

# INSPIRED

55+ lifestyle magazine

AUGUST 2023

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CLARKSON

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RESIDENCE LIVING

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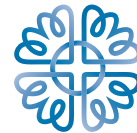
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Celebrating  
Our 20th  
Year in Print



**Cover** Rt Hon ADRIENNE CLARKSON

Canada's 26th Governor-General is passionate about music, her faith, citizenship, the arts and culture and, of course, family.

Photo: Andrew Tolson [www.andrewtolson.com](http://www.andrewtolson.com)

# INSPIRED

55+ lifestyle magazine

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada

Canada

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Subscriptions (10 issues): \$36.75 includes GST, S&H. Canadian delivery only.

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## THRIVE BEYOND 55

by BARBARA RISTO, PUBLISHER



As we celebrate our publication's 20th year in print, one of the things I have loved the most are those moments when someone we are writing about peels back the curtain to reveal their inner thoughts and motivation as they recount their life experience.

I'm always thrilled and fascinated by the stories of creativity and strength amid vulnerability and adversity.

Last month's article about fashion designer Marilyn Cobban, owner of Blue Sky Clothing, was one of those stories that touched me deeply, as I know it did many of you.

It takes a special kind of courage to build a successful business. It takes even greater courage to reveal the personal struggles and challenges faced along the way.

Even more admirable are those who take the hard lessons they have learned and use them to encourage and uplift others.

Life sometimes deals us a crappy hand. It's what we do with it that determines the depth of character we develop.

This past month dealt me one of those crappy hands.

In the space of weeks, I was faced with not just one personal crisis, but three.

The road ahead will be filled with uncertainty and challenges, the likes of which I have never faced before.

At times like these, I draw strength from the stories of those who have persevered through adversity, unwilling to give up.

Sometimes, when our own courage fails us, we need to reach out and draw upon the courage of others for inspiration.

I'm proud that *INSPIRED Magazine* has been a place where many of those stories of courage have been shared.

These brave people stand as beacons to me right now, giving me hope amid despair and an element of comfort, knowing that others have walked difficult paths and found their way through pain, grief, chaos and adversity.

They say the Chinese character for "crisis" is the same as for "opportunity."

I trust that out of the multiple crises I'm facing, opportunities of equal magnitude will arise. And that I'll uncover the strength and wisdom needed to prevail.

Maybe one day, like Marilyn, I'll have the chance to tell my story for the benefit of others. My hope is that it, too, will be one of courage, persistence and ultimate success.







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One of Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson's many interests includes cooking.

*Photos: Courtesy of the Office of  
The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson*

# RT HON ADRIENNE CLARKSON: A SENSE OF PURPOSE

by JOHN THOMSON

I'm on the phone with Canada's 26th Governor-General, the Rt. Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, talking about the crazy colours Pantone, the colour consulting people, have come up with.

"They have 110 shades of grey and about 150 shades of white," Madame Clarkson laughs from her oak-lined study in the Toronto home she shares with husband, philosopher and novelist, John Ralston Saul. Madame Clarkson knows her colours.

"I love everything to do with art and painting and decorating houses," she confesses. "I could have lived a very nice life just moving from house-to-house decorating."

Other interests include cooking – "I can make hollandaise sauce in five minutes flat and I don't need a double-boiler" – as well as reading, writing and attending concerts two to three times a week. "Music is everything to me."

She's published two novels, numerous essays, an autobiography, a biography on Norman Bethune, and *Belonging*, a book about citizenship. She's presently writing another book called *Now, That's a Very Good Question*, a cheeky compendium of answers to questions, both trivial and consequential, posed by friends and others. And on the back, back burner, the germ of an idea for a murder mystery.

"I'm cooking it," she says.

Whew.

We, of course, remember her as a national TV host, her six-year tenure as the Governor-General and as an Officer and then a Companion of the Order of Canada. Along the way, she's represented Ontario's business and cultural interest in Europe as the province's first agent-general, served as president of publishing house McClelland & Stewart and chaired the board of trustees of the Canadian Museum of History.

And now, as the recently appointed Honourary Chair of the National Institute on Aging, she brings her skills and experience to the world of seniors' advocacy.

"We're all living in a way we've never really imagined and we're living it in a way which our parents never imagined," she says about life in the 21st century.

Established in 2016, the National Institute on Aging is a collaboration between Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital and the Metropolitan Toronto University. Its goal is to make

Canada the best place in which to grow old and to that end commissions research, publishes reports and lobbies the federal government on behalf of the elderly. It shares its information with other provinces and institutions – here in BC, it's the Office of the Senior Advocate – and National Institute research has contributed, in part, to the Advocate's continuing campaign to eliminate home care fees.

Madame Clarkson is the public face of the Institute and plans to use her position to highlight seniors' issues, specifically aging in place, through interviews and public speaking.

"The Scandinavian countries handle things so much better," she says. "In Denmark, if you are over 80, you have the right as a Danish citizen to have 40 hours of home care a week. We know that 68 per cent of Canadians want to stay where they live. They want somebody to come two hours a week to help them go grocery shopping. They want somebody to come two or three times a week to help them have a bath or wash their hair. In Denmark that is all handled in terms of home care and that's what we hope to be able to get for people."

Today, Madame Clarkson has the power to affect change but back in 1942 when she was two years old and the family fled Hong Kong aboard a Red Cross steamer for a new life in Canada, the prospect of influencing anything, much less government policy, seemed a long way off.

"We lost everything," she says "but we spoke English and had the advantage of growing up in a former colony. Being Anglican was also an enormous advantage. My mother was very, very devout."

Attending church provided solace and community. Her father joined the men's association, her mother belonged to the women's auxiliary. Young Adrienne attended Sunday School.

"The Anglican thread in my life is very, very strong and the Anglican Church was very much a part of my culturalization," she says.

Her father started afresh, establishing his own import-export commodities business and although there were some lean years, she grew up in Ottawa encouraged to be the best she could be.

"I had a tremendously supportive father who validated everything I did and told me the sky was the limit. My whole aim in life was to get out and do as many things as I could."

Education was the key. There was no question she and her brother were headed for university. She wanted to be a novelist



# Snapshot with Madame Clarkson

If you were to meet your 20-year-old self, what advice would you give her?

*"Go for it. The most important thing I did in my education was to persevere. I was determined to go to France and learn French. If I had not learned French, I would not have been Governor-General."*

Who or what influenced you the most? And why?

*"Apart from my parents, my high school English teacher Walter Mann. He never talked politics in class but everything he embodied was about equality, fairness and social justice. All those things came out in the way he taught us literature."*

What are you most grateful for?

*"I'm grateful for my religious faith. I couldn't live my life without it. It gives me the feeling that whatever happens I'm kind of looked after. It gives me grounding and most importantly it gives me the ability to forgive. It contributes to my humanity."*

What does success mean to you?

*"I'm very happy for my emotional life. I have a wonderful husband who I've been with for nearly 47 years. I have lovely grandchildren and remarkable daughters." |*



and while she eventually earned a master's degree in English and then studied at the Sorbonne in Paris to perfect her conversational French, Madame Clarkson says it was her high school English teacher, Walter Mann, who changed her life. He not only encouraged her to keep writing but, impressed with her speaking voice, trained her for a city-wide public speaking contest. She placed second.

"Whenever I give an important speech, I can always see Mr. Mann sitting at the back looking at me," she muses. "He prepared me for public service."

In 1965 she started her media career as an on-camera, part-time book reviewer for CBC-TV's mid-afternoon current affairs magazine *Take 30*. When the show's co-host left for other opportunities, the Corporation held auditions and Madame Clarkson, much to her own surprise, was awarded the position.

"I was thrown right into it at 25. I had no training. I didn't go to journalism school. I didn't think about it, yet I had the best time of my life."

She learned on the job, perfecting her interviewing skills, thinking on her feet, distilling information quickly and accurately, listening, condensing, clarifying and above all, learning how to put people at ease, attributes that would serve her well in the future. After 18 years at *Take 30*, *The Fifth Estate* and

other CBC shows, she became a well-known, homegrown TV celebrity.

Already a public figure, she became Canada's 26th Governor-General in 1999, the second woman and the first person of Asian heritage to assume the role. Her tenure was not without controversy. Traveling extensively across Canada, especially the north, she was accused of over-spending, yet she championed the north, arguing it was part of our national identity and part of the circumpolar community.

She also breathed new life into the arts. A series of Governor-General's Awards recognizing excellence in art, literature, and performance were all initiated during her term. She believed culture is a fundamental building block of nationhood, and nationhood and citizenship dominated her thoughts during and after her vice-regal appointment.

Thus, the Institute for Canadian Citizenship was born, a non-profit organization she and her husband founded in 2005 shortly after leaving office. Critical of an earlier experience in which she swore in new Canadians, she used her status and connections to create a warmer, more inclusive citizenship ceremony, one that truly gave newcomers a sense of what Canada was all about.

"I was asked to do a swearing in ceremony," she says. "I did it. I liked it but at the end of it there was no coffee, nothing. That was it and I thought that was terrible. Lame. I wanted to do something that reflected my experience in life and that's why it had to be about citizenship."

Today, the program conducts enhanced citizenship ceremonies in towns and cities across Canada with speakers and performers. And yes, there is coffee. Canoo Cultural Access Pass, an idea spurred by Madame Clarkson's love of the arts, allows immigrants one year's free admission to over 1,400 cultural institutions.

"It's been an enormous success," she declares. "I'm really, really proud of our Canoo Pass." She and her husband continue to chair the board and support it financially.

When I ask what drives her commitment to public service, she credits her upbringing and her faith. It instilled a sense of purpose.

"I grew up with a strong sense of know-



Madame Clarkson during a CBC interview with Chief Correspondent Adrienne Arseneault.



ing what was right and what was wrong, and you should help other people,” she says. “That was very, very strongly emphasized.”

She says she’s basically an introvert, not an extrovert and admits impatience is her worst trait.

“I don’t get angry. I don’t fume. I just get irritated.”

When I suggest it’s perhaps because she expects excellence in herself and likes to see it in other people, she replies,

“No, I don’t know what it is. I think I inherited it from my mother. She was quite irritable, and I try not to be, but I can feel it coming into my body.”

One of her better traits, she says, is knowing her strengths and weaknesses. Like when Prime Minister Jean Chretien offered to make her a senator in 1993 and she turned it down.

“He said, ‘Are you saying no?’ And I said, ‘Yes, I am.’ And he asked why? And I said, ‘I can’t do it better than anybody else and I’ve never done anything in my life that I didn’t think I could do better than anybody else.’ That’s the way I was brought up. I was brought up to be excellent. If somebody else can do it better than me then let them.”

Or when she chastised Russian President Vladimir Putin for invading Ukraine.

“I wrote him a letter and said ‘Dear Mr. Putin, You named me to the Order of Friendship of the Russian Federation in 2001 and at that time we had very amicable relations. You should not have invaded Ukraine and I’m herewith returning your medal.’ And I sent it through diplomatic pouch to Russia.”

He did not write back.

A second-generation feminist, she believes challenging the patriarchy hasn’t gone far enough and isn’t afraid to say so.

“To me, it’s still very, very important that young women learn that they still haven’t totally succeeded in making things equal for themselves. If they believe that, believe me, they believe in the Easter bunny.”

Madame Clarkson speaks her mind.

Which bodes well for her new position at the National Institute on Aging.

Her passion stems from her own experience convalescing at home from gall bladder surgery in 2013. Had home care workers not come in every day to drain an open wound, she would have had to go to emergency, eating up time, energy and taxpayer money at \$300 per visit. It convinced her it was cheaper and more humane to subsidize home care workers.

“I really blame governments for this,” she continues, “because they really don’t look at it from the point of view of what is convenient and cheapest

for society and the patient.”

“What I feel I’m best able to say is don’t feel you do not have a choice as you’re aging. I hate the idea that people who have been productive citizens all their lives are suddenly told they have no choice in how they want to age or where they want to age. We can’t do that in a democracy. It’s just not right. That’s the kind of thing the National Institute wants people to be aware of, to say this isn’t good enough and we want something else.” |



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# CRUISING INTO OUR 70s

by JANE CASSIE

It's not every day you turn 70. Some of us cringe at the thought of advancing another decade, yet I welcome this milestone with glee. The sixties have been a toughie: losing a parent; dealing with anxiety; fighting cancer; and, of course, going through a crazy pandemic. Though the challenges had seemed daunting, each provided opportunities for growth and discovery. And I'm now feeling grateful to have survived and to be moving into this new age.

"Let's celebrate with a few friends by going on a Mediterranean cruise," my husband, Brent, suggests. "It's time for some fun." Clearly, this man-of-mine is feeling the pressures of the past few years as well – and with only three weeks between our birthdays, he has a right to celebrate his big 7-0, too. Even our buds, the Fishers and the Goodes 'jump on board' (figuratively) when we extend the offer to join us.

We decide to go with Oceania, an upscale cruise line that is touted for its excellence in food, amenities and service. The booking process over the six-month period, prior to boarding, has its share of frustrations, but soon after stepping onboard the *Riviera*, this company lives up to its acclaimed standards.

"Do you think you'll have this ship figured out by the time we get to Barcelona?" Brent jokes, as I head in the wrong direction, once again, two days after we depart from Athens.

Even though I have my ship guide in hand and this floating hotel is host to an intimate number of only 1,200 passengers, I still manage to get turned around. Thankfully, with the 2:3 ratio of crew/passengers, there's always some-

one who can point me in the right direction.

Stunning artwork flows throughout our classy vessel, and a number of venues provide enrichment and entertainment during our travels. Some are drawn to the Culinary Centre, where they learn how to create yummy delights, while others are lured to the adjacent Artist Loft to dabble in watercolours. We can dance to the oldies in Horizons, enjoy piano tunes in Martinis, get insider's knowledge from guest-speaking historians, enjoy sinful desserts at afternoon teatime and head nightly to the Riviera Lounge, where dancers, comedians and other performing artists put on a show.

Daily activities range in everything from mah-jongg and bridge to bingo and trivia. The Aquamar Spa is a nurturing haven where, in peace, we get pampered, and rejuvenate in the steam rooms, sauna and oversized hot tub. And the ocean-viewing fitness centre is my go-to for yoga and spin classes as well as other appreciated calorie-burning machines. Shimmering pool, ping pong, bocce, putting green – there's never a shortage of action.

"They even have pickleball," my husband points out, soon after we embark. Being an avid player, I had wondered if he'd go into withdrawal during this 11-day cruise. Not a chance. Before long, he's scheduled games with our friends and is in his happy place.

ABOVE | Glimpsing chi-chi Monte Carlo from the water.

TOC | The author and her husband enjoy tea time with friends on their cruise ship. Photos: Brent and Jane Cassie



Cuisine is a big part of cruising and, as well as 24-hour stateroom sustenance, we join the Fishers and the Goodes to fuel up at the many culinary options. Our morning lattes at Baristas are followed by breakfast spreads at Terrace Grill. All-American classics at Waves keep us satiated when enjoying pool time and the signature delights in the Grand Dining Room cater to every gastronomic desire; appetizers like molten cheese soufflé and tuna tartare, entrées such as parmesan-crust chicken and succulent beef bourguignon. And way too many decadent desserts!

As well as this main eatery, there are four specialty restaurants that are included in our cruise package. Jacques, modelled after a Parisian bistro, features classic French cuisine; Toscana dishes up tasty Italian; Polo Grill lures the meat lovers; and our favourite, Red Ginger, offers a tantalizing line-up of Asian fusion. We order two appetizer platters for the six of us: skewers, sushi, tempura, oh my! Spicy roast duck and watermelon salad is my next palate pleaser, a unique combo that is perfectly paired. By the time I finish my red curry chicken, I'm done. But can I pass up on the Chocolate Crème Brûlée for dessert? Not a chance! Once again, I waddle away from the table and go in search of my stretchy pants.

During our 11-day cruise we pull into eight intriguing ports. In Kavala, Greece, we hike up cobblestone streets to a Byzantine fortress, the city's pivotal point that offers an incredible panorama. Next is Istanbul, where we explore the iconic Spice Market, Grand Bazaar and Blue Mosque, a place of prayer that was built from 1609-1666. From Turkey, we head back to Greece and the pretty postcard setting of Mykonos, where we plod the maze of pedestrian pathways. Shops, restaurants, churches and windmills are all photo-worthy stops at this vibrant spot.

Now, aside from good health, what is something we all hope for when traveling? Good weather, right? On this trip it becomes something that's totally out of our control.

"Unfortunately, a strong storm system is moving through Italy," the captain

announces after we leave Greece. "And there's no way of avoiding it."

Clearly, the weather Gods are tuned in, for ominous clouds move in soon afterwards and the pelting rains begin.

High rollers take on an entirely new meaning, even for the casino lovers onboard. The previously glassy ocean becomes a coaster of three-metre swells. As our ship navigates the Strait of Messina some guests retreat to the comfort of their stateroom – others head to venues, where the Activities Director offers a line-up of distracting indoor activities. Later, we are all rocked to sleep with gale force winds.

We often take cruising for granted; thinking that these steel cities at sea can conquer anything. But Mother Nature has her own agenda. She really does dominate and needs to be respected. I'm relieved to see that this cruise company gets that message.

"Because of the rough conditions we are unable to tender into our next port," we hear over the loudspeaker. "The good news is we have a berth at nearby

Salerno." Despite this wise decision, a sigh of disappointment is detected in our group. We were all looking forward to exploring the little towns that line the Amalfi Coast and getting a bird's eye view from the scenic summit of Ravello.

But we soon discover every cloud has a silver lining. The quiet, tourist-free shops of Salerno offer great prices. People are friendly and the vibe is relaxed. And despite a few raindrops, this little blip doesn't dampen our spirits. We're all going with the flow, sunshine or not.

Clouds continue to dominate during our final four cruise days when we explore the port of Civitavecchia, Cinque Terra's quaint townships, the chichi boulevards in Monte Carlo and old town Toulon. And though our rain slickers are put to good use, it's been truly a full and amazing show. It's also been a perfect way to celebrate life as we cruise into our next decade. |

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# SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO RETIREMENT LIVING

by VERENA FOXX

While the only constant in life may be change (Heraclitus), some transitions, especially as we age, can become more of a challenge to navigate.

If or when the time comes to choose independent or assisted retirement living, skilled professionals are there to offer advice and tips to help reduce any stress.

Moving from a private home into retirement living is often accompanied by a combination of anticipation and trepidation.

Leaving a long-time home and downsizing into less square footage means letting go of possessions and emotionally charged memorabilia, recycling clothing that may not have been worn for a long time, shredding documents that no longer need to be saved, cancelling service providers, and the dispersing of family mementoes.

After the move, the settling-in transitions happen. It can take a bit of time to establish new routines and habits, to share mealtimes with others, to make new friends and to decide which activities to engage in.

“We encourage our future residents to be pro-active instead of reactive,” explains Paula Hosking, Assistant Executive Director at Victoria’s not-for-profit Legion Manor.

“When prospective people or families reach out to us, we support them in making decisions about their future, and we encourage them not to wait too long in terms of making life changes that free them to have time to relax and do joyful things.”

“Sometimes people wait until they have an incident or accident, and are then stripped of their decision-making,” she adds.

Hosking encourages those who call her office to come and view the various living options in their facility, and to get their name on the wait list. She then starts the process of “what-to-do” to prepare for living in a smaller space and in a community (see sidebar).

She also refers those who request support to professional downsizer Anney Ardiel (Victoria), who, she says, is “compassionate and reliable.”

Mike Garisto, President of Columbus Charities Association, a non-profit organization that provides affordable housing to seniors across BC in eight properties, from the Lower Mainland to Prince Rupert, has some useful tips for residents applying to make a move into a smaller housing situation.

“Before we accept applications, we ask our prospective applicants to look at the building facilities, to sample a meal in the dining room, and to see their potential future suites,” he says, “to help them visualize their new home

base. Women often take photos and measurements before they commit,” he adds.

“We also walk them through everything, from hydro (included), our basic cable package, wifi (free) in common areas, and the need for a cell phone or landline to access the entry buzzer system.”

“For some people, living in community is a big change,” adds Garisto. “But we find that once our new residents can relax about their food preferences and dining room choices, they are more comfortable. We also provide bus trips into the community and lots of in-house activities.”

At New Westminster’s not-for-profit independent-living site, Dunwood Place, Administrator Roschelle Wilson says that once an application has been made, future residents are shown the facilities.

“We help them visualize the process of downsizing by asking, for example, where their bed would go,” she says.

Residents are then highly encouraged to start letting go of possessions prior to moving in. This makes for an easier transition, enables workers to get into suites if there is a building issue, and not only makes housecleaning easier, but frees residents to enjoy the facilities, to meet people and to take part in activities.

“When people make the decision to move here, they continue to age in place,” adds Wilson. That’s because, while they have their own private living space, there is plenty of opportunity to socialize with others, enjoy activities, entertain their families on site, use the outdoor space, and know that if there is an emergency, they will immediately be supported by 24-7 staff.

Professionals who work with individuals and families that are getting ready to transition into retirement living all agree that it’s important to:

- visit potential facilities to start imagining a future home;
- get on a wait list sooner than later; and
- start downsizing and decluttering as soon as possible. Moving forward with fewer possessions frees up time to enjoy new experiences.

Swedish author Margareta Magnusson coined the term “Swedish Death Cleaning” in her 2017 New York Times bestseller, *The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning: How to Free Yourself and Your Family from a Lifetime of Clutter*. The idea supports looking at your possessions and shifting your approach to them. What do you really need to carry your memories forward?

“Retirement living is being free to do joyful things.” reminds Paula Hosking, “and we do our best to support our residents in that.” |



# bc senior housing directory

## CAMPBELL RIVER

### Berwick by the Sea ■●

250-850-1353 / 1-844-418-1353; 1353 - 16th Ave.

www.berwickretirement.com

**Capacity:** (I) 130 units; (A) 30 units; private **Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** ocean view; housekeeping; linens; wellness program; theatre; fitness centre; games room; transport; rooftop lounge; coffee lounge; chef prepared meals; 24hr emergency response.

## CHILLIWACK

### Columbus Manor Chilliwack ■

604-250-6444; 8980 Edward St,

www.colchar.org

**Capacity:** 54 units; private

**Price:** \$890+

**Amenities/Services:** free laundry equipment; pay parking available. +\$120 per month for 2nd person in 1-bdrm suites.

## COMOX / COURTENAY

### Berwick Comox Valley ■●

250-339-1690; 1-866-1690; 1700 Comox Ave.

www.berwickretirement.com

**Capacity:** (I) 170 units; (A) 35 units

**Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** in heart of downtown Comox; housekeeping; linens; wellness program; transportation; rooftop garden & lounge; theatre; fitness centre; games room; bistro; pub; coffee lounge; chef prepared meals; 24hr emergency response.

## DELTA

### Columbus Lodge Delta ■

604-250-6444; 8850 118A St.

www.colchar.org

**Capacity:** 31 units; private

**Price:** \$1670+

**Amenities/Services:** continental breakfast, chef prepared lunch, dinner; free laundry equipment; hydro included; activities; regular bus trips; emergency pendant included. +\$700 for 2nd person in 1 bdrm suites (covers meals).

### Waterford, The ■▶

604-943-5954; 1345 56 St.; www.WaterfordSeniors.ca

**Capacity:** (I) 106 units; (C) 36 units

**Price:** \$4300+

**Amenities/Services:** daily fitness & social activities; Red Seal chef prepared meals; housekeeping; courtesy shuttle; bus outings; hair salon; guest suite; close to amenities. Independent living or licensed 24-hour care centre; pets allowed.

### Wexford, The ■

604-948-4477; 1737 56 St.; www.WexfordSeniors.ca

**Capacity:** 65 suites

**Price:** \$4600+

**Amenities/Services:** daily fitness & social activities; Red Seal chef prepared meals; housekeeping; courtesy shuttle; bus outings; hair salon; fitness centre; rooftop garden; private dining room; pets allowed.

## KAMLOOPS

### Berwick on the Park ■●

250-377-7275; 1-866-377-7275; 60 Whiteshield Cres. S.

www.berwickretirement.com

**Capacity:** (I) 147 units; (A) 25 units; private **Price:** call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** valley view; housekeeping; linens; wellness program; transport; games room; fitness centre; library; theatre; gardens; pub; bistro; coffee lounge; chef prepared meals; 24hr emergency response.

## LANGLEY

### Magnolia Gardens ■▶

604-514-1210; 5840 Glover Rd.; www.MagnoliaSeniors.ca

**Capacity:** (I) 115 units; (C) 40 units

**Price:** \$3200+

**Amenities/Services:** daily fitness & social activities; Red Seal chef prepared meals; housekeeping; courtesy shuttle; bus outings; hair salon; guest suite; close to amenities. Licensed 24hr residential care centre.

### Sunridge Gardens ■

604-510-5091; 22301 Fraser Hwy; www.SunridgeSeniors.ca

**Capacity:** 145 suites

**Price:** \$2795+

**Amenities/Services:** daily fitness & social activities; Red Seal chef prepared meals; housekeeping; courtesy shuttle; bus outings; hair salon; guest suite; close to amenities; theatre; courtyard gardens; pets allowed.

## MAPLE RIDGE

### Columbus Christopherson House ■

604-250-6444; 11797 Burnett St.; www.colchar.org

**Capacity:** 19 units; private

**Price:** \$2010+

**Amenities/Services:** close to bus; regular bus trips; basic cable; continental breakfast; chef prepared lunch & dinner; activities; hydro; free laundry equipment; emergency pendant included; pay parking; +\$700 for 2nd person in 1 bdrm suites (covers meals).

### Columbus Kilmartin Gardens ■

604-250-6444; 11821 Burnett St.; www.colchar.org

**Capacity:** 22 units; private

**Price:** \$1170+

**Amenities/Services:** close to bus service; hydro included; all are ranch style one bedroom units; coin laundry; pay parking available; +\$145 for 2nd person.

## housing directory legend

Three housing categories are used to define residences:

### Independent/Supportive Living (I) ■

Includes a combination of housing and hospitality services for retired adults who are capable of directing their own care.

### Assisted Living (A) ●

Offers housing, hospitality services and personal assistance to adults who can live independently but require regular help with daily activities. By law, all Assisted Living residences must be registered with the Assisted Living Registrar of BC.

### Residential Care (C) ▶

Sometimes called Complex Care, these units also provide care and supervision for retired adults who are no longer capable of directing their own day-to-day activities. Complex Care settings typically provide a combination of housing and hospitality services, as well as extensive support services.

The **Housing Directory** on INSPIRED Magazine's website also has senior housing options:

[www.seniorlivingmag.com/housing](http://www.seniorlivingmag.com/housing)

## NANAIMO

### Berwick on the Lake ■●

250-729-7995; 1-877-525-3111; 3201 Ross Rd.  
www.berwickretirement.com **Price:** call for rates  
**Capacity:** (I) 120 units; (A) 28 units; private  
**Amenities/Services:** lakeside; housekeeping; linens; wellness program; transport; fitness centre; coffee lounge; bistro; craft room; library; theatre; games room; gardens; chef prepared meals; 24hr emergency response.

## NEW WESTMINSTER

### Dunwood Place ■

604-521-8636; 901 Colborne St.  
**Capacity:** 191 units **Price:** 30% of monthly income  
**Amenities/Services:** studio & 1 bdrms; large patio for barbeques etc.; large lounge with view of Mt. Baker; workshop; tenant gardens; bingo; karaoke; cards; church services & bible studies; cafe with patio and garden; 2 libraries.

## PARKSVILLE

### Berwick Parksville ■

250-937-0989/ 1-888-441-6209; 180 Jensen Ave E  
www.berwickparksville.com  
**Capacity:** 188 units; **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** ocean views; pickle ball courts; fitness centre; top floor lounge; craft room; poker room; theatre; wellness program; games room; transportation; pub; coffee lounge; chef prepared meals; 24-hr emerg response.

## PRINCE RUPERT

### Columbus Kaien Place ■

604-250-6444; 550 - 5th Ave E  
www.colchar.org  
**Capacity:** 26 units; private **Price:** \$705+  
**Amenities/Services:** coin operated laundry; activity room; free parking; +120 for 2nd person in 1 bdrm suites.

### Columbus Wayne Place ■

604-250-6444; 630 Wayne Place  
www.colchar.org  
**Capacity:** 25 units; private **Price:** \$705+  
**Amenities/Services:** coin operated laundry; activity room; free parking; +120 for 2nd person in 1 bdrm suites.

## QUALICUM BEACH

### Berwick Qualicum Beach ■●

250-738-6200; 120 First Ave. W;  
berwickretirement.com  
**Capacity:** 94 units **Price:** call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** downtown Qualicum; ocean view; housekeeping; linens; wellness program; theatre; fitness centre; games room; rooftop lounge; transport; pub; bistro; coffee lounge; chef prepared meals; 24hr emergency response.

## SIDNEY

### Amica Beechwood Village ■

250-655-0849; 2315 Mills Rd.;  
http://amica.ca/beechwood  
**Capacity:** 106 units **Price:** \$3795+  
**Amenities/Services:** studios, 1 & 2 bedroom suites, premium patio suites; 24 hr staff & emerg pendant; assisted living services; all meals; basic cable; weekly housekeeping & linen service; activities & fitness programs; bus outings; respite & short term stays.

### Legion Manor ■●

250-652-3261; 7601 East Saanich Rd.;  
www.legionmanorvictoria.ca  
**Capacity:** (I)78 suites; (A)68 suites **Price:** \$3025+  
**Amenities/Services:** affordable housing suites at \$905; fitness classes and activities; entertainment; outings; situated on 5 acres in the beautiful Saanich Peninsula & close to all amenities.

## VANCOUVER

### Amica Arbutus Manor ■●

604-736-8936; 2125 Eddington Dr.  
www.amica.ca/arbutus-manor  
**Capacity:** 114 units **Price:** \$5300+  
**Amenities/Services:** 24/7 licensed practical nurse on-site; 3 meals; daily activities & entertainment; weekly housekeeping; flat linen laundry; cable; personal emergency response system. Located on 4-acres; courtyards; near shopping, parks, bus.

### Amica Edgemont Village ■●▶

604-929-6361; 3225 Highland Blvd. North Vancouver  
www.amica.ca/edgemont-village  
**Capacity:** 131 suites **Price:** \$4800+  
**Amenities/Services:** 3 meals; 24/7 on-site nursing; personal emergency response system; weekly housekeeping & flat linen service; daily activities; bus excursions; entertainment; beautiful inner courtyard; theatre; craft kitchen; near shops and amenities.

### Amica Lions Gate ■●▶

778-280-8540; 701 Keith Rd;  
www.amica.ca/lions-gate  
**Capacity:** 130 units **Price:** \$8278+  
**Amenities/Services:** all meals; bistro; theatre; 24 hour on-site nursing staff & emergency call system; utilities include heat, hot water, internet; daily suite tidy; weekly housekeeping, flat laundry service; daily activities & events; short term/respite stays.

### Amica West Vancouver ■●▶

604-921-9181; 659 Clyde Ave., West Vancouver  
www.amica.ca/west-vancouver  
**Capacity:** 121 suites **Price:** \$5000+  
**Amenities/Services:** 24/7 nurse on-site; 3 meals; daily activities & entertainment; weekly housekeeping & flat linen service; cable; personal emergency response system; swimming pool; courtyards; near shopping, parks & bus; short term/respite stays.

### Columbus Millennium Tower Vancouver ■

604-250-6444; 1175 Broughton St.  
www.colchar.org  
**Capacity:** 55 units; private **Price:** \$1006+  
**Amenities/Services:** dining room service at additional cost; coin operated laundry; secure underground pay parking; basic cable included; West End Vancouver. +\$175 for 2nd person in 1 bdrm suites.

### Columbus Tower Vancouver ■

604-250-6444; 5233 Joyce St.  
www.colchar.org  
**Capacity:** 81 units; private **Price:** \$830+  
**Amenities/Services:** next to Sky Train; free laundry equipment; pay parking.

### Southview Terrace ■

604-438-3367; 3131 58 Ave E;  
www.southviewterraces.ca  
**Capacity:** 57 units **Price:** Call for rates  
**Amenities/Services:** Southview Terrace offers 1 & 2 bdrm apts. Rent incl lunch & dinner; utilities; cable; phone; housekeeping; flat laundry; 24hr emergency response; activities; & more; located beside Champlain mall.



## VICTORIA

### Abbeyfield House St Peters ■

www.abbeyfieldstpeters.org;  
info@abbeyfieldstpeters.org  
1133 Reynolds Road

**Capacity:** 12 units

**Price:** subsidized

**Amenities/Services:** private studio suite with garden & patio, bright spacious common areas; beautiful trees & gardens; fresh nutritious meals; family style non-profit; rental subsidy if you qualify; walking distance to shops, medical, churches & bus service.

### Amica Douglas House ■●▶

250-383-6258; 50 Douglas St;  
www.amica.ca

**Capacity:** 102 units

**Price:** \$3900+

**Amenities/Services:** full kitchens in independent living, spacious suites & assisted living services; licensed residential care with nurses on duty 24/7; located in James Bay. Respite & short term stays.

### Amica Jubilee House / Presentation Centre Hillside Mall ▶

778-535-6093;  
1900 Richmond Rd - Opening Fall 2023

**Amenities/Services:** Long term care / Memory care; studios, 1 bedrooms.

### Amica on the Gorge ■●▶

250-220-8000; 994 Gorge Rd. W; www.amica.ca

**Capacity:** 166 units

**Price:** \$3600+

**Amenities/Services:** Gorge waterway Continuum of Care - Independent Living, Assisted Living, Long Term Care, & Memory Care; 3 meals a day; bistro; weekly housekeeping; linen service; activities included.

### Amica Somerset House ■●

250-380-9121; 540 Dallas Rd; www.amica.ca

**Capacity:** 135 suites

**Price:** \$4400+

**Amenities/Services:** Independent and Assisted Living; oceanfront studio, 1 and 2 bedroom suites with balconies; includes meals; bistro; weekly housekeeping; activities and fitness programs; theatre; pool; bus shuttle; newly renovated.

### Berwick House ■●▶

250-853-5492; 1-866-721-4062; 4062 Shelbourne St.

www.berwickretirement.com

**Price:** call for rates

**Capacity:** (I) 99 units; (A) 35 units; (C) 37 units; private

**Amenities/Services:** housekeeping; linens; wellness program; transport; fitness centre; library; theatre; games room; gardens; bistro; coffee lounge; chef prepared meals; 24hr emergency response.

### Berwick Royal Oak ■●▶

250-386-4680; 1-866-721-4680; 4680 Elk Lake Dr.

www.berwickretirement.com

**Price:** call for rates

**Capacity:** (I) 201 units; (A) 25 units; (C) 27 units

**Amenities/Services:** housekeeping; linens; wellness program; transport; fitness centre; library; theatre; games room; gardens; coffee lounge; bistro; pub; chef prepared meals; 24hr emergency response.

### Cherish at Central Park ■

250-478-4431; 100-917 Avrill Road;

www.cherishvictoria.ca

**Capacity:** 130 units

**Price:** \$3650+

**Amenities/Services:** home made whole foods; warm & friendly place to call home.; all amenities like workshop, putting green, greenhouse, theatre, bistro, gym, salon, etc.; family owned and operated. Please call Cherish - a human is waiting to talk to you.

### Cridge Village Seniors' Centre, The ■●

250-384-8058; 1307 Hillside Ave; www.cridge.org

**Capacity:** 38 units (I); 38 units (AL)

**Price:** \$2725+

**Amenities/Services:** beautiful heritage building; walking paths; excellent food; modern addition; grand lounge; extensive recreation programming; common areas; visiting pets; subsidized (AL).

### Revera - Parkwood Place ■

250-598-1565; 3051 Shelbourne St.

www.reveraliving.com

**Capacity:** 101 units

**Price:** \$2495+

**Amenities/Services:** spacious studios; 1 & 2 bdrm suites; 3 chef-prepared meals daily; fitness studio; 24hr emergency response system; full recreational package; near Hillside Mall, doctor's offices, pharmacies; pet friendly; walk score 87.

### Ross Place Seniors Community ■●

250-381-8666; 2638 Ross Lane;

www.rossplace.ca

**Capacity:** 182 units

**Price:** \$2700+

**Amenities/Services:** proudly owned by VRS, a non-profit organization, our dedicated team strives to provide seniors with a safe & secure environment, quality home-cooked meals, & opportunities to stay active & meet new friends.

### Sunrise Senior Living of Victoria ■●▶

250-383-1366; 920 Humboldt St;

www.sunrisevictoria.com

**Capacity:** 93 units; private

**Price:** Call for rates

**Amenities/Services:** Age in Place community; assisted living; long term care, memory & palliative care; secure environment; 24/7 nurse & care; emerg call system; nutritious meals; walking club; activities; lovely gardens & patios; bistro; library; hair salon; pet friendly.

### Victorian, The ■

250-477-1912; 1773 Feltham Rd;

www.atriaretirement.ca

**Capacity:** 94 units

**Price:** \$2800+

**Amenities/Services:** 3 chef prepared meals/day; housekeeping; shuttle bus; all day cafe; life line; 24/7 on duty personnel; calendar of activities; exercise classes; games room; library; residents' computer; pets welcome.

### Victorian at McKenzie, The ■

250-381-9496; 4000 Douglas St;

www.victorianatmckenzie.ca

**Capacity:** 117 units

**Price:** \$3200+

**Amenities/Services:** 3 chef prepared meals/day; housekeeping; shuttle bus; all day cafe; life line; 24/7 on duty personnel; calendar of activities; exercise classes; games room; library; residents' computer; pets welcome.

### Wellesley of Victoria ■●

250-383-9099

Community Relations Manager Jeff Nahnybida 250-514-5114

2800 Blanshard St;

www.retirementconcepts.com

**Capacity:** 204 units (I & AL)

**Price:** \$2900+

**Amenities/Services:** salon; store; bistro; housekeeping; room for private functions; library; recreation; shopping shuttle; rooftop gardens; patio; theatre; AC; secure parking; pets allowed.

## WHITE ROCK

### Amica White Rock ■●▶

778-545-8800; 15333 16 Ave. South Surrey;

www.amica.ca/white-rock

**Capacity:** 160 suites

**Price:** \$5500+

**Amenities/Services:** 3 meals; bistro; housekeeping; linen service; recreation programs; 8,000 sq ft roof top terrace; ocean & mountain views; pool; theatre; library; craft kitchen; fitness centre; bus; in-suite laundry; balconies; near medical centre; downtown.

## housing directory legend

- Independent/Supportive Living (I)
- Assisted Living (A)
- ▶ Residential Care (C)

# GOOD EATS!

*Laughter is brightest in the place where food is good. –Irish Proverb*

by LAURIE MUELLER

The two main reasons people move into a full-service independent living residence are for the homecooked meals and the companionship of others.

Flexible mealtimes, a variety of choices, custom meals for a person's dietary concerns, and a room full of friends all make for an enjoyable and stress-free mealtime. Dinner bells and 'one food fits all' are no longer the norm.

"Senior residences are becoming skilled at finding the right balance between nutrition and elegance as they employ highly trained chefs capable of satisfying every diet, while often elevating the overall cuisine to a 5-star level," says Barbara Risto, publisher of *INSPIRED Magazine*.

An individual's meal plan can be made up of many components, such as personal likes and dislikes, allergies to certain foods or a doctor's prescribed eating plan. Thanks to technology, the individual's dietary preferences and needs are kept in the kitchen's data bank. When ordering the salmon salad or the roast beef dinner, the information on file is used to make sure the right components in the making of the resident's request.

Four people sitting at the table can order the same meal but in the kitchen one person's meal may be created gluten free, while another will have lowered sugar content and a third may not contain the dreaded cilantro leaves. If Tom likes to have a red Okanagan wine with his meal, it is delivered to him without him having to order it. If Sally prefers to start every meal with a small salad or bowl of soup, that, too, is taken care of without her having to ask each night.

"I change the menu choices frequently," says Connie Davis-Young, Executive Chef at the Wellesley in Victoria. "In summer, there are more salads and cold cuts, as well as more BBQ meals. When fall comes and the weather starts getting cooler, the food gets heartier." She explains there aren't just one or two choices, but five choices every single day at mealtime – plus standbys such as a cheese omelet that can always be ordered when nothing else appeals.

Thinking of a move to an easier lifestyle? When you are, be sure to have a meal as a part of the tour at each residence you visit. Many websites will give you details, but you also want to taste the meal for yourself and get a feel for the ambiance and chat with some of the residents.

Sunrise Living is an international company that caters to Independent Living, Assisted Living, Long-term Care and Memory Care. Rocky Cervantes, based in Chicago is the Regional Director of Dining & Nutrition Services (also known as the "Food Guy") for Sunrise Living Residences even here in BC.

Before arriving at Sunrise, Rocky worked for such hotel chains as Hilton Hotel and Resorts and Marriott Hotels and Resorts. Moving into his position at Sunrise, he finds the relationships are more meaningful because they are longer term than hotel guests who are in and out for a vacation or business trip. His work supports the food service departments in communities across Canada and the US. Rocky and his team hire professional certified chefs. "Creating food that is really engaging, welcoming and personalized" is their aim. "Food is so important, it is a time to connect with our family, friends and other residents."

Rocky explains that food choices for each region reflect the regional culture. In New Orleans, jambalaya and pralines may be the cultural favourite and a regular on the menu, while here in BC, popular and comforting food choices are more beef and salmon, Nanaimo bars and butter tarts. West Coast cuisine is our comfort food. But that doesn't leave out tastes from around the world. Each week there are chef's specials that can be chosen that bring in tastes developed elsewhere.

Looking over the menu selections at one of the Bria Communities on the Lower Mainland, your mouth will water at the fine dining experience. "Grilled sockeye salmon, lemon pepper Brussels sprouts and peppers with zucchini noodles served over rice. Includes starter and dessert. Bria breakfast: Freshly baked pastries, fruit, warm or cold cereal, and a selection of beverages. Available at your leisure between 8-10 a.m. daily."

Adina Mooney, an 11-year resident at Wellesley, says, "When my husband and I moved in here, we wanted to have a community to feel that we belonged to. We tried out the food at a few places, and we chose the one with the food we thought was best. It has a good, varied menu. I really like that there are three choices at dinnertime and sometimes it's hard to choose just one. It's all good! There is a good variety of meats, lots of fish, and a good variety of vegetables. The helpings are generous, and I've been known to take half home to eat at another time. You can order half helpings if you want."

Adina can eat anything, but she has friends that are gluten free and there is never any problem with their meals conforming to their diet. "The staff in the dining room are excellent. They go over and above to please you."

"Healthy, tasty, and a good variety," says Joanne DeJong, 90, who moved in a year ago this month. "My favourite is the fish and chips."

Charley, who lives in Assisted Living at Sunrise, was even more succinct, "It's good!" |



# INSPIRED MAKEOVER: MARY HICKS

by **INSPIRED Staff**

After working as a registered nurse in Alberta for nearly 50 years, Mary Hicks is enjoying retirement in Victoria, which she calls her “ideal place to retire.”

“I love Victoria for so many things, but primarily for its beauty and the abundant opportunities to get out into nature year-round,” she says. “I also love listening to music and dancing and I find Victoria offers so much live music from concerts in the parks to the wonderful Victoria Symphony.”

In 2021, Mary was diagnosed with cancer and underwent treatment that she says left her feeling exhausted. Now in her 75th year, she decided to apply for the *INSPIRED* Makeover to give herself a boost following her recovery.

“I have never worn much makeup and I was envious of contemporaries who can put on glamour for special occasions,” she says. “A new look would definitely give me a lift.”

“It has been such an interesting and positive experience. The makeover team was gentle, supportive and encouraging.”

Mary says her favourite aspects of the process were the pampering of the facial, and the excitement of a radically new hairstyle.

“I have had very positive feedback from family and friends,” she says, “and it does make me feel younger and more carefree.”

**HAIR:** When I met Mary, we had a chat about what would work for her lifestyle and what kind of upkeep she was able to maintain with her hair.

Mary’s hair is fine and straight. We decided to switch things up and put some curls in her hair. Instead of changing the colour, we chose to change the texture and we brought back the perm.

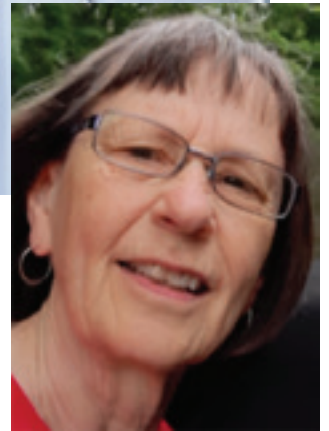
A perm is still a great option for creating texture and some movement in the hair. Nowadays, there are different solutions and rollers than those available in the ’70s and ’80s. I decided to introduce a softer wave and the result was beautiful!

For the cut, I brought it up a little to Mary’s chin and left the bangs because they were already quite short. I added some soft layers to create a little more roundness to the haircut.

With the new texture of her hair, we used the 100% organic Belma Kosmetik curl cream to create a soft hold on her curls. Then I used a diffuser on the hair dryer and gently scrunched her hair to create a quick, beautiful style that Mary can recreate at home.

**COSMETICS:** Mary wanted a little glam to go with her outfit, so I started out with ELF primer, which creates the perfect base as it hydrates the skin, blurs fine lines and minimizes pores. Then I applied the ELF CC cream as it is a foundation that also has a colour corrector to help even out the skin tone.

Mary has beautiful blue eyes, so I applied an off black smudge-resistant eyeliner close to her lash line and then a coat of water-resistant black mascara to the top lashes only. To add



some bling, I applied a sparkly cream eye shadow in a champagne colour to give her eyes some glam.

I applied some rosy pink blush on her cheeks from Burt’s Bees and then a nude lip liner and a pop of pink on the lips with a hydrating lip crayon in Hawaiian punch. Note: I also applied a little of the rosy pink blush to the outside corner of her eyelids to add a little more pizzaz.

**CLOTHING:** Jolin Jumpsuit Hydrangea made from 95% Bamboo, 5% Lycra with a locally designed hydrangea print and Diana Jacket White, a bamboo linen jacket, made from 50% Bamboo, 50% Linen.

## SPECIAL THANKS

**Hair Stylist:** Hana Akai of Akai Hair Salon, visit online <https://akaihairdesign.com>

**Makeup Stylist:** Gina Lavertu of Gina Lavertu Esthetics, part of Wild Oak Hair Collective 778-533-2486 Gina not only did the makeup application, she provided a facial and a manicure to all the models.

**Fashion Stylist:** Marilyn Cobban of Blue Sky Clothing Co. Victoria store manager Christine Blainey worked with all the models and assisted them with fittings and clothing selection. Blue Sky gifted the models all the clothing that was chosen for them free of charge.

**Photographer:** Jan van der Hooft of J. Abram Photography. |



# ISLAND GETAWAY: A MOTHER-DAUGHTER RETREAT IN BARBADOS

by MELODY WREN

When COVID slammed the brakes on travel, my daughter and I chatted regularly about taking a trip together to the Caribbean. It's challenging to finish a conversation when we get together for family dinners or country walks as her small children have other ideas. When travel restrictions eased, we zeroed in on Barbados as it fit our mutual love of active adventure along with good food.

Staying at the O2 Beach Club & Spa on the ocean was a luxurious treat. With an oceanfront room and several pools to choose from, we didn't want to leave the property at all, but with so much to see on the island, we explored the resort and the island in equal measure. The rooftop Brisa bar on the 8th floor became our hangout as it has its own pool and bar service with hot snacks. The bar near the oceanside pool made the best Basil mojitos, which I would pick up on the way to Brisa and enjoy alongside a snack of grilled vegetables.

At Earthworks Pottery studio the first morning, we met David Spieler, one of 12 artisans who make pottery in the

studio that his mother started over 40 years ago when she moved to Barbados from Canada. After touring the studio, we took turns making bowls. When David showed us the ropes, it looked as seamless as drawing a breath, however it wasn't as easy as he made it look but we enjoyed the process and were both quite proud of the finished product.

Open Kitchen was the next stop for a delicious lunch, neither of us wanting to eat much as we were ziplining next. My daughter, Sara, had never ziplined before, so I challenged her to embrace my motto "feel the fear and do it anyway" as I had gone many times in different countries.

ABOVE | The view from the resort where the author and her daughter stayed in Barbados.

RIGHT | The author gets an opportunity to be a passenger in a racecar - a dream come true! *Photos: Melody Wren*



After our arrival at Chukka Adventures and a safety chat with guide Malakai, we headed up steep steps to the high platform. “I think I’m going to be sick,” Sara said, as she peeked over the edge seeing only treetops and a deep valley. Our guide mentioned that she would be fine on the next four. She replied, “Oh no, I thought there was only one.” The rest were easier and when we finished, she said she would definitely do it again.

Travelling together and sharing passions is what made every day colourful. We both love exploring farmer’s markets, so we made an early start to Brighton Farmer’s Market for breakfast and shopping. Our first stop was Samarah Jewellery, a local jewellery maker. Meeting the creator and learning the backstory adds to the experience. For us, the ideal souvenir is to buy authentic locally made mementos, ones that support local artists and their craft.



We had lunch and a tour at PEG Farm and Nature Reserve. It’s an impressive and unique business concept by visionary Paul Bourne who started it over nine years ago with a business background, but no agricultural experience. Standing for People, Environment and Growth, PEG is on leased land that was home to abandoned sugar cane and now combines biodynamic farming, free range animals, educational programming and retreats with a backdrop of lush tropical scenery.

Over a delicious and locally sourced lunch, Paul regaled us with stories about his days as World Champion of rally car driving, and I told him, with my hand on my heart, that I had always wanted to go in a race car. He said that he would make a couple of calls to see if he could make it happen to which I gasped. The next morning, we met up with him at Bushy Park Raceway.

After signing consent forms, I was fitted for the suit and helmet. The helmet was cushioned by a full balaclava, and it still fit tight to ensure my head wouldn’t move at all. Once we got to the pit, I was strapped into the very low seat. The steering wheel came off to allow Paul to slide in much more smoothly than I. Sara took a video of the car racing around the track, her worried laughter heard over the roar of the race car. After six laps, the pit crew pushed us back in as the cars don’t have a reverse. I took off my helmet, shook out my hair, and Sara asked immediately how it was. “Amazing,” I said, “I would go again right now if I could.”

Late one afternoon we took a sunset tour on a Calabaza catamaran. Snorkelling together was a novel experience for us and Sara’s excitement was infectious. As I slipped into the water, she guided me towards large sea turtles, rays and a huge tarpon; a lovely, choreographed snorkel. On the sail back, the skies opened up with torrents of rain that turned into a double rainbow, an ideal ending to a beautiful day.

Driving along the rugged coastline to Andromeda Gardens, we came across the “Soup Bowl,” which fittingly describes the carved-out landscape of the beach in the “Bathsheba” area. The immense rock formations add to the craggy beauty of the beach. Sara threw off her sandals and leapt in between the huge rocks with the beautiful ocean view just beyond.

We then walked through nearby Andromeda Gardens, which felt like walking through a living children’s book with enormous and whimsical plants and trees. The huge gardens have over 500 plant species and is the oldest and largest garden in Barbados. Downloading their app guided us through the garden allowing us to learn details about each plant or tree.

One memorable morning we set off for Mount Gay Distillery where we were signed up for a basic history tour. Rumal Jones with honey brown eyes and endless historical anecdotes along with a wicked sense of humour offered us Planters Punch even though it was only 10 o’clock in the morning. I mentioned it was a bit early and he replied, “Drink what you can, not what you want” as he slid a brightly coloured glass of deliciousness across the bar. When I commented on the strength of the Planters Punch, he quipped, “The reason it’s called a punch not a tickle – they hit you hard but just don’t tell you when.” After a tour of the property, we headed back to the tasting room and tulip shaped glasses were served. Instructed to hold it at the base like a professional and tip to the side to look at the colour, Rumal said, “No swirling, if you shake it up, you’ll piss it off.”

Bursts of laughter exploded between me and Sara at unexpected times like gifts. We often chatted over dinner about our day and what the best bits of it were for each of us, sharing laughs or moments. After dinner one night, feeling quite tired and just thinking about going to bed, Sara asked if I wanted to go to the beach to look at the stars. Knowing this was a rare moment I replied quickly, “absolutely.” It was time to hit the beach and the stars above twinkled brighter than ever. |

*For IF YOU GO information, visit [www.seniorlivingmag.com/articles/mother-daughter-barbados](http://www.seniorlivingmag.com/articles/mother-daughter-barbados)*

# FOREVER FIT

by EVE LEES



## HOW INSULIN ‘WORKS’ AND IS AFFECTED BY FOOD

Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas. It helps our bodies use, store and regulate glucose; a type of sugar created after the body breaks down carbohydrates. When insulin works appropriately, it monitors and controls blood sugar levels, ensuring the energy needed for all your vital functions.

However, if insulin isn’t ‘working’ properly, the sugars in your bloodstream can build up to dangerously high levels. High blood sugar levels can eventually damage organs and tissues. The higher and longer blood sugar levels are elevated, the greater the risk for many health complications.

When the pancreas doesn’t produce insulin at all or doesn’t make enough of it, the condition is known as Type 1 Diabetes, where injections of insulin are necessary. However, if your body produces enough insulin but doesn’t work as efficiently as it should, this is known as Type 2 Diabetes. This is usually controlled by diet but, in some cases, may need insulin injection as well. Both conditions can cause harmful and even life-threatening complications.

Insulin resistance is known as “prediabetes,” the stage before Type 2 diabetes. With insulin resistance, the cells are less sensitive to insulin, making them unable to absorb it properly. Those diagnosed with insulin resistance (or low insulin sensitivity) are advised to make lifestyle changes to improve their insulin sensitivity to ensure they do not develop Type 2 diabetes.

Diet is an essential factor in preventing and improving insulin resistance. Often advised is a diet very low in ultra-processed carbohydrates and mostly plant-based (because plants are high in fibre, which helps stabilize blood sugar levels).

Being overweight increases the risk of insulin resistance because fat cells secrete hormones and other substances that may interfere with the processes of insulin. Losing five to 10 per cent of body weight can significantly improve insulin sensitivity.

Food quality is as important as quantity: typically, very sweet and/or highly changed foods (ultra-processed) are absorbed too quickly and may raise insulin levels. Regularly eating these types of food eventually affects the body’s abil-

ity to produce enough insulin and limits the ability of cells to absorb the sugar. If the cells become saturated with too much blood sugar (or glucose), they gradually respond less and less to insulin. The glucose then remains in the blood, contributing to the health problems that accompany consistently raised blood sugar, like damage to the kidneys or limbs.

Avoiding or significantly limiting ultra-processed foods and foods high in added sugars can help moderate blood sugar levels. Instead, replace these foods with more healthful options as often as possible. Whole, complex foods (generally richer in fibre) take longer to digest and therefore keep blood sugar levels more stable. Ask a Registered Dietitian for more specific dietary advice.

Diet can be even more effective in controlling blood sugar when combined with other healthful lifestyle practices, like managing stress, adequate sleep (about seven hours each night), and regular physical activity.

Exercise can maintain and improve the way insulin regulates glucose. When physically active, muscles use up glucose without needing insulin. This helps reduce blood sugar levels. Those with insulin resistance should consider some mild activity after eating, like a stroll around the block. In addition, regular exercise – most days of the week – is a significant factor in improving blood sugar management.

Strive for healthy habits. Eat sensibly and keep moving to positively affect how your body handles insulin. Life can still be sweet! |

**Eve Lees** has been active in the health & fitness industry since 1979. Currently, she is a Freelance Health Writer for several publications and speaks to business and private groups on various health topics. [www.artnews-healthnews.com](http://www.artnews-healthnews.com)



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# AVERTING LONELINESS

“Don’t wanna be all by myself anymore.”  
-Eric Carmen



*Living*  
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by LAURIE MUELLER

Have you reached out to a lonely person lately? Or are you a lonely person? Loneliness and isolation are concerns in Canada as more and more people retire and find themselves living alone. In the US, the Surgeon General Vivek Murthy states, “Loneliness is at epidemic proportions.”

We need to stay connected with people we care about and who care about us.

Murthy says, “Our relationships are a source of healing and well-being hiding in plain sight – one that can help us lead healthier, more fulfilled and more productive lives.”

And according to Clare Morgan in *Scientific American*, “loneliness has been estimated to shorten a person’s life by 15 years, equivalent in impact to being obese or smoking 15 cigarettes a day.”



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As a younger person, I experienced loneliness and it’s not a place to which I want to return. After marriage, I found myself hundreds of kilometres away in a small northern town, far from my friends and family. People my age were unmarried, childless and out partying. I was a housebound mother of two, struggling to make ends meet.

One Sunday morning, I went to church. People greeted me, and my children went off to Sunday School. Afterwards, I had coffee with my new friends. Soon I was busy and fulfilled with new friends and activities.

Just this morning, I wished one of those friends a happy 80th birthday on my Facebook page. We live in different parts of the province now, but we are still in touch. I wrote: “Happy Birthday, Ruth! I get a warm feeling every time I think of our adventures together so many years ago living in Mackenzie.”

Loneliness is real, and as we age, it can happen more frequently. Life is more complicated than ticking items off a list, but if you are lonely, you can use these suggestions as a starting point to feel more connected:

- Learn to enjoy your own company first.
- Take some personal growth courses online or in person.
- Identify activities you like to participate in.
- Garden in your front yard and talk to the folks who walk by.
- Start a regular coffee or tea date with a friend, relative or neighbour. Adhere to the weekly or daily schedule. For instance, I meet with my friend Sandy once a week. When someone wants me to do something else that day, I simply say, “My Tuesday afternoon meetings are non-negotiable.” People never argue with that.
- Volunteer
- Get a pet or become a foster pet parent.
- Move into a Seniors’ Residence with lots of activities and communal meals.
- Find a social or special interest group that resonates with you. Announce “I’m new, I’m looking for ways to belong to this group.” Be proactive and take the first step. |

Laurie Mueller, M.ED is retired and living in Victoria with her husband, Helmuth. Her book *The Ultimate Guide on What to do When Someone You Love Dies* is available on Amazon. More about Laurie can be found at [www.lauriemconsulting.com](http://www.lauriemconsulting.com) or on Facebook.



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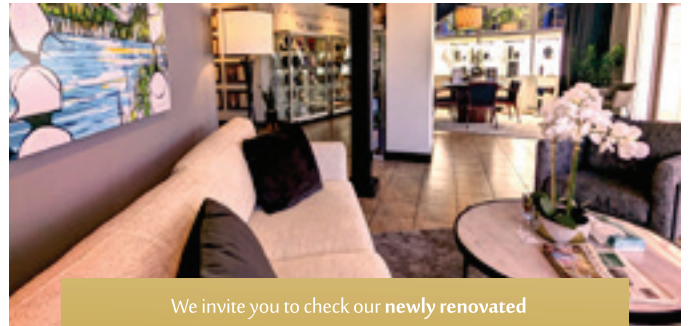


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