plan can include the following elements:

**A Will.** This stands as one of the most recognizable features of estate planning, and rightfully so given its substantial role. A will empowers you to decide how you would like your assets distributed on your death and who you would like to appoint to carry out the administration of your estate.

Everyone who has savings or other assets with a value of over \$15,000 should have a will.

It's common to put off the need for a will, but if you want a say in the distribution of your possessions, then a well-crafted will protects the well-being of those left behind.

### Enduring Powers of Attorney (EPA).

An EPA allows you to appoint a trusted individual (known as an "attorney") to represent you in decision making if you are incapable of making decisions for yourself due to mental incapacity.

There are two types of EPAs:

- *property: making financial decisions, including managing funds, property transactions, bills, and other financial matters*
- *personal care and welfare: decisions related to health and overall wellbeing*

Getting EPA's in place is proactive and wise, ensuring the seamless and preferred management of your affairs in circumstances where you are not able to look after yourself. Without EPA's in place, your family or close friends would need to apply to the Family Court for an order to manage your financial affairs or to make decisions about your care and welfare. This is a time consuming and far more expensive exercise than simply making EPA's.

**Trusts.** These prove invaluable for those seeking to safeguard their assets and ensure ongoing benefits for their family for years to come. Unlike a will which establishes the distribution of your estate upon passing, a family trust establishes legal ownership of assets from the moment of its creation.

A family trust comprises of three essential components:

- *trustees: the individuals who manage the trust*



- *settlor: the person who initiates the trust.*
- *beneficiaries: those who stand to benefit from the trust.*

A trust deed, a legally binding document, outlines these three roles, as well as the instructions on how the trust is to be administered. The benefits of a family trust offer protection against risks associated with business uncertainties, or it can serve to allocate funds for the welfare and benefit of children and grandchildren, as well as the passing down of properties to younger generations.

A family trust may not be necessary or appropriate for everyone so it's important to seek personalised legal advice.

*If you have any questions about these matters, or would like to discuss your situation, please contact our friendly team at Dawsons Lawyers.*

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

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Email: [enrolments@sacredheart.school.nz](mailto:enrolments@sacredheart.school.nz)

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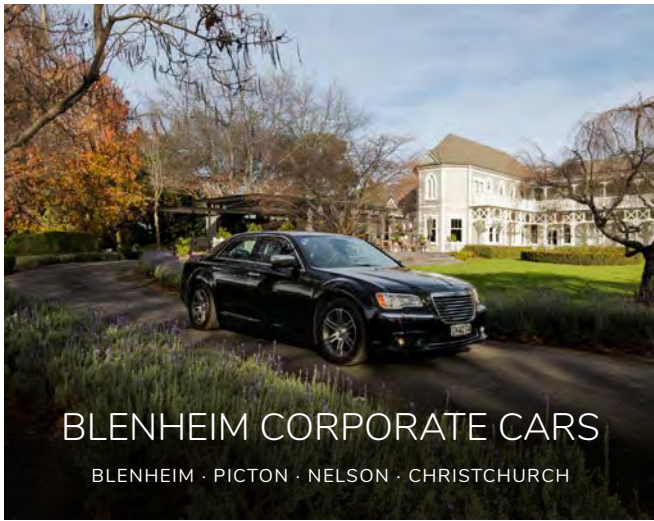
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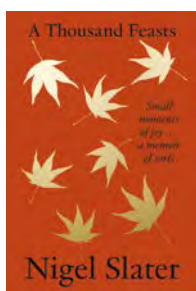
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# On the Bookshelf

Sometimes, a beautifully designed cover is all it takes to inspire your next great read – discover a golden pick from the selection below.

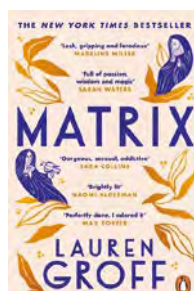


## A THOUSAND FEASTS Nigel Slater

From award-winning writer Nigel Slater comes *A Thousand Feasts*, a beautifully crafted collection of notes, memoirs, small joys, and fleeting moments like miso soup at breakfast, a butterfly on a carpet, or a mango in monsoon rain. Written in diverse settings, from a moss garden in Japan to a Vienna cafe, these stories celebrate life's quiet pleasures: the scent of sweet peas, the sound of water at night, and the comfort of macaroni cheese. This exquisite book is a tribute to life's simple wonders, rewarding both careful reading and rereading.

*'Nigel Slater's prose is the rarest delicacy of all: exquisite yet effortless, filled with heart, tenderness, yearning and humour'* ELIZABETH DAY

*Published by Harper Collins*

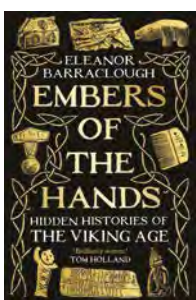


## MATRIX Lauren Groff

Born of a warrior lineage yet unsuited for courtly life, Marie de France is cast from the royal court and sent to *Angleterre* to lead a struggling abbey.

Lauren Groff's modern masterpiece reimagines Marie's life as a visionary leader, queer lover, and 12th-century writer. A bold, addictive tale of female ambition and creativity, it explores the creation of a female utopia during the time of Eleanor of Aquitaine. From divine visions to earthy realities like abbey pigs, vegetable gardens, living quarters and account books, Groff crafts a vividly original, purposeful novel. A *New York Times* bestseller.

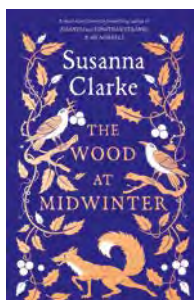
*Published by Penguin Books*



## EMBERS OF THE HANDS: HIDDEN HISTORIES OF THE VIKING AGE Eleanor Barraclough

The Vikings, often seen as brutal raiders, also lived charmingly ordinary lives. Eleanor Barraclough's *Embers of the Hands* explores hidden histories through artifacts and runic inscriptions, offering charming glimpses of their daily lives. From deer antler combs to walrus ivory buckles, Barraclough unearths stories of meticulous grooming, perilous voyages, and domestic life. The book also examines how history flows beyond set dates, showing Viking influence across continents long after the era's end. A must-read for anyone curious about the complexities of the Viking Age.

*Published by Profile Books*



## THE WOOD AT MIDWINTER Susanna Clarke

A haunting winter's tale of Victorian sensibility and otherworldly magic, *The Wood at Midwinter* is a masterful work that highlights Clarke's gift for weaving the historical with the magical. Though smaller in scope than her novels, it is deeply focused and emotionally resonant. With profound truths packed into its quiet, snow-covered depths, this story proves that Clarke's talent for blending the ordinary with the miraculous remains as powerful as ever.

*Published by Bloomsbury*





# Roll With It

The humble roller skates became one of the unlikely winners of the Covid pandemic as the cooped-up public searched for ways to make the most of their time outside.

And now the renaissance continues with skating celebrated not just as a means of getting fit but as a form of creativity and self-expression to boot.

“My mum had bought me a cheap pair of skates, and over the years, I wore them to death!” Questa Shae, rollerskating instructor and co-founder of Skate Nation, tells *Verve*. At 19, she rediscovered her “burning passion” after taking a break and “dove headfirst back into skating”.

“Then I discovered roller dance, a facet of skating that was completely new to me and gave me a brand-new creative outlet that I’d never expected,” Questa continues. “I found this spark during a dark period in my life. Skating and roller dance became my lifeline, giving me the drive to get out of the house, to keep myself active and moving.”

“I can remember pulling a pair of white figure skates with pink wheels out of the shed and asking my mum whose they were,” says Sheyney Ansin, Skate Nation’s other instructor and co-founder. “She grew up rollerskating on the streets with other kids when speed skating was a thing. We used to live in Napier, and she would take me and my sisters rollerskating at the Napier Soundshell.”

It was around a year into her newfound hobby that Sheyney met her “soul sister” Questa, immediately bonding over their “shared love for the craft”.

“Together, we’ve worked hard over the years to learn, grow, and become the best teachers we can be,” Sheyney continues.

“Our mission is to encourage people to find, what we like to call their own ‘spice’ or ‘sauce’ through roller dance, by creating safe and inclusive spaces that allow people to find their own authenticity.”

Skate Nation’s recently launched website showcases services like classes, workshops and free outdoor roller discos, while promising to help create a community of roller skaters.

“We’ve recently teamed up with the professional skater and choreographer Morgan Weske who founded Dance Skate in the US,” says Questa. “She’s an amazing woman who’s helped to give us more clarity around our goals and purpose behind being rollerdance teachers.”

## **Is rollerdance fast gaining popularity?**

“Absolutely, yes!” says Sheyney. “While skating has been around in New Zealand for a while, rollerdance is relatively new and we think people find it exciting. There’s so much rollerdance content all over social media that it’s becoming quite a trend in all parts of the world right now. Authenticity and creativity are what’s driving rollerdance and this feeling of freedom you get from dancing on eight wheels, we’d even compare it to flying! The feeling is contagious and it’s this love of moving on wheels that brings people together and creates beautiful communities.”

## **Do you have a typical student?**

“Mostly commonly for us are women in their 40s and 50s,” says Questa. “It’s quite a nostalgic outlet for them and one they strongly relate to. We’re keen to extend our content and curriculum to attract the younger demographic. Rollerdance should be for everyone, regardless of age or gender. We are



moving to expand our reach and class accessibility by including kids' classes, as well as workshops all over New Zealand."

Skate Nation classes are open to all skill levels - even those that have never worn skates before, and for those worried about falling, the women say that it is all part of the process!

"We teach people how to fall safely - *bend your knees!*" says Sheyney. "We can't stress this enough. The closer you are to the ground the less impact your fall will have. Safety is sexy, so wear safety gear when trying any new sport."

When asked what they'd like everyone to know about the roller dance, Sheyney says "how many beautiful it is as an artform, and how amazing the community is": "Plus, the sheer amount of dedication and passion they have for rollerskating is inspiring, and the fact that anyone can join this big family, because it really is for everyone."

"Skating has opened so many doors," adds Questa. "Learning to dance, teach, perform, choreograph, and more has been a challenging but deeply rewarding journey. I've poured my heart and soul into this craft, and I'm so excited for what the future holds for Skate Nation. We have so many dreams and so much we want to achieve, from meeting new, aspiring creative minds, to sharing our love and passion of the art of roller dance and the joy it gives us to more and more people."

Find out more at [skatenationnz.com](http://skatenationnz.com) and follow them on Instagram @[skate.nation.nz](https://www.instagram.com/skate.nation.nz).

#### SKATING INTO HISTORY

It was advances in plastic technology combined with the rise of disco music in the 70s and 80s that led to the birth of the roller disco, though roller dancing has been around for a couple of centuries. The roots of rollerskating reach even further - all the way back to the Netherlands in the early 1700s when an unknown Dutch ice skater nailed some wooden spools to his shoes that became known as 'skeelers' (now the name of inline skates).

In 1760, London inventor Joseph Merlin literally crashed a high society party when he dramatically entered riding his all-new metal-wheeled boots while playing a violin only to plough straight into a wall-length mirror! Far more graceful was the arrival of the roller ballet in Germany in 1818 with the premier of *Der Maler oder die Wintervergñugungen (The Artist or Winter Pleasures)*, which originally required the use of ice skates. The first roller skate patent was issued, in France, the following year, and, by the middle of the century, there were barmaids on skates serving patrons in German beerhalls, and massive public rinks in London.

Around the turn of the 20th century, Chicago's rink at The Coliseum welcomed more than 7,000 skaters to its opening night, and soon New York's Madison Square Garden was doubling as a skating rink too. The sport spread throughout Europe and the US thanks to indoor and outdoor rinks that offered everything from polo skating to ballroom roller dancing to competitive speed skating and more.

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# Horoscopes

## AQUARIUS

20 January –  
18 February

You also have a harder time till 17th February dealing with mental tasks with a group of people or by yourself, and work better when you have one partner. From the 18th is a good time to talk about your relationship with someone, or to form a new business partnership. You will have an easier time dealing with your loved ones than usual.

## PISCES

19 February –  
20 March

You're interested in many things presently, more curious than usual, and want to learn more about them. You may not stick with anything for very long though, so you will pick up lots of new, random bits of information, but don't become a master at anything. You might be more outgoing, wanting to be more socially engaged, and need a busier schedule.

## TAURUS

20 April –  
20 May

You're more defensive of your beliefs, and if you feel threatened, you'll defend them strongly. You can question your dreams for your future, and feel that they're too unrealistic and out of reach, but this may not be a good time to make any final decisions about what you should do. You can let your emotions run more freely and give your head a break.

## ARIES

21 March –  
19 April

You may come across as more proud, warm, and friendly. Your creative self will come out to let your artistic side shine. There are no fences that can hold you in and no limit to how high you can fly. If you're single, you can meet more people who pique your interest. If in a relationship, you can try to bring romance back into it.

## GEMINI

21 May –  
20 June

You embrace what it is that makes you who you are, and want to be a unique, independent person. You may be more dramatic with your emotional displays, requiring more attention when you're feeling insecure. You might finish a creative project, take a love relationship to the next level, or stop seeing someone entirely if you don't feel that it's working out.

|                                       |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| CANCER<br>21 June –<br>22 July        | You'll come up with big ideas of what you want to do with your life. You can see the big picture more clearly, but the details are a little fuzzy. You might take an interest in something and want to study it further. You can become more interested in other cultures, and try to learn about other ways of living.   | SCORPIO<br>23 October –<br>21 November      | You're driven to pursue your dreams. You want to get closer to attaining them and can accomplish one of them during this time. You're more open to things that are unusual, unconventional, innovative, inventive, and futuristic, and want to push the envelope. You have more mental energy than physical energy and can do a lot of investigating into subjects before pursuing any of them. |
| LEO<br>23 July –<br>22 August         | This is a good time for going back to a career you used to work in. You can feel like your life isn't expanding the way that you want it to and this frustrates you. You're stuck in the dark, dwelling on the issues that hold you back. You may experience power struggles with someone, especially over money, and have issues with other people's money.        | SAGITTARIUS<br>22 November –<br>21 December | This isn't a period to focus on the seriousness of life; it's a time to joke about its kookiness and relish in its joy. You're extremely optimistic and positive about life, feeling everything is going great. You want to expand your consciousness, and may spend time learning something new, studying a philosophy or culture, or jet-setting to some foreign land.                        |
| VIRGO<br>23 August –<br>22 September  | Your mind will be active and sharp and you come up with lots of new ideas. This is a good time for any mental work that needs to be done, though you're not good at sticking with any project for very long right now. Smaller projects will get done quickly. You'll be more loud and boisterous and more social and engaging with others.                         | CAPRICORN<br>22 December –<br>19 January    | You'll feel more ambitious, hard-working, and focused on success. You may seem more distant emotionally, too concerned with your goals and with where you want to be in your life. You have an easier time with travel, legal dealings, writing, and learning. You'll have more passion for your dreams, and more focused on the future and may have a harder time living in the present.       |
| LIBRA<br>23 September –<br>22 October | You may come across as more of a perfectionist, organised, and anxious. You will work quickly, efficiently, and won't stop until you get everything done. You are good with the details, and gathering facts you need. You can also feel stronger and more vital, and decide to try to improve your health through diet, exercise, or some other lifestyle changes. |   |   |



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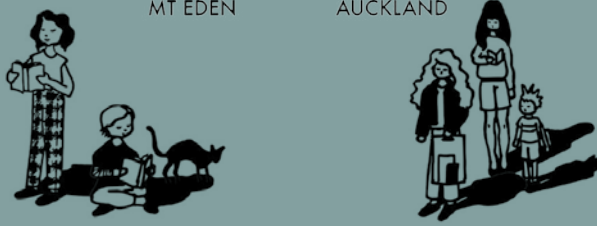
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