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Goodbye 2019, hello 2020

WHEN I first moved to London in June 2012, I never thought I would be where I am today. I thought that by the age of 37, I would be a homeowner, perhaps married with a child or at least a dog and that I would have a slightly better work position. That's not turned out to be completely accurate, but life has taken on some significant turns this year, which I am going to share with you. Without change, we would be stuck in one place and that would be very boring.

One of the major changes in my life was love. I met an amazing guy on the dating app Hinge in April and that has developed into a fully-fledged, quite serious relationship. My name for him is the Desi Mr Big because, well I'm the Asian Carrie Bradshaw and he's a tall, handsome guy. He's been absolutely lovely in the six months we have been official, and it really made me think about my views on relationships. As someone in their late-thirties who has mostly dated men from the same background, this relationship brought challenges around faith and cultures. I realised that all relationships are not perfect. That people on the outside will show you their version of perfect, but in reality both of you have to work hard and compromise.

And who said a relationship is easy? It's a beautiful journey, and I am learning from it every day. A major challenge this year has been my health. In January, I developed a painful and disgusting ulcer on my leg. I had to visit the nurse twice a week for five months to have my dressings changed. It really knocked my confidence, stopped me from doing so many things I loved, such as going to the gym, hot yoga and wearing summery clothes.

However, it made me appreciate so many small things in life, like we shouldn't ever take for granted the NHS or your local GP nurse or being able to go out in shorts when the weather is warm.

My affirmation for 2020 is to give all the love I possibly can. To give love to my partner, family and friends. To give my writing more love, which admittedly I have lacked this year. Next year, I will be back, and better than ever. I am also thankful for my past. Yes, I may not be where I wanted to be, but I will get there. That may not be next year or even the year after, but right now I'm where I'm supposed to be and that makes me happy.

My last quote for 2019 for you comes from Mehmet Murat Ildan "In the New Year, never forget to say thank you to your past years because they enabled you to reach today. Without the stairs of the past, you cannot arrive at the future."



Christmas beauty shopping guide

HERE we are again. With another year coming to a close and festive season in full flow, we are back on the hunt for gifts for those fellow beauty junkies in our lives.

I have done the hard work for you. It's important to think about the skin tone/type of the person you are buying for. Lots of these sets are good introductions to brands and have great trial sizes. My favourite party product has to be the Stila Magnificent Metals Shimmer & Glow Liquid Eye Shadow in shade Kitten (£24).

(A top make-up tip this season is to add a bit of sparkle, but don't overdo it. A glittery eye or a stunning lipgloss. Draw attention to just one area for the perfect, effortless look.)

Here are my top 20 beauty gifts for £40 and under. Have a great festive break and see you in 2020.



1. Drunk Elephant The Midi Committee Kit: A skin saviour taster kit for those who have been curious about the brand. £40



2. Fenty Beauty Glossy Posse Mini Gloss Bomb Collection: An amazing set for those who love a gloss and from a great brand. £34



3. Delilah Cosmetics Colour Intense Eyeshadow Palette in Jezebel: A gorgeous colour collection that can take a look from day to night. £34



4. Cover FX Glam & Glow Shimmer Veil Trio: A great and quick way to do a glam eye look. £20



5. Real Techniques By Sam and Nic Everyday Essentials: Some of the best starter brushes in the market. (I still have some from four years ago). £19.99

6. Laura Mercier Pret-A-Powder Limited Edition Powder & Puff in Translucent: A wonderful way to present one of the best setting powders out there, an everyday essential. £36

7. Eco Tools Warm Winter Glow Beauty Kit: A lovely set for a makeup newbie or as a first make-up tool kit. £19.99

8. Three Ouai Kit: A great hair starter kit for the brand to create volume and texture during the party season; great for travel too. £25



9. Glossier The Skincare Set: A fab introduction to this underrated skincare brand. £40

10. Clinique Stay In and Chill Out Kit: Great for post party season hydration with good-size products. £20

11. Huda Beauty Acrylic Lip Kit Famous & Bawse: A lovely neutral lip kit from the lip boss herself. £29



12. Glossier The Makeup Set: This has three of the most sought after products for brows, lashes and lips/multiuse (Cloud Paint). £35



16. Ole Henriksen Balance It All - Oil Control and Pore-Refining Set: A great starter kit for blemish prone skin from one of the biggest skincare brands for 2019/2020. £30

17. Benefit Christmas Gift Set, Cheek Champions Blusher & Bronzer: A staple in every make-up kit. Some of the best bronzers out there. £25



18. ICONIC London Glammed Up Set, shade Glow: This is a great value set for one of the best setting spray sets out there. £38

19. Clean Beauty Edit - Powered by Feel Unique: Some of the best Clean Beauty brands in great, full and trial size. £39



13. Anastasia Beverly Hills, Power Duo: Her famous brow tool kit, Brow Wiz and Brow Gel. A top tip - get a shade slightly lighter than your natural hair (on your head). £25

14. Marc Jacobs On the Dot 3-Piece Le Marc Liquid Lip Crayon Collection: Stunning party season colours with a fab lasting formula. They smell amazing too. £25

15. Origins Mask and Go On the Go: The best of the Origins face-masks in perfect trial sizes. £20

A gift that keeps on giving a luxurious and sensory experience with a wonderful room diffuser included. £39.50
*Prices correct at the time of going to press

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