

# Filter

*Style hits the suburbs, mangoes so sweet they blush, why red is the best bubbly and how to exercise like Madonna.*

## Cheap trick

Keep yourself noice and ditch the designer labels.

It all started with Ugg boots. Now it's time to get rid of those Paspaley pearls, ditch the Gucci shades and head to the shopping centre because cheap-and-cheerful suburban chic is the look du jour. "It's all about tongue-in-cheek glamour, like fake gold chains instead of 18-carat earrings," says futurist Ben Hourahine of culture forecaster 42. "Copying the naff look of suburbanites like Kath and Kim [right], while ironic, lets us reflect social aspirations more sincere than our own." So rev up that hatchback, hit the mall and indulge in some anti-aspiration (and save a few bucks at the same time).



### Better reds

Move over, champagne. This summer, the bubbles on everyone's lips will be of the ultra-trendy sparkling red variety – served chilled, of course. "It's a full-bodied sparkling wine for people who like red wine," says Vicki Brownrigg of Sydney's CBD Cellars. "A lot of Australians drink red wine so it's a great alternative coming into summer." According to Brownrigg, the best of the bunch is Seppelt's Original Sparkling Shiraz 2002, which, at about \$19 a bottle, is ideal for sipping outdoors on a summer evening. "It's probably a bit too big for a seafood barbecue but with meat and salad, it's perfect."



### Flip flop flap

Fresh from Florida's surfing community – and inspired by the split-toe booties used for board riding – comes a sock for thongs. They've taken off in the US, where fashionistas are pushing the daggy socks-with-sandals image aside and embracing the quirky, custom-made split-toe socks. Cloudyreason, manufacturer of the Flip Flop Sock, is creating a new line for the holiday season. "They will be classy and colourful – more like a light, stylish dress sock," says a spokeswoman. Flip Flop Socks cost up to \$13 and can be ordered online at the website [www.cloudyreason.com](http://www.cloudyreason.com) – if you're game.



### Mango magic

Just in time for the hot weather, Oneharvest has developed the Calypso mango, a hybrid of the delicious Kensington Pride and the small-seeded Sensation. The result is fruit with a beautiful blush, long shelf life and firm, fibreless flesh. It's high in vitamins A, C and betacarotene and also contains vitamin E and potassium – perfect for whipping up into a naughty but very nice daiquiri. Not into cocktails? Then slice it into salads, pulp it into smoothies or preserve it in jams, pickles and chutneys. Just don't wait for your Calypso to soften – it's meant to be eaten firm.



### Doing the rounds

Even Madonna is doing it. Gyrotonics – or "yoga with resistance" – is based on yoga, ballet, swimming, dance, Tai Chi and gymnastics and was developed in New York in the 1980s by Juliu Horvath, principal dancer in the Romanian State Opera. The moves are practised on a bench-like contraption that looks more like a torture rack than gym equipment. It involves 50 sets of exercises, with more than 130 variations, and is supposed to stretch muscles to increase fitness. Go to [www.gyrotonics.com](http://www.gyrotonics.com).

## Hit list



**It's A Wonderful Life (1946)**

A great film by a great filmmaker, Frank Capra. Made before consumerism blitzed Jesus's birthday, it's an emotionally raw movie about a man coming to terms with his life.



**Edward Scissorhands (1990)**

Before Tim Burton wrote *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (a wonderfully dark animation), he made this moving, funny Gothic fairytale set in a "perfect" suburb and told in flashback one Christmas.



**Cunnamulla (2000)**

At the end of this controversial Australian doco, the sight of Christmas lights draped on a corrugated iron shed and a Hills hoist shows what Christmas means to an outback town at the end of a train line.



**Elf (2003)**

Towering comic Will Ferrell in a green suit and pointy hat is delicious enough but his finding chewy on a New York street and eating it like a kid in a candy store is one of the funniest things I've seen.



**Bad Santa (2003)**

Directed by Terry Zwigoff (*Ghost World*), this film is for those who appreciate how good Billy Bob Thornton can be. It's dark, uncompromising and very funny – and it squares the ledger for anyone who hates Christmas movies.

## Five classic Christmas flicks.

By Megan Spencer