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Fashion Week

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top of the World

How suite it is

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Jennifer Siebel

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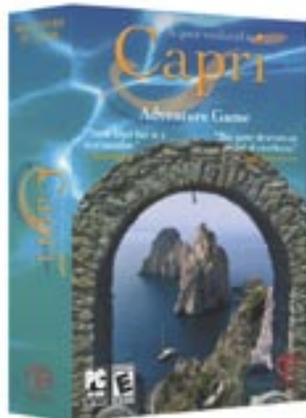
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The family way

This month's travelling involves families. As the economy picks up in the west, one might think self-indulgence would be the order of the day, but on the contrary, it's family first **COMPILED BY Jack Yan**



ABOVE LEFT: St Tropez's Villa Carol Beach with a sea view on Pampelonne Beach. **LEFT:** Amazing quality: a screen shot from *A Quiet Weekend in Capri*. **TOP:** The new computer game to catch the travel bug. **ABOVE:** A houseboat from Forever Resorts on Lake Mead.

LUXURY RESIDENCES Wimco (www.wimco.com, info@wimco.com, 1 800 932-3222), for instance, has appeared in *Lucire* Volante news items for years offering some very luxurious residences in the West Indies and all over Europe. Usually, they're for couples. But Wimco has gone the family way this season.

These aren't Mum and Dad and a Toyota campervan, but villas all with outdoor swimming pools. **Les Truffiers** in the Luberon, Provence, is a five-bedroom villa sleeping up to 10, overlooking the Luberon Hills and 8 km away from the shops—a respectable distance. This is the value package but remember it is Wimco and, therefore, among the best—at US\$4,844 per week.

St Tropez's **Villa Marguerite** at the Quessine area near Cap Camarat comes in at

US\$12,070 weekly with a four-bedroom villa sleeping 10 overlooking the sea with a path directly to the beach. Another great beachside villa is at **Cap Benat** on the same island, with a private harbour for boat hires and sailing lessons. This five-bedroom villa goes for US\$15,723 per week. **Villa Carol Beach**, in St Tropez and the Var, has sea views on Pampelonne Beach and is near **Club 55**, sleeping 12 with six bedrooms. But to be so near the party scene means a premium and this goes to US\$21,248 each week.

If you need facilities for kids, **Villa Scopetello** in Toscani has a swimming pool, tennis court and a play area with swings and slides, going for US\$9,215 weekly; or the **Villa sur le Golf** at the Pont Royal in Provence-Aix on the grounds of the local country club.

There's golf (of course), archery, tennis, horse-riding and more, plus a dedicated children's play area. It's half an hour to Aix-en-Provence and 50 km to the famous sights of Avignon, from US\$7,623 per week.

We haven't even listed the most expensive—**Les Treilles de la Moutte** in the St Tropez area, a private estate costing US\$23,000 weekly.

A LAKE MOMENT But you don't need to spend the price of a car on a week's villa rental. **Forever Resorts** in Phoenix, Ariz. (www.foreverhouseboats.com) is offering houseboats and betting that this popular vacationing method is going to make a comeback in 2004. Why not? It suits parents and kids for a start.

These days, houseboats aren't about some shoddy wooden thing made from bits from the local hardware store. Their accoutrements include a TV, stereo, gas grill, a full kitchen, queen bedrooms, bathrooms, linens, towels, central air conditioning and heat. Forever also wants to point out that it's even equipped their boats with a waterslide off the upper deck.

Popular places to do this in the US include **Lake Mead National Recreation Area** (Nev.) and **Don Pedro Lake** (Calif.).

GET THE TRAVEL BUG Family holidays this season aren't all about going all the way to exotic locations, when you can experience them in the home for less. And we believe that this is an educational solution, too, that the family can enjoy.

A new computer game from **Got Game Entertainment** (www.GotGameEntertainment.com), **A Quiet Weekend in Capri**, launched in March and from the screen shots that we've seen, it's an excellent way to experience the island for under US\$30. It's a first-person adventure where you arrive on Capri by ferry with a camera, notebook, cash and credit card, all to solve 'The Code' among Roman ruins, ancient streets and azure sea shores.

There's a bonus travel feature on the real island of Capri and a separate CD soundtrack of original music. The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) gives *A Quiet Weekend in Capri* an "E" (for Everybody) rating, which means no nasty surprises.

There's an extra perk to that rating. If your kids aren't ready for travelling like *Lucire's* Well Travelled Girl, then *A Quiet Weekend in Capri* may just set off that travel bug. •

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The next wave

Jack Yan cruises to Helsinki aboard Silja Line's *MS Symphony*. It's a family experience, except on weekends PHOTOGRAPHED BY THE AUTHOR



HERE'S A WHOLE GENERATION that has grown up with the adventures of Capt Merrill Stubing and his crew. We all knew that much of what we saw on *The Love Boat* was the stuff of fiction—the large cabins, for example, the frequency with which Dr Bricker got married, and the fact that Don Adams returned countless times in different roles. But for some reason, I expected travelling on Silja Line's *MS Symphony* from Stockholm to Helsinki to reflect the TV show, ever so slightly, and I would be content if the cruise director did not look like the *Playboy* bunny of *The Love Boat*, *the Next Wave*.

Silja Line was the preferred line, I discovered, for travelling across the Baltic Sea. There were others, but Silja was better known for a decent atmosphere and professional staff. The problem was, since I was sailing mid-week on business, bringing my French-registered Peugeot 307 with me, I should not expect fun at all.

Sweden still regulates its alcohol sales. Even Absolut Vodka is a state-owned enterprise. Alcohol is sold through Systembolaget, and at fairly high prices, so there are legends of Swedes boarding the boats, waiting till they get to international waters, and experience much less pricey fare. But a mid-week sailing would not, apparently, be frequented by this group.

Instead, the *Symphony* had mostly elderly and family travellers. Given this month's focus in *Lucire*'s Volante section, there is much to recommend the line. For example, those boarding conventionally (i.e. not bringing a car) had their photographs taken by the ship's photographer. The souvenirs were placed, perhaps embarrassingly, on the promenade deck for all to see—but that's perfect for most families. And if this month's theme were singles' travel, I would be reviewing something from Singles' Travel Inter-

But I was aching to experience the amenities. The 142 m long promenade deck (Deck 7) shops appeared impressive as I gazed out of the window from my ninth-level floor and I had been given coupons for dinner and breakfast. The sailing time was 5 P.M., for arriving in Helsinki at 9:30 A.M. the following day.

The ship's maps indicated that there were lounges and a nightclub, open after midnight, although at this time, I felt a slight cold coming on (a long story but it goes back to a pleasant walk with a friend along Kungsholmen in Stockholm), so I would try not to party, but I would definitely try to use the amenities on board.

Once the shops opened, I ventured to the promenade deck to look around. Unlike *The Love Boat*, we singles were few. While walking about, I did open a door for a young English tourist with a large suitcase, picking up her dropped pullover and made a remark that she could 'Watch for the halo,' if she were ever to encounter difficulties. This was much to the chagrin of her boyfriend, who I gather did not read Leslie Charteris's Saint stories, one of the great Chinese literary heroes of the twentieth century.

I have never been a fan of buffets—*smörgåsbord* as they say in these parts, with a below-deck restaurant to which some Japanese tourists were flocking—but noted the numerous restaurants on deck as well as the Bon Vivant wine bar and shop. Any of the *à la carte* restaurants will serve up delectable treats and I was fortunate enough to travel with a menu change in between the two legs. The main restaurant, a Mare Balticum trophy winner in 2000, has halibut, terrine and whitefish as well as more traditional steaks (reindeer, beef, lamb). What I discovered was that the restaurant has made sure that the food has been meticulously prepared—in other words, these are not first-taste, first-bite wonders, but deserving award winners.

Given that Silja rivals Systembolaget, the selection at the Bon Vivant wine bar is impressive, while the bar at the Atlantis casino and dance lounge was quite well stocked. What disappointed the gastronome in me was that the hot chocolates aboard the *Symphony* were rather poor—it was a case of buying your own powder and adding hot water. Hot chocolates in Helsinki proper, by contrast, are rich and possibly fattening, and consistently so, regardless of where one ordered them.

My next duty was to purchase beauty products, not for *Lucire* but a certain young lady, and noted that the *Symphony*'s duty-free boutique had Lumene, which is as Finnish as L'Oréal is French. This national brand has skin care, make-up and body care ranges and I have since had a report that the body wash is of a world-class standard. Prices at the shops are in both euro (as used in Finland) and Swedish kronor.

A more general store sold souvenirs and magazines and I picked up a Russian *Vogue*, while noting that there were equally German titles such as *Auto*, *Motor und Sport* as well as Swedish and Finnish fare.

For the family traveller, there was a 'Kids' World' children's activity centre with video arcades, ball pools and games.

The Commodore class has a separate entry card to separate you from the poor; the Silja suite has its own sauna with whirlpool bath

national. However, the trend is toward travelling with someone. Perhaps it's a backlash to the "me" generation of the 1980s and 1990s. After 9-11, we discovered that families are important and with an economic recovery, we want to benefit them.

I had made my way to the cabin from the car deck and as expected, it measured around 11 m². These Tourist class rooms are not recommended for family travellers; it's better paying the extra for a Promenade or Seaside class rooms, which are equally small but have double beds, or the Silja class with 3 m² extra. Family suites are also available, which are ideal—15 m² and the line believes you can fit four people in one. There are 25 m² and one, 11th floor 75 m² suite for those travelling in style: the former's Commodore class has a separate entry card to separate you from the poor. The latter has its own sauna with whirlpool bath. Remember: Finland is the land of saunas. It's what Santa Claus does to unwind on Boxing Day.

Jack Yan is founding publisher of *Lucire*. The author thanks Stefan Engeseth, Evangelos Patouchas and Panos Papadopoulos.



OPPOSITE PAGE: The *Symphony's* bow, as seen from the Atlantis lounge. **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** Carl Ludwig Engel's Tuomiokirkko Cathedral. A close-up from the Cathedral. Uspensky Cathedral. Inside the Uspensky Cathedral. Detail from inside Tuomiokirkko. Downtown Helsinki: the Hugo Boss store is located in this building.



I hit the Atlantis lounge too early and saw a group of English dancer-singers rehearsing. They would perform later at night, their act suggesting they were graduates from the typical S Club 7 school of entertainment. Later, a small band of four would sing slightly older tunes as the Atlantis opened up for dancers. I never caught either group's name, but the latter had one remarkable trumpeter whose Louis Armstrong impersonation was mind-boggling. He was Caucasian, but if you had your eyes closed you could imagine Satchmo performing 'Hello Dolly' and 'What a Wonderful World'—he sounded *that* alike.

Some of the families had gone to an upper deck, to the Sunflower Oasis, with swimming pools, saunas, a solarium and Jacuzzi. This deck also has a hairstylist and cosmetologist. What marks it out is that you can see the sea from the pools. An attractive Swedish brunette whose car was on the same deck as mine boarded with her grandmother and left the following day with her hair in braids, having made use of the on-board hairstylist.

But there was more on a lower deck: a plunge pool, private saunas and a massage therapist. I had booked in and happened to have one therapist, Anne-Maarit, who turned out to be a huge fan of New Zealand. Having learned I spent a good deal of each year there, the one-hour scheduled massage went for longer—I was the last appointment of the evening—as we discussed her favourite series of movies, *The Lord of the Rings*. Peter Jackson, I salute you.

The Starlight Lounge nightclub opened to karaoke singers and, later, DJ music, and if it were not for the Arctic winds, the outside areas would have made for nice walks. (There is a covered walkway on another deck, however, for those insistent on seeing the moonlight.) But this was mid-week, and not a lot was on. I had even bored of the Atlantis lounge, though plenty of the Japanese were mingling in the adjoined casino.

And that is perhaps the trouble of sailing on a ship. Once you've walked the 142 m, then there's nothing new to see. It's like living in a suburb. Without a family or friends inside the stores, it can be a rather solitary experience. The basic rooms are too small for television sets and the radio comes through the telephone speaker.

With a family, then Silja Line sailing can be fun. The on-board activities kept children entertained, to the relief of the no-kids crowd. No cries were heard.

But I question whether shipboard cruising is for the bachelor—or bachelorette. The lounge acts were good but would never win a Grammy; the karaoke was abysmal. Ultimately, it was a mode of transport that proved to be more interesting than taking a plane. I experienced Silja's professional, courteous staff. The novelty may wear off quickly, but you still can't get a €38 massage that lasts for over an hour on a plane flying out of Arlanda into Vantaa.

HELSINKI is a beautiful city. There are still remnants of the other countries that had settled here: the street signs are in Finnish and Swedish, and if you look hard enough, you'll even find the odd one in stone on the side of a building in Cyrillic. The Finnish language is hard to decipher without studying it: it is a distant relative to another Uralic tongue, Hungarian, and owes nothing to its largest neighbours. When written, it almost looks like a Latinized Japanese (which probably helped initial Nokia sales).

Even those most disinterested in architecture could become converts in this city. There are neo-classical and *art nouveau* influences, but interpreted uniquely—much like the language.

Helsinki is four hours west of St Petersburg and a western Russian feel is in the air. Plenty of foreign influences have affected Helsinki over the centuries and its multicultural roots show.

It is impossible to miss the Tuomiokirkko Cathedral in the central city, designed by Carl Ludwig Engel. Possibly every tourist guide talks of the Cathedral. Outside is a statue of Alexander II with his right hand open. The structure itself is magnificent not just because of its architecture, as shown here, but its sheer scale. Of course, there are larger structures in Europe, but the way the Cathedral is "framed" by period buildings on side street, plus the large square before it, make it look more sizeable. Two Jehovah's Witnesses tried to start chatting to me in Mandarin, but I explained that I was a southerner.

Inside, it was less magnificent and felt smaller. However, there is the Eastern Orthodox Church (Uspensky Cathedral), another landmark, in a contrasting Byzantine style. This is walking distance away. It is decorative, in a brick colour, whereas the Tuomiokirkko is neo-classical white. Flash photography is not permitted inside, but I managed to get one picture on a longer exposure. Here, the interior does not disappoint (part of the dome is visible), the gold lettering lining the arches in Cyrillic but looking, to eyes accustomed to Latin script, alien.



Downtown walks in the city reveal more. The Svenska Teatern on the Esplanadi is a Swedish-Finnish institution in a city where you can, occasionally, hear Swedish spoken. Built in 1866 but modernized in 1936, the theatre has hosted both traditional and modern plays. Its simple lines contrast the more extravagant designs that I had seen in the city. Similarly, the Helsinki railway station is characterized by simple, circular lines, but one's eyes are more likely

to glance at its stone figures, each holding lights in the shape of globes.

The Stockmann department store and the Academic Bookstore are two places to go for the shopping-minded, as well as a nearby Marimekko boutique. Stockmann is blessed with a multilingual staff member at its information desk, while the Akateeminen Kirjakauppa (Academic Bookstore—owned by Stockmann), with its marble slabs and sky-lit windows, is apparently one of the largest in Europe.

Marimekko is represented by 27 stores in Finland, with the greatest number in Helsinki. At one branch near Stockmann selling both clothing and furnishings, I was able to get a glimpse of the upcoming season's offerings. The Marimekko look has been evolving, but it maintains a clear link to the past with its use of stripes and motifs. It was good to see this brand experience a revival: its renewed confidence a sign of greater things in Finland, now perhaps better known for Nokia cellphones than Santa Claus.

Near the harbour and the presidential residence are the vibrant food markets—which are fun to walk through, but I had bigger plans in mind for dinner.

One of the most highly recommended restaurants in the city, according to locals, was Lehtovaara (Mechelininkatu 39, 00250 Helsinki, telephone 358 9 440-833), known for its fish and special house wines. This was excellent for dining on the second day, especially having been to a very disappointing Chinese restaurant the night before. Lehtovaara's location, across from the Sibelius park, means that one can walk off the food afterwards—or enjoy a pleasant stroll before dinner. I could have stayed at the Hotel Grand Marina, a Scandic hotel and a member of the Hilton family, who had given me two coupons to use for free drinks (the most powerful stuff excepted). Unfortunately, despite my second stay at a Hilton establishment in two months, I have yet to receive my proper, plastic Hilton Honors card.

But night-time is perhaps best left for a visit to the highest building in the city, Tornii (Yrjönkatu 26, 00100 Helsinki), from where there is a panoramic view of Helsinki. The city has been spared of high rises, making the view more spectacular. And the hot chocolates here are wonderful.

It was a haunt of young people and foreign businessmen who had gone up for a drink, and the building itself houses the hotel of the same name, complete with four saunas and an Irish pub. There is also an 'American-style bar', according to the web site—if they meant the bar on the top floor, then it wasn't spacious enough to be authentic: Tornii is a tall, thin building.

On my final day, before boarding the *Symphony* on the way back to Stockholm, I took a drive around the harbour. I stopped off at a café on the Ehrenströmsvägen and glanced out toward Luoto Island. The beautiful wooden Klippan Palace struck me as one of the city's crown jewels. Today, it houses a hotel (the Palace Ravintolat) and restaurant; staying and dining there would have been quite a memorable experience. It would have to wait till a future visit to Helsinki.

For it was now the weekend, and the *Symphony* was about to set sail. The only difference, I discovered, was the larger number of passengers indulging in alcohol. One had already reached her limit before 7 P.M. and it wasn't a pretty sight by eight. It didn't make for a special trip, my having exhausted the shops on the voyage to Helsinki, and the massage sessions were all booked out. I did get a free drink from the café late at night. My camera even went kaput on this leg, with the crew stumped on how to fix it. (It was repaired back in Sweden free of charge by Vito Fotoservice in Solna.)

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Signage in downtown Helsinki. Klippan Palace on Luoto Island. Helsinki street scene. View of the city from Torne. Svenska Teatern. Checking in the car on the return journey with Silja Line. The figures at the Railway Station. Helsinki Railway Station. previous page, **INSET:** The information counter at Stockmann.

THIS MONTH LAST WORDS

Avant-garde and loving it

continued from p. 27

Textures included silk velvets, velveteen and *devorés*, paillettes and satins.

MERCEDES DE MIGUEL While some menswear designers softened their approaches in the 1990s for the new-age guy, Mercedes de Miguel is hardening her women's wear line. While there are still the flowing dresses—often in black and contrasted with beige—her *fedora*-adorned models tried to impress a more masculine sense on the Gaudí runway. There were skirts that showed brash lettering; a vest showed painted hot pink concentric circles; skirts and blouses were made in a light gauze.

CORTANA Cortana's designs were inspired by the theatre, with her face-painted models wearing shades of black and white. The idea was to force one to admire the feminine, flowing clothes, which partly worked.

MIREIA BISBE Mireia Bisbe was inspired by the nightlife of the 1920s, when femininity got its first boost in the twentieth century. Rather than *charleston* dresses, Bisbe sent down some of the most glamorous gowns and dresses of the Pasarela Gaudí collections.

JOVENES DISENADORES A section especially for young designers—some relatively established, such as Karina Savarese, others less so, such as Mar Rodriguez—showed more avant-garde thinking.

Mar Rodriguez dared with lace; Maria Jesus Henarejos displayed a more restrained, old-style aristocratic elegance. Karina Savarese took deconstruction to new heights. Higinio Mateu forecasts tartan and, interestingly, worked in thin red trim details while sticking to a green and red palette.

Emo-Esther Montoya bridged the gap between Spanish elegance, European street styles and hip-hop. Montoya, from the few outfits shown, blended ties, hip-hop-inspired lettering and linear patterns in a cross between cultures. Marta Fernandez's designs showed natural floral forms, whether on cotton or velvet, and quite happily suggested orange as her colour for autumn–winter. M. Angels Botello's selection was more sporty: athletic ties from a sweatshirt and zips appeared alongside ribbons—though maintaining a feminine silhouette with flowing skirts.

We adored the designs of Caridad Frutos. This label was not afraid of playing with distinctive knitting and crocheting techniques. Nuria Sendra showed some of the few menswear items, with her black cape being one of the more memorable. Maria Barros went from knits to silk brocade with a stunning orange-and-gold gown, recalling Tibetan monasteries.

TOYPES Being part of the establishment hasn't dulled Toypes's creativity. We were taken back to *Breakfast at Tiffany's* as Toypes's autumn–winter 2004–5 looks appeared: an off-the-shoulder dress in green and black, complemented by a clutch bag called Holly; a dress and wrap with untidy but passionate hand-lettering; even a pair of black pants that was further away from Hepburn. These designs did

not go lightly, especially a black jacket more at home in *Grease*.

PEPE ARELLANO Pepe Arellano's show was known for the appearance of pregnant actress Cate Blanchett and this somewhat overshadowed the designs. Arellano mixed glamour with the practice of tagging as everything from bikini tops to fur coats came out with light graffiti effects. If anything typified the idea of *urban jungle*, then this was it. Khaki mixed with red rose prints and exaggerated military camouflage were at direct odds with the final wedding dress with its angular top half and flowing tulle below. •

Jack Yan is founding publisher of *Lucire*.

Lisboa: contrasts

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once again revealed why he is one of the best Portuguese designers.

LOUIS DE GAMA From sober long coats to revival patterns on flowing dresses, Louis de Gama made an effort to present a sophisticated collection that mixed a professional look with one of a party animal! Long-legged yellow boots? Yes, it's possible to buy them, wear them and still look good in them—as long as one doesn't get caught up in corny mixtures of colours.

PEDRO MOURÃO Although not as well known, Pedro Mourão showed a consistent collection and is a must on my agenda for the next Moda Lisboa. He is an inspired designer that gave a whole new look to men's fashion, varying from "bike roadster" to "vampire killing" theme-wise. Great fur hats, stretched fabric on trousers, glitter pants and my favourite, dark coloured riding gloves! This was a wonderful touch.

ALVES-GONÇALVES This is one of the greatest fashion teams in Portugal! Alves–Gonçalves is associated with girls who aspire to a more sophisticated look. Its autumn–winter collection emphasizes simplicity and how it is used to bring out the practical effects of clothing. Strong colour schemes and Oriental patterns were printed on metallic fabric. Flounce dresses, skirts and tops under heavy raincoats make Alves–Gonçalves' collection not a type but a *genre* for fashion lovers! •

Tiago E. Santo is Lisboa correspondent for *Lucire*.

How suite it is

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who 'don't stop being hip' after parenthood, is a masterpiece of functionality and fashion. **Tumi** supplied a weekend travel tote and **Lulu Guinness** provided its Weekend Fishnet Tote. Like a Russian doll, there were bags within the goody bags. Decorated with fur, feathers, flowers, fringe and Swarovski crystals, signature handbags and accessories from **Lauren Scherr** were donated by **Ma Jolie**, a speciality boutique in Brentwood, Calif. **Amy Schwab Designs** made up custom cigar-box purses

and matching fabric-covered belt for each of the nominees (both sexes get them with significant others and family members getting the "goods"). Jewellery designer **Carolee** selected jewellery and watches personalized for each nominee and included freshwater cultured pearls, genuine diamond stackable charm rings, a sleek stainless Swiss tank watch, and more enclosed in a fabric jewellery box.

Sleepyheads.com included '40s glam silk and satin 'Hollywood Star Jammies' in addition to a sterling silver and Swarovski crystal bracelet that says 'Movie Star'. A hypo-allergenic silk charmeuse bed throw was provided by **Kookoon. Maker's Mark**, the legendary hand-crafted bourbon whisky, commemorated its 50th anniversary by furnishing each nominee with a one-of-a-kind bottle with silver seal. **Bath & Body Works** put together a gift package including Botanical Nutrients Wheat Germ Almond Hair Treatment, Aromatherapy Energize Orange Ginger Pulse Point Therapy, Sensuality Ylang-Ylang Myrrh Sugar Scrub, It Isn't So Shea Butter Foot Cream, Toe the Line Foot Scrub and Pure Simplicity Pumpkin Mask. **Styli-Style** included a selection of Flat Pencil make-up pencils which provide a thick- and thin-line application. **Weleda** (www.usa.weleda.com), the holistic personal care company, provided its fragrant 100 per cent natural Everon Lip Balm, Iris Moisture Cream and Soap, Rosemary Hair Oil, Rosemary Soap, Shaving Cream, Skin Food, Wild Rose Body Lotion and for the baby, a Baby Starter Kit.

Loons Paris provided unisex sunglasses, the brainchild of Eric Gautier, who turns traditional eyewear design on its side by putting a special accent on the temples. **Playboy** (www.playboy-footwear.com) has created a collection of colourful flip-flops with iconic bunny references that are fun and playful. **Carushka Bodywear** (www.carushka.com) selected pieces of its signature bodywear for men and women. **Caldrea** (www.caldrea.com), the makers of aromatherapeutic household cleaning solutions, gave an aromatherapy candle, linen spray and Chandelle (rooster) feather duster featuring an antique wooden spindle, the better for keeping the Oscar dust-free. **Waterpik** (www.waterpik.com) delivered a full body shower panel, showerhead, and automatic flosser with whitening tips.

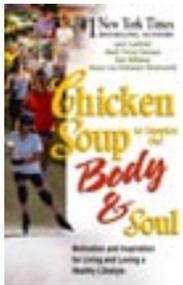
W Hotels (www.whotels.com) provided a gift certificate good for a weekend getaway at any W Hotel worldwide. **Kimpton Hotels** (www.kimptongroup.com) offered special VIP gift certificates for two nights in a luxury suite at any of the 40 nationwide Kimpton Boutique Hotels. **Chicken Soup to Inspire the Body and Soul: Motivation and Inspiration for Living and Loving a Healthy Lifestyle** was included in the goody bags along with other magazines. **Mattel** (www.Mattel.com) provided an Armani Barbie doll fashioned in stunning style reflecting the haute couturier's signature look. **Pez** (www.pez.com) offered its 50th Anniversary Collector's Edition Golden Glow Dispenser packaged in a navy blue velvet bag embossed with a metallic silver Pez logo. •

Stevie Wilson is beauty editor of *Lucire*.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:

Loons sunglasses, in detail. Loons Elyot black sunglasses. Tumi Tote bag. Maker's Mark 50th anniversary bourbon whiskey. Amy Schwab Designs purse and belt. From the gift bag: Nyakio African tea candle. Playboy flip-flop. The well known book, *Chicken Soup to Inspire the Body and Soul*.



More, brighter, bigger

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amount of creative freedom. 'I used to just do everything,' he says, 'whereas now I can almost pick and choose my projects.'

Lawler currently spends half of each year in Paris, working the European shows under the direction of hairdressing supremo Eugene Souleiman. A noted innovator in his field, Souleiman is the darling of cutting-edge designers Yohji Yamamoto, Viktor and Rolf, and Hussein Chalayan. In 2003 he was named one of the fashion world's 30 power players for the year by *The Observer*, who noted, 'If [he] makes a statement for hair on the catwalk, you can guarantee it will become a major trend.'

Lawler describes Souleiman as 'a genius [who] gets outside the square. He stays up all night in his lab mixing strange concoctions to spray, melt, or weld onto his models' hair.'

Interestingly, the words Lawler uses to describe Souleiman's work could easily be—and in fact are—applied to his own. 'Genius' was the word of choice used by journalists to describe his kaleidoscopic handiwork at last year's L'Oréal New Zealand Fashion Week, and frequently passes the lips of Francis Hooper when describing his friend and collaborator.

With his challenging and eclectic aesthetic vision—preferring excess to subtlety, and individuality to the look of the moment—Lawler seems set for greatness. The pomp and pageantry of his runway shows has spurred offers from theatre companies and filmmakers, eager to bring his work to new audiences. But while Lawler is always keen to broaden his repertoire, his first love remains fashion: 'Film is such a lengthy process, with its continuity issues; you lose the immediacy of a shoot or show. I'm already bored of the look

I created in the first scene by the time I have to re-create it eight weeks later.' •

Clare Marshall is Melbourne correspondent for *Lucire*.

A worldly passion

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basics. 'By basics, I mean a good pant suit, fun black party dress, black knee high boots, khakis, white blouse, Seven jeans, polo shirt, etc.'

'Polo Ralph Lauren is one of my favourite designers, although upscale, when it comes to investing in basics that are quality and classics. Of course, you can get much of those items cheaper like at the Gap, which I now love since I can't afford Polo on my low acting income. Accessories are also a must, to dress up or down certain outfits, especially when travelling.'

She has become more casual since arriving in Los Angeles to pursue her acting career. Her agents advised her to dress down: 'less sophisticated, more jeans and flip-flops,' she recalled, noting that she had become extremely comfortable with the look.

But she still enjoys the dressing-up. 'It is fun wearing something special from your travels—it brings back so many memories and I suppose that is my playing different parts and roles and keeping connected to other cultures.'

In this photographic feature, Siebel shows both her eclectic and timeless sides. While she was somewhat nervous, she more than made up for it by being very accommodating. The dog in the photographs is hers, not one that we found or borrowed as a prop. What we noticed during the shoot was that despite being so driven, Siebel exhibits an unassuming very down-to-earth manner, and was flattered about getting the attention.

SIEBEL HAS KEPT her sights on the planet while working as an actress. Many who have been exposed to greater global issues at a young age often do, finding ways to incorporate them in their careers.

'I lived all over the world trying to make the world a better place, by helping to do the following: reduce poverty and violence, eliminate threats to the environment and conserve our most biologically rich ecosystems, and support women's rights and empowerment in addition to the education of children.'

'I personally think that I have as much if not more to offer Hollywood than someone who has lived here their entire life. Having had real-life experiences all over the world, I believe I am a shoo-in to play a breadth of diverse, international characters.'

'To have a career like that of Cate Blanchett, Meryl Streep, Nicole Kidman, etc., would be a dream come true. But Hollywood needs to determine that for themselves.'

As far as we are concerned, the decision for Hollywood is not a tough one. •

Jack Yan is founding publisher of *Lucire*. Devin Colvin is entertainment editor of *Lucire*. Jon Moe is a New York-based celebrity photographer.

The next wave

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Somehow, I preferred sailing with the families. I'd still do it again—I did meet others on board, which is more than could be said if I had flown—but next time, I'd pace myself. •

Jack Yan is founding publisher of *Lucire*.



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