



AUSTERITY APPROVED

BEST KEBABS

LITTLE TURKISH CAFE (217 KARANGAHAPE RD, NEWTON, PH 302-0353). We love their tasty fresh tabouli and hummus, the crisp falafel, the buns they use instead of dreary wraps, the care they take with the meat. We love that they serve you with friendliness and speed, that they stay open, and busy, really late. We love that it always feels like a good place to be.

BEST CHEAP EATS

FOOD ALLEY (9 ALBERT ST, CITY, PH 373-4917). Voted the best foodhall in the city by readers — again — Food Alley delivers reliable, tasty food from every stall. You have to go significantly upmarket to eat better than this.

all manner of divisions in the main room. Welcome to Auckland's new party central.

BEST WINERY EXPERIENCE

BRICK BAY WINES (BRICKBAY.CO.NZ). Just a little appalled by faux-European grandeur in the countryside? Matakana's Brick Bay is the antidote. It has an award-winning glass building (by architect Noel Lane), 2km of bush showcasing the work of around 40 sculptors — all of it for sale — lovely views, good plattered food and, oh yes, some very nice wine. Check out the Saturday farmers' market on the way there, and take your pick of beaches, golf course and cinema afterwards. A splendid day out.

BEST FOOD MARKET

LA CIGALE (69 ST GEORGES BAY RD, PARNELL, LACIGALE.CO.NZ). We love it that there are markets everywhere from Britomart to Clevedon, Takapuna to Titirangi, and we're still fond of the big markets at Avondale and Otara. But for quantity, variety, quality, price and the sheer sense of bustling pleasure, there's no beating La Cigale. Open Saturday and now Sunday mornings, and Wednesday afternoons.

BEST TIME & PLACE FOR CELEBRITY SPOTTING

FRIDAY AFTERNOON ON THE TERRACE AT SOUL (VIADUCT HARBOUR, CITY, PH 356-7249, SOULSEARCH.CO.NZ). The spacious terrace, the sun-glinting water, the boats, that next glass of wine... perfect for the celebrity-watching game. Which actress and which businessman is that in the corner? Who are the studly looking gents wandering past? Which society mavens are propping up those hats? They're all at Soul.

BEST ICE CREAM

KOHU ROAD (KOHUROAD.CO.NZ). Made in Newton and sold at a score of outlets around town (check the website), the range includes sumptuously rich and dark chocolate, and vanilla with flecks of real Madagascar beans. At Garnet Station (85 Garnet Rd, Westmere) they serve Kohu Road in waffle cones, and also do affogato: ice cream with a shot of coffee poured over. Now that's a real summer-in-the-city treat.



BEST Shopping



BEST QUIRKY INTERIORS SHOP

FLOTSAM & JETSAM (168 RICHMOND RD, GREY LYNN, PH 361-3831). Cameron Woodcock, of Agnes Curran fame, opened Flotsam & Jetsam this year. As the name suggests, it's a random collection of anything Woodcock thinks is cool: balsa-wood model airplanes, retro caravan toys, lovingly re-covered dining chairs, an ancient butcher's scale, and a cacophony of lamps. Next week it will probably be completely different.

BEST BUDGET SEEDLINGS

AVONDALE MARKET (ASH ST, AVONDALE, PH 818-4931). Where \$14 gets you 36 seedlings: 12 corn, seven lettuce, six beetroot, six Thai basil, two eggplant, two zucchini and one chilli. Look out for the open-sided truck packed with shelves of robust seedlings.

BEST NEW SHOPPING DESTINATION

BRITOMART. The voluminous brick-lined spaces house quality tenants including Eon Design, Gubb & Mackie, Made and Urban Loft, and on Saturday mornings and Wednesday evenings, the City Farmers' Market sets up behind the train station.

BEST DRYCLEANERS

REGAL DRYCLEANERS (402 BROADWAY, NEWMARKET, PH 520-6040). Recommended by a swathe of designers, Regal is still the best place in town. We don't feel

nervous leaving them with our dresses and suits, and we're confident nothing will be returned over-pressed.

BEST KITCHEN STORE

MILLY'S KITCHEN WAREHOUSE (155 THE STRAND, PARNELL, PH 309-1690, MILLYSKITCHEN.CO.NZ). The original little Milly's Kitchen in Ponsonby Rd is stuffed with quality kitchen goods, but if you really want to get among the cornucopia of quality products on offer head for Milly's in Parnell. Honourable mentions: the best pots in town are Bourgeat, at Sabato; the best knife service and selection is at House of Knives.

BEST SUPERMARKET

NEW WORLD VICTORIA PARK (2 COLLEGE HILL, VICTORIA QUADRANT). Now with wider aisles, more product lines, and more quality food products than in most delis. Now we'd like deli-standard service too.



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BEST SEWING MACHINE SHOP

EXQUISITE STITCH (360 DOMINION RD, PH 630-1155). You know it's a recession when you start digging out your old sewing machine. When Metro recently took an old machine, circa 1991, into Exquisite Stitch for a check-up, they

had it going in no time. For free. The workshop is based at their Takapuna branch, but the lovely ladies at the Dominion Rd branch certainly know their Berninas. Great range of sewing magazines too.

BEST BARGAIN GIFT SHOP

\$3 JAPAN (287 QUEEN ST, PH 309-9110). When you need a quirky gift that looks like it might be expensive, \$3 Japan has a bigger and better selection than most \$2 shops (well, you are

paying 50 per cent more). The impressive range includes household goods, cutesy stationery and a slightly dubious brush-on dye for grey hair.

BEST FABRIC SHOP

GLOBAL FABRICS (139 NEWTON RD, NEWTON, PH 366-1991). For enough beautiful fabric to sate your newfound thriftiness, head to Global Fabrics where you'll find leftovers from designers including Ralph Lauren, Donna Karan, Zambesi and Mala Brajkovic.