

Travel in Technicolor

virgin atlantic



# Ueno

APRIL 2024

► Order up?  
**MUMBAI'S  
LAST PARSII  
CAFES**

► Weird sounds  
**FIND YOUR  
FESTIVAL  
NICHE**

+

The best  
of what's  
onboard

# RUPAUL

**IS EVERYTHING!**





# WHEELBY

Time Redefined



Discover serenity, with a *Perfect Airport Pickup* by Wheely. Powered by automatic flight tracking, and with an hour of complimentary waiting time, your chauffeur will meet you at arrivals to assist with your luggage.

Enjoy a complimentary £20 credit.  
Use code **VERA324** in the Payment section  
of the Wheely app.\*



Refined chauffeurs, scheduled and on demand.  
Available via the Wheely App in London, Paris, and Dubai.





One&Only Reethi Rah is one of the Maldives' most spacious private islands, offering unrivalled privacy and exclusivity. Our beach and water villas considerably designed to ensure each villa occupies its own generous secluded area – enabling your own undisturbed slice of paradise.

## ISLAND ESCAPE

Escape to your tropical haven in the heart of the breathtaking Maldives. Take advantage of complimentary dinner and shared return boat transfers from/to Velana International Airport for stays May through to 18th December 2024.



# *One & Only*

REETHI RAH

*Maldives*





# CONTENTS

APRIL

vera

## 9-24// Red Hot

Discover the stunning new Hampi Art Labs, in India, *Joy Ride's* Sherry Cola pops up, immerse yourself in a photographic history of Jamaican dancehall and step into the great outdoors in Miami.

## 60-82// What's On

Catch up with the much-talked-about *Saltburn*, *Napoleon* and *American Fiction*, tune into the world of *Grime Kids* and hear why we love *The Last Dinner Party*.

## 87-90// Credits

See how our crew work with the Winnie Mabaso Foundation to support vulnerable and orphaned children in South Africa.



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

**FEATURES** RuPaul reflects on 40 years of glamour, we get Parsi-nal with Mumbai's rich café culture and don't miss out on the season's music festivals that may have passed you by.

## CAMEOS



**Jennifer Hayashi** is a Scottish creative director and illustrator based in London. Obsessed with colour, she creates vibrant "doodlebombs" that capture the energy of her subjects. This issue, you can see her interpretation of our cover star, RuPaul. See p26



Photographer **Karan Kumar Sachdev** is based in Mumbai and has exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery in London, *Le Book Connections* in Paris and as part of the *British Journal of Photography's Portrait of Humanity*. Here he captures the Parsi cafés of his home city. See p38



Florida-based **Jessica Poitevien** is a journalist and content creator who writes about travel and culture for such publications as *Travel + Leisure*, *Condé Nast Traveler*. She tells us about the outdoorsy adventures in her backyard: Miami. See p20

Ink

**Editor** Jessica Prupas **Art Director** Pete Allison **Sub Editor** Omer Ali **Photo Director** Tracey Griffin **Picture Editor** Katie Byrne **Publisher** Louise Burt  
**Advertising & Media Partnerships** Patrick Dunne, Anya Mrkic, Daisy Heyes, Jennifer Brown, Marco Devis, Kane Hopps **HR and Careers** beinkredible@ink-global.com  
**Creative Director** Tan Parmar **Ad Operations Manager** Jamie Rabey **Ad Operations Controller** Katie Mulhern-Bhudia **Print and Logistics** Martin Dunphy  
**Pre-Press** KFR Repro **CEO** Michael Keating **CFO** Jim Campbell **Commercial Director** Denise Jaschke **Managing Director Ink Studio** Jonny Clark  
**Head of Finance** Phil Mollwaine **For Virgin Atlantic: IFEC Managers** Leigh Simmons, Cathy Walters

TO ADVERTISE IN VERA MAGAZINE EMAIL PATRICK.DUNNE@INK-GLOBAL.COM OR PHONE +44 (20) 7625 0700

Vera is published on behalf of Virgin Atlantic by Ink. All correspondence should be addressed to: Vera, Ink, Blackburn House, Blackburn Road, London, NW6 1RZ. ink-global.com

© All material is strictly copyright and all rights are reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission of the copyright holder. All prices and data are correct at the time of publication. Opinions expressed in Vera are not necessarily those of Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Atlantic does not accept responsibility for advertising content. Any pictures or transparencies supplied are at the owner's risk.

The paper in Vera magazine contains a biocide based on Silver Chloride that has been tested and shown to be effective on viruses including feline coronavirus.

Printed on Revive  
Silk 100% recycled  
certified paper

PHOTOGRAPHER: COURTESY WORLD OF WONDER/ALBERT SANCHEZ & PEDRO ZALBA  
ILLUSTRATIONS: JENNIFER HAYASHI



# CHARLES TYRWHITT

JERMYN STREET LONDON

Pass summer style  
with flying colours

In-store: London | Manchester | New York | Washington DC | Houston | Chicago

[CHARLESTYRWHITT.COM](http://CHARLESTYRWHITT.COM)





ANYWHERE ANYTIME.

FOPE PHOTOGRAPHED BY THOMAS LOHR

[FOPE.COM](https://fope.com)

# FOPE



Things to get obsessed with RIGHT NOW

# RED HOT

APRIL



WORDS: JESSICA PRIJAS. PHOTO: EXTERIOR SHOT OF HAMPI ART LABS, 2024, COURTESY OF JSW FOUNDATION, HAMPARTLABS.COM

Now showing //

## Art house in Hampi

► **STRADDLING THE TUNGABHADRA RIVER, THE** Indian town of Hampi is famous for its Group of Monuments – stone temples built between the 14th and 16th centuries. But now it'll also be known for Hampi Art Labs, a mega new development housing exhibition spaces, artist studios, residency apartments, a café and more. The building – designed by master architect Sameep Padora – uses organic materials wherever possible and mimics the curves of the river with its undulating lines. Naturally, it's a beaut.

✈ FLY TO BANGALORE



First take //

# MUSICAL REMAKES ARE DOING BIG NUMBERS

Try to get your head around this: Hollywood is greenlighting movies based on stage musicals based on films, finds Al Horner

ILLUSTRATION: BARRY FALLS

The *Color Purple*'s Taraji P Henson won a Golden Globe award for her role as "Cookie" Lyon in *Empire*.





### ► HERE'S A HOLLYWOOD TREND

that's hitting all the right notes with film fans right now: movie adaptations of musicals that began life as movies. And, frankly, it's a trend worth making a song and dance about. For decades now, Broadway has been the Sandy to cinema's Danny Zuko: two media that go together like rama lama lama ka dinga da dinga dong, to quote *Grease*. From *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music* to *Chicago* and *Mamma Mia!*, movie execs have been taking theatre smashes and putting them on the big screen since 1927's *The Jazz Singer*, the first major movie to feature sound. In return, the boards of Broadway and London's West End have welcomed plenty of movies turned into stage musicals. *La La Land*, *The Lion King*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Hairspray*, *Back to the Future*, *Elf*... the list is longer than

the queue for the ladies' rooms in the intermission at *Hamilton*.

Recently, though, something strange has been happening. Hollywood has been greenlighting cinematic remakes of those movies-turned-musicals. Late last year saw the premiere of *The Color Purple*, a big-screen version of the Broadway hit based on Steven Spielberg's powerful film drama from 1985. January saw the release of a big-screen adaptation of the musical based on *Mean Girls*, the iconic teen comedy. And later this year *Wicked* will hit cinemas – an Ariana Grande-starring spectacle based on the hit stage show, which itself was a spin on one of the best-loved movies of all-time: 1939's *The Wizard of Oz*.

More are surely on the way. If you were a studio exec looking for nailed-on hits, why wouldn't you greenlight a movie based on the musical version of *Mrs Doubtfire*, or *Groundhog Day*, or even the Tony-nominated *Legally Blonde*? These remakes offer studios a chance to exhume familiar IP – movie titles that everyone knows and loves – without being accused of cynically cashing in with a straightforward remake. They're different enough to allow audiences to experience a story they love anew (without having to shell out for expensive theatre tickets) – and for theatre lovers, they can experience the stage shows they adored again, now with big-budget movie magic bringing them to life in new and exciting ways.

It used to be that movies sometimes became musicals, and musicals sometimes became movies, and that was the end of that. Now we're in an era of movies based on musicals based on movies. As a girl named Dorothy once told her dog Toto: truly, we're not in Kansas anymore.

“**THESE REMAKES OFFER STUDIOS A CHANCE TO EXHUME FAMILIAR IP WITHOUT BEING ACCUSED OF CYNICALLY CASHING IN**”

© WATCH THE COLOR PURPLE & MEAN GIRLS

### ▮ SOCIAL CLIMBING ▮

## Celebs are scaling new heights

1 //



Loveable beardo **JARED LETO** recently climbed the upper levels of the Empire State Building to plug his band 30 Seconds to Mars's world tour, which kicks off this month.

**VERDICT: HIGH JINKS**

2 //



Marvel heroine **BRIE LARSON** climbed all 4,198m of the famously challenging Grand Teton peak in Wyoming. She didn't tell anybody about what she called a “once-in-a-lifetime opportunity” for, like, a year.

**VERDICT: ROCK STAR**

3 //



Hunky actor **JASON MOMOA** loves scrambling up massive peaks so much he's got his own reality climbing show, *The Climb*. You can catch the career-changing amateur competition on Vera now.

**VERDICT: MOUNTAIN MAN**

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



Risingstar //

# “My mom keeps telling me to get her more *Joy Ride* DVDs”

Comic **SHERRY COLA** blazed into the mainstream with her hilariously raunchy turn in *Joy Ride* – now she’s vowed to keep surprising audiences in her standup and onscreen

PORTRAIT: NATT LIM

► **SHERRY COLA COULDN’T BE BETTER** named. This is, after all, a performer whose wide-eyed brand of humour fizzles with sugar-rush naughtiness, as fans of 2023 cult comedy smash *Joy Ride* are quick to point out. That film, about four Asian American women journeying through Asia on a mission to understand their heritage, saw the 34-year-old play Lolo, an eccentric slacker who makes sexually explicit art and is all about, in her own words, “inspiring chaos”.

The similarities between the Shanghai-born comic and her carbonated beverage namesake don’t end there, however. Cola’s also refreshing – a one-woman laugh riot who’s bottled a brand-new flavour when it comes to Asian representation in Hollywood. Talking to *Vera* from her Los Angeles home, the 34-year-old explains why, whether performing as a stand-up or wowing audiences in TV comedies like *Good Trouble* and indies like *Shortcomings*, she won’t stop till she’s challenged every stereotype and broken every taboo.

**What do you think it is about *Joy Ride* that has connected with audiences so emphatically?**





WORDS: AL HORNER HAIR: STEVEN MASON MAKE-UP: TAMMY YI STYLIST: LAURA SCHUFFMAN ADDITIONAL PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

*Joy Ride* was the first of its kind – you’d never seen a film like this on the big screen: R-rated, Asian faces, so much humour, so much heart, where we were reclaiming our identity. Because for so long [Asian Americans] have been defined through other people’s lenses. We’ve been the punchlines to other people’s jokes. This time, it was like, “We’ll take it from here!” But I do also think it’s such a human story at the end of the day. I think it has cultural specifics, but also a story full of themes that can make anyone feel seen, that anyone can relate to.

**You described your *Joy Ride* character as “the most authentic version of myself I’ve ever played”. Where did you end and Lolo begin?**

Lolo is just so unapologetically in your face and yet has these insecurities. That’s a reflection of the real me that I’ve never been able to unleash in my craft before. Also, Lolo’s parents run a restaurant and my parents have had a restaurant since I was in fifth grade, so that part was very aligned.

**What does your success mean to your parents? They must be proud of the barriers you’re breaking for your community.**

Oh God, yes! My mom keeps telling me to get her more and more *Joy Ride* DVDs so she can give them out to her friends, because for her this is all just ungraspable – not just that it’s me up there on billboards, but the fact that Asian storytellers now get to live out our truths and tell the sorts of stories that her generation weren’t able to tell. I don’t take that lightly – it’s really special.

**When did you first realise you loved to make people laugh?**

I was always acting up when my dad would make home videos. And I was always, always the class clown. On my report cards, it said I was constantly yapping away, surprising a lot of my classmates with the things that came out of my mouth, because it was so unexpected. Society was so used to Asian women being submissive, because that was a definition that they put on us. I always wanted to shatter that stereotype from a young age.

**Were there particular entertainers you looked up to, who showed you how to shatter stereotypes through comedy?**

Well, when I was a teenager, I felt this need to be on stage, but the idea of actually trying to become [a performer] felt like such a huge



gamble. Lucy Liu existed. Jackie Chan existed. Margaret Cho existed. But there were only a handful of Asian faces on screen signalling that we belonged up there. Which made me hang onto trailblazers like Michelle Yeoh and Sandra Oh even tighter. The big one, though, was Margaret Cho. I remember watching her and thinking, “Wow, everything that comes out of her mouth is provocative. It’s unexpected. It’s dirty. It’s fun – and it’s so loud.” I was inspired by her to live in a way I want to – the loudest girl in the room – because I want to prove society wrong.

**“ I WAS INSPIRED BY MARGARET CHO TO LIVE IN A WAY I WANT TO, BECAUSE I WANT TO PROVE SOCIETY WRONG**

**What’s the next step in that mission to prove society wrong, after *Joy Ride* introduced even more people to your work?**

You know, I would love to do the superhero thing! Or actually, the supervillain thing. Marvel, I’m ready! Call me! To be in the Marvel Cinematic Universe is such a goal, because it plays globally in a way that’s unmatched. I’ve actually got a vision board with people I wanted to work with: Ali Wong, Jordan Peele and Michelle Yeoh, of course. There are options in front of me. I’m writing and developing my own TV show. The future’s unwritten. But I know that the sky’s the limit and I’m ready.

*From above: Sherry Cola in Joy Ride; with Sandra Oh at the premiere of The Tiger’s Apprentice in Los Angeles in January*



☎ WATCH JOY RIDE AND SHORTCOMINGS



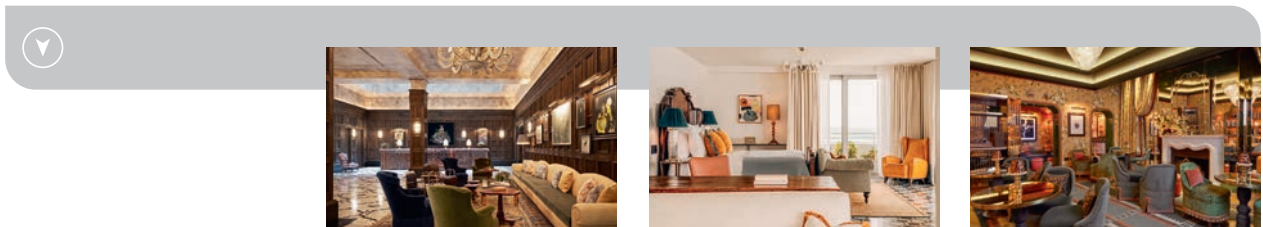
Sleeper hit //

# WIT AND WHIMSY IN NEW YORK CITY

**THE FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL** pulls out all the stops, but with a wink and a glimmer in the eye

➤ **THE BIG APPLE HAS NEVER BEEN** short of luxury hotels. But the new Fifth Avenue Hotel offers something different: all the pomp you'd expect, but with an irresistible dash of whimsy. Housed in an exquisite turn-of-the-century mansion, the hotel harks back to its Gilded Age origins with doting, white-gloved hospitality – 24/7 butler service includes the option of a cocktail poured by your bedside (dubbed the Martini Ritual). It's the quirky detail that really makes this place special. The interior is the work of designer Martin Brudnizki and each of its 153 rooms are a labour of love. Take the magnificent Mansion Suite, where, yes, you'll find a four-poster king bed and complimentary minibar. But look closer: there's a chandelier made up of tiny glass fruits, coat hooks designed as ornate swans, tiger-striped rugs. And with in-house dining from James Beard Award-winning Andrew Carmellini, plus a clandestine wood-panelled drinking den in the form of the Portrait Bar, it's sure to become a high-society hotspot. Cheers to weird.

✈ FLY TO NEW YORK



**3 more  
Brudnizki  
boltholes**

**THE BEEKMAN,  
NEW YORK**

Like The Fifth Avenue, this Brudnizki-designed hotel's origins date back to the late 19th century. Oriental rugs and portraits of the likes of Edgar Allan Poe, who once worked here, hint at the venue's past.

**SOHO BEACH HOUSE,  
MIAMI**

Brudnizki's gorgeous Miami members' club is a real feather in his cap. It backs onto the shore, but you'd be forgiven foregoing a beach day in favour of snuggling into one of the wicker-accented rooms.

**BROADWICK SOHO,  
LONDON**

For this new central London spot, Brudnizki sourced inspiration from far and wide. No expense has been spared in the design – from antiques sourced in Italy to crafted furniture from India.

WORDS: CHRISTINE OCHIEU PHOTOS: THE FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL, PATRICK BILLER, BROADWICK SOHO



Facebook Instagram GrandPalladiumJamaica Twitter PalladiumHotels

**PALLADIUM**  
HOTEL GROUP

## DISCOVER A RENOVATED JAMAICA.

Let yourself be carried away by a relaxed atmosphere in Grand Palladium Jamaica Resort & Spa and Grand Palladium Lady Hamilton Resort & Spa. You can enjoy a swim in the warm waters of the Caribbean, sipping on a piña colada in one of our four crystal-clear pools, or relax yourself by all our Zentropia Palladium Spa & Wellness could offer. Awaken your taste buds in one of our 11 gourmet restaurants with fresh fruit, meat, fish, and the spicy flavours of Jamaican jerk chicken and other local specialties. It's ideal for families and couples alike, offering an extensive range of activities and facilities to suit everyone including a kids' club and 17 bars. Freedom to choose, time to enjoy, and spaces to make the most of your stay. Enjoy your stay with Infinite Indulgence®, it's all included.

For more information, visit [PALLADIUMHOTELGROUP.COM](http://PALLADIUMHOTELGROUP.COM) or contact your favourite travel agent.



**GRAND PALLADIUM**  
JAMAICA RESORT & SPA

MONTEGO BAY - JAMAICA

Dominica Republic • Mexico • Italy  
• Jamaica • Brazil • Spain



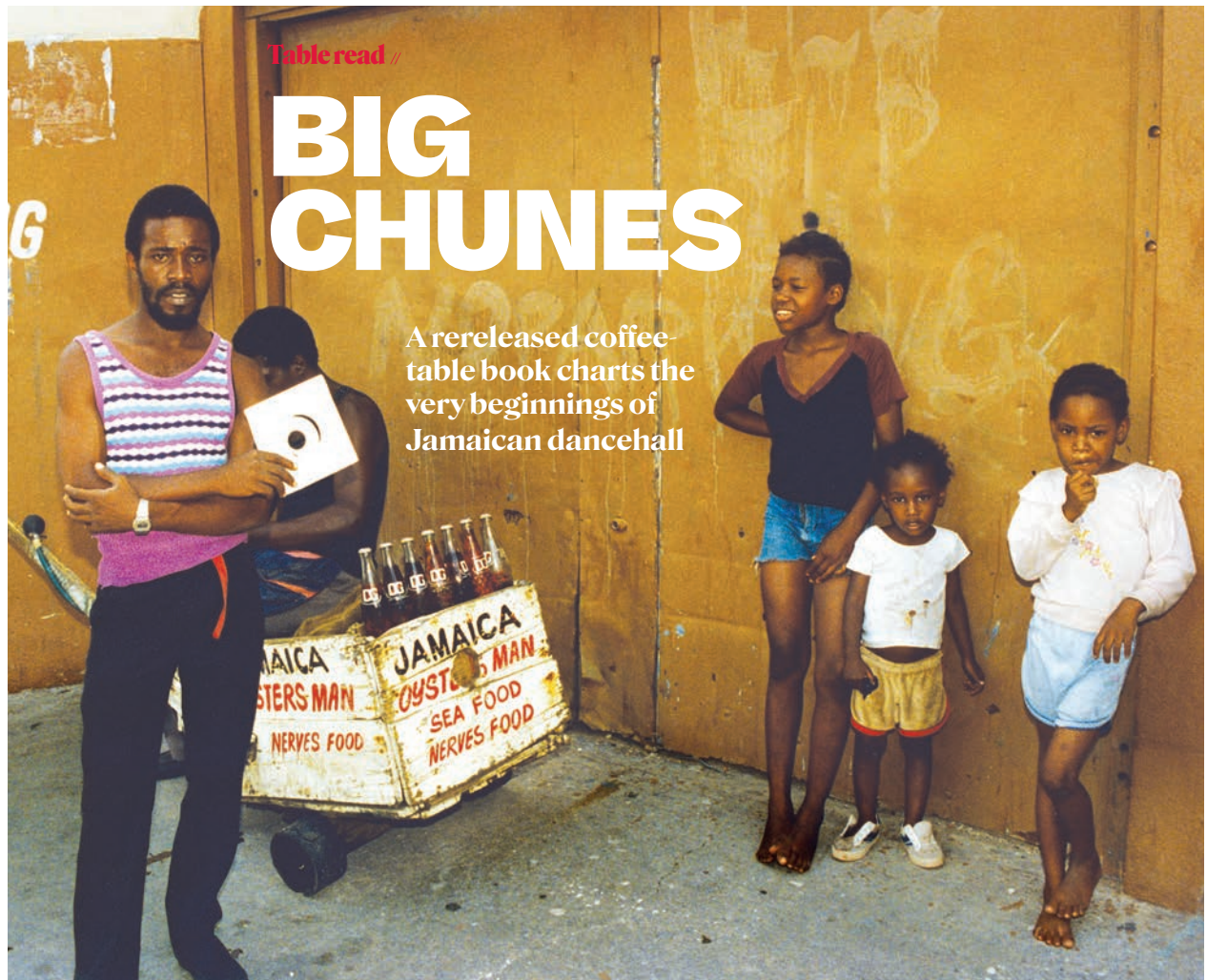


Table read //

# BIG CHUNES

A rereleased coffee-table book charts the very beginnings of Jamaican dancehall

► **IN 1970S JAMAICA, SOMETHING BIG WAS** happening. Massive sound systems rumbled through the districts, manned by deejays like Jah Stitch and Risto Benji. They were playing sounds – rooted in reggae, but with faster rhythms made to soundtrack sweaty dances – that were new to the country and to the world. They called it dancehall.

*Dancehall: The Rise of Dancehall Culture* takes readers there: to the start of a whole new music genre and culture. Featuring the photography of Beth Lesser – who travelled frequently between Canada and Jamaica in the 80s to document the rise of dancehall – its reissued edition also features a new introduction from British-Nigerian fashion designer Duro Olowu. Lesser’s subjects come into sharper focus – those MCs and DJs who were evolving dancehall’s early sounds and making an indelible mark on music history.

Lesser remembers her first encounters with dancehall. She had travelled from Toronto to Kingston with her husband, thinking they would photograph “artists in dreadlocks playing serious, heavy dub music and chanting down Babylon”. Instead, they found that people were collecting cassettes of local dancehall sessions. “The cassette scene was huge!” she says. “Sound systems would play through the night, and the next day, 60- and 90-minute cassettes of the dance would be sold and traded in the streets and in record shops. A DJ could become a star without ever selling a record.”

Soon she found local sound systems and was introduced to the new music they were playing. “Music pour[ed] out of stores, restaurants, buses, taxis. People heard music from dawn to dawn the next day. [It] was woven into every aspect of Jamaican life.”

*Clockwise from above: On Chancery Lane; loading up outside Jammy’s studio; Risto Benji in front of the studio; Jah Stitch selecting at a dance; inside the Youth Promotion studio*







Jammy's studio, in the notorious Kingston area of Waterhouse, was home to local acts like Chaka Demus.



**“SOUND SYSTEMS WOULD PLAY THROUGH THE NIGHT AND THE NEXT DAY CASSETTES OF THE DANCE WOULD BE SOLD**

Not many ventured into these areas with a camera at the time, which gave Lesser unique access to dancehall's early innovators – who, for the first time, properly included women, previously relegated to performing ballads and romantic songs. “They were busting out all over the dancehall scene as DJs, competing directly with the men, performing in sound system clashes,” says Lesser.

Four decades later, dancehall is a cultural powerhouse that has spawned other mainstream genres, such as reggaeton and dembow. But, for Lesser, it was the people who first drew her in and kept her coming back. “They were warm, friendly, kind and very generous. We made many friends. Music has a way of bringing people together.”

● *Dancehall* by Beth Lesser is published by Soul Jazz Books, US\$ 49.95



■ SET VISIT ■



**Life's a beach in Boston**

**I**n Oscar-nominated film *American Fiction*, grumpy lit professor

Thelonious “Monk” Ellison (played by Jeffrey Wright) is surprised when his satirical novel – meant to expose racial bias in the publishing world – is a hit. He bashes most of the book out in a jealous huff at his family’s beach house on Massachusetts’ South Shore. Though Monk isn’t having very much fun on this affluent slice of coast, it’s hard to ignore the gorgeous setting. The beach house is in Scituate, an idyllic town halfway between Boston and Plymouth, where classic New England charm mixes with fascinating Irish-American and maritime history. Just try being salty when you’re at The Mill Wharf restaurant for baked “scrod” – cod with a Ritz cracker crumb and lemon butter.

📺 WATCH AMERICAN FICTION  
✈️ FLY TO BOSTON



WORDS: JESSICA PRUPAS PHOTOS: COPYRIGHT BETH LESSER, SOULJAZZRECORDS.CO.UK ADOBE STOCK



Snacks //

# CLAM ROCK IN SAN FRANCISCO

Sea urchin orecchiette with razor clam and habanada at newly reopened **QUINCE** is a mind-altering mouthful

► **GIVEN THAT QUINCE**, the three-Michelin star San Fran spot by chef Michael Tusk, recently celebrated its 20th birthday, you'd be forgiven for thinking, "If it ain't broke - don't fix it." But genius doesn't work that way. Say hello to Quince 2.0 in a newly renovated Jackson Square space, with Mid-Century dining tables, low lighting, and snuggle-friendly sofa seating under a pretty pastoral mural by artist Galatée Martin. The menu is all new, too - plump for the modest four-course supper, or the more pricey 10-course feast with ultra-seasonal, ultra-local northern Californian produce, much of it from Quince's own dedicated farm a short drive upstate. Highlights? Squab pigeon, from legendary Bay Area birdman Philip Paine. Pitch-perfect wine pairings in elegant designer stemware. And this here sea urchin orecchiette - orecchiette are "little ear"-shaped pasta - with pleasingly piquant habanada and juicy Californian razor clams. Worth shelling out for.

✉ FLY TO SAN FRANCISCO

DRINKS

## Pizza is hitting the sauce

**P**izza flavoured cocktails - it's one way to make a crust. And smart drinking dens everywhere are hopping on the cheesy bandwagon. From the humble Cold Pizza at Double Chicken Please in NYC, with Don Fulano blanco tequila, basil and parmigiano reggiano, to Vegas's high-spirited Pizza

Party at Superfrico (right), with tomato water-infused sweet vermouth and Castelvetro olives. For an intriguingly accented slice of this mad trend, order an I Say Tomato at Cahoots in London. It has Grey Goose, Quiquiriqui mezcal, fresh lime, spicy San Marzano tomato sauce and Cynar artichoke liqueur. Top that.

✉ FLY TO NEW YORK, LAS VEGAS & LONDON



WORDS: ANDY HILL PHOTOS: OIVIND HAUG, COURTESY OF SPIEGELWORLD



# True Gems are Rare to Find. As They Should Be.

ROUND HILL'S PRIVATE VILLA EXPERIENCE



Surrender to the unparalleled luxury of Round Hill's private villas, discreetly tucked amidst the Caribbean's most secluded island paradise.

## EXCLUSIVE VILLA PACKAGES FOR A LIMITED TIME



### Ultimate Villa Retreat:

Elevate your stay in our two to four-bedroom villas. Enjoy your fourth night free, \$100 spa and dining credit, daily in-villa breakfast, VIP welcome basket, and complimentary airport transfers from MBJ.



### Bespoke Villa Indulgence:

Elevate your stay in our five to six-bedroom signature and estate villas. Enjoy your third night free, \$500 spa and dining credit per room, daily in-villa breakfast, VIP welcome basket, and complimentary airport transfers from MBJ.

Limited Time Offer: Book by May 1st, 2024 for stays until September 3rd, 2024.

*\*Terms and blackout dates apply.\**



Discover Your Luxury Escape at [roundhill.com](https://www.roundhill.com)

Reservations: 1-800-972-2159 | [reservations@roundhill.com](mailto:reservations@roundhill.com)





Location scout //

# MIAMI'S GREAT OUTDOORS

The Florida city may be known for its glitzy nightlife, but it also offers plenty of wholesome al fresco activities for those that way inclined, says local writer Jessica Poitevien







► **SOON AFTER ITS 1896 FOUNDING, MIAMI** was nicknamed Magic City as part of a ploy to attract new residents to this humid destination. Today, that magic is real and lives partially in Miami's twinkling skyline (the third tallest in the US), glamorous beaches, Michelin-starred restaurants and raucous, up-all-night bars and clubs.

But there's also magic to be found in the natural beauty that's easily accessible within and around the city. National parks, twisty cycling paths and alligator-filled marshes are just the beginning. For those who know where to look, Miami is teeming with outdoor adventure.

If you've opted for the classic South Florida experience with a hotel stay on the beach, start your open-air explorations with a stroll along the **MIAMI BEACH BOARDWALK**. You can clock in about 11km by foot, bike or skates with beach views on one side and glimpses of the neighbourhood's Art Deco architecture on the other.

Or, if you have access to a car, venture down the scenic A1A route to **JUNGLE ISLAND**, a lush tropical theme park known for its wildlife encounters that allow guests to interact with wallabies, sloths, lemurs and more. For a bird's-eye-view of Jungle Island – and a major adrenaline rush – strap into the aerial obstacle course at **TREETOP TREKKING MIAMI**. You'll climb ropes, balance on wobbly bridges and whoosh along ziplines, all with a view of Miami's skyline peeking behind the tree canopy.

At nearby **HISTORIC VIRGINIA KEY BEACH PARK**, you can mix history with the great outdoors. Guided tours tell the story of this barrier island, once the only beach to officially welcome non-white residents during the South's era of segregation. Experienced cyclists who don't mind a roadside bike path can venture to Virginia Key via the **RICKENBACKER TRAIL** and continue south to other popular parks.

Branching out of the city, head north to **OLETA RIVER STATE PARK**, Florida's largest urban park. Rent a kayak or family-friendly canoe and paddle through the mangrove forest and Intracoastal Waterway. Along the way, try spotting hermit crabs, herons and the occasional dolphin before docking on the beach for a swim. Protected by barrier islands, the waves at Oleta are calm and perfect for families.

To experience Miami's truly wild side, head about an hour west of the city to the Shark Valley entrance of **EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK**. Hike, bike, or take the tram on a 24km loop road with a high concentration of wildlife, including alligators, turtles and egrets. At the end, you'll reach an observation tower with 360° views.

*Left: Everglades National Park is the largest subtropical wilderness in the USA*

“**NATIONAL PARKS, TWISTY CYCLING PATHS AND ALLIGATOR-FILLED MARSHES ARE JUST THE BEGINNING TO MIAMI'S OUTDOOR ADVENTURES**”



FLYING CLUB

*Scan here for more info on our Flying Club. Join the club to earn points on every Virgin Atlantic flight.*

Leaving the park, be sure to stop by the **MICCOSUKEE INDIAN VILLAGE** to learn about the customs of the tribe that has inhabited this region for centuries. Tribe members also lead airboat tours for a fast-paced, immersive jaunt into the Everglades' unique environment – gator sightings practically guaranteed.

Continue your explorations by moving south of the city and slowing down at **FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANIC GARDEN**. This peaceful 34-hectare oasis showcases more than 3,000 species of native and exotic plants, as well as butterflies. Plan your visit around the garden's calendar to catch live music, guided bird walks and more.

Keep this relaxed pace going as you drive deep into South Dade, sometimes referred to as Miami's countryside thanks to the abundance of farmland and fruit stands. **KNAUS BERRY FARM** is the stuff of local lore, opening seasonally (till mid-April, usually) to offer pick-your-own strawberries and tomatoes.

South Dade is also the gateway to **BISCAYNE NATIONAL PARK**. The site is 95% covered by water and dotted with multiple islands, so be ready to get wet. Scuba divers flock here for the shipwrecks along the Maritime Heritage Trail, but guided tours combining multiple activities are arguably the best way to explore. Snorkel above the Florida Reef; paddle through a lagoon where you might spot juvenile sharks, stingrays and turtles; or go fishing on a remote island. With so much to see and do in its great outdoors, Miami will have you hooked.

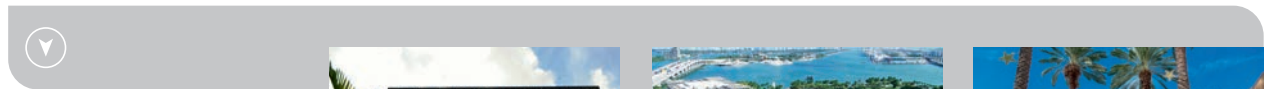
Take to the water in Biscayne National Park, site of the world's third longest coral reef system.



Clockwise from below: Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, feeding a wallaby at Jungle Island and Treetop Trekking Miami



FLY TO MIAMI



**WYNWOOD**  
Come to Miami's Art District for an open-air gallery with 200-plus murals spread across 50 blocks. Stay for the trendy bars and restaurants offering a more laid-back nightlife experience.



**PHILLIP & PATRICIA FROST MUSEUM OF SCIENCE**  
Fun for kids and adults alike, this downtown Miami museum has a 250-seat planetarium, a three-level aquarium and a range of exhibits covering dinosaurs to the human body.



**LINCOLN ROAD**  
Stretching eight blocks and featuring more than 200 boutiques and restaurants, this is a shopper's paradise. Don't forget the nearby New World Center for symphony concerts, including free events live-streamed outside.

3 more Must-dos in Miami

PHOTOS: ADOBE STOCK, COURTESY OF FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN, TREETOP TREKKING, GETTY IMAGES, PHILLIP & PATRICIA FROST MUSEUM OF SCIENCE



# MAMMA MIA! THE PARTY

DANCE, DINE, HAVE THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE



WHERE IT'S SUMMER ALL YEAR ROUND!

Book your tickets now at

[MammaMiaTheParty.co.uk](https://MammaMiaTheParty.co.uk) | The 02, London



Screen test //

# Will we ever grow babies in pods?

How soon till we can all share the load of pregnancy, just like the couple at the heart of new sci-fi rom com *The Pod Generation*? asks Ralph Jones

ILLUSTRATIONS: RUBY FRESSON



➤ **A LOT OF PEOPLE WILL TELL YOU THAT** pregnancy can be a bit of a drag. Spending nine months with a babe stretching your belly to its limit is, when you think about it, A Little Bit Strange. But what if we could, in the words of Samwise Gamgee, share the load?

In *The Pod Generation*, a near future is imagined in which “carrying” a baby is taken literally, and a couple (Emilia Clarke and Chiwetel Ejiofor) are one of many who share their pregnancy by having their baby gestate in an external egg-shaped pod. Conversations about gender and pregnancy are obviously evolving, but one of the inescapable realities of pregnancy in 2024 is that it happens inside the body. The million-dollar question is: does it have to?

We already succeed at keeping alive babies outside the womb, says Ian Henderson, clinical research fellow at the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit. We are familiar with this: although premature birth is the leading cause of death in newborn babies, if a baby is born early, it can have its needs met in an incubator. Similarly, conception need not happen inside the human body, thanks to IVF. But the gulf in between conception and birth – that’s the land of ectogenesis, ie the growth of an organism in an artificial environment.

Currently it is illegal to grow human embryos outside the womb for longer than 14 days. This legislation would of course need to be overhauled in order for full ectogenesis to occur. But Henderson points out there has been plenty of research.



Pig and sheep foetuses have been developed for several weeks in what was attractively called a Biobag, designed by researchers at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

If full ectogenesis becomes achievable in animals, it will only be a matter of time before it is possible in humans. It’s some way off at the moment but it may not be a long way off. “Some people think it will be sooner than later,” Henderson says.

And if ectogenesis is realistic, it could radically change our perceptions of parenting, making the responsibility more equal – in theory. Vincent Straub, a researcher at Oxford Population Health, points out that there is nothing that says a pregnancy has to occur within a female body. “We know by now that womanhood and pregnancy are not really the same thing,” he says. “They’re obviously very related but I think it’s important to separate them and focus on the importance of parenthood.”

Although, as Henderson says, there are numerous complicated adaptations that happen in the body during pregnancy, any environment can be recreated. The psychological hurdles will be as significant as the technical ones. While some people might consider pod babies dystopian, most developments in this field are met with alarm at first. IVF was one – but it has made millions of people happy. Will ectogenesis do the same? We’ll have to see.

**VERDICT: Yes – very probably.**

© WATCH THE POD GENERATION



# Everywatch™



We designed the Sealander to do-anything and go-everywhere. With this new **36mm GMT**, the range now offers an anytime watch for everyone. Its perfectly proportioned, Lightcatcher™ (another trademark) case protects a precision Sellita SW 330-2 Swiss movement, with 56 hours power reserve and dual time functionality. It sports highly legible, highly luminous indices and hands, contrasted against a black, white or dragonfly blue dial. Each Sealander is available on a wide selection of quick-release straps. Or you can opt for either our Bader Bracelet™ or Consort Bracelet™ (yup, more trademarks) or both. Neatly (and nattily) bringing us to its other complication: which Everywatch™?

**Do your research.**

 **Christopher  
Ward**

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





PHOTOGRAPHS:  
**ALBERT SANCHEZ  
& PEDRO ZALBA**

# SERVING REALNESS

Drag legend RuPaul has made a career out of being the extrovert TV host we all know. But, he tells Martha Hayes, he feels that only now, at the age of 63, can he finally be himself. As he releases his new memoir, can the real RuPaul please stand up?

ILLUSTRATIONS:  
**JENNIFER HAYASHI**



RUPAUL





uPaul is done pandering to others. Calling from Washington, DC – where he’s midway through a US book tour to promote his new autobiography, *The House of Hidden Meanings* – he tells me that he’s spent his life tamping himself down to make those around him more comfortable. No more. “So often, someone in my position – an outsider – will try to make people feel non-threatened,” he muses. “Well, [writing this book] was a way to say, ‘Okay, do you know what? Let’s move that out of the way and just get real and raw and honest.’ A lot of what I’ve done in my career is try to put people at ease. Through a lot of hard work and deep soul-searching, I’ve earned the right to just be myself.”

By “myself”, RuPaul isn’t referring to the person he is without the drag, rather the person behind the very public persona. “I’ve always been an introvert masquerading as an extrovert,” he explains. “I learned how to behave in an outwardly way – to be on television and talk – but to be able to do that, I hold certain things close to my heart.”

The extrovert everybody knows is the world’s most famous drag queen, a 63-year-old icon behind one of the most successful competition reality shows of all time, *RuPaul’s Drag Race* (now in its 16th season and franchised in numerous territories). Initially finding fame with his 1992 debut single *Supermodel (You Better Work)*, RuPaul was the first drag queen to land a major cosmetics campaign, with MAC in 1994, and has gone on to release multiple records, as well as star in a variety of TV shows and films over the next 30 years.

What RuPaul, the recipient of 14 Primetime Emmy Awards, has achieved – helping to bring a marginalised art form into the cultural conversation – cannot be overstated. *Drag Race*, in which contestants compete over everything from costume design to stand-up, has proved to be a lifeline not only for competitors – many of whom are people of colour as well as queer – but for its young audience too. Apart from helping people feel seen, it has also changed the popular lexicon: words like “fierce” or “shade” – which originally came from drag ball culture – wouldn’t be in our daily vocabulary if *Drag Race* hadn’t helped popularise them.

So it’s a surprise to me that, despite the monstrous success of *Drag Race*, RuPaul tells me he still doesn’t think drag has fully penetrated the mainstream. “It’s still a revolutionary idea,” he says. “People can go, ‘Oh, hey! Work it girl!’ But to grasp the depth of what [drag] actually means – I don’t think that’s possible. That would mean a major awakening of our culture. And, if you’ve read the newspaper, that’s not happening!”

He has a philosophical, almost metaphysical view of drag’s power. “Drag [helps] people understand that the illusion we call reality is very fragile and very thin. People are invested in these roles that we take on and people will get angry at you if you break the fourth wall.”

When RuPaul was coming up in the punk drag scenes of Atlanta and New York, he was committed to breaking that fourth wall and jolting audiences with his confrontational performance style – in one of his earliest shows, for example, he played a slave on a plantation. Mainstream success meant that his more avant-garde tendencies needed to be neutered. The RuPaul we all know is a boundlessly positive,



RUPAUL



if slightly unknowable, figure – an avuncular “mama Ru” to the young queens on *Drag Race*. But in *The House of Hidden Meanings* he gets into the grit and the glory of his personal history – from his tumultuous childhood in San Diego through coming to terms with his sexuality as a teenager, to finding sobriety and true love. Given he has already published three – albeit fluffier – autobiographical books, *Lettin’ It All Hang Out* (1995), *Workin’ It!* RuPaul’s *Guide to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Style* (2010) and *GuRu* (2018), why is he so keen to tell this version of his story now?

“It’s an important time in history to get real,” he says. “In this country, we’re seemingly on the verge of going into a fascist state.” He thinks that, in the face of a hardening reality, younger folk need to harden up too. “There are a lot of young people who watch our television show and a lot of young people who have been coddled in ways that bear no relation to the life they’re going to live. So my story is the hard knocks. I felt it was important to give them an honest portrayal of what navigating your own unique story and path really looks like.”

So it’s tough love for the generation to whom RuPaul is very much a leading light. And there’s plenty more where that came from. “Unfortunately there is so much focus on the world hurting your feelings, that I don’t think young people have enough fun today, honestly,” he sighs.

“There is this focus on purity and moral superiority; making sure that other people treat them correctly. When I was growing up, I didn’t put that on other people. My friends and I knew



“Unfortunately there is so much focus on the world hurting your feelings, that I don’t think young people have enough fun today, honestly”

*Clockwise from centre: Performing with Elton John in 1994; as Foxy Brown in 1990; with Lady Gaga on Drag Race in 2007; at this year’s Emmy’s; striking a pose; launching his doll in 2005; the panel of Drag Race UK; performing at a gay rights parade in 1993; photographed in 1979; Club Kids Ru in 1987; with Nirvana at the MTV awards in 1993*

there was darkness in the world and we knew there were people who were very ignorant.”

He tells me he’s always lived by the principles of Hanlon’s razor – a philosophical adage that states “it’s more likely people will do something out of a lack of awareness than out of an intentional desire to cause harm,” he says, reading the definition off his laptop screen. “The point of all of this is – there are a lot of things in the world that could make you feel a certain way but I didn’t let that stop me. I didn’t put a lot of focus on it. And it allowed me to freely move throughout my life.”

## RUOLINGO

A GUIDE TO THE MOST SICKENING\* TERMS POPULARISED ON DRAG RACE

### Charisma, uniqueness, nerve and talent

*[noun]:* The four qualities that RuPaul’s next drag superstar must possess. The acronym is implied but – crucially – is never said out loud.

### Tea

*[noun]:* Gossip, preferably of the salty variety. When tea is shared freely, it is said to be “spilled”. And when a queen says “no tea, no shade”, she means that she is speaking without disrespect.

### Sashay away

*[verb]:* RuPaul’s command to the queen who is about to take one last strut down the runway.

### Good Judy

*[noun]:* A trusted friend, named in honour of gay icon Judy Garland.

### \*Sickening

*[adjective]:* A lofty compliment only given to something or someone truly flawless.

### Beat

*[verb]:* To blend one’s make-up. A queen can be “beat to the gods”.

### Shade

*[noun]:* A cutting insult, spoken either to a queen’s face or behind her back. Shade is always “thrown” – ie dispatched – and a consistently rude queen is branded “shady”.







## RUPAUL

Not that life has been easy. RuPaul speaks in a measured, therapised way about his early years – the clear result of many years on the couch, and many “years of sobriety and soul-searching”. It was only through the clarity achieved from 12-step programmes (he’s been sober since 1999) that RuPaul, who was the third of four children and the only boy, felt able to revisit what he calls “the emotional scene of the crime”.

He now understands, for instance, that a significant incident, involving his mother pouring gasoline over his philandering father’s car and threatening to light a match, isn’t merely a traumatic memory – it was the birth of his “dissociative self” and the catalyst for him anaesthetising himself with drugs and alcohol for the next 30 years. “I’ve learned through sobriety that vulnerability is power,” he explains.

Nowadays, RuPaul’s vices are more comestible. After spending a stretch of time in the UK filming the British version of *Drag Race*, he’s discovered the joys of supermarket Sainsbury’s (he puts the emphasis on the second syllable, pronouncing it like “berry”). “[They] have this cookie called Border and it’s a dark chocolate-covered ginger cookie. I went online in LA and bought a bunch, and had them shipped to my house in LA. They’re so good!” And, like most Brits, he’s crazy about a certain Portuguese-chicken chain. “This morning, on my walk, I passed what I think is the only Nando’s in the US. Here in DC I go to Nando’s all the time. They’re very kind to me, they gave me a black card which allows me to have Nando’s whenever I want at no cost.”

When it’s time to burn off the peri peri chicken, RuPaul likes to roller skate. He tells me he always keeps a pair of skates in his trunk and, when the mood hits, he’ll find an empty car park to “roller skate around”. “It’s beautiful,” he tells me.

Today, RuPaul and his husband, Georges LeBar, who have been together since meeting in a New York nightclub in 1994, divide their time between a



RuPaul and his husband Georges LeBar attend RuPaul’s star ceremony on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2018

house in Los Angeles and a ranch in Wyoming. RuPaul’s conversation is peppered with references to his “inner child” (a psychological term for an individual’s childlike aspect), “the universe” and gratitude (“Writing a gratitude list will really give you an idea of what your power is”) and he practises meditation daily. So far, so LA – but this part of RuPaul has become more than just a lifestyle; it’s become his purpose and an extension of his brand.

A fan of self-help books since the 1970s (his favourites are *Toxic Parents* by Dr Susan Forward and *A New Earth* by Eckhart Tolle), he recently co-founded an “all-inclusive” online book store called Allstora. It was

**“Here in DC I go to Nando’s all the time. They’re very kind to me, they gave me a black card which allows me to have Nando’s whenever I want at no cost”**




# EXPLORE COAST TO COAST WITH PRIDE



OutCoast.com highlights LGBTQ-inclusive destinations, experiences and businesses in Florida and beyond.



 Explore Now





**“I love the fact that my drag career has allowed me to become a writer, a DJ, a TV host, a designer – you name it, I’ve been able to do it”**

maybe a bit too inclusive – the venture ran up against early controversy when customers spotted several eyebrow-raising books for sale, including several purportedly anti-LGBTQ+ titles (Allstora has since issued an apology and pulled many of these books from the platform). But, having faced controversy before, RuPaul soldiers on sanguinely. “I’ve always been a seeker and when I was growing up I loved books,” he explains. “It really is a lifelong mission of mine to bring that presence, knowledge and experience to people who are seekers. It’s pretty brilliant that we’re bringing all these books to young people who are looking for those answers.”

Maybe RuPaul has more in common with young people than he previously suggested. Certainly, this multi-hyphenate has the stamina of someone in their twenties. “Retiring is a 20th-century concept. There is no such thing,” he says. “I love the fact that my drag career has allowed me to become a writer, a DJ, a TV host, a designer – you name it, I’ve been able to do it.”

Or maybe I spoke too soon. “Here’s the thing,” he says, when the zeitgeist comes up again. “Generation after generation thinks they invented everything. The ego makes you think you’re super unique and no one has ever gone through what you’ve gone through before. But the truth is, we’re the exact same as we’ve always been – with smartphones.” Keeping it real. RuPaul just can’t help himself.

From above: Opening DragCon UK 2023; with Drag Race guest judge Debbie Reynolds in 2008 and as Queen Chante on The Simpsons in 2018



**THE QUEEN OF DRAG**

RUPAUL’S CV



**BORN**

RuPaul Andre Charles was the third of four children born in San Diego to Ernestine “Toni” and Irving Andrew Charles, an electrician, on 17 November 1960.

**EDUCATION**

RuPaul was a student at Patrick Henry High School in San Diego. When he was 15, he moved to Atlanta to live with his sister, Renetta, and enrolled at the Northside School of Performing Arts. He appeared in drag for the first time onstage in the Tennessee Williams play *Camino Real*.

**FUN FACT**

Before he was born, a fortune teller told RuPaul’s mother that her baby would be famous. Ernestine even introduced him to his aunts with the words, “His name is RuPaul and he’s going to be a star.”

**KEY WORK**

**Supermodel of the World (1993)**

RuPaul has released 15 studio albums; his first featured arguably his catchiest song, *Supermodel (You Better Work)*.

**RuPaul’s Drag Race (2009–)**

The search for “America’s next drag superstar” now spans 16 seasons, several spin-offs, plus numerous international franchises. The formula – drag queens competing in challenges such as lip-synching – is simple; the result is heartwarming and hilarious.

**RuPaul: What’s the Tee? (2014)**

RuPaul teamed up with his fellow *Drag Race* host Michelle Visage for a comedy podcast which also served as the behind-the-scenes scoop on the hugely popular reality show. Celebrity guests included Lady Gaga and Marc Jacobs.

© WATCH RUPAUL’S DRAG RACE ALL STARS

PHOTOS: COURTESY WORLD OF WONDER/ALBERT SANCHEZ & PEDRO ZALBA/BBC/GUY LEVY, GETTY IMAGES; DAVE J HOGAN, ©20TH CENTURY FOX FILM CORP; EVERETT COLLECTION/ALAMY



THE ICONIC AWARD-WINNING MUSICAL  
LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE!



# PRISCILLA the PARTY!

In London's newest and most fabulous venue, HERE at Outernet, the next adventure begins...

DRINK ✨ DINE ✨ DANCE

BOOK NOW FOR THE BEST PARTY IN TOWN!

**HERE**  Tottenham Court Road  
AT OUTERNET

[PRISCILLATHEPARTY.COM](http://PRISCILLATHEPARTY.COM)





# NEW FIRST CLASS

Luxury-as-a-service platform Wheely's industry-leading chauffeur service is dedicated to driving standards

► **ANYBODY LUCKY ENOUGH TO TRAVEL ON A** regular basis knows that time is the ultimate luxury. London-headquartered luxury-as-a-service platform Wheely provides a peerless on-demand and pre-scheduled chauffeuring service, for making the most of your precious time. Simply summon an impeccably presented, showroom-standard BMW 5 Series G60 (Dubai only), or Mercedes E, S or V Class in London, Dubai or Paris using Wheely's intuitive app, and enjoy the ultimate in-car experience. Wheely membership is available to customers who have taken 15 journeys over the past six months, or been invited by another member. Wheely's latest members-only product, New First Class, offers

members a soothing waft of Acqua di Parma car diffuser with its irresistible Buongiorno scent, refreshing towels and bottles of FIJI water. Arrive ready and re-energised after each journey, with additional legroom, heated seats, rear seat pillows, designer lighting and panoramic sunroof. Time well spent.

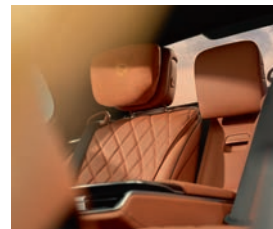
● [wheely.com](https://wheely.com)

“  
**WHEELY'S CORE PRINCIPLES ARE ALL ABOUT SAFETY, ETIQUETTE AND DISCRETION**





*Wheely's industry-leading professional chauffeurs are ready whenever you are*



## Pulling up

**T**he Swiss-founded, London-based firm recently expanded operations to Dubai, part of its long-term vision to be recognised as the last word in luxurious, convenient chauffeured journeys. Aside from priority access to Wheely's New First Class product, members can enjoy the freedom of Wheely Chauffeur for a Day and Concierge services. For customers who are not yet members, Wheely provides exquisite comfort and exceptional chauffeured journeys to them and their families with Business, First and XL Classes. The Perfect Airport Pickups service is ideal if you want a seamless airport pickup with automatic flight tracking.



## Masters of service Chauffeur Academy

Wheely chauffeurs undergo comprehensive training, emphasising at all times the company's core principles of safety, etiquette and discretion. Prospective chauffeurs are overseen by instructors who used to be chauffeurs for A-list

celebrities and high-net-worth individuals. Only one in eight applicants pass. Candidates must sit a rigorous entrance exam, covering language skills and city knowledge. Thoroughly assessed on everything from flawless dress, to how and

when it's appropriate to converse with a passenger, all are subject to non-disclosure agreements to protect customers' privacy. With such high standards, it's no wonder Wheely's chauffeurs are hailed as the best in the business.

# THE LAST

# CAFÉS



PHOTOGRAPHS:  
KARAN KUMAR  
SACHDEV

Mumbai's Parsi cafés – set up by Zoroastrian refugees in the 19th century – are windows onto the city's past. Today, there are only a handful left. Tamara Hinson meets the local people safeguarding these beloved establishments





**SORRY**  
NO TALKING TO CASHIER  
NO SMOKING  
NO FIGHTING  
NO CREDIT  
NO OUTSIDE FOOD  
NO SITTING LONG  
NO TALKING LOUD  
NO SPITTING  
NO BARGAINING  
NO WATER TO OUTSIDERS  
NO CHANGE  
NO TELEPHONE  
NO MATCH STICKS/LIGHTER  
NO DISCUSSING GAMBLING  
NO NEWSPAPER  
NO COMbing HAIR  
NO BEEP  
NO LEG ON CHAIR  
NO LIQUOR ALLOWED  
NO ENQUIRY  
NO GRAPPHY



# IT'S A SWELTERING DAY IN MUMBAI.

Leaden ceiling fans, struggling to stir the sticky air, flutter the Union Jack flag hanging on the wall behind me. To my right, an elderly tuk-tuk driver sips his drink – an electric-pink raspberry soda. The morning rush is well underway and moments after he takes a bite of his bun maska – a bread roll slathered with butter – a Ray-Ban-sporting businessman asks if he can share the driver's rickety wooden table. A bow-tied waiter delivers the businessman's order – a jam puff served on a pastel-pink plate – and after a hurried meal over small talk with the tuk-tuk driver, he scoops up his Gucci briefcase from the dusty floor and dashes out the door.

I'm seated in Britannia & Co, the city's oldest Parsi café. Most of these Mumbai institutions were founded in the early 1900s by Parsis – descendants of Zoroastrians who arrived in India after fleeing religious persecution in Muslim-majority Iran in the eighth and ninth centuries. Regarded as excellent bakers and restaurateurs, they provided fellow immigrants with a taste of home and introduced Mumbaikars to dishes that quickly became staples of their diet. In the 1960s there were hundreds of Parsi cafés dotting the streets of Mumbai – but now there are only a handful and they are dwindling still.

Britannia & Co's current owner is Afshin Kohinoor. His grandfather started the business in 1923; now the 72-year-old spends most of his time presiding over

Opening pages: Britannia & Co, Mumbai's oldest Parsi café

Clockwise from below: The rules at Britannia & Co, Daisy, daughter of the café's owner, and the interior of Kyani & Co

his kingdom from a raised counter near the entrance. Earlier, I'd deigned to ask which dish he recommends. He responds by pointing to the "Do not disturb" sign at his elbow. Thankfully a woman sitting nearby comes to my rescue. "Try the berry pulao," she suggests. "It's a rice-based dish common in Iran, but it wasn't popular here until my grandmother added it to the menu. It's made with Iranian cranberries."



This is Diana, Afshin's daughter. She's next in line to take over Britannia & Co – a rare female boss in the male-dominated world of Parsi cafés, and a rare third-generation café owner. One of the main reasons for the slow disappearance of Parsi cafés is that their young scions are reluctant to take over the family business, instead choosing to pursue university courses and other careers. But Diana felt an irresistible call to her father's trade. "This is my second home. I feel very sentimental about it. Our customers come here to experience a slower pace of life and for the reminders of a different time."

For any Parsi café owner, keeping their family businesses relevant while retaining their timeless lures – a homely, welcoming vibe and cheap homecooked food – is a tall

task. The low price point means profit margins are slim, so they need to rely on volume to keep afloat. But the food is so delicious, and so unlike anything else you'll find in Mumbai, that it keeps people coming back in droves. The most popular items are baked goods like the tuk-tuk driver's piping bun maska and curry biscuits made with cinnamon and semolina, as well as a cardamom custard pudding that riffs on the creamy dessert brought over by the British. Other staples of Parsi cafés include peeling walls, antique







withersworldwide

The law firm for success

# What does success mean to you?

---

We are the leading global law firm for successful individuals, their private capital and businesses in the digital and physical worlds.

For over 125 years, we have been proud to partner with our clients to realize their ambitions, protect their family and interests, and help them use their resources to shape the future.

**Whatever success means,  
we can help.**



[withersworldwide.com](https://withersworldwide.com)



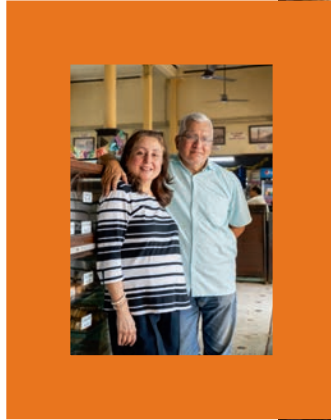
Attorney advertising





grandfather clocks and ornate Iranian floor tiles.

At nearby Kyani & Co, a café close to Mumbai's UNESCO-listed Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus train station, I meet Farokh Shokri. A Mumbai-born Zoroastrian whose parents were born in Iran, Shokri admits that running a Parsi café is hard work, but he wouldn't have it any other way. Whether it's the wood-panelled walls or faded photos of Iran, little has changed since it was founded in 1904 (Farokh's family took over in 1959). "All of the furniture is original," he says, proudly. "Take the chairs – they're teak and don't break easily. And when they do, we call the carpenter."



Customers like all the creaks and cracks – any swanky refurb could actually hurt business. "The cafés have this huge sense of nostalgia," I'm told by a Mumbai-born businesswoman I meet at B Merwan & Co, another Parsi café outside Grant Road Station. She lives in Florida now, but always stops by to



**“Prices are low because we want as many people as possible to experience Parsi culture – rich, poor, Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian. Everyone's welcome”**



*Clockwise from left: Customers at Kyani & Co and its owners, and the interior of B Merwan & Co*

pick up bread rolls when she's in town. She points at the chipped, decorative floor tiles. "Everything is original – the décor is exactly the same as when they opened and that's exactly how we prefer it."

Another Parsi café shibboleth? The strict rules that govern customers' behaviour, which have become a cherished part of the Parsi café experience. At Britannia & Co, the framed rules remind customers that banned behaviours include – alongside spitting, fighting and bringing in beef – phone use and talking to cashiers. Farokh, who enforces similar rules at Kyani & Co, explains that a ban on laptop and phones not only allows customers to retreat from the outside world, it also keeps the till chiming. "We've got to make a profit, but rely on turnover, not price increases." Customers dawdling over spreadsheets

## PARSI CAFÉS

simply wouldn't work, especially when the average bun maska served in a Parsi café costs around 24 rupees (23p). "Prices are low because we want as many people as possible to experience Parsi culture – rich, poor, Zoroastrian and non-Zoroastrian. Everyone's welcome."

His inclusive attitude is shared by Mumbai-born Zyros Zend, co-owner of Yazdani Bakery, tucked into a dilapidated, powder-blue heritage building in South Mumbai. It's easy to miss – the faded sign bearing the bakery's name hangs lopsidedly beneath a dust-caked semicircle of stained glass typical of Mumbai's neglected Art Deco buildings. Yazdani was founded by Zyros's Iran-born grandfather and it's his second home. "I'd come here after school and eat cake dough and nothing has changed – although we now have a fridge." The small café is temporarily closed, but queues still regularly snake down the street (bestsellers include Zyros's legendary cardamom-filled, eggless mawa cakes).



### NICE BUNS

FOUR MORE PARSI CAFÉS TO VISIT IN MUMBAI



#### JIMMY BOY

This family-run restaurant, founded in 1925, serves up a range of Parsi delicacies – including chicken berry pulao (a take on biryani), dhansak (Parsi curry) and bun maskas, all made according to top-secret recipes passed down through generations.

● *11 Bank Street*

#### SODABOTTLE-OPENERWALA

This national chain has a huge following in India. The Mumbai restaurant is a great place to learn about Parsi cafés – tables are adorned with literature explaining their history and walls heave with framed photos of Parsi icons.

● *G Block Road*



#### CAFÉ UNIVERSAL

Café Universal is run by tattooed, baseball-capped Rustom Dehmeri and his parents, all of whom are Zoroastrians and will happily chat to customers about their religion. It's also one of the few Parsi institutions to serve beer.

● *299 Shahid Bhagat Singh Road*

#### SASSANIAN RESTAURANT & BAKERY

Founded in 1913, this iconic spot has a heroic menu encompassing everything from sizzlers – a medley dish served on a hot metal plate – to Chinese food and classic Parsi standbys.

● *1st Marine Street*



“Ratan Tata [the billionaire Tata Group chairman] often sends his assistants to the bakery,” says Zyros. “Other regulars include CEOs, handcart-pullers and pensioners who bring their grandchildren and say, ‘I proposed to granny here!’”

Zyros, who recalls his father spending hours standing in line, chatting with customers, isn’t sure what the future holds. When I ask why Parsi cafés are so important, he replies, “We give people their daily bread and our history spans multiple generations. We’re living dinosaurs!”

## “We’re windows onto the past, institutions stretching back centuries. We’ve been here for 150 years – take care of us”

Zyros peppers his conversation with quotes from Churchill – a reminder of how British rule has influenced these cafés and the people who run them (Diana’s Anglophile grandfather even got the chance to meet William and Kate when they visited Mumbai). “Never surrender!” Zyros bellows, expressing his determination to keep Parsi cafés alive.

Many owners are calling on the Indian government to do more to protect the legacy of Parsi cafés. At Kyani & Co, Farokh hopes for the same UNESCO Intangible Heritage Status bestowed on Singapore’s hawker culture and regularly writes to government bodies to suggest this. It appears the rest of the world is starting to take note, too. In the UK, the owners of Dishoom – whose modern Indian

restaurants are inspired by Parsi cafés – dedicated a chapter of their bestselling cookbook to Kyani & Co and wrote passionately about the importance of Parsi cafés to Mumbai’s cultural life.

So next time you’re in Mumbai, duck out of the busy, dusty streets and into a Parsi café. Take a seat beneath the whirring fans and tuck a serviette under the leg of your wonky table. Order a raspberry soda (made by Mumbai’s Pallonji’s Sodas and served in a glass bottle with the disclaimer “Contains no fruit”) and strike up a conversation with the table next to you. There aren’t many places left in the world like this. “I’ll never stop asking the government to protect us, to help us stand the passage of time,” says Farokh. “We’ve been here for 150 years – take care of us.”



From top left: Bread at B. Merwan & Co, the counter of Yazdani

✪ FLY TO MUMBAI

DON'T FORGET TO PACK  
YOUR NEW **TRAVEL ESSENTIAL**



  
**Lenor**

**CREASE RELEASER**  
WITH **RUBY JASMINE**  
FRAGRANCE

REMOVES CREASES AND  
STATIC WITHOUT THE  
HASSLE OF IRONING



[@the.laundry.hub](https://www.the.laundry.hub)

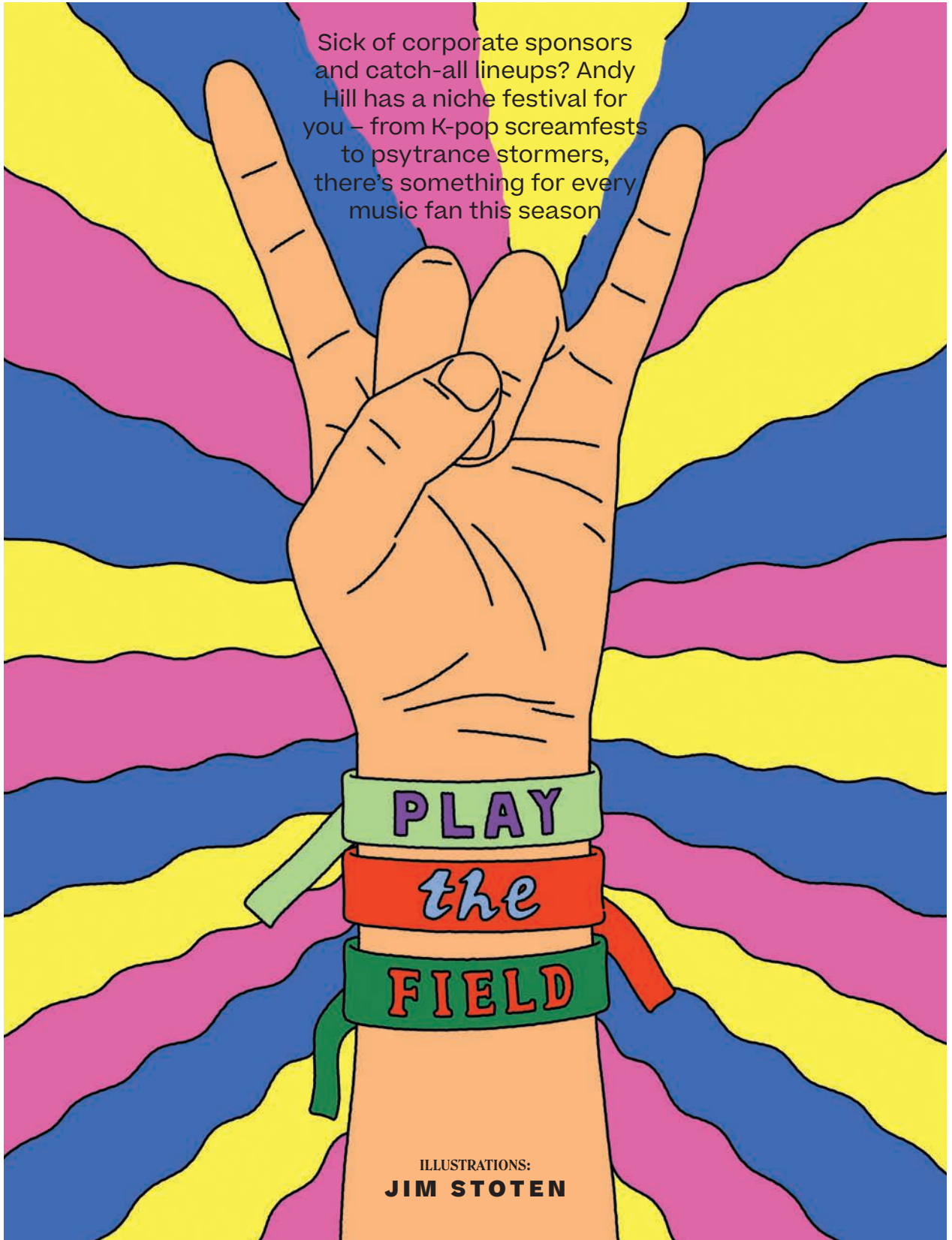


AVAILABLE AT SELECTED UK RETAILERS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY

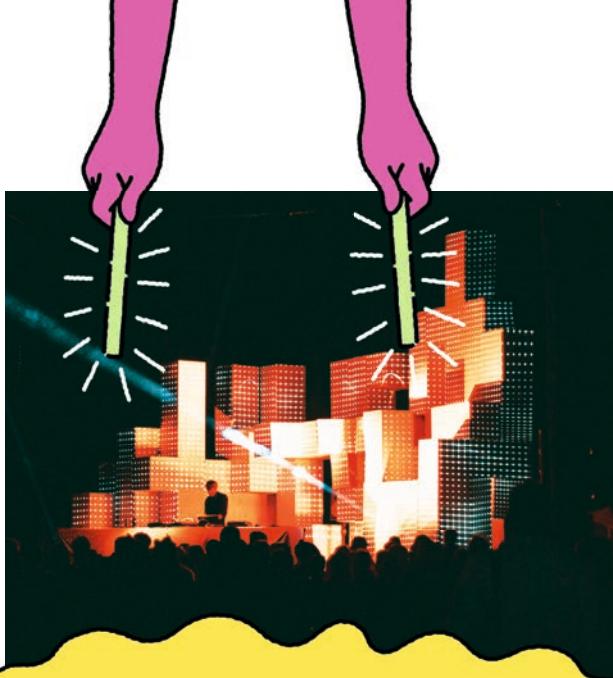
Certain trademarks used under license from The Procter & Gamble company or its affiliates.



Sick of corporate sponsors and catch-all lineups? Andy Hill has a niche festival for you – from K-pop screamfests to psytrance stormers, there's something for every music fan this season



ILLUSTRATIONS:  
**JIM STOTEN**



THE ONE FOR...  
**Transcendental beats**  
 Timeless Festival

**Where?** Cape Town  
**When?** 5-7 April  
**Who's playing?** Astrix, Monkey Safari, Tigerlily

Psytrance is a mad new(ish) flavour of electronic dance music, characterised by hard-driving repetitive kick drums and a sparkly, psychedelic overlay of wonky blips and bleeps. It's incredibly fun to dance to. Timeless Festival in South Africa is a three-day affair in the idyllic surrounds of Elgin Grabouw Country Club,

with bucolic views over the nearby mountains and flourishing "fynbos" flora, which is unique to the region. Leading psytrance DJs keep the party bouncing, with wellness and all manner of shamanic goings on at The Temple – just the thing when you decide you probably fancy a sit down. Which you definitely will, after a day or so.

**Don't forget to bring...**  
 Baggy trousers, facepaint.

✉ FLY TO CAPE TOWN



THE ONE FOR...  
**Offbeat adventures**

**REGGAE SUMFEST**

**Where?** Jamaica  
**When?** 14-20 July  
**Who's playing?** Aidonia, Jada Kingdom, Beres Hammond

The greatest reggae show on Earth – so say

regulars – is back in Montego Bay for another sizzling summer showpiece event. Onstage at Catherine Hall this year, expect to see a plethora of acts underscoring the diversity within the genre. Like Beres Hammond, who's famous for a more

soulful, romantic variety of reggae beloved by older fans. Saturday headliner Babyface is a crossover artist who made a big splash in the 90s.

**Don't forget to bring...** Vibes.

✉ FLY TO JAMAICA

THE ONE FOR...

**Cowboys and girls**

**ROCK THE COUNTRY**

**WHERE?** OCALA, FLORIDA (+ MORE)

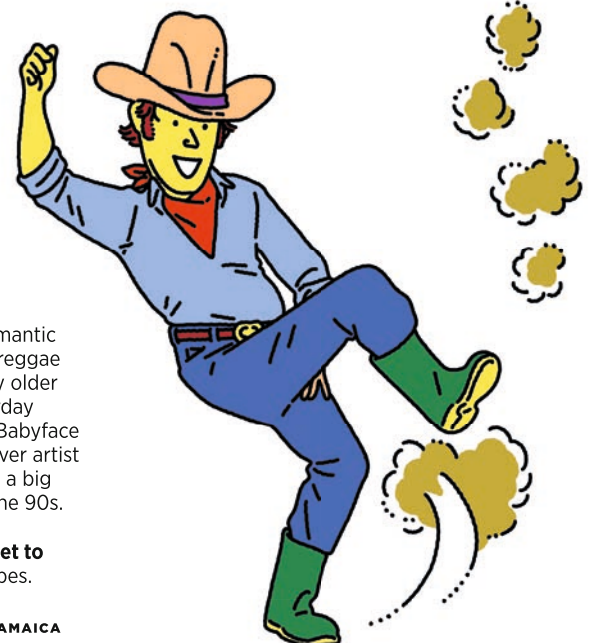
**WHEN?** 7-8 JUNE

**WHO'S PLAYING?** JASON ALDEAN, KID ROCK, HANK WILLIAMS JR

So much more than a mere "genre", country is an entire industry, an aesthetic, a worldview, with a vocabulary all its own. Rock the Country is a new country music festival touring small towns like Rome, Georgia and Ocala, Florida. It's headlined by two giants of the biz, Jason Aldean and Kid Rock, with support from newbies and some refreshingly electronic flavours from the likes of Dee Jay Silver.

**Don't forget to bring...**  
 Blue jeans, boots, bolo tie.

✉ FLY TO ORLANDO







THE ONE FOR...  
**Nostalgic indie kids**  
 Just Like Heaven

**Where?** Pasadena  
**When?** 18 May  
**Who's playing?**  
 The Postal Service, Miike Snow, The War On Drugs

This slick showcase hosted by Goldenvoice – the good folks behind Coachella – neatly evokes that warm fuzzy feeling that washes over you when you find a

forgotten iPod in a lost jacket pocket. Big indie acts from recent(ish) decades – think Death Cab for Cutie, Phoenix, Two Door Cinema Club, Tegan and Sara – take over the Rose Bowl, Pasadena, for a sparkling summer day of picnic blankets on the grass and wholesome guitar-based throwbackery.

And, who knows, you might discover something new, like when sites would dump random gems onto your iTunes library.

**Don't forget to bring...**  
 Skinny jeans, analogue journal for doing Tumblr stuff IRL.

© FLY TO LOS ANGELES



THE ONE FOR...

## Millennial smoothies

### LOVERS & FRIENDS

**WHERE?** LAS VEGAS

**WHEN?** 4 MAY

**WHO'S PLAYING?** USHER, ALICIA KEYS, BACKSTREET BOYS, NELLY FURTADO

Did you come of age around the turn of the century, and can't shake your soft spot for slinky R&B and radio-friendly hip hop jams? Boy, do we have a day out for you. Lovers & Friends gathers the cream of the era's mainstream urban acts – from Janet Jackson to Lil Wayne, Mary J Blige to Snoop Dogg. The whole endeavour is curated by Super Bowl king Usher.

### Don't forget to bring...

The exact spray-on scent you swore by in high school.

✉ FLY TO LAS VEGAS



THE ONE FOR...

## Moshing like mad Camp Punksylvania

**Where?** Gilbert, PA

**When?** 5-7 July

**Who's playing?** 7 Seconds, Laura Jane Grace, The Dirty Nil

"Pennsylvania's ultimate punk rock summer camp"

goes hard with four stages of ear-splitting dms. Female-led organisers Riot Squad Media started the whole shebang as a BBQ for pals a couple years back, now punks and freaks of all stripes are welcome, even with kids in tow (under 10s go free). There's free daily "health goth Yoga" before you charge into the mosh pit like a steam engine.

### Don't forget to bring...

Studded belt, nose ring, ear protectors for junior.

✉ FLY TO NEW YORK







### THE ONE FOR... Folksy jigs

#### GÓBÉFEST

**Where?** Manchester  
**When?** 21-23 June  
**Who's playing?**  
Koszika & the  
Hotshots, Parno  
Graszt, Izzie Walsh

How's this for niche? Góbéfest is an annual celebration of the Szekler people – a group of ethnic Hungarians from Transylvania, part of modern Romania. And this



free-entry festival is an opportunity to imbibe their rich, meaty cuisine, goulash and potent pálinka brandy. There are crafts, a produce market, storytelling, folklore and dance workshops. And folksy music! Parno Graszt is

an explosively energetic gypsy party band, Judit Andrejszki is an elder stateswoman of the Hungarian early music scene. There's even a chance to learn the Szeklers' instrument of choice, the zither – if you're feeling plucky.

**Don't forget to bring...** Big smiles, empty stomach, plectrum if you're a keen bean.

✕ FLY TO  
MANCHESTER



### THE ONE FOR...

## Seeing and being scene

### SAD SUMMER FESTIVAL

**WHERE?** NEW YORK (+ MORE)

**WHEN?** 1 AUGUST

**WHO'S PLAYING?** MAYDAY PARADE,  
THE MAINE, THE WONDER YEARS

Emo, despite the clichéd image of sad eyes and lank fringe, has always had its tongue firmly in its cheek. And while, sure, the music is less superficially “fun” than its sunny, ripped counterparts in the pop-punk world, there's still a lot of laughs to be had at this ironically titled touring festival. The band names and song titles give you a clue to the level of mirth involved – take Hot Milk and their tunes *Alice Cooper's Pool House*, or immortal thrash banger *Party On My Deathbed* (“I'm super nihilistic, yeah!”). Angsty, but in a smirking meta-ironic way.

**Don't forget to bring...**  
A buttload of eyeliner.

✕ FLY TO NEW YORK



THE ONE FOR...

## Die-hard goths

### TOMORROW'S GHOSTS

**WHERE?** WHITBY, UK

**WHEN?** 1-3 NOV

**WHO'S PLAYING?** PETER HOOK & THE LIGHT, CREEPER, IST IST

*Dracula* was inspired by the North Yorkshire town of Whitby. All ruined abbey and windswept hillsides, it's perfect for a goth festival. Tomorrow's Ghosts celebrates "the darker side of life" with bands bearing names like Black Doldrums or Skeletal Family, but there's more to this festival than heavy riffage. A gothic trinket market, lectures on dark literature and eerie theatrical sideshows – plenty to get your teeth into.

**Don't forget to bring...**  
Garlic, a sense of humour.

✉ FLY TO MANCHESTER



THE ONE FOR...

## Idol worshippers

Kcon

**Where?** LA (and various locations later in the summer)

**When?** 26-28 July

**Who's playing?** ATEEZ, Stray Kids, Cravity

K-pop, basically, means South Korean pop music. K-pop exploded onto the world stage in the late 1990s, part of a wider "Hallyu" ("Korean wave"). It's all about maddeningly

catchy tunes, elaborate choreography and impossibly beautiful, high-cheekboned stars. Kcon, a hybrid concert and convention, is a chance to scream at your idols, snaffle Korean delicacies and cosmetics, and flash the V-sign in every photo.

**Don't forget to bring...**  
A lightstick – the K-pop wand. Girl-group Blackpink's lightstick is shaped like a hammer.

✉ FLY TO LOS ANGELES





THE COCOON COLLECTION

MALDIVES | ZANZIBAR

A selection of luxury resorts nestled  
in the most beautiful corners of the Indian Ocean.  
Marvel at the incredible Maldivian white sand beaches,  
azure waters, and long coral reefs.

Be enchanted by the culture and magic of Zanzibar,  
crystal clear sea, unforgettable colors,  
breathtaking sunrises and sunsets.

COCOON MALDIVES | YOU&ME MALDIVES | JOY ISLAND  
GOLD ZANZIBAR | THE ISLAND PONGWE | BAWE ISLAND

THECOCOONCOLLECTION.COM



Cinnamon

MALDIVES RESORTS

YOUR SUMMER  
BUCKET  LIST

[CINNAMONHOTELS.COM](https://cinnamonhotels.com)

EXPERIENCE ADVENTURE, ROMANCE, AND DISCOVERY,  
WITH YOUR CHOICE OF 3 BOOK DIRECT BENEFITS



**DINNER**  
ON THE BEACH



**MARINE**  
EXCURSIONS



INTIMATE  
**COUPLES'**  
MASSAGES



1 KID  
**STAYS**  
FREE



**LOCAL**  
EXPLORATIONS

**15 APR - 30 SEP 2024**

VALID FOR A MINIMUM STAY OF 5 NIGHTS



PROMO CODE  
**SUMMER2024**

\*Terms and conditions apply



## The Maldives

# HOTEL GUIDE



### Stay in the loop

There's no finer feeling than waking up in the Maldives. The Edenic archipelago is graced with blissful natural wonders - not least the sapphire sea, mere steps from your bed, populated by tranquil turtles and psychedelic shoals of fish. And properly next-level luxury resorts. Here's our pick of the best...



**Refined, rustic**

relaxation is the order of the day at You&Me Maldives, an adults-only five-star retreat on Raa Atoll. It's all about intimacy, and privileged access to abundant natural wonders and superlative pampering – like at the Elizabeth Arden Spa with its double suites and glass floor. Of 109 rooms, 99 are overwater, decked out in natural materials with tasteful accents – Aqua Suites have slides leading straight into the sapphire sea. You&Me Maldives’ “dine around”



concept invites couples to mix it up, from theatrical teppanyaki at Rising Sun to urbane champagne at Green Carpet. The standout spot is H2O by Michelin chef Andrea Berton, a submerged dining room for sampling gastronomic genius in the company of sharks – the ultimate immersive date night.



**You&Me Maldives**  
THE ONE FOR IMMERSIVE ROMANCE

**WALDORF ASTORIA MALDIVES ITHAAFUSHI**

The one for **treetop treasures**



Ithaafushi means “pearl island” in the Maldivian Dhivehi language. How apt. This exquisite Waldorf Astoria hideaway is quite the gem. Forty minutes from the airport by private yacht – the resort boasts the biggest fleet here – and you’re standing on bone-white sand, the scent of frangipani and hibiscus tickling your nostrils. From the world-class spa with glass-floored treatment rooms and pioneering wellness concierge to 11 restaurants – including Terra’s tasting menu served in treetop bamboo snugs, champagne cocktails at Amber and vintage bottles at Rock – it’s all startlingly perfect. Ithaafushi itself is the Maldives’ largest private island and an in-house marine biologist takes care of the coral, delighting in explaining the kaleidoscopic pageant of marine life to any curious traveller lucky enough to behold this utter jewel.







**The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands**  
 THE ONE FOR DESIGNER CHIC

**A peerless** architectural masterpiece - the last-ever project, as it happens, by visionary and much-missed Australian architect Kerry Hill - The Ritz-Carlton Maldives is unquestionably a real looker. Get an eyeful of that halo-shaped, timber-clad Bamford spa. Each of its confidently contemporary villas - 100 of them, and not a thatched roof in sight - is graced with a chic infinity pool, plus tasteful coral and rattan accents in the spacious interiors that evoke island life as stirringly as the blown conch greeting you'll receive on arrival. Dine on fresh-as-you-like blue water prawns at the casual, lively Beach Shack; prime sushi at IWAU, under salmon-coloured sunsets; or cocktails by starlight at Eau Bar. Learn to make banana fritters, or allow your deferential "aris meeha" butler do it all for you. Like Kerry Hill, you'll love it so much, you'll want to put a ring on it.



## ONE&ONLY REETHI RAH

The one for unrivalled splendour



When the natural backdrop is this gorgeous - Reethi Rah literally means “beautiful island” in Dhivehi - the resort has to be something special. One&Only Reethi Rah covers 12 sublime white sand beaches, with 118 villas rendered in warm natural materials that sit harmoniously over lapping water or nestled amid verdant gardens. Six world-class restaurants - candlelit Botanica with its wholesome “farm-to-fork” philosophy taking fragrant herbs and the freshest veg from the Chef’s Garden, exotic sunset Middle Eastern at Fanditha, pan-Asian at Earth, or exotic cocktails set to great tunes at Rah Bar are just some. An award-winning spa provides holistic pampering under thatch, with swirling vitality pools and crystal steam rooms. Anyone can try art classes or rock climbing. And gents can get a trim at Barber&Blade. It’s a cut above.



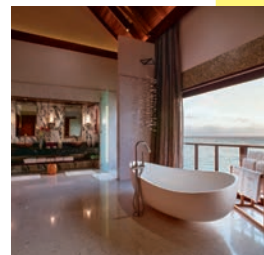
## OZEN Life Maadhoo

THE ONE FOR ELEMENTAL JOY

### Making the most

of the Maldives’ abundant natural charms, magnificent OZEN Life Maadhoo has adopted the elements as its central theme. Its roomy villas are classified as either Earth - that is, perched upon golden sands, shrouded in plush foliage - or Wind, sat on stilts overhanging the rippling waves, all dangling hammocks and swatches of glass floor. If Fire is what you seek, tuck into Hong-Kong-style flash-fried lagoon crab at the Peking restaurant, toast an incendiary sunset at the Gin Is In speciality bar, or dance to hot tunes at Hudhu Bay beach club. Water is

plentiful, naturally - the resort’s exceptional Elena spa boasts salt and freshwater dipping pools, while unforgettable undersea eatery M6m lets you dine alongside curious eel and lionfish. You’ll be in your element.







## GILI LANKANFUSHI, MALDIVES

The one for **eco escapism**



“No news, no shoes” runs the delightful motto of this sumptuous spot on the ludicrously lovely sandbanks of the North Malé Atoll, a mere 20 minutes by speedboat from Malé. The vibe is “castaway chic”. Each of the roomy 45 overwater villas is built using recycled or otherwise sustainable materials, tastefully done out inside with upcycled furniture and provided with eco-smart – yet high-end – toiletries. There are seven Crusoe Villas if you want to push the boat out fantasy-wise. The Meera Spa draws inspiration from old-school East Asian rituals. Food is fished from the surrounding turquoise waters, or the resort’s own kitchen garden. Try impeccable Japanese fusion at By The Sea, with sake or the trademark Wasabi Martini, or a sundowner tipple at newly decked-out Overwater Bar. It’s incredible – drink it in.





## Jason and the Aquanauts

It's not often that a film star pitches a story for the follow-up to a hit superhero movie, but that's just what Jason Momoa did during filming of the first *Aquaman* movie. This time round Momoa's Arthur/Aquaman must team up with half-brother Orm (Patrick Wilson) to defeat the renewed threat of deadly pirate David/Black Manta (Yahaa Abdul-Mateen II). All three stars make a splash, you could say.

📺 WATCH AQUAMAN AND THE LOST KINGDOM

### 65-71// Movies

See how the other half live in *Saltburn*, tap along to musical makeovers of *The Color Purple* and *Mean Girls*, and delve into some *American Fiction*.

### 73-77// Television

Going back in time for *Grime Kids*, Lee Mack tickles our funny bones, and a whole load of doggy action from the likes of Martin Clunes and César Millán.





**79-82 // Audio**

The Last Dinner Party are all dressed up and going places, Liverpool fan Jamie Webster is kicking off and Jon Batiste reinvents pop on *World Music Radio*.



**Vera Loves**

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

A WORLD OF ENTERTAINMENT AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

# WHAT'S ON

APRIL

# THE CHOICE IS YOURS

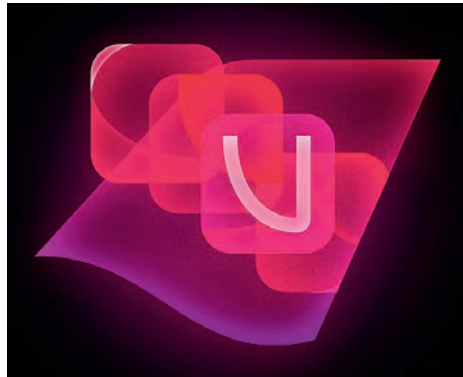
Tune into **VERA**, our genre-busting world of entertainment

## Welcome onboard

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:

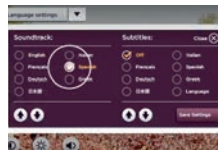
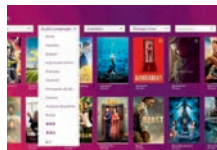
- Select an album from Music, a TV show from TV or a movie from Movies.
- For Music, click on the star symbol next to your chosen track or album.
- For Movies and TV click Save Show/Movie for Later.
- Depending on which aircraft you are on, you'll see a tab or star at the top of your screen.
- Click 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.



## Languages & accessibility

Some of our entertainment comes with a selection of different audio languages and/or subtitles, which you can find by using the onscreen controls.

**See below for more on your aircraft**



Travelling on one of our **A350** or **A339** aircraft? Select the media type – such as Movies – and filter from the dropdown menu at the top of the screen. Then just touch the screen while the media is playing and click on the icon above to select the desired language/subtitles.



If you are on one of our **789** or **A333** aircraft, select subtitles or audio description from the dropdown menu to see what's available. Once you have made your selection, just touch the screen while the media is playing and select the desired audio language or subtitles from the Language Settings dropdown menu. Now you're good to go – enjoy!

## Kids' Zone

Most of our aircraft feature a dedicated Kids' Zone with content just for kids, rated U or PG (suitable for children aged up to 12). For older kids, you can let them loose in the main section, but we do have parental blocking available if you need it.

### Parental blocking

If you want to limit which content is available by BBFC rating at a particular seat, please talk to a member of the cabin crew.

### Accessibility

Subtitles, closed captions and audio descriptive titles (AD) are available on a selection of entertainment.

## Viewing guide

- ⚠ Not suitable for nervous flyers
- ! Unsuitable for children
- ♥ Vera Loves

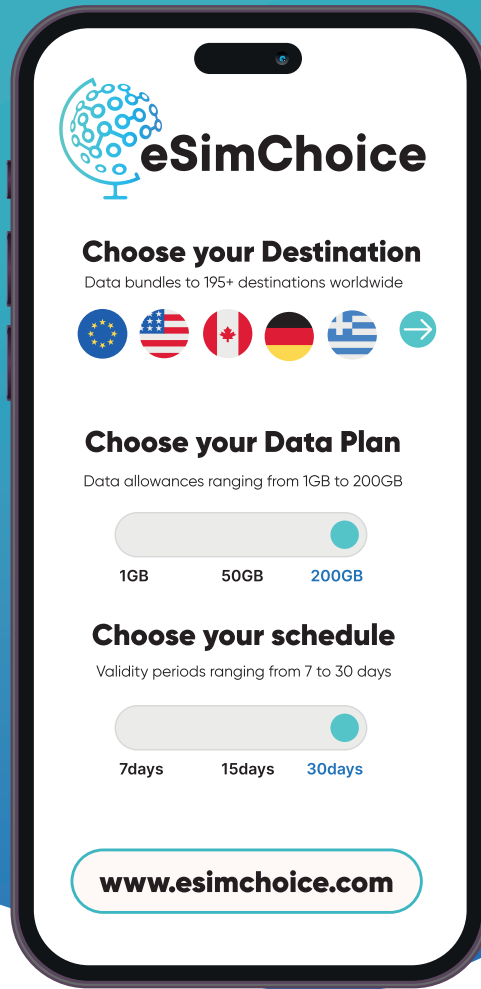
## Headphones

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



# No data connection is like ...

being stranded on an island without a map.



## Say Goodbye to Roaming Fees

**Stay connected with one of our eSIM data bundles to 195+ Countries & Regions worldwide.**



*Grab an eSIM plan instantly and get set up in minutes.*



*Stay connected worldwide, and avoid costly charges.*



*Keep your existing SIM to receive calls as usual.*



[www.esimchoice.com](http://www.esimchoice.com)

# Travel Insurance with you in mind



Buy online at

**truetraveller.com**

even if you're already abroad

★ **REVIEWS.io**



**truetraveller**

travel insurance designed by travellers

In partnership with 



# WHAT'S ON MOVIES

CINEMATIC HIGH SOCIETY

► **ARE THE POSH REALLY** as wild as *Saltburn* makes out? Emerald Fennell's film, about upper-crust folks partying hard at a palatial estate, rather suggests so. And she'd know. Emerald, named by her Etonian jeweller father, attended Marlborough College, then Oxford. Her 18th birthday was featured in high-society magazine *Tatler*.

The subtle cruelties of the English class system are laid bare when low-caste outsider Oliver (Barry Keoghan) is mocked for wearing a rented tux (heaven forbid!) of the sort one is expected to wear to dinner at certain colleges. Lest we forget, the famous Bullingdon Club dining outfit sported by former UK PM Boris Johnson in his youth costs around £3,500.

Ironically, given manners and etiquette are supposedly more refined the higher up the social scale you climb, the blue-blooded are often downright vulgar. Lord Bath of Longleat notoriously kept a harem of up to 75 mistresses, whom he referred to as "wifelets", living on his vast Wiltshire estate. British socialite Lady Anne Glenconner recalls her husband taking



**POSH PARTY ESSENTIALS**

FASCINATOR  
ANTIQUE LIGHTER  
GROUSE FORK  
SNEER OF COLD  
COMMAND

## BAD MANORS

Lee Campbell on the truth behind the hedonism of **SALTBURN**

“**THE HIGHER UP THE SCALE YOU CLIMB, THE BLUE-BLOODED ARE OFTEN VULGAR**”

her to a Parisian brothel on her honeymoon – and spiking her drink with LSD. Just like the movie – for which Fennell staged an actual 48-hour bender – posh parties go hard. Lady Glenconner also tells of a Chelsea house being demolished from the inside out and a Norfolk bash that ended with a gardener dead in the fountain.

So how true is *Saltburn*? The theme that privilege is often needy and status-obsessed certainly rings true. The great English writer Evelyn Waugh – who enjoys a shout-out in the film – made a career out of documenting their oddball excesses. For proof that the nobility

like getting off their faces, just google “*Made in Chelsea drugs*”. I guess we shouldn't be too surprised that the ultra-privileged upper classes are wild in a way that often manifests in a selfish and nasty fashion. Just think about where many of those sprawling estates came from in the first place.

© WATCH SALTBURN

HOT RIGHT NOW



Saltburn ♥

15

Barry Keoghan, Jacob Elordi	127 mins
--------------------------------	----------

▶ **LET'S BE REAL HERE - THERE ARE CERTAIN SCENES IN SALTBURN** that have generated enough online heat to power an old people's home. We won't go into what they are, save to say "risqué" and "eyebrow-raising" are adjectives that apply. Elsewhere, what you have is director Emerald Fennell's follow-up to her brilliant *Promising Young Woman* 2021 debut, which comes on like an update of *Brideshead Revisited*, as a Cambridge student (Barry Keoghan) becomes involved with an upper-class family (matriarch: Rosamund Pike). Psycho-sexual shenanigans and wicked twists follow suit, as well as points about class that certainly have the ring of authenticity. *See opener*

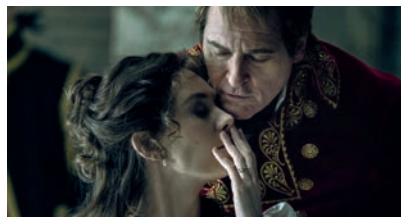


MEAN GIRLS

12

Reneé Rapp, Angourie Rice	112 mins
------------------------------	----------

For a certain demographic, *Mean Girls* will feel like having the whole of the internet smushed in your face at once. For the rest of us, it's a great musical remake of the classic 2004 movie in which the new girl in town goes toe-to-toe with the school clique.



NAPOLEON

15

Joaquin Phoenix, Vanessa Kirby	158 mins
-----------------------------------	----------

If director Ridley Scott is on good form for this biopic of the French emperor, then his star, Phoenix, is even better. The epic story of Bonaparte's rise, as well as his chequered relationship with his wife (Kirby), is brilliantly handled by all concerned.



AQUAMAN AND THE LOST KINGDOM

12

Jason Momoa, Patrick Wilson	124 mins
--------------------------------	----------

Our hero must fend off a vengeful Black Manta (Yahya Abdul-Mateen II), all the while avoiding a climate emergency. It looks good and features people with seagoing superpowers duking it out underwater. What more do you blimmin' want?



THE COLOR PURPLE ♥

12

Taraji P Henson, Danielle Brooks	140 mins
-------------------------------------	----------

The 1985 classic gets a musical makeover, and if you're thinking "corny cash-in" you couldn't be further from the truth. It tells the story of Celie (Fantasia Barrino) who, escaping from an abusive husband, embarks on a long road to find happiness. All the feels are here.



FREUD'S LAST SESSION !

Anthony Hopkins, Matthew Goode	121 mins
-----------------------------------	----------

Based on a play, *Freud's Last Session* finds its stars, Hopkins and Goode, on impeccable form to tell the story of a fictional meeting between CS Lewis and Sigmund Freud. Heavyweight discussions? Of course. But they also know how to have a laugh (thank goodness).



# Taking liberties

## How accurate is *Napoleon*?

**Is it true that Napoleon “came from nothing and conquered everything” as per the breathless tagline of Ridley Scott’s latest historical epic?** Mais non! The “Little Corporal” (Joaquin Phoenix) was born into minor Corsican nobility, so wasn’t exactly a nobody. And he never conquered Spain or, ahem, the Brits.

**Did he really watch the execution of Marie Antoinette?** The French Revolution and its overthrow of the monarchy provides the essential backdrop to his tale, but Boney’s attendance at the guillotine is a total fabrication – for historians, this one really takes the cake.

**What about all the battles? They’re real, right?** He was a legendary commander, winning 52 battles during his career. But the scene where he shoots the Pyramids is nonsense – that battle was miles away and cannons of the time were nowhere near strong enough.

**Did he meet Wellington?** Nope, sorry. Historians say Napoleon and his arch nemesis maybe passed within a mile of each other at Waterloo, but that’s it. Ridley Scott’s reply? “Get a life.”



WATCH NAPOLEON

VERA LISTINGS: ANDREW HOLMES WORDS: ANDY HILL PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

### BLACK STORIES



## American Fiction ♥

15

Jeffrey Wright, Tracee Ellis Ross

117 mins

➤ **AMERICAN FICTION IS A RARE BEAST IN THAT IT MANAGES TO** be both satire and family drama, nicely dovetailing the timely messaging with a well-wrought character study. A neat trick – and no doubt probably why it’s being touted as one of the best in year – whose success owes much to a brilliant central performance from Jeffrey Wright. He plays not-too-successful novelist Monk who, exasperated with stereotypical novels of Black experience, pens a micky-take. What he doesn’t expect is that his satire, *My Pafology*, will be taken seriously and he’ll be proclaimed as an urgent new voice in Black literature. It adds up to a comedy-drama that’s well-observed, topical and exquisitely performed.



### ORIGIN

12

Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor, Niecy Nash

135 mins

Acclaimed biopic telling the story of Isabel Wilkerson (Ellis-Taylor, in an outstanding performance), the first woman of African American heritage to win the Pulitzer Prize in journalism, as she writes her landmark work, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*.



### ALL DIRT ROADS TASTE OF SALT

15

Charleen McClure, Reginald Helms Jr

92 mins

Charting the growth, loves and heartbreaks of a Black woman in Mississippi – from her childhood through to her adult years – *All Dirt Roads Taste of Salt* is a genuinely moving, not to mention flawlessly performed drama. It’s one to treasure.

BAD ROMANCE



May December ♥

15

Natalie Portman, Julianne Moore	117 mins
------------------------------------	----------

► **TODD HAYNES' LATEST COMES TRAILING A WHEELBARROW FULL** of awards and nominations, with all concerned getting multiple nods: Haynes for his direction, of course, but in particular Natalie Portman and Julianne Moore, whose typically brilliant performances lie at the heart of this movie's appeal. Moore plays Gracie who, in a sensational scandal many years ago, was sent to prison for seducing a 13-year-old boy. Now out of chokey, she's married to the bloke in question, the couple have three kids, and to all intents and purposes, lead a great life. Into this (relatively) stable mix comes Elizabeth (Portman), an actress due to play Gracie in a movie about the scandal.



MILLER'S GIRL

15

Martin Freeman, Jenna Ortega	93 mins
---------------------------------	---------

To explain why this movie is controversial would mean giving away the plot, so let's just whisper that it's something to do with the age difference between Freeman, playing a teacher, and student Ortega.



ANYONE BUT YOU ♥

15

Sydney Sweeney, Glen Powell	104 mins
--------------------------------	----------

Eye-candy settings are at stoopidly high levels in this winning rom com. Sweeney and Powell are the couple who, thanks to a misunderstanding, hate each other – but must pretend to be in love, natch.

PERFECTLY FORMED



HAROLD & MARY !

Dermot Crowley, Phyllis Logan	12 mins
----------------------------------	---------

Devastating short about the eponymous couple – played by Crowley and Logan – who've been together for the best part of half a century. Their relationship is tested by Harold's dementia diagnosis.



EVERYBODY DIES... SOMETIMES !

Tanya Reynolds, Mathew Horne	11 mins
---------------------------------	---------

Mathew Horne (him off *Gavin & Stacey*) is one of the stars of this dark comedy about Mara, who lives with the somewhat dark idea that she has killed everybody she's ever been close to.



GENE !

Tim Fox, Emmanuel Okafor	2 mins
-----------------------------	--------

What does Gene Simmons of Kiss get up to when he's not being a rock god? The answer, according to this irreverent short film, is that he does everyday tasks, except he does them the Gene Simmons way.



MUM'S THE WORD



THE POD GENERATION

12

Chiwetel Ejiofor, Emilia Clarke | 101 mins

An intriguing mix of sci-fi, comedy and romance here with Clarke and Ejiofor playing a couple who, in the not-too-distant future, use "pod technology" to literally grow a family.



SCRAMBLED

!

Leah McKendrick, Ego Nwodim | 100 mins

Meet Sara (McKendrick), a thirtysomething woman who isn't quite ready to accept her status as "eternal bridesmaid". So she sets out on an empowering and frequently hilarious journey of self-discovery.



The End We Start From

15

Jodie Comer, Joel Fry | 102 mins

▶ **IF YOU WERE TO GO SOLELY ON THE MARKETING FOR THIS ONE,** you'd think that Jodie Comer stars in a gripping and timely thriller about a mother trying to save herself and her baby from an apocalyptic flood in London. And, yes, it is indeed partly that, with the very prescient notion of a climate emergency being expertly mined for its nail-biting elements - not just the flood itself, but the business of everyday survival after the waters hit. However, where *The End We Start From* really excels is the way in which it combines this part of the story with a study of relationships and parenting, both subjects tackled with great insight and emotion. Elsewhere? Well, it's very much the Comer show.

Short shorts

Meet Discover Film's Jaine Green



Hi Jaine! What is Discover Film?

We're a leading short-film festival, taking entries from over 100 countries. Our very best films are shown on Vera.

Aren't short films all arty and weird?

If you've not watched one in a while, you'd probably be blown away by the production values of short films nowadays. Big stars and talented producers love the freedom to make shorts as quick, fun passion projects.

What was the first short film you loved?

The *Dancin' Outlaw*, a documentary about Jesco White. He was a hard-living, tap-dancing resident of West Virginia. I was hooked. I watch thousands of films every year and I remember every single one.

What's onboard right now?

*Gene* is a clever animation about a rock god going about his daily life. *Harold and Mary* has famous faces giving heartrending performances. *Tondex 2000* (left) is my idea of the perfect short - it's beautifully crafted, with outstanding performances by both characters.

Is the future bright?

The genre is absolutely thriving, with giant leaps in technology opening up the art of filmmaking to everyone, even in the most challenging places and on very limited budgets.

WATCH THE SHORT FILMS CATEGORY

LAUGH IT UP



## The Holdovers ♥

15

Paul Giamatti,  
Da'Vine Joy Randolph

133 mins

▶ **THERE'S SO MUCH TO LIKE ABOUT ALEXANDER PAYNE'S LOVELY** comedy-drama that it's difficult to know where to start. There's the central performance by Paul Giamatti. He plays Paul, a teacher at a New England boarding school who gets the plum job (#sarcasm) of looking after a bunch of pupils stranded at school over the Christmas holidays. That's pretty much the story in a nutshell; what springs forth is where the real magic lies, as Paul forms unexpected bonds with Mary, the cafeteria manager, who must also stay at school (a brilliant performance from Da'Vine Joy Randolph) and Angus, a student feeling abandoned by his mother. The story moves gracefully from comedy to tragedy.



### ARTHUR'S WHISKY

12

Diane Keaton,  
Patricia Hodge

96 mins

A stellar cast including Boy George and Lulu is one of the many reasons to see this British comedy – and Vera exclusive – in which three ladies of a certain age discover a tippale that makes them look younger. The result is a touching and amusing take on ageing and friendship.



### MIGRATION

U

Elizabeth Banks,  
Kumail Nanjiani

91 mins

Animated family movie about Mack, a duck who overcomes his fear of adventure to go on holiday with his family – only to get more than he bargained for. Awkwafina and Danny DeVito are among those adding their voices to the adventure. You'd be quackers to miss it, ahem.

## Movie quiz

### Take on our featured films

1 //

Riffing on *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Anyone But You* is now the highest grossing live-action Shakespeare film adaptation, but what animated feature based on the Bard's work is the GOAT?

2 //

*May December* is Julianne Moore's fifth collaboration with director Todd Haynes – how many can you name?

3 //

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* was previously adapted for the big screen in 1985 by which director, who also acts as producer on Blitz Bazawule's new musical movie?

4 //

A Vote for Pedro poster in the cafeteria in Tina Fey musical *Mean Girls* references which movie that was released the same year as the original *Mean Girls* film 20 years ago?

5 //

Seventies boarding school movie *The Holdovers* is director Alexander Payne's second outing with Paul Giamatti after which winery-tour flick back in 2004?

● *Answers on the right*





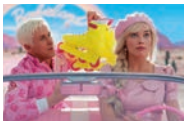
# OUR COMPLETE MOVIE LISTINGS

Make your choice from the A–Z of our pick of the BEST OF THE BEST

## NEW RELEASES

### A–D

- Aliens Abducted My Parents and Now I Feel Kinda Left Out
- All Dirt Roads Taste of Salt
- American Fiction
- Americanish
- Anatomy of a Fall (Anatomie d'une chute)
- Anyone But You
- Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom
- Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe
- Arthur's Whisky
- Back on the Strip
- The Baker



- **Barbie**
- Bernadette
- Blue Beetle
- The Book of Clarence
- Brother
- The Burial
- The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial
- The Canterville Ghost
- Carmen (2023)
- Cassandro
- Cat Person
- The Color Purple
- The Creator
- Daddy
- Dead Shot
- The Dive
- Dreamin' Wild

- Dream Scenario
- Dumb Money

### E–H

- The End We Start From
- The Equalizer 3
- Expend4bles
- Fallen Leaves (Kuolleet lehdet)
- Ferrari
- Five Nights at Freddy's
- Freelance
- Fremont
- Freud's Last Session
- Gran Turismo
- Haunted Mansion
- A Haunting In Venice
- The Holdovers
- The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes

### I–L

- Influencer
- Insidious: The Red Door
- Joy Ride
- Jules
- Jungle Beat: The Movie
- Kandahar
- Killers of the Flower Moon
- The Kill Room
- The Kingdom: Flame of Destiny
- Lego DC Comics Super Heroes: Justice League vs Bizarro League
- Lights Out
- Lola

## M–Q

- The Machine
- Mafia Mamma
- The Marsh King's Daughter



- **The Marvels**
- May December
- Mean Girls
- Medusa Deluxe
- Meg 2: The Trench
- Mending the Line
- Migration
- Miller's Girl
- A Million Miles Away
- The Miracle Club
- Mission: Impossible – Dead Reckoning Part 1
- Monster
- Napoleon
- Next Goal Wins
- No Hard Feelings
- The Nun II
- The Old Oak



- **Oppenheimer**
- Origin
- The Painter
- Past Lives
- Paw Patrol: The Mighty Movie
- The Persian Version
- The Pod Generation
- The Portable Door
- Priscilla

- Puffin Rock and the New Friends
- Puppy Love

### R–V

- Reality
- The Retirement Plan
- Ride On
- The Royal Hotel
- Rumble Through the Dark
- Saltburn
- Sanctuary
- Saw X
- Scooby-Doo! And Krypto, Too!
- Scrambled
- Scrapper



- **She Came to Me**
- Shortcomings
- Sick Girl
- Silent Night
- So Long for Love
- Somewhere in Queens
- Sound of Freedom
- Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse
- Strays
- Suzume
- The Swan Princess: A Fairytale is Born
- The Swan Princess: Far Longer than Forever
- TAZ: Quest for Burger
- TeenTitans Go! & DC Super Hero Girls: Mayhem in the Multiverse
- Thanksgiving
- Theater Camp



## The Three Musketeers: D'Artagnan (Les Trois Mousquetaires: D'Artagnan)

- Tripped Up
- Trolls Band Together

### W–Z

- War Pony
- What Happens Later
- Wish
- Wonka
- The Wrath of Becky
- The Zone of Interest

## VERA CLASSICS

- About Time
- Atonement
- Bridget Jones's Diary
- Crazy, Stupid, Love
- The Departed
- Eastern Promises
- Gangs of New York
- Gladiator
- Goodfellas
- Indecent Proposal
- Interstellar
- La La Land
- Memento
- No Country for Old Men
- The Prestige
- Slumdog Millionaire
- Something's Gotta Give

## REGIONAL

- Afamefuna
- Angrezi Medium
- A Bag of Trouble
- Born to Fly
- Brahmastra Part One: Shiva
- Daredevil Musthafa
- The Ex-Files 4: Marriage Plan
- Golmaal – Fun Unlimited
- Kantara
- Kapoor and Sons
- Kesari the King
- Merry Men 3
- Orisa
- Pathaan
- Rocketry: The Nambi Effect
- Something Like Gold
- Street Dancer 3D
- Student of the Year
- Tanhaji: The Unsung
- Tatsama Tadbhava
- The Two Aishas
- Uunchai
- Vadh
- Vikram Vedha

## SHORT FILMS

- Bean Feasa (Wise Woman)
- Cat Got Your Tongue
- Everybody Dies ... Sometimes
- Gene
- Harold & Mary
- An Irish Goodbye
- Strange Way of Life (Extraña forma de vida)
- The Stupid Boy
- Tondex 2000



# BENNETT WINCH

HANDMADE IN ENGLAND



## The smartest bag on board

Gone are the days of taming unruly suit bags in high winds held only by an exposed hanger, while your wheelie case goes for a wander down the airport ramp. The Bennett Winch Suit Carrier Holdall combines a garment bag and a duffel into a single piece of luggage for those who seek a smarter way to travel.



WHAT'S ON

# TELEVISION

APRIL

HYPING UP THE SMALL SCREEN

## LIFE OF GRIME

Playwright Theresa Ikoko takes us back to 2001 in heartfelt UK rap drama **GRIME KIDS**

► “GRIME MUSIC IS A MANIFESTATION OF a community, its people and their relationships,” says showrunner Theresa Ikoko. Her latest hit, *Grime Kids*, was inspired by scene legend DJ Target’s memoir, set in the early 2000s. We caught up to ask what inspires her and how making the show needed a solid crew.

**Hey, Theresa! What drew you to the book?**

I love how it’s not just the story of grime, but of the people and places that made it. You get a sense reading it how Stormzy headlining Glastonbury happened because some kids on Devons Road in east London made studios in their bedrooms. Because an older Jamaican man gave his son some decks one day, or a mum was listening to Revival on her kitchen radio.

**I bet doing research for the show was fun?**

Yes! The storyline among our five leads is fictionalised. But it was vital we got the background detail spot on. Long chats with Target and his friends about what equipment they were using, what DJs were on what stations at what time, even the placement of traffic lights, or area bus-route numbers. And the dialogue – I had lots of fun on WhatsApp groups dusting off half-forgotten slang terms.

**The cast is brilliant.**

Thank you! They lived together during filming and that created such chemistry. The humour, the banter. The bravado, but also the softer side of male friendship during that tender coming-of-age period really comes across, I think.

**Who’s your favourite grime artist?**

Have to say Shystie. She told me loads of incredibly useful stuff about life as a woman on that scene. Voice of a generation.

“ I HAD LOTS OF FUN ON WHATSAPP GROUPS DUSTING OFF HALF-FORGOTTEN SLANG



PHOTO: ADOBE STOCK

© WATCH GRIME KIDS

MUST WATCH



**The Tourist** ♥

15

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

► **BIGGEST TV PHENOMENON OF THE LAST FEW YEARS (THAT'S NOT *Mr Bates vs The Post Office*)?** That would be *The Tourist*, the twisty-turny drama starring Jamie Dornan. In the first season we found his Elliot waking up with amnesia in an Aussie hospital and getting drawn into an ever more bewildering mystery. This second season (we have the whole of it onboard, binge fans) finds Elliot returning to Ireland in order to rediscover his roots – only to get dragged into his past life. What made the first season really stand out was its mix of leftfield drama and black comedy. Happily, the creatives involved, who have since gone on to also give us *Boat Story*, know better than to mess with a winning formula.



**LEE MACK: HIT THE ROAD MACK** ♥

15

Comedy	120 mins
--------	----------

If you know Lee Mack from *Not Going Out* and *Would I Lie to You?* – in particular his habit of delivering superfast one-liners – then you know what to expect from this stand-up film. Big banter and sharp wit – all delivered at Mack speed. See *box overleaf*



**PROJECT ICEMEN**

!

Sports Corner	113 mins
---------------	----------

Triathletes. They're the ones monopolising the fast lane at the swimming pool. But as this documentary shows, bonkers triathlete Anders Hofman puts that lot to shame, attempting to be the first person ever to complete a long distance triathlon in – wait for it – Antarctica.



**TEN PERCENT** ♥

15

Comedy	60 mins
--------	---------

This British version of the colourful French TV show *Call My Agent* has a stellar cast telling the story of a London talent agency where agents scramble to keep stars including Kelly Macdonald, Helena Bonham Carter and Dominic West happy.



**TRIGGER POINT** ♥

15

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

You'd expect this bomb-disposal drama from Jed "Line of Duty" Mercurio to be full of gut-wrenching twists, fiendish double-crosses and, of course, nail-biting races against time. And you'd be right, because that's exactly what you get.



**EXTRAORDINARY EXTENSIONS** ♥

Lifestyle	60 mins
-----------	---------

Rapper, Brazilian jiu-jitsu expert and now property-and-design enthusiast Tinie Tempah casts an eye over homeowners' radical transformations in this series. Can his expertise benefit a couple trying to add an eco-friendly pool to their house?



# Five things You never knew about Jed Mercurio

**1** // He's a qualified doctor. The wildly successful creator of *Line Of Duty* and *Payback* was a frustrated medic. He saw an ad to be script adviser on a hospital drama, the rest is TV history.

**2** // He's a showrunner. Jed Mercurio is a writer, director and producer on his projects, a rarity in the UK but much more common in the US.



**3** // His parents are Italian. However, Jed's parents decided not to teach him Italian, after an older brother was bullied for being different.

**4** // He loves *Hill Street Blues*. Several locations in *Line of Duty* are named after police stations on the iconic American cop show.

**5** // Accountancy inspires him. *Payback* features a widowed accountant (Morven Christie) who has to placate a vengeful fraudster. It did numbers.

WATCH PAYBACK



## THE FUNNIES



### Big Boys ♡

15

Box set

27 mins

► **THE TIMES CALLED THIS UNIVERSITY-BASED SITCOM “ONE OF the most funny, tender, profound, sad-happy comedies [of the] year”.** And who are we to disagree with that? Based on a book as well as Edinburgh Fringe shows created by writer Jack Rooke, it revolves around Jack, a shy 19-year-old who, as well as still getting over his dad's death, is also struggling with the fact that he's gay and has yet to tell the world. There's also the small matter that he's starting university and is singularly unprepared for the heavy social life. At uni, Jack meets Danny, who is keen to chat up female students while dealing with mental health issues – thus the scene is set for well-observed and very modern comedy.



### CATASTROPHE ♡

15

Comedy

30 mins

Sharon Horgan and Rob Delaney made an unbeatable writing and acting team for this sitcom, which perfectly skewers the ups and downs not just of modern parenting but of modern life. We have episodes from the brilliant farewell season onboard.



### JUICE ♡

!

Box set

Up to 28 mins

Mawaan Rizwan wrote this very funny sitcom and stars as young gay guy Jamma, who must navigate his relationship with Guy (Russell Tovey), as well as his traditional family. Series one is here; what makes it stand out is a surreal sensibility and genuinely out-there feel.

RUFF GUIDES



**The Secret World of Guide Dogs with Martin Clunes** ❤️

Culture	60 mins
---------	---------

► **LOSING HER EYESIGHT AFTER A SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTION,** Leicester woman Jaina Mistry was in need of a guide dog – and in 2012 found a doggy companion in Laura. Years later, it's time for Laura to retire and she must be found a new home. Step forward Martin Clunes, who takes on the simultaneously painful and fulfilling task of finding a new residence for Laura, as well as seeing the search for a new dog for Jaina. In the process, Clunes meets the volunteers and staff who raise and train these remarkable animals. As he says, "It's an incredibly moving world where animals are trained to do a life-changing job." If your heart needs warming, you need look no further than this uplifting show.



**CÉSAR MILLÁN: BETTER HUMAN BETTER DOG**

Lifestyle	60 mins
-----------	---------

The Emmy-nominated Mexican-American dog trainer makes a timely TV return to help give new pet parents the tools they need to teach their dogs good habits and shed the old bad habits.



**MAKING THE MOVIES: THE STRAYS** !

Factual	26 mins
---------	---------

Are you one of those people who mourn the fact that the onset of streaming has meant the death of the DVD making-of featurette? Then this is for you. Here we find out how the dogs talk in *Strays*.

PROPER DRAMA



**THE LAZARUS PROJECT** ❤️



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

In series one of the Brit sci-fi series, George (Paapa Essiedu) found he could make time go backwards in order to prevent mass extinction events. We have the second season onboard, set in 2012.



**BOILING POINT** ❤️



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

This mini-series starring Stephen Graham picks up from the frenetic 2021 film of the same name. Set in a busy restaurant, the show's selling point is its in-yer-face style, which puts the viewer right at the centre.



**YOU** ❤️



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

This tale of perennially lovestruck serial killer Joe (Penn Badgley) trying to find his perfect match is as utterly ridiculous as it is addictive. We have the whole of season four showing onboard.



MUSIC MATTERS



**GROUND CONTROL: EZRA COLLECTIVE 2023** ♥



Culture | 52 mins

This blend of documentary and concert film finds the London-based, Mercury Prize-winning jazz quintet taking to the stage in Paris to showcase their hip hop and Afrobeat-inspired sound.



**Grime Kids** ♥



Drama | 60 mins

► **SET IN 2001, GRIME KIDS CHARTS THE EMERGENCE OF THE** eponymous hip hop genre through the eyes of five lads who plan to start their own crew and make their voices heard through music. As the series begins, we meet our five protagonists, who are wondering what to do with themselves as school ends and summer looms. At the same time, a new, London-based strain of hip hop, known as grime, is providing the soundtrack to the urban experience. Smitten by the way in which the new beats reflect the life they lead, our guys want to get onboard. What better way, then, to form their own crew and set about making a name for themselves. *See opener*



**THE PIANO**

Reality | 60 mins

Claudia Winkleman hosts this really rather lovely talent show, in which judges covertly observe performers on “street pianos” at railway stations in order to find the UK’s best amateur pianists.

**Mack daddy**

**Why Lee Mack is a national treasure**



**Mack has a sharp mind.** His wit makes him the perfect foil to David Mitchell on *Would I Lie To You?* and countless panel shows. Plus, *Not Going Out* is now the longest-running sitcom on air.

**He’s funny, obv.** Mack’s stand-up eschews contemporary avant-garde comedy styles in favour of good old-fashioned gags that come thick and fast, delivered with the fizzing Eric Morecambe style of northern physicality.

**And big-hearted, too.** In 2022 he and fellow comic Bill Bailey walked 100 miles to raise money for cancer relief in honour of their late friend Sean Lock. Just weeks before, Mack had scored the winning penalty in that summer’s Soccer Aid match for UNICEF at the London Stadium.

**Mack is surprisingly mindful.** He quit drinking in 2016, is a committed vegan and co-hosts a podcast called *I Can’t Believe It’s Not Buddha*. He’s worked with Wim Hof, describing the cold-plunge guru as “a proper bona fide lunatic”.

© WATCH LEE MACK: HIT THE ROAD MACK



**FLEMING**  
VERANDAS



**OUTDOOR LIVING DELIVERED ALL YEAR ROUND**



**VERANDAS | AWNINGS | GLASS ROOMS**

Fleming Verandas is the leading provider of luxury outdoor living solutions, blending style, elegance, and intelligent design in our range of verandas, awnings, and glass rooms. Renowned for meticulous craftsmanship and unwavering commitment to excellence, we create outdoor spaces epitomising sophistication, practicality, and comfort.

Our exceptional products and unparalleled customer service guide clients through every step, from consultation to installation. Endorsed by the Which? Trusted Trader scheme, we're dedicated to bringing clients' outdoor living visions to life with unmatched expertise.

**Get in touch or come and visit us at one of our showrooms today!**

[www.flemingverandas.com](http://www.flemingverandas.com)



# WHAT'S ON AUDIO APRIL

THE TASTIEST SOUNDS AROUND



## COOKING ON GAS

Laura Snapes tells us why **THE LAST DINNER PARTY** have made a masterpiece

► IN AN ERA RULED BY MINIMALIST aesthetics and enigmatic indie-rock, The Last Dinner Party (TLDP) are serving up the indulgent antithesis: opulent prog-punk with rock-opera DNA and a taste for ecstasy in all its forms. “We’re making a statement that we’re not a bloodless band,” says singer Abigail Morris. Their riotous debut album, *Prelude to Ecstasy*, arrived to critical acclaim in February and looks set to make them the band of 2024. Prepare to get splattered at their banquet...

### The facts

For TLDP, the south London post-punk scene was uninspiring: a drab, predictable offering that they were certain they could outshine with their own unique Baroque-rock vision. Abigail Morris, Lizzie Mayland and Georgia Davies met at King’s College, then found Guildhall students Aurora Nishevci and Emily Roberts, and hothoused their sound during the latter days of the pandemic before staging their own hyped early gigs, one of which sparked a bidding war won by Island.

### The finery

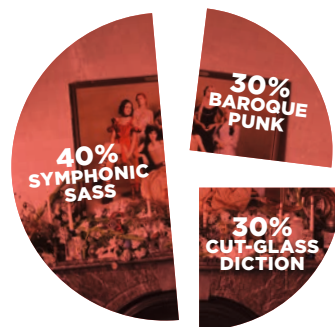
In Florence and the Machine’s 2022 song *Choreomania*, the star sang of rock ‘n’ roll being resurrected “like if Jesus came back, but in a beautiful dress / And all the evangelicals were like, ‘Oh yes, oh yes, oh yes.’” Right on time, TLDP came billowing through the door in crinolines and ruffles, with “mood board queen” Morris setting dress codes for their shows such as “O Muse! Greek myths and legends”, “The language of flowers and Victoriana”, *Velvet Goldmine* and *Brothers Grimm*. It caught on from their earliest shows, full of “teenage girls in the

front row wearing beautiful dresses and going all out and expressing themselves,” according to Roberts.

### The fanfare

The first major British release of 2024, *Prelude to Ecstasy* wowed the critics, with *The Guardian*’s Alexis Petridis extolling their “preposterously nailed-on” choruses, *The Observer*’s Kitty Empire likening them to “watching firecrackers going off indoors” and *NME* saying they “offer a type of melodrama that doesn’t crop up often in modern mainstream pop”. On release in February, the record hit No 1 and became the biggest debut album by a band since Years and Years’ first album in 2015. A fresh run of live dates sold out almost immediately. Festival season beckons. And that’s just for starters.

## THE MAKE-UP OF THE LAST DINNER PARTY



🎧 LISTEN TO PRELUDE TO ECSTASY

FRESH SOUNDS



**Jamie Webster** ♡

10 for the People  
ALTERNATIVE

► **LIVERPOOL FC FAN JAMIE WEBSTER, WHO WAS BORN IN THE CITY'S** Norris Green and first found employment as an electrician, gained attention for his musical talent when he changed the words of *Mrs Robinson* to incorporate star Jordan Henderson. (It's in your head now, isn't it?) The club got in touch, asked him to record some songs for them and his journey began. And what a journey. Over three albums – this is the latest – Jamie's been showcasing an enviable knack for penning songs that go right to the heart, illuminating those corners of everyday experience most songwriters don't bother to explore.



**FRANK CARTER & THE RATTLESNAKES** !

Dark Rainbow  
ROCK

Artistically restless Frank Carter now fronts this punky outfit who riff up a storm over lyrical themes involving such matters as male toxicity and the dangers of becoming a star.



**THE LAST DINNER PARTY** !

Prelude to Ecstasy  
ALTERNATIVE

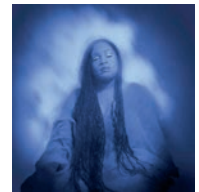
One of the reasons that The Last Dinner Party have been hailed as Britain's most exciting new band is their idiosyncratic dress code, but do they cut it musically? Oh, yes. See *opener*



**THE VACCINES** ♡

Pick-Up Full of Pink Carnations  
ALTERNATIVE

West London's The Vaccines are often described as the UK's answer to The Killers. This, their acclaimed sixth album, has been described as being "an album full of singles".



**NAILAH HUNTER** ♡

Lovegaze  
ALTERNATIVE

Crafting mystical folk and ambient since 2019, harpist Hunter's debut finds her coaxing her usual soundscapes into more of a song-based form. Just beautiful.

**Rudh boy**  
The king of Kollywood



Anirudh Ravichander started playing piano aged three, egged on by his dad and mum, both stars of the Tamil movie scene – aka "Kollywood". He's composed countless movie tie-in hits, like *Why this Kolaveri Di*, remixed Diplo and signed to Sony. Tracks like *Sodakku* or *Dippam Dappam* reveal his genius for blending Indian classical textures with thudding EDM.

🎧 LISTEN TO BEST OF ANIRUDH RAVICHANDER



R&B SOUNDS



RAYE !

My 21st Century Blues  
POP

Despite being one of the most-streamed artists in the world, Raye struggled to get this album released. Finally, after tussles with her label, here it is, and having already yielded a number one single, *Escapism...* well, let's just say her old label must be kicking themselves.



VARIOUS !

Retro R&B  
RETRO

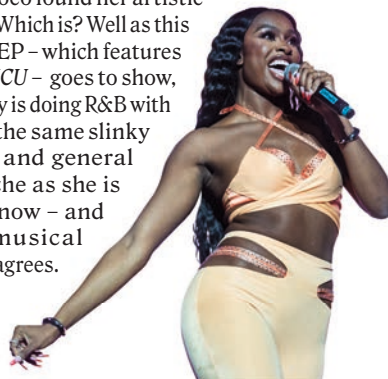
Despite the pursuit and approval of all things new and shiny, it does a body good to look back once in a while. Hence this *Retro R&B* set to remind us just how good the likes of Cameo's *Word Up* or TLC's *Waterfalls* were.



Coco Jones !

What I Didn't Tell You (Deluxe)  
R&B & SOUL

> **A TENNESSEE UPBRINGING FOR** Coco Jones led to her auditioning in Nashville, hoping to pursue a career in entertainment. Next thing you know, she's part of the Disney family and a regular fixture on Radio Disney. Frequent trips to the studio resulted, but it's arguable that it wasn't until signing to Def Jam in 2022, by then in her mid-twenties, that Coco found her artistic voice. Which is? Well as this latest EP – which features track *ICU* – goes to show, nobody is doing R&B with quite the same slinky vibes and general panache as she is right now – and the musical world agrees.

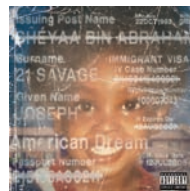


ALTANTA HIP HOP

Killer Mike !

Michael  
HIP HOP

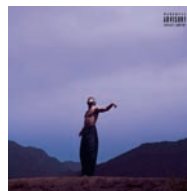
> **ATLANTA RAP IS A GENRE UNTO** itself and if OutKast are very much the wellspring then Killer Mike, having appeared on the duo's *Stankonia* and *The Whole World*, was present at the beginning. Solo joints followed, as did the critical acclaim, but it wasn't until he joined forces with producer El-P to form Run the Jewels that the commercial success came, too. Now he's rightly admired as one of the world's best MCs and, the odd hiccup aside, looks in no danger of relinquishing his crown. This sonically rich album features collabs with many of Atlanta's finest.



21 SAVAGE !

American Dream  
HIP HOP

The American Dream according to 21 Savage turns out to be a game of two halves. On the first side (not that there are sides, but you know what we mean), he showcases his rap skills while on the second half he displays his softer, more song-based side.



6LACK !

Since I Have A Lover  
R&B & SOUL

Rapper 6lack (pronounced "black") took the name after his rather hair-raising upbringing in Atlanta's Zone 6. This, his third album and the follow-up to *East Atlanta Love Letter* (can you see a theme here?), is an ode to romance.

Stay classy  
Scratch that  
classical music  
and operatic itch

1 //



HERA HYESANG PARK  
WITH ORCHESTRA DEL  
TEATRO CARLO FELICE  
AND JOCHEN RIEDER  
Breathe

The breath-taking South Korean soprano Hera Hyesang Park has some truly heavyweight musical backing here and still manages to transcend them.

2 //



LANG LANG  
The Chopin Album

He is, according to *The New York Times*, the "hottest artist on the classical music planet", and here the 41-year-old pianist devotes an entire record to the composer who has inspired him the most: Polish virtuoso Frederick Chopin.

3 //



SHEKU KANNEH-MASON  
Elgar

Award-winning Sheku has been described by no less an authority than *The Times* as "the world's new favourite cellist". This follow-up to his sensational debut *Inspiration* is an album of works centred on Elgar's Cello Concerto.

KEEP IT UPBEAT



**RENEE RAPP, AULI'I CARVALHO** ♥

*Mean Girls*  
SOUNDTRACK

Not surprisingly, the world has gone gaga over the remake of the classic high school comedy, not least because it's been tricked out with some great new songs. The brilliant breakout stars Renée and Auli'i are all over this soundtrack. The result? Totally fetch.



**DONNA SUMMER** ♥

*Icons - Donna Summer*  
ICONS

Along with collaborator Giorgio Moroder – and simultaneously with Kraftwerk – Boston-born Donna Summer changed the landscape of pop and dance music forever. For proof, apply within.



**CALVIN HARRIS** !

*Funk Wav Bounces Vol 2*  
DANCE & ELECTRONIC

Volume one of this two-part project was club bangers all the way. This follow-up, on the other hand, is much more smooth and chilled-out. Guests include Dua Lipa, Young Thug, Katy Perry, Big Sean, Justin Timberlake, 21 Savage and Pharrell Williams.



**Jon Batiste** ♥

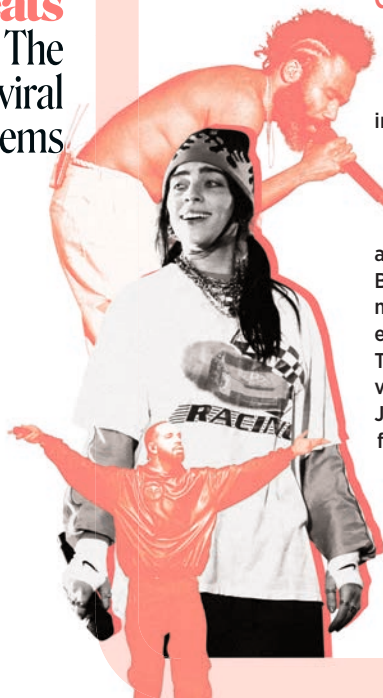
*World Music Radio*  
POP

▶ **THERE'S REALLY ONLY ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE**

Jon Batiste and that word is “wow”. At the age of just 37, this is a musician (singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, bandleader and composer, if you want to be precise) who's recorded and performed with artists including Stevie Wonder, Prince, Lana Del Rey and Mavis Staples. Not forgetting the fact that he co-composed the score for the Pixar film *Soul*, for which he received an Oscar, Golden Globe, a Grammy and a BAFTA. So when this maestro turns his hand to a solo album you can bet we're listening. For a start, he's assembled an array of guest stars – Lana Del Rey and Kenny G among them – while secondly it comes with lofty ambitions as Batiste hopes to create no less than a new vision of modern pop, where music from across the globe can form a new, exciting whole. Does he succeed? An armful of awards and nominations at this year's Grammys would seem to say yes.



**Sick beats**  
The best viral anthems



**Childish Gambino**  
**THIS IS AMERICA**

Donald Glover's era-defining masterpiece ingeniously paints gospel sweetness on a rugged trap canvas to evoke the febrile atmosphere around the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement towards the end of the last decade. The unforgettable video – directed by Japanese-American filmmaker Hiro Murai – is a haunting triumph. Bizarrely, *This Is America* was first dreamed up as a diss track, with Gambino taking aim at – of all people – Drake.

**Billie Eilish**  
**BAD GUY**

White-hot brother and sister double act Billie and Finneas Eilish unleashed this floor-filling breakthrough banger back in early 2019 (it's the fifth single from her debut album). Apparently it's about poseurs, people who say they're “bad” when really they aren't. Simultaneously juvenile and wickedly worldly wise, it made Eilish the youngest Grammy Record of the Year winner – at 18 – and the first artist born since the year 2000 to score a number one hit. Deserved? To quote the song: “Duh.”

**Drake**  
**HOTLINE BLING**

Drake's 2015 hit is truly viral, in that it both dominated charts worldwide and spawned a meme. You know, the one where Drake shuns the top thing, while approvingly fingerwagging the bottom thing? Billie Eilish, covered *Hotline Bling*, a song about booty calls (or lack thereof), her version peaking at the meme-worthy UK chart position of #69.

LISTEN TO VARIOUS ARTISTS - VIRAL ANTHEMS





# KAMADOJOE®

INTRODUCING

## KONNECTED JOE

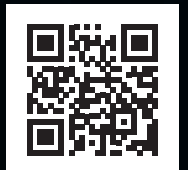


# THE FUTURE OF OUTDOOR COOKING

LEARN MORE AT

# KAMADOJOE.COM

SCAN HERE



## DISNEY 100: THE EXHIBITION

The Walt Disney Archives' biggest and best exhibition ever is back at ExCeL

London. Behold priceless artefacts from across a century of cinema – including a script for *Steamboat Willie* (1928), Dick Van Dyke's carousel horse in *Mary Poppins* (1964), a crystal slipper from *Cinderella* (2015) and Scarlett Johansson's *Black Widow* (2021) catsuit. And don't miss *Once Upon a Studio* – a joyful, and emotional short film marking Disney's 100th anniversary. Featuring 543 characters, the film assembles heroes and villains, princes and princesses, sidekicks and sorcerers in a spellbinding combination of hand-drawn and CG animation. Magic.



● [disney100exhibit.com/london](https://disney100exhibit.com/london)

# WHAT'S HOT NOW



### VIRIDIAN NUTRITION

Committed to crafting supplements that are effective, ethical and pure, Viridian uses 100% active ingredients with zero nasties. The Viridian High Five Multivitamin is a unique blend of 23 vitamins, minerals and plant extracts, with Vitamin B5 to support normal mental performance and reduce fatigue, all in a handy one-a-day vegan capsule.

● [viridian-nutrition.com](https://viridian-nutrition.com)



### LENOR CREASE RELEASER

Maintain an enviably crease-free look with Lenor Crease Releaser, a game-changer for anybody who doesn't compromise on looking great even while travelling. Simply hang up your creased garments, give them a quick squirt of Lenor's fragranced formula, smooth by hand and watch those tiresome crumples dissipate.

● [@the.laundry.hub](https://the.laundry.hub)

WORDS: ANDY HILL





### TITANIC BELFAST

Experience probably the most extraordinary story of all time for yourself at Titanic Belfast. Architecturally ravishing, and situated on the very spot where the Titanic was designed and launched, this attraction's award-winning artefacts include the Titanic's iconic deckchairs, and hero musician Wallace Hartley's world-famous violin.

● [titanicbelfast.com](http://titanicbelfast.com)



### KIND BAG

Groovy London indie brand Kind Bag's stylish Hackney Backpack comes in an array of nifty colourways, plus it's water resistant, machine washable and ideal for laptops. Best of all, it's made from 100% from recycled plastic bottles, destined for the ocean or landfill. So far Kind Bag has recycled 6 million bottles. What's in your backpack?

● [kindbag.co](http://kindbag.co)

# BUYS GUIDE

THE VERY BEST IN  
SPRING FASHION,  
DAYS OUT AND  
TRAVEL MUST-HAVES



### THRUDARK

Designed by former UK Special Forces, worn here by Jason "Foxy" Fox from Channel 4's *SAS: Who Dares Wins*, British heritage brand Thrudark uses cutting-edge fabric technologies to create hard-wearing, high performance apparel. Discover its extreme cold weather expedition gear, hot weather clothing and activewear.

● [thrudark.com](http://thrudark.com)



### CHARLES TYRWHITT

Dressing well this time of year is all about versatility – coping with whatever curveballs the weather sees fit to send our way. Charles Tyrwhitt's 100% Cotton Rib Crew Neck Jumper is just right. Breathable, great for layering under a jacket and graced with subtle detailing, it's also machine washable. An indispensable spring style classic.

● [charlestyrwhitt.com](http://charlestyrwhitt.com)



# HEATHROW TO LONDON IN AS LITTLE AS 15 MINUTES\*

JUST ENOUGH TIME FOR 4 SONGS

KIDS 15 AND UNDER TRAVEL FREE

## BOOK ONLINE

AT [HEATHROWEXPRESS.COM](https://www.heathrowexpress.com) OR VIA THE APP

\*15 MINUTE JOURNEY TIME TO LONDON  
PADDINGTON FROM HEATHROW TERMINALS 2 & 3.  
ADDITIONAL 6 MINUTES FROM TERMINAL 5. FREE  
TRANSFER AVAILABLE TO TERMINAL 4.



**Heathrow**  
Express



# CREDITS

VIRGIN ATLANTIC NEWS AND VIEWS

## ► MEET STEPHANIE

Jones, a Virgin Flight Services Manager of 23 years service. “I’ve always loved flying our Johannesburg route,” she says. “One such flight, about eight years ago, I got chatting to a colleague who’d volunteered at a children’s home. She showed me pictures and I was captivated.” Stephanie struck up a friendship with Lisa Ashton MBE, a former TV producer and Virgin Atlantic customer from Derbyshire, who heroically took over the reins of the Winnie Mabaso Foundation when its founder passed away. Since then, Stephanie has visited the foundation – established in 2004 to support orphaned and vulnerable children in South Africa, particularly those living with HIV – regularly helping children and their local community of all ages through everything from the weekly “feeding station”, which feeds a thousand people a week, to mother and baby clubs and a pre-school enabling young parents to work. “The girls have all come from traumatic backgrounds,” explains Stephanie.

### Team effort

Stephanie brings along several crewmates to pitch in every visit. “We have a Facebook group of about 500 Virgin crew, who help sort essentials. Last Christmas, along with my



Clockwise:  
Stephanie  
volunteering;  
Carmel, wannabe  
Virgin crew  
member; a feeding  
station



“**SEEING HOW LOVING AND HAPPY THE KIDS ARE NOW THANKS TO THE FOUNDATION IS AMAZING**

friend Vickie Earle, we organised 200 shoeboxes full of gifts for families in Meriting, a nearby community with no power and limited sanitation. The Mabaso Foundation’s Friday feed is often their only good meal.”

### Carmel

Carmel, a 19-year-old from a tough background who has been with the Foundation since childhood, is so inspired by Stephanie’s team that she is attending college, and hopes to join Virgin Atlantic as a crew member one day. “The work Lisa and her team are doing for the community is remarkable,” says Stephanie. “Seeing how

loving and happy the kids are thanks to her work, and the Foundation, is amazing”

## A STRONG FOUNDATION

Our crew’s work with the **WINNIE MABASO FOUNDATION** is inspiring young lives

- See how you can help at [winniemabaso.org](http://winniemabaso.org)
- @winniemabasofoundation



## ASK THE ENGINEER

We ask Senior Design & Development Engineer **SHAUN SANDERSON** all the burning aviation questions



### What's the coolest tool of your trade?

As you might expect, aircraft engineers have lots of fun gadgets at our disposal – micrometers to tensiometers, grip gauges to collar swages. I'm particularly fond of this very fancy \$150,000 ultrasonic gadget called a D-Lam Size Tool. We use it for detecting anomalies inside layers of carbon fibre structure. Delightfully, it always reminds me of Wall-E. It's

basically an array of ultrasonic sensors inside a rubber roller. Guided by lasers, we pass it over the surface of our aircrafts' skin to obtain a detailed picture of what lies underneath. Results are transmitted to a tablet, which lets our skilled engineers see inside the structure to work out what repairs might be required. We also routinely use "resonance frequency testing" to achieve similar results. That literally means tapping it with a coin and listening to it.

### HIP HIP HARRY

SPILLING THE TEA ON OUR ZINGY NEW BREW

Origin stories don't get more evocatively Cockney than that of Harry Brompton's London Ice Tea. Founder Ian's granddad Harry "Brompton" Cobb (right) worked as a waterman on the Thames from 1926 until 1994, unloading fruit, spices and tea in the old Docklands.



Harry was never without a cuppa so his grandson created an iced tea in his honour. Harry Brompton's



London Ice Tea – a Virgin Start Up Loan recipient – is made from tea harvested in the Great Rift Valley, with generous portions of lemon and peach. But no apples and pears – sorry, Harry.



Meet Virgin Atlantic's Senior Engineer for Cabin Design & Development **JAMIE MILLAR**



### The role

Anything electrical in the cabin – not the flight deck – is my remit.

So lighting, seating, emergency equipment, heating, in-flight entertainment, you name it. If there's issues, or improvements needed, that's what I work on.

### The lowdown

Small changes, over a whole fleet, over 10 years, make a big difference. In premium cabins on the new A350, we moved the headphone socket to the side pocket to stop it snapping off when customers move around.

### The buzz

After 25 years in aviation, I get a kick out of seeing new-generation engineers coming up and growing with Virgin Atlantic. I'm proud of the lighting system on our 787s. I spent many weekends and evenings in darkened rooms with the design team perfecting the colour. It's on-brand, luxuriant, gentle enough for sleeping but pretty. Bright enough to move if you want. Like being bathed in starlight.



# We are the face of seamless travel.



BETC

No matter where you're heading in the world, SkyTeam member airlines offer you more convenient connections, more fast-track services than any other alliance thanks to SkyPriority, the broadest set of loyalty benefits at 970+ airports around the globe.

To learn more about how SkyTeam can make your travel smoother visit [skyteam.com](http://skyteam.com)



# PRETTY FLY FOR A WIFI

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

## HOW TO CONNECT

- 1 //** Turn on your WiFi-enabled device and connect to the "Virgin-Atlantic" WiFi network.
- 2 //** If you don't automatically connect to the WiFi portal, don't worry. Just take a look at the safety card in your seat pocket to see what type of aircraft you're on.

If you're onboard...

- A 787-9 or an A350-1000, open your browser and navigate to [virgin-atlantic-wifi.com](http://virgin-atlantic-wifi.com)
- An A330-300, open your browser and navigate to [airborne.gogoinflight.com](http://airborne.gogoinflight.com)

- 3 //** Just follow the onscreen instructions to buy a session and then get browsing!

## SHOUT ABOUT IT

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

## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR DATA

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



# VIRIDIAN



**Say No to Ultra Processed Supplements,  
Feel Good with Pure Vitamins**

*#DigDeeper*

Many supplements contain ineffective fillers,  
Viridian only uses pure and active ingredients.  
Ask an expert at an independent health store,  
#DigDeeper at [Viridian-Nutrition.com/NoJunk](https://Viridian-Nutrition.com/NoJunk)

# ABBA<sup>®</sup> Voyage

A concert like no other



**See ABBA on stage in a concert 40 years in the making.**

ABBA have created the kind of concert they always wanted, performing for their fans at their very best: as digital versions of themselves backed by today's finest musicians.

Blending cutting-edge technology, spectacular lighting, and some of the most beloved songs ever written, ABBA take to the stage in a whole new way. Located in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, the stunning, purpose-built arena houses one of the most popular groups in history in a **'Ground-breaking'** (Metro) concert that really **'Needs to be seen to be believed'** (BBC).

Only at the **ABBA<sup>®</sup> Arena**, London | [abbavoyage.com](https://abbavoyage.com)