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**Katelyn
Williams**

"How I landed
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chocolate"

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you FAT?**
Try the
flat-tum diet

**YOUR RECIPE
COLLECTION**



QUICK & HEALTHY
Easy-peasy suppers

CHOCY HEAVEN
Crowd-pleasing bakes

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to drop a dress size

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& must-have buys

TRY IT THIS WEEKEND

7 easy home
upcycling ideas

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- * Learn to say no & mean it
- * 5 of the best money-saving apps
- * Fit body, calm mind – in just 15 min

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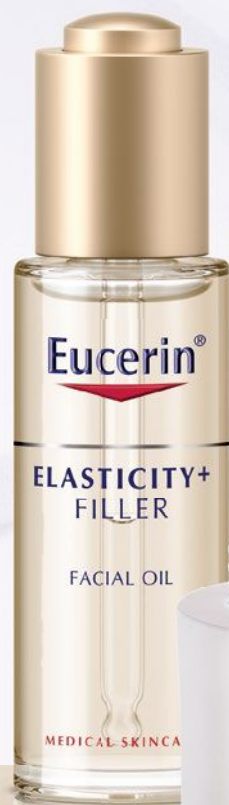
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Editor's letter



Hello! As you flip through the pages of this month's issue, you'll notice we've had a makeover. And, because *Essentials* is all about YOU, our fabulous readers, we've partnered with Miladys to offer five of you wardrobe makeovers valued at R5 000 each (p12)! Something that hasn't changed, though, is our promise to fill *Essentials* with inspiring stories and brilliant tips to make your life easier. Whether you're looking for relationship advice (p36), a new hair style (p51) or an easy recipe for dinner tonight (p76), you'll find it all here... Enjoy!

Kate

EDITOR
ESSENTIALS.CO.ZA



MEET OUR COVER STAR

Katelyn Williams chatted to us about breaking diets, finding love, and making money from her hobbies (p8)



Let us know what you think of our new look by mailing us at essentials@caxton.co.za

CHOCOLATE HEAVEN!

How good does this tart look? You'll find this recipe (and more chocolate-y goodness) on p83



MAKE IT THIS WEEKEND

You know all those old tins you can never bring yourself to throw away? Turn them into herb planters. Genius! (p103)

“How do you remove gel nail polish at home?”

We've answered this, and your other most Googled beauty questions, on p58

LOOKING GORGEOUS
Find out how to style yourself slimmer on p22 – it's easy and effortless!



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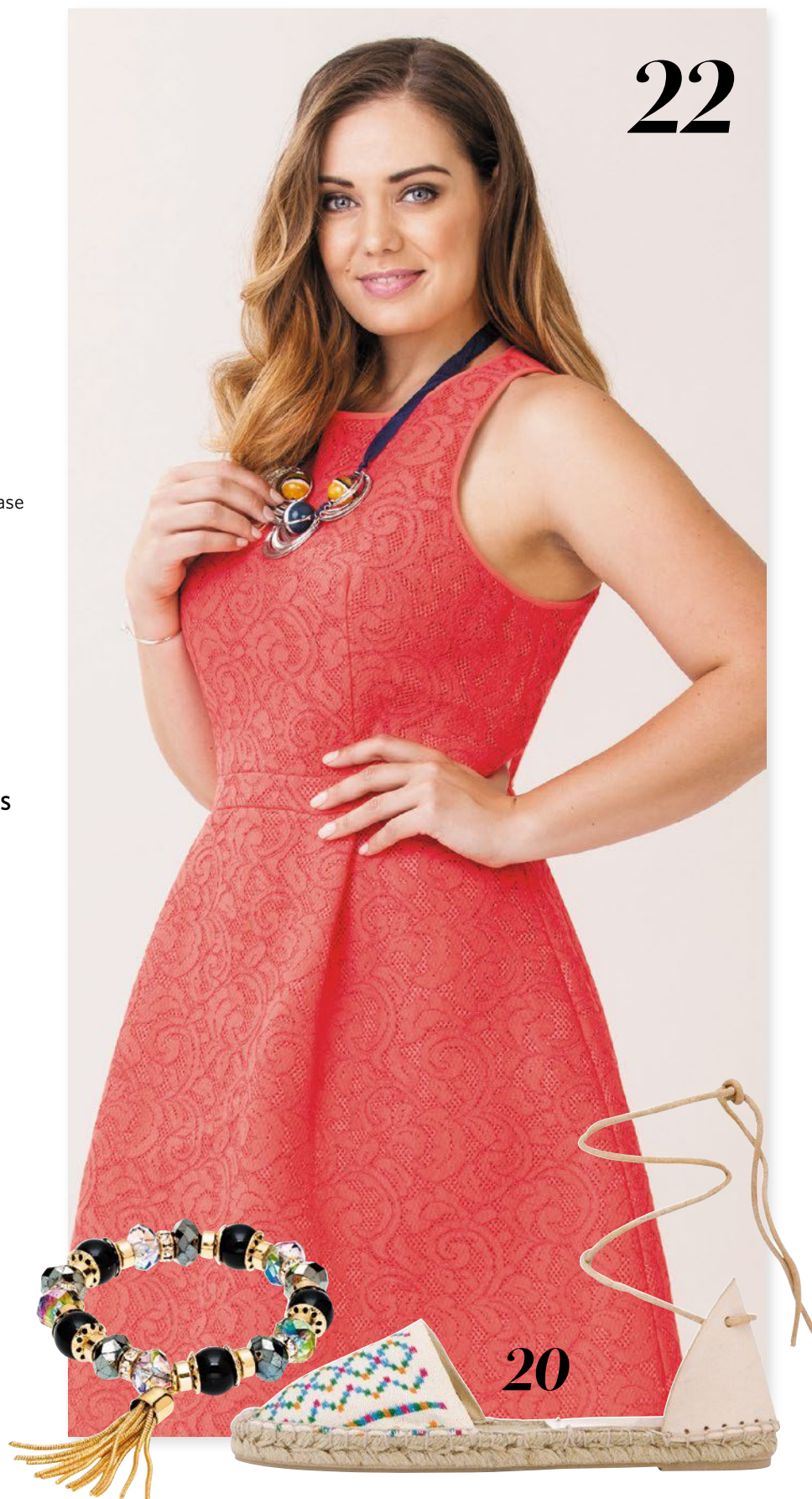
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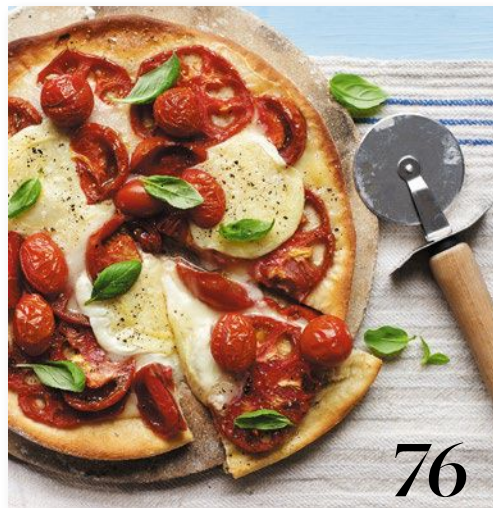
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Essentials *etc.*

These fab new buys are pretty and pastel – and we want them all!



Feature Tamlyn Cummings Photography Supplied
Products and prices were checked at time of going to print

- 1 Mug, **R29,99**, Mr Price Home 2 Morgan Taylor Nail Lacquer in Days in the Sun, **R138**, Dis-Chem 3 Talia gown, **R399**, Cotton On 4 Heart cupcake jar, **R39,99**, Mr Price Home 5 Earrings, **R199,50**, Colette Hayman 6 Heels, **R499**, Truworths 7 Brogues, **R259,99**, The Fix 8 Skinny belt, **R225**, Poetry 9 Bucket bag, **R399**, Cotton On 10 Alpha sticky notes, **R39,99**, Typo 11 Hexe pen pack, **R99,99 for four**, Typo 12 Diamond tank top, **R69,99**, Mr Price 13 Pastels plates, **R99 for eight**, Meri Meri at Superbalist.com 14 Woven live print cushion, **R259**, @home



**



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'I've landed my dream job... WORKING WITH CHOCOLATE!'

She loves a kitchen shortcut and never says no to a slice of cake.

Essentials' dessert guru Katelyn Williams is a woman after our own hearts

Katelyn, 29, has been baking since her rough-and-tumble days while growing up on her parents' farm in George.

After qualifying from the Institute of Culinary Arts in Stellenbosch, she worked in a range of professional kitchens, most notably under the late Chef Frank Zlomke at the Grande Roche Hotel in Paarl. From cheffing, she then ventured into the media side of food, working her way up from an intern position to being food editor at *Top Billing* magazine,

and on to co-heading the food department of SABC 3's *Expresso* show, with Chef Zola Nene. In 2006, she launched *The Kate Tin* (thekatetin.com), which took the prize for Best Food & Wine Blog at the 2014 and 2015 South African Blog Awards.

Katelyn is a regular contributor to *Essentials'* food section (you'll find her latest recipe on p85) and works as a food stylist and photographer. She lives in Pinelands with her fiancé, Italian chocolate-maker Antonino Allegra, 40.

Starting my first job in a professional kitchen was eye-opening. At the time, Grande Roche had the best restaurant in Africa, and Chef Frank was a legend to

train under. But it was tough. You're on your feet for 16 hours a day with a 30-strong brigade around you, mostly Michelin-star chefs from Europe. I split my time between pastry and the hot kitchen. We had five restaurants and 24-hour room service, so you'd be cooking beautiful fine dining food one minute, and making a toasted sarmie for delivery the next!

Women have fought long and hard to be taken seriously in professional kitchens.

Things are better now, but I started at a time when women weren't valued in the industry. I struggled with that. Once I had worked in a few kitchens, my tipping point came in a shocking service one evening. It had been one of those nights; the sous chef had called me stupid and sworn at me during service, and as we knocked off, he made a pass at me. I was so confused: on the one hand, I was stupid, but on the other, I was worth dating. I'm just not the kind of person who can brush that off. I was 19 and didn't see it as a world I wanted to be in. As much as I loved cheffing, I couldn't do it.

TV is a rush, but it's bizarre putting so much work into something that can become a three-minute insert. We could spend an entire day filming something, and it'd be cut down to something tiny, then it airs and disappears, and you're onto the next thing. I'd do my own prep

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as often as I could and would drive the food assistant mad. I'd hover near her, checking what cake tin she was going to use, until she would tell me to do it myself. It's not that I don't trust other people with my recipes but, honestly, the best part of my day is when I'm baking.

I started blogging when I was a food assistant at *Top Billing*. It's an intern position, and you don't actually get to touch much food – you prepare things, wash dishes, and then watch while the food stylist styles. I felt like I needed a creative outlet, somewhere to practise baking and styling, so I started my own blog. I've always wanted my readers to feel like they're sitting in front of me, and talking nonsense over a cup of coffee.





Want to try Katelyn's chocolate Amarula ice-cream lollies? Go to essentials.co.za

Being busy is addictive – I'm not happy sitting around and doing nothing. I've always got something in the pipeline. I've had a lot of great opportunities and I'm thankful for them – but at the same time, if an opportunity presents itself, you have to squeeze everything out of it. *The Kate Tin* is now more than a blog; it's my company, and it's allowed me to go out on my own. I've actually just hired my first employee, which is a huge step.

I couldn't believe it when *Essentials* asked me to contribute a monthly recipe for the magazine. I actually had to read the email twice; it's not often that a major magazine approaches you and says, 'Hey, we want to give you a whole page every month – oh, and please bake whatever you want.' In fact, it never happens, but that's exactly what the *Essentials* team said to me. I've been having a ridiculous amount of fun dreaming up recipes for the page and also photographing them (and eating them, obviously!), but my favourite part has been working with such an incredible team – and, they love cake as much as I do!

I worked with a nutritionist at *Expresso*. Each morning, she'd ask me, 'What diet are you breaking today?' I'd usually be concocting something that involved putting chocolate on top of chocolate, on top of more chocolate. One day, I asked her if she thought what I did was truly offensive, if my indulgent creations were really that bad. She said no, explaining it's when people deprive themselves that they feel an urge to reward themselves – and then they over-reward. If her clients were on an eating plan but really felt like a chocolate, she would tell them to have it. It's better to eat a couple of blocks in the moment, rather than a full slab after obsessing for a week.

'Healthy' doesn't have to mean being stick thin if you aren't naturally shaped that way. I love my curves. I have hips, bumps and imperfections, and I'm okay with that. When you're younger, you can only see those parts of yourself as flaws. But I have bumps and curves because I love chocolate. And you know what? I really love chocolate!

Photography: Justin Dingwall. Stylist: Xolani Gumedede. Hair & make-up: Kelly-Jean Gilbert. Cover: River Island. Dress: River Island. Necklace, ring, earrings: all Colette Hayman. Extra images: Skirt: Forever New. Necklace, Accessorize.

My mom insists she hasn't got anything to do with my cooking or baking ability, but I disagree.

There aren't many people who'd get up early to bake their own bread every morning, or churn butter from scratch, but my mom did it willingly – while also raising kids and running a farm with my dad.

Antonino owns, and is head chocolate-maker at Afrikoa, a direct-trade bean-to-bar chocolate factory.

He taught himself chocolate-making entirely from books, but he's also got 25 years' experience as a pastry chef, having worked in Michelin-star restaurants and on cruise ships.

He's Sicilian, and found his way into the food industry in a totally romantic, utterly Italian way.

When he was 11, he'd been riding around town on his Vespa without a helmet, and the police began chasing him. He raced into a pastry shop and cried out, 'I'm hiding from the police!' The owner sent him to wash dishes in the back, and at the end of the day, he invited Antonino to return the following morning. From doing dishes, he began baking bread, and he went on to learn everything through hands-on experience.

In the beginning of our relationship, when everything was all doe-eyed infatuation, we'd bake together often.

But as it's become more mature and complex, we've figured out that we can't

“To save our relationship, we've had to agree never to bake together”

actually do it anymore. One of the biggest fights we've had was over a comment he made while I baked lemon meringue. Since then, we've agreed: when I'm baking, he can't say anything – and vice versa.

There's magic in watching things bake. I could sit in front of my oven for hours.

If you cook a steak, you buy a steak and eat a steak. But with baking, you take three or four disparate items and

transform them through pure science. Macarons are by far my favourite thing to make because they are intimidating and temperamental. Everything from the weather to your mood affects how they'll turn out. When you see their little feet forming around the edges, it's really the greatest thrill. I took a chocolate and pastry tour around Paris in 2015, and ate proper old-fashioned macarons at a quaint pastry shop run by nuns, Pâtisserie Viennoise. They were big and dense – and not at all like the dainty numbers Chef Pierre Hermé made famous. After trying those, I don't feel bad when my macarons turn out wonky.

My gran was an amazing cook but a nightmare when she baked!

She hated reading instructions. I have the most vivid childhood memory of seeing a beautiful meringue in a book, and nagging my gran to bake them with me. She finally gave in,

and what we baked that day was a flat, sticky mess. When we separated the egg whites, there was yolk in the white and I remember Gran saying, 'It's not going to make a difference.' We whisked the egg whites, but not to the stiff peak stage as instructed in the book. 'It's not going to make a difference.' The recipe said to pipe it on to a lined baking sheet, but we only had foil. 'It's not going to make a difference,' she said. I'll never forget the disappointment that I felt when I pulled the tray out the oven and it looked nothing like the picture.

I think of that disappointment whenever I'm testing or styling a recipe.

Baking is an investment. You spend money on your ingredients, time going to the shop and back, and energy putting it all together – so it does need to work. With the millions of recipes online,

it's always a real vote of confidence when people choose mine. The least I can do is make the recipe as simple and doable as possible, so my readers get the feeling that what they have created actually looks like the picture. It doesn't have to be perfect, but it has to be

“Being healthy doesn't have to mean being stick thin if you aren't naturally shaped that way”

possible for you to try something once, and it comes out of your oven looking as pretty as it does out of mine. There are certainly special-occasion recipes on the blog, but I want my readers get maximum enjoyment – with minimum effort.

KATELYN'S WINNING RECIPE**HOW TO MAKE A SUCCESS OF YOUR BLOG***** LISTEN TO YOUR AUDIENCE.**

In the beginning, I blogged about everything – sweet and savoury recipes – but the response was so much better on the sweet stuff. More often than not, what you're most passionate about tends to get the best reader response.

*** TRY TO OFFER SOMETHING DIFFERENT.**

I didn't know of any other local blogs that were just about desserts and baking. I also didn't want to jump on

the sugar-free and Banting trends. I feature those recipes, but it's not what my blog is about.

*** IF YOU GET TO THE STAGE WHERE PEOPLE WANT TO PAY YOU,**

partner with brands that align with yours and learn the ethics of sponsored content. Declare when a post is paid for, and don't say you're using a brand if you wouldn't naturally choose it in the first place.

*** EXPECT THINGS TO BE QUIET FOR A WHILE –**

and stick with it. For a good three years, I felt like my mom was my only reader. And it was okay because I didn't do it to gain a following; it was just for my own enjoyment.

*** CONNECT WITH OTHER BLOGGERS.**

It's the blogging equivalent of networking – seek their advice, and promote their content on your blog. There's enough of an audience for everyone.

Win a wardrobe MAKEOVER!

We're giving away five Miladys shopping vouchers worth R5 000 each!

In need of a wardrobe revamp? Enter our amazing competition and you could stand a chance to win your own fashion makeover, valued at R5 000 from Miladys. As part of your makeover, you'll be able to choose a pair of Miladys WonderFit jeans: these high-rise denims with a difference boast tummy control, hidden seams that lift your bottom, and just the right amount of stretch that's both comfortable and figure flattering.

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Top, **R599**;
bracelets, **R99**
for set of five;
both Queenspark

IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

We're banishing minimalism in favour of floaty, sheer fabrics with loads of pretty details. And it turns out we're not the only ones who are head over heels for these feminine fabrics – Queenspark has just launched a new range of luxe, vintage-inspired clothing that feature on-trend crochet, lace, as well as sheer panelling. Paired with chiffon, denim, metallics, beaded accessories or even sparkling shoes, it's the most romantic summer trend yet.



For our fashion editor's tips on how to wear leggings the right way, visit essentials.co.za

Fashion news

COMPILED BY XOLANI GUMEDE

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT...

Thanks to this season's 'athleisure' trend, chic workout wear has become part of our daily wardrobe. With buys as pretty as the ones from local brand MOVEPRETTY, you won't want to stuff them back in your gym bag after a session! See movepretty.co.za



NEW LOCAL BRAND!

Crop top, **R380**;
wrap top, **from R590**;
leggings, **R550**;
all MOVEPRETTY

FASHION FORMULA

Invest in these mix-and-match office accessories



Necklace

A simple necklace will make a statement without being OTT. **R399**, Accessorize



Heels

Throw these nude heels on with everything. **R699**, Madison



Handbag

A classic shape won't go out of style. **R629,50**, Colette Hayman

IF YOU ONLY BUY 1 THING...

BLOCK HEELS

Flattering, versatile and comfy... just three of the (brilliant!) reasons we're buying into the block heel trend. They work just as well with rolled-up jeans as they do with a showstopping LBD – once you have a pair you'll find any excuse to wear them. Who said beauty had to hurt? Block heels, **R549**, Bronx.



3 OF THE BEST...

PLEATED MIDI-SKIRTS

Stylish, flattering and versatile, everything a woman wants in a skirt!



Floral skirt **R699**, Poetry



Black midi-skirt **R399**, Foschini



Striped skirt **R699**, Poetry



Feminine touch

Lace, metallics, satin and pleats, summer's fashion has never been more romantic. Upgrade your wardrobe with these six trends...

FASHION EDITOR XOLANI GUMEDE
PHOTOGRAPHER JUSTIN DINGWALL

Love lace

Who said a little black dress had to be boring? Romantic lace will give your LBD an instant boost.

Dress, **R1 499**, Poetry.
Earrings, **R99,50**; rings, **R114,50 for three**; both Colette Hayman.
Bracelets, **R250 for four**, Accessorize.

Go glam

It's time to shine in glamorous metallic tones - no need to overload with jewels, let your clothes do the talking.

Top, **R579**, Forever 21.
Pants, **R249**, H&M.
Earrings, **R169,50**; rings,
R114,50 for three;
both Colette Hayman.



All in the details

Give a classic shirt a grown-up edge with on-trend embroidery in bright, bold colours.

Top, **R399**, H&M.
Jacket, **R899**, River Island.
Pants, **R799**, Forever 21.



Mix & match

Florals for summer are nothing new, but this season's prints have been reimagined with an Eastern feel.

Top, **R599**, Jo Borkett.
Bomber Jacket, **R899**, H&M.
Pencil skirt, **R1399**, Lipsy London.
Sunglasses, **from R149**, Le Specs.
Ring, **R114,50 for two**, Colette Hayman.
Heels, **R2 290**, Europa Art.





Soft touch

Want to try the sleepwear trend? You'll get loads of use out of a lace-trimmed slip. It's smart enough for work and after-hours - layer it over a crisp shirt and you'll wear it all through winter, too!

Top, **R589**, River Island.
Shirt dress (worn as jacket),
R1 800, Sharagano at Lalalux.
Culottes, **R499**, Poetry.
Rings, **R114,50 for two**,
Colette Hayman.
Heels, **R1 699**, Dune London.

Pretty in pleats

Nothing says 'laid-back glamour' like a pleated midi-skirt. Give this look a sporty spin with floral trainers.

Blouse, **R629**, River Island.
Skirt, **R599**, Poetry.
Necklace, **R349**, Accessorize.
Trainers, **R1 799,95**, Ted Baker.

Go boho

Office or off duty, summer's relaxed boho looks are great to throw on and go!



Top, **R350**,
Old Khaki



Jeans,
R829,
Zara



Maxi dress, **R340**, Exact



Playsuit, **R499**,
Tally WEIJL



Blouse, **R299**,
Foschini



Heels,
R699,
Rubi



Espadrilles,
R700,
Espadril



Belt, **R199**, Poetry



Necklace, **R120**,
Queenspark



Bucket bag,
R799,
Accessorize



Bracelet,
R169,50,
Colette Hayman

We show you how to dress like your favourite celebs - on a budget essentials.co.za



Maxi dress, **R499**;
sandals, **R329**;
off-the-shoulder
dress, **R499**;
gladiator sandals,
R499; all Tally WEIJL

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**FLATTERS
EVERY
SHAPE**

Style yourself slimmer

Finding the right dress for your shape is the no-diet figure fixer we've all been waiting for. Here's our pick of the best

FASHION EDITOR XOLANI GUMEDE **PHOTOGRAPHER** JUSTIN DINGWALL

The miracle worker

A classic fit-and-flare dress cinches you in at the narrowest part of your waist and skims over a wider bottom half, making it a perfect choice for pears, hourglasses and even apple shapes! Have a boyish figure? It will even create the illusion of curves.

Dress, **R1 599**, Forever New. Necklace, **R349**, Mango. Bracelet, **R169,50**, Colette Hayman.



Top tip

Choose strategically placed ruching for an instant tummy tuck!

The confidence booster

A dress with an illusion neckline and a floaty chiffon flare will conceal and reveal where it matters most. Only thing you need to worry about is enjoying the party!

Dress, **R1 299**, Forever New. Bracelet, **R449**, Accessorize. Heels, **R899**, Call It Spring.



The waist trimmer

If you're trying to disguise a fuller tummy, ruched or draped detailing will slim and trim your middle. A mid-length sleeve gives you added coverage and confidence.

Dress, **R399**, David Jones at Woolworths. Necklace, **R499**; bracelet, **R169**; both Accessorize. Ring, **R199,50 for three**, Colette Hayman.

ESSENTIALS EXTRA

- * Wearing the same colour from head to toe can make you look taller (and slimmer!)
- * Nude shoes are instant leg lengtheners - and they'll go with everything.
- * A deep V-neckline and high-waisted pants will draw attention upwards, creating the illusion of height.



The all-over slimmer

Drop a dress size instantly with an easy-to-wear wrap dress that smoothes your silhouette. The low V-neckline will accentuate your bust while three-quarter sleeves are your bingo-wing saviour.

Dress, **R2200**, Chaps at Lalalux.
Earrings, **R169,50**; ring, **R169,50**;
both Colette Hayman.

Top tip!

Fake your way to a perfect hourglass figure just by throwing on a wrap dress

The illusion

Fake your way to an hourglass shape in a two-tone dress with a cut-out waist. Is your upper and lower body different sizes? You can easily replicate this look with flattering separates.

Dress, **R1 199**, Lipsy London.
Ring, **R114,50 for three**; necklace
R249,50; both Colette Hayman.

ESSENTIALS EXTRA

- * If you're wearing a dress with a tie belt, always style the tie to the side, rather than over your tummy, which can add bulk.
- * Choose a bold print – they're perfect for disguising lumps and bumps because they stop the eye from resting in one place.
- * Oversized pockets, pleats and padded shoulders might be big trends, but if you're not stick thin, they can make you look bigger.



The show-stopper

Who says women with curves can't wear bodycon styles? Choose a pretty print that's darker on the bottom to flatter wider hips - origami detailing up top will boost your bust.

Dress, **R1 499**, Lipsy London.
Ring, **R169,50 for three**,
Colette Hayman.

**PERFECT
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THIRST FOR INDULGENCE

Finally March is upon us and the New Year, New Year worm has left your memory (sorry). With the amber glow of Autumn shifting through the trees, comes the packing away of bikinis. We thought it would be an appropriate time to re-introduce the concept of indulgence to you...

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Don't tell me I can't... travel solo

Tracie Bates is happy to leave her husband at home in favour of holidaying alone...



Sipping on a cocktail by the pool, I felt the sun warm my skin. I was spending a lazy week in paradise, and while I certainly loved every

minute of it, there was one person who wasn't there – my husband. But I really wouldn't have had it any other way...

I've always been curious about the world. When I was a teenager, I decided to backpack around Thailand, staying in hostels as well as sleeping under the stars. And when, in 1992 and aged 28, I met my husband John, I was thrilled he shared my passion for travel. In 1992 I returned to Thailand for our honeymoon – this time swapping those dingy hotels for five-star luxury. Each year, we would save up to go away. Holidays to Namibia and Morocco were so special – an escape from everyday life. And in 2015, when I decided to swap my recruitment job for running a beauty salon, I needed a holiday more than ever.

With my diary full of beauty appointments, I'd lie awake at night, compiling a never-ending to-do list in my head. I needed time for myself without any distractions – and I realised that for the first time, I wanted to go away alone.

I went online and came across the website for Bliss Sanctuary for Women in Bali – a retreat for solo female travellers that offered everything from yoga and massages to sightseeing trips. It sounded perfect, and within minutes I'd booked a week-long stay. It wasn't cheap at all but it included unlimited spa

treatments, excursions and a chauffeur-driven car to and from the airport.

When I told John, he immediately agreed that I needed a break, even if it meant going without him. While he excitedly pored over all of the retreat's brochures with me, my friends struggled to understand my decision. 'Won't you be bored on your own?' one asked. 'You won't know anyone else,' said another. But I told them I was looking forward to time to myself.

Three weeks later, full of excitement, I boarded my flight. But when I arrived at the airport in Bangkok, with a five-hour wait until my connecting flight to Bali, I suddenly felt so alone and far from home. In that moment, I couldn't help but question my decision to holiday

solo and, holding back the tears, I called John. 'Maybe this was a bad idea,' I said. But John was encouraging. 'You'll love it when you're there.' And when I finally made it to Bali, I realised he was right. Arriving at the retreat by chauffeur in an air-conditioned car, I could hardly believe the stunning villa next to a blue pool would be my home for the next week.

While I enjoyed occasional meals with the other eight women staying on the retreat – including an actress and a brain surgeon – this was my holiday and I spent the rest of the time alone. I had a one-on-one surfing lesson, went cycling in paddy fields, and whiled away hours reading by the pool.

A week later, when I boarded the flight home, I felt relaxed and refreshed. John picked me up from the airport and he was so happy for

me as I told him about the wonderful time I'd had. A month later, I started working in my beauty salon with a clear head, thanks to my trip away. And so far, my salon business has been a huge success.

As for our next adventure, John and I are planning a trip to Italy in May – our holidays together are still so special. But I will be booking another solo trip – this time to Ibiza – because holidaying alone gives me exactly what I need: a few days of peace and quiet. I simply can't wait!

*** Visit blissanctuaryforwomen.com**

“I had surfing lessons, went cycling in paddy fields, and whiled away hours reading by the pool – bliss!”



Kids these days...

Parents get a bad rap for embarrassing their kids, but really it's just payback for the embarrassment they cause us! We love these mom confessions...

Mouths of babes

When I was five, my mom mentioned that she thought our doctor was 'an old bag'. Of course, the first thing I said to the doctor at our next appointment was, 'My mom thinks you're an old bag.' I'm 31 and my mom still can't talk about it.

Honest toddler

At the tender, and honest, age of four, I climbed onto the lap of an elderly relative, stroked her face and said, 'You should have used face cream when you were younger.' She took it quite well.

But why, mom?

While I was talking to one of the other moms at the nursery school gate, my little one came up to me and shrieked, 'You said you didn't like Angie's mom — why are you talking to her?'

Um... where?

Standing around the braai one night, my eight-year-old kept shining his torch up and down the place where our friend's amputated leg would have been.

Everyone just pretended it wasn't happening. Cringe!

P(oops)!

We had guests over for a braai and my son — upset at being told it was bath time — had a poo on the patio. In front of everyone.

#Awkward

I was sitting with my three-year-old son in the small waiting room at the doctor, when he pointed to a man with a large belly that poked out the bottom of his shirt and asked (loudly, of course) why that man had such a huge tummy. The ground couldn't have swallowed me up fast enough.

Oh, behave

Tired of my shenanigans at church one Sunday, my mom pinched my arm to try and get me to keep still. I looked at her and yelled, 'Mommy, WHY did you pinch me?'. Of course it was during a minute of silence and the whole congregation turned their judging eyes on my mom.

How rude!

My two-year-old daughter got stuck walking behind an elderly woman using a walking stick. She clearly got impatient so she shouted at the woman to 'hurry up already!'

The birds & the bees

After we had the 'birds and the bees' talk, my son kept pointing at men in the shops and asking, 'Mommy, does that man have a penis, too?'

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Back at HOME

Would you consider moving back in with your parents? These women – both in their thirties – did exactly that, and here's what happened...

When I got together with Ron eight years ago, one of the things that clinched the deal was the fact that his two girls were already out of the nest.

The last thing that I wanted was to find myself in the eye of a raging teenage-girl hormonal storm. My own son was about to move out of the home I'd bought after my divorce, and it meant that Ron – who would move in with me – and I had plenty of new-found 'us time' to adjust to.

So last year, when Ron asked how I'd feel if Lora, his younger daughter, now 31, came to live with us for an unspecified period, my first instinct was to pour myself a stiff gin and tonic. Despite having lived independently for a decade,

Lora, a psychiatric nurse, found herself without work, uncertain of her career direction, and completely broke.

I didn't doubt for a moment that I would say yes, because just as I would expect Ron not to object if my son Thomas had to move back in, I could hardly turn a blind eye to his daughter at a time of crisis. Lora needed an anchor and we could try to provide it.

Boomerang phenomenon

I was about to experience the so-called 'boomerang phenomenon', where cash-strapped adult kids move back in. To say

“More cash-strapped adult children are moving back home”

I was apprehensive is an understatement. I sat down with Ron to talk it through. Two rules, I said, must be adhered to.

The common quarters, like the kitchen and living areas, would have to be kept pristine. I make no apology for being a cushion-plumper and someone who can't sleep peacefully until greasy pans have been scrubbed, and all the surfaces wiped spotlessly clean.

This needed to be said because, on the few occasions that Lora had stayed over, I'd noticed her fling-it-anywhere approach to housekeeping. The second rule I realised could prove trickier. Over the years I'd taken a back seat when things exploded between Lora and Ron – with him inadvertently pressing the

wrong buttons about her approach to life, work, and the universe, and her laying into him without inhibition. 'I won't have the harmony of this household disrupted by arguments between you two,' I said.

The truth is that I both like and admire Lora. Feisty and smart, and with a strong sense of right and wrong, she's chosen to take on work that exacts a large emotional toll – and for a lot less money than she could have earned in another job. She's not materialistic, but nevertheless has a wonderful sense of style, always dressing in riotously colourful clothes culled from second-hand shops. But there was one thing that troubled me. Although I knew Lora was pleased that her dad had found happiness after he and her mom split up, I wasn't sure if she actually *liked* me.

I couldn't put my finger on it, but I sensed a degree of disapproval of my prissy ways and conventional lifestyle. It was only a feeling, and one I needed perhaps to work out for myself. I also needed to work out how I felt about Lora's way of being, too. It's only natural that I would find myself comparing Lora's lifestyle with my own at her age. By the time I was 31, I had already been married and divorced, and I had a home and a career. For me adulthood, ambition and success had all come early. What I have recognised, though, through living with Lora, is how much easier it was for my generation, with jobs landing in our laps.

I don't envy the uncertainty of the millennial generation, the financial insecurity of short-term work contracts, the transient world of dating apps, and reaching your thirties with no clear life path ahead.

A crowded home

The day Lora came to stay, I thought I might have to be the one to move out. As the hallway downstairs filled with more and more of her stuff, I felt resentful of the idea that we were little more than a convenient storage container. Rather than hover and let my disquiet show, I left the house to visit my sister and have a moan.

By the time I got home, order was more or less restored, and I suddenly saw it all quite differently. After all, I had a lovely house full of my possessions, whereas everything Lora owned fitted into one narrow corridor. How could I begrudge

Lora her dressing table, her chest of drawers, and a bit of furniture?

Life with Lora these past few months has worked out so much better than expected. She moved into Thomas's bedroom, and filled it with colour. Her clothes hang on rails, and as I puff away on the cross trainer – which is kept in her bedroom – my eyes range over the rainbow colours of Lora's wardrobe, her bright, technicolour bedspread, and Thomas's bookshelves now draped with jewellery, and I smile at this sense of a daughterly presence I've never before experienced. Even ignoring the mess has become easier, which I now recognise is probably Lora's version of deep-cleaned.

An unexpected outcome

At first, when Lora moved in, I felt more polite than relaxed. It must have been the same for her, but slowly we have both learned to be ourselves with one another. On the day she gave me a spontaneous hug and told me she loved me, I let out a sob. To my relief, Lora *did* like me after all!

The expected arguments with her dad haven't materialised. It makes me realise that Lora, who has shared houses with friends for a decade, understands very well the compromises required on all sides. It can't always be easy for her, and my respect for her has grown.

Lora's life is beginning to fall into place again. She has decided to do a master's degree, and she has sorted herself out with two part-time jobs to help with her finances while she studies. Meanwhile, she lives here rent-free because her dad and I would far rather

she saved for when she moves out than hand over what little she earns to us.

Lora and I are good friends now. After she returns from work in the evening, we sit at the kitchen table and chat. When her dad arrives, he often finds us engaged in conversation while I chop the veg for dinner, and it helps him know it has all turned out OK.

I do want Lora to move out as soon as she is able, because now she's passed 30 it has to be better for her. But while a

couple of months ago she gave us August as her deadline, I can't really see anything changing in the next few months. And I don't mind at all. Right now I'm thinking that when she does go, I'll miss her a lot. And that's the most surprising thing of all.

The other side

LORA SAYS: Last year I found myself, aged 31, and living back at home. I have the added complication of living with my father and his partner, in a house that she actually owns.

The surprise is this added complication, or Linda as I should call her, has turned

out to be the saving grace of the situation. She's been the buffer between me and my loving, but worrywart, dad. When it comes to my dad, I'm still surprised at how quickly I revert back to my teenage self when cornered over my life choices.

Linda's house is a far cry from the one I grew up in and, despite having lived

here for more than seven years, my father still feels the need to run everything domestic past Linda. This used to irk me, but in time I've realised it says more about my father's anxieties than Linda's. Yes, she likes things a certain way: no shoes on the carpet upstairs, and for some reason, she keeps her potatoes in the fridge. But she owns these quirks of hers completely. Yes, I may feel under scrutiny while doing the dishes and putting things away in the kitchen. And, yes, the fact I share my room with Linda's gym equipment means I have to remember to pick up my underwear. But Linda letting me into her home has also allowed me to address the fact I've never told her I loved her, something I found myself rectifying recently while helping to put the groceries away.

At the beginning I would find any opportunity to stay out during the week. And, you know what? It's kind of nice when my father messages me in the morning following one of my after-work drinks that has turned into an all-nighter. I haven't lived with my dad for 13 years. Since the age of 18 I've moved 12 times. I'm hoping to make my 13th move in the next few months – if Linda can hopefully put up with my unconventional dishwasher loading techniques until then!

“I revert back to my teenage self when cornered over my life choices”

“Life with Lora has turned out so much better than expected”

'I never imagined I'd move back in with my mother at the age of 34!'

Nadia Perumal, 44, is a customer services manager. She lives in Riverlea with her daughters, Mumtahirah, 17, and Nusaybah, 10, as well as her mother Fahima Abrahams, who is 65.

When my ex-husband and I split up, I was 34, unemployed, and had two children to look after: one seven years old, the other just a baby. I had to move out of my home and I was so grateful when my mother offered for us to stay with her until we got back on our feet.

Moving back in with my mother, after years of living independently with my husband, was a huge adjustment; I was used to having my own space and freedom to do what I wanted, and I had enjoyed quite a lavish lifestyle. But, suddenly, our situation was different.

“My mother helped me when things got tough, and now I can return the favour”

Finding our way

I don't think the first weeks were that easy for any of us: the girls were in a new home, I was a newly-single parent who was also dealing with the shock of a divorce - and once again living under my mother's roof, while my mom had to adjust to having three extra people in her space.

My parenting style differs greatly from that of my mom's generation, so at first we clashed when it came to making decisions that concerned the girls, but through a lot

of hard work, perseverance and even family therapy, we managed to find a harmonious and respectful way to live together. Now, 10 years later, it's an arrangement that still works for us!

I'm a typical 'sandwich generation' mom, because now I have to financially support my children and my mother. I work for a financial services provider and my mother lives on a very modest pension, so it has been wonderful to be able to help her now that our circumstances have been reversed.

It's a way for me to thank her for everything she did for me when I was a child, and again when I moved back home as an adult.

Why it works

There are so many advantages to having us all live under one roof: my daughters love having their grandmother around and she's very involved in their lives.

Her help around the house, and with the girls, is especially welcome in a single-parent family.

I think the person who benefited most from our living arrangements is me. My mother was my greatest supporter after the divorce. At the time, my self-esteem had plummeted and I felt like I'd lost part of myself. She also helped me get back to the independent, confident woman I was before. Yes, there are challenges that come along, but the best part of my day is coming home to a house that's filled with happy, bubbly people.



Nadia with mom Fahima (left) and her two daughters

ESSENTIALS EXTRA

It's difficult to predict how a change in living arrangements will impact your family. Some say they feel closer to their parents than ever before, while others feel like a failure for moving back home...

*** Be considerate.** Obviously you won't need to ask permission if you go out, but have ground rules: let your parents know if you won't be coming home, or, if you do get in late, do it quietly.

*** Express gratitude.** Yes, most grandparents are thrilled to help out with childcare but it can be quite hard work. It won't hurt to show your appreciation through a thoughtful gift or gesture

*** For parents, if you need one night a week to yourself, or you don't want to be responsible for picking grandchildren up from school, talk about it and determine what each of you is, or isn't, prepared to put up with.**

*** Respect each other as adults.** The parent/child stage of your relationship is behind you, and your role is now that of a capable adult - and your parents should treat you as such. Think of each other as roommates: contribute to groceries if you can, and tidy up without being asked

*** Share the financial load:** talk to each other to establish who is responsible for various bills, before moving day



Nadia (second from left) with her daughter (far left), nieces and nephews



Mom Fahima and her daughters



She's a SUPERHERO

It's no secret - moms are superheroes in disguise. But their super-human powers often go unnoticed; with McCain's help, Jessi gets the chance to show the wonder woman in her life how special she is...

There is no instruction manual for being a mom, but somehow, they just seem to know what you need. They are the undercover superheroes found in everyday life, making sure that no tummy is left grumbling, no schoolbook gets left behind, and she is the one person that can always be counted on to be sitting in the front row at the school play.

This super-human power often goes unnoticed as we forget to sometimes thank our moms for the little things that they do for us that mean everything. McCain has always been these superheroes' secret weapon and has now taken on another role and switched sides by helping one little girl thank her mom for all the little things in a unique and special way.

Jessi is a bubbly, confident 13 year old who has just started high school and has her heart set on the silver screen. Her mom Nadine is always by her side supporting and motivating her, which is probably why Jessi refers to her as her very own superhero. This is their story.

It has been me and my mom for most of my life, 'Things haven't always been easy, but my mom

works super hard to give us this beautiful life and I am so grateful. I love singing, dancing and acting. Being on stage makes me feel so alive and I love it. I feel very lucky that my mom is always there to cheer me on and encourage me to do my best. She tells me to try my hardest and to be myself.

'Dinner time in our house is lots of fun. It is our special time to catch up and talk about our days. To be honest, it's actually my favourite part of the day. It is just me and mom chatting, laughing and eating yummy food. She is my best friend and we tell each other everything, so keeping this special McCain dinner surprise a secret from her was very hard.

'The people from McCain came to help me plan the special dinner for my mom. We set up a beautiful table and I made chicken nuggets and McCain Texan BBQ crispy oven chips. Chicken is Mom's favourite and of course we both love chips. My favourite thing about the dinner was the awesome plate McCain helped me make. The message for Mom was, "Mommy thank you for giving me this life. You are Amaze-

A-Licious. I love you. Jessi". When she saw the message, she smiled so big and it made me so happy. She hugged me super tight and I am so glad that I got to make her feel so loved. She is my superhero and I don't know what I would do without her.

'I know that there are many other kids out there who love their mom like I love mine and I hope that this will make them want to do something special for their mom too. It really doesn't have to be something big, it's about showing her how much you love her, you can make her a quick snack, a sandwich or even write her a letter telling her how much you appreciate her. We need to thank our moms for the little things that they do that mean everything to us and make sure they know how Amaze-A-Licious they are.'



For more on Jessi's story and to watch her mom's special McCain surprise unfold visit www.mccainjoys.co.za.

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Too poor to DIVORCE?

Many women are trapped in miserable marriages, simply because they can't afford to leave. So what happens next?

Our experts offer advice on how to move on

Crying herself to sleep at night is a regular occurrence for Sue Kelly*, 40. By day, she puts on a brave face: her part-time job as a receptionist earns her R10 000 a month, and her two children are the light of her life. 'But it's after the kids have gone to bed and I'm on my own with my husband that I feel trapped in my marriage.'

Sue stays with her spouse, Alec*, because she can't afford to leave – and she's part of a growing trend. New research reveals one in seven divorced or separated people have stayed together for longer than they wanted to because of financial concerns. Women are more likely to be financially worse off after a break-up: a study by Old Mutual shows that 53 per cent of SA's men contribute to a pension or provident fund, as opposed to only 47 per cent of women. So it's easy to see why staying put is 'better' than leaving.

No way out?

'I earn a small part-time salary, we have no savings, and we owe about R30 000 on credit cards and a small bank loan for our last car,' says Sue. 'Thankfully Alec earns a decent salary from his job in construction, and that's what we rely on to keep our heads above water every month.' The problem is that Alec had a two-year affair six years ago with a close family friend – a betrayal that Sue cannot forgive, and which has slowly strangled the love she once felt for the man she married 12 years ago. 'We went to marriage guidance counselling for six months, but try as I might, I just can't forgive Alec for what he did to me,' says Sue.

She has been trying to find full-time work, without success, for the last two years. Without it, she says she couldn't afford to house, feed and clothe her children, as well as herself. 'So I stay in a miserable, loveless marriage watching the years slip away, and then crying myself to sleep at night,' she admits.

A growing problem

Despite Statistics SA revealing an almost five per cent increase in divorces since 2012, a precarious economy is still forcing many to stay together – as many as 76 per cent of women feel financially insecure, and only 39 per cent have money saved in a bank account. But Denise Knowles, a relationship counsellor, says there are reasons to be positive if you find yourself stuck in a marriage.

‘It’s so easy to feel stuck because we’re afraid of change, but there really is no need to,’ says Denise. ‘Instead of feeling paralysed, reach out to your friends and family and share what you’re going through – some people might make useful suggestions, as they’re looking at the situation with a clear head. If you work, talk to your boss about giving you more hours. If you’re in debt, you can always talk to your bond lender or credit card provider about what steps can be taken to help you – like consolidating your debt into one monthly, often lower, payment.’

Keeping up appearances

From the outside, estate agent Angela Driscoll*, 34, lives a rose-tinted life. Her first baby, Alfie*, is a happy, healthy 10-month-old, and Angela was able to give up her job as a fitness instructor early in her pregnancy, thanks to her husband’s lucrative career. But instead of celebrating what many would regard as good fortune, Angela feels like she’s been living in a gilded cage.

‘I couldn’t love my son more than I do and I wouldn’t want to jeopardise

things for him in any way, but the truth is that the sole reason Steve* and I got married was because I was pregnant. We’d only been together for six months and it’s now patently obvious that we’re not right for each other. But what can I do?’

‘Even if I found a job and went back to work full time as a fitness instructor, I would barely be earning enough to put a roof over our heads. Of course, Steve would have to make some sort of financial contribution, but I still don’t see how I could provide for my son and myself on such a limited income.’

‘Whichever way I look at it, I’m stuck, and I can’t tell you how panic-stricken that makes me feel. I find it very hard to talk to people about my predicament, in part because I feel ashamed that I’ve put my son, and me, in this position.’

However, Denise Knowles says that feelings of being trapped can often be misplaced. ‘There will be a way out, you just have to find it. So often in counselling sessions women tell me they can’t leave because they can’t afford to, when – if they’re honest – what they *really* mean is they’re not willing to see their standard of living drop. They worry about what people would think if, after doing the school run in a BMW, they’re suddenly doing it in an old *skadonk*. I say, stop worrying about what people think and have a

reality check. It may not be as bad as you think – and there’s no need to be embarrassed about asking for help. It’s just the first step to escaping.’

Living in hope

Vivian Barstow*, 47, has been married to John* for 18 years. ‘Our marriage was happy for a time, but we’ve drifted apart over the last decade,’ says Vivian. ‘I think we’ve made love three times in 10 years – we don’t share a bedroom any more. We simply live very separate lives.’

‘I have a job, lots of friends, and I run a charity, while John works all hours in insurance. I don’t love him and I don’t want to be with him anymore, but I’m not in any financial position to leave my husband.’

Vivian and John made an unfortunate house purchase in 2008, which has left them in serious debt.

‘If we were to sell, we would lose about R400 000 and we can’t afford that,’ says Vivian. ‘Right now, I can’t go anywhere, but I live in hope. I’m saving money so that one day I can move out and start a new life, even if we have to sell the house at a loss.’

‘I know there are people in a worse financial situation. I still have a roof over my head and a job, but this feels like a half-life and, for the foreseeable future, there’s no way out of it.’

“Our marriage was happy for a time, but over the last decade we’ve simply drifted apart”

HOW TO GET OUT AND MOVE ON: THE FIRST STEPS

PSYCHOTHERAPIST JUDITH LASK OFFERS TOP TIPS FOR WOMEN WHO FEEL FINANCIALLY TRAPPED IN A MARRIAGE...

- * If you are able to, see a lawyer and financial adviser for advice, even if (or especially if) things seem hopeless.
- * **Write a list of the positives and negatives associated with staying or leaving – this sometimes puts things into a different perspective.**
- * Talk to your partner and come to a decision about what sort of relationship or separation you can have. If you both agree to a divorce, you can even do it online for R1 000; see idivorce.co.za

- * **Consider counselling or therapy, which can be a useful forum to work out issues or plan a separation.**
- * Ask yourself what’s really stopping you. Sometimes, it’s easier to focus on the financial side than to examine other things that might be holding you back – disappointing your parents, shame at having a failed relationship, lack of confidence in managing money or in parenting, fear of being on your own or making big changes to your life.

- * **If fear about not being able to provide for your children is a major factor that’s keeping you stuck in a marriage, there’s always maintenance. The amount of maintenance is based on the child’s monthly costs, and how much both parents are able to contribute. If you decide to get divorced, you can apply to the divorce court for a court order for maintenance for yourself, your children, and a contribution towards your legal costs. See justice.gov.za for more info.**

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The 5-min LIFE FIX

Want to sleep better, live longer and feel healthier? Just 5 minutes a week is all it takes to increase your contentment by 25%

You can be happier, healthier and more satisfied with your life – and it's really not that hard to do! Scientists have found that one of the best ways to feel more content is to be grateful for the good things you already have. They think it works because focusing on the positives helps you get perspective, even when times are tough. Practising gratitude also helps you see the support and resources you have in your life, which can help you feel more confident and upbeat. A 2012 study found that people who regularly expressed gratitude experienced fewer aches and pains – it can even help you sleep better! And you don't have to come up with a list as long as your arm. Research has shown that spending just five minutes a week listing the things that you're grateful for can impact your levels of satisfaction – in fact, doing it can even increase happiness by 25%.

1. Make it happen!

To get into the habit, put a regular five-minute slot into your diary. Choose a time that works for you, when you know you'll get the chance to sit quietly – it doesn't matter whether it's after the kids are in bed on a Sunday evening or during your lunch break

at work on a Tuesday. This should be a non-negotiable appointment.

2. Get prepared

You can write your gratitude list on the back of an envelope if you want – the point is to write it, not necessarily to have it in a fancy notebook (but you might feel more motivated if you have a special journal in which to jot your thoughts). And, of course, there's an app for that too – most will encourage you to write a list daily. Try the Gratitude Journal 365 – Diary For Your Happiness app (free for iOS/Apple) or the Attitudes of Gratitude Journal app (free for Android).

3. Make some quiet time

Don't write your list with the dog barking and the kids screaming. You need to spend a few minutes really appreciating what you have and that will be easier in a calm, quiet environment. Take the chance to grab some time for yourself; sit quietly and see what comes into your mind.

4. Struggling?

We know even five minutes may seem like a tall order in a bad week but that might be when you need it the most. And there's always something you can feel grateful for, whether it's your adorable cat, your warm home – or just the fact you've

got your favourite bar of chocolate waiting in the fridge for you. Even listing the smallest, simplest things in life can make a difference to the way you feel.

ESSENTIALS EXTRA

Try these easy mood boosters for when you can't shake the blues

*** Keep your chin up – literally. Experts say that your body language can help you feel more positive. Looking down can make negative thoughts worse so... eyes up!**

*** Be selfish. Women are programmed to feel guilty, which makes it very hard to say no when friends and family ask things of us. But putting yourself first on occasion is essential for our own well-being.**

*** Declutter. Even if you only tidy up while you boil the kettle, you'll feel calmer and less distracted.**

Can you make MONEY FROM BLOGGING?

Could you really earn a living by lounging about on a beach, or reviewing the latest nail polish? We chatted to three successful bloggers to find out...



Imagine doing what you love, and getting paid to share it with the world. Sounds like living the dream, right? Sadly, there isn't a formula for success, but we've found three bloggers who share how they managed to crack the code.

Don't quit your day job

If you want to ditch your 9 to 5 to launch your dream blogging job – think again. Most bloggers diversify their income by taking on extra freelance work. *Mzansi Girl's* Meruschka Govender started

blogging over weekends and after hours, while she worked full time in the tourism industry. 'I already had content to share from my previous travels – like an epic solo backpacking trip from Joburg to Malawi. I blogged about my past travel adventures, and started getting offered press trips, which I had to turn down, as I had a full-time job. I travelled a fair bit for work, but all I saw were conference rooms and hotels, and I was frustrated – it was quite an impulsive decision to quit my job and become a blogger, but I went for it. I haven't reached the salary

I once had, but I'm living a more fulfilling life.' Meruschka freelances as a social media consultant, and adds that bloggers-to-be need to see their blog as a portfolio, and their social media presence as PR.

Brett Robson, who heads the fashion blog *brettrobson.com*, works full time as a merchandiser, and pays an assistant and photographer to work with her on her blog. 'I'm lucky because my employer funded my clothing line (Brett's blog has an online store), so there's pressure for my project to work. Despite working full time, I'm still involved in projects year-round.'

Feature: Ang Lloyd Photography/Fotolia; Supplied

MEET THE BLOGGING EXPERTS



*** Heather Mason, 42:** documents her life as 'a quirky American living in Johannesburg' on her blog *2Summers.net*, which has over 10 000 active subscribers.



*** Meruschka Govender, 36:** runs *mzansigirl.com*, a blog that focuses on South African and pan-African travel; she has over 20 000 Twitter followers on her account @MzansiGirl



*** Brett Robson, 28:** based in Durban, she's behind the popular fashion and beauty blog, *brettrobson.com*, which also has a successful online shop, Shop Brett Robson.

ADVERTISING ON YOUR BLOG

There are a number of ways to make money from your blog, from Google Adwords to affiliate marketing:

- * PPC ads (pay per click) - a reader clicks on an ad on your blog, and you are then paid for that click.**
- * CPM ads (cost per 1 000) - pay a fixed amount based on how many views (or impressions) your ad gets.**
- * Affiliate marketing - an advertiser pays a commission on each sale if a buyer clicks on their ad, via your blog.**

Strike it lucky

Heather Mason, who runs *2Summers.net*, got into blogging by accident. Before coming to SA, she lived in Washington D.C., but an NGO fundraiser brought her to Africa for the first time. In 2010 she moved to Joburg permanently, and at the same time, she started a blog on *Wordpress.com* to share her experiences

'I had a vague notion of writing a book, as I felt moving to SA was a big deal, so I decided to start a blog,' says Heather. 'I wrote a post about urban regeneration in Maboneng, which went viral, and I began to get more local traffic.'

Meruschka also fell into blogging by chance, but via the micro-blogging site, Twitter. 'I'd started a Twitter account in 2010 during the Fifa World Cup,' she says. 'Soon after I won tickets to a festival, on condition I tweet about it. People started responding to my tweets and I realised how social media engagement works.' She spent a lot of time growing her Twitter audience before meeting a web editor for a travel magazine at a tourism event. 'She knew me by my Twitter profile and suggested I blog for her publication. I was a bit intimidated - a blog post is more than 140 characters! And it took me another year to start my own blog.'

Use sponsored content

That's when a brand or company pays you to write about their product on your blog. 'I use Instagram for this type of work, but I tie in the content with my blog posts,' explains Heather. 'For example, a local airline wanted to promote their new route to Mozambique so they paid for my flights and accommodation, as well as a fee to

write a blog post and some social media updates about my stay. I had to use their social media handle and hashtags were supplied - I just needed to create the content to then share with my readers.'

Sponsored content is a popular way for bloggers to make money, but it can be a slippery slope, as the assumption is that you won't say anything negative. Heather explains, 'When I do accept paid blog work, I make it clear that I maintain full editorial control, and I disclose that it's been sponsored at the bottom of the post; it can be hard to balance the needs of the client with the needs of my readers.'

Partner with brands

Sponsored content is amazing once you have it, but how do you get brands to work with you in the first place? According to Meruschka, you need to get brands to realise you have a market they can talk to. 'In my case, it's people who are interested in travelling and can afford to do it. So I work with brands whose products can align with that, like cars or rehydration sachets.' She emphasises that brands want to get exposure to your audience in a way that resonates. 'Brands approach me because I'm a real, relatable person, rather than a token celeb.'

Become an influencer

The lines between blogging and social media often blur, but it's key to have a large social media following in order to get your blog content seen by as many eyes (and brands) as possible. 'I'm more of an influencer than a blogger, but I do both,' says Meruschka. 'An influencer is someone who has an authoritative effect on a consumer's purchase decision. It's also about targeting a niche market: my followers are passionate about SA and African travel, so I focus my online engagement on these topics.'

Brett adds that for her, social media reach [how many people see your post on their feeds] is more important than blog subscribers. 'When I started I had a 'subscribe' button, but my self-hosted Wordpress blog doesn't have one, and I've still seen huge growth.' If you have 1 000 Twitter followers or more, you can sign up to a platform that connects brands with influencers, called *Webfluential.com*

Readers are customers

Brett incorporated her online store, Shop Brett Robson, into her blog and Facebook page via Shopify (*shopify.co.za*), a fee-based ecommerce platform that manages buying and shipping of products, and lets her track her customers' buying patterns.

Be prepared to hustle

For many bloggers paid content isn't consistent - and Heather can relate. She has to pound the digital pavement to pay the bills, and she's been involved in everything from contributing to a guide book about Sandton, to doing freelance writing for NGOs. 'But when work stops coming in, I just focus on blogging, and eventually something comes my way,' she says. She adds she never goes more than a week without publishing a blog post. 'You have to be consistent, and super passionate about what you write about.'

Meruschka agrees. 'Blogging is tough, but also rewarding. It's hard to convince brands of your worth; I'm offered many free holidays - working for "exposure" doesn't pay my mortgage. But I get to do what I love, and I travel a lot more than I would if I had a full-time job. The SA blogging community is great, and I've made amazing friends along the way.'

ESSENTIALS EXTRA

Although a free blog (like one from Wordpress.com) is easy to set up and maintain, and allows for a unique domain name (like *www.myblog.com*) at extra cost, if you want to be taken seriously, self-hosting is a must. And when an open-source content management system is installed, like one from Wordpress.org or Joomla, customisation is far greater - from bandwidth to layout. You'll need to pay a provider a small monthly fee (try *inspiretec.co.za*) to host your blog - if you don't know code, get a geek to help.

'I risked my life TO HAVE MY LITTLE GIRL'

When Lisa Connell, 36, was diagnosed with a brain tumour, she wrote a bucket list. But she never dreamed she would tick off her most wished-for item: becoming a mom...

There was a flutter in my belly, my body was now rounder, fuller and my face had a new radiance. The baby I had always longed for was growing inside me. Yet

I was completely and utterly terrified, because the last time I was pregnant, it nearly killed me. And since then, doctors had told me I would never become a mom.

About 10 years ago, I was three months pregnant when I started to feel dizzy. My vision was blurred, my speech slurred, and I struggled to stand up straight. When I popped out to the shops near my home I saw passers-by frowning and tutting as I staggered about. They must have just assumed that I was drunk.

After visiting my GP, I was sent for an MRI scan. With all the stress, I miscarried while waiting for the test results.

Then I got the news that changed my life.



'You have a brain tumour,' the doctor told me. She explained it was non-cancerous, but could still cause disability, paralysis – or death. I could have years left, or months. There was no way to be sure. Operating to remove it would be too dangerous. They could only try to control the tumour with radiotherapy.

It seemed so unreal

This thing could have been there since childhood, but the symptoms had surfaced because of the pregnancy. My levels of progesterone had rocketed, which is normal in pregnancy, but research suggests it can cause meningioma tumours like mine to grow quickly. If I hadn't miscarried, my baby and I would both have died. In just a few short weeks, I had gone from happy expectant mom to someone facing death. It was all just too much to take in.

Dizzy, in pain and barely able to get out of bed, I sank into deep depression. By that time I had split from my then-boyfriend. My parents and friends rallied round, but I just shut myself away. 'Why not die and get it over with?' I thought. One night I overdosed on sleeping pills and a friend found me collapsed on my bedroom floor... she had let herself in with a spare key.

But then, seeing how worried everyone was gave me a real wake-up call. I had to stop moping around and make the most of life, however long or short that might be.

Picking up the pieces

I wrote a bucket list. Some things on it were completely frivolous: kiss a seal, go paragliding, take part in a seance. Other items were bittersweet. Find the man of my dreams. Get married. Have a baby... My pen hovered over the last one. Besides doctors' warnings that pregnancy could kill me, the intense sessions of radiotherapy had left me much less likely to get pregnant, and anyway, who would want to date someone who was dying? 'Hi, my

name's Lisa and I have an inoperable brain tumour.' It hardly makes for good small talk. Then, in October 2014, a friend set me up on a blind date. What did I have to lose?

I never expected to find love

When I met Dean, we didn't stop chatting, and we have barely stopped since. Dean, 35, moved in with me about two years ago. With two kids aged seven and eight from his previous relationship, there was no

pressure to have babies. Still, I yearned to have a child of my own.

My condition meant that I was unlikely to be selected to adopt. Besides, I wanted to carry and to nurture my baby from the start. I was using the contraceptive coil, and had been suffering with terrible periods. Having

been told that pregnancy was a no-no, I booked an appointment to discuss having a hysterectomy.

The amazing news

One afternoon in August 2015, I was rooting around in the kitchen cupboards, ravenous. Gobbling pickled onions, gherkins and spoonfuls of chutney, I suddenly stopped. With my heart racing, I called Dean and asked him to pick up a pregnancy test. Later, I screamed from the bathroom. The test was positive. Impossible. Yet, there it was. In blue and white.

A blood test confirmed that I was four weeks pregnant. The neurologist strongly advised a termination, warning that carrying to full term could kill me. But the words barely registered – this baby was my miracle.

I was booked for an MRI after my 12-week scan. If it showed my tumour had grown, a termination would be the only safe option. Seeing our baby on the screen, I burst into tears. And I knew I would carry on, even if it did mean risking my life in the process.

A week later, my MRI results showed that, against all the odds, my tumour had remained stable. A month before my due date, a scan

revealed fluid on Ruby's brain, and that the white matter connecting the two halves of her brain had failed to develop normally – she had a rare condition called Agenesis of Corpus Callosum. It was unrelated to my tumour, and it meant a 50 per cent chance of developmental problems. We were also given the option of a termination – at 33 weeks. But after everything we'd been through, there was no way I was giving up.

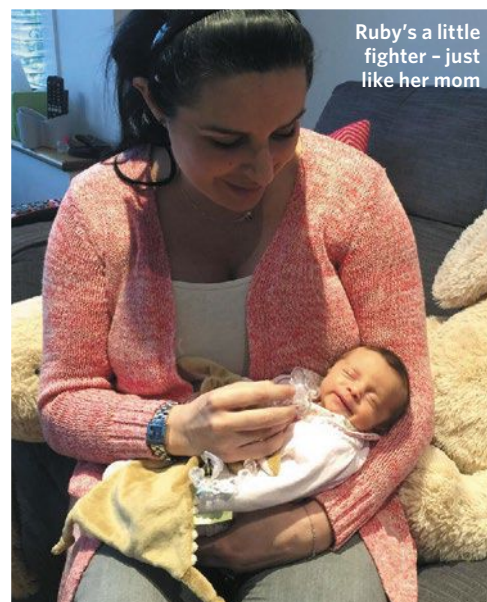
I've never been happier

Ruby was born by C-section on March 18, 2016 weighing 2.1kg. She spent the first weeks of her life in an incubator, wires sticking out of her tiny frame and a UV light treating her jaundice. The first time I saw her after surgery, I put my hand through a hole in the incubator and she wrapped her tiny fingers around mine. It was a week before I could hold her properly. I laughed and cried at once.

Since then, an MRI scan showed the fluid has disappeared from her brain. There's still a risk of developmental problems, but the signs are positive.

Looking at her, following everything with those big blue eyes and giggling away, she looks like a little fighter to me.

I had a hysterectomy when I had my C-section. I won't put my health at risk by trying to have more children. My prognosis hasn't changed. I could have years to live, or months. If I can watch Ruby grow up and achieve her own dreams, that'll mean everything to me.



Ruby's a little fighter – just like her mom

Do you need to learn **HOW TO SAY NO?**

It's just a two-letter word. So why do some of us find it so hard to say, while others let it trip off the tongue with ease?

Take our quiz to determine your Yes/No personality

Sorry seems to be the hardest word. Well, so sang Elton John back in the '70s. But in today's increasingly hectic, multitasking society it seems that many of us are finding it harder than ever to say 'no'. The result? We're feeling overcommitted and totally stressed out. Our expert psychotherapist Juliet Grace sheds some light on what your unique way of saying yes or no means. Take our quiz and add up your scores to find out...

- 1 Which of the options best describes how you feel when you say no to a request?**
- a. A bit guilty
 - b. Empowered
 - c. That you've made the right decision
 - d. You very rarely say no

- 2 When someone asks you to do something, how do you usually respond?**
- a. Say you need to sleep on it
 - b. Say yes without thinking
 - c. Say no to make sure you don't overload yourself
 - d. Say yes, then regret it immediately

- 3 How do you usually feel when asked to take on a favour or task by others?**
- a. Flattered
 - b. That they're taking advantage
 - c. Frantic and immediately worried about how you'll actually fit it in
 - d. Interested, but you're going to have to check your diary first

- 4 As a child, were you...?**
- a. Always helping out your teacher with odd jobs (even during break time!)
 - b. Often left alone at playtime (or stuck in detention)
 - c. Happy to try out most things but never jumped in feet first
 - d. Turned down friends' invitations but felt bad about doing so

- 5 If you admit you haven't heard of something and your companion expresses surprise, how do you feel?**
- a. Really embarrassed
 - b. It's water off a duck's back – you can't know everything!
 - c. You'd pretend to know about it
 - d. You'd ask for more information to clarify whether you do or don't know what they're talking about

5–20 YOU'RE A PEOPLE PLEASER

Juliet says: 'People pleasers often want to be liked and to fit in. This is a basic need for all of us, but if you feel that being liked is conditional upon doing what others want, part of your identity is being sacrificed. Think about where these beliefs have come from – they often stem from experiences of feeling insecure from an early age. You may be a people pleaser because of your desire to avoid conflict. Unfortunately, you end up feeling overcommitted and stressed.'

*** WORK ON IT** 'If you find it hard to say no to someone's face, tell them you'll check your diary and get back to them. Email or SMS can give you the space to find the words to refuse someone without the risk of confrontation. Honestly explain that you'd like to help, but you don't want to let anyone down as you are overcommitted. Don't waver – you'll need to be firm with people used to your previous amenable self!'

Add up your scores and all will be revealed...

1a 5, b 15, c 10, d 1. 2a 10, b 1, c 15, d 5. 3a 1, b 15, c 5, d 10. 4a 1, b 15, c 10, d 5. 5a 5, b 15, c 1, d 10



21-36 YOU'RE A GUILT EXPERT

Juliet says: 'Your responses may often be knee-jerk. If you're busy, overwhelmed and already stressed out, the thought of taking on more is just too much. You know this in your rational mind so why do you feel so guilty? Guilt can be a learnt pattern of behaviour - feeling that we 'should' is often a hangover from our early relationships. Guilt often leads to resentment, which can reinforce the wish to avoid people and situations. Feeling this way can be a sign that things have become out of balance, and you might need to re-prioritise according to your own needs.'

*** WORK ON IT** 'Take a look at how you're spending your time, making sure the important things and people in your life are being considered (including YOU). If you don't respond to requests immediately, you may be able to work out a compromise. Accept you can't do everything, and try to feel comfortable with your choices.'

37-55 YOU'RE A THINK-BEFORE-YOU-SPEAK MASTER

Juliet says: 'If you fall into this category, it's quite a healthy approach to take. You are involved enough with the needs of the people around you to be engaged and want to help, but not to your own detriment. Being able to balance the needs of others and to prioritise them while respecting your own needs can be tricky, and will usually require you to be mindful about decisions in order to weigh up the different pulls on you.'

*** WORK ON IT** 'Placing conditions around saying yes can also help to make things more manageable. Simplifying a task, or sharing it with others, and negotiating a deadline will mean you are able to deliver in a way that should satisfy everyone.'

56-75 YOU ARE A SELF-PRESERVATION EXPERT

Juliet says: 'If you're someone who can say no and doesn't look back, you may well have a good sense of what you want and how to get it. However, being very self-reliant and unwilling to get involved may also be a defensive technique. Are you worried that you might not fit in? Not getting involved and keeping yourself isolated can be a lonely place to be, and is often driven by fear, which is perceived by others as being selfish or stand-offish.'

*** WORK ON IT** 'If you recognise yourself as being too self-reliant, start with small steps. Dip your toe in the water in a situation that feels OK and open up slowly. It will take time to build trust in others but it's usually an investment worth making.'

We tried something new... & LOVED IT!

Trying something novel can ignite an undiscovered passion – and kick-start a rediscovered you.

These four women found out how...

‘When I visited an expo and got a voucher for an art class, I thought, “Why not?”

Jacqui Jorge, 33, is a co-owner of an occupational therapy practice. She lives in Kempton Park with her husband Miguel and children Keira, six, and Layla, four.

I went to Hobby-X last year on a whim and, when I got a voucher for a free art class at Ajay’s Art School in Kempton Park, I thought, ‘Why not?’ I’d taken art as a subject at school and had loved it, so I was keen to try it out again – when I realised how close to home the art school was, my mind was made up. In my first lesson, my art teacher put me through a series of exercises to gauge my art skill level, then assigned me to a class. The two-hour weekly classes were in the mornings and evenings, so I could choose which session worked around my job and family schedule. I started out with drawing lessons and then decided my first project would be to draw an avocado. It was so motivating to watch as the project evolved, and to see how realistic it looked at the end of the process. Next I tackled a portrait of [One Direction’s] Harry Styles for my niece.

Over the past few months I’ve learnt to work with oil paint, watercolour, pastels,

ink, pencil and multimedia. But it’s not just my art skills that have developed, I’ve really enjoyed learning again, and doing something that’s just for me. By taking the time every week to do something creative, I’ve also learnt that my family, and my business, can cope without me for a few hours – which makes me want to spend more time on my own doing something that I really love.

At the moment I’m creating a mixed-media piece of my husband and I holding hands, and two matching pieces of each of our parents holding hands. I plan to frame these three pieces together for our 10-year wedding anniversary.

I’m really excited about my next creative project, which is a course in animation – and I will finally be able to illustrate the children’s story that I wrote for my own daughters!

Trying something new can be really daunting; you don’t know if you’ll enjoy it or if you’ll get along with the people you meet. It may also feel impossible to carve time out of your already busy schedule, but you might just rediscover a long-lost passion like I did. And I couldn’t agree more with my daughter’s Grade R mantra for the year that says, ‘You’ll never know until you try.’

*** See artclassesatajays.com for more info; classes are held in Kempton Park, Sandton, as well as Fourways.**

“I’ve realised my family can cope just fine without me for a few hours”



'I'm making money from my new hobby!'

Jaclyn Marnoch, 33, runs her own business and lives in Riverclub with her four-year-old daughter Ella.

I started painting furniture soon after I became a single mother. At the time, I was living in London and was looking for a creative way to stretch my budget. While my daughter, Ella, napped, I experimented with painting second-hand pieces of furniture and I fell in love with the shabby-chic look.

Then I discovered Annie Sloan paints, an international brand of decorative chalk paint, and that discovery marked the start of my addiction. One day I bought a second-hand hallway table and revamped it in 40 minutes!

Soon, I was watching tutorials online and painting everything in my house that didn't move – and my friends began asking me for décor advice. I continued to paint when I moved back to South Africa and found a local chalk supplier called Granny B's. By this stage, I felt I'd pushed my own skills as far as I could, and I decided to go on a training course with Granny B's. Although I already knew some of the paint techniques, I also learnt some great tricks of the trade, and the teacher noticed that I had a particular talent for creating a distressed look, and suggested I pursue it for a living!

The idea stuck – it would be amazing to make money from a hobby I loved. Soon, I was approached by my first client, but turning my passion into a profit wasn't as easy as I thought. While I loved the practical projects, I didn't know much about running a business. It was a steep learning curve. Feeling demotivated and in need of inspiration, I took another course offered by a local paint brand called Tjhoko. It was exactly what I needed to motivate me and, shortly after that I started by business, naming it Ella Blue Decor in honour of my daughter.

Now, I do ad hoc painting for clients, or paint individual pieces of furniture, which I then sell. I also began to host my own workshops, which really brought me out of my shell. These intimate and creative workshops have become a hit, and the participants often end up forging lasting friendships with each other.

Painting is my passion, my creative outlet, and my escape – I've become an upcycling addict! I am so glad that I took the first step years ago to try something that I'd never done before.

*** Find Jaclyn's business on Facebook: search for 'Ella Blue Decor'**

“ I've become an upcycling addict – I even run my own workshops now! ”





'It's amazing how one and a half days can completely transform the way you live'

Tarryn Silber, 33, lives in the east rand and works as an account manager.

When my mom came back from a weekend away where she'd attended a plant-based cooking workshop in Mpumalanga, she raved about how amazing the workshop – and the accommodation – had been. I googled it straight away and was totally enchanted by the beautiful photos of the place. I knew I had to experience it for myself.

I really love cooking, especially in a gorgeous setting with a glass of good wine, but I'm lactose intolerant so I was interested in learning more about different dairy-free recipes and cooking. I'm not vegan, but I'm always on the lookout for non-dairy inspiration, as well as an excuse to explore our beautiful country, and this cooking course gave me a chance to do both!

Old Joe's Kaia Country Haven is in the heart of Schoemanskloof, and their cooking workshop is structured over one and a half days. The owners, Paul and Marian, welcomed us with a talk on their journey to becoming vegan, and why they encourage people to eliminate meat and dairy from their diets. With a new understanding of the vegan way of life, we got into the fun part – preparing the meal for dinner that night! This turned out to be an indulgent, strictly vegan three-course meal of mealie and cauliflower soup, tasty mushroom tempura, sorghum pancakes with samp and bean stuffing, and a to-die-for chocolate mousse for dessert. Throughout the weekend, we worked alongside incredible chefs in the kitchen, and we sampled our delicious culinary work at the end of the day over dinner.

The course has had an impact on my everyday life – I'm cutting down on the amount of animal products I eat, vegan mayonnaise and cashew-nut butter are now staples in my fridge, and I've started my own veggie garden at home. It's an empowering feeling to grow and harvest your own food, and it's something that I'd definitely like to do more of.

I think everyone should try something that's a little different, and that gets them out of their comfort zone. It's also amazing how just one and a half days can completely transform your life.

* See oldjoes.co.za for more information.

“Everyone should try something that pushes them out of their comfort zone”

'I'm proof that making time for yourself can make all the difference'

Patience Mushaya, 35, is a stay-at-home mom. She lives in Sandton with her husband Victor, and her two children Tadiwa, 12, and Mwaka, two.

About a year ago, I realised that I was unhappy. I was stuck in a negative mindset, and I felt unattractive and pretty drained. It also seemed like I'd lost a part of myself after having my second child, and I knew I needed to make changes. I realised that I wasn't making an effort to be physically and mentally happy or healthy, and I certainly wasn't making time for myself. I was running on empty and taking care of everyone's needs but my own.

The first change I made was to my diet, and I decided to overhaul the way my entire family ate at the same time. I replaced all the fried food, white rice, sweets and fizzy drinks with healthier substitutes like sweet potato and quinoa, and introduced more grilled, lean meats and salads. For sweet treats we had fresh fruit, and I'd bake every now and then.

I promised to spend more time on myself, so I joined a gym and started running in my suburb. I was surprised by how much I enjoyed being active; I loved how invigorated I felt after going for a run or to the gym. I could feel myself grow stronger and fitter with each run, which was quite addictive. As I got fitter, I felt more motivated to fuel my body with food that was good for me.

As a mom, it's so easy to put yourself at the bottom of your priority list, but it's important to have something that's just for you, something that makes you feel ready to get up and tackle another day. There are times when you just have to get away from it all and, for me, that's feeling the tar under my feet and the wind on my skin – even an hour to myself works wonders to reset my mind.

I feel like a new person these days, but none of this happened overnight. I was determined to make gradual, sustainable lifestyle changes, rather than simply

focusing on losing weight. Instead, I made my new life about health, fun and trying new things, whether it's a class at the gym or a new healthy recipe – and along the way I lost 15kg, and found my abs!

Now I make time to look after myself; I exercise six days a week, alternating between weights and cardio. And even if

I don't get to the gym, I find a way to exercise at home, using steps, my son's skateboard, or just a wall to help me get moving. It's crazy to think just over a year ago, I was unhealthy, unfit and miserable – now I even run half marathons!

Recently, I wore a bikini for the first time. The moment I put it on, I felt beautiful, confident and proud of myself. I wasn't only proud of how

far I'd come, but also that I'd chosen to prioritise and look after myself.

*** Follow Patience on Instagram for healthy meal inspiration and at-home workout ideas @fit_fabmum**

“Moms always put themselves at the bottom of their priority list”





EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT...

Beauty Crayons...

This is the beauty world's version of colouring in for grown-ups, and I'm a huge fan! These no-fuss 'chubbies' do it all: conceal, contour and colour. Just draw on, blend in and go. No brushes or sponges needed – and they're all handbag sized. Win-win!



- 1 COVER** Essence Pure Nude Concealer, **R54,95**
- 2 LIPS** Clinique Chubby Stick Moisturizing Lip Colour Balm in 'Woopin' Watermelon, **R290**
- 3 CHEEKS** Smashbox L.A. Lights Blendable Lip & Cheek Color in Beverly Hills Blush, **R350**
- 4 CONTOUR** Bobbi Brown Skin Foundation Stick in Alabaster, **R515**
- 5 BROWS** Maybelline Brow Drama Pomade Crayon, **R129,95**

Beauty news

COMPILED BY GRACE MANTJUI

For genius beauty hacks that will save you time every morning, visit us at essentials.co.za

SAVE OR SPLURGE

Freshen up your hair in an instant on those I'm-hitting-the-snooze-button-again days



SAVE
TRESemmé Instant Refresh Dry Shampoo, **R88,95**



SPLURGE
Moroccanoil Dry Shampoo Dark Tones, **R397**

BEAUTY FORMULA

Say goodbye to cracked heels with this clever combo





Moisturiser
Choose a thick, hydrating cream like aqueous

Essential oils
Add drops of lavender or peppermint oil to the cream

Socks
Massage cream into your feet, then wear socks overnight



THIS MONTH

Forget that boring middle parting, statement side partings (think Brooke Shields in the '90s) are big news right now. Already wear your hair in a side parting? Years of parting your hair the same way will train it to lie flat, so switch sides for instant lift at the roots.

3 OF THE BEST... NAIL POLISHES



For high shine
L.O.V Long Lasting Nail Lacquer in Opulent Orchid, **R115**



For long-lasting colour
Sally Hansen Miracle Gel in Sugar Fix, **R129,95**



For a touch of glamour
Sorbet Glam Effect in I Gold You So, **R90**

Head-turning *transformations*

It's so easy to stick to that same old hairstyle, but getting a new cut or colour can push your confidence levels to a perfect 10. Our expert stylists worked their magic on these four women – ready, steady... style!

CUT A FRINGE

“ A fringe doesn't have to be hard work – I can get a salon-style finish in two minutes flat ”

Stick to blunt ends for a modern bob that looks thick and healthy



THE STYLIST Nicky Stagnolo of Carlton Hair.
THE CHALLENGE Claire Sebastião, 31, is *Essentials'* digital editor. She's married with a four-year-old and her 2017 hair buzzword is 'manageability'. 'It's been almost a year since my last haircut, says Claire, 'I need an easy-to-maintain change!'

THE SOLUTION 'Claire's new cut combines an on-trend side parting with a soft, brow-brushing fringe, which is cooler in summer and a lot easier to grow out than a thicker cut,' explains Nicky. 'The fringe then frames her face, drawing visual attention to her eyes. Hair grows about 10 to 15cm a year, so

Claire's tips could easily be three years old – split ends tend to frizz so taking a good few centimetres off the length has added volume, making her hair look healthier.'
THE VERDICT 'I thought it'd take me ages to style a fringe in the mornings but Nicky showed me how to get a great salon-style result in two minutes flat.'

GO SHORT!

“ Now that it’s shorter, my hair looks so much fuller – it even bounces! ”

Short styles give fine hair movement, making it look thicker

Before



THE STYLIST Jacqui Radebe of Share Hair Salon.

THE CHALLENGE Nicole Naidoo, 31, who works as an image editor, wanted to breathe new life into her hair after a beach holiday left her with split ends. ‘My hair is quite fine so I’m on a seemingly never-ending search for a style

that will make it look fuller and healthier,’ says Nicole.

THE SOLUTION ‘If your hair lacks body, keeping it short will immediately make it look thicker because, without the length weighing it down, it will be able to bounce and move,’ explains Jacqui. ‘I cut a graduated bob at

the back to give her hair lift, while the blunt ends make Nicole’s hair look thicker than it really is.’

THE VERDICT ‘With a few volume-boosting miracle hair products, and some smart styling tips from Jacqui, my hair really does look healthier and much thicker than before.’

LIGHTEN UP

You can go lighter and brighter for summer, with warmer tones for winter

“Wow – I feel so fresh and fun with my new, lighter hair”



THE STYLIST Matthew Pengilly from Jeauval Hair Salon, Nicolway.

THE CHALLENGE Deneal Florence, 29, is an assistant fashion editor who was looking for a change. 'I've had long dark hair for a number of years and I've always wanted to know if

blondes *do* have more fun.'

THE SOLUTION 'The darker your natural colour, the more realistic you need to be about lightening your hair,' says Matthew. 'Because Deneal's hair is dark, it was important not to bring the colour all the way up to the roots. Focusing on the

mid-lengths and ends makes it look more natural (without a stripey-effect) and maintenance will be low-key. I used a warm coppery tone to complement her skin, but it can be as subtle or dramatic as you like.'

THE VERDICT 'I love it – even my complexion looks brighter!'

THE NEW BLONDE

“ I’ve had lots of compliments about my new look – and it’s so much more manageable than before ”

De-bulk thick hair by cutting the ends into a tapered shape



THE STYLIST Bernadette Campher of Terenzo Hairdressing.

THE CHALLENGE Ingrid Booth, 36, is a working mom with two children under five, so she doesn't have time to fuss with her hair. 'Usually I just wash and go, letting my hair dry naturally, or I tie it up,' says Ingrid. 'I've always been

blonde and don't want to go dark, but the regrowth is a hair-mare!'

THE SOLUTION 'Ingrid's fair skin suits blonde hair, says Bernadette, 'but I added a few lowlights in a shade closer to her natural colour. Using multiple contrasting shades looks more natural than a solid colour and it adds depth and

richness, too. This is a minimal maintenance blonde that's easier to grow out, meaning that Ingrid will be able to go longer between her touch-ups.'

THE VERDICT 'I've had so many compliments on my new look, and it's much more manageable than before.'

SWITCH IT UP

Rub two drops of oil between your hands then run through your hair to wake up frizz free

“ Having long hair makes me feel so glamorous – and I think I look five years younger! ”



THE STYLIST Sinah Mafuyeka from Sinah's Glam Hair.

THE CHALLENGE Thelma Masilo, 36, is a busy retail sales manager with two children, who was stuck in a short-hair rut. 'Short hair is so quick and effortless that I've just stuck with that for ages,' says Thelma.

THE SOLUTION 'With the right

choice of weave, long hair doesn't have to be a chore,' says Sinah. A good-quality weave is versatile; Thelma's one can be styled with curling tongs or a straightening iron, and will last for six weeks or longer. Also, there's a strong nod to the '90s here with the long, super sleek, poker-straight

finish, and it really softens Thelma's features. One of the great things about a weave is that you can always go back to your natural hair when you feel like it – so it really is the best of both worlds!

THE VERDICT 'I can't believe how glamorous I feel with long hair – I look five years younger!'

Feature: Charley Williams-Howitt; Grace Mantjuu Photographs: Justin Dingwall; Peter Whitfield; Gallo Images/Getty Images; Thinkstock; Supplied Hair & Make-up: Vuvo Varoy Styling: Xolani Gumede Clothes: Mango, H&M, Forever New. Prices were checked and correct at time of going to print.



Cut a fringe

A fringe doesn't have to be hard work; simply spritz with a smoothing product then run a straightener over it when dry. For the rest of your hair, work a walnut-sized blob of mousse from the roots to the tips, then scrunch or leave to air dry for beachy waves.



Corioliss C3 Straightening Iron, **R2 750**

Davines Nourishing Shampoo, **R275**

TRESemmé Heat Defence Styling Spray, **R79,99**

Davines Nourishing Vegetarian Miracle Conditioner, **R330**



Go short!

If you're after big, sexy hair, start by tipping your head over and blowdrying from underneath – this will lift the roots and stop your hair from falling flat. Choose a volume-boosting or thickening shampoo and follow with texturising- or volume spray before heat styling. Subtle teasing – or using a few heated rollers at the crown – can also give the style the boost it needs.



Philips DryCare Advanced Hairdryer, **R494,95**

L'Oréal Studio Line Silk & Gloss Volume Mousse, **R89,95**

ghd Style Smooth & Finish Serum, **R190**



Lighten up

Everything from water to heat stylers can pull pigment from your hair, so if you want your expensive colour to last longer, use specially formulated products. Apply a colour-boosting mask weekly and choose a hydrating shampoo and conditioner to combat dryness from the lightening process.



OGX Keratin Oil 3 Minute Miraculous Recovery, **R164,95**

Wella System Professional Color Save Mask, **R336**

John Frieda Frizz Ease Daily Miracle Leave-in Conditioner, **R115,95**



The new blonde

Dry hair can tangle and frizz, and blonde highlighted hair is particularly prone to breakage. Weekly deep conditioning will bring it back to life, and a drop of lightweight hair oil, like Terenzo Liquid Gold, will put the shine back in. Just remember not to over wash or style colour-treated hair.



Girlz Only Dry Shampoo, **R49**

Pantene 2 Minutes Intensive Moisturizing Mask, **R48,95**

Terenzo Liquid Gold Hair Oil, **R310**



Switch it up

Protecting your natural hair should be your top priority – do this by using a hydrating product on your hair and scalp before and after installing the weave. Daily scalp moisturising will prevent itching and flaking while washing with a clarifying shampoo will keep the weave free from product build-up.



Schwarzkopf Smooth 'n Shine Detangling Lotion, **R27,45**

Naughty To The Rescue Moisture Boost Shampoo and Conditioner, **R149,95 each**

Kardashian Small Paddle Brush, **R325**

Your most GOOGLLED beauty questions

At last, we have all the answers to your most searched-for beauty bugbears... You're welcome!

1 How can I pop a really deep spot?

To reduce the swelling, cleanse your face with an oil and remove the residue. Add one to two drops of essential oil (any kind will do) to a bowl of warm water and steam your face for two to three minutes. Next, cleanse face with a clarifying cleanser, then, with your fingertips wrapped in clean tissues, gently press the spots – don't squeeze them or use too much pressure. If nothing happens, just stop! Alternatively, use a thermal deep-cleansing facial mask for five minutes, massaging into problem areas. Remove the mask and extract using clean tissues.

TRY Clinique Pep-Start 2-in-1 Exfoliating Cleanser, R295

Top tip!

A dash of blusher is an instant skin pick-me-up, and an easy way to cheat glowing skin in seconds

2 How can I avoid getting lipstick on my teeth?

Fortunately, there are lots of little things we can do to dodge those awkward 'You've got lippy on your teeth, darling' moments. Lip liner is a must, so outline your lips with your chosen shade, then fill in the whole area with the same liner. It will act like a magnet to your lipstick and hold it in place. Apply your lipstick over your liner base with a brush for a lighter layer of colour that stays put for longer, and blot off any excess with a tissue. Finally, with clean hands, place your index finger into your mouth. Purse your lips and pull out – it might look silly, but it works. Any leftover lipstick near the teeth area should come away on your finger.

TRY L.O.V Lip Affair Color & Care Lip Pencil, R134,95



3 How do I get glowing skin?

The best bet is to massage your face daily with a nourishing oil to reduce puffiness and boost hydration. Just pour a couple of drops into the palm of your hand, close your eyes and take in a few deep breaths to enjoy the aroma of the oil before massaging it into your skin. In smooth sweeping movements, gently work it out from the centre of your face. Your complexion will be left dewy, plump and glowing. It only takes a couple of minutes of massage a day but you will see the benefits in no time.

TRY Eucerin Elasticity + Filler Facial Oil, R329,95





48%

of women say panda eyes are the worst beauty sin

4 How do I ward off panda eyes?

The oilier your eye area, the more your make-up will stray, so swap eye cream for an eye gel and pat it on, avoiding your lid. Choose eyeliners and shadows

that boast maximum longevity – pen liners usually last longest. When applying mascara, go steady when you get to the tips of your lashes, that's where it will build up, so don't overload them. Dust a sheer setting powder over and under your eyelid to stop things from budging. TRY Stila Stay All Day Waterproof Liquid Eye Liner, R255



5 How do I remove gel nails myself?

Resist picking at all costs. First, lightly roughen the surface of your gel nail with an acrylic file. Dip a small piece of cotton wool into acetone, place it on the nail, then wrap in a square of tin foil – repeat on the other nails. Leave for 10 minutes, then remove the foil. Using a cuticle pusher, gently scrape at each nail and the gel should roll off. To finish, gently buff the surface of each nail, then apply a strengthening polish and massage vitamin E oil into your cuticle. Use a weekly nail treatment to stimulate nail growth and repair.

TRY Sorbet Love Me Long Growth Care, R80

6 How do I stop getting static in my hair?

Use a moisturising shampoo and conditioner, as dry hair tends to be a lot more susceptible to static. Avoid the rub-a-dub-dub motion when you towel dry, as that's a major static encourager, instead squeeze out the water. Swap plastic brushes for natural bristle, and use an anti-frizz blow-dry spray. To up the ante, use a super-lightweight serum that you can reapply on dry hair throughout the day to keep those strays at bay.

TRY John Frieda Frizz Ease Perfect Finish Polishing Serum, R110



7 What are lip fillers?

Today's fillers are pretty sophisticated and are made of hyaluronic acid (HA), a naturally occurring substance in your body. If you're braver than us (we prefer to cheat pillowy lips with make-up tricks, like dotting a bit of shimmery gloss in the centre of your bottom lip!) and you're considering fillers, make sure you do your homework first. Your practitioner needs to be qualified and experienced, and look to a brand like Juvederm, which is delivered using a fine needle to smooth and plump lips. Expect to pay R4 000 for a Juvederm Lip Sculpting and Enhancement treatment at Medi-Sculpt Clinic (medisculpt.co.za). TRY Essence XXXL Shine Lipgloss, R39,95



The easy CAT EYE

Master the perfect flick in
just a few simple steps

A simple cat eye suits everyone, regardless of your eye shape or skin tone – and it's a lot easier than it looks! Just add a flick to your top lid for a wide-awake day look, or match it with a sexy, smoky lower lash line to up the va-va-voom factor for a night out.

Top tip!

Drawing a pencil along the waterline on the underside of your top lid will make your lashes look thicker!

1 TO START WITH... Prime your lids with a nude base to give your liner something to stick to. Then, with a soft charcoal kohl, lightly draw from the inner corner of your top lash line to three-quarters of the way across your lid. It doesn't need to be perfect, this first line is your guide, you can neaten it up later with a cotton bud soaked in moisturiser.

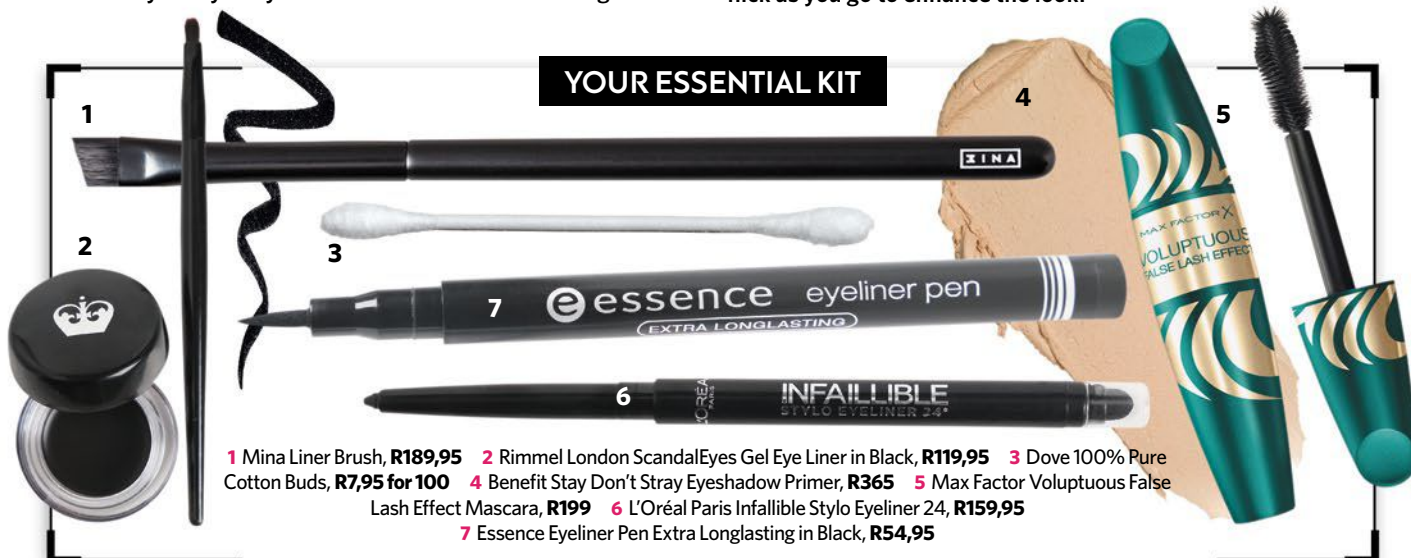
2 DOT TO DOT Lay a bank card flush with the upward curve of the outer half of your lower lash line, so it extends past your eye. Make a dot with your pencil along that line, 3mm from the outside corner of your eye.

3 THE FLICK Continuing your pencil line from the three-quarter mark on your lid, aim it diagonally towards the dot you made, finishing at that point. Make another tiny line with your pencil that joins the point at the outer corner of your eye to your dot and fill in the little triangle.

4 GO BOLD You've got your shape, now thicken it up. Using black gel liner and an eyeliner brush, trace your pencil line to make it broader and your flick sharper. If you prefer a liquid liner, go for a felt-tip pen style – they're easier to use and dry quickly, so you won't risk smudges.

5 FINISH IT A few sweeps of mascara are the best finishing touch around. Make-up artist Caroline Barnes recommends brushing the wand from the root of your lashes to the tip, aiming towards your eye flick as you go to enhance the look.

YOUR ESSENTIAL KIT



1 Mina Liner Brush, **R189,95** **2** Rimmel London ScandalEyes Gel Eye Liner in Black, **R119,95** **3** Dove 100% Pure Cotton Buds, **R7,95 for 100** **4** Benefit Stay Don't Stray Eyeshadow Primer, **R365** **5** Max Factor Voluptuous False Lash Effect Mascara, **R199** **6** L'Oréal Paris Infallible Stylo Eyeliner 24, **R159,95** **7** Essence Eyeliner Pen Extra Longlasting in Black, **R54,95**

Feature: Annie Vischer; Photography: Gallo Images/ Getty Images; Thinkstock; Supplied
Products and prices were checked at time of going to print

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* For more visit theravine.co.za



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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Shoot from THE LIPS!

Quit playing safe with your pout – here are the colours and textures you need to mix it up

1 '90s LIPESSENTIAL L'Oréal Paris Color Riche Lip Liner Couture in Intense Plum, **R129** **2 SHIMMER SHOT** Bobbi Brown High Shimmer Lip Gloss in Hot, **R310** **3 BARELY THERE** Revlon Colourburst Lacquer Balm in Coy, **R175** **4 STAYING-POWER GLOSS** Inglot Sleeks Cream Lip Paint in 109, **R249** **5 HOT LIPS HERO** Yardley SuperMoist + Lipstick in Electric Tangerine, **R109,95** **6 DARK SIDE** Gosh Velvet Touch Matte Lipstick in Plum, **R125** **7 RED ALERT** Stila All Day Liquid Lipstick in Fiery, **R285** **8 ROSY PICK-ME-UP** Rimmel London The Only 1 Lipstick in Listen Up, **R119,95** **9 POWER PINK** NYX Soft Matte Lip Cream in Addis Ababa, **R120** **10 METALLIC MUST-HAVE** L'Oréal Paris Infallible Mega Gloss in Resist Me, **R159** **11 STATEMENT LINER** Rimmel London Exaggerate Automatic Lip Liner in Pink A Punch, **R99,95** **12 KISS ME QUICK** Maybelline Color Sensational Lipcolor in More To Adore, **R124,95** **13 JUICED-UP GEL** L.A. Girl Glazed Lip Paint in Hot Mess, **R49,95** **14 HYDRATION HIT** Clarins Instant Light Lip Comfort Oil in Raspberry, **R295** **15 CLASSIC FUCHSIA** MAC Lipstick in Full Fuchsia, **R240** **16 CONDITIONING COLOUR** Catrice Beautifying Lip Smoother in Cake Pop, **R65**

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FASHION



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ideas to help you make your
outdoor area seem bigger.

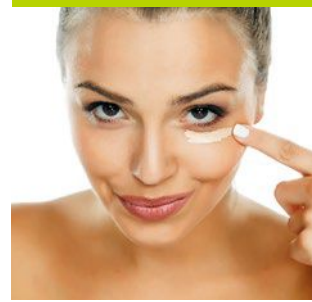
HEALTH



Testing, testing

Our list of the 7 routine
health checks that every
woman should have
– it could save your life.

BEAUTY



Dark circles 101

Follow our step-by-step guide
to covering dark circles under
your eyes, and never look like
sleep deprived again!



4 WAYS TO BEAT BELLY FAT

It's not just your weight but also where you carry it that matters, says health, well-being and weight-loss expert, Dr Sally Norton.

DO THE BODY MATHS

The amount of fat around your waist is an important indicator of your health, as it can be a warning sign that you are at risk of diabetes and heart disease. Measure your waist and compare it with your hip measurement. If your waist/hip ratio is 0.80 or more (or if your waist measurement is over 88cm for a woman), your health may be at risk. Easy-to-use waist/hip ratio calculators can be found online.

REMEMBER HIDDEN FAT

The fat on the inside is more of an issue than visible fat. Having a big belly is an indication of excess

fat in the liver and around other internal organs, and is associated with diseases like high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes.

PUMP UP THE CHROMIUM

Also known as the 'insulin helper', as it keeps glucose levels in check. Find it in broccoli and shellfish.

GET MOVING

Losing a few kilos will also reduce fat in the internal organs. Short bursts of High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) exercise will help to burn fat, fast; for classes try thehiitclub.co.za in Cape Town or movementx.co.za in Joburg.

Health news

COMPILED BY GRACE MANTJIU

Do you know how many kilojoules you're drinking? Get 6 healthy drinks swaps at essentials.co.za

WHAT'S BETTER?

Should you brush your teeth before or after tucking into breakfast?

THE VERDICT: Before

THE REASON: When you brush your teeth after breakfast, all you're doing is brushing sugars that have lingered on your teeth further into the protective enamel. This can then cause long-term damage. If you brush before breakfast, you'll strengthen the enamel. Time to change the habit of a lifetime! World Oral Health Day is on 20 March.



DID YOU KNOW?

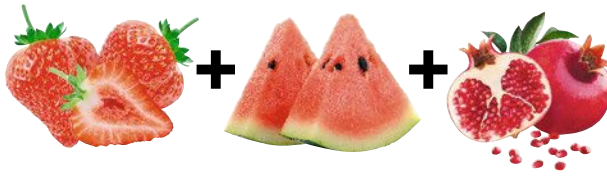
56 MINUTES

That's the number of minutes' sleep women miss out on each night, according to a UK sleep study. That's double the amount that men miss out on – and 43% of us blame our partners' snoring! It totals up to 10 days per year, putting us at risk of obesity, diabetes and even depression.



HEALTH FORMULA

Press these superfruits for a skin-reviving juice



250g strawberries	2 cups watermelon	1 pomegranate
An all-natural anti-inflammatory	For amino acids that aid circulation	A great source of antioxidants

3 OF THE BEST...

NEW BUYS TO TRY



Cure a cold sores

Kroko's ColdSoreFix is a two-step system for natural healing, **R125,99**



Instant pain relief

Femagene Soothing Heat Therapy patches for menstrual cramp relief, **R120 for five patches**



At-home tester kit

Glenmark's Allergo CHECK, a high-accuracy DIY allergy testing kit, **R426,10***

Am I on the right BIRTH CONTROL?

Many of us have relied on The Pill for years, but it isn't the only contraceptive method out there. We round up the alternatives...

For over 50 years, a tiny pill has totally revolutionised the sex lives of women around the world, and has protected us against unwanted pregnancies.

However, the press has been peppered with alarmist news when it comes to the combined oral contraceptive – also known simply as ‘The Pill’. Although research is still inconclusive

when it comes to its long-term risks for some women (and it may – or may not – be linked to mood swings and breast cancer), each of us is different – what may work for a friend, may not be a good fit for you. But with so many birth-control options, where do you even start?

Here's the low-down on some solutions that don't involve you having to scramble around for that condom you'd stashed away...

Did you know?

65% of South African women are on some form of contraception

BEST FOR... GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BODY'S CYCLE NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

Possibly the oldest trick in the book, and also used by some for religious reasons. It involves tracking your fertility by taking your temperature daily, understanding the secretions of mucus from your cervix, and calculating the length of your menstrual cycle – this method is sometimes used in conjunction with a fertility monitor or app.

HOW DOES IT WORK? By getting to know your own natural rhythms, and charting

them, you'll find out which days of the month you are fertile, so you can avoid having sex at those times of the month. If you have irregular periods, doing this without a fertility device can be tricky.

WHAT'S THE CATCH? There'll be days you'll still have to use condoms if you're in the mood. And a disclaimer: it can be risky, as 13 out of 100 women will fall pregnant in the first year of use.

BEST FOR... A HORMONE-FREE SOLUTION DIGITAL FERTILITY MONITOR

Using a fertility monitor, like Daysy, takes the headache out of manual menstrual tracking. Just take your temperature each morning under your tongue, and log those readings, along with when you have your period, using the device. It'll predict when you'll ovulate; once the data is linked up to the daysyView app, green days on the calendar mean you're safe to have sex, while red means closed for business.

HOW DOES IT WORK? We're only fertile for around six days a month, and your basal body

temperature (taken under your tongue every morning) can be a good indication of this as it rises with ovulation. An algorithm works out when it's best to avoid any bedroom antics (or when to use a condom). Clinically tested, it's 99.3% accurate. It's especially good for women who suffer side effects from The Pill, or those who can't take it for one reason or another.

WHAT'S THE CATCH? It'll cost you! The Daysy will set you back just under R6 000.

WHERE TO GET IT? Go to daysy.co.za



BEST FOR... HEAVY, PAINFUL PERIODS THE INJECTION

Getting a jab may sound like a rather drastic solution to period pain, but it helps many women manage painful menstrual cycles, as well as acting as an effective contraceptive, as it prevents ovulation. Each injection lasts up to three months (depending on the type that's prescribed).

HOW DOES IT WORK? It steadily releases a synthetic version of the female hormone progesterone, called

progestin (some release a mix of synthetic oestrogen and progestin). Like progesterone – which is released by a temporary gland in a woman's ovaries after ovulation, which then triggers your period – the injection stops your body releasing eggs, and it also thickens cervical mucus to prevent implantation. Injections are usually straight into the muscles in your bottom or your arm.

WHAT'S THE CATCH? It can take up to a year for your period and fertility to return to normal after the injection wears off, so if you're planning on having a baby in the near future, this isn't for you. If you have side effects, you'll have to put up with them for a few months. Also, it takes up to three weeks to kick in. **WHERE TO GET IT?** Government community health centres, your GP.

BEST FOR... A LONG-TERM SOLUTION THE IUD ('THE COIL')

If you don't have plans to have babies in the next few years, the copper IUD (like ParaGard) could be for you. Without any of the potential mood-altering hormones, a coil can last for up to 10 years, and it only takes around 15 to 20 min to fit.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

A small plastic and copper T-shaped device with two strings attached is inserted into your uterus. It then releases copper ions, which are toxic to sperm. And,

you still have the choice to have it removed, after which your fertility levels will return to normal practically immediately.

WHAT'S THE CATCH?

Your periods may worsen but should improve after a few months. Some women may expel the IUD, which usually happens in the first few days or weeks of the IUD being inserted.

WHERE TO GET IT?

Government community health centres, your GP.

BEST FOR... A LONG-TERM SOLUTION THE HORMONAL IUD

Unlike a copper IUD, a hormonal IUD (like Mirena), releases levonorgestrel, a progestin that prevents pregnancy.

HOW DOES IT WORK? After the device is inserted into your uterus, the levonorgestrel that's released makes your cervical mucus thicker, so that an egg can't be implanted. It can be removed at any time, and many women report far less menstrual bleeding (your period can stop entirely – which is a win in our books!). It lasts up to five years.

WHAT'S THE CATCH? Possible side effects include initial spotting and mood issues, but these often go away after a few months. Not to be used if you have liver problems, or if you take St John's Wort, anti-epileptic drugs, or certain antibiotics.

WHERE TO GET IT? Your gynae or GP.

BEST FOR... A FUSS-FREE OPTION THE IMPLANT

This is sometimes referred to as a 'fit and forget' birth control solution – and it's considered to be one of the most effective, at 99.95%! It's easy to insert and remove and, once in place, you don't have to think about contraception for up to three years. If you want to have kids, your fertility will return to normal when it's taken out.

HOW DOES IT WORK? A matchstick-sized plastic rod is inserted under the skin of your upper arm; it releases small amounts of progestin to stop you from releasing an egg each month, and it thins the uterus lining so it's unable to support a fertilised egg.

WHAT'S THE CATCH? Irregular or heavy periods, or spotting, can occur (although one in three women stop getting their periods after a year). The implant starts releasing hormones immediately, but you may need to use condoms for the first few weeks to be safe. It might not work as well if you're overweight or have high cholesterol. It can cause headaches and nausea.

WHERE TO GET IT? Government community health centres, or your GP.

BEST FOR... A WEEKLY VERSION OF 'THE PILL' THE PATCH

If The Pill works for you, but you'd rather just deal with a weekly, instead of daily, contraceptive routine, then this is a hassle-free option for you.

HOW DOES IT WORK? The patch, which contains the same hormones as the combined contraceptive pill (oestrogen and progestin), is applied directly to the skin, usually on the bottom or the legs. You apply one patch a week for three weeks in a row, then you go patch-free in the fourth week – when your period should start. It works by delivering a steady flow of hormones – that prevent ovulation – through the skin into the bloodstream. This can minimise side effects.

WHAT'S THE CATCH? Like The Pill, it could put you at higher risk for blood clots or depression, and it can be less effective if you're overweight.

WHERE TO GET IT? Your GP.

* These are contraceptives only and won't offer protection from STDs. If you're considering a new birth control method, speak to a medical professional. You can get pregnant immediately after stopping any form of birth control, so keep condoms on standby!



Tone up & CHILL OUT!

Stretch your way to a firmer body and a calmer mind – in just 15 minutes a day!

Sleepless nights? Sweaty palms? You need to take a break and calm down – try trainer Caroline Sandry's 15-minute Pilates routine and you can tone up, too.

OK, so a gym session may not be the first thing that comes to mind when you want to relax, but working out is as key for your head as it is for your heart. A good workout reduces the levels of adrenaline and cortisol,

your stress hormones, while also stimulating endorphins – chemicals in your brain that act as mood elevators. Apart from helping get a firmer core and toned limbs, Pilates can help to chill you out. 'With each movement, try listen to your breath and focus on the body part you're moving,' says Caroline. 'This will improve the physical results, and help you feel calmer.' You really need to try it out to believe it...



THE DART

Strengthens and extends spine

Lie on your stomach, hands down by your sides with legs together. Inhale, and draw your shoulders away from your ears and lift your head, shoulders and arms from the floor, reaching hands down towards your toes. Exhale to return to the floor. Repeat eight times, slowly.



ROLL DOWN

Stretches the back of your body

Stand tall and straight with feet and knees hip-width apart. Inhale and then exhale to slowly roll down one vertebra at a time, until hands are down by your toes. Inhale and hold. Exhale to roll back up one vertebra at a time. Repeat once more.

Top tip!

Keep a neutral spine, shoulders away from ears, and abs drawn in.

**PLANK**

Strengthens entire core, and flattens abs

From standing, exhale to roll down one vertebra at a time, walking your hands out into a plank position. Stay for 30 to 60 seconds. Reverse steps to roll back up one vertebra at a time to standing. Use your abdominal muscles to straighten spine.

**TWIST**

Improves spinal rotation, loosens tight shoulders

Inhale, then exhale to roll down one vertebra at a time. Walk your hands out to kneel on all fours with your hands under your shoulders, your knees under your hips and a neutral spine (neither flat nor arched). Inhale and reach your left arm out and twist, looking up towards the ceiling. Exhale and draw your belly button in towards your spine as you thread your left hand under your trunk and through the opposite side. Repeat three times.

**SWIMMING**

Strengthens your core muscles

On all fours, exhale, draw belly button in towards your spine and lengthen opposite arm and leg out until they're off the floor. Inhale, return to centre, then exhale and switch sides. Repeat on each side. On the last rep hold the 'out' breath position for three breaths.

**CHILD'S POSE**

Helps relax body and mind

Kneeling on the floor, press your bottom back on your heels and let your arms relax by your sides. Take long, slow, deep breaths for about one minute. Then roll back up to kneeling and circle your shoulders backwards three to four times to complete your workout.

ESSENTIALS EXTRA**GETTING YOUR BREATHING RIGHT IS KEY TO A GOOD WORKOUT**

- * It helps to oxygenate your blood so you feel revitalised, and enhances the control of each movement.
- * Getting into a rhythm will stop you from holding your breath.
- * Inhale when you open and expand your body, and exhale when you close and contract your body.

The new **FLATTUM** DIET SECRET

The right eating plan can help you lose weight, stress less and feel happier, too...

Is stress making you fat?

According to nutritionist Charlotte Watts, author of *The De-Stress Effect* (Hay House Publishing), it might be a key reason you're piling on the extra kilos. Luckily, you can get control of those stress-driven impulses to reach for cake. 'If you're giving your body the resources it needs to cope, you are less likely to fall prey to the impulses that keep you at the mercy of cravings,' says Charlotte

How does it happen?

When you're stressed, your brain needs glucose for a spike in energy, so it sends messages to encourage you to fill up on high-kilojoule food, which allows sugar to get into your bloodstream fast. So you're likely to reach for the sugary, carb-rich snacks instead of healthy options.

* The sugar spike of a high-carb meal leads to a surge of insulin, the hormone that helps regulate blood sugar. Insulin brings your blood sugar down quickly, which can leave you tired and craving more high-carb food. Over time, insulin encourages your body to store fat.

* Stress causes consistently raised levels of the hormone cortisol, which encourages your body to store kJs as abdominal fat.



YOUR DIET GUIDELINES

* **AVOID ALL FORMS OF SUGAR AND REFINED CARBS.**

That means steering clear of sweets, cakes, fizzy drinks, fruit juice, honey and white bread. This is key, because sugar and refined carbs push up insulin and keep you in the cycle of stress eating.

*** IDEALLY CUT OUT CAFFEINE AND ALCOHOL,** as they disrupt brain chemistry, and can aggravate stress.

If you can't eliminate them completely, at least cut down to having one cup of tea or coffee a day, and no more than one post-work alcoholic drink.

*** HAVE SIX TO EIGHT PALM-SIZED PORTIONS OF VEGETABLES DAILY,** and a daily serving of two to three portions of fruit.

*** COOK WITH OLIVE OIL,** coconut oil or low-kilojoule cooking spray.

*** EAT MINDFULLY.** Sit down with no distractions and try to chew every mouthful thoroughly. This will help to improve both your digestion and your stress levels – as well as helping you realise when you're full so you don't over-eat.

*** PROTEIN.** Eggs, lean meat, fish or shellfish should make up a quarter or a third of each meal.

THE DIET PLAN

BREAKFAST

- * One or two poached, boiled or scrambled eggs with wilted spinach and a grilled tomato.
- * One poached egg, two rashers grilled bacon, four roasted cherry tomatoes, and asparagus.
- * Bircher Muesli: rolled oats, nuts and seeds in water or yoghurt, grated apple, ground cinnamon, desiccated coconut.

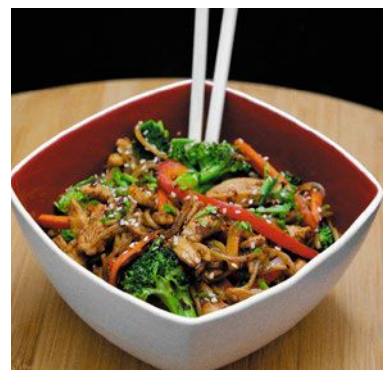


LUNCH

- * High-protein soup such as chicken, lentil or pea and ham.
- * Roast beef slices with a salad of green leaves, avocado, asparagus and a sprinkle of goat's cheese.
- * Poached or scrambled eggs on sourdough toast with avocado.

DINNER

- * Chicken stir-fried with peppers, broccoli, ginger, chilli and a handful of cashew nuts.
- * Lentil dahl with spinach.
- * Baked salmon with stir-fried cabbage and kale.



SNACKS

- * A piece of fruit.
- * A small handful of nuts and seeds.
- * A smoothie: blend half an avo, half a can of coconut milk, 200ml pressed apple juice and a handful of fresh or frozen berries.

Top tip!

Choosing the wrong food could make you feel more stressed and cause weight gain – refined carbs can increase the mood highs and lows triggered by stress hormones

DON'T FORGET... TO STAY HYDRATED!

This is crucial as dehydration can cause bloating. 'But simply increasing the amount of water in a dehydrated body can be like watering a pot plant – the water goes straight through without being absorbed,' says Charlotte.

Try these tips instead:

- * **Drink coconut water** – it's fat- and cholesterol free, and packed with potassium.
- * **Swap sugary snacks** for glasses of half-water, half-apple juice (the freshly

pressed kind). Gradually build up to drinking just water.

- * **Have herbal teas** – you can try making your own by pouring hot water onto fresh mint or fennel seeds.





60-SECOND health boosters

In as little as one minute, you can improve your physical and mental well-being. Don't believe us? Here are 20 ways to feel better in a flash

STAY BUG-FREE

*** Wash your hands properly.**

This can cut respiratory illness by 45% and prevents cold virus infections. It should take 15 seconds – the time it takes to sing Happy Birthday twice – to wash your hands thoroughly.

*** Gargle for 60 seconds.** Gargling with water three times a day cuts your risk of catching a cold by 33%.

*** Hang your bag up in public loos.**

In a study conducted by microbiologist Dr Charles Gerba, 30% of handbags tested were contaminated by E. coli, probably picked up from toilet floors.

TWEAK YOUR DIET

* Sprinkle some cinnamon on your cappuccino.

A small study has shown that eating half a teaspoon of ground cinnamon per day can lower blood glucose, as well as 'bad' LDL cholesterol levels.

*** Eat an apple a day.** Studies in mice reveal that a chemical called ursolic acid in apple peel can help protect against obesity, and may even aid in increased muscle mass (which burns kilojoules). So, you really may be able to keep the doctor away...

*** Swap salt for seaweed granules.** The sodium content is just 3.5% compared to almost 40% in regular salt – and it's hard to taste the difference. We love Earth Products Dulse Granules, R85; faithfultonature.co.za

SORT OUT YOUR SLEEP

* Drink milk before bed.

A protein that's found in the white stuff – called alpha-lactalbumin – can help you nod off, as it also contains tryptophan, an amino acid that helps to promote sleep.

*** Test your pillow.** Fold it in half, place a book on top

and let go. If the pillow throws the book off and springs back, it's still sleep-worthy.

* Keep lavender nearby.

Studies show that the scent of lavender lowers anxiety, promotes relaxation and induces sleep.

GET PEARLY WHITES

*** Make a dental appointment.** Having your teeth professionally cleaned and polished at least once a year can cut your risk of heart attack by 24% – and your risk of stroke by 13%.

*** Drink through a straw.** Yes, it's a pain but this simple trick will prevent sugar acids from coming into contact with your teeth.

*** Massage your teeth.** Dentists warn that brushing your teeth too hard erodes enamel and causes gums to recede. Instead, hold the brush with your thumb and forefinger and think 'massage' instead of 'brush'.



HEALTHY BODY, HEALTHY MIND

*** Try kissing.** Research shows that smooching lowers levels of the stress hormone cortisol, and can even increase the levels of dopamine and serotonin (known as the pleasure- and happy hormones respectively).

*** Copy your cat.** Get on all fours and suck in your tummy, arching your back as high as possible. Release, then repeat slowly 12 to 15 times. This will release tension from the body, leaving you poised and ready to face the day.

*** Log on to freerice.com;** this game tests your vocabulary and boosts brainpower. And for every right answer, 10 grains of rice are donated to needy countries.

*** Don't look down.** Chiropractors warn that 'text neck', caused by hunching over your smartphone, overflexes the tissues and facet joints in the neck. This can result

in headaches and shoulder and neck pain in the short term, and arthritis in the long term.

*** Check your bra:** Tight, thin bra straps can impinge the trapezius muscle (where the straps sit on the shoulders), triggering head pain. You should be professionally fitted at least once a year.

*** Stand-up hands free.** When you rise from a seated position, do so without using your hands – of course it's much harder this way, but it will help strengthen your core muscles.

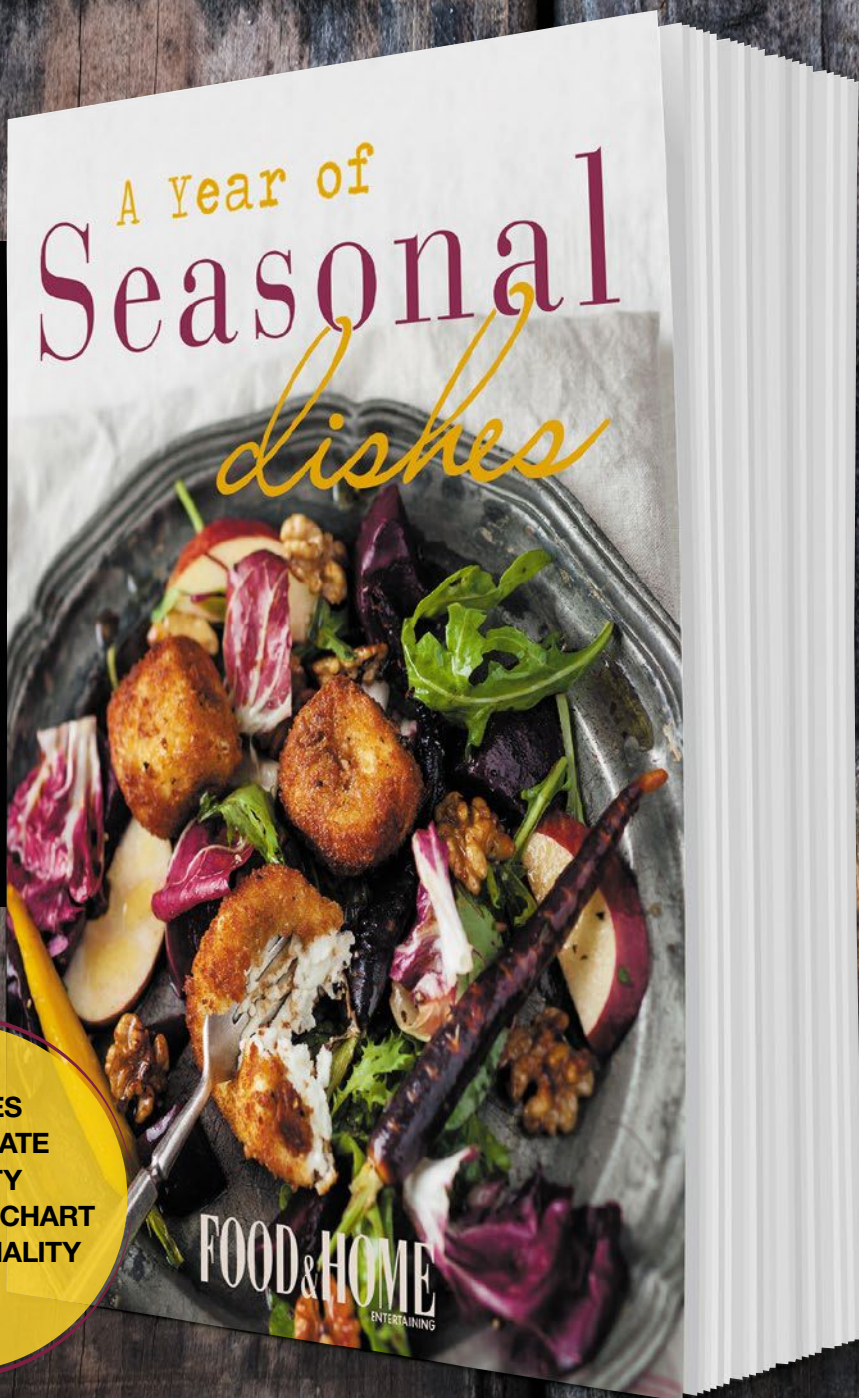
*** Work your ankles.** If you've been sitting for a long period of time, get the blood flowing again and release tension by tracing each letter of the alphabet in the air with one foot, then the other.

*** Change your font to 12 point or bigger.** Reading text any smaller on a computer or tablet increases the risk of eye strain and headaches.

ON SALE *now!*

Food & Home Entertaining – *A Year of Seasonal Dishes* offers 144 delicious recipes that combine classic cuisine with on-trend appeal. From cocktails to soups, salads to mains, sides to desserts and beautiful bakes, this inspired collection caters for every occasion, including Valentine's Day and Mother's Day.

With beautiful images capturing each dish, the cookbook's monthly chapters use seasonal ingredients, making it an indispensable tool for chefs, students, home cooks and all lovers of food.



**INCLUDES
THE ULTIMATE
QUANTITY
CONVERSION CHART
AND SEASONALITY
GUIDE**

FOOD & HOME ENTERTAINING – A YEAR OF SEASONAL DISHES
IS AVAILABLE AT [HTTP://SHOP.CAXTONMAGS.CO.ZA](http://shop.caxtonmags.co.za) FOR R350.

FOOD & HOME
ENTERTAINING

THIS MONTH

Fill your freezer for no-fuss meals

With the back-to-school slog in full swing (thank goodness!), it's OK to go for super-quick and easy dishes, and there's no shame in serving up freezer favourites for the kids. My go-to are fish fingers, and these flaky and delicious I&J Tasty Fish Fingers, **400g for R38,99** from Pick n Pay, tick all the right boxes – just add tomato sauce, no judgement!

FOOD FORMULA

Whiz up these ingredients for an energy-boosting smoothie



Blueberries

Filled with antioxidants



Avocado

Contains good, heart-healthy fats



Plain yoghurt

The probiotics aid digestion

Food news

COMPILED BY TAMLYN CUMINGS



Short of ideas for dinner tonight? See essentials.co.za for loads of easy recipes!

3 OF THE BEST...

USES FOR VANILLA



Savoury flavour booster

Add a few drops to intensify everything from salmon to tomato sauce



Hunger buster

One whiff of its rich scent can trick your brain into thinking you've just eaten a sweet treat

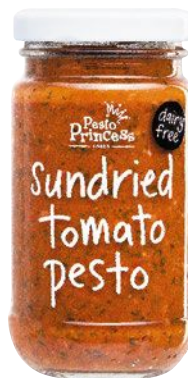
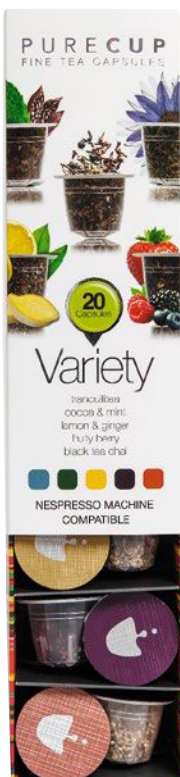


Tasty body scrub

Make your own with equal parts salt, olive oil and a few flecks of vanilla paste

TRIED, TESTED LOVED!

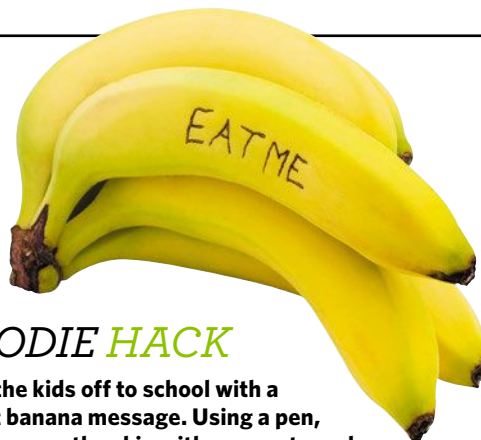
PURE CUP Fine Tea and Coffee capsules are at the top of my shopping list. While I'm a complete coffee addict (and this brand does not disappoint!), I really love their range of tea pods, too. The Rooibos with Blueberry is a must-try. **From R59** at Food Lover's Market and select Spar and Pick n Pay stores.



WE'RE TALKING ABOUT...

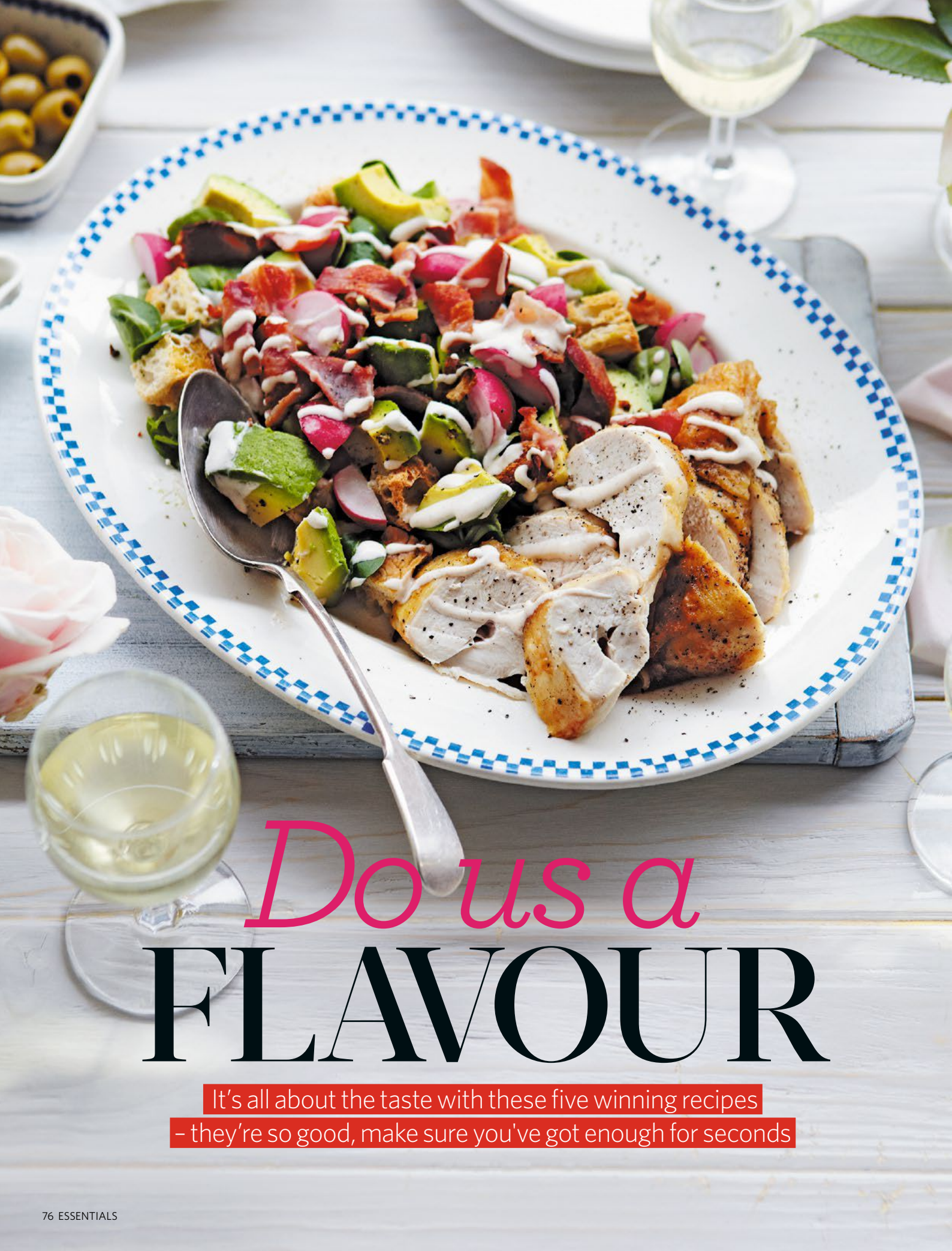
SCRUMMY PESTO

I love the versatility of pesto and the fact that it injects flavour into any dish. And I'm super excited that Pesto Princess has added a sundried tomato flavour to their range. **From R42,99**, leading retailers.



FOODIE HACK

Send the kids off to school with a secret banana message. Using a pen, simply score the skin with your note and it will gradually appear – as if by magic – as the peel bruises throughout the day.



Do us a **FLAVOUR**

It's all about the taste with these five winning recipes
- they're so good, make sure you've got enough for seconds

ROASTED CHICKEN BREAST WITH BACON & AVOCADO SALAD

SERVES 6 READY IN 40 MIN

6 chicken supremes (large chicken breasts with the wing still attached)
 2 tbsp olive- or avocado oil
 200g ciabatta bread, cut into small chunks
 150g back bacon
 3 avocados, halved, de-stoned, peeled and cut into chunks
 150g radishes, quartered
 60g lettuce leaves
For the dressing
 175ml crème fraîche
 1 small garlic clove, crushed
 ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1 tsp honey

1 Heat the oven to 180°C. Brush the chicken lightly with half the oil and season. Roast for 25 min or until it's cooked through.

2 Toss the ciabatta chunks in the remaining oil and spread on a lined baking tray. Then bake in the oven with the chicken for 10 to 12 min or until golden. Grill the bacon until cooked through and crispy.

3 In a small bowl, mix all the dressing ingredients until smooth. Mix the croutons with the avocado, radishes and the lettuce. Chop the bacon and sprinkle on top. Add a drizzle of the dressing, slice the chicken, and then serve on the side.

2 510kJ PER SERVING 37g FAT 14g SAT FAT 19g CARBS

Top tip!

This salad also works as a delicious breakfast idea – just swap the chicken for fried eggs



Exotic
& super
tasty

CHINESE FIVE-SPICE CHICKEN WITH CORN

SERVES 4 READY IN 1 HR + MARINATING

1 onion, peeled and thinly sliced
 2 garlic cloves, sliced
 1 tbsp Chinese five-spice
 ½ tbsp peppercorns
 60ml soy sauce
 90ml honey
 1.5kg chicken thighs, bone in (6-8 thighs, depending on size)

For the corn
 4 mealies
 20g butter
 Splash soy sauce
 Pinch dried chilli flakes

1 In a large dish, mix the onion, garlic, five-spice

powder, peppercorns, soy sauce and honey until smooth. Add the chicken thighs and coat well in the sauce. Cover with cling wrap and leave in the fridge for at least 1 hr or even for up to two days.

2 Heat the oven to 150°C. Double-line a roasting tin with oiled foil (this will save you hard-labour washing up... promise!) and add the pieces of chicken, skin side up, with the marinade. Roast for 40 min, basting now and again,

then turn up the oven to 200°C and cook for a further 15 min until the chicken is well browned and sticky.

3 For the corn, stand the mealies upright, then run a knife down the cob to cut off the kernels. Stir-fry in butter, soy sauce and a pinch of dried chilli flakes for 2-3 min. Spoon into a bowl and serve with the chicken on the side.

2 326kJ PER SERVING 18g FAT 6g SAT FAT 29g CARBS



TOMATO & GOAT'S CHEESE PIZZA

SERVES 2-4 READY IN 25 MIN + 30 MIN RISING TIME

250g pizza dough
3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
Flour, for dusting
450g mixed tomatoes, seeds removed and cut into thick slices and wedges
100g goat's cheese with a rind, cut into thick slices
Handful basil leaves

1 Shape the dough into a ball, then leave to rise until it has doubled in size (around 30 min) in a bowl covered with oiled cling wrap, or overnight in the fridge.

2 Heat the oven to 210°C. Roll the dough into a 30cm circle on a baking tray that's dusted with flour, drizzle with half the oil and bake for 8 min.

3 Remove the pizza from the oven and scatter over the tomatoes and goat's cheese, season and bake for another 5-6 min. Scatter over the basil and drizzle over the remaining oil.

1 674-2 508kJ PER SERVING
15-30g FAT 6-12g SAT FAT
50-100g CARBS



**Veggie
delight**

SPINACH, MUSHROOM & PEPPER LASAGNE

SERVES 6 READY IN 1 HR

500g frozen spinach leaves
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 tbsp olive- or avocado oil
1 onion, chopped
300g mushrooms, sliced
200g lasagne sheets
375g jar tomato and basil pasta sauce
290g flame-roasted red peppers, sliced
250g mascarpone
170g cream cheese
1 tbsp milk
Fresh basil leaves, to garnish

4 Spoon the mushroom mixture into an ovenproof dish. Top with lasagne sheets and half each of the tomato sauce and peppers. Add another layer of lasagne, followed by the rest of the tomato sauce and spinach. Finish with a layer of lasagne and the rest of the roasted peppers.

5 Mix the mascarpone and cream cheese with the milk and spread over the top. Bake in the oven for 30 min until the lasagne sheets are tender. Garnish with basil and serve.

1 879kJ PER SERVING 30g
FAT 18g SAT FAT 30g CARBS

1 Heat the oven to 180°C. Put the spinach and garlic into a bowl and microwave on high for 4 min.

2 Heat the oil, add the onion and fry for a few min. Stir in the mushrooms and cook for 4 min to soften.

3 Tip the spinach into a sieve, resting over a bowl, and press with a masher to squeeze out the excess juice.

Top tip!

You can freeze the made up lasagne (for up to three months) and cook it from frozen



Oh-so Zesty!

LAMB CUTLETS WITH MUSHY BROAD BEAN PURÉE & POTATOES

SERVES 4 READY IN 30 MIN + MARINATING

Zest and juice 2 lemons
3 tbsp fresh oregano, chopped or 2 tsp dried
3 garlic cloves, crushed
3½ tbsp olive- or avo oil
¾ tsp dried red chilli flakes
8 lamb chops, fat trimmed
400g baby potatoes, cut in half if they are large

For the purée

500g broad beans, outer skins removed

1 tbsp tahini or pesto
Good squeeze lemon juice

1 In a bowl, mix the lemon zest with the oregano, garlic, 1½ tbsp of the oil and the chilli, and season. Now add the lamb and mix to coat. Leave the meat to marinate for 20 min or overnight.

2 Meanwhile, add the potatoes to a pan of cold

water and bring to the boil, then simmer for 4 min or until just tender. Drain and leave on a tea towel to dry.

3 For the bean purée, put the broad beans, tahini and half the lemon juice into a food processor; pulse until it's fairly smooth. Season and set aside.

4 Heat a large heavy-based frying pan over a medium heat, then add the remaining oil

and the potatoes; cook for 8-10 min or until golden, turning occasionally.

5 Cook the lamb cutlets on a braai or hot grill for 3-5 min on each side, sprinkle over some lemon juice and a little salt to serve.

2 125kJ PER SERVING
25g FAT 7g SAT FAT
24g CARBS

The hero ingredient

PINEAPPLE

With its numerous health benefits, as well as metabolism-boosting enzymes, the humble pineapple has gone up a notch!

What's so good about it?

It turns out, this tropical fruit is a bit of a gem in the superfood crown, as it's loaded with nutrients and powerful enzymes.

* The real star of the show is the enzyme bromelain – pineapples are full of it. It has powerful anti-inflammatory benefits that can help reduce symptoms of arthritis, as well as lessen healing time from sports injuries, wounds and stings. Bromelain can also reduce hay fever symptoms, increase the absorption of antibiotics, alleviate blood clotting and – excitingly – some studies have even shown that it can help in controlling the growth of tumours in mice. It also gives metabolism a short-term boost by speeding up digestion.

* Pineapple is fibre-rich, so it's great for digestion, and it's also high in vitamin C, which is essential for a healthy immune system. Don't overdo it though, as it's quite a high-sugar fruit.

* It's a good source of thiamine, copper – essential for healthy red blood cells – and potassium, which helps lower blood pressure.



Quick and easy ideas with pineapple

STICKY MAPLE PINEAPPLE

SERVES 4

Cut 1 pineapple into wedges, discarding the skin and core. Melt 25g butter in a frying pan, add the pineapple, cook on a medium heat to lightly brown on all sides. Add 4 tbsp maple syrup and a good pinch of sea salt, bubble until nice and sticky. Serve with plain, fat-free yoghurt.

SWEET & SOUR CHICKEN

SERVES 4

Heat 1 tbsp vegetable oil in a wok, then brown 500g chicken breast pieces and set aside. Cook 1 sliced onion until golden, add 2 sliced red peppers and 2 cloves garlic, cook for 1 min, put the chicken back in the wok with 300g pineapple chunks, 2 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tbsp rice-wine vinegar, 1 tsp sesame oil, 2 tsp honey and 1 tbsp tomato sauce. Heat for 5 min. Mix in 2 chopped spring onions, and serve with rice.

CARIBBEAN FRIED RICE

SERVES 2

Heat 1 tbsp vegetable oil in a frying pan, cook ½ chopped small onion until golden, add 250g cooked basmati rice, 150g thawed peas, a pinch of ground allspice and ½ chopped red chilli, mix and fry for few min. Take off the heat and add 30g coconut shavings, 150g chopped pineapple, the juice and zest of 1 lime, black pepper and 2 handfuls of fresh chopped coriander.

Now try...

SUPER-STICKY CHICKEN

SERVES 6 READY IN 55 MIN

3 *tbsp* sunflower oil
6 *chicken* drumsticks
6 *chicken* thighs
3 *limes*
4 *tbsp* chutney
4 *tbsp* soy sauce
432g *can* pineapple slices, drained
1 *red chilli*, deseeded, sliced
Rice, peas and coriander, to serve

1 Heat the oven to 200°C. Heat the oil and fry the drumsticks and thighs in batches, turning occasionally, until crispy. Remove and drain on kitchen paper.

2 Place the chicken into a roasting dish. Grate the zest of 1 lime, and set aside. Squeeze the juice of that lime and another 1, and mix with the chutney and soy sauce. Brush the mixture liberally over the chicken and roast for 20 to 30 min.

3 Meanwhile, slice the pineapple into wedges and fry in a griddle pan until golden. Sprinkle the chicken with chilli and lime zest and serve with the pineapple wedges, 1 lime (in wedges), rice, peas and fresh, chopped coriander.

1 121kJ 13g FAT 3g SAT FAT 10g CARBS



NO GLUTEN UPSIDE-DOWN PINEAPPLE AND GINGER PUD

SERVES 10 READY IN 2 HR 20 MIN

175g *dairy-free* spread
165g *light brown* sugar
3 *eggs*, beaten
175g *gluten-free* self-raising flour
Zest of 1 *lime*, juice half
½ *tsp* mixed spice
½ *tsp* ground ginger
4 *tbsp* *almond- or other dairy-free* milk
4 *tbsp* maple syrup
175g *fresh* pineapple chunks
3 *balls* stem ginger or ginger preserve, chopped



For 80+ delicious
gluten-free
recipes, go to
[essentials.co.za/
diets/gluten-free](http://essentials.co.za/diets/gluten-free)

1 Cream the spread and sugar until pale and creamy. Gradually beat in the eggs, then fold in flour, lime zest and juice and spices. Stir in the milk (add a drop more if it looks dry) until it makes a thick batter.

2 Drizzle the maple syrup over the base of a 2-litre round ovenproof dish, sprinkle over the pineapple and ginger, then pour in the mix and smooth the top. Fold a piece of tin foil so it has a pleat in the middle, set over the dish and tie tightly with string.

3 Put the dish on a saucer in a deep saucepan and half fill with boiling water. Cover and steam gently for 2 hr – you may need to top up the water during cooking.

2 054kJ 26g FAT 5g SAT FAT 63g CARBS

Just add **COCOA!**

Here are your ultimate chocolate recipes... but with a brand-new tasty twist

*Utterly
divine*

CHOCOLATE & CHERRY MARQUISE

SERVES 10-12

READY IN 45 MIN

+ OVERNIGHT SETTING

300g dark chocolate, roughly chopped

125g unsalted butter, cut into cubes

1 tsp vanilla extract

6 large egg yolks

165g castor sugar

500ml cream

50g cocoa powder, sifted

For the filling

400g pitted cherries, soaked in kirsch

For the topping

100g dark chocolate, finely chopped

Small handful fresh cherries

Edible glitter

You will need

1.4-litre terrine mould or loaf tin,

double-lined with cling wrap

1 Melt the chocolate, butter and vanilla extract in a heavy-based saucepan over a low heat. Mix to combine, then set aside, leave to cool.

2 Using a free-standing or electric hand mixer, beat the egg yolks with the sugar until thick and creamy. Turn the speed to low, and while you continue mixing, pour in the chocolate mixture in a slow, steady stream. Still on a low speed, add the cream in two batches and mix until well incorporated – add the cocoa powder after the first addition. Be careful not to over-mix, it should be thick, but easily spreadable – if it's been over-mixed, just add some more cream to loosen.

3 Spoon just over half the mix into the prepared tin and smooth the surface. Add an even layer of cherries down the centre – it should resemble a column. Spoon over the remaining chocolate mixture and smooth the surface. Leave in the fridge to set overnight. Once set, run a hot, dry palette knife over any rough edges on the top and sides of the marquise and return it to the fridge for at least 20 min.

4 For the topping, melt the chocolate for a few sec in the microwave, then mix to combine and leave to cool. Put the marquise on a serving plate and drizzle over the chocolate. Decorate with fresh cherries lightly coated in edible glitter and slice with a hot, dry knife.

2 431-2 916kJ PER SERVING 44-53g

FAT 26-31g SAT FAT 40-48g CARBS



*Sweet
'n nutty*

CHOCOLATE PECAN PIE

SERVES 10 READY IN 1 HR 20 MIN

100g dark chocolate, roughly chopped

50g unsalted butter, cut into cubes

225ml golden syrup

100g sugar

2 large eggs, beaten

200g shortcrust pastry

100g pecan halves

Icing sugar, to dust

You will need

20cm fluted, loose-based tart tin, oiled

Baking beans and tin foil

1 Heat the oven to 180°C. Melt the dark chocolate and butter in a bowl set over a pan of simmering water. Set aside and then leave to cool.

2 Put the syrup and sugar in a pan, melt over a low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Turn up the heat and bubble for 3 min, mixing well, then leave to cool for 15 min.

3 In another bowl, mix the eggs and choc mixture together, then gradually whisk in the syrup mixture until smooth.

4 Roll out the shortcrust pastry and line the prepared tart tin. Prick it all over with a fork, then chill in the fridge for 15 min. Put a sheet of foil on top and fill with baking beans. Bake for 10 min, then remove the foil and beans; bake for another 5 min.

5 Turn the oven down to 160°C. Pour the filling into the tart shell and bake for 15 min. Remove the tart from the oven and arrange the pecans on top. Return to the oven and cook for 25 to 30 min or until the filling has just set, but still has a slight wobble. Allow the tart to cool for at least 30 min in the tin, then dust with a little icing sugar before serving.

1 590kJ PER SERVING 21.5g FAT

7.5g SAT FAT 41g CARBS

DEVIL'S CHILLI-COFFEE CAKE

SERVES 16 **READY IN** 1 HR 15 MIN + COOLING

450g flour
 2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
 2 tsp baking powder
 200g dark chocolate, roughly chopped
 300ml hot, strong coffee
 350g unsalted butter, softened
 400g castor sugar

4 large eggs, lightly beaten
For the ganache
 600ml cream
 ¼-½ tsp chilli powder
 600g dark chocolate, roughly chopped
To decorate
 100g thin dark chocolate squares

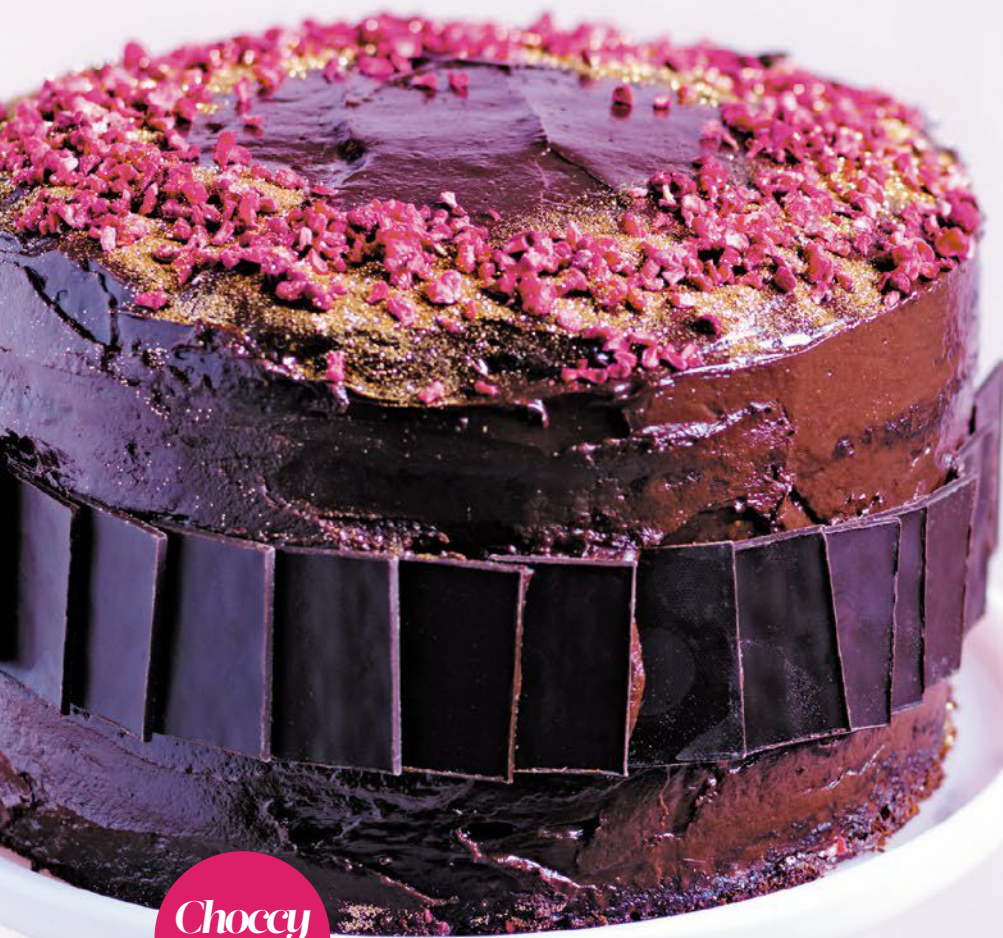
(try Woolworths)

Edible glitter

2 tbsp freeze-dried raspberries

You will need

5x20cm round cake tins, greased and the bases and sides lined with baking paper (or you can make the sponges in batches)



1 Heat the oven to 160°C. Sift the flour, bicarb and baking powder into a bowl with a good pinch of salt, and set aside. Put the chopped chocolate into a small bowl and pour over the coffee. Allow to melt, then mix until smooth; leave to cool.

2 Cream the butter and sugar until pale and creamy, then gradually beat in the eggs, adding a little flour if it looks like it might curdle. Fold in the flour mix, followed by the cooled melted chocolate mixture. Divide between the prepared tins and cook for 10-15 min. Allow the sponges to cool slightly in the tins before removing to a wire rack to cool completely.

3 For the ganache, heat the cream with the chilli powder until hot, but not boiling – adjust the chilli to taste. Put the chopped dark chocolate into a bowl and pour over the chilli cream. Allow to melt, then mix until smooth. Set aside and leave to cool slightly.

4 Using a palette knife, spread a layer of ganache on the first sponge, top with another sponge, then repeat with the remaining layers. Cover the sides and top of the cake with ganache. Finish with a layer of chocolate squares, running around the middle of the cake, and a dusting of glitter and freeze-dried raspberries on top.

**3 636kJ PER SERVING 56g FAT
 34g SAT FAT 81g CARBS**

**Choccy
 heaven!**



OUR COVER STAR
KATELYN WILLIAMS IS
THE FABULOUS FOODIE
BEHIND THE BLOG
THEKATETIN.COM

KATE BAKES

Get ready for some serious chocolate decadence
- three times the charm - thanks to our resident
sweet tooth, Katelyn Williams

SALTED TRIPLE CHOCOLATE TART

MAKES 1 LARGE TART

For the pastry

¼ cup cocoa, plus extra for dusting

200g cake flour

125g butter, chilled and cubed

½ cup icing sugar

3 egg yolks

2 tbsp ice-cold water

For the filling

300ml cream

105g butter

100g each dark chocolate, milk

chocolate, and white chocolate,

finely chopped, plus extra to decorate

Pinch of sea salt

1 Place the cocoa, flour, butter and icing sugar in a food processor and combine until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Gradually add the egg yolks and just enough ice-cold water to form a dough. Flatten into a disc, wrap in plastic and then refrigerate for 1 hr.

2 Roll the pastry out to 5mm thick and line a 25cm loose-bottomed tart tin. Allow the pastry to roughly hang over the sides and prick the base with a fork. Refrigerate again for 30 min then bake blind with baking beans at 180°C for 15 min; remove the paper and beans and bake for another 10-15 min until golden. Trim the pastry edges with a sharp knife and allow to cool.

3 Put the dark-, milk- and white chocolate into separate bowls. Place the cream and butter in a saucepan and heat until just below boiling point. Pour 135g of cream and butter mixture into each type of chocolate and allow to stand for a few min to melt. Stir each mixture until smooth.

4 Pour the dark chocolate into the pastry case and place in the fridge to set. Once firm, pour over the milk chocolate and set again before finally pouring over the white chocolate. Refrigerate for 30 min to set completely. Decorate with extra chocolate, if desired, and sprinkle with sea salt.



For a delicious
collection of our
30 favourite chocolate
recipes, visit
essentials.co.za

5 Smart & speedy SALAD JARS

This is your easiest packed lunch ever – and you can eat it on the go!

Add heavy ingredients first, leaves on top, then shake and serve!

VEGETABLE TACO SALAD

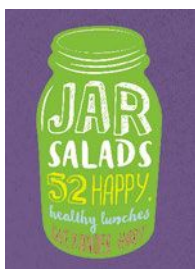
READY IN 25 MIN

Mix together 3 tbsp Greek-style yoghurt with 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar, juice of 1 lime, large handful of finely chopped coriander leaves, pinch of castor sugar and sea salt. Add the dressing to the jar, then 1 diced small cucumber, 90g cooked black beans, 2 tbsp chopped jalapeños, 1 diced tomato, 3 tbsp corn kernels, ½ avocado (sliced) with lemon juice squeezed over, 2 tbsp shredded Cheddar cheese, handful of chopped coriander and handful of baby spinach leaves to fill.

WHY WE LOVE IT

A target of five portions of fruit and vegetables a day is actually the minimum you need to be eating, so the more you can cram into a salad jar, the better.

2 163kJ 33g **FAT**
13g **SAT FAT** 14g **CARBS**



Extract taken from
*Jar Salads, 52 Happy
Healthy Lunches* by
Alexander Hart (Smith
Street Books; available
at exclusivebooks.co.za)



JAPANESE SESAME CHICKEN & SOBA NOODLE SALAD

READY IN 20 MIN

**Real
hunger
buster**

Mix 1 tbsp mayo, 1 tsp rice vinegar, 1 tsp tamari/soy sauce, 2 tsp tahini, ½ tsp castor sugar, pinch of salt. Blanch 200g frozen edamame in shells in boiling water for 5 min. Shell once cool. Add dressing to jar, then 1 finely chopped carrot, 75g shredded chicken, the edamame, 50g cooked soba noodles and 80g shredded red cabbage to fill.

WHY WE LOVE IT

Chicken is a lean protein, which helps you feel full for much longer.

2 510kJ 28 g **FAT**
3g **SAT FAT** 39g **CARBS**



HOKKIEN NOODLE SALAD

READY IN 20 MIN

For the chilli dressing, mix ½ tsp sesame oil, 2 tsp rice vinegar, 2 tsp light soy sauce, 1 finely chopped and seeded red chilli, 2 tsp toasted sesame seeds and 1 tsp castor sugar. Add dressing to jar, then 1 spiralized carrot, 100g cooked Hokkien noodles, 2 sliced spring onions, 50g sliced mange tout, handful beansprouts and coriander to fill.

WHY WE LOVE IT

Carrots are rich in beta carotene, which helps to improve skin tone.

1 690kJ 17g **FAT**
3g **SAT FAT** 44g **CARBS**



CRUNCHY THREE-BEAN SALAD

READY IN 20 MIN

Mix 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, 1 ½ tbsp lemon juice, 1 tsp lemon zest, ½ tsp Dijon mustard, ½ tsp castor sugar, salt and black pepper. Add dressing to jar, then 1 diced cucumber, 1 diced tomato, 25g cubed feta, 100g cooked black beans, 100g cooked cannellini beans 200g cooked edamame and parsley to fill.

WHY WE LOVE IT

Beans have soluble fibre, which helps lower 'bad' LDL cholesterol – and they're super tasty!

2 230kJ 23g **FAT** 6g **SAT FAT** 40g **CARBS**



ITALIAN CHICKEN SALAD

READY IN 20 MIN

Mix 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, 2 tsp red-wine vinegar, ½ tsp Dijon mustard, salt and black pepper. Put 1 red pepper in the oven at 200°C for 15–20min. Then steam in sealed bag for 10 min, peel, deseed, slice. Add dressing to jar, then 40g mozzarella, 100g shredded chicken, red pepper, 1 tbsp pine nuts, handful of basil and rocket to fill.

WHY WE LOVE IT

Red peppers are full of vitamin C, which strengthens the immune system.

2 088kJ 33g **FAT**
9g **SAT FAT** 7g **CARBS**



**Boosts
your
immune
system**

Easy
comfort
food

Pulled-pork
rösti, eggs
& chipotle

RISE & shine!

Brunch is the new dinner – brinner, anyone? Send the kids off to Gran and stretch out the weekend with these fully loaded recipes

Shakshouka
with mint
yoghurt &
toasted
buckwheat

One
pan
wonder

PULLED-PORK RÖSTI, EGGS & CHIPOTLE

SERVES 2 READY IN 40 MIN + AN EXTRA 3 HR IF COOKING THE PORK FROM SCRATCH

For the pork belly

1 onion, peeled and quartered
3 garlic cloves, crushed, skin on
1 carrot, peeled and halved lengthways
2 bay leaves

1 sprig fresh thyme
2 sprigs fresh sage
500g pork belly, skin scored
A splash olive or avocado oil
400ml chicken stock

For the rösti

2 potatoes, cooked halfway, then peeled and grated
1 tbsp chipotle paste
Handful pulled pork
A splash olive- or avocado oil
1 onion, finely diced
Pinch finely chopped coriander
40g butter
2 eggs
Chive stalks, finely chopped

1 Heat oven to 200°C. Put the onion, garlic, carrot and herbs into a roasting tray and put pork joint on top. Drizzle with oil and season. Roast for 30–45 min or until a crackling begins to form, then reduce the oven to 140°C.

2 Add the stock and continue roasting for 2 hr – until the meat falls apart when pressed with a fork. If it dries out too much, top up with a little water.

3 Remove the joint from the oven and leave to rest for 30 min. Next, using two forks, pull the meat apart.

4 To make the rösti, put the grated potato in a bowl. Add the chipotle paste and a handful of pork, and mix well.

5 Heat a pan and add a splash of oil. Add the onion and sauté over a medium heat for 3–4 min, taking care not to let it colour, then add it to the potatoes and pork. Add the coriander, season with sea salt flakes and black pepper, and stir well.

6 Heat a small non-stick pan over a medium heat and melt half the butter. When it begins to foam, add half the rösti mix and spread it out evenly. Cook for 5–6 min, or until golden brown, then turn it over and repeat the process. When cooked, slide rösti on to a plate. Repeat with remaining rösti mix and butter.

7 Heat another pan and fry the eggs. Serve each rösti with an egg and a sprinkling of chopped chive stalks.

2 828kJ PER SERVING
48g FAT 19g SAT FAT
39g CARBS



SHAKSHOUKA WITH MINT YOGHURT & TOASTED BUCKWHEAT

SERVES 4 READY IN 35 MIN

50ml yoghurt, with pinch of finely sliced fresh mint
A splash olive- or avocado oil
½ onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 bay leaf
1 red chilli, finely chopped
1 tsp cumin seeds, toasted
1 tsp smoked paprika (try Yuppiechef.com)
Pinch cayenne pepper
1 red pepper, deseeded and sliced ½cm thick
1x400g tin chopped tomatoes
200ml vegetable stock
Pinch finely chopped coriander
Pinch finely chopped parsley
4 eggs
30g toasted buckwheat
Mint leaves, to garnish

2 Add the cumin, paprika and cayenne, and cook for a further 3 min. Add the red pepper and cook for 5 min or until it begins to soften.

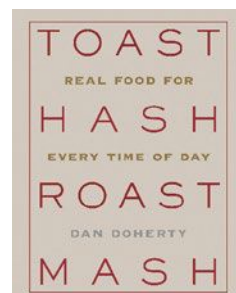
3 Pour in the chopped tomatoes and stock, then lower the heat and simmer for 10 min. Stir in the coriander and parsley, then make four little wells in the surface of the sauce and crack one egg into each well. Simmer over a very low heat for 10 min, or until the eggs are set, but still soft.

4 When ready, season the buckwheat and garnish with some fresh mint leaves. Serve with dollops of the mint yoghurt on the side.

728kJ PER SERVING
9g FAT 2.5g SAT FAT
11g CARBS

1 Mix the yoghurt and mint together in a bowl, then set aside. Heat the oil in a large non-stick pan or casserole over a medium heat and sauté the onion, garlic, bay leaf and chilli for 3 min – it's fine if they become a little coloured. Season with some sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper.

* Taken from *Toast Hash*
Roast Mash: Real Food for Every Time of Day by Dan Doherty (Octopus Publishing Group)



ADD A POP OF COLOUR

Hands up if you're tired of beige walls and neutral furnishings. Yep, us too!
So take the plunge with bold, bright colours – you'll be so glad you did...

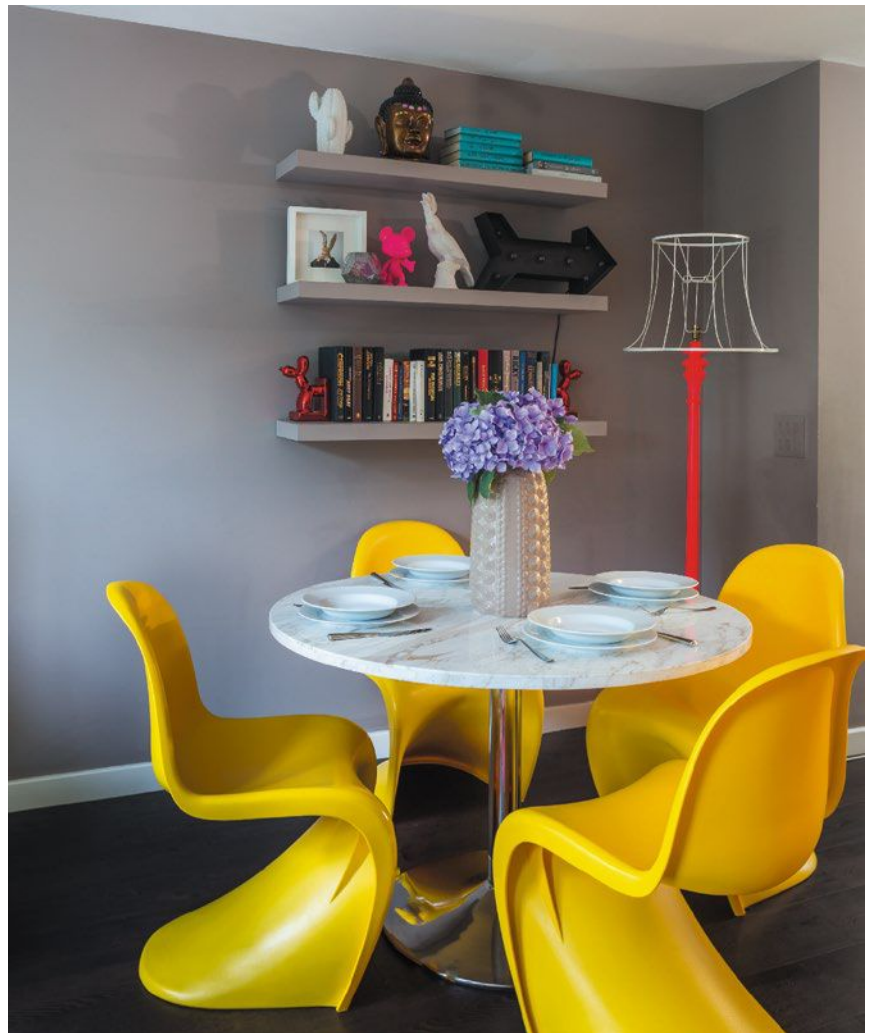


SPRUCE UP YOUR SPACE

So many of us spend our time surrounded by grey and beige in boring offices so, if you get the chance, perk up your colour scheme at home. Studies have shown that you can actually improve your state of mind just by surrounding yourself with certain colours! Is a yellow accent wall just too much for you? Then go dark on your walls – the urban myth that dark colours make rooms look smaller is just that, a myth; instead, it's all about getting the lighting right for the space. Finish off the room with bright, statement pieces, like the pink couch on the left.

Style tip!

Choose white kitchen units for a sleek style – this is also great if you have dark walls as it keeps the space nice and light



GO QUIRKY AND COOL

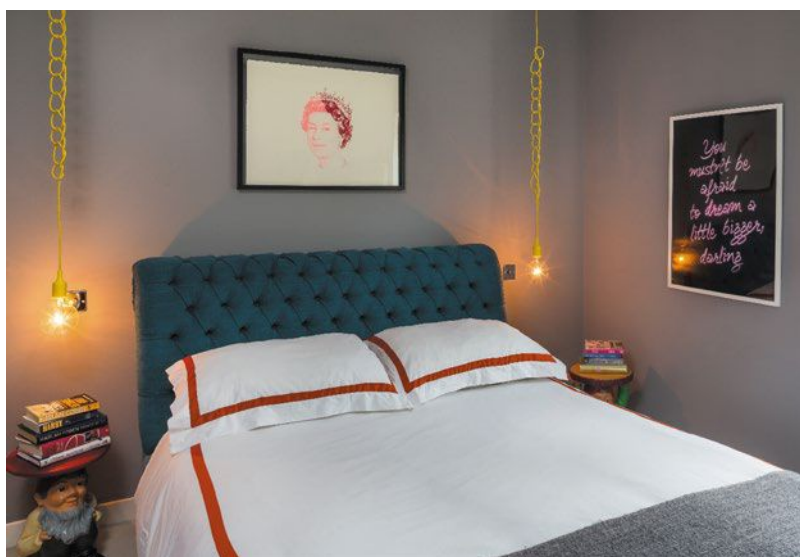
It's tempting to go completely wild with colour, but you have to have a plan; you might want to consider using vibrant and warm colours like yellow and red in high-traffic areas like the entrance or the lounge, while you switch to cooler, more soothing colours like blue in the bedrooms. Creating some 'breathing space' with the grey walls and white kitchen units allows the colours to really pop. Not ready to commit to neons? Adding just a few well-placed neon items, like a lamp or a trendy kettle, is a quick and easy way to give a neutral room an instant update.



CREATE A SANCTUARY

In a house filled with colour and statement pieces, it's nice to have at least one room that's calmer, with a more neutral palette. The bathroom is the perfect place to escape to for some relaxation (when the kids allow it!), so try to choose a calming, soothing colour palette. To tie the room in with the rest of the house, add a finishing touch, like a printed shower curtain or an interesting light fitting, so your personality can shine through.

“It's ok if every room in the house has something different about it. It may seem a little over the top with every colour of the rainbow, but that's what makes a real visual impact.”



ADD AN ARTY EDGE

Remember that anything, from a fabulous print to an inspirational quote, or even just a pretty fabric, can be art. You can personalise your home with a collection of wall art and prints – Superbalist.com has hundreds of designs in a wide range of styles and colours to suit every look and budget.

GET THE LOOK

'You Are So Lovely' print, **R99**,
Elisabeth Fredriksson at
Superbalist.com



Cage pendant,
R699, Sixth Floor at
Superbalist.com



Pineapple-shaped
stationery holder,
R89,99,
Mr Price Home



Decorative
standing
flamingo,
R259,
Mr Price Home



Storage box,
R79,99, H&M



Mini marquee letter,
R99,99, Typo



Brass Buddha
statue, **R99**,
@home

Verner panton chair
replica, **from R500**,
Esque.co.za



Paper weave
bin, **R69,99**,
Mr Price Home

Jagged stripe rug, **R999**, Sixth
Floor at Superbalist.com

Feature Cassie Pryce; Tamryn Cummings Photography Brett Symes; Supplied Home owner Emilie Jacob Products and prices were checked at time of going to print



To the letter

Here's how to work the typography trend – it's as easy as ABC!

Feature: Tamlyn Cummings Photography Supplied
Products and prices were checked at time of going to print

- 1 Patterned cushion cover, **R129**, H&M 2 Novelty cocktail glass, **R199,99**, Typo 3 Marble doorstop, **R99**, @home 4 Metal trivet, **R199**, H&M
5 Mini marquee letters, **R99,99**, Typo 6 Mug, **R199,99**, Typo 7 Love decor accessory, **R225**, Woolworths 8 Yours & Mine hooks, **R249** for four, Umbra at Superbalist.com 9 'You Got This' print, **R99**, Sixth Floor at Superbalist.com 10 Print plaque, **R79,99**, Mr Price Home
11 Espresso mug, **R35**, Woolworths 12 Wooden decoration, **R429**, Zara Home 13 Metal bookend, **R199**, H&M
14 Novelty wine glass, **R199,99**, Typo 15 Script print photo frame, **R180**, Woolworths

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De-junk your inbox in 4 easy steps

Inundated with emails? Spend five minutes sorting it out and feel your stress levels fall

Do you get that sinking feeling every time you log on to your email? An out-of-control inbox can be enough to drive the most calm of us to have our third espresso of the morning! In fact, a study of office workers by the UK's Loughborough University found that 83% of participants became more stressed while using email. Measurements of heart rate, blood

pressure and the stress hormone cortisol were taken over a 24-hour period and were shown to peak at points in the day when people's inboxes were fullest. Professor Thomas Jackson, who headed up the study, suggested that reducing the volume of irrelevant emails – and limiting how often you check email – could take the pressure off. Here's how to get a handle on your inbox – just five minutes at a time.

1. Develop a schedule

Research has found that it takes office workers a third longer to complete a task if they're interrupted by email – if your computer or smartphone automatically downloads new emails every 15 minutes, that's over 30 interruptions in a work day! So establish a routine for when you check emails, and turn audio alerts off. A study by the University of British Columbia in Canada found that limiting it to three times a day has a significant impact on mental health. So take five minutes to think about the quietest moments in your day to block off as your 'email sessions'.

2. Unsubscribe

An inbox that constantly fills up with messages from mailing lists you signed



up to ages ago can make you feel out of control. So take five minutes to review your email subscriptions and click 'unsubscribe' (it's usually right at the bottom of the email) on the ones that you don't want to see – ever again!

3. Become a folder fan

Filing emails into folders frees up your inbox and makes it easier to find relevant messages. Ideally, your main inbox should hold only unread or unactioned emails, which you should try to limit to under 20 at any time. Take five minutes to look at the most recent messages in your inbox and then note down recurring subject matter – these should be the names of your new folders. In future, once you've dealt with



5 MIN
LIFE
FIX

ESSENTIALS EXTRA

Feeling distracted? Switch your phone to flight mode so you won't get alerts every time a new message lands

an email drop it into the relevant folder or delete it when you no longer need it. Email filters can make this whole process much easier by automatically processing emails as they enter your inbox and then performing a certain action, like moving it immediately to your 'Personal' or 'Spam' folders.

4. Hit snooze

If your inbox is prone to getting filled with important emails that don't need to be taken care of right away, use an app or software that lets you 'snooze' emails – they'll be removed from your inbox temporarily and land back in it on the day and time you designate. For Gmail, try Google Inbox (free), and for Outlook there's SnoozeIt (R530).



Essentials

coming next month

In our April issue...

*Look GOOD,
feel GREAT!*

- ✓ **Get better hair while you sleep**
- ✓ **Have healthy skin that glows**
- ✓ **The 5-min face massage that's even better than a facelift!**

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FUSS-FREE FOOD: FIVE DELICIOUS NEW BURGER RECIPES THE FAMILY WILL LOVE



ARE YOU HEADING TOWARDS BURNOUT? HERE'S WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT



KEEP THE KIDS BUSY WITH OUR EASTER CRAFT SPECIAL - SOMETHING FOR ALL AGES



SLEEP BETTER & HAVE MORE ENERGY. OUR EXPERTS CURE YOUR INSOMNIA... IN 3 DAYS!

Savvy shopper

5 OF THE BEST COFFEE MACHINES

One drink, so many ways to make it. If you live for your morning cup of coffee, we've found the best home gadgets to get the job done

1. THE INSTANT WHIZZ

AeroPress Coffee and Espresso Maker (R699; AeroPress at yuppiechef.com)

This nifty little gizmo combines the best of a French press with the pressure of an espresso machine. The result? Utterly delicious coffee. The fact that it's fully mobile – there's no need to give up your coffee fix just because you're going camping – and dishwasher safe, are an added bonus. Simply put the filter in place, add coffee and water and press... and voilà! It really couldn't be easier.



4. THE BEAN-TO-CUP ONE

Modena 3-in-1 Coffee Maker, R1 099, Mellerware at yuppiechef.com

Fancy yourself a bit of a barista? This is the 12-cup machine you need! With separate espresso and filter coffee functions, as well as a steam nozzle to froth milk, you will be practising your coffee art in no time; and at a fraction of the price of other machines.



2. THE AT-HOME BARISTA

Lattissima Touch Automatic Espresso Machine with Integrated Milk Frother, R4 849, Nespresso at yuppiechef.com

If you live for your morning coffee ritual, this machine is a dream come true. With the touch of a button (as the name suggests), you can make six pre-programmed drinks, from a cappuccino to a ristretto – and even frothy warm milk. You can also programme the settings exactly to your liking.

WISH LIST!

3. THE CROWD PLEASER

DEFY Drip Filter Coffee Maker, R649, at Makro

If you entertain regularly, having to stand at the machine making one cup at a time can be a schlep. This machine brews enough for 12 cups in one go, and it will even turn itself off when it's done. It's user friendly, keeps the coffee hot, and won't make a mess.



5. THE MUST-HAVE EYE-CANDY

Cafféluxe Verona Espresso Machine, R1 399 at caffeluxe.co.za

We love a proudly South African company, and Cafféluxe does not disappoint. Their Verona Espresso Machine is compatible with just about any brand of pod, is easy to use, compact, and it comes in at a reasonable price when comparing it to similar coffee machines. It's also pretty enough to leave out on the kitchen counter!



GREAT VALUE!

3 OF THE BEST...

PODS



Cafféluxe – there's everything from lungo to cappuccino and lattes, and they make a mean hot chocolate, too! **From R40**, select retailers.



Pure Tea – if you don't drink coffee, this is for you! You're spoiled for choice with the variety on offer. **From R59**, select retailers.



Red Espresso – with no caffeine and packed with antioxidants, we can't get enough of these flavoured red espresso pods. **R54,95**, select retailers.

5 of the best free money- saving apps

We all feel the crunch in the first few months of the year, so now's the time to stop using that phone for Facebooking and start using it to help you save for a rainy day...



1. Spending tracker

BEST FOR:
BUDGETING

With this app, you'll have your very own budget tracker and calculator in your pocket. It's simple to use: set your budget, log all of your transactions, and track your spending. To keep you on track, you'll get various reports – even in the form of charts – which will give you feedback on how you're looking budget-wise and what your spending habits are. Nifty!



2. 22seven

BEST FOR:
CONSOLIDATION

If you like seeing your money all in one place, this app is for you. Link your cards, accounts, loans and rewards, track your spending habits, and set your personalised budget, based on your spending. You can even make low-cost and tax-free investments – all within the app.



3. Unsplurge

BEST FOR:
SETTING A GOAL

Have a loan to pay off? Dreaming about that overseas holiday? Well, the perfect (and responsible) way to save is to have goals to aim towards, and Unsplurge allows you to do just that. Set your goals, log your savings (just make sure you're putting that money aside!) and track how close you are to going on that holiday. As the app states, you save for the things you love by 'unsplurging' on the things you don't. You can also join the community of Unsplurge users to see their goals and get motivated by their successes.



4. Fuel Log 3

BEST FOR:
FUEL LOGGING

The high price of petrol and diesel these days is enough to send anyone into a mild panic, so being able to track how much you're spending, and how far you're

getting on your hard-earned rand, is incredibly useful. Every time you fill up, enter your current odometer reading, litres and cost, and you'll be able to keep an eye on your fuel consumption, and see if you're using your petrol or diesel as cost-effectively as possible.



5. Money Mammals Save for a Goal

BEST FOR:
TEACHING LITTLE ONES

It's important to learn how to budget and save money early, and to help introduce your children to the vital concept of saving, this app is full of educational videos, tips and valuable information to get them budget conscious as early as possible. It's ideal for pre-school and early primary-school littlies, and the app covers three major financial literacy aims: saving, needs versus wants, and becoming money smart.

SO
CLEVER!

Try it this weekend

For more
brilliant upcycling
and crafting
ideas, visit us at
essentials.co.za



Cool home revamps, easy upcycling ideas, a princess playhouse for the kids, and so much more...

Quick & clever HOME REVAMPS

Update existing furniture and decor with our fab step-by-step upcycling projects

BUNTING PENDANT

ADD A BIT OF CHARACTER TO A PLAIN LIGHT SHADE WITH A PRETTY PATTERNED WASHI PRINT

* Washi tape in different patterns * 30cm white paper lantern (try lightlantern.co.za) * Small paintbrush * Clear glue * Scissors * String or twine

1 Cut triangles from the washi tape and stick them into place on the lantern along the wire lines. Space them about 6cm apart and use alternating patterns.

2 Starting at the top of the lantern, use a small brush to paint clear glue just below the wire then press the string on top. Follow the line until all the bunting is linked. Stick any pieces of washi tape that haven't adhered properly. Leave to dry.



Co-ordinate your clock with accents in the same colours



CORK CLOCK

REVIVE OLD CORK PLACEMATS WITH A RETRO TWIST THAT'S ALSO VERY ON TREND

* Two cork pot stands * 15mm washi- or masking tape * Craft paints * Paintbrush * Clock mechanism (capewatch.co.za) * Self-adhesive picture hanger (try 3M Command Picture Hanging Strips)

1 Drill a hole in the middle of the cork mat that's large enough for the centre of the clock mechanism to push right

through. Stick lengths of washi tape onto the front of the mat to create a geometric pattern.

2 Paint each segment of the design in a colour of your choice then remove the tape and leave to dry. Push the clock mechanism into place and tighten up the nut. Carefully fit the hands on and then hang up on the wall using a hanging strip or small nail.

PHOTO LADDER

MAKE A BRIGHT AND
PERSONALISED FOCAL PIECE

* Wooden ladder * Old wooden picture frames * Thin drill bit and drill * Craft paints * Paintbrush * Fine sandpaper * String or twine

1 Lay the ladder flat on the floor and figure out which frames fit into each gap between the rungs until you're happy with the design. Carefully consider the colour scheme of the frames at this point, too, and make sure they're evenly spaced.

2 Remove the glass and backboard on each frame and drill two holes approximately 3-4cm from the edges at the top. Paint each frame and leave to dry before distressing the paintwork slightly with fine sandpaper. Cut lengths of string or twine and push through the holes in each frame, then tie to the ladder rungs to secure. Insert photos, artwork and prints before carefully replacing the glass in each frame. Hang on the rungs to display.

DO IT IN
UNDER
2 HRS!



BOTTLE-TOP PINS

REVIVE VINTAGE BOTTLE CAPS WITH THIS COOL AND QUIRKY IDEA

- * Clean bottle caps
- * Hot-glue gun
- * Map push pins (with a 15mm spike)

1 Working on a flat surface, place the bottle tops face down. Heat up your glue gun and carefully apply a generous dot of hot glue to the centre. Be sure not to apply too much as this will cause the excess to run over the sides.

2 Take one bottle cap at a time and push the head of a pin into the glue immediately. Make sure it's positioned in the centre of the cap and hold for a few seconds to set in place. Leave them to dry thoroughly before using on a noticeboard.



UPHOLSTERED STOOL

ADD SOME OLD-SCHOOL CHARM TO YOUR HOME OFFICE

- * Small piece of wadding
- * Wooden stool
- * Fabric scissors
- * Pen
- * 0.5m fabric
- * Staple gun

1 Fold your wadding to make a double layer and place on the floor. Turn the stool upside down and lay it on top, so the seat is positioned onto the wadding. Draw around this and cut out two circles from the double layer using scissors. Turn the stool upright and place both circles of wadding onto the seat. Lay

your fabric over the top so that the patterned side is facing up.

2 Fold the fabric to the underside of the stool and secure at four equal points with a staple gun (we worked around the clock face, stapling at 12, 3, 6 and 9). Keep the fabric smooth but not pulled too tight, as this will cause it to pucker. Continue to staple around the underside to hold the fabric in place, then trim away any excess material.

PHONE BOOK ENDS

TRANSFORM AN OLD PHONE INTO A FEATURE PIECE

* 30cm wooden kitchen spatula
 * Sprayon spray paint in Azure Blue (sprayon.co.za) * Drill and small drill bit * Small screw with washer

1 Take the handset apart and remove the cord. Take number buttons out and keep to one side. If you want to keep the markings, cover with masking tape before spray painting. Cut the end of the spatula off to leave you with a 20cm-long handle.

2 Working outside, spray the two halves of the handset and the spatula with blue paint and leave to dry. Apply a second coat. Once dry, reassemble and make a small hole in the base of the phone with a drill and use a screw fed through a washer to fix the spatula to the phone. Tighten to secure.

Top tip!

If you don't have any old tins lying around, painted glass jars will look just as good

TIN HERB PLANTER

UPCYCLE RETRO CONTAINERS INTO BRIGHT AND COLOURFUL PLANT POTS

* Tin of your choice * Hammer and nail * Potting compost * Fresh herbs

1 Turn your tin upside down and make small drainage holes in the bottom using a hammer and nail (or a drill if you prefer). If you've chosen a pre-used container, make sure it's clean and dry before starting.

2 Place some compost inside the tin and plant your choice of herbs. Add more compost if needed and keep your tins in a bright, dry area in the kitchen, remembering to water them regularly. Research which herbs are best suited to the size of each container you've chosen, as some will need more room for growth than others.



Princess Playhouse



Cast a spell over some old cardboard boxes to turn a little girl into a fairy princess with her own dream play-palace

SMART
RECYCLING
IDEAS!

YOU WILL NEED

- * Three extra-large cardboard boxes (or just one!)
- * PVA paint in pink, blue, purple, orange, red, green and white
- * Floral wrapping paper
- * Small foil tart cases
- * Small paper doilies
- * A4 pale blue paper
- * Ruler
- * Pencil
- * Craft knife
- * Paint brush
- * PVA glue
- * Box tape
- * Double-sided tape



1 For a painted house, paint each side of the box in a different coloured PVA paint and leave to dry. For a papered house, cover the box with the floral wrapping paper, using PVA glue to stick in place.

2 Looking at our pictures as a guide, draw doors and windows in whichever shapes you choose onto the boxes with a ruler and pencil. Using a craft knife (adults only), carefully cut along three sides of each opening, then lightly score down the fourth side so that the door or window

shutter can open and close. For a circular window, draw round a plate and cut out.

3 On a painted house, stick on wrapping paper to add patterns to windows and doors, or draw scalloped frames around plain windows, then paint. You could use a stencil to paint on a door number, and draw and paint some flowers around the base.

4 On a paper-covered house, paint the door and leave to dry. Stick on small foil tart case 'door handles' with double-sided tape.

5 To make a paper-tiled roof, stick two end flaps (or rectangles of card) together with box tape. Cover each side with 'roof tiles' – sticking on overlapping sheets of blue paper, starting with the bottom row and working up. For a pretty effect, use paper doilies as tiles. For chequerboard tiles, paint spare pieces of card with orange and red paint, leave to dry, cut into 15 x 20cm tiles and stick on in overlapping rows. Stick a roof onto each house using double-sided and box tape.

Top tip!

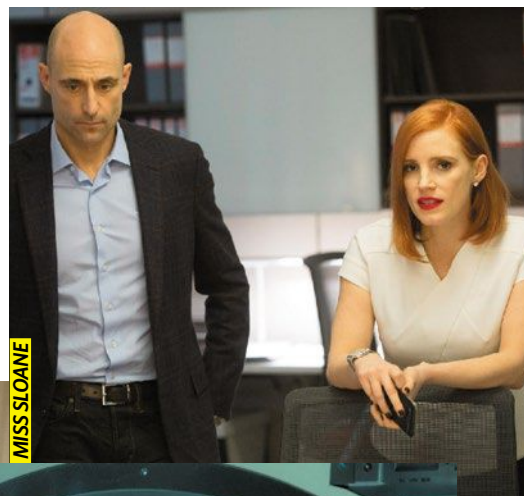
Depending on your box, you'll probably be able to cut off the top and the base to make roof pieces. For front gables, cut the two opposite box-top flaps into triangles.



Essentialist

FILM, TV, BOOKS & CULTURE

Stay inside or head outdoors, we've got plenty to keep you entertained



MISS SLOANE



JACKIE



LIFE

ON THE BIG SCREEN

Jackie 🇺🇸 🧔

Natalie Portman really shines as Jackie Kennedy, in this re-telling of the days after the assassination of President JFK. This biopic offers an intimate look into the life of The First Lady as she plans her husband's funeral, and ensures that history will remember them both. Keep the tissues handy. Out 3 March

Miss Sloane 🗡️ ⚖️

Tough-as-nails lobbyist Elizabeth Sloane (Jessica Chastain) takes on the biggest case of her career. When she's asked to support the gun lobby's attempt to appeal to women, she changes course – but not out of idealism; all she wants is to win, at any cost. A disturbing political psych thriller. Out 17 March

Life 🚀 🧑‍🚀

A group of astronauts are sent on a mission to Mars to study a sample collected from the Red Planet. They discover that it's a large single cell organism – which proves there's life beyond earth. But they soon realise this life form has intelligence that surpasses ours... Edge-of-seat stuff. Stars Ryan Reynolds. Out 24 March

ON THE BOX



BILLIONS, S2 M-NET EDGE, DStv channel 102

The epic battle between two New York high-finance titans continues. Chuck has nothing left to lose, and Axe has everything at his disposal. Expect more manoeuvring, and high stakes.



VERA, S7 ITV CHOICE, DStv channel 123

The ever-grumpy yet brilliant DCI Vera Stanhope is back, and this time her team investigate four murders, including the strange death of a wildlife ranger. Get ready for some chilling viewing!



THE HOME TEAM, S1 THE HOME CHANNEL, DStv channel 176

A brand-new Australian DIY series that focuses on revamping dull suburban homes – this season is all about giving new life to a 1950s home that's seen better days.



HOBBY-X



HARVEST WINE TOURS



DÎNER EN BLANC



PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT

ON THE TOWN

Hobby-X

Get some serious creative inspiration at the 20th Hobby-X expo – whether it's to make extra money on the side, or simply just for fun, there's something for every free-time pursuit. From mosaics to paper craft; model trains to 3D printers, there will be an expert to chat to, no matter your interest. Plus loads of hands-on workshops, activity areas and demos will let you get your hands dirty. On at the Ticketpro Dome in Joburg from 2 to 5 March; see hobby-x.co.za for more info.

Dîner en Blanc

Thirty years ago, Parisian François Pasquier arranged a dinner with his friends; now, Dîner en Blanc has become a global hit, with 70 cities in 25 countries taking part. Joburg has hosted this magical open-air dining experience since 2013, and this year promises to be phenomenal. Like all Dîner en Blanc events, the location is secret until the last minute – you first need to register via johannesburg.dinerenblanc.com to book your space. On the night of 18 March, you'll need to wear white, and then you'll meet at a pre-arranged spot, before being whisked off to the evening's spectacular location.

Harvest wine tours

Durbanville Hills, one of SA's well-known wineries, is once again hosting its popular harvest tours, taking place every Wednesday from 22 February to 22 March. Set against the backdrop of the Tygerberg Hills, the harvest experience is more than just a wine tour – it's a chance for wine lovers to get a taste for the wine-making process, from start to finish, all during the peak production period. Included in the package is a tutored tasting of the cellar's premier Rhinofields range, as well as a complimentary bottle of Sparkling Sauvignon and an exclusive hand-crafted gift. For further information, email sibrown@durbanvillehills.co.za

Priscilla, Queen of the Desert

If you're a fan of the Australian cult classic, this adult musical is not to be missed. It tells the story of two drag queens and a transgender woman, who go on an adventure of self-discovery through the Outback – in a beaten-up bus called Priscilla. Expect over 500 outrageous costumes, singing along to *I Will Survive*, and loads of naughty innuendo! On stage from 26 March until 23 April at the Artscape Opera House in Cape Town. See computicket.com to book.

ON DEMAND



YOUNGER, SEASON 1 SHOWMAX

From the creators of *Sex and the City*, a single mom in her forties, Liza (played by Sutton Foster) reboots her life when she's mistaken for a 26 year old. Thanks to a makeover by best friend Maggie (Debi Mazar), Liza lands a new job, a younger man, and gets into all sorts of trouble.



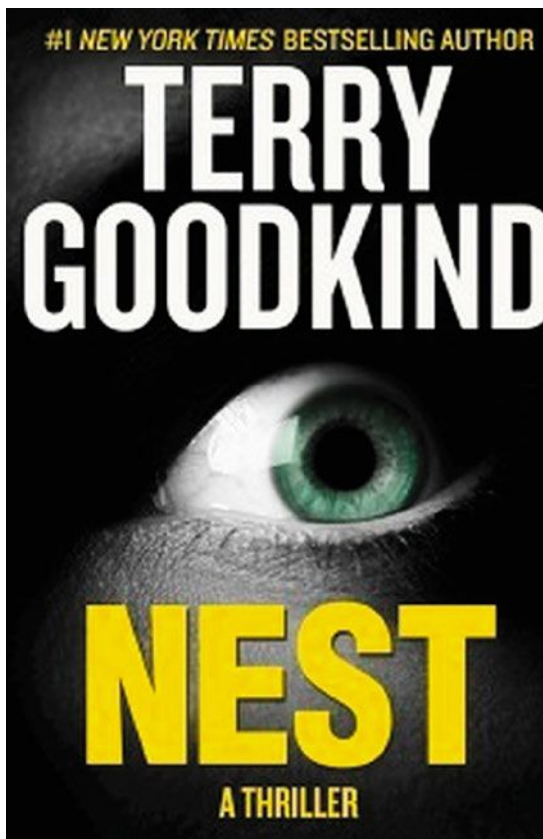
JANE THE VIRGIN, SEASON 1, SHOWMAX

Gina Rodriguez stars in this Golden Globe winning series as Jane, a good Latina Catholic girl who vows to stay a virgin until she gets married to her beau, but falls pregnant during a routine medical check-up – thanks to an artificial insemination mix-up!



A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS, SEASON 1, NETFLIX

Catch this classic from storyteller Lemony Snicket, about the lives of three orphans, named the Baudelaire's, after the death of their parents in an unexplained fire. While they dodge Count Olaf, a psychopathic relative, they encounter one disaster after another, and dark family secrets.



ON THE SHELF

Nest

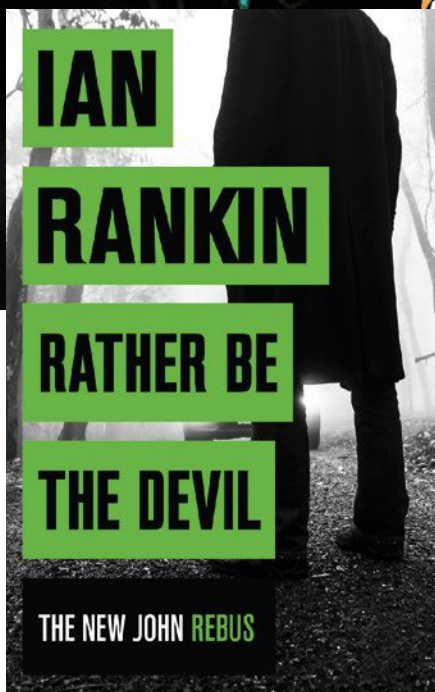
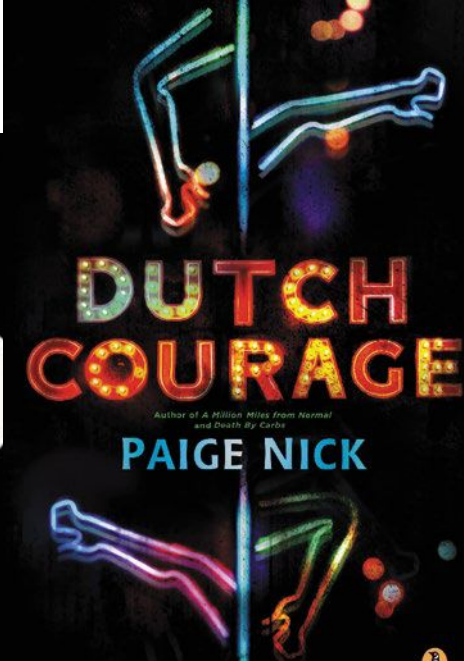
BY TERRY GOODKIND
(SKYHORSE PUBLISHING)

After the murder of her brother, Kim Bishop discovers that she can identify killers by looking into their eyes. This unique ability makes her a target, and salvation can only be found through Jack Raines, an elusive author who has connections to others like Kim. Follow them as they delve into the criminal underworld and discover what true evil really is. A reinvention of the thriller genre that will keep you captivated until the end.

Dutch Courage

BY PAIGE NICK
(PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE)

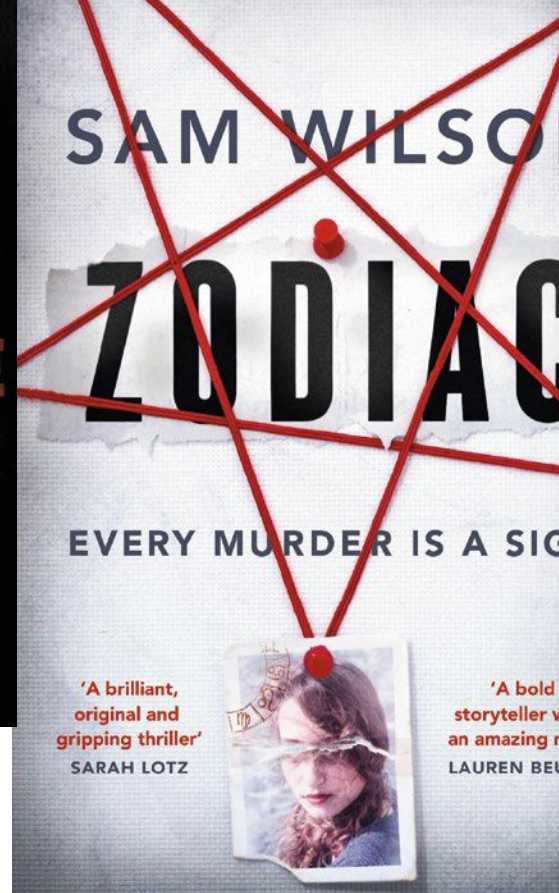
Grace has led a pretty sheltered life, until her sister, Natalie, breaks her leg and begs her to take her place as a Rihanna impersonator at a strip club in Amsterdam. Grace needs the money, and before she knows it, she's lying to her fiancé Lucas, sharing an apartment with a group of divas, dealing with stage fright, and flinging her clothes off in front of a paying audience. It's a fun read from this much-loved *Sunday Times* columnist, with lots of laughs and cynical commentary.



Rather be the Devil

BY IAN RANKIN
(ORION PUBLISHING)

Despite a long list of suspects, socialite Maria Turquand's murderer was never found, and it is the irresistible pull of a crime, 40 years unsolved, that keeps Scottish detective John Rebus from wallowing in retirement. But after talking to Rubus, an ex-cop related to the case is found at the bottom of a river. Meanwhile, crime kingpin Big Ger Cafferty is back on the scene, and Rubus's former colleagues, Fox and Clarke, investigate an assault on a local heavyweight gangster connected to Cafferty. Is the most obvious answer always the right one? A web of conspiracy and murder will keep crime fanatics guessing from the first page to the last.



Zodiac

BY SAM WILSON
(PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE)

Imagine a world where your birth date affects every aspect of your life – from the job you get to the area you live in. SA author Sam Wilson has penned an intriguing and original crime thriller set in a dystopia where your future is determined by your zodiac sign. When a serial killer starts committing 'sign-related' crimes, a zodiac-sceptic detective and astrological profiler must set aside their conflicting views to stop the murders. The fast-paced plot and intertwined narratives make this home-grown novel a must-read.

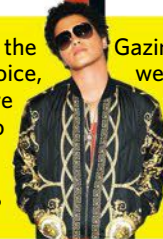
City of Friends

BY JOANNA TROLLOPE
(PAN MACMILLAN)

When Stacey Grant – a confident and successful career woman – loses her job, she feels like her world has come crashing down around her. This is the only life she's ever known, so how will she reconcile her old life with her new one – even with the moral support of her best friends, Beth, Melissa and Gaby? Stacey quickly pulls away as cracks start to appear in her once-perfect world, and a long-hidden betrayal of friendship also comes to the surface. The women in this novel are relatable, strong and real. An easy read over a glass (or two!) of wine.

THE IN/OUT LIST

Bruno Mars: the swag, the voice, the songs – we're swooning! Who else can pull off silk pyjamas as day wear?



Gazing at the stars: we love being spoilt, but we're relieved the pressure of Valentine's Day is over

Pop-up events: Dîner en Blanc, Secret Sunrise and all those once-off markets have filled up our diaries, and we like it!

Roughing it in tents: we work hard for our money, so unless it's a getaway that involves glamping, count us out!

Awards season: we've followed the Golden Globes and the Emmys – and next up is the big one: the Oscars. We'll be glued to our screens!

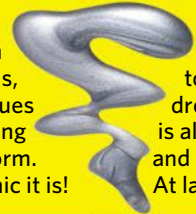


Sunburn season: we love summer, but we can't wait to snuggle up under the duvet at night (without the mozzies)

Chroming: first came contouring, then strobing, now there's a technique using lipstick to highlight your face – what will they think of next?

'Bronde': we were just getting used to this word, but the latest hair buzzword is now 'blorange'. We can't keep up anymore

Metallic and bright: from shoes to nails, metal hues are trending up a storm. Alien chic it is!

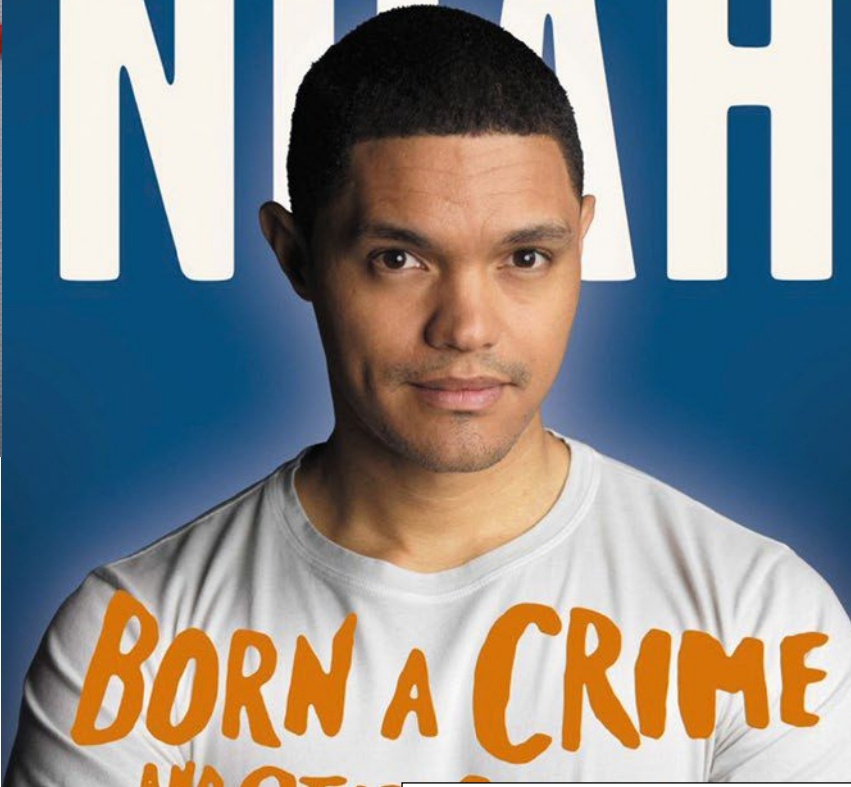


Skin-tight: bid farewell to constricting dresses – 2017 is all about comfy and casual layers. At last!

Time off: You can put in three leave days and get a week off; or nine leave days for 19 days of holiday. Where do we sign up?

Overtime: Don't have any leave? If you're stuck in the office, at least go in with popcorn and a few great downloads.

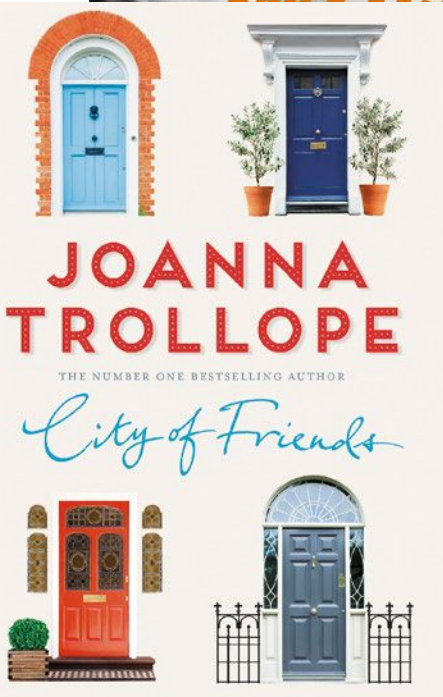
TREVOR NOAH



ESSENTIALS BOOK OF THE MONTH

BORN A CRIME AND OTHER STORIES BY TREVOR NOAH (PAN MACMILLAN)

If you're a fan of Trevor Noah and his stand-up comedy, you're probably familiar with his story. A result of a relationship between a black Xhosa woman and white Swiss man during apartheid – a union that was punishable by five years in prison at the time – Trevor was literally born a crime. In his book, Trevor gives us insight into his incredibly interesting life with 18 stories that are equally hilarious, serious and incredibly human. If you're expecting a book about celebrities or how he managed to land the job as host of *The Daily Show*, this is not it. Instead, it's a witty and honest story about a playful boy and how he grew up in a world in which he was never supposed to exist.



THE BEST bush breaks

Dreaming of a bush getaway? Explore our local parks – from Addo to the Kruger, rustic to glamping, there's something for everyone



Great
escape
for two

Camdeboo National Park, Lakeview Tented Camp

Camdeboo National Park in the Eastern Cape is a truly special spot, as not only is it teeming with wildlife, but it also encircles the historic town of Graaff-Reinet (known as the 'gem of the Karoo'). The national park's 1000-hectare Nqweba Dam is the star of the show; so if you enjoy watersports, this is a great choice for a weekend away.

*** WHERE TO STAY** If you love camping but aren't prepared to 'rough it' too much, choose the Lakeview Tented Camp. It offers a rustic but comfortable bush experience on the floodplains of the Nqweba Dam. Each tent is self-catering, sleeps two people

in twin beds, and has a braai unit and fridge, as well as a small wooden deck to take in the amazing surroundings. There is also a communal kitchen and bathroom facilities.

*** WHAT TO DO** Apart from game viewing, kick back and soak up the scenery at one of the many picnic spots in the park, or take a 30-minute drive to the jaw-dropping Valley of Desolation, where you'll enjoy vistas of the great Karoo plains atop the valley's sheer dolerite cliffs. Or spend the day in nearby Graaff-Reinet, the fourth oldest town in SA.

*** HOW MUCH** From R685pn for two adults*; sanparks.org/parks/camdeboo





See the
'Big 7'



Kruger National Park, Boulders Bush Lodge

For a dramatic location, Boulders Bush Lodge can't be beaten. From Joburg, it's nearly an eight-hour drive to get there, but it's so worth it. This unfenced Kruger lodge (closest entrance is at Phalaborwa Gate) is perched on a boulder-strewn hill, surrounded by baobabs and seringa trees, and overlooks a distant watering hole. Off the beaten track: check; private game-viewing from a deck: priceless!

***WHERE TO STAY** The self-catering lodge, which sleeps up to 12 people in four en-suite rooms, is built on stilts. A wooden walkway connects the rooms to a comfy communal area, where you'll

find a lounge, a private game viewing deck, a fully equipped kitchen and a braai area. You need to book out the whole lodge, which is solar powered, but there are no plug points and there's no cell reception – as nature intended!

***WHAT TO DO** Game drives are offered at the nearest camp, Mopani, which is 25km away. There are also night drives and guided bush walks.

***HOW MUCH** From R3 480pn for the whole lodge, whether it's for one person or four people†; see sanparks.org for more info and to make a booking.

Addo Elephant National Park, Addo Rest Camp

A weekend just isn't long enough to fully take in South Africa's third largest national park, and settings don't get much more picturesque. About 70km from PE, there aren't many places as diverse as Addo: here you'll find everything from herds of elephant cooling down at a water hole, to rolling sand dunes and whale watching.

***WHERE TO STAY** The main camp, Addo Rest Camp, is a popular choice – it boasts a range of accommodation options, from caravans to guesthouses. Stay in a self-catering chalet that sleeps two in twin beds, with en-suite bathrooms and a mini kitchen (and if you don't feel like cooking, there's also an on-site restaurant). A major drawcard is the rest camp's flood-lit water hole, as well as an underground hide; so you're bound to have close encounters.

***WHAT TO DO** Apart from spectacular game viewing, there are loads of activities to choose from, such as horse-back riding, hiking trails and even marine eco tours to see the 'Big Seven' (raggycharters.co.za).

***HOW MUCH** From R1 080pn for two adults in a chalet; see sanparks.org/parks/addo for more information.

Get
away
from
it all



Marakele National Park, Bontle Safari Tented Camp

One of the big selling points of this park is its location – set in Limpopo's Waterberg Mountains and only a four-hour drive from Joburg (and just three hours from Pretoria), it means the Big Five aren't far away. And it's no wonder that 'Marakele' means place of sanctuary.

*** WHERE TO STAY** With unobstructed views of the African bush, and convenient proximity to the main entrance gate, it's the ideal escape for a couple or a family. Each of the two- or four-sleeper tented units are self-catering, and come with a private veranda and braai area. If you're travelling with the little ones, request a family unit and your home for the night will have a double bed and two single

beds, as well as an en-suite bathroom and kitchenette, *** WHAT TO DO** Marakele is a popular spot for a range of activities, from bird watching to guided bush walks. Drive the narrow road up to Lenong Viewpoint to spend a lazy afternoon – and look skywards to see Cape vultures soaring above (there's a colony nearby; just bring a pair of binoculars).

*** HOW MUCH** From R1235pn for two adults sharing in a two-sleeper Safari Tent Unit; see sanparks.org/parks/marakele for more info and to book.

Close
to
home



Mapungubwe National Park, Vhembe Wilderness Camp

About a five-and-a-half-hour drive from Joburg, and sharing a border with Zimbabwe and Botswana, lies the Mapungubwe National Park in Limpopo. Known for its impressive wildlife and scenery, it's also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and historic Mapungubwe Hill – an archaeological site dating back to the Iron Age – is found here.

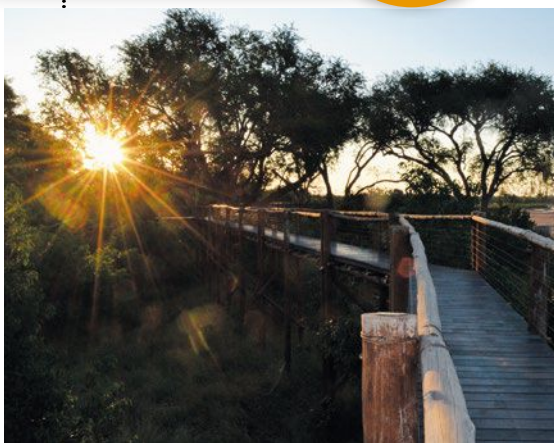
*** WHERE TO STAY** The park already feels like a well-kept secret, but to get further away from it all leave the main rest camp behind and head to Vhembe Wilderness Camp. Perched on a rocky ridge in a valley, the camp

is within walking distance of the Limpopo river and Mapungubwe Hill. The lodge runs on solar power and you'll have your own two-person, self-catering unit (with twin beds) with en-suite bathroom and braai area. The camp only has four units, which share a fully equipped communal kitchen and a lapa.

*** WHAT TO DO** A must-do is a tour of Mapungubwe Hill, as well as a visit to the Mapungubwe Interpretation Centre, which houses a museum and artefacts.

*** HOW MUCH** From R755pn** for two adults in a Wilderness Cabin; visit sanparks.org for more information.

For
history
buffs



Feature René de Klerk Photography Supplied. **Bedding and towels supplied. †Additional adults pay R690, children R345. **Not suitable for children. ‡R180 per additional child (sleeper couch/bunk beds in living area). Note: Please check if camp is in a malaria area prior to visit; some parks require additional fees, activities and tours at extra cost, prices are for peak season. All prices are correct at the time of going to press

Mokala National Park, Mosu Lodge

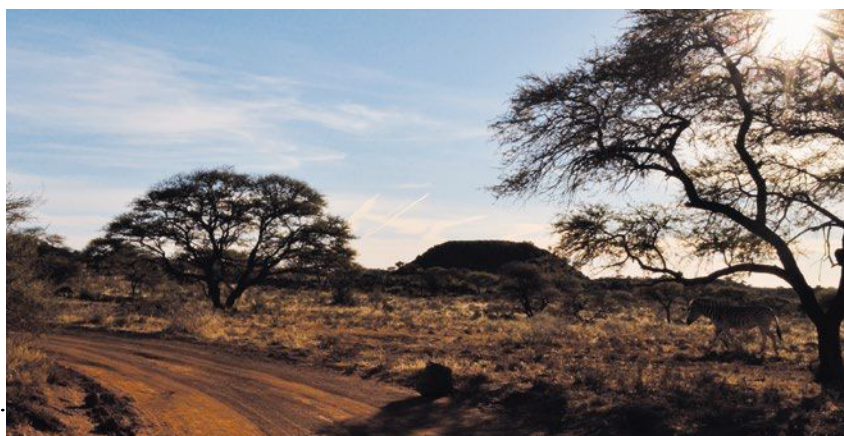
If it's rare animal sightings that will make your holiday memorable, add Mokala National Park to your bucket list. This Northern Cape hidden gem is about a six-hour drive from Joburg and is home to the likes of black rhino and other endangered species. With its koppieveld hills, open plains and ancient San rock art, a trip to Mokala is a holiday to remember.

*** WHERE TO STAY** At Mosu Lodge rustic bush meets modern convenience; choose from a range of overnight options ranging from luxury family bungalows to semi-luxury non-self-catering units (the rest camp has an on-site restaurant).

Stay in a luxury family bungalow that sleeps two adults (in two single beds pushed together) and two children with a fully equipped kitchen, bathroom and an outdoor braai/gazebo area.

*** WHAT TO DO** As well as guided game drives and walks, a guided trip to see the San rock etchings is unmissable. Or dine under the stars for breakfast or a bush braai (book two weeks in advance).

*** HOW MUCH** From R1045pn⁺ for two adults (in two single beds pushed together) in a self-catering Luxury Family Bungalow; see sanparks.org/parks/mokala for more information.



Kruger National Park, Baobab Hill

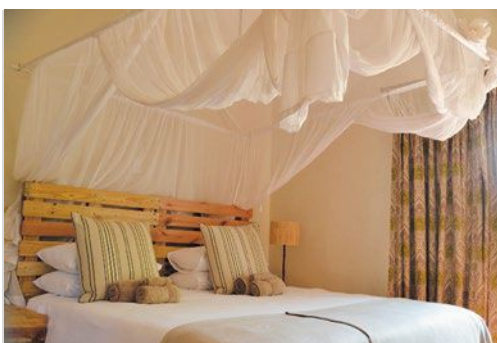
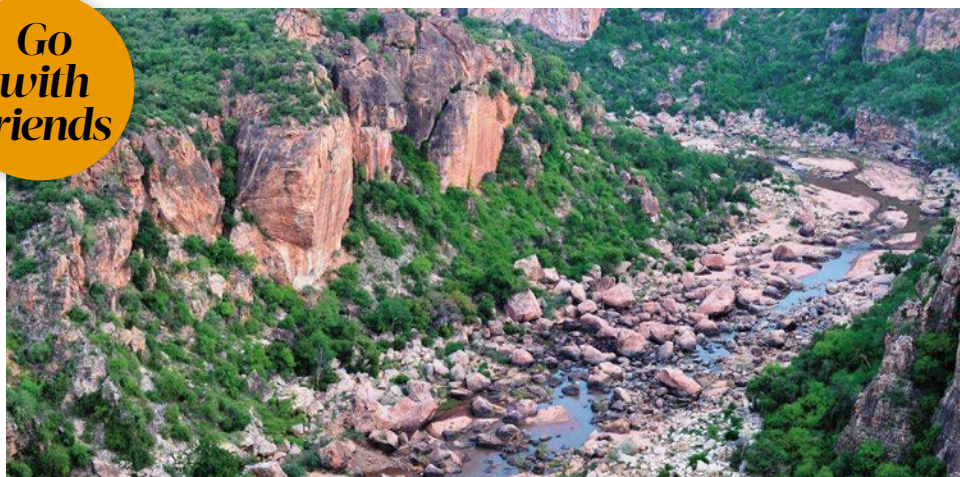
Escape the Kruger crowds by heading further north; think fever tree forests, giant baobabs and starry night skies. If you're travelling with a group and have your hearts set on luxury, head straight for the Makuleke Contract Park – a seven-hour drive from Joburg, but well worth it – in the northern most section of the Kruger Park, via Punda Maria Gate.

*** WHERE TO STAY** The Baobab Hill Luxury Bush House sleeps eight people in four rooms (two are en-suite), and comes with the mod-cons you'd only expect of a swish hotel, like a personal cook, housekeeping, a private pool and even your very own game ranger guide.

*** WHAT TO DO** After a morning game drive, lounge on the house's private verandah. Relax in the pool (with drink in hand, of course!), enjoy the sight of giant baobabs in the area, or seek out herds of zebra and antelope in a fever tree forest.

*** HOW MUCH** From R11 000pn for the self-catering house. Includes personal chef and game ranger plus game vehicle (no private vehicles are allowed); see returnafrica.com for more information.

Go
with
friends



horoscopes

Essentials astrologer Wendy Bristow reveals all...



*Resist the
urge to
play the
victim'*

PISCES

19 FEBRUARY – 20 MARCH

It's a tricky month and someone could take their anger – or disappointment – out on you. Whatever happens, even if the anger and frustration is your own, do your best not to play the victim. That way you'll pull yourself out of the situation quicker.

Aries

21 MARCH – 19 APRIL

If you're travelling there could be hold-ups or things going wrong. And if you're not, you'll still encounter some other kind of obstacle. There's no avoiding it. Deal with it by keeping an eye on the big picture and your long-term purpose.

Taurus

20 APRIL – 20 MAY

Some of you are arguing about money or sex. But even if you're not, this is a month when all of your practical qualities can shine. Thinking about the nitty-gritty is what's needed, so get grounded and focus on what's most important.

Gemini

21 MAY – 20 JUNE

Don't be amazed if things come to a startling halt. It may be that you've had enough (or someone else has). Either way, this doesn't have to be a bad thing. Coming to the end of the line does mean something else can happen – like a new beginning.

Cancer

21 JUNE – 22 JULY

All kinds of energies are flying around – some easier to deal with than others. But what gets you through the month is to start talking and keep talking. And I mean truly communicating and telling it like it is. Good luck.

Leo

23 JULY – 22 AUGUST

At the end of February, the planetary forces are lined in your sign's zone of money. Now's the time to wangle a bonus or pay rise, or, if you are in debt, a much better way of budgeting will work in your sign's favour.

Virgo

23 AUGUST – 22 SEPTEMBER

March is a month of big changes and transformations. But don't worry, these shifts will be for the better. So, no matter how difficult your month gets, if you can't turn things around to your liking now, you never will...

Libra

23 SEPTEMBER – 22 OCTOBER

Your instincts are operating on max. You'll be able to get clearer about things that have been puzzling you, and even dreams could be meaningful. So trust your gut feelings, because they might lead you to some amazing places, and people.

Scorpio

23 OCTOBER – 21 NOVEMBER

You haven't had the easiest time so far this year. And now you could reach the end of the line where a person or obstacle is concerned. This month it's easier to move forward, but it might mean leaving someone or something behind.

Sagittarius

22 NOVEMBER – 21 DECEMBER

This month it'll feel like driving your car with the brakes on. You're eager to get somewhere but something's stopping you – and it may be due to your own actions. Taking responsibility for your own part is the only way past it.

Capricorn

22 DECEMBER – 19 JANUARY

Watch out for anger – yours and other people's. A tantrum can be surprising, especially if it's you having it. Some of you know too well why you're cross. But anger's also a force for change; you can transform a situation now once and for all.

Aquarius

20 JANUARY – 18 FEBRUARY

Conflict feels far stronger – and maybe nastier – than usual. And it could result in loss, so bear that in mind before quitting your job or taking it out on someone. That said, it's also time to stand your ground. What helps no end is staying positive.



LAST MONTH YOU LOVED

Really inspirational and empowering article in your January edition ("The moment that changed my life"). Women and young girls need to read about fearless, strong, empowered women who inspire, not mindless drama and sensation-craving celebs who most of us have nothing in common with. We need to show role models like the four women featured.

Well done ☒ @chiyannlene via Instagram

OUR TWITTER POLL RESULTS ARE IN!

How clean is your house right now?

33% Pretty darn clean

51% A few rooms are messy

13% It's a disaster

3% I'm thinking of selling

Over to you

COMPILED BY **CLAIRE SEBASTIÃO**



Short of ideas for dinner tonight?
See essentials.co.za for loads of easy recipes!

YOUR FAVOURITE...

ONLINE POSTS



Go out

51 fun things to do in Joburg with kids



Shape up

Get in shape with our six-week core strengthening programme



In the kitchen

How to make the ultimate roast chicken

WHO TO FOLLOW

Fill your feed with stunning pics – from décor and travel to beauty and fashion, Joburg-based Dimi Ingle has all the inspiration you need. Follow her on Instagram, @stylescoop



We asked you...

IF YOU COULD GO BACK, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR YOUNGER SELF ON YOUR FIRST DAY OF WORK?

Try remember the names of new people you meet and use their name the next day when greeting them – it makes a good impression
@BelindaMountain on Twitter

Work hard, always do your best, learn as much as possible, but don't let people take advantage of your willingness to help.

Charmaine Paterson on Facebook

Don't apply a full face of make-up at your desk – luckily a word from my lovely editor put me right and I went on to work there for 4 years, but to this day she'll still tease me about it
@lipglossgirl on Twitter

No one is born with knowledge – learn as you go
Isabel Abreu on Facebook

Next, we want to know

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE LOW-EFFORT MEAL THAT YOU MAKE ON BUSY WEEK NIGHTS?

Share your idea with us on Facebook or Twitter, then look for your name in next month's mag!

Whether you like wondering about words or focusing on figures, we've got a conundrum to get that grey matter working. So sharpen your pencil, keep your wits about you and get solving!

CRAFTY CODE CRACKER

Fill in the grid. Each letter of the alphabet has been replaced by a number from 1 to 26. We've given you four letters to start you off. When you've completed the grid, the shaded squares will spell out a three-word answer to this question: at a concert in Manchester last year, US pop star Beyoncé demanded 12 of what be positioned backstage for her road crew?

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

17	11	26	22	23		2	7	13	4	23
26		4		19		11		4		6
17	5	4	21	7		23	1	26	4	23
23		26		12		7		14		11
	14	2	26	23	3	24	26	14	24	
9		26				26				8
5	17	24	26	2		19	23	11	14	23
18				7		23		23		11
14	23	23	26	3	10		7	8	7	11
24		1		19		23		11		25
	2	7	24	7	20	7	11	7	3	
16		20		14		11		26		15
18	3	26	24		24	6	23	3	24	25
7		3		7		26				23
2	11	23	7	20		10	26	19	23	3
21				23				26		7
	2	7	17	24	26	19	7	24	23	
21		26		15		26		7		20
3	7	14	24	25		11	18	20	13	7
23		4		14		18		26		2
23	19	23	3	24		14	26	3	10	23

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Your answer:

SUDOKU

To solve the puzzle, each 3 x 3 box, each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

			7	2				
				8		6		
7	8	6					9	
					4			
	3		5				2	8
2		1	8	3				9
8	4	7	3			9		
		5		4		1		
6		3	9			5		

WORD SEARCH

US planemakers Boeing have been using what as an unusual substitute for passengers to test its in-flight Wi-Fi system? The answer is the one missing from the grid.

F	O	O	T	B	A	L	L	S
C	C	R	U	O	L	F	L	N
U	H	A	Y	O	W	L	D	O
S	O	E	B	L	A	O	O	O
T	L	L	E	B	L	M	O	L
A	E	A	F	S	A	E	W	L
R	S	L	R	O	E	G	J	A
D	O	R	F	D	A	S	E	B
G	S	K	I	T	T	L	E	S

BALLOONS
CABBAGES
CHEESE
CUSTARD
FLOUR
FOAM
FOOTBALLS
GOLF BALLS

HOLES
JELLY
LARD
POTATOES
SKITTLES
WOOD
WOOL

THE BIG QUIZ

The answers to all these general knowledge questions – except one – are in the grid in various directions; work out which answer is missing. Answers are in alphabetical order in each section.

THE SILVER SCREEN – SOUND

1 Which 1942 Disney classic features a rabbit character, called Thumper because of his habit of thumping his hind foot on the ground? (5)

2 Which American actor, singer and dancer played the role of inventor Caractacus Potts in the 1968 movie *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, after playing cockney chimney sweep Bert in *Mary Poppins*? (4, 3, 4)

3 Which British singer and actress played the trainee nun Maria, sent to be the governess for the Von Trapp family in the 1965 classic *The Sound of Music*? (5, 7)

WHERE IN THE WORLD? ROUND

4 Which tiny landlocked European principality in the Pyrenees is surrounded by France and Spain? (7)

5 Which tiny landlocked European Grand Duchy is surrounded by Belgium, Germany and France? (10)

6 Which landlocked European country is surrounded by France, Italy, Austria, Liechtenstein, and Germany? (11)

GROUND

7 What word follows *Friends Of The ...* to make the name of an international network of environmental organisations? (5)

8 What two words follow 'Between a rock and a ...' to make a phrase meaning being stuck choosing between two unpleasant alternatives? (4, 5)

9 What's the surname of the TV gardener, presenter and author Alan ..., who fronted *Ground Force* with Tommy Walsh and Charlie Dimmock? (10)

CROWNED

10 What was the nickname of the king William the ..., who was crowned King Of England on Christmas Day 1066 after winning the Battle Of Hastings? (9)



11 Which king – name and number spelled out – was crowned on 24 June 1509 and is famed for having six wives? (5, 3, 6)

12 What was the first name of the king ... the Third, who was crowned in 1483 and is held responsible for the deaths of the Princes in the Tower and whose body was found in 2012 under a car park? (7)

POUND

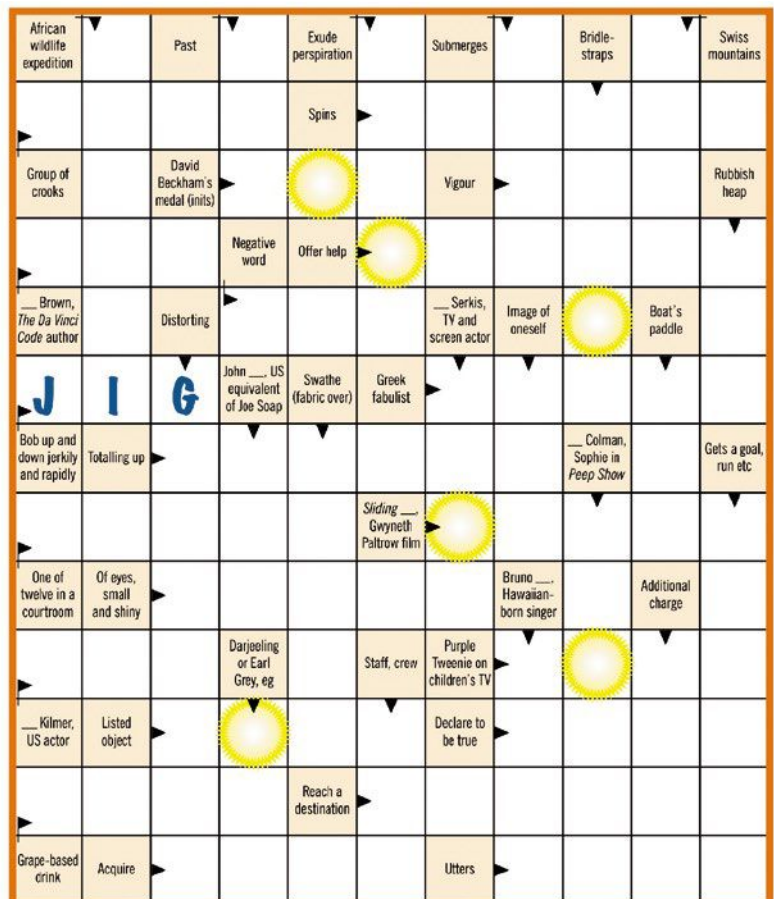
13 What completes the phrase 'Penny wise, pound ...' describing someone who is thrifty over small matters but careless over larger ones? (7)

14 In predecimal UK currency, what was the name of the coin that was worth one-twentieth of a pound and twelve old pence? (8)

15 What completes the title of the Shakespeare play *The Merchant Of ...*, in which a moneylender asks for his pound of flesh forfeit when the loan is not repaid? (6)

BLOCKWORD

Complete the title of the 1977 film starring Burt Reynolds, *Smokey and the ...*?



Essentials *stockists*

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Allergo Check at
 Dis-Chem 0860 347 2436

Benefit at redsquare.co.za
Bobbi Brown at
 Edgars 0860 692 274
Bronx at zando.co.za

Caffeluxe.co.za 011 268 3700
Call It Spring 021 551 1527
Carlton Hair at carltonhair.com
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 0860 347 243
Clarins at clarins.co.za
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Clinique at clinique.co.za
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Esque.co.za
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Forever 21 011 883 0025
Forever New forevernew.co.za
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GHD at ghdhair.com/za
Girlz Only at Dis-Chem
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Yuppiechef.com

Zando.co.za
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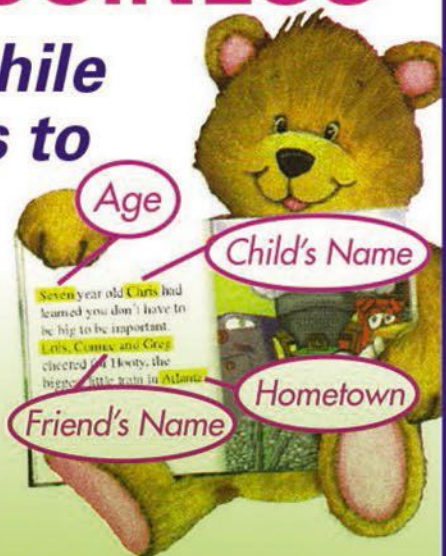


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Zoë Brown

Expresso presenter and KFM DJ Zoë Brown chats to *Essentials* about DIY disasters, kitchen cheats, and what she'd say to her younger self...

My dream job... is the one I've got now on *Expresso*. I love that so many South Africans wake up with the show and hopefully I can put a smile on their faces every weekday. I feel like a very ordinary girl doing an extraordinary job.

People don't know that... I've had my fair share of DIY disasters (those are the ones you don't see on the show!). I've been lucky to avoid any major disasters but I have enough scars to prove they were hard work. My worst DIY-related accident was dropping hot glue from a glue gun onto my finger.

My best friend... is still the person I sat next to in Grade One! Enja and I sat together in class for three years and we're still inseparable. We've travelled together to Mozambique, Miami and Abu Dhabi. Although it doesn't matter where we are or what we do, we always manage to have a laugh.

I'm listening to... Bruno Mars' *Versace on the Floor* and James Arthur's *Say You Won't Let Go* – I listen to them on repeat!



Zoë with her dad

“I've had my share of DIY disasters – and I have the scars to prove it!”

If I could talk to my younger self...

I'd say, 'You know that voice in your head that never stops talking? Trust it and you'll be okay.' It's taken me a long time to trust my gut instincts. The best advice I've ever been given was 'to keep my head in the clouds and my feet firmly on the ground'. The worst? 'Say yes to everything!'

The perfect date... would involve a fun round of putt-putt or ten pin bowling. I'm not impressed by fancy restaurants or expensive gifts – I

prefer the simpler things in life. As for a perfect girls' day out, it would start with a hike, followed by brunch – and wine-tasting – with my friends. A long, lazy afternoon nap would be the best way to finish it off!

In the kitchen... I'm a terrible cook, so I rely on kitchen shortcuts. My 'signature dish' is Mince Mate! It's super easy to make... just follow the instructions and hope it doesn't burn – it works every time!

The women I admire... I grew up surrounded by inspiring, strong women, like my mom, her friend Christine, and our family friend Anna-May. Their kindness, support and mentoring gave me direction, and also made me want to make a difference in other peoples' lives.

“My most Instagram-worthy moment... I recently spent two weeks exploring KZN with my parents – we behaved like tourists in our own province!”



Photography Fotolia: EBEN Photography

Don't tell me I can't... have it all – of course women can have it all! We live in a time where anything is possible, and there are so many support systems in place to help us at home and at work, so we shouldn't have to choose between having a successful career and a family.

Things I can't live without

My kitten Sailor... he's the first pet I've had since leaving home and he is really adorable!

My phone... It's the reason I can multitask. I use this one device to organise and run my entire life.

My sneakers... my Stan Smith sneakers go everywhere with me – I can wear them with almost anything.

Nail polish ... I have many scars on my hands from all the DIY so I keep my nails manicured as a distraction.





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