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ISSUE: 194

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FROM THE EDITOR...

Dear Readers,

The cooler season lingers gently across the country, with soft sunlight by day and crisp evenings that invite gatherings outdoors.

This year, February carries particular meaning. The holy month of Ramadan is now upon us, bringing with it the quiet rhythm of reflection, generosity, and community that defines this sacred time. Across Kuwait, mosques, homes, and neighbourhoods come alive each evening with prayer, shared meals, and moments of spiritual connection. Preparations across the country have ensured that worshippers can observe the month comfortably and safely, with hundreds of mosques ready to welcome the faithful for Taraweeh prayers.

Ramadan this year coincides with another deeply meaningful moment for the nation. On February 25 and 26, Kuwait celebrates its National Day and Liberation Day, commemorating both the country's independence and its liberation in 1991. These days remind us not only of history, but of resilience, unity, and the enduring spirit that continues to guide Kuwait forward.

At a time when tensions and uncertainty across parts of the region weigh on many hearts, it is especially important to recognise the stability and care that Kuwait strives to uphold. We extend our sincere appreciation to the Government of Kuwait, the security services, healthcare professionals, and all frontline workers whose dedication ensures that daily life continues with safety and dignity. Their vigilance and commitment are deeply valued.

We also encourage our readers, as always, to remain mindful and cooperative, following official guidance, supporting one another, and preserving the spirit of solidarity that has long defined Kuwait's society.

Within these pages, the February issue celebrates creativity and craftsmanship from across the region and beyond. Our cover interview with Thekrayat Almutairi highlights a powerful voice in Kuwait's evolving beauty culture, while conversations with Maitha Abdalla and Kinda Ghannoum explore the intersection of art, identity, and storytelling. In Fashion, Ramadan collections from leading houses set the tone for elegant seasonal dressing, while Beauty, Travel, and Food invite moments of inspiration and discovery throughout the month.

As Kuwait moves through this season of reflection and national pride, we hope this issue offers both comfort and curiosity, a quiet companion for the evenings of Ramadan and the celebrations that bring us together.

Warm regards,

Jameel Arif

Jameel Arif
Founder & Chief Editor

The Team

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في الشغف..

شرواكم



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CROSSOVER
For Those Who Dare To Cross

DON'T MISS YOUR PLACE ON THE WINNERS' STAGE



CELEBRATE RAMADAN IN EFFORTLESS STYLE WITH 1309 STUDIOS' NEWEST RELEASE; **A WOMAN, UNFOLDING**

This Ramadan, A Woman, Unfolding is a release shaped by presence, emotion, and the quiet confidence of becoming. Designed for meaningful evenings and reflective gatherings, the edit captures the spirit of the holy month through fluid silhouettes, sculpted tailoring, and tactile fabrics that move with intention. Balancing softness and structure, each piece embodies modern modesty with depth; refined, effortless, and deeply personal.







Sculpted Structure
Structure emerges with clarity and confidence. Sculpted tailoring, precise cuts, and layered compositions create a poised, commanding presence while remaining effortless. Deeper hues and refined detailing lend depth and sophistication. The silhouettes hold their shape with intention, expressing a femininity that is composed, grounded, and self-aware. Ideal for formal gatherings and hosting moments, these designs embody modern elegance, where modesty meets architectural refinement.





Draped Silhouettes
Grace reveals itself through movement. Elongated proportions, soft draping, and fluid cuts create silhouettes that feel weightless yet intentional. A palette of understated tones enhances the purity of line, allowing craftsmanship and texture to take focus. The pieces fall effortlessly, skimming the body with a natural elegance that defines contemporary Ramadan dressing; modest, elevated, and quietly striking.

czar.kw

The Alchemy of Success:

How CZAR Fragrances Bottles the Power of Teamwork

Abdulwahab AlRefai
Chief Technical Officer &
Business Development Manager
CZAR Fragrances

awalrefai



When you experience a luxurious scent, you are taking in a carefully crafted symphony of top, heart, and base notes. But behind the elegant glass bottles and the captivating aromas of CZAR Fragrances lies a different kind of symphony, one of human connection, shared vision, and relentless teamwork.

A recent photograph of the CZAR team captures this essence beautifully. Gathered in a brightly lit, elegant space, this large, diverse group stands shoulder-to-shoulder. It is a portrait that reveals the true secret ingredient behind the Kuwaiti brand's rising success: its people.



The Notes of a Masterpiece

Just as a master perfumer relies on a diverse palette of ingredients from around the world to create a signature scent, a thriving brand requires a diverse tapestry of talents. Looking at the CZAR team, you can see the physical embodiment of this harmony:

•**The Base Notes (The Foundation):** The operational crew and frontline staff-seen wearing their branded, comfortable team wear, who are grounded and essential, providing the structure that allows the brand's vision to be executed flawlessly every day.

•**The Heart Notes (The Core):** The managers, coordinators, and brand ambassadors who bridge the gap between an abstract idea and a tangible luxury experience for the customer.

•**The Top Notes (The Vision):** The leadership and creative directors, providing the initial spark of inspiration and the lasting impression that defines the brand's upward trajectory in the market.

"A great fragrance is a chorus of individual elements singing with one voice. A great company is no different."

Unity in Diversity

What strikes the viewer most about the team photo is the genuine warmth. You see individuals in sharp, tailored suits standing proudly alongside colleagues in traditional Gulf dishdashas, and others in casual, modern brand apparel. Men and women representing a myriad of backgrounds and roles are united in a single frame, smiling and sharing a moment of collective pride.

This visual perfectly represents the modern corporate spirit in Kuwait, deeply respecting rich cultural roots while embracing a dynamic, modern, and highly inclusive business environment. It is exactly this seamless blend of local tradition and international modernity that defines CZAR Fragrances' unique olfactory offerings.

More Than Just a Scent

Building a luxury brand that resonates on a deeply personal level requires more than just high-quality ingredients; it requires a team that truly believes in the story they are telling. The camaraderie and shared joy evident in the CZAR team's smiles speak volumes about their internal culture. When the people behind the scenes support one another with this level of unity, the resulting product inevitably carries that same essence of quality, care, and passion to the consumer.

CZAR Fragrances isn't just bottling perfumes. They are bottling the dedication and unity of the people who make it all possible. And if this picture is any indication, the scent of their future success will be incredibly sweet.

Asteri Skincare Sets the Tone for Ramadan Hydration



This Ramadan, Asteri Beauty highlights its skincare collection as an essential hydration ritual designed to support skin through long fasting hours, late nights, and seasonal dehydration. Rooted in Asteri's A-Beauty (Arab Beauty) philosophy and formulated to meet the needs of the region's demanding climate, the skincare range is built on the brand's signature Desert Proof standard helping skin remain resilient, nourished, and comfortable throughout the Holy Month.

A Night-Time Skincare Ritual for Ramadan

As hydration becomes a priority during fasting, Asteri recommends a simple evening routine to restore moisture levels after Iftar and support overnight repair:

Dew Good Restorative Serum – A multi-weight hyaluronic acid serum that delivers deep, immediate hydration to revive skin affected by dryness and fatigue.

Fourtress Moisture Barrier Cream – A long-lasting moisturizer clinically proven to lock in hydration for up to four days while strengthening the skin's natural barrier.

Rainmaker Overnight Miracle Mask – A replenishing overnight treatment that smooths, comforts, and deeply nourishes skin while you sleep.

Together, these three hero products create a calming, effective ritual that helps skin wake up refreshed, plump, and balanced for Suhoor.

Infused with Hyaluronic Acid, Squalane, Desert Date Seed Oil, Pomegranate Extract, and Prickly Pear, the collection delivers:

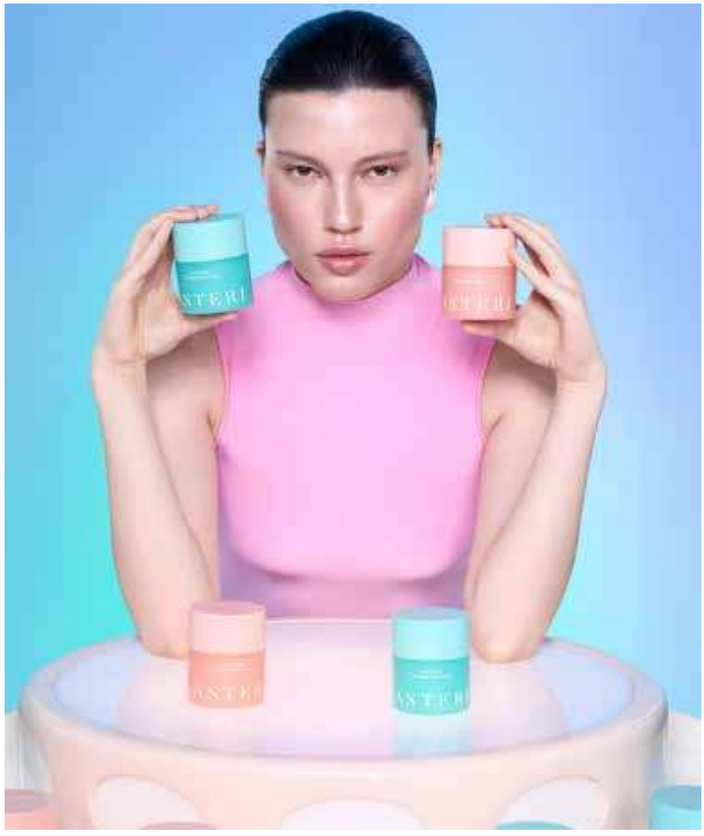
- Long-lasting hydration and comfort
- Improved skin elasticity and firmness
- Strengthened moisture barrier function
- Cooling, soothing relief for dehydrated skin
- Vegan and dermatologically tested formulations

Because at Asteri, healthy skin remains the ultimate canvas during Ramadan and beyond.

As a regional beauty powerhouse, Asteri continues to create high-performance, science-backed formulations made for the Middle East. This Ramadan, the brand invites consumers to embrace moments of restoration with a skincare ritual designed to hydrate, repair, and endure.









sanaaghazal

SMOKEY EYE MAKEUP LOOK

Smokey eye mode:
Soft blend, bold depth, and just the right amount of drama. This smokey eye is giving confidence, mystery, and main character energy all in one look.







ARMANI BEAUTY
Mini Luminous Silk Natural Glow Blurring.

KVD BEAUTY
Tattoo Pencil Liner Waterproof Long-Wear.

URBAN DECAY
Black , 24/7 Eyeshadow.

MAC COSMETICS
Brown, Eye Shadow.

LANCÔME
Mini Lash Idôle Lengthening & Volumizing Mascara.

TOWER 28 BEAUTY
GetSet® Blur + Set Matte Powder Blush.

MAC COSMETICS
Lip Pencil Creamy Lip Liner.

TOWER 28 BEAUTY
ShineOn Lip Jelly Hydrating Non-Sticky, lip oil
.

maithaabdalla

THEATRE OF THE SELF

THE HAUNTED, TENDER WORLDS OF

MAITHA ABDALLA

There is always a stage in Maitha Abdalla's work. Even when no curtain is visible, even when the figures seem suspended in an abandoned landscape or confined within a claustrophobic domestic interior, the sense of performance lingers. Born in 1989 in the United Arab Emirates, Abdalla has built a multidisciplinary practice spanning painting, drawing, sculpture, film, photography, and performance that feels less like a body of work and more like an unfolding psychological theatre.

talent radar/

by José Berrocoso Photography: Maitha Abdalla



Hailing from the UAE, Abdalla belongs to a generation of artists reshaping the region's contemporary art scene through deeply personal yet culturally resonant narratives. Inspired by memory, family stories, and regional folktales, her work moves fluidly between autobiography and myth. It is at once intimate and allegorical, grounded in lived experience yet charged with fantasy.

For Abdalla, theatre is not simply an aesthetic device—it is a methodology. She appropriates theatrical codes, staging, gesture, costume, and character, to confront themes that range from folklore and mythology to gender, social conditioning, and psychology. The stage becomes a safe distance from which she can interrogate the social world she inhabits.

Her compositions oscillate between the abstract and the poetic, often charged with a quiet drama or underlying melancholy. Characters emerge as alter egos, each embodying a different vector of the artist's persona. They are frequently placed in tight, domestic settings, rooms that feel both familiar and unsettling where vulnerability is exposed rather than concealed. These interiors operate like emotional chambers, amplifying tension and introspection.

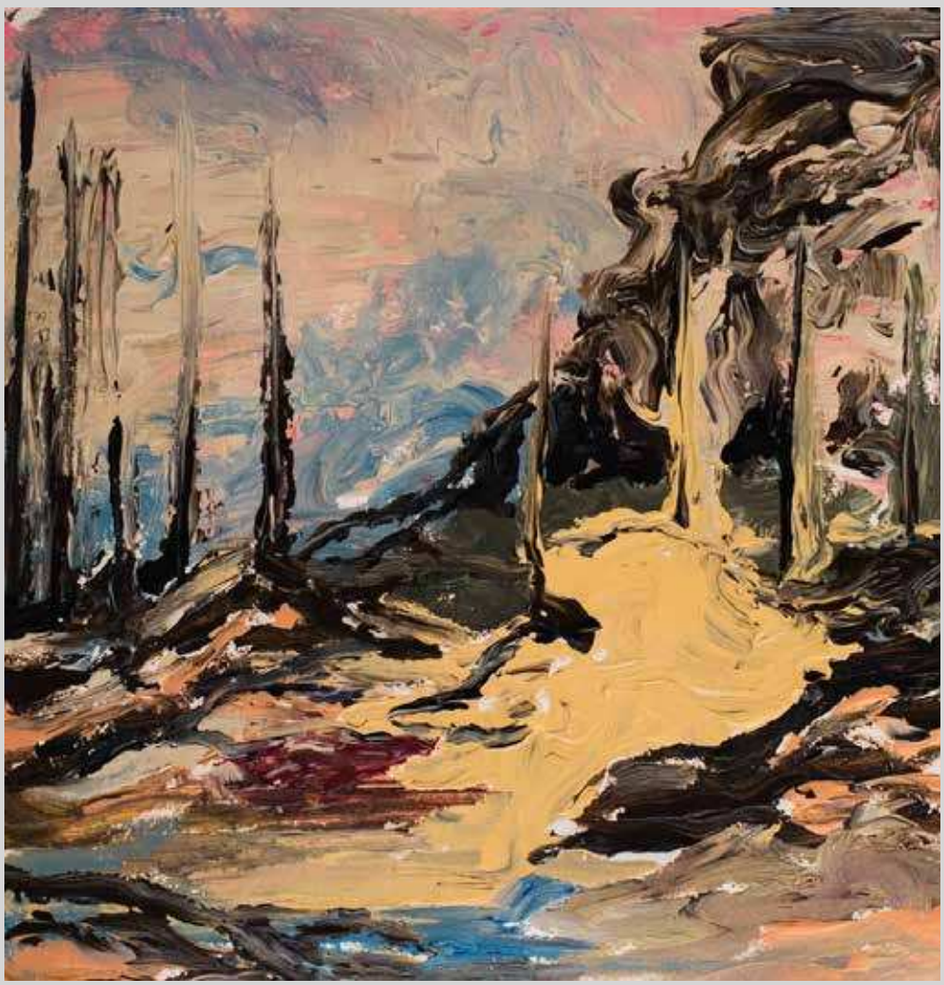
One of the most compelling aspects of Abdalla's visual language is her use of animals. Roosters, pigs, and other creatures populate her canvases and sculptural environments, standing in for distinctly human traits, pride, shame, aggression, innocence. Through them, she humanises instinct while simultaneously revealing its absurdity. The animal becomes a mirror, reflecting both societal archetypes and private anxieties.

Abandoned landscapes also recur in her work, tapping into darker, more introspective themes. These spaces bare, muted, suspended in time suggest psychological terrains rather than geographical ones. They are sites of confrontation, where memory and fantasy collide.

Abdalla's process is inseparable from performance. Painting, for her, is a bodily act. She applies dense layers of oil and acrylic with her fingertips, tracing the contours of her own figure with gestural charcoal smears. The canvas becomes an extension of her physical presence; the act of making is itself a continuation of the staged narrative.

This tactile, almost ritualistic engagement with materials intensifies the emotional register of the work. The surfaces feel laboured, layered, insistent like memories that refuse to fade.















Drawing inspiration from storytelling traditions across cultures, Abdalla intentionally blurs the boundaries between Eastern and Western perspectives. Folklore from the Gulf coexists with universal archetypes; personal memory intersects with collective mythology. The result is a surreal visual language that challenges fixed notions of identity and belonging.

In doing so, Abdalla situates her practice within broader global conversations around gender roles, mental health, and social constructs yet she does so without didacticism. Instead, she invites the viewer into a space of ambiguity, where meaning is not imposed but felt.

At its core, Maitha Abdalla's practice is an ongoing exploration of the self. Each character she creates is a fragment an aspect of her psyche externalised and examined under the theatrical spotlight. Each setting becomes a psychological landscape where vulnerability, conditioning, and desire are quietly negotiated.

In an ever-changing world grappling with questions of identity and belonging, Abdalla's work feels both timely and timeless. It reminds us that the most compelling dramas are often the internal ones and that sometimes, the only way to confront them is to step onto the stage.





FormerlyMe is an online movement to motivate and inspire people to become the best versions of themselves by showing them my journey in trying new workouts, lifestyles, or adventures every 90 days. Every post, update, and video is "formerly me" as I endeavor to become the best version of myself and become FormerlyMe. Each month, CP Magazine will showcase part of my journey. I hope these glimpses in turn inspire and motivate you to start your own journey.

FormerlyMe.com presents:
"On the Go: Grand Turk Island"

formerly me/ by Jim West



Nestled in the turquoise waters of the Turks and Caicos Islands, Grand Turk is a small yet captivating island that offers visitors a blend of rich history, vibrant local culture, and stunning natural beauty. Known for its pristine beaches, laid-back atmosphere, and crystal-clear waters, this island paradise is an ideal destination for those looking to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life. At just seven miles long and one-and-a-half miles wide, Grand Turk is easy to explore, making it perfect for a day trip or a leisurely vacation.

The best way to navigate Grand Turk is by renting a golf cart—a fun and convenient way to zip around the island's compact streets and scenic coastline. With limited traffic and a relaxed pace of life, driving a golf cart allows you to explore at your own pace, stopping wherever inspiration strikes. Whether you're visiting historic landmarks, browsing local shops, or simply taking in the breathtaking ocean views, this mode of transport ensures you won't miss a thing.



No trip to Grand Turk is complete without a visit to the Grand Turk Lighthouse, located at the northern tip of the island. This historic landmark, built in 1852, offers stunning panoramic views of the island and the surrounding ocean. The lighthouse grounds are also home to a collection of wild donkeys that add a charming, playful touch to the experience. With its sweeping vistas and historical significance, the lighthouse is a must-see for any visitor.



As you cruise along the island's oceanfront road, you'll be treated to breathtaking views of the turquoise-blue sea. This scenic route is lined with small market stalls where local artisans sell handcrafted goods, souvenirs, and traditional items. Stopping here offers an opportunity to pick up unique treasures and engage with friendly locals who are always eager to share stories about their island.



Grand Turk's beaches are the epitome of Caribbean perfection, boasting powdery white sand and calm, crystal-clear waters. Whether you're lounging in the sun, taking a refreshing dip, or snorkeling along the vibrant coral reefs just offshore, these beaches offer an idyllic escape. The combination of the soft sand and the stunning ocean backdrop creates a postcard-worthy setting that's perfect for relaxing or capturing unforgettable photos.





Grand Turk's warm and sunny weather makes it a year-round destination, but the best time to visit is during the dry season, from December to April. This period offers ideal conditions for enjoying outdoor activities and exploring the island without worrying about rain.

With its charming streets, historic landmarks, and unspoiled natural beauty, Grand Turk is a destination that invites you to slow down and savor the moment. Whether you're zipping around in a golf cart, exploring the lighthouse, or relaxing on its pristine beaches, this island paradise promises an experience that's as relaxing as it is unforgettable.



Follow my journey online at FormerlyMe.com and on the YouTube channel. Next month I will cover more of the unique experiences I had in 2022-2026. Until next time this has been FormerlyMe!

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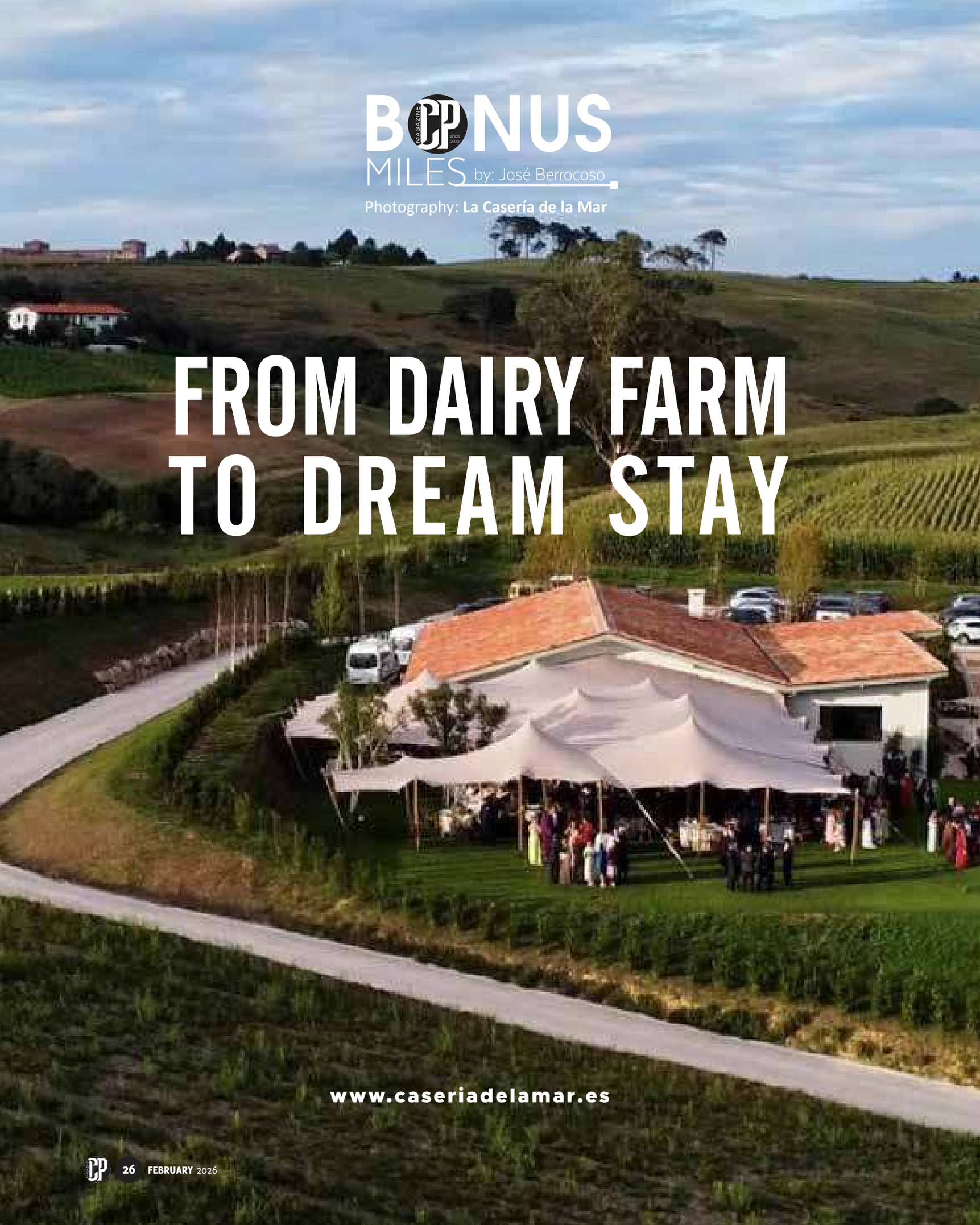
BONUS MILES by: José Berrocoso

Photography: **La Casería de la Mar**

FROM DAIRY FARM TO DREAM STAY



www.caseriadelamar.es



On Spain's wild northern coast, between the misty peaks of the Picos de Europa and the restless Cantabrian Sea, a 19th-century dairy farm has been quietly reborn as one of the country's most soulful boutique stays. In Comillas, where grand architecture meets Atlantic drama, La Casería de la Mar redefines rural luxury with just eight rooms, orchard-scented mornings, and a devotion to the art of slowing down.





There are places in the world that remain undiscovered, not because they lack beauty, but because their magic is subtle, waiting for the traveller who seeks depth over spectacle. Cantabria, on Spain's northern coast, is precisely such a destination. Perched between the verdant mountains of the Picos de Europa and the turbulent Cantabrian Sea, this small autonomous community is a tapestry of contrasts: jagged peaks dusted with snow in winter, rolling meadows dotted with wildflowers in spring, estuaries and marshes that glisten in the soft northern light, and beaches so pristine they seem untouched by time.

The region is a haven for those who value slow travel. It is not a place to rush; it is a place to savour. Charming villages such as Potes, where cobbled streets and stone bridges lead the way to mountain trails, or Santillana del Mar, whose medieval architecture is preserved as though frozen in time, invite lingering walks. Liérganes captivates with its quaint waterfront and artisanal shops, while Bárcena Mayor reveals a perfectly preserved rural landscape. And then there is Comillas, a coastal jewel where history, architecture, and culture coalesce in harmony. Here, the Palacio de Sobrellano, the Universidad Pontificia's gardens, and Gaudí's playful El Capricho stand as monuments to creativity, taste, and grandeur, all within the intimacy of a small seaside town.



It is in this northern idyll that La Casería de la Mar has quietly opened its doors, offering an entirely new perspective on luxury. Housed in a meticulously restored 1896 dairy farm on 19 hectares of private meadows and orchards, the boutique hotel comprises just eight rooms. This is a property that feels simultaneously grand and personal, where the sophistication of a five-star hotel meets the privacy, warmth, and freedom of a private country house. Guests are free to wander through the estate's orchards, gaze at the snow-capped peaks of the Picos de Europa, or watch the waters of the Ría de la Rabia shimmer in the distance. It is the kind of place where time seems to stretch and the air itself invites reflection.









The restoration of La Casería de la Mar was a labour of love. Over a year and a half of planning, permissions, and painstaking construction was devoted to preserving the rustic charm of the original farm while introducing contemporary comforts. Spaces were opened to let the landscape become part of the interior, creating a seamless dialogue between inside and out. The hotel's aesthetic, curated by Chesu Puente and guided by Lara Alonso del Cid, co-founder of Grupo Mentidero, reflects a refined homeliness: English fabrics, antique Christofle cutlery, Limoges porcelain, bespoke furniture, each element chosen to complement the natural surroundings while exuding quiet sophistication. Each room is distinct – some with vaulted ceilings, some abuhardilladas with large windows – but all invite contemplation and relaxation.

At the heart of La Casería de la Mar is its kitchen, a space that honours the traditions of Northern Spain. Copper moulds hang alongside a rustic fireplace, a reminder of the building's origins. Meals are intimate, personalised affairs: anchovies, fresh seafood, and produce from the estate, as well as cakes baked with lemons grown on the property. Breakfasts and dinners are served on demand, allowing guests to savour each meal at their own pace, with the flexibility of a private home rather than a public restaurant. Here, gastronomy becomes part of the slow tourism ethos, encouraging diners to linger over flavours and conversation alike.

The property embraces seasonal travel. Closed in August to avoid the tourist rush, it instead invites guests to explore Cantabria in autumn and winter, when the coastline is dramatic, the Atlantic winds sharp, and the estate's fireplaces beckon. The boutique hotel's small spa offers an infrared sauna and natural stone pool, perfect for warming up after a brisk walk through the surrounding meadows. For the active traveller, electric bicycles allow exploration of Monte Corona, while horseback rides and guided cultural excursions provide curated access to the region's natural and historical treasures.

What makes La Casería de la Mar exceptional is its ability to offer both privacy and connection. Eight rooms mean that exclusivity is guaranteed, yet families or small groups can rent the entire property, enjoying the freedom of a private estate. Technology is integrated discreetly, never intruding on the sense of place; textiles, finishes, and lighting are chosen to enhance comfort and serenity. The luxury here is not ostentatious; it is measured in attention, presence, and the pleasure of moving through a space deliberately designed to slow you down.

Beyond the hotel, Comillas and the surrounding area offer countless experiences for the curious traveller. Stroll along the Ría de la Rabia, explore the Monte Corona trails, visit El Capricho de Gaudí, or wander through the town's historic centre. Each village nearby, Santillana del Mar, Liérganes, San Vicente de la Barquera is a discovery, revealing history, artisan craft, and nature in equal measure. For the nature lover, the Parque Natural de Oyambre offers extensive beaches, marshes, and walking trails that connect directly with the Cantabrian coast.













La Casería de la Mar is not simply a hotel; it is a philosophy of travel, a sanctuary for those who wish to immerse themselves fully in a place. It celebrates slow living, curated luxury, and the art of presence. From the moment guests cross its threshold, the estate becomes a private stage for exploration, contemplation, and discovery. Every sunrise over the Picos de Europa, every walk along the orchard paths, every quiet evening by the fire becomes a memory framed by intention and care.

For those seeking to disconnect from the world, yet indulge in comfort, La Casería de la Mar is the embodiment of what Cantabria offers at its best: space, beauty, calm, and authenticity, where the pleasure of travel lies not in ticking off sites, but in savouring each moment.

In the end, Cantabria is more than a destination, it is a revelation. And La Casería de la Mar is the perfect place to witness it. A hotel that whispers the promise of unhurried mornings, spectacular views, intimate luxury, and the quiet joy of simply being. Here, time slows, senses awaken, and travel becomes a meditation, not a race.

CELEBRATE RAMADAN WITH RABANNE ONE MILLION GOLDEN OUD



Celebrate Ramadan with Rabanne Million Gold Oud: Supremely powerful and intense, a fragrance as precious as gold enriched with the most majestic ingredient of perfumery. Its magnificent emerald jewel shines bright to echo the jewel of Kings. An intense ambery expression of absolute refinement for men.

One Million Golden Oud represents a harmonious blend of Western sophistication and Middle Eastern opulence. This captivating fragrance is the newest addition to Rabanne's iconic One Million Collection - a legacy of exceptional scents for men

Indulge in the opulence of the One Million Collection, where each fragrance represents a chapter in this enchanting story:

One Million Golden Oud: The jewel of the collection, capturing the essence of the Middle East with its harmonious blend of oud, violet, and saffron, infusing Ramadan with enchantment and mystique.

Let the scents weave together to create unforgettable memories during this special time.



PARURE ATELIER UNVEILS ITS ROSE CUT COLLECTION



The “Rose” cut is among the earliest diamond cuts, originating in Belgium in the 15th century. It takes its name from the delicate arrangement of its facets, which unfold across the surface of the stone like the petals of a flower.

Unlike modern cuts, precious “roses” have no fixed number of facets. Instead, each stone reveals its own geometry, guided by the natural form, clarity and colour of the raw stone. As a result, every Rose cut demands time, patience and the intuitive hand of a master artisan.

Such openness leaves little room for concealment, exceptional clarity is essential, as even the smallest inclusion is visible to the naked eye.





SPORTMAX
FALL/WINTER 2026 RUNWAY SHOW COLLECTION





Fall Winter 2026 Sportmax is a story of dynamism. Like its core woman, this is a collection on the move, with shapeshifting garments and convert- ible looks, and an emphasis on the graphic. There is no clutter weighing the Sportmax woman down.

As always, the collection's bedrock is the Sportmax-signature doublé. Here, it is a canvas for experimentation with shape, notably around the neckline. Juxtaposition is another key theme: suede against leather, detachable contrast collars, sudden shifts from long to short, matte to shine, sheer to opaque. An essential piece is the layerable, mix-and-match gilet, with its over- size origami collar. Like much here, the gilet was conceived with versatility in mind, a motif running through the collection's wraps and cinches, and even its wear-anywhere deconstructed tailoring.

Another theme is lightness. This is a Fall Winter collection unafraid of show- ing skin. It is its own textural and graphic effect, sleekly deployed in body - skimming knits and jerseys, and part of a general paring back, a seeking for the essential in each silhouette. The collection's sole embellishments are its hints of sparkle, its sexy slashes, its contrast trims, and its flashes of color. This restraint leaves breathing room for forceful accessories printed leather earrings with coloured crocodile effect and clutches like 'Baldessari dots'; great ropes of metallic fringe. Like the rest of the collection, Texan boots and wedge heels are designed with the Sportmax woman top of mind: refined, wanting more from fashion than nostalgia, understanding and demanding quality, with places to go.















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& LIFESTYLE EXPERIENCES
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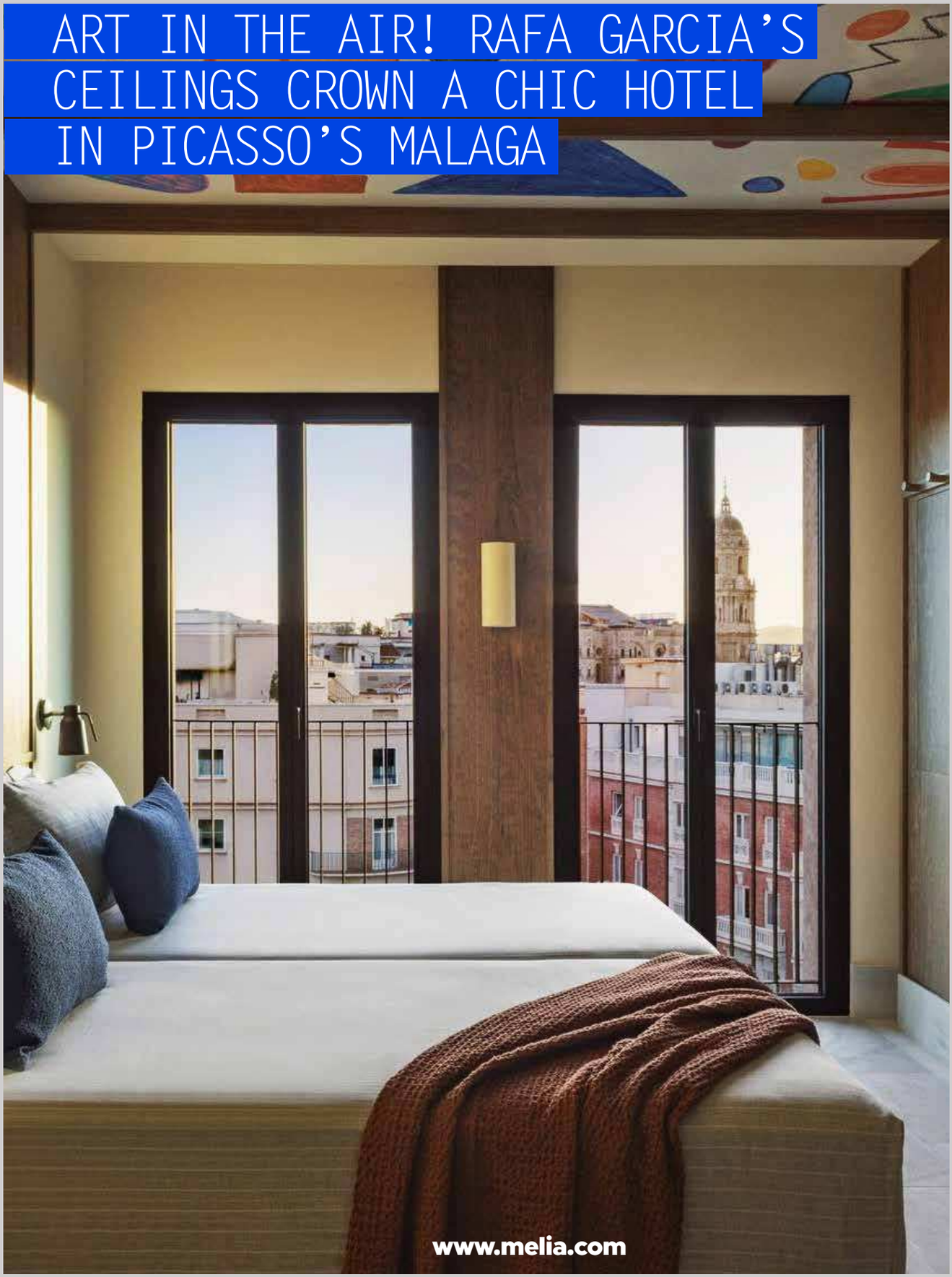
كافتريا الضاحية

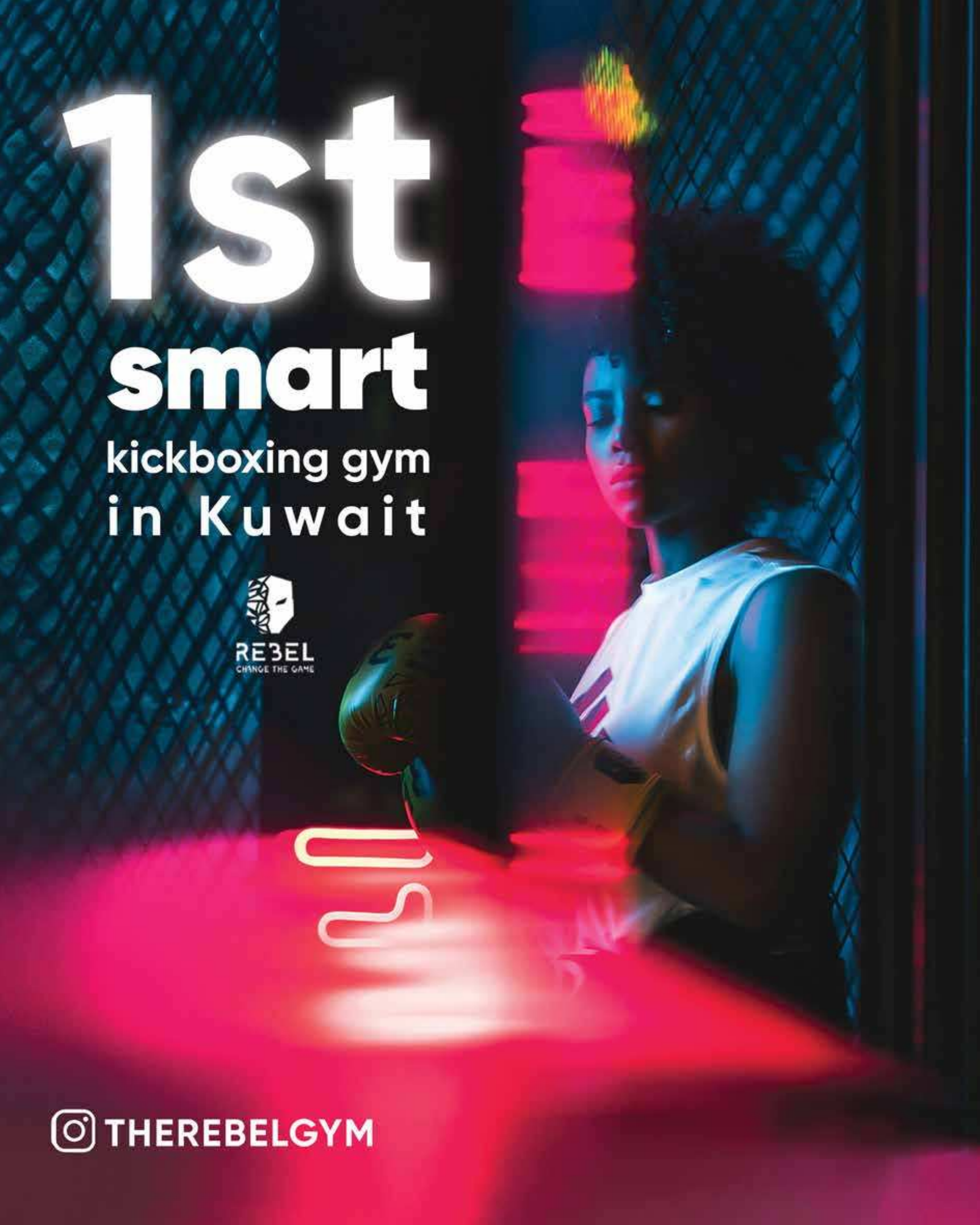
ART IN THE AIR! RAFA GARCIA'S CEILINGS CROWN A CHIC HOTEL IN PICASSO'S MALAGA



From the rooms at ME Málaga, the historic centre of this southern Spanish city comes into view, with the Cathedral of Málaga rising above a dense urban landscape shaped by centuries of cultural exchange. Located just steps from Picasso's birthplace, the hotel places art at the centre of its identity, with original works by Picasso and Miró presiding over the lobby. That artistic sensibility extends throughout the building, most notably in the ceilings conceived in collaboration with designer Rafa García, whose interventions introduce a sculptural rhythm to the interiors. This new five-star combines strong visual character with ME+ personalised service and a refined culinary offering, positioning itself as a cultural address within Málaga's historic heart.

a room with a view/

by travel-expert José Berrocoso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smart
kickboxing gym
in Kuwait
REBEL
CHANGE THE GAME
THEREBELGYM



top cyber pro/tech tips

Malware is one of the most common digital threats, and it often sneaks in through risky downloads, pirated software, or compromised websites. The safest approach is to stick with official app stores and publisher websites, steering clear of "cracks" or "keygens" that are notorious for hiding malicious code. Keeping your operating system, browser, and apps updated is equally important, since automatic updates quickly close security holes. Adding a reputable, always-on security suite with web protection provides another layer of defense.

Limiting your exposure also comes down to how you use your computer day to day. Running a standard user account instead of an administrator account reduces the damage if malware does slip through. You can further minimize risk by using a separate browser profile with fewer extensions, which lowers the attack surface. Disabling or restricting macros in documents is another smart step, since attackers often exploit them to deliver malicious payloads.

Backups are your ultimate safety net. Automated backups to both a cloud service and a local external drive ensure you have clean copies of your files if ransomware strikes. For maximum protection, unplug the external drive after each backup so it can't be encrypted along with your system. Just as important, test your restore process occasionally so you know it works before you're in a crisis. Physical media can also be a hidden danger. USB drives and other removable devices should always be scanned before opening files, especially if they come from unfamiliar sources. Malware can spread quickly through these vectors, bypassing many of the protections you rely on. Treat every unknown file with caution, and don't assume a familiar-looking document is safe.

Recognizing the signs of infection is just as critical as prevention. If your device suddenly slows down, displays unexpected pop-ups, or redirects your browser, disconnect from the internet immediately. Running a full system scan can often identify and contain the problem before it spreads further. When in doubt, it's better to seek professional help than to experiment with fixes that could make the situation worse.

Defending against malware doesn't require advanced technical skills, just consistent, thoughtful habits. By combining safe download practices, limited user privileges, reliable backups, and cautious handling of files, you can dramatically reduce your risk. Add in a trusted security suite and a willingness to act quickly when something seems wrong, and you'll be well prepared. With a little vigilance, everyday users can stay one step ahead of malware.

Samsung raises the bar for AI-native mobile innovation with Galaxy S26 Series and Galaxy Buds4 Series

Samsung Gulf Electronics announced the Galaxy S26 Series, powered by the most intuitive, proactive and adaptive Galaxy AI experiences yet and designed to simplify the tasks people do on their phones every day. From managing plans and finding information to capturing and refining content, Galaxy S26 reduces the effort and number of steps required to get things done. As Samsung's third-generation AI phones, Galaxy S26, S26+ and S26 Ultra handle complex tasks in the background, allowing users to focus on results rather than how the technology works. Samsung's latest devices are now available for pre-order for customers across Kuwait until March 10.



The most intuitive Galaxy AI experience yet

Built with intelligence at its core, the all-new Galaxy S26 Series is designed to anticipate intent, support everyday decision making and deliver seamless experiences, making everyday actions feel simpler. Using proactive, context-aware support through features like Now Nudge, Now Brief and an upgraded Circle to Search with Google to deliver timely suggestions, personalized reminders and enhanced multi-object recognition. The series also introduces an upgraded Bixby as a more conversational device agent that lets users navigate and adjust settings using natural language, alongside a choice of integrated agents including Gemini and Perplexity.

Privacy and security in the age of AI

As consumers increasingly use their phones in shared environments, from their daily commute on public transport to co-working and travel, the Galaxy S26 Ultra also introduces the industry's first built-in Privacy Display, which controls how pixels disperse light to keep content clear for the user while limiting side-angle visibility for others, with customizable activation and adjustable modes like Partial Screen Privacy for notifications and Maximum Privacy Protection for added discretion. Smarter software safeguards also run quietly in the background, including AI-powered Call Screening that helps identify unknown callers and summarize intent.

Effortless pro-level photography, video, and editing

The Galaxy S26 Series makes pro-level photography, video, and editing feel effortless for everyone. Enhanced Nightography delivers clearer low-light photos and video for real-life night moments. Together with Galaxy AI tools that support faster, more natural on-device creation and editing, the Galaxy S26 Series helps users capture, refine, and share content with fewer steps.

Powerful all-day performance

Engineered for dependable all-day performance, the Galaxy S26 Series is built on the most powerful Galaxy S hardware to date and powered by a Snapdragon® 8 Elite Gen 5 Mobile Platform chipset optimized for AI performance, power efficiency, and thermal management. Super Fast Charging 3.0 now reduces downtime by charging up to 75% in 30 minutes

HAIR DRAMA CO. PRESENTS ITS RAMADAN EDIT











As Ramadan approaches, moments of reflection, togetherness and elegance take centre stage. Hair Drama Co. unveils a refined edit of hair accessories created with the spirit of the Holy Month in mind.

Thoughtfully curated for Ramadan moments, from intimate iftars to peaceful suhoor gatherings, the Ramadan Edit brings together delicately embellished headbands, pearl-accented pins, sculpted metallic styles and satin scrunchies in refined neutral hues, offering a soft, understated glow to any Ramadan look.

The collection pairs seamlessly with flowing abayas, kaftans and eveningwear, offering a subtle finishing touch that feels both intentional and graceful. Whether worn to frame a sleek bun or softly accent loose waves, each piece reflects Hair Drama Co.'s signature balance of craftsmanship and modern design.

LACOSTE RAMADAN EDIT
A SEASON OF EASE AND TOGETHERNESS



As the Holy Month unfolds, Lacoste's Ramadan campaign with Moatasem Al Nahar and Leen Brinjikji captures the quiet poetry of the season, shared mornings, reflective pauses, and the warmth of gathering at sunset. Extending this intimate narrative, the exclusive Ramadan Edit translates those moments into a wardrobe designed for comfort, intention, and effortless refinement.

Created exclusively for the GCC, the capsule moves seamlessly from suhoor to iftar, balancing softness with structure and ease with polish. A serene palette of butter yellow and rich chocolate brown sets the tone, warm, grounding, and luminous under golden Ramadan light.

For daytime calm, breezy blouses, fluid skirts, and elevated polos offer relaxed silhouettes in breathable fabrics that feel gentle against the skin. Coordinated tracksuit sets and tailored brown denim bring a contemporary edge while maintaining comfort for long days in motion.

As evening arrives, the collection transitions gracefully into iftar-ready dressing. Flowing skirts paired with structured tops, refined knitwear, and coordinated sets create silhouettes that feel polished yet unforced, ideal for family gatherings, intimate dinners, and nights that stretch beautifully beyond the table.

Rooted in the authenticity reflected through Moatasem and Leen's natural chemistry, the Ramadan Edit is designed not just to be worn, but to be lived in, pieces that honour the rhythm of the month while embodying Lacoste's signature balance of modern elegance and timeless ease.

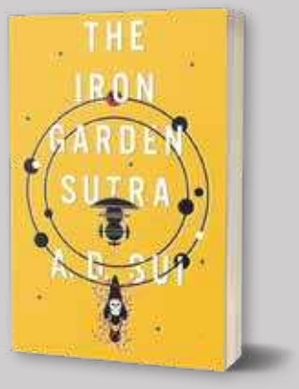








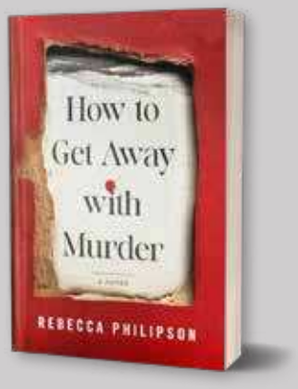
book releases/february



The Iron Garden Sutra

A.D. Sui

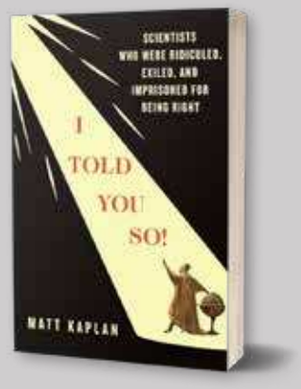
In a distant future shaped by ritual and memory Vessel Iris serves the Starlit Order, travelling between stars to perform funeral rites for the departed and guide their spirits toward the Infinite Light. Despite the comfort he hopes to offer, Iris remains isolated, finding his only steady companionship in an artificial intelligence that assists his duties. When the long-lost generation ship Counsel of Nicaea suddenly reappears after a thousand years, scholars rush to examine the vessel's history, and Iris is assigned to honour the forgotten dead. Inside, corridors have transformed into dense gardens of moss and winding vines. Yet the ship hides more than relics. Something ancient endured through centuries of silence, watching the visitors as they search for answers. As fear grows and the team disappears one by one, Iris and his artificial companion must confront a presence beyond human knowledge and decide whether faith and reason can preserve hope.



How to Get Away with Murder

Rebecca Philipson

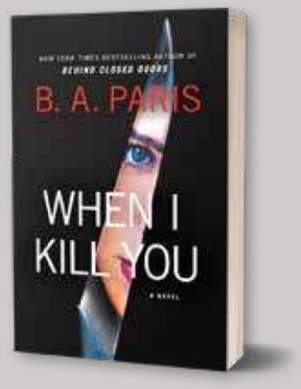
Detective Inspector Samantha Hansen has spent six months away from duty after a severe breakdown shook her confidence. When a fourteen-year-old girl is discovered murdered in a London park, Sam seizes the chance to return to Scotland Yard and prove she can still solve the city's darkest crimes. The investigation offers little evidence except a curious clue: a self-help book titled How to Get Away with Murder by the mysterious Denver Brady. In its unsettling chapters, Brady claims to explain how an unidentified killer could commit crimes without being caught. As the book spreads across the internet, copycat fears grow and Sam begins to suspect the author may know far more than he admits. Determined to bring justice for young Charlotte, Sam must trust her instincts again while tracking the truth behind Brady's identity before another life is lost and the killer finally escapes the law entirely forever today perhaps again.



I Told You So!: Scientists Who Were Ridiculed, Exiled, and Imprisoned for Being Right

Matt Kaplan

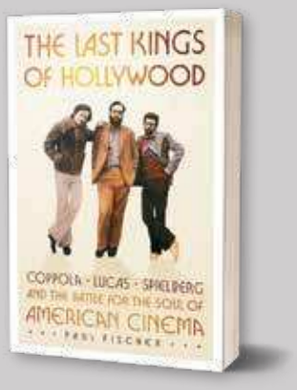
For more than twenty years science journalist Matt Kaplan has reported on discoveries that reshape how humanity understands the world. Again and again he noticed a troubling pattern: revolutionary ideas often face ridicule or hostility before gaining acceptance. In this lively work of popular science, Kaplan explores the stories of researchers who persisted despite scorn, exile, or imprisonment. Central among them is Hungarian physician Ignaz Semmelweis, who realised that deadly childbed fever spread because doctors failed to clean their hands. Rather than celebrate the discovery, many colleagues rejected it, offended by the suggestion that their practices caused harm. Kaplan also revisits figures such as Galileo and Nobel Prize laureate Katalin Karikó, alongside lesser-known scientists who challenged flawed assumptions about medicines and laboratory research. Through vivid storytelling he reveals how progress often depends on courage, persistence, and institutions willing to question tradition and listen carefully to evidence when uncomfortable truths emerge last.



When I Kill You

B.A. Paris

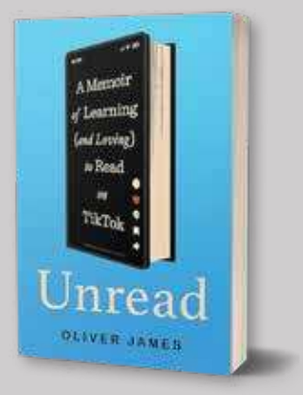
Nell Masters is convinced someone is following her. Every journey to work brings the uneasy sense of watchful eyes, while silent telephone calls and an enormous bouquet without a card deepen her dread. Nell hides a past she has never revealed, not even to her partner Alex, who carries secrets of his own. Fourteen years earlier, when she lived under the name Elle Nugent, she saw a fellow student named Bryony Sanders enter a stranger's car. When Bryony was later found murdered, Elle became consumed by the need to identify the man she believed responsible, Brett Parker. Her relentless suspicion led her down a dangerous path that changed everything. Now Nell wonders whether someone from those years has discovered her new identity. Is she imagining the threat, or has the hunter become the hunted? As tension rises, buried truths begin to surface, and Nell must confront the past before it destroys.



The Last Kings of Hollywood

Paul Fische

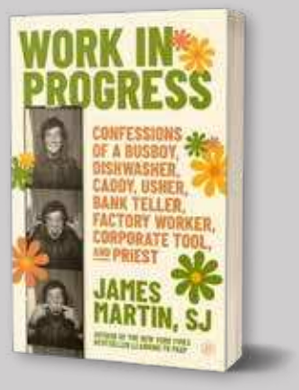
In the late nineteen-sixties the old Hollywood studio system was fading and three determined young filmmakers prepared to change American cinema. Francis Ford Coppola, George Lucas, and Steven Spielberg met early in their careers and formed a complicated friendship built on rivalry and encouragement. Spielberg pursued steady studio opportunities, while Lucas and Coppola sought independence by founding an alternative company in San Francisco where they could create films beyond strict corporate control. Drawing on extensive research and interviews with collaborators and family members, Paul Fischer traces how their ambitions shaped an extraordinary era. During the following fifteen years they competed and supported one another while producing landmark works that redefined popular storytelling. Their successes brought global fame and immense influence, yet also tested loyalty and vision. This vivid narrative explores friendship, creativity, risk, and the struggle to transform an industry while chasing bold cinematic dreams that changed film history forever aterwards.



Unread: A Memoir of Learning (and Loving) to Read on TikTok

Oliver James

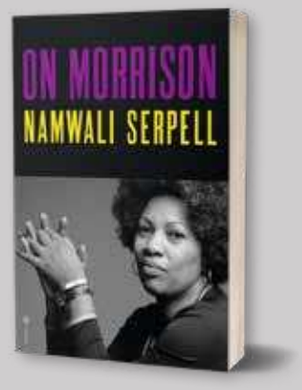
Oliver James left school unable to read comfortably, the result of learning difficulties and years of neglect. For a long time he managed daily life by hiding the problem, joining millions of adults who struggle with written words. At thirty-four he decided to change everything. Determined to gain the skill that had always eluded him, Oliver began documenting his attempt to teach himself to read through short online videos. Viewers followed his honest accounts of frustration, persistence, and small victories, and he soon inspired a vast community of supporters. In this reflective memoir, Oliver shares the deeper story behind that journey, exploring the twenty-one books that guided his progress. Within a single year he moved from struggling with simple menus to pursuing the ambitious goal of reading one hundred books in twelve months. His experience shows how stories nurture empathy, courage, and personal growth while reminding readers that learning can begin.



Work in Progress

James Martin

In this warm and humorous memoir, writer and Jesuit priest James Martin reflects on the many unexpected jobs that shaped his younger years. Long before entering religious life, he worked as a busboy, dishwasher, caddy, usher, factory worker, bank teller, and office employee, often stepping into unfamiliar roles without training or confidence. Each position brought awkward moments, mistakes, and small triumphs as he learned how demanding everyday work could be. Set largely during the nineteen-sixties and seventies, the narrative follows Martin from boyhood into early adulthood while capturing the uncertainty of growing up and searching for direction. Through lively anecdotes he recalls chaotic kitchens, noisy factory floors, and the challenge of earning money while discovering personal responsibility. Photographs from his youth accompany the stories, adding a personal dimension to the memories. Above all, Martin reflects on the simple lessons these experiences taught about humility, kindness, patience, and perseverance.



On Morrison

Namwali Serpel

Toni Morrison stands among the most influential writers of the modern era, yet her work can appear daunting because of its richness and complexity. In this thoughtful study, novelist and professor Namwali Serpell guides readers through Morrison's extraordinary body of writing. Drawing on her experience teaching university courses devoted to the author, Serpell examines novels, criticism, dramatic pieces, and poetry, revealing the bold experiments with voice, structure, and history that define Morrison's artistry. Rather than presenting distant admiration, Serpell offers close readings and contextual insights that illuminate recurring themes of memory, community, power, and imagination. Archival discoveries and thoughtful commentary help readers see familiar works from new perspectives while also introducing lesser-known texts. The result is both an accessible introduction and a rigorous exploration of literary craft. Through this dialogue between devoted reader and celebrated writer, Serpell demonstrates how Morrison's achievements reshape our understanding of storytelling.

GENTLE FUSION



Discover the delicacy of
damascus rose, apple & sandalwood



Directed by: **Ruben Fleischer**
Written by: **Michael Lesslie, Paul Wernick, Rhett Reese, Seth Grahame-Smith, Eric Warren Singer**

The *Now You See Me* franchise has always leaned heavily on its ensemble, with recurring cast members like Jesse Eisenberg, Woody Harrelson, Dave Franco, and Isla Fisher forming the core identity of the Horsemen. Their chemistry, banter, and shared history were just as important as the tricks themselves. *Now You See Me: Now You Don't* attempts to continue that legacy, but in doing so, it misunderstands what actually kept audiences invested in the first place.

Now here comes the spoilers...

Rather than centering the story on the original Horsemen and their dynamic, the film shifts focus toward a new group of illusionists built around deepfake technology. While some of the legacy characters are still present, they're noticeably sidelined, reduced to cameos or support roles that lack narrative weight. This decision strips the franchise of its emotional continuity, making the sequel feel disconnected from the very foundation it was built on.

The plot itself is thin and largely predictable. The reliance on CGI-driven illusions replaces the tactile, cleverly staged tricks that once defined the series. Instead of watching characters outthink their opponents, we're watching technology do the heavy lifting. The result is a heist that unfolds exactly as expected, with reveals telegraphed well before they're meant to surprise.

The new characters fail to compensate for this loss. They're underwritten, unengaging, and never feel like worthy successors to the Horsemen. Their motivations barely extend beyond serving the plot, and without strong personalities or clear stakes, it's difficult to care whether they succeed or fail.

To be fair, the familiar cast chemistry still flickers in isolated moments, briefly reminding the audience why the franchise worked at all. A few magic sequences manage to capture a hint of the old energy, but those moments feel more like echoes than evolutions.

Ultimately, *Now You See Me: Now You Don't* is flashy, fast, and occasionally entertaining but it's also hollow. By sidelining its strongest recurring characters and replacing clever misdirection with digital shortcuts, the film loses the sense of wonder that once defined the series. The biggest trick here isn't the heist, it's convincing the audience this franchise still has something new to say.

With that, thanks for reading Writing Movie 'WRONGS'.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THEKRAYAT AL-MUTAIRI

The Woman Behind Kuwait's Curly Hair Movement

Interview by: **Jameel Arif**

In a region where straight hair styling once dominated the beauty landscape, **Thekrayat Almutairi** has carved out a space dedicated entirely to celebrating natural curls. A passionate curly hair specialist, entrepreneur, and founder of **The Curly Studio Kuwait**, Thekrayat has become a leading voice for women embracing their natural texture with confidence.

Her journey began with a personal experience, learning to understand and appreciate her own curls at a time when expert guidance was difficult to find in Kuwait and across the Gulf. What started as a search for knowledge soon turned into a mission to create change. Today, through her work as a stylist, salon owner, influencer, and creator of vegan curly hair products, she is helping reshape how curly hair is understood and cared for in the region.

As the owner of **The Curly Studio Kuwait**, a franchise of the Middle East's first curly hair salon concept, Thekrayat has built a space where expertise, education, and personalised care come together. Her goal is simple: to empower people with curls to embrace their natural beauty and feel confident in their own hair.

Beyond her professional achievements, Thekrayat is also a wife and mother who believes deeply in inspiring others to live authentically.

In this conversation with CP Magazine, she shares insights into her journey, her inspirations, and the vision behind her growing curly hair movement.



Briefly introduce yourself to our readers.
My name is Thekrayat Almutairi. I'm a businesswoman, an employee, a wife, and a mother who believes in inspiring others to live their most authentic life.

What was the very first moment you realised you wanted to specialise in curly hair?
About seven years ago, when I decided to embrace my natural curly hair. At that time, I was looking for someone around me to guide me or learn from, but I couldn't find anyone in Kuwait or even in the Gulf who specialised in curly hair. That moment made me realise how important it was to learn and eventually help others with curls like mine.

How did your journey as a curly hair stylist begin?
While searching for an Arab expert to learn from, I discovered an American organisation offering specialised curly hair courses in the Gulf. Four years ago, I travelled to Riyadh to attend the training and received my first certification. That experience marked the true beginning of my journey as a curly hair stylist.

What inspired you to open The Curly Studio Kuwait and bring a boutique curly salon to the region?
I wanted to create a place in Kuwait with real expertise in curly hair. My goal was to offer something different and unique in the region. I wanted to build a space where every question about curly hair has an answer, and where women can receive the right guidance from the start. My aim is for every client to leave satisfied from their very first visit, because at The Curly Studio we focus on knowledge, experience, and truly understanding curly hair.

What do you love most about working with curly hair clients?
What I love most is giving my clients confidence in their natural curls. Seeing how their mood and self-image change after a haircut and styling session is incredibly rewarding. I also appreciate the trust they have when they come to us, knowing they will find the right answers and expert guidance.

"My goal is for every client to leave satisfied from their very first visit."

What's the biggest misconception people have about curly hair?
One of the biggest misconceptions about curly hair is that it's complicated or difficult to manage. Many people also believe that curly hair looks messy or isn't suitable for formal settings. Some even see it as a problem that needs to be fixed or treated. In reality, curly hair simply needs the right knowledge, care, and techniques to look its best.

What's your go-to product from your vegan line on a busy morning?
My go-to on a busy morning is keeping things simple. I usually use just two styling products: Curlit Leave-In and Curlit Gel. They're enriched with Vitamin E and work well for normal and colour-treated hair. I love that they're gentle and suitable for women, men, and even kids. It makes styling curly hair quick, easy, and effective.

How has being a mum shaped the way you approach your work?
Motherhood taught me flexibility, but also strength and confidence. It showed me that as women, we're capable of handling many things at once. Honestly, becoming a mother made me realise how powerful and incredible a woman truly is.

What's one beauty ritual you never skip, curly or not?
Deep conditioning is one beauty ritual I never skip, whether the hair is curly or not. Healthy hair always starts with hydration and care, so I make sure to deeply condition my hair every time I shower. It keeps the hair soft, strong, and manageable.

How do you balance running a business, being an influencer, and family life?
I've been juggling this for almost three years now, and honestly, it's never easy. There are many challenges and moments of exhaustion. But when I compare myself from two years ago to today, I see how much I've achieved. My advice to anyone reading this is: you can't give 100% to everything all the time. What matters is that every day you do your best in each area and that's enough.

What's the best piece of business advice you've ever received?
The best piece of business advice I've ever received is simple: keep going, keep learning, and keep evolving. Persistence is key, just keep going, again and again.

As a proud vegan product supplier, what's the core message you want your products to communicate?
I want people to know that curly hair isn't difficult. Our products are vegan, clean, and designed for both wavy and curly hair. Every hair type has products that suit it, and people can see the results from the very first use.





What's the toughest challenge you've faced with The Curly Studio and how did you overcome it?
In the beginning, the toughest challenge was gaining visibility and spreading awareness about The Curly Studio. I learned that building this takes time. Through people's trust and word of mouth, we were able to reach a much larger audience.

When do you feel most confident and what gives you that energy?
I feel most confident when I see the impact of my work, the positive effect we leave on people. That's what gives me energy and motivation every day.

What's one thing about you that most people wouldn't guess?
This might make you laugh, but most people wouldn't guess that I really don't like being tired… and yet, almost everything in my life right now is exhausting! Haha.

What are some of your other hobbies?
These days, I enjoy baking and gardening. They're my little escapes and ways to unwind.

What's something you're still dreaming of achieving, even after all your success?
I'm still dreaming of entering the fashion industry. It's a goal I'm passionate about and can't wait to pursue.

Outside of work and family life, what truly makes you switch off and feel at peace?
Spending time with myself truly helps me switch off. I love moments of silence, peace, and reading, it's when I feel most at ease.

What's next for you and your brand, any exciting plans on the horizon?
At the moment, there's nothing new on the horizon, but I'm focused on continuing what we do best and enjoying the journey.

Your message for us at CP magazine.
Thank you for your time and amazing work.
Wishing you all the best!

"Motherhood made me realise how powerful and incredible a woman truly is."



Abel Richard Elevates Ramadan 2026 with Timeless Italian Luxury





This Ramadan, Abel Richard highlights a curated selection of its sculptural, timeless handbags, embodying reflection and refined elegance for the season.

Merging Italian craftsmanship with architectural precision, each creation is designed to transcend trends, offering a thoughtful approach to luxury gifting during the holy month.

Handcrafted in Italy from aerospace-grade materials including titanium, carbon fibre, and Ergal aluminium, Abel Richard pieces celebrate patience, intention, and artistry - qualities that resonate deeply with Ramadan's spirit of quiet elegance.

From intimate Iftar gatherings to refined Suhoor evenings, signature designs such as The Chrono, The Mosaic, and The Oyster complement the season's understated sophistication, presenting a modern heirloom that balances innovation with restraint.





Front Row Elegance at Max Mara FW26

The Max Mara FW26 show at Milan Fashion Week on February 26 welcomed a host of celebrated names, including Paz Vega, Celeste Dalla Porta, and Carolina Crescentini. The actresses attended the show wearing Max Mara Eyewear, bringing their signature elegance to the front row and reinforcing the brand's timeless, sophisticated aesthetic on one of fashion's most anticipated global stages.







Celeste Dalla Porta attended the fashion show wearing MM0164, bold sunglasses with a rectangular shield lens and a metal front. The geometric design with sharp lines creates a modern and distinctive look. A standout feature is the tubular hinge, inspired by Eileen Gray's creations, joining the acetate temples as a refined, functional design element.



Paz Vega was wearing MM0204 – ELIZABETH3, modern sunglasses with sharp cuts and dynamic volumes. The wide, impactful cat-eye front highlights the worked bridge aesthetic that showcases the Maxim Ghost detail.



Carolina Crescentini was seen wearing MM0186 – ROCOCO, refined and contemporary sunglasses. The acetate front creates elegant contrast with the metal bridge and tubular temples, resulting in a precious and powerful silhouette. Inspiration from Eileen Gray's architecture meets Rococo art in an essential and balanced reinterpretation of beauty.



AN UNFORGETTABLE DINNER AT MADRID'S NEW EM SHERIF

Em Sherif's arrival in Madrid, as the group's 35th restaurant worldwide, feels less like an expansion and more like a natural next step. With executive chef Yasmina Hayek at the helm, the restaurant offers a warm, generous take on Lebanese cooking, grounded in tradition and gently influenced by some of Spain's finest ingredients.



Madrid's transformation over the past decade has been one of Europe's most striking cultural and gastronomic stories. Once celebrated primarily for its taverns, late-night dining culture and regional Spanish cooking, the Spanish capital has evolved into a fully fledged international luxury destination, capable of competing with Paris, London and Milan not only in hospitality and retail, but also at the highest level of global gastronomy. Today, Madrid is no longer simply a city where one eats well; it is a city people travel to in order to eat exceptionally well. The opening of Em Sherif marks another decisive chapter in this evolution, introducing to the city a refined interpretation of Lebanese cuisine at a scale and level previously unseen in Spain.



www.emsherif.com

The arrival of Em Sherif in Madrid reflects a broader shift in the city's culinary identity. In recent years, Madrid has become a magnet for ambitious international restaurant groups, luxury hotel brands and chefs whose ambitions extend beyond borders. Its energy, accessibility, long dining hours and increasingly cosmopolitan clientele have created fertile ground for concepts that blend heritage with contemporary execution. The city's dining scene now operates within a global framework, absorbing influences from Asia, the Middle East and the wider Mediterranean, while retaining a strong sense of place. Em Sherif enters this landscape not as an imported novelty, but as a missing piece: a comprehensive, high-end Lebanese dining concept that aligns naturally with Madrid's Mediterranean sensibility.

Founded in Beirut in 2011 by Mireille Hayek, Em Sherif began as a single restaurant deeply rooted in the traditions of Lebanese hospitality. Over the past fifteen years, it has developed into a substantial international group with more than thirty locations across Europe and the Middle East, including London, Paris, Monaco and Dubai. The Madrid opening, the group's thirty-fifth restaurant, represents its first foray into Spain and signals a strategic commitment to Europe as a growth market. In doing so, Em Sherif positions Madrid as a new European reference point for Lebanese haute cuisine.

The project is now led by Yasmina Hayek, executive chef and co-owner, who has overseen the group's international expansion and culinary direction. Her approach reflects a dual education that combines classical French culinary discipline with a contemporary understanding of design, entrepreneurship and global food culture. Trained at the Institut Paul Bocuse in Lyon and later at the Scuola Politecnica di Design in Milan, and shaped by professional experience in Michelin-starred kitchens in Copenhagen and Paris, her work bridges technical precision and cultural narrative. At Em Sherif, this translates into menus that remain firmly anchored in Lebanese tradition while being subtly responsive to local contexts.

In Madrid, that dialogue with place is evident both in the cuisine and in the physical space. Located on Calle Alcalá, close to Retiro Park, the restaurant occupies a position that mirrors its ambition: central, elegant and outward-looking. The interior, designed by architect Samer Bou Rjeily, draws on Levantine light, textures and craftsmanship, reinterpreted through a contemporary European lens. Warm materials, artisanal details and a carefully calibrated sense of intimacy evoke the idea of the home as a space of generosity and gathering, a core principle of Lebanese dining culture, while remaining aligned with the expectations of a modern luxury restaurant.

The culinary offering unfolds as a structured journey through the Lebanese repertoire. At its foundation lies the concept of mezze, not as an assortment of small plates, but as a carefully composed opening movement. These dishes establish the restaurant's technical and cultural vocabulary, combining classical preparations with refined presentations. Raw and emulsified textures, controlled acidity and aromatic depth define the early































stages of the meal, setting the tone for what follows. The balance between richness and freshness, a hallmark of Levantine cuisine, is handled with restraint and clarity.

Main courses expand the narrative towards heartier, more ceremonial dishes that reflect the historical role of communal feasting in Lebanese culture. Slow-cooked meats, open-fire grilling and spice blends rooted in regional tradition are executed with precision and consistency. Lamb, beef, poultry and fish are treated with equal respect, each preparation designed to highlight both the primary ingredient and the broader architecture of flavour that surrounds it. Techniques such as confit, charcoal grilling and controlled roasting are employed not for effect, but as vehicles for depth and balance.

A distinctive feature of Em Sherif's Madrid menu is its integration of local Spanish produce within a Lebanese framework. Seasonal ingredients are incorporated not as adaptations or fusions, but as natural extensions of a cuisine that has always been defined by its relationship to land, sea and market. This approach reinforces the restaurant's philosophy of authenticity without rigidity, allowing the cuisine to remain recognisably Lebanese while resonating with its surroundings.

The dessert course completes the experience with a return to delicacy and aroma. Milk-based preparations, semolina cakes and cheese pastries are perfumed with orange blossom, rose water and spice, offering a conclusion that is both comforting and precise. These desserts avoid excessive sweetness, favouring instead balance and fragrance, in keeping with the overall structure of the meal.

Beyond the plate, Em Sherif's significance lies in what it represents for Madrid's gastronomic ecosystem. The city has increasingly positioned itself as a bridge between Europe, Latin America and the Mediterranean basin. The introduction of a fully realised Lebanese fine-dining concept strengthens that position, expanding the city's culinary vocabulary while reinforcing its status as a destination where global food cultures are presented with seriousness and respect.

The opening also reflects a wider re-evaluation of Middle Eastern cuisines within the global fine-dining context. Long appreciated for their flavours and generosity, these culinary traditions are now being examined through a more technical and cultural lens, with increasing attention paid to provenance, technique and narrative. Em Sherif contributes to this conversation by presenting Lebanese cuisine not as an exotic counterpoint to European dining, but as an equal participant in it.

As Madrid continues to redefine itself on the international stage, the arrival of Em Sherif feels both timely and inevitable. It speaks to a city confident in its ability to host diverse gastronomic expressions, and to an audience increasingly curious, informed and demanding. In bringing the rituals, flavours and hospitality of Lebanon to the heart of the Spanish capital, Em Sherif does more than open a restaurant; it reinforces Madrid's position as one of Europe's most dynamic and compelling dining destinations.

MISSONI FALL WINTER 2026 SHOW COLLECTION





Missoni as an attitude: a spontaneous way of approaching the daily act of getting dressed, following intuition and instinct, writing one's own rules, and bringing together things that belong to different worlds but which, when Missonified, come together.

This real dimension - a sublimation of the everyday is Alberto Caliri's signature: a narrative that expands organically season after season, escaping the urgency of the new at all costs. Reflecting a brand and an aesthetic invented by a couple, the dialogue, which is ultimately fusion and confrontation between masculine and feminine is another salient feature, which in this collection becomes dominant, so that the Missoni woman begins to dress like a man, picking up things from his

wardrobe and wearing them as they are, without renouncing her other self, sinuous and shimmering.

On one side, then, are the roomy martingale coats, the statement-making blousons, the shearling jackets, the blazers with sharp, pointed collars, the pleated trousers and the wide leather Bermuda shorts held up by a belt - solid and bourgeois classics in reimagined volumes - and on the other, the midi-length dresses that are slouchy on top and then cling and define the figure, and diffuse metallic flashes.

Tying it all together are long scarves, cowl necks, small knitted stoles, hats halfway between sea wolf and newsboys, pumps and flat ankle boots. Missoni-ism, meant as an amalgamation of patterns and colors,now plays on the idea of monochrome polychromy: different notes of the same color blend in tonal scales, drawing the eye closer and inviting discovery, while textures and details make the difference, revealing the agitation of three-dimensional geometries.

The palette revolves around organic notes of brown, tobacco, ochre, cognac, milk, and intense blue, while checks and fiammato motifs alternate with the clear cadence of vertical stripes.

The Missoni way reveals itself through layering, enveloping, and blending, without ever forgetting the body, its energy, and its character.














kindaghannoum

Kinda GHANNOUM

Multidisciplinary Designer Exploring Identity, Typography and Cultural Memory

Interview by: **Jameel Arif**

In the world of contemporary design, where cultural identity and visual storytelling increasingly intersect, Syrian-Polish multidisciplinary designer **Kinda Ghannoum** has emerged as a distinctive voice. With a background in architecture and a deep-rooted appreciation for art and Arabic calligraphy, Ghannoum's journey into graphic design has evolved into a thoughtful exploration of typography, heritage and cultural memory. Today, her work sits at the crossroads of design, research and storytelling, where letterforms and visual systems become tools for preserving narratives and reinterpreting identity in modern contexts.

Growing up in an artistic family in Syria, Ghannoum developed an early fascination with patterns, language and visual culture. After initially pursuing architecture, she transitioned into graphic design as a self-taught practitioner before later completing a Master of Visual Arts at Sint Lucas Antwerpen. Her work now focuses on branding, typography and archival research, often drawing inspiration from Arabic typographic traditions while bridging Eastern and Western design influences.

A co-founder of the Syrian Design Archive, Ghannoum is also widely recognised for her collaborations with international organisations including the Obama Foundation, Netflix, Expo Dubai 2020 and the Qatar Foundation. Her award-winning work has been honoured by global institutions and published across leading design publications and books.

In this conversation with CP Magazine, Ghannoum reflects on the cultural influences shaping her practice, the role of archives in preserving visual history and how design can become a powerful language for identity, resistance and memory.





Please introduce yourself to our readers briefly.

I'm a Syrian-Polish multidisciplinary designer with a background in architecture, but my journey into design really began growing up in an artistic family in Syria, where I developed a deep appreciation for art, design and Arabic calligraphy. I later transitioned into graphic design as a self-taught designer before completing a Master of Visual Arts at Sint Lucas Antwerpen. My work focuses on branding, typography and research, often drawing inspiration from Arabic typography and cultural heritage. Through my practice, I explore typography as a storytelling tool that connects identity, memory and culture, often blending influences from both my Syrian and Polish backgrounds. I've had the opportunity to collaborate with a range of international organisations, and I also co-founded the Syrian Design Archive

What first drew you towards graphic design, and how did your cultural background influence that journey?

I am Syrian-Polish and grew up in Syria, surrounded by the beauty of Damascene culture. Coming from an artistic family, my love for art, patterns and Arabic calligraphy has been with me since childhood. I was always fascinated by design, art and architecture, anything that involved creating. While I originally wanted to apply to art school (that's a long story on its own), circumstances didn't allow it, so I chose architecture as the next closest option.

Once I started studying architecture, I enjoyed it, but I soon realised I wasn't drawn to designing large buildings. Instead, I was more interested in smaller-scale projects, such as interiors. After graduating, finding work in Syria was challenging. By chance, I joined a team working on an event where my role was to create the project's visual identity. The project won first prize, and the visuals were even nominated for an award. That experience made me realise my passion for graphic design and that I could turn it into a career. I started working as a designer during the day and learning in the evenings, slowly building my skills and portfolio. I was lucky to have mentors and inspiring people who guided me along the way.

Architecture gave me a strong foundation in problem-solving and design thinking. It taught me how to create solutions that balance functionality and creativity, an approach that is central to my work. Whether I'm developing an identity or a logo, I think structurally, ensuring my designs are organised, purposeful and impactful.

Graphic design became a way to research, question and reclaim visual narratives connected to the Arab world, and Syria in particular. Working with Arabic typography, archives and cultural references isn't just an aesthetic choice for me, it's a way of asserting presence, preserving memory and creating space for visual histories that are often overlooked. My practice sits somewhere between design, research and storytelling, shaped by this in-between cultural position and a desire to build bridges between visual worlds that rarely get to speak to each other on equal terms.

Your work bridges art and heritage. How do you define that relationship in your practice?

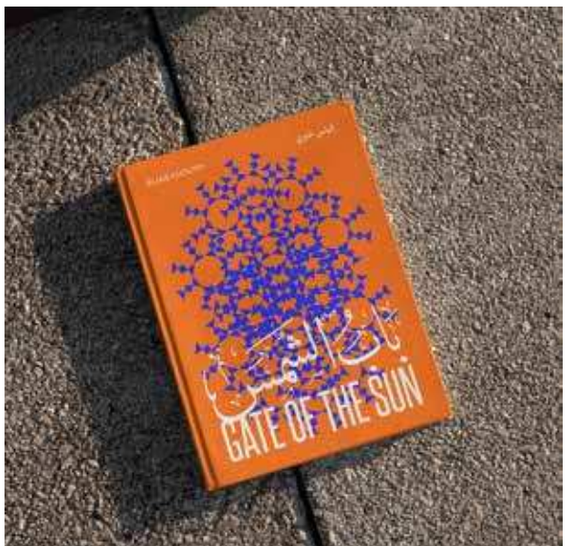
I don't see heritage as something fixed or frozen in the past; for me, it's a living, evolving set of visual languages, stories and ways of seeing the world. In my practice, art becomes a way to engage with heritage critically and creatively, rather than simply preserve or replicate it.

I'm interested in what happens when historical references, archives and traditional forms are placed in conversation with contemporary tools, contexts and questions. A big part of my work is about translating cultural memory into visual systems that can exist in the present through typography, branding, cultural projects and experimental work.

Sometimes that means working directly with archival material; other times it means reinterpreting familiar scripts, patterns or symbols to explore how identity, displacement and cultural continuity can be visually expressed today.

So the relationship between art and heritage in my practice is not





nostalgic, it's dialogic. Art becomes a space to question heritage, to activate it and to allow it to evolve. Heritage, in return, grounds my artistic and design decisions in lived experience and collective memory, giving the work depth beyond aesthetics. In that sense, I see my role less as a "preserver" of heritage and more as someone who recontextualises it, keeping it alive through contemporary visual language.

Can you share a moment when design helped you tell a story that words alone couldn't?

There were many moments when I wanted to speak openly about Syria and Palestine, but fear always held me back. Even though I live outside Syria, I couldn't allow myself to imagine the consequences this might have for my family. Design became a way for me to speak when words felt too risky, too heavy, or simply insufficient.

In 2021, I was invited to take part in "#ARABORAMA | Il était une fois, les révolutions arabes" at the Institut du Monde Arabe. I was asked a simple question: What do you think about the Arab Spring? For me, the answer was freedom or rather, the absence of it. People asked for their most basic rights and were met with brutal punishment: imprisonment, disappearance and death. I kept thinking about those who vanished for years while waiting to be freed, and those who never returned.

The poster I created featured the word "freedom" written in Arabic, styled like a tally of counted days, a quiet visual metaphor for time passing in detention, for freedom being postponed, slipping away, or ending tragically. I never wrote the full context behind it, but the image carried what I couldn't say out loud.

Similarly, with my poster for Palestine, design allowed me to express grief, solidarity and resistance without relying on explicit language. Visual symbols, abstraction and typography created a space where I could communicate politically and emotionally, while also protecting myself and those close to me.





What's the most surprising thing you've learned while curating the Syrian Design Archive?

One of the most surprising things I learned is how rich, intentional and conceptually strong Syrian graphic design has always been, despite how invisible it has become in global design narratives. Even I underestimated how much visual intelligence existed in everyday Syrian contexts: posters, book covers, publications, packaging, stamps and institutional graphics.

Seeing this material together made it clear that Syrian designers were not simply following trends but actively developing their own visual languages within specific political, cultural and material constraints.

Another big surprise was the sheer amount of material that existed and that we didn't even know about. So many works had never been documented or circulated beyond their original context, and with them came the discovery of many designers whose names had completely disappeared from public memory. There were entire careers and visual contributions that no one talks about today. In many cases, the archive became the first space where these designers' names were written back into history, which made the work feel urgent and necessary.

What also surprised me was how emotional the process became. The archive didn't just reveal design history; it revealed personal histories. Many materials came with stories of displacement, loss or interrupted practices. Collecting and curating turned into an act of care as much as research. People reached out with a single scan, a damaged poster or a fragment of memory, and suddenly the archive became a shared space of remembering.

I was deeply moved by how much people wanted this history to exist. There's a real hunger, especially among younger designers, for a visual lineage they can relate to and learn from. Curating the Syrian Design Archive showed me that archives aren't just about preserving the past, they're about restoring continuity in the present and offering a foundation for futures that don't have to start from zero.

How do you balance historical preservation with contemporary creativity?

I treat historical material as a starting point and a source of inspiration, not something to replicate. It's important for me to understand the history, the context and the "rules" behind visual languages first, because you can only break them meaningfully once you truly understand them.

Research grounds the work, but experimentation allows it to become personal and contemporary. In that sense, preservation and creativity aren't opposites in my practice, they depend on each other.

What role do archives play in shaping collective memory in your view?

Archives play a crucial role in shaping what is remembered, what is forgotten and how histories are told. They don't just store material; they actively shape collective memory by deciding which stories, voices and visual cultures become visible and which remain invisible. In that sense, archives are never neutral, they reflect power, access and whose narratives are considered worthy of preservation.

For me, archives are tools of resistance as much as preservation. They can challenge dominant narratives, recover overlooked histories and create space for voices that were excluded or erased. When archives are activated through design, research, exhibitions or education, they become living spaces that allow people to reconnect with their visual heritage and see themselves reflected in history.

That visibility matters because it shapes how communities understand their past, their present and their right to imagine a future.

Which project has pushed you creatively in unexpected ways?

In different ways, every project pushes me creatively each one teaches me something new, whether it's conceptual, emotional or formal. But there are a few projects I choose to speak about not simply because they were "challenging", but because I feel grateful to be part of them and because of the responsibility they carry.

The Syrian Design Archive has probably reshaped me the most in unexpected ways. I initially approached it as a research and preservation project, but it quickly expanded into something that affected how I think about design altogether. Working with fragmented archives, missing materials and overlooked designers pushed me to develop new ways of telling visual histories and to accept incompleteness as part of the process. It also made me more aware of my ethical responsibility when working with other people's histories, shifting my focus from polished outcomes to care, process and creating space for multiple narratives.

Another project was a poster I created with Ranim around the anniversary of the fall of the Syrian regime. At the time, images resurfaced of torn posters and scraped-away portraits of Assad in public spaces, especially a striking image from Homs where tiles forming his face had been removed, leaving only a hollow outline. His presence remained, but emptied of authority.

That gesture of erasure became the foundation of our poster: referencing his imprint without granting him a face. The work speaks to the regime's unraveling and the collective desire to reclaim public space. By fragmenting his image, it reflects how deeply his likeness once saturated daily life, while also honouring the quiet resistance of those who dismantled it.

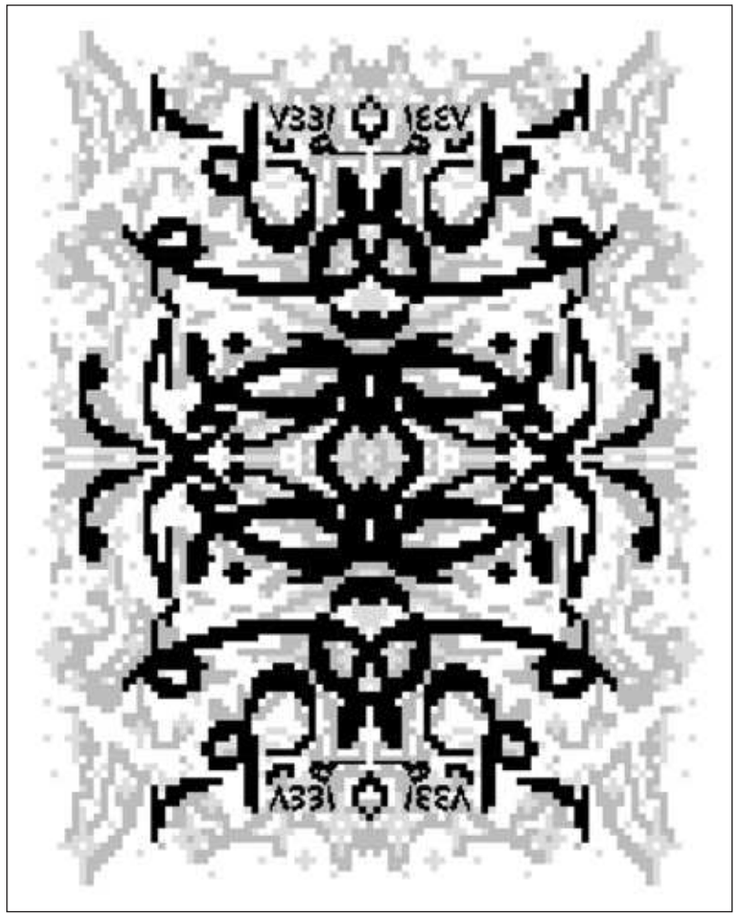
For families engaging with this work, it becomes a space to reclaim narrative and confront an image that once symbolised fear. For us, it carried the responsibility of reflecting their strength and contributing to a collective memory shaped by survivors. Absent Presence taught me how design can carry political weight without reproducing the violence of the image itself.

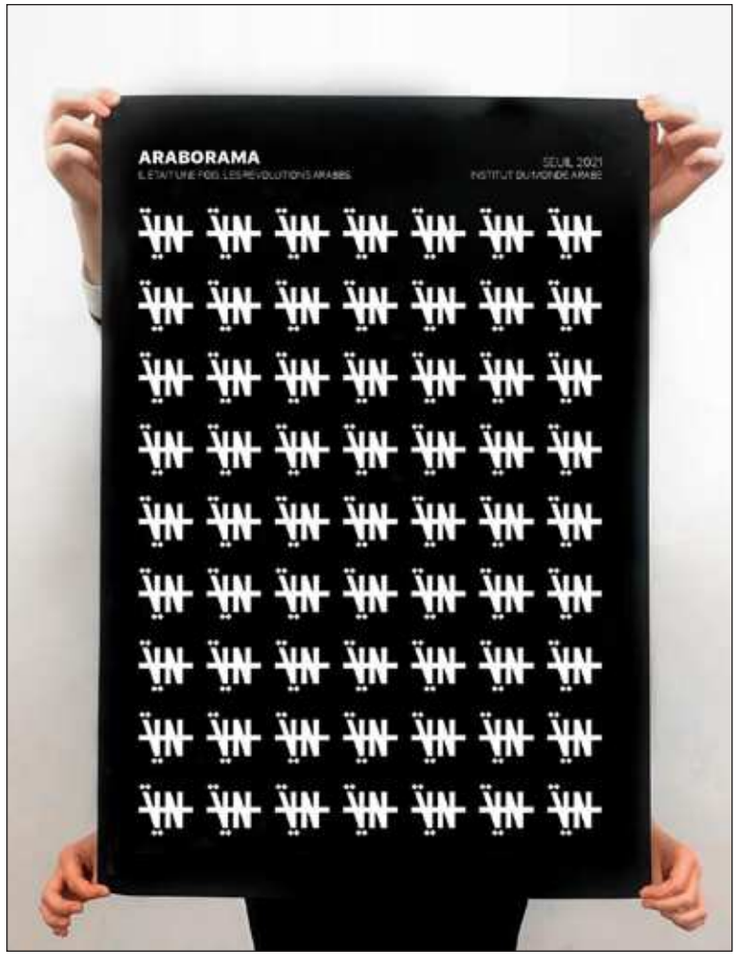
In a very different way, the collaboration with Choose Love for The Swimmers pushed me as well. Designing the "Choose Love" artwork in Arabic for a fundraising T-shirt connected to the story of Yusra and Sara Mardini reminded me that design can also be gentle and practical a way to translate visibility into concrete support for Syrian refugees. It made me think more about circulation, accessibility and how design can move beyond cultural spaces into everyday acts of solidarity.

So while every project challenges me in a different way, these reminded me that creative growth doesn't only come from difficulty, it also comes from responsibility, trust and being invited to contribute to stories that matter beyond the design world.

How has living in Brussels shaped your perspective on global design?

Every place influences you through people and experiences. Brussels didn't radically change my perspective compared to other places in



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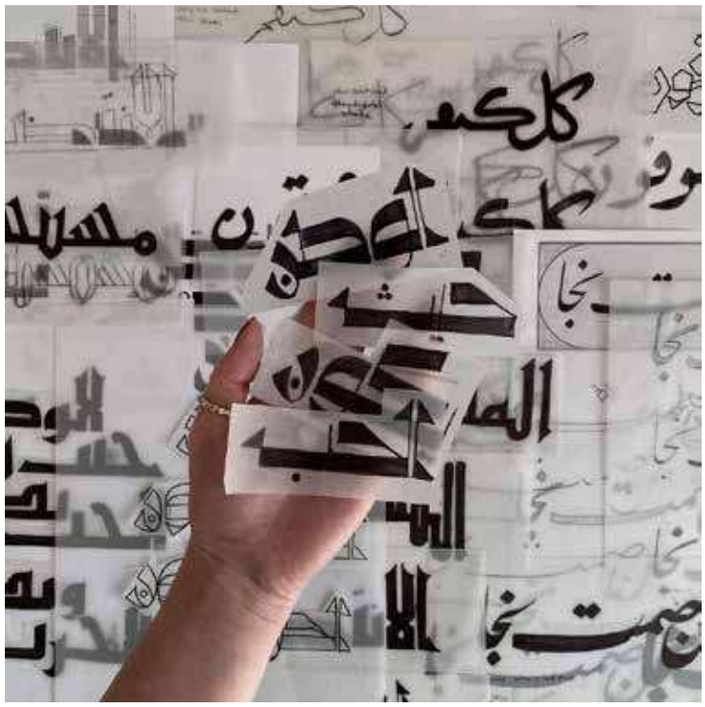


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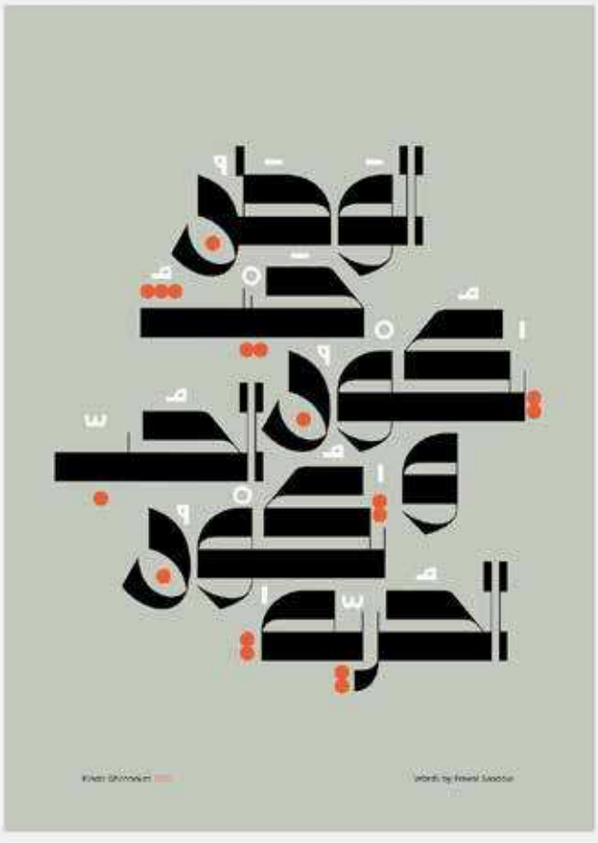







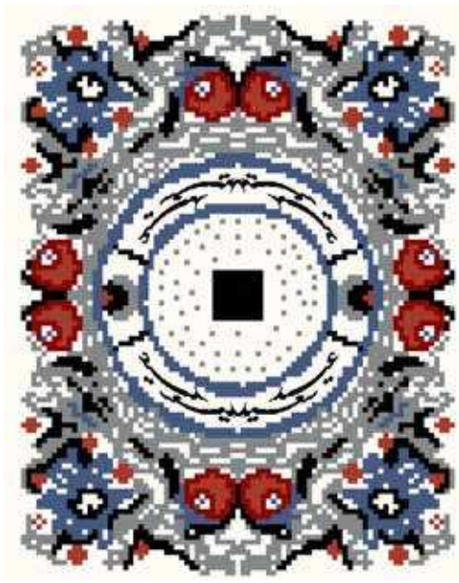


WANTED
BRING ASSAD TO JUSTICE

Europe, but it gave me a practical base, more mobility, access and ease of connection. My outlook on global design comes more from living between cultures than from one city.

In your opinion, what makes Middle Eastern graphic design distinct?

Let's call it SWANA region design. What makes it distinct isn't one single style, but the context it's created within. It's shaped by layered histories, political realities, multilingual environments and rich visual traditions that designers constantly negotiate. There's often a tension between the weight of heritage and the urgency of the present, which creates visual languages that are emotionally charged, resourceful and deeply contextual.

Another distinctive aspect is how designers work with constraint. Limited access to resources, censorship, displacement and unstable infrastructures have historically shaped how design is produced and circulated. This has led to practices that are adaptive, inventive and often concept-driven rather than purely trend-driven. Arabic typography plays a particularly central role, not just as form but as meaning, identity and sometimes resistance.

I think it's important not to essentialise SWANA region design as one thing. There are many local scenes, aesthetics and approaches. What connects them is less a visual style and more a shared condition: designing within complex social and political realities, and constantly negotiating visibility, representation and voice.

What's a misconception about design that you wish more people understood?

I think things are slowly getting better, but one misconception that still exists is the idea that design is somehow "better" or more professional when it's done in Latin scripts. There's this unspoken standard that associates quality, modernity or global relevance with Latin typography, as if other scripts are automatically less refined or less contemporary.

I strongly disagree with that. High-quality design isn't tied to one language or script. Arabic, for example, can carry the same level of conceptual depth, precision and contemporary expression as any Latin-based design. The question shouldn't be "Is it in Latin?" but rather "Is it well designed?" Who decided that Latin should be the default benchmark of quality?

Design standards can exist in any language. What matters is the thinking, care and intention behind the work, not the script it's written in.

Your Instagram reflects both process and passion. How intentional is the storytelling there?

I've honestly never thought about it as intentional storytelling. It's more instinctive than planned. I use Instagram to share my process, what I'm thinking about, how I work and what interests me at a given moment. It feels more like a visual diary or an evolving online portfolio than a carefully constructed narrative.

Over time, the way I share has changed as well. What I post now reflects how I understand my practice differently than before. So in that sense, there is a story being told, but it isn't a fixed one, it's shaped by where I am at that moment. The account becomes a trace of my growth, shifts in thinking and evolving interests, rather than a polished or intentionally structured storyline.

What piece of advice would you give to younger designers just starting out?

The most important thing I would say is: don't compare yourself to others. Everyone has their own story, struggles and timing. Social media only shows the highlights, the perfect moments and achievements but behind every project there's usually a big mess, doubt and many failed attempts. You're only seeing the polished outcome, not the process, so comparing yourself to that isn't fair to you.

Another thing I'm still learning myself is to embrace imperfection, the idea of wabi-sabi, finding beauty in what's unfinished or imperfect. Try to enjoy what you're doing instead of chasing perfection, because perfection doesn't really exist. It's okay to share work even when it feels "not ready". Some of the projects I was most unsure about ended up leading to opportunities I never expected, including collaborations that later felt like dream projects for me.

I'd also say: ask for feedback and stay open to learning. Social media can be overwhelming, but it also gives you access to people all over the world. You can reach out, ask questions and learn from others. The moment you think you know everything is the moment you stop growing as a designer.

Try things outside your comfort zone, experiment and allow yourself to take breaks as well. Growth doesn't only come from pushing harder — it also comes from giving yourself space to rest, reflect and come back with new energy.

What's your favourite part of the creative process, from idea to execution?

The moment I enjoy most is right at the beginning, when everything is still open. Sketching on paper with pens is where ideas feel most alive to me. It's messy, fast and low-pressure, and it allows me to think with my hands before I overthink things with my head. There's something very honest about that stage: ideas can be bad, strange or unfinished — and that's exactly what makes it productive.

I also really love the research phase, because it constantly surprises me. It's the moment when a project starts to shift from "my idea" into a conversation with history, references and unexpected discoveries. I often begin with one direction in mind and end up somewhere completely different because of something I learned along the way.

For me, sketching and research are the most exciting parts because they're driven by curiosity and discovery. Everything after that feels more like translating that excitement into a final form.

What's one archive you'd love to see created that hasn't yet existed?

I'd love to see dedicated design archives for every Arab country. We're slowly getting there, more people and initiatives are starting to document, collect and share visual histories, which is really encouraging.

But there are still many gaps, many materials at risk of being lost and many designers whose work hasn't been documented yet.

How do you want people to feel when they encounter your work?

I've honestly never thought about this in a fixed way. I don't think there's one specific feeling I want people to have across all my work. With every project, it changes. Sometimes I simply hope people notice the research and care behind the work that it's not only about the final visual, but about the process and thinking that led to it.

There are also projects where I'm more intentional about wanting a reaction. When the work is connected to a specific issue or struggle, I want people to feel something to pause, feel connected or reflect on the topic the work is responding to.

In those moments, the purpose of the work matters more to me than whether it is simply "liked". So the feeling I hope for depends on the project: sometimes it's curiosity, sometimes recognition and sometimes a deeper emotional response.

What's the most meaningful feedback you've had from your audience?

I'm not sure if it fits the classic idea of "feedback", but one moment really stayed with me. Early in my career, there was a designer I deeply admired. Years later, when we became friends, he told me that the first time he saw my work he thought, "This girl is going to take my place." Of course, I don't believe anyone takes someone else's place, there's room for everyone but hearing that meant a lot to me.

At that time I was full of doubt and didn't feel confident about what I was doing. For the younger version of me, that moment was very affirming.

It didn't change how I act, because I already try to encourage younger designers and students whenever I see something beautiful in their work. But hearing that made me more aware of why that encouragement matters. It connected me back to what I think I needed when I was starting out and helped me recognise the value of small, honest gestures of support.

Another meaningful kind of feedback for me is when students reach out for advice or say that something I shared helped them in their process. And when I work on politically or socially engaged projects like my poster for Palestine, seeing people use the work, share it and engage with its purpose feels like more than feedback. It feels like the work is living beyond me, and that's very meaningful to witness.

Your message for us at CP Magazine.

Thank you for having me and for giving me the space to share my story.



A PRIVATE DOMAINE IN THE PÉRIGORD NOIR

YOU'LL NEVER FORGET

Words: **José Berrocoso**
Photography: **Casalino**



Have you ever dreamed of wandering through the French countryside in spring, when villages glow in soft sunlight and the air smells of wild herbs and fresh earth? In the Périgord Noir, forests, meadows, and rivers awaken after winter, markets brim with strawberries and fresh cheeses, and every quiet path feels made for exploring. It’s a place to slow down, linger over long lunches, and simply breathe where the beauty of rural France isn’t staged, it just is.

www.casalino.fr

There are corners of France that whisper rather than shout. Places where beauty is not curated for effect, but simply exists, layered, timeworn, quietly assured. The Périgord Noir, in the heart of the Dordogne, is one such place. Come spring, when the valleys soften into green and the light turns honeyed against limestone villages, this storied region reveals itself as one of the most compelling countryside destinations in Europe.

Long favoured by those who know France well enough to avoid its obvious pleasures, the Périgord Noir offers a rare combination: a sense of deep history, a gastronomic culture rooted in the land, and a pace of life that feels almost defiantly unhurried. It is rural France at its most elegant, never showy, always authentic.

Castelnaud-la-Chapelle, perched above the sinuous Dordogne river, captures this spirit perfectly. With its medieval château surveying the valley and Sarlat just a short drive away, it sits at the crossroads of heritage and discretion. From here, the landscape unfolds in forests and meadows, walnut groves and ancient stone walls, the air scented with damp earth and wild herbs after rain. This is a place designed for walking, lingering, and looking at markets, at Romanesque churches, at long lunches that stretch lazily into the afternoon. It is also, increasingly, a place to stay well.











A HOUSE THAT BELONGS TO ITS LANDSCAPE

Hidden among 40 hectares of woodland and pasture, on the heights above Castelnaud, stands a private domaine that feels less like a rental and more like a well-kept family secret. Built of the region's signature blonde stone, surrounded by old walls and absolute silence, the house embodies the understated confidence of the Périgord itself.

With 550 square metres spread across three levels, the main house accommodates up to 14 guests with an ease that never feels ostentatious. Six bedrooms, each with its own bathroom, allow privacy without formality. The living spaces are generous and light-filled: a vast 70-square-metre salon, a welcoming dining room that opens onto a broad terrace, and a kitchen that clearly understands the importance of food to this part of France.

This is not a kitchen for show. With its five-burner range, professional-grade equipment and stainless-steel finishes, it is made for long, convivial cooking sessions, perhaps with produce from Sarlat's market or a truffle acquired quietly from a local contact. Meals spill outside, eaten under the stars, accompanied by the low crackle of the brasero and the slow rhythm of the countryside after dark.

Days here unfold naturally. A swim in the 19-metre pool, south-facing and framed by greenery. A game of billiards or table football. Someone idly picking at the piano. Children disappearing into the garden. Adults rediscovering the pleasure of doing very little at all. The luxury, as ever, lies not in excess but in space, calm and a profound sense of place.

While summer brings warmth and abundance, it is spring that belongs to the Périgord Noir. The crowds have not yet arrived, the roads are quiet, and the countryside feels newly awake. Wildflowers edge the paths, rivers run full and reflective, and the region's great pleasures, walking, cycling, visiting villages, lingering at outdoor cafés can be enjoyed without haste.

Gastronomically, it is a season of renewal. Early vegetables, fresh goat's cheeses, river fish, and the first strawberries appear on menus, while cellars yield wines that seem to taste better when drunk slowly, at noon, with nowhere else to be.

It is also the ideal moment for multigenerational travel or gatherings of friends: days structured loosely, evenings anchored by shared meals, conversation flowing as freely as the local Bergerac.



Casalino: Curators of the French Art de Vivre

Finding a house that truly reflects its surroundings and lives up to the promise of its photographs is no small feat. This is where Casalino distinguishes itself.

Rather than operating by formula, Casalino works by instinct and experience. Each property is selected personally, often visited in person, and photographed with an understanding that atmosphere matters as much as architecture. The result is a collection that feels cohesive without being repetitive: over 210 addresses across France, each chosen for its character, its sense of soul.

From traditional Alpine chalets to contemporary duplexes overlooking the beach at La Ponche in Saint-Tropez; from Breton stone houses with waves at their feet to architect-designed villas facing the Mediterranean, Casalino's portfolio reads like a love letter to French diversity. What unites these homes is not a checklist of amenities, but a shared commitment to style, authenticity, and comfort.

Just as importantly, Casalino offers something increasingly rare in luxury travel: human guidance. Guests are listened to, advised, and matched with a house that fits not only their practical needs, but their way of travelling, whether as a couple seeking quiet or a tribe in search of shared space and ease.

In the Périgord Noir, that philosophy finds one of its most eloquent expressions. This countryside domaine is not simply a place to sleep; it is a setting for living well, for reconnecting with others, with nature, with time itself.

Founded in 2016 by Amélie Fiat, Casalino is a confidential collection of exceptional homes for rent across France. Through a carefully curated selection of singular places, Casalino invites travelers to rediscover France's most beautiful regions through the lens of slow travel, taking the time to truly experience each destination.

Unusual homes, houses designed for groups, family- and kids-friendly retreats, beachfront properties or mountain hideaways, each address is chosen for its character, setting, and power to inspire escape. Designed for stays with family or friends, Casalino homes are conceived to fully embrace each place, allowing the house itself to become the heart of the journey.













THE QUIET LUXURY OF RURAL FRANCE

In an age of hyper-connected travel and overexposed destinations, the appeal of the French countryside feels stronger than ever. The Périgord Noir offers an antidote: a landscape shaped by centuries rather than trends, hospitality that is generous without being intrusive, and houses that invite you to stay not just pass through.

Come spring, when the light softens and the land breathes again, it becomes clear why those who discover this region tend to return, quietly, year after year.

With addresses like this, and curators like Casalino, rural France is not simply back on the map. It is, once again, a must.

ONE MONTH. MANY JOURNEYS. ONE LINEUP











In most parts of the world, midnight means empty roads. In the GCC during Ramadan, it often means movement.

Across the region, the holy month subtly transforms driving culture. Afternoon streets grow quieter, while evenings and late nights bring a surge of activity - families heading to Iftar gatherings, friends travelling across cities for Suhoor, and weekends stretching into longer drives between emirates and provinces. Desert majlis glow beyond the skyline, extending mobility well past city limits.

As schedules shift, so do demands on the road. Urban trips increase after sunset. Intercity travel becomes more frequent. Vehicles carry fuller loads, often three generations travelling together, moving seamlessly from city streets to highways and, in many cases, onto sand.

In the Gulf, mobility during Ramadan is not singular. It is layered. And each journey demands something different.

The City Connector

After sunset, city streets fill quickly as families head to Iftar gatherings and friends travel between homes for Suhoor. Parking is tighter. Traffic is denser. Journeys are shorter, but more frequent.

Compact and mid-size SUVs such as the GMC Terrain and GMC Acadia naturally fit this urban rhythm — combining elevated visibility, advanced safety technologies and adaptable interior space suited to busy Ramadan evenings.

The Multi-Generational Highway Journey

Ramadan weekends often mean longer drives between cities, with extended families travelling together. Comfort becomes essential. Space becomes responsibility. Stability matters over distance.

At the center of these journeys is the GMC Yukon - a full-size SUV engineered for long-distance Gulf travel, offering expansive seating configurations, refined cabin comfort and advanced driver-assist systems aligned with the demands of multi-generational mobility.

The Desert Majlis

For many in the Gulf, Ramadan gatherings extend beyond the city. Desert Suhoor camps remain a cultural constant, bringing vehicles onto sand and uneven terrain.

Pickup trucks such as the GMC Canyon and GMC Sierra are built for the terrain that defines much of the region's social culture, with enhanced ground clearance, off-road suspension and traction systems.

The Evolving Night Drive

Even as cities grow quieter in the early hours, mobility continues - sometimes in new forms. The fully electric GMC Hummer EV reflects the evolving side of Ramadan movement, pairing near-silent electric performance with the bold strength and off-road credibility that define the brand.

"Ramadan highlights how distinctive mobility is in the GCC," said Furrukh Jawaid, Chief Marketing Officer, General Motors Africa & Middle East. "Drivers here transition between city streets, highways and desert terrain within the same week - sometimes the same day. That diversity of use has long shaped how we engineer our vehicles for this region."

With decades of presence across the Middle East, GMC's lineup has evolved around Gulf realities - sustained high temperatures, long distances, varied terrain and the importance of family travel.

Because in the GCC, Ramadan is not just a month of reflection. It is also a month of movement, across cities, highways and desert landscapes. And in a region where mobility carries meaning, versatility is essential.



Toyota Introduces all-new RAV4 to Middle East



Toyota has launched the all-new RAV4 in the Middle East, marking a full model change for one of the brand's most consistently popular vehicles worldwide.

Evolving with a refined new design, enhanced driving performance, and a suite of advanced technologies, the latest RAV4 reinforces Toyota's commitment to delivering vehicles that seamlessly integrate everyday usability with a spirit of adventure.

Since its introduction in 1994 as a pioneer of the monocoque SUV, the RAV4 has continuously redefined expectations of what a recreational vehicle can be. Designed to bridge the gap between city driving and outdoor exploration, the RAV4 created an entirely new category that combined the comfort and accessibility of a passenger vehicle with the versatility of an SUV. Over nearly three decades, it has grown into a global success, embraced by customers across diverse markets and lifestyles, including the Middle East.

With this latest generation, Toyota builds on that legacy by delivering a RAV4 that is more capable, more efficient, and more intelligent than ever before. The all-new RAV4 has been developed around the philosophy that "Life is an Adventure," ensuring drivers can move confidently between their everyday routines and extraordinary moments, supported by comfort, safety, and peace of mind.

Electrification remains central to the RAV4 story. As one of Toyota's earliest and most successful platforms for hybrid adoption, the RAV4 has played a key role in advancing electrified mobility in line with the company's multi-pathway approach. The new model continues that journey through the adoption of Toyota's 5th generation hybrid electric system, delivering stronger acceleration, improved fuel efficiency, and a smoother driving experience without the need for external charging.

As the core powertrain for the Middle East, the hybrid system offers the convenience and familiarity of a petrol vehicle, combined with the benefits of electrification. Drivers can enjoy responsive performance and confident power delivery, while also benefiting from excellent fuel efficiency suited to both urban commuting and longer journeys. By making electrification accessible and practical, the new RAV4 supports Toyota's broader efforts toward carbon neutrality while enhancing everyday usability for customers across the region.

homework for grownups/

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

1. **What smartphone operating system increased its market share from 4% in 2009 to 70% in 2013?**
2. **The flammable intoxicating compound Hydroxyethane (C2H6O) is better known as what chemical?**
3. **In economics the Lorenz Curve is a graphical representation of typically: Wealth distribution/inequality; Inflation; Gold price; or Pet ownership?**
4. **Hydromel is a very old alcoholic drink made with fermented what?**
5. **Przewalski's (what?) is the once extinct (in the wild, Mongolia) now reintroduced and only true wild: Horse; Cow; Pig; or Turkey?**
6. **The word psalm derives from meaning a song sung to what instrument: Guitar; Harp; Piano; or Organ?**
7. **The prefix 'neo' (neocon, Neolithic, neo-Nazi, neonatal, etc) means: New; Old; Nearly; or Extreme?**
8. **A gimlet tool is traditionally shaped like the letter: T; S; V; or D?**
9. **The famously gruelling c.1,100mile (1,800km) Iditarod Trial Dog Sled Race is run annually each March where: North/South Poles; Chile; Finland; or Alaska?**
10. **Devised in 1920 from Russian research into proximity sensing, what eponymous musical instrument is controlled by the player's proximity to it?**
11. **What uniquely specialized profession traditionally uses a Piscatory Ring?**
12. **What was the first element discovered in space (actually at the Sun)?**
13. **What 2nd World War US pilot's alliterative expression for an unidentified flying object, from the 'Smoky Stover' cartoon strip, inspired the name of a rock band?**
14. **The term phylum generally refers to a classification of: Living things; Medicine; Facial expressions; or Photography?**
15. **Bort or boart refers to waste/inferior what, used for industrial purposes?**
16. **What does HALO stand for in military/paratrooper terminology?**
17. **Which country is famous for its Blue Lagoon hot springs bathing lake?**
18. **A 2012-13 UK Competition Commission found basic failings of innovation, quality and integrity among the four globally dominant providers of what B2B service: Auditing; Banking; Insurance; or Real Estate/Property?**
19. **The French-English word 'tronc' refers to what, shared by a number of people: Bicycles; Staff tips/gratuities; Guns; or Parenting duties?**
20. **In which human sensory organ is Bruch's membrane?**

ANSWERS: *1.*Android, *2.*Ethanol, *3.*Wealth distribution/inequality, *4.*Honey, *5.*Horse, *6.*Harp, *7.*New, *8.*T, *9.*Alaska, *10.*Theremin, *11.*A Pope, *12.*Helium, *13.*Foo Fighter, *14.*Living things, *15.*Diamonds, *16.*High Altitude Low Opening, *17.*Iceland, *18.*Auditing, *19.*Staff tips/gratuities, *20.*Eye.

TEST YOUR VOCABULARY

The opposite of **healthy** is:

a. **apt**
c. **sick**
b. **suitable**
d. **modest**

ANSWER: c. *Healthy* means having good *health*. It's the opposite of sick, but also can mean "doing well" in a general sense. You can have a *healthy* attitude, or be served a *healthy* portion of food.

Health is one of the most fundamental human concerns. The ubiquitous "How are you?" is often asking after a person's health. To remember *healthy* think of the proverb: "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy and wealthy and wise."

JUMBLED WORDS

1. L Y C E C
2. S E U G S
3. P T A S C E
4. T R C P E
5. L N J E G I
6. C E L Y G A

ANSWERS: 1.CYCLE, 2.GUESS, 3.ASPECT, 4.CREPT, 5.JINGLE, 6.LEGACY

MATH QUIZ

Solve: 5x – 7 = 18

A. **x = 3**
B. **x = 4**
C. **x = 5**
D. **x = 6**

ANSWERS: C. x = 5
Solution: Add 7 to both sides:
5x = 25
Divide by 5:
x = 5

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ARIES
(March 21 - April 19)

February 2026 encourages Aries to focus on teamwork and shared goals. You may feel motivated to connect with friends or colleagues who support your ambitions. Listening carefully strengthens cooperation and avoids misunderstandings. Progress comes through steady effort rather than rushing ahead. Mid-month brings fresh ideas worth exploring, but take time to check practical details. Balance activity with rest to maintain energy. Financial or career matters improve when you stay organised. By the end of February, you feel encouraged and ready to move forward with renewed confidence. Patience, clear communication, and thoughtful planning help you build lasting success during this productive month ahead for you.



TAURUS
(April 20 - May 20)

February 2026 highlights responsibility and long-term planning for Taurus. You may feel determined to strengthen your position at work or within your community. Practical decisions bring steady progress. Avoid resisting helpful change; flexibility supports growth. Support from trusted people provides reassurance. Mid-month reflection helps clarify priorities and future goals. Balance effort with moments of rest to protect wellbeing. Financial matters benefit from careful review and realistic budgeting. By month's end, confidence increases as results begin to show. Consistency and calm judgement guide you forward. This is a month for building stability through patience, reliability, and thoughtful action in every important area of life for you.



GEMINI
(May 21 - June 20)

February 2026 brings Gemini curiosity and thoughtful expansion. You may feel drawn to learning, planning travel, or exploring fresh ideas. Conversations open new perspectives when you remain open-minded. Avoid scattering your attention across too many tasks. Clear goals help you stay focused. Mid-month encourages reviewing progress and adjusting plans carefully. Relationships improve through honest discussion and patience. Keep routines balanced to prevent tiredness. By the end of February, your outlook feels brighter and more confident. Steady effort now prepares you for larger opportunities ahead. Communication, organisation, and practical thinking bring satisfying results and renewed motivation throughout this forward-looking month for you.



CANCER
(June 21 - July 22)

February 2026 encourages Cancer to focus on emotional balance and shared responsibilities. You may review financial or family matters with care. Honest conversations strengthen trust and understanding. Avoid holding onto worries that no longer serve you. Mid-month brings clarity through reflection and calm discussion. Gentle routines support your wellbeing. Small, thoughtful steps lead to steady progress. Support from close connections feels reassuring. By the end of February, you sense renewed stability and confidence. Trust your instincts while remaining practical. Patience and compassion guide you through any challenges, helping you build stronger foundations for the months ahead with calm determination and quiet resilience for you.



LEO
(July 23 - August 22)

February 2026 highlights partnership and cooperation for Leo. You may feel called to strengthen key relationships through fairness and listening. Shared plans benefit from practical organisation. Avoid impatience if progress feels slower than expected. Mid-month reflection helps refine goals and responsibilities. Creative ideas flourish when you remain open to suggestions. Balance leadership with humility. Financial or career matters improve through teamwork. By month's end, confidence grows as mutual support becomes clear. This is a month for steady progress and shared success. Respect, communication, and patience build lasting results and reinforce trust in important personal and professional connections for you now.



VIRGO
(August 23 - September 22)

February 2026 supports Virgo in creating healthy routines and practical systems. You may feel motivated to improve daily habits or organise responsibilities. Attention to detail strengthens results. Avoid overthinking small matters; steady effort matters most. Mid-month encourages cooperation and clear communication at work or school. Rest supports productivity and focus. Small improvements bring noticeable progress. By the end of February, confidence increases as plans fall into place. Patience and discipline guide you toward meaningful achievements. This month rewards thoughtful preparation, realistic expectations, and consistent action that builds lasting security and reassurance for the future ahead for you.



LIBRA
(September 23 - October 22)

February 2026 brings Libra creative energy and thoughtful reflection. You may feel inspired to revisit hobbies or strengthen personal interests. Relationships benefit from fairness and honest conversation. Avoid people-pleasing at your own expense. Mid-month offers clarity about priorities and values. Balance enjoyment with responsibility. Financial or practical decisions improve through calm discussion. By month's end, you feel more centred and confident. Harmony grows through realistic expectations and gentle compromise. This is a month for building joy through balance and steady effort. Patience, kindness, and clear boundaries help you move forward with calm assurance and renewed optimism for the months ahead.



SCORPIO
(October 23 - November 21)

February 2026 encourages Scorpio to focus on home, security, and inner strength. You may review personal goals and adjust plans thoughtfully. Avoid reacting quickly; reflection brings better outcomes. Mid-month conversations clarify misunderstandings. Practical planning strengthens financial stability. Support from family or trusted friends provides reassurance. Small, consistent actions lead to steady progress. By the end of February, confidence deepens as foundations feel stronger. This month rewards patience, honesty, and resilience. Trust your instincts while remaining open to advice. Calm determination guides you through challenges and supports lasting success for you.



SAGITTARIUS
(November 22 - December 21)

February 2026 highlights communication and planning for Sagittarius. You may feel inspired to share ideas or explore learning opportunities. Stay organised to avoid confusion. Mid-month reflection helps you adjust goals realistically. Relationships improve when you listen as carefully as you speak. Balance enthusiasm with practical thinking. Short journeys or new interests bring fresh energy. By month's end, optimism grows as direction becomes clearer. Steady effort supports meaningful progress. This is a month for thoughtful preparation and open-minded discussion. Patience and focus help you build strong foundations for future adventures and long-term success.



CAPRICORN
(December 22 - January 19)

February 2026 encourages Capricorn to review financial plans and personal priorities. Practical budgeting brings reassurance. Avoid unnecessary pressure and focus on steady improvement. Mid-month conversations offer helpful advice. Small steps lead to reliable progress. Relationships strengthen through patience and clear communication. Balance work with rest to maintain energy. By month's end, confidence rises as efforts show results. This month rewards responsibility and thoughtful planning. Consistent action builds lasting security and stability. Trust your discipline while remaining flexible when needed. Calm determination ensures continued growth and prepares you well for the opportunities ahead.



AQUARIUS
(January 20 - February 18)

February 2026 brings Aquarius renewed focus and clarity. You may feel motivated to set personal goals and express ideas confidently. Cooperation strengthens progress, especially in group settings. Avoid rushing important decisions. Mid-month reflection helps refine plans and responsibilities. Balance independence with teamwork. Practical steps bring steady improvement. Support from friends feels encouraging. By the end of February, confidence increases as direction becomes clearer. This month favours innovation grounded in realism. Patience, communication, and organisation help transform ideas into lasting achievements and prepare you for meaningful growth throughout the year ahead.



PISCES
(February 19 - March 20)

February 2026 invites Pisces to slow down and reflect. Gentle routines support emotional balance and clarity. You may feel drawn to creative or spiritual interests that bring peace. Avoid overwhelm by simplifying commitments. Mid-month brings insight into long-term goals. Honest conversations strengthen understanding. Small, steady actions build quiet confidence. Rest is essential for maintaining energy. By the end of February, optimism grows as plans feel more realistic. This month encourages compassion, patience, and thoughtful preparation. Trust your intuition while remaining practical. Calm reflection now lays strong foundations for brighter opportunities and personal growth ahead for you.


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