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November 2021

Why Jessica Henwick
is the hero we've
been waiting for

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Cameos

TAKE ME, I'M YOURS
Enjoy this magazine onboard and at home



Simran Hans

Who better to interview our cover star than *Observer* film critic Simran? She also writes for the likes of *Dazed* and *Empire*, and co-hosts podcast *Twenty Twenty*. See p30



Stuart Heritage

Author and journalist Stuart is a long-standing writer and columnist for *The Guardian*, and for us looks into the future of the *Fast and the Furious* franchise. See p61



Celia Almeida

Celia is a Cuban- and Salvadoran-American culture writer and editor from Miami. Her work has been featured in *Billboard* and *Paper*, among other publications. See p24



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Red Hot

Everything you need to get obsessed with right now, from gold-plated burgers in Scotland and southern US comfort food to Marvel's mastery of design.

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Features

Cover star Jessica Henwick talks all things *Matrix* and *Star Wars*. Plus, find out what you've missed while the USA's been on lockdown and meet Grenada's answer to Bear Grylls.

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What's On

The lowdown on our onboard entertainment system. It's all here, whether you want to watch a brand-new blockbuster like *Black Widow* or a great box set like *The White Lotus*.

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Credits

Important news and updates from the Virgin Atlantic world. This month we're celebrating one year of our VALUED network, the new Virgin Red Room and women in engineering.

COVER PHOTO: ZOE MCCONNELL; STYLIST: OIGEA; TIMOFEJEVA AT THE ONLY AGENCY; HAIR AND MAKE-UP: NADIA ALTIKIBAS AT THE ONLY AGENCY; USING GHID AND LAURA MERCIER; MAIL TECHNICIAN: AMANDA LEE; CLOTHES: FEATHER COAT - HUIZHAN ZHANG; EAR CUFF - TASAKI; THIS PAGE: CAPE, TOP, PANTS - DIOR; EARRINGS: TASAKI



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THINGS TO GET OBSESSED
WITH RIGHT NOW

Red Hot



TICKETS PLEASE

AFRICA'S BURNING MAN

With its mutant vehicles, performance art and huge sculptures set alight beneath starry skies, Burning Man is one of the world's most iconic gatherings, and the big annual burn in the USA's Black Rock Desert is now joined by many satellites worldwide. One of the largest, AfrikaBurn, flickers into life in the remote plains of Tankwa Karoo in South Africa's Western Cape in April 2022. Tickets go on sale on 1 November, so you've got time to work on your dayglo cyberpunk-goddess costume.

✕ Fly to Cape Town



FIRST TAKE

THE SPREAD OF FAMILY DRAMA

From the Sopranos to the Windsors, Hollywood's become obsessed with exploring relative values, says **Al Horner**

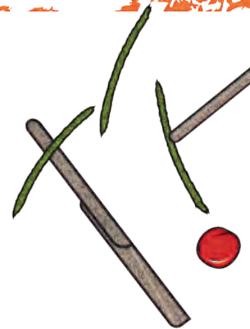
When it comes to great films and TV shows, it helps to keep things in the family. From *Star Wars*, a daddy-issues drama set in space, to *The Godfather*, a daddy's issue drama set in the mob, Hollywood history is littered with tales of embattled parents, brother-sister bickering and complicated family relationships.

It's a tradition set to continue this winter. Hot on the heels of returning TV smash *Succession*, about an ageing media mogul and the children battling to inherit his wealth, and eagerly awaited *Sopranos*

prequel *The Many Saints of Newark*, comes a string of hotly anticipated family dramas.

Early this month *Spencer*, starring Kristen Stewart as Diana, Princess of Wales, provides a glimpse inside the complicated workings of the Royal Family. Just weeks later, *House of Gucci* hits cinemas - a true-life crime thriller about Italian fashionista Maurizio Gucci and the complicated family ties that led to his murder. It features Lady Gaga, Adam Driver, Jared Leto and Al Pacino.

Already this year, we've seen *The Father* and *Black Widow*, both available on today's inflight





The young Tony Soprano is played by original actor James Gandolfini's son Michael.

entertainment. Each explores the bonds we share with our blood relatives, and what we owe them in their times of need.

What is it about families that makes for such good cinema? It might be that it's because we've all got them, and many - maybe even most - are complex, too. When we see the Skywalker family, with all their flaws and inner conflicts, we're seeing families just like our own. Give or take a lightsaber or two.

📺 Watch *The Father* and *Black Widow*



ILLUSTRATION: DIEGO PATINO. WORDS: ANDY HILL. PHOTOS: ANNIE LESSER, YUAN SPA, COURTESY OF SLOOMOO INSTITUTE

SOUND STAGES

ASMR is popping off



Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) is the tingly sensation some get when hearing exaggerated sound effects. **Whisperlodge** in LA and beyond provides expert hissing and rustles. **Relaxation rating:** Act calm



An online phenomenon, ASMR is making its way into IRL spaces. NYC's **Sloomoo Institute** is now home to a unique, slime-themed immersive ASMR tunnel. **Relaxation rating:** Goo times



The ASMR Power Nap treatment at **Yuan Spa** in Bellevue, Seattle, taps into your parasympathetic nervous system to induce a state of deep rest. Shh... **Relaxation rating:** Chill AF

RISING STAR

True believer William Catlett

THE *LOVECRAFT COUNTRY* ACTOR BOUNCED FROM A CAREER IN BASKETBALL TO ACTING... EVENTUALLY. HE TELLS **ED CUMMING** ABOUT KEEPING THE FAITH

WILL CATLETT WAITED longer than some for his moment, but he's making up for lost time. After growing up in Alexandria, Virginia, and college basketball in Iowa and San Diego, Catlett moved to Los Angeles for drama school. It took nearly 10 years of bit parts and working as a waiter before he landed *Black Lightning*, a superhero series on The CW network, in 2017. What was meant to be two episodes turned into four series. Parts in *Love Is_* and *Lovecraft Country* followed, leading to Catlett being cast opposite Kevin Hart and Wesley Snipes in *True Story*, which premieres on Netflix this month. Next year he'll appear with Samuel L. Jackson in *The Last Days of Ptolemy Gray*.

You were on track for a career in basketball. Why the switch?

I came to a crossroads when I was playing basketball in college. One day I mentioned acting to my father and he said that's what he had always wanted to do, before life got in the way. I realized the gift was already flowing through him to me. I took an acting class and it hit me like a sack of bricks: this was the journey I was meant to be on.

Your initial jobs weren't in drama but on reality shows...

My first job was as an assistant on *The Apprentice*, Donald Trump's show. But I never met the President. Then I went to work on *Survivor*. I'd never been out of the



country, so I leapt at the opportunity.

Your faith is a big part of your life. Has it helped in your career?

I grew up a Baptist, but I'm non-denominational at the moment. I still help out at church, sometimes preaching, sometimes as a kind of hype man. My faith has been a huge blessing to me. In 2017, I had been acting for 10 years. I'd been working as a waiter for five.

I was at the end of myself. I had done all I could do. I knew I was talented, but I was beating against the wall. I needed divine help. I remember lying on the floor of my 140-square-foot apartment in Los Angeles and saying, "Dear Lord, I'm too talented to not be making it in this industry. You have to do something." That's when I got the role in *Black Lightning*.

The past few years you've worked with some huge stars – Samuel L Jackson, Kevin Hart, Wesley Snipes – what did they teach you?

It was amazing to watch these guys at such a high level. Kevin Hart can read a script once and memorise it. You'll give him a page and he'll be like, "I've got it." Wesley is all about protecting the actors. He told me that your face lives on screen forever, so you want to do the best work you can. Sam has a lot of great ideas because he has done every movie you can do. His advice was to keep saying yes. It felt like they were passing the baton to me.

What would your advice be to others in a similar situation?

You've got to stick to it. The universe is going to test you to see if you really want what you want. Most people give up before they make it. "As a man thinketh... so is he." If you cannot think of yourself as a movie star, I can guarantee you will never make it, because we are the sum of our thoughts. If you're not doing what



In 1950s-set *Lovecraft Country* (left) and with Oprah Winfrey at the LA premiere of *Love Is* in 2018 (below)

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES; ELI JOSHUA ADEHIBO

“IF YOU CANNOT THINK OF YOURSELF AS A MOVIE STAR, YOU WILL NEVER MAKE IT, BECAUSE WE ARE THE SUM OF OUR THOUGHTS”

you want to do, you should stop, because we only get one trip around this Earth.

There has been a lot of attention on diversity and black representation in recent years. Has the landscape improved?

I think it's a window of opportunity right now. I just don't know how long the window will be open. My hope and prayer is that we get past the idea of "the black actor" and get to the "actor".

You welcomed your first child just before the pandemic hit. How was it becoming a father in lockdown?

I got to see our daughter's first steps, and be there for her, instead of being on the road. She's two now. I just found out we have another one in the oven. I'm a firm believer in family. You can have a big career, but those things will fade. I'd have as many kids as I can, to be honest. My wife's not so sure...



Watch *Lovecraft Country*

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DRINKS



London's feeling the Mexican spirit

If tequila is fun, mezcal is its more mysterious sibling. These days, though, the Mexican liquor is coming to the fore in London's late-night hot spots - like Covent Garden's Cafe Pacifico, where the Bru-groni is a mezcal-drenched take on the classic Italian tippie, mixed with Campari, vermouth, Cynar and smoked rosemary. Dalston's Hacha serves - officially - the UK's best mezcal cocktail: the winner of a 2019 competition made with coffee-infused Illegal Mezcal. Strictly after the hard stuff? Head to nearby Del 74, where you can swig pay-as-you-go pouring bottles till you're mezcalifornia dreamin'.

✂ Fly to London



SNACKS

BOUGIE BURGERS IN EDINBURGH

A luxe new nightspot in swanky Old Town hotel **House of Gods** is dishing out patties with pizzazz

OFTEN DESCRIBED AS "Edinburgh's sexiest hotel", House of Gods has a reputation to maintain. Its rooms feature animal print bedspreads and butler service. Its cocktail bar is a pink paradise. So how about the House's newly opened late-night restaurant Casablanca Cocktail Club - how will it uphold the core brand values of saucy decadence and informal excess? With a golden hamburger, that's how. This juicy 24-carat bad boy is the creation

of head chef Andrew Logie - ex of Edinburgh's Caledonian Hotel - and comes draped in gold leaf, served between black buns and presented on a Versace plate. If that feels a bit ostentatious, for a more subtle flex you can slum it with Logie's signature scallop chicken wings marinated in Dom Pérignon. Flamboyant House of Gods co-founder Mike Baxter calls his new joint "an ode to Studio 54... where you can have a few drinks, and end the night dancing on the tables". Wait until they clear the plates first though, eh.

✂ Fly to Edinburgh

From top: Casablanca Cocktail Club's 24-carat gold Wagyu burger and crab maki sushi





BLACK WIDOW: STYLISH AND DEADLY

A FASHION-FORWARD SPY TURNED JUMPSUITED SUPER HERO.

The Black Widow first appeared in *Tales of Suspense* #52 (1964) as a Soviet agent. The story's art focuses on Iron Man and is classified for mid-1960s Marvel super heroism: a classic panel layout, an emphasis on the hero's action scenes, and a familiar palette of primary colors. When the Black Widow arrives, she steals every panel. Don Heck, an artist whose talents for color and technical detailing were well-suited for drawing stylish women, designed the Widow wearing the fashion-forward clothing of Soviet secretaries during the mid-century period.

From *Black Widow* #1 (1999) to the present, the Widow's physical appearance has remained mostly unchanged, but writers have emphasized her background as a spy with a gritty cover palette of black and gray.

258 | THE GRAPHIC ELEMENTS

TABLE READ

MARVEL'S MANUAL

A new coffee-table book reveals the comic book studio's secrets

Ever heard of the Marvel Method? Devised by moustachioed comic kingpin Stan Lee – he of a thousand movie cameos – the approach turned conventional comic wisdom on its head in the 1960s by granting artists, not writers, more say over storytelling. Lee's bold new approach elevated titles like *Spider-Man* and *Fantastic Four* to their present ubiquity – and allowed Lee to cannily crank out several bestselling titles at once, ultimately building Marvel into the multi-platform commercial juggernaut it is today.

This smart tome takes a grown-up look at the core elements of Marvel's visual language, decoding everything from layouts to logos, colour palettes to cover stars. There are eye-opening contributions from the likes of Paul Sahre, who designs Malcolm Gladwell book covers for a day job and raves here about modern Marvel's "painterly" quality. Typography nerds will devour a double-page deep-dive into the evolution of *The Avengers'* logo over time – spoiler, it's all about the kerning.

What prevailing sociopolitical currents impacted the look and feel of *Wakanda* or the extent of Ms



ANATOMY OF A COMIC BOOK PAGE

A COMIC BOOK IS THE SUM OF ITS PARTS. TAKEY TOGETHER ITS GRAPHICAL ELEMENTS TO CREATE A FOUNDATION FOR VISUAL STORYTELLING.





Stanley Lieber adopted the pen name Stan Lee in 1941 as comics were held in such low esteem.



Marvel's bare midriff? How do comic artists deploy onomatopoeia – POW! KA-SPLAT! – to create drama, and humour? To what extent did Lee, and his less well-known colleague Jack Kirby, transform how marketers and web giants sell their wares? For any reader of a creative bent – or indeed a nakedly commercial one – there are valuable lessons to be drawn.



■ **Marvel By Design is out now, published by Gestalten**

WORDS: ANDY HILL PHOTOS: ALAMY, YVES MARCHEAND & ROMAIN MEFFRE, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN (1999) #641, SEPTEMBER 8, 2010 (COVER), COVER ARTIST: PAOLO RIVERA, MARVEL BY DESIGN, GESTALTEN 2021



SET VISIT

VIP roadside dining at Café Sixty-Six

Supernova is a poignant road movie set in the Lake District, starring Colin Firth as a classical pianist whose long-term romantic partner, played by Stanley Tucci, has just been diagnosed with early-onset dementia. In one stand-out scene, the couple stop for a bite at Café Sixty Six, an unfussy roadside diner named after the nearby A66. In a sublime and very British riff, Tucci mocks Firth's niche celebrity in front of an indifferent waitress clearing plates. Pull over next time you're in that part of the world for a taste of the full English.

✗ Fly to Manchester



ON THE ROAD

SOPHISTICATED SOUTHERN COMFORT FOOD

Grits, biscuits, devilled eggs – hearty meals from the Southern states are getting a gourmet makeover just in time for Thanksgiving, says road-tripping food writer **Anastasia Miari**

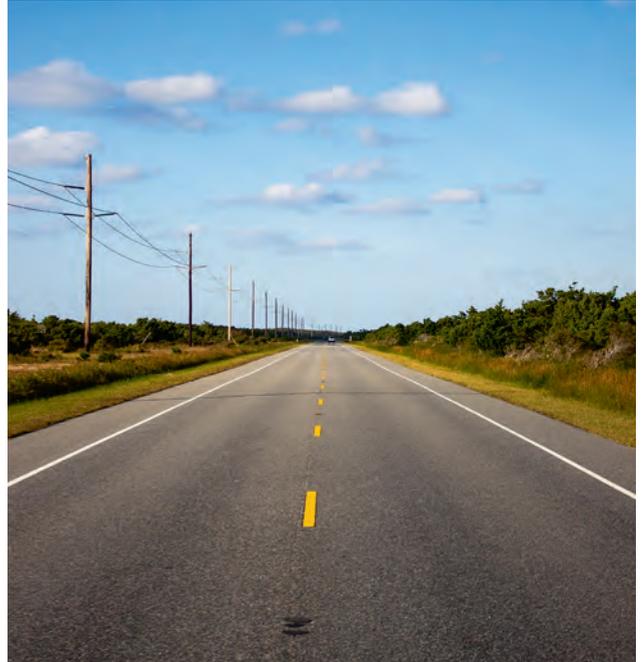
Sean Brock is the man credited with redefining comfort food in the Southern states of America. “Most people have this idea of Southern food being unhealthy and greasy and calorie heavy, but it’s so much more than that,” he says, while pouring steaming broth into a bubbling bowl in front of me.

We’re in his farmhouse kitchen, deep in the Appalachian Mountains of Virginia, and the James Beard Award-winning chef is carefully cleaning green beans and delicately plating up his home-made preserves. He made his name in 2010 when he opened the first outpost of Husk, in Charleston – one of four in a chain of game-changing restaurants.

I’m at the start of a road trip across the states of the Deep South, driving my ant of a car along highways of mega trucks, hoping for that serendipitous meeting of empty belly and perfect plateful, and seeking a true taste of Southern hospitality for my podcast *Food Trippin’*. I was ready for stodgy mac and cheese, greasy burgers and indecently saucy ribs. And while those are certainly options, I’ve found plenty of stereotype-busting menus along the way, showing how the cooking has taken on a gourmet twist, without sacrificing any of its satisfying qualities.

Take hominy grits – a ground corn dish introduced by the Native American Muscogee. When I get to Nashville’s Husk, I find it’s given new life with a tomato sugo and juicy shrimps sauteed in lashings of butter and lemon, topped with delicate microgreens. Gritty? No. Delicious? Absolutely.

In fact, everywhere I travel – over six weeks and across 10 states, from North Carolina to Texas – there are surprises, from delightful morsels in roadside diners, to the results of marathon all-night cookouts from prize-winning



I’m driving my ant of a car along highways of mega trucks, hoping for a true taste of Southern hospitality



pit-masters. I fall in love with the humble devilled egg – an iconic snack that African American motorists came to rely on at a time when most diners and the like were off-limits. At plush, red-velvet-lined Bar Marilou in New Orleans, they’re filled with puffed rice and spring onions for a textural explosion in every bite. In Texas, Zachary Ladwig at Dos Brisas serves up heavenly crab sandwiches with

thick mayo, triple-baked chips and herbs from the garden. At Olamaie in Austin, I dive into the softest, most moreish biscuits (the American bread bun variation) I’ve ever tasted. Olamaie reopens this month with a new chef, Amanda Turner, who used lockdown to explore Southern cuisine, while Sean Brock’s moved on to Audrey, in Nashville, named after his grandma and inspired by his Appalachian roots.

These chefs are preserving heritage in the most comforting of dishes; with no stodge in sight, you don’t need to be a road hog to enjoy them.

✖ Fly to Atlanta. Anastasia’s podcast *Food Trippin’* launches this month. Download at foodtrippinpodcast.com

Clockwise from opposite: Veggies at Husk Nashville, served up by executive chef Ben Norton; on the road; the writer and friend in North Carolina; devilled eggs at Bar Marilou



SLEEPER HIT

Israel's oasis of cool

SIX SENSES BRINGS HIGH-END WELLNESS TO THE NEGEV DESERT



IF YOUR LUXURY mindfulness retreat isn't perched on a remote desert cliffside, frankly, is it even a luxury mindfulness retreat at all? Worth the cinematic three-and-a-half-hour drive into the desert wilds south of Tel Aviv, the spanking new Six Senses Shoharut draws design inspo from the ancient nomadic Nabataean people. So low-rise, natural stone, copper and reclaimed teak detailing are the order of the day. A thoughtfully curated wellness programme runs the gamut from traditional hammam massages to Ayurvedic energy healing and aura readings. Ever dreamed of whipping up your own bespoke botanical



tinctures? A dedicated Alchemy Bar has you covered. Dine on spicy regional produce grown in the garden, or sustainably sourced up the road from the local kibbutz. Yeah, there are camels, in their very own on-site stable, for trekking

✕ Fly to Tel Aviv

3 MORE DESERT DIGS



INVISIBLE HOUSE, JOSHUA TREE

This bolthole has been described as a "horizontal skyscraper" – 22 storeys of steel and tempered glass laid over desert rock, it features a 30m indoor pool and is available to rent for a steep \$2,697 a night.



THE OASIS AT DEATH VALLEY

This historic hotel – founded nearly 100 years ago by a group of miners – has had a facelift, but still retains its Old Hollywood charm (it was once favoured by silver-screen stars like Brando and Gable).



THE SAGUARO, PALM SPRINGS

Though it opened in 2012, this candy-coloured hotel has a distinct retro vibe that draws in a cool LA crowd, who spend the days lolling by the palm-fringed pool or prepping for Coachella.

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LOCATION SCOUT

LATIN LEGENDS IN MIAMI

So many of the Floridian city's highlights come from Latin American culture, says local expert **Celia Almeida**

Miami locals sometimes joke that, in some corners of the sunny South Florida city, English is considered a second language. Decades of Caribbean and Latin-American influence have shaped the city's identity, from the rhythmic tropical music that wafts out of shop windows to the language spoken when caffeine fiends order *cafecitos* at the nearest *ventanita*.

While Cuba's influence on modern Miami cannot be overstated, visitors would be remiss to overlook the rich impact of other Caribbean, Central American and South American nations on the metropolis dubbed the Capital of Latin America. Here's a guide to the feast of flavours on offer, along with some classic landmarks.

It's hard to miss **La Placita** (1) restaurant when driving down historic Biscayne Boulevard in the MiMo (Miami Modern) District. Artist Héctor Collazo Hernández – best known for painting the Puerto Rican flag throughout the island territory as part of his *78 pueblos y 1 bandera* project – painted the three-storey flag mural on the facade. Inside, chef ▶





Calle Ocho (Eighth Street) is home to this welcoming mural, as well as the Walk of Fame, Domino Park and a day-long fiesta

Decades of Latin American influence have shaped Miami's identity, from the music to the language spoken ordering a *cafecito*

José Mendin cooks up traditional Puerto Rican dishes alongside creative takes on classics, such as the *gandules* (pigeon peas) hummus dip with tahini and plantain chips.

Just one block west of the shore, the **North Beach Bandshell (2)** amphitheatre's MiMo-style design earned it a spot on the National Register of Historic Places in 2009.

The outdoor space has hosted music since the 1960s, but it became one of Miami's prime Latin-music concert venues when non-profit The Rhythm Foundation took over its programming in 2015. Notable stars to have played here include Colombia's Monsieur Periné, Puerto Rico's iLe and Cuba's Cimafunk.

Miami has one of the largest Peruvian populations in the US, making it the ideal home for chef Gastón Acurio's **La Mar**. Since opening his first restaurant in Lima, Peru, in 1994, the culinary ambassador's taken Peruvian cuisine global with more than 40 restaurants worldwide. The waterfront venue boasts some of the best ceviche in the city – the view of the Miami skyline is a bonus.

About 1,500km south of the Statue of Liberty, the **Freedom Tower (3)** – nicknamed the “Ellis Island of the South” – welcomed Cuban refugees from 1962 to 1974. Today, it's home to Miami Dade College's Museum of Art



Above: Héctor Collazo Hernández began painting Puerto Rico's flag across the island five years ago; this is one of the first of his murals outside the country



In 2008, the Freedom Tower was designated a US National Historic Landmark.





and Design, and the Cuban Legacy Gallery, where exhibitions explore the impacts of Cuban culture on the city and surrounding region.

Midway between the two ends of the Calle Ocho Walk of Fame, which honours Latin artists such as Celia Cruz with engraved sidewalk stars, Little Havana's **Domino Park** offers locals a chance to bask in their own glory; the retirees you'll encounter in the park engage in epic battles on domino tables, and it's common for spectators to spend the morning watching a few rounds. Across

the street, the Azucar Ice Cream Company (its name a nod to Cruz's signature "¡Azúcar!" catchphrase) makes for an indulgent post-game snack.

Coconut Grove's **Jaguar (4)** restaurant is as much a feast for the eyes as it is for the taste buds. The Technicolor murals you'll encounter on the walls reflect the diverse blend of Pan-Latin dishes

on the menu. Try the Argentinian churrasco with Chilean merkén sauce for a taste of South America, or take a gustatory trip to Mexico with the Celia's Salad, made with cilantro, jalapeño dressing, peppers and crispy tortillas.

✈ Fly to Miami



3 MORE TASTES OF LATIN AMERICA IN THE USA



LA CASITA MEXICANA, LOS ANGELES

Named one of the USA's top five Mexican restaurants, this acclaimed spot from chefs Jaime Martín del Campo and Ramiro Arvizu offers dishes from their native Jalisco.



LA COSECHA, WASHINGTON, DC

This recently opened marketplace and food hall showcases Latin American flavours, from Salvadoran street food at La Casita Pupuseria to Michelin-starred Colombian cuisine at Elcielo.



PUERTO VIEJO, NEW YORK CITY

In Brooklyn's Crown Heights, this Dominican classic is renowned for its delicious plates, spanning everything from mofongo with chicken or pork to a comforting shrimp soup with rice.

SCREEN TEST

Are there really aliens among us?

WOULD WE KNOW IF EXTRATERRESTRIALS HAD MADE OUR PLANET THEIR HOME?
EUAN FERGUSON EXAMINES THE EVIDENCE

If television and movies are to be believed, extraterrestrial life not only exists, it's hiding in plain sight. From *Mork & Mindy* to *Men in Black*, it's everywhere. Your neighbours are probably aliens, your partner might be one, that guy in the seat beside you *definitely* is. They're among us. (I say "us", meaning Earthlings – chances are a few readers are aliens.)

In comedy-drama *Resident Alien*, the titular visitor has stopped by Patience, Colorado, with the classic intention of destroying humankind, hiding his scaly form by taking on the appearance of a doctor. The longer he stays the more emotionally humanlike he becomes, although his struggles with social protocols make it hard to blend in. As we know, though, he's not our only cosmic caller, so how can we figure out which Earth-dwellers are aliens too? For the sake of humanity I should try.

In *Under the Skin*, the extraterrestrial looks like Scarlett Johansson and lures men to their death in a Transit van. I've hoped for years to be lured into anything by someone who looks like Scarlett Johansson, so it's unlikely to happen now.

What about kids' show *My Parents Are Aliens*? They're basically normal parents, apart from them morphing into other forms when they eat ice cream. I stand and watch the queue at an ice-cream van for signs of shape-shifting until I'm asked to buy a cone or get lost. Sci-fi stalwart *The X Files*? The boggly-eyed Colonists are straight off a "Take me to your dealer" student poster. Real aliens would never be so clichéd. It's probably best to trust boffins rather than screenwriters.

Scientists say planetary conditions would affect the way intergalactic interlopers look. Bigger planets have higher gravity, giving their residents shorter bodies and more limbs. Counting



people's arms and legs for a few hours makes me even more suspicious of baggy trousers than I was previously, but yields no alien sightings. There's this from a NASA researcher: "If there is life in the solar system, it's probably microbial." I've spent enough time in the past 18 months worrying about microbes, thank you.

Other theorists reckon the universal laws of physics coupled with Darwin's "survival of the fittest" means aliens will share our evolved characteristics: multiple senses, bipedal movement, ingrown toenails etc. This is enough to induce Agent Mulder-like levels of paranoia, but is useless at helping to identify an alien in a crowded room.

Most chillingly of all, alien expert Dr Seth Shostak of the SETI Institute told the BBC: "The majority of the really smart stuff in the universe is going to be machinery." So, to sum up, aliens either look like microscopic blobs, or people, or computers. I'm off to line my house with tinfoil and stock up on Pot Noodles. We're all doomed.

 Watch *Resident Alien*

THE VERDICT

Aliens are already here and probably infinitely superior to us humans. I, for one, welcome our new insect overlords.



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THE ONE TO WATCH





THERE'S A NEW GOLDEN ERA OF SCI-FI AND JESSICA HENWICK IS ITS BRIGHTEST STAR. AHEAD OF HER LEADING ROLE IN *THE MATRIX RESURRECTIONS*, SHE TELLS SIMRAN HANS HOW A LIFE-OR-DEATH MOMENT HELPED HER SEE THE WORLD CLEARLY

PHOTOGRAPHS: ZOE MCCONNELL

JESSICA HENWICK WAS HIKING THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO.

It was late August, around the time of her birthday, and she had been walking alone in blazing heat for 20 days. The Camino, a Spanish trail originally travelled by Christian pilgrims, is now a rite of passage for tourists looking for a challenge, or simply a change. When the British-Chinese actor finally turned on her phone, after weeks of headspace, she was expecting a call from her family. What she got instead was an email with the subject line: MATRIX AUDITION.

Lana Wachowski, co-creator of the *Matrix* films wanted her to send in a video. If this was a sign, Henwick didn't see it at first. "I was in the middle of nowhere! How am I meant to self-tape?" she tells me, in the basement of a west London cocktail bar. "I said no. I turned it down."

Back home, the opportunity came around again. She flew out to Los Angeles for a chemistry test with three actors auditioning for the role of Morpheus, the shades-wearing sage portrayed by Laurence Fishburne in the first three movies. The next day, her phone rang. "But I didn't recognise the number," she groans. "I was waiting for my UberPool, and so I picked up and went, 'Yeah, I'm on the corner.' I just heard Lana, like 'Hello?' The rest is history."

Henwick plays Bugs in *The Matrix Resurrections*, the fourth film in the Wachowskis' epic sci-fi ▶



Previous pages:
Shirt and shorts
Huishan Zhang.
Boots Aquazzura

This page:
Shirt, pants, belt and
boots Alberta Ferretti.
Necklace Shaun Leane



Top and skirt
Huishan Zhang

franchise, coming out this December, nearly 20 years after the last chapter. Her character serves as “the audience’s eyes”, as Keanu Reeves’ Neo re-enters the virtual world of the Matrix.

It’s not Henwick’s first rodeo in the stunt-filled sci-fi and fantasy space. The last six years have seen her handy with a bullwhip as Nymeria “Nym” Sand, the illegitimate daughter of Pedro Pascal’s Prince Oberyn Martell in *Game of Thrones*, turning heads as martial arts master Colleen Wing in three of Marvel’s Netflix series, and a surprise fan favourite as fighter pilot Jess Pava in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. Despite a CV stacked with impressive blockbuster titles, the woman sat next to me is notably chill. Jessica Henwick is relaxed in a way that belies the wealth of experience she’s already had in a cut-throat industry (legend has it she missed out on Daisy Ridley’s role as Rey in *Star Wars* by a whisker). But this, for sure, is the big time. Or at least her friends and family think so. “Everyone keeps saying, ‘Oh my God, *Matrix*, this is it!’”

Henwick comes from a family of sci-fi fans; her father writes urban fantasy novels. In fact, he was inspired by her. “I became an actor, and then my dad decided to follow his dream,” she explains. She grew up in Surrey in the UK, with no connections to the entertainment industry. “I just started going to any after-school drama club I could get into.” Her mother, who “was kicked out of school as a child” in her home country of Singapore, was her biggest champion, working 15-hour days to ensure the kids could attend classes in piano, dance and acting. “I wanted to make my mum proud because she had put so much money and time and goodwill into the three of us. She was never given any of those opportunities.”

It was Henwick’s mum who was responsible for her breakout role in the BBC children’s adventure series *Spirit Warriors* back in 2010, having spotted a flyer for the casting on the family’s annual trip to eat out in Chinatown, and pushed her daughter to audition. When Henwick got the part she dropped out of drama school to take it, and has been learning on the job ever since, typically in front of huge audiences.

“It’s not that there’s no room for niche filmmaking, but how incredible, to make something that’s enjoyed by millions of people from different cultures, different ages, different ethnicities,” she says, unfazed. Fandom, she reckons, has a bad rap. Many of the franchises Henwick has starred in

“MY ILLNESS WAS A BIG TURNING POINT FOR ME: I CHANGED MY ENTIRE LIFE. I THINK I HAD OVERLY PLANNED EVERYTHING BEFORE”

In real life

JESSICA HENWICK’S CV

Born

Jessica Yu-Li Henwick was born in Surrey on 30 August 1992 to a Singaporean-Chinese mother and a Zambian father.

Education

Henwick studied at the Redroofs Theatre School in Maidenhead and the National Youth Theatre in London.

Interests

“I love martial arts,” Henwick says of her 2017 role as Colleen Wing in Netflix/Marvel’s *Iron Fist*. “But I didn’t want her to just be defined by her martial arts capabilities.” She’s also a keen writer, with a comedy series in development for Amazon.



Key works

Spirit Warriors (2010)

At 17, Henwick became the first British-Chinese actor to play the lead in a British TV series as Bo in this spooky BBC children’s show.

Game Of Thrones (2015)

Henwick plays Nym Sand – one of the eight bastard daughters of Prince Oberyn Martell – in Season 5 of *GoT*. Her part required six months of bullwhip training. Ultimately, she cracked it.

Star Wars: The Force Awakens (2015)

Henwick swapped surnames to play the first female X-wing pilot, Jess Pava, in a part that was written especially for her by JJ Abrams after she only just lost out to Daisy Ridley on the lead role of Rey.

Love and Monsters (2020)

Set seven years after monsters take over the planet, this story of romance against the odds has been described as a “feel-good apocalypse movie”.

have cult followings. Before she cut her hair (today styled in a sleek bob), she would get recognised on the street as comic book heroine Colleen Wing “a couple of times a week”.

For most actors, starring in a major franchise is where their career peaks, but Henwick has other ambitions. She wants to do a Korean drama, especially one of the “swoony” ones. “I love romantic K-dramas, that flip-flopping between romantic and serious, and then really silly.” And she’s obsessed with period dramas, so much

so that she's written her own. "I always used to think, I guess I'll just never be in one," noting the overwhelming whiteness of stories set in the past. She started researching the arrival of Chinese people in England. "It's way before anyone thinks."

Henwick is widely cited as the first East Asian actor to play a leading role in a British TV show. At the age of 17, the accolade was something of a burden to bear. "I didn't know what to do with it. For many years I didn't take Asian roles. Because of the lack of representation, [each role] felt like it had to mean so much more." Instead, she went up for roles that didn't have a specific ethnicity written for them. But now that she's older – 30 next year – and watching films like Jon M Chu's *Crazy Rich Asians* and Justin Chon's *Blue Bayou*, she's starting to change her mind. "Those films make me cry so much, because you just feel so seen. That's my family, that's my relationship with my mother. It really cuts you to the bone. Now I'm very interested in telling Asian stories."

That might have to wait until she's less in-demand as an all-action hero, however. "I always say, 'This is the last time!' And then something great will come along," she says, with a smile. Why does she think she is so suited to these roles? "My voice is too low, my eyebrows are too thick, I look too intense." In other words, Henwick specialises in steely resolve.

She worries about being pigeonholed as "an action girl", but finds the genre hard to resist – which was the case when she was offered a role in Michael Matthews' *Love and Monsters*. Based on an

original screenplay, it has Henwick as a typically no-nonsense young woman who manages to survive the monster apocalypse. The movie, released in 2020 as an on-demand experiment, was a sleeper hit. Yet things could've taken a very different turn.

Henwick flew to the Australian Gold Coast for the shoot, but fell ill on the plane. She was breaking a fever, and couldn't move her neck. The doctors thought it might be meningitis. She ended up in hospital for a week. "They were like, your body is fighting something and we don't know what it is. I was green. I could barely walk to the bathroom. They said it was nothing they had in their

"SOMETIMES IT'S EASIEST TO KNOW WHAT YOU WANT IF YOU STOP LISTENING TO EVERYONE ELSE'S VOICES FOR A SECOND"

databases. They were talking about maybe having to quarantine me. On the seventh day, the doctor came in and was like, so, your liver will shortly fail. The doctor left and I burst into tears." She began to wonder if she might die.

Her body, it seems, was sending her a message. Given another chance, she knew she would live her life differently. "The next day, I recovered."

"It was a big turning point for me. I kind of changed my entire life," she says of the experience. She left a long-term relationship and decided to shake up a career she had spent years carefully ▶

"All I'm offering is the truth"

EVERYTHING WE KNOW ABOUT *THE MATRIX RESURRECTIONS*



Trouble for Neo: Directed by Lana Wachowski, the movie's trailer hints at a storyline in which Keanu Reeves' Neo has been inserted back into the Matrix after the events of 2003's *The Matrix Revolutions*, plagued by "dreams that don't feel like dreams," as he complains to his therapist.

Question marks over Morpheus: Reeves' co-star Carrie-Anne Moss is confirmed to return, but not Laurence Fishburne. The film's trailer does feature *Watchmen* actor Yahya Abdul-Mateen II looking suspiciously like a young version of the trenchcoat-loving sensei.

It's about to get meta: *The Matrix Resurrections'* trailer features a split-second shot of characters in the movie – get ready for this – watching footage from 1999's *The Matrix*. In the immortal words of Neo: "Woah."

Action, action, action: The first film revolutionised cinema with its "bullet time" special effects. Early reports suggest that *The Matrix Resurrections* features equally mind-blowing leaps forward, with Henwick teasing that it'll "change the industry again".

Coat Etro. Boots
Giambattista Valli.
Necklaces Sportmax





Dress David Koma.
Boots Stella
McCartney

mapping out. “I think I had overly planned my life. Realising that I could die at any moment – what’s the point in having a five-year plan, a 10-year plan, a 15-year plan?” Her career-driven dreams suddenly seemed irrelevant when she found herself on death’s doorstep.

After the illness, she needed to regroup. “Sometimes it’s easiest to know what you want if you stop listening to everyone else’s voices for a second,” she tells me. And so she set off for the Camino, on a pilgrimage of her own. “I went there because I wanted to be alone,” she remembers.

There’s that steely resolve again, driving Henwick along the path towards success. She shows me a selfie of her with a beanie-clad Keanu Reeves on *The Matrix Resurrections* set. Appropriately enough, Henwick stresses that this digital souvenir is not exactly representative of her real life. “I’m just like... Am I not going to have to pick up my dog’s s**t tomorrow? Yeah, I still am. I don’t ever imagine my life having some overnight change.”

 Watch Love and Monsters

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USA! US!

America's back, baby! And a lot has happened since pandemic-related travel restrictions came into effect. Here are the best new things to experience across the glorious US of A

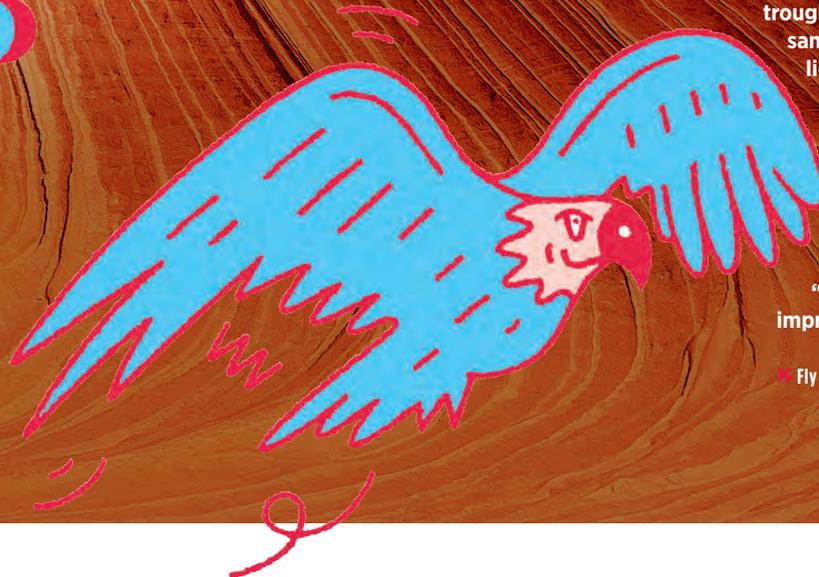
WORDS: ERIC NEWILL
ILLUSTRATIONS: RUDI DE WET

ANSI!

A!

THE WAVE, ARIZONA

It's one of the Southwest's most photographed landmarks, but you have to put in the effort to get this sandstone spectacular on your camera roll. Access was extended to greater numbers in 2021, but still only 64 people a day are allowed entry, mostly through an online lottery, which just adds to its bucket-listability. What's more, it's no breeze to get there – located on the slopes of the Coyote Buttes wilds, the Wave is reached via a challenging 10km round-trip hike – but its one-of-a-kind looks make it worth the effort: intersecting U-shaped troughs of eroded Jurassic sandstone, geology buffs. The light means autumn is a great time to visit, but permits are easier to obtain in winter; the local wildlife scene is impressive too – in nearby Vermilion Cliffs National Monument you can check out the “dinosaur dance floor” of imprinted tracks. Rock on.



• Fly to Las Vegas

THE ONLY LIVING BUOY IN NEW YORK

LITTLE ISLAND, NYC

Here's one billionaire's private island you can hang out on without needing a billionaire's bank account. And you don't even have to hit the Caribbean: this lush landmass floats in the Hudson River, its backdrop one of the world's great skylines. Dreamed up by media mogul Barry Diller, the recently opened Little Island floats off Manhattan atop 132 tulip-like columns designed by architect Thomas Heatherwick. And though the city's towers sparkle in the distance, it's easy to feel like you're somewhere much more bucolic as you wander along the pathways of the one-hectare park. This island's no cultural backwater though - hop over for a kids' playground, street food (you must try a famous Sabrett hot dog) and starry performances in the amphitheatre. New York City's hottest new attraction? Isle say.

✂ Fly to New York



3 MORE AWESOME PHOTO OPS



Omega Mart, Las Vegas

This fantastical supermarket from experimental art collective Meow Wolf is the perfect fit for “experiential retail” complex Area15. Just minutes away from the Strip, it’s filled with surreal, art-filled landscapes.



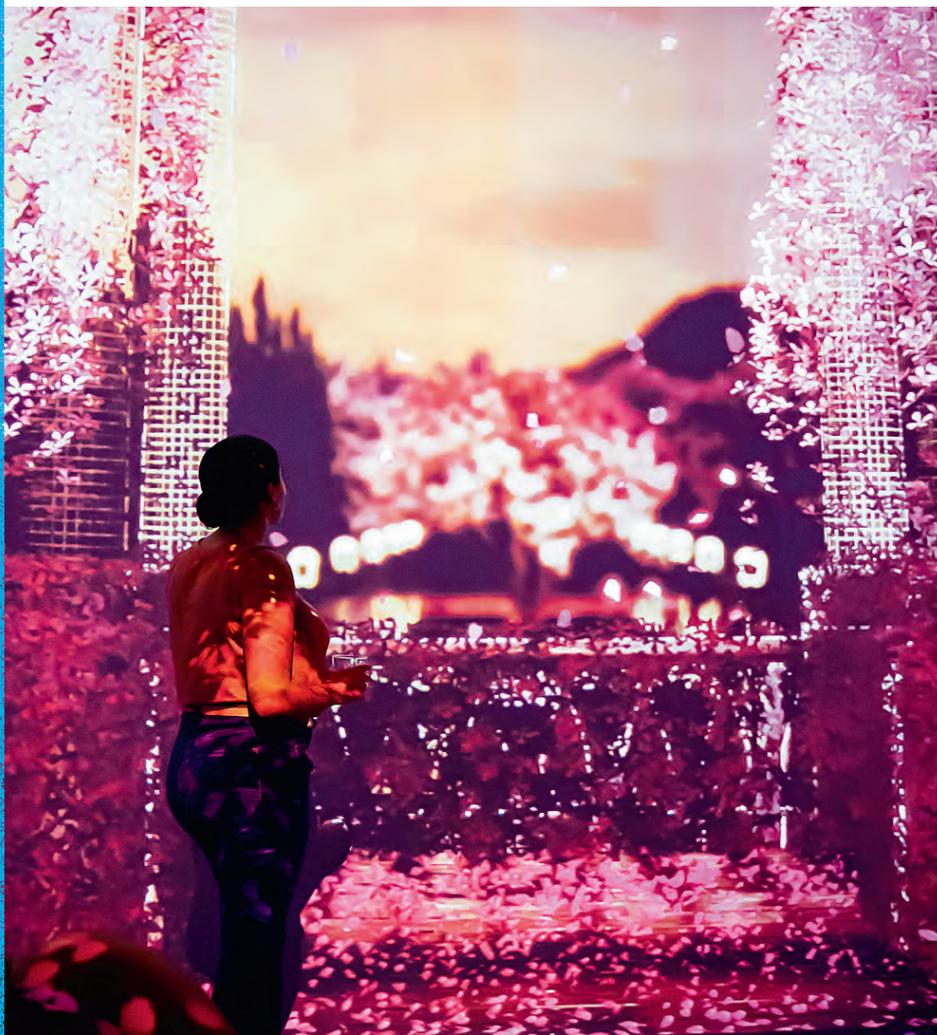
Summit One Vanderbilt, New York

Zoom in a glass lift to the top of the observation deck at this new skyscraper – the views are spectacular, there’s a mirrored art installation plus glass “sky boxes” jutting over Madison Avenue.



Route 66, California

Recently added to the National Scenic Byways Program, this 240km route from Needles to Barstow, CA, offers not one but many photo ops. Snap shots of the striking Mojave Desert, Calico Ghost Town and more.



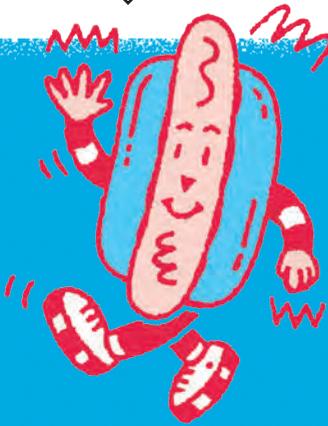
ILLUMINARIUM, ATLANTA

Africa by way of Atlanta? Why not. The inaugural experience at the city’s newest immersive attraction, Wild, transports guests to Kenya through a high-tech combination of 4K laser projection, 3D audio and even – ahem – “authentic” scents.

You’ll feel the footfalls of elephants thundering by, watch as big cats stalk their prey, and take in the glory of sunrise over the savannah. When you’re all animalled out, head over to the bar, where you can sip on creative cocktails surrounded by ultra-realistic images of frenetic Tokyo streets, or stop by in the evening for Wild After Dark – basically a safari but with added African-themed cocktails and African wine, which is probably safer to experience virtually than IRL. They call it “VR without the glasses” – they’re not lion.

✕ Fly to Atlanta





3 MORE DINING DESTINATIONS



Sexy Fish, Miami

The London institution's first US outpost arrives in Miami's Brickell neighbourhood, complete with over-the-top seafood presentations, ostentatious decor and eye-catching artwork – courtesy of Damien Hirst.



Delilah, Las Vegas

A sumptuous new supper club in the Wynn hotel, featuring live music and elegant cocktails in a swank setting reminiscent of Old Las Vegas. The menu includes chef Joshua Smith's high-end take on the classic TV dinner.



Eleven Madison Park, New York

Chef Daniel Humm has pivoted to a totally vegan menu in his latest revamp of the three-Michelin-starred restaurant. It's still all about beautiful dishes that have you guessing at the ingredients.



TIME OUT MARKET, BOSTON

The many flavours of Beantown without the schlep between restaurants? Hell, yeah. The latest in a global chain of food markets brings together under one roof the likes of “charcuterie cones” stuffed with brie, Genoa salami and sesame crackers from Kured, Cusser’s lobster rolls with grainy mustard mayo and Union Square Donuts’ Boston cream on brioche dough. Housed in a historic Art Deco warehouse in the Fenway district, the 2,300m² venue has 15 diverse outlets for casual day-to-night dining and drinking, all curated by Time Out’s team of editors and experts. Two stand-alone bars are the place to be for peak people-watching as well as New England-produced drinks – check out Luluna’s Rhode Island-brewed kombucha – and the spot is a winner for Red Sox fans before or after a game at nearby Fenway Park. We’ll say it: TO Market Boston hits it out the park.

✂ Fly to Boston

PHOTOS: BRIAN SAMUELS PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY SEXY FISH; BILL MILNE; ELEVEN MADISON PARK; EDOY ALEXANDER ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF EUREKA, CALIFORNIA



THE REDWOOD SKYWALK, CALIFORNIA

The majestic redwoods along the Northern California coast are not only the tallest trees on Earth, but also among the oldest. It was only in June, however, that casual visitors finally got the chance to get up close and personal with the species, when Eureka's Redwood Sky Walk opened to offer easy – and breathtaking – access to their upper reaches. Rising from the forest floor, ramps gently ascend to provide nearby perspectives of large burls and other features, ultimately topping out at 30m. The 400m-long attraction, which is almost completely compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act, has nine distinct viewing platforms. A special “adventure leg” features aerial netted suspension bridges, which occasionally sway in the breeze – allowing you to have your own invigorating exploits among the forest canopies.

✈ Fly to San Francisco

PRETTY GNARLY!



3 WEIRD & WONDERFUL EXPERIENCES



Napa Valley Wine Train Murder Mystery, CA

As if sipping wine on a vintage locomotive isn't cool enough, the Wine Train hosts a variety of murder mystery trips too. Don some 1920s threads and hop aboard on 13 November for a "Crime and Punishment" romp.



Tammany Hall, NYC

Be transported back to election night 1929 during this immersive theatre experience at the SoHo Playhouse. Guests can get involved by casting their own vote, chatting with famous figures such as Legs Diamond and having a tittle in the speakeasy.



Seeing the Invisible, MA

You might not believe your eyes at this exhibition at The Gardens at Elm Bank. The special app lets you experience augmented reality art by the likes of Ai Weiwei.



SEE YOU AGAIN SOON!

SUPERBLUE, MIAMI

Sorry, Wynwood. The Magic City has a new and hipper art hood – Allapattah. And one of its anchors is the trippy Superblue, an experimental art venue that's about as far from the white-cube gallery as you can get, enveloping visitors in immersive colour, light and sound. A climate-change-influenced installation by Es Devlin brings together the breathing structures of trees and humans into a mirrored labyrinth, while a floral-based fantasy courtesy of Japanese collective teamLab depicts blooms blossoming and scattering over the course of an hour. Another Superblue interactive installation by the same crew, *Massless Clouds Between Sculpture and Life*, sends visitors into a roomful of shifting bath-time soap-bubble clouds. Now that really is a superb-loo.



✈ Fly to Miami

PHOTOS: ES DEVLIN; FOREST OF US, 2021; INSTALLATION VIEW OF EVERY WALL IS A DOOR, SUPERBLUE MIAMI, 2021; ES DEVLIN; MARIA BARANOVA, EL ANASTOL, AG + BA (AR), 2014/2021; IMAGE COURTESY OF ELM BANK BOTANICAL GARDENS

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Walking away



EXPLORER, MOUNTAINEER, GUIDE, NATURALIST, LEGEND - 82-YEAR-OLD TELFOR BEDEAU IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST EVER ADVOCATE OF GRENADA'S NATURAL BEAUTY. AS HE PREPARES TO RETIRE, HE TAKES **VICTORIA BEARDWOOD** ON ONE OF HIS LAST HIKES

PHOTOGRAPHS: ARON KLEIN

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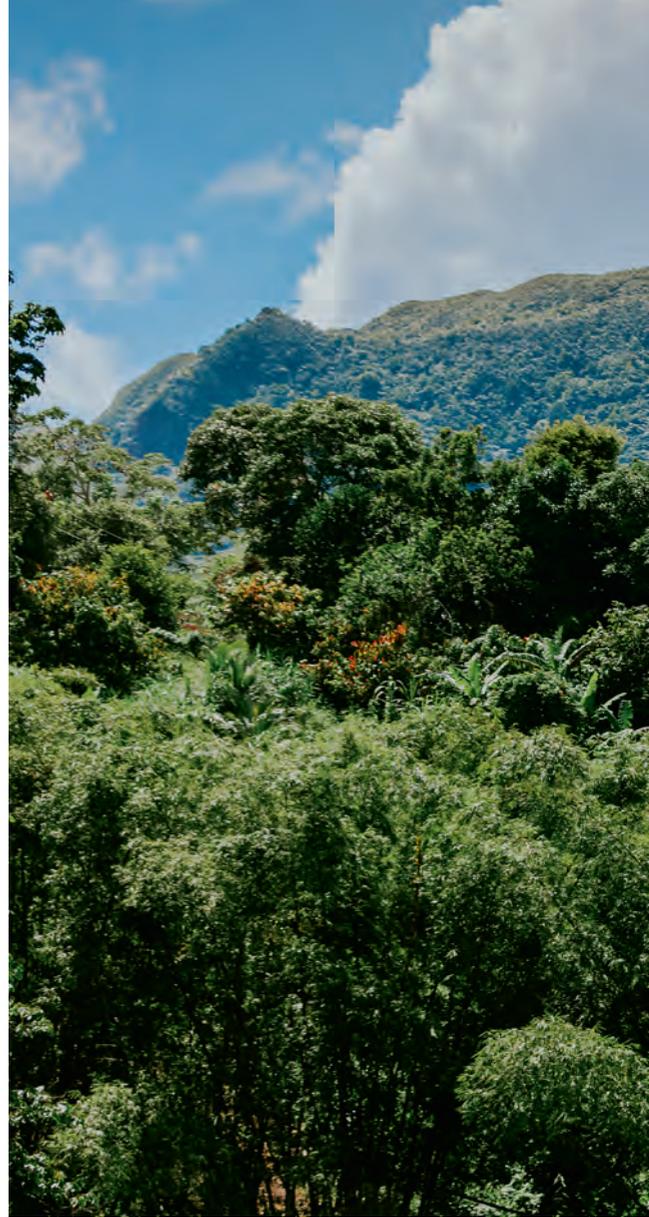
elfor Bedeau knows all there is to know about Grenada. He should do – he’s hiked every trail on the map of this island in the Lesser Antilles and many more that aren’t. He’s considered the warm waters of

the Caribbean Sea and the expanse of the Atlantic Ocean from every possible precipice. He’s gently handled the petals and pods of every species of native plant. He has, to date, climbed Grenada’s highest peak, the 840m-tall Mount Saint Catherine, an improbable 217 times (on one occasion, twice in the same day). He’s also circumnavigated the island non-stop three times, twice in a rowing boat and once in a kayak.

Why attempt these feats? Because Telfor loves Grenada with unrivalled passion, even after 82 years of living and working here. Exploration has become more than a hobby, or a job (he’s spent the past three decades using his immense knowledge to guide others around his home terrain), it’s a reason for living. Something that I feel tangibly in the grip of his handshake on the terrace of his wooden bungalow. “You’re coming to hear about my adventures, right?” he says, grinning and grabbing a pair of home-made walking sticks tied together with string. “I do it all for the challenge... You know, when I started hiking, people wondered what the hell I was doing. In those days, no one did it, so they thought I was crazy or an idiot.”

Locally, Telfor is still considered something of a maverick – the “Indiana Jones of Grenada”. He’s a slight figure, engulfed in a loose T-shirt and baggy shorts (no fedora or bullwhip), but his endless days spent hacking through foliage within the island’s dense interior jungle, and zealous commitment to natural history have earned him the comparison with the good Dr Jones. And, just as Harrison Ford can’t help but keep returning to our screens in ever-more wrinkly adventures, Telfor too has struggled to keep away from the pathways his plastic sandals have trodden so many times before.

“I’ve never cared what people say. As soon as I know what I want to do – if it doesn’t interfere



From top: Grenada’s centre is covered in verdant jungle; Telfor talks us through his home-made canvas map of the island





“We sold sand, sea and relaxation; we never told people to come here to hike and explore nature. Then they realised it’s important”

with anyone else’s freedom – I’m going to do it,” he tells me. Still, age is catching up with him. This is his last year rambling across Grenada, meaning it’s somewhat bittersweet that he’s agreed to take me out on one of his last walks. I wonder how he feels reaching the end of a lifetime’s journey, and what Grenada will be without him.

Telfor lives in Soubise in the east. The postcard version of this coastal village is rows of colourful fishing boats lined up on an otherwise empty

beach. But we’re heading in the opposite direction – out of Telfor’s garden and towards the dense and steeply rising jungle that leads to... well, I’m excited to find out. This is the aspect of the island that Telfor – and his protégé Simon Green, who joins us – have been revealing to growing numbers of tourists looking for a more holistic sense of Grenadian life than what they find on a thin strip of beach. Telfor tells of magical waterfalls and lakes, inhabited by mythical creatures he’s happy to bump into. “I didn’t worry too much about that,” he says, of many islanders’ superstitious approach to folklore.

And then we’re off, wading through grass so long it tickles the back of my thighs, until we reach a less overgrown trail, slick with mud. Soon we arrive at a clearing that affords sweeping views out over the eastern coast and the verdant islands and skerries that rise up out of the Atlantic, as well as nearby Grenville, the island’s second largest town after St George’s.

This is where Telfor was born and baptised. His mother left Grenada to live in Trinidad when he was just a few months old, leaving him with his



Clockwise from below: a red ginger plant in Grand Etang; getting up close and personal with a Grenadian gecko; Mount Saint Catherine from the village of Birch Grove



paternal grandmother, whose own children were grown when Telfor came

along, and who never truly understood the adventurous, bookish boy in her care. By day, Telfor would read everything he could: classics such as *Around The World in 80 Days* and the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, or books on astronomy, cartography and seismology. Then, at night, he'd sneak out of the house for adventures.

"When I was eight or nine years of age, I used to leave the house after dark and go down on the beach there," he says, pointing. "There was a rowboat that was little enough that I could haul it down to the water and the owners used to leave their oars inside it, so I'd row out and fish, then bring it back in the morning. By then, my grandmother would be up and wondering where I was. I was a puzzle to her," he chuckles.

At 12, he built his own rowing boat (and later a 40-foot sloop), based on observations of workers at the local boatyard and some rudimentary school geometry. He used it to explore the coastline in detail, beginning work on simple maps that quickly ▶

Telfor's top trails

THE EXPLORER PICKS HIS FAVOURITE HIKING SPOTS



THE ONE WITH A CRATER LAKE Mount Qua Qua

Starting from the Grand Etang National Park visitor's centre in the middle of the island and passing by its famous crater lake, this is a 4.3km out-and-back trail. It's not too challenging, though you can up the ante by heading on to Concord Falls.



THE ONE FOR ADVENTURE South East Mountain

A 508m-high peak in the eastern parish of Saint Andrew, this steep hike offers eye-popping views of the rugged Atlantic coast. Telfor recommends it as, "It's away from most of the other mountains and away from regular human traffic."



THE ONE FOR ISLAND VIEWS Welcome Stone

So named due to the large rock at the summit, the Welcome Stone hike is all about the view from the top, from where you can see Levara Lake and several islands. "The fishermen call it 'big hill' because they use it as a landmark when they're out at sea," says Telfor.



developed into detailed surveys displaying the best trails between villages and sites of unusual volcanic activity. By the end of his teens, Telfor had filled many notebooks with logs, sketches and stories.

He left Grenada as a young adult, but only briefly. A stint as an employee of British Railways in London didn't agree with him ("Not enough sun!"), and it always felt as if there was more of Grenada to explore. Ultimately, other people cottoned on to what Telfor had known all along – that the island's interior was a magical place – and by the time he was 51 he was guiding visitors along his own trails as part of a burgeoning tourist industry, helping travellers who would usually hit the beach to instead meet mona monkeys and learn about native vegetation on the mountains.

"No one saw this as an industry. We sold sand, sea and relaxation; we never told people to come to Grenada to hike and explore nature. Eventually people realised that it's important."

Grenadians don't venture into the astonishing rainforest at the heart of their country as often as you might imagine

Having forged through the undergrowth, we're now standing in front of Grand Etang Lake, a body of water filling the crater of an extinct volcano within Grand Etang National Park. Local legend says the murky lake is bottomless, and that if it overflowed it would flood the entire island. In order to keep it protected, a mermaid lives in the water, warding away trespassers.

Tales like this go some way to explaining why Grenadians don't venture into the astonishing rainforest at the heart of their country as much as you'd imagine. Hiking has never been a cultural norm – Telfor has always been a nonconformist in this respect. Plus, he's quite happy to poke holes in the myths.

"I decided to measure it," he tells me, gesturing at the mysterious lagoon. "I took measurements at all different points to make sure it was a fair reading. I think I measured about 15 feet," he explains. "When I went and told people, they all said that it wasn't true – the mermaid had been holding the reader up so that I couldn't get a ▶







proper measurement. I told them that she must have dirty hands since it was covered in mud!”

As Telfor recounts his stories, Simon laughs along, even though he’s heard the tales many times before. The pair have known each other since Simon was eight, when Telfor would take school groups into the wilderness to share his knowledge and love of the natural world. “Out of all the young people I used to take out to hike, he’s the only one who learned something,” says Telfor. “When he first started hiking with me, he was so small, I’d turn around and think I’d lost him until I saw the long grass moving!”

As Telfor grew older and less mobile, Simon began helping with the guided trips. Now he has his own company, Hidden Treasures, and is taking over as Grenada’s new Indiana Jones. With a rope wrapped around his body and a machete at his waist, he looks the part.

Rambling through the forest, shaded by the foliage, I ask Simon what Telfor’s retirement signifies. Telfor plans to move to Grenada’s smaller sister island Carriacou, where his mother was born. How will it feel no longer working alongside his mentor, or even living on the same island?

“I’m going to miss him when he moves away,” Simon considers. “He’s my best and longest friend. Our relationship is deep and special in so many ways. Sometimes in life you don’t know who’s going to become your ride-or-die kind of friend

– and most of the time it happens with someone from the same generation as you, but Telfor is closer to my grandparents’ age. Having the privilege of knowing him for so long and having learned so much from him, it’s hard to picture my world without him being physically here.”

Seeing their bond first-hand, you could easily mistake Telfor and Simon for father and son. Simon’s parents divorced when he was seven and his mother moved to a house in Grenville. Without a male role model at home, he turned to his mentor, Telfor – as did many of the local kids whose dads weren’t always around. “As I’ve got older and travelled, Telfor has always been an

Previous page:
Royal Mount Carmel
Falls, Grenada’s
tallest waterfall.
Left to right: Simon
Green cutting a trail
through the forest;
Telfor with his protégé



anchor that I've come back to," Simon adds.

Just like Telfor, Simon considers himself an outlier among his peers. "In my generation it's a bit more normal to go hiking and exploring than it was in Telfor's, but not entirely – I guess I'm just a weirdo too," he says with a smile. "In recent years, though, more local folks are starting to appreciate their natural environment and if I've inspired and encouraged that among the population like Telfor did then that's one of my greatest achievements."

On-the-go snacks

GRENADA'S FORESTS ARE NATURE'S TUCK SHOP



Soursop

The evergreen trees that produce this tropical fruit grow all over the island and bear year round, so you'll likely come across it on your hike. You only eat the creamy flesh, so discard the spiky skin and black seeds.



Callaloo

People often steam this plant, but it's better to eat its spinach-like green leaves raw. It doesn't taste of much but is highly nutritious, providing high levels of iron, potassium, calcium, vitamin C and protein.



Cacao fruit

Although it's the source of all cocoa and chocolate, cacao fruit tastes much more refreshing and fruity. Open the outer shell, pluck off individual beans and suck away the white pulp that surrounds them.

As we continue our walk, the pair point out various trees and plants, such as the edible medicinal munga plant ("People say I should worry about Covid, but I've survived worse because of this stuff!" says Telfor). We pause near a cacao tree and, hearing I've never tried a raw bean, Simon pulls a pod from one of the branches and slices it open. I pop it in my mouth, and he and Telfor are delighted at the surprise on my face – the flavour isn't as I expected. The white pulp tastes tart and fruity, almost like lychee.

Wandering back through Telfor's flourishing garden, our outing nears its end. However, I'm still curious to know how Telfor really feels about retiring and moving away. Is it out of choice or necessity? Surely he'll miss his life in Grenada?

"No, I shouldn't – I've been here doing this for long enough!" he says, laughing. "When I get to Carriacou, I'll be hanging out with my friends, fishing, hiking – that's retirement!"

Retirement sounds a lot like what Telfor's been doing in Grenada his whole life, but I'm pleased he's leaving with a sense of nothing left behind. He embraces Simon as we say our goodbyes, and I wonder if some of Telfor's choice to move on is in order to mark Simon's succession. It's time for the Indiana Jones of Grenada to let someone else officially take over the franchise.

✂ Fly to Grenada

A WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT
AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

What's On



HEAD FOR THE HEIGHTS

A Latin American neighbourhood in New York City is the setting for *In the Heights*, an all-singing, all-dancing adaptation of Lin-Manuel Miranda's smash Broadway musical. If you need something sunny and relentlessly positive to get you through a chilly winter, this is for you: 140 minutes of pure movie escapism. You'll be smiling for hours afterwards.

 Watch *In the Heights*



THE BEST OF WHAT'S ONBOARD

61-67

Movies

From *Peter Rabbit 2* to *Snake Eyes: GI Joe Origins*, there's a feast of films onboard.

68-72

TV

Chill with *The White Lotus* or say "a-ha" to Alan Partridge – we've got all the telly you need.

73-75

Music

Rock, soul or Afrobeats: 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 boxsets and ace docs. Read on for our top picks for November.

THE CHOICE IS YOURS

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

SCREEN TIME

Onboard this month we have

114

Movies

410+

Albums & playlists

240+

Hours of TV shows

26

Destination guides

77+

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.

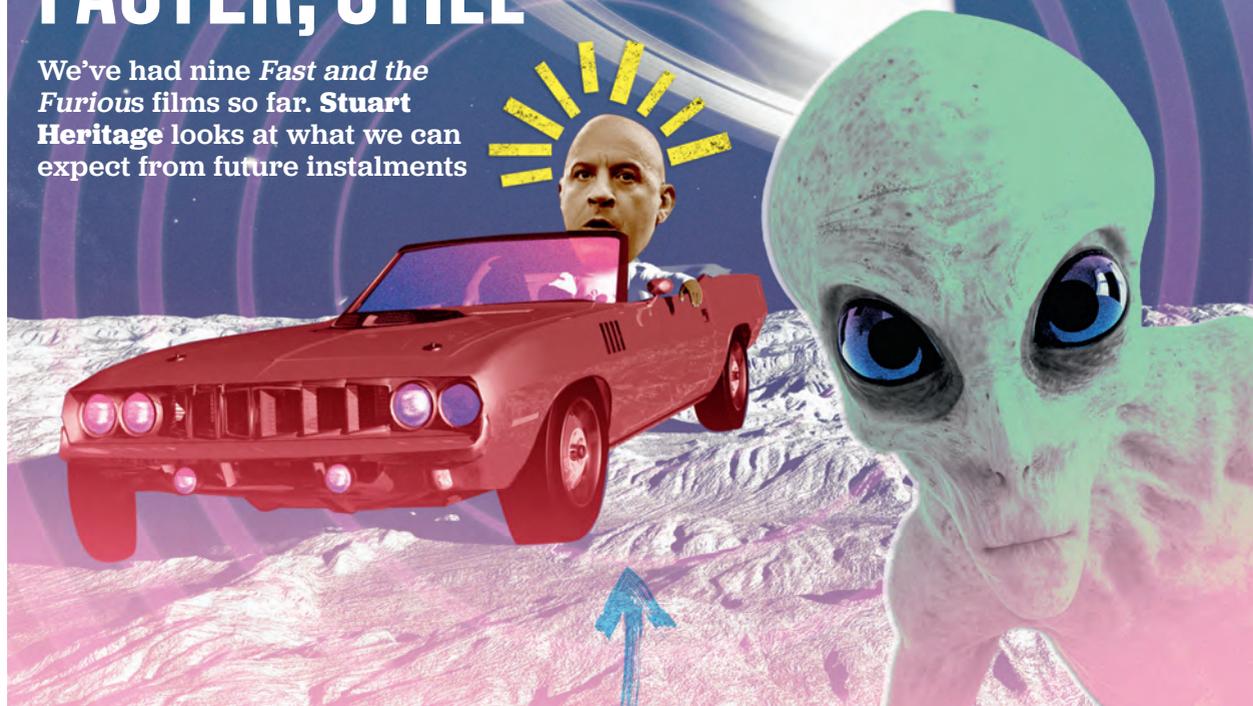
- Select Control Your Screen.
- Select the pairing button and enter your four-digit code when it asks you.
- Ta-da! You can now use your device as a remote.

FILMS TO MAKE YOUR FLIGHT SPEED BY

Movies

FASTER, STILL

We've had nine *Fast and the Furious* films so far. **Stuart Heritage** looks at what we can expect from future instalments



AMONG THE MOST successful film franchises of all time, *The Fast and the Furious* is the definition of high-octane cinema, carrying its winning formula of shiny rides and elaborate heists through nine movies so far. However, *F9: The Fast Saga* does see Vin Diesel's crew drive a car into space. Where do you go from there? Luckily, I have some ideas.

F10: Fast Contact Diesel, Michelle Rodriguez and the rest of the gang return to space, becoming the first humans to meet, and then punch, extraterrestrial life.

F11: The Past and the Furious Having learned the secret of time travel, they then zap 100 years into the past to kill Hitler by driving a monster truck over his head.

F12: The Fast and the Curious The Furious family take time out to soak up the culture of 1920s Austria. Ludacris in particular becomes obsessed with the architecture of Karl Ehn.

F13: The Fast and the Furriest The gang finally return to the present, only to learn that

all humans are now Muppets. Vin Diesel races Big Bird up the side of a skyscraper on a motorbike.

F14: The Fast and the Spurious An art-house film where nothing is what it seems. A cake shaped like Rodriguez shouts at a crow. Sung Kang is replaced by a million wasps in a suit. Helen Mirren drives a car made of toenails.

F15: Avast and the Furious A pirate one. There are lots of jokes about "booty".

F16: The Unbearable Lightness of Vin Diesel

A period piece in which Diesel wistfully intellectualises the communist repression that resulted from the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

F17: Furious in Toyland Vin. Diesel. Is. NODDY. Ray Winstone guest stars as Big Ears.

F18: The Fast and the Furious, Again
A film about some low-rent illegal drag racers, just for a change.

📺 Watch *F9: The Fast Saga*





Black Widow ♥

12

Scarlett Johansson,
Florence Pugh

133
mins

LIKE IRON MAN, Black Widow is a superhero who doesn't actually have superpowers (unless you count Tony Stark being very rich as a superpower, which, sorry, we don't). That fact, however, has always made her one of the most interesting of the Avengers, given that she needs to rely on her skills (plenty of them) as well as her guile and cunning (lots of it), both of which, in this long-awaited spin-off movie, prove to be a lot of fun. Johansson has been playing Black Widow, aka Natasha Romanoff, for about a decade now, so you'd expect her to be good at it, and she surely is, while new to-the-franchise Pugh acquits herself superbly as Natasha's spunky sister. The result is a funny, action-packed treat.



Nobody ♥

15

Bob Odenkirk,
Aleksy Serebryakov

92
mins

Funny and violent, and did we say violent? *Nobody* stars Odenkirk as... well, if we tell you what he is, then it'll spoil the surprise. Suffice to say, it's him against a gang of Russian drug lords, much ass is duly kicked, and a lot of violent fun is had.



Snake Eyes: GI Joe Origins

12

Henry Golding,
Samara Weaving

100
mins

If Marvel and DC can feature their characters in spin-off films, then why not Hasbro, owners of the GI Joe franchise? Here, the toymakers take the property in a more serious direction, telling how a vengeful orphan becomes... Snake Eyes (*Crazy Rich Asians'* Golding).



Cruella ♥

12

Emma Stone,
Emma Thompson

134
mins

Who better than Stone to play the title role in this riff on the Disney classic, as we journey back in time for a prequel that explains how Estella, a creative kid with a knack for fashion, turns into the arch-baddie Cruella.



In the Heights ♥

PG

Anthony Ramos,
Corey Hawkins

143
mins

Did you groove on *Hamilton*? Did you dig *Crazy Rich Asians*? If you answered yes to the above, you're going to love this version of a Broadway smash set in a Manhattan neighbourhood and packed with exuberant dance numbers.



F9: The Fast Saga

12

Vin Diesel,
Michelle Rodriguez

143
mins

This latest in the long-running *Fast and the Furious* franchise is so star-studded it's not even funny. In fact, as the team go after a terrorist in their usual high-octane style, the only thing the movie has more of than A-list names is gobsmacking stunts. See opener

FUNNY FILMS



5 REASONS...

Nobody star Bob Odenkirk is somebody

1

His discipline

While most of us were stuck on the couch, Odenkirk spent the pandemic training for his fight scenes in *Nobody*.

2

His badass skills

He's earning rave reviews for his physical performance, which is partly inspired by Bruce Lee's great moves.

3

His accolades

Nominated multiple times for his acting, the multitasking Odenkirk actually earned two Emmys for his writing on *SNL* and *The Ben Stiller Show*.

4

His just-miss

Odenkirk was *this close* to getting Steve Carell's role in *The Office* (US), but did guest in the show's final season.

5

His bounce back

Not even a heart attack could slow Odenkirk down – just a month after suffering one this year, he went back to work.

Watch Nobody



For Your Consideration

12

Bob Balaban,
Jennifer Coolidge

86
mins

AS USUAL, THE brilliant Christopher Guest has assembled an ensemble cast of regulars for this needle-sharp Hollywood satire. The plot involves a bunch of actors shooting a period drama who get wind of an internet post which suggests that one performance in the film might be Oscar-worthy. Just one. But they don't know which one. The producers start to demand changes to the film, and pretty soon the actors' lives are changing in ways they couldn't possibly have anticipated. Boasting great performances from the likes of Catherine O'Hara, Eugene Levy and Parker Posey, while skewering actors' pretensions, the world of acting coaches and pretty much anything else Hollywood-related, the result is as exquisite as it is excruciating.



The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard

15

Ryan Reynolds,
Samuel L. Jackson

118
mins

This sequel to the very funny original features a starry cast, all of whom chew the scenery with gusto. With a plot that's neatly explained by the title and the swears violence even more turbo-charged than before, the result is an uproarious gem.



Together Together

!

Ed Helms,
Patti Harrison

91
mins

So good they named it twice, *Together Together* is a cracking little comedy about a young woman who signs up to become a gestational surrogate for a single bloke in his forties. What happens next won't exactly come as a surprise – the joy is in how it all pans out.

FAMILY FUN



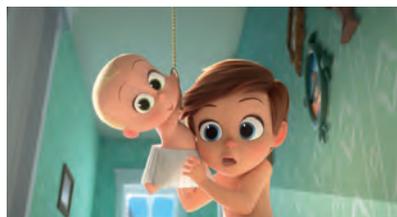
Peter Rabbit 2



Rose Byrne,
James Corden

94
mins

THE ADRENALISED FIRST outing for our floppy-eared friend proved a delightful treat for little ones and this is no different. As before, Peter is voiced by Corden, while his human neighbours are Bea, played by the brilliant Byrne, and Thomas – the equally awesome Domhnall Gleeson. The difference this time is that Bea and Thomas now live in wedded bliss in their countryside retreat, sharing their living space with their floppy-eared pals. Peter, however, is getting itchy paws. He's tired of being painted as the local rebel. So when Bea and Thomas go on a trip, he takes advantage of their absence to go on a little tour himself. That's right, it's Peter in the big city – and nothing will ever be the same again.



The Boss Baby: Family Business



Alec Baldwin,
James Marsden

105
mins

Boss Baby acquires a colon and a subtitle in this animated sequel, and the "family business" entails the Templeton brothers teaming up in order to defeat a horrid new boss baby. Result? Plenty of fun for the little ones.



Luca



Jacob Tremblay,
Jack Dylan Grazer

120
mins

The latest from Pixar is set on the Italian Riviera, where Luca seems to live an idyllic life of ice cream and scooter rides. What few people know, however – like literally nobody – is that Luca is in fact a sea monster posing as a human.

ACTION-PACKED



Embattled



15

Stephen Dorff,
Darren Mann

117
mins

Dorff is in gripping form in this bone-crunching mixed-martial-arts drama. He plays an MMA champ who's also probably the world's worst dad. Now his son wants to follow in his footsteps – but must first break the cycle of abuse.



Infinite



Mark Wahlberg,
Chiwetel Ejiofor

106
mins

If *Infinite* can be baffling, well that's because it's a sci-fi tale of Wahlberg trying to make sense of his hallucinations. But what it lacks in dot-to-dot storytelling it more than makes up for in gobsmacking visuals and action.



Godzilla vs Kong

12

Alexander Skarsgård,
Millie Bobby Brown

112
mins

When a man is tired of watching monsters kick seven shades of whatsit out of each other, one is tired of life. This latest in the *Godzilla* franchise, which finds the two doing battle in Hong Kong, is stompingly good fun.

SHORTS



Bertie !

Alison Steadman, Jemima Roper	16 mins
----------------------------------	------------

Parenthood, bereavement and a little pug called Bertie feature in this short. Bertie's the dog next door to new arrivals Tom and Lisa. But is he just a normal canine, or does he have special powers?



Abe's Story !

Colin O'Donoghue, David Bamber	12 mins
-----------------------------------	------------

A gorgeously animated tale set in Victorian London, in which Abe, an overworked Irish writer, draws inspiration from his theatre day job to write what he hopes will be a brilliant novel.



How To Fall In Love in a Pandemic !

Michael-David McKernan, Mimi Wilcox	11 mins
--	------------

THE PANDEMIC FORCES two filmmakers to move in together in this acclaimed short – and if you can't guess what happens next then take a second look at the title. But what makes this such a little jewel is its sensitive, nuanced and insightful treatment in the hands of writer-director (star and producer and editor and cinematographer) McKernan. He made waves with his debut, the single-take *Halo*, winner of a whole bunch of gongs but still an underachiever compared to *How To Fall In Love in a Pandemic*, which has snaffled short film awards at literally every festival its played, including a nod at Tribeca. Put it this way, if you're a fan of the small-but-perfectly-formed story – and who isn't? – then you need look no further than this gem.



MOVIE QUIZ

TAKE OUR
TRIVIA TEST

ANSWERS: 1: JARVIS; 2: THE SKIN; 3: GATE; 4: EMILY BLUNT; 5: BOYHOOD
WORDS: TOM HIDDLESTON PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

1

Scarlett Johansson returns as the title character in Marvel's all-action *Black Widow*. But which 2013 sci-fi thriller found the Hollywood icon cruising the streets of Glasgow in a beat-up Transit van?

2

British comic James Corden voices the hero in animated adventure *Peter Rabbit 2*. Which of his other movies was dismissed by critics as

“the biggest disaster of the decade” and “*Battlefield Earth* with whiskers”?

3

Modern classic *Frozen* is one of the biggest animated hits in Disney history. But which beloved Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale provided the inspiration for the story?

4

Stanley Tucci appears alongside Colin Firth in

intimate drama *Supernova*. Which British actress and screen super-nanny is Tucci's real-life sister-in-law?

5

Actor Ethan Hawke and director Richard Linklater worked together for the first time on wistful romance *Before Sunrise*. Which of their film collaborations took a record-breaking 12 years to shoot?

See how you did on the left

DRAMATIC



Escape from Pretoria

12

Daniel Radcliffe,
Daniel Webber

106
mins

FAIR PLAY, RADCLIFFE has attacked some interesting and challenging roles since his days as the boy wizard with a Z-shaped scar on his bonce. Don't believe us? Add *Jungle* and *Swiss Army Man* to your watchlist and you'll see an actor stretching his wings, trying new things and happy to shoulder the responsibility for any mixed results that follow. *Escape from Pretoria*, however, is a cracker through and through. Based on a heart-rending true story, it sees our Dan playing a South African anti-apartheid activist imprisoned in a brutal jail following an act of insurrection. Pretty soon he's making plans to get out, but as things inevitably go awry, the breakout turns into a nail-biting race against time.



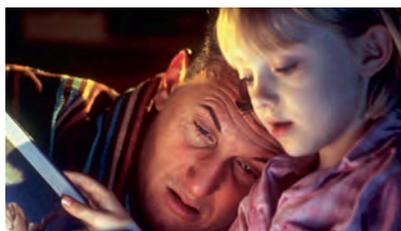
Here Today

!

Billy Crystal,
Tiffany Haddish

117
mins

Written and directed by Crystal, this touching comedy pairs two generations of great comic talent as Haddish's New York street singer forms the classic "unlikely friendship" with a comedy writer, played by Crystal himself. Heartfelt? Tick. Funny? Tick.



I Am Sam

12

Sean Penn,
Michelle Pfeiffer

113
mins

Witness absolute powerhouse acting from Penn in this classic tale of a man with mental disability who wants to fight for custody of his seven-year-old daughter. Pfeiffer as his cold-hearted lawyer is just as good – and the result is devastating.



My Salinger Year

!

Sigourney Weaver,
Margaret Qualley

101
mins

Exquisitely performed drama as a young writer (Qualley) starts work at the agency representing JD Salinger. Dealing with her boss (Weaver) is just one of the hurdles as she embarks on her own journey of creative discovery. *See right*



The Father

♥

15

Anthony Hopkins,
Olivia Colman

97
mins

Hopkins has been raking in the awards for his perfectly calibrated performance as Anthony, who is beginning to succumb to dementia. Colman is the daughter who desperately wants to help, despite his strenuous objections.



The Climb

15

Michael Angelo
Covino, Kyle Marvin

98
mins

You don't need to be a MAMIL (aka a middle-aged man in Lycra) to love this cycling comedy-drama about Kyle and Mike, best buddies whose previously unbreakable biking bond turns into an uphill battle when Mike sleeps with Kyle's fiancée. Yup. That'll do it.

LOVED-UP

MOVIE BLUFF

DON'T KNOW WHO
JD SALINGER IS?



I SparkNotes-ed my way through Eng Lit, who is he? Salinger ("Sonny" to pals) is widely regarded as one of the most important writers of the 20th century – even though you can count his published work on one hand. He's best known for his first novel, *The Catcher in the Rye*.

Isn't that the one about that angsty teen in a hunting cap? Yep – the book's protagonist, Holden Caulfield, has become an icon for his leftfield hat choices and hard-shell misanthropy – a personality trait some say Salinger possessed as well.

So how did he take his literary success?

Not very well – Salinger retreated to New Hampshire, where he spent the rest of his life as a semi-recluse. He died there in 2010 aged 91 leaving a cache of new work behind that's being edited by his son, Matt, and widow Colleen O'Neill.

How can I make it sound like I'm into Salinger?

Just say: "I can't wait to see what comes out when his family have gone through his archive – there's 50 years of unpublished work there."

📺 Watch My Salinger Year



Love Sarah

12

Shelley Conn,
Celia Imrie

97
mins

"ALL GOOD THINGS come to those who bake," is the tagline for this rather wonderful Brit-flick. What's it about? Well, it's about an hour and a half. But as far as the plot is concerned, it has 19-year-old Clarissa aiming to honour her recently deceased mum's wish of opening a bakery and enlisting the help of an old friend, as well as her grandma, to do it. To realise the dream, this mismatched trio will need to overcome issues of grief and generational differences, making for a funny, heartfelt and nostalgic confection. Think *The Great British Bake Off* meets the world of Richard Curtis in what must be the feelgood film of, oh, the decade.



Supernova

15

Colin Firth,
Stanley Tucci

97
mins

Tear-jerking romance about long-term partners Sam (Firth) and Tusker (Tucci). When Tusker's diagnosed with dementia, the pair embark on a road-trip in order to reconnect with friends and family – only to realise that time together is the most precious thing they have.



Before Sunrise

15

Julie Delpy,
Ethan Hawke

101
mins

The first in what turned out to be one of cinema's great romantic trilogies takes place in a single night as Jesse (Hawke) and Céline (Delpy) meet on a train and spend the night in Vienna getting to know one another. Director Richard Linklater's *Apollo 10½* is due out 2022.

Television

CONSIDER THE LOTUS

For a comedy about a hotel, *The White Lotus* says a shocking amount about the realities of life, says Jonny Ensall

IN THE FIRST episode of *The White Lotus*, hotel director Armond – played with captivating nihilism by Murray Bartlett – describes the experience of staying at his exclusive five-star Hawaiian resort. “[The guests] get everything they want but they don’t even know what they want,” he deadpans. “Or what day it is, or where they are, or who we are, or what the f**k is going on.” *The White Lotus* is a kind of purgatory; a liminal space in which rich people attempt to solve their fundamental unhappiness as they relax in paradise.

It’s also a hotel of two halves: the staff are tolerant to a fault (until they finally snap, that is) and the guests are unanimously awful. Over the course of its seven brilliant and slowly unwinding episodes, creator Mike White’s masterpiece has a lot to say about privilege, but also everything else in life: birth, death, love, sex, violence, family, secrets, endings and beginnings. Everything is covered in excruciating detail via the bickering of newlyweds Shane and Rachel, the woke barbs of teenagers Olivia and Paula – typically directed at the entitled Mossbacher family to which they are unwillingly attached

– and the endless quest for emotional pain relief of therapy-addicted Tanya (played, in a career-best performance, by Jennifer Coolidge).

You’ll finish it feeling slightly delirious, not knowing whether what you’ve experienced is tragedy or comedy, if you like any of the people involved or if you’re complicit in the terrible behaviours they exemplify. If that sounds too much like real life then be reassured that this is not your average day at the beach – *The White Lotus* is a dreamlike environment where, to paraphrase Armond, “the goal is to create an overall impression of vagueness”. We’re vaguely convinced you’ll enjoy your stay.

 [Watch The White Lotus](#)



MUST-WATCH



Clockwise from top: hotel director Armond; Tanya; Olivia and Paula; hotel staff; Rachel and Shane; Nicole and Mark Mossbacher

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS: JACQUE STOCK



The White Lotus ♥

Box set	60 mins
---------	---------

The lives of privileged guests rub up against those of hotel workers in all manner of comic and ultimately tragic ways in this satirical US series. See it as modern parable, prestige drama or murder-mystery. Just see it. *See left*



Good Girls ♥

Box set	45 mins
---------	---------

Finding themselves in financial dire straits, three hard-up mums turn to crime in this hit US show. Needless to say, they get in way over their heads. We have the whole of season one onboard.



Rick and Morty

5 episodes	22 mins
------------	---------

Inspired by the relationship between Doc Brown and Marty McFly in *Back to the Future*, this cult animation finds boozy scientist Rick and his grandson, Morty, embarking on inter-dimensional adventures.



Playing With Power: The Nintendo Story ♥

Box set	60 mins
---------	---------

This tantalising documentary tells the story of the notoriously secretive Nintendo video games world, using an ensemble of celebrity icons, industry veterans and – most crucially – actual Nintendo personnel, past and present.



Lovecraft Country

Box set	60 mins
---------	---------

Set in 1950's Jim Crow America, *Lovecraft Country* weaves the real horrors of racism with the Lovecraftian monsters its title suggests, as our hero Atticus sets off in search of his missing father. We have the whole of season one onboard.



Mare of Easttown

Box set	58 mins
---------	---------

Kate Winslet is at her all-time best in this riveting murder-mystery series, playing dogged detective Mare, who investigates the murder of a local girl while simultaneously juggling her own chequered private life. The result is at times almost unbearably tense.

ALIEN BEINGS



Wellington Paranormal ❤️

Box set	22 mins
---------	---------

FIRST SEEN IN the vampire spoof *What We Do in the Shadows*, officers O’Leary and Minogue were a couple of Wellington cops with a great line in po-faced, straight-to-camera dialogue. Played by Karen O’Leary and Mike Minogue (director Taika Waititi hadn’t thought of names for the characters so they kept their real ones), they effortlessly stole whatever scene they were in, which was quite a feat considering the strength of competition. What a treat, then, that not only do O’Leary and Minogue now have their own spin-off TV series, but they’re still dealing with paranormal outbreaks in Wellington. It is, as you might imagine, brilliantly funny stuff that works as a standalone comedy, or as a welcome addition to the *Shadows* universe. Season one screens onboard.



Spaceship Earth 12

Documentary	116 mins
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Beginning in 1991, the Biosphere 2 experiment replicated Earth’s atmosphere inside a closed vivarium populated by eight scientists. But what really went on during their two years inside? The truth is stranger than fiction.



Resident Alien ❤️ ⚠️!

Box set	50 mins
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Harry is an alien with a mission in this new US comedy. Although he takes human form he intends to steer clear of Earth-dwellers. Until, that is, he becomes involved in the local community. Even – whisper it – falling in love.

RELAXATION



Headspace

Various	Up to 45 mins
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Headspace aims to promote the benefits of mindfulness and relaxation through guided meditations, animations, articles and videos. Whatever your specific needs, you’ll find them covered onboard, including a short show for kids.



Mindful Earth ❤️

Box set	30 mins
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Created by Headspace’s co-founder, *Mindful Earth* is a short series of programmes that combine soothing narration with breathtaking visuals of nature from around the world – designed to inspire, relax and rejuvenate.



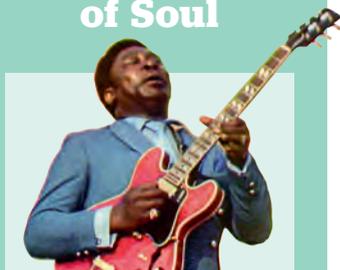
Sharecare Windows

4 episodes	30 mins
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Sharecare Windows specialises in relaxing videos that help viewers find peace and stillness in their everyday lives. The onboard programming includes “Lighthouse with Ocean Waves for Sleep”.

TOP 5...

Hot artists from the Summer of Soul



These soul luminaries ripped up the stage in Harlem in 1969 – as caught on camera

1

Nina Simone

The transcendent singer gets festivalgoers fired up by reciting political poetry.

2

Stevie Wonder

The hitman barely plays any of his beloved songs – he mainly jams on the drums.

3

Sly and the Family Stone

The funk-soul band's sizzling summer saw them decamp to Woodstock from Harlem.

4

BB King

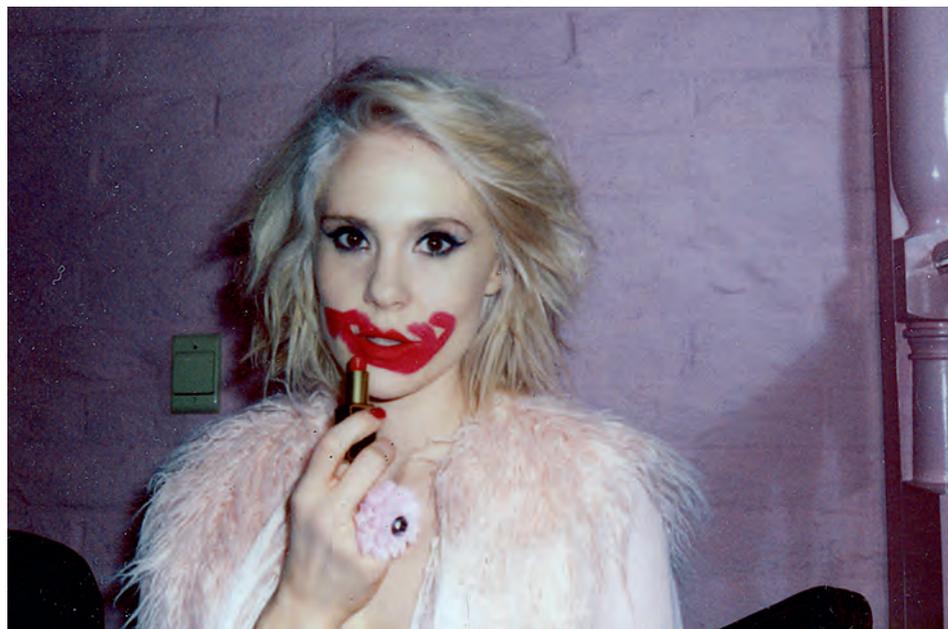
King (*pictured, above*) plays licks so sharp they could take your eye out.

5

Gladys Knight

If you heard through the grapevine that Ms Knight kills her set, you heard right.

Watch Summer of Soul



Kate Nash: Underestimate the Girl ♥ !

Documentary

90 mins

IN 2007, KATE Nash made musical waves with her brilliant debut single *Foundations*, swiftly following it with an equally fabulous album, *Made of Bricks*. Album number two in 2010 was also a hit. After that, however, things came apart at the seams: she was dropped by her label, released a poor-selling third album and then, having been defrauded of a lot of cash, found herself nearly homeless. Joining her as she sets out to record her fourth album, this intimate film charts her efforts to pull herself from the doldrums, examining issues of mental health and music-business morals along the way, with Nash emerging as a supremely likeable, but most of all determined and inspiring character. Needless to say, the music's pretty great, too.



Summer of Soul 12

Documentary

118 mins

Documentary focusing on the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival, aka "the black Woodstock", which despite appearances from the likes of Stevie Wonder, Nina Simone and Gladys Knight remains a footnote in musical history – an omission the film seeks to correct. *See left*



Hip Hop: The Songs That Shook America ▲!

Box set

43 mins

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

JUST FOR LAUGHS



Friday Night Dinner

15

Box set

22 mins

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER for the Jewish Goodman family is a weekly event to be endured rather than enjoyed by the two sons of the household, Jonny (Tom Rosenthal) and Adam (Simon Bird). Why? Because dad (the late Paul Ritter) swigs ketchup straight from the bottle, mum (Tamsin Greig) is obsessed by *MasterChef* and will go to any lengths to watch it, and grandma likes to wear her bikinis around the house. Not a pretty sight. Then there's the fact that the evening always springs a few surprises, many of them courtesy of next-door neighbour Jim (Mark Heap), who's apt to pop in at any time. It all adds up to a wonderfully weird but surprisingly gentle half-hour of comedy, relying more on character and whimsy than on big, obvious laughs. We have a full helping of season six onboard.



This Time with Alan Partridge

Box set

29 mins

After years of trying and failing, our favourite sports-casual wearer – played by Steeve Coogan – finally has a show on prime-time TV. However, as this second season goes to show, things aren't exactly going according to plan.



What We Do in the Shadows

4 episodes

30 mins

Having started life as a brilliant cult comedy film, *What We Do in the Shadows* has made the transition to brilliant cult TV show. The simple tale of three vampire housemates, this is very funny stuff indeed.

GAMING



Modern-Day Gladiators

4 episodes

44 mins

If you're not familiar with the world of eSports, here's the quick version: eSports are organised video game competitions in which players from all over the globe congregate online to duke it out for staggering sums of money.



Counter-Strike Global Offensive

11 episodes

45 mins

If you've heard your kids yakking on about CS:Go this is what they mean: it's one of the most popular video games in the world, which means that its eSports equivalent is one of the most hotly contested.



Fornite Summer Smash 2020

4 episodes

60 mins

Get set for the battle royale as we present all the thrills and spills of the eSports gaming event of 2020: the Fortnite Summer Smash. Top players from more than 12 countries compete for first place – and the AU\$100,000 prize.

FUTURE CLASSICS AND TIMELESS FAVES

Audio

WHO IS CLAIRO?

A very new-school pop star with a bright future, explains Rhian Daly

Clairo? Sounds Welsh to me...

Not quite. The 23-year-old singer-songwriter – real name Claire Cottrill – was born in Atlanta and grew up in Massachusetts in the US. She started out penning songs as a teenager in her bedroom until the sweet and simple *Pretty Girl* went viral in 2017. Her two albums since then have positioned her among Gen Z's brightest talents.

So, what is Gen Z listening to?

It's the sound of a friend – Clairo's cosy songs act as an arm around the shoulder to her listeners as well as a therapeutic space for Cottrill herself. Latest album *Sling* sees her get candid about her mental-health struggles. On her 2019 debut *Immunity*, she shared thoughts on sexuality and coping with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis.

Seems painful.

It's more intimate. *Sling*, especially, borrows from classic singer-songwriters of the '70s like Joni Mitchell and Carole King to craft an album full of warm, organic folk-pop.

Those are some all-time greats. How does Clairo match up?

It's still early for her compared to those big names, but she's made an impressive start. Give her time and, in decades to come, we should be looking back on her music with the same reverence.

🔊 Listen to *Sling*





Max Richter

Voices 2	Classical/Chill
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ON THE FIRST *Voices* album, the undisputed king of modern classical, Max Richter, found inspiration in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, using the “voices” of the title to create a message of hope in these troubled and toxic times. Never one to rest on his laurels, Richter recorded this sequel during the same session, and while the voices’ hook remains unchanged, he’s changed up in terms of his musical backing. Or “changed down” might be more accurate, since his use of lush orchestration takes this set in an even more soothing and ambient direction than before, making for an experience that is at once enriching, relaxing, deeply moving and provocative. Not many composers can pull off such a gargantuan feat, but it’s all in a day’s work for Richter.



Ludovico Einaudi

<i>Cinema</i>	Classical
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The Italian pianist and composer’s best soundtrack moments are collected on this exquisite new album. Selections include music from *Nomadland*, *The Father*, *The Water Diviner* and more. *See below*



Ólafur Arnalds

<i>Some Kind of Peace</i>	Classical/Sleep
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Icelandic composer Arnalds is the person to go to when you want to scratch that melodic-ambient itch. Fans of Sigur Rós, Brian Eno, Nils Frahm and Max Richter – you know the score. This is his latest, acclaimed album.



Craig Armstrong

<i>Sun On You</i>	Classical
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The new album from composer Armstrong, whose film scores include *Moulin Rouge!* and *The Great Gatsby*, is a set designed for piano and strings. The result is a downtempo work that is haunting and captivating.



Alexis Ffrench

<i>Dreamland</i>	Classical
------------------	-----------

Contemporary pianist and composer Ffrench is on a mission to make classical music more diverse and eclectic – and if the critical acclaim for this collection of classical-soul is anything to go by, he’s succeeding.

5 MOVIES...

Featuring Einaudi's music



Prick up your ears – the Italian pianist Ludovico Einaudi has soundtracked some cinematic bangers

This Is England Einaudi’s twinkly tunes inject some beauty into this gritty drama. **Insidious** Think piano music can’t be scary? **Nuvole Bianche** ups the chill factor in this supernatural horror. **Les Intouchables** You’ll hear the Italian’s keys in this French drama – including its emotional finale. **I’m Still Here** This divisive mockumentary about Joaquin Phoenix’s fake hip-hop career features Einaudi’s beloved tunes. **Black Swan** Not technically the movie – but Einaudi’s music really makes the trailer.

🔊 Listen to Cinema

GIRL POWER



Clairo ❤️

Sling	Pop
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Variouly described as pop, acoustic folk and folk rock, US singer-songwriter Clairo continues to keep it lo-fi and deeply heartfelt on this acclaimed second album. See *opener*



Olivia Rodrigo !

SOUR	Pop
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If the kind of experimental, edgy but honest pop made by the likes of Billie Eilish and Phoebe Bridgers is your bag, then we've got this for you. One listen to opener *Brutal* will have you hooked.

Nubya Garcia ❤️

Source	Jazz
--------	------

HAVING RELEASED TWO rapturously received EPs, tenor saxophonist Nubya Garcia – a composer, radio host and key member of the resurgent London jazz scene – took herself into the studio to make her debut album. Along for the ride were the usual members of her quartet – pianist Joe Armon-Jones, double bassist Daniel Casimir, and drummer Sam Jones – as well as co-producer Kwes, a veteran of Bobby Womack and Solange. The result is a truly exceptional work, a heartfelt and emotive take on modern jazz that incorporates dub reggae, spiritual jazz and neo-soul.



ICONS



Depeche Mode ❤️

Icons	Vera Playlists
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Take a dive into Depeche with this playlist featuring a brilliant grab-bag of the Essex boys' oeuvre, including snatches of their synthpop era and their industrial phase.



The Police

Icons	Vera Playlists
-------	----------------

Whether you're a committed fan or a newcomer, there are plenty of hits and lots more besides on this playlist capturing Sting, Andy and Stewart in their pomp.

The Cure

Icons	Vera Playlists
-------	----------------

OVER 40 YEARS in the game, and The Cure remain a potent musical force. They're a niche band revered by goths and at the same time a Glastonbury-headlining, chart-topping phenomenon, as beloved of audiences as they are of critics. Few bands can make such a claim, but few bands are as consistently brilliant as The Cure. This playlist features material from their four-decade career, taking in their gloomy beginnings to the more pop-oriented material of their middle years and beyond.



PLAYLISTS

Destinations: Nigeria ❤️

Wizkid may be achieving worldwide acclaim right now, but he's by no means an anomaly. Our playlist shows he's the next exciting stop on a line that features many inspiring artists.



Destinations: South Africa !

A rich, musical history surrounds South Africa, blending traditional African sounds with all the global influences the country has been exposed to. This playlist looks to the future and past.



Laser Disco !

Grab a glitterball and pretend you're off to Studio 54 with our discofied playlist. Donna Summer's *I Feel Love* and *Car Wash* by Rose Royce stand out in a sparkling overview of the genre.





virgin atlantic 

Poolside posing,
Virgin Atlantic style

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CREDITS.

Virgin Atlantic news and views

Virgin Atlantic Cabin Technical

Operations Engineer Georgia Fife-Wright tells us about her career and how the airline is trying to encourage more young women to get into engineering.

How did you come to Virgin Atlantic?

I started at Virgin Atlantic as an apprentice engineer in 2012. I always loved science at school and finding out how things work, which really drew me to a career in engineering. After graduating, I spent four years learning and working with different teams and in different roles while studying for a degree in engineering. I realised what I wanted to do is not only fix, but try to improve systems and that is what I do now.

How would you describe your current role to someone new to the world of aircraft engineering? And what do you like most about it?

I am currently a Cabin Technical Operations Engineer. We are essentially responsible for providing frontline maintenance support as well as fixing and improving the product presented to our passengers, while ensuring safety and compliance at all times.



What do you like most about your role?

During any given day, I can address a large variety of tasks, anything from wiring to structures. The variety is definitely my favourite part – unless you count my teammates.

Has being a woman in engineering changed since you started your career?

Absolutely. It's fantastic to see more women pursuing roles within engineering and it's amazing we are growing in number – but it's not enough. I think women are still concerned about how they will be viewed in these roles and that has to change. Virgin Atlantic has been working with schools to engage young people – young girls in particular – in STEM subjects. In doing so, we hope to build their confidence and let them know that pursuing a career in engineering is as open to them as their male peers.

What is your top tip for women and girls interested in pursuing a career in engineering?

Believe in yourself. Don't be put off by stereotypes or allow self-doubt to creep in. Women are every bit as capable as men in engineering roles and the power is within you.

Georgia started out as an apprentice with Virgin Atlantic nearly a decade ago



LEGACY OF LOVE

The Winnie Mabaso Foundation in Johannesburg continues the work of its selfless namesake, with the help of partners like Virgin Atlantic

There are moments that unexpectedly change the course of your life. Perhaps you decide last minute to go to a party you were going to skip and end up meeting the one. Or maybe a conversation with a stranger on a train ends up with them investing in a business idea you've had. For Lisa Ashton, it was meeting Winnie Mabaso 18 years ago while recording a BBC programme in South Africa that celebrated individuals who had made a significant difference to their communities during the apartheid era.

When Lisa met Winnie, she was almost single-handedly caring for children who had lost their families to HIV-related illnesses. "Winnie told me that she wanted my help to raise some money to create a safe haven for these children, somewhere they could stay and be loved and looked after," says Lisa. "Without sounding too callous, as a programme-maker I often felt it was my job to tell somebody's story and then move onto the next. But with Winnie, we had a connection as soon as we met and I knew that somehow we'd be together for the long-haul."

So Lisa returned to the UK and started raising money. Soon they were able to buy a home and turn it into the orphanage that Winnie had imagined. Sadly, she died three months later. "I knew nothing about



Virgin Atlantic staff can volunteer at the Foundation during their layovers – and have even hosted parties onboard



running a charity, I knew very little about HIV/AIDS, and I certainly didn't know anything about African cultures and customs. But I knew that I couldn't let this lady's dream die with her, so I did all I could to help the Winnie Mabaso Foundation."

Today, Lisa and her team in South Africa run a home for 23 girls (aged between 7 and 19) in the south of Johannesburg, as well doing a lot of project work in a neighbouring informal settlement. This includes a preschool, a granny club, an after-school club and a feeding station. They've also just managed to buy a new

house – "A forever home, we're calling it" – so when the children leave the orphanage, they've always got a safe and loving place to come back to and call home.

The Foundation can't do it all alone, however. Alongside the team's own hard work, they also rely on donations from companies and individuals. Six years ago, for example, the Foundation set up a programme for eager-to-help Virgin Atlantic flight deck and crew members to come and do voluntary work during their layovers in South Africa. Since then, hundreds of Virgin staff members have been to volunteer at the orphanage and the other local projects. "A few years ago, they arranged for the girls to actually board an aircraft, which absolutely blew the kids away. And the granny club got to have a Christmas party onboard too. They sat in upper class and had tea, cakes and a little glass of sherry. It was fantastic."

As well as this hands-on voluntary work, Virgin staff members have also helped organise things like shoebox appeals and clothing donations.

"The Winnie Mabaso Foundation has probably grown more than Winnie could have dreamt. But we've never moved away from her original ethos," adds Lisa. "The legacy of love she left behind is still very much alive and I feel honoured to have been part of this journey."

■ To find out more go to winniemabaso.org

INTRODUCING THE VIRGIN RED ROOM

Our new VIP suite means a good time is guaranteed for Virgin Red members at the AO Arena in Manchester

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT FANS, we have an announcement that'll be music to your ears. Virgin Red, the rewards club from Virgin, has created a new A-list experience. Unveiled at Manchester's AO Arena, the Virgin Red Room is an incredible private members' suite exclusive to Virgin Red members, who can book the VIP seats for themselves and a guest using their Virgin Points.

The Virgin Red Room comes with all kinds of perks, including complimentary parking right by the arena (perfect for a quick post-show getaway), and fast-track entry to skip the queues on your way in. Once you're inside, the star factor continues with a private pay bar and waiter service to deliver drinks to your seat.

There's also a private cloakroom and en-suite bathroom, along with a Virgin Red glitter wall for all your mid-gig selfies. The Virgin Red Room holds 16 guests in total and there's plenty of space to dance like no one is watching.



There's a Virgin Red glitter wall for all your mid-gig selfies plus plenty of space to dance like no one's watching

"At Virgin Red we are always lifting experiences out of the ordinary and that's exactly what we've done with the Virgin Red Room. This is an amazing VIP experience you will never forget," says Michael Buffham-Wade, Director of Membership at Virgin Red.

To gain access to the Virgin Red Room you can sign up to Virgin Red for free and start earning Virgin Points on your everyday spending.

■ virgin.com/virgin-red



WHY I LOVE MY JOB

Dave Gunner is passionate about giving other people's stories a platform

"I've been at Virgin for 26 years and I'm currently an editorial specialist within the corporate communications team. We cover all internal comms, as well as social media (I'm probably the only 63-year-old social media person!). My baby, though, is the company blog: Ruby. It covers our places, our planes

and our people. I put that together myself and I'm privileged to be able to roam freely across the company to find the stories. I'm so grateful that my job has allowed me to do some extraordinary things. The one I don't think I'll ever beat is when I was in the flight deck of an aircraft flying during a total solar eclipse.

"My favourite thing about the role, though, is interacting with all these different people to learn and tell their stories.

A few months ago, I shadowed a turnaround coordinator at Heathrow and learned about his job, and also about Ramadan and his beliefs. I came away with a deep respect for him and for his religion. Together we communicated that, and that made him proud. For me, that is the real highlight of my job: when I've written a piece about someone and I realise that they're grateful to have their story told."

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- An A330-300, open your browser and navigate to airborne.gogonflight.com

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SCAN ME TO
GET CONNECTED



FEELING VALUED

In November 2020, a group of Virgin employees set up the VALUED network. We find out what they've achieved in just one year

One of the most important principles we uphold here at Virgin Atlantic is to create an inclusive environment where everyone – and we mean everyone – feels they belong. We're committed to constantly learning and improving in this area, which is why we're so proud of our VALUED network. Formed in November 2020, VALUED (which stands for Virgin Atlantic Loves Unity and Ethnic Diversity) is a network for our Black, Asian, and minority ethnic colleagues, and aims to champion diversity and inclusion internally.

Since its creation just one year ago, the network has already achieved a lot. "Among other things, we've partnered with our leaders to sign the Race at Work Charter, participated in Fantasy Wings, which encourages young people from ethnically diverse backgrounds to consider careers in aviation, and worked with recruitment to advise on how to attract a greater talent pool from different backgrounds," explains committee member and customer service

master trainer Justin Ho. "We were also very proud to organise an event with Lord Simon Woolley as our guest speaker. He had a great conversation with Virgin Atlantic CEO Shai Weiss, in which they discussed diversity and inclusion in the workplace, including his personal experiences and tips."

Education is another key focus for VALUED. This means teaching people within the business about different cultural backgrounds, and the customs, religions and events that come with them. "We can do this simply but effectively. For example, by looking at our cultural calendar and producing social content to make sure people are aware of when and what these special events mean. For example, I did a big piece around Chinese New Year in February because that's where my culture and background is from," adds Justin.

VALUED has accomplished a huge amount in a short time. We can't wait to see what comes next – and what we learn – in the new year.

The VALUED network aims to champion diversity and inclusion at Virgin Atlantic

ALL-INCLUSIVE PARADISE IN

Saint Lucia



**NEW
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From London to
Saint Lucia with
Virgin Atlantic

SANDALS GRANDE ST. LUCIAN

VOTED THE WORLD'S LEADING ALL-INCLUSIVE RESORTS FOR **25** YEARS IN A ROW

Prized for its Piton Mountains, it comes as no surprise that the stunning Saint Lucia emerald isle has captured the heart of many for centuries. Boasting a drive-through volcano, as well as its own National Rain Forest Reserve, Saint Lucia's exotic beauty truly captures the luxuriant allure of the Caribbean.

Located on the stunning picturesque island of Saint Lucia is Sandals Regency La Toc, Sandals Grande St Lucian and Sandals Halcyon Beach. Sandal Regency La Toc is set on a half-mile, crescent-shaped beach, cradling exotic corals bluffs. This resort boasts the incomparable Millionaire Suites with private three-tiered patios, infinity-edge pools and retractable doors offering 180° ocean views. Sandals Grande St Lucian is located on its own peninsula, offering unobstructed panoramic sea vistas and a sheltered mile-long beach-front with the calmest waters in all of Saint Lucia. Of all the Sandals Resorts, Sandals Halcyon Beach best defines the Caribbean – a laid-back retreat tucked into a gorgeous palate of ever-blooming gardens along a tranquil turquoise sea. Home to Saint Lucia's most legendary dining experience – Kelly's Dockside Over-the-Water Restaurant – dramatically extending 150 feet out over the water.

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