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See pages 55-59



28-36

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# IN THIS ISSUE

9-26

## Red Hot

Line up for one of the modern world's brightest celestial wonders in Manhattan, meet *Morbius's* Adria Arjona and go all wobbly for London's new Jelladrome.

28-52

## Features

Pose star Billy Porter tells us how he is embracing joy. Plus, go on an urban safari in Delhi's rewilded forests and scale the best rooftops to hang out on this summer.

60-77

## What's On

*The Northman* joins *The Batman* in our fab movie line-up, and get down with TV's *Wu-Tang: An American Saga* while the kids tune into *Armchair Adventures*.

79-82

## Credits

All the latest news from the Virgin Atlantic world, including how Virgin Money travel insurance can earn you Virgin Points towards your next trip.

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THINGS TO GET OBSESSED  
WITH RIGHT NOW

# Red Hot



NOW SHOWING

## CATCHING THE SUN IN MANHATTAN

The ancient circle of Stonehenge in the UK is where, every year, hundreds gather to witness the sunrise at the summer solstice (the longest day of the year). New York City has its own version of this phenomenon, and although Manhattanhenge (a term coined by the physicist Neil deGrasse Tyson) doesn't occur on the solstice, it is still a beautiful moment of cosmic calibration. This year, the sun will set in perfect alignment with the east-west streets of Manhattan's grid on 11 and 12 July. Catch NYC's hottest star at around 8.20pm.

 Fly to New York

FIRST TAKE

# BIG SCREENS, BIGGER IDEAS

The stream of sequels, prequels and reboots might seem endless, but a crop of new releases proves Hollywood isn't out of fresh concepts, says **Al Horner**

**C**ould Hollywood be out of ideas? That's the allegation detractors have levelled at Tinseltown for a decade or so now, pointing to multiplexes full of remakes and endless sequels as proof. Juggernauts like *Jurassic World*, *Fast & Furious*, *Star Wars* and the Marvel Cinematic Universe are fun, critics concede, but where are the original stories? Since 2008, those four franchises have spawned a staggering 45 films alone. And in 2021, just three movies that weren't sequels, spin-offs or adaptations managed to crack the top 25 highest-grossing list at the US box office: computer game caper *Free Guy* and two Disney animations, *Encanto* and *Raya and the Last Dragon*.

When *Spider-Man: No Way Home* swung into cinemas in December, it was the ninth Spidey film to hit screens in under 20 years. But don't let the fact that we've had more Peter Parkers than UK prime ministers this century fool you – recently, we've started to see signs that audiences are craving original stories. In 2022, non-franchise blockbusters are officially back in demand. At the time of writing an impressive 11 original movies currently sit in the list of this year's top 25 biggest box office draws so far. Robert Eggers' brutal, brilliant new Viking drama *The Northman* – available on today's in-flight entertainment – is just

one of a string of smash-hit movies this year to have disrupted the idea that all audiences want is familiar characters in barrel-scraping spin-offs.

Sandra Bullock adventure-comedy *The Lost City*, Michael Bay thriller *Ambulance*, bonkers cosmic disaster movie *Moonfall* and heartwarming canine road-trip drama *Dog* are just some of the other non-IP-based successes this year. Add well-received Jennifer Lopez romcom *Marry Me* and Nicolas Cage comedy *The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent* to the mix and original stories well and truly seem to have made a comeback. But what's behind the shift? Are audiences suffering franchise fatigue and demanding something new?

Huge box office returns for recent superhero sequels *The Batman* and *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* – plus the inevitable success of *Jurassic World: Dominion* this June – suggest franchises aren't going extinct any time soon. But with further original titles like *Bullet Train*, from *Atomic Blonde* director David Leitch, still to come this year, it looks like Hollywood is finally finding more room again for fresh stories and characters. What's Viking for "it's about time"?

 Watch The Northman







Robert Eggers' *The Northman* is based on the Danish saga of Amleth, which also inspired *Hamlet*.

## SCRATCH THAT

### The boys are nailing it



**Harry Styles** is one of several male celebs who've launched their own nail varnishes. Styles' Pleasing polish is a pilot for a beauty brand – so he's starting from scratch.

Finger points: 🇺🇸🇺🇸🇺🇸



Rapper **Machine Gun Kelly** is promoting his brand of nail varnish, called UN/DN LAQR, with a range of sexy shirtless photos. As would you, if your torso looked like his.

Finger points: 🇺🇸🇺🇸🇺🇸



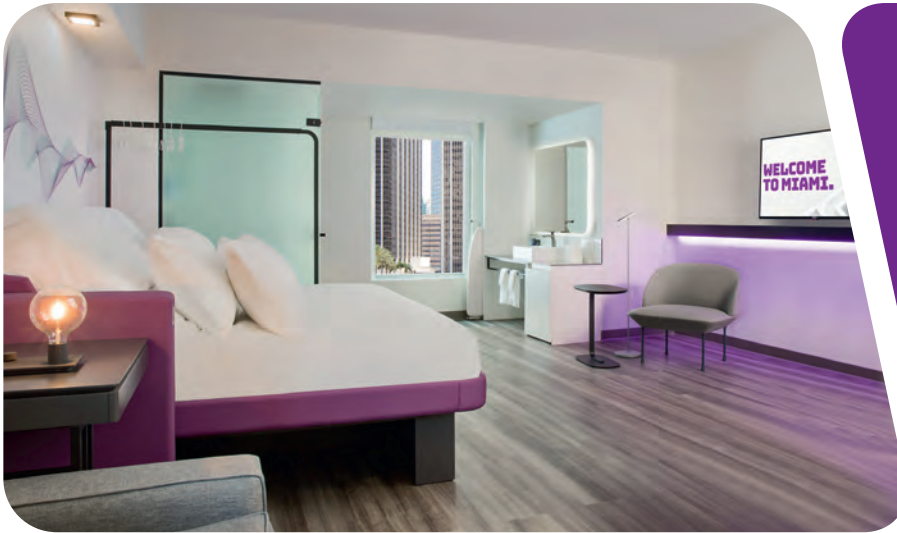
Rapper and punctuation stickler **Tyler, the Creator** has released a nail polish range under his Golf le Fleur line of products. Available online – or digitally, you might say.

Finger points: 🇺🇸🇺🇸🇺🇸

ILLUSTRATION: GUY SHIELD PHOTOS: ALAMY

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RISING STAR

# Jetsetter Adria Arjona

THE PUERTO RICAN ACTOR IS ON HER WAY TO HER LATEST PREMIERE - **RALPH JONES** TRIES HIS BEST TO KEEP UP

**ADRIA ARJONA MAY** have travelled the world and appeared in Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and *Star Wars* projects, but she has never come across the phrase “hen do”. “A hen? Do?” she asks, incredulous at each word. “I lived in London some time, I’ve never heard that in my life. Ooh, I’m gonna use that. ‘I’m gonna have a little do.’ That sounds like I’m gonna go to the bathroom...”

Arjona is speaking from a taxi on her way to a flight for the Mexico premiere of *Father of the Bride*, the second remake of the 1950 film starring Elizabeth Taylor. Indeed, she’s been attending a lot of “dos” lately - it’s all flights and premieres >





for the actor at the moment: not just *Father of the Bride*, in which she plays the bride, Sofia, but also an intriguing new HBO series called *Irma Vep*, which debuted the day before our call. Before that, there was *Morbius*, in which she held her own in the MCU opposite Jared Leto.

But soon Arjona won't be starring opposite big names, she'll be a big name herself.

#### Tell me about *Irma Vep*. It looks fascinating.

It's about this actress [played by Alicia Vikander] who's been doing Marvel movies and wants to do a real auteur movie. It'll give the audience a couple of episodes to go backstage and see what filming a movie really is like. We had our own crew and a fake crew on set. I mean, I got confused all the time.

#### And *Father of Bride* – how does this version compare with the previous two?

I think we're so used to seeing a woman and a man get married: the woman stops her life and her education to support the man and see him shine. In this case, [groom] Adan is doing the opposite and sees himself as equal to Sofia, as it should be. That's the reason Ingrid and Billy [Sofia's parents] are going through this divorce – because he's so old-fashioned that he didn't realize she was also worthy of having her own life without having to stop it in order for his dreams to be obtained.

From above: Adria Arjona opposite Jared Leto in *Morbius* and alongside Andy Garcia in *Father of the Bride*

#### How did the fictional wedding prep compare with your wedding?

The similar aspect was that I had two cultures come together at my wedding, and that can always be really terrifying, and funny and scary. And it was amazing, they loved each other. I lost my rings right before walking up the aisle. I was like, "Mom, I gave them to you," and she said, "I know you know you didn't give them to me." But we ended up finding them. I was also filming *Morbius* while I was planning this wedding so it was really chaotic.

#### Speaking of *Morbius*, what was Jared Leto like between takes, given that he went "method"?

He would stay in character and he would sort of go into his own space. He would live in his own sort of bubble. I'd never watched someone work the way that he works. I think as actors we have to be forever adapting. I loved working with him.

#### Can you tell me about your audition for *Morbius*?

I first met with the director and he was like, "I feel like you might be too young." "Ugh, can I please just audition so you can see what I can do?" He texted Ryan Reynolds, "Is she nice?" And Ryan

**"THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS THAT YOU'RE THE BEST ACTOR YOU CAN BE... BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY YOU WANT TO HAVE FUN"**

said nice things about me because we had just worked together, and then it was like, "OK, we're casting her."

#### In the film industry, do you think it's as important to be nice as it is to be a good actor?

I think the most important thing is that you're the best actor you can be, and you tell the story right. But at the end of the day you want to have fun. Making a movie feels like you're going to camp. We make these movies, where we're away from our families for three months, sacrificing time with our loved ones. I don't think that you should be a dick at all or that you have the authority to be more egotistical than any other career.

 Watch *Morbius*







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## DRINKS



## Soy is hitting the sauce

Soy boys of the world rejoice. Everyone's favourite umami-flavoured legume is having something of a moment on the global cocktail scene, with ingenious soy-based cocktails cropping up all over the place. Take KYU Miami's Live at the Bar-B-KYU, which features sweet soy, bacon-infused Widow Jane whiskey, amaro and maple syrup. Over in San Fran, the Pacific Cocktail Haven's Kinako Sidecar uses cognac, kalani and soy-based kinako dust, while the Momofuku Ssäm Bar in NYC serves a Tamari Old Fashioned based on a fermented soybean sauce. Cool beans.

✂ Fly to London



## SNACKS

## GOOD VIBRATIONS IN LONDON

The **Benham & Froud Jelladrome** at the Arcade Food Hall sets out to show jelly is still worth a shake

**JELLY, BELIEVE IT** or not, once represented the apex of culinary sophistication in Britain. The Victorians commissioned elaborately ornate copper moulds for serving jelly at the highest of high society tables. In recent years it's become a basic kids party staple, but no more. Behold the Benham & Froud Jelladrome! Run by Willy Wonka-esque multisensory event designers Bompas & Parr, the Jelladrome will purvey shareable "architectural trifles" made in

resurrected classic moulds, layered with jelly, trifle, strawberries, blancmange and gin on a biscuit base. The counter can be found at central London's Arcade Food Hall, which recently underwent a nifty rebrand following – ahem – some early wobbles. The hall includes other great joints like Indonesian Bebek! Bebek!, but we're aquiver for the Jelladrome's saffron ice cream served Victorian style in a glass "penny lick". Best get a wiggle on.

✂ Fly to London

Heritage jelly brand Benham & Froud is at the heart of "architects of taste" Bompas & Parr's latest venture, the Jelladrome in central London





SLEEPER HIT

## Club class in Edinburgh

THE VENERABLE GLENEAGLES GOLF RESORT TEES OFF A NEW URBAN MEMBERS' LODGE

**FOR NIGH-ON 100 YEARS**, the Gleneagles golf resort in Perthshire has been a byword for prestige and charm. Can its impressive standards be transplanted into a city-centre setting? Apparently so. There may not be a golf course at Gleneagles' new Townhouse outpost in Edinburgh's St Andrew square, but this lavish Neoclassical pile boasts 33 rooms blending old-world grandeur – ornate cornices, leather-bound books, canopy headboards – with 21st-century amenities. Take the so-called Telling Rooms, a cosy snug named after the building's former life as a bank headquarters, where

members can hustle away on laptops before retiring to The Spence, an open-to-all restaurant in the lofty Corinthian-columned central hall. The spa rocks a funky cryotherapy chamber, while the swinging roof terrace is where the city's movers and shakers swap numbers over posh cocktails. Because even in town, Gleneagles is all about the links.



✕ Fly to Edinburgh

## 3 MORE MEMBERS' CLUB HOTELS



### THE NED, LONDON

Soho House's ginormous outpost in the Square Mile includes no fewer than 10 restaurants plus gorgeous bedrooms inspired by Belle Époque glamour and a golden-age ocean liner vibe.



### THE BATTERY, SAN FRANCISCO

San Fran's most exclusive members' club – with a waiting list several years long – is yours to explore if you book a room. Word of warning – cameras and social media are a strict no-no.



### THE 'QUIN HOUSE, BOSTON

Rising from the ashes of the stuffy old-money Algonquin Club, the 'Quin is a much more laid-back affair, with pan-Asian food, wellness programmes and luxurious workspaces.



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## LOCATION SCOUT

# GEEKING OUT IN SEATTLE

Dragon dens and gamer gatherings make it natural to nerd out in the Northwest, says local **Naomi Tomky**

**S**eattle upends the classic teen movie dynamic, showing what happens when the geeks get the upper hand. In the Emerald City, it's hip to be square: the cool kids collect comic books, hang out at video game cafes and keep a full calendar of tech conferences.

Microsoft and Amazon both started here and continue to be two of the city's largest employers, feeding Seattle a steady flow of smart people. In return, the city offers space and support for all kinds of quirky interests. This year's festivities cement Seattle's status as the geekiest city in America – from **Emerald City Comic Con (1)** in August to gamer heaven **PAX West** (originally called Penny Arcade Expo) in September, and femme-centred **GeekGirlCon** in November, nerds are well catered for here.

Foraged wild mushrooms and fresh salmon bring visitors to Seattle, but the flavour of local geek culture can be sampled at Dungeons and Dragons-themed coffee shop **Distant**



Above:  
The 184m-tall  
Space Needle  
observation  
tower was built  
for the 1962  
World's Fair



**“In the Emerald City, it’s hip to be square: the cool kids collect comic books, hang out at video game cafes and keep a full calendar of tech conferences”**



**Worlds (2)**, where lattes are sweetened with flavours inspired by books, movies and shows. Or, for tea-loving geeks, **Friday Afternoon Teas** serves custom fandom-themed blends, like full-bodied breakfast brews inspired by *Battlestar Galactica*.

Less than 500m from the offices of Google, Adobe and Tableau, three robots dance over the bar at **Add-a-Ball**



**Amusements'** kitschy vintage arcade game emporium. The maze of rooms off a Fremont alley holds a 1966 *Batman* console, foot-operated pinball and an old-school cigarette machine, while the bar serves modern drinks like natural wine and IPAs from the many nearby craft breweries. Neighbouring **Outsider Comics and Geek Boutique** highlights local, independent and queer creators ▶



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3

in their zine collection, and sells size-inclusive, gaming convention-ready 'fits. One neighbourhood over, in Ballard, wizard-themed bar **The Splintered Wand** serves Harry Potter fan fave butterbeer mead on tap. Competitive spellcasters can get extra practice around the corner at **Mox Boarding House (3)**, a store and restaurant where punters can play all the newest board games. Find higher-tech fun at nearby **Portal Virtual Reality**, where solo visitors or groups immerse themselves in new worlds.

The iconic **Space Needle** is a relic of Seattle's original geek gathering – the 1962 World's Fair, which showcased optimistic predictions of a tech-centric 21st-century world. At its feet, a shimmering, abstract Frank Gehry-designed building holds the **Museum of Pop Culture (4)**, which houses more than 80,000 items, including one of rock band Devo's "energy dome" hats from 1980 and an animation cel from the original *Sailor Moon* anime series. This summer's exhibition takes a look at Afrofuturism through the costume design of Ruth E Carter, including her pieces from *Black Panther*, *Coming 2 America*, and *Selma*.



4

Right: Brandon J Simmons stars in Julian Golver's adaptation of *Beowulf*, at the Book-It Repertory Theatre

In the adjacent Armory building, the **Book-It Repertory Theatre (5)** turns literature into live performances, like their take on *Beowulf*, which runs 22 July to 7 August. Though the Armory also holds a food court, the **Taylor Shellfish Oyster Bar** across the street makes for a better pre-theatre dinner, featuring local seafood from its fifth-generation family-owned farm.



5

The explosion of geek culture in Seattle is the latest evolution in the city's accepting culture, which has previously given rise to iconic scenes like indie DIY and grunge. In the words of one of Seattle's most famous – but least nerdy – residents, "Come as you are."

✖ Fly to Seattle

## 3 MORE STOPS IN SEATTLE



### SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

In addition to the standard library offerings, this 11-storey Rem Koolhaas-designed building has a short-story dispenser, artists in residence, and coffee and chocolate shop.



### KAMONEGI

Fresh soba noodles made daily show off the skill of chef Mutsuko Soma, alongside a menu full of seasonal local ingredients prepared with traditional Japanese techniques.



### CENTER FOR WOODEN BOATS

Part museum, part activity centre, this lakeside venue shows off historic and modern boats, while offering the opportunity to rent similar craft for a quick spin on Lake Union.



### Seattle, in your pocket

Urbaniser is a new app for organising and sharing the places you love in any city in the world. All the venues featured in this story have been collected for you to download, just scan the QR code.

PHOTOS: COURTESY MUSEUM OF POP CULTURE, ADOBE STOCK, WEST SMITH, REEDPOP, THE CENTER FOR WOODEN BOATS, THE SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY, ACTOR BRANDON J SIMMONS BY ANTHONY FLOYD, SUZI PRATT





TASTE THE FEELING®







T

he grand Los Angeles mansion of Loretta Powell – Miss United States 1959 – no doubt saw many parties, but none quite like this. Crowds of people buzz around piles of

homeware and clothing dotted around the Rococo-style gold and baby-blue bedroom, their frenzied hunt reflected in the mirrored ceiling. A young brunette sweeps through the room, her phone held up to her face in selfie mode. Filming herself, she launches herself straight at the heap of clothes on the bed.

“It’s truly beauty queen vibes!” says the effervescent Macy Eleni, aka @blazedandglazed, to camera. She pulls out a cute retro gold top. “This sweater was meant to be mine!”

Macy calls herself a “thrift queen”. On TikTok, where she has close to 400,000 followers, she posts vintage hunting tips and shows off her latest scores. Lately, she’s got into a rather niche pursuit: scouring the estate sales of Old Hollywood icons for unique vintage pieces.

The dusty old mansions of departed Hollywood stars may seem like a strange place for a Gen Z thrifter to shop, but she’s far from the only one – in LA, a surprising post-pandemic trend has seen young fashion influencers descending on the city’s estate sales. Using sites like estatesales.net or handledestatesales.com, TikTok accounts such as Macy’s have clocked up hundreds of thousands of followers for documenting these everything-must-go events. They are showered with “hearts” when they show off their hauls, which often include glitzy ball gowns, chintzy furniture and rare memorabilia that make up part of LA’s rich pop culture history.

“The best-ever estate sale I’ve been to was last year in Calabasas,” says Macy. “It was the home of a couple who had been prominent members of the adult film industry in the 1980s. The walls were lined with a pink, pillow-like fabric. It was impeccable.” Her other top finds from previous estate sales include a chair that belonged to the former mayor of Beverly Hills and “a massive, life-size giraffe sculpture”.

Quinn Garvey (@vintageonq) is another TikTok magpie who’s obsessed with trawling old houses for the best knick-knacks in the county. “Estate sales will give you the biggest range of everything from pristine vintage Chanel suits to closets full of old fishing merch T-shirts or even old circus







From far left: A Handled sale in the former home of Hollywood "It Girl" Fannie Brice; Handled principal Amy Byer in vintage fashion



posters from a family of circus performers," she says. Her best-ever find was a pair of Gucci knee-high boots for \$15, which she found "shoved in the back of a closet". But she says the trend goes deeper than just the material attraction: "I think the appeal of estate sales ties into the sustainability effort. The younger generation is becoming more aware about the problems of fast fashion."

Aside from being more planet-friendly, Quinn and Macy simply find the vintage pieces they pick up at estate sales more interesting than brand-new buys. They want authentic stories behind their fashion statements, not carbon copies. "Shopping second-hand is cool!" says Macy. "These are pieces that tell a story."

And in Hollywood, these stories happen to coincide with some of history's most cherished pop culture moments. "Estate sales give people an inside look into another life," says Macy. "It lets you explore a life well lived, while also having the opportunity to own something one of a kind."

✂ Fly to Los Angeles



WORDS: JESSICA PRODAIS PHOTOS: ADRIE STOKK, MACY ELEN, AMY BYER, ANNABELLE SAGIER



## SET VISIT

### A doggone beautiful drive

Channing Tatum's latest film, *Dog*, follows in the tradition of the great American road movie. Only instead of a sassy passenger-seat sidekick, Tatum's driving buddy is a Belgian Malinois military working dog, who makes for cute company as Tatum's ex-soldier character travels from Washington to Arizona for a funeral. A detour along the way in Big Sur, California takes the unlikely duo over Bixby Creek Bridge, an iconic open-spandrel structure that forms part of Cali's State Route 1. To recreate the magic, take the classic drive from San Francisco to LA, where you'll cross the famous bridge.

🐕 Watch Dog

## SCREEN TEST

# How hard is it to catch a bank robber?

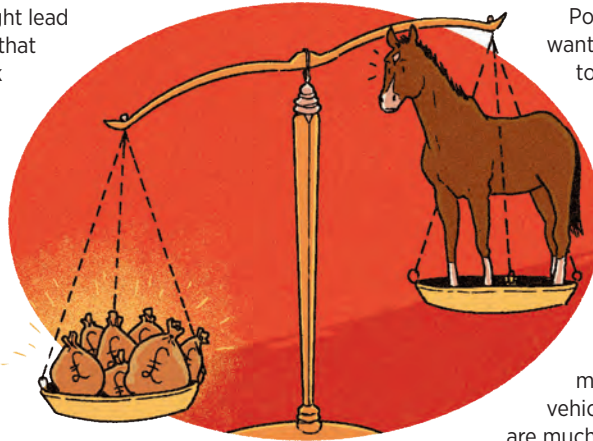
IN MICHAEL BAY'S LATEST MOVIE, *AMBULANCE*, JAKE GYLLENHAAL MAKES OFF WITH \$32 MILLION. JUST DON'T TRY THIS FOR YOURSELF, SAYS **RALPH JONES**

**F**ilm and TV might lead you to believe that robbing a bank is the quickest shortcut to a windfall. In *Ambulance*, Michael Bay's latest film, adoptive brothers Will and Danny (Jake Gyllenhaal and Yahya Abdul-Mateen II) do it for Will's wife, who needs hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of surgery. The stick 'em up trope is a cinema staple – *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Dark Knight* – but are you really likely to get away with the crime?

Bank robberies actually rank among the crimes most easily foiled by the police. It is “extraordinarily easy” to catch a bank robber says Dale Carson, a former police officer and FBI agent. This is for various reasons: the proliferation of cameras in the bank; because money takes a while to physically shift; and because of the existence of licence plate readers and red-light cameras (cameras at traffic lights that photograph a vehicle that has sped past).

In *Ambulance*, Will and Danny are trying to make off with \$32 million – an amount that would weigh around 320kg. When the money weighs more than a horse, police have a long time to arrive on the scene. Carson says, “I often laugh at these movies where the guys are getting gold, and a guy just reaches and picks up a bar of gold, which you're not gonna do. It's extraordinarily heavy.”

In reality, even if they make it out, a typical bank robber might have nabbed not \$32 million but around \$3,000. In the cash, however, there would be a range of dye packs, set to explode all over the bills when they leave the building. “It's indelible,” says Carson, “so you can't show up later and say, 'It wasn't me.'”



Police actually want the bank robber to get out of the bank before confronting them. This is because they are no longer surrounded by innocent people and because they might be in a vehicle. “Vehicles are much easier to stop, identify and control,” says

Carson. “You would blockade an area, saturate it with law enforcement so they really can't get away.” If the vehicle gets onto open roads it can be a problem because the robber can travel far and fast. But people fleeing a crime scene often give themselves away to police officers on standby, since “driving down the road very quickly” is a major tell that you're guilty.

And, even if police let the bank robber get away, he can still trip up. Carson was once part of a team hunting Willie Sellers, a notorious American bank robber. They knew he had a moped that he carried on the plane he flew around. Because mopeds like that often break, they contacted the manufacturer and asked to be alerted when someone ordered a specific new part. “When Willie came to pick up the part he'd ordered,” says Carson, “we just put his ass in jail.”



## THE VERDICT

Bandits can pretty much bank on getting caught.

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# FEAR

Passionate performances, fierce fashion, endearing honesty  
– *Pose* star Billy Porter is as bold as Hollywood gets.

# LESS

Now, having directed his first feature film, he tells **Chris Mandie**  
how he's making the bravest choice of all – embracing joy

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANDREW EGAN

# MESS





# CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER FOR BILLY PORTER.

Two days before he speaks to *Vera*, the 52-year-old won his second award for his work as a producer on the musical *A Strange Loop*. “Two-time Tony winner, ho-ney!” he trills. When I ask where he has put his second Tony – mantelpiece, shelf, toilet? – he says they will send it to him in six months, mainly because it needs to be engraved, and jokes it’s better than him trying to get it home on the night itself. “Don’t leave it in the car, girl!” he booms, pretending to warn himself. “Do NOT. Leave it. In. The. Car.”

Porter speaks only in declaratives – his voice is a silky thing and his years on Broadway have given him the gift of clear diction and rafter-grazing volume. Every sentence, thought and utterance has such a wonderful cadence to it. Even his umms and ahhs are pitch-perfect. His aura, even through ▶

Billy Porter wears a kaftan from the Billy Porter x KAFTKO Pride Collection. [kaftko.com](http://kaftko.com)







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a laptop screen, is one of absolute self-assurance (he's talking to me on Zoom from his house on Long Island, New York). But it's a hard-won confidence. Porter has been acting since he was a teenager, growing up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He's become a fixture in the world of theatre and has released four studio albums. He's filed for bankruptcy and written a best-selling memoir, *Unprotected*, detailing instances of sexual abuse by his stepfather and his HIV diagnosis in 2007.

He hit what we might call his imperial phase around 2019, when he was cast in Ryan Murphy's show *Pose*, set among the ballroom scene of 1980s New York. As Pray Tell, the commanding emcee and costume designer, he was sharp-tongued and smart, but audiences responded just as powerfully to the wounded pride, the hurt, the agony behind the sass and smarts. The same is true of Porter in the flesh – yes there's theatricality and wit (the comic timing, eyebrows with the dexterity of an Olympic gymnast), but he has faced trauma and hardships dead in the eye. He is an open book and he has given us everything.

When Porter started hitting the red carpet, he blew people's minds with his genderless styling – tough and soft, masc and femme, weird and fun. Conservative pundits freaked out. He didn't care. During this period, Porter didn't so much steal the show as commit a series of fabulous red carpet heists. An embroidered suit with Barbie-pink cape (“Billy Porter's Golden Globes Look Just Changed My Life”, gasped one fashion magazine) or his hybrid Christian Siriano tuxedo gown (think: a tuxedo, but also a gown), which is considered so iconic it's currently on show at the V&A Museum in London as part of an exhibition looking at the intersection of fashion and masculinity. For this magazine he sports a sparkling and effortlessly glam garment from his own Billy Porter x KAFTKO Pride Collection.

Some people think the Timothée Chalamets, the Harry Styles and the Kid Cudi's all owe a debt to Porter, who was shattering conventional style rules before everyone else. I tell Porter I recently went to see the outfit in person at the V&A. He nods, sagely. “At the end of the exhibition, it was supposed to be only me,” he explains – meaning the garment – “but you know, they had to make room for Harry Styles [his outfit] too, I suppose, so they put us together. Everyone wants to give him the credit.”

Now, he's directing his first feature film, *Anything's Possible*, a high-school romance inspired

**“For a long time, I thought my queerness was my liability. That's what people said to me”**

## Port of call

### BILLY PORTER'S CV

#### Born

Billy Porter was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on 21 September 1969.

#### Education

He graduated from the prestigious Carnegie Mellon University with a bachelor's degree in fine arts and drama. He is now adjunct professor at Carnegie's School of Drama, where he has directed productions of *Company* and *Letters from 'Nam*.

#### Fun fact

He made a cameo in the video for Lil Nas X's *That's What I Want*, handing Nas a black guitar while the rapper wears a bridal gown. Porter has previously heaped praise on the singer saying, “He is my baby, he is one of my descendants.”



#### Key works

##### **Angels in America (2010)**

In 2010, Porter was cast in the 20th anniversary stage revival of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* as Belize, a compassionate nurse known for his unwavering commitment to treating AIDS patients.

##### **Kinky Boots (2013-15)**

Three years later, Porter starred as Lola in *Kinky Boots*, the musical with songs by Cyndi Lauper, based on a 2005 British film.

He went on to win his first Tony and a Grammy for his performance. Last month he won his second Tony for producing the show, *A Strange Loop*.

##### **Pose (2018-21)**

As emcee Pray Tell, Porter became a household name on the FX show about ball culture. He brought fire and sharpness to the role, and gained critical acclaim, particularly for his work during the show's third and final season, where *Pray* confronts his alcoholism.



by 80s coming-of-age movies. He says he has wanted to direct for over 20 years – he even went back to school, studying screenwriting at UCLA, because he wanted to learn. It's been a long time coming, this opportunity, but Porter believes in manifesting, the Oprah Winfrey-backed practice of believing in something so powerfully that you force the universe to make it happen.

He says the script “literally fell out of the sky” (in reality, producer Christine Vachon, “the >



if the guy and the girl meet and flirt and snog a little, and are also young and figuring stuff out? The quietly revolutionary part is that Kelsea's identity as a trans woman isn't the engine pushing the story forward. It's like a lot of other coming-of-age teen films, with the added benefit of being gently trans-inclusive.

"My intention is based on service," Porter says, launching into a honey-coated sermon. "I learned that from Oprah. And Maya Angelou. When you shift your intention to service, everything else will work out." He

godmother of queer cinema", reached out to him) and 25 pages in, he clicked that it was set in Pittsburgh. A light bulb went off. The film had all those gorgeous John Hughes touches but it was radical in its depiction of queerness, too.

The film's lead, Eva Reign, a trans woman, plays Kelsea, also a trans woman. It's a meet-cute between her and a handsome, artsy, goofy hunk played by Abubakr Ali. The premise is simple: what

Above: Billy Porter's "Egyptian" look for the 2019 Met Gala was inspired by Diana Ross in 1975 film *Mahogany*

credits everything in his imperial phase, from *Kinky Boots* and *Pose* to directing this film, as a direct result of giving himself over to the universe, all-in. "For a long time, I thought my queerness was my liability. That's what people said to me. And now it's not."

As a child, the Pentecostal church he attended worshipped his beautiful singing voice, but condemned him for being effeminate and gay. The impact of that tore him in two and he says ▶



## CATEGORY IS...

### A GLOSSARY FOR THE BALLROOM-ERA LINGO OF POSE

**Ball.** Gatherings in which competitions are held. Categories include posing, voguing, performing and lip-synching. Trophies and other substantial prizes are awarded.

**Realness.** How well a contestant adheres to a given category or aesthetic. Balls may include formal categories (such as "femme queen realness" or "virgin realness" for debut performers) but this term has spread thanks to social media to mean any heavy coherent aesthetic.

**House.** Communities or alternative families, formed to provide a safe space for individuals who may not be accepted by their biological families. House mothers or fathers refer to older members of the ball scene who look after younger members.

**Voguing.** A mix of posing, dance and modelling, originating from the ball scene in 80s Harlem and later popularised by Madonna's 1990 song and the documentary *Paris Is Burning*.



**Kiki.** A less formal, more low-key social function, where friendlier competitions are held and there is a greater focus on community.



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that he shied away from harnessing his true self for a long time. He was ashamed. But by embracing his sexuality he's been able to get the things he wants out of the universe. It took a while for him to figure this out. He sees it now.

*Anything's Possible* was his chance to direct a love letter to Pittsburgh, a city I had never thought about in my entire life until watching the film myself. "I wanted to smash the stereotypes that it's in the dark ages, it's now a wonderfully young, queer, artist city," he says. "Did you know Obama brought the G20 summit to Pittsburgh?" The city had weathered the 2008 financial crash and the President wanted to know why. The why has to do with the way Pittsburgh, which was once a steel-industry hub, pivoted into the technology sector.

"They call it the East Coast Silicon Valley. Uber is there, testing their stuff. Google is there. The arts scene is major, and the medical [institutions are ranked among] the top five in the world.

"My sister, she has a medical condition called Chiari malformation, where the brain grows larger than the skull. Nobody was able to diagnose it around the world. She went into the doctor's in Pittsburgh and they figured it out. That doctor devised the surgery to help her. So the man who created all of that s\*\*t to deal with this rare condition that my sister has lives in Pittsburgh and works at UPMC, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center." He pauses for a well-deserved dramatic effect. "Major."



**"I'm choosing joy... I went to trauma therapy and I learned there that depriving yourself of joy, or not experiencing it, is a trauma response"**

Though his upbringing was traumatic, it's clear he hasn't turned his back on home. *Anything's Possible* reframes Pittsburgh in Porter's mind, and writing his memoir, he says, was a way to unload all the horror, in an attempt to make peace with it.

"I'm still trying to figure out boundaries, especially post-Covid," he says. "I'm trying to figure out how to take care of myself in a different way." He and his husband, Adam Smith, got a labradoodle in quarantine, called Lola, who pops onto Porter's lap. "I'm choosing joy. I had all this time off during the pandemic, and I worked on my psyche. I went to trauma therapy and I learned there that depriving yourself of joy, or not experiencing it, is a trauma response. It's a huge component

of my healing. Going forward, all the art I make, it has to come from a space of healing, not running away from something."

Billy Porter is brave enough to have found his bliss. I ask him what he does for himself, to feel joy. "I cook, I watch my mindless TV shows," he says, with a cackle like rolling thunder. "I bought this house, and sometimes I just walk around, taking it all in, you know? He pauses and stares around his home office as if he's gazing at the stars. "I sit on my porch, or swim in my pool, and I just try to remind myself: I did my best, and sometimes that's all I've got. But now I know it's enough."

 Watch Pose





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# C O N C R E T E





# J U N G L E

IN A LITTLE OVER A DECADE, THE SUBURBS OF DELHI HAVE GONE FROM ASPHALT SPRAWL TO GREEN PARADISE, SURROUNDED BY THRIVING FORESTS THAT HAVE BROUGHT RARE FLORA AND FAUNA BACK TO THE CAPITAL. **GEETANJALI KRISHNA** GOES ON AN URBAN SAFARI IN INDIA

**PHOTOGRAPHS: NISHANT SHUKLA**

## DENSE SCRUB STRETCHES AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE.

The spiny leaves of jujube trees offer little shade against the North Indian sun, hot even at the hour we're here, a groggy 7am. As the day heats up, the cicadas begin their deafening morning chorus. Out of the corner of my eye, I spot sudden movement in a nearby bush, which causes a couple of grey francolins – plump ground-dwelling birds – to let out aggravated squawks. Minutes later, I see why: a blue bull (actually a type of large Asian antelope) steps out from behind the same bush. It gazes at us, ears alert, then ambles along the thorny bushland to the waterhole ahead, invitingly cool under the forest canopy.

“We've been seeing two leopards visit regularly and suspect they might breed here,” says Sohail Madan, our guide for the day. “Look,

Clockwise from below: Sohail Madan scrolls through the footage on one of the sanctuary's many camera traps; Madan; a blue bull stares at the camera, while monkeys play behind



there are pugmarks.” He examines footage from the camera set in a strategically placed trap and my heart skips a beat. A young leopard stares directly into the camera, eyes widened in surprise.

We could be lost in a jungle, in a remote corner of the planet. But Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary, a rewilded sanctuary covering 33km<sup>2</sup> of bushland where I find myself today, is technically within Delhi city limits.

“Few think Delhi has jungles or even natural habitats,” says Madan. “Yet Asola Bhatti is spread across almost the same area as New Delhi, to give you a point of comparison.” For an urban forest, it's massive – and its size may increase still, thanks to a major rewilding push that means the jungles on the edge of India's megatropolis are making a quiet comeback.

The Delhi government's plans to develop and conserve its 26 “city” forests – small remnants of the Aravalli forest surrounded by urban sprawl – began in the early 2000s. The proliferation of mining and stone crushing in the area meant the jungle lay silent, dry and pockmarked, wiped of the diverse wildlife it was once home to. Now, thanks to a long and tireless conservation effort led by people like Madan – who is currently assistant director at Bombay Natural History Society, a Mumbai-based research and education outfit that's been heavily involved in rewilding efforts – diverse species roam freely again. These include leopards, striped hyenas, golden jackals, ▶







blue bulls and palm civets (cute, shaggy-haired mammals with curious eyes).

Delhi's green development is also essential to its non-animal residents: at a time when Delhi is battling typical urban problems including pollution, embracing its wild side could prove essential to the population's long-term health.

When Madan – an engineer from San José State University, California, who switched careers because of his interest in butterflies and wildlife photography – first saw Asola Bhatti, he says he wasn't fazed by the devastation but excited by its rewilding potential. "Parts of the forest remained intact," he explains. "I thought that there's so much wildlife in Delhi – birds, mammals and so on – that there was bound to be a lot of it here also."

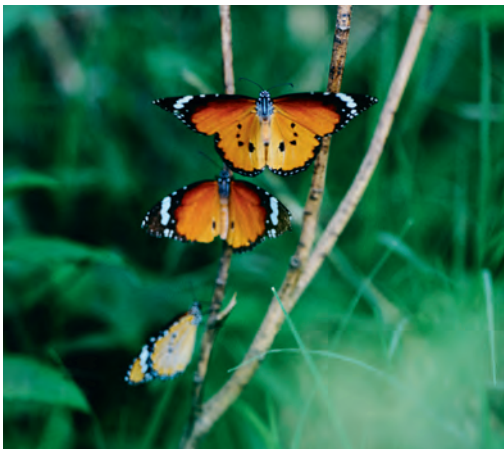
Coming to the project, Madan and the team had to take on the difficult task of clearing the forest of

### **"IT'S AN AMAZING FEELING TO SEE SEEDS WE'VE COLLECTED FROM DISTANT FORESTS CREATE THEIR OWN COLONIES IN THE PARK"**

the invasive species of fauna that had flourished in ill-conceived tree plantation drives and reintroduce native species to the area.

As the forest regenerated, the jackal and civet population grew, and birdlife became more diverse (Madan and his colleagues have recorded 200 bird species). Eventually, leopards – whose population dwindled from the middle of the last century on due to habitat conflict with humans – returned. "We've been able to photograph and identify five leopards," Madan says. "I believe there are more."

While Asola Bhatti was being restored, another kind of rewilding effort was taking root on a ▶







From far left: Asola Bhatti Sanctuary is now home to 90 butterfly varieties; Vijay Dhasmana in the Aravalli Biodiversity Park, which helps to purify Delhi's air and conserve the city's water

# FRONDS WITH BENEFITS

## DELHI'S GREEN SPACES IN NUMBERS



**195** KM<sup>2</sup>

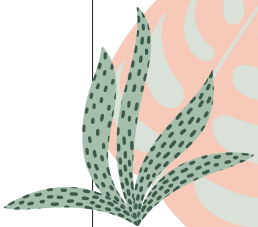
TOTAL FOREST COVER

**26**

CITY FORESTS

**23.06%**

CURRENT OVERALL GREEN COVER



**25%**

GOAL FOR GREEN COVER BY 2025

**300**

PLANT SPECIES IN ARAVALLI BIODIVERSITY PARK

**10**

MAMMAL SPECIES IN ASOLA BHATTI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY







From above: Peacocks have the run of the Aravalli forests; a gardener forages for native seeds

different section of the Aravallis. Near the suburb of Gurgaon, a fast-developing corner of Delhi where gleaming high-rises jostle with five-star hotels, the mining of gravel and quartzite stone had laid the forests bare. “But unlike Asola Bhatti, where patches of old growth existed, here the land had been completely stripped of vegetation,” conservation expert Vijay Dhasmana says.

Commissioned to take on the project in 2010, Dhasmana developed a plan to not rewild, but replant and restore nearly 162 hectares of barren land with native trees, shrubs and grasses. They compared historical records of the area with present-day landscape surveys to plant micro-habitats of forest, shrubbery and grassland with the help of nearly 20,000 volunteers. “We decided to irrigate every newly planted section for three years,” Dhasmana says, “then let nature take over.” Today, the Aravalli Biodiversity Park has distinct forest sub-types, verdant valleys and swaying grasslands.

**“SEEN FROM MID-AIR, THESE FORESTS SURROUND DELHI IN GREEN AND OFFER THE CITY A BREATH OF COOL, FRESH AIR”**

I walk through the park with Dhasmana, feeling like an interloper as peacocks, mongooses and grey francolins scurry for cover. In the distance, the overhead metro snakes repeatedly on the Gurgaon-Delhi line, transporting well-heeled Delhiites south to shopping malls with their luxury clothing shops and ice-skating rinks – a popular activity in the summer when outdoor temperatures soar. The scent of jasmine and frangipani intensifies at dusk as we pass gossiping evening walkers and young couples strolling hand in hand.

From the vantage point of a hillock, the surprisingly dense expanse of rewilded forest blends perfectly into the landscape, barely 12 years after being planted. “Native plants have a way of doing this,” Dhasmana says, as he points out a flowering shrub used in traditional Ayurvedic medicine to treat stomach issues that has now propagated naturally into dense clumps in the park. “Seeing them develop a life of their own gives me so much joy.”

Look down from the window of your plane just before it lands in India’s capital and the impact of these rewilding efforts in the Aravallis becomes apparent. Seen from mid-air, these forests surround Delhi in green and offer the city – often affected by poor air quality and heatwaves – a breath of cool, fresh air. “These forests act as a sink for pollution and noxious gases, retain moisture and create a possibility for cooling the heat island effect,” Dhasmana says.

Delhi’s – and indeed the Aravallis’ – future is likely to be greener. Working with local charity I Am Gurgaon, Dhasmana is also busy with several other eco restoration projects in Gurgaon. He says his biggest reward is to see plants that had disappeared from the Aravallis decades ago

propagate naturally in the wild following replanting. “It’s an amazing feeling,” Dhasmana says, “to see seeds we’ve collected from distant forests in the Aravallis germinate, flower and, ultimately, create their own colonies in the park.” It is as if they have finally come home.



✗ Fly to Delhi





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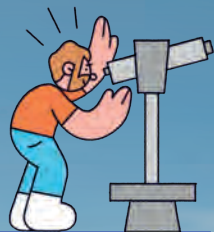
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# TOP

# OF THE

It's peak summer and that means we're seeking out the best rooftops. From cloud-level cocktail bars to vertiginous parks and soaring cinemas, we've rounded up the ones that truly rise above

WORDS: ANDY HILL & EUAN FERGUSON  
ILLUSTRATIONS: DAN WOODGER

## Best city views

### EDGE, NYC

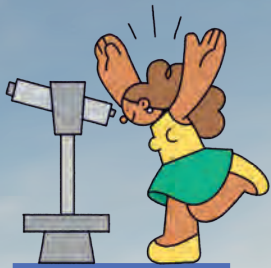
**What:** A panorama to end panoramas.

**Why it deserves top marks:** There's balconies and there's Edge, a 700m<sup>2</sup> triangle of sheer insanity jutting out from the 100th floor of a skyscraper at 30 Hudson Yards. The highest outdoor platform in the city - indeed, the highest in the entire western hemisphere - Edge is not for the faint of heart, especially that spot in the middle with a dizzying glass floor. But there is a very respectable bar to calm nerves, plus regular yoga sessions and the best view of New York you're ever likely to see.

A great shout for a photo op, or a solid first date when you're planning to whisk your intended way, way off their feet.

Fly to New York

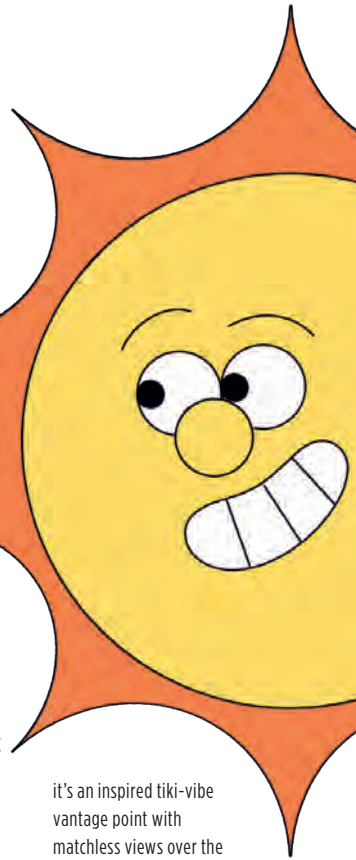




# TOPS



# S



## BEST FOLIAGE SUGAR, MIAMI

**What:** Fab greenery 40 storeys up.

**Why it deserves top marks:** The crowning glory at the EAST Miami hotel is, as its name rather implies, a sweet spot. Doling out high-end Asian bites – wok-tossed edamame, boneless Korean wings – with posh sake from a hand-carved wooden bar,

it's an inspired tiki-vibe vantage point with matchless views over the city and Key Biscayne. Best of all is the rooftop's glorious profusion of plants, including tamarind, ficus and autograph trees. An idyllic hang-out for you and your best buds. ▶

✖ Fly to Miami







## BEST SKY-HIGH COCKTAIL

### OZONE AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, HONG KONG

**What:** The highest bar in the world.

**Why it deserves top marks:** Skyscraper-strewn Hong Kong is a feast for the eyes, so to truly appreciate it you have to get up even higher than the others. Here's where to do it – 118 floors up, with a glass of something in hand. During the day, the windows look across the

whole city: you can see from Victoria Harbour to Hong Kong Island, or all the way out towards Lantau. At night, the whole vista sparkles to life with a million lights. Prices are through the roof, as you'd probably expect, but this is still an experience to tick off your bucket list.

✂ Fly to Hong Kong

## BEST MOVIE NIGHT

### ROOFTOP CINEMA CLUB, LA

**What:** Movies at the top of the world in two city locations.

**Why it deserves top marks:** Hats off to the genius who realised that watching films is much better al fresco on top of a skyscraper. In Downtown LA and El Segundo, Rooftop Cinema shows classic and new movies

(*Lost in Translation* and *Friday* are just two this month) with fun themed seasons. Luxe trappings like adjustable deckchairs, wireless headphones and cocktails are part of the deal, too. Does *Up* improve when you watch it at elevation? Is *Moan* more atmospheric under the stars? Find out here.

✂ Fly to Los Angeles





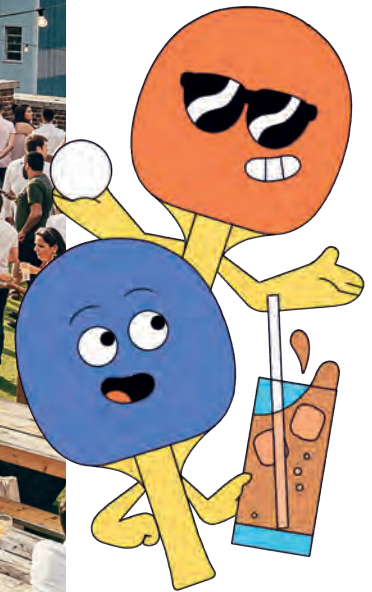


## Best lawn games

SKYLIGHT, TOBACCO DOCK, LONDON

**What:** Fun and frolics high above the old East End.  
**Why it deserves top marks:** Like most things in life, rooftop get-togethers are improved by the addition of some organised fun. Skylight is full of the sort of games you only have a hankering to play when the sun's out and you've had a couple of spritzers – croquet, pétanque, shuffleboard, ping-pong and more. So as well as being party central, it's perfect for those dates where you might run out of conversation. Think of it as an outdoor playground you won't get ejected from for being an adult.

✖ Fly to London



## BEST ALL-ROUNDER

ROOFTOP AT BROWN TLV, TEL AVIV

**What:** A slick city-centre rooftop that does it all.  
**Why it deserves top marks:** Just off lively Rothschild Boulevard, plush Brown TLV Urban Hotel is beloved by Tel Aviv's movers and

shakers. The view from on top is sublime, taking in the Bauhaus-inspired skyline and twinkling Mediterranean beyond. Best of all, this roof boasts great cocktails, sumptuous designer

lounge chairs, a full-on Jacuzzi, and open-air showers to soak up those sunny summer vibes. They've really raised the bar here. ▶

✖ Fly to Tel Aviv





## BEST HARBOURSIDE HANG

### LOOKOUT ROOFTOP, BOSTON, MA

**What:** Buzzy social space with awesome waterfront vistas.

**Why it deserves top marks:** This glossy contemporary spot atop The Envoy hotel is all about great mixing. Mixing

cocktails, sure – shout out to its summery Drippy Creamsicle, with Jameson Orange, Tangerine Fruitations and Licor 43. But also the mixing of the modern Boston skyline with its timeless harbour

below. The sociable seating encourages yet more mingling – a series of cosy horseshoe shapes with roaring firepits. It's so hot right now.

✂ Fly to Boston



## BEST HAUTE RESTAURANT

### THE LOOKOUT, EDINBURGH

**What:** High-class food with views to match.

**Why it deserves top marks:** It's often the case that in rooftop restaurants what's on the plates plays second fiddle to what's out the windows. Not here.

Edinburgh has one of the world's most dramatic skylines. "This is a city of shifting light, of changing skies, of sudden vistas," according to writer Alexander McCall Smith. This classy spot, on top of

central Calton Hill in an old Observatory building, makes the most of it and serves tasting menus of elegant, confidently flavoured dishes.

✂ Fly to Edinburgh



## Best ground-level rooftop

### INTERCONTINENTAL SHANGHAI WONDERLAND, SHANGHAI

**What:** Buried treasure in hotel form.

**Why it deserves top marks:** Due to the fact it's built in a greened-up, water-filled former quarry, 16 of the 18 storeys of this hotel are technically underground so in a head-spinning twist the rooftop garden lounge is at ground level (you still following?). This makes for a one-of-a-kind stay that seems to grow out of a lake and into the verdant sides of the surrounding forest. Feeling all upside down? You'll just have to see it for yourself.

✂ Fly to Shanghai (operating 2023)





## BEST COMMUNITY GARDEN

### JFF ROOFTOP FARM, JOHANNESBURG

**What:** A plant-based community hub in downtown Joburg.

**Why it deserves top marks:** In a city where green space can be hard to find, the enterprising gardeners behind JFF have put to ingenious use one of the many high-rises in Braamfontein by plonking a diminutive but verdant plant nursery and cafe on top of it. You'll need to be able to climb a short ladder to gain access, but once there you'll find a genuine oasis where you can buy exotic plants and fresh produce, or just hide away from the world with a fresh cup of tea. ▶

✂ Fly to Johannesburg





## Best roof park SALESFORCE PARK, SAN FRANCISCO

**What:** A high-end public park on the roof of a bus station.

**Why it deserves top marks:** More than 20m above downtown San Francisco perches a veritable Arcadia of rolling meadows, manicured botanical gardens, a kids' play area and an amphitheatre offering free yoga classes. This is Salesforce Park, a newly opened, two-hectare project that promises to be SF's own High Line, only better. Some 600 trees and 16,000 plants, reflecting California's biodiversity, offer sanctuary for hummingbirds and lunching tech workers. Be sure to check out artist Ned Kahn's clever interactive fountain, triggered by activity in the bus station below. In a word: splashy.

✂ Fly to San Francisco

## BEST SOUNDTRACK

### PIER 17, NYC

**What:** Swish Manhattan gig venue hits the high notes.

**Why it deserves top marks:** From the ashes of Pier 17's historic timber warehouses – wrecked by Hurricane Sandy in 2012 – a five-storey phoenix has emerged in the form of this gig venue. Big hitters like Elvis Costello,

Blondie, Jason Mraz and Sum 41 will light up the East River this summer, with peerless views of the Brooklyn Bridge and lower Manhattan, plus exclusive patio bars from Patrón and Grey Goose. Talk about the height of sophistication.

✂ Fly to New York



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF EDGE; COURTESY OF THE HOWARD HUGHES CORPORATION; GETTY IMAGES; HAYDON PERRIOR; BROWN HOTELS; SUSIE LOWE; KIMMICKANES.COM



THE  
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SKYWALK

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PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

# SWITCH IT UP

**Sustainable choices for life**



[EARTHKIND.CO](http://EARTHKIND.CO)

## **EARTHKIND'S CONSCIOUS COUTURE**

Meet the ethical multi-brand clothing platform taking on the modern blight of fast fashion – and doing it in style.

[See over](#)



**EARTHKIND**

**THINK  
OUTSIDE  
THE BOX**

We get it. You care about the planet. And you want to do the right thing by shopping sustainably. But you're busy. And you suspect most "eco fashion" you read about is just shallow greenwash. This is where Earthkind comes in. An expertly curated style platform for legit, ethical clothing and accessories brands, Earthkind pledges to fill your wardrobe with choice pieces that won't cost the Earth. Plastic packaging is out, of course. And for every order, they plant a tree. So you can look on point and help Mother Nature.

[earthkind.co](http://earthkind.co)



**GIN D'AZUR**

**THE SUSTAINABLE SPIRIT**

Raise a glass to a more environmentally conscious world with Gin d'Azur. It's a premium gin inspired by long summer days spent at the beach in the South of France, but with one eye fixed on the future. How? Through sustainable supply chains for its crop of heady botanicals

like rosemary, thyme and Citron de Menton – topped off with an inspired dash of Camargue salt. Gin d'Azur's fashion-forward bottle is plastic-free, and a portion of proceeds goes towards maintaining marine habitats in the Med and beyond.

Follow @gindazur on IG or go to [gindazur.com](http://gindazur.com)

**SIX ECO-FRIENDLY**

**TOM RAFFIELD HOMEWARE**

**AHEAD OF THE CURVE**

Inspired by the undulating Atlantic Ocean as it meets his native Cornish coastline, Tom Raffield's sinuous wooden homewares are a swish blend of modern curvilinear design and ancient natural materials. Studying for his 3D sustainability and design degree, Tom discovered an age-old, low-energy technique for bending timbers using steam. Now a world leader in this craft, Tom creates intricate, organic twists and gentle arcs for his award-winning range of lighting, furniture, and other home accessories. All raw materials at his solar-powered workshop in Cornwall, England are responsibly sourced, with any waste wood being re-used in other designs or by the local community, and never sent to landfill. Dry production methods are favoured - screws instead of glue, where possible, and all packaging is plastic-free and recyclable. Such beautiful designer pieces are the heirlooms of the future, and Tom Raffield is the shape of things to come.

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







## VOICE INTERNATIONAL

### JEWEL PURPOSE

Designer, founder and self-confessed “big dreamer” Natasha Katumba has a vision. It was sparked when she visited Uganda as a 19-year-old volunteer. Natasha met several women trapped in cycles of unstable, low-paid work, selling vegetables and charcoal to support their families. Moved, she vowed to try and offer something better. Voice International, Natasha’s stylish accessories brand, feted at Paris Fashion Week 2020, instead offers creative, sustainable and rewarding employment to female artisans in Kampala. People like Regina (*left*), who can now afford to send their kids to school and aspire to better things through Voice International’s creative academy programme. Best of all, the pieces are gorgeous – take these earrings, crafted from locally sourced brass and Ankole cow horn, an agricultural by-product blessed with hypnotic and unique colour gradients. Scan the QR code for more proper visionary stuff.

[voiceinternational.org.uk](http://voiceinternational.org.uk)



# ALTERNATIVES

It’s easy being green with these responsible buys



## MINIMALISMA KNITWEAR

### A CUTE ANGLE

If anything makes you want to take care of Mother Earth, it’s having kids. It’s their planet next, after all. That’s why superior kidswear brand minimalisma is fighting the scourge of fast fashion with its cool line in durable Scandi-inspired family basics, from cosy baby jammies and cute kiddie dresses to luxurious mummy crop tops. Crafted to the highest ethical standards from all-natural materials – silk, merino wool, cashmere, baby alpaca and organic cotton – minimalisma is one clothing brand that’s cut from a different cloth.

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

## NAVO.CO

### THE ONLY WAY IS ETHICS

Stylish Navo.co founder Lourdes Perera is a passionate believer that sustainability begins at home. That’s why every chic piece in her high-end collection is manufactured to the loftiest ethical standards by workers who are paid properly in safe conditions. Every detail – from compostable tags to FSC-certified packaging – is thoughtfully made. And all pieces, like this Alaia blouse, are made in small batches to

minimise waste. The brand proudly creates versatile pieces and is steadfastly committed to female empowerment. While looking amazing.

[navo.co](http://navo.co)





*welcome to the anti-routine*

CHARGE AND RECHARGE THE SOUL  
AT ORLANDO'S MOST UNEXPECTED HOTEL





**GOOD VIBES ONLY**

SURI brushes  
in three smart  
colourways



## BRISTLING WITH IDEAS

**The world's most sustainable electronic toothbrush by British brand SURI is cleaning up with savvy travellers everywhere**

**How's this for an inconvenient truth:** every single toothbrush you've ever owned is still out there. In fact, it's reckoned we throw away about four billion of them every year. That's enough to encircle the Earth a dozen times. Sure, bamboo is better than plastic. But dentists insist electric brushes are still best. What to do? SURI – "Sustainable Rituals" – is a UK start-up that's gone back to first principles to create a carbon-neutral, recyclable electric toothbrush. Its chic,

slender body is manufactured from aluminium. Those replaceable heads? Corn starch. If the mechanism breaks, post it back to SURI and they'll fix or recycle it. It's perfect for travelling too, charging off USB-C, in a sleek designer case that also incorporates an ingenious ultraviolet self-cleaning light. Show up wherever you're headed with a bright smile – and a clear conscience.  
[trysuri.com](http://trysuri.com)

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overnight




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A WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT  
AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

# What's On

## EYE SCANDI

From acclaimed director Robert Eggers, the man behind cult hits *The Witch* and *The Lighthouse*, comes this atmospheric big-budget epic in which the fights are bloody, the scenery is stunning and the action is gung-ho. Alexander Skarsgård stars as a violent-but-vulnerable Viking warrior alongside the icy Anya Taylor-Joy (both pictured). Things go seriously berserk.

 Watch The Northman





## THE BEST OF WHAT'S ONBOARD

63-68

### Movies

From *The Batman* to *The Bad Guys*, there's a feast of films for one and all to enjoy onboard.

70-73

### TV

Cheer and cry at *Shane* or split your sides at *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* - all the telly you need.

75-77

### Audio

Rock, soul or white-hot jazz: whatever you're into, here are the tunes to make your flight fly by.

## VERA LOVES

We're one of the few airlines that selects their own movies and TV, with lots of new content onboard each month. Look out for anything labelled with a heart - that means we think it's the best of the best. We champion big blockbusters, quirky shorts, binge-worthy box sets and ace docs. Read on for our top picks for July.

# THE CHOICE IS YOURS

Tune into **Vera**, our award-winning world of entertainment

## SCREEN TIME

Onboard this month we have

**160**

Movies

**640<sup>+</sup>**

Albums, podcasts & playlists

**410<sup>+</sup>**

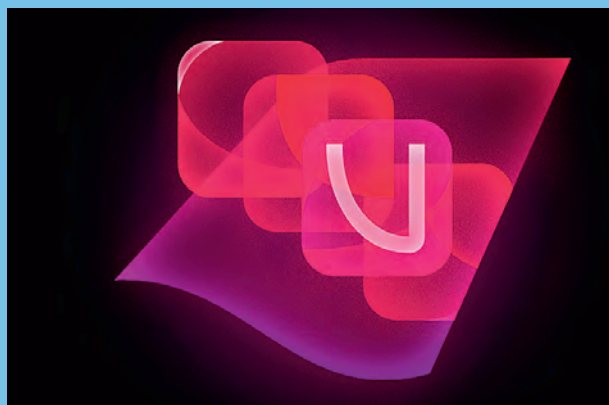
Hours of TV shows

**28**

Destination guides

**54<sup>+</sup>**

Hours of kids' content



**ARE YOU A** fan of grime, rock, pop or classical music? Do you like dark movie thrillers or light-hearted comedies? Whatever you're into, we have it onboard. But what if you've got eclectic taste and you like all these things – and more?

Well, on our aircraft you can create your own bespoke playlists for music and watchlists for TV and movies. Here's how:

- Select an album from Music, a TV show from TV or a movie from Movies.
- For Music, click on the star symbol next to your chosen track or album.
- For Movies and TV click Save Show/Movie for Later.
- Depending on which aircraft you are on, you'll see a tab or star at the top of your screen.
- Click on it and you'll see the items you've selected.
- Select Music, Movies or TV. Now you can work through your personally curated list of top entertainment at 30,000ft.

**SEATBACK CHAT**  
If you receive a message from a seat or name you don't recognise, you have the option to accept or decline it

**Parental blocking**  
If you want to block by rating or specific content, please talk to a member of the cabin crew.

**Headphones**  
Using your headphones? Our PAs are recorded at levels that work with the headphones we provide onboard, so be prepared if you use your own.

### Viewing guide

Not suitable for nervous flyers

Unsuitable for children

Vera Loves

### Languages

Most movies have several language options available. To find them, pick a movie, select the dropdown language box, choose your language and enjoy! We also have a selection of Hindi and Chinese movies onboard.

### Subtitled

Subtitles and audio descriptive titles (AD) are available on a selection of movies onboard.



## Pair your device

The entertainment screens on our sleek new A350 aircraft are all touchscreen, but you

can also choose to navigate our awesome selection of movies, TV and music with your own device too. All you need to do is pair your phone or tablet and, hey presto, it turns into a remote control. Here's how:

- On your entertainment screen, select the pairing button (see left) to get your four-digit code.
- On your personal device, select the "Virgin-Atlantic" WiFi network.
- Your device will

automatically take you to our WiFi page.

- Select Control Your Screen.
- Select the pairing button and enter your four-digit code when it asks you.
- Ta-da! You can now use your device as a remote.



THE VERA'S SPARKLING SELECTION OF FILMS

# Movies

## IS THIS THE DEFINITE ARTICLE?

*The Batman* does it.  
*The King's Man* does it.  
The Ralph Jones considers why films are gaining the "The"

WHEN IT COMES to making a good film, you needn't worry too much about the script, the concept or even the actors. It seems like the most important quality of a big film these days is that its title begins with one word: "The".

It's a small word, "The", but it packs a punch. When director Matt Reeves wanted to convey that he meant business with his new *Batman* film, he called it *The Batman*. In doing so, he put any future *Batman* directors in a bit of a pickle: how do you have a more definitive take than *The Batman*? Will they need to call theirs *The Batman* (*He Hadn't Quite Finished*)? Or *The The Batman*? Or maybe *The Next The Batman*?

There's a precedent here. After *Kingsman: The Secret Service* and then *Kingsman: The Golden Circle*, the third instalment in the *Kingsman*

universe was called *The King's Man*. *Suicide Squad* didn't need "The" in 2016 but by the time of its 2021 sequel, *The Suicide Squad*, the definite article had crept in. Hollywood folk know that people are suckers for a "The". It gets them thinking, "This isn't any old *Batman*. No – this is *the Batman*."

This means, of course, that if Robert Pattinson's *Batman* is *the Batman*, every *Batman* thus far – Adam West, Christian Bale, George Clooney... – is, in retrospect, simply a *Batman*. It's like having various loves of your life and then meeting the love of your life. The last one's the one you remember. And why not extend this theory to other films crying out for sequels? Yes, we've had *Withnail and I*, but what about *The Withnail and I*? Sure, *When Harry Met Sally* was a big deal, but imagine how good *The When Harry Met the Sally* would be. *The Shrek*? *The Clueless*? *The Grease*? *The ET the Extra Terrestrial*?

The lesson we've learned: an Eiffel Tower is less important than *the Eiffel Tower*; a holy grail is less dramatic than *the Holy Grail*; and *The Batman* will always sound cooler than plain old *Batman*. End of. Sorry – The End of.

📺 Watch *The Batman*

The, the, the, the, *Batman*: Robert Pattinson, Christian Bale, Michael Keaton, Adam West and George Clooney (clockwise from top)





## The Northman ♥

15

Alexander Skarsgård,  
Nicole Kidman

136  
mins

**FROM HORROR AUTEUR** Robert Eggers comes this violent and offbeat tale of Viking prince Amleth, who sets out to avenge his father's murder. And if the name Amleth, not to mention the overall theme of the piece, seems familiar then award yourself a special brainy-boots prize, because this is indeed an adaptation of the same ancient Danish myth that inspired Shakespeare to write *Hamlet*. There the similarity ends. From start to blood-soaked finish, *The Northman* is an intense, visceral experience – the one-shot staging of a Viking raid scene alone will take your breath away – that features its world in fantastic, grimy detail and draws superb performances from its cast. Kidman's turn, in particular, is an absolute showstopper.



## Ambulance ♥

15

Jake Gyllenhaal,  
Yahya Abdul-Mateen II

136  
mins

Strap in because, as you might expect from director Michael Bay, this is a very fast-moving ambulance indeed. The medic wagon in question has been stolen after a daring heist has gone awry. Now the chase is well and truly on.



## Father Stu

15

Mark Wahlberg,  
Mel Gibson

124  
mins

Wahlberg takes the title role in this true story of Fr Stuart Long, a former boxer who starts going to church in order to impress his new lady love. After an accident almost claims his life, Stu decides to pursue an unlikely vocation.



## The Batman ♥

15

Robert Pattinson,  
Zoë Kravitz

176  
mins

It's been a long time coming, but this latest iteration of the Dark Knight starring Pattinson as Batman has been well worth the wait. As Bats goes up against the fearsome Riddler, the result is Batman the way mother used to make: dark, tortured and intense. *See opener*



## Operation Mincemeat

12

Jason Isaacs,  
Colin Firth

128  
mins

Firth heads a mouthwatering cast in this true-life tale of a daring World War II mission. Armed only with a corpse and a satchel of false documents, a team of plucky Brits attempts to hoodwink the Nazis and send them on a wild goose chase.



## The Phantom of the Open ♥

12

Mark Rylance,  
Sally Hawkins

106  
mins

Hugely entertaining true-life story of how, in 1976, amateur golfer Maurice Flitcroft (Rylance) managed to gain entry to the British Open Golf Championship. He then went on to play the worst round in Open history – but became a national hero in the process. *See right*



MOVIE BLUFF

## WHO WAS MAURICE FLITCROFT?



Meet the unlikely amateur in *The Phantom of the Open*

**Maurice who?**

He was a chain-smoking crane operator and former ice cream man who successfully blagged his way into playing at golf's prestigious 1976 Open Championship.

**Did he win?**

Ha, no. He scored a frankly atrocious 49 over par, and was dubbed "the world's worst golfer".

**How did he pull this off?**

Sheer audacity. After watching a golf tournament on TV, he borrowed a library book on the sport and sweet-talked organisers into believing he was a pro.

**They really dropped the ball...**

Totally, and the signs were obvious – like Flitcroft's incomplete assortment of mail-order clubs and cheap faux-leather bag.

**Did he quit after such a public humiliation?**

Nope, he kept trying to enter the Open for years, sporting dark glasses, fake moustaches and ludicrous made-up names like Count Manfred von Hoffmanstel.

Watch *The Phantom of the Open*

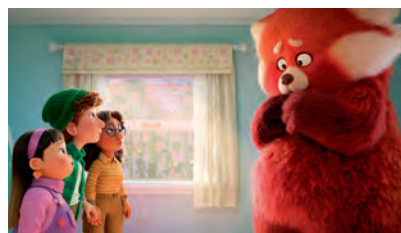


## The Bad Guys

Sam Rockwell,  
Awkwafina

100  
mins

**THIS CRACKING ANIMATED** comedy from Dreamworks finds Rockwell voicing Wolf, the leader of a team of master criminals who are also animals. Actual animals. Not figurative ones. There's Mr Wolf, Mr Snake, Ms Tarantula, Mr Shark and Mr Piranha. Each has a very particular set of skills and by pooling their talents they make a formidable bunch of crooks. When a heist goes wrong, our gruesome gang makes a deal with a guinea pig billionaire (Richard Ayoade), who claims he can make do-gooders out of them. Keen to avoid prison, they go along with the idea, planning to revert to type later and make off with more goodies. However, there's a problem. Certain members of the gang (that'll be Mr Wolf) actually like being good.



## Turning Red

Rosalie Chiang,  
Sandra Oh

90  
mins

The latest from Pixar deals with Meilin (Chiang), who to all intents and purposes is a normal, high-achieving 13-year-old. Soon, however, her body changes, meaning that when she gets excited or feels overwhelmed, she transforms into a giant, fluffy red panda.



## Sonic the Hedgehog 2

Jim Carrey,  
Ben Schwartz

122  
mins

Carrey is back on OTT, ultra-maniac form as the evil Dr Robotnik in this riotous, colourful sequel, except that now he has a new partner in the form of Knuckles the Echidna. Who can stop him? Sonic the Hedgehog and his new buddy Tails, that's who.

SCARES



Umma

15

Sandra Oh,  
Dermot Mulroney

84  
mins

**FRESH FROM KILLING EVE**, the brilliant Oh takes the lead in this psychological chiller named after the Korean word for “mother” (as well as a turn voicing *Turning Red*, which also plays onboard). She plays Amanda, who as a child was abused by her evil mother. These days Amanda lives with her kid on a secluded bee-keeping farm where electricity is forbidden (there’s a reason why electricity is forbidden, but we’ll save you the gory details) and, by day, she tends the farm. But as night falls, the mental torment begins, in particular her fear of somehow becoming the person her mother was. It’s a fear that intensifies when she begins to experience strange visions. And when her mother’s remains turn up at the farm, the terror truly begins.



Studio 666

18

Dave Grohl,  
Whitney Cummings

107  
mins

A chance to salute the memory of the late Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins, as well as enjoy a wonderfully goofy comedy-horror. Can Grohl and pals defeat supernatural forces and record their 10th album?



Malignant

18

Annabelle Wallis,  
George Young

107  
mins

What should you expect from a film called *Malignant*, with a screenplay from *American Horror Story* writer Akela Cooper and direction from James Wan, who co-created the *Saw* and *Insidious* franchises? Something very scary indeed.

FAM DRAMS



The Humans

15

Richard Jenkins,  
Amy Schumer

108  
mins

*The Humans* corrals a brilliant ensemble cast into the tale of the Blake family, who get together to celebrate Thanksgiving. However, as night falls, strange things begin to occur and long-buried family tensions surface with tragic results.



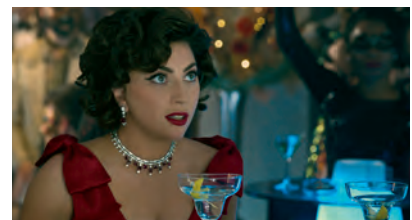
Mothering Sunday

15

Odessa Young,  
Josh O'Connor

110  
mins

Calling this *Downton Abbey* with added nudity would be crass, so we won't. Instead, enjoy a brilliant cast and sumptuous cinematography in a tale of thwarted love as a maid falls in love with a landowner in post-war England.



House of Gucci

15

Lady Gaga,  
Adam Driver

158  
mins

Lady Gaga proves that her turn in *A Star is Born* was no one-off with a staggeringly immersive performance in Ridley Scott's tale of betrayal, revenge and murder set in the world of high fashion. Top stuff.

ANSWERS: 1 WIFE AND HUSBAND 2 MANCHESTER 3 INSIDE OUT 4 TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY 5 THE INCREDIBLE HULK. PHOTO: ALAMY



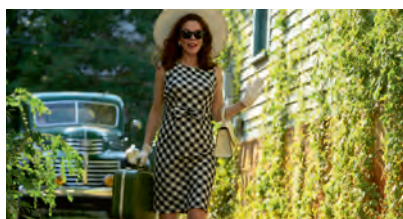
LOVE, LOVE, LOVE



**7 Days** !

Geraldine Viswanathan, Gita Redy	86 mins
-------------------------------------	------------

This romcom finds Ravi and Rita going on what seems to be a terrible blind date. They're all set to part when Covid forces them to isolate together, and if you can't guess what happens next then you need to go back to romcom school.



**Charming the Hearts of Men** !

Anna Friel, Kelsey Grammer	140 mins
-------------------------------	-------------

Set during the time of the Civil Rights Movement in 1964, and inspired by true events, this mix of history and romance stars Friel as Grace, who returns to her home town only to find it a hotbed of racial and sexual discrimination.



**Long Story Short** !

Rafe Spall, Zahra Newman	90 mins
-----------------------------	------------

**ROMANTIC COMEDY WITH** Spall as Teddy, who throughout his life has always had a habit of putting things off until later. Somehow he manages to not only find the perfect woman but get married. However, waking up the morning after his wedding, Teddy finds that it isn't actually the morning after his wedding, it's exactly a year later – his first wedding anniversary. As he tries to make sense of things the same thing happens again, pitching him forward yet another year in time. Before he knows it, he's losing years of his life, and there's no more putting things off until later. Now he must use every precious moment very wisely indeed. The result is funny, yes, but with a heart-tugging bittersweet edge that may well have you deciding that you, too, are going to "seize the day".



MOVIE QUIZ

TAKE ON OUR  
FEATURED FILMS

1

In *The Northman*, Nicole Kidman (pictured) and Alexander Skarsgård play mother and son, but they've appeared together before. What relationship did their characters have in 2017's *Big Little Lies*?

2

*Spider-Man* spin-off *Morbius* is set in New York but much of the action was filmed in the UK. Which English city stands in for NYC?

3

*Turning Red* is all about a 13-year-old girl who turns into a giant red panda whenever she gets too excited, but it's not the first time Disney-Pixar have tackled emotions head-on. In which 2015 movie did an 11-year-old girl and her emotions struggle with a move to a new city?

4

Action flick *Ambulance* features a thrilling car chase shot in the Los

Angeles River. The soundtrack for this scene plays homage to which iconic 1991 movie that also featured a chase filmed in the LA River?

5

*Eternals* is the first Marvel Cinematic Universe film in nearly 15 years to be rated PG-13 in the US (meaning it's unsuitable for pre-teens). What was the 2008 outing that received this rating?

Answers on the left



## Morbius

Jared Leto,  
Matt Smith

104  
mins

15

**THIS SPIDER-MAN** spin-off stars the mercurial Leto as biochemist Michael Morbius, who has devoted himself to finding a cure for a blood disease afflicting him and his beloved brother, Milo. His work with synthetic blood gains him a Nobel Prize but, taking his studies further, he secretly captures dozens of vampire bats, planning to splice their genes with his own in order to cure himself. It goes without saying that this particular procedure goes badly. It's so disastrous, in fact, that he inadvertently infects himself with vampirism. What does this mean? Now he has superhuman strength and a desire to fully exsanguinate anyone unlucky enough to find themselves in his vicinity. Plus he drops the Michael and is just... Morbius.



## Eternals

Gemma Chan,  
Richard Madden

157  
mins

12

Ten superpowered Eternals are sent to Earth to do battle with a race of near-immortal baddies called Deviants. As if the truly stupendous action sequences weren't enough, get a load of the cast: Angelina Jolie, Salma Hayek and even – in a cameo – Harry Styles.



## Spider-Man: No Way Home

Tom Holland,  
Zendaya

148  
mins

12

To say that events in the latest *Spider-Man* movie are huge is a gross understatement. No spoilers here, other than things go wonky when Dr Strange intervenes. If you've seen it before you'll want to see it again. And if you haven't seen it yet then, boy, you're in for a treat.

STRANGER  
THAN  
FICTION

## The crazy tale of Operation Mincemeat



### The plan

Operation Mincemeat was an ingenious World War II Allied scheme to outfox the Nazis by planting fake military plans on a dead soldier's body, and the subject of a movie of the same name.

### The idea

The plot was inspired by pre-war detective novel *The Milliner's Hat*, read by up-and-coming British intelligence officer Ian Fleming. Who later created James Bond.

### The plant

They used Glyndwr Michael, a homeless Welshman who died aged 34. A fake backstory was crafted, and photographs planted on his body of a pretty fiancé – really M15 clerk Jean Leslie (Kelly Macdonald). Who, some say, had a fling with married mission commander Ewen Montagu (Colin Firth).

### The result

Hitler was fooled into shuffling his troops out of Sicily, where the Allies went on to make vital in-roads into Nazi-controlled Europe. All thanks to an obscure novel.

Watch Operation Mincemeat





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TELEGRAPH

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# Television

## WU-TANG FOREVER

Clan fan **Siobhan Murphy** on why the story of the hip-hop group from NYC still matters

**WHEN A GROUP** of hip-hop outlaws from Staten Island, New York City, released *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)* in 1993 it landed like a bomb. On its cover the mysterious crew of MCs were represented by a blurry group shot with blanked-out faces. But it was soon clear that the arrival of the Wu-Tang Clan had changed the face of hip hop for ever.

Afrocentrism had ruled the US East Coast scene since the turn of the decade, while the West Coast had given us gangsta rap. The charts were dominated by the stoned, sinuous G-funk style fostered by Dr Dre. The kung-fu drenched *Enter the Wu-Tang* was like none of this – at once euphoric and paranoid, grittily real and ludicrously fantastical. The Clan – the RZA, Method Man, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Raekwon the Chef, the GZA, Ghostface Killah, Inspectah Deck, U-God and Masta Killa – spouted esoteric Five-Percent Nation spiritual philosophy and chess allusions alongside violent Shaw Brothers wuxia film fantasies, outsize gangster tales, killer battle raps, grimy stories of poverty and desperation, and paeans to weed.

All this was enveloped in menacing, hallucinatory soundscapes replete with disconcertingly chopped and sped-up soul samples, created by their mastermind and de facto leader, the RZA. It was a masterclass in restrained fury, leavened by ODB's wild, drunken master-style turns on the mic. It was utterly original and completely intoxicating.

The Wu-Tang's groundbreaking record contract meant that all the Clan members could also sign individual deals, so the Wu was, for a time, all-dominating. And despite a slip in quality

control, too many affiliate projects, infighting and ODB's untimely demise in 2004, they could still create a furor in 2015 when the single copy of their album *Once Upon a Time in Shaolin* was sold at auction for \$2 million.

Their legacy is evident in everything from the subsequent success of artists such as Mobb Deep, Notorious BIG and Jay-Z to Kanye West and Just Blaze's "chipmunk soul" production. And almost 30 years on from their breakthrough, it seems fitting that the comic-book obsessed Clan get their own origin story in *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*, co-created by the RZA – a dramatised version of their rise that will send you rummaging through their copious back catalogue.

 Watch Wu-Tang: An American Saga





From top: The real Wu-Tang Clan at the 1998 American Music Awards, and their TV counterparts in *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*



PHOTOS: ALAMY, ADOBE STOCK



**Scenes from a Marriage** ♥ !

Box set	50 mins
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This remake of Ingmar Bergman's 1973 series has Jessica Chastain and Oscar Isaac in the leads and is equally unsparring in its depiction of marriage and divorce through the lens of a contemporary couple.



**Mrs America** ♥ !

Box set	60 mins
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Cate Blanchett is at her acid best as conservative activist Phyllis Schlafly, who in the 1970s opposed feminism, gay rights and abortion, and in particular launched a campaign to block the Equal Rights Amendment.



**Kin** ♥ !

Box set	50 mins
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*Kin* tells the story of a fictional Dublin gangland war, and speaks to the enduring unbreakable bonds of blood and family. It comes from the creator of drama *Hidden Assets*, while Aiden Gillen and Ciarán Hinds are the rival leaders.



**The Last Kingdom** ♥ !

Box set	Up to 59 mins
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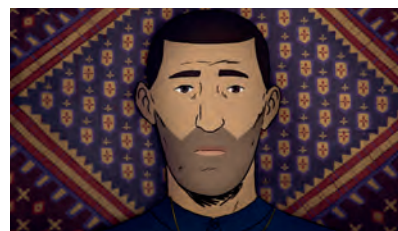
Based on Bernard Cornwell's bestselling series of novels, this gritty but absorbing drama series focuses on Saxon warrior Uhtred, who as a kid was kidnapped during a raid and then raised by Vikings. Can he reclaim his ancestral birthright?



**Listening to Kenny G** !

Documentary	96 mins
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Anything that's popular attracts its fair share of snobbery and Kenny G is no different: on the one hand he's despised by musical cognoscenti; on the other, he's the world's bestselling instrumentalist. This documentary examines the reasons behind this contradiction.



**Flee** ♥ !

Documentary	89 mins
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This Danish animated documentary spins the amazing tale of Amin, who on the eve of his wedding is compelled to reveal the true story of his past. Beautifully crafted and packing a real emotional punch - little wonder it was nominated for no fewer than three Oscars.

SPORTY SUMMER



**Winning Time: The Rise of the Lakers** ♥ !

Box set	60 mins
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**JOHN C REILLY** leads the cast of this star-studded series taking a look at the on- and off-court activities of basketball legends the Los Angeles Lakers. From 1979 onwards, and spearheaded by the arrival of Earvin “Magic” Johnson – played here by Quincy Isaiah – the Lakers were the dominant force in basketball. Not only did they regularly destroy the competition, but they did it with such panache that before long tickets to Lakers games were the hottest in town. Not only that but the Lakers’ superstars, who included Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, led just as colourful lives off-court. So: larger than life, stylish and thrilling.



**Shane** ♥ 15

Documentary	95 mins
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The life and career of cricket legend Shane Warne (who died suddenly in March) is covered in this documentary that covers the extraordinary highs – and the lows – of what was a glittering, inspiring career.



**Rooney** ♥ !

Documentary	103 mins
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There are few footballers quite as storied as Wayne Rooney. This doc not only charts his progress from schoolboy stardom to all-time top scorer for England, but also deals with his, ahem, “shortcomings” as a role model. *See right*

PAST DRAMAS



**The Pursuit of Love** ♥ !

Box set	60 mins
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Directed by Emily Mortimer, the BBC’s three-part *The Pursuit of Love* is a sumptuous adaptation of Nancy Mitford’s classic novel about two cousins, who must negotiate love and life in 1920s England.



**The Gilded Age** ♥ !

Box set	60 mins
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From the pen of the redoubtable Julian Fellowes comes this new series, precision-tooled to appeal to fans of his biggest hit, *Downton Abbey*. This time the conflict is between new and old money in 1880s New York.



**The North Water** ♥ !

Box set	57 mins
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Based on the brilliant novel, *The North Water* tells of an ex-surgeon (Jack O’Connell) who signs up to an Arctic whaling expedition, only to find himself in conflict with a psychopathic harpooner (Colin Farrell).



**KNOCKING  
'EM IN**

## Wayne's World

**The four stages of England footballer Wayne Rooney**

### Boy wonder

After joining the youth ranks at Everton FC aged eight, Wayne Rooney made his full-team debut in 2002 at 16 and immediately started turning heads.

### Premier League goal bagger

Rooney announced himself in style with a last-minute winning goal against imperious Arsenal. The goals never stopped, especially after he signed for Manchester United in 2004. He now sits second in the all-time rankings of Premier League scorers, behind Alan Shearer.

### England hero

Fans loved Rooney's all-in style, and he represented his country at three World Cups, becoming England's top goalscorer on 53. International trophies have eluded him, however.

### Rookie manager

In 2021, Rooney played his last professional game and took over as manager at Championship side Derby County. But he couldn't keep them up and next year they'll be in League One.

 Watch Rooney



PHOTO: ALAMY



## Brooklyn Nine-Nine



4 episodes

22 mins

**LAST YEAR, THE** successful US police comedy *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* wound to a close after eight seasons and no fewer than 153 episodes. Set in a New York cop shop and featuring a superb ensemble cast led by Andy Samberg, the show went out on a high, with critics praising its treatment of serious social issues, in particular its portrayal of the LGBTQ+ community, and awards panels lining up to hand out gongs. *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* was very careful to keep its narrative character-based allowing fans to be as invested in their respective journeys as they would in a serious drama, but it never forgot that it was a comedy and to its final day remained very funny.



## Young Rock

Box set

30 mins

It had to happen. Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson gets his own spin-off show. And like that other Rock - Chris - and his *Everybody Hates Chris* smash, this one takes a look at the formative years of its subject as he grows from being a little kid with big dreams to, well, The Rock.



## American Dad



5 episodes

22 mins

Now in its 19th season, this animated sitcom from the decidedly twisted mind of Seth MacFarlane revolves around CIA agent Stan, his upper middle-class but dysfunctional family, their three housemates and a goldfish. We have episodes from the 16th series onboard.

EDGE-OF-YOUR-SEAT



**Trigger Point** ♥

15

Box set

60 mins

**IF YOU LIKED** *Line of Duty* then the chances are that you're really going to enjoy *Trigger Point*. Why? Firstly because it's written by *LoD* head honcho Jed Mercurio; secondly because it stars the wonderful Vicky McClure in the lead, and thirdly because it shares much of that show's DNA. Gut-wrenching twists? They're here. Fiendish double-crosses? All present and correct. A somewhat, shall we say, gleeful approach when it comes to dispatching major characters. Oh yes. Did we also mention nail-biting races against time? With a plot that focuses on police desperately trying to stop a terrorist bombing spree, you can be certain that there are plenty of those.



**Manhunt** !

Box set

60 mins

Based on the memoirs of former Met detective DCI Colin Sutton (played by Martin Clunes) this award-winning series dramatises the real-life hunt to find the killer of Amélie Delagrange in 2004. We have all three episodes onboard.



**The Beast Must Die**

Box set

Up to 48 mins

Nail-biting stuff here, with the always brilliant Jared Harris heading the cast in the tale of a woman who, after the death of her son, embarks on an act of subterfuge in order to find and punish those responsible.

HIP HOP DON'T STOP



**Wu-Tang: An American Saga** ♥ !

Box set

Up to 58 mins

Series dramatising the rise of the Wu-Tang Clan, the New York hip-hop crew that under the stewardship of visionary leader RZA, aka Bobby Diggs, took the genre by storm in the early 1990s. *See opener*



**Rap Game** !

Box set

59 mins

Reality show in which would-be rappers hole up in a recording studio for a month, competing to prove which one of them is the next rap superstar. It's a bit like *MasterChef*, except with beats and rhymes instead of, um, meat and rind.



**Hip Hop: The Songs That Shook America** ▲ !

Box set

43 mins

Series in which classic hip-hop jams are assessed for their contribution not just to the genre but to wider US culture. Plenty of insight then – including from the artists involved – as well as some seriously good tuneage.



ESCAPE INTO OTHER WORLDS WITH WORDS AND MUSIC

# Audio

## ARMCHAIR ADVENTURES!

Allow **Connie**, the host of the *Armchair Adventures* podcast for kids, to take you on a journey without leaving your seat

**HELLO, ADVENTURER! HAVE** you ever wondered what it would be like to bounce, bounce, bounce inside a giant bubble? How about hike in a tropical jungle? Woah, watch out for that lion! Or what goes on in a top-secret superhero lair?

What if I told you that you can do all this and more with *Armchair Adventures*? My name's Connie and I live with my parents above their travel agent shop. Their business hasn't been doing very well recently, so along with my lovely customers, I invented a different way to take a holiday – using your imagination!

In each episode of this award-winning podcast for kids you can act, sing and move along as you, me and the gang embark on a brand-new adventure. We've teamed up with our friends at Virgin Atlantic to bring you eight of our favourite episodes and here's a taster of what to expect...

🎧 Listen to Armchair Adventures

### A BUBBLE ADVENTURE

**"I feel like a hamster in a wheel!"**

Join Connie and her lovely customers on a bubble-filled *Armchair Adventure* to one of the world's most stunning sights, the mesmerising Northern Lights. You'll be filled with wonder as the night sky comes alive with bright colours. Just be careful not to pop your bubble!

### A COMPOST ADVENTURE

**"In nature, nothing is wasted.  
Everything is recycled"**

Time to save the planet again and we need your help! You'll shrink to the size of a beetle, ready to explore a summer garden, with snail rides, ant piggybacks and flying with bumblebees! Wow, the world is so different when you're teeny!

### A UNDERWATER ADVENTURE

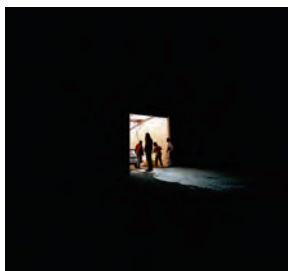
**"Don't forget your flippers!"**

Connie just wants to get away from it all, so the gang suggests a trip to Australia's Great Barrier Reef! You'll dive under the waves to learn all about coral reefs and how they're being regenerated, swim along with jellyfish, glide with stingrays and even dodge sharks!





FRESH SOUNDS



Peach Pit ♥

From 2 to 3 Pop

Peach Pit's third album expands on their signature horizontal, stoner vibe, moving from laid-back, indie-pop to a fuzzier, more earthy sound.



Reinhard Goebel & Mozarteum Orchester Salzburg & Mirijam Contzen

New Mozart Classical

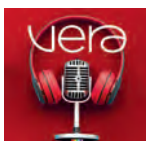
Mozart treasures presented here include the maestro's orchestral version of the *Gran Partita* serenade.

HAPPY TIMES

The Vera Magazine Podcast

Vera Exclusive Podcast

**OUR SECOND EDITION** of the audio version of this magazine brings our brilliant stories to life in an extra-listenable way. As always, we've searched every corner of the Virgin Atlantic network to find the finest travel and entertainment inspiration. This month, get ready for a deep dive into the thriving nerd culture of Seattle, including comic cons, vintage arcades, board game stores and a bar with actual butterbeer (a Harry Potter fan favourite drink from the Wizarding World) on tap. We visit Delhi's revitalised green spaces and find out why Londoners are all aquiver about Benham & Froud Jelladrome, an addition to a food hall that updates the classic wobbly pud for a new generation. Plus, we get down and dirty with *The Batman*, the moody latest adaptation of the flying-mammal-based franchise.



Celebrity Catch Up: Life After That Thing I Did

Lea Thompson talks about starring in the *Back to the Future* films, what life was like afterwards and *Unplugging*, her latest movie, out now.



The One Hit Wonders ♥

Nothing sums up an era quite as effectively as a one-hit wonder. Are you of *99 Red Balloons* or *Ebenezer Goode* vintage? You'll find both and more on this playlist.

TOP 3

One-off stars

Three acts that burnt out in a blaze of glory

**Len,** *Steal My Sunshine*  
Siblings Marc and Sharon Costanzo



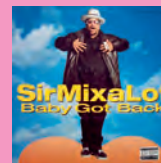
apparently splurged most of their \$100,000 video budget plugging this 1999 summer smash on alcohol. It was revived for 2018's *Peter Rabbit*.

**Wheatus,** *Teenage Dirtbag*  
Chart-topping 2000 outcast



anthem from New York rockers Wheatus that resonates with anybody who had an awkward adolescence. That's all of us, then.

**Sir Mix-A-Lot,** *Baby Got Back*  
This moving ode to the feminine form was briefly banned by MTV in 1992. The bottom line? It still slaps.



Listen to The One Hit Wonders



MERSEY MUSIC



**George Harrison**

<i>All Things Must Pass</i>	Abbey Road
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Post-Beatles, John and Paul duked it out with their solo albums while George went on to release what most (sane) people consider to be the very best solo work.



**Miles Kane**

<i>Coup de Grace</i>	Alternative
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If you follow Miles Kane, then you'll know that he really likes rock music. This, his third solo album, has shades of everyone from Paul Weller to T Rex and beyond.

**The Coral**

<i>The Coral</i>	All Time Greats
------------------	-----------------

**BACK IN 2002**, there was a lot riding on The Coral. Happily this debut album met all the expectations heaped upon the band and in most cases exceeded them. Produced by Ian Broudie of The Lightning Seeds, it found the band exploring and expanding upon their mix of indie, psychedelic and folk, with each musician firing on all cylinders and the whole thing anchored by frontman James Skelly.



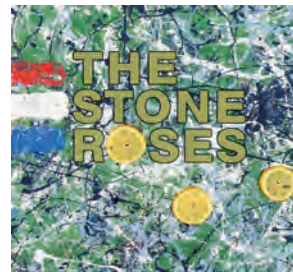
INDIE CLASSICS

**Doves**

<i>The Last Broadcast</i>	All Time Greats
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**DOVES' SECOND ALBUM**

is this stone-cold classic, currently blowing the candles out on its 20th birthday cake. With its mix of sky-scraping guitar and heart-tugging vocals that managed to be epic and intimate, universal and personal all at the same time, it's little wonder that the album was nominated for that year's Mercury prize. *There Goes the Fear* became the band's highest-charting single, despite being deleted the same day it was released.



**The Stone Roses**

<i>The Stone Roses</i>	Alternative
------------------------	-------------

After a string of brilliant singles, and having already been elevated to the status of Madchester royalty, the Roses released this era-defining debut.



**Brit Pop Takeover** ❤️

<i>Vera Playlists</i>	Pop
-----------------------	-----

Time to pull on your bucket hat and Adidas Gazelles: we've selected some of the very best and bounciest tunes of the Brit pop years.



NEW JAZZ

**Nubya Garcia**

<i>Source</i>	Jazz
---------------	------

Tenor saxophonist Garcia, a key member of the thriving London jazz scene, essays a deeply heartfelt and emotive take on modern jazz on this swoonsome debut. Don't sleep, this is not to be missed.



**Ezra Collective**

<i>You Can't Steal My Joy</i>	Jazz
-------------------------------	------

The superb, inspirational Ezra Collective combine jazz (natch) with Afrobeat and hip-hop, and do so in irresistibly funky style. Sample the magic on this tremendous debut album.



**Lettuce**

<i>Elevate</i>	Jazz
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Lettuce, whose aim is to "funkify your lives", are right there in the jazz-funk vanguard. This seventh album features a sublime Tears for Fears cover that's worth the admission price alone.



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# MILITARE CHRONO



# CREDITS.

Virgin Atlantic news and views



## LISTEN UP

Watch our new ASMR video celebrating the sounds of flight

PHOTO: ADOBE STOCK

**A**utonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) is that relaxing tingly feeling in your scalp and neck triggered by certain sounds like whispering, popping and tapping, or peculiarly satisfying imagery. To celebrate this summer's return to travel normality, we made an

ASMR video highlighting the in-flight sounds our customers say they missed most during the pandemic - from the satisfying clunk of an overhead locker to the effervescent fizz of a topped-up champagne flute. Slip on your headphones now to experience it on Vera, our in-flight entertainment, where it's all popping off.



## ON POINT

How travel insurance from Virgin Money can help towards your next trip

**IMAGINE HOW COOL** it would be if the tiresome faff of organising your travel insurance actually helped you towards your next adventure. Well, imagine no longer. Members of Virgin Red, Virgin's rewards club, can now earn 3,500 Virgin Points when they buy Virgin Money's Annual Multi-Trip Travel Insurance. What do Points mean? Access to almost 200 rewards, from coffee and cinema tickets to concert performances by your favourite artists in the exclusive Virgin Red Room at Manchester's AO Arena. It's super easy to earn Virgin Points on the everyday too, whether that be on your shopping with online retailers such as Marks & Spencer or ASOS, purchasing train tickets via Virgin Trains Ticketing or a fancy dinner out via SquareMeal. You can even put them towards Virgin Atlantic flights to glamorous tropical destinations. With virtually all medical conditions covered and a maximum age of 80, this is one bit of life admin that won't feel like a drag.

## Ask an engineer



WE ASK SENIOR DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT ENGINEER **SHAUN SANDERSON** ALL THE BURNING QUESTIONS ABOUT AVIATION

### Q: What does the autopilot do?

**A:** Modern commercial aircraft are highly automated, so the crew can focus on the broader task of managing the flight safely and efficiently. The autopilot doesn't replace the crew, but functions a lot like an additional crew member, so they don't need their hands and feet on the controls for the entire flight.

Like picking a speed on the cruise control in your car, crew will select an altitude, a heading and how fast they want to climb or descend. The autopilot executes that plan.

Advanced processors take inputs from a range of sensors, determining the exact current position, speed, altitude and *attitude* – position relative to the horizon – of the aircraft. The autopilot takes these inputs and determines what control movements are necessary to follow the plan. It then manipulates control surfaces – the rudder, for instance – with hydraulic and electronic actuators.

Airliners are often landed manually, but modern autopilots are capable of this too. This helps planes touch down in low visibility, as the autopilot is capable of flying accurately by following electronic signals. The pilots remain in control of the decision to land and will take over once the aircraft has touched down to taxi it safely off the runway.







## JOIN THE CREW IN... BOSTON

Flight Service Manager **Antony Lademan's** top tips for the ultimate day out in Boston



Start your day at **The Friendly Toast**. The Hash Quiche – two home-made hash browns stuffed with eggs and bacon – will set you up for the day's walk.



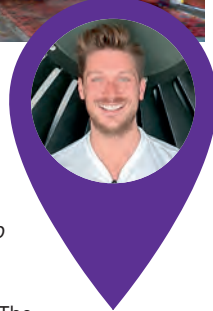
Cross the Charles River for the universities of Cambridge – **MIT** and **Harvard** – home of intellectuals and movie settings for *Good Will Hunting* and *Legally Blonde*.



Hit up **Quincy Market** for the famous lobster – “lobstah!” – rolls. They don't get any more Bostonian than those from Wicked Lobsta.



Swing by the cute duckling statues on Boston Common on your way to the original **Cheers** bar. Where, until you hand over your credit card, they actually don't know your name.



# STIRRING STUFF

VIRGIN ATLANTIC CREW MEMBER **BRIAN ROSE** VOLUNTEERS AT SOUP KITCHENS AROUND OUR NETWORK

**“I'M A LONDON-BASED** cabin crew member, and I volunteer at soup kitchens around Virgin destinations during layovers. I started with a friend in San Francisco five years ago, and since then I've volunteered in Delhi, New York, Boston, Seattle and Washington, DC. I've always felt like giving something back. I love the positive interactions, new connections and helping to make a difference. My favourite memory is of providing *seva* – ‘selfless service’ – at the Gurudwara Shri Bangla Sahib temple in Delhi. They provide food and support to over 10,000 people within their Langar hall every day regardless of caste, race, creed or orientation. I've learned so much about cooking from them. And



I've received some lovely messages from other crew members who I've encouraged to help out as well. The kitchens need help more than ever, post-Covid, with so much uncertainty around. The way I see it, it's just about passing on the love.”



**Leanne Toombs is a Customer Service Advisor in Swansea**

“I've been working at Virgin Atlantic for 12 years and I love it. My role involves talking to our customers on the phone and helping solve any problems. That might be a

schedule change, a request for information or an upgrade. The best thing is chatting to people who are simply excited about travel, especially after the tough couple of years we've had. I'm also part of the leadership academy, where

we support new hires, and I'm a talent assessor, basically sifting through applicants to help identify the customer service stars of tomorrow. Plus I'm involved with DEN – the Disability Engagement Network – which helps people with

disabilities feel included through initiatives like our dedicated well-being room here in Swansea. We're a family – quite literally, as my daughter and her wife both work here. My favourite thing is talking to customers. Sometimes the

calls can be challenging or sad, but we can still do a great deal of good. Mostly it's very positive, though. Once I picked up the phone to Bradley Cooper. He was very charming. I was screaming inside, but I think I played it cool.”

## WHY I LOVE MY JOB

WORDS: ANDY HILL PHOTO: ADOBE STOCK

# PRETTY FLY FOR A WIFI

Now you can post selfies, binge-read your favourite e-book, brag about your hols to your mates, or even catch up on some work while flying above 10,000ft with Virgin Atlantic

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- A 787-9 or an A350-1000, open your browser and navigate to [virgin-atlantic-wifi.com](http://virgin-atlantic-wifi.com)
  - An A330-300, open your browser and navigate to [airborne.gogoinflight.com](http://airborne.gogoinflight.com)
- 3 Just follow the onscreen instructions to buy a session and then get browsing!

## SHOUT ABOUT IT

Tweet or take a pic with #LiveFromVirgin and let the world know you're connected above the clouds.

## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR DATA

Remember to switch off your device's automatic app updates and synchronisations. That way you can avoid using up your data on the boring background stuff while you're busy browsing, tweeting and sharing.



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deserves the  
chance to fly.

# WICKED

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

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