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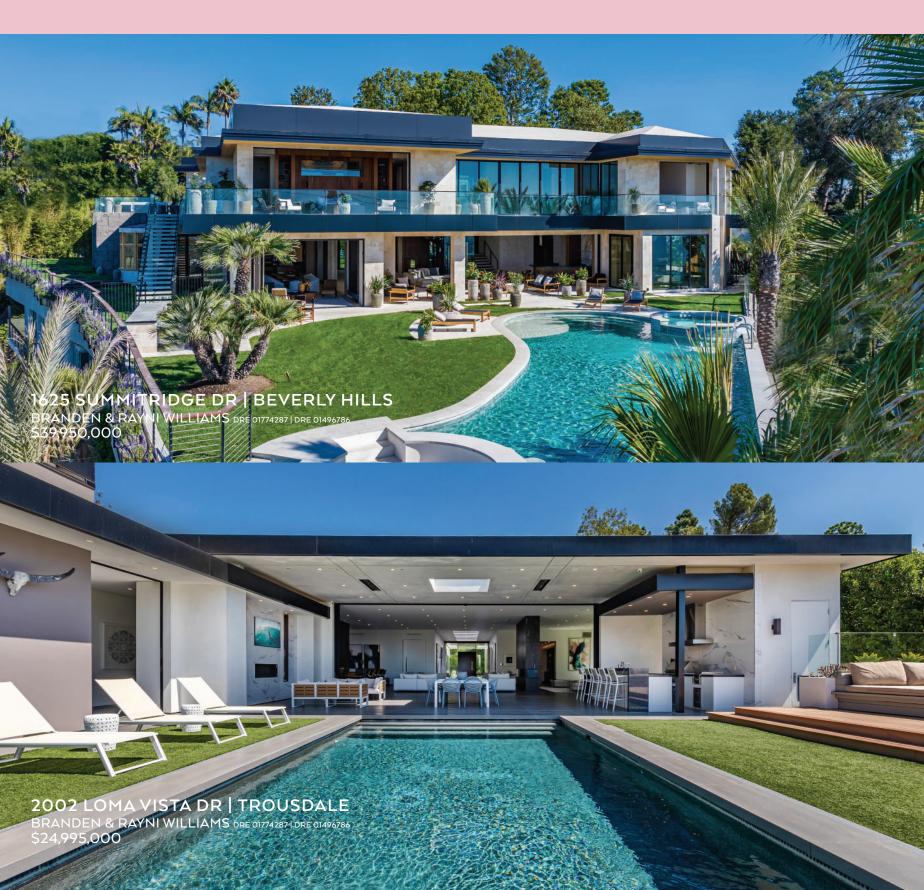




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LISA FRIEDMAN BLOCH

JOHN BENDHEIM

T's that time of year when our world-famous city begins to transform, radiating its holiday glow with a dazzling display of lights and festivities. It's also a time to celebrate many of the qualities unique to Beverly Hills. In this issue we highlight our city's inimitable trendsetting style, particularly as it intersects with the festive, family and friends' energy present in our community, especially during the holidays.

Thinking about entertaining? Exquisite private dining venues are popping up, creating the latest dinner party experiences. Read more in "Private Rooms for Holiday Events in Beverly Hills." Want to look your best as a host or a guest at upcoming holiday celebrations? Find out about the latest beauty breakthroughs in "Get Holiday-Ready with These New Beauty Offerings in Beverly Hills." Wondering what to wear to look and feel sensational, and right on trend? "The Stylists Shaping Beverly Hills" features insights from the leading stylists who dress the rich, famous and those in the public eye. Their advice covers what to buy this gifting season.

Seeking what's trending in film this holiday season? Learn about upcoming blockbusters, movies and streaming projects in "Fall/Winter Film Previews." Considering trendy facial interventions, but don't know if it's too early? Top plastic surgeons in Beverly Hills weigh in on the younger generations in "The Rise of Baby Botox in Beverly Hills."

Enticed by the idea of an indulgent holiday tea? This longstanding tradition is in the spotlight with some trendy twists. Don't miss the spectacular afternoon teas highlighted in "Celebrate the Holidays at the Finest Afternoon Teas in Town."

For our cover feature, we proudly present the incomparable queen of the court in "Candace Parker-Powering Forward." Discover how this global superstar and dynamic trendsetter earned GOAT status while breaking down barriers, focusing on family and advocating for equality. Enjoy a sneak peek of what's next for her.

A big thank you to my partner, John, who arranged our exclusive cover feature with his dear friend, Candace. Thank you, Candace, for sharing your inspirational story. To our phenomenal local, national and global advertisers who continue to support the Courier's publications each week and the quarterly magazines throughout the year, we thank you.

John and I and the entire Courier team wish you great health, happiness, peace and prosperity. May you enjoy many reasons to celebrate in Beverly Hills during the holidays and throughout the new year.

LISA FRIEDMAN BLOCH, PUBLISHER AND WRITER

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### Private Rooms for Holiday Events in Beverly Hills

BY CAROLE DIXON



STELLA UPPER LEVEL TOSCANA DINING ROOM PHOTO BY JEFFREY CHAN

hether you are looking for an intimate family gathering or entertaining your whole office, we've compiled the best options around Beverly Hills for booking a private dining room this holiday season—and also gathered a few tips from top florists and event gurus around town.

While most of these locations are stylishly decorated already, the right floral arrangements are key, and the first step, to setting the right tone for your gathering. The Hidden Garden is the in-house florist for many Beverly Hills institutions from the Beverly Wilshire, a Four Seasons Hotel, the Beverly Hills Hotel, the Maybourne Beverly Hills, the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills and restaurants such as Il Pastaio.

The Courier spoke with Amy Marella, founder and CEO of the Hidden Garden, who advised letting the floral designer utilize what is best in season at the time of the dinner party. "If you don't have a set color scheme for the table asking, 'What looks best from Mother Nature today?' It allows us to design something that might be uniquely in bloom that week."

Known for larger-scale events, weddings and bat mitzvahs for over 30 years, the Empty Vase on Doheny Drive and Santa Monica Boulevard is doing more smaller-scale events in private rooms. The family-owned business counts e. baldi Ristorante, Cecconi's (which has a private space with a Damien Hirst painting) and Stella among its regular clients.

"We work with so many places on a regular basis that we know what

would suit the space and work with the decor, color scheme and style of the room so it's not a blank canvas," Manager-Designer of the Empty Vase Avva Babaeean told the Courier.

A few things to consider from both florists are the shape and style of table, side tables, and how they will be used, such as a coursed-out meal, allowing for a more elaborate floral arrangement, or family style, which offers less room. In some cases, gifts for the guests are provided from a rosebud vase on each place setting to guest chocolates or napkin rings to take home.

According to fine linen stylist and owner of E. Braun & Co. on Robertson Boulevard, Liz Barbatelli, the ambiance you create is very important and integral to your success. "From the linens, the room decor and ambiance, the flowers, candles, dinnerware, cutlery and other necessary accouterment set the tone. Every detail should be planned and thought through in advance."

Barbatelli, who works with many local restaurants and hotels, advised on a few things to look out for when planning a private soiree. First of all, "Avoid a restaurant in which you have never dined, and one that will not give you firm pricing. Also, make sure they have a special event coordinator that you can work with, and be sure they will let you bring in anything that you feel is missing or important for your event. You want a collaborative experience that creates an extraordinary event with an artful, inspired and thoughtful approach."

#### THE VENUES

#### E. BALDI RISTORANTE

The Aperitivo Lounge on Brighton Way, which is the new addition to e. baldi Ristorante, features a stylish private dining room behind a curtain. This space can seat 49 people with different table configurations from smaller round tables to a long communal setting, or intimate parties of 10. For a corporate meeting, there is a flat-screen for presentations, but the main use so far has been for celebrations and celebrity parties. You will also have menu options from beloved chef Baldi for "Tuscan food with an accent of Emilia-Romagna," and they offer a range of price points. privateroom@ebaldi.com



THE PRIVATE DINING ROOM AT E. BALDI PHOTO COURTESY OF E. BALDI RISTORANTE

#### NOVIKOV

Mediterranean newcomer Novikov has a private dining room that seats 16 at a gorgeous oval table. The space is adorned with a chandelier, greenery, a large mirror and a modern abstract painting, creating a homey atmosphere. The enclosed, glass-walled space provides a view of the dining action, yet with some privacy. You can also book the side or front patio, which holds about 25 in each space. A set menu is required for prix fixe or family-style service. The food and beverage minimum is \$2,500. To book, call 310-300-0090.



STEAK 48 DINING ROOM PHOTO BY WONHO FRANK LEE

#### **STEAK 48**

For a large variety of room options, Steak 48 offers a sophisticated setting, equipped with television screen capabilities. The Wine Room accommodates groups of up to 24 with sliding doors and views of the lounge. For more privacy, the Canon Room is closest in proximity to the front door and seats up to 30 guests with a variety of table configurations and dedicated volume controls for music to set the right tone for the evening.

For true gourmands who want a glimpse of the kitchen action, book the Chef's Dining Room for a group of 34 or fewer. You will have the audio-visual capabilities, and can combine this space with the Cannon Room, for up to 65 guests. If you are planning a reception-style soiree, the Dominick Room setup includes a mix of high-top tables and booth seating for a maximum of 40 guests.

No matter which room you choose, prices start at just \$95 per person for a "city menu" with appetizers, entrees, sides and sweets, and up to higher price points for a "chef tasting." guestservicesbeverlyhills@ steak48.com



THE PRIVATE DINING ROOM AT NOVIKOV PHOTO COURTESY OF NOVIKOV

PRIVATE DINING CONTINUES ON PAGE 38

# The Stylists Shaping Beverly Hills

BY SELINA KAUSAR

In today's world, the term "influencer" is associated with hundreds of thousands if not millions of followers across social media. But in the fashion world, true influence comes from behind the scenes. Celebrity stylists shape the trends we will see everywhere this holiday season from the red carpet to intimate holiday gatherings.

Several of these top stylists call Beverly Hills their home and credit the city with influencing their outlook on fashion. We've chronicled their journeys to discover how these stylists are exerting their fashion influence through Beverly Hills and beyond. From bold statement pieces to effortlessly chic essentials, discover the creative forces shaping Beverly Hills fashion and their must-have style tips for the holidays.

#### **ANYA SARRE**

A celebrity stylist and TV fashion expert, Anya Sarre's love for fashion started at a young age. "It must have been innate," she told the Courier.

Born and raised in the Bay Area, Sarre moved to Los Angeles to attend the University of Southern California before earning her graduate degree from the Parsons School of Design. Since then, Sarre has become an internationally recognized fashion tastemaker, brand influencer and celebrity stylist. Through her business "Styled by Anya Inc.," Sarre has dressed some of the biggest names in the world for award shows such as the Emmys, Grammys, Golden Globes and Oscars, and features frequently as a style expert on KTLA5.

Sarre's influence on the style choices of others reaches far beyond social media. "It's no different whether you're influencing millions of people on TV every day, or just your neighbors–oftentimes people ask me where I got something, and to me, that suggests a certain level of influence," she noted.

It's this influence that shapes how Sarre styles her celebrity clients. "I look at each client like a blank slate, but I like to always keep things classic with a hint of trend," she said.

After decades in the fashion industry, Sarre developed a patented styling questionnaire, which means she can now dress people "sight unseen." Regardless of who she is styling, one thing remains the same: style is as much about the emotional as it is the physical.

"If you feel great, you look great, and if you look great, you feel great. So, it's really about me figuring out what makes people feel comfortable, and then dressing them based on that," she said.

One of the biggest challenges Sarre faces in her career is in styling a big event. She most recently styled for the Emmys and said clients are on "the quest for perfection," more than ever for a televised awards ceremony–a quest that often leads to them second-guessing if they've found the right outfit, with decisions not made until the last moment. "It's such a big decision. For some, this could be one of the biggest nights of their lives," Sarre said. "It's very different to styling someone for everyday looks."

It's these events that have some of the biggest names in Beverly Hills calling upon Sarre for her fashion influence and expertise. But beyond her strong client base, Beverly Hills has influenced Sarre's approach to fashion as much as she has influenced trends in the city.

For Sarre, Beverly Hills is incomparable to other fashion capitals like New York, Paris or London because it leads more on reputation rather than trend. "Beverly Hills is just the ultimate fashion destination," she said. "What makes it different than other fashion capitals is simple: it's iconic."

"There's no other city in the world that has as much brand recognition as Beverly Hills. There is so much significance behind what fashion in Beverly Hills means. It's a lot to live up to, but for me and my clients, it's always lived up to the expectation," she said.

The city's reputation as an iconic fashion destination is exactly why



ANYA SARRE PHOTO BY JESSICA CZARNECKI

Sarre chose to host her holiday shopping event at the Four Seasons Beverly Hills last year. It's an event for celebrities, VIPs and Sarre's most exclusive friends to do some holiday shopping and see the newest trends of the season. "It took months of planning and curation, but there is nowhere else I'd ever throw an event like this. It's Beverly Hills, always," Sarre said.

And when it comes to what's in style this holiday season, Sarre is conclusive. "White, white and white!"

"Doing a white, cream or winter-neutrals theme is the 'in' thing for the holidays this year. If you're attending a cocktail party or holiday event, show up in winter white neutrals. I guarantee you will look the chicest in the room," she said.

For this year, Sarre encourages clients to prioritize the emotional over the physical when it comes to gifting. "It's all about the experience rather than the tangible gift," Sarre said. "Gifting someone a meaningful experience means so much, especially in a city like Beverly Hills where so many of us already own so many physical items as is."

And Sarre shared some recommendations for those searching for last-minute holiday gift ideas.

"Head over to Kitson on Beverly Drive. You can always find a unique gift there, especially for the kids in your life. For the adults, you can't go wrong with an Erewhon gift card. I'd recommend Stefano Ricci for men; they make the best ties. And if you want to talk jewelry, I would race down to XIV Karats. They have every gift you could ever want for the holidays," Sarre said.



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## STYLE's Fall/Winter Film Preview

BY NEELY SWANSON



KRISTOFER HIVJU AND DWAYNE JOHNSON IN "RED ONE" PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANK MASI/PRIME

This fall has been a case of hope springing eternal. Summer releases revealed a dearth of product for mature adults although the box office showed promise with the extraordinary results of "Deadpool vs. Wolverine." That film accomplished two things of significance. First, it showed that there's still life in the Marvel Universe; and second, it successfully crossed demographic lines domestically and internationally. "Inside Out 2" was a major hit as well, and is, at present, the box office winner for 2024, further underscoring the fact that families do, indeed, go to the movies together and repeatedly. Both of those films joined the elite billion-dollar club. The 2023 writers' strike had an outsize effect on what was released this summer and early fall, but the sun is starting to peek from behind those clouds. There is a lot to look forward to in the coming months—the Oscar-qualifying months.

Many, if not most films that aim for an end-of-year release have Oscar aspirations. Although there have been many Oscar-quality films that opened earlier in the year, too many are forgotten when nominations come around; hence, the desire for a late fall opening. To qualify for an Oscar, films must have a run of seven days in a commercial theater in a qualifying U.S. metropolitan area. They may, however, open simultaneously in a theater and on a streaming network. A streaming release prior to commercial theatrical release disqualifies the film from Oscar consideration. More and more, stars have been demanding a theatrical release of their films, even if they are ultimately meant to be streamed.

Opening dates for the late fall were in constant flux as distributors were still picking up films from festivals, the Toronto International Film Festival being the most influential. I'm definitely bullish on the upcoming movies. So, on with the show:

#### NOV. 15

"All We Imagine as Light" won the Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival. It is a poetic ode to the lives of two nurses and roommates from Mumbai, one of whom is estranged from her husband and the other in a forbidden romance with a Muslim, as they explore their lives, loves and disappointments. Ironically, India has chosen a different movie as their Oscar submission, something almost guaranteed to backfire.

"Red One" is Santa, and Santa has been kidnapped. Getting him back will be the trick as the security staff at the North Pole must battle monsters, bad guys and themselves to succeed or, gasp, there will be no Christmas. Full to brimming with comedy stars like Dwayne Johnson and Chris Evans, this Jake Kasdan-directed holiday film is sure to be a family pleaser.

#### NOV. 22

"Gladiator II" is Ridley Scott's return to the arena, this time with the nephew of Maximus out to avenge his father's death and return glory to Rome. Starring Paul Mescal, Denzel Washington and Pedro Pascal, there will be blood and some unlikely fighting animals.

"Wicked Part I" finally makes its way to the big screen after years as a hit on Broadway, with no end in sight. Divided into two parts, this novel take on the "Wizard of Oz" stars Ariana Grande as Glinda and Cynthia Erivo as Elphaba. Part II premieres on Nov. 26, making it a total Thanksgiving experience.

#### NOV. 27

"September 5" follows the massacre of Israeli athletes by the Palestinian terrorist group, Black September, at the 1972 Munich Olympics as covered by the ABC sports correspondents who were there broadcasting the games. It is a heart-stopping reminder of an event seen through the prism of the sportscasters with Peter Sarsgaard starring as Roone Arledge.

"Moana 2" is a journey across the seas and Moana, accompanied by Maui, must answer a call from her ancestors. There are rifts to heal and people to bring together. The animation shines in this sequel.

"Maria" is director Pablo Larain's biopic of Maria Callas in her final years in Paris. Angelina Jolie stars.

"Queer" has made almost as many waves for its story as it has for its star. It is based on a semi-autobiographical novel by William S. Burroughs, part of the Beat Generation of poets and novelists in the 1950s. Lee, a gay man in thrall to drugs and younger conquests, finds love, romance and sex in Mexico City in the 1940s. Daniel Craig stars as Lee in a much-talked-about performance.

#### DEC. 6

"Hard Truths" is a return to form for Mike Leigh, here reuniting with the superb Marie Jean-Baptiste as a bitter dysfunctional British Jamaican who lashes out at everyone and everything including her preternaturally optimistic sister, her exact opposite.

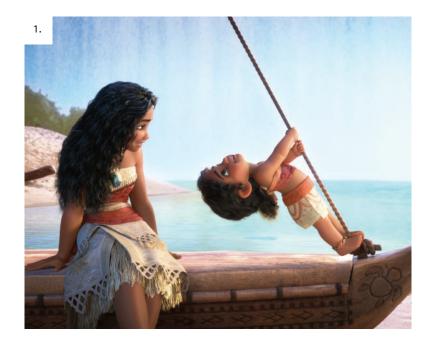
"The Order" is a stunning depiction of a true 1983-84 drama about a white supremacist who decides to take action and foment a rebellion and the FBI agent on his trail. Starring Nicholas Hoult and Jude Law, the events are reenacted chillingly, a harbinger of what happened on Jan. 6.

"The Return" is director Uberto Pasolini's take on Homer's tale of the Odyssey with Ralph Fiennes as Odysseus and Juliette Binoche as his long-suffering wife, Penelope. Expect Pasolini to exhibit the quiet depth he showed earlier this year in his masterpiece, "Nowhere Special." This film marks the first time Fiennes and Binoche have acted together since their breakout roles in "The English Patient."

"The Six Triple Eights" gives us the story of the Black women who joined the war and were assigned the task of sorting, delivering and tracking the mail sent to soldiers during World War II. Directed by Tyler Perry and starring Kerry Washington, this is the story told by Romay Johnson Davis in "Black Uniform," the outstanding documentary made by Beverly Hills' own Robert Darwell. As Davis pointed out and Perry's film emphasizes, mail is communication, hope and information, something supplied by this all-female, all-Black and all-disregarded unit who played the major role that everyone seems to have forgotten. Streaming on Netflix on Dec. 20.

1. "MOANA 2"

PHOTO COURTESY OF DISNEY ENTERPRISES, INC.
2. ANGELINA JOLIE IN "MARIA"
PHOTO COURTESY OF PABLO LARRAÍN/NETFLIX
3. DANIEL CRAIG IN "QUEER"
PHOTO COURTESY OF YANNIS DRAKOULIDIS/A24







FALL/WINTER FILM PREVIEW CONTINUES ON PAGE 48

## The Rise of Baby Botox in Beverly Hills

BY SELINA KAUSAR

'air, nails, outfit and ... Botox? The holidays are here, and the wish list of some of the city's younger residents may have a surprising addition. That's because an increasing number are considering Botox and other agedefying injectable treatments in an attempt to freeze the clock.

It's been over two decades since Botulinum toxin, or Botox as it's more commonly known, was first approved for cosmetic use by the FDA. Traditionally reserved for patients in their 30s and above, Botox is a neuromodulator that works by temporarily paralyzing muscle movement to reduce visible expression lines and wrinkles.

But now, Botox is catching on with a younger crowd. Millennials and Generation Z have fast become proponents of preventative Botox, or "Baby Botox," as it's often referred to.

Carl M. Truesdale, M.D., is a facial plastic surgeon based on Rodeo Drive. He explained that Botox can be administered on a spectrum, from "treatment to preventative."

"As a prevention, Botox can be used if someone doesn't have resting lines or signs of aging. The neurotoxin can weaken the muscle before lines develop. This is given over time, usually over the course of several years, so wrinkles do not form," Truesdale said.

Such prevention typically involves using smaller doses on smaller muscle groups for a more subtle treatment effect.

Natalia Guzman, a Beverly Hills-based aesthetic nurse practitioner, explained, "The FDA-approved average is 20 units of Botox in between the eyes or for the forehead, and then 12 units per side for the crow's feet. But with Baby Botox, we're only talking about something between 5 or 10 units, so it's about one-third of the regular dosage."

The smaller doses don't tend to last as long as traditional Botox injections either. Guzman likes to remind her patients that "dosage equals duration." This means the effects of Baby Botox generally wear off much more quickly.



NATALIA GUZMAN РНОТО ВУ АВВУ СОХ



CARL M. TRUESDALE, M.D.

#### THE RISING POPULARITY OF COSMETIC **INTERVENTIONS**

Although the "baby" in "Baby Botox" often refers to the nature of micro-dosing (using smaller amounts), social media has also adopted the term to describe the increasingly younger age of patients seeking out this treatment. Last year, over 137,000 patients aged between 20-29 received Botox injections, according to figures from the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS).

Botox wasn't always as commonplace for this age group.

In fact, research by the ASPS found a 71% increase in Botox treatments administered to individuals in their 20s between 2019 and 2022.

So, what's behind the sudden ascent in popularity?

"The rise of social media, particularly Instagram and TikTok, have meant awareness of Botox has grown exponentially," said Urmen Desai, M.D., a Harvard-educated, double-board certified plastic surgeon based on Roxbury Drive. He has noticed a significant increase in younger patients requesting this treatment in recent years.

One such patient is Thomas Legrand, a 24-year-old who first started Botox and dermal fillers at 21. While he isn't sure his parents would be accepting of a fresh round of Botox injections on his holiday wish list, he cites the pressure faced by his generation as a major influence in his decision.

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PROTECTION

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## Get Holiday-Ready with These New Beauty Offerings in Beverly Hills

BY CAROLE DIXON



VALMONT INTERIOR PHOTOS BY KATIE JONES

B everly Hills is a global trendsetter when it comes to glamour, style and beauty. And what better time than the holidays to experience some of the town's newest beauty establishments? Whether you're looking for lush lashes, 3D nails or a Korean full body scrub, the Courier has compiled a selection of noteworthy newcomers to help you prepare for those holiday gatherings and the awards season to follow.

#### VALMONT

Luxury Swiss skincare brand Valmont and French co-founders Sophie and Didier Guillon have opened the brand's first freestanding boutique on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. La Maison Valmont specializes in The Rodeo Drive Red Carpet Treatment with a serious celebrity following and is exclusive to this location. It includes 90 minutes of IonixLight, Diamond Micro-Abrasion, Oxygen Therapy Infusion, Light Therapy, Microcurrent and Ultrasound, along with a sequence of targeted massages. <u>Lamaisonvalmont.com/en/ la-maison-valmont-beverlyhills</u>



NEW BEAUTY OFFERINGS CONTINUES ON PAGE 46

A CANDLE AT VALMONT



#### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S ULTIMATE SHOPPING DESTINATION

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## Celebrate the Holidays at the Finest Afternoon Teas in Town

BY CLARA HARTER

s the holidays approach, an afternoon tea is the perfect event to draw together family members of all ages. Fortunately, Beverly Hills and its neighboring cities boast an exquisite selection of tea services. In this town, traditionalists will be able to find the finest selection of Earl Grey teas and classic scones, while those with an adventurous taste will delight in trendy exotic sweet treats dreamed up by local pastry chefs. And of course, make sure you don't forget to order Champagne.

#### THE PENINSULA BEVERLY HILLS

Considered by many to be the crème de la crème of afternoon teas, the luxurious service in the Living Room at the Peninsula Beverly Hills is not to be missed. Indeed, attendees will feel positively royal while sipping Dom Pérignon on plush velvet sofas and listening to a classical harpist perform. The Peninsula offers a selection of 20 loose-leaf teas ranging from Earl Grey to a tropical fruity green tea to a buttery smooth Tahitian vanilla tea. Its worldclass pastry chefs come up with a different selection of baked delights every month, but guests can always be certain to enjoy the finest finger sandwiches and scones. In the winter, the opulent living room has a wood fireplace offering the perfect place to cozy up with friends and family. Reservations are required and seatings are offered on Wednesday through Sunday at 11 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m.

#### WALDORF ASTORIA

#### **BEVERLY HILLS**

On Saturdays and Sundays, the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills boasts an exquisite afternoon tea experience with all the trimmings. Located in the historic hotel's chic, three-story, Art Deco lobby, the afternoon tea offers the perfect blend of relaxation, indulgence and people-watching. Tea selections include a monsoon chai, vanilla rooibos, lavender Earl Grey and organic peppermint. And, of course, there is an ample supply of Champagne and fine wine on offer, as well as a live harpist. On Nov. 23 and 24, the Lobby Lounge will host its annual Nutcracker Tea in partnership with the Los Angeles Ballet. The event serves as a fundraiser for the ballet and a delightfully whimsical event where young sippers can meet Clara and her doll friends, take photos with Santa and shop at the pop-up L.A. Nutcracker Boutique.



#### AFTERNOON TEA CONTINUES ON PAGE 54

TEA SANDWICHES AT WALDORF ASTORIA BEVERLY HILLS

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CANDACE PARKER PHOTOGRAPHED BY SARAH ORBANIC, STYLED BY DIAMOND MAHONE BAILEY, HAIR BY MINA SMITH, MAKEUP BY LYSETTE CASTELLANOS

# CANDACE PARKER Powering Forward

BY LISA FRIEDMAN BLOCH

S parkling with Christmas lights, and packed with sports fanatics, families and friends, the high school gymnasium in Naperville, Illinois was electric. The 2001 Dundee Crown Christmas Tournament was in full swing, and all eyes were on the basketball court. Sophomore Candace Parker battled through the traffic, got a breakaway, drove down the floor, and with every ounce of her 6'2", 15-year-old body, reached high, cleared the 10-foot rim and slam dunked the ball. The crowd roared as history was made. Candace Parker became the first female basketball player to dunk in an official United States high school varsity game.

The next morning Candace was awakened by the local and national news organizations camped out in her family's front yard. Rolling out of bed, Candace, with her parents by her side, greeted the enthralled media. Everyone wanted to know about this burgeoning basketball phenom.

To their surprise, she was not motivated by being the first high school girl in history to dunk.

"It was more because my brothers dunked at 16. I wanted to dunk before they did."

Nor did she want to be the player known only for dunking. What mattered to Candace was everything about basketball.

"My talent always lied in my ability to be versatile. I could bring the ball up the court, pass, shoot, rebound and run the floor like a guard. The dunking, I was resistant because when I dunked everybody just wanted me to dunk. I never wanted to just stay in that lane."

Candace had the maturity to recognize that being caught up in the

moment could derail her career. At the same time, she had the foresight to understand the depth and breadth of her limitless potential. It's what propelled her into becoming one of the most celebrated and influential athletes of this generation.

With two Olympic gold medals, two NCAA championships as MVP and three WNBA titles, no feat has been unattainable for Candace. In 2008 Candace was selected as the No. 1 overall pick in the WNBA draft and joined the Los Angeles Sparks. She succeeded in her first year, again making history, as the first and only player to earn WNBA MVP and Rookie of the Year. She did this while pregnant. In 2016, she led the L.A. Sparks to their WNBA championship title, again in 2021 with her hometown's team the Chicago Sky, and one more time in 2023 with the Las Vegas Aces.

Off the court, Candace, aka Ace (from the last three letters of her name), has similarly dreamed big. She's established herself as a media entrepreneur, as the first-ever on-air female analyst for both the NBA and NCAA on Turner Sports, as well as the spokesperson and ambassador for companies such as Adidas (President of Adidas Women's Basketball), NBA2K, CarMax, Gatorade, Muscle Milk, Invesco QQQ and Dick's Sporting Goods. With her authentic voice, Candace is an activist fighting for equality in sports and business. She is the subject of a full-length ESPN documentary entitled "Unapologetic," and the founder of a production company, Baby Hair Productions. As a globally recognized public speaker, her TED Talk was ranked the sixth most popular in 2021. She is also an investor in several women's professional sports teams. Earlier this year, with all of her momentum, Candace decided to pivot, not on the court, but in life. In an Instagram post to her 1.1 million followers, she said, "It's time ... I'M A BUSINESS man, not a businessman. This is the beginning ... I'm attacking business, private equity, ownership, broadcasting, production, boardrooms ... with the same intensity and focus I did basketball. My mission in life, like Pat Summitt [her legendary coach] always said, is to 'chase people and passions and you will never fail.' Being a wife and mom still remains priority #1."

As this is the year of the woman in leadership, I was given the rare opportunity to sit down with Candace, the GOAT, as she is often called by Shaquille O'Neal and other NBA superstars, to talk about her sports journey's lessons, the importance of family, and her future aspirations in pushing the boundaries for women.

### $E_{\rm part}$ of her life.

"My basketball was in my crib."

Born April 19, 1986, in St. Louis, Missouri, Candace Nicole measured 2 feet long. Her proud parents, Sara and Larry Parker, happily brought her home to meet her brothers, 11-year-old Anthony and 8-year-old Marcus. Soon after, the family of five moved to Naperville, Illinois where Candace was raised. Today, after a successful 10-year career playing in the NBA, Anthony is the general manager of the Orlando Magic. Marcus also resides in Florida and practices medicine as a radiologist. Candace proudly suggests her "super intelligent, super intuitive" brothers

helped shape who she is, thanks in part to the family's stimulating dinner conversations. Her admiration for her brothers and their impact on her life remains steadfast.

"My mom always tells the story that I walked at 8 months and was running at 9. I was always in the mix with my older brothers and whatever they did, I was trying to be there."

Larry met Sara at the University of Iowa. He played basketball for the Hawkeyes; Sara was a cheerleader. Larry was Candace's first basketball coach; Sara organized the team's practices and tournaments. Yet, they raised their children without gender roles.

"We didn't have the, 'You're a boy, you cut the grass.' I cut the grass. My brother cooked. I took out the garbage. We vacuumed. There weren't certain gender roles. My parents said, 'If you can do it and you work for it, why can't you accomplish it?""

That philosophy was embedded in Candace's psyche, until her first crash course in winning. It was junior year of high school, her team went 34-0, and they won the state championship.

"I remember thinking the game is becoming easy. I was kind of doing what I wanted on the court ... taking the game for granted a little bit. And I tore my ACL."

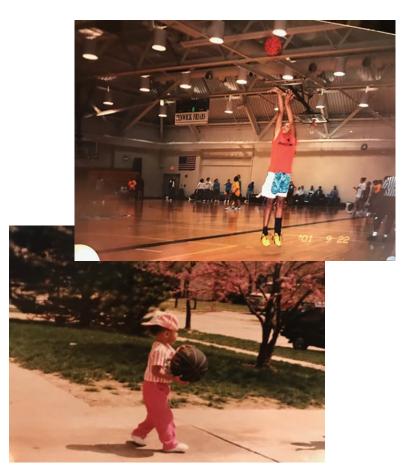
It was her wake-up call.

"They say absence makes the heart grow fonder ... I became fueled by the 'can't.' 'Oh, you don't think I can come back from this and be the player that I was?' I'm going to come back and be better."

She learned to commit to the process with laser focus, a foundational strategy for her life.



TOP: CANDACE WITH HER BROTHERS ANTHONY (LEFT) AND MARCUS (RIGHT) BOTTOM: CANDACE WITH HER FATHER LARRY AND DAUGHTER LAILAA PHOTOS BY APRIL BELLE PHOTOS



TOP: CANDACE, THE BASKETBALL PHENOM, ON THE COURT IN HIGH SCHOOL BOTTOM: CANDACE AS A CHILD IN NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS PHOTOS COURTESY OF CANDACE PARKER



LEFT: THE PARKERS AT PLAY - AIRR (IN FOREGROUND), LAILAA (LEFT), CANDACE (CENTER) AND ANNA (RIGHT) RIGHT: CANDACE WITH HER MOTHER SARA PARKER PHOTOS BY APRIL BELLE PHOTOS

"It was the commitment to not be physically out there doing jump shots, but bettering my jump shot by doing leg lifts and making sure that I'm rehabbing ... and getting up early and studying and not letting school slip away."

With a multitude of knee, shoulder and foot surgeries, Candace equates the emotional rollercoaster injury ride to life itself. She believes you need to have balance.

"I was miserable when we lost. I would wake up, and I wouldn't want to open the shades because we lost. I wouldn't want to get out of bed because we lost. I've had to learn that you do what you can. You live in your purpose, and then you relinquish the results in whatever you're doing. So even in my marriage, I'm divorced and remarried again. Even in being a mother, there's so many times where you're up late at night hoping that you're doing the right thing, and you do what you feel is best and relinquish the results."

Despite the projected year sabbatical caused by the injury, Candace returned to the court her senior year of high school after five months of rehabilitation and went on to win back-to-back championships. She became the first female to win the McDonald's slam dunk contest at the All-American Game, beating out two future NBA players, and was named the Gatorade Girl's High School Player of the Year in 2003-2004, which earned her a trip to Los Angeles, her very first.

At 17 years old, she was fixated on seeing Beverly Hills. "That's all you heard about ... 90210." Today, the city is a regular stop for her. You might pass Candace, listening to Adele or Jay-Z, as she cruises Mulholland Drive on the way to Beverly Hills for a business meeting or a fun dining experience at Wally's, Honor Bar or Crustacean.

Back then, Candace was one of the most sought-after basketball recruits in the nation. She committed to the University of Tennessee, playing for the Lady Vols (Volunteers) under Pat Summitt, one of the greatest women's basketball coaches of all time.

Brimming with anticipation, her freshman year at Tennessee quickly turned to disappointment. Her doctors discovered a hole in her injured knee, which meant another operation. While sitting out the entire year, her sadness swelled with the news of her parents' divorce. It was Coach Summitt's leadership style and assurance of Candace's return that helped her through. She came back the following 2005-2006 season with a vengeance, delivering the first dunk in a NCAA tournament game, which she performed twice. The following year, in addition to dating a rising basketball star at Duke University, Sheldon Williams, Candace led the Lady Vols to win the NCAA championship, ending the current drought that had plagued Tennessee. As the now 6'4" college basketball sensation, Candace graced the cover of Sports Illustrated after clinching the 2007 championship. By her senior year, Candace had solidified a second NCAA championship, the hopes of a professional career and the possibility of a U.S. Olympic Team position.

In 2008, Candace struck gold. As the WNBA's biggest ticket, McDonald's, Adidas and Gatorade all vied for her ambassadorship. Poised to make history in Los Angeles with the Sparks, she married Sheldon and received the honored invitation to represent the United States in the Beijing Olympic Games. It was not surprising that, with all of her momentum, she won her first gold medal.

While standing on the gold-medal platform, watching the raising of the American flag and listening to the United States national anthem, Candace was exploding with joy in her heart, thanks to the new life growing inside her.

Nine months later, "Out popped joy!" says Candace about her newborn daughter, Lailaa.

"I wanted a daughter, and I wanted to be a mom so badly. I always envisioned it when I was a kid. I damn near played house until I was 13 years old. I was the youngest sister who always wanted a younger sister. I begged my parents, and they said, 'No, you are the younger sister.' In college, I was babysitting on Friday nights instead of going to parties. And then when I hit reality, it was like, 'Well, you can't do that and have a career.' But I watched one of the greatest leaders do it."

Pat Summitt had a family during her career.



CANDACE, PLAYING FOR THE TENNESSEE LADY VOLS AT THE NCAA FINAL FOUR IN 2007 WITH HER MENTOR, LEGENDARY COACH PAT SUMMITT

PHOTO BY BILL FRAKES/GETTY IMAGES

"She [Pat] wasn't playing; she was coaching, which I think is a little bit more intensive, honestly. And so, when I was about to have my daughter, I was like, I can do this. I know I can do this, and I'm not going to sacrifice one for the other."

Within 51 days of giving birth, Candace was back on the court playing at full strength. During halftime, in the locker room that first year on the Sparks, Candace would breastfeed Lailaa while Coach Michael Cooper would give the team direction. Candace made history again at the end of the season when she became the first woman awarded Rookie of the Year and MVP, even though the Sparks did not make it to the finals.

Through it all, Lailaa breastfed for almost 15 months.

"She wouldn't take a bottle. She never had formula. And that's not to say that's the best for everybody else. But I put my mind to not sacrificing motherhood for my career, and not sacrificing my career for motherhood."

Despite the WNBA's establishment 12 years earlier, the disparity between Candace and her male counterparts in the NBA was blatantly obvious. NBA salaries for their superstars were in the multiple millions. Candace had to play in Russia, in the offseason, to make ends meet.

"It was a great experience, don't get me wrong. We had charter flights, we had chefs, we had drivers. I stayed in a fabulous apartment. My daughter went everywhere with me. I made a great contract where I could take care of my family ... take care of my mom. I could do the things that I wanted to do ... But I wish I could have done that here."

When asked about her former Sparks teammate, Brittney Griner, whose arrest and detention in Russia made international headlines, Candace reveals it hit home on two levels.

"It's like the part of the place that you thought was a certain way, and you were treated in that way, and then you see the different side of it. It's scary. It really is."

On a deeper level, Candace shares it's personal.

"My wife is Russian."

With compassion, Candace explains, "It's the war, and that means

that you don't know when things are going to get back to normal, or be OK, or be safe. I've always been super supportive of her and her feelings because I don't care what type of home you come from, you defend your home, that's where you're from. That's where her heart is."

Anna (her government name) or Anya Petrakova was born in Budapest, Hungary and raised in Russia. Like Candace, she was introduced to basketball by her father, Viktor Petrakov, who played pro basketball in Russia and was a member of the Soviet Union's National Basketball Team. After a successful college career in America at the University of Louisiana, Anna went pro in Russia, playing for several teams. And like Candace, she received the invitation to represent her country at the London Olympics as a member of Russia's Women's National Basketball Team in 2012. Honored with the 2015 Player of the Year Award in the Russian Premier League, she is considered one of the most successful players in Russia.

In 2012, Candace was introduced to Anna, the UMMC Ekaterinburg team's new power forward. A teammate friendship began. Both women were in committed relationships. By now, Lailaa was 3 years old, almost bilingual, in English and Russian, and more than ever, the center of Candace's universe.

"This kid was on 12- to 14-hour flights from two years old. She would get on and say, 'Is this a lay down flight?' She knew that was overseas. If it's just juice, it's probably two hours. She's just been here on earth before, I mean, I have it tattooed right here."

Candace points to the tattoo on her forearm and reads it.

"My reason, Lailaa Nicole."

Mother and daughter share the same middle name.

"I'm so grateful that I had a kid that allowed me to do both [career and motherhood] and has been a part of this journey. And Lailaa is super special. I still believe she was sent here for me."

Eventually, the wear and tear of a long-distance marriage for Candace and Sheldon became evident. While she was overseas for half of the year with her daughter and her mother, Sheldon was jumping between NBA teams. The stress of two professional careers spanning the globe was too much. Their marriage failed in 2016, one of the many challenges Candace faced while in the public eye and performing at top level on the court.



ANNA (LEFT), CANDACE (CENTER) AND LAILAA (RIGHT) PHOTO BY APRIL BELLE PHOTOS

As the sad reality of her impending divorce loomed, other negative news landed. Candace was passed over for the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team, despite still leading in the WNBA. Worse yet, Pat Summitt, Candace's lifelong coach, mentor and friend was losing her battle to early-onset dementia in the form of Alzheimer's.

But Candace rebounded, a true sign of a champion. By powering forward, she led the L.A. Sparks to their first championship in eight years. When asked her secret for working through the ups and downs of life, both on and off the court, she recounted one of Coach Summitt's life lessons.

"Pat was who she was, when she was winning eight championships and when she lost 194 times, or however many losses she had. I think it's just being that same steady person and never getting too high or too low. That's what I respect. It's committing to the process."

Live from the basketball court, seconds after Candace's championship win in 2016, with her highest rebounds of the season, ESPN announcer Holly Rowe asked Candace, "What does this moment mean to you?" Fighting back her tears, Candace responded, "This is for Pat."

Over time, and as a surprise to both Candace and Anna, their friendship evolved into love. In 2019, while on a birthday trip to Mexico with Anna, Lailaa, family and friends, Candace presented a birthday cake to Anna with the words, "Will you marry us?" Two years later, they publicly revealed they had been married, along with the news that they were expecting their first child together.

Going public about her marriage to Anna was challenging for Candace.

"People come to be who they are on their own time. And sometimes it takes people longer. It took us a long time because the life that we had envisioned for me, for her, wasn't what the reality was. We were a happy family within these walls. And when we walked out, we were something that we weren't. We were acting like we weren't together when we were. I introduced her as Anna. But who is this person? Is she a



ESPN REPORTER HOLLY ROWE INTERVIEWING CANDACE AFTER HER WIN FOR THE L.A. SPARKS IN GAME FIVE OF THE WNBA FINALS IN 2016 PHOTO BY DAVID SHERMAN/GETTY IMAGES



TOP: CANDACE DOMINATING FOR THE L.A. SPARKS IN A GAME AGAINST AN ASTONISHED CONNECTICUT SUN IN 2017 BOTTOM: SHAQUILLE O'NEAL AND CANDACE PARKER COVERING THE NBA ALL-STAR RESERVES THIS YEAR FOR TNT TOP PHOTO BY LEON BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES BOTTOM PHOTO COURTESY OF CANDACE PARKER

friend?... And so, I just encourage people to work to be true to who they are in whatever setting they're at. I think when you start trying to play too many roles, and be too many things to too many different people, you lose yourself."

Especially as a parent, Candace felt she had to lead with truth and conviction.

"I can't tell my daughter to be proud of being tall and do what you want, and follow your heart when I am not doing it myself. I want my daughter to know me as somebody that even if it's a whisper, or even if it's taking a big gulp before I say it, I'm going to be the one who says it. Even if it's not popular, even if it's looked down upon."

Today Lailaa is big sister to brothers Airr Larry, 2½ years old, and 6-month-old Hartt Summitt, named after Candace's father and Pat Summitt.

"People ask me what age I like. I like whatever age they're at. I feel like every year they just get better."

Suddenly, she calls to Airr in a higher-pitched, happy voice, having spotted him in the hallway of their home, shooting a shot into his Little Tikes basketball hoop.

"Hi Goose [Airr's nickname]! Did you have a good day at school? You're going to take a nap?"

Candace shares, "He gets up and gets buckets before breakfast a lot of times, from his crib. I'll give him the ball. When he shoots into the hoop, he always says, 'Kobe!' It's really cute." "Kobe" originated from reading Kobe Bryant's book together. They also enjoy reading about "the GOAT," Michael Jordan, Candace's hometown hero.

Airr responds sweetly with one word, "Basketball." Candace repeats encouragingly, "Basketball, you're right," as the nanny brings Airr to Candace.

"Give me kiss, give me kiss." Airr leans in to kiss his mom. "I love you," says Candace.

As the nanny carries him away, Candace admits, "I might say that I have, from a very young age, shown him basketball and how to shoot. We have basketball hoops all around our house, and every time we walk past them, he has to do his little shot."



CANDACE CELEBRATES HER SECOND GOLD MEDAL WIN WITH HER DAUGHTER LAILAA AT THE LONDON OLYMPICS IN 2012. PHOTO BY PHIL WALTER/GETTY IMAGES

Does Candace plan on being a "boy mom" coach, mirroring Kobe's "girl dad" status?

"A hundred percent, yes!"

With her blended and growing family, Candace is not guided by a particular religious denomination, but rather by her strong belief in one's intention and purpose.

"I wholeheartedly believe that we know when something is wrong or something is right ... [It's important] to hold yourself accountable and be disciplined, to do what you say you're going to do."

She adds, "Kids will humble you ... [They] don't care who you are, how many MVP awards you get. You're Mom."

Often asked, Candace will not commit to her all-time favorite winning moment as she compares the question to choosing her favorite child. But when I requested her to name "three" favorite winning moments in honor of her three children, she happily responded.

"Winning the first WNBA championship."

"My Olympic gold medal in London because I got to share it with my daughter."

"My high school first championship. Committing to the process and being rewarded for it."

Driven by passion and purpose off the court, Candace has worked to break down barriers. Believing that sports can change lives, she has made inroads as an advocate for equality for women on a professional level as well as for youth.

"I think sports is bigger than just sports. Sports is life. You're teaching life lessons to young kids."

As an ambassador for national brands, her speaking engagements and influential power continue to produce successful partnerships that provide for youth organizations. As an example of her efforts, Gatorade and the Dick's Sporting Goods Foundation Sports Matters Program partnered with Candace and donated \$100,000 to continue advancing youth sports equality.



CANDACE IN AN INTIMATE MOMENT WITH HER SON HARTT SHORTLY AFTER HE WAS BORN PHOTO BY APRIL BELLE PHOTOS

As a role model, her ability to communicate her expertise and insightful perspectives has pushed the boundaries for women in broadcasting. In 2018, Candace broke into the male-dominated world as the only female analyst for the Men's March Madness Tournament. Acing her analysis in that first year, she was offered a multipronged broadcasting role for Turner Sports, which included regular analysis and commentary for the NBA on TNT and NBA TV, along with the NCAA tournaments. She continues in this role today with Turner Sports for the 2024-2025 NBA season.

To illustrate her impact on the world of men's and women's basketball, when David Stern, Commissioner of the NBA and founder of the WNBA, suddenly passed away on Jan. 1, 2020, the NBA network went to Candace for her comments. As a female basketball legend and a savvy broadcaster, she reflected on his contribution and "his foresight to see that women's basketball could grow." She continued, "The WNBA is the longest-standing women's professional sports league in the history of the United States. We are so grateful for what he's done, as we continue to try to follow the blueprint of what the NBA has done to grow the game."

As a producer, for her first Baby Hair Productions project in 2022, Candace chose to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Title IX, the landmark federal civil rights law that changed sports in America. But now, Title IX is in question in certain states as gender identity and transgender issues have surfaced. Candace infuses her "I can" motto into making sure Title IX is inclusive for everyone.

"If you say you can't, then you have to find a way that you can. Great understanding without completely agreeing is something that I wish our country got to a place of. And I think sports has always been a great unifier and has always united us in tragedy. There has to be a way for everyone to be able to compete."

She cites the New York Yankees playing in the wake of 9/11 and Kobe's tragic death. Yet she's frustrated by the blame game interfering with Title IX's blanket acceptance today.

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THE PARKERS AND THEIR POOCHES: LAILAA (LEFT) HOLDING ACE, ANNA (CENTER) WITH FLASH, CANDACE (RIGHT) WITH AIRR ON HER LAP AND THEIR BELOVED ROTTWEILER, NAHLA, SITTING FRONT AND CENTER PHOTO BY APRIL BELLE PHOTOS

"In America, it's always women's problems, and it's not just a women's problem. Why do women have to make the policies and figure out all of this stuff? And then we get blamed for it if it doesn't work. I love the responsibility, but can we do this with everyone? Title IX was meant for equality in the very essence of the law. Somehow it gets lost in wrestling. Somehow it gets lost in male gymnastics. It's always on the women's sports. There are others that are benefiting from inequalities of Title IX, and we all have the responsibility to figure it out."

Candace's fight for equality in the corporate structure is just as important to her. As an outgrowth of her ambassadorship, combined with her leadership style, Candace has accepted the new role as President of Adidas Women's Basketball. Her brand loyalty began when she was 15 years old, and Adidas supplied her team with products.

"We grew together. We've been through injuries, pregnancy, I mean, we talk about CEOs changing. I've been through leadership change ... There's an allegiance that you grow up with in a brand, and I think it's established at a young age. And so, I think for me as president, I want to impact youth and grassroots, and then we'll find our signature athlete ... who believes in the brand like I do."

Today, Candace is an investor in the female professional sports teams Angel City Football Club and League One Volleyball LOVB, as well as an Athletic Ambassador for the Avenue Capital Group, Marc Lasry's sports fund. Melding corporate management with sports franchise management and ownership is a huge goal of Candace's. She aspires to own an NBA or WNBA team one day.

"Why not?" Candace fires back.

"Women know we can do it. It's never been a question. We've been shouting from the rooftops that we're able. I'm tired of firsts. The first female president of hockey, the first female president of NHL, NBA, NFL teams. Come on, man, this is 2024. We've got to get over this. Who's the best person for the job? I think men are figuring it out, and I don't think it's telling women that we can do it. I think it is men realizing that diversity of thought is better."

During a controversial broadcast on Turner Sports when Shaquille O'Neal strongly suggested that the WNBA lower the rim for better dunking statistics, Candace shut him down by not giving the question attention.

"Sometimes people are fortunate to continue to not know what they don't know. You sometimes don't know the perspective. You don't know the story. You don't know what's behind it. You don't know the years and years and years of fight. And some people are fortunate to not ever have to experience that. I don't think he was saying it to be disrespectful." A fter 13 years in Los Angeles leading the Sparks, Candace decided to go back to her hometown and play for the Chicago Sky. In her first year with the team, her leadership and expertise helped the team win its first-ever championship in 2021.

But living far from her family in Los Angeles was hard for Candace. The following year, she accepted the offer to join the Las Vegas Aces, miles closer to home. Armed with her drive and positive energy, after one season, Candace led the Aces to their first title in 2023. Once again, Candace made history and remains the only player to win the WNBA championship with three different franchises.

Unfortunately for Candace, the second half of her final championship season was spent on the bench due to another injury. She announced her retirement on social media earlier this year in April after 16 years of playing professional basketball.

"I promised I'd never cheat the game and that I'd leave it in a better place than I came into it. The competitor in me always wants one more, but it's time. My heart and my body knew, but I needed to give my mind time to accept it. ... My last game, I walked off the court with my daughter. I ended the journey just as I started it, with her."

At the end of our interview, while reflecting upon David Stern and his need to form the WNBA, Candace reveals her desire to move forward with a bigger purpose.

"A lot of people celebrate when things come to fruition and everything happens. But you also have to think about the steps that it took and the no's and the nays and the disbelief. He [Stern] was someone who truly bought in and stuck with it, and stuck through it when things weren't right. Sometimes it's going against the grain, and sometimes it means not being liked. And sometimes it means people not believing in what you say, but still continuing to go forward with it because there's a bigger purpose. That's what I want to do within women's sports. I think slowly but surely, we're a different game. And it doesn't mean that we have to have the same path as men's basketball. We have a blueprint, but we can change the plans a little bit."

Thoughtful, authentic and inspirational, Candace commits to the process.

"That's what I'm going to do with women's basketball. I'm going to continue to be a visionary of what's next and what lies ahead. How can we make a bigger jump? How can we make a bigger push?" ●



LISA FRIEDMAN BLOCH AND CANDACE PARKER PHOTO BY SARAH ORBANIC

## Rodeo Mights Holiday Lights

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To learn more, visit BEVERLYHILLS.ORG/HOLIDAYSBH







CAMDEN ROOM AT OCEAN PRIME PHOTO COURTESY OF OCEAN PRIME

#### CRUSTACEAN

If you'd like to dine in a private wine cellar with five of your closest friends, head upstairs to Da Lat Rose at Crustacean, which also features an open kitchen, private bathroom, private bar, audio-visual system and a private entrance. This space can hold 60 guests seated and 150 plus for cocktails. The minimum for food and beverage is \$8,000 with a room rental of \$1,000-\$1,500. Other options are downstairs in the Santa Monica Room (25 seated or 40 plus for cocktails) and offer accordion doors, a flat-screen TV and access to a private Koi bar (\$3,500 minimum spend). For more information, email the private dining director at Hannah@houseofan.com.

#### **OCEAN PRIME**

Seafood haven Ocean Prime offers a plethora of private dining options and price ranges. Half and full buyouts are available for the Wilshire Room (36 seated, 40 reception); Dayton Room (10 seated); Camden Room (14 seated); Apex Bar (80 seated, 100 reception) or the Terrace (44 seated, 75 reception).

From holiday parties to more intimate, special moments like bridal showers and birthday celebrations, the team will accommodate special requests including floral arrangements, audio-visual support, specialty cakes and desserts. Guests can choose from an option of welcome cocktails, a Champagne toast or wine bar. Caviar service is also available, as well as food stations or sushi platters. Lunch menu options vary from \$60 to \$75 per person while dinner menu options range from \$115 per person to \$170. To book, call 310-859-4818.



SANTA MONICA ROOM AT CRUSTACEAN PHOTO COURTESY OF CRUSTACEAN



THE BAR AT THE HIDEAWAY PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HIDEAWAY

#### THE HIDEAWAY

No matter how often you sat on the patio by the wood-burning fireplace or pushed the tequila button for a table-side shot, hidden pockets remain at The Hideaway. The Mexican-themed gem is backed by celebrity investors, including Ryan Phillipe and Evan Ross.

At The Hideaway, you can book the extended patio that seats 50 or up to 100 people standing. This area also has a dedicated private bar connected to it that fits 25 people and can be booked independently, and it has a private entrance.

Other options include the main bar, which can be booked for up to 50 people and features eight private booths and a tequila-tasting room. The side dining room closest to the bar can also be closed off for privacy with up to 30 seats.

Drinks are charged on consumption, and prix-fixe menus are offered at different price points, plus the room rental fee is waived if you fill it to capacity. To book, contact General Manager Bart Clemmer at bart@ thehideawaybeverlyhills.com.

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#### WALLY'S

At Wally's, you won't be short of top wine options if you book a private party. Tucked away in the back of the restaurant, the main room for private events accommodates 22 guests for a sit-down gathering, which includes a prix-fixe family-style menu, or 35 people for a standing reception with tray-passed hors d'oeuvres. The food and beverage minimum ranges from \$4,000 to \$6,000 (depending on the day of week and season). You can also book the Barrel Room for 10 people, which is located in front of the rare wine vault and spirits room. The minimum buyout for this space is \$3,000 to \$5,000. To book, contact privatedining@wallywine.com.

#### THE CHEESE STORE

If a wine and cheese party is more your style, The Cheese Store of Beverly Hills has a new patio that can hold 22, with 16 seats and four high-top tables that can accommodate another eight people standing. This space has a \$5,000 minimum spend for a buyout. The entire shop can also be rented out for private events with a \$9,000 minimum spend for both combined. To book, contact events@cheesestorebh.com.



FUNKE DINING ROOM PHOTO BY STAN LEE

#### FUNKE

#### WALDORF ASTORIA BEVERLY HILLS

For a splurge, try the in-suite culinary experience in the Presidential Suite at the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills hotel's bespoke culinary dining experience. It includes a private chef, personal mixologist, special musical performances and the global cuisine of your choice for an exclusive experience for up to 12 seated and 20 for a standing-style reception (starting at \$4,000). This culinary amenity is ideal for those celebrating a romantic date night for two, a private dinner party with friends and family or even a corporate event. In-suite dining experiences can be arranged by contacting the property at insuitedining@ waldorfastoria.com or 310-860-6617.



MXO'S PRIVATE DINING ROOM PHOTO COURTESY OF SBE

#### MXO

New to La Cienega Boulevard, right across the street from Nobu, MXO is an upscale open-flame steakhouse with a Mexican twist by James Beard Foundation award-winning chef Wes Avila, sbe and Marc Anthony. Brought to life by celebrity designer Jae Omar, the space includes several patios with fire pits and offers not one but two private dining rooms. The larger space has a fireplace, and mid-century modern style furnishings in earthy tones, and can hold 20 people with a minimum food and beverage spend of \$2,500. The smaller private dining room is \$1,500 minimum and can fit 10 people with a sliding glass door for privacy. To book, visit http://www.mxosteakhouse.com.

For a unique opportunity to experience old-world handmade pasta techniques in an intimate setting, book Evan Funke's namesake eatery for a private bash. The dark green-hued private dining room fits up to 20 people on the mezzanine dining level with an oval table and windows down to all the action below. Expect a base rate for the room, plus per-person costs depending on the date, menus and party size. To book, contact events@ funkela.com.

If you prefer an alfresco gathering overlooking Beverly Hills, the restaurant's Bar Funke can hold 40 guests seated and 100 standing. Or, if you would rather party in Hollywood, Funke's other acclaimed restaurant, Mother Wolf, has two private dining rooms. Remus is a more intimate room, decked out in rich woods, with a capacity of 10, and Romulus holds up to 22 guests. To book, visit <u>www.motherwolfla.com/book</u>.

The Mother Wolf building also offers an expansive space upstairs at Citizen News that can be modified to fit various group sizes or productions. Expect a \$5,000 venue rental fee and a \$30,000 minimum food and beverage spend. To book, contact events@rh-hollywood.com.

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NICOLE POLLARD BAYME PHOTOS BY MAIWENN RAOULT

#### NICOLE POLLARD BAYME

"I was always captivated by how fashion goes beyond clothing–it's a language, a tool for self-expression and a catalyst for transformation," said Nicole Pollard Bayme.

Born and raised in Santa Monica, Pollard Bayme founded her styling firm Lalaluxe in Beverly Hills in 2005 and now provides fashion styling services for world leaders, visionaries and trailblazers. "Beverly Hills launched my career with stores like Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue and other Rodeo Drive boutiques rolling out the red carpet for me. This city supported me in building Lalaluxe into what it is today," she told the Courier.

Describing her style as "luxurious and intentional," Pollard Bayme's captivating and unique approach has seen her win numerous accolades. She was named "L.A.'s Best Personal Stylist" by CBS Los Angeles and frequently hosts fashion events across the globe.

"Style, for me, is about how clothing makes me feel-aligned, powerful and free. This ethos guides how I style my clients. It's not about following trends but about curating a wardrobe that truly reflects who they are at their core," she said.

For Pollard Bayme, true influence is at the heart of what fashion stylists do. "My influence happens behind the scenes–guiding clients to feel fully seen and aligned through what they wear. Real influence isn't about numbers or the algorithm; it's about genuine transformation. That's what my work is about, and it's where my impact lies."

The common thread throughout Pollard Bayme's styling career has been using fashion as a tool to exhibit her clients' personalities. "My goal is to help them create a relationship with fashion that feels personal, meaningful and lasting," she said. "Trends are always evolving, but I focus on creating a timeless foundation."

Pollard Bayme recommends thinking about pieces that are aligned with who you are as a person when deciding what to buy or wear. She helps her clients look beyond fashion trends to discover a more soulful, aligned sense of style. "One of the biggest challenges has been shifting my clients' mindset from seeing fashion as merely external to understanding it as a reflection of their inner world," she said. "Additionally, balancing the fast pace of the fashion industry with the need for deeper, more lasting impact is something I always navigate. I bring joy and heart to an industry that can sometimes feel closed off or inaccessible, and I lead with that intention when working with top designers and haute couture houses."

Pollard Bayme's approach to personal transformation through style has been strongly influenced by the city of Beverly Hills. "Beverly Hills is where luxury meets individuality," she explained. "My company partners with every five-star hotel in Beverly Hills, curating VIP shopping experiences for their guests. The city has been instrumental in my success."

A recent event in Beverly Hills saw Pollard Bayme style a Silicon Valley CEO with a blend of "tech innovation and luxury." She utilized pieces that reflected both his visionary leadership and the glamour of Beverly Hills, resulting in a wardrobe that felt both innovative and elevated.

This, she said, is what style in Beverly Hills means to her. "It offers a balance–combining California's laid-back vibe with refined, effortless glamour. It's all about looking polished, but in a way that feels easy and natural."

According to Pollard Bayme, craftsmanship and quality are hallmarks that guide fashion in this city. "It's not about showing off, but about wearing pieces that are carefully curated and deeply intentional. Someone who embodies Beverly Hills style understands the power of subtlety–effortless glamour that looks natural and timeless."

Pollard Bayme thinks style this holiday season will be all about the statement pieces. "Think luxe velvet, jewel tones and oversized outerwear with dramatic silhouettes."

She also advised paying close attention to jewelry choices this season. "High jewelry from houses such as Tiffany, Van Cleef and Arpels, Harry Winston and Louis Vuitton has made a major comeback, as people want to celebrate in style while investing in something that holds long-term value," she said.

As for the best holiday gift for the fashion lover in your life, Pollard Bayme is resolute in the power of a beautifully crafted statement piece with a twist. "Think a Hermes leather bag, Louis Vuitton luggage or a pair of Tod's crocodile driving moccasins that have been personalized with a mantra or uplifting phrase," she suggested. "These are timeless, luxurious items that become uniquely meaningful, making them something the recipient will treasure for years to come."

In the end, it all comes down to influence. "People want to make an impact while creating a legacy," she said.



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#### **DIAMOND MAHONE**

For celebrity stylist Diamond Mahone, style is an individual matter. "Personal style is just that: so personal. It's knowing what you feel most comfortable in and expanding on that," Mahone told the Courier.

Mahone knows the fashion industry inside-out, having worked her way up from retail to now styling a cascade of celebrity clients– including STYLE cover star Candace Parker.

"Candace allows so much leniency when we collaborate. There's a level of trust there—and I think that's also very affirming to the work that I do," said Mahone.

Mahone credits her success as a personal stylist to much of what she learned during those early days of her career. "Working in the luxury retail space gave me an insight into the human behavior of fashion– knowing how different things work with different people and learning what makes them feel most confident."

As Mahone's prominence in the fashion industry grew, she began to work with a range of high-profile clients, styling celebrities like Parker and singer Erykah Badu alongside corporate professionals.

But regardless of who she's styling, Mahone's grounding principle remains the same: fashion should be rooted in comfort.

"I never impose my personal style on my clients. I always go back to what the client feels they're best in, and I just try to bring that out," Mahone said.

When it comes to balancing trends with timelessness, Mahone is resolute in her stance. "I always want to be at the forefront of refining and elevating, but also still staying true to the one thing that feels most authentic for any individual."

According to Mahone, it would be remiss to deny the level of influence stylists hold in helping define what is fashionable over time. "It's more of a different lens to look at fashion. I not only think about who the client is and who I am, but I also think about my audience response–I want to create something they can relate to and feel like they can see themselves in."

Despite Mahone's zest for all things fashion, she believes there is still progress that needs to be taken when it comes to sizing in particular. "Luxury fashion panders to a specific size group," she explained, "but it's a huge, missed opportunity to not have a broader size range to account for differences in height, body type–you name it."

Now based in Mexico City, she splits her time between styling clients in Los Angeles and New York, but always comes back to Beverly Hills because of its strong influence on the fashion world. "It's such a huge epicenter of luxury fashion."

Describing Beverly Hills style as aspirational yet relatable, Mahone thinks Beverly Hills is particularly unique in its approach. "For fashion in America, outside of New York, you think of LA as a celebrity center, and so much of fashion in LA is influenced by trends in Beverly Hills."

The city's take on trends is something that resonates with Mahone's own conception of making style work for you. "I think of trends so differently because I think of them so personally, like how do we interpret what is happening on the runway into real life?" Mahone said. "So, there's this fun mix of relatability here, where you see people style things that feel very decadent and dressed up but in a more toned-down, everyday way."



DIAMOND MAHONE PHOTO BY YESI FORTUNA

"For fashion in America, outside of New York, you think of LA as a celebrity center, and so much of fashion in LA is influenced by trends in Beverly Hills."

This mosaic approach to fashion is also what Mahone thinks will be big over the upcoming holiday season. "Taking something that feels a little more glitzy or glam and pairing that with a cool sweatshirt, T-shirt or some fun cowboy boots will be a great way to show how the mix of different things can exist together."

Speaking on her decision to style Candace in a white suit for the cover of this edition of STYLE, Mahone added, "White is going to be huge this season. Expect to see a lot of it."

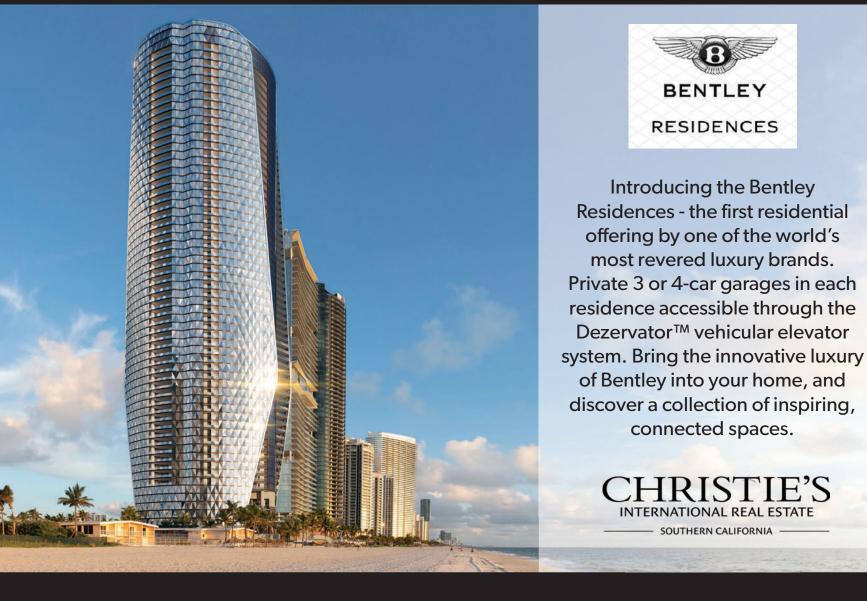
Mahone's commitment to making fashion a personal endeavor also translates to her approach to gift-giving. "I always love a personalized gift. So, anything that is personalized with something that feels true to your relationship to the person you're gifting—whether it be a quote, a euphemism, something that maybe you say to the person or their name, I think all of those things are very special."

A lasting impression is the most powerful gift one can give, Mahone concluded. "I just love something that will last through the test of time, whether it is glassware or whether it's something that has to do with the home."  $\bullet$ 



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NAIL ART AT NEW LOUNGE PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW LOUNGE

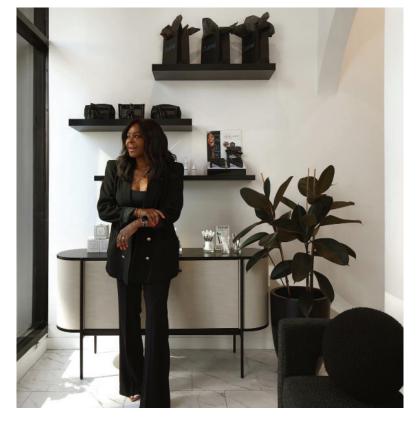
#### **NEW LOUNGE**

On the lower level of the Rodeo Collection, a fan-favorite Filipino beauty salon with over 17 locations has opened its first U.S. outpost in Beverly Hills. NEW Lounge is the spot for brow lamination, lash perms and tinting. "Beverly Hills represents the pinnacle of high-end beauty and wellness. Our top-notch service makes clients feel that elevated luxury experience," owner Rachelle Bravo told the Courier. If you do not have time to visit the salon, the signature Filipino hospitality will come to you via their mobile services. <u>Newloungeus.com</u>

#### D'LASHES LASH & WELLNESS SPA

Dionne Phillips has been a driving force in celebrity eyelash extensions and faux lashes for almost two decades while working with clients from Victoria Beckham to Naomi Campbell, Renee Zellweger, Mary J. Blige and a host of others. Her retail brand D'Lashes is a collection of luxury lash products and DIY lash kits, which has won several awards.

Phillips has recently opened D'Lashes Lash & Wellness Spa on Wilshire Boulevard, just east of La Cienega Boulevard, to provide her lash expertise and in-house products with a full menu of wellness services. This approach is deeply personal for Phillips, who is a proud breast cancer survivor, and is hoping her journey can both inform and inspire other women to prioritize their health and well-being. Mention the Beverly Hills Courier to receive a 20% discount on a lash service. Dlashes.com



DIONNE PHILLIPS INSIDE D'LASHES PHOTO COURTESY OF DIONNE PHILLIPS

#### PELLEQUR

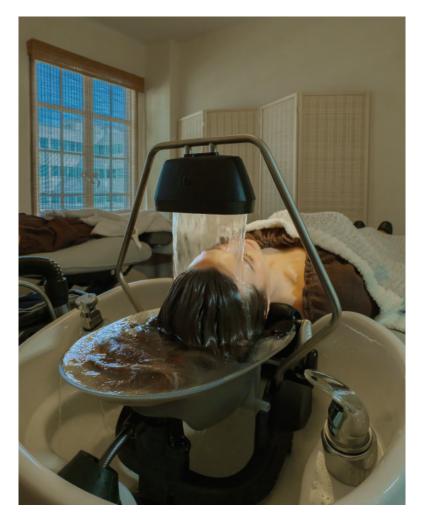
Korean body scrubs are not necessarily for the faint of heart. They typically require vigorous scrubbing followed by a water bucket poured over you in a communal setting. This isn't the case at Pellequr in Beverly Hills, the Westside's only upscale Korean scrub spa exclusively for women. You have probably driven by the blacked-out windows on South Beverly Drive, but never knew what goes on beyond the smokey glass. Pellequr offers a personalized, three-step treatment to unclog pores and excrete toxins, with a lymphatic drainage massage for relaxation and smooth glowing skin. The 75-minute combination starts with a French Vichy shower followed by a Korean full body scrub and wash, and a blissful CBD oil massage. For additional pampering, Japanese head spa services by a trichologist have been added to the menu.

Owner Anna Margaryan has been in the beauty and wellness business for over 20 years and started frequenting Korean spas as a release for postpartum depression. She feels the Korean beauty trend started primarily because the culture takes skincare so seriously from head to toe. "It's not about just putting on sunblock. We forget to hydrate and get rid of our dead skin—it gives you a youthful look," she told the Courier. "It's our largest organ and it is the first thing you see so you want a clean canvas, but you need to get rid of the buildup first. You can slather on as many products as you want, but if your skin is not taken care of, it will not work." <u>Pellequr.com</u>

#### HEAD SPA NAGOMI

Longtime local hair extension and color guru, Kazumi Morton, has opened a head spa a few doors down from her popular Salon Kazumi on South Santa Monica Boulevard. Head Spa Nagomi offers 30, 60 or 90-minute treatments, seven days a week. The procedure is recommended monthly, as the hair cell growth turnover is every 28 days. The idea is to stimulate blood flow and release buildup to promote healthy skin–just like a facial but for your scalp.

The process first involves a microscope scalp camera to examine for any buildup or troubled areas. Then the sensory journey begins, using traditional Japanese techniques such as essential oils to add a relaxing aromatherapy component with a Japanese charcoal-paste exfoliation to remove impurities. Next comes a nano steam to hydrate and remove buildup from hair follicles. A relaxing, extended scalp massage is followed by the cascading waterfall head bath, called toshinyoku. For the finishing touch, a steaming leave-in serum is applied to nourish the scalp. The 90-minute treatment includes a red-light therapy session to reduce inflammation and stimulate hair growth. A reparative, deepconditioning hair mask add-on is also available during this process. <u>Headspanagomi.com</u>



SCALP TREATMENT AT HEAD SPA NAGOMI PHOTO COURTESY OF HEAD SPA NAGOMI



MINILUXE BEVERLY HILLS STUDIO AND MURAL BY DONALD ROBERTSON PHOTO COURTESY OF MINILUXE

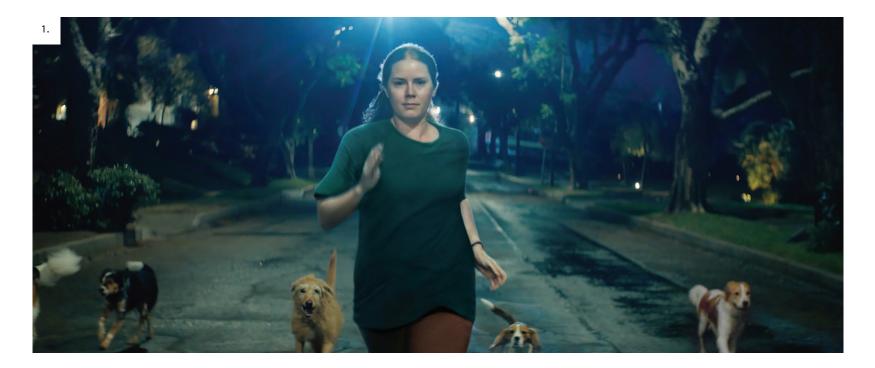
#### MINILUXE

For new nail art offerings this winter, MiniLuxe on Canon Drive has just launched chrome services. This trend started with Hailey Bieber's "glazed donut" nails and has skyrocketed in popularity ever since. The procedure uses a metallic chrome powder in the color of your choice to create a mirror-like, reflective or iridescent finish.

The brand's lead designers have also added the highly sought-after "Cateye" service, which gives nails a reflective, dimensional look that resembles a cat's eye. You can also request Blooming gel polish to spread out and create a unique watercolor or marble design and the look of a blooming flower. Transfer foils add a high-shine metallic finish to a gel manicure by placing thin, shiny sheets of foil over painted gel nails to create a full foil or broken glass style design. Other new services include ombre nails using two or more shades of powdered pigment over a chosen base color, nail jewelry in the form of rhinestones or studs or 3D gel that creates three-dimensional embellishments and decorations on the nails. <u>Miniluxe.com/</u> pages/beverly-hills

#### SOHO HOUSE HOLLOWAY

For the first time, Soho House Holloway is offering facials by Australian brand RATIONALE, and non-members are welcome. The 75-minute treatment is performed by celebrity facialist Katie Matten, who focuses on hydration and repairing the skin barrier by infusing potent ingredients such as glutathione and vitamin C for a glass-like radiant skin effect. In-home treatments can also be booked. <u>Us.rationale.com/pages/rationale-residency</u> •



#### DEC.6

"Nightbitch" is a horror/black comedy starring Amy Adams as a stayat-home mother whose frustrations manifest themselves at nighttime when she turns into a dog, or does she? Motherhood is complicated.

In "Oh Canada," based on the book by Russell Banks, director Paul Schrader reunites with "American Gigolo" Richard Gere to tell the story about a man who fled to Canada to avoid the draft and now wants to tell his story.

"Get Away" has it all–remote island location, dysfunctional family vacation, serial killer–what could possibly go wrong? Billed as horror, but with British funnyman Nick Frost in the lead, black humor has to be on the menu.

#### DEC. 13

"Kraven the Hunter," plucked from the Spiderverse, is the villain with daddy issues. Kraven follows his ruthless father down a path of vengeance and mayhem against his purported enemies. Starring Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Ariana DeBose and Russell Crowe, it won't be pretty, and there will be blood. "Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim" is a stylish anime film based on the characters from the J.R.R. Tolkien fantasy novels. A prequel to the trilogy, it tells the tale of the King of Rohan.

"The Last Showgirl" has created buzz both for the subject and its stars, particularly Pamela Anderson, starring as Shelley. Having been a showgirl for over 30 years in Vegas, she and the other dancers are rocked when the closing show is announced. Shelley and her friends, including Annette, played by Jamie Lee Curtis, are upended. What is left for these women, all over 50, when the only life they knew as dancers has now ended? Directed by Gia Coppola, granddaughter of Francis Ford, this signals the arrival of another talented member of that family.

#### DEC. 20

"The Room Next Door" is Pedro Almodóvar's first English-language film and stars Julianne Moore and Tilda Swinton. After being estranged for many years, a daughter reconnects with her mother, trying hard to piece together what pulled them apart. It won the Golden Lion at the Venice International Film Festival.



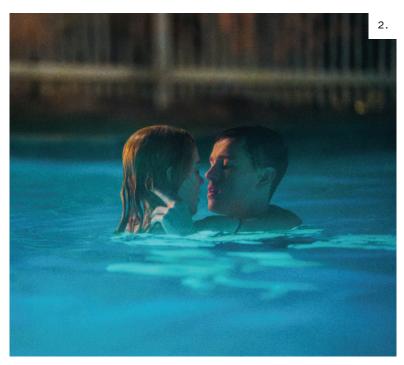
AMY ADAMS IN "NIGHTBITCH"
 PHOTO COURTESY OF SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES
 "LORD OF THE RINGS: THE WAR OF THE ROHIRRIM"
 PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. PICTURES



3. JULIANNE MOORE AND TILDA SWINTON IN "THE ROOM NEXT DOOR" PHOTO COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES CLASSICS











#### DEC. 20

"Mufasa: The Lion King" is both a prequel and sequel to "The Lion King," telling the origin story of Mufasa and Prince Taka. Using photorealistic animation, this film, with its amazing voice cast, will be a sight to behold –a family film to unwrap during the holidays and savor.

"Sonic the Hedgehog 3," based on the video game series, is the box office gift that keeps on giving. Like "Despicable Me 4," this year's hit rerun, "Sonic" should appeal to families looking for fun during the holidays as the furry creatures combine with their human friends to battle the evil Shadow.

#### **DEC. 25**

"The Fire Inside" was originally scheduled to open last summer. It is the inspirational story based on the journey of Claressa "T-Rex" Shields who wants to be the first American woman to win a gold medal in boxing at the Olympics. Directed by Rachel Morrison and written by Barry Jenkins, the Oscar-winning writer/director of "Moonlight," it features a very strong cast led by Brian Tyree Henry.

"A Complete Unknown" is the highly anticipated biopic of Bob Dylan starring Timothée Chalamet. Focusing on the moment at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965 when Dylan decided to go electric, Chalamet will sing. Directed and written by James Mangold who knows his way around biography, having directed "Ford v Ferrari" and "Walk the Line" about Johnny Cash, this is one of the most anticipated films of the season.

"Babygirl" is a story of a powerful CEO who embarks on a passionate affair with an intern. But in this erotic story, the CEO is a woman (Nicole Kidman) and the intern is a young man. Kidman won the Best Actress Award at the Venice International Film Festival, and she has turned heads everywhere the film has been shown.

"Nosferatu" is a starry revisit of the legend of Dracula. A remake of the famous and still scary German Expressionist silent film made in 1922, it is the story of a young woman's hypnotic obsession with Count Orlok who turns into a vampire at night, searching for blood to keep him alive. Many will try to save her from his spell. It stars Bill Skarsgård, Nicholas Hoult and Lily-Rose Depp. Hoult is fast becoming the villain you love to hate. The magnetism of this story seems to be limitless.

"Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl" brings back that favorite stop-motion, animated duo. This time around it's up to Gromit to save his master from an evil figure from his past, who may just have been released through Wallace's latest invention.

#### Happy Holidays and Happy Viewing.

 ELLE FANNING AND TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET IN "A COMPLETE UNKNOWN" PHOTO COURTESY OF SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES
 NICOLE KIDMAN AND HARRIS DICKINSON IN "BABYGIRL" PHOTO COURTESY OF NIKO TAVERNISE/A24
 WILLEM DAFOE IN "NOSFERATU" PHOTO COURTESY OF AIDAN MONAGHAN/FOCUS FEATURES LLC
 "MUFASA: THE LION KING" PHOTO COURTESY OF DISNEY ENTERPRISES, INC.











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BEN TALEI, M.D. PHOTO BY CAIGE MOORE

"Yes, I do feel like I'm too young, but I see it as something I'm doing for aesthetic purposes," he told the Courier. "I'll admit I am influenced by social media–TikTok and Instagram are full of people who look 'perfect.' It's no secret that those who are aesthetically good-looking have a massive following. So, those are the people you naturally end up wanting to emulate and pay so much money to try and look like in some way."

There is no evidence to show the trend will die down any time soon either, with Botox also growing in prevalence for patients even younger than their 20s. The ASPS reported a 9% rise in Botox use for those aged 19 and under in the last year alone–a statistic evidenced across many of Beverly Hills' top clinics. For instance, celebrity plastic surgeon Raj Kanodia, M.D., has patients as young as 16 years old visit him asking for Botox and other cosmetic procedures.

For Ben Talei, M.D., the increase in Baby Botox treatments is symptomatic of a wider overall trend of people opting for cosmetic procedures younger than ever nowadays. Talei, a dual board-certified plastic surgeon, sees many young people in his clinic, the Beverly Hills Center for Plastic and Laser Surgery, where he refers to Baby Botox as "MicroTox."

"Younger patients are trying to intervene early, whether it's girls coming in for their lips or guys doing treatments like PRP to help prevent hair loss," Talei said.

"They ask a lot sooner about Botox, starting from about 21 or 22 years old, in the hope of preventing aging around the forehead and eyes," he added. This contrasts with a decade ago, when his youngest patients at the time tended to be in their late 20s.

#### AN UNNECESSARY INTERVENTION?

"We tell most of the young patients who come in that no, you don't need Botox yet. It's not going to prevent any aging if you start so young," Talei said.

In fact, early intervention may risk more harm than good for young people. While the short-term effects of Botox only last for two to six months, depending on the individual, facial muscles naturally weaken over time. As a result, starting early could lead to unintended consequences later down the line.

According to Kanodia, doing too much too soon may have a reverse effect and accelerate the aging process instead.

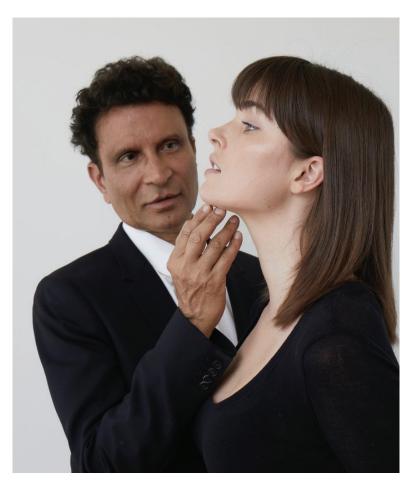
"Repeated heavy Botox injections can make muscles become less active, resulting in a flatter or less dynamic appearance," he said. "This leads to a lack of natural expression ... which can make patients look older over time."

Talei also warned about the risks of injecting a face that is still growing. "The skeletal growth around the jaw can change if someone, for example, botoxes the masseter [jaw] muscle too early in life."

Many young people fall under the illusion that repeated Botox treatments when young are simply "maintenance" procedures and cause no harm.

"I don't worry about [Botox] no longer working once I get older," Legrand said. He plans to continue with repeated injectable treatments as a routine procedure now.

But Truesdale warned that overdoing it when you're younger might impede how well Botox can work when patients reach an older age.



RAJ KANODIA, M.D.

"It is always possible that you can develop antibodies to Botox that can cause it to become less effective. This usually happens over many years, but not always. If it does happen, you can take a break from Botox or switch neurotoxins," he explained.

When an individual builds up resistance to one neurotoxin like Botox, it stops working as well. In this case, it's standard practice for these patients to switch to an alternative like Dysport, Jeuveau or Xeomin.

However, with the long-term effects of Botox and similar procedures still generally unknown due to their relative novelty, it's important to note that risks like building tolerance are very much dependent on the individual.

"I have many patients who started receiving Botox when it first came onto the market, and we haven't seen any loss in efficacy over the years. If administered correctly, Botox can dramatically slow the signs of aging," Desai said.

It's not just Botox, though—many forms of cosmetic procedures carry greater risks for young people than they realize. According to Talei, lasers and radio frequency devices, which are also used as preventative treatments, can inadvertently speed up the aging process for younger faces.

"Young people are taking their beautiful, healthy, youthful skin and definitely aging it more rapidly by using lasers when they absolutely don't need them," he said. "Those are all devices that damage your skin in order for your body to repair, but the damage that you're doing has to be worse than the damage you've already incurred in life, from sun exposure, aging, anything like that. And for a young person, that's almost never the case."

#### BABY BOTOX IN BEVERLY HILLS

Baby Botox is not a uniquely Beverly Hills phenomenon, but the city was amongst the first to catch onto the trend.

The Motykie Med Spa, spearheaded by the renowned Gary Motykie, M.D., who featured on E!'s "Dr. 90210," began offering Baby Botox several years ago in response to growing demand in the community. "Beverly Hills and West Hollywood are definitely at the forefront of this trend," he told the Courier.

Motykie believes there's less of a stigma around cosmetic treatments now in part due to social media, but also because of a growing emphasis on self-care in the city. "Younger individuals view these treatments as part of their overall wellness regimen rather than something to fix a problem later on," he said. "There's a culture of prevention when it comes to aging here."

Many clinicians agree that Beverly Hills' image-conscious reputation has a big role to play in explaining why the city's younger residents feel the need to start cosmetic procedures so early.

For Guzman, young people here feel the pressures of appearance not just from social media but also because of how normalized it is in their local environment. "I feel like younger girls are more worried about their appearance here because their friends or their moms are doing things like Botox, so there's more exposure to it in Beverly Hills compared to Wisconsin or Tennessee, for example," she said. "The environment here does push girls to do things younger and younger."

And with the holiday season fast approaching, the injectors of Beverly Hills are now busier than ever.

"The holidays are the busiest time of the year!" Guzman said. "It's a whirlwind of patients having emergency Botox because they have so many parties to attend, and all want to look their best."

If you're planning on some Botox to look party-ready this year though, remember to factor in recovery time. Most doctors advise giving yourself about two-and-a-half to three weeks before a big event to heal and allow any bruising or swelling to resolve.

Social calendar aside, the festive season also sees a rise in demand for Botox because it's one of the only times of year when people can recover from such procedures in private.

"A lot of people have downtime where they're off work or school, so they choose to do more involved procedures now in the hopes that nobody will notice," Guzman said.



GARY MOTYKIE, M.D.

#### WHEN TO START?

If you want to use the holiday down period to indulge in Botox injections for the first time, there are a few things to keep in mind.

While many doctors agree that the early 20s is far too young to begin receiving regular Botox injections, the matter of when to start if you want to slow down the signs of aging depends entirely on the individual.

"If you're somebody with darker, thicker skin, in general, you don't need to worry about it until your 40s," Talei said.

Motykie believes there's no "one-size-fits-all" approach when it comes to cosmetic procedures. "For most patients, I suggest considering Botox in their mid to late 20s if someone starts to notice fine lines or if they're looking to prevent wrinkles from forming."

But as each treatment is personalized to the individual, the best way to know if you'd benefit from Botox is to schedule a consultation with an accredited doctor.

Josef Hadeed, M.D., Chair of the Patient Safety Committee at the ASPS, advises the following: "Always research the credentials of your practitioner and ensure they are board-certified, as well as having the requisite training and experience. Looking at before and after photos can be helpful to see what kind of results you can expect."

According to Hadeed, there is no standard recommended age at which to begin Botox injections. "Every person ages differently, and everyone has their own specific aesthetic goals," he said.

The ASPS also cautioned that it's important to remember we still don't know the long-term effects on people who start Botox at a younger age.

Regardless of the age one may start Botox injections, all medical treatments carry risks of which patients must be made aware.

"Botox is relatively safe, but [there are] risks such as allergic reactions, over-weakening of muscles and headaches. The most common complication is ptosis, where the muscle is severely weakened causing a fallen eyebrow or eyelid," Truesdale said.

According to Motykie, "Overuse or incorrect placement can lead to unnatural results, such as drooping or an overly stiff appearance."

But the doctors of Beverly Hills are unanimous that the best thing you can do for anti-aging isn't an intervention found in any of their offices.

Rather, it's simply giving your skin adequate sun protection and being consistent with applying a daily SPF. So, maybe a good-quality sunscreen might be a better holiday gift than Botox for the Gen Zers in your life.  $\bullet$ 

#### THE MAYBOURNE BEVERLY HILLS

Located in the stunning indoor-outdoor Terrace restaurant, the Maybourne's afternoon tea service offers a California twist on the classic British tradition. Patrons will sip on Laurent-Perrier Champagne while listening to the cascading fountain under the golden afternoon sun. The Maybourne offers a unique black tea blend created exclusively for their sister hotel, Claridge's in London, which is home to one of the world's most iconic afternoon teas. They also serve an exquisite selection of sweets, including an exotic baba with passion fruit and mango chutney, dark chocolate pot de crème with hazelnut rocher, pavlova with strawberry and toasted pistachio and a coconut religieuse with lemon curd and baked meringue. The tea service is offered from 2-4 p.m. on weekends.

#### THE LONDON

If you are searching for a classic British afternoon tea, look no further than the London Hotel just over the border from Beverly Hills in West Hollywood. The hotel is proud to honor its English roots by working closely with the world-renowned Henrietta Lovell, founder of the Rare Tea Company, to serve a selection of sustainably sourced tea from producers all over the world. Reservations are required for the tea service, which is served from 12:30-3:30 p.m. on the weekends. Tea sandwiches include a matcha green tea crêpe with smoked salmon and crème fraîche and a peach molasses sandwich with chicken and onion profiterole. Sweet treat highlights include white chocolate dipped strawberries, Battenburg pistachio cake and a lemon verbena meringue tart.



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AFTERNOON TEA SPREAD AT THE GETTY CENTER

#### THE GETTY VILLA OR CENTER

Take a step back in time and enjoy afternoon tea by the sea at the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades. The tea service was inspired by the Getty Villa's authentically recreated, first-century Roman gardens and by visitors' fond memories of the beloved Tea Room, which closed in 1997. The sandwiches and pastries feature flavors of the Mediterranean herbs, vegetables and fruits that grow at the Villa. Tea is served at the Villa every Thursday, Saturday and Sunday from 1-3 p.m. If you are searching for something a little closer to home, The Getty Center in Brentwood also offers a tea service from 2-3 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays on the restaurant terrace. Enjoy a selection of savory and sweet snacks as you gaze at the panoramic view. Reservations are required for both services.



## LOUIS VUITTON FINE JEWELRY

