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PAKISTAN
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PENN BADGELEY
ON THE NETFLIX THRILLER, *YOU*

LILY JAMES
ON *WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?*

UMAIR JASWAL
"MUSIC IS MY GREATEST PASSION"

AYESHA OMAR
"I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD"

THE MULTIFACETED ARTIST ON BEING THE BEST VERSION OF HERSELF

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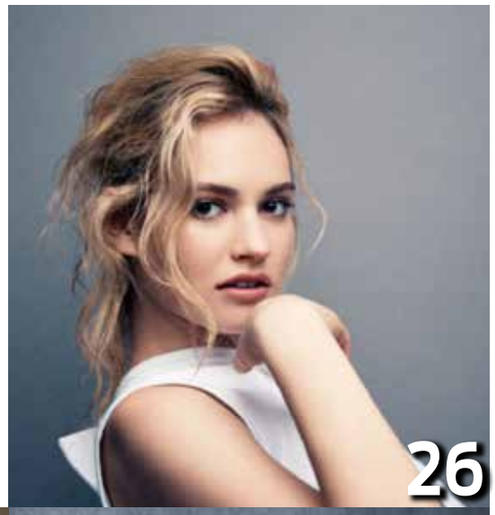
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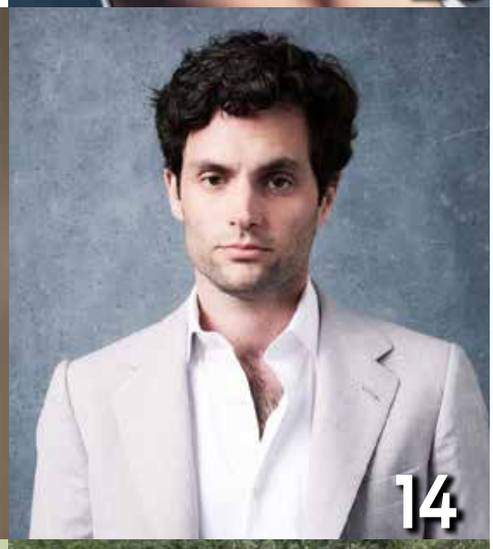
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THE ART OF FUSION

Dustin Johnson

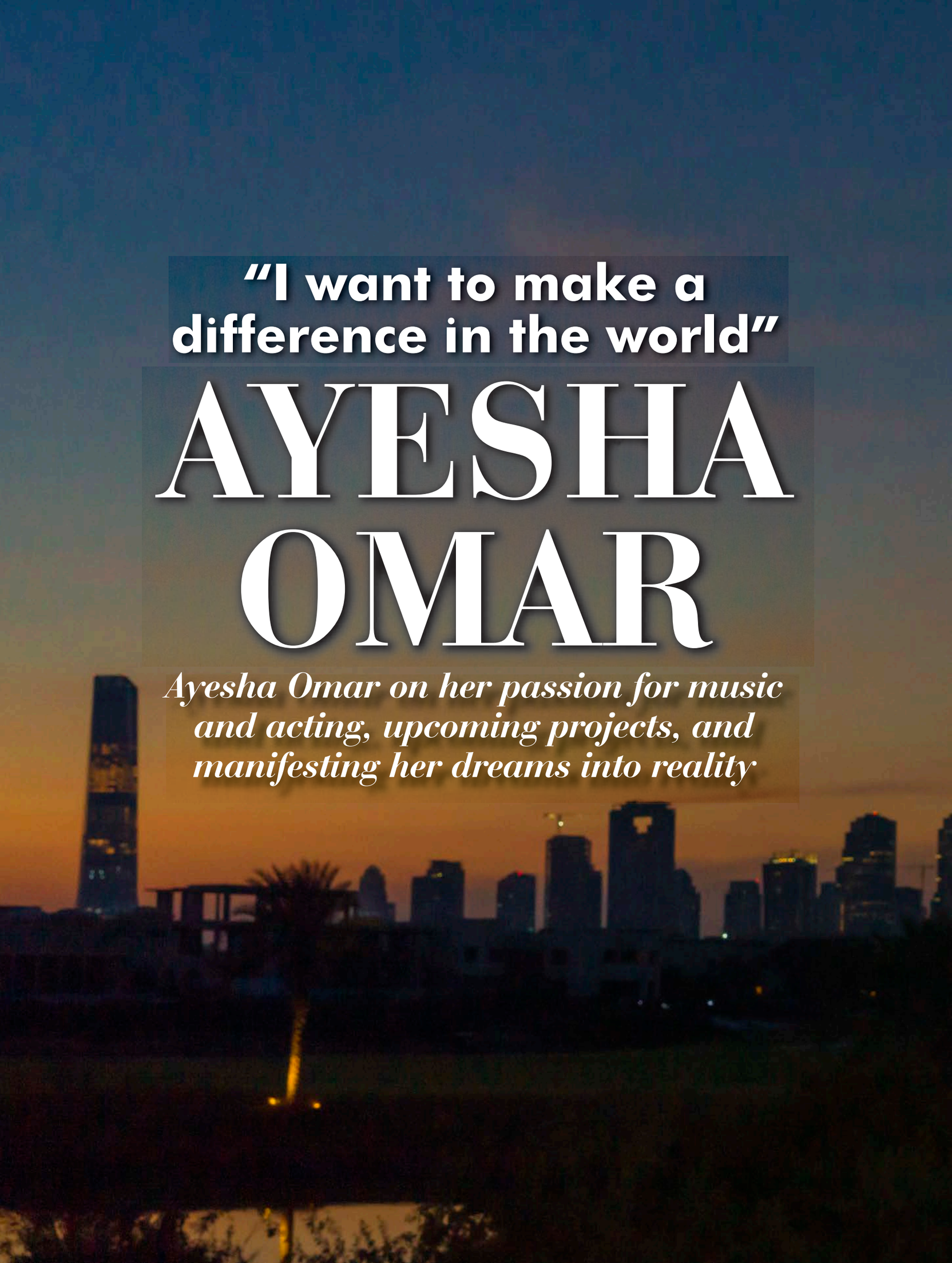
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"I want to make a difference in the world"

AYESHA OMAR

Ayesha Omar on her passion for music and acting, upcoming projects, and manifesting her dreams into reality





Tell us about yourself – your family, childhood, school and college, friends...

AYESHA OMAR: I was born in Karachi but I moved to Lahore when I was two due to my father's demise. My childhood was very tough. My mom was a single parent and we really had to struggle to make ends meet.

My brother and I were lucky to get admission in Lahore Grammar School, which is an expensive school, but we got scholarships on compassionate grounds. So our school fee was waived off, but obviously there were other expenses like books, uniforms, transport and all of that. My mother really struggled a lot, and obviously she was dealing with her own trauma and emotional upheaval as well. So it was very hard on us and on her.

We had a lot of independence even in childhood, as we had to do most things ourselves. It made me a very strong and resilient person.

I have a degree in Fine Arts from the National College of Arts. And then I was dabbling with a bit of acting in college and doing some sitcoms while I was still in college and from there I got a lot of acting offers and that's how I entered this industry.

You were brought up in Lahore – what made you move to Karachi?

AO: I was getting a lot of acting offers in Karachi. So I was back and forth between Karachi and Lahore a lot, and then I started doing long running soaps. It was at this point that I moved to Karachi. I also joined MTV Pakistan as a VJ, and I was there for a good six to seven years.

I still visit Lahore quite often, as my mother lives there.

Has music / acting been your passion from as far back as you can remember?

AO: Yes, it has. Like I said, I was singing and acting in school when I was five years old. I took part in many singing competitions. I was in the school choir, the school band, and then the college band. Later, I was a part of underground bands. While I was in college, we performed on stage many times. I did a lot of theatre in school. Every summer, we would do plays with students from other schools as well.

> "I run after experiences. I run after evolution, growth, peace, and health."

What is your earliest memory associated with acting / music?

AO: I won a singing competition when I was five years old! And I sang Bol kay Lab Azad on stage at Alhamra in Lahore, I was around eight at the time.

Film, television, studio collaborations, songs, you've done it all – as an artist and as an individual, what have you enjoyed the most and why?

AO: I love to sing and I do love to act on stage. I would say theatre – and also films – if done in the right environment, with the right team and the right people.

In singing, I get to express and create a little more. I think I'm also moving towards direction.

What would you define as your dream project?

AO: It would be a Hollywood film with Chris Hemsworth, Bradley Cooper and Kate Winslett as the cast. And it would be about something very powerful and important, a social issue – perhaps domestic violence or sexual harassment.

Any international collaborations / projects in the offing?

AO: Yes, absolutely. A film of mine is releasing in April; it's called Money Back Guarantee, and it's going to be released worldwide. I am also working on a couple of music projects so I can't say much right now. Then there is Saladuddin Ayubi, which is a collaboration between Pakistan and Turkey. The script is being finalised, and we will begin shooting after a month. So that's in the pipeline as well.

Had you not been a musician, what might have been your alternate calling?

AO: I would have been an artist, a painter.

How do you tackle controversy?

AO: There was a time when I was new in this ▶



“I love taking care of people, I am very maternal that way.”





“Becoming the best version of myself is on my bucket list.”

profession, new to being a public figure, and to being commented on and criticised by all and sundry. I was younger also and probably less mature, so controversy or people talking about me or my privacy being breached would really affect me negatively. It gave me a lot of trauma and pain, and it would really take me down a dark hole. But now, I have developed techniques to pacify myself. I believe in myself a lot more now. I have accepted all parts of myself, and I am true to myself now as much as I can be. I stand by my social philosophy and I align myself according to my own values.

So the gap between my public persona and my private life is smaller now because I want to remain true to myself. And when you know that your intention is pure, when you're not doing anything which goes against your own values, your family's values, the boundaries that you've set for yourself, then external controversy really does not matter. It's only between you and God.

So controversies come and go. They follow me everywhere. But I stay on my path and I stay true to myself and my values. And I try to be good to myself and to others. I don't like to manipulate anybody. I don't like to take anybody for granted. And I don't cross my own boundaries. So I take it all in my stride. Yeah, it really doesn't affect me or bother me at all anymore, because my vibration is higher than that now. I vibrate on a higher plane.

Personally and professionally, what has been your biggest high and your greatest challenge?

AO: Well, continuing my sitcom, Bulbulay for 14 years actually. And that is a huge commitment to any project, especially in Pakistan, because we work in all kinds of conditions. Things are not perfect for us, things are not tailormade for us. It's not all very comfortable. So to stay committed to something for such a long time is a huge challenge.

Bulbulay is also my biggest high because of the kind of love and respect and appreciation I get all over the world. I mean from Norway to Australia to Africa – wherever there are Pakistanis, the show is loved and all the characters are loved, and I am loved. So that kind of love and appreciation is probably my biggest high.

I also felt great when I won an award for my first film, when I won an award for my first album, and when I performed internationally on stage in Melbourne.

Both as an individual and as an artist: 1) what motivates you to push and raise the bar, 2) what inspires you, 3) what is your motto, 4) your comfort zone, 5) your getaway?

AO: That's a lot of questions, guys. This is cheating... I really have to think about that. But what motivates me is that I really want to make a positive difference in my own society and the world over. So what pushes me is just to be a better person every day and make a positive impact. For me, it's not about making money. I don't run after money. I don't even run after material possessions. I run after experiences. I run after evolution, growth, peace, and health. I guess constantly evolving is a high for me. I want to just be a better person, a kinder person to others. I want to be an inspiration to others. I want to share my knowledge and my awareness. So, yeah, life inspires me. Health inspires me. People who are doing great things inspire me. People who are spreading knowledge and doing stuff for the betterment of the world inspire me. People who are changing the world without any hidden agendas inspire me. Talented people who are creating art inspire me.



My comfort zone is just my home, my friends, my family, my beautiful home, good food, good books, movies, travelling – all of this is my comfort zone. But I want to break out of it and do things which push me as well.

My getaway within Karachi would be the beach. I try to go to the French Beach whenever I can. And I also like going to Lahore, to visit my mother and my friends.

Outside Pakistan, I would say any place which brings me closer to nature – the beach, mountains or forests.

Top 10 on your Bucket List?

AO: Iceland is on my bucket list. The Amazon Rainforest, going to Peru or South America, all ►





of this is on my bucket list.
Going to Burning Man once again is on my bucket list. So is skydiving, developing a wellness centre, and designing my own home.
Finding a partner who shares my values and my dreams and then eventually living on a farm with my family, that's on my bucket list. Becoming the epitome of health, cutting all toxic foods, and waking up at seven in the morning, sleeping early, exercising every day – I want to do all of this.
Adopting a child and becoming the best version of myself is on my bucket list.

You have collaborated with a number of artists – which have you thus far enjoyed the most?
AO: I think the best is yet to come. Yeah, there's a lot of collaboration yet to come.
But I really enjoyed collaborating with Abdullah Siddiki on a song which is yet to be released.

How would you define Ayesha Omar – the individual and the artist?
AO: Ayesha Omar the individual is a work in progress, constantly evolving, constantly putting out her desires and manifesting her dreams into reality. Constantly growing and trying to be a better version of her own self. Just trying to be kinder and better every single day. Trying to adopt better practices. Trying to be a better human. Trying to make a difference in the world. Trying to inspire herself and others. That is Ayesha Omar the individual. I want to be honest and real, and stand up for what's right and for what I believe in. I want to stand up for the truth. I want to spread positive energy and vibrate on a higher frequency, basically. Ayesha Omar the individual is trying to change her energy into healing energy, into positive energy. I want to make a difference and I want everybody to be attracted and drawn to my energy.
But I also want to protect my energy. I want to help people become better versions of themselves. And that goes for Ayesha Omar the artist. Also, I want to create. I want to stay true to myself. I want to learn more. I want to be particular about details; I don't want to go with the flow because only dead fish go with the flow. Ayesha Omar the artist wants to go against the current. She wants to create, she wants to inspire. She wants to step into areas which are not comfortable, step out of her comfort zone and do big things, work on issues and subjects that need to be highlighted. Ayesha Omar wants to live in the moment and create her own future.
I also want to be somebody who helps others see things that they're not aware of. Like maybe how to take care of their health better, how to eat better. I love taking care of people, I love feeding people, and I am very maternal that way. So I would define myself as someone who likes to take care of other people and make a difference in someone else's life. Leave my mark that way.

What's next for Ayesha Omar?
AO: Oh, lots and lots of things. I'm working on my own line of perfumes and will be launching it soon In sha Allah. I'm also working on a food concept with someone. Then I'm busy with my makeup and hair care line.
Two of my films are going to be released soon – Dhai Chal in March, and Money back Guarantee in April. Plus, I'm working on another film. Yeah. So there's lots to look forward to. OK!

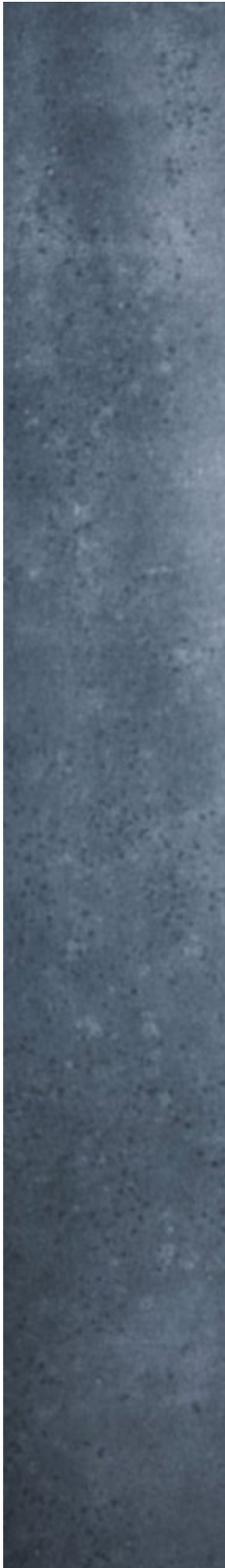
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"THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT *YOU* THAT ACTS AS A SORT OF SOCIAL EXPERIMENT"

PENN BADGELEY

Season 4 of psychological thriller television series *You* launched on Netflix on February 9, and Penn Badgley has had a long time to analyse his character, Joe Goldberg, the man women find irresistible, just as he seems irresistibly drawn to killing them







Penn Badgley has long said that you don't necessarily need to like the characters you play as much as you need to understand them. But he does admit that it takes plenty of understanding to be able to play a lovesick serial killer over the course of the past five years, especially when audiences are willing to absolve Joe no matter how many people he kills.

Now living in London under a new name – Prof. Jonathan Moore – will Joe find the peace of mind that will allow him to control his obsessions and become a model expat?

"No, I think Joe will remain the same," says Badgley. "Someone this profoundly ill, disturbed, traumatised and violent has a serious hurdle before them if they're ever going to heal and change. I don't know if that's possible for someone who's that far gone."

He might be right. After all, the conclusion of Season 3 saw Joe murder the latest love of his life, (his wife, named Love, and played by Victoria Pendretti), who was a skilled killer in her own right and became too much of a liability. Joe then leaves their child in the care of their gay neighbours, fakes his death, and moves to London to begin a new chapter in his life.

"Living in London has allowed me to bury the past, if you will," Badgley says as Joe/Jonathan in the Season 4 trailer. "Gone are the days of unrequited love and longing. This time around I'm focusing on academia and instruction while keeping my typical extracurricular activities strictly professional."

Season 4 takes Joe on a different kind of journey. Gone are the usual plot mechanics of Joe meets girl, Joe obsesses over girl, then Joe kills girl. Instead, the hunter becomes the hunted as Joe is being stalked by a mysterious antagonist while another serial killer is keeping busy murdering people in his midst.

Season four of the hit Netflix series is divided into two parts. Part One, which includes episodes one through five, landed on the streamer Feb. 9; Part Two, featuring episodes six through 10, will be released on March 9.

Badgley, 35, who first became famous as Dan on the hit series, Gossip Girl, is also the narrator and co-creator of a SiriusXM podcast, Podcrusher, which deals with real-life accounts of adolescent experience.

He and his wife Domino Kirke live in New York City where they welcomed their first child, a son, in October of 2021. Badgley started work on the new season of You episodes barely three months later, which has left him still in the process of adapting to fatherhood.

"I didn't even have the opportunity to be in shock as he was born," Badgley said. Now he's finding fatherhood to be a "great joy" but added that "it's going "swimmingly so far, but ask me again in 10 or 15 years." A fervent believer in meditation and mindfulness, he revealed that he found the experience of childbirth "really beautiful."

Can Joe ever become the good man he believes he wants to be?

PENN BADGLEY: It's a difficult question. He can never feel absolved of what he's done, but he can try to become a better man and fight those darker impulses that drive him to do terrible things. I think Joe will always find life to be a struggle in some form.

What would you say to Joe if you ever ran into him or in some alternate universe became a friend of his?

PB: Let's say he was a person I was obsessed with and, somehow, I could meet him in a controlled circumstance and he was interested in listening to me...I really, at this point, and I think I've been clear about how much I detest all of his deeds, so, in that context, I would actually try to love him.

Because, the truth is, he's never gotten that. Because of my relationship to him, I would try to love him. I'm not saying he deserves that. I'm not saying anybody else should do that. I'm saying I would try to love him. He needs that. He needs love. It's like, I would hug him... I would hold him.

Is You the kind of series that serves as a way of testing people by seeing how we react to what Joe does and how we keep wanting to find excuses for his actions and exonerate him in our minds?

PB: That's a huge part of what You is about. There is something about You that acts as a sort of social experiment. As viewers, we're somehow forced to ask ourselves why we like Joe, why we like watching him so much, and why we need to defend him and empathise with him so deeply.

Is it easier or harder to play a serial killer, however sympathetic he may seem, when you really don't like him that much as you've said many times?

PB: It's been a strange process. I don't let myself get affected that much, if at all, because as an actor I know that in this case I'm playing a fictional character. He doesn't exist, and never had. That helps me to be able to distance myself from his worst actions. ▸

And when I do find myself struggling with Joe as a character because I just don't like him, I remind myself that Joe just has this inexhaustible desire to be understood and for others to share his utter indignation at the way certain people treat others with great disrespect and behave aggressively. Joe wants a soulmate that he hopes will help him to transform himself although that obviously hasn't worked out very well so far and audiences can take that for what it's worth.

Many fans of the show still wonder why he couldn't have found a way to save Beck from himself?

PB: Joe is ultimately a survivor, and he's selfish, and his instincts will kick in at the limit of things. But his motivation is very flawed and egocentric. In the case of Beck, he wanted to mould her into his image of who he wanted her to be and make her the person who lives in his imagination.

But that has nothing to do with reality. He was never able to accept her flaws even though he was told by her previous boyfriend how selfish and status conscious and fake she was in many respects. But he doesn't understand because he doesn't do anything to interfere with his vision of her.

Why does Joe keep falling back on his old habits?

PB: He's wired in a certain way and he's finding it difficult to escape that kind of impulsive and willful side of him. He would like life to be this kind of literary fairy tale. But it's not, even though he keeps trying to manipulate reality and those real people who are flawed.

But we are all manipulative at times. On a small or large scale. And we will occasionally hurt the people around us, often unintentionally, although of course not in a violent way. That's one of the important subtexts of the series. Joe in many respects is just holding a mirror up to us and pointing out moments when our motivation might not be quite as pure as we think it is.

Joe obviously is a tragic figure in many ways. What's his tragic flaw?

PB: We've seen this meta progression in Joe which shows that he is not the good guy. Joe is the physical manifestation of how we troll each other. In a sense that's where Joe exists in all of us in that he's the voice of our incessantly tyrannical inner judge that's trying to protect our sense of self-worth.

But that's not how you become worthy to yourself, that's not how you become valuable for yourself. You gain self-worth through qualities like forgiveness and patience and compassion and empathy.

How would you explain the perverse kind of identification audiences may feel for Joe? And what does that say about us?

PB: Of course, the series is weighted in Joe's favour in the sense that he's meant to be someone whom people can identify with in terms of his search for true love and self-validation. We're all meant to believe that if only Joe can find what he's looking for, whatever that is exactly, then he'll be happy and at peace with the world.

But all this is part of the much more significant allegory about how our pop culture definitions of love are often very shallow and illusory. And there's an even deeper, more personal allegory about how we're blind to the hollowness of so many of our wants and desires and strivings.

I also realise that it's the nature of drama and fiction to depict bad guys in such a way that you root for him no matter what he does. Of course, I try to remind fans of the series and even some of my friends who seem overly fond of Joe that he is a very sick man who keeps on killing people.

There's a huge contradiction there. So we shouldn't be too forgiving of him, even though in some sense we want him to find his true love, settle down, and change for good. But I just don't think that's in the cards.



Is that blindness the ultimate form of self-delusion?

PB: It's certainly leading us to make bad decisions just as Joe's own misguided search for love is leading him to make the worst possible decisions. That's his major problem. When it comes to Joe, someone who is manipulating and controlling people so much that he's driven to lethal lengths, that person is not then suddenly going to be happy when he meets somebody who he thinks is perfect.

Is there still some hope for Joe down the road or is he still going to find himself going back to his bad old habits of killing people?

PB: I don't think that redemption is possible for Joe. He's among the worst. I've been thinking a lot about whether there is justice in the show. There isn't justice yet.

But I think if we're doing the show in the right way and the show goes on...there needs to be a real sense of justice if not for Joe then for us.

One of the challenges for me was for me to play him as authentically as possible by making it appear that he believes that he is somehow justified in what he's doing. In Joe's mind, he understands he's done terrible things but he rationalises it by convincing himself that he's in the process of trying to become a better man, someone who deserves love and forgiveness. In the end, though, he's going to continue being Joe. OK!

The above comments by Penn Badgley were made during the course of a May 2022 Zoom chat while he was promoting his SiriusXM Stitcher podcast, entitled Podcrushed. His comments have been condensed and edited for length and clarity.

INTERVIEW: JAN JANSSEN
PHOTOGRAPHS: WENN, SHUTTERSTOCK





"MUSIC HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY GREATEST PASSION"

UMAIR JASWAL

_OK_! Pakistan spoke to Umair about all things music, irresistible scripts, the current music scene and more



Umair Jaswal is an incendiary force to be reckoned with. A genuinely multi-talented artist, he sings, acts, and conducts adventurous documentaries with enviable panache. He is also the brand ambassador of BMW Bikes in Pakistan.
From the rock-heavy Qayaas, to brilliant Coke Studio appearances and an acting debut with period drama *Mor Mahal* (2016), Umair's journey has been a delight to follow. His latest album is titled 'Dance Kerain Saari Raat' and promises to be a shining success.

What can you tell us about your recent album? How did the idea behind the compilation first strike you?
UMAIR JASWAL: The idea for this album actually came about during the Covid pandemic because it was a time when we were all looking inwards. This time gave me an opportunity to evolve and deconstruct my sound. While creating this new soundscape, we had a lot of fun and also a sense of freedom. We found something really unique in the process. We kept working on it and soon enough we had plenty of songs. We decided to go ahead and release an album because there were so many tracks, and also because I'm a bit old school and I still believe in the relevance of albums, and how they are indicative of an artist's journey and their feelings at a certain point in time.

How would you describe the vibe of the album?
UJ: I think it's got a pretty chilled out vibe. We've got tracks where you can move, you can dance, which you can listen to while you're just lounging, or just listen to on a drive. It's an album that can accompany you on all the myriad things you do in life. While exploring all these different sounds we explored a range of vibes, and I think when you hear it you'll really get to hear all these varying moods.

Would you say that music is your greatest passion? Please elaborate on why this is so.
UJ: I think music has always been my greatest passion because the kind of freedom I feel while doing music is unparalleled. I'm generally a very shy person. I would describe myself as an introvert, but when it comes to music, it becomes my love language, music becomes my expression, music becomes my tool for conveying a lot of things that I need to say. I can't say these things otherwise. Music has always been that expression for me, music has always been my truth. Music is self expression for me and I believe it will always play this role in my life.

How would you describe the current music scene in Pakistan? How have you seen it evolve from when you first started out?
UJ: The music scene in Pakistan has definitely come a long way. We are a little late on the world stage but that's always been the case. We're always a decade behind on where the world is. Which is why, with my recent work I wanted to create something that is forward-looking and which is ahead of its time. We're trying to push the envelope as much as possible and trying to reach a place close to where international music is right now. As we all know, electronic sounds have taken over the world completely and the frequencies have changed and the audiences have changed. Back in the day we had bands, and live instruments and we used to rehearse and jam before we went onstage in front of an audience. There was live energy at play. My experience from all those performances really helped me to understand the dynamics of performing a show for an audience, and how to make it appealing. It also helped me to understand how to construct my songs for a live set. Audiences have grown up along with musicians, and there is a lot of talent that is making its mark. I wish them all the best.

Who are your favourite musicians from the younger lot of artists and why?
UJ: I think this whole new lot – I can't name any one person – but the people that have emerged in the last three to four years have been phenomenal. A lot of them come up to me and say that I have inspired them, but little do they know that I am inspired by them as well. I was lucky enough to surface as a musician in my late teens, and it's been an amazing journey so far. Some of the musicians who have just become known recently, are my age, and it's tremendous that they didn't give up on their dreams and they kept on striving and kept their self-belief intact. It's great to see ▸




“Music has always been my truth.”

“I want to put Pakistan on the global map.”



them reap the benefits of all the hard work they’ve done over the years.

Are you working on any new projects for ‘Umair Jaswal Productions’?
UJ: Absolutely, we will be going ahead with new productions, we will be making the new season of ‘Raahi’ soon Inshallah. Due to the floods we were held back for a while, both in South Punjab and up north. That is something that made me sad but I hope that all remains well and we don’t have any natural disasters to contend with.

What kind of documentaries would you like to work on in the future? Any more motorcycle journeys ahead?
UJ: More bike journeys ahead! We are also trying to bring more bikers into Pakistan, as well as bringing biker tourism into Pakistan. The conversation has changed from just being a biker yourself to now bringing in people from abroad to see how beautiful Pakistan really is. I also believe that international biker events can take place in Pakistan, because Pakistan has that stunning landscape. I want to put Pakistan on the global map, in that capacity, so that people can see our potential to host large-scale biking adventure events.

Is there more acting on the horizon for you?
UJ: The opportunities are there for me, but my complete focus right now is on my music. I’ve come out with tracks after a long time and before I take up any acting projects, I want to feel fulfilled and satisfied with what I’ve done with releasing original music.

What kind of scripts would appeal to you in the future?
UJ: I think anything out of the box would personally appeal to me. I’ve been having this conversation for the last five, six years with producers, directors, writers about the need to write better things for television – things that have much more purpose and meaning. With the rise of streaming platforms across the world we have seen so many interesting stories come up which are built on dynamic concepts, and then one somehow wonders why this initiative hasn’t been taken in Pakistan. We watch all sorts of absorbing Indian shows, which have just blown up and are phenomenal. We still don’t see Pakistani content up to that level. A lot of local creators are now aware that we do now need to change, we need to evolve and I think the present time is perfect for a push forward for our industry. If something off the beaten track and different comes my way, I would love to be part of that.

You have quite a few passion projects in your arsenal. What is on your plate in regard to these for the rest of the year?
UJ: The year ahead will be filled up with music, performing live, bikes and the biking world and creating content around the latter. Somewhere down the line there is an acting opportunity which I’m looking into – but only if everything pans out well. I strongly believe that if you’re in it, you’re in it a hundred percent, so if I can go into it I want to give it a hundred and ten percent and just focus on acting. If that is the case then you will be seeing me in an acting project very soon but for the rest of the year I just want to tell all my fans that a lot more music will be coming. I also want to let my fans know that Vol 2 is coming out on Eid, and we will be touring all over Pakistan. You’ll be having a very unique audio visual experience.
Thank you so much for all the love and support that you’ve shown over the years. Thank you for the support for the album as well! I’ll keep pushing harder, we will keep pushing the boundaries and music as much as we can. By the end of the year we will start releasing singles from the second album as well so stay tuned! OK!

INTERVIEW: AFSHAN SHAFI
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF UMAIR JASWAL





"THIS STORY GETS TO THE HEART OF THE NOTION THAT IS SO FUNDAMENTAL TO HUMAN EXPERIENCE - THE DESIRE TO FIND THAT ONE PERSON WHO WILL BE YOUR IDEAL PARTNER IN LIFE"

LILY JAMES

The beautiful actress opens up about starring in the sprightly new rom-com, *What's Love Got To Do With It?*. Directed by Shekhar Kapur and written by Jemima Khan, the film sees James display the carefree spirit that endeared her to audiences in *Mamma Mia: Here We Go Again*, and more recently in *Yesterday*



Lily James has spent most of the past year trying to shed the memory of Pamela Anderson whom she played in *Pam & Tommy*, the Hulu mini-series that streamed earlier in 2022. Playing the part of the former Baywatch star and sex symbol took its toll on her psyche and personality, and the British actress confesses to having had trouble letting go of Anderson's mannerisms and speech patterns.

This is why James found it far less stressful to play in the sprightly new rom-com, *What's Love Got To Do With It?*, which opened in UK theatres on Feb. 24. Directed by Shekar Kapur, and written by Jemima Khan (the daughter of late billionaire James Goldsmith and former wife of cricketer and recently deposed Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan), the premise of her new film is fairly straightforward: former childhood friends Zoe (James), and Kaz (Shazad Latif), the product of a traditional Pakistani family, now find themselves searching for true love as adults.

When Zoe, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, learns that Kaz, a dedicated doctor, has agreed to his parents' wishes for an arranged marriage, she is so intrigued and confused by his decision that she decides to shoot a documentary about his nuptial journey.

Along the way Zoe, raised to be an independent-minded woman by her very liberal English single mother (Emma Thompson), is forced to re-examine her troubled romantic past and habit of choosing bad men.

"This story challenges all your preconceived ideas," says James. "It gets to the heart of the notion that is so fundamental to human experience - the desire to find that one person who will be your ideal partner in life."

"The film develops these two opposing visions of that search....It's either walking into love or falling into love. And it's like, OK, you feel passionately in love with someone and then maybe it fades out and this other version where you walk into love and the passion follows."

The 33-year-old Lily James is the daughter of late British musician James Thomson (she was born Lily Thomson) and actress Ninette Mantle. At the age of 18 she chose the stage name Lily James in her father's honour after his tragic passing in 2008 at the age of 54. She grew up in Surrey and studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London prior to making her acting debut in the BBC

"I come from a family of artists."

TV series *Just William*.

James would gain a massive public following with her portrayal of Lady Rose MacClare in *Downton Abbey* from 2012-2015. It was while shooting Downton that James auditioned for the lead in Kenneth Branagh's *Cinderella* which went on to become a box office smash and launched her film career. In recent years, she's distinguished herself with performances in *The Darkest Hour* and *Rebecca*.

Lily James lives in London and for the last two years has been in a relationship with Michael Shuman, the 36-year-old bass player for the rock group Queens of the Stone Age.

What was it like making *What's Love Got to Do With It?*

LILY JAMES: It was great. It's a really lovely story and I'm excited that the film's coming out now. The script was written by Jemima Khan who wrote an amazing script. I got it during lockdown. I hadn't seen a living soul for however long I was on my own. And the actor attached to it was Shazad Latif who as it turns out has been one of my very, very close friends for the last 10 years.

How do you see the story between your character and Shazad's?

LJ: We see them as friends initially. And it's kind of like a romantic family comedy...that evolves and deepens. For me it was the chance to make a film with a friend, having been deprived of human contact during the pandemic. It was just like this siren song, and I couldn't resist it.

What is your perspective on your character, Zoe?

LJ: Zoe is an ambitious filmmaker who, like so many other people, is trying to figure out how to live her life. The role is brilliant, it's very authentic and also very emotional.

Love is the central theme of this movie. What is it about romantic comedies that still has this special hold on audiences?

LJ: I think that everyone loves to laugh and that every single one of us on the planet is searching for love whether it's in a family or in a partner. And we all get it wrong, we all wind up in this big mess, and Shakur (the director) told me that my character is like she's in a washing machine the whole time ▸



"I want to be pushed beyond my limits."



“I’m learning to feel more sure of myself.”



when it comes to her life and her search for love and romance.
I also think that we’re naturally drawn to these kinds of stories which resonate with people. I love all the great rom-coms like *Pretty Woman*, *Notting Hill*, and every Christmas I watch *Love, Actually*. Richard Curtis is so brilliant and one of my favourite people on the planet and I had the chance to do one of his scripts in *Yesterday* which was such an honour for me.

What was it like working with a close friend like Shazad?
LJ: It was amazing. He’s like my brother. It was a total joy and he’s such a good actor...He really brings so much sensitivity and also depth to the character of Kaz. And every day on the set with him was wonderful.

You’ve worked in some very serious dramas like your *Pam & Tommy* TV series and some lighthearted movies. Do you have a preference?
LJ: My natural inclination is to be more lighthearted and find a lot of joy and love in the stories I want to be part of. But I also know that if I want to grow as an individual and as an actor, that I constantly need to push myself into darker roles and explore the human condition as deeply as I can. Figuring out complex characters is always a test that actors set for themselves...
Everything you do has to challenge and frighten you. Helena Bonham Carter told me once that it’s OK not to be OK, to have a breakdown, to cry – it lets people know you’re not a robot.
It can be so difficult, the relentless filming every day, getting up at 5am – doing that for months can become too much and that’s OK, as long as you’re still a good person and good to work with and don’t turn into a diva.

You’ve said in the past that you thrive on the intensity of your performances?
LJ: In a sense, yes, because I want to be pushed beyond my limits, going to dark extremes that take you to places that you’re scared to explore but are exciting at the same time. It’s not easy, but I don’t know any other way of working that brings me to where I feel I need to go. I’m naturally inclined to want to push myself as hard as possible to the point where I feel exhausted from doing as many takes as possible.

How do you feel you’ve handled your acting journey thus far?
LJ: Actors have to have really thin skin to let emotions out, but you have to have really thick skin to deal with success. When you get a rejection, let it hurt for a couple of hours and then let it go, it wasn’t meant to be...I’ve tried to never get too upset if I don’t get a part that I really, really wanted to do.
But that’s part of this business. You simply have to be ready for all the ups and downs and just wait for the opportunities that present themselves and make the most of them. Overall, though, I feel I’ve been really lucky although I still feel that I have so much I want to accomplish and get to show what I’m capable of.

Your father was a very talented musician. Do you feel that acting is in a way an extension of his artistic gifts?
LJ: I’m sure it’s ingrained in me. I started singing and reciting poems when I was three – I was always extroverted. As soon as my father picked up the guitar, I started singing. Dad also wrote his own bedtime stories that he read to us. So, I’m sure that my father contributed greatly to my imagination and my sense for the dramatic.
There’s also maybe an element of destiny involved. My mother used to work in the industry and my father was an actor for a while when he was in his early 20s, and he even lived on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. My grandma and an uncle were also actors. You could say that I come from a family of artists.
Was your family always supportive of your acting ambitions?
LJ: My parents supported me tirelessly, but so did my two brothers, Sam and Charlie. I remember that when I did a Chekhov play they came to see me perform nine times!

Do you have any specific goals for the future?
LJ: I’m learning to feel more sure of myself and trying to be more focused in terms of the things that make me truly happiest. I was running off in so many different directions in my twenties because everything seemed to be happening so fast and I didn’t feel that I had a chance to stop and reflect on where I was going.
But during the lockdown I had a lot of time to think about my life, and I feel I have a much better idea of who I am and where I’m headed.
OK!

The above comments by Lily James were made on Sept. 12th during the course of her appearance at the Toronto International Film Festival where she was promoting her new film, What’s Love Got to Do With It? Her comments have been condensed and edited for length and clarity.

INTERVIEW: JAN JANSSEN/WENN
PHOTOGRAPHS: WENN, SHUTTERSTOCK

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OK! FASHIONISTA
WHAT'S IN HER BAG? QUDSIA ALI
SARAH ZULFIQAR TRAVELS TO CHICAGO
OK! SPOTLIGHT MISHAYL NAEK
From Paris With Love
THE GRADUATING CLASS OF THE ASIAN INSTITUTE OF FASHION DESIGN SHOWCASES IN PARIS





THE FUTURE OF PAKISTANI FASHION GOES GLOBAL

The graduating class of 2022 at the Asian Institute of Fashion Design (AIFD), Iqra University, presented their thesis collection at Hôtel d'Évreux in the Place Vendôme, Paris. The collection was chosen by Fashion Week Studio, a Los Angeles-based firm, to run alongside the official Paris Fashion Week shows. AIFD was selected after nearly a year-long application process and here are some of their brilliant pieces.


ASIAN
INSTITUTE
FASHION
DESIGN






ASEAN
INSTITUTE
FASHION
DESIGN





OK! Red CARPET



Cara Delevinge could get away with murder in this red hot Elie Saab number.



Cate Blanchett makes strikingly bold choice in Louis Vuitton at the Oscars.



Nicole Kidman dazzles in Giorgio Armani at the Oscars.

ROCKSTARS



Michelle Williams captivates in a embellished gown by Chanel Couture.



Modest yet Glamorous as ever, Malala Yousafzai makes our heart skip a beat in Ralph Lauren.



Lady Gaga wore an all black Versace gown to the Oscars.



GIGI HADID



ALEXANDER WANG
Off-Shoulder Top,
PKR 130,000

CHANEL
22 Handbag,
PKR 1,200,000





GUCCI
Ballerina Shoes,
PKR 158,000

DENIM

Whether it's head-to-toe denim or just a trending maxi skirt that's on your wish list, this long-standing, durable fabric is a fashion front runner this spring. For an extra punch, a denim bag or baseball would complete your look.



H&M
Cap,
PKR 2,800



H&M
90s Baggy
High Cargo
Jeans,
PKR 7,500



GESTUZ
Corset Top,
PKR 30,000

OUTFITTERS
Wide Leg Jeans,
PKR 3,990





COPERNI
Denim Swipe
Bag,
PKR 150,000



SAINT LAURENT
Nano Bucket
Bag,
PKR
400,000



ZARA
Denim Skirt,
PKR 12,000



RETROFETE
Shirt Dress,
PKR 110,000



LOEWE
Raffia Tote,
PKR 290,000



SACAI
Denim Top,
PKR 130,000





THE FRANKIE SHOP
Hayla Contrast
Denim Pants,
PKR 29,000

Y/PROJECT
Midi Skirt,
PKR 78,000



JIMMY CHOO
Washed Denim Logo Tote
Bag with Embroidered
Logo,
PKR 379,070



JIMMY CHOO
Denim Wedges with
Crystal Straps,
PKR 262,890



JIMMY CHOO
Denim
Sandals,
PKR 190,000



H&M
Dark denim
blue Shirt
Dress,
PKR 112,700



ZARA
Denim
Overshirt,
PKR 13,000



PHOTOGRAPH: WENN

STOCKISTS: ALEXANDER WANG www.alexanderwang.com; CHANEL www.chanel.com; COPERI, THE FRANKIE SHOP www.thefrankieshop.com; GESTUZ, RETROFETE, SACAI, Y/PROJECT www.farfetch.com; GUCCI www.gucci.com; H&M www.hm.com; JIMMY CHOO www.jimmychoo.com; LOEWE www.loewe.com; OUTFITTERS www.outfitters.com.pk; SAINT LAURENT www.ysl.com; ZARA www.zara.com.
; prices are approximately





NICKY HILTON

From red carpets and runways to front row at Fashion Week, designer and muse Nicky Hilton has earned her reputation as a style icon, which is why this month we choose her as our ultimate Style Crush.

GET THE LOOK

VERSACE
Embellished Logo Wool Mini Skirt
PKR 452,600



ALL SAINTS
Ilaria Tie Waist Long Sleeves Bodysuit
PKR 36,000





MACH & MACH
Double Bow Crystal-Embellished Satin Platform Pumps
PKR 243,500



VERSACE
Embellished Logo Oversize Wool Blazer
PKR 1,951,000

MIU MIU
Embellished Cat-Eye Sunglasses
PKR 94,000



STOCKISTS: VERSACE www.luisaviaroma.com, ALL SAINTS www.nordstrom.com, MACH & MACH www.net-a-porter.com, MIU MIU www.mytheresa.com; *prices are approximate*

RICH IN COLOR

Black Panther star and trendsetter Michael B. Jordan raises the bar for men's fashion by donning colourful looks one after another.





GIVENCHY
Distressed T-Shirt,
PKR 140,000



H&M
Relaxed Fit Pants,
PKR 8,000



JACQUEMUS
Linen Blazer,
PKR 190,000



JACQUEMUS
Feijoa Trousers,
PKR 125,000

MAISON KITSUNÉ
Chillax Fox Sweatshirt,
PKR 35,000





MONCLER
Logo T-Shirt,
PKR 45,000

H&M
Oversized Sweatshirt,
PKR 8,000





POLO RALPH LAUREN
Linen Shirt,
PKR 28,000

RIVER ISLAND
Double Breasted Jacket,
PKR 22,000





NIKE
Swoosh Sweatpants,
PKR 18,000

STOCKISTS: GIVENCHY www.givenchy.com; H&M www.hm.com; JACQUEMUS www.jacquemus.com; MAISON KITSUNÉ, MONCLER www.farfetch.com; NIKE www.nike.com; POLO RALPH LAUREN www.polo.com; RIVIER ISLAND www.riverisland.com ; *prices are approximate*

POPS OF COLOUR

Add mood-boosting pops of colour to decorate an otherwise-simple ensemble to make a statement anytime, any day.

VAN CLEEF & ARPELS
Antennae Necklace

HARRY WINSTON
Kaleidoscope Watch

CHOPARD
Frog Necklace

AUSTY LEE
Blue Morpho Earrings

GRAFF
Butterfly Watch

CHOPARD
Imperiale Joaillerie 581 Multicolored Sapphire Watch

BVLGARI
Pink Sapphire & Tourmaline Earrings

CHAUMET
Lueurs d'Orage Earrings

NIKOS KOULIS
Coloured Gemstones Ring

POMELLATO
Rainbow Gemstones Chain

TASAKI
Pearl, Diamond, Aquamarine, Sapphire & Tourmaline Necklace

CHRISTIAN DIOR
Printemps Earrings

MARGOT MCKINNEY
Bow Tourmaline Earrings

STOCKISTS: AUSTY LEE www.austyleeartjewellery.com; BVLGARI www.bvlgari.com; CHAUMET www.chaumet.com; CHOPARD www.chopard.com; CHRISTIAN DIOR www.dior.com; GRAFF www.graff.com; HARRY WINSTON www.harrywinston.com; MARGOT MCKINNEY www.margotmckinney.com; NIKOS KOULIS www.nikoskoulis.com; POMELLATO www.pomellato.com; TASAKI www.tasaki.com; VAN CLEEF & ARPELS www.vancleefarpels.com.



What's IN HER BAG?

Model and actress Qudsia Ali shares the contents of her bag



The Zero Makeup Palette is one kit that solves all my makeup needs. It really is a quick 60 seconds to flawless skin solution, and includes a concealer, cream blush, lipstick and powder

AirPods Pro are my forever and always. They're perfect for music and long phone conversations





The Cadbury chocolate bar is a sweet treat keeps me happy and chirpy



I use a cardholder wallet for my everyday cards.



Cantu curling cream is creamy, weightless and moisturising, leaving my curls softer than ever.



I have literally had my Ray-Ban shades for years, which is amazing because they're the longest I've kept sunglasses alive

Hair claw - I like wearing my hair up and a bit loose. I have long curly hair, so I try to avoid using hair ties that yank on my scalp



My Way perfume by Giorgio Armani is one of my favourite scents of all time



Extra bubble gum is perfect for a refreshing breath and I always keep it in my bag



OK! *Beauty* EDIT

NEW AND A-PEELING

THESE NEW EXFOLIANTS PROMISE THE GLOWIEST, SMOOTHEST SKIN EVER



2



1



3



4



5

1 Mulac Mayday Scrub PKR 4,050
Slough off the rough with apricot kernels and moringa seed oil in this once-a-week formula.

2 Elemis Peptide4 Overnight Radiance Peel PKR 19,400
You snooze, you smooth. This anti-ageing formula is gentle enough to use every night.

3 Sienna X The Chemical Peel PKR 12,800
The tanning brand is extending its glow-giving skills into skincare products like this DIY glycolic facial.

4 Decléor Green Mandarin Exfoliating Overnight Bi-Phase Peel PKR 15,600
This mix of glycolic acid and botanical oils is a 28-day course in gorgeous, glowy skin.

5 Huda Wishful Yo Glow Enzyme Scrub £PKR 11,800
Huda Kattan's skincare debut is a mix of AHAs, BHAs and fruit enzymes, with Instaworthy effects.

STYLED BY: LAURA MULLEY PHOTO: MEGAN BRAMLEY





NEW CRUSH

I don't think I've worn bright lipstick since the first lockdown, but Bobbi Brown's new Crushed Shine Jelly Sticks, pkr 8,900, come in six shades and have been the perfect way to dip my toe back in. Housed in satisfyingly clicky pop-out tubes, they're more pigmented than your average tinted balm yet sheer enough to skim over my chapped winter lips. So yes, I'm ready for this jelly.



FINE LINE

Where do you draw the line? Well, if you're using NYX Professional Makeup Epic Wear semi- permanent liners, the answer is – all over. They come in eight waterproof shades, pkr 3,200 each, and the idea is to use them for feline flicks AND swirly body art. Sadly there are no festivals to test them at, but I did sleep in the stuff on a glamping trip and it lasted two days without running down my face.



BEAUTY *Essentials*

LUXURIOUS LATHER

Shampoo has always had a pretty straightforward job – clean the hair and scalp without totally destroying their condition. However, L'Oréal Elvive's new More Than Shampoos, PKR 2,500 each, are the high achievers of the haircare world. They give the cleanse of a shampoo with the care of a mask, offering added benefits like shine, strength and nourishment. They are, quite frankly, making all the others look rather lazy now!

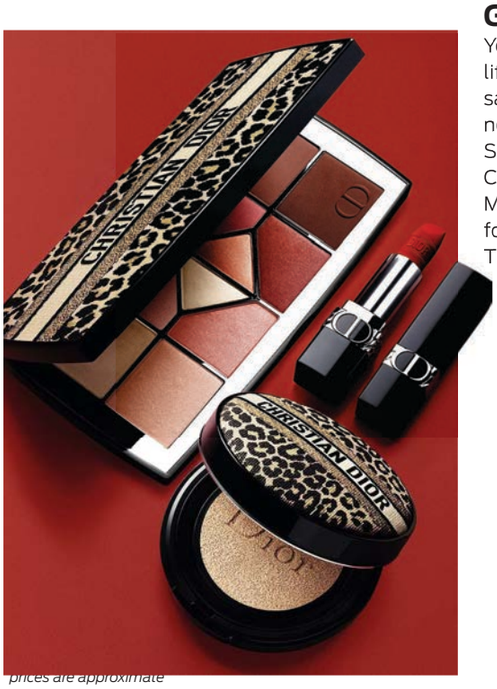


GO WILD!

Yes, yes, I know I don't need any more animal print in my life – my wardrobe already resembles a small wildlife sanctuary – but what's that they say about a leopard lover never changing its spots?

So, naturally, I couldn't wait to get my paws on Dior's La Collection Privée

Mitzah Collection, with everything from lippy to foundation and eyeshadow in wild and wonderful designs. The limited editions start fromPKR 9,600 for nail polish, although I'm wondering if I can justify "rehoming" that stunning PKR 39,500 10 Couleurs Palette...



prices are approximate



SUMMER LOVIN'

If you fell in love with Molton Brown's Flora Luminare fragrance last summer, get ready to reignite your holiday crush. You can now be reunited with that warm and fuzzy white floral scent via the new Flora Luminare Glowing Body Oil, PKR 14,400, Bath & Shower Gel, PKR 7,800, and Body Lotion, PKR 9,200. It's like the beauty equivalent of Sandy and Danny meeting up again at high school.

THE LIFE OF TANYA HUSSAIN

The talented actress aka Tia shares her favourites with *OK*! Pakistan



Favourite travel destination?
London and Turkey.



Signature Scent?
Gucci Guilty.

Three things you can't live without?
My family and close friends, my work and saying my prayers.

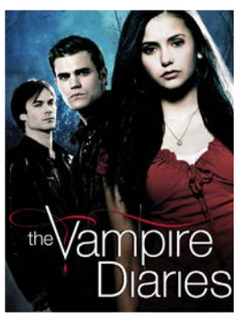
Most inspirational person you know?
My mother inspires me everyday.



Favourite luxury brand or item you own?
My LV bag that my parents got for me as a graduation present!



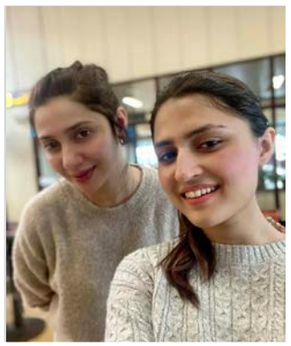
Favourite restaurant or cuisine?
Sumo (I love Sushi/Japanese food).



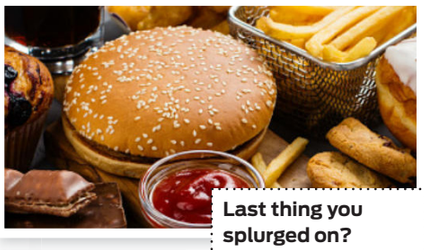
Last show you binged watched or show you recommend?
The Vampire Diaries is my all-time favourite.



Exciting celebrity encounter?
I met Mahira Khan at the airport and she was kind, humble and beautiful!



Ideal weekend?
A weekend away in a fun city!



Last thing you splurged on?
I went to Turkey with my friends and had the best time of my life (spent my money on food and sightseeing mostly).

Skin care essentials?
Moisturiser (Kiehl's serum) and Kiehl's face wash.

How do you keep your self fit?
My dad takes me to the park for a walk often!



Instant mood lifter?
Good food and spending quality time with my dad!

Favourite song?
I have many but I'm currently listening to *Night Changes* by One Direction a lot and *Pasoori* is my all-time favourite.

Any book you would recommend?
The Alchemist but Paulo Coelho.



Guilty pleasure?
Cheesecake (or any dessert).



All-time favourite film?
Any Shahrukh Khan movie and the Batman trilogy.

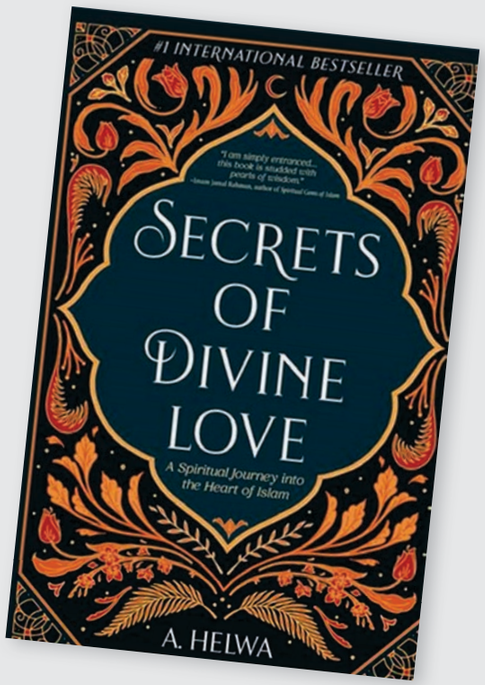
ENTERTAINMENT



MOVIE

SCREAM VI

The newest addition to the ghost faced killing saga will take you right back to high school! With a 78% rating on Rotten Tomatoes, we are certain this sixth edition will be anything but stale, as it comes with a change of setting and so much more. Grab some popcorn, sit back and brace yourself with this blast from the past.



LITERATI

SECRETS OF DIVINE LOVE: A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY INTO THE HEART OF ISLAM

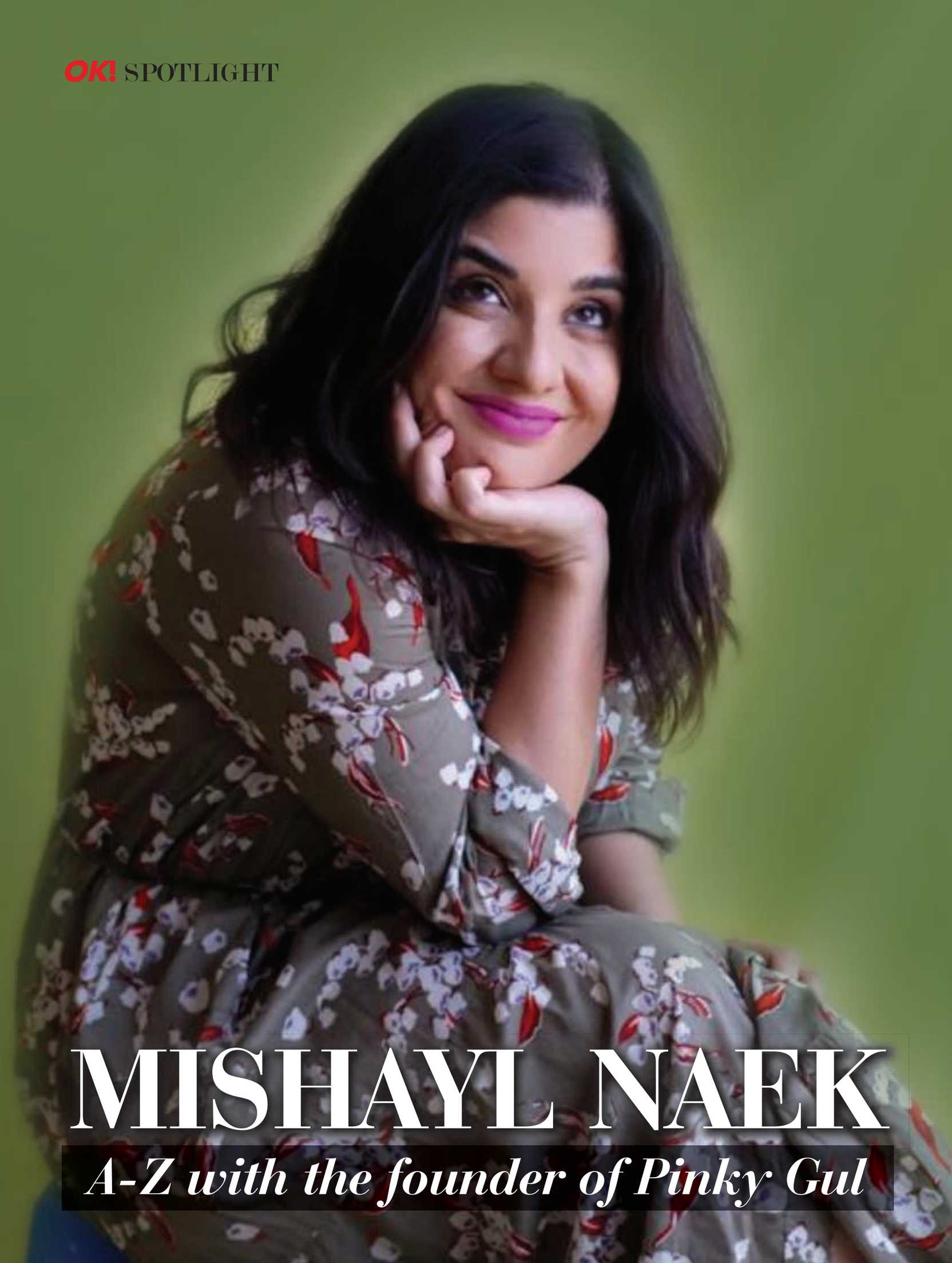
This book is the perfect read for Ramzan as it draws upon secrets from the Quran while exploring ancient mystical poetry and stories from prophets and spiritual masters that will help strengthen one's spiritual connection and reawaken faith. The core belief of the book is that all individuals are deeply loved by the Divine (God).



TV SHOW

ALCHEMY OF SOULS

Despite being from 2022, this Korean TV show is worth a mention with an IMDb rating of 8.8, the show will have you hooked. *Alchemy of Souls* is a 30-episode drama about soul swapping magic that will keep you at the edge of your seat one minute and laughing the next. Romance, suspense and action, the series has it all and reminds us of a grown up version of *Harry Potter*.



MISHAYL NAEK

A-Z with the founder of Pinky Gul



Mishayl Naek set up Pakistan's first Facebook mummy group - Yummy Mummy Network, which serves as a safe haven for thousands of women. Later, she went on to create Pinky Gul - a safe space for Pakistani women to work, shop, and network. Here, she shares her journey with *OK*! Pakistan

What was the inspiration behind Pinky Gul? What made you realize you needed a space for women?

Mishayl Naek: Pinky Gul was created as a safe space for Pakistani women to work, shop and network. In 2019 I had started a female centric co-working office, but quickly realised women need much more than a working environment; they need a safe community space. The inspiration was a multi-purpose space that could evolve with the changing needs of Pakistani women.

Hence I started Pinky Gul, which is a women-centric community space or what is now referred to as third spaces. Third spaces are locations where a community can exchange ideas, enjoy themselves and build relationships.

As Pakistanis, particularly women, are drifting further into social siloes, we at Pinky Gul are working towards providing a vital Third Space for women to connect, learn and grow.

How has been your experience so far?

MN: The experience has been incredible with regards to meeting different women from all communities and hosting incredible events. We faced a lot of difficulties with Covid, but worked hard to overcome. We're currently refurbishing our space to create a new environment and services.

What requirements do you have for your retail side?

MN: Our retail side is curated by me and I personally meet and evaluate every product that goes into the shop. I ask myself "would I like this in my life?" and if it fits then we stock. We're constantly changing the curation so we can feature different brands and offer our customers something new everytime. I'm also very price conscious so that anyone who comes to the shop can treat themselves.

> "...Women need much more than a working environment; they need a safe community space."

How do you juggle between Yummy Mummy Network (YMN) and Pinky Gul?

MN: YMN is an online space and after 10 years it self manages quite a bit. Since it isn't monetised and is a community group it really relies on the members to function. Also there are a lot of cross overs with retailers, events and visitors so they both feed off each other.

A work space away from home seems to be the need of the hour - how has the response been?

MN: The work space is open and free to anyone to use but we also offer a variety of packages for private events and meetings. I love how both, professionals and students enjoy our peaceful upstairs. However, it wasn't as frequented as I would have liked hence we are taking a new approach.

How would you say Pinky Gul is different from other places like this?

MN: I truly feel Pinky Gul is unique in what we offer so it's hard to compare, but if I had to then I would say the care and attention we give is particular to Pinky Gul. The staff and I work very hard to make sure everyone who comes feels attended to since it's a privilege to have them visit us. We always make sure they leave with a smile on their faces.

How did you come up with the name?

MN: So why is it called Pinky Gul? The name is inspired by my parents, whose nicknames are Pinky (Farzhana Naek) and Gul (Farooq Naek). ▶



that's like asking which daughter I love most!

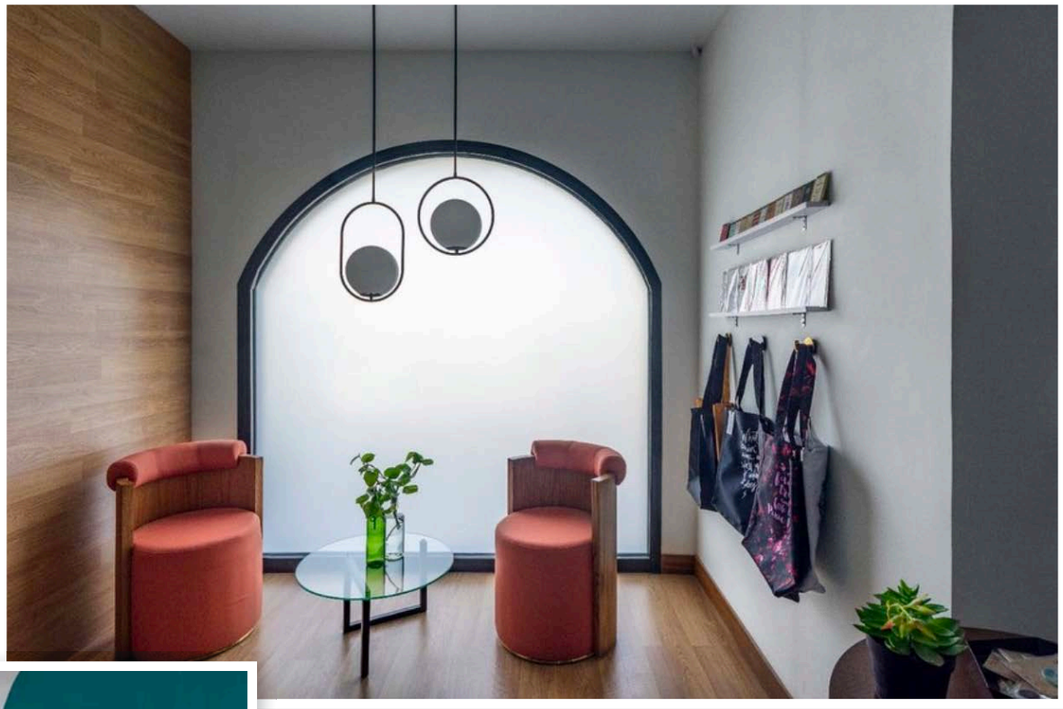
Whats next for Pinky Gul?
MN: I'm sure you've picked up some hints in the responses before but yes - we're having a makeover at Pinky Gul. Our downstairs retail space will remain the same with incredible women led brands, but our upstairs space is getting refurbished for a new, fun service. I like to always evolve and change as per the customers' needs so that the space stays current and fresh. Stay tuned for our new space offering in 2023!

Ideal travel destination?
MN: Right now I'm dreaming of either the mountains up north or massages and beaches in Thailand.

Favourite local brand?
MN: I love all the brands that we stock at Pinky Gul! I have each and everyone of them at home.

Can you tell us about some of your favourite projects?
MN: Choosing a favourite project is hard! But I would say the food pop ups with Curated Plate, the interior pop ups and also our art shows with students.

Can you walk us through a day at Pinky Gul?
MN: A day at Pinky Gul is always balanced with my family life - I have two kids (a precocious 10 year old and a new born). I timed the rennovations with the birth of my second baby so I could get some time in with her and take my own time redoing the space. My day starts early with them at 6 am and then post school drop-off and the baby's nap, I try and swing by Pinky Gul to meet the staff and check on the site, upload on social media and do an overall check of the store. I used to like to stay on and meet customers and clients before the school pick up and look forward to continuing that once we reopen in 2023. Afterwards I'm at home in Mom Mode getting homework done and dinner started as





my husband and I enjoy cooking together. If I can, I try and swing by in the evening otherwise the staff handles closing. I answer all the Instagram messages myself to make sure customers and interested parties are getting the best responses possible and it keeps me updated with how people are responding to the space.

What are your core responsibilities?
MN: My core responsibilities are the events, retail and marketing. I have an amazing team for operations allowing me to handle the more creative angles.

Idea behind the interiors?
MN: The interior was very thoughtfully done to celebrate Pakistani craftsmanship while maintaining my love for all things feminine. For example, for the flooring we sourced a retired terrazzo tiler and had it done via the traditional method versus laying ready-made tiles. The mural concept was the artist's nani's garden, so all the florals are indigenous to Pakistan.

YMN or Pinky Gul, if you had to pick one?
MN: I can't pick between YMN and Pinky Gul -

Tea or coffee?
MN: Coffee - cold, hot, blended! Coffee is my therapy.

One thing you can't live without?
MN: I can't live without my family and my quiet, uninterrupted bowl of sugary cereal at night after everyone's gone to bed. If you ask my 10 year old, she would say I can't live without Instagram.

Describe yourself in three words.
MN: I would like to imagine myself to be funny, kind and generous.

Last book you read?
MN: I love my kindle and it really comes in handy during the late night feeding sessions. I just finished *What Happened To The Bennetts*, which was a quick easy read. I'm currently reading *The Last Thing He Told Me*, which I'd prefer to recommend. I'm also (re) reading *The Witches* with my daughter. OK!

INTERVIEW: MEHR KASSIM
PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MISHAYL NAEK

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THE GOOD LIFE

BOOST YOUR LONGEVITY AND WELLBEING WITH DELICIOUSLY NUTRITIOUS RECIPES INSPIRED BY THE FOOD OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Quinoa porridge with berries and Brazil nuts



SERVES 2

INGREDIENTS

- 250ml almond milk, plus extra if desired
- 100g quinoa, rinsed
- 1 tsp honey
- 3 tbsp fresh or frozen mixed berries
- 1 tbsp Brazil nuts, roughly chopped

1. Warm ⅔ of the almond milk in a saucepan over a medium heat, then add the quinoa. Stir well.
2. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 15 minutes, stirring, or until all the liquid is absorbed.
3. Remove the quinoa porridge from the heat and stir in the honey and berries. Divide between two bowls.
4. Scatter over the chopped nuts. Pour an extra 2 or 3 tablespoons of almond milk over each serving if you prefer a thinner consistency. Serve.

Greek-style fritters



MAKES 8

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large courgette
- 1 tbsp chopped dill
- Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1 large free-range egg
- 50g self-raising flour
- 40g feta or mozzarella cheese
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Salad of lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and peppers, and tzatziki, to serve

1. Grate the courgette into a sieve. Press with the back of a spoon to remove the moisture.
2. Put the courgette into a medium-sized bowl. Add the dill, lemon zest and egg and mix well, then add the flour and stir to combine.
3. Add the feta or mozzarella cheese and mix again.
4. Heat a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and add the olive oil.
5. Spoon 1½ tablespoons of the mixture into the pan to make individual fritters.
6. Fry for 3 minutes on each side, or until golden brown. Drizzle on the lemon juice.
7. You may need to fry the fritters in batches. Serve with a salad of lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and peppers, and tzatziki for dipping. ▷



Grilled sardines with orange, garlic and Spanish paprika

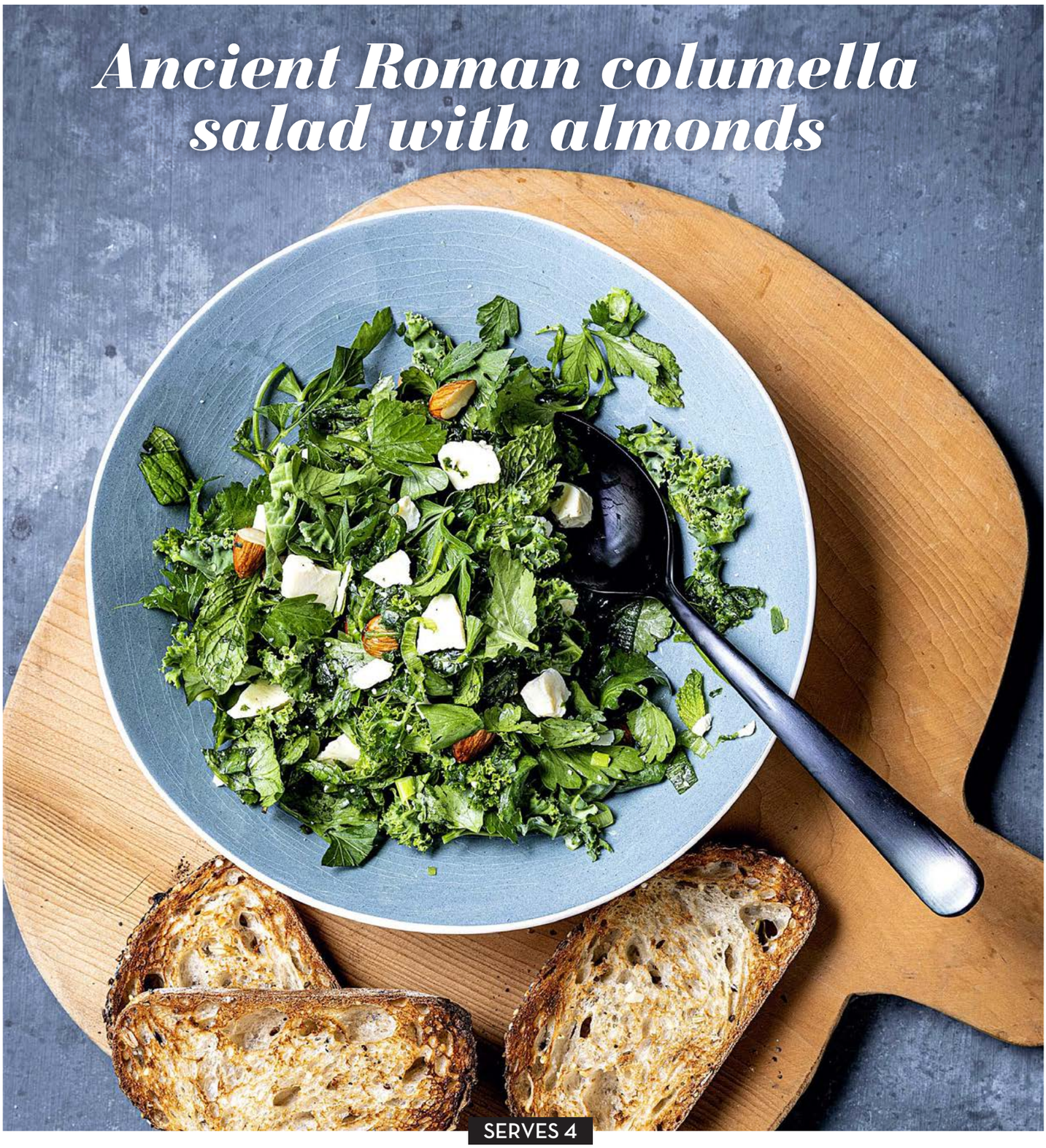
SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 60ml fresh orange juice
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tsp smoked red paprika
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- ¼ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 12 fresh sardines, cleaned and gutted
- Salt, to taste
- 3 tbsp flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Salad of lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and peppers, to serve

1. Combine the orange juice, garlic, paprika and spices in a large bowl and whisk well.
2. Place the sardines in the marinade, turning the fish to ensure they are evenly coated.
3. Cover and set aside to marinate in the fridge for 30 minutes.
4. Remove the sardines from the marinade.
5. Heat a griddle pan, or a barbecue griddle plate, and cook the sardines on one side for 2-3 minutes.
6. Turn the fish over and fry for a further 1-2 minutes, or until they are cooked through.
7. Transfer the sardines to a platter, season with salt and sprinkle with the chopped parsley.
8. Serve with a salad of lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and peppers.

Ancient Roman columella salad with almonds



SERVES 4

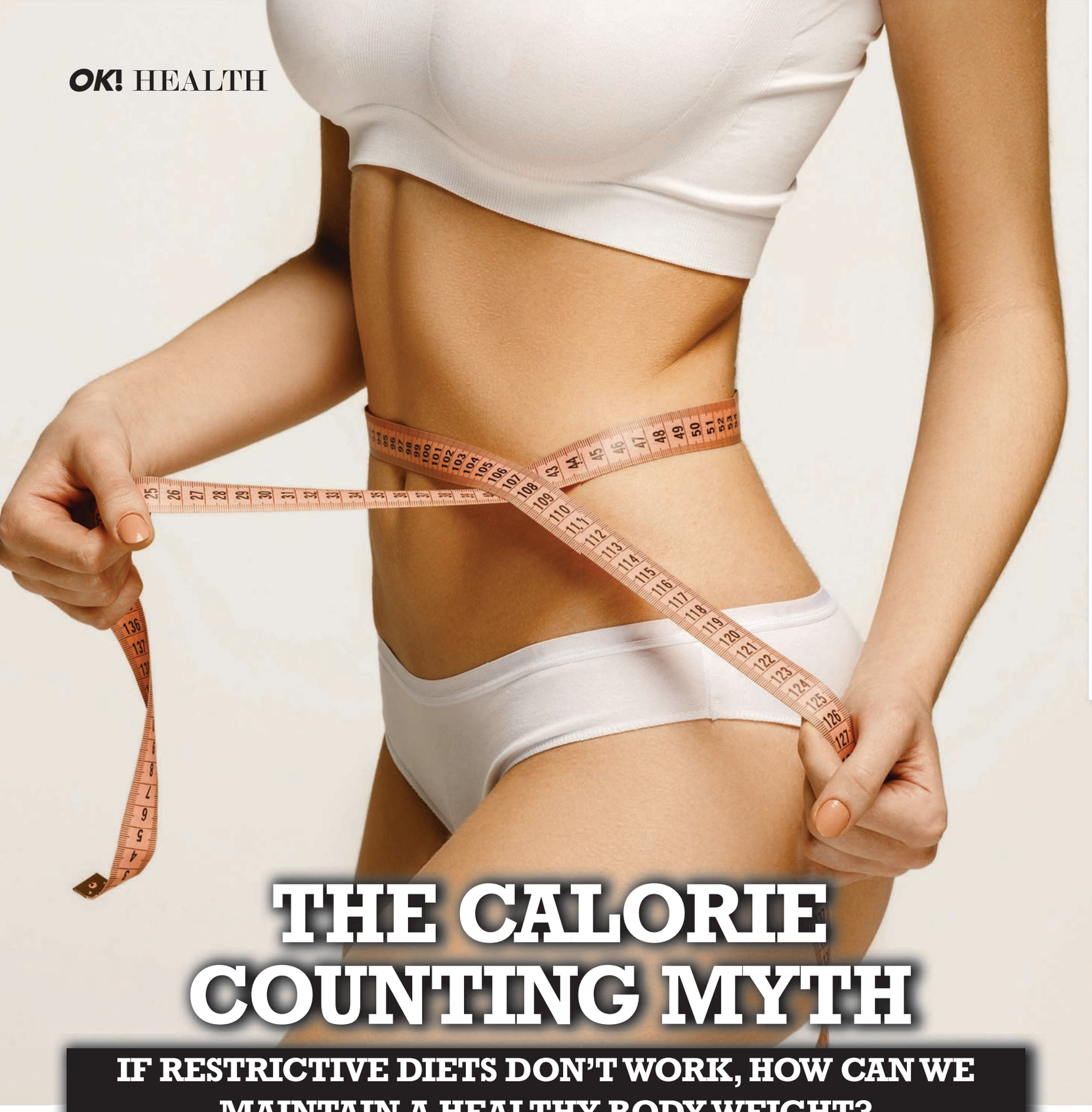
INGREDIENTS

- 120g rocket
- 120g curly endive leaves
- 2 spring onions or 1 small leek, sliced
- 3 kale or chicory leaves, stems discarded
- 10 mint leaves, chopped
- 2 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 tsp chopped coriander
- 1 tsp thyme leaves
- 75g salted ricotta, crumbled
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 10 almonds, coarsely chopped
- Olives and toasted sourdough bread, to serve

1. Put the rocket, endive, spring onions (or leek) and kale in a mortar and roughly pound with the pestle. Alternatively, process them roughly in a food processor.
2. Place the greens in a bowl, then add the fresh herbs and salted ricotta. Mix well to combine.
3. Stir in the vinegar and season with salt and pepper.
4. Place the mixture on a serving plate and drizzle with the olive oil. Top with the almonds and serve with olives and slices of toasted sourdough bread. OK!



RECIPES FROM *MANUAL OF HEALTHY LONGEVITY AND WELLBEING* BY LUIGI FONTANA (HARDIE GRANT, £18.99), PHOTOGRAPHY © BONNIE SAVAGE



THE CALORIE COUNTING MYTH

IF RESTRICTIVE DIETS DON'T WORK, HOW CAN WE MAINTAIN A HEALTHY BODY WEIGHT?

We're all familiar with the idea of counting calories. In fact, four in 10 of us are obsessed with it.* It's science, isn't it? Eat more calories than you burn = gain weight. Burn more than you eat = lose weight.

So why is it hard to shift the pounds? And what if science has got it wrong? Those are the questions London UCH bariatric surgeon Andrew Jenkinson has asked during his studies of 2,000 obese people.

"I was intrigued why someone would want me to remove their stomach rather than go on a diet. How could it be so difficult?" says Dr Jenkinson. "It got me thinking that maybe we had this wrong, that diets aren't as simple as calories in and calories out; that there are other things going on with our metabolism."

The good news is he has proved restrictive diets don't work. Even better, he knows how we can lose weight for good. But we need to understand the reasons before fixing the problem. So here comes the science bit in three simple steps...

Wise up on your hormone signals

Never heard of leptin? It's the reason you're



not losing weight. Leptin is a hormone that comes from fat cells and is released into the bloodstream. The more fat cells you have, the more leptin.

"The hypothalamus, the part of your brain that controls your appetite and metabolism, reads the amount of leptin in your blood and determines whether you've got enough energy. If it thinks you've got too much, it will lessen your appetite and metabolism to stop you gaining too much weight. If your leptin signal is low, it senses you don't have enough fat and will make you want to eat and rest," says Dr Jenkinson.

The trouble is, for many of us – as much of half the population, he reckons – the leptin signalling system simply isn't working. "Sugar and refined carbs, and too much regular snacking, mean insulin levels are high," he says. "This insulin blocks the leptin so your brain can't see it. If you're overweight, your leptin signal will be really high but your brain will detect low leptin levels."

He likens this to the petrol gauge on a car breaking. "Imagine you're driving and the petrol looks low. So you slow down to conserve fuel and then fill up. However, the car was actually already full – the petrol gauge was simply faulty."

Get to know your 'weight set point'

Dr Jenkinson believes everyone has a "weight set point" – the weight your body wants to maintain. It will adapt to periods of more or less food to keep your weight stable. That's why you might lose weight when you first start dieting, but then it stops.

"Our bodies are good at adapting. That's why restrictive diets are counterproductive. Ultimately, you can end up even heavier because the body wants more energy insurance in case there's another diet on the horizon," he says. "Think of your weight set point like an anchor on an elasticated rope. The further you try and move away from the anchor on a diet, the stronger the pullback. Starving yourself won't help because you'll put the weight back on – and usually increase it."

Weight set points are controlled by genes and environment – food, stress and sleep. What you need to do, says Dr Jenkinson, is to "move the anchor from overweight waters and put it back down in normal waters. And the only way to do that is by making long-term changes to your diet and lifestyle."



Switch your food and lifestyle choices

"Don't go on a diet. Look at the types of food you're eating and what they're doing to your body to reset your weight set point and fix leptin signals," advises Dr Jenkinson.

"If you change those foods, you can lose weight forever, rather than make things worse."



Reduce: Sugar and refined carbohydrates, fructose (found in fruit and honey) and vegetable oils. Sugary foods, like cakes and biscuits, and fructose directly block leptin. Vegetable oils have an inflammatory effect, which increases insulin and impacts on leptin signals.

Increase: Meat, fish, vegetables and dairy products, and cook in olive oil. Eat more saturated fat and protein and you won't be hungry. Sleep and stress are key, Dr Jenkinson says. "Being tired or stressed raises cortisol, making you hungry. It also increases insulin which causes leptin resistance." OK!

WORDS: LARA KILNER
PHOTOS: GETTY



CHICAGO CALLING

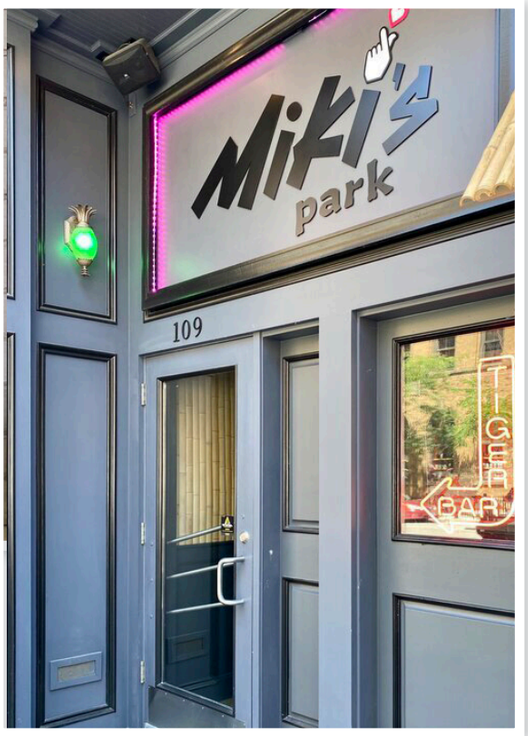
Model Sarah Zulfiqar shares details of her recent trip to the Windy City

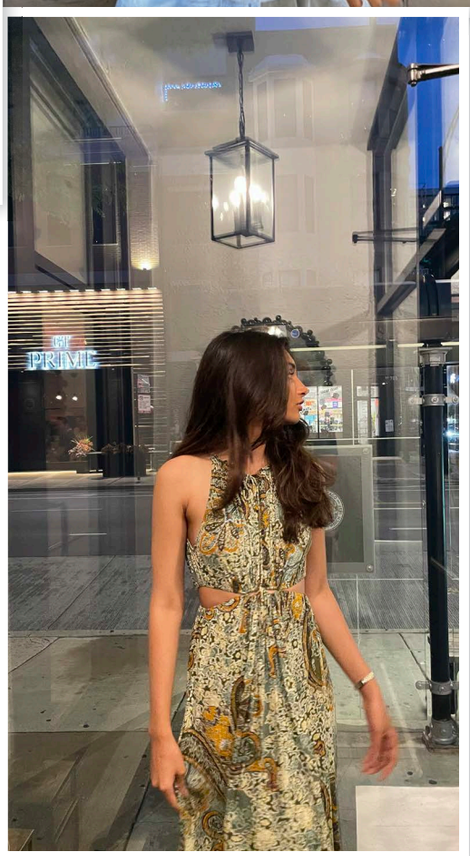












Where did you go?
Sarah Zulfiqar: Chicago, USA.

Why Chicago?
SZ: It's one of my favourite cities in the world.

What did you pack?
SZ: Lots of pairs of jeans, my favourite sweaters and comfortable shoes.

What was favourite meal/restaurant?
SZ: Rose Mary - the Italian-Croatian fusion cuisine is to die for.

What was the biggest highlight of your trip/ most memorable moment?
SZ: Seeing the Berlin Philharmonic orchestra, visiting my favourite exhibit at the Art Institute and going to my first opera.

Favourite shopping destination?
SZ: Wicker Park has a ton of really cool indie and thrift stores. I'm officially obsessed with Japanese denim.

Some sights worth seeing?
SZ: The Museum of Contemporary Art

and the Architectural cruise on the river!

What are some spots for a night out
SZ: Miki's Park, the Gilt Bar and Joy District are amazing.

Travel essentials?
SZ: My Kiehl's moisturiser, lip balm by Summer Fridays and sunscreen by Supergoop! Tried and tested.

Any travel tips you would like to share?
SZ: Don't be afraid to experiment with food, wear comfortable shoes and break away from shopping at Zara etc. - look at brands and stores you've never heard of before. Travelling gives you the opportunity to explore new places and try new things - take advantage of it! OK!

TEXT: MEHR KASSIM
PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF SARAH ZULFIQAR

GREAT GRENADA

FEAST ALL OF YOUR SENSES ON THIS SMALL BUT PERFECTLY FORMED CARIBBEAN GEM

WHY CHOOSE GRENADA?

Less flashy than its neighbours Barbados and Saint Lucia, the small island of Grenada is a gorgeous green gem, offering rainforests, waterfalls and white sands. Nicknamed the Spice Island due to its long history producing the world's finest nutmeg, the locals are as warm as the climate and it has the lowest crime rate in the Caribbean.

The capital of Saint George's boasts a picturesque muddle of pastel-coloured buildings and a busy fishing harbour. There's only one touristy resort on the low-key island – Grand Anse beach, which features a smattering of low-rise hotels and the Grand Anse Craft And Spice Market. Bartering here is very simple, with English the official language and US dollars widely accepted. Oh, and they drive on the left, too!







WHERE TO STAY

Sandals' all-inclusive, adults-only resort, set on the private Pink Gin Beach, has 257 rooms across four villages. Our huge Skypool Suite had a lounge, dining room, kitchen, bathroom and bedroom, plus our own infinity pool on the balcony. A personal butler and free bar added to the luxury feel.

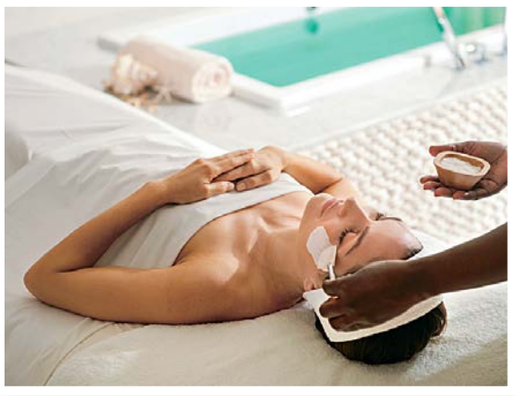
Other options include the Rondoval thatched cottages, swim-up suites and honeymoon hideaways. There are six bars and 10 world-class restaurants but our fave on location alone was Mediterranean seafood joint Neptune's, overlooking the beach. A light seafood salad and ice-cold rum punch hit the spot before heading back to our sun loungers.

Le Jardinier is more dressy but delivers delicious French cuisine, while Spices serves up stunning local delicacies. Try the "national dish" of Oil Down – a stew of coconut milk, breadfruit, dumplings, taro leaves and salted beef or fish. Callaloo soup (made from a leafy cabbage-like vegetable) is also popular, as are rotis. Every morsel comes infused with the local nutmeg, from your porridge to your ice cream – and even the rum.



CHILLS AND THRILLS

The tranquil Red Lane Spa at Sandals Grenada offers Caribbean-inspired beauty treatments and massages using natural regional products. The range includes the Night Blooming Jasmine Massage, tailored for couples and available after hours, plus the Youthful Radiance facial, which uses the "power of island botanicals". There's also a gym, tennis courts, fitness sessions and free watersports.



It would be a sin to miss the beautiful scenery though, courtesy of Island Routes, which is based on site. With our tight schedule, it organised a bespoke trip and for five hours we explored mountain roads, stopping to taste the sweet seeds of a freshly picked cocoa pod before driving to the highest point of Mount St Catherine through scenery out of a Jurassic Park flick!

Grenada is famous for its waterfalls, too. Concord and Mont Carmel cascade from 50ft-plus drops but Annandale Falls was our favourite – you can walk behind the sheet of water.

INSIDER TIPS

Sandals is licensed to hold weddings, so there are some idyllic packages. And once the island's romance has worked its magic, mums-to-be can book a babymoon spa experience!

The quietest time to visit is the summer but that's also the rainy season (June-November). The island enjoys a hot, tropical climate year-round, with average 29°C temperatures soothed by cooling trade winds, and rarely gets hit by hurricanes – with only four since records began.

We recommend a guided tasting tour of the rum distilleries (Quang rum is the traditional brand) – go with Routes, which also offers tea and spice plantation tours.

Want to eat out in Saint George's town? Sandals will organise a taxi for the 15-minute trip there. Be sure to sample the fresh catch of the day at BBs Crabback on the Carenage (harbour front). Other musts are the collapsed volcano crater of Grand Etang lake, a snorkelling trip to the underwater sculpture park (the only one in the Caribbean) and a romantic sunset cruise. OK!

WORDS: DAWN NEESOM
PHOTOS: GETTY

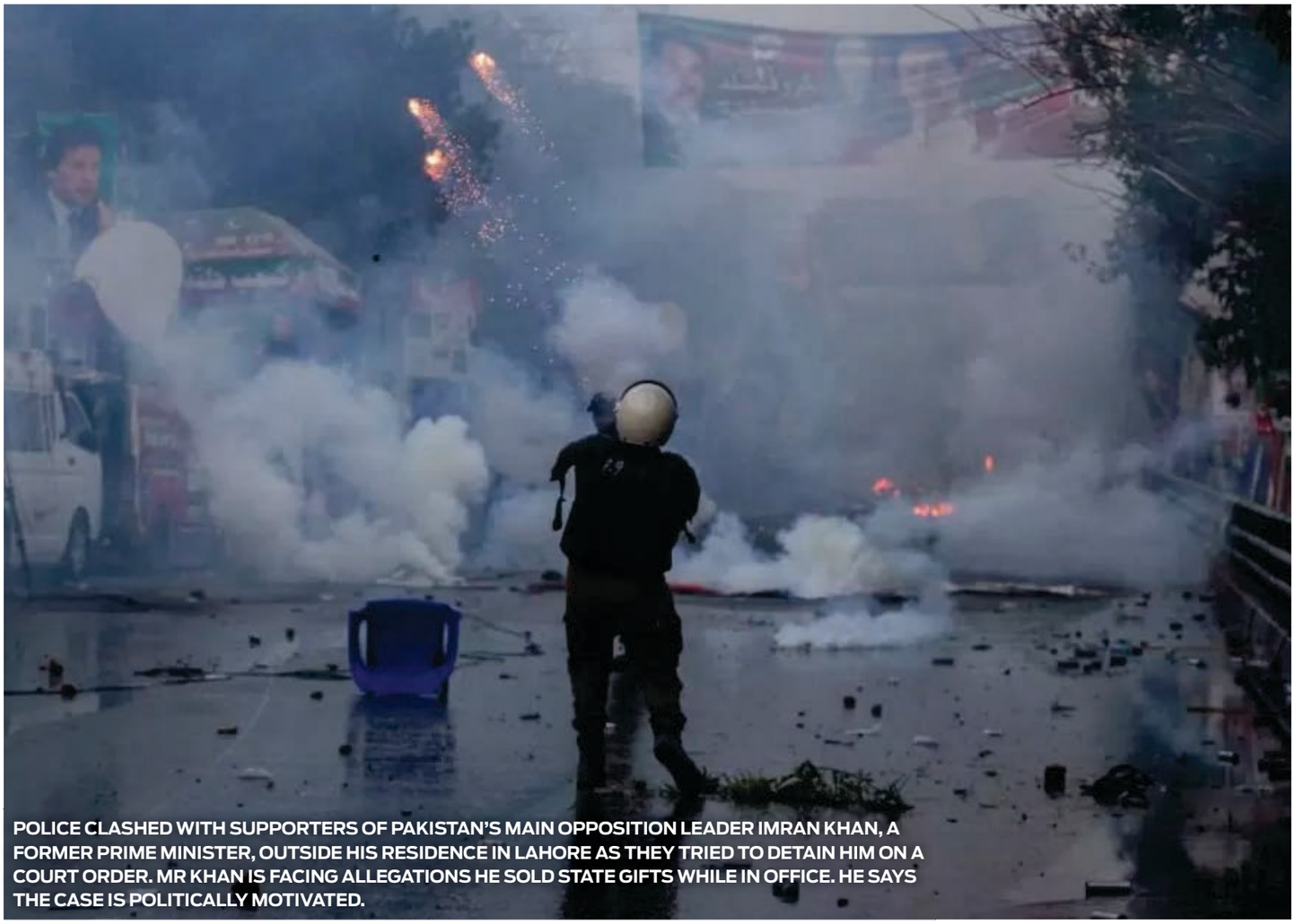
OK! WORLD IN ACTION



KE HUY QUAN, WINNER OF THIS YEAR'S BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR AWARD AT THE OSCARS, POPPED OUT BEHIND BEST ACTOR WINNER BRENDAN FRASER, WHO WAS POSING WITH HIS PRIZE, FLANKED BY HIS SONS LELAND AND HOLDEN AT THE 95TH ACADEMY AWARDS IN HOLLYWOOD.



REVELLERS STAINED WITH COLOURED POWDER CHEER DURING THE HOLI FESTIVAL CELEBRATIONS IN CHENNAI, INDIA.



POLICE CLASHED WITH SUPPORTERS OF PAKISTAN'S MAIN OPPOSITION LEADER IMRAN KHAN, A FORMER PRIME MINISTER, OUTSIDE HIS RESIDENCE IN LAHORE AS THEY TRIED TO DETAIN HIM ON A COURT ORDER. MR KHAN IS FACING ALLEGATIONS HE SOLD STATE GIFTS WHILE IN OFFICE. HE SAYS THE CASE IS POLITICALLY MOTIVATED.



THE NORTHERN LIGHTS ILLUMINATE THE SKY OVER HORNBAEK BEACH IN DENMARK. THE LIGHTS COULD BE SEEN MUCH FURTHER SOUTH THAN USUAL.

PHOTOGRAPHS: MINDY SMALL/GETTY IMAGES, NBC, SHUTTERSTOCK

HOROSCOPE & TAROT

IT'S WRITTEN IN THE STARS!

CAPRICORN



Dec 22 – Jan 20

You will be right on the money as far as your professional goals are concerned. However, guard against unwanted aggression as it can cause some sparks in your personal life. This is a good time to purchase a new property or spend on household work. Avoid intake of spicy and acidic food.

TAURUS



Apr 21 – May 21

There could be some unfavourable developments at the workplace which can lead to a transfer or relocation for some. Your love life will remain moderate and relations with your beloved can be somewhat strained. Take care of your father's health and stay on your guard.

VIRGO



Aug 24 – Sep 23

There can be an increase in your expenses this month and you may need adequate financial planning to avoid going overboard. Nonetheless, you are likely to receive incentives and perks at the work front. Don't react when it comes to handling personal relationships. Maintain a regular workout routine.

SAGITTARIUS



Nov 23 – Dec 21

You need to be wary of your competitors as they can try to damage your image. Be careful while signing official documents as well as your conduct with female employees. Refrain from speaking ill against anyone and do not participate in office gossip. Your spouse can face some health issues.

AQUARIUS



Jan 21 – Feb 19

You are likely to remain prone to minor injuries, hence adequate precautions are advised. Some unforeseen expenditure is likely to come up that can cause undue stress. Maintain your calm. Some of you can find a new job opportunity. Those aspiring to relocate or travel abroad will be successful.

GEMINI



May 22 – Jun 21

Your financial situation will stabilise and you will feel mentally secure. But avoid quirky investments and focus on long-term options. Some new challenges can crop up in your job and you could be given some additional work outside your domain. Some of you are prone to litigation, so plan in advance. Avoid being rude with your love partner.

LIBRA



Sep 24 – Oct 23

You will be required to take on additional workload which can spoil your pre-existing commitments with the family. It will bear fruit as you will be adequately rewarded by your seniors. This is a favourable time to invest in property or shift to a new house. Take care of your mother's health. Watch out for eye-related ailments.

PISCES



Feb 20 – Mar 20

You can step into a new role which will give you more power and authority to take decisions. Those in business are likely to crack new financial deals. Those who are single are likely to find a compatible partner. Family environment will remain blissful and some of you can expect a new addition to the family.

CANCER



Jun 22 – Jul 23

Keep your calm at the workplace and avoid getting into unproductive conversations. Those in business should avoid starting something new. Don't impose yourself on others as it will cause resentment. Singles will find a new spark in their love life. Guard against stomach issues.

SCORPIO



Oct 24 – Nov 22

You will be high on energy and will stay motivated to achieve your goals. A short journey is likely for professional reasons which will turn out to be productive. Investments done in the past will now start showing positive signals. Your younger siblings will prove lucky for you. You are likely to recover from any ongoing health issue.

ARIES



Mar 21 – Apr 20

You will be successful on the career front and will face every challenge effectively. Some people at the workplace may conspire against you but they won't be able to do any damage. Avoid making any risky financial investment during and stick to your budget. Those married can plan to expand their family. Avoid overexertion and fatigue.

LEO



Jul 24 – Aug 23

You will find yourself in a competitive environment. You will have to work hard to get whatever you want. But professionally this is an auspicious phase as you could be considered for a new role in your organisation. Those involved in legal issues can face some stress. You can purchase an electronic item for the family. Plan a doctor's visit.



SHAHID AFRIDI
MARCH 1, 1977



JESSICA BIEL
MARCH 3, 1982

CREDIT: NEERAJ DHANKHER; PHOTOGRAPHS: SHUTTERSTOCK, WEEN

MORE INSIGHTS LESS CATFIGHTS
MORE GLAMOUR LESS DRAMA



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