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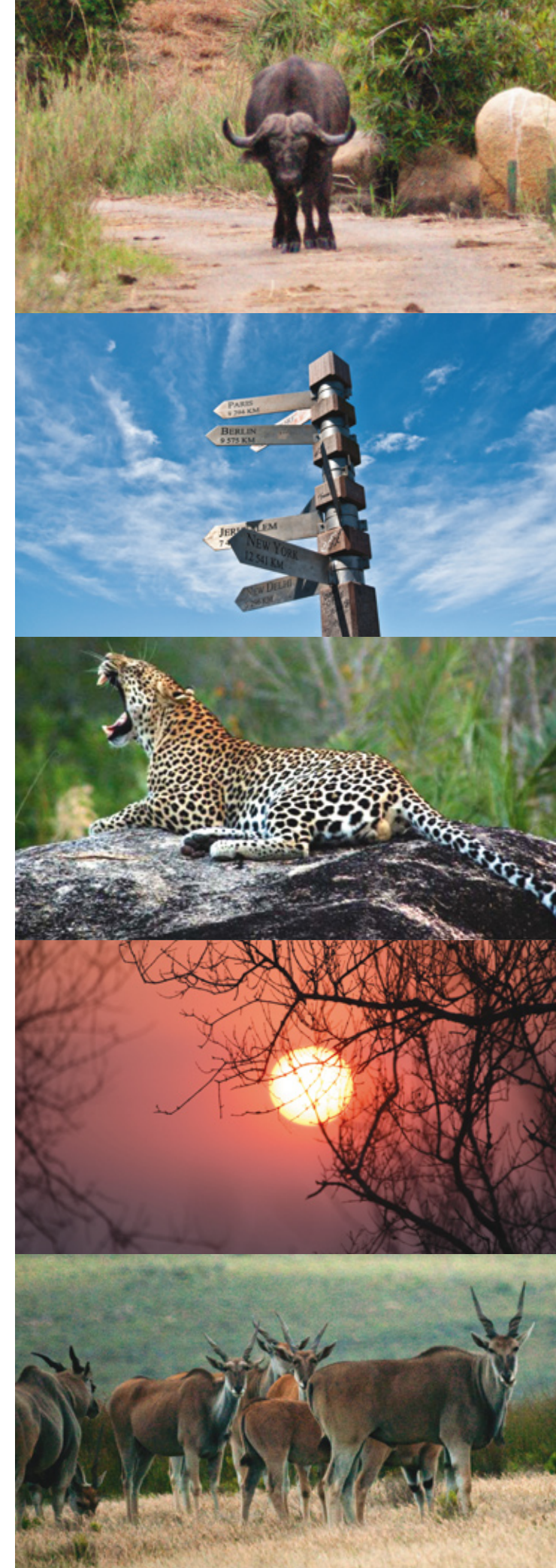
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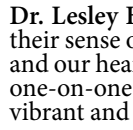
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Travel to a new destination is generally a learning experience, even more so if the perception prior doesn't match the reality. That was certainly the case with South Africa. The first things that came to mind previously were apartheid, HIV, unemployment, shantytowns and crime. Basically, a developing country burdened with a host of insurmountable issues. There is no doubt these issues exist, however, there is no air of hopelessness. The general atmosphere is of a nation working together to improve the quality of life for all its citizens. As the steward on our South African Airways flight described it, South Africa is the country where citizens of neighbouring countries come for opportunity.

The CIA Fact Book states: "South Africa is a middle-income, emerging market with an abundant supply of natural resources; well-developed financial, legal, communications, energy, and transport sectors; a stock exchange that is 17th largest in the world; and modern infrastructure supporting an efficient distribution of goods to major urban centers throughout the region."

We very much enjoyed South Africa and the people we met. Our primary objective was to see the Big Five: lion, leopard, water buffalo, elephant and rhinoceros. This we achieved on an almost daily basis, while enjoying luxurious lodges that offered exceptional service, quality dining and outstanding local wines. The only major centre we spent any time in was Cape Town; a very large, cosmopolitan city offering everything you would expect in a modern community of that size. We expect to return many times.

Coming up on the agenda is Dubai, Galapagos Islands, Argentina and the Cooke Islands. So, as always, I would suggest you make your reservation by filling in the subscription form. We're also offering free subscriptions to the digital edition of the magazine. Recently, the technology has improved dramatically, such that reading has become a quality experience, with the added benefits one has come to expect from the internet. Visit our web site at www.goodlifeconnoisseur.com and check it out.

Your comments, suggestions or criticisms are always welcome.

Terry Tremaine
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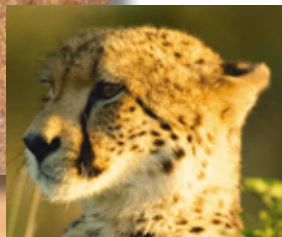
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Photographer: Connie Ekelund - Bushman's Kloof, Cederberg Mountains, South Africa



Londolozi Private Game Reserve, Sabi Sands



South Africa—It's Possible!

By Terry Tremaine

Photos by Connie Ekelund

Flying to South Africa from Vancouver is a challenge eased by the non-stop flight offered by South African Airways from New York to Johannesburg. Upon arrival we immediately embarked upon our quest to see Africa's Big Five with a flight to Sabi Sands Game Reserve, adjacent to Kruger National Park. As luck would have it, our arrival at Londolozi Private Game Reserve in the heart of Sabi Sands was just in time for the afternoon game drive.

Since the animals tend to avoid activity during the middle of the day, game drives are early morning and late afternoon. Generally, the vehicle is an open-air jeep style with two or three rows of elevated seats for passengers. The guide is also the driver who has a rifle handy in a case placed along the dash. The tracker is positioned over the left front end of the vehicle in a special seat. Somehow, from this position he is expected to recognize and analyze animal tracks as the vehicle is moving.

For our first drive, Kate was our guide and Rainus our tracker. Rainus was good. Quickly, seeing antelope such as impala, bush buck and kudus became humdrum as we sought more exotic sightings. Soon we were rewarded with giraffe and zebra. But just after the sun had set, we were able to get within a few feet of a sleeping leopard just as he was rousing himself for the evening hunt. Somehow, Rainus was able to keep us on the leopard's track for the next half hour, allowing multiple sightings as he travelled through the brush.

So, there we were, arriving back for dinner and being able to report that we had seen a leopard on our very first drive—having yet to spend one night in South Africa. One down, four to go.

We were met for dinner by Bronwyn Varty, whose grandfather first bought the reserve on a whim after a few gin and tonics. Originally, the reserve was used for hunting, but the family changed with the times and offers a great safari experience. There are five different lodge types. We stayed in the Varty Camp. Each well-appointed room has its own lunge pool and deck overlooking the bush. Well-prepared meals are either on the open-air deck overlooking the bush below—with the possibility of sightings—or in the Boma, part of the Sparta Hunting Camp.

It was here Bronwyn elaborated on her family's very significant conservation efforts, in addition to their efforts to work with the local community to increase their opportunity for an improved quality of life.

The next day we were up with the sun for the morning drive. First up was a hippo standing in the brush. Next, an elephant with extremely long tusks almost dragging on the ground. Elephants go through three sets of teeth in their lifetime. They literally rip branches off trees for the leaves and then gnaw the bark off as well. That's hard on teeth. It was apparent this elephant was on his last set.

Before the drive was over we saw rhino, wildebeest, water buffalo, lions and hyena. We had yet to be in South Africa a full day and we had already seen the big five!

Following the drive we caught a flight to Singita Sweni in Kruger National Park. The park has awarded concessions to a few private companies. Singita was awarded a 20-year concession six years ago. They have constructed six secluded suites flanking the Sweni River. The park stipulates that should the concession not be renewed, all evidence has to be removed. Plus, there is ongoing reporting required to ensure as little impact on the park as possible.

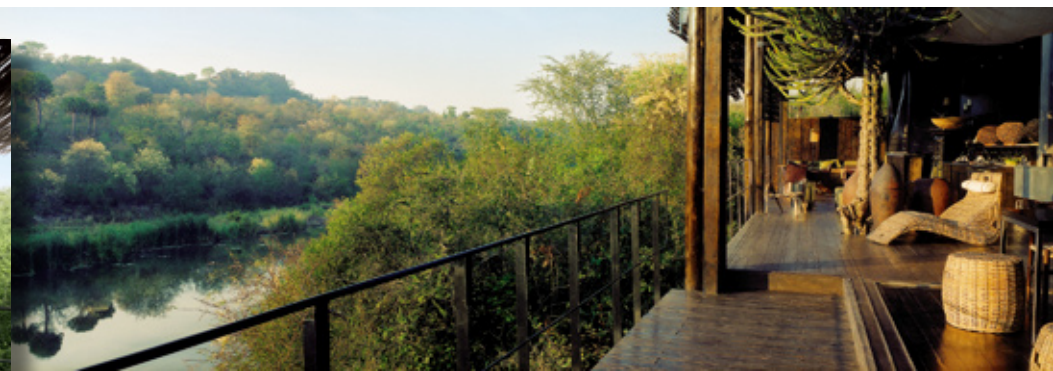
Our very modern suite had floor to ceiling glass, a luxurious bathroom with indoor and outdoor showers, and a lounge with its own private wooden deck—from which we were able to watch crocodiles stalk the wildlife coming for a drink. From our room we saw giraffe, bush buck, water buck, impala and numerous varieties of waterfowl.

Service was remarkably attentive. A good example: Connie was quite flattering regarding a tea we were given upon our arrival and moments later the recipe—nicely presented—arrived at our room. Dining was a treat, with a great international menu. The very passionate sommelier conducted a wine tasting of South African wines, which opened our taste buds to a remarkable number of internationally recognized quality wines. One evening, to our surprise, we dined privately in the wine cellar.

The terrain around the concession changes significantly from dry brush and flat areas to sandstone hills and lush, more tropical areas near the two rivers coursing through. As a result, our guide and tracker were able, over the course of a couple of days, to bring us near numerous lions, rhinos, giraffe, zebras, wildebeest, water buffalo, elephants and hippos. Plus, of course, various antelope herds.

Again, I was fascinated with the trackers' ability to spot animal tracks from a moving vehicle and actually determine when they were made. On one occasion when the vehicle had stopped, I, too, was able to look down at the ground beside us to see a lion track and questioned how he had determined the time it was made. Across the impression from one of the pads was the mark left by a grasshopper, pinpointing the time to that morning. How he saw that grasshopper mark from the moving vehicle is beyond me.

Our guide also brought to our attention how giraffe tend not to stay nibbling on one acacia tree but rather move on to the next after a short time. The reason being the plant, when, in effect, under attack, increases the level of tannins in its leaves, making them unappetizing. Further nearby plants become aware and increase their tannin levels as well. I heard two explanations of how they communicated: one, through the roots and the other, that the tannin level change was noticeable in plants that were downwind.



Singita Sweni Lodge and Reserve, Kruger National Park





From Sweni we flew to Royal Malewane within the Thornybush Private Reserve adjacent to Kruger National Park. The property is about the same age as Sweni but more colonial in design. Again, there are only six freestanding suites surrounding a small waterhole which provides wildlife viewing opportunities. While relaxing in a lounge chair on the attached deck, numbers of antelope grazed within a few feet. The plunge pools with each suite are frequented by elephants looking for a cool drink. The suites themselves are spacious and well appointed with an extravagant bathroom.

Dining again was very good, with food accompanied by a broad selection of South African wines selected by the sommelier from their cellar. A special treat was having a massage at the surprisingly well-equipped spa. There is something special about relaxing in a spa in what could best be described as wilderness, while exotic wildlife can be seen through the windows.

Craig McFarlane, our guide for the duration of our stay at Royal Malewane, was truly outstanding. Being a third-generation guide, who started when he was only 18, he had the experience and knowledge to make the game drives truly remarkable. On one drive we came across two male lions lying in the grass. Craig explained that the older lion was the younger's father, who had recently arrived from further north. Apparently the son and his brother had left their father's territory to seek out their own domain. The brother had been killed in a fight to establish the brothers' control over the area. Now the one brother was king. His father had been forced to leave his own territory by younger up-and-coming lions, and had managed to form a coalition with his son, although the son was dominant.



As we were taking pictures of the two allies, another jeep drove up, but left quickly looking for more exciting viewing rather than two sleeping lions. But Craig suggested we be patient and pointed to a group of buzzards circling not too far away. As soon as the young lion caught sight of the birds he was up and trotting in their direction. We high-tailed it in the same direction and beat the lion to a freshly killed impala. When the lion arrived he immediately dragged it off and began feeding, his dad waiting for his turn.

*“There is something special about relaxing
in a spa in what could best be described as
wilderness, while exotic wildlife can be seen
through the windows.”*

On another occasion we came across a mother cheetah and her offspring, feeding on an impala. Apparently she had started with seven offspring and only three had survived. We learned that since cheetahs do not have the strength to take on a lion, mom has to teach her young how to kill so the prey doesn't make a sound, which might attract a lion.

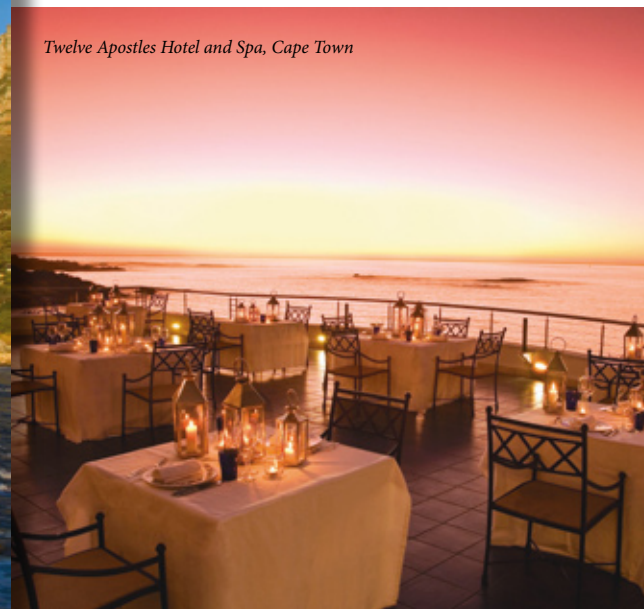
During the drives here we saw both white and black rhino, hippos, water buffalo, wildebeest, warthog, genet, a white lion and numerous species of antelope and waterfowl.



The Lodge at Thornybush Private Reserve, Royal Melwane.



Thornybush Private Reserve, Royal Melwane.
Right: Father and son



Twelve Apostles Hotel and Spa, Cape Town



Left: Protea—South Africa's National Flower.
Below: Terry at the Cape of Good Hope



Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve



From Royal Malewane we flew to Cape Town, spending a couple of nights at the Twelve Apostles Hotel and Spa. The hotel sits on the Atlantic Ocean just outside Cape Town, with Table Mountain and the Twelve Apostles Mountain range just behind. The building has a long history and the rooms have undergone a recent renovation and modernization with each being entirely different. The property is a showplace for art, and the dining and other facilities are standout.

Cape Town is a very large, modern, cosmopolitan city, blessed with a sandy beach coastline. The Victoria and Alfred waterfront is the centre and focus of the city. It is here that the latest luxury hotel, the One&Only, Cape Town, has recently opened, just in time for the World Cup happening this coming summer. Just as Vancouver is currently under construction for the Olympics, so too is Cape Town, with improvements being made to the airport and highways, plus a brand new stadium.

We dined at Gordon Ramsay's Maze restaurant in the One&Only, and had an opportunity to have a look at the suites, which were as opulent as one would expect from the One&Only group.

A short drive from Cape Town will bring you to Cape Point and the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans meet. The drive is very scenic and along the way is Boulder's Beach, home to a penguin colony.



Giraffe sleep two out of every twenty four hours. Out here, dining by the flickering flames under the acacia and their watchful gaze, I didn't want the night to end either.

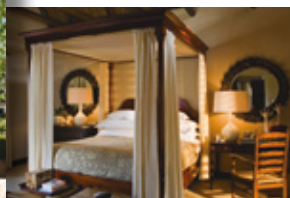
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Bushman Kloof Lodge



Leaving Cape Town by car, we drove three hours to Bushman's Kloof. For the greater part of the drive, to my surprise, the landscape reminded me of driving through the prairies, with seemingly prosperous small communities dotted among endless feeds of grain.

Bushman's Kloof is a South African Natural Heritage Site situated near Clanwilliam in the Cederberg Wilderness. It is known as the world's largest open air gallery of ancient Bushman rock art. The lodge has only 20 suites spread out over the property, with fabulous views of the ravine and wildlife refuge. Again, dining was excellent; plus we took advantage of their spa to have a couples massage in a special cabana overlooking the refuge.

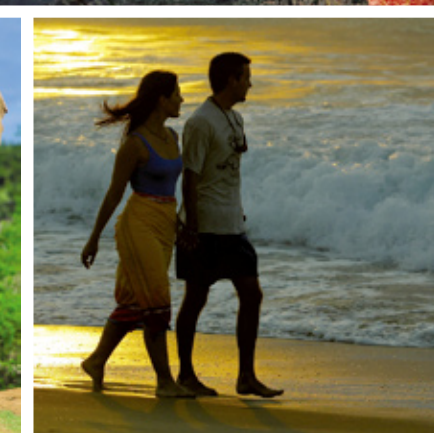
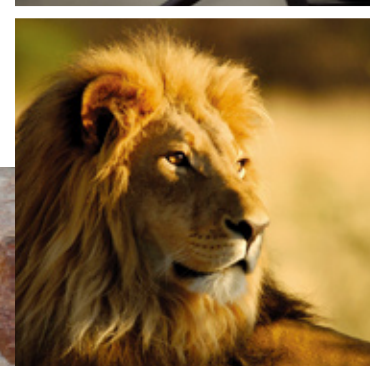
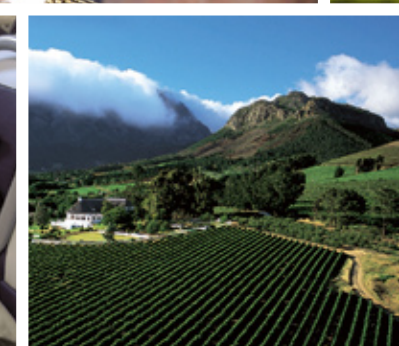
Drives in this reserve were different from the previous in that there are no predators, so there is plenty of opportunity to get out and examine the plant life. Only here did we come across a herd of eland. But the high point of the drives was definitely the Bushman rock art. Seeing the paintings and gaining some understanding of what they depicted from our effervescent guide, Zenobia, was a fascinating experience. Archaeologists have catalogued the sites and a number are easily accessible for viewing.



Clockwise from top: Bushbuck; Terry with our guide Zenobia; Bushman's Kloof.



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From Bushman's Kloof we drove for a couple of hours to reach Franschoek in the heart of picturesque Franschoek Valley. The valley was settled by the Huguenots and is home to some of South Africa's best wineries. We visited Boekenhoutskloof. Founded in 1776, it is one of the oldest farms in the area and only began producing wine in 1996. Their modestly priced Porcupine Ridge Syrah is exported world wide. But it was their premium brand Boekenhoutskloof that got our attention.

Franschoek is also home to Le Quartier Francais, considered by many to be the finest restaurant in Africa. We visited their Tasting Room, which specializes in multi-course meals with wine pairing. The eight-course meal we experienced was remarkably creative and the pairings best described as perfect.

Our accommodation was at La Residence, a relatively new property with only 11 very opulently-furnished, distinctly different suites. Each ensuite bathroom is best described as gigantic. The suite we were in had three steps on each side to reach the king-size bed. On the desk was an autographed photo of Elton John commemorating his stay in the same room.

The owner's wife has travelled the world to find furnishings that are over the top. The main hall alone had a least half a dozen extraordinarily large chandeliers which were shipped in from India. I expect returning guests will be requesting specific suites since they are that distinctive. To be expected, the dining is also very good.

From Franschoek, we headed by car to Grootbos Private Nature Reserve, overlooking Walker Bay near the tip of South Africa. Along the way we made two stops. One was at Bouchard Finlayson, a boutique winery dedicated to the making of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc wines, located in the wine ward of Walker Bay. The 125-hectare property currently has 19 hectares under vines; the rest is mountain land, covered by the spectacular indigenous "fynbos" flora of the Western Cape. With only a small portion of the farm under vine, Bouchard Finlayson is able to ensure the conservancy of the mountain land. Bouchard Finlayson's flagship wine is the Galpin Peak Pinot Noir, which has won many an award and accolade. It was well worth the stop.

For lunch we dined at Birkenhead House perched on the cliffs overlooking Walker Bay in Hermanus. This property has the same ownership as La Residence and the 11 suites, as expected, are opulently and individually furnished. A superb lunch was had while watching Southern Right whales breaching very near the shore. The Southern Right whale has made Walker Bay one of the world centers for whale watching.

During the winter months, June through November, Southern Right whales come to give birth and raise their young before heading back to Antarctica. They feed on plankton, which is unavailable in these waters, so these 60-foot behemoths go hungry while feeding their offspring for the few months they inhabit these waters.

One of the activities readily available through Grootbos is whale watching, not only from the shoreline, from which we saw dozens breaching and playing with their offspring, but also closer up on whale watching boats. On our excursion one actually bumped the side of the boat and I'm not sure which was bigger. We also saw a great white shark almost equally close as we sailed towards Dyer Island, a protected island and home to large numbers of Cape Fur seals, penguins and numerous species of seabirds including the rare red-footed oyster catcher.



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Above and right: La Residence, Franschoek
Below and right: Birkenhead House



Whale watching in Walker Bay, Hermanus





Right: Fur Seals on Dyer Island.
Far right: Walker Bay, Hermanus.

The principal behind Grootbos Nature reserve is Michael Lutzeyer. His motivation in establishing the reserve was to save the indigenous plant life from extinction. Though not from the hospitality industry, he felt establishing a luxury resort would provide the wherewithal to maintain the 1,700 hectares of pristine fynbos. There are some 650 species of plants on the property. As Michael explained, during the ice age, South Africa was one of the few areas on the planet unaffected, so the genetic background of these plants are quite unique. Further, exploring the caves along the shoreline, archaeologists have found extraordinary old remains of early mankind.

Additionally, Michael has established the Grootbos Green Futures Foundation: a non-profit organization with its three pillars of conservation, education and research. He also established the Green Futures Horticultural and Life Skills College, which provides annual, practical-based training for unemployed people from the local communities. The property has won numerous awards and gained international recognition for its efforts.

Our nature guide was one of the first graduates who since has worked hard to become head of the guides at Grootbos. In conversation, he described how prior “his life was crap, with no home and no job.” Now he has aspirations and a means of achieving them.

The resort area has 13 luxury individual suites, all with commanding views of Walker Bay. Each is very spacious, modern and well appointed. Dining, of course, was up to if not superior to the high standards we had experienced in the various properties we had visited on our first journey to South Africa.

Our only other experience in Africa was a much-enjoyed visit to Kenya a couple of years ago, so our expectations were that they would be similar. While there is little doubt Kenya is a developing country, I would view South Africa in comparison as developed. Their infrastructure is well established. As we travelled by car from one area to another, it was on modern highways through rural communities that appeared to be prospering. The wine regions are picturesque and exporting wines that are receiving international recognition. Yes, there are shantytowns housing many of the people who work in the resorts. But the government is making efforts to improve conditions. There would appear to be a sense of everyone working together for the common good. As an entrepreneur, I think there is opportunity. A complaint I have with properties in North America is that for a day's access to internet they tend to charge enough to cover a month. Every resort we visited in South Africa provided free wireless internet access. We intend to return.

South Africa is hosting the FIFA World Cup of football in 2010. Now would be a good time to make reservations for a trip to this remarkable country. ■



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Rediscovering Toronto

By Terry Tremaine

Photos by Connie Ekelund



Nuit Blanche



When Tourism Toronto first suggested we should come pay a visit, I was only modestly enthused. As a past Toronto resident and now-fervent supporter of my adopted hometown of Vancouver, I found it a little difficult to accept that Toronto “The Good” would make an exciting story. Then they mentioned Nuit Blanche.

Nuit Blanche originated in Paris in 2002 and has since been adopted by many cities around the world. The City of Toronto, in collaboration with Toronto's arts community, had their inaugural event in 2006. The all-night celebration of creativity brings over a million people out to view experiential art created solely for that evening by over 500 artists and presented in some 130 locations. The magic of art appears for the evening in unlikely places, such as parks, alleyways and abandoned warehouses throughout the downtown core. The financial section of Bay Street becomes a pedestrian mall. Queen Street West—now a haven for the avant garde with boutiques, trendy restaurants and leading edge art galleries—literally teems with throngs of art seekers wondering the sidewalks throughout the night. Restaurants remain open for the duration.

Wandering the streets of the city at night with endless numbers of others, all seeking the next artistic creation, is truly a novel and unexpected experience. The camaraderie amongst strangers is remarkable, all drawn together by the desire to sense and feel something new.

Not wishing to wander the streets on an empty stomach, we started the evening at Chiado Restaurant on College Street. Created by Albino Silva, this acclaimed restaurant and tapas bar is known for its “progressive Portuguese” cuisine, enhanced with bold flavours and creative presentation.

From the restaurant there was easy access to the western zone of events taking place along Queen Street and into the Liberty Market area.

We were drawn to two presentations in particular. *The Apology Project* by Maria Legault, of Toronto, was comprised of a cluster of 55 people wearing large brown paper bags covering their bodies with only holes for their eyes. They were massed in a public hallway and as we wandered through, being gently jostled, they all kept apologizing. Possibly, a reflection on the Canadian tendency to always say they are sorry no matter the circumstance.

Farther along in Studio City on Pardee Avenue we found *Sultry World* by Norico Sunayama, of Japan. The artist was sitting atop a three-metre-high chair wearing a huge scarlet velvet dress draped over the chair and covering a very large area of floor space around her. Those passing by were encouraged to crawl under the flowing skirt and enter the sensory chamber created underneath.

After we wandered over to the southern zone surrounding the bottom of Bay Street to Union Station, we found *Imminent Departure* by Heather Nicol, of Toronto. This multimedia installation featuring projected images and recorded sounds evoked the romance and heartbreak of travel stories brought about by unforeseen crises.

At the bottom of the Exchange Tower we found *Monopoly with Real Money* presented by Iain Baxter & [sic] of Windsor. Toronto celebrities were found playing Monopoly through the night—somehow fitting in the home of the country's major stock exchange.

Toronto City Hall was transformed into *Beautiful Light: 4 Letter Word Machine* by D.A. Therrien of Phoenix. Four seven-metre square, alphanumeric, quartz lamp arrays were suspended 65 metres in the air between the Toronto City Hall Towers. A series of different four-letter words appeared throughout the course of the night.



Senses Restaurant at the SoHo Metropolitan



Downtown Toronto Shopping

We didn't manage to make it through the whole night, but rather retired to our home away from home, the SoHo Metropolitan, around two in the morning. The streets were still full of exuberant art seekers.

The SoHo, part of the Metropolitan Hotels group with luxury properties in Toronto and Vancouver, is found on Wellington Street, convenient to the downtown financial and shopping areas. This luxury boutique hotel is currently the "in" spot for celebrities visiting the city. The well-appointed rooms feature extravagant bathrooms and the latest technology to dim lights, draw draperies or simply activate the do-not-disturb light.

Chef Patrick Lin has recently taken over the kitchen at Senses Restaurant, located on the ground floor of the SoHo. Although Chef Lin has an excellent reputation for leveraging his Chinese heritage with classical French culinary training, his new menu, a year in development, goes beyond interweaving Asian ingredients in Western dishes. It's more how traditional Asian food preparation and cooking techniques can compliment classical Western dishes. We particularly enjoyed an evening meal well paired by the sommelier with some excellent Ontario wines.

Nearby, also on Wellington Street atop the TD Bank Tower, is Canoe, another superb restaurant. Chef Anthony Walsh seeks out produce from across the country to prepare his uniquely Canadian cuisine. The day we visited, the menu boasted B.C. salmon, Alberta lamb, Yukon caribou, Yarmouth lobster and Qualicum Beach scallops. The sauces were all very creative and one served with the Conquest Hill squab featured Quebec chokecherry and Newfoundland Screech. Again, pairing with Ontario wines is encouraged.

Nearby on Queen Street is Nota Bene, the latest restaurant from Chef David Lee and Yannick Bigourdan. This more casual dining affair features Canadian home-style favourites complemented with desserts such as Ontario strawberry sorbet and Quebec lemon panna cotta.



While exploring Toronto we visited the Distillery District. On the east side of the downtown area, this 13-acre historic enclave is centred on the Gooderham & Worts Distillery, founded in 1832, and contains 45 completely restored 19th-century buildings. These buildings house some 100 tenants including galleries, artist studios, restaurants, boutiques and cafes. Found among the mix is Soma, a creator of chocolate. Using carefully selected ingredients, the chocolates are made from scratch and offerings include a broad range of flavours from the 85% pure chocolate bar to a smoky Papua New Guinea cocoa blend.

Another find was the Elmwood Spa on Elm Street. This 40,000 square foot day spa boasts 34 treatment rooms plus pools and steam rooms. The Australian LI'TYA Healing Rituals are exclusive to Elmwood Spa in Canada. Body massages combine Aboriginal massage techniques with Australian-sourced ingredients for the treatment products. I found the massage technique very relaxing. But I was most surprised when I recognised the scent of lemon myrtle.

While we were in Australia not so long ago, we came across a line of spices for food preparation incorporating only indigenous plants called Outback Pride. We had brought a full selection home to our own kitchen and lemon myrtle had become our standard spice in preparing fish. In the steam room after the treatment there were comments about how appetizing I smelled.

Connie was equally impressed with the Sweetgrass Spa, part of the Verity Women's Club on Queen Street. The spa is designed for women by women, while the club has garnered much critical acclaim.

The long-running *Jersey Boys*, a Tony award-winning musical based on the story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, has been entertaining sold out audiences since August 2008 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts at the top of Yonge Street. After attending a performance, we would not be surprised if it goes for another year. The performers are remarkably dynamic, the story is engaging and the music seems to appeal to a broad age group.

Left and below: The historic Distillery District.



Right: Terry at Soma's chocolate tasting; An assortment of handmade chocolate at Soma.



Above: Fresh Bistro and Anna Olsen on the Ravine Vineyard Estate. Below: Sweetgrass Spa at the Verity Women's Club, Queen Street.





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Above and right: Peller Estates Winery, Niagara-on-the-Lake;
Cellar dining at Peller Estates. Below: Bar at the Ravine Vineyard.



Stratus Wines, Niagara-on-the-Lake.



Wherever we travel, if possible, we visit the wineries in the area. The Niagara Peninsula is a relatively short drive from Toronto and home to some excellent wineries. We managed to visit three.

The Ravine Vineyard is a young boutique winery in St. David's. The hospitality centre is located in the 200-year-old loyalist Georgian William Woodruff House. This is one of Canada's more architecturally significant ancestral homes. The story behind the reconstruction and the different owners who were involved in preserving this piece of Canadiana is worth the visit alone. Plus, celebrity chef Anna Olsen and her husband run a bistro on the property featuring wood-fired artisan breads and uncomplicated country fare.

Over 40 years ago, Andrew Peller opened a modest winery in British Columbia. Over the years Peller Estates has grown to be the largest independent winery in Canada. In 2001, Peller Estates opened a new winery situated on a 40 acre site in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The property is a showcase for the company, offering public tours and an exceptional dining experience at the Peller Estates Winery restaurant. Naturally, pairings with the best Peller Estate wines is part of the experience.

We were quite taken with Stratus Wines in Niagara-on-the-Lake as well. The building housing the winery is a contemporary design, incorporating eye-catching interior design. But, most importantly, it is also the first winery in the world to receive LEED certification. This attention to issues of sustainability is found in the winemaking process as well.

Stratus produces wine in the tradition of assemblage, blending from 11 different varieties for the Stratus red and 7 different varieties for the Stratus White. We couldn't help but bring back a bottle.

It had been some time since I had last visited Toronto and I must say I appreciate the invitation extended by Tourism Toronto. We're definitely not going to wait so long for the next visit. ■

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Historic Distillery District | www.thedistillerydistrict.com

Soma Chocolatemaker | www.somachocolate.com

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Wineries

Ravine Vineyard | www.ravinevineyard.com

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Restaurants

Canoe Restaurant & Bar | www.oliverbonacini.com

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Mildred's Temple Kitchen | www.templekitchen.com

Chiado | www.chiadoreastaurant.com

Spas

Sweetgrass Spa | www.sweetgrassspa.ca

Elmwood Spa | www.elmwoodspa.com



The Mandarin Oriental—clockwise from left: This relaxing steam room channels the healing powers of an amethyst crystal that serves as the centerpiece for the room; Stones are carefully placed to induce powerful healing properties in Chakra massage; Restorative water therapies such as this vitality pool are a popular balm for fatigue, aches and pains.



Best Spas Far Away and At Home

By Debbie Travis

There's plenty of choice in destination spas, and you can have it all at home if you choose.

I live a very hectic life, and I wouldn't have it any other way. I feed on the pressure, the new goals, and the many opportunities that are just around the corner waiting to be discovered and expanded upon. For me, there is never a dull moment, that's for sure. But like everyone else, if I don't pace myself, I can feel my internal engine running down, my temper gets short and I know I have to escape for a bit.

A personal retreat is such an individual thing. We don't all relax in the same way or under similar conditions. Lazing on a beach is fine for a short period of time, but I get antsy. However, hiking up a mountain or across unknown terrain does wonders for my spirit. Add a massage at the end of the day and a comfy bed and I'm revived.

Have you noticed that there is a boom in the spa business? It's the next generation of spas. Most big hotels have a spa connected to them and there are wonderful boutique spas all over the world. It appears that for the most part people are taking better care of themselves; there's a constructive push from all quarters to live a healthier lifestyle, eat right, exercise, and take time out. The new ideal for building and decorating homes is centred around healthy, environmentally friendly products. This focus on a balanced way of living is inspiring, but not so easy to accomplish. If you find yourself badly out of whack, it's time to prioritize, get downright selfish if you have to, and give yourself a break. Getting away is a sure fix, but you can also pick up some tips from the pros and create a health and wellness spa space at home.

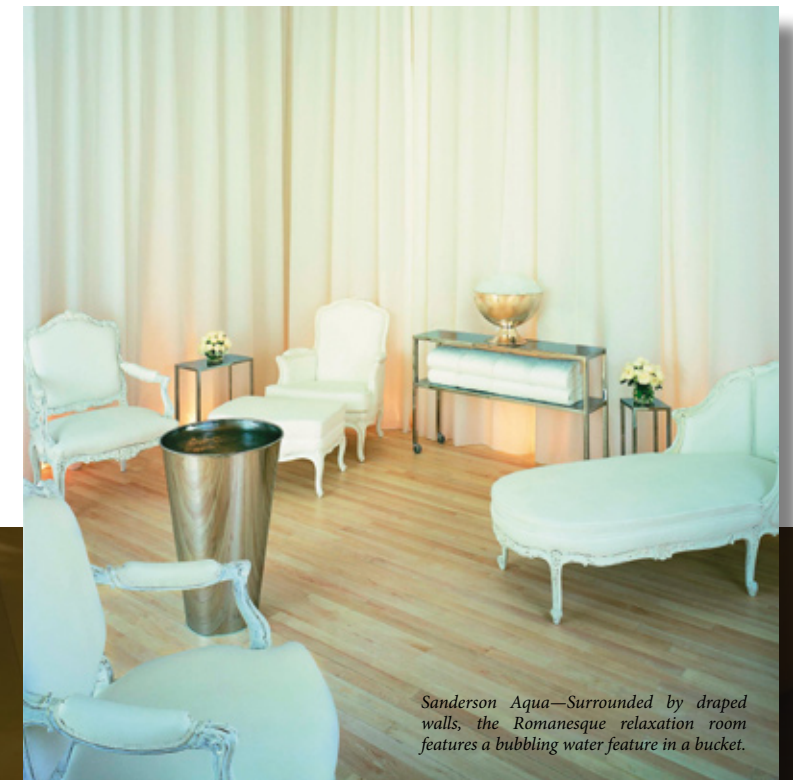
New Generation

I've had the opportunity to visit many getaway destinations and I am amazed at the variety of therapeutic and holistic treatments available. Each setting has its own unique ambiance.

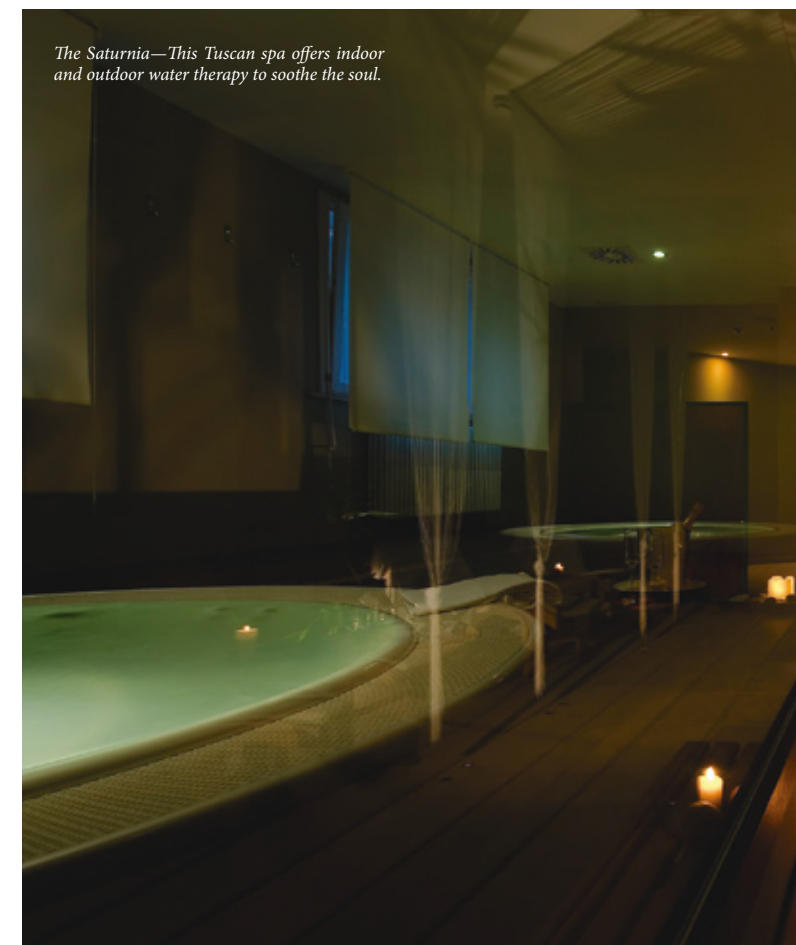
There is nothing quite as stressful as a large, cosmopolitan city. When you are on a business trip and can't handle one more dinner out, this is the time to turn off your cell phone, and immerse yourself in the quiet, sensual world of hot water therapy and a massage. No one does it better than the Mandarin Oriental in New York City. This hotel's magnificent spa is located on the 35th floor overlooking Central Park. The overall design is a blend of eastern heritage and the city's diverse cultures. Bamboo floors run throughout with slate floors in wet areas. Chinese furniture, gold leaf millwork, and Japanese rice paper window treatments set an ornate atmosphere rich in history. To relax and meditate, there's the Amethyst Crystal Steam Room; subdued colour lighting and a gentle infusion of relaxing fragrances enhance the soothing effects of the moist heat. Hydrotherapy body jets in the Vitality Pool ease tired and aching joints. The Thai Yoga Suite is luxuriously decorated with rich, dark, teak wood—and gold leafing reminiscent of the Buddhist temples of Thailand—to transport you from the busy city outside into a distinctly Thai aesthetic conducive to stretching, breathing and quiet meditation.

In downtown London, the Sanderson Hotel, designed by Philippe Starck, is modern, playful, and fun. The building originally housed the old Sanderson wallpaper and fabrics company showroom. The walls run to about 36 feet high as they hung their papers for display. These walls are now covered and rooms have been divided by lengths of floaty, white sheers, which give a magical effect to the whole place. Their Agua Spa is designed in the style of ancient Rome. In one of its resting areas, the Bubbling Bucket water feature set amidst a sea of white promotes a timeless feeling of relaxation and peace in a pristine sanctuary.

One of my favourite places on earth is Tuscany—the spectacular light, hills of lavender, breathtaking views and timeless traditions are famous the world over. When travelling, most people think of lots of great food and wine, touring galleries and cathedrals, but there is another side of Tuscany—the thermal waters. These hot springs gush water from nearby Mount Amiata, a dormant volcano. The Saturnia is a hotel and wellness centre that offers water therapies and massages designed “to put the soul in your body.” Medicinal herbs grow nearby and the famous Mulino sulphuric waterfalls with their special curative powers have natural carved pools in which to relax and heal. Inside the Wellness Centre, light tones of wood planks underfoot, simple benches and lounge chairs surround the pools. Skylights let in the sun, while gauzy white draperies blend with the soft sand shades and the pale blue water. Lush green plants in the lounge area across from pool bring the Tuscan countryside indoors, and are an important feature of any healing environment.



Sanderson Aqua—Surrounded by draped walls, the Romanesque relaxation room features a bubbling water feature in a bucket.



The Saturnia—This Tuscan spa offers indoor and outdoor water therapy to soothe the soul.



Haymarket's huge pool features a magnificent colour show.

The Haymarket in London is a home away from home with a major modern twist. I could live in this hotel. It is designed to please those who love a modern mix of colour and pattern in fabrics and artwork blended with comfortable traditional style. Along with the gym, massage and beauty rooms is the stunning Soholistic pool; a long pewter bar and lounge areas flank the vast pool. There is a state of the art sound system, and hundreds of tiny lights overhead provide a spectacular light show, colour therapy that can be set to arouse and excite or relax you into a dreamy state.

Your very own home spa

You can bring the rejuvenating effects of these hotel spas into your home and experience the benefits on a daily basis. Dawn Woodruff Thrasher is a Holistic Spa Consultant who understands first hand the power that comes from healthy mind/brain functioning. Illness and stress muddle us so that we can't run on all cylinders.

As well as working with spa owners, Dawn consults homeowners who want to include an area for any combination of exercise, meditation, yoga or simply relaxing. If space is tight, you can easily manage a home sanctuary in your bathroom, bedroom or a corner of a home office. Colour is important; paint a wall or part of a wall in turquoise, known for its connection to spirituality. Set up a reclining chair so that you have this colour close by, and hang a picture that will transport your mind to a place that relaxes you.

If you find it difficult to relax or require assistance getting satisfactory results from your time out, I discovered an amazing system called Creative Visualization and Relaxation. CVR can be used at home; slip on earphones and special glasses and listen to calming tones and music while encouraging words fill your mind. Choose from a series of messages—relaxation and stress control, goal focus, help with addictions—the programs are specifically designed to meet your needs.



Create your very own sanctuary—one corner of a busy home is all you need to set the right atmosphere for de-stressing.



Use the power of colour to create the right mood for rest and rejuvenation.

Connoisseur's Choice in House & Home

Her Sanctuary, Indigo and Gingham bedrooms are from *Debbie Travis' Painted House Bedrooms*, written by Debbie Travis with Barbara Dingle, published by Clarkson Potter.
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Prepare an oasis of calm for yourself or your guests with lots of floating sheers and a balancing colour such as green.

“The monochromatic palette of earthy browns and the rolling swirls make a soothing landscape for tired eyes.”

As you know, I am a believer in the power of colour, and more so, the right we all have to paint and decorate in a way that feeds our own personal souls. I have had great fun devising decorating schemes for my TV shows. Here are three bedrooms that illustrate how easily you can produce your own mini-retreat. In Her Sanctuary, a corner of the room has a plush couch layered in cozy, tactile pillows and a throw. The whimsical pattern on the lower wall is a pencil stencil. The monochromatic palette of earthy browns and the rolling swirls make a soothing landscape for tired eyes.

Indigo is a powerful blue that is relaxing and intuitive. The focal wall in this Radiant Blue bedroom can be produced by colour-washing dark and lighter tones of blue to replicate a dreamy night sky. White furnishings and linens add a classic freshness.

My Gingham Guest Room is one of my viewers' all-time favourites. It utilizes the floating airy feeling of soft white sheers at the door and over the day bed. Green is a balancing colour, and by mixing the paint with glaze the stripes become light and translucent.

Take the time to build a relaxation space for yourself and your family. It will make a trip to the spa quick and accessible so that you can recharge whenever the spirit moves you. ■

Produced by Debbie Travis and Barbara Dingle.

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A: “

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Charmed by Carmenere

By Barbara Philip, MW



The Carmenere leaf and vineyards overlooking the Maipo river.

In the mid-1990s, DNA mapping proved that Chilean vineyards had something special. Vine scientists discovered that much of the Merlot planted in Chile was not Merlot at all, but an ancient Bordeaux grape variety called Carmenere. Since then, producers, marketers and consumers have been trying to understand Carmenere. What should they expect in the vineyard, winery and glass? As yet, the Chilean industry has not decided what role this “new” and quirky variety will play in the country’s wine future.

Carmenere is a European wine variety, originally from the Bordeaux region of France. It was widely planted on Bordeaux’s “left bank” before the devastation of Phylloxera (a vine louse) necessitated replanting of the vineyards in the 19th century. Most vigneron chose not to replant Carmenere as it had been relatively difficult to grow in the past and tended to produce low yields. Meanwhile, Chilean wine producers (made up of the country’s aristocracy) were visiting France and taking cuttings of plants back home. Among the Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot vines were slips of Carmenere. The cuttings arrived in Chile and were planted, propagated, and became the foundation for today’s fine wine industry.

Somewhere along the line, Carmenere vines were mixed up with Merlot. Chile’s physical isolation and political instability meant that viticulture grew up relatively independently in the 20th century and the mistaken identity went undetected. Though Carmenere behaved differently than Merlot, it was believed to be a later-ripening, finicky clone. With DNA testing of vines in the 1990s, visiting French ampelographers identified the strangely behaving clone as Carmenere.

Once they knew what they were dealing with, Chileans could start to treat Carmenere like Carmenere. One of the first adjustments was to harvest it later than the Merlot, allowing for better maturity of fruit flavour and tannins. Next, producers could start to focus on matching Carmenere with appropriate vineyard sites. Casa Silva in Colchagua is a champion of Carmenere and a leader in discovering how “micro-terroirs” affect flavour and structure of the wines. Export Manager Arnaud Frennet offers a glimpse into how different vineyards influence Carmenere: “In dry and hot areas it will give wines with lots of structure and ripe red fruits. In soils of lesser drainage and more fertility it will give wines with more spices and vegetal notes.”



Above: Organic Carmenere vineyard at Luis Felipe Edwards. Right: Arnaud Frennet at Casa Silva.

Vegetal flavours, which are part of Carmenere’s signature, can be controversial. Consumers looking for the ripe plum notes of Merlot might be put off by Carmenere’s aromas of roasted bell pepper and wet earth. The less ripe the grape, the more pungent the herbaceous character. That is why, says Canadian importer Ron Bergstrom, it is difficult to make Carmenere for the mass market. He says “the vegetal stemmy characteristics present in wines made from early harvested grapes are just not that appealing to most wine drinkers and for cheap large-scale production, you can’t be too fussy on the timing of the harvest.” Bergstrom believes that this aspect of Carmenere will keep it from being a successful flagship variety in a country known for its value wines.

On the other hand, Carmenere’s distinct flavours might help to set it, and Chile, apart. Coletta & Associates represents the interests of Chilean producers in Western Canada and partner Julian Scholefield believes the industry has already begun to “hang its hat” on Carmenere. He says that “most consumers are willing to try anything as long as they are given that little bit of insight as to what they are trying.” Scholefield and his team hold several events and tastings during the year to introduce consumers to Carmenere and other top Chilean wines. Arnaud Frennet sees the value of associating Chile with one grape variety. “Chile’s diversity plays a little bit against Carmenere as you will see fantastic wines from many other varieties,” he says, “but Carmenere is almost exclusive to Chile, and to stand out on the international market we need a differentiating factor, and here it comes.”



Left: Cactus growing beside a Chilean vineyard. Above: Alpaca



Blending Carmenere with other varieties may be the answer. In a cuvée with Bordeaux grape varieties, like Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, Carmenere’s herbaceousness adds a lifted spice and unique Chilean character. Arnaud Frennet says that it is a “great variety to blend as it will contribute roundness and smoothness to varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot or Syrah.” Both Julian Scholefield and Ron Bergstrom are

excited at the prospect of Carmenere in blends and say that wineries all over the country are experimenting with it.

A successful movement to promote Carmenere as a flagship grape, either in blends or as a varietal wine, would need the support of the largest producer organization, Wines of Chile. However, Managing Director Juan A. Somavia does not agree that focusing on any one grape variety is the best way to show off the country’s wines. “Carmenere is certainly an attractive part of Chile’s story, but it is just one part of that story,” he says. “We want Chile to be defined by its diversity, consistency, and outstanding value at every price point, and not by a single varietal.”

“Chile is still focused on value, but the

value is spread over a much wider price

range now than it has been historically...”

Even if they aren’t promoting it as a signature variety, Wines of Chile are helping Carmenere’s cause by setting a standard for its spelling. Next time you look in the Chilean section of your local wine store, you might notice that the varietal is spelled three ways, differentiated by the number and positioning of accents. Currently, Carmenere, Carmenère and Carménère are all in use. The official spelling according to Juan Somavia is the simplest, accent-free one: Carmenere. Hopefully, producers will follow Somavia’s lead for upcoming vintages.

If Carmenere isn’t a point of differentiation for Chile—what is? In the last 20 years, Chilean wines have set themselves apart from the competition, not with a style of wine (like sparkling in Champagne) or grape variety (like Malbec in Argentina) but with price point. In export markets like Canada, the U.K. and the U.S., Chile is known for offering good quality wine at reasonable prices. Wine sales have benefited from the current economic climate where consumers are looking to get more for less out of each bottle. Though growth has been steady for the last year, most producers recognize defining their industry by low-priced wines is not a desirable strategy for the long term. Several brands have line extensions that climb the price ladder in an effort to trade consumers up. “Icon” wines are ultra-premium priced offerings meant to bring an air of sophistication to a producer’s line up. The way to encourage consumers to spend more on Chilean wine, according to Ron Bergstrom, may be changing how they think of value. “Chile is still focused on value, but the value is spread over a much wider price range now than it has been historically,” he says. “Some people may complain that Chile is no longer the cheapest producer, but in my books that is good news. If we can get off the floor and onto the stage, so much the better.”



Chilean BBQ and appetizers

The role of Carmenere could actually diminish as Chile switches its focus to promoting higher-end wine. Other than Casa Silva, where they consider it to be a “pillar” of the company, large Chilean wineries do not feature Carmenere in their high-end wines. This is bad news for a grape variety not particularly suited to mass market production. Perhaps as producers understand Carmenere better in the vineyard and winery, they will be more confident putting it in their icon wines.

While Carmenere seems destined to play only a supporting role in the development of Chile’s wine industry (at least in the short term), producers and importers clearly display a fondness for this re-discovered grape variety. Julian Scholefield and Juan Somavia both appreciate the variety’s “herbal” and “peppery spice” qualities, while Arnaud Frennet loves the “way it brings vibrancy into your glass.” Certainly, when it is planted in the appropriate site and allowed to ripen fully, Carmenere brings depth to the cast of Chilean grape varieties. ■

Connoisseur’s Choice in Carmenere

CHILEAN CARMENERE	MINI-NOTE	FOOD PAIRING	FIND
Terra Noble ‘Gran Reserva’, Maule 2007	<i>Espresso, dark berry notes and lifted tobacco leaf flavours. Good finish.</i>	<i>Savoury lamb sausages</i>	FI
Viña Chocalan ‘Reserva’, Maipo 2007	<i>Very rich nose with chocolate and black fruit. Firm on palate with a touch of classic herbaceousness.</i>	<i>Buffalo pot roast in vegetable sauce</i>	FID
Viña Felipe Edwards ‘Gran Reserva’ Colchagua 2007	<i>Nice toasty oak with mineral and black fruit. Tannins are well-integrated and the finish is long.</i>	<i>BBQ’d rib steak with grilled sweet red pepper</i>	FIND
Viña Morandé ‘Reserva’, Maipo 2006	<i>Earthy and leathery nose. Medium bodied with red fruit on palate.</i>	<i>Mushroom empanadas</i>	F
Nativa ‘Terra Reserva’ 2008	<i>Sweet vanilla and bramble fruit on the nose with coconut, raspberry and green notes on the palate.</i>	<i>Chicken stuffed sopapillas</i>	FN
Terra Andina ‘Reserva’, Rapel 2007	<i>Light bodied with red plum and herbal quality.</i>	<i>Grilled tuna steak</i>	F
Viña Undurraga Sibaris ‘Reserva’ 2008	<i>Plum, blackberry and baking spice aromas. Soft on palate with chicory notes.</i>	<i>Spicy lentil stew</i>	FD
Casa Silva ‘Reserva’, Colchagua 2007	<i>Opaque purple/black. Cassis, roasted bell pepper and tar aromas. Palate is lush and full.</i>	<i>Pastel de Choclo-Corn and meat stew</i>	FID

F Food. Wine matches well with a range of dishes.

I Interesting. Wine has a distinctive and delicious character.

N Natural. Wine was produced with particular concern for the environment.

D Deal. Wine offers excellent value at its price point.

Holiday 2009 Must-Haves

By Connie Ekelund



- **KULTUhr** Skeleton Tourbillon with 24 hour and power reserve indicators. Stainless steel case houses mechanical, self-winding, double-barrelled Tourbillon for superior accuracy, appreciated through the scratch proof sapphire glass case back. Limited 99 pieces. Power reserve 65 hours, water-resistant to 165 feet, crocodile strap. Swiss Design. \$7,900.
www.kultuhr.net



With the holidays upon us and the economy still being a concern, expect a family holiday season where everything gets “personal.” Both you and your loved ones will be thrilled with the collection of “must-haves” we have selected for you. We have items big and small to fit every budget and style.

JEWELLERY

- **Tiffany's** enamel bracelet with a lacelike diamond-and-platinum overlay and 18 karat gold lining, \$104,000, recalls the Victorian era; black onyx and diamond teardrop earrings, \$25,400, also in platinum.
www.tiffany.ca
- **Dimples**—an environmentally-friendly, Canadian jewellery line made from re-claimed silver—captures life's precious moments in a single touch. Bracelet, \$175; toggle necklace, \$325; cufflinks, \$175.
www.dimplesforever.com



- **Elie Tahari** sleeveless sequin-front tee in black and silver, \$178.



- **Hanky Panky** exclusive holiday gift boxes of the greatest panties ever! \$68.

FASHION

- Don't have time to shop for yourself this holiday season? **Rent the Runway** to the rescue. Borrow a fabulous dress from designers such as Proenza Schouler, Herve Leger, Brian Reyes, Yigal Azrouel, and many more. Rentals start at just \$50.
www.renttherunway.com

Holt Renfrew has all the designer must have looks for this holiday season.

- **Rock & Republic** bootcut jeans featuring crystal “&” symbol on the back right pocket, \$295.



- **OATS** Men's Cashmere v-neck sweater in five great colours, \$198.
www.holtrenfrew.com

STYLE

This season at **Harry Rosen** is all about luxurious layering, as it continues to be an important factor in how men dress for winter. It's not only practical for our Canadian climate; it also presents an opportunity to showcase personal style in an outfit.



• **Levi's** leather jacket, \$498.
www.harryrosen.com



• **Canada Goose** has a modern take on the original polar Expedition Parka developed for scientists working in Antarctica. Done in DWR-treated, wide-wale corduroy with trimmer fit and rock-n-roll details, \$1,200.
www.canada-goose.com



FOOTWEAR

• **Stuart Weitzman** stiletto evening sandal with Swarovski crystals, \$525.



• **Valentino** patent 95mm pump with nappa back bow detail, \$795.

• **Burberry** rainboot with novahearts, \$195.
www.holtrenfrew.com



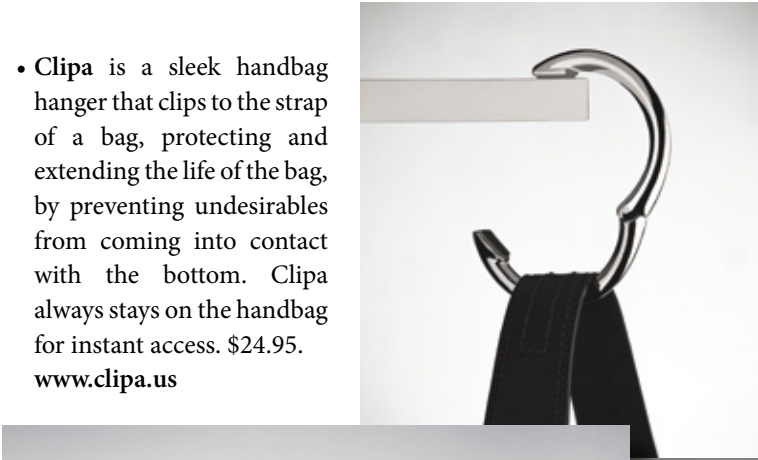
ACCESSORIES

• **Red Scarf Equestrian** designs and manufactures in Canada a beautiful line of luxury luggage and bags designed for equestrians, using the finest materials and Eco Italian leather. Red bootbag, \$1,350.
www.redscarfequestrian.ca

• **Pierre Creations** “Canes of Exception.” Master jewellers, sculptors, engravers and setters work together with an unequalled know-how and mastery, in order to insure that each item is unique and entirely handmade. All canes with precious metals and gems are approved by the Royal Belgian Mint. €1900 (Euros).
www.pierre-creation.be



• **Clipa** is a sleek handbag hanger that clips to the strap of a bag, protecting and extending the life of the bag, by preventing undesirables from coming into contact with the bottom. Clipa always stays on the handbag for instant access. \$24.95.
www.clipa.us



FRAGRANCES

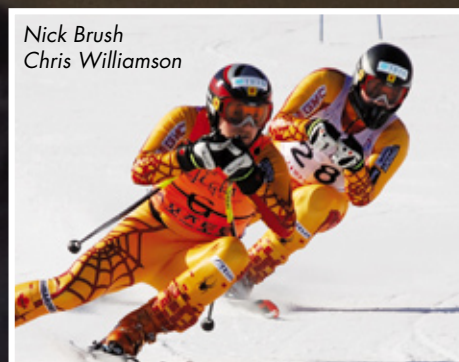
• **Lola Marc Jacobs**—Lola, the newest fragrance is Jacobs’ own personal creation. His vision of what is feminine and sexy is a boldly creative triumph of ingenuity that could only come from Marc Jacobs. Eau de Parfum, 50ml, \$79; 100ml, \$105.
www.holtrenfrew.com





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from IRIS.

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connoisseur's choice 5

STYLE

- **Dior**—The Holiday 2009 sets are beautifully packaged for the season with Dior's luxurious fragrances, couture white accessories, white satin pillows inside and trimmed with a gold satin bow. Dior Fragrance Miss Dior Cherie Box Set, \$127; Dior Fragrance J'adore Jewel Box Set, \$127; Capture Totale Holiday Set, \$144.
www.holtrenfrew.com



SKINCARE

- **Chantecaille**—The Nano Gold Energizing Cream from Chantecaille relies on the extraordinary capabilities of nanotechnology, an incredible delivery system that is proving to be one of the most important scientific advances of our time. Nano gold energizing cream \$525; Nano gold energizing eye cream, \$325.
www.holtrenfrew.com



www.GoodLifeConnoisseur.com



COSMETICS

- **Yves Saint Laurent** Limited Edition "Your Lovely Palette" Duo Eye Colour, \$82.



- **Armani** Swarovski Art Deco Palette for eye and face, \$99.



- **Revive** Limited Edition Art bag set, \$300.



- **Estee Lauder** Renutriv "The Ultimage Lift" Gift Set, \$350.

www.holtrenfrew.com

Copeman Healthcare Centre: Creating a New Standard of Healthcare in Canada

By Nicole Aubertin

Dr. Beth Donaldson, Family Physician



The Copeman Healthcare Centre, now with facilities in both Vancouver and Calgary, has defined the term “premium health services” in this country while becoming Canada’s recognized leader in the field of preventive healthcare. It hasn’t been an easy road. Four years ago, when the organization announced its arrival, it generated considerable national controversy. Opponents surfaced from every direction, shouting phrases like “two-tier medicine” and “healthcare for the worried wealthy.” The company became one of the very few to ever be audited by the government for compliance to the Canada Health Act. The result? Not a single recommended change to its practices.

“We’ve been largely misunderstood since the beginning,” says Don Copeman, its founder. “Do we deliver a higher standard of healthcare for our fees? Absolutely. Do we violate either the spirit or the letter of health legislation in our country? Absolutely not.”

Copeman is quick to point out that as early as the 1950s, Tommy Douglas, the acknowledged founder of Medicare in Canada, warned that creating a funding system for universal health insurance was only the first stage; that unless we made a shift to a culture of prevention in Canadian medicine, universal healthcare would become unsustainable.

“The fact is that we represent the long-overdue arrival of comprehensive preventive health services in Canada,” says Copeman. “It was never the intent of government that all of the costs of delivering personal preventive medicine would be borne by the taxpayer.”

The Copeman Healthcare Centre provides its members with personal health services from a variety of professionals including registered dietitians, exercise medicine specialists, nurses, psychologists, screening technicians and personal health coaches. The Centre integrates this care with that of expert doctors, providing members with a complete healthcare service under one roof. Copeman says the Centre’s approach to healthcare represents the type of innovation that is desperately needed in Canada right now.

“After four years of hard work and research, we now know that our model will save lives, while ensuring the health, wellness and longevity of people,” says Copeman. “This can have a profound impact on controlling escalating public health costs as the baby boomer generation ages. Knowing that we may be providing a guiding light to our fiscally-challenged universal health system makes our staff even more proud of what they do.”

The costs? At this new style of “full service” medical clinic, the integrated team assigned to each member of the Centre is covered by an all-inclusive annual fee of \$2,900. It is \$3,900 in the first year, as this is when the medical team needs to spend the most amount of time with people. If a person requires an ongoing program of psychology, physiotherapy or coaching, there are extra costs on a “fee for service” basis.

“We are proactive, and deliver the two things that define quality primary healthcare: access to professional expertise and unhurried medicine.”

If this seems like a lot of extra money to pay in a “free” medical system, the founder of the Centre encourages people to think again. “Canadians spend about \$280 billion dollars per year on life insurance, but virtually nothing by comparison for quality, prevention-based healthcare that may save their lives. Think about that for a minute. It’s really very interesting.” Copeman also points out that a large portion of the Centre’s fees are often covered by extended health plans, with some covering 100% of the fees. Virtually everything else that plans don’t cover can be reported as qualified medical expenses on your income tax form.

“In the end, it’s a matter of priorities,” says Copeman. “What we provide is essentially very simple. We take the burden of healthcare off people’s shoulders. We are proactive, and deliver the two things that define quality primary healthcare: access to professional expertise and unhurried medicine.”

Membership is limited, but both centres are still accepting new patients through to the end of this year. Free on-site consultations can be arranged through a toll free service (888.922.2732) or facility tours can be taken online at www.copemanhealthcare.com. ■

SOY

The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

By Sandra Tonn, RHN

Soy food manufacturers promote their products as a wonder food that can treat and prevent a seemingly endless list of ailments and diseases, including hormone imbalance, osteoporosis, diabetes, heart disease, prostate problems and menopausal symptoms. Despite a lack of consistent evidence, most consumers also believe that soy can help prevent cancer, too, especially breast cancer.

The truth is, the benefits of soy are controversial at best. Before we stock up on blocks of tofu, choose the tofu dog, add soy to our latté and use soy milk with our cereal, we're best advised to consider the many sides of the soy story—including the good, the bad and even the ugly.

Soy the Good?

The latest research on soy appears to be good news. According to a 15-year study of more than 35,000 women in Singapore, daily, moderate consumption of soy may reduce risk of breast cancer by 18 per cent in post-menopausal (but not pre-menopausal) women.

So, is this good news? It may or may not be. To date, there have been four other quality studies done on the link between soy and breast cancer risk. Three of the four studies found no association, and one study found that the risk of developing breast cancer was actually increased with intake of soy.

Where, then, do soy manufacturers get their good news with which to sell and advocate eating large quantities of soy? They look to the East, pointing to the good health and low breast cancer rates of Asian women. However, a study by Institute of Nutrition and Food Safety and Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention showed that the average soy intake of rural adult women in China was between 0 and 35 milligrams (0.001 ounces). Other sources show the average consumption of soy foods in Japan and China is 10 grams (about 2 teaspoons) per day. Unlike Canadians, who often eat soy to replace meat in a meal, Asians consume soy foods in small amounts as a condiment.

In Canada, the average package of tofu weighs 400 grams (14 ounces) or more. Add a glass of soy milk at breakfast or on your cereal, soy in your latté, soy yogurt for a snack, soy ice cream for a treat, and the large amounts of soy used as a cheap filler in processed foods and energy bars, and soy intake is off the charts.

Associate Professor Koh Woon Puay, co-principal investigator of the National University of Singapore (NUS) where the Singapore soy-breast cancer study was conducted, pointed out that while soy may reduce cancer risk, "It doesn't mean the more soy people consume, the better it is. When people consume soy in high amounts, their hormones might be affected."

Why do we eat too much soy in the West? Well...because soy marketers tell us to. According to research from the Department of Food Science and Nutrition, University of Minnesota, soy products are heavily marketed to postmenopausal women for relief of menopausal symptoms, despite the absence of consistent clinical data demonstrating any such benefit in human trials.

Is it possible that soy is a good, healing food and that we're simply eating too much of it?

Soy the Bad?

According to some health experts, including Sally Fallon and Mary G. Enig, PhD of the Weston A. Price Foundation, soy should not be eaten at all.

Their research suggests that soy naturally contains many anti-nutrients that reduce mineral absorption, interfere with protein digestion—causing pancreatic damage, and disrupt endocrine function, which may cause the development of infertility and breast cancer. Fallon and Enig also describe soy's active ingredient, called phytoestrogen, as extremely harmful to the thyroid.

Kaayla T. Daniel, PhD, CCN, nutrition expert and author of *The Whole Soy Story* (NewTrends Publishing, Inc.), agrees with the Foundation's warnings. In a recent interview with health guru Dr. Joseph Mercola (www.mercola.com), Daniel expressed her concern about the many women she sees who have thyroid problems as a result of what she believes is regular soy consumption. She also speaks about the many well-meaning parents who give their babies soy formula until they discover that its consumption has been linked to autoimmune thyroid disease.

In addition to thyroid damage, scientific studies suggest the side effects of soy consumption may also include DNA damage, accelerated aging of the brain including dementia and memory loss, and hormone disruption including early menopause in women and decreased sperm production in men.

Soy the Ugly?

Whether viewed as good or bad, there are some ugly truths connected to soy's story.

Because soy has become a big seller it has also become an agricultural cash crop in North America. Many farmers have given up the practice of diversification and are practicing monocropping, which means they plant the same large crop of soy year after year. Monocropping damages the soil, resulting in the use of more synthetic fertilizers. Most soy farmers are also using liberal amounts of pesticides, since the majority of the soy grown in both Canada and the US is genetically modified.

Aside from the potential harm agri-business and GM farming causes the soil, the farm workers and us consumers, there is the very real threat of GM soy seeds contaminating the nearby organic and diversified farms we rely on for clean, safe food.

Soy grown outside of North America is also a concern. Independent research, as well as reports from non-profit groups such as Greenpeace and The Nature Conservancy, says that growing soy beans to feed to cattle that will be served at North America's many fast food chains is among the most damaging actions behind rainforest destruction.

Such devastation kills off millions of species of birds and animals and threatens our global environment, too, since the world's tropical rainforests act like the lungs of the Earth.

Another ugly truth is that due to the big soy business, soy crops are replacing traditional crops in third-world countries. Such countries are losing out on both food that they used to grow and the value of processing it. Now their work benefits multi-national corporations, not their local populations. The same is true of corporations paying third-world countries to plant soy for bio-fuel.

Good Quality Counts

Since soy is now so readily available, it has become a common ingredient in processed foods. If you read labels, which you need to if you want to ensure you're not overloading yourself with soy, you'll see that it's found in most packaged products including soups, cereals, crackers, bread, candy and energy bars. Soy is cheap filler, an inexpensive source of protein and is also desirable to manufacturers because it's high in fat, providing a cheap source of oil.

Some Really Good News

If you're after health benefits from a bean, but are hesitant about soy, have no fear—there are many other healthy legumes to choose from. Legumes are known to significantly lower cholesterol levels, help to control insulin and blood sugar levels, aid in lowering blood pressure, alleviate hemorrhoids and improve bowel disorders, help to prevent colon disorders, and may even help to inhibit cancer.

Legumes, which include beans, chickpeas, peas, and lentils, are also considered one of nature's near-perfect power foods because they offer so many nutrients and in such a good balance. They are a rich source of protein, iron, calcium, zinc, B vitamins and fibre.

To prepare legumes the traditional way, which makes them easier to digest and makes their many minerals more available, soak one-part legumes in four parts water for 12 hours or overnight. Throw away the soaking water, and use fresh water to cook them in. To cook, cover the legumes with water and add another inch or two of water to the pot. Bring them to a boil. With a large spoon or ladle, remove and discard the foam that forms on the water. By removing the foam, you remove digestive discomfort. Once legumes have boiled and you've removed the gas-causing foam, reduce to a simmer (so water is gently bubbling), cover and cook for about one hour, or until soft. Adding a bit of fennel or cumin during cooking will also aid digestibility.

Legumes are extremely versatile and can be used in hundreds of ways including baked, in soups, casseroles, stews, vegetarian patties and burgers, salads and more. There is a long list of legumes to choose from, including adzuki beans, black turtle beans, Great Northern beans, lentils, Lima beans, navy beans, split green peas, pinto beans, kidney beans and garbanzo beans (chick peas). Lentils cook the quickest.

If legumes are a new item on your menu, don't be surprised if it takes a few months for your digestive system to get used to them. Be sure to follow the soaking and cooking directions above and then chew well. Buying dry beans in bulk is extremely affordable and will last for up to a year.

If you do your homework and decide that soy, in moderation, is a healthy choice for you, the next step is to choose only high quality products. Avoid the soy in processed foods. It will not provide the potential benefits found in traditional diets. Even nicely packaged tofu may be more harmful to your health than not. The more processed soy is, the more difficult it is to digest. There are also many questions about how the processing of soy affects its safety. Some soy, for example, is processed using aluminum. The way a food is grown and prepared makes a world of difference in relation to its safety and health benefits.

“The truth is, the benefits of soy are controversial at best.”

The best way to enjoy soy is in as traditional a form as possible. Choose organic products, which cannot contain GM soy or any of the toxins that accompany non-organic farming and processing. Choose fermented soy. A recent study that showed eating tofu at least once a day in senior years led to memory loss (*Dementia and Geriatric and Cognitive Disorders*, July, 2008), also reported that those who ate fermented soy products had an increase in memory.

Unfermented soy products, such as tofu, still contain anti-nutrients that make the food difficult to digest and prevent the bean's minerals from being absorbed into the body. Fermented soy products, on the other hand, offer easier digestion and liberated minerals. Fermented soy products include tempeh, miso, natto and tamari. Look for them in health food stores and learn how to use them in small amounts.

There are many questions surrounding soy. Those who do not have a stake in the industry are quick to point out that there really is not enough research to support black and white answers. For now, the smartest approach we can take is to be aware of the good, bad and ugly, instead of being blinded by the many marketing campaigns attempting to sell us this controversial bean. ■

Recent Soy Studies Say

Soy protein does not lower LDL cholesterol, according to research done by Nutritional Physiology Research Centre at the Sansom Institute for Health Research at the University of South Australia and published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (Aug, 2008).

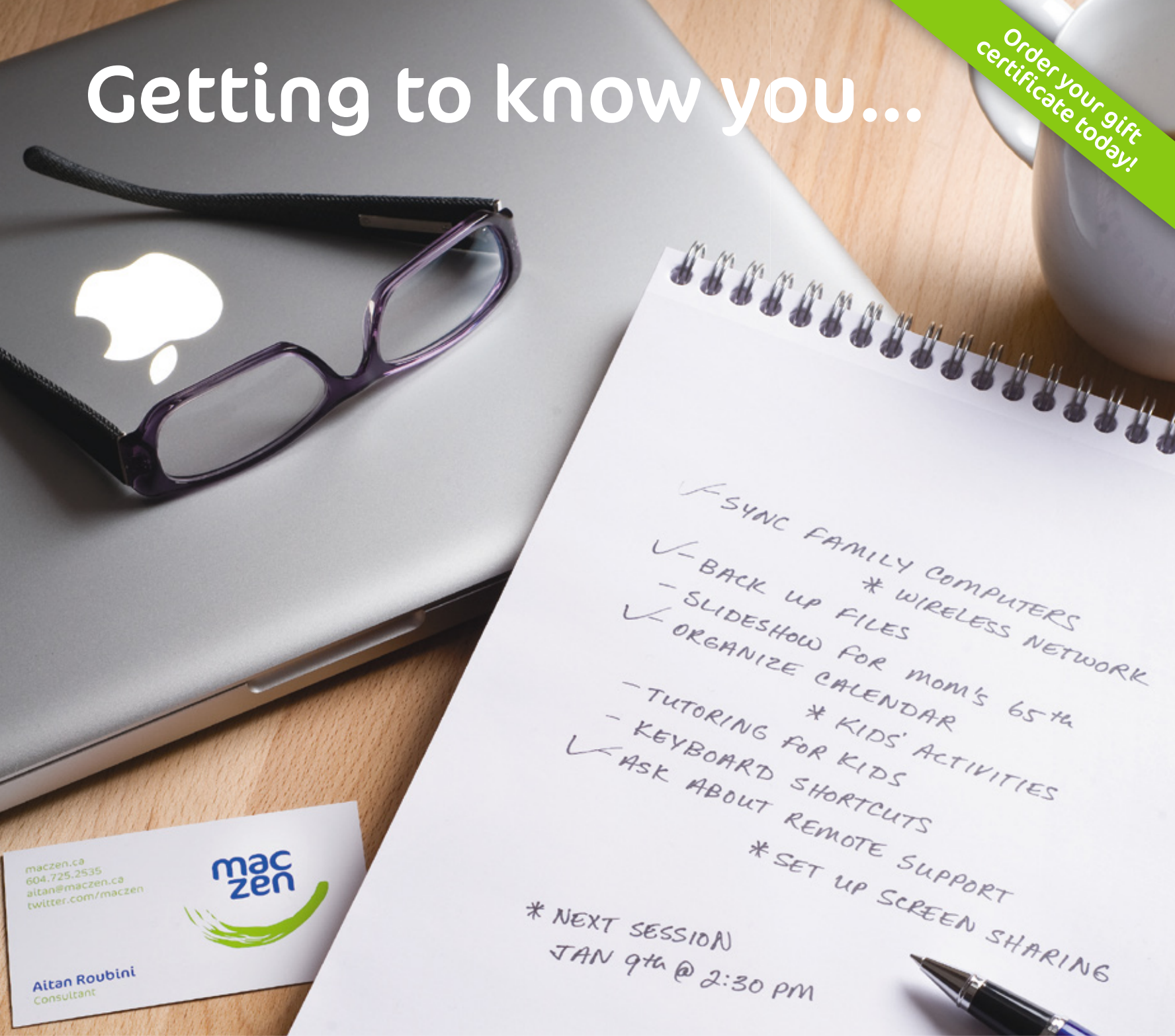
Soy products may bring on early-onset menopause in women, according to a study done by North Carolina State University and published in the journal *Neurotoxicology* (July 2008).

Men who eat soy on a regular basis may produce significantly less sperm than men who never eat it, according to research done by the Harvard School of Public Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Harvard Medical School and published in the journal *Human Reproduction* (July 2008).

Those who eat tofu at least once a day may have an increased risk of dementia or memory loss, particularly if they are over age 65, according to research done by Loughborough and Oxford Universities last month, funded by the Alzheimer's Research Trust, and published in the journal *Dementia and Geriatric and Cognitive Disorders* (July, 2008).

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connoisseur's choice
INNOVATIONS

Geek Gift Guide

By Steve Dotto



Panasonic LUMIX GH1

Offering a premium product in the ultra competitive camera market is not for the faint of heart. Although not the best known camera brand, Panasonic is making a name for itself with those willing to look beyond brand name. Their flagship camera, the LUMIX GH1, is elegant, sophisticated and oh-so-capable.

"A wealth of features makes the GH1 a dream to use regardless of your level of experience."

Panasonic chose to go with a 3/4 type sensor. Slightly smaller than other DSLRs, it still captures a whopping 12.1 megapixel image. The upside of a smaller sensor is the camera body is significantly more compact than other DSLRs—something you will appreciate when lugging one around. The moment I fell in love with this camera came when I tried the full HD video record mode. Now, with a single camera, you can choose the best media to capture the moment, still shots or video, it is completely your choice. A wealth of features makes the GH1 a dream to use regardless of your level of experience. Interchangeable lenses all provide continuous auto-focus in both still and video mode. The LUMEX GH1 is a breath of fresh air in the rarefied strata that is the world of the DSLR. \$1899.99.

www.panasonic.ca

What are the best holiday gifts you can get? Why, the ones you buy for yourself, of course! Let this year's gift guide provide inspiration for your self-indulgence. And what about your loved ones? You might just find something in our hi-tech stocking for them as well.

iClubby

If you're like me, you spend far more hours sitting in a crappy chair at your office computer than you do on that designer sofa in your living room. Doesn't your tush deserve the best where it is most often parked? The engineering team at Gravitonus thinks so. Their iClubby workstation is a futuristic synthesis of ergonomic seating, high end computer system, 5.1 surround sound, and even environmental controls. The centerpiece is a stunning trio of LCD displays driven by a Matrox triple-head video adapter.

Should any of your kith or kin suggest that such a workstation is excessive, kindly remind them that over the course of a typical career, a knowledge worker will spend more than 12,000 hours at the keyboard. Then tell them that doing so in a \$200 office chair with poor ergonomic properties should be prohibited under the Geneva Convention treaties as cruel and inhumane. If that doesn't work, point out that studies have shown productivity increases with available screen real estate, so the three screens in this system merely make you the best you can be! Besides, they're just jealous. Starting somewhere north of \$7,000.

iclubby.com

www.GoodLifeConnoisseur.com



Pioneer AVIC-Z110BT

Every Tom, Dick and Harry has a GPS with roadmaps for use in the car these days, but the Pioneer AVIC-Z110BT will show you the way with style, class and a feature set that leaves the others lost and heading nowhere fast. Where to begin? Bluetooth integration for hands-free voice calls, iPod connectivity, and an operating system that allows drag and drop customization of your favourite features.



The voice recognition system turns the AVIC-Z110BT into a navigator/concierge par excellence. As you are driving along you can simply ask your GPS “find the nearest ATM” and you are on your way. The voice activation extends into the iPod connectivity, so you can ask for a favourite playlist or artist or song as you make your way to that bank machine. As expected with the Bluetooth integration and voice features, hands-free phone operation is a given.

The 7” LCD display is bright and easy to read, which is so important in mapping mode. Squinting at a small hard-to-read screen while trying to determine your next turn can make for a turn for the worse!

The screen is touch-sensitive, meaning you don’t have to fumble with multipurpose controls, and entering information with the onscreen keyboard is a snap.

“Where to begin? Bluetooth integration for hands-free voice calls, iPod connectivity, and an operating system that allows drag and drop customization of your favourite features.”

Coming from the audiophiles at Pioneer, the AVIC-Z110BT is also the heart of a superb sound system, which includes a 7-Band Graphics equalizer and three sets of hi-volt pre-outs. Optional integration with XM Sirius satellite radio round out the offering, making the AVIC-Z110BT the envy of pretty much everyone, including Thomas, Richard and Harold!
www.pioneerelectronics.ca



Porter Garden Telescope

Telescopes of Vermont proudly re-introduces the Porter Garden Telescope. Designed in the 1920s by Russell Porter as a luxury item, and a model for the 200-inch telescope at Palomar, the elegant bronze art nouveau instrument is a permanent installation in a garden or roofdeck. The superb optics will show you the moons of Jupiter, or the sailboats out front, and they can be removed in seconds for safekeeping. The remaining bronze sculpture stays outside forever. Each telescope, based on one in the Smithsonian and handcrafted by four senior gentlemen who are masters of their trade, is serial numbered. Only 200 will be made. Price includes marble pedestal. \$37,000 plus shipping.

www.gardentelescopes.com



Endurance Wind Power Wind Turbine

When you think about the gift for the person who has everything, how about your own windmill. Not for the budding Don Quixote, out to rid the world of evil, but for the eco-friendly Don Quixote, out to make the world a greener and healthier place.

Endurance Wind Power makes Wind Turbines for the rest of us, whether for residences or small industry, they have a wind turbine worth tilting at. Take the S343, designed for light commercial or residential applications where the annual power requirements are between 10,000 and 25,000KWH. You supply the wind and the S343 will supply the juice.

Now Santa is going to have to be careful and dodge the blades as he makes his annual visit but these systems are efficient enough that in many applications you can actually contribute power back to the grid, and depending on where you live, that can mean money back in your suit of armour. Starting at \$34,995.

www.endurancewindpower.com

Bang and Olufsen BeoCom 5

Decisions, decisions. Many of us have ditched the old landline, and in many cases VOIP (Voice Over IP) has replaced the old fashioned POTS (Plain Old Telephone System) phone we grew up with. Others are not yet ready to cut their relationship with Ma Bell’s offspring. Regardless of whether you want traditional phone service or VOIP, the tres chic designers at Bang and Olufsen think you should have an über-cool home phone. The BeoCom 5 is a two-line phone, which you can use as a traditional two-line or have one dedicated to IP telephony. As you would expect from B&O, sound quality is superb. Through the handset you should be able to hear the proverbial pin drop, but it is the external speaker that will turn heads—it doubles as (you guessed it) a cordless charging station.

www.bang-olufsen.com/beocom5





Palm Pre

"When I grow up I want to be a BlackBerry Killer!" "No, when I grow up I want to be an iPhone killer!" When the Palm Pre grows up (and it does have a bit of growing up to do) it may give either one a run for their money. Palm has been pretty quiet lately, but the Pre is going to change all that. Taking the best from both the BlackBerry and iPhone and squishing it into a convertible phone, the Pre is a force to be dealt with.

"The online features come together to help sync all your contacts, calendars and other crucial information, making the Pre the device that pulls your world together."

The Pre is a tidy little powerhouse; the touch screen moves aside to access a small keyboard. True BlackBerry aficionados will find the keyboard a tad tight, but it is easier to use than the onscreen keyboard that is the bane of so many iPhone users.

Full connectivity is the hallmark of this Smartphone, with Wi-Fi, and Bluetooth connections well managed and easy to engage. The online features come together to help sync all your contacts, calendars and other crucial information, making the Pre the device that pulls your world together. A way cool induction charging system is the icing on the cake—just slap the Pre against its charging cradle and you are priming the pump!

Palm has done a very nice job with the applications as well—setting up email is easier than on any platform I have tried. A host of multimedia features put the Pre in the same conversation as the iPhone—not leading the pack yet, but give it time to grow up a little. Price varies depending on contract and carrier.

www.palm.com

Powermat

One of the absolute coolest features of the Palm Pre is the wireless magnetic induction charging station that ships with the Palm. The rest of us can cut the charging cord with the Powermat. If you are an iPod, iPhone or BlackBerry junkie (that pretty much describes the civilized world), this is worth the price of admission. A slight modification to your Smartphone (replacement battery cover on the BlackBerry or a streamlined case on the iPhone) and you can charge wirelessly. Simply place the phone on the mat, a magnet centers the phone into position and the charger does its thing. The base accommodates up to three devices at a time, and includes a whole whack of older legacy charging connectors, so you can charge just about any electronic gizmo you can imagine. There is even a folding portable version. I don't think I will ever be able to buy a gadget that requires a traditional charger again! \$99 for the base station and cases for BlackBerry and iPhone run at about \$40.

www.powermat.com

Stocking Stuffers

USB Cell

The problem with rechargeable batteries is having to carry around and keep track of all the attendant chargers and their cables. What a nuisance! That is a limitation of the past if you opt for USB Cells from Moxia Energy. These little AA rechargeables pop their top and plug into a USB port to juice up.

Duty cycle is somewhere around 500 recharges, so you will not be one of those contributing to the current disposal of 15 billion disposable alkaline batteries produced annually. \$20.

www.usbcell.com



were taken, making this a very cool memory card for the world travelers out there. \$109 for the 4GB card.

www.eye.fi

Eye-Fi Explorer

Want to share photos and videos when on the road, but don't want to carry a computer? Try the Eye-Fi Explore Video wireless SD card. What looks like a plain-Jane SD card is actually a marvel of miniaturization. A built-in Wi-Fi transmitter enables you to upload data directly from the card to your favourite online photo sharing or social networking site, no computer needed! As a bonus, the Eye-Fi also tags your photos with the geographic locations where they

SwissFlash 16 GB

The "Swiss Army Knife" of Swiss Army knives. In place of nose hair tweezers, the Swiss Army folks have included something far more useful for the techie survivalist: a 16 GB USB drive. Yes, in addition to the convenience of the blade, screwdriver, nail file and mini flashlight, you can also carry around a few thousand songs, the complete Season 3 of Dexter, your holiday photos, a couple of PowerPoint presentations from the office, and whatever other digital content that strikes your fancy. All this and the potential to keep you alive for weeks in the bush—not bad! \$114.95.

www.swissarmy.com



Powermat Home & Office



Powermat Portable

Luxury Car Wish List

By Tony Whitney



2010 Porsche 911 Turbo



2010 Porsche 911 Turbo Interior

Around this time of the year, the world's press regularly turns for seasonal filler copy to the legendary Nieman Marcus Christmas Book to find the most lavish imaginable gifts. And while a his-and-hers Icon A5 sport aircraft with trailer and flying lessons for two might be this year's NM "ultimate," those with the funds can find plenty of inspiration at their local luxury car dealership.

A good start would be at the neighbourhood Aston Martin store, where a base model won't leave a whole lot of change out of \$200,000. Currently, Aston's most desirable (and most expensive) model is the \$325,000 DBS Volante convertible and finding one of these under the tree would be a treat indeed. This car uses a powered fabric top, and it's so well crafted and finished that somebody at Aston Martin must have snuck over to one of those megabuck Savile Row tailors in London to get advice on the task.

The bodywork is mostly of aluminum, but there is quite extensive use of carbon fibre too, some of it visible, some not. The timeless Aston Martin styling that's pretty well unmistakable has evolved from other models, but it's evolved with subtlety and good taste.

It's also a practical car and reasonably easy to get in and out of—but you'll probably want to use the tiny rear seats strictly as a place to toss your Louis Vuitton briefcase or Hugo Boss jacket.

"The first 911 Turbo road car appeared in 1975, and ever since then the model has been at the very pinnacle of sports car design."

The power unit is Aston Martin's hand-built all-alloy quad cam V-12, which displaces just inside six litres and develops a serious 510-horsepower and 420 ft. lb. of torque. Find an open road and you can rocket the beast to 100 km/h in something like 4.3-seconds. Top speed is quoted by Aston Martin as 307 km/h, but for most of us, that will have to remain a theoretical figure.

Although most of the buzz around Porsche right now concerns the ground-breaking four-door Panamera model (previewed in an earlier issue of this magazine), the newest sportster on the company's roster is the 2010 911 Turbo. The first 911 Turbo road car appeared in 1975, and ever since then the model has been at the very pinnacle of sports car design. Like so many other Porsche production cars, Turbos have been raced with great success over the years. The first Turbo arrived in North America in 1976 and its price was described at the time in *Road and Track* as being "as high as its top speed" at \$26,000. How times—and sticker prices—have changed!

The 2010 Turbo is a sports car of exceptional ability and, while incorporating every imaginable element of performance technology, it still manages to carry on 911 traditions begun in 1964. Diehard Porsche fans wouldn't have it any other way. Amazingly, the new car has 20 more horsepower than the earlier model, yet it uses 16 per cent less fuel. Acceleration is quicker thanks to the new car's lighter weight. As always, the Turbo's engine is at the rear and to keep all the power on the road, there's a full "suite" of electronic stability control technology.

The 3.8-litre, twin-turbo, horizontally-opposed six-cylinder (another piece of Porsche tradition) develops a whopping 500-horsepower. Buyers can choose a six-speed manual gearbox or Porsche's very effective PDK semi-manual seven-speed. All-wheel drive helps keep all this power under tight control—feeding it to the road with amazing refinement. At very high speeds (I've seen 305 km/h on a track in an earlier model) the car feels rock solid and capable of easily exceeding its stated upper limits. Porsche gives the car's zero to 100 km/h time as 3.7-seconds and it's faster still with an optional "Sport Chrono" package.

The new Turbo's interior is superbly done and once the driver has wormed into it, it feels like the best place on earth from which to control a high-performance sports car. The cabin is snug to be sure, but everything's there—even a fully-featured navigation system if that's your desire. As with so many Porsches over the decades, the driving position is just perfect—a result of the racing DNA passed down from all those Le Mans 24-hour victories the automaker posted. These wonderful Porsches are far from cheap—\$163,900 for the coupe and a little more for the roadster—but on a performance-for-the-money basis, they're bargains.

Not a car for anyone wanting to keep a low profile, the magnificent Rolls-Royce Phantom Coupé makes a seriously bold statement and boasts all kinds of novel features and unashamed luxury by the bushel. All Phantoms (there are four models altogether) use 6.7-litre V-12 engines designed and assembled by parent company BMW in Germany. For many decades, and with a wonderful air of eccentricity, Rolls-Royce refused to reveal the horsepower of its cars—famously telling buyers that the power levels were “adequate.” Today, Rolls-Royce is happy to confirm that the mostly-aluminum Phantom boasts a very adequate 453-horsepower.

As always, these cars offer an uncanny level of refinement and luxury and retain the lofty standards set all those years ago by the Hon. Charles Rolls and Mr. Henry Royce. Refinement is almost uncanny and at a level few automakers get close to, but the heavy Phantom will top 100 km in a surprising 5.7-seconds and the top speed would be higher than a claimed 250 km/h if the car wasn’t electronically governed to restrain itself when that pace is reached. Handling, too, is far better than a driver might expect, though the Phantom has a turning circle like the Queen Mary. It powers through tight bends like a far smaller automobile and with decent stability too.

The Phantom Coupé uses what Rolls calls coach doors—curiously called “suicide doors” in North America. The mirror-like paint finish of these cars can be specified in 16 different hues, but for the truly picky, Rolls has 44,000 colours available. One interesting Coupé styling touch is a brushed metal finish to the hood—a unique exterior feature, unless you count the long-gone DeLorean.



2010 Rolls Royce Phantom Coupé



2010 Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG

The interior of the Phantom is an absolute delight and exceeds the wildest expectation. If those fabled 18th-century English cabinet-making maestros were alive today and building vehicle interiors, this is the kind of work they’d be involved with—and with \$565,000 cars like the Phantom Coupé, they’d probably get rich in the process.

It might not be the most expensive supercar out there (though it will cost US\$375,000) but the two-seater Lexus LFA might well be the most exclusive as only 10 are scheduled for Canada—ever. Lexus’ answer to the Ferrari/Lamborghini segment, the LFA is powered by a 552-horsepower 4.8-litre V-10 which will rocket the car to 100 km/h in something under four seconds and head all the way up to 325 km/h if there’s room for a good run. According to Lexus, the acoustics of the V-10 have been tuned to deliver “a unique, Formula 1-inspired soundtrack.” No doubt parent company Toyota’s experience in grand prix racing helped there. Only 500 will be built for worldwide sales.



2010 Lexus LFA

“It might not be the most expensive supercar out there...but the two-seater Lexus LFA might well be the most exclusive as only 10 are scheduled for Canada—ever.”

Not to be outdone on the megabuck sports car front, Mercedes-Benz is soon launching its SLS AMG, to replace the “legend in its own time” McLaren SLR. Perhaps even more than the SLR, the SLS looks back to the glory days of Mercedes-Benz racing cars with its big grille, prominent three-pointed star, gullwing doors and big air vents just behind the front wheels.

It’s a car that will surely remind racing legend Sir Stirling Moss of the one he drove in the 1955 Mille Miglia—though that one was open and had swing-up doors. Although “SLS AMG” is the car’s official name, even Mercedes-Benz is calling it “the new Gullwing.” And if it’s any consolation, you’ll have to pay something like \$600,000 for a real, well-restored 1950s Gullwing, while the new version will be closer to \$400,000. But it’s not all go and show with this Mercedes. It’s quite a bit lighter than the model it replaces, thanks to M-B’s first aluminum space frame structure, and is thus more fuel-efficient. Not quite a green supercar, perhaps, but close enough. It’s a stunning-looking automobile and promises to provide even more of a breathtaking driving experience than the old SLR.



2010 Spyker Aileron



2010 Bugatti Veyron

The recent announcement that we can now buy a Spyker in Canada (or timeshare one at Empire One in Richmond, B.C.) probably sparked interest in only the most knowledgeable of car fans, but the Dutch manufacturer has a lengthy and complex history. The company goes all the way back to 1880, when it built horse-drawn carriages (one of them is still used by Dutch royalty), and it turned out its first automobile in 1899. For many years the firm was moribund, but in 1999, it was resurrected as a manufacturer of high-end sports cars and for a while, even had a Formula One race team. Current highlight is the Spyker Aileron with its very appealing lines and what could be called “semi gullwing” doors. It’s fast, sleek and beautifully built, and has been selling encouragingly in upscale markets around the world. It uses an Audi-sourced V-8 (an excellent choice) and is priced around the \$300,000 mark. The car was featured extensively in the Jason Statham/Jet Li movie *War*, but please don’t drive yours like that, OK?

“Bugatti’s astonishing Veyron is another model that’s finally arrived in Canada, but this “best of the best” 400 km/h ultra-supercar will cost over two million dollars.”

Bugatti’s astonishing Veyron is another model that’s finally arrived in Canada, but this “best of the best” 400 km/h ultra-supercar will cost over two million dollars. If you buy a Veyron (or one turns up on Christmas Day!) you’ll be joining owners like Ralph Lauren, Simon Cowell and newly-crowned F1 World Champion Jenson Button. Bugatti is part of the Volkswagen Audi Group and thus has vast technological resources to draw on. The original Bugatti had a history of innovative design, racing successes, an eccentric patriarch and—inevitably—financial woes. After some turmoil, Bugatti is surely here to stay this time around and has some fascinating plans for future models beyond the awesome Veyron.

Apart from its highly original looks, the Veyron’s main claim to fame is its remarkable engine—a mighty W-16 (that’s 16 cylinders in a “W” configuration) developing a mind-blowing 1,001-horsepower. Reportedly, it can maintain its 400 km/h top speed for 12 minutes before the fuel runs out. It’s not the kind of car you’d show up at your local Green Party meeting with, but that will probably be the last thing owners worry about. Expectedly, the car is built with great care and precision and the snug interior is superbly trimmed in the finest materials. These cars are very much “one-offs” and owners get to choose any combination of colours and trim styles they fancy. ■



For more information visit www.porsche.ca

It's always a bit surprising the first time a valet tips you.

In every sense, a true sportscar experience – now designed to be shared by four. An uncompromising 400 hp engine combines powerful, yet fuel efficient Direct Fuel Injection (DFI) and the seamless, split-second gearshifts of the Porsche Doppelkupplung (PDK) with a fuel saving auto start/stop function. Uncompromising acceleration, the exhilaration of Porsche precision handling and a luxurious executive class interior.

The new Panamera 4S. Coming, Fall 2009.



WEALTH

Top 10 money concepts for our children

By Adrian Mastracci



You can learn many things from children. How much patience you have, for instance.

~ Franklin P. Jones, author

If you could teach your children only a few money concepts...these are the ones.

I'm often asked what we can do to instil responsible financial behaviour into our youngsters. I've crafted the top 10 concepts every child should know to accomplish the tasks. After all, we will rely on their good judgement down the road.

The good news is that parents and grandparents are usually very attentive about their children's and grandchildren's money skills. Everything you read points to ensuring that our youngsters have a positive experience with matters of money.

Too many children become adults not fully prepared to handle the daily responsibilities and implications of their finances—such as budgeting, balancing the chequebook, credit cards and making appropriate investment decisions. Parents and grandparents have a long road to teach children and grandchildren the many lessons that lead to sound money management. We cannot just expect this to happen. Children who don't acquire sufficient money skills can face difficult consequences in their adult life.

However, there are many ways to assist children to realize their sound financial futures. The first realization is that children look up to their parents and grandparents for direction on their money management. They copy what the important people in their lives actually do, not what they say.

In order to demonstrate by example, parents and grandparents should first work through their own financial issues. If money management is not one of their strengths, they may seek help so they can be more effective teachers for their children. Be aware that your children can see through any inconsistencies between what you encourage them to do financially versus how you actually conduct yourself. Good habits learned early will form the lasting foundations of responsible money management.

I'll outline 10 concepts that form solid money management skills for our children:

1. Let them make plenty of mistakes

Yes, that's right! Let them make plenty of financial mistakes. As important, don't rush to correct them. They will foul up often, but allow children to make their own decisions, even the wrong ones. For instance, if they want to buy something with their money, let them—even if you disagree. Later, ask them if they are happy with their purchase and discuss the impact of their decision. It is all part of making informed choices. Practice will get it right, and don't sweat the small stuff!

There is more to be learned by children making mistakes than by doing it right every time. They will gain more knowledge sooner if you let them make plenty of mistakes. The key is to learn from their mistakes. Adults are often not prepared to take counsel from professionals until they have worked through a number of mistakes. Children are very similar. They listen more after making their own mistakes.

2. Spending and saving

Start the process by having each child manage a regular allowance. Start around age five and agree on dividing the allowance between the “spending” and “saving” jars. Allowances are an excellent way to teach children financial responsibility. However, do not link the allowances to household chores. Children receive the allowances so they can learn about money.

The goal is for the children to spend money on items of their choice and pay for them. Dipping into the saving jar is allowed, just like in real life. Especially when they are saving for that special purchase.

Teach your children well about saving and spending, especially the spending part. This is the major step to successful money management. As the children grow older, the allowances increase and they can learn about earning money by working to make extra money at the same time—perhaps by providing some services around the house or to your business.

3. When we spend the money, it’s gone

This is a bit of a struggle for young children to grasp. A way to quicken the process is for the child to remove the money from the spending and saving jars and hand it to the cashier at the time of purchase. Discuss the idea that when the allowance is fully spent, there is no more until the next one.

One way to teach good money habits is to discuss the merits of something that the children purchased. You should inquire as to whether the children would purchase something different, whether the purchase has been beneficial, and would they do it again the same way. The answers may surprise you.

If you refrain from telling the children what to do, even when you are completely right, they will develop better money habits sooner.

4. We can’t buy everything, we make choices

Give children options to decide on how, what, where and when to spend the money. The concept “if there is no cash, you can’t buy it” will slowly take a foothold. Further, there should be no borrowing on future allowances, especially for young children.

It is important to allow children to actually spend a good part of their money. Trust me on this one, it is the least costly lesson that you can convey to a child. It will save you a bundle later.

Assist your children in understanding consumerism. Take them shopping whenever possible and try to evaluate both the product and the service. As an example, children can learn plenty by evaluating the food and the service when the family eats out at a restaurant.



5. Pay yourself first

One of the essential lessons is to save for something that children want. Condition the children to put aside a certain amount of their cash intake on a regular basis. Start with something manageable, say 10 to 15 percent, and increase its over time, say to 25 to 30 percent.

Try to train the child to put aside the savings money first before other allocations. Hence the phrase, “pay yourself first.” You can also illustrate the difference between saving for something in the near future—say the purchase of a small gift in a week or two—versus long-term savings for bigger items.

6. Becoming an owner

Begin a simple stock portfolio for your children or grandchildren. Over time, select three or more stocks that the children can easily relate to—like a toy company, music company, soft drink company, computer firm or a famous restaurant.

Of course, ask for their input in the stock selection process and engage them in discussions of how these companies affect their life. Make sure that at least one of the chosen companies sends a regular dividend, no matter how small, and encourage the children to check the stock prices.

My portfolio manager hat is being removed, but only for a brief moment. I suggest that you put aside thoughts of long-term asset allocation for the starter portfolio. Concentrate on making it an experience that the children can relate to in their everyday life. This is the more important lesson.

“In order to demonstrate by example, parents and grandparents should first work through their own financial issues.”

If possible, select a company that holds its annual general meeting near you. This allows you to take the child to the meeting and experience firsthand what it means to be a shareholder. Of course, be prepared to exit early as their attention span may be short, especially in the early years. If you own a business, perhaps they can come to work with you every so often.

7. Credit cards

Children should receive training on the philosophy, the implications, and the responsible use of credit. Keep in mind that having credit is a privilege, not a right. Children who do not understand the implications of credit, often find themselves swamped. An essential point is that credit is never free money and must be repaid. The inappropriate use of credit is one of the major mistakes made by adults.

Make sure that each child’s first credit card has small limits that you are comfortable with. Also ensure that the invoices are paid on a timely basis, and in full. Once they become teenagers, your children will likely receive plenty of applications for credit cards. This intensifies immensely when they reach the college years. Often, credit cards do not require parental permission and may allow children to accumulate more debt that they can repay.

8. Compound interest

Explain the magic of compound interest—that wonderful concept of first earning interest on our capital, then earning interest on the interest. An area that children can visually see the effect of compounding interest is on the growth of their savings account. As when the money is invested in vehicles like a money market fund, government bond or certificate of deposit.

9. Household bills and budgeting

Discuss the cost of running your home—food, telephone, utilities, property taxes, eating out, personal items, gifts, car insurance and gas. Teach the importance of paying bills before penalties are incurred.

Get your children involved in household spending decisions and simple bill paying. They will be doing the same thing as you are, sooner than you think.

This concept also leads into budgeting, as in the idea that a child could be responsible and accountable for allocating part of the allowance to specific personal needs. Purchases such as personal care items, clothing items and toys come to mind.

10. Writing the cheque

Allowing older children the actual life experience of running their own chequing account is almost a miracle. There is nothing more definitive than children writing cheques from their own accounts. Sometimes it is pure agony for them to watch the money flow out of their hands.

You will find that most financial institutions can provide suitable accounts for children of all ages. Take advantage of as many of these provisions as possible and as your children require them.

Your goal is to demonstrate a positive attitude towards money, to take responsibility for your actions and to be accountable. That conveys the development of good money habits. Walk the talk with your children and grandchildren. The sounder your financial judgement, the better theirs will be.

Treat your own money with due respect and allow your children to share that respect. This is one of the best investments you can make. ■



Canadian & International Artists



"Little Girl" by Jun Hu

Established in 1996, the Howe Street Gallery brings together fine art from around the globe. Beautiful paintings and life sized African stone sculptures entice fine art lovers into the Gallery. With an air of the exotic, the possibility of finding something precious is never ending.

Soul of Africa Sculpture Collection



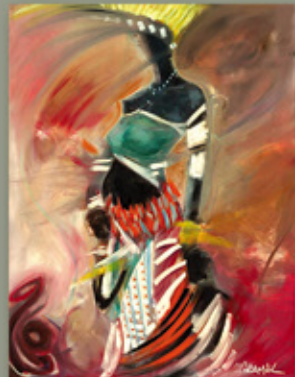
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*"Paradise Woman"
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"An Early Start" by Kiff Holland



"Willow Banks" by Joseph Wong



"Storm" by Voytek Nowakowski



"Out of My Feelings" by Niculaes S. Nuca

"Shona" & "Realistic" Sculpture from Zimbabwe



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Living the Good Life

The Concept of Enough

By Dr. Lesley Horton, MD

What is enough? How do we know when we have enough? When we are enough? There's no medal handed out, no trophy, no monetary value for having arrived at that elusive destination. Especially at the holiday time of year—do we have enough presents and food? Are we popular enough, social enough, thin enough? It's like trying to grasp a bubble; just when you think you have it, it dissipates. You don't learn about it in school, you can't Google it, and it's not for sale. Yet having a sense of enough is one of the greatest life accomplishments that we can achieve.

Twenty-five hundred years ago, a man by the name of Siddhartha Gautama lived the life of a prince and then renounced it all in search for the truth of what life is. He eventually realized something that has come to affect millions of people since and it holds true as much now as it did then. He said "Life is *dukha*,"—"dukha" being Sanskrit for dissatisfactory.

Now Siddhartha, who came to be known as the Buddha, never drove a new BMW. He couldn't know how nice a new car is, the shiny paint, the new upholstery smell, the thrill of an engine revving, ready to take you anywhere you desire. But he did get that just as something can bring us pleasure, it can also bring us pain in the very next moment and, hence, dissatisfaction. Someone keys the BMW. It gets towed and we miss our client meeting. A son borrows it, speeds and cracks it up. Angry words, maybe injury, all from what brought us such happiness. Insert job promotion, new house, or new relationship for the above BMW—it's the same story. Siddhartha explained that the dukha or dissatisfactory part is because no thing or person can bring us permanently lasting happiness despite our hopes it will.

But every holiday season a lot of us try to disprove him! It's so easy to believe the story that we need more things. We might feel a temporary glow as we revel in our new toy, rejoice in the holiday bonus, or enjoy the thrill of a new relationship. And then it fades over time until whatever brought us pleasure is no longer so satisfying.



*"Now Siddhartha...
never drove a new BMW."*

Turns out our mind is, in part, the culprit. Were we to personify it, it would say, "But what have you done for me lately?" Neuroscientists have proven that the brain loves novelty. On brain scans, our brain lights up like a Christmas tree when we are exposed to new and slightly challenging situations. And let's face it, buying is fun. Acquiring also gives us a sense of security. In and of itself, it's not bad, as long as we see it for what it is—that our mind will never be permanently satisfied.

So how can you gain a sense of deep satisfaction in life? How can you have a sense of enough that is so profound that you feel it in every cell?

By going beyond the mind. By connecting with a deeper part of ourselves, the core of our essence, of who we really are. It's a felt sense, deep within our being. Modern day spiritual teachers such as Eckhart Tolle, Deepak Chopra, or Byron Katie all agree that regular meditation is the

major key to quieting the mind enough to connect with that sense of self. From there, the feeling of enough naturally arises, for at our core essence, we already are enough.

If you don't feel drawn to meditation, try simply relaxing your shoulder and belly muscles and breathing deeply for a few moments. This helps us to naturally connect with our core and our heart. Experiment with slowing your life down a notch, so you are more available to notice the moments that touch your heart. Connecting with a spiritual or religious community whose values you really resonate with helps too.

We gain a deep sense of satisfaction in life when we are living our lives in alignment with our deepest values, honouring who we really are. Working with a life coach is another way to identify and then restructure our lives in order to live life joyously to the fullest.

So, this winter, live the good life to its fullest. Whatever you choose, it's all just icing on the cake of life, for underneath it all, you really are enough just as you are. ■

the art of barrie chadwick



"Merinos"

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