

# NATIONAL treasure



The one and only Peta Mathias is known for a fabulous style that represents her unique joie de vivre. **Karlya Smith** talks fashion and food with the chef and author.

**P**eta Mathias MNZM needs little introduction. The prolific chef, author, speaker and broadcaster is instantly recognisable by her striking style and fiery hair.

In her new book, *Shed Couture*, Mathias makes a compelling case for food and fashion as bedfellows. "Food and fashion both require inventiveness and self-expression," she says. "They both give structure to your day: breakfast and block-printed Indian pyjamas, lunch and Marni slacks, dinner and an evening gown." My favourite line of the book is one that nails the point: "If we stop buying crap

clothes, then companies will stop making them." *Shed Couture* is the compelling story of Mathias' rediscovery of clothes stored in her garden shed, and her accidental journey to sustainability.

She makes a case against over-adherence to fashion trends, and celebrates the joy and constant companionship of beautiful, but durable, well-made items. It's a personal tale that will resonate with lovers and collectors of fashion.

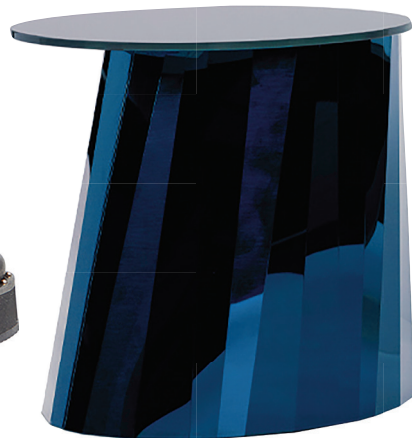
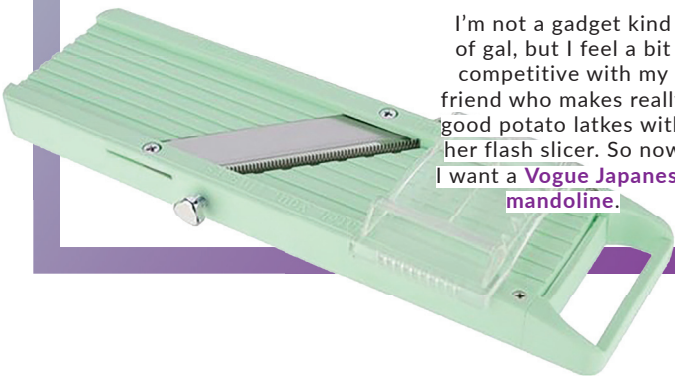
This week she shares a couple of her favourite pieces recovered from the shed, as well as some, so treasured, that they're a permanent fixture in her wardrobe.

## THREE ITEMS I WISH I OWNED

Spring is coming and I love **big boxy slip-ons** - can't bear closed shoes in the summer. These are from Mi Piaci.



I'm not a gadget kind of gal, but I feel a bit competitive with my friend who makes really good potato latkes with her flash slicer. So now I want a **Vogue Japanese mandoline**.



I've recently moved into a new apartment in central Auckland. When you move furniture from an old house it doesn't always fit in with the feel of a super modern one. I would like this **Matisse Pli side table** for the lounge. It's stainless steel and light reflective. I mean, hello?



## FIVE THINGS I OWN AND LOVE

**1** This is a **double Marni skirt**, folded back on itself so that when you walk it billows out and you resemble a joyous ship in full sail. Marni designs are loose, round-cornered, feminine and unrestrictive. They are a complete joy to wear as they can be mixed and matched with previous seasons' pieces.

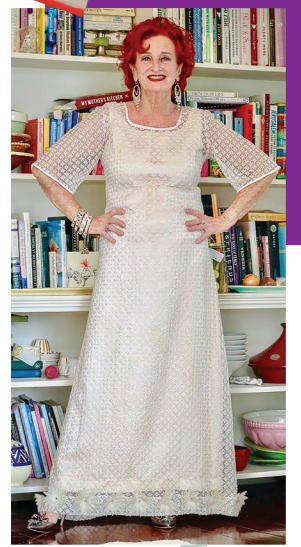
**2** I bought these **powder blue Dr Martens** in London in 1996 and wore them with my Zambesi fold-around dress. I ended a relationship wearing them. I started another one wearing them. I still wear them, often with a flowery Marni skirt. I love shoes and boots because they propel us through life, work and love.



**3** I'm a huge fan of fans and have drawers full of them in France and here in Auckland. They are beautiful, elegant and practical and really work in cooling you down. I use them for decoration, give them as gifts and they are great for hiding behind as protection from the sun and nosy people.



**4** This is my **debutante dress** from 1967 and I still have it. Mum made it from silk organza with tiny daisies embossed all over it. Right along the hem she attached hand made silk flowers with little diamantes in the middle. She made a pale pink satin petticoat for it, explaining that a white one would be obvious and vulgar.



My *Pleats Please* book is huge, thick and like an art book. Every page is divine and inspiring. Issey Miyake developed his unique permanent pleating system on polyester in 1993. I first discovered these floaty, clingy, silky, folded, sculptured clothes at Scotties in Herne Bay when I was filming *Taste NZ* for TVNZ. It's what I'm wearing in the main photo.

