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Letter from the **Editor**

With this third edition of *The Quarterly*, we welcome Summer and all that it offers to us. From farmers markets to the shoe of the season and everything in between, I hope this edition gives you plenty of reasons to be thankful for our sunniest season.

Things are changing quite a bit on our end, but we are excited and hopeful for this next step. We announce our re-brand in this edition (My *name* is still Kameron Vogt, but our brand gets a makeover). We welcome Willow as our new co-creative director (She was always the one keeping this train on the tracks, but now we will all get to appreciate her creativity and insight in a much more visible role).

Finally, our brand and this publication has decided to focus solely on serving women and doing what we can to address your style needs. There are several reasons for this, but the short answer is that this is where we feel we can provide the most value and we would like to prioritize doing one thing exceptionally well before expanding the community that we serve. We are so grateful for those of you who have supported this endeavor from the beginning as well as those of you who are just joining us. In many ways, this is our new beginning and we are full of excitement and anticipation for how this brand will mature in the seasons to come.

Welcome to Summer and welcome to Refined Elevation.

- Kameron Vogt, Editor

the perfect summer shoe

Kam recently got his first pair of espadrilles, and he thinks they might be the perfect Summer shoe.

One of the benefits of our business is that market research is much more fun in our industry than, say, Corporate Finance. Like every other new piece we add to our wardrobe, Kam's espadrilles were "market research." You have to try what you're recommending, right? Fair enough.







You will instantly recognize an espadrille by its woven rope sole. It is practical in the sense that it provides cushion, support, and absorbs moisture (feet sweat when it's 90 degrees outside, but I won't tell if you won't and we'll just leave it at 'moisture'), but it is also a nice little style bonus. Whenever I've seen these shoes in the past, I instantly think of someplace sunny, warm, and bustling with energy - like Spain.

Well, Spain is exactly where Kam's shoes started. Viscata hand makes all of their espadrilles in Spain and they've adapted the characteristic rope sole to everything from the classic flat to the perfect poolside wedge.

This style works so well for Summer, because it would look so out of place in the Winter. Just like your heavy wool overcoat is getting a much needed break right now, these flats will be getting a break when the temperatures start to drop again - and that is completely okay! There are some pieces in your wardrobe that you want to use all year round, like your white sneakers. But then there are some pieces that you get to pull out of storage every year when its season rolls around and it feels like reconnecting with an old friend. These are going to be like that friend that you don't see as much as you'd like, but every time you do see each other, it is such a fun time catching up.

The other wonderful part about getting a style that is obviously a warm-weather staple, is that it can take some pressure off of the rest of your pieces. Is a pair of blue denim Summery? How about a plain white tee? Even though neither of these pieces on their own are Summery, pair them with your espadrilles and the answer is a resounding, **yes!**

We'll be the first people to agree with you that sometimes style is just difficult. It's not always as easy or simple as we would like it to be, but sometimes in small ways, it is. This is one of those times where you can make an easy style decision that is going to up-level your style with so little effort it will feel like cheating.

Here's to the best style-cheat of Summer: **The Espadrille.**

Love Letter to Summer

Dear Summer,

Welcome back - I'm so glad you decided to pay us another visit. I could tell that you were getting closer as the temperatures steadily rose and every school-aged kid I passed in the store seemed to be bursting with more excitement with each passing day.

You are more than welcome to stay for a few months. You have such a wonderful ability to encourage us to spend more time with friends, be a little more adventurous, and make more memories. I have no idea where all of this extra energy springs from every year, but I'm loving it all over again.

If I remember your last visit correctly, we enjoyed some cold drinks under a warm sun and could always find a good reason to stay up a little longer. I think my skin was a shade or two darker and my hair a little lighter. The sunsets always lingered a little longer when you were around and even though the days were full of more excitement, there was something slower about them as well.

It's good to have you back in town, friend. I'm looking forward to making some new memories with you and don't worry about running off too soon. Just make sure you make a little room for Autumn in a few months so she can bring back those Pumpkin Spice Lattes, okay?



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REFINED ELEVATION

STYLE CONCIERGE



Hi there!

My name is Refined Elevation.

I used to be 'Kameron Vogt', but I've been growing quite a bit lately, so I got a new name and I would love to introduce myself!

Here are some things that I get really excited about:

- 01 Beautiful design, crafted with integrity
- 02 Clothing that fits just right
- 03 A life well lived

Here are some things that I am really good at:

- 01 Helping women use their style as a form of communication
- 02 Sourcing the best clothing pieces from brands that are worth the investment
- 03 Using style to help women feel like the best version of themselves

In my ideal world, I would help every woman up-level her style so that she feels confident every single day with as little effort as possible. Style doesn't have to be this scary world that requires us to settle for 'just okay.' You can do this and I can help you figure it out.

Now that I've introduced myself, I would love to hear what you get excited about and what style help you need! I've done enough talking so feel free to take the talkingstick and continue the conversation at **hello@refinedelevation.com**

Until next time, Refined Elevation

See the new website:





Farmers Mar



Fruit, veggies, and flowers are all objectively better from your local farmers market. I actually don't know if this is true, and maybe they aren't objectively better, but I also don't think it really matters. When I get to buy produce from the person who actually grew it and harvested it, it makes me feel a little more connected to the food I'm enjoying and the person who nurtured that food for me. It is a connection that I don't feel in the produce section of the grocery store and it makes me so much more grateful for the gift of fresh food.

But, fresh does not mean manicured, and that should be okay. The apples probably won't have a shiny wax layer on them, the carrots aren't perfectly straight, and the peaches might have a

kets



bruise or two. None of this hurts the flavor, though, and after enjoying some produce from your local farmers market, you might even start thinking that these little blemishes actually enhance the flavor.

There is no hiding for a producer at a farmers market. They open up their truck or van, set up an awning with their produce, and lay it all out there for everyone to see. They had radical transparency down, before it was a marketing must. You can ask them about their product and their operation, where it's grown and who grows it. It's this rare amount of openness and personal connection that has the opportunity to blossom into a level of trust with the producer of your food that is very difficult to achieve in any other setting.

If that doesn't do it for you, see if you can hold back a smile at the whimsical feeling of walking around a farmers market with a loaf of bread in one hand and a fresh bouquet in the other. Instantly, time turns back at least seventy years and life feels more simple and more manageable for a moment.























shop for YOU

Personal style is personal, but so often we can fall into the trap of buying pieces because they are on-trend, or the "it" piece of the season, or we think they are going to help us be perceived better by friends and strangers.

Here's the bummer : That on-trend piece is going to accomplish everything you want it to - until it doesn't. One day, the trend will be over, there will be a new cool girl on the playground, and you will either have to rush to catch up or start playing by a different set of rules. Here's an example from our friend's experience. She's styleaware and willing to invest in her wardrobe, so when Golden Goose was at the height of its reign as the "it sneaker," she bought herself a pair and joined the growing crowd.

She wore them off and on for a while, but was never really that in love with them. At some point she started to feel bad about spending the money on a nice pair of sneakers that saw more of her closet than the outside world.







Eventually, she decided to just get rid of them.

So, how can we go from being willing to spend \$600 on a pair of sneakers to getting rid of them because we just don't enjoy them? This is possible, and actually fairly common, if we make style decisions based primarily on what we think others will think about us rather than starting with what we actually think.

If this sounds like a speech your parents gave you in high school about resisting the urge to fit in and being confident enough to stand out, they were onto something and the world after high school doesn't look as different as maybe we would have hoped. There are still voices telling you what's in and what's out. Strangers can be rude and judgy without getting to know you first. Those insecurities haven't completely left, even if you've gotten better at being kind to yourself.

What has changed then?

You've already lived through the high school drama once. You're wiser because of it. You know how this story ends if you do the same thing all over again. So let's do something different.

Instead of spending your energy on trying to figure out what other people think you should do, how about you spend that energy on asking yourself what you think you should do. Do you like that jacket? If it makes you feel like the best version of yourself, trust yourself and go for it. Do you think this season's trend is weird or doesn't flatter your body? Then by all means, avoid it and move on.

You're a grown woman and you've made it this far in life for a variety of good reasons, but blindly following the crowd is not one of them.

If you don't feel like you have a clear sense of your personal style goals, that is what we're here for, to help you define your style clearly so that your outfit communicates what you want it to. There is no shame in asking for help from people that you trust who have been working in a particular field longer than you have, but let's move past taking advice from trend-setters who think that style has to change every three weeks or else something is broken.

The next time you go shopping, only buy pieces that you personally connect with. Choose what flatters your body, what makes your eyes sparkle, what makes you feel more like you. If the things that make you feel more like you are on-trend right now, that's fine, but if they aren't, may you be courageous enough to stay true to yourself and your style.

How to actually enjoy your vacation this summer

More often than not, when I talk with a friend just returning from a vacation, they look more exhausted than when they left. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but if your motivation for taking a vacation is to rest and return to your everyday life feeling rejuvenated, here are some helpful ways to accomplish just that.

Technology

Action Step: Only check your phone twice per day. Once at 10:00 AM (After Breakfast) and once at 6:00 PM (Before dinner). I believe in you! Just give it a try.

At the risk of sounding cliché, technology is going to need to take a backseat if you have any chance at coming home feeling rejuvenated. The obvious reason to limit technology is so that you aren't tempted to engage with work while you should be resting. That's the easy one, though. I've made the mistake multiple times of intentionally not checking my email, but then I will catch up on Instagram or online shopping. These are things that I definitely enjoy sometimes, but I wouldn't characterize them as restful. Usually, I jump down the rabbit hole, get lost and stressed for an hour, and then resurface only to realize that I wish I could go back in time and make a different decision. Technology isn't bad, but it rarely if ever, has a calming effect on our lives. More often, it creates comparison and anxiety. Vacation is a great time to shelve these feelings by shelving your technology.

Personal Rejuvenation

Action Step: Before leaving for your vacation, or on the plane, write out one thing each day that you will do that is going to feel rejuvenating for you. (It can be the same thing every day if you know you have one practice that really accomplishes this for you)

Unless you are traveling alone, this step is going to require a little bit of planning, communication, and firmness.

First off, you need to determine what makes you feel rejuvenated. This is where the planning comes in, because if you're like me and working on self-awareness, this isn't always a quick answer. For Willow, it's something along the lines of a massage or reading a good novel while laying out by the pool. Take some time to determine what it is for you whether it's reading, eating, napping, or a host of other activities that get pushed out of your busy daily schedule.

Next, communicate your plan with whoever you are traveling with. Self care

can be tricky, because we can neglect it for so long that by the time we realize what we actually need, we swing so far the other way that we decide to do whatever we need to do whatever the cost to those around us and usually without saying a word to another living soul. This is my problem at least. Take a moment and tell your traveling companions what you plan on doing as your personal rejuvenation activity during the trip.

Even if you don't feel like you owe it to anyone to communicate how you are going to take care of yourself, a little extra communication can go a long way towards helping your friends and family understand what you need. I think people are more understanding than we make them out to be in our heads, and if they're rude about you prioritizing taking care of yourself on vacation, then that is their own issue, but at least you did what you could do.

Finally, be firm if you must. Hopefully, you are supported in your decision to take care of yourself while on vacation.



Even if this is the case, however, it's easy for vacations to get real busy real fast if you aren't traveling alone. If your group is intent on taking every excursion offered and staying out all day exploring, that is just fine, but show some confidence and let your party know that you have a date with yourself this afternoon and unfortunately you're going to have to pass on the snorkeling tour.

Limit your Chores

Action Step: Be honest with yourself and your group about what you are trying to take a break from in your daily life.

Just as it helps to intentionally prioritize doing things for yourself that are rejuvenating, it is important to intentionally decrease the amount of daily chores that you would like a break from during your vacation. Avoiding these little stressors every day of your life might not be the healthiest approach, but it can be helpful within the boundaries of a vacation. Some of the obvious daily stressors that might be nice to take a break from would be getting up early, cooking, and cleaning. Of course, this should be personal to you. If you enjoy cooking every meal, then you shouldn't feel bad if you decide to cook on your vacation. If cooking is something that you do as a gift to your family, but not for yourself, then you can give a gift to yourself by communicating with your traveling companions and deciding to enjoy some local restaurants instead.

This is only going to help you rest if you fully enjoy and appreciate the gift you are giving yourself. If you feel guilty for not getting up early or not picking up after everyone else, you won't feel any different by the end of your trip - and you might actually feel worse. You can afford to take a week off from the daily responsibilities of life. The world will continue on without you and you will be in a better place to bring your best self to it when you return from your much needed break.

So, for your upcoming Summer vacation, plan ahead just a bit and experience what it's like to come home feeling more ready to take on your day-to-day than when you left.



In Review:

- 01 Take a break from your phone.
- 02 Enjoy some of your favorite rejuvenation activities.
- 03 Give yourself a break from daily chores.



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Beer's Not Dead

Summer heat can only mean one thing for your drink of choice - **It's time to grab a beer.**

Red wine is a delightful companion on a cool Fall evening. A cocktail elevates the average holiday gathering. But for Summer, you're going to want to keep a refreshingly crisp beer close at hand.

I might not be a woman, but I can give you the perspective of a heterosexual American male. There is something very sexy about a woman sipping a beer at a Summer party.

There is no shortage of Summer drinks to choose from. There's the margherita, the daiquiri, the piña colada, and of course the new kid on the block - White Claw (and its growing group of spinoffs). There is absolutely nothing wrong with this selection of Summer drinks. They are tasty, refreshing, and can make you feel like you're lounging on a beach in Mexico even if you're just laying out by your apartment's rooftop pool in Philadelphia.

But, while there isn't anything wrong with these drinks, it still feels like something is missing. They just seem too easy - too basic. And that is where a longneck bottle comes to the rescue.

For a variety of reasons, it seems that beer has fallen out of favor with a large segment of the female population. I'm not a sociologist and I can't add very much to the conversation on gender norms, but I can tell you what I see when I see a woman drinking a beer.

I see a woman that is incredibly confident and self-assured. Even though she has a clearly feminine style, she has no problem sipping on something traditionally marketed as a "man's drink" (whatever that means). It very clearly communicates that she can hang with the boys while maintaining her femininity.

Is it easier and less obtrusive to order a cosmopolitan at the bar? Of course it is, and there is nothing wrong with a cosmo if that's your go-to. But it doesn't set you apart from the crowd.

Grabbing a beer as you join a circle of friends or perfect strangers this Summer is a subtle way to set yourself apart, to communicate selfconfidence, to disarm while creating a healthy dose of sexual tension.

Pushing the boundary and standing apart might not be your thing, but if you want to give it a try, go with a Mexican beer in a longneck bottle this Summer and see if you don't stand a little taller.

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How to stay in love:

Keep Dating (and call it "dating")

Willow and I will celebrate our fifth wedding anniversary this Summer and our eighth year of dating. I don't have the longest list of incredible relationship advice, but I have been learning one helpful lesson over the past few months: If you want to stay in love, keep dating - and call it "dating."

We got married young and there seemed to be a major life event every year for our first few years of marriage - college graduation, first jobs, grad school, move halfway across the country, move halfway back across the country. We've only just recently begun to discover some semblance of rhythm in our life. A sustainable rhythm of life is a great thing, but for us, it came with the challenge of resisting the urge to just settle for good enough. When you look around and see couples stuck in a constant state of relational tension, good enough can start to look pretty enticing.

But neither Willow nor myself are big on settling for just okay, so we've tried to make our relationship a priority over these last few months - **we started to date again**.

We picked a day of the week and decided to schedule a weekly date night. Now, every Thursday night, we pick a new restaurant around town and intentionally date each other for a couple of hours.

It's restaurants for us, because we get so much enjoyment from good food and drink and the ambiance of a beautifully designed space. It might be a yoga class or wine tasting or a Saturday drive for you and your life buddy, but what you do is not as important as your commitment to do it regularly. When we first started dating again, I felt a little silly scheduling a weekly date night with my wife because I didn't think that it was necessary to make such a big deal out of going out on the same night each week. Even though I didn't think we were busy enough to warrant the weekly scheduling, choosing one day and sticking with it, made us actually go out on dates. It set the expectation and we could plan our weeks around it to make sure that it happened.

Even if you don't have kids yet and you think you're free enough to play your dating life fast and loose, try making it a weekly habit. You will go on more dates with your partner and it is going to clearly communicate that you value them enough to put them on your calendar and you are serious about growing in your relationship with them.

One last word on logistics. **you** can start this conversation with your partner. It would be fantastic if your partner knew what you wanted and did what they could to make it a reality, but waiting for them to figure out what you want almost never has a happy ending. **you** can tell them that you would like to schedule a weekly date night. **you** can schedule the first one and then have your partner schedule the second until you figure out an arrangement that works for your relationship. I completely understand that this will probably seem like a bit of a disappointment compared to the ideal scenario of being swept off your feet, but start by training your partner on what you desire, so that one day they will be equipped to sweep you off your feet. Also, this way you get to go on more dates and have more fun with your life buddy.



I believe in $\mathbf{you}!$ Send me a selfie when you go on your "first" date!



Willow on Skin Care:

The Rec: Oil Control Serum by The Ordinary

What It's Good For: Gentle breakout control.

How to Use It:

Apply half of a dropper every morning after splashing your face with water. After it soaks in, chase it with a daily moisturizer and you're G2G.

Refill Schedule:

One bottle will last you three-ish months if you use it once a day.

Last Words:

I originally went with this one based on a friend's recommendation and the fact that it is water based, so it absorbs into your skin quickly. Get the Niacinamide 10% + Zinc 1%. It's the clear bottle, not the brown one. No parabens or sulfates were invited to this party. It's not 100% 'Clean,' but it's better than most.

Style Rec: Vintage Watch

If you only add one piece to your wardrobe this season, make it a vintage watch. Give me 3 minutes to convince you. **The clock starts... now.**

O1 It helps you stand out, but in an understated way

If you have spent any amount of time on your style in the past few months, chances are you were trying to find a piece that got you excited or that was different from your current wardrobe that you have grown bored with. There's no shame in that at all. 80% of my wardrobe stays constant, but then I leave 20% of it free to rotate and breathe new life into my style as a whole. But, it can get a little tricky to continually breathe new life into a well established wardrobe while still staying within the colors and fits of clothing that look best on you.

A vintage watch on the other hand, brings more than its fair share of intrigue and personality into your wardrobe with far less effort.

02 It is grounding

Wearing a vintage watch grounds your present reality by tying it to something in the past. Innovation and forward-thinking are wonderful pursuits, but our daily

perspective can always receive a little help from taking a moment to pause and see the bigger picture. Wearing something on your wrist that has been around for several decades (or longer), has a calming quality to it. In an odd way, this piece that functions to tell you the time, can actually help slow it down for just a moment.

03

It can soften the sharp edges of a crisp style

Putting some effort into your style and looking incredible can make you feel like the absolute best version of yourself.

The only trouble, in America especially, is that it can sometimes put a target on your back. Other people see the effort you put into your style, they feel selfconscious because they haven't quite figured out their own style yet, and then jealousy turns into judgment. So what does a vintage watch have to do with this? A vintage watch is going to bring a softer, more down-to-earth quality to your personal style. It's not brand new, it is going to have some bumps and scratches, it's going to have a lived-in personality. Just like any other piece that you wear to communicate your personal style, it is going to say something about who you are as a person. It is going to show that you are comfortable enough to wear something that is imperfect, yet full of meaning. Even though a stranger might have the urge to judge you based on your impeccable style, seeing a vintage watch on your wrist is going to give them plenty of reason to pause and reevaluate their initial reaction.

If you've made it this far, I hope that you are at least considering adding a vintage watch to your wardrobe this season.

As far as finding a watch that fits your style, here are a few recommendations.

Vintage Seiko Tank

Vintage doesn't have to mean expensive. This is a great looking watch from the 80's and 90's that will give you a lot of style mileage and it's about what you pay for your phone bill every month.

Vintage Cartier Tank

The original tank watch. Absolutely elegant. You'll pay more for the Cartier version, but this is one of the all-time greats for the style-savvy woman.

Vintage Tiffany Watch

As a jeweler, and the same can be said of Cartier, Tiffany has had to fine tune the proper proportions that will flatter a woman's features. This shows in their execution of their watches and their vintage pieces have a nice variety of classic round and modern square shapes.



What we're enjoying this

Summer

Do you need to buy all of them to be happy? No.

Do we like them? Yes.

L'AGENCE Sada Jean

Willow added these to her Summer denim rotation and hasn't looked back. Light-wash blue denim is still a classic go-to, but having a color like this beautiful natural brown, adds just the right amount of variation to the blues and whites of Summer.

COCOKIND Daily SPF

Cocokind

Why is it SPF 32? No clue. But the clean-beauty queens at cocokind haven't let Willow down yet, so we'll trust them that the extra 2 SPF needs to be in there.

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MAYBE IN ANOTHER

by Taylor Jenkins Reid

This novel gets Willow's seal of approval as your pool read this Summer. When a young woman is faced to make a choice, you get to see how each option would have played out, resulting in two very different realities. If you're looking for some encouragement that everything happens for a reason, then this is your book.

RAINBOWS Sandals

Kam has had these sandals for about six years, but somehow they look 76 years old. He's loved and destroyed them through daily life and claims that they are more comfortable now than they've ever been. A worn-in pair of sandals waiting by the front door just feels like an open invitation from Summer.

LEPE CELLARS Chardonnay

White wine is not on our short list of favorite Summer beverages...**but**, Lepe Cellars from Monterey County has crafted our favorite Chardonnay of all time! Not too heavy on the oak, but not too sweet. It is smooth and delicious and if we need a white wine on our Summer menu, this is going to be it.

scared, but living

To: Everyone that started a new phase of life in the past couple of years.

Fresh starts are exciting and terrifying. My trust muscle has been growing lately, but I still get scared sometimes when I think about what Will and I are trying to accomplish. I'm not going to resolve all of your fears in the next three minutes, but I can tell you that you are not the only one feeling the way you've felt and that feeling afraid might mean you are coming to the edge of something incredible.

From : Kam

I don't know if I can stay here yet. The rent is too high and the profit too low.

Oh the ocean is wonderful - more so than I had imagined in my mind. The daily rhythm is sustainable and slow more so than I had imagined in my mind. I have the space to be creative here - more so than I had imagined in my mind.

But the rent is too high and the profit too low to know if I can stay here.

I have a fear inside of me that cautions me against calling this place my home until I know whether I can stay or not. What if I tell my friends that this is my home and then I have to tell them that I've moved to a new "home?" Worse yet - what if I tell my heart that this is home and then I have to break it with the news later?

Maybe it is better to just say that this is where I "live - for now". That way, I have an easy out later and I can more easily explain why it's not actually all that bad when I have to move and really it's a good thing when I think about it. I know it's a terrible option, even as I first have the thought, but it just seems so much less complicated than **actually** committing and **actually** getting hurt.

I'm not ready to call this place "home" yet, but saying that this is where I "live - for now", doesn't sound right either.

It is all **more so than I imagined in my mind** - the good and the otherwise. The complications and the heightened emotions - this feels like life. Maybe that is where life is most true, where we accept the possibility of the entire range of emotional response instead of opting for only a portion of it in a predetermined dose.

I'm scared, but I'm living.

If you've been living in this complicated reality for longer than I have, then I look forward to learning from you. If you're just joining us, welcome to this diverse group of humans trying to live life well.

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