

# Australian Filipina

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Love, actually .....p1  
You are awesome .....p1  
Head over Lauryn Hill .....p2  
Walk down memory lane .....p2  
Be still, my beating heart .....p3  
Here comes the  
Valentine Scrooge .....p3  
How to make your  
wallet fat .....p4  
Eetsy bitsy news .....p4

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

*We didn't want to just be mushy and only write about love and all that for the February issue. So here are some of the things we are passionate about as well.*

*Veronica Monro writes about why Lauryn Hill is an inspiration to her while Rosano Martinez shares how he fell in love with hip-hop (p2).*

*We may have found a resident health guru, too. Dorothy Bordeos gives us some pointers on how to keep our hearts physically healthy for more loving through the years (p3).*

*And no matter what season it is, a little tip on how to fatten up the wallet is always useful (p4).*

*I hope everyone had a nice Valentine's Day. Since Aussies actually value quality relationships (see p1), I'm sure you all got some good loving – coupled or not!*

*This year, 14 Feb also marks the start of Chinese new year so here's to a prosperous Year of the Tiger!*

*Happy reading!  
Mimmette xo*

## RELATIONSHIPS

### Love, actually

Well, I'll be ... it's a nice surprise to find out that most Aussies do actually value meaningful relationships over jumping from bed to bed.

New research into Australian relationships found that Aussies rate quality relationships as most important to them, ahead of financial security, health/fitness, or career success.

The Nescafé Relationships Survey revealed 99 per cent of Australians believe that face-to-face time together is a better way to develop deeper relationships.

And don't let their 'tweets' fool you either because 79 per cent of Gen Y agrees, but they're just so time-poor. Couples are time challenged too with six in 10 Australians in a relationship wishing they could spend more time with their partner than they currently do.

Other key findings:

- Despite wanting quality relationships the most, Aussies still spend more time checking



finances and exercising than investing time in friendships.

- 86 per cent of Australians rate meeting up in person as one of the most common ways of keeping in touch, before using email, facebook or SMS.

- 77 per cent of Australians would rather spend more time with their existing friends than meet new ones.

- Over 50 per cent have had upsetting or embarrassing misunderstandings via electronic communication including:
  - 34 per cent of people have been upset by an email or SMS because they misread it.
  - Almost 25 per cent of people have sent a very personal email or text message to the wrong person by mistake. ●

## MEDIA

### You are awesome

*MICHELLE BALTAZAR finds out that people are not just gossip-mongers after all.*

Hey you. Yes, you. Do you know how awesome you are? Well, let me e-mail you this story as a reminder.

According to research on what news articles people are more likely to share with others, stories of man's triumph over tragedy trumps even the most salacious exposé on Tiger Woods.

Yes, you heard it. A study of more than 7,000 *New York Times* articles show that awe-inspiring stories go 'viral' faster than you can say Brangelina.

Sure, readers of *NYT* may not be the *News of the World* type but that was factored in the research, too, by two Wharton School academics who analysed the articles.

They even calibrated their research on other variables that could skew their number-crunching like writing style and positioning (front page versus back page).

Conclusion? Awe-inspiring articles are more likely to go viral; positive news get forwarded more

often than negative news; and people are more likely to share longer articles that showcase self-transcendence.

So next time you think society is only obsessed with celebrity culture, think again. Hard data proves many people are more enlightened than some sociologists give them credit for. That's a good thing given studies suggest what we share with the society shapes our own culture. ●

*\* Just google 'Social Transmission and Viral Culture' to find out more.*





Left: Veronica Monro  
Bottom right: Lauryn Hill

It's been 10 years since her first solo effort, 'The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill', was nominated for 10 Grammy awards, of which she won five. It made her the first female artist to ever receive such an accolade in one year and it also set the benchmark for other female hip-hop artists and singers to follow.

She walks on stage to a loud roar and I couldn't help but be mesmerized by her presence – this is a woman whose ideals I believe in. I may not be a big fan of her

Her singing is impeccable for such a high-energy set, and she doesn't fail to impress with her well-timed scats and vocal improvisations. For an artist who has been dubbed 'tardy' by the media over the years, she certainly makes up for it in stage presence and a tight reign over her band, and her audience.

One hour flies by too quickly, and though she performs popular songs from both her time with The Fugees, and from 'Miseducation', she doesn't perform the historical

*"I had a feeling that the iconic Lauryn Hill would not disappoint."*

popular music, but I am a great fan of what she stands for and the message she has promoted to women in the past decade, which has been unwelcomed many times even by those close to her.

The story of her morality aside, I jump back into consciousness to hear the sound of her voice ... and for the first time in a long time, I am in awe of a performance.

Lauryn Hill's still got it. Even after a few long years away from the limelight, (having supposedly cancelled two tours in both 2008 and 2009 – we should be so lucky!) this woman still has what it takes to get people to pay attention to her message through a song with cutting rhymes and amazing vocal technique.



encore that the entire crowd anticipates, considering we may never see her on stage again.

In spite of this slight disappointment, to have even seen her in the flesh is enough for me – a philanthropist through music, Ms Hill is an inspiration and driving force for writers, musicians, singers and artists all over. ●

MUSIC

## Head over Lauryn Hill

*She came, she sang, she conquered. It took a live performance of reclusive superstar Lauryn Hill for VERONICA MONRO to rediscover why singing is her lifelong love.*

As an admirer of great singing – and part of being a vocal coach – I have a tendency to be critical of singers and performers.

I can't help it. And believe me, the bad habit detracts heavily from simply enjoying the melodies that resonate in my ears when I'm at concerts and gigs or even just watching the occasional live DVD.

I've seen many performers return to the stage after a short or

long hiatus, only to be disappointed by their lack of showmanship, and worse, lacklustre singing.

However, as I stood to the side of the stage at Sydney's Enmore Theatre amidst a reggae crowd complete with Jamaican colours, dreadlocks, and the occasional trademark hint of a certain plant being smoked by a group of punks behind me, I had a feeling that the iconic Lauryn Hill would not disappoint.

### WHEN DID YOU FIRST FALL IN LOVE WITH...?

## Walk down memory lane

Our very own Rosano Martinez (pictured right) was Australia's first signed hip hop artist – composing, recording and art directing with Sony Music, Virgin, EMI, and Warner Music. Along with his friend Sergio Montoya (also a breakdancing legend in his own right), Rosano was a member of The United Break Team, Puma's first sponsored professional breakdance crew. Both Sergio and Rosano supported the legendary Rock Steady Crew on their Australian Tour in 1984.

As if that wasn't enough, Rosano was behind seminal hip-hop groups Westside Posse, Sound Unlimited and Renegade Funktrain, as well as a founding member of the country's most influential graffiti group: Future Art Beat 4.

Rosano was there in the thick of it, living and breathing hip-hop back when Australia was taking its baby steps cultivating the culture that

*"I first fell in love with hip-hop when I saw the Rock Steady Crew on Malcolm McLaren's Buffalo Gals film clip in 1983. It was the first time I saw people who looked like me on television. It was a very exciting time. A lot of new and creative movements were emerging from the street which influenced everything from fashion, art music, dance, and of course, me!"*

exploded in the US and continues to reshape urban and contemporary history. ●

\*Source: [www.dancestudio101.com.au](http://www.dancestudio101.com.au)





HEALTH

## Be still, my beating heart

*Valentine's Day sends a lot of hearts a flutter, but DOROTHY BORDEOS says it's also a good time to check how healthy yours is.*

Your heart may be bursting at the seams from all the romancing on Valentine's Day – but just how healthy is it? Take a look at your waistline because it's a good indicator. If it's small and flat, you can pop another one of those Lindt balls in your mouth. But if it's big and round, it's probably wise to skip the chocolates this year.

Cardiovascular disease covers all diseases and conditions that affect the heart and blood vessels and it's the biggest cause of death in Australia. Despite all the advances in medicine, it's also the most expensive health condition to have. So, it's important to know how to tell if your heart is healthy.

Here are a few things to keep an eye on:

### Your Blood Pressure (BP)

GOAL: Below 120 (Systolic)/80 (Diastolic)

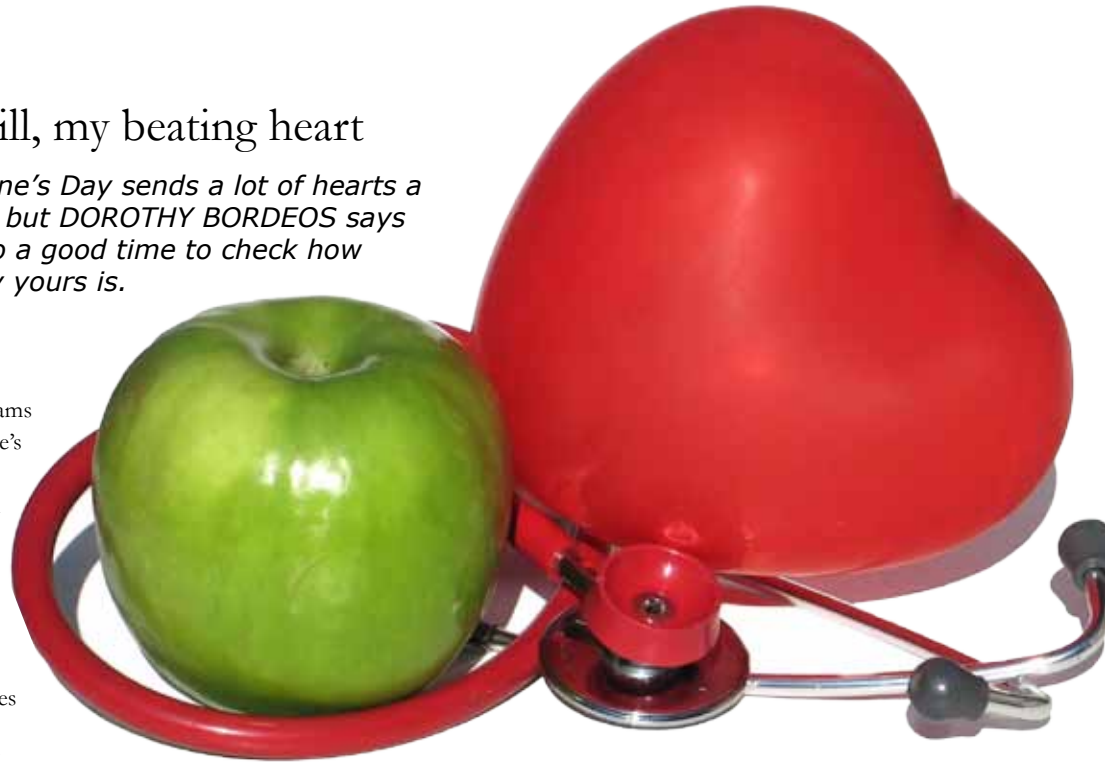
Your blood pressure is an indication of how hard your heart is working. The systolic (upper number) is the amount of pressure that your heart is generating when it contracts. The diastolic (lower number) is the pressure in the arteries between contractions. Having a reading over 120 over 80 increases your risk of cardiovascular disease.

### Weight and Body Mass Index (BMI)

GOAL: Generally between 18.5 and 25.

The BMI is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms by the square of your height in metres (kg/m<sup>2</sup>).

When it comes to weight we use the BMI as an indication of how much weight you are carrying against your height. Generally, a value over 25 indicates that you are at an increased



risk of cardiovascular disease. But, there is some research that indicates Asian people are at higher risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and have higher levels of body fat at lower BMI values. Currently, the agreed trigger point for Asians is 23.5 where anything over that represents an increased risk.

Carrying too much weight forces your heart to work much harder and hence raises blood pressure. For Asians 23.5 is the trigger point of increased risk and 27.5 for high risk.

The BMI, however, can't differentiate between muscle and fat or where fat is distributed so it's not an accurate indicator when used in isolation for muscular or athletic people, pregnant women, or the elderly.

### Waist Circumference

Female: Increased risk >= 80cm,

Greatly increased risk >= 88cm

Male: Increased risk >= 94cm,

Greatly increased risk >= 102cm

Your waist measurement shows how much fat you carry on the torso and is a predictor of the risk of high blood pressure.

The World Health Organisation states that using waist measurement with the BMI can accurately assess the risk of obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

All three factors are related. When your waist measurement increases, then the amount of fat surrounding your organs; blood pressure; weight and BMI all increase too. This isn't just for old people either. As a personal trainer I come across a wide range of people and some of my 20-something clients have come to me with a stern warning from their GP that if they don't do something about losing weight then they're more likely to get diabetes or cardiovascular disease.

To ensure that you'll be around for many more Valentine's Days, look after your heart. Be mindful of what you eat and try to get at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity every day. Not realistic? Ok, try on most days of the week then, at least. ●

*\* Check out the longer online version of this article at [www.australianfilipina.com](http://www.australianfilipina.com)*



RANTS

## Here comes the Valentine Scrooge ...

Five words that would make my heart skip a beat are 'Honey, our mortgage is paid.' Spare me the 150-dollar bunch of roses because hearing that we no longer have debt would be the most romantic thing – ever.

Considering prices are jacked up to the hilt on this most commercial of days, the real cost of Valentine's Day is more than you think. At [myrate.com.au](http://myrate.com.au), they crunched the numbers and found that if the \$300 normally spent on typical romantic gestures are redirected to paying off a home loan instead, it's a saving of more than \$19,000 over a 30-year loan or can shave one year off the loan.

Want to save more? Further calculations showed that sacrificing a night out each month and putting \$150 into your home loan instead would save almost \$97,000 over 30-year loan or reduce it by about five and a half years.

It's no wonder home loan specialist Kevin Sherman from [Myrate.com.au](http://Myrate.com.au) wants people to boycott the "ridiculous spending" on this day. Call me the Valentine Scrooge but, I'd rather own my home sooner than get an overpriced bunch of flowers that wilt in a couple of days. ●

# How to make your wallet fat

Just like your body, there's no point putting your purse under a crash diet. Slowly but surely, getting rid of high-sugar expenses is the way to go, writes MICHELLE BALTAZAR.

**W**hat happens if your bank account is fat-free? When you count the minutes to your next paycheque? Or maybe your credit card blues are starting to give you the twitch?

Don't stress. Millions of Australians are in the same boat. According to research, many are weighed down by their mortgage payments, mounting credit card bills and rising prices of just about everything (food, petrol and alcohol included). No wonder there are plenty of Aussie battlers!

But with the new year comes a new chapter in your life – a good excuse to scratch your money problems in 2009. Here are three tips from the experts.

**1. Don't go 'cold turkey'.** Find out what you can cut from your expenses and what you can't – but go slow on changing your lifestyle or else you'll revert back to old habits, says experts.

For example, if you buy coffee from your favorite deli every morning, cut it down to only twice a week (to coincide with the days you really need a pick-me-up).

New year's resolution? Buy your own percolator and coffee beans. It'll cost you a fraction of what you usually pay and you can avoid those long 9am queues.

**2. Visit the markets.** For sight-seeing on a lazy Saturday morning, go to the Bondi markets, the Glebe markets or the one in Paddington. But for serious "oh-my-god-I-can't-believe-how-cheap-it-is" feeling, go to Paddy's Markets or somewhere away from the city (like the suburban markets of Blacktown and Flemington).

In Paddy's Markets Chinatown for example, a bag of snowpeas cost \$2 (can cost double that at major groceries), or a punnet of strawberries for \$1 (\$2.99 in groceries), or a bag of mushrooms for \$2 (can be \$4 for the same bag in groceries).

Markets are also great for buying birthday and Christmas gifts. Pre-loved items that look good as new are a-plenty. In Blacktown markets for example, one happy buyer snagged an uber-cool lamp for \$5 while another bought a rare, retro doll for \$2. Less practical but more memorable than the usual soap and shower gel set!

**3. Get running.** Research shows that all types of exercise can help keep your brain sharper than if you didn't do any exercise at all. Aerobic activity (gets your heart pumping for more oxygen) also prevents you from getting mental-related illnesses in the future. It has something to do with the synapses in your brains remaining connected and fired up with regular exercise.

Why is running a money-saving strategy? You don't need a gym membership for it and you can save on huge healthcare bills in the future. Oh, running to your favourite store during a sale doesn't count as exercise. Sorry. ●

## EETSY BEETSY NEWS

### Killing you softly with 'My Way'

It's another "You know you're Filipino if ..." kinda question when someone asks you if you know that Frank Sinatra song My Way. Yes, Way! It's a karaoke favourite we all grew up singing along to.

But according to an article in the *New York Times*, singing it in public these days can kill you. At least six people have died in the Philippines in what's been called the My Way Killings.

Maybe they should add Britney Spears' 'Oops, I Did It Again' to the ban. Hearing women say they're not that innocent over and over again makes me want to tear their hair out – in a friendly, non-violent way.

What's the song that makes you wanna hurt somebody?

### Drop the racial profiling

A supposedly well-respected US news blog, the Talking Points Memo, headlined a story like so, 'Lawsuit: Blackwater Put Filipino Prostitute On Government Tab'.

Was the race of the alleged prostitute relevant to the story? No. Does it still stack up as an expose against corruption if the publication dropped the Filipino reference? Yes.

This is another dig at Filipino women worldwide. There are sex workers of all nationalities so why single us out? If the prostitute was American, I don't think the headline would have included that fact.

Stop with the racial profiling already. That's so 2000-and-late.

### Radio interns wanted

Want to get some experience hosting a radio show? Michelle and other members of Radio Sandigan at 2RDJ ([www.2rdj.com](http://www.2rdj.com)) are always on the lookout for youth volunteers. All you need to bring is your dedication and sense of humour, and we'll take care of the rest. No experience required.

If you live in Sydney and can drive to Burwood on Wednesday nights for the two-hour taping of a community radio program, send your details to [michellejbaltazar@gmail.com](mailto:michellejbaltazar@gmail.com)

### Joke ala Pinoy

Emo dude: I love the rain because nobody notices me cry.

Punk dude: Ako rin, hindi halatang umihi sa pantalon. (*Me too. You can't tell when you piss in your pants.*)

