

Expat Living

Expat living is a page dedicated to the issues that affect foreigners' daily lives. It is your page, where you can share stories about your life in Korea. Send story ideas to Matthew Lamers at mattlamers@heraldm.com

SeoulSteves.com's Top Events for this week

Ongoing

The Leeum has a guest curator Henk Slager from the Netherlands organizing the "Flash Cube" exhibition. For more information see www.leeum.org

Thursday

A.G.E. is hosting the DJ Jam Asia Tour at Club Circle in Apgujong. For more information see thecircle.co.kr

Today through Saturday is the International Seafood Show at COEX. Over 300 international exhibitors show off their best. For more information see seoulseafood.com or call 6000-2800.

Friday

Jason Mraz has a performance in Seoul at 8 p.m. ROKon Magazine has the scoop: rokonmagazine.com

Club Answer in Hongdae is hosting a Euro-techno party SpeKtra. SpeKtra bills itself as a full audio/visual event that must be experienced to fully understand. For more information see myspace.com/clubspektra

Club Air in Apgujong has Liquid House, Seoul's newest monthly party, hosted by Frqncy productions tonight. For more information see liquid-house.co.kr

Sunday

Will it be Hillary or Obama facing off against McCain in November? Come talk politics and the future of the Democratic Party with members of Democrats Abroad ROK while enjoying a brunch buffet at Big Rock Brewery in Gangnam. Everyone is welcome to come socialize, but only people registered to vote in the U.S. are eligible for membership in the Democratic Party. For more information see DemsAbroadROK.org

Ztravelbug is putting together a paintball outing. For more information see Ztravelbug.com

Today's your last chance to see Brenda Stacechat's photography at Buddha's Belly Thai restaurant in Itaewon. E-mail brendachatt1@yahoo.com for more information.

Enjoy a walking tour of Joseon Seoul Architecture led by Peter Bartholomew, an expert in the field. This trip is arranged by the Royal Asiatic Society. For more information see raskb.com

Monday

Every Monday and Tuesday you can enjoy five drinks for 30,000 won at Blush (Grand Intercontinental Hotel — COEX) while enjoying a live DJ performance starting at 9:15 p.m. Call 559-7631 for more information.

What The Book's English bestsellers

Fiction Bestsellers

- A Thousand Splendid Suns** (Last week No. 2)
Khaled Hosseini
Hard cover \$25.95
- The Kite Runner** (1)
Khaled Hosseini
Trade paper \$15.00
- Water for Elephants** (4)
Sara Gruen
Trade paper \$13.95
- The Friday Night Knitting Club** (3)
Kate Jacobs
Trade paper \$14.00
- The Other Boleyn Girl** (8)
Philippa Gregory
Trade paper \$16.00
- The Road** (9)
Cormac McCarthy
Trade paper \$14.95
- What Is What: The Autobiography of Valentino Achak Deng** (6)
Dave Eggers
Trade paper \$15.95
- Duma Key** (7)
Stephen King
Hard cover \$28.00
- No Country for Old Men** (10)
Cormac McCarthy
Intl paperback ed. \$7.99
- Remember Me?** (N/R)
Sophie Kinsella
Hard cover \$25.00

Nonfiction Bestsellers

- Brother One Cell: An American Coming of Age in South Korea's Prisons** (3)
Cullen Thomas
Trade paper \$15.00
- Eat, Pray, Love** (1)
Elizabeth Gilbert
Trade paper \$15.00
- Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace** (2)
Greg Mortenson
Trade paper \$15.00
- The Reluctant Communist** (6)
Charles Robert Jenkins
\$24.95
- New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose** (7)
Eckhart Tolle
Trade paper \$14.00
- The Secret** (4)
Rhonda Byrne
Hard cover \$23.95
- The God Delusion** (5)
Richard Dawkins
Trade paper \$15.95
- Into the Wild** (8)
Jon Krakauer
Trade paper \$13.95
- Guns, Germs and Steel** (9)
Jared Diamond
Trade paper \$16.95
- The World is Flat** (10)
Thomas L. Friedman
Trade paper \$16.00



What The Book ships anywhere in Korea. See its website at www.whatthebook.com



S-Gallery's merchandise (top). The interior of Dar (right), a concept store that carries decorative items from Moroccan hand-crafted light fixtures to colorful Berber area rugs. Photos by Valerie Pergay



Giving your home an eclectic, exotic touch

Valerie Pergay on Design

Shopping for home accessories in Seoul is never comparable to what one would expect to find back home. Like any good expat, one must be creative and work with what's available.

But sometimes, we get tired of decorating with the usual Korean knick-knacks and want something different. Here are three design stores in Kangnam that carry imported, high-quality, stylish home accessories to fit your every decorating mood.

If your home resembles an intricate mosaic of vibrant colors and rich textures that lie in an aura of exoticism, then Dar is the place for you. Dar means traditional townhouse in Arabic, which is contrary to the store's modern and minimalist facade.

Dar is a concept store that carries many decorative items, from Moroccan hand-crafted light fixtures in wrought iron to colorful Berber area rugs.

Other merchandise includes Chinese antique furniture and Italian crystal chandeliers. The Venetian antique mirrors they sell are known for their frames composed of cut glass in ornate shapes. The Lomonosov porcelain they distribute was first created in 1744 and is known as the Russian Emperor's porcelain.

If that is not enough, they ex-

hibit an array of other products like the interior perfumes of Australian Jaye Niemi and Laundress New York's luxurious line of fabric care that come in unique fragrances. Dar has an eclectic collection that will help you create an exotic retreat from the hustle and bustle of Seoul's medina.

TeHome is a new shop that opened near Apgujeong's Rodeo Street. One cannot miss its gigantic, dark wood exterior. The store is composed of three floors. The main and upper floors carry modern European furniture.

Unlike Dar's rich and extravagant collection, TeHome prides itself on their minimalist and clean designs. The kitchen merchandise includes a selection of smooth and stylish cutting boards, magnetic knife blocks, and decorative bowls in wood.

Preferred by professional chefs and cooking enthusiasts, the German company Triangle featured in-store is known for its innovative and functional design of kitchen utensils.

Table top accessories include faience plates made by Antheor and porcelain plates by French manufacturer Deshoulieres and

Dar
Located near Cheongdam crossroads
664-12 Sinsa dong,
Gangnam-gu
Tel. 02-545-6591
www.darboutique.co.kr

TeHome
664-12 Sinsa dong,
Gangnam-gu
Tel. 02-541-2082

S-Gallery
635-9 Sinsa dong,
Gangnam-Gu
Tel. 02-3442-6368
www.space-deco.co.kr

the German Rosenthal. The difference between faience and porcelain is the proportion of raw materials used as well as the manufacturing process. Faience uses low temperatures creating a porous and opaque surface, whereas porcelain uses high temperatures resulting in a translucent, smooth finish.

TeHome's in-house design team has also created a series of Korean ceramic plates. They also sell crystal quality glasses by the century-old Slovak company Rona. If real crystal is your preference, you can choose from the series of hand-blown

stemware by the Belgian artisan Val Saint Lambert.

For other decorative pieces, TeHome has cool wooden vases from Belgium that resemble pieces of tree trunks. Other vases in metal exist in a variety of unusual shapes and sizes.

They also carry the luxurious Italian hand-made candles of Lemani known for their finished edges of natural plant materials like wood or flowers.

Push bath towels and rugs are also available accompanied by the collection of French shower gels and soaps by Marius Fabre. If you need some reading material for the bath, TeHome has a great selection of design books ranging from fashion to interiors, cook books, flower arranging and entertaining.

The last stop on my list was S-Gallery located next to Jaseng Oriental Hospital in Apgujeong. It is owned by Space Deco Associates, a design company specializing in creating and decorating model houses for construction companies. They do not work with private clients, but anyone can access their hidden treasure trove located in the basement of their showroom.

Upon entering, I felt like I discovered a modern version of Ali

Baba's cave. In one corner, there was a plethora of objects on sale from plates, vases, picture frames, lamps and other riches to discover.

These discounted items were all used on display projects for model houses. If you like rummaging through things, this is the closest you can get to a flea market — but much, much cleaner.

The rest of the shop carries new, imported merchandise. The table top collection consists of plates and glasses made from eco-friendly, 100 percent recycled glass, manufactured by the Spanish company Vidreco.

Other stemware includes the Italian Casa K who designs hand-painted glasses. The selection of stainless steel teapots and trays can be complemented by Parlane's series of white porcelain tea cups to create a stylishly modern afternoon tea.

Most of all, they have the widest selection of vases I've seen — in every shape, size and material you can think of.

Whatever your decorating style, these shops will provide the ornaments you need to make your home a reflection of your unique personality.

(vvalkenburgh@yahoo.fr)

In focus: film vs. digital

I've only ever photographed using a digital camera. Is it worth using film cameras? — Nicole, Seoul.

The rise of digital was bound to bring with it conflict between purists and modern photographers. These days, however, few photographers disagree about the benefits of digital.

Actually, I wanted to answer this question because I bought a film camera this week; a Leica. The reason I bought it is because I grew up shooting and developing film. So a rediscovery of sorts was in order for my old film passion.

Even though I love my DSLR, there is a different feel to film. There is no doubt that doing it the old way will also help with digital photography too.

The most important thing to understand is that there are a number of myths surrounding film vs digital.

The first myth is that digital is higher quality. For printing, film is definitely higher quality than digital; especially with bigger prints. Some digital cameras are catching up, but film still has the advantage.

However, on a computer, digital images always look better. But don't blame film for that; blame the poor quality and resolution of scanned images. A photo scanned from a slide can look absolutely amazing, even on a computer.

Another myth is that you are a better photographer with film. Film is definitely a harder medium to work with. Film photographers need to trust their ability to get the shot, but digital offers the benefit of instant feedback.



PHOTO CHALLENGE — Spring — Spring is in the air. In the never ending cycle of life, spring is not really a new beginning but a continuation of the vibrancy that was temporarily put into hibernation over the winter.

Photo by Ryan Chappell (lotuseaterphotography.com)

This can be great for dramatically increasing your photography skills and guaranteeing that you don't miss the photo. A lot can be learned from both mediums, especially with fully manual film cameras.

There are some clear benefits to digital, too. Digital photography can be more creative, because it allows you to see the results immediately and reshoot where necessary. In the long run,

digital is also cheaper.

The outlay on a camera is higher, but there are no added costs for film and developing. Digital images can all be stored on a few CDs. Film photographers need to keep boxes of negatives, slides and printed photos.

One big disadvantage of digital is the time it takes to process photos. Not only does a serious photographer have to spend time downloading, sorting, delet-

ing, and editing, but they also need to spend money on expensive editing software and computers.

Digital requires proficiency with technology that isn't required with film. I've rarely heard complaints from film photographers about their workflow. Yet digital photographers constantly complain about how much time they need to organize and edit.

Film's big benefit is that film photos look amazing compared to digital. This can be explained by the crystals in film which give a remarkably superior rendition of a scene, in terms of color fidelity, tones, and resolution. A slightly overblown shot looks terrible in digital. Film is a lot more forgiving in this respect.

Like all technology, there will be conflict between the old and new schools of thinking — Are CDs better than vinyl? The important question is: What do you want to get out of photography?

If you want to take snapshots, or post all your images online, then stick to digital. If you want to learn the old ways of photography, and put beautiful big prints on your wall, get yourself a film camera.

Neither is categorically better. But if you're serious about photography, why not do both?

Happy shooting!

Send David a message at david-smeaton@gmail.com or visit his website at www.davidsmeaton.com. If you want to be a part of the weekly Photo Challenge, join the "Seoul Photo Club" group at flickr.com/groups/seoul-photoclub/. — Ed.