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# Meghan Markle

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# mavi





From  
**THE EDITOR**



Meghan Markle - PAGE 42

We've got Oscars fever! In this issue, we talk all things Academy Awards, and highlight our stand-out catwalk pieces that we are hoping make it down the red carpet.

We get to know Suits actress, Meghan Markle, who could soon add 'Future Princess' to her impressive resume.

We swoon over one of Cartier's most iconic pieces, and also fall head over heels for rising starlet, Ruth Negga- in particular her enviable red carpet presence.

And don't think we've forgotten the most romantic day of the year either- we've got your back this Valentine's Day. From what to get your honey, to what gifts to hint for and even what to wear throughout the course of the day; we've thought of everything!

*Myles Mellor*

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## Full of surprises.



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Life and Sole\*

# of the Party

\*sorry

## What's the best thing about parties?

Sure socialising with your nearest and dearest and dancing to the hottest tunes are both definitely up there, but nothing beats having an excuse to slip into a gorgeous and attention-grabbing pair of party heels. Here are some of our absolute favourite heels (ready to buy and slip your feet into straight away, may we add) that we have been drooling over lately...



○ Make your outfit really pop with these perfectly irresistible purple party heels (try saying that really fast!) courtesy of the shoe gurus at Jimmy Choo. The satin material is just the sort of luxury your feet will need if they're going to be dancing all night long. Jimmy Choo Kris knotted satin sandals, £675, available at Net a Porter



○ You haven't truly experimented with fashion until you've decided buckles are no longer just reserved for belts and you're willing to wear them on your feet instead. These buckle shoes are the epitome of luxury too; what else would you expect from Burberry? The sleek black and gold accents are surely what dreams are made of. Burberry metallic leather sandals, £595, available at Net a Porter







○ Sophia Webster knows how to make a girl feel special, doesn't she? These badboys are the Mohawk of the shoe world – business in the front and party in the back! If subtle and sophisticated is the way you like to roll, these are the shoes to wear with your little black dress to the next party. It would be unthinkable not to! Sophia Webster Maya bow-embellished suede sandals, £425, available at Net a Porter



○ A party isn't a real party unless sparkles are involved. If sparkles are your way of life, then you probably already have several pairs of glittering party heels in your wardrobe. But we don't think anything can beat these dazzling beauties from Christian Louboutin. We could get lost for days in the sparkles! Christian Louboutin So Kate 120mm glitter pumps, £475, available at Matches



○ Party shoes at the height of elegance – that's the best way to describe these Dolce and Gabbana beauties. We love the bold red colour which gives that instant wow factor, and the all-over lace detailing adds that extra romantic and ladylike touch that every party needs at some point. Dolce and Gabbana Belluci crystal embellished lace pumps, £625, available at Matches



○ What woman doesn't love jewellery and the colour pink? Extend your love of jewels to your shoes and get your hands (and feet) on these gorgeous crystal-embellished satin pumps. We sort of want to bite the jewel off and put it on a necklace, but we'll try and restrain ourselves for the time being... Nicholas Kirkwood Eden jewel crystal embellished pumps, £550, available at Net a Porter





# FIRST AVENUE TIPS

## FOR PAIN-FREE PARTYING

Akin to childbirth, no man will truly understand the all too real pain of walking in heels all night. They may say they do, but not really... unless they have a little secret to tell us? We have nothing but respect and admiration for the A-listers who have made a point of it, largely by taking their shoes off mid-awards ceremony.

Most recently, John Legend's gorgeous wife Chrissy Teigen decided to break with tradition and sit down on the steps at the Golden Globe awards half way through her red carpet walk – and got a high five from Blake Lively for her “I don't care what people think” attitude. Good for you, girl!

But there are a few top tips for making heel-wearing just that little bit less torturous, which is exactly what you need when investing so much in a beautiful pair of party heels. So here goes:

**01** • Tape your toes together. Obviously this can't be done if you're wearing a dainty pair of strappy sandals (sorry!), but for court shoes and even peep toe pumps, taping your second and third toe together (cutting masking tape into a thin strip usually works best as we found it has the strongest hold) works remarkably well. We don't want to get into the science of it all, but it's something to do with alleviating pressure throughout the foot, which is all the convincing we need!

**02** • Gel pads. How women lived without gel pads in the past, we'll never know. Clear gel pads are a must, as they cushion the balls of your feet which, let's face it, is where the pain starts from – and only intensifies as the night goes on. These will definitely make you last a little bit longer than you would have without them, so they're a must-buy. Stock up, give them to your friends and family, carry them around in your bag – you get the picture!

**03** • Fake it with a chunky heel or wedges. If you wear heels solely for the height, then look no further than wedges. If you love the leg elongating effect high heels give you, then you could definitely get away with a chunkier heel which takes a lot of pressure off the feet. Sneaky!

**04** • Fake it part 2 – platforms. We don't actually mean seventies-inspired platform boots (although they're also making a comeback, so don't rule them out altogether), but any heel with even a fraction of a platform at the front is going to be way more comfortable than one without. Think about the angle of your foot and you'll see what we mean. It makes perfect sense – it's all in the math!

**05** • Blisters from straps? Unfortunately a lot of straps can cause blisters or make your skin incredibly sore and sensitive from the friction, which isn't going to be appreciated the following morning. Luckily, there are some everyday household items that could give you that much-needed relief before you've left home. Rubbing Vaseline on the inside of the straps (don't worry, it won't damage the shoes) is a great way to prevent this. Additionally, rubbing or spraying deodorant on your feet will work wonders too. Who knew?

**06** • Get the right size. We can't stress this enough: wearing the wrong size shoe will do long-term damage to your feet, as well as cause you incredible short-term pain on the night you wear them. We would recommend getting your size and width measured by a pro at least once every couple of years. Take advantage of those half sizes and wide-fit shoes when they're available, if you need to. They'll make a world of difference. And make sure you take the designer's fitting guide into consideration too. Some websites tell you to go a size up or down accordingly, so we urge you to take their advice. They're the professionals after all!

**07** • Take a rest. You'll last a whole lot longer if you take short rests throughout the night. Sit down when you need to and you'll be surprised with how many more songs you'll be dancing to without complaining. Just think of Chrissy Teigen...

**08** • Go athleisure the next day. Make sure you give your feet a well-deserved rest the next day by slipping into something a little comfier. Luckily, athleisure couldn't be hotter right now, so slide into those trainers and go about your day knowing you're channelling the trendiest celebs and making your feet happy too. Win, win!



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Style Crushing On...

# Ruth Negga

You would be forgiven for not having heard of Ruth Negga before today – but we predict that by this time next year the Ethiopian-Irish actress will have become a household name. Or at the very least, be considered in the same fashion icon league as greats such as Blake Lively, Gigi Hadid, Diane Kruger, and many more.

We mention these fabulous ladies only for their status and not for style comparison reasons, simply because, we don't think Ruth Negga's red carpet style compares to that of anyone else's. And that's exactly why she is our undisputed style crush of the moment!

We aren't the only ones to have fallen head over heels for this lady either, as Vogue US, aka the ultimate fashion Bible, decided to kick off the year with her stunning face on the cover. A real honour, we think you'll agree. If that doesn't show that you've made it in the fashion world, what will, eh?

It's taken a while for us to narrow down our favourite Ruth Negga red carpet looks from the past few years (look her up – you'll see what we mean!) but we think we've finally got our list. There aren't enough magazine pages available for us to highlight every single one of her amazing red carpet looks. Quick – check them out now before we change our minds again.

Here are just some of the reasons  
she is the one to watch this year



1 Old Hollywood screen sirens were onto a winning style formula back in the day, and it looks like Ruth Negga knows that if her appearance at the Palm Springs lunch which took place at the beginning of this year is anything to go by. We love her sleek, slick twenties-inspired hairstyle as it really complements the rest of her outfit in ways we never really imagined. The Erdem florals and high waisted skirt is a flawless combination, and the baby pink belt is just darling. If you would never think of putting an outfit like this together, perhaps you should reconsider, because Ruth Negga is making it work wonders.

2 We told you in the last issue that it was all about the metallics – and it still is, by the looks of things – although we don't think Ruth Negga waited for our approval before stepping out on the Golden Globes red carpet at the start of the year. If her intention was to wow the crowd and match up to the big red carpet players then she certainly achieved what she was going for – it's hard to fade into the background when you're wearing Louis Vuitton at the best of times, but this is something else altogether! (This particular LV gown reportedly took over 120 hours to make... and we think it was worth every single microsecond!) We love everything about this look, and we haven't even got to her flawless make-up yet. If all you need is one word, then it has to be: wow.







**3** You know you've made it when you're parading down a red carpet in Valentino! Ruth really impressed us at the Palm Spring International Film Festival, as this look could have been quite difficult for unseasoned red carpet walkers to pull off. Not Ruth Negga though, who floated down the red carpet as effortlessly as you could ever imagine – as if on a cloud. (We would be on a permanent cloud all night if we wore Valentino, too. Just sayin'...) We love how romance meets sexiness with this expertly crafted Valentino dress; the romantic embroidered floral detailing is absolutely heavenly, while the sheer material not covered by embroidery added some cheeky seductiveness to the proceedings. And well played on the bold red lip, too!

**4** Lace isn't just for those soft and romantic looks, you know – as proven by Ruth Negga at the Warcraft: The Beginning Hollywood premiere. She opted for a stunning black lace dress by Rodarte (you know your lace is in good hands with Rodarte) and made us fall in love with the vamp trend all over again. She could have really played on the aforementioned vamp trend by going for some dark and heavy make-up, but we love how she softened the look with a subtle smoky eye and a dreamy light pink lip. Someone made all the right decisions here – tick, tick, tick!



**5** Flick through this issue of First Avenue and you'll know how powerful velvet can be. It was one of the biggest trends at the end of last year, and fashion experts around the world are predicting that it's here to stay for yet another season. If you still aren't convinced to try the trend out, then let Ruth Negga be your red carpet inspiration. Just look at her – we don't know about you, but we can't take our eyes off her! The nude Valentino dress definitely helps, but we think it's more to do with Ruth and her red carpet presence. Hair and make-up, as always, were flawless. Enough said!

**6** Forget the embroidery as seen on the Valentino gown which we saw earlier, Ruth Negga has given us yet another faultless way to wear florals. And once again, the look doesn't appear to be out of place on the red carpet. (Florals can be quite tricky to nail on the red carpet, especially during any other time of the year that isn't spring or summer – but Ruth clearly didn't let that bother her. And it shows.) Ruth stunned at the BAFTA Tea Party which took place in January this year – certainly not your conventional time for flower power) in a Vampire's Wife tea dress. We're quite tempted to snap one up for ourselves for any tea parties we might get invited to in the future. Always good to be prepared!







# Be My Valentine


February is synonymous with Valentine's Day, and you don't have to feel guilty for getting excited about Cupid's favourite time of the year. Not only is it the perfect excuse for you and your partner to express your love to each other, but it also gives you another great reason to get all dressed up to celebrate the occasion. And we haven't even got to the gifts yet...



# What to hint for

Let's face it – men are, most of the time, a little bit clueless when it comes to guessing what women want. Regardless of how good their gift-giving skills have been in the past, it surely wouldn't hurt to steer them in the right direction and make it a little bit easier for them,

right? At the end of the day, we're only thinking of them... so feel free to leave this page wide open for them to 'accidentally stumble upon'. Circling your favourite items with the thickest, boldest marker pen you can find is optional, but highly encouraged...

 Diamond earrings (and any type of jewellery with a little bit of sparkle) are always going to be well received – hint, hint – but that's not to say fashion jewellery should be overlooked when present-buying. On the contrary, there are some truly remarkable, sometimes even jaw-dropping pieces of statement jewellery, in particular earrings, that we would be all too grateful to unwrap on Valentine's Day. Or any day of the year, if we're honest. So that's why we've been a little bit greedy and selected not one or even two, but three pairs to tempt you with. You must have a favourite, surely...




Ippolita Rock Candy 18 karat gold topaz and amazonite earrings, £1,460, available at Net a Porter



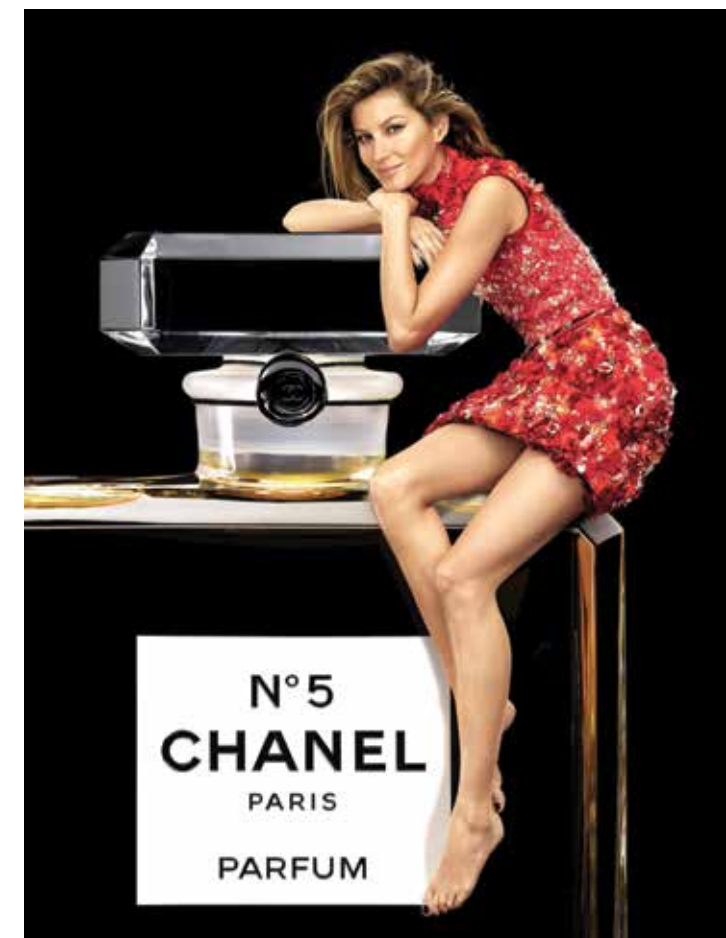
Aurélie Bidermann gold plated coral and feather clip earrings, £333, available at Net a Porter




 Bright, bold eyes reminiscent of the eighties are seriously on-trend right now, and the Colour Gradation limited edition palettes from Christian Dior are pretty much all you need to achieve this season's most in-demand make-up looks. Both palettes are equally as heavenly, although it would be pretty special if you were treated to both... Christian Dior four colours eyeshadow palettes, £42.50 (each)



Oscar de la Renta tasselled silk gold plated and Swarovski crystal clip earrings, £263, available at Net a Porter



 Chanel fragrances are classics for a reason, and you can never have too many. Even if you've just opened a fresh bottle of Chanel No 5, it definitely wouldn't hurt to have another one on standby just in case of emergency. Any Chanel fragrance is going to leave a lasting impression, but the distinctive, iconic scent of Chanel No 5 is a firm First Avenue favourite. Chanel No 5 eau de parfum 100ml, £96, available at John Lewis





Does your partner always stare at and point at his watch in an exasperated fashion because you're running late and you still haven't decided on an outfit yet? You and your partner are not alone, but we have the perfect relationship-saving solution. This Valentino clutch in the now iconic rockstud design will come to the rescue in 90% of sartorial emergencies – and we'll tell you how. The colour alone means that it will go with the majority of the clothes in your wardrobe, which is a great place to start. If you're really pushed for time, grab any black ensemble from your wardrobe (black skinny jeans, a black blouse and your go-to pair of black stilettos for example) and embrace the all-black trend which, let's face it, will never go out of style. This is a great purchase that could save you and your partner countless hours – and may also eliminate a few arguments too. You hear that, men? This is really a present for yourselves... Valentino lock leather wristlet clutch, £1,170 available at Matches



And finally, sometimes we have to admit that it's the little things that can make the biggest impact. Something as simple as a mug can serve as a constant reminder that your other half is there for you. What's better than starting the day off with a sip of your morning coffee and the knowledge that you have someone who loves you in your life? We love this his and hers mug set as it means your man won't feel left out on the love either. Perfect! 3 Blonde Bears interlinking mugs, £20.80, available at Not on the High Street

# What to get him



Of course Valentine's Day gift giving goes both ways, so we're here to help you spoil the man you love too. And best of all, we've heard through the grapevine that men tend to love the presents they want (as opposed to need, as let's face it, they would probably already have

There's a reason aftershave is one of the biggest hits for any present-giving occasion. Nail the scent and you can't go wrong! Christian Dior's original Homme aftershave is a bold, spicy, woody, unmistakable and unforgettable scent – one which will no doubt become a firm favourite for years, maybe even decades, to come. Dior Homme eau de toilette 100ml, £67.50



No man is going to turn down a crisp shirt, least of all if it's luxuriously crafted by the one and only Tom Ford. While your man undoubtedly has hundreds of white shirts that he wears to the office, there's something just that little bit more special about one of a different colour. Especially when, as demonstrated, it can be worn with a statement, attention-grabbing blue suit. The perfect accompaniment to any power suit, wouldn't you agree? Tom Ford Herringbone French cuff shirt, £385, available at Harrods

it if it was of sky-high importance) which really opens you up to a whole world of gifting opportunities. Take a look at these items below which we know are going to put a smile on your loved one's face. You're welcome!

If suave and sophisticated are two words you use to describe your man, then these mother of pearl cufflinks from quintessentially British brand Mulberry are going to be a great present. Classic cufflinks with a modern twist – your man will love them! Mulberry semi-precious round cufflinks, £135, available at John Lewis



Most men take technology very seriously. We aren't suggesting you replace any of his trusty hardware, but no man is going to refuse a brand new pair of the latest and possibly even greatest headphones, are they? Although there are tons of top-selling headphones on the market right now, we definitely think you'll get brownie points when he unwraps these badboys. You get the best of both the fashion and music world with these Beats x Fendi pro headphones, and we love the colour too. He will always remember what you got him for Valentine's Day thanks to the traditional romantic colour. (Although if he really isn't a fan of the ruby hue, they do also come in a host of other colours, including true blue, yellow and of course, the classic black and white shades.) A great way to spoil him, if you ask us! Beats x Fendi pro headphones in red flame, £950, available at Fendi





# What to wear

Your other half has undoubtedly got something special up his sleeve for the big day. And if he isn't one for the organising, we bet you will ensure that something exciting and romantic is planned well in advance. Either way, it's pretty much a dead cert that you'll be

celebrating somewhere fancy, so you're going to want to dress for the occasion and look your best. Take a look at the outfits we have planned for various portions of the day and night.

Day

From a nice spot of window shopping (which could lead to the purchase of another gift – we're not ruling it out!), to seeing a show, having a casual lunch, or even visiting one of Dubai's many tourist attractions, there are lots of fun daytime activities that can be done on Valentine's Day. A simple jeans and a blouse outfit with some comfortable footwear and a statement bag is definitely what we would recommend for the first portion of your special day. (Side note: if you know in advance that your daytime activity isn't going to be too strenuous, may we suggest replacing the flats with a pair of leg-elongating nude stilettos instead?)



Raoul flora blue printed silk pussybow blouse, £126, available at Brand Outlet



Givenchy Antigona sugar small leather tote in nude pink, £1,375, available at Selfridges



The Row Noelle suede loafers, £550, available at Net a Porter

Citizens of Humanity rocket high-rise skinny jeans, £275, available at My Theresa



## Evening

If you can't wear red with pride on Valentine's Day, when can you, eh? Embrace the stereotype – men love women in red for a reason, and we guarantee this stunner from Valentino will blow them away. Dazzle your date with any striking red dress and some killer heels and you're good to go – but you can't blame us for falling hopelessly in love with this Valentino ensemble We're only human.



Valentino crepe midi dress, £1,753, available at Browns



Valentino rockstud patent leather kitten heel pumps, £620, available at My Theresa

Monsoon Layton small satin clutch, £35



## Night

We don't like to dictate what goes on in the bedroom, but we will say this: if you're looking for seductive luxury, then look no further than the delights of Agent Provocateur. Every single piece of lingerie tells a story and will guarantee that the wearer will feel sensual and most of all, beautiful in any piece. For a romantic look:



Agent Provocateur Gulia ivory and black kimono, £1,195



Agent Provocateur Gulia ivory and black slip, £725



For all-out seduction: Agent Provocateur Gulia short slip, £725



# LOVE to Lust

## The Cartier Love Bracelet



Admittedly, being presented with any bold red Cartier gift box is going to send chills up and down our spines and render us giddy with both excitement and wild anticipation.

However there's a bracelet-shaped gift box that is top of our wish list, as we would hope that it would contain the thing we have been dreaming of for as long as we can remember. We are of course talking about the infamous Cartier love bracelet...

So famous, in fact, that it was actually the most Googled piece of jewellery in 2016. We don't know about you, but knowing it is so high on everyone's wish list makes us want, nay – need, it even more. Don't you agree?

A sign of status and style, the Cartier Love bracelet is as timeless as it is covetable. Sure it seems to be having a typically big moment right now, but you know it's going to wow for generations to come. Any expertly crafted piece of Cartier jewellery is undoubtedly going to have a limitless future. With prices ranging from £980 to £45,000, it's safe to say that being spotted with one of these bracelets on your arm is just as, if not more, powerful than turning up to the event of the season with a rare, vintage Rolex.



## A little history

Cartier actually launched the Love bracelet back in 1969 in New York. The jeweller's Italian designer Aldo Cipullo was the visionary who created the bracelet with two C halves for men to give their other half as a sign of true love, hence the name, and then 'screwed on' their wrist for all eternity. Symbolically speaking of course.

"Love has become too commercial, yet life without love is nothing – a fat zero," the designer famously said about his creation.

"What modern people want are love symbols that look semi-permanent – or, at least, require a trick to remove. After all, love symbols should suggest an everlasting quality."

So important was the symbol of love that women were once upon a time forbidden from turning up to a Cartier store and purchasing one for themselves – they had to wait for their partners to make the decision to buy one for them. Imagine that?

Luckily, that rule has since been abolished, although we would of



course prefer it if our boyfriends and husbands took it upon themselves to purchase one for us so we wouldn't have to. The rules don't say anything about subtle and not-so-subtle hints though... Since the rules have changed and it is no longer frowned upon to gift one to yourself, a neat little idea is to buy one and then ask your significant other to engrave it for you to give it that nice, personal, romantic touch. What do you think? If this isn't enough to tempt you onto the Cartier website for a closer look at the bracelets, then perhaps the knowledge that these bracelets have been seen sitting proudly on the wrists of some of the world's most famous women will do the trick.

The late Princess Diana was famously gifted one of the bracelets, which is a true sign of the elegance and versatility the bracelet has the capability of achieving. Other famous fans also include Joan Collins, Jennifer Aniston, Angelina Jolie and British model Rosie Huntington-Whiteley among others. Topshop mogul Sir Phillip Green's daughter Chloe Green has regularly been spotted with not one or even two, but three and sometimes even four bracelets stacked up on her wrist at the same time. If that isn't a sign of style and status, we don't know what is!



### A few final words

As well as its strikingly stunning appearance and sign of wealth and status (particularly the pricier diamond encrusted ones) the thing we love most about the Cartier Love bracelet is way it is associated with true love – very fitting for this upcoming Valentine's Day, if we may say. Each bracelet comes with a mini screwdriver (not your average screwdriver of course – a luxurious one crafted with the same precision and attention as the bracelet itself, it would seem) for those wishing to take the bracelet off. The commitment to putting the bracelet on and taking it off only adds to the symbolism of love and dedication. We certainly wouldn't be in a hurry to take ours off if we ever got one from our other half...

The classic Cartier love bracelet currently comes in yellow, pink and white gold. There are 35 different variations available on the official Cartier website; special designs also feature some of the most intricate and beautiful additional stones, such as yellow and pink sapphires and amethysts among others.

If you want to expand your Love collection then there are many other items in the Cartier Love range to complement your bracelet, such as necklaces, rings and earrings. You're welcome.





# Up your Velvet game (trend to try)

So what's the deal with velvet? Have you hopped in a time machine and transported yourself back to the age of The Spice Girls, dial up internet connections (shudder) and hair scrunchies – aka the nineties?

It's no secret that some of the biggest nineties trends have made a once feared but now very welcome comeback – did someone say choker? and now it looks like another fabulous trend has come back with a vengeance too. Yes ladies, it's perfectly acceptable to wear velvet again – no time machine required!

Velvet trousers? You've got to be kidding... you might be thinking. However we know you'll be eating your words once you've tried out some of the best and most in-demand velvet trouser offerings from the biggest fashion players in the industry. These Haider Ackermann red velvet trousers tick all the trend boxes for us, and are an excellent staple wardrobe piece to team your everyday essentials with. Haider Ackermann red velvet trousers, £576, available at My Theresa



Are you suddenly curious about velvet trousers but don't want to spend quite so much money trying out a trend you might not be 100% convinced about? Then look no further than these crushed velvet Topshop trousers in a stunning aquatic shade of turquoise. We love the relaxed, loose silhouette too which makes them perfect for autumnal lounging; plus the lighter colour means that, weather permitting, these can transition nicely into the spring season with something as simple as a white vest top and a chunky, gold statement necklace. And finally: we know we aren't the only ones who want to try these simply because they remind us of a mermaid's tail. Never in our wildest dreams did we think we could channel Ariel without committing to a full fancy dress costume and getting strange looks from people... Topshop crushed velvet trousers, £38





Finally, time to get halfway back into your comfort zone with these velvet trousers in a failsafe shade of black. Don't thank us, thank Stella McCartney. You can also thank her for the loose silhouette of these trousers too – relaxed, casual, and her own spin on the popular athleisure trend. Stella McCartney Camilla velvet trousers, £306, available at My Theresa

Velvet is a hard-working material that can be adapted for all kinds of different looks. It works fantastically when toughened up with bold accessories, which is why it has been a hot favourite amongst the punks and goths of the world for as long as we can remember. It also works wonderfully when softened down, and really speaks for itself when more romantic looks come into play. Take this Nina Ricci skirt for a prime example. Have you ever seen anything more gorgeously feminine? It comes with a matching long-sleeved top if you want to go all-out, but we would recommend accessorising with something more subtle and muted. Let the skirt do all the hard work! Nina Ricci velvet skirt, £480, available at My Theresa



A daring mini skirt with ruffles and a cheeky hint of pink to spice things up – what could be more exciting than that? If you want playful femininity, then this skirt from Lanvin is without a doubt the one for you. Attention-grabbing and trend-heavy, this skirt is a great piece for those moments you really want to let your hair down. We can already see you salsa dancing your way to your handbag to reach for that credit card. We don't blame you! Lanvin ruffled velvet skirt, £767.50, available at The Outnet

Rachel from Friends was always ahead of the game when it came to fashion... and that's not even taking her iconic "the Rachel" haircut into consideration. Having never spent a day on this earth without at least one episode of Friends on in the background, we know that she was partial to the odd velvet item over the seasons. Or five. We can't help but think of Ross's on again, off again girlfriend when we see this skirt; tell us we aren't the only ones? Channel your inner Rachel and team this truly striking blue velvet skirt with black tights (highly recommended; have you seen the hemline?!) and some sky high black suede heels. Pinko Fandango draped velvet skirt, £130, available at Harrods



Worlds away from the velvet smoking jacket you haven't been able to get out of your head since our first mention of velvet, this gorgeous piece of outerwear will keep you warm and en-vogue for many seasons to come. We adore the not-so-subtle nod to the timeless military jacket too; don't you love it when your fave trends come together to create one almighty stunning piece? Saint Laurent cotton velvet jacket, £1,905, available at My Theresa





Is it a shirt, or is it a bathrobe? Neither – it's a luxurious Luisa Beccaria slouchy, longline velvet jacket in a deep, mesmerising shade of teal blue. We can't look away, which definitely bodes well for any fashionista wanting to make an effortless statement. Team with skinny jeans, ankle boots and a casual vest top, with this jacket "thrown on at the last minute" as the final, finishing touch. The effortlessly chic illusion starts here! Luisa Beccaria tie waist velvet jacket, £850, available at Matches



We love everything about this cropped, embroidered red velvet jacket by Alice Archer. A statement piece that can add instant wow factor to an otherwise average-looking ensemble; works just as well when teamed with the fanciest threads as well as when added to a simple jeans and tee combo. Alice Archer Desiree velvet jacket, £356, available at Far Fetch



Dare you try a short velvet dress in a bold leopard print? We think we know you well enough by now, and we are willing to say that your answer will be "yes". Leopard print will never, ever go out of style, so this dress is a true investment piece that can be pulled out of the wardrobe minutes before it's time to leave, and you know you'll have a winner on your hands. Make sure this dress is the first item you pack when jetting off to a colder climate (which let's face it, is the majority of the world) as this dress is perfect for keeping you warm on a chilly evening! Layer up with a faux fur black jacket when the temperature really drops! Dolce and Gabbana leopard print velvet dress, £1,850, available at My Theresa



A black velvet midi dress with a difference, this off-the-shoulder offering from Rachel Zoe is the best way to channel the velvet trend without conformity. And that's exactly what we want! The criss-cross lace up feature at the back is an added bonus, too. And the subtle slit at the back, teamed with the playful straps, really will take your look one crucial step further. Rachel Zoe Kinsley off-the-shoulder velvet dress, £234, available at Net a Porter

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# Who is Meghan Markle

everything you need to know about Prince Harry's new girlfriend

She was most Googled actress of 2016 - but why is the world all of a sudden obsessed with American actress Meghan Markle?

Has she taken on a really controversial movie role? Is she up for a handful of Oscars? Not quite - this is perhaps something even more exciting than all of those things combined.

She's well on her way to becoming British royalty, as she is officially dating the one and only Prince Harry.

And best of all, she already has Her Majesty The Queen's royal seal of approval. You can't get any better than that, right?





# the **Stuff** we need important to know

We won't go into too much detail – we'll leave that for all those official and undoubtedly even unofficial biographies that are bound to come out if she marries into the British royal family. But there are a few must-know facts about our could-be future Princess. So let's start with the basics...

## **What's her real name?**

Meghan is actually her middle name – she was born Rachel Meghan Markle.

## **Where was she born?**

Meghan was born in Los Angeles on August 4 1981. She was raised by her mixed race parents – her mother, a yoga instructor and clinical therapist, and father, a photography director.

She really opened up in a magazine interview last year about facing uncertainty and confusion about her mixed race background, and even struggling to find work as an actress because of it. Who knows, if it wasn't for her stunning features, she might not have captured the eye of the Prince...

## **What has she been in?**

Her most famous role has been as Rachel Zane in the popular US drama, *Suits*, which she has starred in since 2011. (We definitely recommend binge-watching this if you haven't already – it's highly addictive once you get started!) You may also recognise her playing the role of FBI special agent Amy Jessup in the sci-fi thriller *Fringe*.

Viewers with keen eyesight may also spot her in films such as *Horrible Bosses* and *Get Him to the Greek*, and TV shows like *90210*, *General Hospital* and *CSI: Miami*. And if you happen to catch yourself watching *Deal or No Deal* re-runs and see someone who looks like Meghan holding one of those infamous red boxes, then pat yourselves on the back. She was indeed one of the gorgeous box holders at the beginning of her acting career. Hey, we all have to start somewhere...

## **Does she have any other jobs or projects?**

Meghan teamed up with Canadian clothing company Reitmans and released a line of fashionable yet reasonably priced women's workwear. The latest five-piece collection might just be the slickest yet. It comprises of a sleek, faux leather pencil skirt that grazes the knees, faux leather leggings (you see the theme here), a cashmere blend black

poncho, an oversized but expertly tailored grey shirt, and what is fast becoming the wardrobe essential of the century: a black bodysuit.

([http://www.reitmans.com/en/meghan\\_markle](http://www.reitmans.com/en/meghan_markle))

She's also the founder and editor-in-chief of lifestyle site *The Tig*, which to use its own words, is "a hub for the discerning palate - those with a hunger for food, travel, fashion & beauty." (<http://thetig.com/>) She once said that she launched the site to "reframe the beauty content to include think pieces about self-empowerment". Nice! We love her already!

## **Who have her previous love interests been?**

If she does make it down the aisle with Prince Harry, it won't be her first wedding as she actually married her long-term boyfriend, film-producer Trevor Engelson in a stunning Jamaican ceremony in September 2011. The pair went their separate ways in 2013.

She has since said to have dated pro golfer





Rory McIlroy as well as a top Toronto chef.

### **Where did she meet Prince Harry?**

The pair reportedly met in Canada while Prince Harry was promoting the Invictus Games for disabled servicemen. Although Meghan is from LA, she lives in Toronto as that's where Suits is actually filmed.

### **Do her family approve of her royal romance?**

Meghan's father reportedly met Prince Harry back in January – and it looks like he made a great impression on him. Do we hear wedding bells already?

### **They have a lot of charity work in common, don't they?**

Charity is immediately the first thing that comes to mind when talking about these two lovebirds. Megan is a global ambassador for World Vision Canada; she has travelled to Rwanda in Africa to help with the clean water campaign. And that's not all. She's also worked with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

She's also involved in international charity One Young World, and even spoke about gender equality and modern-day slavery at the annual summit in Dublin back in 2014.

Charity and public speaking go hand in hand with the Royal Family, so it looks like Meghan is already off to a flying start.

### **What about her fashion and style?**

Ok, we admit it, we are insanely curious about her fashion choices. Her red carpet and street style looks were one of the first things we researched after choosing to delve deeper into our Meghan Markle investigation...

If she's going to be photographed even half as much as Prince Harry's sister-in-law Kate Middleton, the world is going to have its watchful and probably even judgemental eye on everything she wears. And most likely try to snap it up the second she steps out in it if they approve.

At the moment, she seems to be quite low key with her sartorial choices. This makes a huge difference from her Suits character who is

always polished to perfection. But you know what? We actually kind of love it...

"When I get ready to go out, it's half an hour and we're out of the door," she once said. "I don't want to waste time getting ready, I want to have fun. At work I get so dolled up that it's nice to wear jeans and a sweater."

Will this change if she and Prince Harry get engaged and eventually get married? We'll have to wait and see...

We think we know what Prince Harry sees in her. Brains as well as beauty, she seems like the perfect fit for the modern royal family. We can't wait to see where their relationship will take them.





Whether she likes it or not, Miss Markle's style is always going to be on our radar. She doesn't have anything to worry about though; she seldom looks anything short of perfection. Let's take a look at some of our favourite Meghan Markle fashion moments of all time.

1. The word 'suits' stretches a whole lot further than her day job, as Meghan is seemingly quite fond of both long and short two-pieces. You only have to look at her Reitmans collection to know that she wears workwear extremely well, so it makes perfect sense for her to adopt this look on the red carpet too. If it ain't broke, and all that...



2. We will rave about metallics until we are blue in the face. Or at the very least, until our A-list style-setters prove to us that the trend isn't working for them anymore. That doesn't look like it's happening any time soon, as Meghan Markle proved at the CFDA Vogue Fashion Fund Awards. We don't think a plunging neckline and a teeny tiny hem will be met with a great deal of approval at Buckingham Palace, but there's no denying how scorching Meghan looks. And we must point out that her hair and make-up are thoroughly on point too. We love the nude lip!

3. If Meghan Markle does eventually get her Princess status, then we imagine that she and Prince Harry will be inundated with invitations to black tie functions. In other words, she is going to have to stock up on a whole lot of eveningwear and get friendly with the hottest designers (we imagine she is already doing pretty well with the latter) which means we can expect more divine looks such as this one. We adore everything about this look from head to toe. The silhouette of the dress, how the colour complements her hair and skintone beautifully, the make-up, we said hair already didn't we? We've run out of things to praise. Excellent work, MM!



4. Meghan is channelling our favourite fashion bloggers here – and how fitting that she's attending the Wes Gordon fashion show during New York Fashion Week. Someone's been doing their sartorial homework! This look was expertly put together, and proves that she really has a natural flare for fashion. A look like this is easy to overdo and get wrong, but she chose a simple hairstyle and barely there accessories. In other words, she absolutely nailed it.



5. The lady in red! We love it when our young royals experiment with colour (some of our favourite Kate Middleton looks involve some bold yet beautiful hues) and it looks like Meghan Markle may very well follow in her footsteps. This is one of her most recent looks to date – this photo was taken back in January at the Elle 6th Annual Women in Television dinner in California, and it's clear to see that she has really upped her fashion game. We didn't even think it was possible, but there she goes, surprising us. Bravo, Meghan for your seductively sultry – but still classy – look. And you get all the brownie points in the world for embracing the dark red lipstick!



6. Meghan has made no secret of the fact that she loves keeping it cool and casual. And although this isn't the most casual we have seen her (sportswear and a comfy pair of trainers all the way!) you can tell that that's exactly what she was going for here. Effortlessly stylish on a breezy summer's day. And that hair-commercial-worthy barnet definitely hasn't gone unnoticed either. Could she give the Duchess of Cambridge's coveted locks a run for their money? Watch this space!

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# Longines

A close association with equestrian sports  
for over a century!



**Juan Carlos Longines Vice President and Head of International Marketing**

Longines' passion for equestrian sport dates back to 1878, when it produced a chronograph engraved with a jockey and his mount. Three years later, it was found on American racecourses, adopted by horse enthusiasts. In 1912, the company partnered for the first time with an international show jumping competition. Today Longines' involvement in equestrian sports includes show-jumping, flat racing, endurance and eventing competitions. First Avenue magazine conducted an interview with Mr. Juan Carlos Longines Vice President and Head of International Marketing, about a some of topics, including the company's sponsorship in the UAE, future plans for sponsorship, and Longines product models.

**Longines watches have always been associated with equestrian sports and has remained over the years, one of the most important sponsors of this sport. Could you please tell us more about this?**

Our link with equestrian sports dates back from more than a century. Indeed, already in 1878, Longines produced a chronograph engraved with a jockey and his mount, allowing to measure performances to the

official timekeeper for the FEI Furusiyya Nations Cup™ and the official partner for three series of the Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping: the European league, the North American league and the Chinese league, as well as the Longines FEI World Cup™ Jumping Finale. Moreover, Longines will be timing the World Equestrian Games in 2018 and 2022 and is the Official Partner for the Longines FEI World Endurance Championships in 2016 and 2020.



**H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum Receives award from Juan Carlos and Patrick Aoun**

second. Thanks to it, Longines held a pre-eminent position on American racetracks as early as the end of the 19th century. This chronograph was the first milestone in a long history that has led the Swiss watchmaking brand to partner with world-renowned institutions, races, jumping, eventing, endurance and breeding competitions around the globe.

**Longines have always tied-up with the Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) and sponsored its events and activities. Could you tell us more about this relationship and the most important events sponsored by Longines?**

The Swiss watch brand is proud to be the FEI's first "Top Partner" but also its Official Timekeeper and Official Watch. As part of this partnership, Longines is lending its name to the FEI world ranking for riders participating in the show jumping trials: the Longines Rankings. The brand is also the

**Longines first associations in UAE were related to jumping and sprints races and you are now sponsoring the most important endurance races which is His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Cup. What is the reason of this interest in UAE Equestrian Sports?**

The world of equestrian sports is an expanding universe that provides Longines with an ever-growing number of attractive opportunities to bring itself and its values to the attention of an increasing number and variety of audiences all over the world. About the UAE, Longines has been growing substantially in this part of the world and is proud of this achievement. Our Gulf-based equestrian portfolio reflects this achievement. We are Official Timekeeper of all equestrian events organized by the Meydan Group and are committed to the Emirates Equestrian Federation. We also





partner with prestigious events, as for instance the Dubai World Cup, The Dubai Show Jumping Championship, The President of UAE Showjumping Cup CSIO5\* presented by Longines or the Emirates Longines Showjumping League.

**Tell us about your partnership with “MEYDAN” and the launch of the new name “Longines Dubai Sheema Classic”?**

Longines has been involved in flat racing for more than a century. Since then, the brand has then taken on the role of Official Partner and Official Timekeeper for many races and racecourses all around the world.

As part of this strategy, Longines collaborates with Meydan since many years now. This partnership is a unique opportunity for the brand to enhance its privileged relationship with equestrian sports and sports timekeeping. We are very proud to be associated with one of the major actor of the Middle East equestrian world. In 2017, Longines together with Meydan Group announced the continuation of their partnership, stipulating that the watchmaker is the Official Timekeeper for all equestrian events being held by Meydan. As part of this partnership, Longines has become the Title Partner of the Longines Dubai Sheema Classic.

**What are your future plans for sponsorships in the UAE?**

We have lots of events all over the world and subsequently lots of



projects that we cannot speak about yet.

**You have mentioned in the press conference held before the championship that The Longines Equestrian Collection would be the official watch of the championship this year, what are the unique features of this watch?**

With the Longines Equestrian Collection, Longines offers a genuine allegory of the equestrian world in tribute to the deep bonds the brand has forged with it. The various models of The Longines Equestrian Collection are linked by their references to the equine world. Shapes and materials derive their inspiration from symbolic elements of this environment, like a sublime echo of the world of horse lovers.

**What are the advantages of Longines watches and why is it associated with Equestrian Sports?**

Both Longines watches and equestrian sports share the same core values : elegance, tradition and performance. It is then a perfect match.

**What are the watch models you choose for horse races sponsorships and especially for Dubai World Cup?**

Longines produces models both sporty and sophisticated, which are a perfect fit for people willing to enjoy the thrill of the races without compromising on elegance.







# The Oscars

our red  
carpet predictions!



The Oscars are almost upon us. In fact, by the time this magazine is published and hits the shelves, the Academy

Awards will have just passed, and we'll have an awards season shaped hole in our hearts.

We will however no doubt still be talking about The Oscars and gushing over the jaw-dropping dresses to grace the red carpet. You know just as well as we do: the arrivals red carpet is the true highlight of the entire ceremony.

It might sound like an odd thing to say, but we don't envy the stars of Tinsel Town, as they have an incredibly hard task of choosing their red carpet gowns for this year's ceremony, simply because the spring/summer 2017 season was overflowing with one stunning dress after the other.

We've scanned the collections that debuted in New York, London, Milan and Paris in September, and have selected a few knock out pieces that we predict (or sometimes just hope) might be selected by our favourite A-listers.

**Want to see what made the cut?**





# Carolina Herrera



We hope this isn't cheating, but we have selected not one, but three Carolina Herrera SS17 dresses for our Oscars predictions. (We've decided that it isn't cheating. We make the rules, and we say the more Carolina Herrera dresses, the better!) Carolina Herrera knows a thing or three about making women feel like

they are floating on a cloud in her dresses, which is why she is always a hot favourite for the Academy Awards. Sleek and sexy and large and in charge – all three styles are worthy of draping one of the Best Actress or Best Supporting Actress ladies. Which one would you go for if you had the honour of attending?



Carolina Herrera



Carolina Herrera





# Oscar de la Renta



If you're going to do metallic gold, you might as well let Oscar de la Renta help you do it in style. We would need a confident, possibly even award-nominated

actress to wear this glimmering creation, or even the partner of a leading actor who isn't afraid to be upstaged by his date. Who can you picture in this dress?

# Christian Dior



We imagine these sheer red and black dresses could be donned by those ladies who aren't afraid to take fashion risks. They're great options for those who want to show a little leg but also want to conform to the typical floor-length and fabulous dress code.





# Valentino



You would hope that at least one luscious lady is going to wear Valentino for the Oscars, wouldn't you?

# Monique Lhuillier & Elie Saab



If we were going to attend the Oscars, we would start our search with Monique Lhuillier and Elie Saab. We wouldn't give it a second thought. Their collections are in a league of their own and if you can imagine, seem

to get more spectacular season after season. We are never surprised to see the film and fashion elite trusting both of these incredible designers with their looks for the biggest red carpet night of the year.





Elie Saab



Elie Saab



Monique Lhuillier



Monique Lhuillier





Monique Lhuillier



Monique Lhuillier



Monique Lhuillier



Monique Lhuillier





## Going Couture

We're not ruling out Couture collections either – after all, isn't that where the most luxurious of garments can be found in their droves? Both Spring 2016 and Fall 2016 Couture collections were outstanding, to say the least, and we predict that at least one famous face will be lucky enough to be draped in the finest Couture on their big night.

# Zuhair Murad Couture



For the ladies who want to feel like princesses (and let's face it, how many women do you know who would turn down the chance to live every little girl's dream for the night?) there are only three words. Zuhair. Murad.

Couture. Need we say more? Both Spring 2016 and Fall 2016 couture collections from the designer are what red carpet dreams are made of. The pictures speak for themselves, do they not?



Zuhair Murad



Zuhair Murad



Zuhair Murad



Zuhair Murad





# Giambattista Valli

It's hard to believe Giambattista Valli only got his Couture status just over five years ago (it was in 2011, to be exact) as you would assume by his impeccable work that he was at it long before he could even crawl.

We are crossing all our fingers and toes that someone will be bold and brave enough to don one of his Fall 2016 Couture dresses, in particular either of the two scarlet masterpieces!



Giambattista Valli

## Trend predictions

As you can see from the dresses we have chosen as favourites and predictions, our heads and hearts are telling us that sheer accents are going to be huge.

Gone is the high high Angelina Jolie slit, and in its place, sheer skin-showing materials that are designed to tease.

We also have high hopes for pastel hues returning to the red carpet. Don't get us wrong, we live for the "go big or go home" mantra, but we would really like to see a softer colour palette on the Academy Awards red carpet this year. Who's with us?



# Talking Fitness, Wellbeing & Social Responsibility



Could you please introduce yourself and your company?

I completed my MBA from UK. I was there for 6 years and worked for a while with a local company. In 2012 I moved to the UAE and joined the family business of Health Care Management and took over the nutrition department.

We started off with only 3 outlets, now we have about 9 retail centers spreading all over the UAE, with Abu Dhabi being our main region with more than 5 outlets.

As a group, we are growing along with the fitness and wellness industry. We are planning to expand the number of our outlets in the coming years. We will soon be launching our online retail store, which will be listing about 2000 products. Initially though, we intend to focus only on the UAE market with our online store. Our future plans include expanding over other GCC countries as well.

We do have a distribution wing called IBR Distribution. We handle few of the top international brands of organic products which are distributed to our own retail centers and pharmacies, and even to entities outside our group.

Do you have a special license for distributing organic products here in Dubai?

We do have a general trading license and all our products are registered under Dubai municipality. Our organic products are approved by organic committees like USDA and Ecocert. Our range of products vary from weight loss to skin care and supplements.

Do you also have a color cosmetics line?

At present, we focus entirely on health supplements and sports nutrition supplements. We strive to bring products that contribute towards the wellbeing of people living in UAE

Could you share a few wellness tips, especially for the people living in Dubai, also keeping in mind that you represent a company that believes in wellness, health and fitness?

Many of us are too busy with our hectic lifestyle in Dubai and health and fitness often takes the backseat. Dubai being the heart of fast paced life, eating out and eating unhealthy has becomes a routine. Since choices are plenty, people end up eating unhealthy more often than one might expect.

As the economy is growing and since there is more awareness, people tend to spend more money on their lifestyle and along with that they want to keep fit as well. People have started taking fitness and over all well-being much more seriously. Even if not immediately, few would at least like to start considering fitness at some point in their lives. There

**We strive to bring products that contribute towards the wellbeing of people living in UAE.**



**Mohamed Ghazal**  
CEO - Docib Healthcare Management LLC.

are also many who are into dieting. Bottom line is that awareness is still there.

We live in a country where there's a gym or a swimming pool in almost if not every apartment and if you live in a villa community then you most certainly have a park or a jogging track nearby. This means

everywhere you look you will find a place to start moving and work out, this also speaks volumes about this country. The best thing is Dubai government has been actively promoting the wellness aspect. Take the highly successful 'Lose

weight and Win gold' program. The main objective is to lose weight and be fit and above all you get rewarded with gold, which I don't think any other country in the world practices. Our company is more focused promoting wellbeing rather than a business; we have the social responsibility towards the people of UAE. We want to give them the best product in the market, healthy products which really benefit their health.

You look very fit. How do you manage?

There is a saying - When in Rome, do as the Romans do. I am in



the fitness industry and it requires me to keep myself fit. So, I tend to eat clean food, try to go to gym regularly. Recently, I met a group who have a busy lifestyle. We were sitting and talking about things like health and wellness and I was surprised by their yearning to be fit. They asked me the same question of how I keep myself fit. I told them, “Once you decide to be fit, you have to eat clean. This is very important, because 70% of your wellness depends on what goes into your body. 30% is contributed by the sort of exercises or activities you may be in to. Exercise does play a vital role but food is very important. You need to know what to eat, when to eat.” The people I met were CEOs and Directors of companies and they said that they take multi-vitamin, omegas, and supplements. This is good, because you don’t get enough nutrition entirely from the food you eat; especially we miss out on fiber. Fiber is very important for digestion and your digestive system on the whole. To be honest, most people I spoke to had issues like constipation because of the lack of fiber in their food and so adding fiber is very essential.

I remember as youngsters we used to eat a lot of raw food like corn on the cob, radishes etc. Children these days are not into that that kind of food. They choose the mushy corn, baby carrots, and it takes away the natural way you interact with food and consequently miss out on the fiber element in your diet?

There is a benefit of eating corn from the cob. You are strengthening your jaw muscle and teeth as well. When you go out of

the natural way, you miss out on many things. That’s same with your food as well. When you go out of your natural food you miss out on essential proteins, vitamins, and minerals. That’s where we step in. Even though we run a number of nutrition centers, the main objective is to

provide suggestions for healthy living. Our staff members at the centers are all well qualified and well trained. So, even if you have nothing to buy when you visit us and talk to them, you’ll get an idea of what you need to do. What are the better choices and practices for a healthy living. So, more than a business there is a social responsibility aspect as well. Sometimes I talk to people, I tell them to alter small things in their daily life. Look into what you are eating. If you are living on the fourth floor, take the stairs. Your health is really important. Only if you lead a healthy life, can you achieve what you aim for.

**There are other competitors in the market. What is the unique selling point of your venture?**

First of all, we are not just a shop. There is a misconception that a nutrition center is only for body builders and this is absolutely wrong. We cater to all age groups and that includes infants as well. Our main objective is to have A – Z range of products to cater to all age groups regardless of the gender. When you step into our store you will find something suitable for yourself. Like I said, we have well trained staff with whom you can discuss your health issues. If it’s something we can take care of like weight loss, skin & hair issues we suggest supplements. For those into fitness and require lean body mass, we give products

related to that.

**Do you have Ayurvedic products?**

We call it herbal. We do have few products. We only serve based on requirements. Only very few people are into it here in UAE. Majority of our clients

are into organic or popular individual brands. We distribute almost all world renowned brands along with in-house brands in our stores.

**What have been your challenges?**

Like I said before, for us it is not just a business. It more of a social

The best thing is Dubai government has been actively promoting the wellness aspect.



responsibility towards the people and it is important to create a health and wellness awareness. It is important as ambassadors of wellness, we strive to build awareness at every given opportunity.

**There are skeptical opinions about such products.**

What I believe is that as long as it is natural, it shouldn’t affect you. These are supportive medicines. That’s why they are called supplements. For example, a product like Omega 5, is an antioxidant. It is made from Pomegranate, the fruit with the highest antioxidants. So how does it benefit. Say you are going for a skin treatment, weight loss or anything. This will promote it, improve good skin. Antioxidant is what you require for your skin because oxidative stress can cause lots of free radicals. What happens is it accelerates the aging process. So what this kind of supplements does is it slows down and protects you from oxidative stress. It’s supportive from inside and does not harm you in any way

and you benefit from it.

**What about people who believe not go for the supplements but go for the real thing?**

Good that you asked. Let me put it in a simple way. One capsule contains two thousand seeds of pomegranate which means you need to have more than three kilos of pomegranate to get two thousand seeds.

Practically speaking can you eat three or four kilos of pomegranate every day??

This is where supplements come into the picture. You won’t be able to fulfill your daily nutrition requirements entirely from the food you eat, especially when

you cook vegetables, most of the nutrition value is lost.

**One last question... Who are your customers?**

Like I said before, anyone walks into our store be it a man or a woman, a child or an elderly person and anyone who aspires for better health, nutrition and wellbeing.

In the UAE, when it comes to food, you have all the options. It’s you who needs to make the right choice.



# Dubai Duty Free

Annual Sales Reach Dhs6.673 billion  
(US\$1.85 billion) in 2016



Dubai Duty Free ushered in the new year by announcing annual sales of Dhs6.673 billion (US\$1.85 billion) in 2016.

Reflecting on the year at Dubai Duty Free, Colm McLoughlin, Executive Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer said: “Overall, it has been a good year for the operation and I would like to thank H.H. Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and Chairman of Dubai Duty Free for his ongoing support. I also join His Highness in thanking our great team of staff, our suppliers and of course our customers, for their contribution to our growth and success.”

In 2016, Dubai Duty Free opened 7,000 square metres of retail in Concourse D on February 24 as part of the phased opening of the newest concourse in Dubai International Airport early this year, and that brought the retail area under its operation to 36,000 square

metres in both of Dubai’s Airports. Perfumes continues to be the highest selling category with annual sales topping Dhs1.104 billion (US\$306.85 million) and which represents 16.55% of total annual sales. Liquor followed with sales of Dhs1.063 billion (US\$295.40 million) while Cigarettes & Tobacco came in third place with sales of Dhs578.53 million (US\$160.70 million). Cosmetics came in fourth place with sales amounting to Dhs535.65 million (US\$148.80 million) followed by Confectionery with Dhs517.48 million (US\$143.75 million). Meanwhile, sales in departures outlets across the concourses accounted for 86.66% of the total annual sales at Dhs5.782 billion (US\$1.60 billion).

During the year Dubai Duty Free also recorded an impressive

27.119 million sales transactions which is an average of 74,097 sales transactions per day across both Dubai International and at Al Maktoum International airports, and its performance won the company 28 awards during the course of the year. Commenting on Dubai Duty Free’s plans in 2017, Colm McLoughlin said: “There is a lot to look forward to in 2017, including the improvement of our retail offer both in Dubai International Airport’s Concourse C and in Al Maktoum International Airport’s Passenger Terminal Building (AMIA PTB). In Concourse C, we have just opened our outlets in the area that links Concourse C to Concourse B, and we will fully renovate the retail areas in the rest of departures and apron

levels of Concourse C over the course of the year. We are also looking forward to developing our DDF Leisure business. The Irish Village in Garhoud was voted the Irish Pub of the Year at the Irish Pubs Global Awards ceremony in Dublin, and we opened the second Irish Village in the Dubai Parks and Resorts complex in December 2016. The Jumeirah Creekside Hotel continues to do well, and you will see new food and beverage outlets in this hotel during the course of the year.” Looking ahead, Dubai Duty Free will continue to maintain its busy events and promotional calendar which includes the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships to be staged at the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Stadium from the 19th February – 4th March.





# Fostering the Future

## Stepping Stones for Developmental Disorders



Children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) require specialized care and attention. Stepping Stones is an international organization dedicated to providing evidence-based treatment methods that address behavioral, social, speech-language, educational and occupational areas of needs for such individuals diagnosed with ASD and related disorders. Such treatments methods begin with a full comprehensive assessment and evaluation for the individual.

Following a three step process from consultation to diagnosis, and finally treatment, Stepping Stones works to overcome the limitation imposed by ASD, emphasizing the need to help such individuals acquire age-appropriate developmental milestones that are achievable and sustainable.

### Main Types of ASD

Asperger's Syndrome  
Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Not  
Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)  
Autistic Disorder  
Rett Syndrome  
Childhood Disintegrative Disorder.

First Avenue spoke to Stepping Stones clinical management about ASD, specific objectives, and the availability of required care and services within the UAE.

**Could you please introduce us to Stepping Stones?**

Stepping Stones Center is a treatment center, dedicated to improving the lives of those affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and other learning and development disorders. This is done through assessment and evaluation along with applying evidence-based treatment methods for each individual that is individualized in order to meet their developmental areas of needs. Early diagnosis and early intervention is key. We offer early screening for Autism Spectrum Disorder, complete

developmental and psychological assessments, vocational and school inclusion programs, school and academic support, as well as therapy interventions based upon principles of Applied Behavior Analysis, Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy

**What is the main area of focus when providing care and education for individuals with such disorders?**

ASD is a developmental disorder which becomes evident within the first 3 years of life. It affects the brain's normal development of social and communication skills, which affects a child's ability to interact, communicate, relate, play, imagine, and learn. In some children, self-stimulatory and repetitive behaviors are observed, as well. Since delayed language and impairments in social communication as well as behavioral problems are key features in ASD and are often interconnected, it is fundamental that early intervention focus on reducing problem behaviors, and increasing verbal expression and social communication.

**What is the role of the caregiver and the therapist in such therapies? How important is the involvement of the family of the patient?**

Parents and caregivers have a fundamental role within their child's therapy program and continued progress. It is crucial that parents be part of the full assessment and goal setting process so that they can see their own family needs and goals, as it relates to their child's development, worked on and achieved by the therapy team. It is also important for parents and other family members to work collaboratively on the child's goals by carrying over key components of therapy within the home. For example, behavioral techniques, specific

speech development strategies, or physical activities, which require consistent practice, even outside of the child's individual therapy sessions should be practiced at home.

**Do you think that times have changed and we are more aware of the developmental disorders?**

1 in 68 children (1 in 42 boys) are now diagnosed with ASD.



Veronica Lucy Micalizio  
Program Director and Counselor

### Notable Personalities on the Autism Spectrum

History's greatest physicist with an incredibly high IQ, received the Nobel Prize for his theory on the Photoelectric effect. His name is synonymous with genius...

Albert Einstein- Expelled from school when he questioned conventional wisdom & challenged those in authority, was suspected to possibly have ASD. (Inspiring stories of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder, 2016)

Fortunately, awareness and availability of supportive service have been increasing in recent years, and children and their families are being given earlier access to these fundamental services. There are many centers presently in the UAE who offer early intervention services; however, there is still a great need for more within the GCC due to the increasing numbers of individuals affected by this disorder. Furthermore, support services for students who are of secondary school age, as well as young adults, are still in early stages of

development within the UAE, with few centers providing such services.

**Are your efforts aiming to offer a normal life to your patients with the help of these therapies?**

Our aim is to maximize each child's potential and individual abilities, while providing the support each child needs in order to acquire new





skills. Each child has a different or unique set of skills and difficulties which will affect his or her development in different ways. Our focus is on establishing realistic, achievable and measurable outcomes so that the child can reach his or her potential, whether it be within academic skills, social interactions, and/or community living.

**Do you think that there is a need for more clinics and institutions in the Middle East to provide such services and expertise to the people?**

There is still a substantial need in the GCC region for expansion of centers

## Notable Personalities on the Autism Spectrum

World's most prolific inventor with 1093 patents... From the incandescent light bulb and phonograph to the first movie camera, to name a few of his inventions... dubbed, 'The Wizard of Menlo Park', the inventor who changed the way the world lived...

Thomas Alva Edison- Hyperactive and easily distracted, he lasted for 12 weeks in a public school, was also suspected to possibly have ASD. (Inspiring stories of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder, 2016)

well as Applied Behavior Analysis, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, parent training, and ongoing case supervision and consultation services.

**Some words of advice for our readers who are facing these challenges?**

Early identification and early intervention are key factors in ensuring the best progress and outcomes for a child who has developmental delays, speech delays, and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder. It is fundamental that the child be evaluated by a team of qualified professionals, and that the child receive a therapy



and provision of such services whereby such centers can provide early diagnosis and early intervention services, as well as supportive services for young adults and older adults.

**Do you have expansion plans in the region?**

We have established a few franchises within the Middle East: one in Kuwait and another in the Eastern Province of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (in Al Khobar). These centers provide assessment and diagnostic testing, as

## Autism Spectrum Disorders

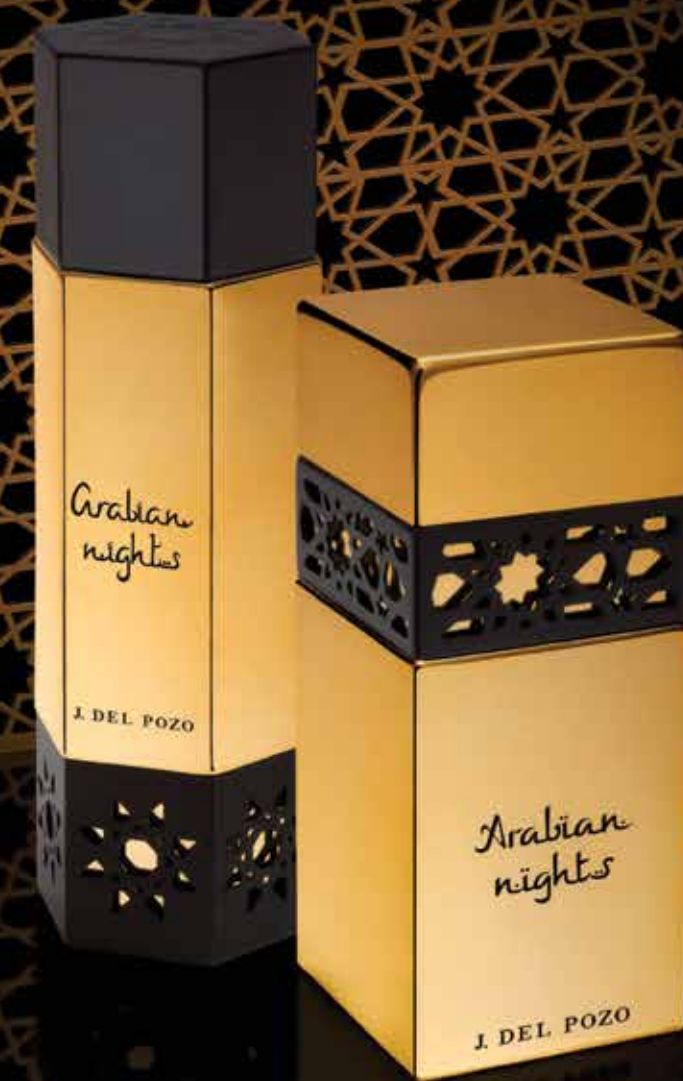
The common symptoms of ASD include but are not limited to:

- difficulties in social interaction
- difficulties in verbal & nonverbal communication
- repetitive behaviors, interests & activities
- sensitivity to changes in the environment
- Intense focus on certain objects or activities, etc.

plan which addresses his or her needs in all areas of development, to include safety and independence skills, communication and social skills, and pre-learning and school readiness skills. Concerned parents can access support and services by booking an initial consultation with a qualified and specialized center and then identifying along with the clinical team, what is the best step to take for their child's development.

# Arabian nights

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