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THE CARING KISS YOU WILL NEVER FORGET

NEW
THE 1° FLOWER OIL-INFUSED
ULTRA WEAR & ULTRA CARE
DIOR LIPSTICK
FASHION WITH HEART
Shop well this season

‘I WAS A Bosnian War Rape BABY’
The generation coming to terms with their violent past

Jess Phillips
Lily Collins
Katharine Hamnett
Sophie Dahl

find your balance
Be kinder to yourself, manage eco-anxiety & boost wellness

COME AS YOU ARE
Why women are so mute on masturbation

She will rock you!

THE RISE OF LUCY BOYNTON
Where to begin, and how to end... of the 122 editor’s letters I have written over the past ten years as Editor in Chief, this one is without doubt the hardest to write, because this will be the very last printed edition of *Marie Claire* UK.

I can, of course, tell you about the great reports, interviews, fashion stories and opinion pieces in this issue (check out Flo Perry’s unflinching call for an end to the taboos around women’s sexual pleasure on page 98). I can also point out our #StartSomewhere sustainability campaign – now in its third year – with content woven throughout the magazine to highlight the ways in which we can all make a stand for the planet (the irony of ending *Marie Claire*’s life in paper is not lost on me here).

But all I really want to do is pay tribute to every one of the incredible editors, writers, designers, sub editors, picture editors, fashion stylists, beauty editors, publishers and advertising and marketing teams who, for the past 31 years, have given their heart and soul to creating a women’s magazine like no other. I’d also like to thank all of our readers past and present – whether you’re a committed subscriber or a dabbler at the hairdresser’s – without you, we would never have made it this far. You have shared our values and purpose, as well as supported us across vital campaigns – from women’s rights and empowerment to identity issues and climate change.

These important conversations are, if anything, needed more now than they ever have been in the past three decades, and *Marie Claire* will still remain at the forefront of them as a digital-first brand. You can find out more by turning the page to see all the ways to interact through the website, social platforms and events.

Now it’s time to face the future and say farewell to what has been an incredible chapter in my life. And for everyone else leaving the team, as well as those staying on, here’s to new beginnings...
Fear not!

You can still find groundbreaking features and inspiring fashion and beauty at marieclaire.co.uk
unique to 
marie claire

marie claire Edit.

Pooling decades’ worth of fashion authority, think of Marie Claire Edit as your virtual, shoppable fashion cupboard. From knockout designer pieces to the high-street hits you’ll love, Marie Claire Edit brings your dream shopping experience to life. And if you’re signed up to our mailing list, you’ll be sent all our sartorial secrets straight to your inbox.

FABLED by marie claire

Offering the best premium beauty brands in the business (think Tom Ford, Aveda and La Mer) alongside unique labels fresh to the market, Fabled by Marie Claire also delivers expert advice in-store at our flagship London address, 21 Tottenham Court Road, and online at Fabled.com. In short, we’re here to shake up the way you wear and shop all things beauty in a multi-level, multi-platform emporium.

marie claire jetstyle

Power pedis, pro brows and premium multi-treatments: head to Marie Claire Jetstyle – our new series of airport- and train-station-based beauty salons – for your fast-track ticket to great hair and glossy nails. Visit marieclairejetstyle.com

SPECIAL EVENTS

From our career-boosting @work series and pioneering Salesforce partnership to the industry game-changers, Prix D’Excellence de la Beauté Awards and annual #Verified winners party, Marie Claire UK has been at the forefront of the most inspiring events and innovative project collaborations for the past three decades. So watch this space: 2020, we’re coming for you…
ROSE DES VENTS AND MIMIROSE COLLECTIONS
Yellow gold, pink gold, diamonds, rubies, lapis lazuli, malachite, mother-of-pearl, onyx, pink opal.

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MASTER OF MATERIALS

RADO DIAMASTER DIAMONDS
PLASMA HIGH-TECH CERAMIC. METALLIC LOOK. MODERN ALCHEMY.

RADO
SWITZERLAND
WHAT IS AVAXHOME?
AVAXLIVE ICU

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AVAXHOME - Your End Place

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brand new books, trending movies, hot games, fresh magazines, recent software, latest music releases.
DOLCE & GABBANA
The Only One
Second chance: former FARC fighter Angelina with her son, Jadeur, in one of the 26 remaining transition camps – she was one of the first to have a baby while living in a camp. Angelina was 11 when she joined up, after years spent living on the streets. She was only seven when her mother threw her out after Angelina accused her stepfather of abusing her. FARC closed off her heart, she says, but, “I can open it up again with my son”
COLOMBIA’S REBIRTH

When a peace deal with Colombian militant group FARC ended decades of bitter conflict, it kick-started an unexpected baby boom among former female fighters.

During 53 years of guerrilla warfare, the foot soldiers of the Marxist–Leninist militant group FARC (The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) lived a harsh life in the jungle, where one of the strict rules was that fighters were forbidden from having children.

But with the signing of a historic ceasefire in 2016, there has been a baby boom, with hundreds of new families created, many living in the demobilisation camps set up to help them transition into everyday life.

Yorladis is one of hundreds of pregnant former soldiers. She is expecting for the sixth time – the other five pregnancies during her years with FARC were all terminated; the last one when she was six months pregnant.

‘I wanted to keep the baby, so whenever the commander came by, I would wear loose clothes. But one day, he turned up unannounced and sent me to the sick bay [for an abortion]. I had to give birth as if it were a full-term pregnancy, and the baby was big and fully shaped. I dug a hole next to my tent and buried him, then wept for hours.’

At the height of FARC’s struggle against the landowners and the state for more rights and control over land ownership, FARC rebels boasted an estimated 20,000 active fighters, with 40 per cent of them female. Women were ordered to put war before their children, leaving babies with relatives, or, as many claim, undergoing forced abortions – a charge FARC has continued to deny.

Photographer Catalina Martin-Chico visited the camps where former fighters are living as they wait to return to society, and discovered they are now fully formed villages. ‘They told me so many tough stories of what they had to go through as women,’ says Martin-Chico. ‘I asked them, “Aren’t you resentful?” They said, “No, those were the rules.”’

Many young mothers and new families have left the camps to live with relatives, while others have settled in rural areas and become farmers. Martin-Chico forged close bonds with many of them and has pictured several families in their new lives. While the political climate is still volatile in Colombia, perhaps this new generation of babies is testament that some people have started to cautiously believe in their country’s rebirth.
We all know that the consumer and investment choices we make have a significant impact on the environment, but what’s good for the planet isn’t always good for our wallet, right? Surely, going fully green only puts us in the red? Not so fast. Contrary to popular belief, living sustainably and saving money aren’t mutually exclusive. Here are five ways to make a positive difference to the climate crisis without breaking the bank...

1. ELECTRIC DREAMS
Nothing beats taking public transport – or, better still, walking to work. But if you do need to use a car, follow Norway’s example and get with the electric revolution. Almost half of all cars sold in the first six months of 2019 were powered by fully electric engines, according to the Norwegian Road Federation. In the UK, only around 50 per cent of electricity is generated by renewable sources, but electric vehicles (EVs) are still the greener option, explains Professor Jillian Anable of the Institute for Transport Studies at the University of Leeds. Yes, the upfront costs are greater, but Professor Anable claims prices are falling all the time and you could even receive a government grant towards the cost. ‘Buyers should also factor in the reduced running costs – around 4p per mile compared to 15p per mile for a family petrol or diesel car. And most EVs are exempt from car tax and the congestion charge.’

2. WASTE NOT
Food waste is responsible for a whopping 8 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, says Libby Peake, senior policy adviser at Green Alliance. ‘The average UK family puts about £700 worth of food straight into the bin each year,’ she adds. Thankfully, there’s plenty we can do to reduce this, such as batch-cooking and freezing, planning meals in advance and only buying what you can use before a product expires. For more tips, visit lovefoodhatewaste.com.

3. MIND HOW YOU SHOP
Another way to cut food waste is by making more mindful purchases. Using an app such as Giki, which scans a product’s barcode to assess its sustainable, health and fairness credentials, could make you think twice about what you put in your basket – and help you source low-carbon and better packaging options (often the cheaper alternative). Giki’s founder Jo Hand also suggests: ‘Pick up a reusable water bottle for under £5, which could save you over £100 a year.’ (On average, we each buy 150 single-use plastic water bottles per annum.)

4. GREEN, NOT CLEAN
Disposable fashion has had a bad rap of late, and rightly so – but splashing out on pricier labels isn’t always the answer to greening up your wardrobe. Dr Mark Sumner, a sustainability, retail and fashion expert at the University of Leeds, carried out tests on the durability of garments and found some fast fashion pieces lasted longer than high-end alternatives. If you really want to dress more sustainably, it’s all in how you look after your clothes, says Sumner. ‘If you can make garments last for longer you’re reducing your overall carbon and water footprint. Only wash clothes when they need it, and at no more than 30 degrees, and avoid tumble drying. Not only will you extend their lifetime, you’ll also save money in terms of water, energy and washing powder use.’

5. ‘SAVING’ THE PLANET
Get this – moving your savings to sustainable funds can be 27 times more efficient to lowering your carbon footprint than reducing your shower by two minutes each time, taking one less international flight per year, taking the train instead of the car and eating a maximum one piece of meat each week combined*.

*ACCORDING TO RESEARCH BY NORDEA (NORDEA.COM/EN/SUSTAINABILITY/SUSTAINABILITY-NEWS/USE-YOUR-SAVINGS-TO-LOWER-YOUR-CARBON-FOOTPRINT.HTML)
‘IF SOMETHING ISN’T RIGHT, STAND UP AND DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT’

As one of Westminster’s most straight-talking, no-nonsense MPs, Jess Phillips knows a thing or two about calling out BS. Here, she pays tribute to her four-foot-nothing nan, who taught her to call a spade a spade, even when that spade is the Prime Minister.

Learning to stand up for myself didn’t come to me in an epiphany – it was my culture. I guess you could say that I was raised by wolves. Both of my parents were strident political campaigners, and in my house you were as likely to hear the phrase, ‘This isn’t right, we’ve got to do something about it!’ as you were to hear, ‘Pop the kettle on, bab.’ The folklore of my family always revolved around things people had done to stand up to bullies and bigots. I remember how proud my parents were of my brother, Joe, when he took on the local bully as he was picking on our neighbour.

As I was raised by wolves, so too were my parents, and when asked who taught me to be a stroppy madam who will not quit if something is not right, the answer is my nan and grandma. When I was little, I spent my formative years in the homes of my grandparents while my parents were at work. My grandmothers lived streets apart from each other and were hard, working-class women. They knew pain and hardship and it had made them tough. They were generous and kind, and were certain about right and wrong – and didn’t mind telling you, or anyone, if you fell on the wrong side.

My favourite story about my Nanny Jess (my namesake) is the time she was on the top deck of a bus with lots of people, including a load of skinheads who were abusing the only Asian bloke. It was the early 80s and she was in her seventies. While everyone looked out of the window, my tiny four-foot-nothing nan went and sat next to him, then turned to this gang of racists and told them that racists was what they were and asked them why they had no humanity for their fellow man. I don’t think she clipped them round the ear, but the threat was probably there, and miraculously they quietened down.

I’m glad to say that race relations have moved on a bit since the 80s, but I think we have lost some of the grit of my grandparents’ generation. They definitely gave that to me. I have stood up to school bullies; I have stopped dangerous fights in the street; I have walked into the middle of angry protests and stood my ground. My grandparents and my parents taught me that you should call a spade a spade, even if that spade is the Prime Minister. Nowadays, we worry too much about offending people or saying the wrong thing. Today, we desperately want to be more like my granny and stride up to people and give them what for, but something stops us.

There is no better feeling in the world than the euphoria you get from calling out bullshit. The buzz I feel in my chest when I swallow my fear and rise to my feet in Parliament to fight back, or when I stand up to those who don’t like people who are gay or of colour. People cheer the brave and, as they cheer, they are wishing they had done or said something, too. Being brave in the face of conflict was the way. Nothing changes if we do nothing. My nan knew that and so should you. Let’s be more Nanny Jess.

Truth to Power: 7 Ways to Call Time on BS by Jess Phillips MP is out in October (£9.99, Monoray)
WOMEN WHO WIN

Ruth Morgan is the first professor of crime and forensic science at University College London (UCL). She is passionate about promoting women in STEM careers, and was named one of the World Economic Forum’s (WEF) 21 Young Scientists of 2019

‘DON’T LET FAILURE STOP YOU’
‘Funding is a huge challenge for forensic science. It was clear to me that the traditional routes to secure this for research wouldn’t work, so I raised money to set up a lab by crowdfunding.’

‘THE WAY SCIENCE IS USED IMPACTS ON PEOPLE’S LIVES’
‘While I was a PhD student, I did research on a murder trial appeal. We discovered the forensic evidence that led to the guilty verdict hadn’t been properly tested, and the real culprit was eventually convicted. There’s a lot of work to be done to ensure the interpretation of science in court is robust and trustworthy.’

‘WE NEED COLLABORATION TO ENSURE INNOVATION’
‘There are challenges in forensic science that scan the entire process. We need to bring people from different industries together because that’s when you get the innovation to deal with big issues.’

‘I WANT SCIENCE TO IMPROVE OUR FUTURE’
‘Within the WEF’s Young Scientists group, we have every type of scientist. We’re given the chance to talk to politicians and industry leaders. I think something quite exciting could happen from this – I’m really positive about the future.’

32

THE WHISTLEBLOWER

In 2004, GCHQ translator Katharine Gun was arrested after leaking a top-secret document about the Iraq War. As her story hits the big screen, starring Keira Knightley, she talks to James Mottram about the fallout

The memo you leaked when working at GCHQ showed the US and UK planning to bribe UN Security Council members to vote for the Iraq War. What was going through your mind when you did it?
‘At the time, I wasn’t thinking of myself, I just saw this information as being something everybody should know about. The war seemed to be increasingly imminent and there was no time left. It just had to get out there as quickly as possible.’

Being charged with breaking the Official Secrets Act and on bail for eight months must have been extremely stressful.
‘As soon as I realised that I had to confess [to her boss] that I’d leaked it, that was when the stress hit me. As that was when I knew I wouldn’t be able to be anonymous. The eight months of bail was tough; you don’t know when the axe is going to fall, but it’s constantly hanging over you.’

Although charges against you were dropped, were you at all reluctant to relive it with the making of Official Secrets?
‘Fifteen years on, I’ve come to accept it – it’s almost like it happened in a different lifetime. For the first few years afterwards, whenever I recounted what happened, it always made me feel shaken. I don’t know if it was post-traumatic stress, but it was very vivid at that time.’

What did you think when you heard Keira Knightley was going to play you in the film?
‘I was gobsmacked! I was thinking more towards people who vaguely resemble me, physically, and obviously she doesn’t. But, actually, I’m glad, as it creates a bit of a barrier. It’s like looking at somebody else doing it, so that makes it easier for me to handle.’

Did you meet Keira?
‘Yes, she wanted to meet to ask me questions. I was very nervous, but she was so down-to-earth. We met in a restaurant near where she lives, with Gavin [Hood, the director], and as soon as she saw me she gave me a big hug. That put me at ease and we chatted about motherhood and politics. She’d already done a lot of research, but she really wanted to get down to the nitty-gritty and see how I felt about the issues.’

Do you have any regrets?
‘Not really. I think we have a lot of good values in this country – justice, equality, fairness – which, sadly, have been trampled on. We need to start trying to value those things again.’

Official Secrets is in cinemas from 18 October
Yes, You can Make a Difference

At Marie Claire, we’ve always been committed to creating global change. Here, Sara Vaughan, our first-ever chief purpose and sustainability advisor, explains her hopes for our Start Somewhere campaign, and what inspired her to turn saving the planet into a career.

It took me a while to Start Somewhere on my purpose journey. Working on the launch of Forevermark, the ethical diamond brand was a turning point in my life, when I realised I wanted to create powerful brands and movements for positive change that addressed and solved the world’s most pressing issues. That led to a role at The Body Shop, where I worked on the Stop Sex Trafficking of Children and Young People campaign. Then, I went to Unilever, where I looked after such brands as Dove. Today, I have my own consultancy, working with companies wanting to be purpose-led. I also (partnering with truly amazing people) create and/or catalyse positive global movements for change, such as stopping single-use plastic with A Plastic Planet.

I am inspired on a daily basis by the incredible people I am fortunate enough to meet or come into contact with – men and women, in person or through social media, well-known, like the amazing Greta Thunberg, or unknown, like my sponsored sister Maboba, a survivor of war from Afghanistan bravely rebuilding her life. The common theme between them is their passion, purpose, courage and care for others. Qualities I greatly admire. I look forward to introducing you to some of these special people in my Start Somewhere podcast, which will launch later this year.

The one person who has undoubtedly inspired me the most is my mother, who died just over a year ago. She always encouraged me to be courageous and inspired me with her extraordinary love, generosity, warmth, kindness and compassion. She continues to be my guiding light, and I am incredibly grateful to her.

Marie Claire has been a trailblazer in the purpose space for over 30 years. My role here, in the Start Somewhere campaign, is to help give you lots of fresh ideas and inspiration for making positive environmental and social changes; for you to know just how influential you are.

Small collective actions can become very powerful global movements – The Body Shop’s sex trafficking campaign generated more than 7 million signatures and effected real change in trafficking legislation and the lives of those trafficked in over 20 countries. This is people power in practice.

Together, we, the Marie Claire community, can make a very big, positive difference in this world. Just think, if all of us gave up single-use coffee cups and switched to reusable ones. As Anna Lappé, the writer and activist reminds us, ‘Every time you spend money, you’re casting a vote for the kind of world you want.’

We also wish to celebrate the many of you who are already taking a stand. So, if you are actively campaigning for a cause – thank you for doing this – we would like to hear from you about what you are doing. Please email me at svaughan@gmc.tm.fr

Head to marieclaire.co.uk for more information about the campaign and inspiring stories.

THE YOUNG ONES

The saying ‘youth is wasted on the young’ feels hopelessly redundant right now. Today, across the globe, young people’s voices seem to be some of the loudest and most powerful in the world. Sixteen-year-old Greta Thunberg is shaking world leaders with impassioned speeches on their lack of leadership in tackling the eco-crisis, American high-school students are leading gun-control marches and, in the UK, women like Amika George are campaigning against period poverty – in between sitting their A-levels.

These are the voices that One Young World have been giving a platform to for the past ten years. The annual international conference, which is taking place in London at the end of October, will bring together some of the boldest young activists from around the world in panels and workshops, sponsoring and mentoring them, helping them to become the next generation of leaders. Joining the three-day event are world leaders and activists including Dame Jane Goodall, Richard Branson and Doutzen Kroes. Previously, guest speakers have included Meghan Markle, Gordon Brown and Naomi Campbell.

One Young World’s endeavour to find and support these new voices, and their fresh energy to look for solutions to the world’s problems, began a decade ago. But as we watch the youth of today to organise and mobilise in a world that feels particularly chaotic, listening to them feels more urgent than ever.
Born in the heart of the French volcanic region, seeping through kilometres of rock, Vichy Mineralizing Water is enriched with 15 minerals and helps reinforce skin’s natural defences. By combining this potent water with bio-peptides and vitamin CG, Vichy laboratories created Liftactiv Collagen Specialist Day Cream to target the signs of ageing linked to collagen loss. Skin feels firmer, more toned and pigmentation appears reduced. Skin lives stronger.

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Fashion first

THE NEW MOOD

Perennial hits for autumn winter, our sustainable style special and the ultimate watch edit for a well-timed wardrobe update
Find your lucky star. Shop the new Winter Collection, starting from £59
Born in the 80s

AW’s *Dynasty* vibes are strong, and while power shoulders aren’t obligatory, they are advised.
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THE TRENDS

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01 Shirt, £429, Baum Und Pferdgarten 02 Boots, £225, MICHAEL Michael Kors 03 Bag, £525, Shrimps 04 Dress, £350, Alexa Chung 05 Skirt, £49.50, Per Una at Marks & Spencer 06 Watch, £530, Michel Herbelin 07 Boots, £225, Jigsaw 08 Scarf, £12.99, Mango 09 Dress, £90, & Other Stories 10 Bag, £1,200, Alexander Wang X Bulgari 11 Dress, £460, Caramel 12 Hat, £58, Bimba Y Lola 13 Earrings, £55, Pandora
From our top-ten trailblazing brands to the designers to watch and the influencers to follow, over the next five pages we bring you our ultimate guide to eco fashion.

**THE LABELS WE LOVE**

**1. CURTAIN CALL**

Drawing on decades worth of beautiful vintage fabrics, the idea behind Hôtel is genius, and was sparked by founder Alexandra Hartmann’s love of old hotel curtains. Stumbling upon a pair of discarded, yet decadently stitched gold floral drapes in Paris one evening, Hartmann began calling old-glamour hotels in the area, amassing piles of elaborate but unused curtains and embroidered bedding. The slow, expert process of upcycling began and each jacket, fashioned from Genoa velvet and fringe-trimmed silk, became a piece of history; a wearable heirloom. Now a firm favourite with the fashion crowd, Hôtel is giving upcycling a seriously glam rebrand – and we love it. Hit @hotelvetements

**2. IRISH BLESSING**

Tailored from the finest Irish linen, pure wool or Donegal tweed, 31 Chapel Lane’s modern aesthetic is underpinned by sustainability at every turn. Think natural, durable fabrics, all manufactured in-house in Ireland and shipped direct to the customer for the most ethical, eco-conscious shopping experience possible. Oh, and each collection is divine, so no compromise on style necessary. Shop the new season at 31chapellane.com

**Jackets, £290 each, Hôtel**

**Jacket and skirt, £195 each, 31 Chapel Lane**

**Dress, £315, 31 Chapel Lane**

**HÔtel Jacket and skirt, £195 each, 31 Chapel Lane**
HEART AND CRAFT

Founded by fashion editor Lauren T Franks, Aardes offers up a beautiful range of printed blouses produced on a small scale to keep demand high and waste low. Franks’ philosophy is to slow down and reconnect with nature, so she utilises highly skilled handcrafts, such as block printing, in the design process. She also prefers to support traditional artisan methods over mass manufacturing, which means every garment is unique. Shop at aardes.com

BUG CLUB

Bug Clothing, founded by hip east Londoner Amy Ward, crafts limited-edition garments from natural fibres that have been sourced from designer factory waste. ‘Clothing should be comfortable and purposeful, without faulting on style, so we design garments that can be worn for years to come,’ says Ward. Visit Bugclothing.co.uk

CULTURE CLASH

What do you get if you mix Swedish minimalism with Indian warmth? Mehrotra - a slow-fashion brand putting quality above quantity. Based in Stockholm and founded by Sofia Mehrotra, this beautifully crafted label draws on Sofia’s cultural background to transform pre-owned saris into elegant everyday staples, as well as using new materials with a sustainable mindset. From day-to-night pouches and exquisite scarves to mini watergrass bucket bags lined with silk – if you’re coveting eco accessories, Mehrotra has you covered. See mehrotrasthlm.com

FINE LINES

Catherine Servel, a highly regarded fashion and portrait photographer, is channelling her unique vision into a new project: de Cosmi, a fine jewellery collection. Handcrafted in New York by Servel and her expert team, each of these one-of-a-kind creations is produced from recycled precious metals and ecologically sound materials. Check out Decosmi.com
Straw London specialises in unique woven bags, handpicked from around the world. Each piece comes with its own ‘sourced from’ narrative, so you know exactly where and when it was purchased. Sustainable shopping doesn’t get more charming than this. See strawlondon.co.uk

ACE CARD

Created to provide women with an environmentally responsible platform from which to shop, The Acey e-tailer offers up elevated everyday pieces for confident, fashion-conscious women who also happen to care about the planet. There are no man-made fibres and no micro plastics – just mindful consumption at its finest. Visit the-acey.com

TRES CHIC

Founded by industry insider Marie Dewet and her seamstress mother, Cléo, MaisonCléo is a cool French label that produces handmade pieces from silk, cotton and linen, and names each design after female family members (Agnes, Delia and Kika). Plus, a cute scrunchie (right) is sent with every order to celebrate Cléo’s love of vintage hair accessories. Go to Maisoncleo.com

8

ADD TO BASKET

9

TRES CHIC

Shirt, about £152, MaisonCléo

Shirt, about £134, MaisonCléo

10

LITTLE GEMS

Born from a union of ethics and aesthetics, SVNR’s jewellery is a modern mix of natural materials, upcycled vintage and pre-worn gems. Each look is handcrafted and designed to reference a particular time and place in the collective human consciousness. Profound? Just wait until you see the new collection. Hit svnrshop.com
THE WOMEN OF TODAY LEADING THE SCIENCE OF TOMORROW

Every scientist’s journey is their own. L’Oréal is committed to supporting them when they need it most. For more information please visit www.loreal.co.uk
From the food we eat to the clothes we wear, public awareness about sustainability is greater now than ever before, but Yael Aflalo, 42, had her eco epiphany all of a decade ago. In 2009, the founder of super-cool sustainable LA brand Reformation was working as a freelance designer for a big fashion company. It was a factory visit to China that made her realise the scale of fashion’s pollution problem. She was already a veteran of one brand – Ya-Ya, which she founded in her twenties – and decided then and there to create a new ‘fashionable, sustainable brand’. And Reformation is definitely fashionable. Its vintage-inspired silhouettes and perfect party dresses are loved by LA’s finest – including Taylor Swift, Kendall Jenner and Bella Hadid, to name just a handful. Aflalo started out upcycling vintage pieces for her designs, before expanding into a fully-fledged collection. The company is 100 per cent carbon, water and waste neutral, and pays all its factory employees more than the Californian minimum wage. Aflalo still loves incorporating deadstock and vintage fabrics in her designs, and down-cycles fabric scraps to be used as insulation at company HQ. The label’s first European store is now open in London’s Notting Hill and, to celebrate, we chatted to Aflalo about all things green – and red, and printed, and floral...
Your label is ten years old. How does it feel?
It feels great. When I started the business, I wanted to create a brand that would become a lifestyle. Reformation is about changing the world’s view on the fashion industry, educating consumers about the powerful effect we can all have on the environment, and using our label to inform the industry that it can be done in a sustainable way.

Tell us how it all began.
I really began to dislike a lot of the harmful fashion industry practices that I had become a part of. On a trip to China, I saw first-hand the devastating amount of pollution from manufacturing. I remember passing by these polluted waterways along the side of the road where local people were farming rice. I felt an overwhelming sense of accountability.

What was the key issue you wanted to address?
The fashion industry is extremely polluting – there is so much waste. To address this, I wanted to create limited collections based on demand and bring product to market as fast as possible.

How did the move from upcycled vintage to producing your own clothing come about?
In the beginning, we used recycled vintage fabrics, but when the business started to grow it was impossible to keep up with demand. So we started using deadstock fabrics from mills, or fabrics from designers who over-bought. Today, we mainly work with sustainable fabrics like Tencel, linen, traceable viscose and recycled polys andnylons.

Which pieces have been your all-time greatest hits?
Dresses are definitely our most popular category. The Lacey dress is a great example of the versatility of our clothes – it can be worn day-to-night and is effortlessly beautiful. We want to make timeless pieces that you’ll have in your wardrobe forever.

What makes your dresses different?
I think it’s the way we approach our design process, by focusing on body types rather than age demographics. We understand what women really want to wear, and since day one, our customers seem to agree.
 Michel Herbelin
ATELIER D' HORLOGERIE FRANÇAISE
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PHOTO RETOUCHÉE
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From decadent designs to futuristic faces, here are the timepiece trends to watch right now.

**DIAL UP THE GLAMOUR**
Pair your party dress with one of these lavish looks to release your inner disco diva— it’s time to hit the dance floor.

- £299, Swarovski
- £595, Michel Herbelin
- £109, Fossil
- £139, Karl Lagerfeld
- £169, Citizen
- £50, Michael Kors
- £10, Self-Portrait
- £15, Sally Lapointe
When in doubt, colour code. Tomato red, sunflower yellow and bold fuchsia are just a few of the new key shades. For maximum impact, match your wardrobe to your watch. Tick tock.

COLOUR WHEEL

MINIMAL TIME
Less, as they say, is more and whether you opt for a simple silver bracelet or a clean-cut face, this pared-back vibe offers the perfect balance between fashion and function.

Leather belts and horsebit details dominated the catwalk this season. Go middle of the road with a nod to 70s bourgeoisie - ladylike, preppy and oh-so practical.

AGE OF THE BOUGIE

£89, Skagen
£125, Tommy Hilfiger
£76, Swatch
£119, Hugo Boss
£299, Mondaine
£69, Guess
£195, Lacoste
£399, Movado

Fashion first

£89, Skagen
About £205, Calvin Klein
£125, Tommy Hilfiger
£76, Swatch
£119, Hugo Boss
£299, Mondaine
£69, Guess
£195, Lacoste
£399, Movado

About £185, Michael Kors
About £160, Emporio Armani
About £160, Tissot
£195, Salvatore Ferragamo
£295, Links of London
£709, Kate Spade
£399, Michael Kors

About £160, Emilio Pucci

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HOME COLLECTION
made to make you feel good

Invite the beauty of our signature fragrances into your home and create your own personal sanctuary. Discover the luxury Home Collection by Rituals. Designed to help you truly relax and unwind.
Endless love

Classic, yet contemporary: no wonder we’re head over heels for Chanel’s ‘19’

Softly quilted, with statement hardware, the Chanel ‘19’ is this autumn’s answer to ‘timeless with a twist’. Expertly crafted in leather or tweed, this embellished beauty comes in three different sizes and 13 covetable colours—so choosing the perfect combination may take some time...
INTRODUCING APTAMIL
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#SHOESFIRST

THE RE-BOOT

Stomp your way through colder climes in winter’s coolest chunky treads

01 £830, Dior
02 £500, Tod’s
03 £155, Tommy Hilfiger at Schuh
04 £960, Louis Vuitton
05 £805, Pierre Hardy
06 £39.99, H&M
07 £79.99, Mango
08 £710, Sportmax
09 £320, McCartney X Hunter
10 £450, ATP Atelier
11 £385, Pinko
The future of luxury

SHOPPING

Fusing high-end fashion with culture and cutting-edge accessories, Louis Vuitton’s flagship address is more experiential event than store

Is it an art gallery? Is it a couture salon? Is it a tech hub?

With fashion brands having to be more creative to draw us into their stores, the biggest trend in shopping is ‘experiential’. It’s all about spaces where you can hang out and see interesting things – and we don’t just mean the hot new product. We all know that Louis Vuitton has become French for ‘where it’s at’, thanks to creative director Nicolas Ghesquière, so it’s no surprise that its reopened New Bond Street store delivers all the above – and more.

‘I’ve worked with Louis Vuitton since 1994, and we’ve moved away from all the brown wood we used at the beginning,’ starchitect Peter Marino told us. ‘There’s been a real evolution towards something lighter, clearer and, dare I say, happier. For London, I wanted the space to have a dressier feel, to echo the sophistication of the neighbourhood.’ Here’s a sneak peek at what makes the new maison different...

THE ARTWORK

LV has a long history of ties to the art world – from the first artists commissioned by founder Gaston, Louis Vuitton’s grandson, to create store windows in the 20’s, to modern-day collaborations with the likes of Jeff Koons and Yayoi Kusama. Visitors to New Bond Street will get a mind-boggling art experience, with a curated collection that includes works by 3D plywood sculptor Josh Sperling and a staircase by Jim Lambie in his iconic Zobop stripes.

THE TECH

Fancy an interactive bag? Or fibre-optic trainers?

Ghesquière’s love of all things futuristic and sci-fi has resulted in the ‘Canvas of the Future’. A flexible digital display screen that allows for infinite personalisation has been incorporated into two of the house’s most popular bags, the ‘Speedy’ and the ‘Duffle’. You can also snap up a ‘Keepall’ tote and men’s trainers that feature fibre-optics to make them light up with the colours of the rainbow.

The Louis Vuitton store is at 39-42 New Bond Street, London W1S 2RU

THE CUSTOM CLOTHES

While the house doesn’t do couture as such, the ‘Rare & Exceptional’ service offers personalised versions of iconic Vuitton red-carpet looks worn by A-listers like Emma Stone (right) and Sophie Turner. Your chosen dress is made to measure and personalised to your requirements. Now we’ve just got to find that Oscars-party invite...

WORDS BY JESS WOOD. PHOTOGRAPHS BY GETTY IMAGES
Backing women is better for business

Helping others pays off for everyone. If women started and grew businesses at the same rate as men, the UK economy would be £250 billion better off. That’s why our new programme, Back Her Business, is helping women with funding, support and mentoring to get up and running.

We are what we do

Search NatWest Rethinking Business
Hot list

Our edit of the new high-street drops

01 Bag, £149, Whistles
02 Blouse, £59.99, Mango
03 Headband, £20, V by Very
04 Dress, £45, Weekday
05 Shoes, £139, Hobbs
06 Skirt, £89, COS
07 Coat, £225, Label/Mix at Next
08 Boots, £22, Matalan
09 Sweater, £89, & Other Stories
10 Bag, £175, Reiss
Here to solve all your workwear dilemmas is style journalist Alice Olins, co-founder of women’s career coaching network @TheStepUpClub

First off, I admire your commitment to trends, even when your work style parameters are on the conservative side. You’re in luck, because this season, there is a new look that’s perfect for confident, style-orientated working women. Let me introduce you to: bourgeois chic.

With its spirit of 70s glam, lavish post-war Dior tailoring and a soupçon of 90s power dressing, this style possesses panache in abundance, but can have the volume turned up or down depending on how brave you’re feeling.

So what does it entail? Well, using the decade references as your starting point, think about a strong silhouette, fabrics that feel luxe (so that could be rich silks for blouses, or tweed coats and skirts), layering and accessories that don’t fade into the background.

If the Working Girl cast had post-work cocktails with Audrey Hepburn and a 70s Jerry Hall, collectively, this is the trend they’d be sporting.

In terms of buying yourself into this phenomenal mash-up of styles, let me first point you to this & Other Stories pink blouse (above left). The colour alone will transport you where you want to be, and the pussy bow adds a touch of retro brilliance that will spruce up skirts and wide trousers that you already own. In my dreams, you’d wear this with a pair of burgundy corduroy wide-leg slacks and a flashy gold belt at the waist.

Also, make this Marks & Spencer skirt a new staple (below left). Cut to a neat, but not too short pencil shape, with a wide matching tweed belt and coy split up the back, it won’t ruffle any feathers, but it says ‘I’m expensive’ in just the right tone. It’s a snip at just under £40 – and you are going to want to get it before everyone else does.

Layering is a big part of this trend, and somewhat puts dresses in the shadows. After a summer of us all wafting about in maxis, I don’t feel too bad about this, so think separates, which include a punchy blazer, some colourful (preferably pearl-buttoned) knit cardigans and skirts that rest just above the knee – teamed with a pair of knee-high tan boots.

You will also need a coat that says ‘I’ve arrived’, before you’ve even opened your mouth. For this, head to Ganni, which has just released a killer of a coat (top left). It’s army green, comes in a plush, textured finish and boasts lapels and a super-sized belt. This coat will literally tie your entire look together.

Then you just need to add these flower earrings from Mango (top right), perhaps a slick of pink on the lips and a spray of Elnett and you’re done.

Q. I work in a relatively conservative office, but I love fashion and want to weave some current trends into my daily work-life wardrobe. I don’t know how best to do this. Please help!

Bethany, HR manager

Blouse, £55, & Other Stories

Skirt, £39.50, Marks & Spencer

Coat, £350, Ganni at Net-A-Porter.com

Earrings, £17.99, Mango

Boots, £250, Arket

5 OF THE BEST TOP-HANDLE BAGS

Fresh updates on a workwear basic

1. £457, Cafuné

2. £295, Kate Spade

3. £355, Marc Cain

Style Spotlight

Katharine Hamnett

It was 35 years ago that fashion designer Katharine Hamnett strolled into a reception at 10 Downing Street and flashed then prime minister Margaret Thatcher the anti-nuclear message ‘58% don’t want Pershing’. Since her first slogan T-shirt – 1981’s Buddhist-inspired ‘Choose Life’ – she’s used them to express her own political views. Hamnett graduated from Central Saint Martins in 1969 and spent her first years as a designer creating boho dresses. In 1984, she was the first recipient of the British Designer of the Year award from the British Fashion Council. But when she decided to look into the environmental impact of clothing production, she was so horrified that she immediately began lobbying the industry to make changes. Finding them frustratingly unresponsive, she wound down her label to concentrate on political activism. In 2017, with fashion production technology much more advanced, she relaunched as Katharine Hamnett London. This season, to mark the 40th anniversary of founding her label, she’s releasing a capsule collection replicated from her 80s designs – all produced organically and sustainably.
What were you like in your early years as a designer?
I set up a business after leaving college in 1969. We couldn’t think what to call it, so we mixed a friend’s name, Buck, with Hamnett, and called it Tuttabankem, which was terrible. There was a Tutankhamun exhibition on at the British Museum at the time and we kept getting calls asking what time it opened.

And what was your style like when you first started out?
It was the time of Zandra Rhodes and Thea Porter, and I did a bit of the hippie look, you know, hand-embroidered leather. It was quite chic and grown up. I founded my label Katharine Hamnett in 1979.

So when did environmental consciousness dawn?
My best friend Lynne Franks [iconic fashion PR, and inspiration for TV’s Ab Fab] was, and still is, a Buddhist. I’m not really. I’m terrible because I drink and smoke, but I like the philosophy, and in about 1989 I thought I’d just check ‘right livelihood’, the Buddhist path which means living without harming any living things. So I asked one of my staff to do some research into the environmental impact of the clothing industry.

And what did you discover when they reported back?
I was so naive at that point. I thought it would all be fine. Then it was just shock after shock. Deaths from pesticide poisoning, cotton farmers living in poverty, the rivers and seas being contaminated with pesticides… I thought, ‘My God, we’ve got to do something about this because nobody knows!’

What aspect of the production process shocked you the most?
Cotton is a huge issue – there are massive greenhouse gas emissions contributing to global warming coming from conventional cotton agriculture, and the pesticides and herbicides that are used are so toxic, polluting water supplies. They’re so persistent, they end up in the rivers and seas as this toxic slime, probably being taken up by plants and stopping them releasing the right nutrients back into the food chain as they’re meant to.

So what immediate changes did you make?
I tried to make our denim from organic cotton, but we couldn’t even find any. Then I did a speech in New York in about 1990, saying there was an untenable situation going on in fashion with garment workers in conditions of slavery as well as the pollution from textile agriculture, but the media just wasn’t interested at the time.

What other issues in fashion production concern you?
Leather is a huge problem. The chemical ‘chromium’ used in tanning and dyeing leather becomes even more toxic in landfill. It strips calcium from the locals’ bodies if it gets into the water supply. I’ve heard stories of old ladies with such fragile bones they’ve been broken by the weight of a sheet. But when I went to a trade fair recently, we only found one usable vegetable tanned leather. There was nothing else that was beautiful enough to use.

What can be done to improve the situation?
We need to stop making new and come up with solutions for how to reuse difficult-to-upcycle plastic fibres instead of dumping or burning them. The problem is, in England we don’t sort our rubbish properly – in Germany, they’ve got five or six bins per household, and we’ve got three. Rubbish is best recycled at source and it should be washed as well. The Chinese have prioritised that technology, so we’re just shipping our rubbish off to them to recycle and make money out of it. Even the carbon footprint of exporting our rubbish is shameful.

How would you describe your style these days?
Everything’s got to be functional and comfortable, but stylish and contemporary. Clothes are crazy because they’re about playing a role. A really beautiful garment has a presence and a life in it that transforms you.
**Jess Wood**
**Fashion Features Director**

“I love a “lady bag” and this Saint Laurent top-handle tote is a real beauty. Perfect with a blouse and prim pleated skirt, this gives good bourgeois vibes.”

**Penny Goldstone**
**Digital Fashion Editor**

“Obsessed with small bags? Me too – especially this Aspinal of London number, which I’ll be styling with autumn/winter’s hottest piece: the prairie dress.”

**Tanya Philipson**
**Executive Fashion Director**

“This cult Chloé is my must-have accessory going forward. Super versatile, it’ll work with everything – and I’m all about cost-per-wear.”

**Lucy Reber**
**Acting Fashion Editor**

“The clean lines and simple aesthetic of Wandler’s bags make it a go-to brand for me, and its latest offering, “Luna”, doesn’t disappoint. I’d play with proportions and style this petite design with an oversized mac, voluminous white tee, wide-leg trousers and a chunky trainer.”

**Alison Belamant**
**Senior Fashion Assistant**

“The structured shape of this mini offers the ideal contrast to its fun graffiti print. I’ll be teaming it with leather trousers and a slouchy sweater for that nonchalant, laid-back look.”

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They may be small but minis are having a major moment. From trophy totes to print-perfect, top-handle hotties, here are the coolest bags to carry you through the season. Head over to edit.marieclaire.co.uk for the standout styles to shop now. And for every purchase made, we’ll support leading global children’s charity Plan International UK, which is dedicated to promoting children’s rights and gaining equality for girls everywhere.

**£1,160,**
Chloé at Italist.com

**£550,**
Aspinal of London

**£510,**
Wandler at Browns

**£1,500,**
Saint Laurent

**£510,**
Emporio Armani

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This month, I’m adopting a sheep. No, Maisie won’t be roaming the streets of London’s Kensal Rise looking for grazing opps (she’d have a job). She lives in New Zealand – home to the world’s finest quality merino - and provides wool for the super cool sweaters of Sheep Inc, fashion’s first ‘carbon-negative’ brand. Founder Edzard van der Wyck, the brains behind seamless hosiery label, Heist, explains, ‘There’s a lot of talk about being carbon neutral, but we’re passed the point where that’s enough. That should be the bare minimum for a brand. For every product we sell, Sheep Inc takes ten times more CO2 out of the atmosphere than the product puts in.’ How? Well, £10 from the cost of each sweater is used to ‘adopt’ a sheep. That money goes to a raft of biodiversity projects - World Land Trust reforestation and forest protection schemes, for instance – as recommended by a panel of climate-change specialists who advise the brand. So, what gave van der Wyck the idea for furry friend adoption in the first place? ‘I wanted a new way to get people to really care where products come from by making them an emotionally invested part of the process,’ he says. As a result, each sweater comes with a tag embedded with a QR code that you can scan to get sheep updates. ‘It’s a real animal; we can tell you it’s just had lambs,’ he adds.

Even without the cuteness factor, the sweaters themselves stack up: made on 3D Japanese knitting machines from ultra-fine (19.5 micron) merino, there’s one perfect round-neck style available in five colours. Each is hand finished with different shades of off-cut yarn, used to create a mark in the back of the sweater inspired by the ‘Smith mark’ put on to sheep. Anyway, I’m off to see what kind of day Maisie has had…

He founded the label as a ‘business arm’ of the Bottletop Foundation, which supports disadvantaged young people in the favelas of Brazil (as well as in Africa and the UK). Now, with a new Regent Street store and amazing designs for AW19, like the ‘Margot’ in Berry, £345 (right), the brand is going from strength to strength. Meanwhile, Saul’s Together Band campaign, created to highlight the UN’s 17 sustainable development goals set out in 2015, offers up a band for every goal: you get two in each box – wear one; give the other to a friend to spread the message. The bands are handmade in Nepal from upcycled ocean plastics (each band removes 1kg of waste), while the clasps are made from decommissioned illegal firearms. All proceeds go to projects that support the UN goals, so we’re snapping up the yellow version, from £20 (right) to support goal 12: ‘Responsible Consumption and Production’.

...Cameron Saul, that is. The dynamic founder of bag brand Bottletop (and son of Mulberry legend Roger Saul) is on a mission to do good, both with his bags and the campaign Together Band. And the cred runs deep – who else could turn used, discarded ring pulls into A-list accessories?
CHAIN GANG
From chunky chains (far left) to Swarovski crystals perfectly placed to look like earrings (left), Frame Chain makes upgrading your eyewear a cinch. Each chain is easy to attach with loops to match your frame’s colour and size. Who said practical couldn’t be chic? From £60.

TO THE BALL
A hot new eveningwear line from Net-A-Porter and Jimmy Choo is set to elevate your red-carpet-ready accessories. Comprising 13 exclusive styles (ten pairs of shoes and three bags), the capsule drop celebrates crystals, bows and feathers for the most decadent of details. RSVP immediately…

BESPOKE BUYS
The leading online personal styling service, Stitch Fix, is hitting the UK. Stylists send a capsule of items based on your style profile, with directional bands including Whistles, Rag & Bone and J Brand. What could be cooler?

THE EYES HAVE IT
In an editorial twist, VIU has dedicated its new-season styles to some kick-ass characters: think The Fierce, The Hustler, The Nomad and The Navigator (left and above), £205. Winter sunnies have never been sassier.
**FASHION FOOT FORWARDS**
Taking inspo straight from the runway, Sketchers’ new Heritage line delivers classic kicks with a catwalk update.

**SHINE LIKE A STAR**
Constellation and lunar emblems have long inspired the Chanel Fine Jewellery collections, but the house has, quite literally, reached for the stars with its ‘Comet’ designs this season, which include stellar rings and celestial hair clips.

**WRIST CANDY**
Midnight-blue and rose-gold tones give this luxe Swarovski watch, inspired by astrology, a modern edge. £299.

**GREEN GODDESS**
Pump up the volume in Airfield’s answer to a sartorial blanket for autumn/winter. This emerald number’s sporty yet feminine aesthetic makes it perfect for colder climes, while the envy-inducing pop of green is bang on trend. £932.

**FEMME FATALE**
With party season approaching, Iris & Ink has partnered with creative talent Julia Restoin Roitfeld (left) to launch a limited-edition range on The Outnet. Cue six super-chic pieces, including a timeless silk slip and slick tuxedo-style jumpsuit.

**COOL COLLAB**
Actress and activist Millie Bobby Brown has teamed up with Pandora to launch a new-gen jewellery collection that champions individuality. Charms x self-expression? We love. From £10.
If you’ve ever coveted your own dedicated stylist but baulked at paying for princely personal shopping sessions, Stitch Fix – the personalised retail experience – is just what you and your wardrobe have been waiting for.

Launched almost nine years ago by CEO Katrina Lake in San Francisco, Stitch Fix hit the UK market in May. This October, it will be serving up exclusive in-house labels (Mauvette and Editor’s Cut), as well directional Scandinavian brands, such as Baum und Pferdgarten and Samsoe & Samsoe, plus French house, Maison La Biche. ‘Stitch Fix offers a fundamentally different, smarter and better way to shop,’ Lake says, ‘one Fix at a time.’ Here’s how it works: you sign up at Stitchfix.co.uk and complete a ‘style profile’ that allows the brand to capture what shapes, styles, palettes and prints you prefer; whether you’re looking for power workwear or casual, trend-led looks. You’re then matched with a pro, real-life stylist who curates a five-item ‘Fix’ tailored entirely to you. The items are posted out to you for free and the £10 styling fee can be redeemed against any item/s you decide to purchase. Impressed? Us too. Your bespoke AW19 wardrobe awaits...

Savvy online shoppers are turning to slick styling service Stitch Fix for a bespoke wardrobe edit. Here’s how to get in on the action and tap AW19’s key trends

Above: sweater, £38, and trousers, £65, both Editor’s Cut at Stitchfix.co.uk; earrings (seen throughout), £25, Mint Velvet; boots, £159, Rag & Bone

Left: blazer, £75, and trousers, £59, both Editor’s Cut at Stitchfix.co.uk; top, £35, Whistles
Coat, £160, Editor’s Cut; and sweater, £65, French Connection, both at Stitchfix.co.uk

Jacket, £109, and jeans, £49, both Editor’s Cut; dress, £79.95, Moss Copenhagen, all at Stitchfix.co.uk; boots, £169, Whistles

Dress, £215, Karen Millen at Stitchfix.co.uk; boots, £159, Rag & Bone

Jacket, £85, Selected Femme; top, £69, Baum und Pferdgarten; and trousers, £55, Mauvette, all at Stitchfix.co.uk; boots, £169, Whistles; bag, £69, Baum und Pferdgarten

GET YOUR FASHION FIX FROM EXPERT STYLISTS
Visit Stitchfix.co.uk to schedule your first ‘Fix’; brands include Kitri, Whistles, Gestuz, Samsøe & Samsøe, Baum und Pferdgarten and Maison La Biche
THE NEW ICONS

simply be.
I arrived in Kashmir two weeks after the rivers had burst their banks and found Mushaq Ahmad Wani and Shafeeqa Mushtaq living on the second floor of their house with their two young children; the ground floor had been completely submerged and was still inhabitable. Mushaq worked as an artist, and had saved much of his collection by storing paintings upstairs, but many houses in this area were on the brink of collapse, held together by mud mortar alone. Everyone seemed to be in shock and there was a lot of anger, too. They hadn’t been warned early enough by the authorities and Shafeeqa was keen to show the world what they were going through; for others to bear witness to the destruction.

Photographer Gideon Mendel has spent 12 years capturing the extreme rise in flooding
Surrey, UK, 2014

‘I met Jeff and Tracey Waters after the UK’s heaviest rainfall since records began and, despite their house being raised to protect them from severe flooding, they had still been affected by water damage on the first floor. Living so close to the Thames, many of their neighbours had been forced to move out by the time I arrived – some evacuated by boat – so Jeff and Tracey were two of the few people still living in the community. They were very open to being photographed, even welcoming me and my assistant in to make us bacon sandwiches after the shoot, and felt relatively lucky compared to some of their friends, whose homes have been badly damaged in the deluge.’

E Floods

across the globe. Here, he tells Marie Claire about the devastating human impact
From deadly monsoons in Nepal and dramatic flash floods in northeastern Spain, to the near-collapse of Whaley Bridge dam in Derbyshire, 2019 has, quite literally, been awash with news of global crises caused by a complex, consistent pattern of rising water levels and submerged landscapes. The number of flood reports worldwide has surged by 50 per cent over the past 10 years and Gideon Mendel’s documentary series ‘Drowning World’ is a striking photographic record of the human cost of flooding.

‘It all began in 2007, with the floods that took place in Yorkshire,’ he says of the project. ‘At the time, my children were very young and they got me thinking about climate change. I was trying to imagine their world when they get to my age. I made my way to the [flooded areas of] north England that summer and started experimenting with portraiture in water. I had no equipment; I was walking around in my shorts and completely unprepared... but, for a photographer, it was a very special time: the light, the colours – everything looks different in a flood. You find reflections where there should be none. It’s almost dream-like: frightening, strange, bizarre, yes, but there are still some positive elements, too. People help their neighbours; there is a lot of solidarity.’

The experience led to similar work in India, where London-based Mendel discovered that extreme flooding does not discriminate. ‘Whether you live in Yorkshire or Bihar; whether you’re rich or poor, there exists a kind of shared vulnerability and, despite the very different contexts, people who have experienced severe floods have a lot in common,’ he says.

Now, having created a catalogue of submerged portraits to document survivors across the globe, Mendel is hoping ‘Drowning World’ will shine a light on the victims of extreme weather events, and humanise the effects of climate change. ‘There are no rules – the pathway to making these pictures is unpredictable and chaotic, but I have found that women often show greater strength in these situations, and many want to bear witness to their ordeal in order to get something positive out of the experience. Even the floods have a character of their own,’ he adds.
I was travelling by boat to this village in Bihar when I saw these two women, Shinta and Samundri, swiftly moving through the water. I was surprised but I soon realised that they were actually walking on a road, which was higher than the houses. They seemed to be familiar with their environment and were on their way to buy cooking oil from a nearby stall. They didn’t stop for long though: they didn’t want people to steal their things.

This area is so often flooded that many houses now stand on stilts. I found a man called José, his wife and mother all busily cleaning the walls of their home with flood water before the levels dropped again. Later, I found his mother sitting outside, relaxing in the cool water, smoking her cigarette. She told me that she enjoys the floods when they come, because the water is fresh and pleasant to be in.

Everyone who experiences flooding has a strong urge to return to their house to survey the damage. Shirley was particularly keen to get home. She had been flooded the year before and had only recently moved back in. The water surrounding her home was too deep for us to walk in, so I arranged for a boat to drop us at her front door. I was shooting video footage of her as she opened the door and walked inside – it was as if I was experiencing the shock with her. She realised that a box of photographs placed on top of a table had been knocked off by the rising water, so, my assistant Joe and I spent some time rescuing the photographs from under the water. I will always remember that shared experience.
Florida, USA, 2017

‘I arrived in the wake of hurricane Irma. Terrence was there with his mother Gloria, who he lived with at the time. He looks like a tough guy, but he was in tears when he walked into his mother’s house and saw the damage for the first time. He told me that everything had been destroyed and that they had no insurance. I learned that he had recently separated from his wife and children. But, a year later, I contacted him again and discovered he’d got a new job and had reunited with his wife and kids. For him, this catastrophe was a life-changing event.’

Naogaon, Bangladesh, 2017

‘Malek Mia and his wife, Tahomina, stand in the mud with their two children and nephew in front of their house in an area of Bangladesh that used to be rarely affected by floods. Now, the country is considered to be the most flood-prone in the world. Climate change, rising sea levels and more intense cyclone surges have increased the probability of floods there. Bangladesh’s low-lying land also means that the water often has nowhere to go and takes a very long time to drain away.’

Bangkok, Thailand, 2011

‘Floods generally appear gradually in Bangkok, with the water emerging from drains very slowly. People carry on with their lives amid the chaos and they seem relatively comfortable with it. Shops stay open and people use gas to cook their meals, with water just inches below the work top. Here, Anchalee was part of a group of migrant workers that I photographed who were living on a construction site because their shacks had been destroyed. She was waiting, with her daughter, for a food relief boat that was scheduled to bring supplies and clean water.’
IMPOSSIBLY COMFORTABLE
IMPOSSIBLY VERSATILE
‘WE’VE PUT OUR LIVES ON HOLD TO SAVE THE PLANET’

With scientists issuing daily warnings of the environmental damage caused by mankind, the climate change crisis has become the issue of our times. Marisa Bate speaks to three women who are sacrificing everything for the fight of a lifetime.

‘This is humanity’s last shot. I couldn’t live with myself if I didn’t try to do something. I can’t leave this to my kids’

Sarah Greenfield Clark, Extinction Rebellion activist

‘Not having children is the perfect way to get across to others that this is a life or death situation for everyone’

Blythe Pepino, BirthStriker

‘Young people understand what’s at stake. Older people were told about climate change years ago and did nothing’

Scarlett Westbrook, school youth striker
for legal costs for those who get arrested. Although XR is a strictly non-violent movement, there are many volunteers willing to break the law. We call them ‘the arrestables’, and they receive training and legal advice. When you look back throughout the course of history, it’s only these types of movements that have brought about fundamental change. If you can get just three to five per cent of the population engaged in a matter and are willing to stop what they’re doing, that’s enough to bring about change.

It should be a crime to pollute our lands; it shouldn’t be a crime to stand up and say that’s wrong. This is humanity’s last shot. In fact, there’s a group of scientists who believe we are already passed the tipping point where we can’t actually claw back and slow the process of climate destruction. But I couldn’t live with myself if I didn’t try to do something. Maybe, if I didn’t have kids, I might have thrown in the towel but, because of my children, I can’t leave this to them.

Sarah Greenfield Clark, 36, is a full-time campaigner for the movement Extinction Rebellion. She lives in East Anglia with her husband and two children. I used to be just an ordinary twentysomething. I’d go out for drinks with the girls and on shopping trips at the weekend, but, today, the thought of getting on a plane to jet off on holiday, when I know how much my carbon footprint is robbing from future generations, makes me feel physically ill.

In 2016, my husband Will and I watched a documentary called Before The Flood [about the consequences of man-made global warming] and it suddenly hit us. We just couldn’t unsee what we’d seen and, from the very next day, I needed to know everything about this issue. At the time, I was doing admin jobs as well as running my own gardening business so I was able to work around the kids, but I made a decision to go back to university and study for an MA in sustainability.

I wanted to be a sustainable consultant for corporations, but just before I graduated in 2018, I realised the crisis is too urgent. Around the same time, Extinction Rebellion (XR) emerged and, last year, after reading on Facebook about its Declaration of Rebellion rally in London on 31 October, I went along. I’d never even been on a march before, but everything was done calmly with compassion, and there was clear communication.

XR laid out its demands for the government to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025 and halt biodiversity loss, all to be led by a Citizen’s Assembly on climate issues. I loved the event because I was among a diverse group of people who cared. Taking part in civil disobedience felt like the natural step to alert the government that ‘I’m going to do something bold to get your attention’.

Then, in November 2018, XR planned to shut five bridges in London for a day. A suggestion was made that one of the bridges become family friendly, so that children could play with each other and any of the more arrestable actions would take place on the others.

I thought if I’m going to commit my life to this cause, my boys, who were seven and nine, must come along for the ride. It happened so easily and fluidly. We walked around near Blackfriars Bridge and then, at a chosen time, everyone moved on to the bridge. People began to sit on the road, share food and play music.

I’ve never had any negative thoughts about involving my children – in fact, I was excited about showing them that if you care about something, you should stand up for your convictions.

After the bridge protest, XR saw a massive surge in members, and it was desperate for volunteers. I really wanted to help out full-time, so I talked it over with my husband and quit my gardening business to work on crowdfunding.

It’s an unpaid role that involves me speaking to high net worth individuals to ask them to donate to our cause. We need money to help form other groups across the world, for the stages and sanitation at rallies and for arts and crafts, which are a big part of it. We also require funds for legal costs for those who get arrested. Although XR is a strictly non-violent movement, there are many volunteers willing to break the law. We call them ‘the arrestables’, and they receive training and legal advice.

When you look back throughout the course of history, it’s only these types of movements that have brought about fundamental change. If you can get just three to five per cent of the population engaged in a matter and are willing to stop what they’re doing, that’s enough to bring about change.

It should be a crime to pollute our lands; it shouldn’t be a crime to stand up and say that’s wrong. This is humanity’s last shot. In fact, there’s a group of scientists who believe we are already passed the tipping point where we can’t actually claw back and slow the process of climate destruction. But I couldn’t live with myself if I didn’t try to do something. Maybe, if I didn’t have kids, I might have thrown in the towel but, because of my children, I can’t leave this to them.
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THE BIRTHSTRIKER

Blythe Pepino, 33, is the founder of BirthStrike, an environmental campaign group that refuses to have children until governments enact the systemic changes we need for a safe future.

She is the singer in the band Mesadorm and lives between Stroud and London.

I first became properly aware the ecological crisis through Extinction Rebellion. I’ve been heavily involved in organising music with them and, during last year’s protest on London’s Waterloo Bridge, I was arrested for civil disobedience after locking myself to the underside of a lorry.

My partner Joshua and I had been talking about having kids as we’d been together two years, I’d turned 33 and a lot of my friends were becoming parents. I was really excited about the idea; I’d fallen in love and I wanted a family. But then I started thinking, ‘Maybe the world is not that bad.’ So I have to keep reading the latest climate science to remind myself – yes, it is. Of course I have doubts about my decision to remain childless. That’s just totally human, isn’t it? But for me, I know I’m doing the right thing.

During an Extinction Rebellion protest on Waterloo Bridge in July, Blythe was arrested after locking herself to a lorry

Not having children is the perfect way to get across to others that this is a life or death situation for everyone, and I was aware it would have an electric effect in the media.

I began to tell people I knew what I was thinking and, while nearly everyone seemed to be of the same opinion, most felt it was taboo and too depressing to talk about. I set up a Facebook group to test the water and, in two weeks, 140 women, mostly from the UK, said they, too, would not have children because of the state of the planet.

Now, we’re just a voluntary organisation; we’re not trying to solve the crisis, we’re spreading information through our strike. I’ve been interviewed in newspapers and on TV, here and in the US.

Starting a family is a beautiful thing – procreation is wrapped up in our idea of a hopeful future. But having babies is essential for the economy – it keeps women down and men in power. It’s also something that triggers racism; I receive lots of tweets from people worrying that more black and brown babies are being born.

In fact, it’s how I ended up on Fox News this year. While the show’s producers may not have seen it this way, there are many like me who see the right-wing media’s hostility as them feeling distinctly threatened by the idea of middle-class women refusing to have children while brown mothers around the world procreate. It reveals so much about our society.

When I’m in my music world, I start thinking, ‘Maybe the world is not that bad.’ So I have to keep reading the latest climate science to remind myself – yes, it is. Of course I have doubts about my decision to remain childless. That’s just totally human, isn’t it? But for me, I know I’m doing the right thing.
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Scarlett Westbrook, 15, is a member of the UK Student Climate Network and Birmingham Youth Strike 4 Climate group.

I took an A-level in politics aged 13. I’d been reading the news since I was ten and I was bored due to an injury, which left me on crutches for four months. I asked my school’s deputy head if I could sit the A-level, but she just laughed, so when I told my mum, she said, ‘Fine, but you sort it out.’ I emailed the exam board asking if I could do it the following year and they told me to find an exam centre. I taught myself using textbooks, revision guides and online resources, as I didn’t really know how to find a tutor.

One part of the course was called ‘ideologies in action’, about how climate change is being treated by various politicians. One example that really struck me was when, in 2006, David Cameron, who was then leader of the Conservative Party, said he wanted a green revolution. But in 2013, as Prime Minister, he allegedly said, ‘We have to get rid of all this green crap.’ (No 10 later said it did not ‘recognise’ the phrase.)

He scrapped the plan to make new-build homes zero carbon, the UK wasn’t meeting our Paris Agreement [a global action to plan to reduce carbon emissions] targets, and we were failing everything. The only thing he changed was his Tory Party logo to a tree symbol. We’ve known for decades about the climate emergency and nothing is being done. I thought, ‘This is awful; this is a disaster.’

When the UK Student Climate Network was founded last January, I joined. We’re the people behind the school climate protest strikes, and I’m the community engagement coordinator alongside my friend Isla.

It’s easy to label climate activism as something only white middle-class people do, but we don’t want that image because climate change doesn’t discriminate; everyone is going to be affected, and minority communities will be affected most.

We’ve organised talks at churches, synagogues and mosques across Birmingham to get people – adults and children – involved in our strikes.

We’re doing nothing illegal, we’re just a group of kids with lots of cardboard signs. My school does give us the time off to strike, but you have to fill in a form and parents are called. The school has also been supportive when I’ve had to take days off to meet with politicians in Parliament. I can catch up on school work, but I can’t catch up on the damage done to the Earth.

So far, we’ve talked to Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn about the Green New Deal, and Caroline Lucas of the Green Party, who was great. We plan to meet with Jo Swinson now she’s leader of the Lib Dems, and the Conservatives have yet to attend a meeting with us.

We’re moving very slowly and that’s really worrying. Young people understand what’s at stake because we know what our future is going to be like. Older people were told about climate change many years ago and they didn’t do anything about it, which is very frustrating. The future is really concerning.

The most impressive person I’ve met is [teenage environmental activist] Greta Thunberg. When she came to the UK as she set sail for the US to speak at the UN in New York, I interviewed her for the UK Student Climate Network. She was so lovely and humble. I just started fangirling her, saying: ‘You’re so amazing!’ She replied, ‘No, you are.’

I asked her how she feels standing up to older, powerful people, and she said she doesn’t really take notice of them because they are scared that our message is getting through and they feel threatened by that. That really resonated with me.

She seemed so wise; it just radiated off her, but she was also good fun. At one point we asked her to speak directly into the camera. Greta caught my eye and we just got the giggles and couldn’t stop laughing. We had to do four takes. They say never meet your heroes, but I think I love her even more now. Meeting Greta has given me a renewed sense of hope.
What keeps you awake at 3am? Work deadlines? An argument before bed? Mortgage repayments? We all carry around daily worries, but some of us are sleepless over a much bigger concern – the state of planet Earth.

'Eco-anxiety' is something that mental-health practitioners report seeing a spike in over recent years, as we collectively wake up to the urgency of the climate crisis we find ourselves in today. A recent poll of our top concerns showed the environment eclipsing issues such as housing and crime for the first time ever.

Olivia Howers, 27, who studied sustainability, science and policy at university, admits to living with such a sense of anxiety. ‘I had this constant nagging feeling at the back of my mind, a low level worry that I couldn’t get rid of. When you think about how much needs to change in such a short space of time, it’s completely overwhelming,’ she says. ‘Part of that anxiety comes from being with family and friends who don’t see that change is necessary.’

‘The rise in eco-anxiety,’ says Caroline Hickman, a psychotherapist at the University of Bath, ‘can be traced back to an unlikely source – Sir David Attenborough.’ His award-winning Blue Planet II series hit our screens in October 2017 and brought the extent of what had, until then, been an existential threat into sharp relief, as we watched the negative impact we are having on our oceans and marine life. ‘This was a shifting point. The impact of the climate crisis truly became lodged in the public consciousness with this film.’

The momentum was unstoppable, with other respected figures adding their voice to the cause, alongside news headlines about the crisis. ‘Then, 16-year-old Greta Thunberg started a global movement with the school strikes, while Extinction Rebellion launched its Act Now campaign. Even...
the BBC took the decision to stop giving airtime to climate change deniers,’ adds Hickman.

Today, we find ourselves being hit by a daily deluge of horror stories, so it’s no surprise that many people feel anxious. But how do we tackle our feelings of fear, anxiety and even despair? ‘I tell people it’s a healthy response to something that is huge and terrifying,’ says Hickman. ‘A specific anxiety such as a social phobia can be addressed at a personal level and be traced back, with the help of a therapist, to find a route to deal with it. But eco-anxiety is different – it’s bigger than all of us.’

For Hovers, the best way to tackle her anxiety was changing her own consumer habits. ‘I’m happier now that I’ve stopped buying new clothes, I only buy food I need for pre-planned meals, and I avoid plastics and waste. I’ve also switched to a sustainable bank called Triodos, which invests in projects that benefit the environment. I do wonder how my efforts can make a difference, but I’m trying to be optimistic.’

Experts agree that it’s very common for ‘environmentally woke’ people to find themselves stuck between feeling like they must do more and worrying about what difference one person can actually make anyway. Bouncing between these two extremes can lead to a type of paralysis – where sufferers are unable to move forward with their lives.

Seeing this paralysis as a form of grief can be helpful, says psychotherapist Judith Anderson, as the symptoms are similar: ‘The big things people come to me with are insomnia, lack of focus and feeling alienated from their families who may not share their views, the same symptoms we have with grief,’ says Anderson. ‘However, after bereavement we get on with our lives while still feeling sorrow. So it’s about living with what’s unfolding but not allowing sadness to take over.’

And in order to move on, talking is key. ‘Reaching out for help, or to others who feel the same, can stop people from collapsing into themselves,’ says Tree Staunton, director of BCPC (Bath Centre for Psychotherapy and Counselling).

While it may be a news report or a film that triggers anxiety, often the onset occurs at a new life stage, such as in the case of Parisa Wright, 39, from London, who experienced deep anxiety about the planet after the birth of her second daughter. ‘I had a very tearful moment with my husband, where we both found ourselves thinking, “What have we done bringing children into this world?” I started to feel anxious about what was going on with the planet and what my kids will inherit.’

She decided the only route out of her anxiety was to find like-minded people and act. Wright started by making changes at home – eating less meat, reusing and recycling more and, this year, founded a Facebook group, Greener & Cleaner Bromley (Beyond), for people in her area to swap ideas about living more sustainably. ‘At our first meeting, 25 people came,’ she says, ‘but we now have more than 3,000 members. We hold events – clothes swaps and free talks by sustainability experts.’

Such a proactive approach is particularly effective for young people, who experts say are increasingly likely to suffer, too. In fact, researchers in Finland have found that children and adolescents experience a particularly acute eco-anxiety because they feel they have a limited ability to make an impact on this looming threat compared to adults.

One way round this, says clinical psychologist Dr Laura Kastner, is to educate, motivate and inspire, rather than to create incapacitating fear. Kastner suggests young people start small projects, such as a school recycling initiative, to give them a sense that they are doing something. ‘It’s a way to channel the feeling of hopelessness, and perhaps even shape future climate leaders.’ She says adults should accept a young person’s feelings, encourage healthy questions and reassure them they’ll be there whatever happens.

But what if you’re feeling guilty for not ‘waking up’ sooner? ‘Don’t,’ says Hickman. ‘You’ve defended yourself from this for a very good reason – it’s terrifying.’ She suggests working through your feeling, then decide how you’re going to be part of the change. She says it’s important to form a relationship with our eco-anxiety. ‘Listen to it, validate it, and use your feelings to give passion and commitment to bringing about change in your life and inspiring others to do the same.’

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**FIVE SMALL STEPS YOU CAN MAKE TODAY**

1. **If the issue feels too big to tackle, then hone in on one problem first, such as cutting down on single-use plastics.**

Taking small measures allows you to increase your impact gradually.

2. **Banking ethically is a simple, yet effective way to vote against environmental destruction supported by big banks such as Barclays, HSBC and Santander.**

3. **Cars are bad news, given that the average motorist in the UK uses a vast amount of fossil fuel in their lifetime. Opt for a bike, and reap the benefits of fresh air and mood-lifting endorphin boosts.**

4. **Help your loved ones understand more about these issues by organising a movie night. Cosy up on the sofa with favourite cinema snacks and watch a good environmental documentary together.**

5. **Check the ethical standards of fashion brands with the Good On You app. It collects info on over 2,000 international fashion labels and how environmentally sound they are.**

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Interview

You know a show has reached mass appeal when Drake puts his weight behind it, which is exactly what happened to cult British show Top Boy. Originally running on Channel 4 for two series between 2011 and 2013, the gritty drama starred Kane Robinson and Ashley Walters as Sully and Dushane – two drug-dealing ‘spiritual brothers’ navigating life in London’s Hackney. While the show was off-air, Drake began sharing his love for it on social media, eventually becoming ‘instrumental in the acquisition of the show’ and buying the rights, explains Kane, 34, of its sudden revival on Netflix. But the return of Top Boy isn’t the only thing on his mind. Kane, whose stage name is Kano, is widely recognised as one of the founders of the UK grime scene, with six studio albums under his belt and his introspective lyrics setting him apart from his contemporaries – touching on raw subjects from rifts between friends to the impact of knife crime in London.

And by the time you read this, he will be performing the biggest gig of his life at London’s Royal Albert Hall, celebrating the release of his latest album, Hoodies All Summer. Here, he talks about his return to the limelight…

Why do you think Top Boy is so popular?
‘It resonates with a lot of people. Whenever there’s a show made that feels so real, the people – from the environments we’re speaking of – recognise it so well, and you rarely see that on TV. With the previous series being on Netflix now, I really see that when I travel, people have caught up all around the world. They just love it. Not being on TV for six years, you’d expect people to forget about it, but I was getting asked non-stop when it was coming back.’

Did you always know you wanted to revisit it?
‘Yeah. Me and Ashley [Walters] were always keen to get it back – if anything, just to give ourselves a break from people asking! The most important thing for us was it needed to be made in the same fashion with the same crew, being as real as possible. We know there’s a wider market now, but we’re not trying to play to that or appeal to an American market – it has to be made in the same spirit as before.’

When did you find out Drake was a fan?
‘When he started sharing it on social media. He seemed keen to go beyond being a ‘fan’ and to see how it could come back. He played an integral part in acquiring the Netflix deal, but he wasn’t a creative, day-to-day on the shoot.’

Drake loves the British grime scene. Was he responsible for [grime artist] Dave’s involvement?
‘No, that was probably the casting director [Des Hamilton] – he’s good at spotting talent. It’s not that we try to stay away from people because they have a popularity, but you soon find the job is so demanding, it has to be something you’re taking seriously. Dave surprised me – he does really well.’

Is music your first love?
‘Definitely, I still don’t know if I love acting. I just love this show! Music was always the thing I loved to do; the thing I’ll always do. Acting was never on the cards, but Des Hamilton persuaded me to read the Top Boy script and I went up for it and have been involved with the creation of it ever since. I don’t have major ambitions to act.’

You played football for Norwich City as a teenager.

‘I wouldn’t call it a career because I made no money! I was doing it because it was something I was good at, but I wasn’t in love with. I played football for my school, district, then did a trial and played youth for Norwich City. When music came along, that was my passion – the thing I would do if it wasn’t my job. I wanted to do it every day – I couldn’t put my pen down.

Your lyrics are very honest and raw. Is writing therapeutic for you?
Yeah, even to this day. Not every piece of music is that, but sometimes there have been things I’d say in music that I wouldn’t necessarily bring up in conversation. You can get
really close to music and have a conversation with yourself; you don’t even think about the world hearing it. It’s quite a solitary thing writing lyrics, and sometimes I do dig deep and get things off my chest. It’s been good for me for various reasons at different times during my life.’

Your lyrics - like for T-shirt Weather In The Manor - are always very emotive of specific times and places.

‘Yeah, I think you can speak vividly about today and look back in ten years and know exactly what was happening in that moment. That’s what good storytelling is for me.’

It could be said that your lyrics are more respectful of women than other artists’ in your genre.

‘Yeah, I think that’s probably been a bigger thing in American hip-hop and 90s hip-hop videos - that kind of imagery was the norm then. You look back and watch old videos and think, ‘I shouldn’t have liked this’, and maybe I should have been saying that all along. But, obviously, now we’re in a different time and some things are just not on. Personally, I don’t see myself as portraying that kind of imagery. I think my music is who I am, and I’m a person of respect, so that shouldn’t creep into my music.’

Much of your older work speaks about rifts between friends and family, notably your sister in Little Sis. Has it helped reconcile any of those situations?

‘Yeah, through my brother we [my sister and I] made contact after that. There was a reach out and that was nice. Music does lift things and words can be powerful. On Strangers, I was talking about a mate, and there was a branch that was taken and now we have a good relationship, too.’

How does your mum feel about your success?

‘She watches Top Boy on Netflix! She’s proud, but she knows how I am – if they play my songs, I’m like, “Turn it off, I don’t want to hear my music”. But I know, on the sly, she’s probably more vocal about how proud she is.’

Your performances really push boundaries – you played with a brass band in 2016 at Brixton Academy – has that always been important to you?

‘For me, boundary pushing is the only thing to do – to remain in your comfort zone is lazy. I like to push myself and, hopefully, I push the scene forward, in terms of the way I perform my music. I’m playing the Royal Albert Hall and this [grime] music hasn’t necessarily been represented in venues like that, so that’s going to be a pivotal moment for me in my career, which will help other artists that come after me. When we started out ten years back, trying to do what we loved and create, have a voice and represent where we’re from, we inspired a whole new generation. Dave and Little Simz are doing amazing things, and it makes me so proud. I think I can speak for the Lethal Bs [Lethal Bizzle], the Wileys and the Dizzees, who were there back then when we started out, too.’

You’ve written about the expectation to help people out financially now you’re successful. Do you still feel that pressure?

‘When you’re starting out and everything is new, no one knows how it works. The whole music industry was completely new to us, and when you’re surrounded by “friends”, everyone thinks you get £10 million every time your video gets played. It’s like, “Where’s my Bentley?” Those are troubles new artists go through’

‘Everyone thinks you get £10 million every time your video gets played. It’s like, “Where’s my Bentley?” Those are troubles new artists go through’

Left: Kano on stage at Lovebox in 2017.
Above: starring in Top Boy with Ashley Walters (far left)

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I've only seen the news footage of me as a five-day-old baby once. That was enough. There's a woman speaking to camera, she's saying she can't look at me as it reminds her of the men who raped her. Then she admits that if she holds me she will strangle me.

I was 19 and could see how distressed the woman was. Having a baby should have been one of the happiest moments of her life, but all I did was give her flashbacks of violence. I couldn’t really see her face, only her side profile, and could tell she was consumed by anger. But as I watched her, I knew I had to find her.

I had a wonderful childhood, growing up in Hungary, London and eventually Wales, with my adoptive parents, Sîan and Dan Damon. Dad is a journalist and Mum was a camera operator and they had worked abroad before settling back in the UK. I was seven when I first heard about my adoption, after coming home from school to tell Mum about a class discussion we’d had about what day of the week we’d all been born on. That was when she explained how I’d been adopted from a country called Bosnia, and that the lady who had given birth to me couldn’t look after me because of the war.

The revelation didn’t feel like a profound moment and, throughout the rest of my childhood, my parents revealed as much about my background as they could in an age-appropriate way. We even had a family holiday in Bosnia and they encouraged me to learn the language, although at the time I wasn’t interested.

It was only when I turned 18 and wanted to go on holiday to Bosnia with my then boyfriend that Mum and Dad knew it was time for me to hear the full story of my birth. I remember sitting in our living room on the big blue sofa as they told me what my birth mother had endured. ‘Her name was Safa and she was raped in a concentration camp by Serbian soldiers,’ said Mum, who explained that they had been working in the country during the atrocities.

It was while they were conducting interviews in a hospital in Sarajevo that they had a tip-off about a woman who had been raped in one of the camps and had given birth on Christmas Day. A few days later, they saw me for the first time. I’d just been fed and was wrapped up in blankets, so only my face was visible. My birth mum was so traumatised, she was unable to care for me. That was the moment they filmed the news report, the one I finally watched 19 years later.

After leaving the hospital, my parents said they were so upset, they couldn’t stop thinking about me. They realised if they didn’t get me out of Bosnia, it was unlikely I would survive. My fate would have been a neglected life in an orphanage with staff struggling against impossible odds to take care of so many orphaned and abandoned children. Three days later, they made the decision to adopt me.
‘GROWING UP IN THE UK, I’M NOT REMINDED OF MY BIRTH ALL THE TIME, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT IF I HAD STAYED IN SARAJEVO’
and, after speaking to Bosnian authorities and getting my birth mother’s approval, on 3 January 1993, they picked me up and named me after one of their Bosnian friends who had returned to Sarajevo to help distribute aid.

Thrilled, but also scared by their life-changing decision, my new parents smuggled me out of Bosnia in an armoured car through multiple armed checkpoints manned by aggressive guards with Kalashnikovs. Although they weren’t doing anything wrong – they had all the correct paperwork – they were petrified a brutish or drunk soldier would make the situation difficult. Mum cuddled me in the back of the car, hidden under her coat, making excuses why she couldn’t get out of the vehicle during stops at checkpoints. Amazingly, I slept soundlessly through the journey until we reached the safety of Slovenia.

Years later, as we talked in the comfort of our home in Monmouth, Wales, they gave me a big file with all my papers inside. I’d already started researching the war and knew about the rape camps, but nothing prepared me for discovering I was the product of such a notorious place. I don’t recall becoming emotional when I heard this. Part of me couldn’t take it all in, and it’s taken me a long time to process my thoughts. I finally knew my true identity and, although the truth was horrendous, it was an answer, even if it wasn’t the one I was hoping for. It felt less of a shock when I learned just how many women were raped. I later discovered that many children born in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995 probably had a similar story.

In 2011, a year after learning my birth story, I began studying at art school and befriended Hannah, a student filmmaker. We decided to make a documentary about my search for my birth mother Safa because I couldn’t stop wondering what had become of her. I’ve always felt loved and have never felt anger towards her. How could I? I only wanted to find her and make some kind of contact, to tell her I was alive and that I was OK. Hannah and I flew out to Bosnia and managed to find an English-speaking press officer for the maternity hospital where I was born. He showed us the room I was delivered in and said I should meet one of their Bosnian friends who had returned to Sarajevo to help distribute aid.

The nurse’s reaction when we met was amazing. He was so happy; he kept staring at me. ‘You are the one who got away,’ he said. ‘Your parents are the most incredible people.’ I felt so proud. I didn’t find Safa on that trip, which was disappointing, but back home I received a letter from the Bosnian Embassy in London. I had written to them asking if they had any records of my birth mum or details of my birth. Deep down, I wasn’t expecting her to be alive, so I refused to get my hopes up and was shocked when I was sent her address and phone number.

Of course, I knew it wouldn’t be right to phone Safa out of the blue, so I decided to write and tell her about my life. Six weeks later, a letter arrived and I was almost too scared to open it. It was handwritten and three-quarters of a page long. Safa said she was so glad I had contacted her, that I was doing well, and that she loved me. We carried on writing for nearly three years. Sometimes months passed between letters, but eventually I asked if we could meet up.
In October 2017, with my parents by my side, I flew to Sarajevo. I was excited, but also incredibly nervous. I had no idea how any of us would react when we finally arrived at the block of flats where Safa lived. After I walked through the front door behind my parents, Safa hugged and kissed me. Our reunion was incredibly intense; I met my younger half-sister, Dzejlana, who was born after the war, and also Safa’s sister, my aunt, Fatima. Mum had brought photos of me growing up for Safa to keep, and we were there for four hours talking about my life.

Safa was 57 years old when we finally met and she has Parkinson’s and epilepsy, but despite her poor health, the strength of this woman left a lasting impression on me. She might not be well physically or emotionally, but she’s kept going and possessed the strength to see me. Before travelling to Sarajevo we took advice from a psychiatrist with experience of victims of rape in warfare, who said we should let Safa lead the conversation. Safa is amazing, an inspiration and role model and even though we couldn’t talk in the same language, my friend Ajna Jusić was there helping with translation.

I met Ajna through War Child [a charity for children affected by war] and she is president of The Forgotten Children of War Association. She too was born out of rape in warfare. There are so many of us - tens of thousands of women were raped, and lots of children have had to grow up feeling unwanted and carrying a terrible stigma. Many children were abandoned, not knowing their mother or father, and have become marginalised from society.

That’s why in 2012, I was driven to set up the Children Born of War Foundation [currently a national organisation operating in Bosnia promoting the needs and rights of children born of war, mainly post conflict], and although my normal day job is working in sales for a food company, I also speak at events for War Child. Growing up in the UK has helped me deal with the circumstances of my birth. I’ve been able to keep it at a physical and mental distance. I’m not reminded of my birth all the time, which would have been very different if I had stayed in Sarajevo.

After everything she has endured, Safa’s courage inspires me every day. We’ve kept in touch by letter and I write to my half-sister, too. I have never thought about my biological father. I am the product of rape, but I’ve been given an opportunity and now I want to be part of the change. Rape in warfare didn’t just happen in Bosnia, it takes place in every conflict, and we have to put an end to it.

Lejla will be speaking at the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) international conference to be held in November in London. SEMA is a new international organisation for survivors and victims of sexual violence in conflict, bringing together women like Safa to help them find justice and support, mukwegefoundation.org/sema
‘I MANAGED TO STAY IN THE BUSINESS THAT I LOVE ALL MY LIFE, AND I KNOW THAT’S NOT A GIVEN. I CAN’T NOT FEEL LUCKY ABOUT IT, NO MATTER WHAT THE DOWNSIDES CAN BE’
It was 1980 and, despite being only ten years old, Uma Thurman was already anxious about the way she looked. At school, she was bullied for several years about her height, large feet and hands, and wide-set eyes. So, when a model friend of her mother’s suggested she should have a nose job, her insecurities deepened. ‘I was sure that my looks were hideous,’ Thurman later said. ‘I was a little too tall, odd, funny looking.’ However, a mere eight years later, she was being feted as one of Hollywood’s most beautiful new stars after her breakthrough role in The Adventures Of Baron Munchausen. Being considered attractive and talented was quite the validation for a young woman shunned by her classmates.

Thurman has now become one of the most recognised faces in the entertainment industry, and this month marks 25 years since she shimmied her way to icon status in Quentin Tarantino’s cult classic Pulp Fiction. Her performance as mobster’s wife Mia Wallace earned her an Oscar nomination for Best Supporting Actress and a lifelong role as Tarantino’s muse. But there was also a dark side to her dazzling cinematic pairing with Tarantino – being sexually assaulted by his producer and collaborator, Harvey Weinstein. Now, as Weinstein prepares to stand trial for offences against numerous women, Thurman considers herself ‘extremely fortunate’ to have found the courage to expose him. ‘[It’s] having the courage to just try to move forward, try to take another step, and try not to let things overcome me – to be brave,’ she said earlier this year.

Born Uma Karuna Thurman on 29 April 1970 in Boston, Massachusetts, her father, Robert, is one of America’s leading scholars on Buddhism, and her mother, Nena, a former catwalk model, retrained as a psychotherapist and now runs a mountain retreat. The year she turned 14, Thurman spent the summer in New York taking acting classes. When she returned to school, she played Abigail in a production of The Crucible and some talent agents from New York, who’d come to watch her perform, offered to pay for further lessons. Emboldened, Thurman moved to the city, where she enrolled at the Professional Children’s School and signed up with Click Models to earn money to pay her rent.

In 1988, aged just 18, she got her big break in Terry Gilliam’s oddball comedy The Adventures Of Baron Munchausen. Her character, Venus, which required her to appear as though naked while standing in a seashell, caused a stir – but it was nothing compared to the reaction she received for her next film, Dangerous Liaisons. Set in pre-Revolution Paris, Thurman played Cécile de Volanges, a bride-to-be attacked in her bedchamber by John Malkovich’s rakish Viscount Valmont. Thurman’s breasts were exposed during the scene, causing a public furore. ‘That showing part of the human body would have such an overwhelming effect and be the cause of such insane media amazed me,’ she later said. ‘It was a shocking thing to suddenly put up as some kind of hot thing.’ For the next year, she took to wearing baggy clothing to hide her body and backed away from acting. ‘I preferred not to work if I was going to be pigeonholed as the sexual flavour of the month,’ she later remarked. Malkovich in particular became protective of her, describing her to Rolling Stone in 1989 as ‘a haunted girl’.

In 1990, aged 20, Thurman returned to work in another period piece, the critically acclaimed Henry & June, and it was on the set of that film that she met her first husband, British actor Gary Oldman. Despite the age gap (Oldman was 32) and their obvious differences – she practised Buddhism, he had a reputation for hard partying – the pair fell in love and married that same year. Two years later it was over, though, with Thurman commenting ‘it takes a special kind of woman to put up with him’.

In 1993, she landed the coveted lead role in Gus Van Sant’s Even Cowgirls Get The Blues. Then, a year later, she was cast as Mia Wallace in Pulp Fiction alongside John Travolta and Samuel L Jackson. Costume designer Betsy Heimann put together Mia’s look and, in doing so, created one of the most iconic character images ever committed to celluloid. Her inspiration for the character’s crisp white shirt and black trousers was Reservoir Dogs, Tarantino’s previous hit film,
‘HARVEY WEINSTEIN WAS MY CHAMPION. HE HAD A CHOKEHOLD ON THE TYPE OF FILMS AND DIRECTORS THAT WERE RIGHT FOR ME’

and when she applied Chanel’s Rouge Noir to Thurman’s fingernails, it sent sales soaring and turned the nail polish into a cult product. But, despite the cooler-than-thou image she was projecting as Mia, Thurman was overcome with shyness when it came to the infamous dance scene with Travolta. ‘I was more afraid of the dancing than almost anything, because it was exactly my total insecurity,’ she said. ‘But once I started dancing, I didn’t want to stop.’

On set, Thurman and Tarantino had conversations that ultimately inspired his next project, the Kill Bill series. He wrote the character of Beatrix Kiddo, aka The Bride, specifically for her and waxed lyrically about Thurman being his muse, comparing them to Alfred Hitchcock and his long-time creative influence Ingrid Bergman. ‘It’s a special bond that I’m proud to have and, hopefully, one day, people will reference me and Uma like they do [them],’ he said.

Yet, unbeknown to the director, their professional relationship had put Thurman in personal danger. The studio that bankrolled both Reservoir Dogs and Pulp Fiction, and would go on to finance the Kill Bill series, was Miramax, co-owned by Harvey Weinstein. When a slew of actresses came forward in 2017 to accuse Weinstein of rape and sexual assault, Thurman was among them.

In a harrowing interview with the New York Times published last year in light of the #MeToo allegations, Thurman described how, after Pulp Fiction was released to great acclaim, Weinstein made an advance in a Paris hotel, then attacked her in his suite at the Savoy in London. ‘He pushed me down. He tried to shove himself on me. He tried to expose himself. He did all kinds of unpleasant things,’ she said. By then Thurman was already contracted to film Kill Bill. She felt obliged to continue with the project, but regarded Weinstein as an enemy. She also told Tarantino what happened. He confronted Weinstein and asked him to leave Thurman alone, not realising the full extent of the producer’s behaviour. In the interview, Thurman also spoke of the guilt she carried about continuing to work with Weinstein after he assaulted her. ‘The complicated feeling I have about Harvey is how bad I feel about all the women that were attacked after I was. I am one of the reasons that a young girl would walk into his room alone, the way I did,’ she said. Yet it was obvious, like the other women who came forward, that Thurman felt Weinstein had the upper hand in his position of power. ‘This was my champion… He had a chokehold on the type of films and directors that were right for me,’ she said. Weinstein has since denied assaulting her and other women.
At the time, Thurman was married to actor Ethan Hawke. The pair had met on the set of 1997 sci-fi thriller *Gattaca* and married on 1 May 1998. Their first child, Maya, was born three months later in July 1998, and their son, Levon, was born in 2002.

The first two *Kill Bill* films were shot over nine months. All went well until the final week, when Thurman sustained permanent injuries to her neck and knees after she crashed while driving along a Mexican dirt track at 40mph. She had begged for a stunt person to take her place in the scene, and blamed Tarantino for making her do it. 'Quentin and I had an enormous fight, and I accused him of trying to kill me,' she said. The pair’s friendship was strained for years afterwards. Thurman claimed Weinstein stopped her obtaining footage of the crash so she couldn’t sue, but he denied giving instructions to ‘destroy the vehicle or orchestrate a cover-up’. Prior to Thurman exposing Weinstein to the *New York Times*, Tarantino managed to locate the footage and gave it to her. ‘It is the biggest regret of my life, getting her to do that stunt,’ he said.

In 2003, Thurman and Hawke separated amid reports he was having an affair with their children’s nanny, Ryan Shawhughes, whom he later married. Hawke maintained the relationship only started post-divorce. Thurman described the break-up as ‘excruciating’, and said it left her self-esteem ‘pretty mangled’, adding that she and her ex had difficulty communicating because ‘there’s a lot of unfinished damage’.

In 2007, then 37, she started dating Elle Macpherson’s former partner, billionaire financier Arpad Busson, then 44. Busson proposed in 2008, throwing a lavish party at his £10 million London home in Kensington to celebrate, attended by guests including Elton John, Sting and Claudia Schiffer. They split a year later, but reunited in 2011 and, in July 2012, their daughter Luna was born. However, by then, the couple had all but split, and things became toxic when, in January 2017, Busson took Thurman to court to establish custody rights and accused her of being a pill-popping, temperamental mother. In uncomfortable scenes played out in open court, it emerged Thurman, then 46, had ADHD and a learning difficulty, and she took medication to treat depression, anxiety and insomnia. Previously, she also admitted to developing body dysmorphic disorder following Maya’s birth, telling one interviewer, ‘I see myself as fat.’

Meanwhile, Thurman’s career was failing to match the critical and commercial heights of *Pulp Fiction* and the *Kill Bill* volumes. She had the lead role in *My Super Ex-Girlfriend* in 2006, but the film was panned, and she followed that with the equally derided *The Accidental Husband* in 2008, prompting venerated critic Elizabeth Weitzman to note: ‘[Thurman] gets stuck into so many small, undeserving projects, one has to wonder who’s mapping out her career.’

However, in more recent years, Thurman has successfully ventured into television and, in 2012, was nominated for an Emmy for her guest appearance in *Smash*. She currently stars in the supernatural drama *Chambers* on Netflix – which ironically pits her in the streaming ratings against her daughter Maya, now 21 and the breakout star of Netflix’s *Stranger Things 3*.

But if Thurman is troubled by the trajectory of her career, she doesn’t show it. Instead, with Weinstein’s trial looming, she prefers to reflect on what she’s overcome since being in the public eye. ‘If you had sat me down [at the beginning of my career] and gone through some of the challenges I would face and I would overcome and grow through, I probably wouldn’t have believed any of it.’
We're all trying to be good feminists, and mostly there's nothing we won't discuss with friends, colleagues and partners to make the world a better place for us and women everywhere. But hands up anyone who openly chats about masturbation – the dos and the don’ts? Flo Perry is in a unique position to talk about it – she discovered the wonders of masturbation at 13 and now the 27-year-old bisexual daughter of transvestite artist Grayson and psychotherapist Philippa, has written and illustrated a funny graphic guide called How To Have Feminist Sex.

‘Female sexuality is still surrounded in shame, guilt and an overarching sense of what we should be doing, rather than what we want to be doing,’ says Perry. ‘So I’ve written a book because it’s time that women work out what they want from sex.’

Here, Perry shares her sexual experiences and the five lessons she’s learned about masturbation along the way.

PERRY SAYS: ‘I clearly remember the first time I told a friend I’d had a wank – I was 15. At the time, I didn’t know anyone else did it. I’d accidentally stumbled across it while washing with a showerhead. I thought it was a fantastic discovery, but I had a feeling that this wasn’t something to talk to anyone else about. I probably masturbated for two full years before admitting my secret to just one friend. I grew up in a relaxed household in liberal utopian north London, where the existence of sex was never a secret. But even I picked up that wanking wasn’t something girls did. I remember sitting in a sex ed class when I was 14 and a girl asking the teacher what an orgasm was like. I felt sorry for her – I definitely knew what it felt like. The teacher replied that it was easier for boys to find out because they can just do it themselves. Any shame I felt was eclipsed by the feeling these girls were seriously missing out on a good time.

‘Since I told that one friend (it went well, turns out she was also a right wanker and we talked about it all the time after that), I’ve become more interested in sex. At university, I did a chemistry degree, but might as well have got a secondary diploma in shagging about. Once, after I’d taken part in a public debate, a friend came up to me in the bar afterwards and said, “Those two boys were talking about you. Apparently, you’re a right slut.” This didn’t bother me – at home, my mum had always made it clear there was no such thing as slags and sluts, only women who were “generous with their bodies”.

‘In between shags, I also managed to find the time for student journalism and, after graduating, landed a job at BuzzFeed before going freelance. I’ve had several long-term relationships, a few more years of shagging around and I’ve moved on a lot since I admitted to my friend I was a wanker, but the world hasn’t. Men are great at wanking. They tend to start early, do it all the time and talk about it without shame, while many women only discover masturbation after they start having sex, and many more never try it at all.

‘So here are my valuable lessons, and what we can learn from men about masturbation…’
1 DISCOVER WHAT YOU NEED FROM SEX

If you can make yourself come, you’re gonna be a hell of a lot better at teaching someone else to make you come. A study by the Kinsey Institute at Indiana University in the US, revealed there’s still a large gender orgasm gap: in heterosexual relationships, men come around 85 per cent of the time they have sex, while women only manage 65 per cent. As someone who’s done a fair bit of field research with both genders, I think any theory that tries to explain this by stating it’s harder to make a woman come is total bullshit. In my experience, both genders have plenty of variation when it comes to how ‘easily’ they orgasm. Men tend to be more practised and less ashamed about making themselves come, and are more up for telling you how to do it.

2 MASTURBATE TOGETHER

Masturbation doesn’t have to be something you do alone. If you struggle to come with a partner, or even if you don’t, making yourself come with someone else can be a seriously hot experience. Seeing someone make themselves come is a great way of learning how to make them come. Men do it all the time; it’s totally normal, even in porn, for sex to end with a man wanking over a woman. We should let go of the idea that if your partner doesn’t make you come, the sex has been a failure. If you’ve both had a good time, then it wasn’t a failure.

3 EXPLORE YOUR FANTASIES

We often wank about unrealistic, unachievable scenarios, but how those situations make you feel, and recreating those emotions in your sex life is often key to having the best sex ever. Getting to know what you think about when you come is as important as being aware of how to physically make yourself come. Sharing your fantasies with a partner is a great way for them to know you better sexually.

4 CURE HANGOVERS AND SLEEP BETTER

Wanking doesn’t have to be something you only do when you’re not getting laid. I don’t think it’s helpful to think of masturbation as in competition with partnered sex. It can be a totally different experience. Masturbation doesn’t even need to be particularly sexy - it’s a fantastic hangover cure, and pretty much the best way to fall asleep. You don’t even need to come from it; you can just take an extra-long time washing your bits very carefully with a showerhead and enjoy that sensation. It can also be a real self-care event: take a whole afternoon, use lube, porn and a couple of pieces of equipment. Get to know yourself and feel connected to your body. And then have the nap of your life afterwards.

5 QUIT THE GUILT

I’m struggling to think of anything else that is so definitely free and not bad for your health in any way. In fact, I’m pretty sure it’s good for your health because it will de-stress you and make you happier. It doesn’t make you less likely to come – in fact, you’re more likely to because you know what you’re doing. If you feel ashamed, guilty or shy about masturbating, try to let those feelings go, and relearn that it is an important part of a healthy sex life. But, if you’re happy living your life without masturbation, I’m not here to tell you that you’re wrong. But I’m a big fan of wanking... and I want the whole world to know.
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SUBTLE SHIFTS

The new sorbet shades elevating your neutral staples and fresh designer timepieces to covet. Plus, leading lady Lucy Boynton reveals why now is not the time for political apathy
To indulge a sartorial sweet tooth, simply mix minimalistic tones and languid silhouettes with a strong hit of something sugar-coated.
Cotton jacket, £600, Acne Studios; cotton trousers, about £450, Dries Van Noten; leather shoes, £395, Boss

O P P O S I T E  P A G E
Jersey top, £990, JW Anderson; wool-mix top (worn underneath), £260, Max Mara; double crêpe trousers, £900, Carmen March; leather shoes (just seen), £721, Rochas
Wool dress, from a selection, Kenzo; leather boots, £721, Rochas

Cotton-mix coat, about £887, Nehera; wool sweater (worn underneath), £260, Max Mara; leather skirt, £4,450, Fendi; double crêpe trousers, £900, Carmen March; leather boots (just seen), as before
Acrylic-mix sweater, £270, Beaufille; double crêpe trousers, £900, Carmen March
Polyester dress, about £2,527, Balenciaga; leather boots, £721, Rochas
THIS PAGE
Polyester coat, £4,295, Chanel; wool sweater, £260, Max Mara; double crêpe trousers, £900, Carmen March

OPPOSITE PAGE
Silk-mix top, £422, linen-mix skirt, £684, and linen-mix trousers, £774, all Jacquemus; leather shoes, £395, Boss
From a star-making turn in *Bohemian Rhapsody* to a leading role in sassy new Netflix show *The Politician*, Lucy Boynton is ready for her close-up. Here, she tells Jane Mulkerrins about her life-changing year.
‘When I was younger, I found it easier to be politically apathetic. Then, in the last few years, since Trump and Brexit, there’s no excuse’
When *Bohemian Rhapsody* star Rami Malek closed his Best Actor acceptance speech at this year’s Oscars with a declaration of love for his co-star and girlfriend, no one was more surprised than the woman herself. ‘Lucy Boynton, you’re the heart of this film,’ he gushed. ‘You are beyond immensely talented. You have captured my heart.’

As anyone who has seen the phenomenally successful Queen biopic will attest, Malek is correct on both counts – because, while he might have had the glory of the lead role, Boynton’s portrayal of Freddie Mercury’s muse Mary Austin undoubtedly steals the show. If the 25-year-old American-English actress had been hoping for a quiet night at the Oscars, she would have been disappointed; by the end of the evening, several hundred million viewers in over 225 countries knew her name.

‘He specifically told me he wasn’t going to [mention me]!’ laughs Boynton when we meet in the lobby of the hip Manhattan hotel where she’s currently living with Malek. ‘Sitting front row, right in front of him, it felt like a very personal exchange. And then he walks offstage and there’s applause, and you suddenly realise you’ve shared it not only with an auditorium of people, but everyone watching on TV. I didn’t clock until everyone kept asking me about it. I’d be, like, “None of your business, you weren’t there. Oh, OK, you did see it, yes.”’

I bring it up not just because it feels like a significant moment in her flourishing career so far, but because, with any luck, it will be the last time Boynton plays ‘the girlfriend’ – on or off screen. This autumn sees her take centre stage with her first leading TV role in *The Politician*, the latest razor-sharp comedy drama series from Ryan Murphy (cult creator of *American Crime Story*, *Feud* and *Pose*). In another scene-stealing performance, Boynton plays Astrid, a Machiavellian high schooler with a wardrobe to die for.

When I first met Boynton a year ago, we talked at length about Mary Austin’s ‘evolved’ relationship with Freddie Mercury, since she remained his close friend and muse long after their romance ended and he embraced his true sexuality (albeit never formally coming out). So, it’s interesting that *The Politician* – in which Murphy and his co-creator Brad Falchuck (AKA Mr Gwyneth Paltrow) have transplanted narratives surrounding presidential elections and debates about wealth, power, entitlement and privilege into a darkly comic high-school drama – neatly takes the topic of sexual fluidity and non-conformity to a contemporary (if somewhat utopian) place.

‘The characters never have a conversation about their sexual orientation or gender identity,’ explains Boynton. While there are numerous same-sex relationships in the show – and lots of sex in general – they are never discussed or defined. ‘It’s a huge leap forward,’ she enthuses. ‘Obviously, these are important things to discuss, but the next step is that it doesn’t even need to be a discussion. No one needs to come out at the beginning of a show, being, like, “I’m THIS”.’

If the zeitgeist content wasn’t appealing enough, *The Politician* also boasts a starry cast including Ben Platt, Jessica Lange, January Jones (who plays Astrid’s former prostitute mother) and Gwyneth Paltrow. ‘I didn’t meet her until we did press, so that was intimidating,’ admits Boynton. ‘But then you feel so stupid for having been intimidated, because you meet her and she’s so normal.’

Dress, boots, belt and jewellery, all Dior
And I hate the fact that “normal” just came out of my mouth, but you hold her to some other level and then she’s just really nice. And not sugary nice – brilliantly funny nice.’

‘Nice’ isn’t a word you’d use about any of the characters in The Politician. And in the parlance of real political elections, the privileged, glacial Astrid would certainly not pass the ‘likeability’ test. But labelling her the Mean Girl is to miss her complexity entirely. ‘The ways that she is bad or unappealing or unkind are so rooted in lessons that I think are very valuable for a young woman,’ nods Boynton. ‘Her parents have raised her to be a girl in that world and use her looks. But Dylan McDermott, who plays my father, is relentless in the way that he treats her, and I don’t think it would be any different if he had a son. There is this sense of ruthlessness, the idea that this world will eat you up if you let it, so how are you going to prepare?’

Boynton’s own feminism was formed in large part by her older sister, Emma. ‘When I was 17, [she] thought I wasn’t being enough of a feminist, so she gave me a book called C**t: A Declaration Of Independence,’ she tells me with a laugh, the provocative four-letter word sounding even more gloriously transgressive in her clipped RP. The seminal text by Inga Muscio is, she says, ‘all about how that word used to be associated with queens and female power, and was hijacked by men using it derogatorily, and how that then weighs on society.’

Boynton’s portrayal of Astrid certainly gets the thumbs up from Emma. ‘She watched the first episode and was thrilled, because she knows I learned all of Astrid’s glaring and snarkiness from her.’

In spite of her cut-glass vowels, Boynton was born in New York. Her parents, Graham Boynton and Adriana Piejou, are journalists who were working in the US at the time, and moved back to London when Lucy was five and Emma, six. Their profession has, she says, made her own itinerant career less of an issue. ‘All my relationships are long distance, but it’s something I’ve grown up with.’

I wonder how she’s finding living in the hotel she’s been based at for the last five months. ‘It’s thrilling at first; you feel like Eloise at the Plaza,’ she laughs. ‘But it never seems like your space. You start to feel as if you’re just on borrowed ground and borrowed time, which you are.’

Did they not consider renting an apartment? ‘It made sense at the time,’ she smiles, rolling her eyes. ‘Because we’re both back and forth all over the place.’ Malek, 38, is currently juggling shooting the new Bond film, in which he plays 007’s latest villainous adversary, and the final season of his award-winning hacker drama, Mr Robot, while Boynton spent the summer promoting The Politician in the US. ‘I’ve been feeling quite baseless for a couple of years now,’ she adds.

Boynton attended the prestigious James Allen’s Girls’ School in London, where she was spotted at the age of 11 by a casting director who was visiting the school in the hope of finding a girl to play the young Beatrix Potter in the 2006 film Miss Potter. With no professional experience, she was cast alongside Renée Zellweger and Ewan McGregor. ‘And once I got a taste for it, there was no way back,’ she explains.

Parts in the BBC adaptations of Ballet Shoes and Sense & Sensibility quickly followed. ‘I never did kids TV, so nothing I was doing ever felt child actor-y,’ she says. ‘My agent, who signed me at 11, and who I am still with, encouraged me to say no to a lot of things. It’s an industry that’s not guaranteed, and there is always the concern that if you say no too much, you might ’no’ yourself out of the door. But she gave me a baseline of what to expect and what I should say yes to.’

After that came what she drily refers to as her ‘hiatus’. Turning 16, and deemed ‘too old for the kid roles and too young for adult roles’, coincided with ‘braces, bad skin, crap metabolism and school exams. I wasn’t even auditioning,’ she says. ‘Thank God that time [wasn’t] captured on camera.’

‘There were years of going to auditions pretty much every day and getting nothing,’ she recalls, of trying to pick up where she left off a couple of years later. ‘But it forced me to check myself and check I really wanted it.’ Eventually, the work rolled back in. She appeared in a couple of small films, before bagging more significant parts in Sing Street (2016) and Murder On The Orient Express (2017).

While we get our teeth into season one of The Politician, Boynton will be stepping back into Astrid’s brocade shifts and knee socks – twin-sets and diamonds for season two, which films over the next five months. As for future goals, ‘I’m trying to get involved in projects earlier on,’ she explains. ‘So, instead of just coming in and auditioning, helping develop what it will look like and sound like. I’ve been reading predominantly female authors with female protagonists, with an eye to developing them. It turns out most things are bought.’ Probably by Reese Witherspoon, we speculate. ‘I’m becoming more opinionated, and I don’t think I would have been able to try this any earlier in my career than right now,’ she says.

Perhaps less surprisingly, Boynton has become more engaged in political matters. ‘When I was younger, I found it easier to be politically apathetic. It always just felt very distant, not personal in any way. And, then, in the last few years, since Trump and Brexit, there’s no excuse,’ she says.

‘It affects everyone so deeply, and goes so far beyond just politics, into human-to-human respect, interaction and rights.’ As a US as well as UK citizen, she will, she adds, be fully exercising her right to vote in the 2020 presidential election. ‘You just can’t not be outraged, I think.’ Astrid would be proud. ■

The Politician is on Netflix now
Dress, belt, boots and jewellery, all Dior

HAIR BY DAVID VON CANNON AT SWA AGENCY. MAKE-UP BY NINA PARK AT FORWARD ARTISTS. MANICURE BY GERALDINE HOLFORD USING MISS DIOR HAND CREAM AND DIOR VERNIS. PROP STYLING BY STOCKTON HALL AT ATELIER MANAGEMENT. PRODUCTION AND BOOKINGS BY JESSICA HARRISON.
PRECIOSUS

TIME

Luxe materials and fresh-faced details are dialling up this season’s designer timepieces.

Styling by LUCY REBER
Photography by DAVID NEWTON
'De Ville Trésor' stainless-steel, sapphire crystal, quartz and leather watch, £3,890, Omega

OPPOSITE PAGE
From top: stainless-steel, 18ct pink-gold, diamond and leather watch, £3,480, Longines; stainless-steel and diamond watch, £1,795, Frédérique Constant; 18ct pink-gold, diamond, mother-of-pearl and leather watch, £17,970, Louis Vuitton; 'Glamour Date 26' stainless-steel and diamond watch, £2,290, Tudor
Clockwise from top left:
'Carrera Lady's stainless-steel, mother-of-pearl and leather watch, £2,100, TAG Heuer;
'Serpenti' 18ct rose-gold, diamond, mother-of-pearl and leather watch, £7,950, Bulgari;
'Dialmaster Thinline' rose-gold-plated Ceramos, sapphire crystal, titanium and leather watch, £1,900, Rado.
From top: 'Premiere Mini' black-steel, diamond and rubber watch, £4,000, Chanel; 'Rose Celeste' steel, diamond, mother-of-pearl and satin watch, £4,400, Dior Watches; 18ct rose-gold, diamond and satin watch, £20,700, Tiffany & Co; 'Possession' 18ct rose-gold, diamond and leather watch, £11,400, Piaget
From top: 18ct-gold watch, £19,500, Chaumet; ‘Panthère de Cartier’ 18ct-gold and sapphire watch, £20,600, Cartier; ‘Grip’ gold-plated watch, £1,320, Gucci
From top: ‘Sofia’ 18ct pink-gold, ruby and satin watch, £5,290, Dolce & Gabbana; ‘Day Date 26’ 18ct Everose-gold and Oystersteel watch, £28,850, Rolex
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21 potent plant extracts for our most powerful age control concentrate ever.
After 7 days: instant radiance, reduced pores and fine lines, visibly younger-looking skin**.
Collect your free 3 day sample in-store†.

No.1 SERUM IN THE UK†"
Beauty

Your pro-planet arsenal, empowering new-season scents and the inside track on plant-based supplements for winning skin and well-being

#OBSESSED

When is a brush not a brush? When artisans at Shiseido take 40 steps and a month to assemble each one, so that your make-up goes on evenly. The secret lies in a combination of densely packed bristles in the middle – a mixture of crimped, straight, long and short – and soft fibres along the perimeter. They’re the perfect tools for applying the Synchro Skin Self-Refreshing Foundation and Concealer, which both contain Japanese Active Force technology to ensure they absorb oil, diffuse light and resist humidity. Set with the Hanatsubaki Hake Polishing Face Brush (above centre) and Synchro Skin Invisible Silk Loose Powder for a long-lasting finish that doesn’t smother. From £25.
GET SET GLOW WITH Olay #OLAYMYWAY
BEAUTY INSIDER
FROM THOSE IN THE KNOW

Skincare created by facialists is having a moment, with products such as Sarah Chapman’s Skinesis Overnight Facial, £54 (Spaenk.com), now outselling doctor brands. So why the uptick? ‘Facialists offer a personal touch rather than just a clinical understanding of skin diseases,’ says Chapman. ‘We blend actives for results but also keep in mind the aesthetics of a beautiful skincare product, like its texture and smell, so it improves your well-being, too.’ Another benefit is that you don’t actually have to travel to a treatment room to reap the benefits. Facials are pricey, so if they’re too much of a financial stretch or you want to extend that post-facial glow for longer, facialist skincare can be a more affordable option. The Orange Flower Hydrogel, £19, by Deborah Mitchell (whose clients include the Duchess of Cornwall) is enough to transform your complexion at home. When Christy Turlington and Uma Thurman want plump, lifted skin that reflects light they go to Joanna Czech in Dallas, Texas. Thankfully, you can buy her Facial Massager, £178 (Net-A-Porter.com), instead. To experience the glow-giving effects that models book in for at Alexandra Soferal’s London, NY and LA clinics, try her Forever Young Face Oil, £95, (Fabled.com).

SMALL ACT OF KINDNESS

GHD has supported breast cancer charities for 15 years, raising more than £10 million globally. This October, it has collaborated with tattoo artist David Allen to create the Ink on Pink collection, featuring an original floral design based on his acclaimed work with mastectomy scars. For every GHD Ink on Pink Gold Styler, £139, and GHD Ink on Pink Platinum+ Styler, £175, sold £10 will be donated to Breast Cancer Now.

Dabble in DARK ARTS

Burgundy lips are a perennial favourite. But for AW19, we’re swiping this rich, moody colour on to eyes and cheekbones, too, for a masterclass in monotone make-up. Try Chanel Les 4 Ombres in Noir Supreme, £44, over lids; contour cheeks with Dior Rouge Blush in 783 Confident, £36.50, and create a matte wine lip with Nars The Iconic Lipstick in Fire Down Below, £22 (Fabled.com).

THE JETSET TREATMENT

Fancy an express mani, pedi or blow dry before heading off on your travels? We’ve partnered with celebrity hairstylist Stephanie Stevenson to create Marie Claire JetStyle – multi-service salons delivering luxe 45-minute treatments pre-plane or train journey. The first Marie Claire JetStyle salon opens at St Pancras International this month, followed by a global roll-out across 215 airport hubs and 19 railway stations. Visit marieclairejetstyle.com for details.

FEELING BEAUTY

Not just a pretty face, here’s how beauty can enhance your mood and well-being, too
NEW

VITAMIN C
CERAMIDE
CAPSULES

RADIANCE
RENEWAL SERUM

178x more potent than traditional Vitamin C.

Powered by radiance-renewing Vitamin C and moisture-boosting ceramides, this serum works to diminish dullness, fight the appearance of dark spots and protect against environmental aggressors. Instant brightening power in every dose—each encapsulated for freshness and formulated for maximum potency.

Live with confidence

x Reese

New Facial Treatment: Enjoy our new Skintervention Custom Solution Facial Treatment for £15/€20, redeemable on any Elizabeth Arden purchase on the day the service is received.”
Seeking out sustainably sourced ingredients is only part of the eco story. From refillable packaging to minimising waste, these are the new ways beauty brands are going green.

**The writing’s on the wall:** we need to lessen our impact on the environment product-wise. Thankfully, greening up your regime is becoming easier, and even premium beauty buyers are purring with delight at the effective formulas and appealing packaging of the latest eco-friendly offerings. But some facts are worth repeating: last year, Zero Waste Week reported that over 120 billion units of packaging are produced every year by the cosmetics industry, much of which is not recyclable. Of the product packaging we can recycle, four in ten of us don’t, so aerosol cans and the cardboard boxes your face cream come in end up in landfill. Apart from scanning labels for sustainable ingredients, what other small changes can we make? ‘Invest in a bathroom recycling bin for starters, and choose both glass and aluminium over plastic packaging,’ says Rachelle Strauss, founder of Zero Waste Week. ‘Both can be recycled over and over again, without loss of quality [allowing them to be reused in the same form repeatedly].’ They also stand a better chance of actually being recycled. ‘Seventy five per cent of aluminium ever made is still in circulation, thanks to it being the most cost effective material to recycle, and 60 per cent of our glass bottles and jars are also currently recycled,’ she adds. Eco-friendly soap-style shampoo bars are a burgeoning trend, too. Many are free of chemicals like SLS (sodium laurel sulphate) that make liquid shampoos lather up, and a lack of packaging – most are simply wrapped in paper – also means less waste. With experts estimating that by 2050 the amount of plastic in the ocean will outweigh the number of fish, a few small changes will add up to quite a lot. Above are our top planet-saving beauty swaps...

**SWAP: PLASTIC BOTTLES**
For: Summer Fridays Overtime Mask, £39
Not only does this tick an eco box for being packaged in an aluminium tube but it also makes dull skin sing with vitamin-rich pumpkin, apricot seed powder, oat kernel protein and vitamin E.

**SWAP: LIQUID SHAMPOO**
For: Ethique Mintasy Shampoo Bar, £13
The equivalent of three bottles of liquid shampoo in one solid bar, this pairs coconut oil and cocoa butter with peppermint to cleanse your scalp and smooth strands.

**SWAP: SINGLE-USE PLASTIC**
For: Rituals The Ritual Of Karma Body Cream Refill, £15.50
It’s the same soothing scent of holy lotus and organic white tea, but in a refill that’s healthier for the planet (and your budget), as it saves 70 per cent in CO₂ emissions and uses 45 per cent less water. Simply slot it inside the original pot.

**SWAP: METAL PUMPS**
For: Ren Clean Skincare Atlantic Kelp And Magnesium Anti-Fatigue Body Wash, £22
The spiral pump (and bottle) is made of 100 per cent recycled plastic, so you no longer need a nutcracker to get the metal spring out when you sort through your recycling.

**SWAP: PLASTIC LABELS**
For: Tata Harper Concentrated Brightening Essence, £187
As well as no laminated labels, Harper also uses soy-based ink on her cardboard presentation boxes. With its low petrochemical content, it’s easy to remove, ready for the paper to be recycled.

**SWAP: CELLULOSE SHEET MASKS**
For: The Body Shop Drops Of Youth Concentrate Sheet Mask, £5
Plump, juicy skin in just 15 minutes? Hell, yeah. But the benefits don’t stop there, as afterwards you can just place the mask in your compost bin where it will degrade within a month.

**SWAP: PLASTIC SHEETS**
For: The Body Shop Drops Of Youth Concentrate Sheet Mask, £5
Good-for-skin soap that also exfoliates, thanks to rosemary and peppermint leaf powders, and is sold in plastic-free packaging. What’s not to love?

**SWAP: SHOWER GEL**
For: Aveda Rosemary Mint Bath Bar, £14
Good-for-skin soap that also exfoliates, thanks to rosemary and peppermint leaf powders, and is sold in plastic-free packaging. What’s not to love?
Moisturise dry skin with our breakthrough gel-to-oil formulation.

A little goes a long way.
If I had to describe myself in one sentence, it would be ‘a city girl with a countryside heart’. I am a total social butterfly, with an adventurous spirit, but I also love the quiet and calm of the countryside. In fact, my happy place is probably the English countryside. There’s a specific bench overlooking a lake in West Sussex, surrounded by rolling hills, that I always go back to when I’m stressed or when I finish a project. Luckily, now that I’m older, I can also just go there in my head and feel the emotional benefits.

My beauty regime is full of nostalgia. When I was younger, my mum and I would sleep in the same room. She always had a very specific regime at night, and I remember the soft powdery smells of all her face creams, but also this really medicinal Carmex lip balm. Now, when I go to bed smelling the same, it’s like, ‘Oh, I’ve grown up’. I use Lancôme Advanced Génifique Youth Activating Concentrate [£82.50], as it truly makes my skin so much smoother and stronger. The Lancôme Advanced Génifique Hydrogel Melting Sheet Mask [£17] is brilliant, too, especially when I’m on planes or before filming. And I always have a tube of Kiehl’s Lip Balm #1 [£10] on me. When I was shooting Mirror Mirror, I learned that putting on SPF is so important. I was playing Snow White and the make-up department were like, ‘Lily, you really need to protect your skin!’ So now I wear Kiehl’s Ultra Light Daily UV Defense SPF 50 [£28] whether it’s sunny or not. I also like Lancôme Teint Idole Ultra Wear Nude Foundation [£33.50] and Giorgio Armani Luminous Silk Foundation [£42] because as long as there is coverage and it’s not cakey, I feel like my skin is protected but still able to breathe.

I’ve had a love/hate relationship with my eyebrows over the years. When I was younger, I didn’t understand them. It was the 90s when thin brows were in, and I thought, ‘oh my god, they are bold!’—bold being a negative. When you’re younger
you just don’t want to stand out in that way. I preferred to blend in, so I tended to shy away from accentuating my eyes because I thought maybe they are too big as well, and how can you do big eyes, big eyebrows and big lips? Then, I fell in love with mascara. I have used Lancôme Hypnôse Customwear Volume in 01 Noir (£25.50) since I was a teenager. I love the cat-eye look and the way my lashes curl out when I use it.

‘Different’ is a wonderful word. We’re all different and it’s what makes the world go round. When I was six and first moved from England to LA [after her parents, musician Phil Collins and actress Jill Tavelman, divorced], there were cultural differences right away. Obviously, I didn’t sound the same, and my brows were maybe more European. I just felt a bit like an alien. As mental health is such a huge thing for me, I’ve been involved with the anti-bullying campaign Go, and We Day events, where I speak to kids in the US and UK about empowerment and self-worth. I also use social media as a platform, as I really believe that a lot of things would change if we just think about our issues and articulate our feelings, as opposed to keeping them bottled up. We become more confident, too, when we remember that the things that make us ‘not perfect’ are actually what make us grow into more interesting human beings.

**When I turned 28, I felt ready to talk about my eating disorders.** At the time, I was writing my book *Unfiltered: No Shame, No Regrets, Just Me*, where I discussed things I went through growing up. I was also filming *To The Bone*, which was about a young woman suffering with chronic anorexia. So, I just felt that, in order to truthfully speak in my book and play this character in the movie, I was going to have to draw on my own experiences. [When Lily was 16, she began starving herself, exercising obsessively and became addicted to diet pills]. It was terrifying knowing that I was putting those things out there and people would know my innermost experiences. But it felt like it was the right time, and it connected me with so many people around the world and hopefully made them feel less alone.

I have proven to myself that I can endure a lot of ups and down, and still stay clear on who I am. Part of that has to do with surrounding myself with the right people. Some of my closest friends I’ve known since I was five, and they are the ones who know me best. Even though I love the fact that such a positive community has been surrounding my social media, I also set boundaries for how much I reveal about myself. I am doing my craft, but try to balance sharing my life and being that open book with acknowledging that there are things I want to keep private.

**Being present is so important.** I used to think ‘what if’ so much. You can’t live like that, so I remind myself to stay in the present – enjoy where I am in the moment and what I am doing, rather than always thinking ahead and stressing. I also can’t be my best emotional self if I’m not taking care of my core. I’ve started sleeping with white noise in the background. It creates a hum to help calm the mind. I take time to meditate with the mindfulness app Headspace, too. There’s a lot of peripheral noise in any industry, especially this one [the film industry], but as long as you continue to focus on the voice in your head and your gut instinct, the right things will come. ■

Lily Collins is the face of Lancôme’s new Advanced Génifique Youth Activating Concentrate.
Combining unique science with natural ingredients, Caudalie’s Resveratrol [Lift] Day & Night collection delivers the best of both worlds to help turn back the clock.

With winter drawing in fast, your skin faces another season of central heating, biting winds and colder climes – all of which can leave it looking and feeling a little worse for wear. We know that dehydration and the natural process of ageing results in the complexion looking less plump, dull, and moisture-sapped. But did you also know that by the time we reach 40, our epidermis has lost 50 per cent of its hyaluronic acid reserve? That’s why skin starts to lose its firmness and tell-tale wrinkles begin to appear. To fight these signs of ageing, Caudalie teamed up with Harvard Medical School’s Professor of Genetics, Dr David Sinclair, to create an innovative formula combining active anti-ageing ingredients from the worlds of science and nature. After extensive clinical trials, they found that grapevine Resveratrol and hyaluronic acid were a dream team. Proving an effective anti-ageing tool, this power couple delivers a unique youth boost to skin, literally tripling its production of natural hyaluronic acid to plump and smooth out visible wrinkles, and restore radiance with a super hydration hit. Little wonder, then, that Caudalie’s Resveratrol [Lift] Day & Night Duo – comprising the Face Lifting Soft Cream and Night Cream (£42 each) – is now the number one anti-ageing collection in French pharmacies. Need convincing? Here’s the stats: 100 per cent of women in the clinical trials testing Caudalie Resveratrol [Lift] Face Lifting Soft Cream reported firmer skin, while 90 per cent of Caudalie Resveratrol [Lift] Night Cream users felt the product gave them a smoother complexion. Anti-ageing, science-led and natural? Skincare has never looked so good.

This powerful formula literally triples skin’s production of natural hyaluronic acid to help plump and smooth out visible wrinkles.

EXCLUSIVE OFFER Discover the Resveratrol [Lift] collection at Caudalie.com & save £10 when spending £60 or more. Simply enter code MARIECLAIRE19 at checkout.
Connecting with others can have a confidence-boosting effect, support skin health and help you live longer. Here’s why the wonders of physical contact really matter...
ALL THE FEELS

You are happy being single, have a busy job and a thriving social life, but there is something missing – you crave physical touch. ‘Touch hunger’, or ‘skin hunger’ as it is also known, arises when we are deprived of physical contact. It isn’t a sexual need, but a sense we crave from the day we are born. ‘Meaningful contact produces hormones in the brain such as serotonin, dopamine and the bonding hormone oxytocin to help foster positive emotions,’ says Jo Ham, psychotherapist at the Human Givens Institute. ‘As well as making you feel good, human touch can slow down heart rate, reduce blood pressure and boost the immune system.’ This makes it just as important to our well-being as a nutritious diet and exercise. Not everyone is able to be in an intimate, physical relationship, but it’s important to know that we all have the need. ‘If you don’t have a romantic partner, who can give you that connection, how about close contact with a friend or family member?’ says Ham. ‘Even a friendly touch on the arm can be very soothing for somebody who is feeling upset or alone.’
HEALING HANDS
The intimacy of holding hands can heighten awareness, express a deep connection and trigger the release of the oxytocin in our brain. This neurotransmitter is responsible for increasing feelings of trust, generosity and compassion, while decreasing feelings of fear and anxiety, so the next time you are with your partner, grab their hand. ‘We have a dense network of nerve endings in our palms and fingertips,’ says Sushma Sagar, reiki master healer and founder of The Calmery in London. ‘These receptors deliver information to the brain about any stimuli. Also, when your fingers are interlaced, pressure receptors trigger what’s called “vagal activity”, which resets our nervous system, so you relax faster after a stressful situation,’ adds Sagar. As a society, we are starved of non-sexual touch, so try to be mindful of reaching out a hand to the people around you a little more often. As harsh winter conditions play havoc with our hands, choose a hand wash without SLS (sodium lauryl sulfate, which strips the skin of natural oils), such as Weleda Calendula Soap, £5.50, and use a super-soft hydrator with an uplifting scent, such as Guerlain’s Bergamot Body Lotion, £44.
SOCIABLE SKIN

Researchers have found that the health impact of chronic social isolation is as bad as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and scientists have only recently recognised how destructive it is to the body. ‘Loneliness can lead to depression and anxiety, and these feelings can manifest in the skin through stress reactions,’ says Dr Paris Acharya, aesthetic doctor at Waterhouse Young Clinic. ‘Stress triggers cortisol levels and chronic inflammation that initiate a cascade of events affecting the skin. These include dryness, breakouts, premature ageing and a sallow complexion.’ Touch calms the nervous system and lowers stress hormones, which in turn means that nutrients and oxygen circulate around the body more easily for brighter skin. A HydraFacial (£230 for 45 minutes, waterhouseyoung.com) uses massage to relieve stressed skin. Or, try the Inner Facial by A-list facialist Nichola Joss (£350 for one hour, nicholajoss.com). ‘Massaging a client’s mouth from the inside out removes the emotional stress sitting actively in the muscle tissue,’ she says. ‘This has an impact on how the skin acts and looks.’ For best results, massage daily with a luxurious face cream, such as Guerlain’s Abeille Royale Day Cream, £98.
HUG IT OUT
Cuddle Therapy, a self-explanatory alternative practice, is huge in the US, and is the next big thing here in the UK. This is the most primeval and profound form of comfort that a human being can give and receive. ‘Failing to observe your need for human touch can have emotional consequences,’ says Rebekka Mikkola, founder of Nordic Cuddle (nordiccuddle.com). At £65, a warm cuddle can provide someone with the connection they need to stave off the effects of social isolation, or if you feel that is a bit steep for a hug, go for a cocooning massage at Aromatherapy Associates. ‘It’s time we realised that a platonic, caring touch can increase well-being, confidence and empathy,’ she says.
SELF-CALM

Even self-massage reduces stress levels by releasing oxytocin, which probably explains our propensity for self-caressing. It’s something that we do hundreds of times each day as a calming mechanism – fiddling with our hair, massaging our necks and playing with our fingers. Use Guerlain’s Abeille Royale Youth Watery Oil, £69. Make-up artists have it in their kit, as it has the perfect texture for massaging a model’s arms, neck and face. Try Guerlain’s Parure Gold Radiance Foundation, £63, on top for the softest, flawless complexion.
The smell of rebellion on your collarbone – that’s the current fragrance mood. In the same way that CK One – with its grungy anti-Wall Street vibe and unisex notes – thumbed its nose at tradition in the 90s, a new raft of fragrances has emerged that marks a revolution in scent in 2019. Perfumers are reimagining classically muscular notes, such as myrrh and rum, to create female scents that capture the zeitgeist of empowered, strong women. Not too girly, not too macho, we’re calling it the equivalent of the smoking-jacket-over-birthday-suit look. Take Bulgari’s Splendida Tubereuse Mystique, for instance. It is built on night-flowering tuberose, a note that has never been used in perfume before. ‘Traditionally, tuberose is harvested in the morning when the buds are still closed,’ explains perfumer Sophie Labbé. ‘It smells rough, camphor-like and typically masculine. But when you pick tuberose at twilight, the bloom is open and now smells creamy, fruity and also animalic, as you get more of the orange flower part.’ All of which translates into a female fragrance that isn’t in the least bit frilly. Another example of a scent that deviates from the familiar is Yves Saint Laurent Libre. Master perfumer Anne Flipo took fougère – a traditional style for men’s colognes that leans heavily on lavender – and flipped the script. Instead of a smoky or herbal iteration, she introduced a seriously floral variety of lavender as a top note. ‘We removed the camphor-like smell that lavender typically has to make it fresher and more feminine, before adding orange blossom and jasmine for sensuality,’ explains Flipo. ‘It’s radiant, bright and powerful, which is how I want the woman who wears it to feel.’ Meanwhile, Jérôme Di Marino, the nose behind Kenzo’s World Power, goes one step further by eliminating florals altogether. ‘It reinvents femininity, which is quite a new concept in perfumery,’ he says. Read on for our pick of the best breakthrough fragrances for AW19.

**Fragrance Disruptors**

What does female empowerment smell like? Anything but delicate, says Fiona Embleton, who tries out this season’s punchy fragrance drop.

**01 YSL Beauty Libre EDP, £78 for 50ml** (Fabled.com) This walks the line between feminine and masculine, as lavender and white flowers segue to citrus, vanilla and amber. **02 Nars Audacious Fragrance EDP, £125 for 50ml** The first ever Nars scent and, of course, it’s provocative. Smoky incense smells less church-like and more nuzzly with the addition of white frangipani, tiare flower, sandalwood and white musk. **03 Kenzo World Power EDP, £65 for 50ml** A fragrance that stands out for its total absence of flowery notes – infused with sea salt crystals, almondy tonka beans and aromatic cypress. **04 Byredo Slow Dance EDP, £110 for 50ml** Sweet myrrh, geranium, violet and vanilla conjure up warm silk and breathless exchanges.
01. Givenchy L’Interdit EDT, £69 for 50ml The original was a game changer, and so is this lighter spritz, which adds earthy poppy to a subversive mix of bright white flowers and dark patchouli.

02. Paco Rabanne Lady Million Empire EDP, £82.50 for 80ml (Boots.com) Creamy, fresh magnolia and a boozy cognac note? A little outside the norm but when you think about it, who wants to smell the same as everyone else?

03. Bulgari Parfums Splendida Tubereuse Mystique EDP, £73 for 50ml Night flowering tuberose has an optimistic, sexy vibe. Here, it meets the intensely macho notes of brandy rum and leather.

04. Valentino Born in Roma Donna EDP, £110 for 100ml The classic perfume pairing of jasmine and vanilla is given a liberal helping of fiery spice and woody smells.
Can a 3x4" space cause you anxiety?

For many women, it does exactly that. Why? Because for decades we've been fed a stereotype. The perfect underarm. A 3x4 inch space that must be smooth, flawless and blemish-free. It’s time to get real. So, here's to those who let them grow, those with stubble, scars, moles, patches, dark marks, birthmarks, or vitiligo. Those who like them smooth, glittered, shaved, dyed or tattooed. Here's to your 3x4 inches, however you have them. Here's to your underarms being anything but a worry.

Goodbye judgement. Hello underarms.
Craving a glowing complexion and luscious locks?
Here’s the low-down on beauty’s best supplements to shop now.

Nutricosmetics are on the rise. These days, there’s a pill or powder for almost every skin, hair or body concern. ‘The skin is a mirror of what is occurring internally,’ says Henrietta Norton, founder of Wild Nutrition, and it’s this inside-out approach that’s to thank for an array of powerful active vitamins, proteins, acids and other nutrients being formulated for beauty purposes. ‘The modern Western diet is highly processed and rich in salt, fats and additives,’ says Jenny Carson, nutritional practitioner at Viridian Nutrition. ‘It’s deficient in the plant-based nutrients and wholefood proteins that our bodies crave. Even fresh food isn’t as nutrient-rich as it was 20 years ago due to monoculture farming, where weak soil is used year on year.’ A healthy, balanced diet, sleep and exercise do, of course, go a long way to achieving that glow, but if you need an extra boost, here’s our guide to super supplements...
Innermost The Detox Booster, £24.95 (Liveinnermost.com)
A vegan, superfood powder blend of natural maca, kelp and turmeric to boost your energy levels – make this part of your morning routine.

Wild Nutrition Bespoke Woman Food-Grown Skin, Hair & Nails, £30 for 60 capsules (Wildnutrition.com)
This is packed with wholefood nutrients and herbal extracts, as well as copper and vitamin E to help protect cells from oxidative damage and keep skin healthy. Consider it your secret weapon to support an inner glow.

Altrient Liposomal Vitamin C, £39.99 for 30 sachets (Abundanceandhealth.co.uk)
Vegan friendly, this liposomal vitamin C formula absorbs into cells to keep your skin tone even and boost hydration and suppleness.

Seed Female Daily Symbiotic, £40 for a 30-day subscription (Seed.com)
Already huge in the US, this supplement can now be shipped to the UK. Take two capsules together daily for a powerful probiotic dose to maintain a healthy gut and balance digestion.

Beauty Collagen + Vitamin + Hyaluronic Skincare Drink, £29 for 29 sachets (Beautycolli.co.uk)
This is one for on-the-go travellers. Flavoured with natural berry extract, the easy-to-pack sachet powder is full of Peptan collagen, hyaluronic acid and Vitamin C to improve skin’s elasticity and strengthen hair and nails.

Viridian Beauty Complex, £17.80 for 60 capsules
Viridian is known as the ethical vitamin company. Its beauty supplement is a great all-rounder, packed with iron to combat fatigue and vitamin C to increase iron absorption and fight against free radicals that dull skin.

Viviscal Maximum Strength Hair Growth Supplement, £51.99 for 60 tablets
If you have thin or coloured hair, this is the supplement for you. Backed by 25 years of clinical research, it contains powerful zinc and biotin to help strengthen strands and reduce shredding.

Nuit Daily Balance Blend, £49 for 14 sachets
This Aussie brand delivers 30 per cent of our daily vitamins and minerals in each sachet, which is pumped with immune-boosting barley, wheatgrass and kelp to detox and alkalise.

GET THE BEST FROM YOUR BOOST
Pro health hacks and insider ingredients

*ALWAYS READ THE LABEL*
First off, follow the instructions: whether nutrients can be fully absorbed often depends on if they are fat- or water-soluble. ‘Fat-soluble nutrients, such as vitamin D and E, should be taken with a meal rich in natural fats [oily fish, avocado or nuts] as they are absorbed in the same manner,’ advises Carson. ‘Water-soluble nutrients, such as vitamin C and folic acid are absorbed but not stored in the body,’ she adds. ‘Any excess will be flushed out, so we need daily replenishment.’

Supplements are ‘never a substitute for a varied diet – just boosters to tackle health concerns,’ adds Henrietta Norton of Wild Nutrition. So, keep eating the rainbow.

*TAKE A PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACH*
Not keen on pill popping? Streamline your supps by looking out for these skin-loving ingredients...

**Hyaluronic acid:** ‘This is a water-attracting molecule, and as skin holds over 50 per cent of the body’s hyaluronic acid, it is vital for retaining moisture in its tissues,’ says Carson.

**Peptan collagen:** As we age, collagen production slows down. Thankfully, the Peptan molecule is a bioavailable form of collagen. ‘Ninety per cent of it is digested into small peptides,’ says Emma Caine, head of product development at Beautycolli, ‘which means that once in the bloodstream, these peptides can act as building blocks for cells, boosting the production of new fibres to improve elasticity and prevent wrinkles.’

**Vitamin C:** this potent antioxidant is key for supple skin, stimulating collagen and elastin cells. ‘Look for a liposomal form of vitamin C supplement,’ says Susie Perry-Debice, nutritional therapist at Altrient. ‘Its coating helps protect the nutrient from harsh stomach acids until it reaches the bloodstream to be absorbed.’

*HITS FOR HEALTHY HAIR*
According to a recent survey, 41 per cent of women experience hair loss, while another 40 per cent are unhappy with their hair health. Supplements rich in vitamin A and zinc help glands in your skin to produce sebum, and moisturise the scalp to promote hair growth.

Vitamin E, an antioxidant that prevents oxidative stress which can lead to hair loss, is also a good option.

*BALANCE, RESTORED*
Feeling stressed or run down? First, try Vitamin D. It helps the absorption of calcium for strong bones and feeds cells to release energy. Next, ashwagandha, a herb used in Ayurvedic medicine. ‘It adapts to balance out your hormones and immune cell levels,’ says Norton. Finally, don’t forget probiotics – the microorganisms promote a healthy gut microbiome by balancing good and bad bacteria. ‘Specific strains of probiotics can improve gut barrier function, while others are critical for metabolic health,’ says Seed scientist Dr Gregor Reid.
NEW COLOUR, NEW YOU

To help you achieve your #hairhappy, we teamed up with Schwarzkopf Color Expert to offer Marie Claire readers the chance to win a style transformation. Here, we catch up with winner Jodie Hewitt, who reveals how a colour reboot has boosted her confidence.
We all know that hair can make or break how you feel about your day, especially if you yearn for a shinier, healthier-looking colour. Jodie Hewitt, a customer assistant from York, confessed to lacking the courage to even try a new shade, despite needing a self-esteem boost. Cue Schwarzkopf Color Expert, who we teamed up with to offer Marie Claire readers a total style transformation. Now, post-shoot, Jodie reveals how her confident new #hairhappy look has rejuvenated her artistic ambitions, dream of building a business, and positive sense of self.

‘My hair is naturally a very light brown colour and although I used to dye my hair at home regularly in my teens, I haven’t had the courage to colour it at all for four years,’ Jodie, now 21, reveals. ‘I’m really drawn to dark hair colours and loved the idea of trying a deep purple, but I just couldn’t make my mind up. I’m so pleased that I finally went for it with Schwarzkopf Color Expert’s Deep Amethyst – it’s exactly the rich shade I’ve always loved and I honestly don’t think my hair has ever looked and felt so healthy and shiny – I feel like a completely new person!’

Having boosted her confidence, Jodie thinks the transformation will improve other areas of her life too. ‘We underestimate the power of hair and how it makes you feel,’ she says. ‘Simple changes to your appearance can really improve your mental outlook on life and, now that I’m so happy with my hair, I feel really great about myself generally. It’s emboldened me to try new things and I’m actually thinking of starting up my own art business now. I’m a very creative and artistic person, and I feel more positive about the future; even my boyfriend, and my friends and family have noticed how my inner confidence has improved.’

So, why Schwarzkopf Color Expert? ‘I’ve only ever coloured my hair at home and all the other brands that I’ve used in the past have left my hair feeling dry and looking damaged after one application. I always found the colour faded fast too, even with permanent dyes,’ Jodie says. ‘So using Schwarzkopf Color Expert for the first time has completely changed my opinion on at-home colour: not only is the Deep Amethyst shade perfect for my skin tone, but the OmegaPLEX formula has improved the look and feel of my hair. Now, people compliment me on how healthy and shiny it looks; it feels thicker, stronger, and smoother, too.

‘My hair used to be the thing I worried about most when I left the house, and every bad hair day knocked my confidence. Now, I feel like my hair expresses who I actually am; I can show off my personality through my vibrant colour and the process has made me feel fabulous again,’ Jodie laughs. ‘I will definitely be reapplying Deep Amethyst to keep the colour, and will only use Schwarzkopf Color Expert going forward. My hair feels stronger and healthier than ever – and so do I.’

Now for the science bit...

‘PLEX’ is the new buzzword in beauty right now, but what does OmegaPLEX actually do and how does it provide protection for you and your colour? Here’s the low-down...

Micro-Bonds hold together the hair fibrils inside each fibre and provide hair with strength and structure. Schwarzkopf’s Color Expert technology, OmegaPLEX, reinforces these Micro-Bonds, protecting hair against up to 90 per cent less breakage during and after colouring*. As a result, Schwarzkopf Color Expert delivers on its promise to leave hair looking strong and healthy, while also providing glossy, vivid and long-lasting colour.

Schwarzkopf Color Expert also provides perfect grey coverage, so you never have to choose between colour and the condition of your hair again.

AT-HOME COLOUR HEROES The Schwarzkopf Color Expert range is available from selected Superdrug stores nationwide. To lock in colour and for stronger, healthier-looking hair, Schwarzkopf has developed Color Expert Shampoo, Conditioner and Treatment, also infused with OmegaPLEX Professional Anti-Breakage Technology.
Superior* proven relief from sensitivity

* Colgate Sensitive PRO-Relief PRO-Argin technology vs. Colgate Sensitive Sensifoam Potassium based toothpaste
** When applied to each sensitive tooth for 1 minute
Colgate Sensitive PRO-Relief Repair & Prevent, Colgate Sensitive PRO-Relief Smart White. Home Tester Club, Aug 2018. 1727 member reviews

For instant** and lasting relief try Colgate Sensitive PRO-Relief
This month, beauty director Lisa Oxenham visits Fabled by Marie Claire beauty store to pick out her favourite party make-up

I’ve shied away from talking about daytime make-up in this column because I don’t wear a lot of it at work, or at the weekends. However, when it comes to dates and discos, it’s a whole different ball game. I’ve worn Estée Lauder The Illuminator Radiant Perfecting Primer + Finisher, £28, to every party since it launched eight years ago. I smooth it over my face as the first step in my make-up routine – then I’ll use it again right at the end instead of highlighter, as you get extra gleam, minus any obvious shimmer. I love Laura Mercier’s Illuminating Tinted Moisturiser SPF20, £35, too. It gives a natural-looking glow and involves minimal maintenance, making it ideal for foundation-phobes. It also comes in a wide range of shades and is suitable for all skin types – even the super oily. There’s just one caveat: it looks dark when it comes out fresh from the tube, so blend a little on the jaw before committing to a shade. For party make-up, my motto is, ‘go bold or stay home’ – even with lipstick. In the past, I’ve favoured a near-black eye shadow buffed into the crease and smudged down onto the lower lash line. Currently, though, I’m experimenting with the caramel hues in Urban Decay’s Naked Honey palette, £42, which create an eye-opening pop of colour. Mascara-wise, I avoid thickening formulas for a clump-free finish. Clinique’s Naturally Glossy Mascara in Jet Black, £20, is one of the best on the market, as it delicately coats lashes and is smudge-proof. I apply it in a horizontal zigzag motion, leave it for 30 seconds, then repeat, which lengthens lashes without making them look spidery. Finally, Nars Semi Matte Lipstick in Heat Wave, £22, is my go-to lip colour. Not too matte, not too orange and a cinch to apply – just what you want when you’re swiping it on in the taxi!

For more beauty & well-being tips, follow @lisaoxenham #LiseOfLife
CLINICALLY PROVEN ECZEMA TREATMENT

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OVER-THE-COUNTER, EFFECTIVE RELIEF DEVELOPED BY DERMATOLOGISTS

ITCHING | REDNESS | DRYNESS
ANGELA SCANLON’S

FAD HABITS

This month, our columnist puts the 16/8 intermittent fasting method to the test. But will she get hungry?

I decided to do a fast the day after coming back from holiday. It felt extreme, a little cruel even, but I had cheese and daiquiris, and crusty stumps of Mallorcan bread running through my veins, so it seemed like it may offer a bit of much-needed balance. My husband has been playing around with intermittent fasting ever since he heard about it on a Tim Ferriss podcast (he’s that guy) and, unlike the many mad-cap fads I excitedly explore for you, he’s actually been sticking to it (he’s that guy). He had told me it’s pretty easy and that, instead of being ‘hangry’ and irritable, he feels energised and focused when he does it. His abs also look pretty sharp.

Now, let’s be fair – fasting has been practiced for thousands of years, and is a staple across many different religions and cultures around the globe, so it’s not technically a ‘fad’. But recently, there’s been a shit ton of talk and research around fasting and the benefits on the body; helping with weight management but also cell regeneration, even curing disease. Big claims. That’s fasting at the extreme for days on end, sometimes longer, and should always been done under medical supervision and with advice.

But fasting has been mainstream for a while now, thanks to Dr Michael Mosley (that dude who does The One Show and other stuff). He created the 5:2 diet back in 2012. It feels a bit old fashioned now to ‘diet’, and everything ever discovered about them would suggest that, in the long run, they’re pretty bad for your body and your head. But intermittent fasting has had a makeover, and it’s now all about the 16:8 diet, where you limit your food intake to an eight-hour eating window and go 16 hours without consuming any food.

Sounds extreme, but you count sleeping hours, too. So, let’s assume you finish your dinner at 8pm, get up at 8am and plough on until 12pm when you ‘break fast’. Basically, have some coffee/tea/water, but no food until noon. You can tweak timings to suit your schedule and don’t have to last a full day on minimal calories like the 5:2. Then you can go for gold within the given window. In theory, it’s more sustainable and definitely more sociable.

It also makes you more conscious of what you’re eating. A week in, I realise I eat my lasagne with poise and purpose, mindful of each mouthful, remembering it’ll be a while. There’s garlic bread, too – the proper stinky stuff, ‘homemade’ by chopping a baguette and assaulting it with real butter and nubs of garlic. It tastes like a death-row meal. I then ready myself for deprivation. Except it never comes. I wake feeling hungry-ish, as usual, but now I only have a few hours to wait. I drink a strong coffee, busy myself with some work and feel only a little jealous when I feed my daughter a delicious-looking soft-boiled egg.

Lunch comes and I devour it. It tastes better than I remember. I snack. I plan dinner (this preoccupation is not unusual) and start again. There’s something comforting about the ‘windows’ and I feel alert, not ‘hangry’. In spite of myself, I’m into it. Apparently, I’m that guy, too – for now.

@angelascanlon #FadHabits

WORKING FOR ME

BUY

HUGG CBD BATH SALTS
Run a bath and add this mix of Dead Sea and Himalayan salt minerals – packed with essential oils and added CBD – for the ultimate at-home spa experience.
£10.99, thehuggshop.co.uk

READ

THE BOOK YOU WISH YOUR PARENTS HAD READ BY PHILIPPA PERRY
Psychotherapist Philippa Perry shares the fundamental dos and don’ts of raising children to help you accept the mistakes you make and what you can do about them.

TRY

BETTER YOU MAGNESIUM OIL GOODNIGHT SPRAY
Enhanced with chamomile, bergamot and clary sage, massage five to ten sprays into your body to ensure a good night’s sleep. £12.95, betteryou.com
When it comes to our health, there are plenty of things where we have a choice – what we eat, how much we exercise and whether we smoke, drink or take drugs. Most of us, though, don’t have a choice about the air we breathe and the hidden toxins in our surroundings.

A cocktail of pollutants, including carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and other chemical vapours, can originate from such things as traffic fumes to household products, and even scented candles. ‘Pollution is without doubt a major public health concern,’ says Dr Audrey de Nazelle, a lecturer in air pollution management at Imperial College London.

She cites the connection between rising pollution levels and related asthma and bronchial problems, and has identified robust evidence linking poor air quality to an increased risk of lung cancer and heart disease. But there are simple steps you can take from today to limit the damage. Here’s how.

**OUTDOOR POLLUTION**

According to a report by the World Health Organisation (WHO), 47 UK towns and cities exceed air pollution limits, including Manchester, Plymouth, London and Swansea. Surprisingly, even towns set in picturesque countryside, such as Chepstow in Monmouthshire and Royal Leamington Spa, have dirtier air than London.

**What you can do**

**Take a side street:** A 2017 study by King’s College London revealed that walking in quieter streets (traffic wise) can reduce average exposure to air pollution by 53 per cent. When using a busy road, stay as far away from the traffic as possible and don’t stand near traffic lights, as cars emit more fumes when they’re pulling away.

**Use an app:** Air pollution apps give you a real-time map of air quality in your area, down to street-level accuracy. AirVisual combines data from satellite imagery, government agencies and crowd-sourced information to help users track air pollution.

**Go for an early-morning run:** Pollution triggers inflammation in the body, whereas exercising reduces it and fights the effects of pollution. If you can’t beat the traffic, it’s still better to exercise than not. ‘The benefits from physical activity far outweigh any of the risks associated with increased inhalation of air pollution,’ says Dr de Nazelle. She recommends exercising before the rush hour rather than right afterwards, so early morning may be the best time. If you can, opt for laps of your local park.

**Be a mindful driver:** You are more likely to be exposed to higher levels of pollution in a car than a pedestrian or cyclist, as airborne pollutants are sucked in and become trapped inside. Switch your car’s air vents to ‘recirculate’ when you’re in traffic or tunnels.
Ditch your wood-burning stove: A wood stove emits more harmful particulates than a diesel truck. Wood smoke is thick with the particulate matter known as PM2.5, which is arguably the most health-hazardous air pollutant (it’s thinner than a human hair and can pass through the lungs and into the bloodstream) and is linked to heart attacks, strokes, cancer and dementia.

INDOOR POLLUTION
A study commissioned by the Clean Air Day campaign claims that many UK homes are 'toxic boxes', with indoor air pollution over three times worse than outdoor air pollution. Cooking and heating with polluting fuels, poor ventilation, chemicals in cleaning products and polluted air from traffic in the street outside are mostly to blame.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are airborne chemicals found in many household products. Long-term exposure can lead to damage to organs and the central nervous system. And scented candles can be harmful too, since burning them can release toxic chemicals and particles.

What you can do
Open your windows: 'Keep these and doors open, especially when cooking or cleaning,' says Dr Kirsty Smallbone, head of the School of Environment and Technology at the University of Brighton. If you live on a busy road, open back windows, or ventilate your home at night when pollution levels are lower.

If you must keep your wood-burning stove: Ensure the wood is dry, as this emits fewer particles. It’s recommended that wood is at least two years old – look for the ‘ready to burn’ label.

Install an air purifier: These can reduce particle pollutants by trapping them in a filter, though they won’t remove all airborne gases and chemicals. In reality, not all air purifiers necessarily live up to the marketing hype. Look out for the CADR (clean air delivery rate) rating. This measures the cleaning speed of the purifier for removing smoke, dust and pollen. Pick a CADR of at least 300 – above 350 is even better.

Buy anti-allergy cleaning products: As part of its clean air strategy, the government wants companies to label VOC-heavy goods, but until then, look for products that specify anti-allergy, as these usually have lower levels of volatile chemicals. Choose pump sprays over aerosols or switch from airborne sprays to creams.

Go retro: All you need for an easy and quick bathroom/kitchen deep clean is baking soda, white vinegar, a scrubbing brush and a spray bottle. Add a few drops of lemon juice for fragrance and a good dose of elbow grease. Also, white vinegar and water cleans glass and windows brilliantly.

Wise up on your wicks: Many scented candles are made from paraffin wax, which emits harmful particulates – opt for soy, coconut or beeswax instead.

Invest in houseplants: NASA’s clean air study discovered a number of air-purifying plants that can help detoxify your home, and found the spider plant to be the most effective. In two days, a plant will eliminate close to 90 per cent of toxins in a room. Its leaves absorb mould and other allergens. Chrysanthemums also filter out toxins, including ammonia and benzene, found in plastics, paints, detergents and glue.

FIGHT BACK WITH FOOD
Scientific research has found a link with what we eat and our body’s ability to effectively hit back at the effects of pollution. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, fish, poultry, wholegrains and olive oil can help pollution-proof yourself, and may also help repair any damage already done. How? Antioxidants from the food we eat help protect us from harmful pollutants by neutralising the free radicals so they can’t damage cells.

What you can do
Eat two portions of oily fish a week: Researchers at Harvard Medical School in the US discovered that omega-3 fatty acids could help reduce inflammation and oxidative stress – an imbalance of free radicals and antioxidants in the body, which can lead to cell and tissue damage – from air pollution by between 30 to 50 per cent.

Increase your vitamin intake: Vitamin E is an immunity-boosting antioxidant. Scientists at King’s College London discovered that high levels of the vitamin – found in avocado, spinach and olive oil – may minimise the effects of air pollution. Vitamin C is a potent antioxidant – get your daily fix with berries, grapefruit or any green veg – while vitamin B loves your heart. A study by Columbia University in the US found that B vitamins in broccoli protected the heart from air pollution.
YOUR NEW HAIR CRUSH!

There’s nothing better than a good hair day. Get ready, because your relationship with your hair is about to get serious!

21 Nutrients  Vegan  Great taste

From Boots, Superdrug, pharmacies, health stores & perfectil.com

With biotin & zinc to help maintain normal hair.

*UK’s No1 beauty supplement brand for skin, hair and nails.

Source: Nielsen GB ScanTrack Total Coverage Value and Unit Retail Sales 52 w/e 18 May 2019. To verify contact advalidation@vitabiotics.com
HOW TO LIVE GREEN

Presenter and sustainability activist Venetia Falconer shares her top tips on eco-friendly fashion, eating vegan and her favourite package-free shops

NEW ISN’T ALWAYS NICER
Two years ago, I stopped buying fast fashion. Before that, I constantly browsed in-store or online, and bought pieces that didn’t actually satisfy me. After watching the documentary *The True Cost*, I realised the impact the fashion industry has on the environment, so I started thrift shopping. I found the jacket and trousers of a silk Vivienne Westwood suit on two different visits to Mary’s Living & Giving (there are shops across the UK).

MAKE PACKAGING A PRIORITY
On Saturdays, I go to the local farmer’s market to pick up fresh fruit and veg. I’m lucky to live in London, where we have access to a lot of package-free shops. So, when I need dry goods, I’ll go to Re:Store in Hackney, Hetu in Clapham or Liberté Chérie on Portobello Road. You can bring containers for foods like oats, nuts, seeds and dried fruits, or bottles for oils – and even refill household products such as washing-up liquid and laundry detergent.

EAT RESPONSIBLY
As a vegan, I already eliminate a lot of foods, so I need to be careful about where I draw the line. Still, I’m conscious of where my food is sourced. I’ve started eating less avocados, as most are grown in Mexico, then shipped. Looking for a sustainable milk alternative? Try oat or hemp. For grains, it’s quite easy to find UK-sourced quinoa.

TRAVEL SMART
My goal is to stop flying, because it’s one of the worst things we can do for the planet. If I have to travel by plane, I bring my own reusable coffee cup, water bottle and cutlery to avoid extra waste. I prioritise trains when travelling in the UK, or opt for a car share. And when I need to get around London, I walk.

GO OFFLINE
My boyfriend, Max, and I were looking into the amount of energy our mobiles use, and how they impact our mental health. We decided to go offline every weekend, turning off our phones every Friday night until Monday morning. And, using #offline48, we challenge our followers to do the same.

Little things, big impact
Do your bit for the environment with these simple planet-saving hacks

ROLL WITH IT
Switch to Who Gives A Crap toilet paper, which is 100 per cent recycled. All products come plastic-free and are made without inks, dyes or scents. The brand also donates 50 per cent of its profits to help build toilets for those in need.
24 rolls for £24; uk.whogivesacrap.org

ROOT CAUSE
Add the Ecosia extension to your browser. The search engine uses the proceeds it makes from all our searches (thanks to ads) to plant trees where they are required most. So far, the company has planted over 60 million across the globe. ecosia.org

CLEAR WINNER
Rather than buying plastic water bottles, use a Black + Blum Charcoal Water Filter at home. Just pop the stick in a reusable bottle, leave for about an hour, and the water is filtered. Each stick will last for six months.
£6, planetorganic.com
ROSAS’ ‘STRAW’ AND ‘HAY’
TAGLIATELLE WITH PEAS

For this dish, you can use shop-bought ‘straw’ and ‘hay’ tagliatelle, or make the pasta from scratch with flour, eggs and spinach (to give the dough a green colour). Rosa’s secret to making great pasta? ‘Well, you must have good flour, you must knead it properly,’ she says. ‘Adding spinach makes pasta dough more fragile, so use a food processor to blend the spinach with the eggs – this means the dough will be more uniform and easier to handle.’

For the sauce (serves six)
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 50g unsmoked pancetta, cubed
- 1 large onion, finely sliced
- 200g peas (fresh or frozen, depending on the time of year)
- 250g passata
- Salt

Heat the olive oil in a sauté pan and add the pancetta. Fry it to release some of its fat, then add the sliced onion. Continue to sauté until the onion is soft, which will take around seven minutes. Stir in the peas and passata, and season with some salt. Add a cup of water and then let the sauce reduce until it is thick – so that when you push your spoon through it, you can see the base of the pan briefly.

Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil. Drop in the pasta ribbons and, once the water has returned to the boil, cook them for as long as instructed – test them to see if done. Keeping back a couple of ladles of pasta water, just in case you want to loosen the pea mixture, drain the tagliatelle and toss it with the peas – you want the two colours to be evenly coated with the sauce. Serve with plenty of grated Parmigiano Reggiano.

Pasta Grannies: The Secrets Of Italy’s Best Home Cooks by Vicky Bennison (£20, Hardie Grant). Photography © Emma Lee
ON LOCATION
SRI LANKA

Golden beaches, perfect surf and miles of lush, green jungle – MC’s beauty team discovers paradise in the Indian Ocean.

STAY AT
Cape Weligama, a luxurious five-star hotel perched on the sun-drenched cliffs of southern Sri Lanka that has terracotta-tiled villas, towering palm trees and sprawling infinity pools. Spend your days wandering barefoot in between colonial-style restaurants, bars, a premium spa and dreamy salt-sprayed coastline.

Rooms start from about £410 per night including breakfast. See resplendentceylon.com/capeweligama or email reservations@resplendentceylon.com.

DINE AT
Ocean Terrace restaurant. Commanding incredible views, this offers the ultimate open-air dining experience, serving up spicy curries and seared tuna flavoured with local cinnamon wood by candlelight. Or, hop in a tuk-tuk and speed into Weligama for fresh street feasts.

MUST DO
Lap up all the hotel has to offer, including relaxing poolside service, surfing sessions, dolphin watching and banana boating. Then, take a day out to visit Koggala Lake – a freshwater lagoon fringed with ancient temples – followed by an afternoon exploring the area’s white tea plantations, stopping to refresh with a cup of traditional Ceylon, of course.

SUN, SEA & SUSTAINABILITY
Cape Weligama is owned by Resplendent Ceylon, which gives 10 per cent of its profits to the MJF Foundation, set up to support underprivileged Sri Lankans through education and entrepreneurship programmes. What’s more, it sustainably sources all food produce and works with local communities to drive sustainable fishing, water recycling and renewable energy via solar panels. This is a hotel with serious heart.
Spend your days rushing from one task to the next, feeling overwhelmed by the demands of your work and home life? Join the club says Trish Halpin, who embarks on a week of positive change and transformation in Koh Samui.
Travel

the prospect of change. I’ve signed up for ‘Asian Bliss’, a mix of Ayurvedic treatments, traditional Chinese medicine and Thai therapies, not only because it’s recommended for stress (my middle name), but also because my energy levels are at zero and it sounds like the easiest one on the list.

My first appointment on the afternoon we arrive is a wellness consultation and Bio-Impedance Analysis, during which I’m attached to a machine to check key health markers, such as cellular integrity, fat and lean mass, plus hydration levels.

My assigned wellness consultant, Leila, analyses the results (all of which are surprisingly OK, but there’s always scope for improvement) and asks me how I’m feeling about my life, my health, and what goals I’d like to set for the week. Where to start? The short answer is to feel less exhausted, less overwhelmed, and to shift that constant feeling of heaviness weighing down my shoulders.

Leila talks me through the Asian Bliss programme: I’ll be having two treatments a day, ranging from scrubs, herbal compresses and acupuncture, Reiki and one-to-one meditation. She also recommends what to eat (as a vegetarian, I need to up my protein intake to boost energy) and explains how important it is to calm down the nervous system through holistic activities, such as yoga, meditation and Qigong.

Finally, she advises me to think about just two or three things to take home at the end of the week, rather than expecting to replicate everything that happens here when I’m back in the real world. This could be changing a few habits, making some tweaks to my diet or continuing with a holistic practice.

That evening I have an Ayurvedic massage that certainly ticks the ‘IT’S ALL ABOUT OPTIMAL WELL-BEING FOR BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT’

HIT REFRESH

The Kamalaya philosophy is all about optimal well-being for body, mind and spirit, with each of these three elements being nourished through food, treatments and activities throughout your stay. A wide variety of wellness programmes are available, from detox and optimal fitness to sleep enhancement and embracing the prospect of change. I’ve signed up for ‘Asian Bliss’, a mix of Ayurvedic treatments, traditional Chinese medicine and Thai therapies, not only because it’s recommended for stress (my middle name), but also because my energy levels are at zero and it sounds like the easiest one on the list.

My friend Debbie is one of those super successful, multitasking businesswomen who never seems to run out of energy or enthusiasm for life and all its possibilities. For the past few years she’s been raving about Kamalaya, a wellness sanctuary on the Thai island of Koh Samui, where she takes herself for one week every year and returns home with her batteries fully recharged, her mind relaxed and her body revitalised. When she suggests I join her for the next trip with a couple of other friends, it takes me a while to convince myself that, yes, I can leave my husband and kids on their own for one week, and that actually, I work really hard, so maybe I deserve this? If I can channel even a tad of Debbie’s feel-good energy while learning how to slow down and live a less frantic, more considered life, it will be well worth it.

So, I’m excited when the four of us meet in Bangkok airport – Debbie having flown in from Italy, Jacky and myself from London, and Gaye all the way from Canada. Together, we take the 45-minute flight down to Koh Samui on the south-east side of the mainland, then it’s just a 20-minute drive to Kamalaya, where I hope to say goodbye to my burned-out self.
Wi-Fi access is restricted to your room (one hour free per week) and there are discreet notices everywhere asking guests not to use phones. The effect is startling: on a personal level, I manage to forget about my mobile (apart from guilt-induced check-ins with the husband and teenagers). And seeing fellow guests dining, relaxing on a beach, or going into an exercise class without heads bowed and fingers frantically tapping helps me to relax, too. I'd never considered before just how on edge and alert I usually am to everyone else's pings and dings – never mind my own.

Food, according to Stewart, is the number two healer, and eating becomes a revelation. I consider myself to be pretty healthy: I'm vegetarian, I eat more than my five a day, and enjoy food far too much to ever consider a trendy diet or punishing detox, instead subscribing to the 'a little of what you fancy' philosophy. Here, the menus are designed to be nutrient-rich and flavoured with healing herbs and spices. You can choose from the vegan 'Detox' menu – healthy salads, broths and curries – or 'Ideal Weight', which bolts on a portion of protein such as fish or tofu.

Sitting down to our first dinner, I am genuinely concerned that the modest portion of lemongrass and coconut stew, with a protein side of tempeh, is never going to fill me up, and I'll wake ravenous in the night. When I finish though, it hits me that, for the first time in forever, I feel pleasantly full rather than stuffed, and I understand what Leila meant when she advised me to eat until I'm 85 per cent full. Usually, I have carbs – pasta, noodles, rice, bread – with each meal and always finish every last morsel. I have none of these types of carbs throughout the whole week, though, which makes me realise that, if I eat the right kind – grains, squash, legumes – I'm going to feel a lot better.

Breakfast the next day starts with four rather challenging shots (turmeric, kale, wheatgrass and sweet potato), followed by fruit, eggs and an avocado dip. Within a day, I feel lighter; within two, my stomach looks visibly less bloated. Add in a Thai compress massage and yoga class and I'm positively floating.

Clockwise from left: meals are flavoured with healing herbs and spices; Trish hits the coast for a soul-enriching walk; breakfast shots all lined up; the yoga pavilion

RESTORE HARMONY

‘Nature is the number one healer,’ according to Kamalaya founder John Stewart, so it’s no surprise that the gardens, pools, beach and open-air treatment rooms are beautifully landscaped and extremely tranquil. Stewart built this paradise into a steep hillside 16 years ago after discovering a Buddhist monks’ cave there, which still remains at the heart of the resort as a place for guests to light a candle and spend a moment of reflection. As lovely as my room and balcony are – simple styling in natural materials such as wood and stone – outdoors is where I want to be. So much so that I even come to think of the hill climbs as a bonus workout.

The monks may be to thank for the feeling of calmness and spirituality that permeates Kamalaya, but there’s another factor that definitely helps – Wi-Fi access is restricted to your room (one hour free per week) and there are discreet notices everywhere asking guests not to use phones. The effect is startling: on a personal level, I manage to forget about my mobile (apart from guilt-induced check-ins with the husband and teenagers). And seeing fellow guests dining, relaxing on a beach, or going into an exercise class without heads bowed and fingers frantically tapping helps me to relax, too. I’d never considered before just how on edge and alert I usually am to everyone else's pings and dings – never mind my own.

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BE THE CHANGE

Asian Bliss, it turns out, is not quite so blissful after all. The programme is scheduled to ease you in with the
lovely treatments and, after a few days, they become more health focused, with the introduction of acupuncture and a Thai Therapeutic massage. The 90-minute session is one I will never forget, mainly because it makes me want to scream and vomit, but also because it fixes a shoulder injury I’d been struggling with for the best part of six months.

Sasi, a young and tiny Thai doctor, kneels over me as I lie on a mat, while her bionic thumbs, knuckles and elbows knead knotted muscles to free my shoulder. The pain is intense and I have to breathe, talk and laugh my way through it, otherwise things could get very messy. An hour-and-a-half later, I leave the treatment room feeling slightly stunned, amazed at my pain-free shoulder – and with a big girl crush on Sasi.

The staff at Kamalaya are without doubt its secret weapon. Recruited for their caring qualities as much as their professional skills, they are kind, gentle and intuitively know what you need before you do. On the beach, Kris and Wit magically appear with ice-cold ginger tea, fresh coconut water, or a little dish of frozen grapes. At the breakfast buffet, Viktor has the patience of a saint, talking me through the seven different types of vegan milk (from soy to sunflower seed) not once, but twice. When therapist Anya gently presses my eyes to signal the end of a head massage, I find it surprisingly moving. ‘Compassion’ is the word that springs to mind, and I’m reminded that it’s not something I see – or practice – a lot in my everyday life.

Perhaps the biggest moment of self-awareness, though, occurs during my one-to-one meditation sessions with my Life Enhancement Mentor, Rajesh, in which he asks me what I do to look after my mental health. Er, absolutely nothing? I’ve always been a bit of a gym bunny (in more recent years converting to yoga and Pilates) and ensure exercise is always part of my weekly routine. But looking after my mind... well, it doesn’t even cross my mind.

That’s to be remedied, as Rajesh teaches me the art of Pranayama breathing – a controlled exercise used to oxygenate the whole body and strengthen the nervous system. During my second session the next day, we repeat the breathing exercises and follow it with meditation, in which my mind becomes completely still and I tune in solely to my breathing. Have I really sat completely still for the best part of an hour? Yes, I have. Rajesh sends me on my way with a breathing practice to incorporate into my daily life, which is definitely one of my key takeaways.

As the week draws to an end, all four of us feel like we’ve been on incredible personal journeys, as well as a special group one (this is probably the first occasion we’ve spent time together that didn’t involve booze). I vow to commit time every week to my mental well-being. I also want to be more tolerant of other people and less irritable when I’m on the Tube during my daily commute, and I’m going to stop fretting about what’s happening tomorrow when there is so much to experience today. I leave with more words of wisdom from Stewart: ‘You can’t change your nature, but you can change your habits’.

The Kamalaya seven-day Asian Bliss programme, including treatments, meals, airport transfers and accommodation in a Hillside garden-view room, starts at about £3,600 per person. Visit kamalaya.com or email reservations@kamalaya.com to book.
Alison Wong

‘She is the most irreverent, subversive, funny-as-shit comedian. Her Netflix stand-up show, Baby Cobra, which she performed when she was eight months pregnant, is brilliant. Ali touches on some of the most surprising subjects in a razor-sharp way. If you’re ever in a bad mood, watch Ali Wong. You know how people say, “What would Beyoncé do?” Well, I say, “What would Ali do?” She will make you laugh about the absurdity of life and being human.’

Kate Nicholls

‘Kate wrote the brilliant memoir Under The Camelthorn Tree and is an unstoppable woman. She was an actress who took her five kids to live in Botswana after becoming interested in anthropology. Kate ended up doing research in a lion camp, and writes incredibly potently about how she was raped by three men while living there – the book is about PTSD and its effects. She is fearless, brave and writes in such an elegant way about how PTSD transcends ethnicity, social status, wealth, gender and race.’

My Grandmother, Violette Lane

‘I called Violette “Gigi” and she was like a storybook grandmother. Because I was her only grandchild, I was spoilt. She was born to a straight Victorian family and ran off to become a chorus girl dancer, before eloping with my [paternal] grandfather. Gigi was a great painter, and one of my strongest childhood memories is that evocative smell of turps. The enigmatic old lady in my book has a magical dressing table like hers, which now lives in my bedroom – I think of her when I see it every day.’

Astrid Lindgren

‘Astrid is responsible for some of the best female protagonists in children’s fiction. She was such an interesting, uncompromising woman – a humanist fighting for children’s rights and women’s rights, and the most amazing writer. She wove light and dark into her books in a way that was not at all patronising. I think the best heroines are fierce and vulnerable, like Pippi Longstocking [who Lindgren created]. Often in children’s books, you don’t get shades of grey – you just get black and white.’

Sophie Dahl’s book Madame Badobedah (£12.99, Walker Books) is out now
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