

TORONTO LIFE

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THE CITY'S NEXT SUPER-CHEFS P.76

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NIGHTS



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EYE-POPPING
DENIM



EXPENSE
ACCOUNT
LUNCH



BESPOKE
WALLPAPER



BEST of the CITY



Toronto's top-rated
food, drink, fun, fashion
and more ➡



COOL
COTTON T's

EXTREME
YOGA CLASSES



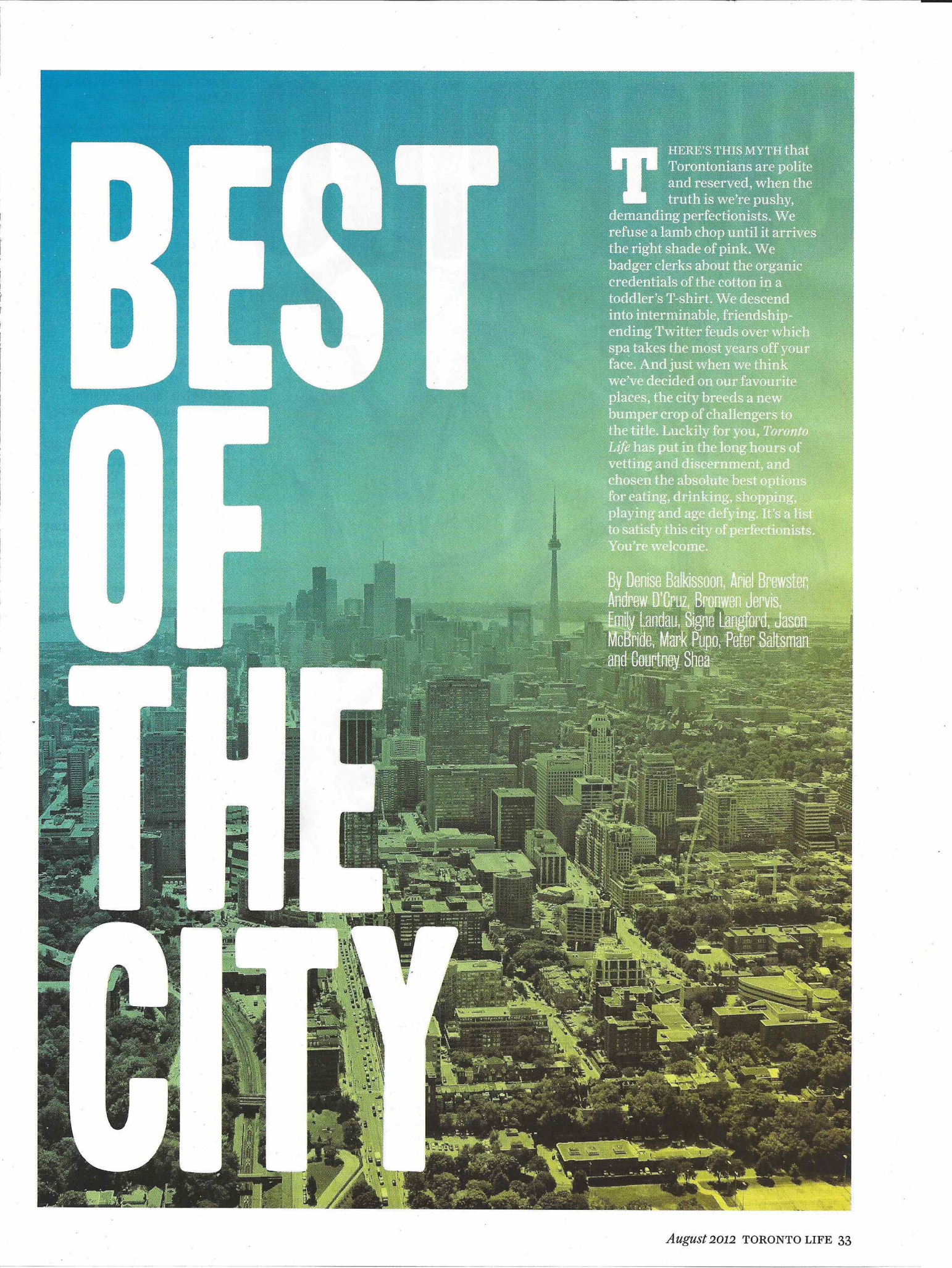
BODACIOUS
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PATIOS
PATIOS
PATIOS

MAN FACIALS

TOTAL
LUXURY
MAKEOVERS

An aerial photograph of the Toronto skyline, featuring the CN Tower and various skyscrapers, with a greenish tint. The title 'BEST OF THE CITY' is overlaid in large white letters.

BEST OF THE CITY

THERE'S THIS MYTH that Torontonians are polite and reserved, when the truth is we're pushy, demanding perfectionists. We refuse a lamb chop until it arrives the right shade of pink. We badger clerks about the organic credentials of the cotton in a toddler's T-shirt. We descend into interminable, friendship-ending Twitter feuds over which spa takes the most years off your face. And just when we think we've decided on our favourite places, the city breeds a new bumper crop of challengers to the title. Luckily for you, *Toronto Life* has put in the long hours of vetting and discernment, and chosen the absolute best options for eating, drinking, shopping, playing and age defying. It's a list to satisfy this city of perfectionists. You're welcome.

By Denise Balkissoon, Ariel Brewster, Andrew D'Cruz, Bronwen Jervis, Emily Landau, Signe Langford, Jason McBride, Mark Pupo, Peter Saltzman and Courtney Shea

SERVICES



WINE STORAGE

Fine Wine Reserve

416-593-9463, www.finewinereserve.com

For oenophiles with a collection surpassing their square footage, this 5,500-square-foot facility, located one floor underground near King and Spadina, provides the most sophisticated wine storage in the city. Owner Marc Russell, a former geologist, maintains optimal conditions for the 11,000 cases in his charge: a \$350,000 refrigeration system ensures temperature and humidity are precisely calibrated (13 degrees and 65 to 75 per cent respectively). Security is equally rigorous: access to the cellar, kept behind cement walls three feet thick, requires an ID card and fingerprint recognition (infrared cameras also record all activity). Private lockers, accessible 24/7 and starting at \$38 per month (for a capacity of eight cases), are geared toward condo dwellers with limited space. Larger case storage units accommodate bottles that won't be touched for a decade or three. Russell is opening a second midtown location this winter specifically for the latter (and to be closer to his Rose-dale and Forest Hill clients), which will free up space for 100 new lockers.

ART RENTAL

Bau-Xi Photo

324 Dundas St. W., 416-977-0400

In an art market where a 10-inch painting can go for as much as a two-bedroom Riverdale semi, rental is an ingenious way to showcase your taste without buyer's remorse. Bau-Xi Photo represents some of the country's most visionary emerging and established photographers, and much of its collection is available to

rent—you might lease a dazzling aerial of the Northern wilderness by Toronto's Eamon Mac Mahon, or a hypnotic shot of museum taxidermy by the New York photographer Richard Barnes. Rental periods can range from a few days (just long enough for a fabulous party) to a year, and fees generally run at a small percentage of the work's retail value—the typical rate is about five per cent a month (meaning a \$3,000 work

would potentially lease for \$150). If you're looking to test out a permanent addition to your collection, rent-to-own programs are available.

BACKYARD FARMING CLASS

Fresh City

South Greenhouse, Downsview Park,
647-721-1150, freshcityfarms.com

It's a time-honoured cycle: every year you promise yourself a vegetable garden, and every year that promise

gets lost in a haze of sun-drenched summer sloth. Fresh City—an urban agriculture venture that delivers organic fruit and veggie boxes across the GTA, year-round—will help you out of that Muskoka chair and into a rigorous backyard farming regime. They offer a two-and-a-half-hour workshop often led by Fresh City co-founder Phil Collins, a landscape architect and lifelong farmer. The seminar is a crash course on the basics of urban farming, focusing on soil health, composting, plant care, pest control and harvesting. Collins also teaches backyard, terrace and container gardening, so condo dwellers with balconies have no excuse. \$50 per workshop.

NEWBORN SLEEP TRAINER

Alma Plummer

416-789-1670

Almost every aspect of motherhood is a lightning rod these days, but there's one thing all new parents can agree on: a sleeping baby makes for a happy household. For those seeking backup, Alma Plummer has hushed and cooed newborns into military-grade sleeping patterns for 18 years. Her clients rave about her, so much so that business is almost entirely word of mouth. During her hours (usually 5:30 p.m. to 5:30 a.m.), Plummer will make sure baby keeps to a strict schedule while you get some much-needed shut-eye. She is also a good resource for pretty much any question you could ever have about how to deal with your bundle of nerves. Make that joy. Call for pricing.

PHOTO DIGITIZER

Pikto

6 Case Goods Ln., 416-203-3443

Found, in a dusty basement: a hefty box of heirloom images, with the first photos taken after Grandma immigrated to Canada jumbled among slides of Mom and