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VIRTUOSO LIFE

CITY STYLE

LOCALS LEAD THE WAY

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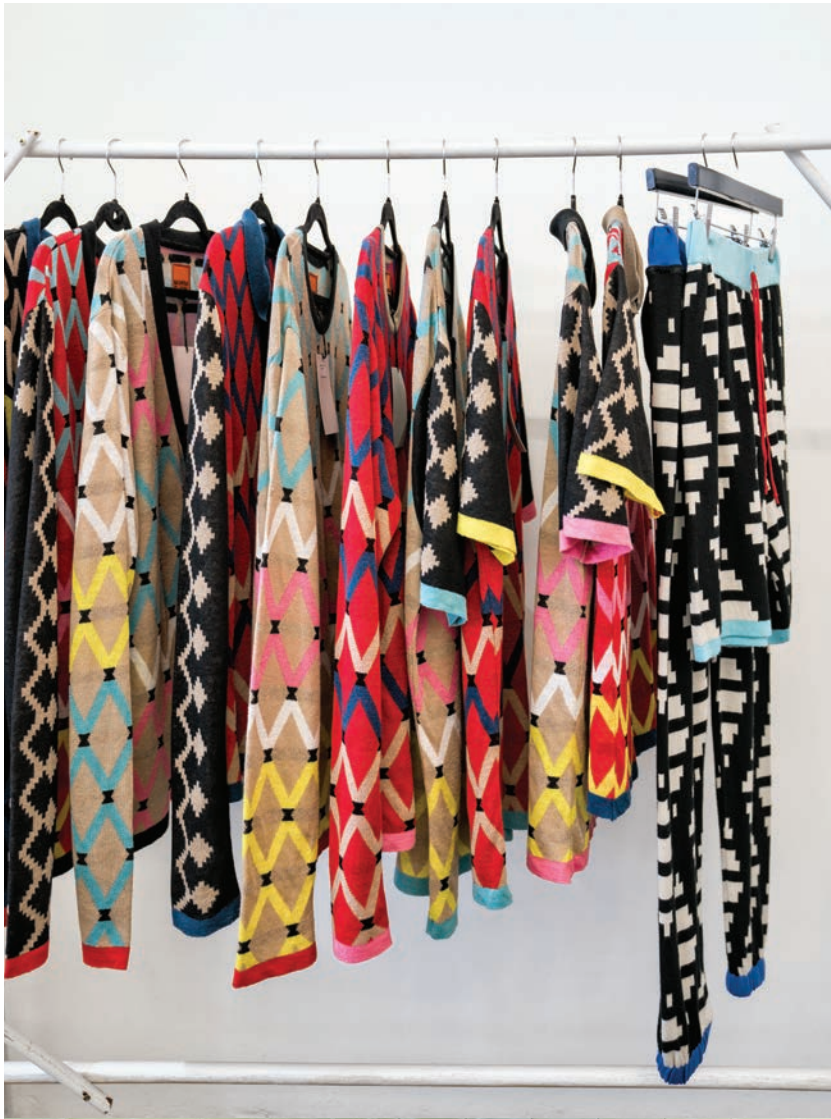
SINGAPORE

MIAMI



Johannesburg-based
fashion designer
Laduma Ngxokolo.

+ TOKYO RAMEN 101 • CROWD-FREE ROME • URBAN SPAS



JOHANNESBURG



MELBOURNE

Clockwise from top left: The MaXhosa by Laduma boutique at Work Shop New Town, *Miami Mountain*, Santiago's Museum of Fashion, Singapore's Projector Cinema, and Melbourne's City Wine Shop.



MIAMI

MY TOWN

CULTURE MAKERS IN SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST SOPHISTICATED CITIES SHARE THEIR HOMETOWN PICKS.



If you want to really know a place, ask a local where to go – especially a local with great taste. Fashion designers, chefs, writers, and art-world denizens take creative cues from their urban surroundings, so they're in tune with the best their towns have to offer. We tapped some of the coolest people in five of our favorite cities to find out what not to miss next time we visit.



SINGAPORE

SANTIAGO



(JOHANNESBURG) CLARA TUMA, (MIAMI) VANESSA ROGERS, (SINGAPORE) LAURYN ISHAK, (MELBOURNE) REBECCA NEWMAN

JOHANNESBURG



**LADUMA NGXOKOLO,
FASHION DESIGNER**



**“JOBURG IS AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT I DO,
TRYING TO FUSE MY HERITAGE
AND SPIN IT OFF IN A MODERN WAY THAT
PEOPLE CAN WEAR EVERY DAY.”**

HE'S SOMETHING OF A legend in South Africa for his bold-patterned knitwear inspired by his Xhosa heritage, but Laduma Ngxokolo's designs for his MaXhosa by Laduma line have a global following as well. He was heralded as African Fashion International's Emerging Designer of the Year in 2014, *Vogue Italia* showcased his work at the Palazzo Morando in Milan in 2015, and Beyoncé has featured his designs on her website. The designer moved his business to Johannesburg from his hometown in Port Elizabeth two years ago to grow his brand.

“Joburg is an example of what I do, trying to fuse my heritage and spin it off in a modern way, so that people can wear it every day,” Ngxokolo says. “Joburg has that, and also has a global cultural presence mixed with it.”

CREATIVE OASIS “The Ma-boneng Precinct is a spot I like because of the diversity that's there, and also the grungy design and the events that happen within that area,” Ngxokolo says. This revitalized stretch of the gritty city core has become a landing spot for Joburg's creatively inclined residents. (Visitors should note

that, much like Rio de Janeiro, Johannesburg has dangerous zones. Stick to safe areas and use car services to move around the city.) “Comedy clubs, exhibitions, markets, and the creatives that live around the area make it a super-interesting place. I like the food and atmosphere at **Pata Pata**, and the steak and decor at **Che Argentine Grill**.”

INSPIRED OUTING “For inspiration, I often go to the **Wits Art Museum**,” Ngxokolo says. “They've got quite a big collection of Xhosa beadwork,” he adds, referring to the traditional designs

CLARA TUMA



of the Xhosa people, one of South Africa's largest cultural groups.

CONTEMPORARY ART "I go to the **FNB Joburg Art Fair** every season," Ngxokolo says of Africa's leading art exhibition, held at the Sandton Convention Centre every September and featuring prominent galleries from across the continent. "Contemporary artists from Africa and the African diaspora come and exhibit their work." Ngxokolo keeps an eye out for the work of Tony Gum – whom *Vogue* once called "the coolest girl in Cape Town" – and Athi-Patra Ruga, whose art has been shown everywhere from New York to London to Dubai.

DESIGNER TO WATCH "I like an up-and-coming designer called **Rich Mnisi**. He has a masculine style that's unisex and also fused with a little bit of African touch," Ngxokolo says. "I think that's what makes him appealing – he's different to the others. He has a studio in Joburg." Fans can shop for his designs at Woolworths stores or at Spree.co.za; for custom pieces, the designer makes house calls.

JAZZ AND STREETWEAR "The **Orbit** is a lifestyle jazz bar where you can buy CDs, drink, listen to live music, and interact. It's in Braamfontein, which has a young streetwear culture."

SOUTH AFRICAN DESIGN You can browse Ngxokolo's distinctive designs at his boutique in **Work Shop New Town**, a sleek retail center carrying South

African designers. "It's a great creative space for us to be in," he says. "We're a one-stop shop for buying locally produced products – there's **Family Tree**, a streetwear brand created by hip-hop artist Cassper Nyovest, and **Era**, a watch store by DJ Zinhle. I'm excited about a new barbershop called **Legends**. And two doors away from us is **The Potato Shed**, where I have my business meetings. I order the steak and fries – they specialize in potatoes."

STAY In a tony area that's home to tycoons and diplomats, the **Saxon Hotel, Villas, and Spa** has become a retreat for global A-listers – think Oprah Winfrey and the Clintons – as well as Joburg's movers and shakers, who congregate at its restaurants. The 53-suite hotel's decor skews modern African, and South Africa's top chef, Luke Dale-Roberts, opened its fine-dining restaurant. *Doubles from \$590, including sparkling wine on arrival, breakfast daily, complimentary minibar and snacks, and one Rasul Chamber spa treatment per couple.*

CRUISE AmaWaterways' 17-day journey through East Africa includes time in Johannesburg before and after a four-day game-viewing sailing on the Chobe River aboard the 28-passenger *Zambezi Queen*. Time at Victoria Falls and on safari in Tanzania and Botswana rounds out the itinerary. *Departures: Multiple dates, March 11 through November 18; from \$15,995.* – **SARAH KHAN**

Clockwise from top: A Saturday-night party in Maboneng, a Maboneng street scene, and Mandela smiling over the Braamfontein neighborhood. Opposite: The Potato Shed.



MELBOURNE



AARON TURNER, CHEF AND RESTAURANT OWNER

AARON TURNER IS A musician, a chef, and, as of last October, the author of *Igni: A Restaurant's First Year*, a retelling of the highs and lows behind the opening of his celebrated restaurant in Geelong, near Melbourne. In a relaxed, minimalist space, he finesses adventurous five- and eight-course tasting menus: pork belly cooked in fermented grains, zucchini flowers stuffed with mussels, or cuttlefish with celeriac and lemons, for

instance. Although he's done stints at Noma in Copenhagen and Spain's El Celler de Can Roca – even a sabbatical in Nashville along the way – Melbourne lured him back: "It's got a nice understated energy to it; it's not flashy like other cities," he says. "It's got an underground electricity."

RESTAURANT OF CHOICE

When Turner gets time away from his own establishment, he typically spends it eating at other chefs' restaurants. "At the moment, I tend to go to a place called **Embla** in the Central Business District, a really cool wine bar. Chef Dave Verheul is killing it," he says. "Their flavors are amazing; there's a lot of fire-cooking there." His current favorite is a sour cucumber dish with dill and feta. "Embla is

very Melbourne: understated, just going about what they do quietly without the fanfare."

CHINATOWN MEANDERINGS

"We have a pretty epic Chinatown. I like the dumplings at **Shanghai Street**, and **Longsong** is a good place for wine and cocktails. But just outside Chinatown, on the same street, is the most amazing pasta bar called **Tipo 00**. They do amazing pasta and wine with minimal intervention."

COFFEE BREAK "Coffee – where do you start? Something that Melbourne's really good at is coffee, and the one I like the most is **Patricia Coffee Brewers** in the CBD," he says. "It's standing room; otherwise, you can sit in the alley on a milk crate." Turner is also a fan of the



(MELBOURNE) REBECCA NEWMAN, (AARON TURNER) JULIAN KINGMA

"IT'S NOT FLASHY LIKE OTHER CITIES. IT'S GOT AN UNDERGROUND ELECTRICITY."

interior: "Another thing I think Melbourne does well is design. Patricia has clean lines and a Scandinavian, European feel."

ROCK ON As a musician, one of the things that first lured Turner to Melbourne from his coastal Victoria hometown of Portland was its live music scene. "When I first moved here, I was playing in bands, and Melbourne had great live-music venues," he remembers. "Sadly, they're all disappearing, but a few still hang on." His favorite? "The coolest one is **The Tote**. They've stood the test of time. The Tote is probably more for street punk and up-and-coming bands. Nirvana played one of their first shows in Australia in this tiny little venue."

WINE TIME "City Wine Shop on Spring Street is really good," Turner says. "They have a lot of amazing wines by the glass and bottle. It also acts as a takeaway bottle shop." Turner recommends wines produced in Australia's **Adelaide Hills** region: "I recently drank a 2017 Jim Barry assyrtiko from Clare Valley, South Australia," he says. "There are a lot of cocktail bars [in Melbourne], but I'm not really a cocktail sort of guy. I just go to Aussie pubs for a beer."

THE GRASS IS GREENER "The **Royal Botanic Gardens** in Melbourne is amazing," says Turner, who loves learning about indigenous plants and their roles

in the ecosystem. "It's nice to go hang out and sneak a bottle of wine in."

BOOK NOOKS "I like the feel and smell of a real bookshop. You can spend time flicking through titles and immerse yourself in the store." Some of Turner's top picks for a trip down literary lane? "**Hill of Content** or the **Paperback Bookshop** – any independent shop selling obscure titles by great authors."

STAY With a prime location overlooking Saint Patrick's Cathedral in the upscale Paris End of Melbourne's Central Business District, the **Park Hyatt Melbourne** has 240 spacious rooms with Italian marble bathrooms. And it has a soft side too: Dog-loving guests should scan the lobby for Mr Walker, a Labrador who welcomes visitors as the Park Hyatt's canine ambassador for Guide Dogs Victoria. *Doubles from \$245, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.*

CRUISE Plan ahead for a Melbourne stay and next year's Australia cruising season: **Cunard's** eight-day voyage round-trip from Melbourne to Tasmania on the 2,068-passenger *Queen Elizabeth* includes stops at Adelaide, Kangaroo Island, and the Tasmanian town of Hobart. *Departure: February 10, 2019; from \$1,349.*

– SARAH KHAN



Chinatown eye candy (top) and Embla's soured cucumbers. Opposite, from left: Patricia Coffee Brewers, Tipo 00 pasta, and the Royal Botanic Gardens.

SINGAPORE



**SHARLENE TEO,
AUTHOR**

NOT MANY FIRST-TIME authors start generating buzz two years before their debut, but 30-year-old Sharlene Teo's Singapore-set novel *Ponti*, out in the UK in April and in the U.S. in September, has already earned her comparisons to Zadie Smith. Teo is a PhD student in creative and critical writing at the University of East Anglia, but she's been amassing awards at a steady clip: the Booker Prize Foundation Scholarship and David T.K. Wong Creative Writing Fellowship at her university, as well as

the inaugural Deborah Rogers Foundation Writers' Award for an excerpt from *Ponti*. These days, Teo divides her time between London and Singapore, where she was born and raised. What does she love about her hometown? "It's constantly changing, never staying still," she says.

LITERARY LION "Singapore has great independent bookstores," Teo says. One of her favorites can be found in the Tiong Bahru neighborhood. "Tiong Bahru is basically a gentrified area of Singapore now, where all the millennials hang out." The neighborhood was home to the oldest public housing project in Singapore and has been revitalized in recent years with eclectic shops and businesses catering to a hip crowd: "There are loads of cute coffee places, secondhand vintage stores, and cool bars," says Teo. The area's premier bookshop is the beloved **BooksActually**. "It's a stalwart in the Singapore literary scene, with a huge collection of poetry, great independent endeavors,

and a couple of resident cats," Teo says.

SWEET STOP Singaporean cuisine is synonymous with its famous noodles and street food, but local desserts with Chinese, Malay, Indian, English, and French influences and ingredients such as fresh coconut, sesame seeds, pandan leaves, jackfruit, and bean curd are well worth a try at the city's many sweet shops. "Also in Tiong Bahru, there's a bakery called **Galicier Pastry**, where you can find old-school Singapore confectionery," Teo says. "*Ondeh-ondoh* is kind of like a coconut sugary-sweet treat, and *nonya kueh* is shredded coconut wrapped with pandan-infused crepe skin. They're really delicious, and really bad for you."

BEST SOUP "*Bak kut teh* translates to 'meat-bone tea,' but it's not as gross as it sounds," Teo says. "It's spareribs in a rich, peppery soup, and you have it with rice and fried bread. I like to have it with kidneys as well. I know it's not to everyone's taste, but

(SINGAPORE) LAURYN ISHAK



“IT’S CONSTANTLY CHANGING,
NEVER STAYING STILL.”



it’s so good.” Her go-to spot for *bak kut teh*? “**Ng Ah Sio** – there’s an outlet on Rangoon Road. It’s a teahouse, and it’s wonderful. You have a nice, bitter tea to wash it down. The specialty is the soup and *you tiao* – fried bread. You just dip it in the soup.”

CRAFTY FINDS “When I was an arts student, I used to go to **Bras Basah Complex**, a big, yellowing building that’s near the National Library,” Teo says. She liked to browse the stationery shops and art-supply stores for acrylic paints and secondhand books. “It’s a cool old place, kind of an institution.”

MOVIE MAGIC “**The Projector** cinema is in a really old building in Singapore called the Golden Mile Tower. It’s a cute independent cinema that has beautiful old-school seating; they left it as it was in the seventies. They show great independent films, including Singaporean films. They have beanbag chairs too.”

ART WALKS Singapore is home to a young but dynamic art scene, and the 2015 opening of the **National Gallery Singapore** has catapulted the city into the global spotlight. “The gallery, in the former city hall and supreme court, is gigantic and amazing and worth a visit – it’s architecturally stunning and has the world’s largest display of modern Southeast Asian art,” Teo says. “It’s vast, like the British Museum when you go in – very big and imposing, with these beautiful columns.” But there are plenty of smaller venues where visitors can see the work of local talents: “The

Singaporean art scene is vibrant, and it’s evolving at a rapid and exciting rate,” Teo says. “**Gillman Barracks** has got a bunch of art galleries, and there are always exhibitions or pop-up events going on. There’s a lot of support right now for artists.”

DRINKS WITH A VIEW “There are some really good rooftop bars: A popular one is **Smoke & Mirrors**, on the rooftop of the National Gallery Singapore. It’s a panoramic wine bar where you get a good view of Marina Bay Sands and overpriced cocktails.”

STAY The city’s grande dame, the 1887-built **Raffles Singapore** is in the midst of a major redesign by Alexandra Champalimaud. When it reopens in the second half of 2018, the 115-suite colonial landmark will have several new suites, revamped restaurants and bars, and a history gallery featuring pictures and mementos from the property’s storied past. *Room rates to be announced; including an upgrade at the time of booking (if available), a Singapore Sling on arrival, breakfast daily, and a \$100 dining credit.*

CRUISE Spend a few days exploring Singapore before an eight-day sailing from the city-state to Phuket, Thailand, via Malaysia aboard **Star Clippers’** 170-passenger *Star Clipper*. The small four-masted sailing ship stops in less-touristed Thai locales, such as the pristine Butang Islands and Phang Nga Bay, with its green-gumdrop mountains. *Departures: March 31 and October 27; from \$1,400.* – **SARAH KHAN**

Clockwise from top left: Gardens by the Bay park, bak kut teh (soup) at Ng Ah Sio, and The Projector’s box office. Opposite: BooksActually.