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CITY LIFE

 SINCE 2003

O CANADA:

HOW DID A GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT MEANT TO SUPPORT CROSS-BORDER TRUCKERS MORPH INTO THE FREEDOM CONVOY, ONE THAT DEMANDED THE PROTECTION OF CANADIANS' RIGHTS & FREEDOMS? **p. 48**

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COVER STORY

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FREEDOMS COLLIDE. FREEDOMS DIVIDE: A look into the evolution of what started as a grassroots movement into what has popularly become known as the “Freedom Convoy”

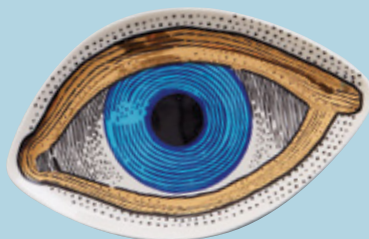
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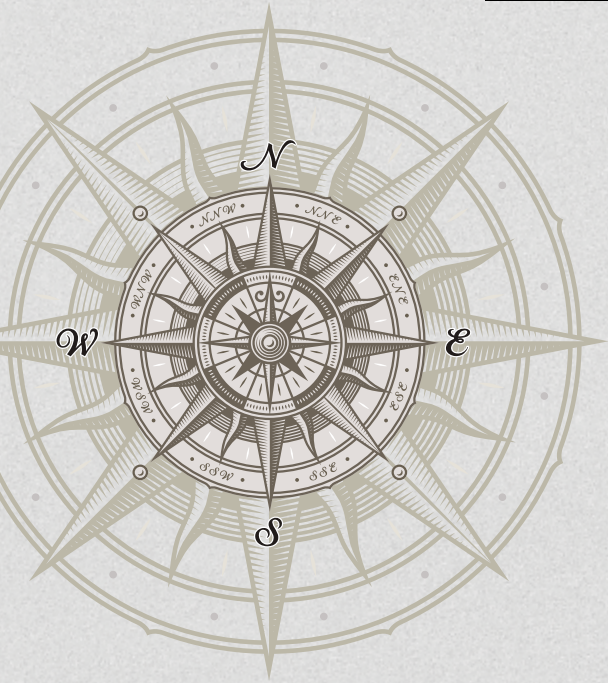
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More stories inside ...

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“He who has overcome his fears will truly be free”

— Aristotle



Michelle Zerillo-Sosa
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief



Fernando Zerillo
Co-Founder/Creative Director

Freedom is the common thread that resonates throughout this edition of *City Life*.

It is a word made even more precious when one understands just how fragile the concept is. It is important for us all to reflect on what is currently transpiring in the Ukraine and how the country's freedom is currently under attack. We can all learn from the residents' resilience and loyalty as they take up arms and fight in the streets, common citizens united in their beliefs and dedication toward protecting their homeland. Our thoughts and prayers are with all Ukrainians.

The next time you sing Canada's national anthem, take the time to reflect on the words “We stand on guard for thee” and pray, as Canadians, that we never have to defend our own freedom against someone as power hungry and ruthless as Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

And yet, our country's capital has seen first-hand how a grassroots movement, one that was meant to support cross-border truckers, morphed into the Freedom Convoy — a protestor occupation that demanded the protection of Canadians' rights and freedoms. Although a lot of negative reports concerning rogue extremists (who did not have ties to the truckers) dominated the news, the photographer Luciano Cherubino, who documented through a resonant body of black-and-white images the unfolding of what was to become an extraordinary and poignant moment in Canadian history, states: “It was the most giant display of humanity I have ever seen in my life.” Whether you were for or against the Freedom Convoy demonstration, whose numbers at any given time were hard to confirm, the fact remains that the rally was massive in scale — too massive to ignore. See the cover story on page 48.

Our feature article “Bonjour. Welcome to your dream life” features Julia and Tim Maarhuis, two Canadians who followed their dream of purchasing an apartment in Paris, where they live part of the year. Wish you could free yourself from all your responsibilities and commitments, and just go for it? Turn to page 60, where Julia and Tim share their insights on how easy it is to follow your dreams.

In conversation with Peloton instructor Olivia Amato, we discover why she left a successful career on Wall Street to pursue

fitness as a full-time career — one that allows her to feel her best. See the story on page 34.

We also speak with Italian-Canadian actor Giacomo Gianniotti, who found acclaim for his role as Dr. Andrew DeLuca in *Grey's Anatomy*. Chatting with us from Italy, where he is working on his upcoming Netflix Original Series, *From Scratch*, Gianniotti shares the inside scoop on his latest endeavour. “It's about a woman from Texas who moves to Florence to study art,” he says. “Yet another brave soul who defies being confined to one place.” See the story on page 42.

Speaking of being restrained, we had a meaningful conversation about mental health and the impact it has had on Gianniotti's personal life. The actor is candid about stating his career is “extremely stressful. It's crippling some days, while on others, it's a cakewalk.”

As we continue to publish each edition of *City Life* — since 2003 — we continue to enjoy and celebrate the privilege of bringing you, our readers, the many and diverse stories of people who are on their own personal missions to build better lives for themselves, made possible by their sheer drive and desire to change their present situations and align themselves with their true callings. No one can take that first step for you, the one that puts you on your own personal path to success. You alone have to initiate it. It may come as a whispered word of encouragement, or a chant of a thousand voices. The choice is personal, one that each of us must choose to hear or ignore. One thing is for sure: it is the kind of defining moment that resonates with each of us.

As we celebrate the arrival of spring, we at *City Life* hope you find your voice and embrace the courage to celebrate and protect both your own personal freedoms and Canada's, should either come under attack.

We hope you enjoy this edition of *City Life*.

With gratitude and blessings,

Michelle Zerillo-Sosa
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

Fernando Zerillo
Co-Founder/Creative Director

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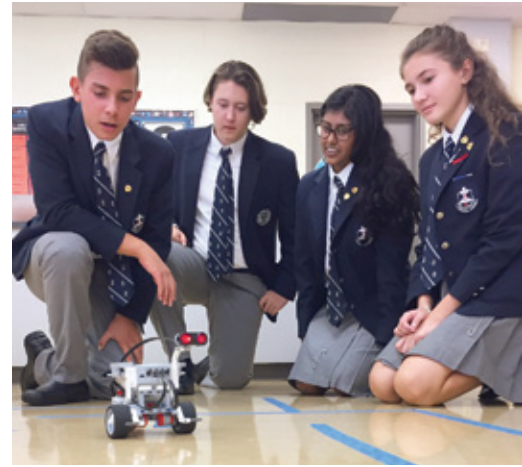


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RECIPE

BUFFALO MOZZARELLA & BURRATA

Pizza

Serves 2-4 persons

Prep Time: 30 min | Cook Time: 10 min | Total Time: 40 min

Ingredients

- 2 Individual Pizza Dough Balls - At Room Temperature (About 9 oz. Each)
- Uncooked Tomato Sauce (Recipe Below)
- 1/4 Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 Bella Casara Fresh Mozzarella Fior Di Latte 250g ball cut into 8 equal pieces
- 1 Bella Casara Burrata 250g Cheese
- Coarse Sea Salt
- Fresh Basil Leaves

Fresh Tomato Sauce:

- 1 Can Good Quality Chopped Tomatoes
- 2 Garlic Cloves, Minced
- 1 Tablespoon Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1/2 Teaspoon Dried Oregano
- 3 Tablespoons Chopped Fresh Basil



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Instructions

- STEP 01** To prepare the sauce, mix the ingredients together in a bowl.
- STEP 02** Heat the oven to it's highest setting (Usually 500 degrees F.)
- STEP 03** To prepare the dough, press each dough ball into a flat disk on a lightly floured counter or bread board. Using your fingers and knuckles carefully, press the dough out into a 12 to 14 inch circle. Place the dough onto a baking peel lightly coated with cornmeal or flour.
- STEP 04** Brush the outer 2 inches of the dough with the olive oil. Place a large scoop of sauce onto each pizza and spread evenly across the pizza leaving a 1 inch edge.
- STEP 05** Scatter the mozzarella cheese on each pizza and place some of the basil leaves on top.
- STEP 06** Sprinkle with a little coarse sea salt, then bake each pizza for about 10 minutes or until the pizza is brown and bubbly turning the pizza halfway if needed for it to bake evenly.
- STEP 07** As soon as the pizza is removed from the oven, cut the ball of burrata open, and spoon some of the curds over the top of each pizza. Enjoy!



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DESIGN NEWS

From dining to design, these multicoloured finds will brighten both areas in your life — enriching your space and your palette

WRITTEN BY ESTELLE ZENTIL



DESIGNER: @ALICEANINTERIORS
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WHEN LIFE IMITATES ART

Inspired by still lifes by Danish modernist artist Vilhelm Lundstrøm, the Raawii Strøm collection will add a splash of colour into your kitchen with vivid palette options such as coral blush, freesia yellow, and horizon blue.

313designmarket.com

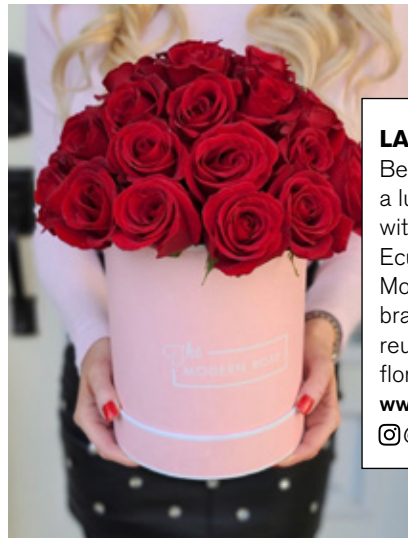
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SPRING IS CALLING

Aptly called *Waiting for Spring*, this work by Canadian-based painter and illustrator Chris Solcz, made on paper with acrylic paint, spray paint and oil pastel, is sure to add a pop of "spring" into any space.

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Devon Doane,
Urban Beekeeper



Angela Stathakos,
Beekeeping
Team Manager

HAVE YOU HEARD THE BUZZ?

Fuzzy bumblebees float around so slowly and gracefully that it almost makes you want to pet them! We need these adorable little creatures to pollinate our crops. In fact, we should be humbled by the bumblebee because, without them, there would be very few crops to harvest. In other words, we couldn't live without them. Meet Angela Stathakos and Devon Doane of Alvéole, a turnkey beekeeping company founded in 2013 to help bring beehives to the rooftops of businesses, schools and other organizations. Their goal? Making the world a better place, one bee at a time

WRITTEN BY DONNA PARIS | INTERVIEW BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

Urban beekeeping is opening our eyes to the lives of bumblebees. “It’s a world that a lot of people don’t know about that’s happening right in the city,” says Angela Stathakos, Alvéole’s beekeeping team manager.

Almost 10 years ago, three men who had spent part of their youth at their uncle’s commercial beekeeping farms decided to bring some hives back to the city and see what would happen. Their neighbours and friends were super excited. “It’s the magic that happens in that moment when people who are terrified of something...get blown away by it,” says Stathakos. So,

they thought, let’s see what happens if we put it on a roof.

The result? It snowballed into an urban beekeeping business. Last year, in the GTA alone, nine beekeepers were visiting about 350 clients. Unlike commercial beekeeping operations, the idea of Alvéole is to engage and educate as many people as possible. They are conscious of all their decisions, and they’re proud of their B Corp certification, meaning they’re legally required to consider the impact of their decisions on workers, customers, suppliers and the environment.

Since there are no huge fields to place the bees in urban areas, most of the

beekeeping happens on rooftops. As a turnkey operation, Alvéole provides the bees, installs and maintains the hive every three weeks. As well, they run workshops, including one of six called Meet Your Bees, where people can watch the operation in action.

“We like to say that we use honeybees as the gateway bug,” laughs Stathakos, as talking about the honeybees can lead to bigger conversations about the environment and urban sustainability. And people get invested in the bees. “Once we have a hive on site, people want to help, and they ask, ‘What do we need to do for our bees?’” says Devon Doane, an urban beekeeper at

Continued on page 65



“
 We like to say
 that we use
 honeybees as the
 gateway bug
 ”

alvéole

Honeybees work hard many hours a day, collecting pollen and nectar and bringing it back to the colony



Bees need flowers that provide nectar for energy and flowers that provide pollen as a source of protein



Etienne Lapiere, one of the founders of Alvéole, is a proud champion of bumblebees

www.mycitylife.ca



Founders Alex Mclean, Declan Rankin and Etienne Lapiere started with a single hive on a roof

CULINARY EXPERIENCE

Chef Ben Heaton is
culinary director at Isabelle

THE CHEF CREATING TASTES FROM COASTAL CLIMATES

Isabelle's culinary director, Chef Ben Heaton, discusses farm to table, his favourite restaurant and how travel has inspired his Mediterranean menu

WRITTEN BY JOSH WALKER | INTERVIEW BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

The interior design of the restaurant lends itself to the tastes Heaton creates



Located on Burlington's waterfront, halfway along the Toronto/Niagara corridor, The Pearle Hotel & Spa is a new space inspired by the region's local lake houses, complete with 151 curated rooms.

Isabelle is part of its offering, a restaurant and lounge bringing together local ingredients and share-style dishes headed up by culinary director Chef Ben Heaton. "When I first walked into the building, I was floored. I felt like I was in the Mediterranean with the views," Heaton says. "The water is crystal clear. The views go on forever, and the sunrises and sunsets are phenomenal."

Having spent a lot of time working in the Middle East and travelling around the Mediterranean, Heaton wanted to fuse that initial impression with his experience with the regions to create a menu that was as approachable as it was flavourful.

That menu (offering breakfast, lunch and dinner) includes such items as smoked eggplant dips, made with pomegranate, walnut and green olive; fall greens with maple vinegar; sheep's gouda and grains; and Òra King salmon with turnips, mustard greens and mushroom xo sauce.

"The interior design lends itself to the cuisine," Heaton shares. "I couldn't imagine having a steakhouse here. It just goes hand in hand. With dining, the ambience and design of a restaurant is important. You'll come back to a place you feel is warm and welcoming."

Heaton describes the food as "the best ingredients treated as simply as possible, which is very hard to do." To give context to the work that goes into every dish, the kitchen doesn't just prep and cook its food but makes its own yogurts, cultures its own cheeses and makes all the bread in-house.

"Looking at the market in Burlington and Hamilton, there's nothing really like it, especially at this level. The food is fresh, colourful and vibrant. We have our own farm that grows a lot of

our vegetables. The summer prior to opening, we did a lot of pickling, fermenting and preserving anything we could get our hands on."

Their farm, aptly called "Earth to Table" and headed up by farmer Laura Headley, is a key component of both Heaton's work process and Isabelle's success. Located in Millgrove, Ont., Heaton shares how it's currently growing a number of vegetables, alongside traditional varieties of leaves and greens the restaurant requires. It's also totally organic, using no pesticides or other artificial processes.

But, for everything it does for the restaurant, there's a long-term vision at play. "We'll be building it out so it's more of a commissary-style building. So, that's where we'll make the breads, charcuterie, cheeses, pastries, grow our vegetables and dry-age our beef."

It's this environment, and the chef's approach to food, that gives Isabelle its stories. In the same way the restaurant brings Heaton's experience travelling sun-soaked climates to the plate, the farm is steeped in narrative.

Heaton explains how the smoky vinaigrette that's poured over the top of the short rib is made from the scraps after dry-aging beef at the farm. He also explains how he works with 1847 Stone Milling, located in Fergus, Ont., to produce the restaurant's pitas. The mill grows a grain called einkorn, which is widely regarded as being one of the first used in bread-making.

"First and foremost, food has to be delicious," Heaton continues. "I've been to high-end restaurants where it looks phenomenal but tastes like nothing. It's always flavour first. Then we think about the presentation."

With early memories of cooking dinner for his parents after school, visiting restaurants in England's Yorkshire Dales with his grandfather and having a brother who's also a chef, food has always been a part of Heaton's life. He cut his teeth with chefs Gary Rhodes and Jason Atherton, who both

own Michelin-starred restaurants in the U.K., before returning to Toronto to work with Mark McEwan and open his own restaurant, The Grove.

Even now, he holds that connection with the U.K. His favourite restaurant is The Seahorse. Located in Devon, a county in southwest England, he's sure to mention the grilled fish over charcoal.

Today, he brings all of this past and present experience to Isabelle seven days a week. "When I started travelling, it opened my mind to different cultures. Not just their food, spices and the way people eat but how they gather. Every single day, it was important to get together as a family and enjoy meals. Ever since, it's influenced the way I've cooked my food and how I want people to eat it. I want everyone to feel they're home when they're here."

thepearlehotel.ca
isabelle.ca
@benheaton_

SHE'S TALKING NOW



Michelle Chubb uses her platform to empower Indigenous youth and create digital space for conversations that are often overlooked in mainstream media

PHOTO BY FELICE TRINIDAD

She used to be shy, but now Michelle Chubb has a voice and a platform, and she's not afraid to use it. The Indigenous TikTok star (with more than half a million followers!) is creating content to educate non-Indigenous people and inspire Indigenous youth to be themselves. She's an advocate who's raising awareness of issues faced by Indigenous communities. It's been a tremendous year for her, with modelling campaigns for BonLook and Sephora, interviews with *Teen Vogue* and *Fashion MAGAZINE*, being named as one of Top 25 Women of Influence 2021 — and she became a new mom. *City Life* sat down to talk to Chubb about her life now

WRITTEN BY DONNA PARIS | INTERVIEW BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

When Michelle Chubb was growing up, there weren't a lot of people to look up to. A few years ago, when not quite so many people were using TikTok, Chubb just wanted to try it out, so she posted a few videos about her culture. People started commenting, asking about Indigenous people, and she wanted to start educating others about misinformation. "I wanted to fix that," she says simply. And now she does — tackling issues from missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, to colonization, cultural genocide and two-spirit people.

She really likes to share her culture, and when a summer powwow was cancelled because of the pandemic, she posted a video of herself dancing in the jingle dress she had made. It took Chubb awhile to make the dress, to express her vision and arrange the colours. "It features flowers on the sleeves, and the dress is red with gold and pinkish detailing. And the jingle cones are gold, which match the gold from the red dress," she explains. She started incorporating her jingle dress dancing on TikTok — people loved it and bestowed thousands of likes on the video. "They were honouring that I was sharing my culture," she adds.

From then on, things happened fast. At the end of the year, she landed a modelling opportunity with BonLook, and *Teen Vogue* wanted to do an interview. Sephora called, asking her

to model for the company. "It's just so surreal," she says. "I didn't think that these opportunities would come to me [when] I was growing up."

Recently, Chubb gave birth to a baby girl, Pisim, which means sun. "It's super life-changing," she says. "I thought I would have more energy to do the

magazine cover perhaps, even looking forward to exploring TV and acting. But most of all, Chubb wants to help Indigenous youth to find their own voice and to feel more comfortable in their own skin. When she looks in the mirror now, she sees a strong Indigenous woman. But she hasn't forgotten where she came from and that helps her to stay true to herself, especially now with all the social media attention. "I always try to remember the experiences I've been through, and I try to stay humble," she adds.

She's proud of what she has accomplished and how far she has come. "There weren't too many Indigenous people in my classes. I went to a predominantly white school," she says. "Sometimes it was uncomfortable because I would have conversations with them, and they wouldn't get it." She was shy, and so she was pretty quiet. "But I started to come out of my shell after high school," she says. "Just having that ripple effect makes my younger self proud, being able to do that for myself and other Indigenous youth."

Her advice to young girls is simple. "Don't worry about what people think of you," she says. Because that's what she used to worry about and that's one thing that can stop your voice from coming out. And her definition of happiness is pretty simple, too. "Being yourself," she says without skipping a beat.

@indigenous_baddie

“
I always try to remember the experiences I've been through, and I try to stay humble
”

things that I was planning on doing, but the baby takes so much energy — I'm tired at the end of the day." So, she's learning to roll with the punches and she's even incorporating the baby into some of her videos, recently posting one of her wrapping up the baby snugly in her moss bag so she can have a good sleep.

Chubb feels good about where she's standing right now. She has a lot of goals and a lot of irons in the fire, hoping for more modelling opportunities, a



Top: The Stop's Farmer's Market operates with an indoor/outdoor model
Bottom: People can stop in to pick up food hampers

COMMUNITY STARTS HERE

In a little church near Kensington Market, almost 40 years ago, The Stop opened its doors to welcome, well, anyone who needed food. Its mission was to feed hungry people in the community. The location (actually, three of them now) is different. But, the mission hasn't changed — it just keeps growing and evolving to serve the community

WRITTEN BY DONNA PARIS | INTERVIEW BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

T rue or false: The Stop served more than 75,000 meals last year, which is more than 400 a day. It's a true story. And, in addition to food access, programs like Healthy Beginnings for new moms have been added, and urban agriculture is a big part of it now. The Stop halts at nothing, not even a pandemic. "The last two years have been, of course, very difficult," says Maria Rio, director of development and communications. "And a lot of our programs, we've had to completely change how we deliver them."

Like many other organizations, The Stop had to pivot. Instead of a store-like setup with people coming in to choose food and items, food hampers and take-away meals are assembled for pickup. Just over a year ago, they opened another location as a drop-in centre for community members. As for the hampers, the reach is huge. "When you come to our food bank, you might be picking up the hamper, but your file represents a family of one to nine people," says Rio. "We actually don't keep track of who's accessing our

drop-in services because some of our community members might be wary." Some people might not have ID, as they may be experiencing homelessness, for instance.

The Stop wants people to know that they're there and they're not going anywhere. Yes, they are an anti-poverty organization, but The Stop also advocates for larger issues, addressing systemic problems and helping people advocate for themselves. At the same time, they're building community, too, running a tax clinic for people who can't speak English, for example, helping people who don't have Internet access or people with mobility issues who can't leave their homes right now. "We launched a pilot program last year for food bank delivery of hampers that we are going to continue because we see the need," she adds.

The Stop relies on donations from community members who are able to share. And, if you do want to help, the best way is to donate money, says Rio, as food expenses have increased. "This way, we're able to purchase in bulk," she says. "We're able to purchase culturally

appropriate foods that make sense for our community members. We're able to pivot our programming and buy PPE." It gives the organization a lot more flexibility in such uncertain times, she says, especially since they can't hold fundraising events like they used to.

Rio is proud of The Stop, their volunteers and their commitment, especially now. "At one point, success was just being open to make sure that we could be there for our community members," she says. But, they've gone above and beyond that, setting up WhatsApp groups for community members and calling people on the phone just to check in and chat. One staff member picked up a senior, a Portuguese woman who doesn't speak English, to bring her to their vaccine clinic.

The last word from Rio is humbling, because this is where it all starts. "Food is a human right...everyone deserves access to healthy, nutritious and culturally appropriate food," she says. "And, we're just trying to make sure that people have that."

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PHOTO BY CARLOS A. PINTO

Marwan Rizek is founder and principal of Cameo Kitchens & Fine Cabinetry

A *Design* DREAM TEAM

Cameo Kitchens & Fine Cabinetry and interior designer Lori Morris have collaborated to create a kitchen that fuses performance with luxury

WRITTEN BY JOSH WALKER



PHOTO BY ROBIN GARTNER

Lori Morris is founder of Lori Morris Design

Backed by almost 40 years in the business, Cameo Kitchens & Fine Cabinetry has outfitted some of the finest homes and condominiums in the Greater Toronto Area. Working with a principle to “never abandon hand

craftsmanship in favour of the mass produced,” all of the brand’s projects are one-offs, developed in partnership with builders, designers and homeowners.

Its most recent collaboration is with Lori Morris Design, an interior designer who enjoys adopting different

narratives into a space and telling a story with every room. Together, the two design establishments have created a kitchen of the highest standard to the tastes of an unnamed client.

“Our Lori Morris designs are thoughtful curations, blending form



This luxury kitchen is the latest in a string of successful Cameo collaborations



“
What makes this the perfect collaboration is how we prioritize our clients’ needs and go above and beyond to make their vision come to life
”

— Marwan Rizek, founder and principal of Cameo Kitchens & Fine Cabinetry

PHOTOS BY BRANDON BARRÉ

and function with each detail selected for its ability to infuse luxury and exceptional performance into every aspect of the space,” says Morris.

“The design for this kitchen fulfilled the functional requirements of a busy family while offering a luxurious experience for even the most discerning chef. My love of nature, classic architecture and haute couture fashion has always inspired my designs. This family cottage kitchen was no exception,” Morris continues.

Where the cabinetry and counters are delivered in monochrome, the smaller details — such as patterned tile backsplashes and oak floors — add another textural layer and elevate the overall experience. It comes together in a way that emphasizes the specialties

of both Cameo Kitchens & Fine Cabinetry and Lori Morris, without either being lost in the room.

“Clean lines, with a soft, sophisticated palette, reflect the sense of calm of the lakeside setting, while the luxurious material selections elevate the look and feel of every surface,” Morris notes.

The collaboration with Morris isn’t the first undertaken by Cameo Kitchens & Fine Cabinetry. In the past, the brand has worked with Kelly Cray, a partner and design principal at U31, who’s been working in the field since 1996, winning awards for his work.

The company’s collaboration roster also includes Lorne Rose of Nazem + Rose Design Inc., an award-winning interior design firm that specializes in luxury property with a focus on craft and working with the highest quality brands in the trade. Shari Lerner Interior Design is another of Cameo Kitchens & Fine Cabinetry’s past collaborators. As a boutique firm in

Toronto, Shari Lerner Interior Design has a focus on customization, balancing good design with function and creating spaces that incorporate luxury into everyday life.

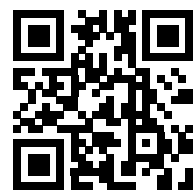
The collaboration with Morris is their latest and comes as part of an extensive Lori Morris Design renovation. “We’re extremely honoured to work with Lori Morris in creating the ultimate dream kitchen for our clients,” says Marwan Rizek, founder and principal of Cameo Kitchens & Fine Cabinetry.

“Both Lori and I understand how people live in their homes and believe in using only the highest quality of materials to make sure that sense of luxury is never lost. What makes this the perfect collaboration is how we prioritize our clients’ needs and go above and beyond to make their vision come to life.”

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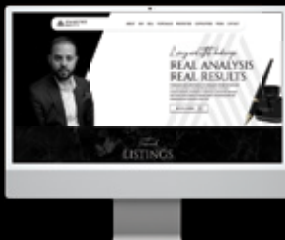
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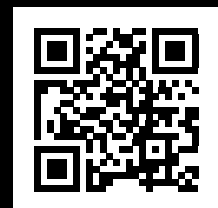
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Commanding the corner of Church and Richmond Streets, Alias Condos will be a distinctive 45-storey tower containing 546 elegant and stylish residences

ALIAS CONDOS: BRINGING AN ELEVATED LIFESTYLE AND NEW ENERGY TO OLD TORONTO

Bringing bold style to Toronto's oldest neighbourhood, Madison Group's Alias Condos will be the superb fit for the area, which is the home of innovative thinkers and cultural influencers

WRITTEN BY RICK MULLER

Toronto actually didn't begin on Yonge Street or Bay Street or on Lake Ontario, but farther to the east, in an area bounded by King and Queen streets, and Church and Parliament streets, called Old Town, and it is here in the heart of history that a striking new condominium residence, Alias Condos, by Madison Group, will soon rise.

Situated at Church and Richmond streets, the 45-storey, 546-suite residence will be distinctive on Toronto's growing skyline with its textured, geometric patterns of sparkling gold-coloured window frames on its facade and glazed black brick designed to cascade down the exterior, topped by the building's gold crown, bringing a landmark "fireworks" element to the night sky.

Madison Group, a leading real estate development company with properties in Toronto and New York City, has teamed up with Teeple Architects and Turner Fleischer Architects to create this new dimension of living in Toronto's oldest neighbourhood. With interiors designed by Studio Munge and landscapes by MBTW Group, the vibe of Alias is inspired by the freedom and glamour of rock and roll, which will be right at home in this neighbourhood of urban influencers.

"Old Town is not only one of Toronto's key intellectual centres, but also it's a destination for the city's most innovative thinkers and powerful cultural influencers," says Josh Zagdanski, vice president of High Rise at Madison Group. "We're honoured to be able to add our own mark on what it means to experience urban freedom. That's what we set out to accomplish with this blazing beacon of rock and roll attitude meeting edgy sophistication, and I'm confident we've accomplished it."

Residences will range from studios to three bedrooms in sizes of 360 to 1,400 square feet, starting from the mid-\$600s and all offered in sleek and contemporary styles with polished quartz, steel and porcelain accents.



In the double-height lobby residents and guests are greeted by a hand-blown Baccarat for Chrome Hearts crystal chandelier, illuminating the richly patterned marble floors



Select suites will have private terraces or balconies, and all residences will offer stunning city views. For the security of residents, 24-7 concierge services are offered, along with the convenience of automated parcel storage.

Alias Condos will feature 18,000 square feet of indoor and amenity spaces, including a fully equipped fitness centre, indoor and outdoor private play areas for children, party rooms complete with a pizza oven, co-working spaces with coffee bar and private meeting rooms and extensive outdoor lounge areas with landscaping and grill stations.

At the ground level, there will be 7,800 square feet of retail space with ample room for spill-out patios. The mixed-used development will also

provide an exciting new public park on the west side of the project, which will be centred around a distinctive art display, ensuring residents and the neighbourhood at large are socially engaged in community-building and activities.

Two hundred years ago, Old Town brought new life to a young town finding its way in the world. Today, Alias Condos will bring the oldest neighbourhood new life with a dynamic urban environment that embraces the history of its surroundings, while invigorating its bright and promising future.

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Ryan McErlain (General Manager)
Chris Crognale (Maple Chapel Location Manager)
Lui Vescio Jr. (Owner)
Lui Vescio Sr. (President)
Brad Reed (Woodbridge Chapel Location Manager)

FROM THE VESCIO FAMILY TO YOURS

Luigi Vescio, president of Vescio Funeral Homes, discusses the importance of family and understanding grief as a journey



Vescio Funeral Homes service is founded on personalization. The company even has an in-house graphic artist who can customize images and printouts in any way a client wants.

As Vescio Funeral Homes is owned and operated by family, there's a true sense of care and customization when it comes to producing something for every situation. This stands in contrast to the funeral homes today that are corporately owned, which can lead to a more structured, less personal way of dealing with specifics and finishing touches.

"We know what our community wants and needs," Vescio continues. "We create a package with no extras, surprises or hidden fees."

Having been in the funeral service for this long, the impact of the local community is clear, and Vescio makes a point of stating how grateful he is for their support. "We offer free funerals for young people, nuns and clergy," he says. "If somebody is in dire straits, we're here to help them."

Currently, Vescio Funeral Homes has three locations, in Woodbridge, Toronto and Maple. Though there's distance between them, the philosophy that makes Vescio's stand above the rest is constant. "The staff believe in our philosophy. They're our extended family. They take our secret to other locations and ensure we can recreate that family-owned-and-operated feeling."

Since its beginnings in 2002, Vescio Funeral Homes has prided itself on being family owned and operated. With Luigi Vescio, who's been a licensed funeral director since 1991 at the helm, his wife, Rose, handling the decor and renovations, his daughter and son, also funeral directors, offering innovative ideas that ensure excellent service in the modern age, that couldn't be more true. "We know and understand grieving

families and understand family values," Vescio shares. "Our motto is 'from our family to your family.'" He says how "grief is a journey," and builds that into his approach to work. "It's not something you can put a stopwatch to. You'll get highs and lows and they'll follow you three years down the road. It's a natural process."

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PHOTO BY CARLOS A. PINTO

For Dr. Jason Granzotto, ND and his Tri-Health Wellness Centre, the key to weight management comes with understanding your body

Naturopathic doctors Maria and Jason Granzotto, owners of Tri-Health Wellness Centre

Dr. Jason Granzotto, ND understands that, for a lot of people, weight loss can be a lifelong struggle. But in collaboration with his team of in-house chiropractors, acupuncturists, massage therapists, personal trainers and kinesiologists, he's helping patients turn those lifelong struggles into lifelong solutions.

"We have a lot of patients coming in and saying they've tried everything," Granzotto says. "We know that diet and exercise are two important things for weight loss, but there are other major factors not being recognized or evaluated. We focus on finding out what those parameters are."

For the Tri-Health Wellness Centre, this includes in-depth discussions with his team and leveraging specialist procedures like blood work to identify nutritional deficiency or thyroid malfunction. "We also do food sensitivity testing, which is major in finding out what foods you should be eating and avoiding," he continues. "When we have tangible, scientific results, we're one step closer to identifying a diet that helps you accomplish your goals."

Alongside the impressive science, the success of Granzotto's clinic is based on how personal his approach is and making sure there's an educational part to creating routine and understanding the body.

"Everyone needs to understand what a healthy, balanced diet is," he says. "They have to know appropriate portions and how to use food as medicine. Give yourself time to meal prep, consciously grocery shop. These are all facets of motivation. It's part of improving everyone's relationship with food, self-worth and their understanding of self-love."



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MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Ellen Contardi, president

April is Autism Month — and exciting new initiatives this year mean Waves of Change for Autism will be able to support even more families who are raising a child with autism

Waves of Changes for Autism has one mission: to make a difference in the lives of children in the community affected by autism. Founded in 2016, the organization brings hope and financial relief to Vaughan families with a child on the spectrum. "This help has positively influenced countless families - these are sons, daughters, friends and neighbours of our community," says Ellen Contardi, the president. "There is no greater joy."

Over the past six years, the organization has raised more than a million dollars. This kind of success rests completely with the partners, sponsors, supporters and their dedicated team. "This would not have been possible without this dedication and commitment," she adds.

The pandemic has been very challenging to say the least and Waves of Changes for Autism had to reinvision their traditional fundraising initiatives. But things are really looking up this year. Mark your calendars: a Ladies Event is booked for May 19th at Copper Creek Golf Club along with our Annual Gala at The Terrace Banquet Centre on September 22nd. Tickets are now available online for the Ladies Event (wavesofchanges.ca/events).

If Contardi had to share a message with the community, it would be a simple one, Waves of Changes for Autism remains wholeheartedly committed to making a positive difference in the lives of children in Vaughan affected by autism. The organization has funded over 317 eligible applications requesting funding for autism related therapies to iPads to help with communication.

"We have partnered with more than 60 corporate sponsors and thousands of like-minded individuals to bring joy and hope to those who need it most. For this we are extremely proud."



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Amato is a Peloton bike, tread and strength instructor, as well as a NASM-certified personal trainer, RRCA-certified run coach and a fitness model

MEET ONE OF PELOTON'S MOST LOVED INSTRUCTORS

FROM SALES AND TRADING TO SQUATS AND TRAINING

In conversation with Peloton instructor Olivia Amato on why she decided to pursue fitness over finance, what makes her feel her best and how to set yourself up for success

WRITTEN BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

When it comes to fitness, the popularity of some workouts come and go: one day, it's all about low-resistance workouts, and the next, it's all about high-intensity workouts. However, there's been one workout on a roll over the past few years — spinning.

When it comes to home spinning, Peloton is the first name that comes to mind. Instructors who teach Peloton's on-demand workout classes have become well-known fitness influencers, thanks to Peloton's platform. One of these trainers is Olivia Amato. She teaches Peloton classes across cycling, tread and strength.

Working on Wall Street right out of graduate school, Amato's idea of going out for drinks was strikingly different from that of her colleagues: after her 5 a.m. workout class, she'd get juices (green juices, that is) and be at her desk by 6:30 a.m. Amato wasn't foreign to the Wall Street lifestyle, but she realized her lifestyle just wasn't conducive to sitting at a trading desk all day. "I went into trading, but, in that area, you are glued to the computer, and I just couldn't sit still for the entire day; it's not in my DNA... One day, it just clicked that the workouts were the best part of my day, and I was thinking, *Why not just make this my life*, because I felt I could be up there doing what the instructor was doing. It took me a couple of months, but I ended up auditioning for two different studios while still working on Wall Street and I wound up getting both of them the day after I quit. It was just a gut feeling that I had to get out, even though there was never going to be the right time to do it." So, she said "Goodbye" to the corporate world and pursued fitness full time. Fast-forward [a couple of years], and she's one of Peloton's most loved instructors, plus a NASM-certified personal trainer (CPT), as well as a Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) running coach and a Wilhelmina model. We spoke with Amato to learn more about her journey from finance to fitness.

Read the Q & A with Olivia Amato at mycitylife.ca.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF OLIVIA AMATO

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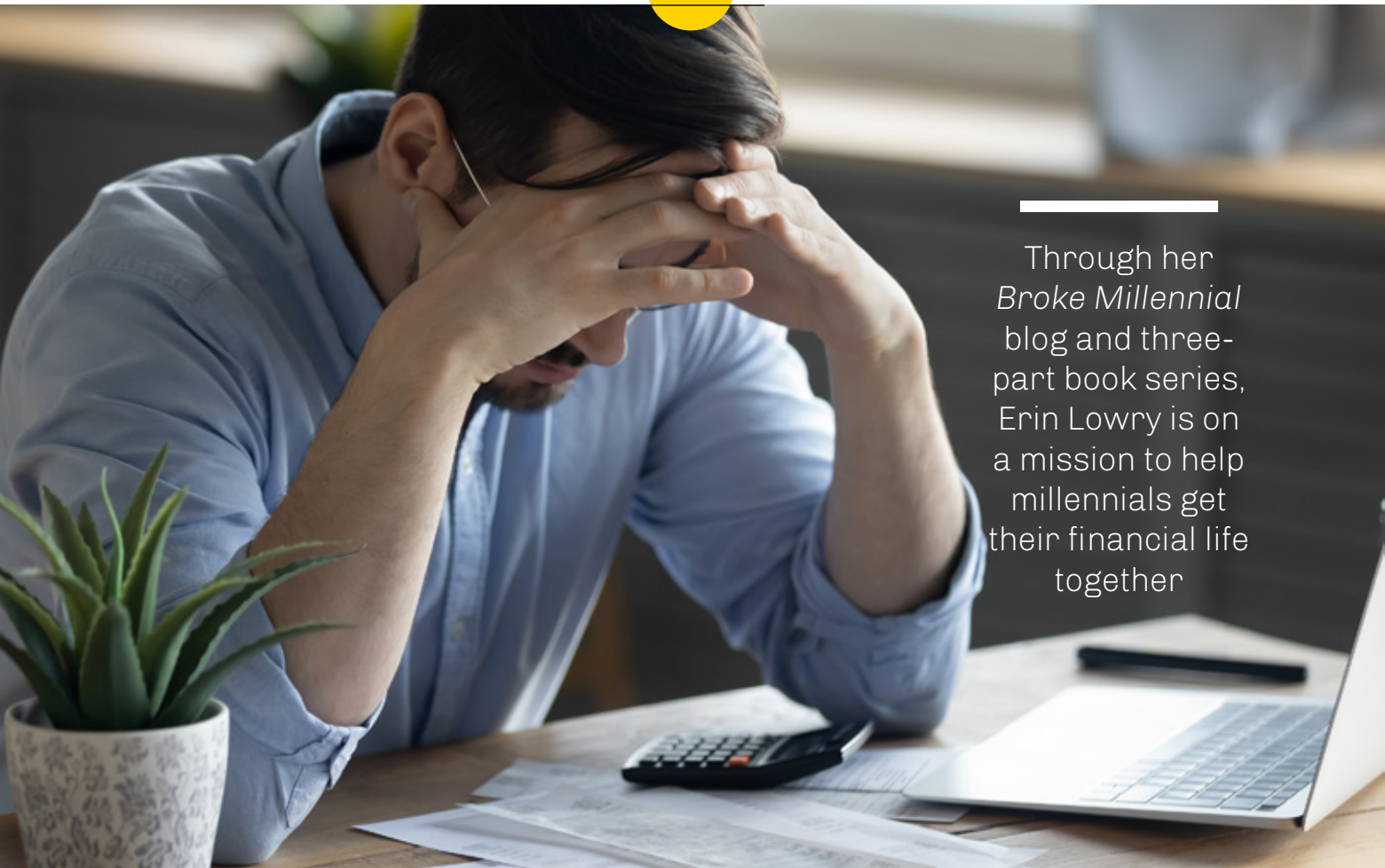
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Through her *Broke Millennial* blog and three-part book series, Erin Lowry is on a mission to help millennials get their financial life together



Erin Lowry is the founder of Broke Millennial, a site offering financial advice to millennials

ERIN LOWRY: I LIKE TO CALL MYSELF A FINANCIAL TRANSLATOR

WRITTEN BY JOSH WALKER | INTERVIEW BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

The art of flipping homes is a time-consuming venture and requires lots of TLC. Few people are able to bring out their true potential and gain a return on their investment.

Talking about money is tough. Writer, speaker and personal finance expert Erin Lowry knows that, but believes it doesn't have to be that way.

“My parents raised me in an environment where talking about money was normal, so I thought everybody was comfortable doing it,” she says. “I moved to New York City after college and it became quickly apparent that a lot of people found it awkward and uncomfortable.”

For Lowry, these tensions can come



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from a variety of places, including the way you were raised, social situations or your own lived experiences. “Student loans in the U.S. are a very common talking point,” she says, offering an example. “That then bleeds into other conversations like not making as much money as friends.

“It also goes into things like dating. Am I comfortable dating someone with debt and how do I have that conversation? How do I tell someone I’m financially responsible for my parents? Money impacts every single element of our lives and social dynamics, but we often never directly say that.”

Finding that dynamic “fascinating,” Lowry decided to do something about it and push herself to create a space where she could talk about money openly. The answer? *Broke Millennial*, a blog-turned-book that offers lessons that cut through the noise of personal finance and help people navigate their anxieties and uncertainties when it comes to cash.

While her advice is relevant for every generation, it’s a pivotal moment for millennials, who are at a time when weddings, engagements and seeing friends purchase properties is commonplace.

“So often the rhetoric is about cutting the lattes and avocado toast. That’s not the financial problem,” she shares. “It’s birthday dinners, bachelorette parties, wedding invites. Sure, little things can bleed you dry over time, but what’s going to really bleed you dry is not being able to set boundaries around your money, and not being able to say no.”

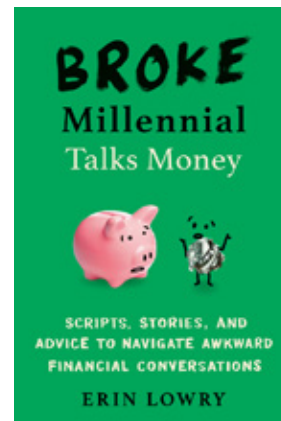
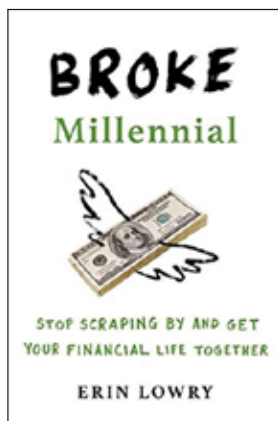
The *Broke Millennial* book series is split across three volumes covering different topics. Where the first offers a step-by-step guide to reworking your finances, the second book gives a from-the-ground-up look at investing. The third is more emotional, offering real scripts and stories to navigate tough money conversations with friends, family, colleagues and loved ones.

“I like to call myself a financial translator because I’ve never worked in banking or in an investment firm,” Lowry says. “I don’t have an economic or finance background, but I do like to ask questions and tell stories. So,

“

I don’t have an economic or finance background, but I do like to ask questions and tell stories

”



Lowry has authored three books. The first acts as a step-by-step guide to reworking finances. The second covers investing. The third tackles tough money conversations

the books aren’t written from the perspective of me being the expert, but rather talking to experienced, smart people and translating their slightly complicated jargon into something that’s easier to understand.”

The storytelling has paid off. As well as sharing stories of people who’ve reached out saying the books helped them feel confident with investing or understanding how to pay off debt, she’s also realized glaring issues with current financial advice. She compares it to the world of fitness, believing advice should be more empathetic and compassionate rather than chastising people for making different choices.

“Part of it is understanding your emotional relationship to money,” she says. “Are you buying things you don’t want or need because you get a dopamine rush and it’s creating a cycle

for you? If so, I wouldn’t say that’s bad, but I will say let’s analyze what emotions are triggering that cycle and what we can do to work on those emotions. It’s about bringing more psychology into the money conversation.”

Above all, Lowry wants people to recognize what they value, save, invest and spend in a way that aligns with those, and say no to everything else. “I think of success as living a life in accordance with what you value and spending lavishly on those. I don’t just mean money but also with time, brainpower and emotionally. I think for so many of us it’s hard to figure out what we actually value — and being open to the fact that those things change over time.”

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ANGÉLUS WINES LAUNCHES TEMPO D'ANGÉLUS FROM ITS NEW WINERY IN BORDEAUX

For more than a century AngéluWines has been crafting some of the world's finest wines from its renowned estate in Bordeaux and its new winery combines its Old World passion and expertise with innovative technology to continue its traditions

WRITTEN BY RICK MULLER

PHOTOS BY STUDIO DEEPIX



Located on a 3.3-hectare piece of land, Angélus Wine's new 4,400-square-metre building in Bordeaux contains 18 inverted, truncated, cone-shaped vats that are all 100 per cent gravity fed

Angélus Wines has been making wine in Bordeaux, France, for more than 120 years, becoming one of the world's great winemakers, good enough to turn the famously martini-loving James Bond into a lover of Bordeaux vintages. Its famous Château Angélus, at its historic Saint-Emilion Estate, has recently expanded by acquiring a new winery in Libourne, France.

This new cellar will be used for making the second wine produced by Château Angélus, Carillon d'Angélus, as well as its latest triumph, Tempo d'Angélus, which first appeared on SAQ shelves in Quebec last November, continuing the Angélus Wines tradition of passion, dedication and craftsmanship for fine wines dating back to 1899.

While grounded in family heritage and history, the success of Angélus Wines is perhaps best seen in the efficiency and innovation it brings to

its winemaking, and the new winery is a perfect example of how modern realities can be paired with Old World values in creating superior vintages.

The old winery of Carillon d'Angélus, located on the famous Saint-Emilion Estate, had become too cramped to accommodate new, more efficient and more innovative equipment. Its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site limited the possibilities of expansion because of strong architectural constraints. So the search began for a new property and space up to the exacting standards of Angélus Wines.

The search expanded to include neighbouring communes in Bordeaux and that search led to the selected grounds in Saint-Magne-de-Castillon. As a result of technical, environmental and esthetic considerations, the new winery is a modern take on an ancient craft enhanced by state-of-the-art equipment for continued excellence in winemaking.

The 4,400-square-metre building is located on a 3.3-hectare plot of land and is semi-submerged with a green roof. It was delivered during the 2019 harvest. Its contents denote the care and expertise Angélus Wines are famous for in that it contains a reception

area for grapes, with optical sorting, a vat room for vinification, and cellars specifically dedicated to fermentation and maturation. The buildings' 18 inverted, truncated, cone-shaped vats, hoist system and vat lift are all 100 per cent gravity fed.

Carillon d'Angélus, like the entire estate, is HVE3-certified, which is the highest level of "High Environmental Value," attesting to the best practices Angélus consistently uses in biodiversity and fertilization. What this type of investment delivers is an outstanding wine that constantly rates as amongst the best in the world, if not the most famous.

Angélus Wines' fame can best be seen by being featured in three James Bond films: *Casino Royale* in 2006, *Spectre* in 2015 and last year's latest Bond blockbuster, *No Time to Die*. Apparently, when Bond sits down for wine, it is for Angélus wine.

Tempo d'Angélus will continue this world-class tradition and the new Carillon d'Angélus winery allows for greater innovation in continuing its time-honoured techniques. For lovers of great wines, these are not to be shaken or stirred, but indeed savoured as some of the finest wines in the world.

www.angelus.com

Giacomo Gianniotti is best known for playing the role of Andrew DeLuca on *Grey's Anatomy*

The Italian-Canadian actor found acclaim for his role in *Grey's Anatomy*. Now, he's keen to try his hand at directing

GIACOMO GIANNIOTTI: FROM THE MOUTH OF THE WOLF

WRITTEN BY JOSH WALKER | INTERVIEW BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

When we speak with Giacomo Gianniotti he's calling from a hotel in the northeast of Italy. "We haven't got snow yet," he says, looking out over the historical city of Trieste. "But it's cold."

With an Italian father and Canadian mother, you could say Gianniotti is somewhat acclimatized to the cold, but it was their travels that served as an early inspiration. "I was very lucky," he says. "I was taken to Italy many times growing up. I was exposed to this other world and that was part of wanting more in life. I knew what was out there waiting for me. I knew there were other places begging to be visited that could enrich me in so many ways."



PHOTO COURTESY OF NOBIS

Another impact was Steven Spielberg. “He’s one of the greatest filmmakers of all time. There’s a reason he is where he is, and why he continues to make great films,” Gianniotti says. “I’ve only known my parents separated, and he was always making films about disrupted families, or families that were apart. Films can always be about what you want them to be. It just depends where you’re looking.”

In 2015, Gianniotti joined the hit TV show *Grey’s Anatomy* to play the character of Andrew DeLuca. It wasn’t his first role, but it was one he’d end up being in for seven seasons.

“When I joined *Grey’s Anatomy* it was a big, established show, so I didn’t have the luxury of starting something new and setting the tone,” he says. “As an actor your role becomes how do I fit into this thing, and what can I add? What’s missing or not dialled up enough that I can shine? That was something I was always fighting for.”

Clearly, the fight paid off, and he was made into a series regular and started having deeper conversations with the writers about how they could develop the character and make him more three-dimensional. “We got my character’s sister to come on to strengthen his backstory. His father came on the show and we eventually led to a diagnosis of bipolar in this character.”

Portraying a disorder like bipolar on screen comes with responsibility. Gianniotti explains how he embarked on a process of deep research, reading articles and books, but also seeing how bipolar disorder had been depicted in film and TV to date, to see if there was a different or more powerful way to represent it. “I think where a lot of pieces of art fail is that they’re not bringing anything new to the table.”

Alongside meaningful conversations about mental health on the show, Gianniotti ensures they have an impact in his personal life. He’s candid about it, sharing how his career is “extremely stressful. It’s crippling some days, and others it’s a cakewalk.”

Most importantly, he just wants the conversation to continue. “For me, it’s never enough,” he says. “It’ll never be enough because the statistics show us we’re still losing people every year and

“
**Films can always
be about what
you want them
to be. It just
depends where
you’re looking**
”

people are struggling. I don’t think it’s ever been better, but it’s great to keep the conversation going.” His role as DeLuca only elevated this. “A lot of the time the focus was on me and my character, but I think the most important thing we did was show a support system for DeLuca,” Gianniotti explains.

As a natural philanthropist, Gianniotti is a global ambassador for Canadian outerwear brand Nobis. Gianniotti was part of launching their #NOCOLDSHOULDER campaign, which is a global initiative that collects gently worn jackets and donates them to vulnerable communities. “There’s a big emphasis on the homeless community and shelters, but there are also people who are living paycheck to paycheck, where a jacket can be a huge expense,” he explains.

When asked what the most surprising moment from his years on *Grey’s Anatomy* was, he shares how it lit the fuse that pivoted him from acting to directing. Though he always had an interest in directing, reading books and watching others at work, he always considered it “a pipe dream.”

When he watched Kevin McKidd (who plays Owen Hunt on the show) directing an episode, “it opened a door in my mind that made me believe I could do that.” Seven years later, he was given the opportunity to direct an episode on his final season. “The man and artist going in was very different to



the man and artist I am now, having left the show.”

Currently, Gianniotti can next be seen in the upcoming Netflix Original limited series *From Scratch*, opposite Zoe Saldana. The series is based on the book of the same name by Tembi Locke and was selected for Reese Witherspoon’s Book Club and Hello Sunshine’s May 2019 book pick. After meeting the film’s director, Nzingha Stewart, he auditioned, armed with his favourite Italian saying, “in bocca al lupo,” (used to wish performers luck that translates to “into the wolf’s mouth”) and got the part.

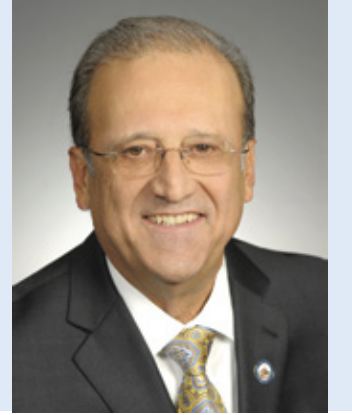
“It’s a beautiful story about a woman from Texas who moves to Florence and wants to study art,” he says. “Along the way she meets the love of her life. It’s both romantic and tragic, and there’s so much poetry in the beauty and the pain. I get to play her first love affair in Florence before she finds the love of her life.”

From all the experiences Gianniotti has, there’s one piece of advice he’d give his younger self. “It’s a marathon, not a sprint. Not necessarily take your time, but don’t be so concerned by having everything resolved by tomorrow, or by age 30. Take the pressure off. It takes time to build. Have patience and trust in the process.”

www.villacharities.com
@giacomo_gianniotti

DEPUTY MAYOR, LOCAL AND REGIONAL COUNCILLOR MARIO FERRI

It is with much pleasure that I continue to share with you a few of the highlights and achievements accomplished in the City of Vaughan and Region of York to date. I thank you for your understanding and support during this pandemic. Better days are ahead for residents and business. I continue to appreciate receiving your feedback on how to make our City and Region the greatest place to work, live and play. Share your concerns, ideas and comments with me anytime. I'd love to hear from you!



CITY OF VAUGHAN HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS



Vaughan residents can post a #SlowDownVaughan sign on their lawn, in their windows or on their social media profiles to encourage the public to slow down while driving in their neighbourhoods

DID YOU KNOW?

York University announced its intention to establish a new School of Medicine in Vaughan. This is a truly exciting prospect. Institutions like York University further position Vaughan as a global talent-driven city – not to mention many of us are part of York University's alumni.

The 2021 Order of Vaughan was bestowed to six deserving individuals who have given selflessly to causes far greater than themselves and who continue to make a positive difference in our society. Congratulations to these exceptional city-builders: Elvira Caria, Bryan Keshen, Iolanda De Simone Masci, Joseph Sgro, Dr. Karine Rashkovsky and Dr. Mark Terry.

VAUGHAN'S 2022 BUDGET AND 2023 TO 2026 CAPITAL PLAN WAS APPROVED



NORTH MAPLE REGIONAL PARK-PHASE 2

The first stage of Phase 2 construction will prepare the site for future park development. It will grade and service (water, storm, sanitary, electrical) the site and restore the ecologically significant pond and wetlands. This construction is underway and should be completed in late 2022. Additional amenities planned: <https://rb.gy/o0dxz2>

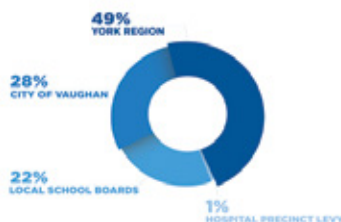
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Where do Property Taxes Go?

Average Residential Tax Bill



VAUGHAN	York Region	Ontario
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service Public works Transportation and snow clearing Waste management Vaughan Public Libraries Parks and sports field operations Infrastructure repair and replacement Recreation Services Maintenance of City facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> York Regional Police Maintenance of major roadways, sewers and bridges Traffic planning on regional roads Regional waste disposal Public health services Social assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education (elementary and secondary schools)
vaughan.ca	york.ca	ontario.ca

YORK REGION HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

YORK REGIONAL COUNCIL APPROVES 2022 BUDGET VALUED AT \$3.7 BILLION

York Regional Council has approved a **\$3.7-billion budget, the final in the four-year budget coinciding with the current term of Council. The budget includes a 1.96% net tax levy plus a 1% Rapid Transit Infrastructure levy** to help fund the Region's portion of the Yonge North Subway Extension (YNSE).

OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS, YORK REGION WILL INVEST MORE THAN \$3 BILLION TO KEEP OUR PEDESTRIANS, BUSES AND CARS MOVING EFFICIENTLY.



Repairs and improvements to the road network are underway. York Region works year-round to provide safe, efficient and reliable transportation. More information about road construction projects in each municipality can be found at york.ca/roadconstruction

CLEAN & SAFE DRINKING WATER

Having clean, safe and reliable water delivery is something most people take for granted. Whether it's a system of underground pipes or a water tower, York Regions water and wastewater projects are moving forward to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population with an investment of \$2.5 billion over the next 10 years. More information about water and wastewater constructions projects can be found at york.ca/waterconstruction

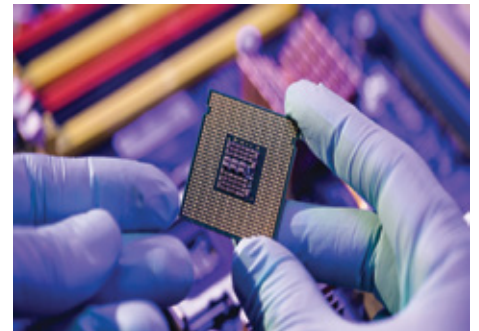
York Region is home to Canada's second-largest tech hub. Our investment into @ventureLABca's hardware lab will help create jobs, attract talent and position York Region as a global destination of choice for investors and entrepreneurs. #YRtech

YORK REGION IS HOME TO 1.2 MILLION RESIDENTS AND IS REQUIRED TO GROW YORK REGION IS EXPECTED TO GROW TO APPROXIMATELY 2.02 MILLION PEOPLE AND 990,000 JOBS BY 2051.



The Regional Official Plan review is underway.

Have your say and learn about this Municipal Comprehensive Review, and share how you want York Region to look and feel in the years to come. Visit York Region at york.ca/mcr or york.ca/haveyoursay



CITY OF VAUGHAN CONTINUES TO WORK WITH YORK REGION ON THE SENIORS STRATEGY

As the Chair of the City's Older Adult Task Force, we continue to work with York Region and City staff to address the promotion of healthy living for seniors. Ensuring that seniors continue to have access to local programs and creating a one-stop shop for older adults.

The strategy guides York Region's actions and defines its role in supporting seniors to ensure resources are directed where they are most needed. The strategy identifies partnerships and brings together key players to address issues related to the needs of seniors. The City is also working to achieve the designation as an Age-friendly city.



Dr. Liza is one of North America's leading body and posture experts and has extensive experience consulting with senior executives, celebrities, professional athletes and political leaders on health matters, injury treatment and prevention and stress reduction strategies

I've always thought outside of the box and work with each patient as a distinct individual and treat accordingly. One of my patients, who is an actress, describes the treatment as "detailed surgery with precision fingers — minus any actual cutting."

Q: Do you have a guiding philosophy when it comes to health and wellness?

A: I believe that wellness is holistic, and we can never look at anything as individual parts when everything in life is interconnected in some shape or form. This is especially true in our body; various parts work together cohesively for it to function properly.

The biggest connection is really between the mind and body, so, in order to achieve good health and well-being, both have to work well together and be in balance. How the two impact each other was my main draw to approaching health holistically.

If we take care of our mind and body, we function and feel better, which, to me, is a key indicator of health.

Q: What are three general tips you'd give to someone looking to improve their lifestyle?

1. Firstly, implement regular stressor detoxes into your self-care routines. There may be activities, people or things in your life that act as stressors, and you should try to eliminate as many of those as possible.

2. Movement is one of the best ways to take care of our minds and our bodies. It helps our bodies work better and releases trauma and tension. It's important to find a form of movement that you find enjoyable, like walking or dancing, so that you'll enjoy it and look forward to it every day.

3. If you want to improve your lifestyle, I think it's important to look at the things you spend the most time in. Your bed, clothes and shoes. Make sure they are comfortable and contributing to your wellness — they are worth investing in.

A BALANCING ACT

Advice from celebrity body and posture expert Dr. Liza Egboah on how to achieve the ultimate health by reaching balance and alignment in our mind and body with the help of osteopathy

WRITTEN BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

As Aristotle famously said, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Dr. Liza's approach to health reflects this notion and helps us understand that the key to wellness is to take a truly holistic approach: "We can never look at anything as individual parts when everything in life is interconnected in some shape or form. This is especially true in our body; various parts work together cohesively for it to function properly."

Q: What is osteopathy?

A: Osteopathy is a holistic form of healthcare that aims to restore balance and alignment in the body to improve function. This is done primarily through

hands-on manipulation of muscles, fascia, joints, nerves and viscera.

Q: What is it about your treatments that make A-list stars come to you? What makes you stand out from the rest of the doctors in your field?

A: When it comes to work that is hands-on, you truly do have to have a significant level of expertise and a gift for healing. I, fortunately, have both the expertise and gift.

My innovative treatments are particularly attractive to celebrities because not only do they help you feel better physically and mentally, they also help you look better. As an actor, the way you feel, move and look are very important, so treatments that address all three are a bonus.

Q: What is one exercise everyone should be doing every day?

A: Walking. It's simple but essential to our well-being. And, going beyond that, if you can do just one yoga pose daily, it should be the dancer's pose. It addresses all the areas that are affected by too much time sitting.

Q: As a society, we've seen so many advancements in science and technology designed to make us healthier, yet we are still suffering. Do you believe we've generally become healthier?

A: While there have been many advancements designed to make us healthier, the majority of advancements in science and technology have actually had the opposite effect. Our modern-day lifestyle revolves around convenience, the use of devices, sitting and minimal movement, which have made us unhealthier than we have ever been.

Q: What's the definition of health to you?

A: Health, to me, is reaching balance and alignment in our mind and body. In essence, I feel like health is actually happiness.

Q: What's the definition of happiness to you?

A: When I think of happiness, I, again, go back to balance — contentment in ourselves and the world around us. A balance of what we can do for ourselves and what we can do for others is where I feel true happiness comes from.

www.drlizaegbogah.com

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FREEDOMS COLLIDE. FREEDOMS DIVIDE

How did a grassroots movement, whose original intent was to gather at cities and towns along the 9,000-kilometre border between Canada and the United States in support of unvaccinated cross-border truckers, morph into the hijacked version of what has become popularly known as the “Freedom Convoy”?

Based on their beliefs and value systems, these truckers, who represent about 10 per cent of the 120,000 cross-border truckers who go back and forth between Canada and the United States on a regular basis, have chosen not to get the COVID-19 vaccinations. It is a decision that ultimately mandated these workers out of a job after the federal government’s Dec. 8, 2021, injunction that all cross-border truck drivers needed to be fully vaccinated.

“The December 8 federal vaccination mandate for cross-border truckers was a slap in the face,” states David Henry, a cross-border driver who has had his commercial licence for 34 years and drives a 2022 Peterbilt 579 with a 53-foot dry van. “There has been more chaos in the last two years than I’ve seen in the previous 32. We have been out here working as hard as we can to keep things moving. We haven’t had the luxury of working from home like government people. So, for [Canadian Prime Minister Justin] Trudeau to say there is now going to be a mandate is absolutely ridiculous. Ninety per cent of truckers are vaccinated, so why

HAS OUR COUNTRY UNWITTINGLY LOST ITS REPUTATION AS CANADA THE GOOD, A POPULATION OF AMIABLE CITIZENS WHO ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR CHAMPIONSHIP OF HUMAN RIGHTS, THEIR CIVILITY, POLITE DEPARTMENT AND APOLOGIST BEHAVIOURS?

WRITTEN BY CECE M. SCOTT

put a mandate on essential workers at this point?”

And so, in early January 2022, when the protests in support of unvaccinated cross-border truckers began, it was just that — a protest against government-mandated vaccines.

However, that message of intent quickly changed.

“Our position has always been that we are in favour of vaccines; we encourage our members and their drivers to get vaccinated. We believe in the science; however, we do not believe in mandating essential workers out of a job when we are already experiencing supply-chain shortages,” states Mike Millan, president of the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, a membership-

based association that represents roughly 260 companies that when combined have more than 20,000 drivers. For this reason, the association is not in favour of the border vaccine mandate. “Nevertheless, a number of groups got involved that were not really affiliated with the trucking industry; they decided to latch on to the movement and turn it into their own thing. The messaging then started to change drastically, and the original intent got kind of lost.”

Not so, according to Brigitte Belton, a Windsor, Ont.-based cross-border trucker who drives for a private American company 289 days a year.

“All mandates have to go; it is about freedom and nothing else. The message has always been the same. We want our freedoms back; we want everything back to pre-COVID days. We have never changed the narrative. It has always been the same — it will always remain the same,” Belton says.

In order to appreciate just how important the cross-border trucking industry is to Canada’s overall trade relations and gross domestic product (GDP), and, as such, why it is so important to keep international trucks moving, one has only to consider the following facts. The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) states that an estimated 90 per cent of all consumer products and foodstuffs are shipped, solely or in part, by truck. And, that the GDP generated by the for-hire trucking industry alone is three times that of rail, sea and air combined.¹



Top: Jan. 29: Protestors stand on Parliament Hill with clear concerns for Canada's current state. The inverted flag is symbolic of Canada having fallen and is in need of help

Below: Feb. 2: Trucks line up with no end in sight, prepared to remain in Ottawa for as long as it takes to be heard by government officials





THIS IS NOT JUST A MANDATE FOR TRUCKERS; IT IS ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, INCLUDING OUR FREEDOMS BEING TAKEN AWAY”

— Kristen Nagle

On Feb. 8, 2022, a group of high-profile trade associations issued a statement on the CTA website detailing the effects the blockades were having on trade corridors and the Canada–United States border entry points. The declaration, which was signed by 16 associations, stated that: “Canada’s economy is being threatened as thousands of trucks and millions of dollars in cross-border trade that typically go through these entry points every day is being disrupted. Our borders are essential trade arteries that feed businesses and Canadians with essential goods, food, medicine, and critical industrial components that fuel our economy and support our critical infrastructure.”

With her bird’s-eye, “boots-on-the-ground” positioning shortly after the Freedom Convoy rolled into Ottawa, Belton says it is “incredible to be standing up on the hill with thousands of people who don’t drive trucks, but agree with our message that all mandates must go, all freedoms must be restored and that the government needs to get off its butt and talk to us. The more they ignore us, the worse it is going to look on the world stage for them.”

In fact, protests in the United States, France, Australia and New Zealand

are currently mirroring those that are happening here in Canada.

Unable to wear a mask for medical reasons during the pandemic, Belton has been approached by people who have told her they hoped she got sick and died of COVID-19.

“People have become extremely mean and rude,” she says.

And because she has not been vaccinated, Belton cannot get a cross-border trucking job and is ultimately worried she will lose her accommodations and the bank will foreclose on her truck, which is her livelihood.

“No one will hire me because I haven’t had a chemical shot up my arm from some type of pharmaceutical company; I think that is unfair,” Belton says. “I firmly believe that if this shot is so good, they should be able to sell it on its own benefits and not have to coerce us into taking it.”

Stating that she was being hassled unduly and constantly by the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), Belton was emotionally affected to the point that she did not want to live anymore. In fact, between mid-November 2021 and mid-January 2022, she lost 22 pounds because of the psychological damage of the harassment.

“I was literally paralyzed by the CBSA; I was threatened more than I was not. I feel like after having spent 289 days in the United States, I have come back to an open-air jail. Without these people at the convoy, I promise you that I would not be here.”

Kristen Nagle, a former nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at the London Health Sciences Centre in London, Ont., before she was terminated for speaking out against the COVID-19 vaccines, has been quite vocal about the jab since it was first initiated in December 2020.

“I led a freedom rally in my hometown of London, which put me under investigation with the College of Nurses of Ontario in November 2020, at which time I was suspended,” Nagle says.

After connecting with a Toronto nurse who was also vocal about the COVID-19 vaccine, the two then joined forces with four other nurses to speak out and “spread awareness and truth.”

“We spoke at the Supreme Court’s Health and Freedom Stage on January 6, 2021, in Washington, D.C., which just happened to be the same day that the riot at the Capitol Building was happening. When we flew home, we were labelled ‘domestic terrorists’ because we were apparently in Washington to be part of the riot. Ultimately, we were internationally defamed by the media. And that is what officially got us terminated from our jobs,” says Nagle.

Along with five other nurses, Nagle founded Canadian Frontline Nurses, www.canadianfrontlinenurses.ca, an organization whose vision is to “restore our freedoms and rights as Canadian citizens and reinstate the four ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice within nursing.”

Describing her position as being one that has “a lot of skin in the game,” Nagle says she does her utmost to inspire people to speak out and stand up against oppression.

“When we heard that the Freedom Convoy was starting, we knew it was absolutely something we needed to be a part of, because it represented everything we have been trying to do for the last



Jan. 30: Protestors gather beside landmark "F Trudeau" truck/trailer, voicing their displeasure with government mandates

two years," Nagle says. "It was incredible to see Canadians come together, find their voices and support one another with so much love. I came [to Ottawa] with the south convoy from London, and we have been here ever since, trying to show what is really happening here."

Nagle, who has two sons, aged six years and three years, does not believe there has been enough data or studies around the recent COVID-19 vaccines, and she states it is the first time that mRNA — the active ingredient in this newest vaccine — has been used.

"I don't think there has been enough data or studies done around it; it is still in the experimental trial stages. By definition, it is not actually a vaccine — it is experimental biological gene therapy — and there is just not enough evidence to support its need. And, it has not been proven to be effective. I think it is the perfect time — when we are questioning this injection — to really look at all the other vaccines as well."

So, what does day-to-day protest living look like on the streets of Canada's capital city?

Nagle, who has been part of the Freedom Convoy's "boots-on-the-ground movement" in Ottawa since Day 1, has been one of a group of people

who has partnered up with fellow protestor Michelle Kloet to organize 30-minute time slots for truckers and protestors to come in, shower and get cleaned up in Nagle's room at the Sheraton Hotel. They are also given gift cards and cash, and they have access to the laundry service Kloet has organized.

There are bouncy castles for the kids on the weekends, along with street performers and musicians, to keep the spirit and energy alive.

With unvaccinated cross-border truckers out of a job, and untold numbers protesting in the streets of Ottawa during the week, where is the money coming from to fund all of these endeavours?

Trailers full of food are being brought in on a consistent basis, Nagle says, with ordinary citizens either dropping off food donations directly to the protestors or at truck stops along the way. Fulger Transport donated 1,500 pizzas initially, then went on to bring in another couple of thousand.

One of the Freedom Convoy's primary fundraisers via the GoFundMe platform is Tamara Lich, an original member of the Alberta-based Maverick Party (she resigned from the party the week of Feb. 8, 2022). She is purportedly

the convoy's president.

After raising more than \$10 million in donations, GoFundMe released a statement on Feb. 4, 2022, stating the Freedom Convoy 2022 fundraiser violates its terms of service and has been removed from the platform.

"We now have evidence from law enforcement that the previously peaceful demonstration has become an occupation, with police reports of violence and other unlawful activity," the statement reads.

On Feb. 7, 2022, the crowdfunding platform announced all donations would be refunded within seven to 10 business days.

GiveSendGo, a Christian crowdfunding platform, was also taking donations for the Freedom Convoy, but those funds were likewise suspended on Feb. 10, 2022.

A Leger/The Canadian Press survey of 1,546 Canadians, which was conducted between Feb. 4 and 6, 2022, and was in collaboration with the Association for Canadian Studies and published by The Canadian Press, asked respondents the following question: "Overall, do you support the message the trucker convoy (also known as the Freedom Convoy) protests are



I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT IF THIS SHOT IS SO GOOD, THEY COULD SELL IT ON ITS OWN BENEFITS AND **NOT HAVE TO COERCE US INTO TAKING IT**”

— Brigitte Belton

conveying of no vaccine mandates and less public health measures, or do you oppose the message?”

Thirty-two per cent stated they supported it, while 62 per cent were opposed.

“There was support when the protestors were opposing the vaccine mandate and the proposed federal vaccine mandate. Then this other thing began, and we started to hear people associated with the convoy calling themselves organizers, doing interviews, using hate language and comparing it to the Holocaust,” Millan says. “People who had nothing to do with the trucking industry became the spokespeople. A lot were extremists in their views, and it started to concern a lot of people in the industry, which ultimately damaged the trucking industry in some people’s eyes.”

The positioning is a confusing one, which has evolved from a status quo situation that was already in place for truckers — who are considered to be essential workers — into a clarion call that screams infractions are being committed on both human rights and freedoms.

And it is here that the inherent rights and the lifeblood elements of freedom become divided.

“The people organizing the convoy had little connection to the trucking industry, but they seized on the frustration some truckers felt around the border vaccination mandate that was implemented in Canada on January 15, 2022,” states James Menzies, editor of *Today’s Trucking* and *trucknews.com*.

“Then a week later, the United

States put their own mandate in place. Organizers who were bent on creating a movement to end all mandates seized on the truckers’ frustrations knowing that they are good allies to have because they’ve got big, loud, noisy machines that can be very disruptive,” Menzies says. “So, when they started to organize the convoy from the west to Ottawa, the initial talk centred on the mandated trucker vaccines at the border. But by the time they arrived in Ottawa, that narrative had broadened to include all mandates, including provincial ones. Truckers do have a lot of very legitimate concerns — access to safe parking, road conditions, poor training standards — concerns that are not even a part of this discussion. My opinion is that this is not really a trucker-focused movement in the first place, but fringe groups that have latched on to the frustrations of truckers, which has taken us to where we are today. These fringes of freedom elements, basically extremists, became embroiled in racial messages and violence, and went so far as to call for a memorandum of understanding that the protestors were going to present to the Governor General and the Senate, asking them to dissolve government and get the prime minister to step down. With extreme measures like these, it is no longer a singular message, and it becomes hard for people to understand the focus.”

And while a great deal of negativity has been reported in the media around some of the heinous acts that have taken place at Ottawa’s Freedom Convoy — such as the incident where “protestors” from the convoy harassed

staff and volunteers, and demanded food from the Shepherds of Good Hope homeless shelter — truckers like Belton and Henry exemplify the causes of respect and human decency they insist they represent.

“Ottawa citizens are literally coming up to our trucks and thanking us for being there; for cleaning the streets [every day] better than Ottawa has ever done; thanking us because the crime rate is down; thanking us for feeding the homeless, because Ottawa has shut down all of their resources,” Belton says. “We’re providing single mothers and children resources and food.”

Henry agrees that in-attendance truckers are doing their part to regulate and keep things peaceful at the Ottawa protest.

“A certain group of people hung the Canadian flag upside down on Terry Fox’s statue,” he says. “Some of the truckers cleaned the statue, bought roses for Terry Fox’s tomb and stood guard. There are good people at the protests. Unfortunately, a lot of bad images have taken over the conversation.”

While Menzies is worried that the long-standing camaraderie between truck drivers who are used to looking out for one another has been damaged throughout all of this — will that unity ever exist again — Henry states that truckers are closer than ever, because they’ve been doing what they’ve always been doing.

“We are out here in crazy conditions and we are going for it. In my opinion, I think there is more camaraderie between those of us who continue to work than those of us who are at the



Top: Jan. 30: On Day 3 of the protests, demonstrators gather in front of Parliament Hill, where Pastor Henry Hildebrand (outside of the frame) delivers words of encouragement to the crowds, who are cheering and whistling

Centre left: A trucker tugs on his loud air horn in a show of support for ongoing protests

Below right: A Canadian from P.E.I. is pinned to the ground, arrested for undisclosed reasons on Feb. 17

Below left: Quebec police stand in formation holding batons ready to clear demonstrators from Ottawa streets by force





On Feb. 12, thousands of protesters gather at Wellington and Metcalfe streets, outside the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. Voicing their opinions and chanting "Freedom," they sang Canada's national anthem

protests. There are many of us who are proud of what we are doing — that we are keeping the economy moving, even with all of the crap that is being thrown at us with the border blockades and so forth. It used to be that back in the 1970s, people looked up to truckers. People appreciated having a trucker help them. I have been on this mission since the early 2000s to try and bring these types of feelings back into the industry," says Henry.

Luciano Cherubino, a family and events photographer who was at loose ends in his career due to the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, also decided to head down to Ottawa with his camera to document, through photographs, the unfolding of what would become an extraordinary and poignant moment in recent Canadian history.

Travelling to Ottawa on Jan. 27, 2022, where he stayed for three weeks in a hotel that was two blocks from Parliament Hill, Cherubino, who describes himself as a supporter of the cause (and is completely vaccinated against COVID-19), documented some of the first trucks rolling in as part of the Freedom Convoy.

"The protest had the air of a festival — a carnival — and the initial 21 days were joyful, peaceful and full of love," he says. "There were food tents set up everywhere, with everything from coffee to hot chocolate, pancakes to hamburgers, all available for free. If you wanted to make a donation, you could, but there was no pressure. It was the most giant display of humanity I have ever seen in my life."

Interestingly, Cherubino, who decided to shoot most of his images in black and white, did so with a specific intent in mind.

"When the movement first started, [Prime Minister] Trudeau referred to the people gathered as being a 'fringe minority,' with unacceptable views. Then the words 'white supremacist' started floating around, as if there were a bunch of racists on their way to Ottawa," he says. "So, I specifically went [to] black-and-white [film] to show this movement had no colour — it had nothing to do with colour. It was about the rights and freedoms of Canadians."

The overriding question in everyone's minds at the time, especially for the hunkered-down citizens of

Ottawa, was, "When and how will this blockade end?"

As the convoy entered its third week of occupation, strong and visible action began.

On Feb. 6, 2022, Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson declared a state of emergency for the city due to ongoing demonstrations. On Feb. 11, 2022, Ontario Premier Doug Ford also declared a state of emergency due to the trucker blockades.

A stalemate on the Ambassador Bridge, which connects Detroit with Windsor and which had been under blockade siege for six days, was cleared on Feb. 13, 2022, with two dozen people arrested and several vehicles seized.

The next day, Prime Minister Trudeau instituted the never-before-used *Emergencies Act*, so his government could move forward with enhanced empowerment to deal with and manage the anti-vaccine protests monopolizing Canada, as demonstrators continued to occupy the streets around Parliament Hill.

"This is about keeping Canadians safe, protecting people's jobs and restoring confidence in our institutions," Prime Minister Trudeau said in a Valentine's Day national address.



In what was probably not a surprise to many who were frustrated with what they considered an ineffective response to the ostensible crisis on Ottawa's downtown streets, Ottawa Police Service Chief Peter Sloyly resigned on Feb. 15, and interim Police Chief Steve Bell took charge, with a strategic and decidedly forceful approach.

By Thursday of the third and last week of the convoy, Ottawa Police, along with reinforcement officers from Toronto, Quebec, Vancouver, the RCMP and the OPP, had their boots on the ground, with several dressed in riot gear and armed with batons and rifles. They entered the fray and began securing the perimeter around Ottawa's downtown streets. And as the occupation went into its fourth weekend, mounted Toronto police officers were called in to disperse the crowds and push back the protestors. Reports vary on exactly what happened, but it is alleged that a woman was hurt in an altercation with the mounted police and a man was trampled. The Special Investigations Unit is looking into the incidents and assessing the appropriateness of the Anti-Riot Weapon ENfields (ARWEN) that were discharged by Vancouver police.

Arrests of protestors and the convoy organizers, including Tamara Lich and Chris Barber, followed. The latter were charged with counselling to commit mischief. Barber was released on bail the next day; however, Lich was denied bail early in the subsequent week because Ontario Court Justice Julie Bourgeois ruled that she was disingenuous in her responses to the court.

"I cannot be reassured that if I release you into the community that you will not reoffend," Bourgeois stated. "Your detention is necessary for the protection and safety of the public."

In a Twitter post on Feb. 19, 2022, @OttawaPolice stated that "Protesters were assaulting officers with weapons warranting the deployment of mid-range impact weapons (ARWEN) to stop the violent actions of the protesters."

On Feb. 22, a Torstar investigation discovered — from a leaked Freedom Convoy donors' list — that at least a dozen officers had given money in support of the cause. And, "of the nearly 100,000 people who donated to the protest via the crowdfunding website GiveSendGo, Torstar reporters identified 15 police officers who as of 2020 were on the payroll of the province's three of largest police forces: Ontario Provincial Police, Toronto Police Service and Ottawa Police Service."²

While these donations were reportedly small — anywhere from \$20 to \$200 — it is the fact that these donations were received after the protest was officially declared both illegal and unlawful that concerns started to mount.

Nagle, who was at the Freedom Convoy to the tumultuous ending on Feb. 22, 2022, describes the situation as traumatizing.

"I am still in shock; I haven't found the words yet to describe what happened," she says. "It was in our heads that it could happen, but you don't really believe it is going to until it actually does."

While Cherubino does not believe police officers had any intent to harm anyone in their execution of pushing back the crowds on the last weekend of the occupation, he says there was a definite shift in the crowd's mood when the *Emergencies Act* was invoked.

"People were starting to feel defeated,

angry and upset that Canada had come to that point where troops were sent in to remove them and also that Canada was imposing these kinds of actions on their own unarmed citizens," he says. "I think it was the principle of 'No, we live in Canada and we want to have our voices heard.' I went from being so happy and so proud in those first few weeks, to being frightened because of what the police may do."

Did the Freedom Convoy achieve what Nagle hoped it would?

"In the sense that we wanted to see all mandates dropped, no, it didn't," Nagle says. "But, in the sense of it uniting Canada and awakening the world, yes, it did. This is not just a mandate for truckers; it is about everything that has taken place in the last two years, including our freedoms being taken away. This isn't over; this was just a start. We knew it was going to be hard and now we know what it looks like for us all to come together as Canadians and the world. The world is still watching — the world is in support. It is important not to feel defeated; it was still a victory. If we can continue to stand up together, we are going to see this through."

On the evening of Feb. 23, 2022, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau revoked the 10-day *Emergencies Act*.

In an Ottawa city council meeting the same day, city manager Steve Kanellakos estimated the cost incurred by the Freedom Convoy occupation would well exceed \$30 million.

To date, there have been 196 arrests, with a total of 389 charges made against 103 people. Seventy vehicles were also towed.

As Canadians reflect on what has transpired since the Freedom Convoy rolled into Ottawa on Jan. 28, 2022, it's hard to blame those who wonder: "O Canada — who exactly is standing on guard for thee?"

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Philip Lago and Mystique Mattai are creators of the recipe and food site Chef Sous Chef



THE COUPLE THAT COOKED THEIR WAY TO A BOOK DEAL

Following the release of their *Eat With Us* cookbook, Philip Lago and Mystique Mattai discuss working together, junk food and taking the chore out of cooking

WRITTEN BY JOSH WALKER | INTERVIEW BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

PHOTO BY AUGUST MEDIA

If there's a couple who add proof to the saying "opposites attract," it's Philip Lago and Mystique Mattai. As creators of recipe and food site Chef Sous Chef, authors of the *Eat With Us* cookbook and co-hosts of their *Dining In* web series on Food Network Canada there's no doubt their chemistry works well, but their journeys to food were different.

Where Lago grew up in a large family with close ties to the food and restaurant industry, Mattai had a smaller family, overseeing the cooking rather than being the main chef. Where Lago discovered his passion for food while studying at a summer course in Italy, frequenting markets for fresh ingredients to make simple, delicious and cheap meals, Mattai's background is in art and art history.

But it's these differences that make it work so well. Where Lago takes care of the cooking, drawing on his experience working in restaurants and travelling, Mattai takes the role of food stylist, funnelling her creativity and artistic eye into presenting the dishes in the smartest, most beautiful way possible. It's a constant process of collaboration and teaching the other something new, but it results in memorable food.

"If we were to take a risotto, it's a thought process from two different angles," Mattai explains. "Phil is thinking about the cooking process, what flavour pairings make it taste good, but when I look at risotto I think of beige rice, flat on a plate. How am I going to showcase it? So, it works from there. If we're doing a mushroom risotto, I'll say to leave some for the top or to have a garnish. I'm looking for different elements to tell the story."

Their book, *Eat With Us*, combines their processes and presents them in a way that encourages the reader to take a slower, more mindful approach to cooking. Split into sections that cover simple weekday meals, comfort food for the soul and lavish means for special occasions, its variety speaks to their individual takes.

The more you speak with Lago and Mattai about the book, the more you see each dish is rooted in story, inspired by their lived experiences. Mattai's favourite from the book is carbonara.



Eat With Us is a cookbook that encourages readers to take a slower, more mindful approach to cooking

"It's a simple, all-season dish," she shares. "I went to Italy with my mum for my 30th birthday. The first restaurant we went to in Rome didn't have cacio e pepe, but it had carbonara." It ended up becoming one of her favourites to the point that, when she returned home, Lago developed a recipe to hit the same spot.

For Lago, a standout recipe from the book is beans on toast. "It's a super easy, delicious meal that reminds me of my nonno because he didn't waste anything. Simplicity was always key. It's beans, chicken stock and parm on toast. It's a very delicious and humble dish."

Above all, though, the couple want the book to stand on its authenticity. "We're very much inviting you into our kitchen," Lago says. "It's an ode to how we eat and the recipes we cook." Mattai adds. "We photograph it and then we eat it. There's no filler. We're not propping things up. If we're cooking it, shooting it and sharing it, it's a good dish we're proud to share with you."

While a cookbook covering so many occasions and culinary moods could be seen as timeliness and a resource to look back on for years to come, both Lago and Mattai believe it comes at an integral moment for people, particularly millennials.

"For a lot of people I know, cooking is a chore," Mattai says. "When you compare that to how easy it is to order on Uber Eats, even pre-pandemic, millennials aren't in the kitchen. What

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We photograph it
and then we eat it.
There's no filler
”

we tried to do was remove that chore element and make it an experience. Get a glass of wine, light a candle and have some flowers on the table. Treat yourself and enjoy."

Lago agrees, noting the physical and mental benefits that come with cooking your own food. He lives by American author and journalist Michael Pollan's mantra that you can eat all the junk food you want as long as you cook it yourself.

"You know what's going in. You're using real ingredients," Lago shares. "Cooking requires you to be completely present. We grew our relationship through cooking, so it's an important time to unwind, catch up with each other on the day and connect."

With so much work going into the creation of a book, it's hard for the couple to think of what's next. For context, they spent a year developing and choosing its recipes and then another nine months preparing and shooting everything.

For now, it's about enjoying the process and the time spent with their daughter. "Sometimes I look at working a nine to five and the stress that comes with that," Mattai says. "I'm grateful we get to spend so much time with Lennox. I want her to be proud we spent time with her. She's a very big part of our day."

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Just because a salad looks super fancy doesn't mean it requires all day to prepare. Case in point: our Roasted Beet, Fennel and Citrus Salad. This salad is crunchy and refreshing, so simple to make, and as visually beautiful as it is delicious. The fennel is dressed in a citrus vinaigrette, which complements its subtle licorice flavour. A creamy blue cheese is sprinkled on top and a dusting of crushed walnuts brings a second dimension of crunch to this elegant dish.



ROASTED BEET, FENNEL AND CITRUS SALAD WITH BLUE CHEESE AND WALNUTS

Serves 4 | Total Time: 45 minutes

ROASTED BEETS

3 medium beets, peeled and cut into ½-inch wedges
1 tbsp olive oil
Salt and pepper

ORANGE VINAIGRETTE

3 tbsp orange juice
2 tsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp Dijon mustard
Pinch salt
2 tbsp olive oil
Pepper

SALAD

1 fennel bulb, quartered and thinly sliced lengthwise
2 clementines, peeled and sliced crosswise
½ cup chopped walnuts
½ cup crumbled blue cheese
Fennel fronds, for serving

ROAST THE BEETS: Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the beets into a medium bowl and toss with olive oil, salt and pepper. Arrange in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet and roast for 25 to 30 minutes, turning once or twice, until fork-tender. Set aside to cool for 10 minutes.

MAKE THE ORANGE VINAIGRETTE: Meanwhile, add orange juice, vinegar, Dijon and salt to a salad bowl and whisk until combined. While continuously whisking, slowly drizzle olive oil into the bowl until the dressing is bright orange and emulsified. Season with pepper to taste.

DRESS THE SALAD: Add the fennel to the salad bowl and gently toss with the dressing until the fennel is evenly coated. Place in the fridge until the beets have cooled.

FINISH THE SALAD: Add the beets and clementine slices to the fennel and toss the salad to redistribute the dressing. Top with walnuts and blue cheese and tear fennel fronds overtop for garnish.

ELEVATE: Alternatively, this salad deserves to be shown off in all its beauty. Sprinkle the fennel fronds on individual salad plates. Alternate layering the fennel and clementine slices then tuck the beets in and around the salad. Drizzle any leftover dressing from the bowl overtop and sprinkle with the walnuts and blue cheese.

Excerpted from *Eat With Us: Mindful Cooking to Make Every Meal an Experience* by Philip Lago and Mystique Mattai. Copyright © 2021 Philip Lago and Mystique Mattai. Photography by Mystique Mattai. Published by Appetite by Random House®, a division of Penguin Random House Canada Limited. Reproduced by arrangement with the publisher. All rights reserved.

A peek into the Maarhuis's French apartment, which features authentic Parisian charm — large windows that open onto wrought-iron balconies, chevron wood floors, marble fireplaces and intricate moulding details

BONJOUR! WELCOME TO YOUR DREAM LIFE!

We all have dreams — but most of us aren't great on the let's-make-it-happen part. Meet Julie and Tim Maarhuis, a couple who actually did it. They bought an apartment... wait for it... in Paris! The plan is to live there for part of the year. And they couldn't be happier

WRITTEN BY DONNA PARIS
INTERVIEW BY ESTELLE ZENTIL

Picture this: a Vancouver couple have been running a veterinary clinic for 15 years, taking care of people's beloved pets. They do have a passion for travel, though... especially Europe. When they went for a month-long vacation with their kids almost 10 years ago, they fell in love...

especially with Paris. "It really resonated for both of us... we love the city, we love the culture — it's romantic," says Julie. "We love the food," laughs Tim. And so, whenever they went on a trip, they'd find a way to fit in the City of Light, even if it was just for a short time. "One time, we went for 24 hours!" she says.

This is how a dream happens. At a dinner party, Julie's friend asked, "What would you do if you could do anything you wanted?" Julie didn't hesitate, saying she would live in Paris for part of the year, every year. "It just came out," she says. And Tim was all in, too. "We work a lot as a team, and we're really good at



On their first visit to Paris, in 2013, Julie and Tim Maarhuis fell in love with the city and have returned there several times over the years until finally deciding to purchase their very own Parisian apartment of their dreams

helping each other realize our dreams,” she adds. They started thinking about renting out their property in British Columbia on Airbnb, and, well, they bought an apartment in Paris. “It all fell into place,” says Julie. “So, it was partly pushing through to realize your dreams, but it was also kind of meant to be.” Serendipitously, they had already sold their business and were preparing to retire, and their kids are all in their early 20s, so they’re more independent now. The timing was perfect, and the stars aligned.

Julie and Tim didn’t buy just any place. They purchased a classic Haussmannian-designed apartment — the kind that one thinks of when they think of an apartment in Paris. It has large windows that open onto wrought-iron balconies, chevron wood floors, marble fireplaces and intricate moulding details. And, they had fun furnishing the place. When you think of some of the places people live in, sometimes people just toss in whatever items they have on hand. Not this place. They went all out with an antique headboard and really beautiful linens. “It has chandeliers ... it’s nostalgic and authentic,” says Tim.

As for location, location, location... tick! The two-bedroom apartment is in the 17th arrondissement, about a 10-minute walk from the Arc de

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”

Triomphe, but it’s not a touristy neighbourhood. “It’s the authentic French experience,” says Tim. If you take a walk down the road on Rue Lebon, you’ll find a butcher, a patisserie (bakery), a cheese shop and a flower shop. The plan is to rent out the apartment when they’re not using it, so Julie set up an Instagram account to get the word out. And, she likes taking pictures, so she often posts her favourites, everything from gorgeous bunches of peonies and fresh pastries to the Luxembourg Gardens and art installations.

What is their tip for anyone who wants to make a dream happen? “I think the biggest thing is just get started,”

says Julie. “For us, we started looking at real estate online and seeing something in our price range. You might think, ‘Oh, it’s too expensive to buy something in Paris,’ or you can’t because of the language barrier, but once you start, it takes you down a road, and sometimes there are obstacles, but there are ways around them, or you can get other people to help you,” she adds, pointing out they worked with someone who spoke English at a finding agency. “I always say, ‘Somebody somewhere has already done it, so it’s not like it can’t be done,’” she adds.

For this couple, the pursuit of happiness landed them an apartment in Paris, where they spend their time biking along the Seine, lacing up their walking shoes to discover new places and riding the Paris metro. “You feel like you’re at the centre of things that are happening. It’s a combination of things that never change, yet [Paris is] at the cutting edge of everything [like] fashion and innovation,” says Julie.

“What’s really cool is that Paris is very touristy. It just is and always will be with the buildings and art,” says Tim. “But, it’s almost like there’s a little curtain that you can sneak past and look and see that there’s way more to it than just the touristy part.”

@aparisienlife

TRENDING BEAUTY PRODUCTS

WRITTEN BY MURSAL RAHMAN



CHARLOTTE TILBURY HOLLYWOOD CONTOUR WAND

Singer Madison Beer is responsible for making Charlotte Tilbury's Hollywood Contour Wand go viral and with good reason. These contour wands have an amazing creamy formula that allows for a seamless application. \$52, sephora.ca



PHOTO BY JOE SEER



DIOR LIP GLOW OIL

The Dior Lip Glow Oils are definitely worth the hype. These lip oils have a non-sticky formula and are made with moisturizing ingredients like cherry oil. With these in your collection, you'll never have chapped lips. \$45, sephora.ca



GIORGIO ARMANI BEAUTY NEO NUDE A-HIGHLIGHT

If you like a subtle glow then you will love the Armani Beauty Neo Nude A-Highlight. It blends out beautifully making it the ideal highlighter for your everyday makeup routine. \$50, holtrenfrew.com



NARS LIGHT REFLECTING ADVANCED SKINCARE FOUNDATION

This foundation looks incredible on camera and reflects beautifully in the light. It's a must-have product for anyone who loves natural glowy-looking skin. \$65, sephora.ca



RARE BEAUTY SOFT PINCH LIQUID BLUSH

Ever since Selena Gomez released these liquid blushes they quickly became a makeup favourite for many. These blushes are pigmented and give a nice flush of colour to the cheeks. \$26, sephora.ca



TOWER 28 SHINEON JELLY LIP GLOSS

Fashion trends from the 2000s are back and so is lip gloss. If you like lip gloss that is hydrating and feels comfortable on the lips then you need to try the Tower 28 ShineOn Jelly Lip Glosses. \$19, sephora.ca



Founders of Fitzroy Rentals Angela Pastor (left) and Julie Kalinowski (right) share how harmful fast-fashion practices are increasing interest in renting clothes rather than purchasing new items

MEET THE FOUNDERS OF FITZROY RENTALS

Back in 2016, besties and business partners Angela Pastor and Julie Kalinowski started a rental dress company called Fitzroy Rentals after hearing women complain about buying dresses they only plan on wearing once

WRITTEN BY MURSAL RAHMAN

Lifelong friends and businesswomen Julie Kalinowski and Angela Pastor love designer clothing and have found a way to make it accessible to everyone who appreciates luxury fashion. The duo met in kindergarten and became business partners in 2011 when they started doing seasonal pop-ups throughout Toronto. After many of their customers shared how they wear their formal pieces only once, they decided to test out a rack of rentals in their final pop-up

shop. The rack of rentals was a success, and the pair decided to open Fitzroy Rentals in 2016, a rental dress company with pieces from prestigious designers that are available for consumers to rent. We had the chance to chat with the duo about how the pandemic has affected their business, the fashion industry and what style means to them.

Q: With second-hand clothing becoming increasingly popular, have you seen more people wanting to rent rather than purchase?

J&A: Yes, definitely. There's a huge

appetite for sustainable fashion and supporting brands that are transparent with how they source and produce their garments. The wasteful and harmful fast fashion practices have really turned consumers' heads to second-hand and sustainable choices like renting clothes, as they give garments multiple lives and provide access to pieces you wouldn't otherwise buy.

Q: How has the pandemic affected your business?

J&A: We rent special-occasion garments

PHOTOS BY JOEL GALE

(everything from cocktail to formal gowns) so with all events being cancelled, we hit a major standstill in 2020 and the beginning of 2021. We, thankfully, saw a huge upswing in the summer of 2021 with the return of social gatherings and, more importantly, customers really wanting to dress up again after wearing sweats for a year and a half. It was amazing to see the pieces that we were renting were some of our most colourful and fantastical pieces. We saw this great resurgence of people wanting to celebrate and wear joyful and fun pieces to counteract the doom and gloom of it all. It also gave even more merit to not needing these formal-wear pieces in your wardrobe. They are truly one-time-wear pieces that you don't need to have wastefully collect dust in your closet.

Q: Do you think Instagram has contributed to how much people purchase clothing and their increased interest in renting?

J&A: Absolutely. People want to show the best possible version of themselves on social and not repeat outfits, which has definitely helped the popularity of rentals. Renting clothes allows you to affordably wear a different outfit to every event while still being sustainable. It also gives you access to designer pieces that you might not normally have access to or be able to afford. It's a win-win on all fronts.

Q: What is the biggest challenge of running a business in the fashion industry?

J&A: There are a ton of logistical challenges specific to the rental business, from inventory management to managing returns to cleaning garments and turning them around in time for the next rental. It's something no other fashion business has to deal with. I think, in general, though, fashion businesses have the challenge of constantly keeping up with the trends and turning pieces around quickly, but the flip side of that is being able to get multiple uses of those garments and prolonging their life cycle through renting.

Q: How do you pick the new pieces of clothing that become available to rent to the public?

J&A: We select all our pieces directly



The Zendaya Dress from Lexi Clothing is one of the many dresses you can find at Fitzroy Rentals. Choose from a variety of Insta-worthy designer gowns next time you have a special occasion

“
The wasteful and harmful fast fashion practices have really turned consumers' heads to second-hand and sustainable choices like renting clothes
 ”

from the designer or brand. It's one of our favourite parts of the job! Over the years, we have really developed an understanding of what women want and what works for various body types, so we can quickly narrow down to select garments and fabrics that we know will work.

Q: What inspired you to start renting bags?

J&A: We wanted to be able to offer the full outfit, so bags are an obvious addition to an evening look. Evening

bags are also the same as dresses in that you don't need to own them. They are interchangeable items to go with the specific outfit and are not for everyday wear so they lend themselves perfectly to rentals.

Q: Favourite customer story?

J&A: There are so many! One of our favourites is always the last-minute bride, who is either eloping or had an issue with their dress not arriving in time or not fitting correctly. They usually come to us stressed out and in a panic, naturally, and leave absolutely thrilled to have found a gorgeous dress to get married in at a fraction of the cost of a typical wedding gown. When they come back after and show us the pictures from their special day, it gives us all the warm fuzzies.

Q: Who is your favourite designer?

J&A: We always love Elie Saab on the red carpet. Monique Lhuillier is another favourite; we actually carry her contemporary line in our collection.

Q: Which dream celeb would you want to work with?

J&A: There are so many! Zendaya would be an amazing one.

Q: What is your definition of style?

J&A: Feeling super-confident in your look. Style to us is not about following trends but dressing in something that makes you feel like the most elevated, powerful and beautiful version of yourself.

Q: What is the most memorable outfit you've ever worn?

J&A: Our matching Hebe Studio Italian suits to fashion week. Rentals, of course!

Q: What are the three must-haves for spring/summer 2022?

J&A: Brights, a dreamy boho go-to dress and a killer jumpsuit!

Q: What are your future goals for Fitzroy Rentals?

J&A: Expansion, for sure. But, you'll have to stay tuned!

www.fitzroyrentals.com

@fitzroyrentals

Alvéole. So, some clients put out nice little water dishes and plant pollinator gardens to support the bees.

And now, the two women would like to clear up a few misconceptions.

1. The queen bee is important, but she's not necessarily the most important. "All of the bees are important," says Doane. "It's all of them when they combine their efforts...it's like [an analogy] to the rest of life: everyone has to work together for the greater good." Get this: the colony can make new queens (just like high school!).

2. Wasps give bees a bad rap, especially last year, since it seemed as if there were a lot of wasps around. Many clients were calling to say the bees were causing problems. Wasps are not bees.

3. Bees are true pollinators. They are herbivores. "They're so busy collecting pollen and nectar and bringing it back to the colony that they honestly couldn't care less about us most of the time," says Stathakos.

What's coming down the pipeline? The organization is expanding – across

“
You might have an idea of how you want to work with them...but really, they're going to teach you things about how you should be working with them
”

continents now. And one project they're launching this year will be focusing on wild bees in a few select cities. Wild bees are solitary — they like to live by themselves, nesting in odd places like a hole made in a tree by a woodpecker, for instance. There's no queen bee, and they just gather food for themselves and their offspring. Wait, what? These bees don't have hives? Yep, and they don't bother making honey, either.

OK, so how can we help the bees? "Start by converting your grass lawn to a clover one," says Doane. "Bees love the clover, so it's a great pollinator plant." And leave the dandelions alone, because they feed on them, too.

One message Doane wants to get out is that as much as bees are managed, they are wild creatures. "You might have an idea of how you want to work with them...but really, they're going to teach you things about how you should be working with them," she says. "At the end of the day, the bees are going to do what they're going to do."

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1

VARIETY OF LIFE

LAST WORD

With March's equinox comes a plethora of fun — whether it be relaxing outdoors or indulging in the sweetness of spring

WRITTEN BY ESTELLE ZENTIL



2

1. SETTING THE MOOD: With up to 80 hours burn time, Lifestyles by Hailey's Safe Haven is a must-have candle of the season, featuring top notes of sea air and base notes that include cedarwood and amber.

www.lifestylesbyhailey.com | @lifestylesbyhailey

2. LOUNGE LOVIN': Weatherproof and maintenance-free, Pottery Barn's Torrey chaise is the missing addition to your backyard set-up whether to simply lounge by the pool or soak up the sun.

3. LET'S JAM: Locally made with an array of five flavors, including strawberry and peach, as well as 10 per cent of all Zerillo Jam supporting Waves of Changes for Autism, it's easy to say "bon appétit" to anything topped with this delectable jam.

www.shopdolce.ca | @shopdolce_ca @famigliazerillo

4. I SPY WITH MY PORCELAIN EYE: Both modern and chic, Jonathan Adler's handcrafted Eye Trinket Tray depicts a piercing blue eye lined with gold details — a beautiful way to store your smaller prized possessions in style.

www.maisonlipari.ca | @maisonlipari

5. JAZZED FOR JACQUARD: Leave it to Montreal designer Nadya Toto to create Jolly, a quintessential spring baby-doll dress featuring black lace jacquard with two gathered tiers and a raw-edge hem.

6. ROSÉ RENDEZVOUS: Nothing screams "spring" than a sip of Saintly's rosé. A wine with a balance of dry, fresh and fruity notes — an exquisite pairing with fresh flavourful salads or prosciutto-wrapped melon.

www.saintlywine.com | @saintlywine

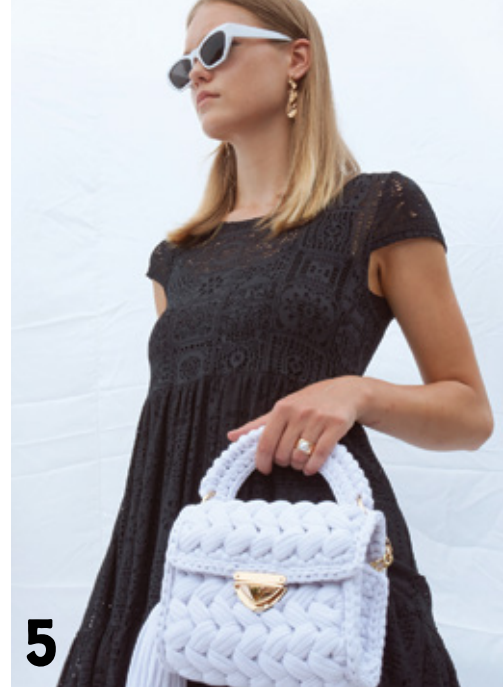
7. WITH A CHERRY ON TOP: Harvested in Italy, Martelli's high-quality pitted cherries are dark red with a sweet, crunchy and slightly bitter flavour, ideally topped on cocktails, added to ice cream or even yogurt.



3



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