

From burpees to blue clothes, **Andrew Taylor** discovers what's hot for 2014.

Trend forecasting has come a long way since the ancient Romans searched through goats' entrails to predict the future and the Azande poisoned chickens to plan their calendar. No animals are harmed in the making of Tony Bannister's predictions about trends in fashion, design and popular culture, which are based on market research and a global network of industry insiders.

Bannister, the creative director of Scout, a fashion-trend forecasting agency in Sydney, suggests the fashion conscious will fill their wardrobes with blue clothes in 2014.

"A lot of womenswear clients used to say blue was for old ladies," he says, "but this decade will be remembered as the blue decade. It was black in the '80s and white in the noughties, but blue has been a force for the past couple of years now."

Fashion buyers have also been resistant to jaundice-coloured clothing, believing it would not sell, but shades of yellow from lemon to chartreuse are another trend.

Bannister is in good company when it comes to predicting trends, says Dr Rohan Miller, a senior lecturer in marketing at the University of Sydney.

"Nostradamus, the witches from Macbeth and economists jump to mind as prominent examples of trend forecasters."

Trend forecasting involves predicting general directions of change over time and is used in industries from gambling to finance to environmental management and retail.

Forecasters need to be able to gather and synthesise large amounts of information, and



Fashion force: Blue will be big, say trend forecasters; as will Middle Eastern food (below). Photo: iStock

develop a broad picture of the area or variable of interest, he says.

"Technology will become even more pervasive. Play will become less and less physical and we will take more pharmaceutical products to try to manage excess calorie intakes rather than reduce our intakes and exercise more.

"The more things change, the more everything will remain the same," he says.

Bannister's colour predictions might seem frivolous, but it is big business for retailers trying to lighten shoppers' wallets.

Bannister's forecasts also surf the zeitgeist, reflecting topical issues such as sustainable living, fair trade and the state of the economy. As he puts it: "Fashion mirrors what's going on in society and globally."

The Slow Fashion movement, for example, promotes fair-trade practices and locally produced clothes. It grew out of the global financial crisis and consumers who had tired of and could no longer afford disposable fashion made in south-east Asian sweatshops.



Likewise, pop-up shops emerged as economic times became tough, Bannister says. "Designer brands were trying to be clever and not spend money, while thinking of new ways to reach their audience."

The American College of Sports Medicine's list of expected trends for 2014 puts short bursts of exercise, or high-intensity interval training, at No. 1, followed by bodyweight training such as push-ups and burpees.

These two forms of exercise require no equipment or instruction, but fitness fanatics still want people telling them what to do, with personal training and yoga still popular.

Posh roast chicken, "psychotasting" and fancy butter are some of the dining trends.

Food, like fashion and fitness, is no less prone to passing trends, with Middle Eastern cuisine gaining traction in 2014. Caribbean cooking is likely to follow as flavour of the month. Artisan food halls such as Eataly, which is reportedly looking for a Sydney site, are also rising in popularity.

Posh roast chicken, "psychotasting" and fancy butter are among the other dining trends identified by New York-based food and restaurant consultants Baum and Whiteman.

A fear of tainted produce, especially from Asia, has prompted growing demand for organic and home-grown food.

"There's a sense we're not living in a healthy society," says Sydney social researcher Neer Korn. "There's something wrong with

society, causing illness, but we're not sure what causes it, so we look for purity of ingredients."

Immigration has dramatically changed Australia's eating habits, says demographer Bernard Salt.

It took three decades for Italian and Greek cuisine to be absorbed by the Anglo population, but Vietnamese, Middle Eastern and Latin American cooking has been accepted more quickly.

This is bad news for potato farmers, as the humble spud is now less popular than pasta, noodles and rice, Woolworths' 2013 Trolley Trends report found.

The survey of 9500 shoppers over two years also found a decline in "Anglo" vegetables such as carrots and broccoli and increasing sales of Asian greens and Middle Eastern foods, such as dates, figs and pomegranates.

Age-old insecurities about Australia's isolation and cultural cringe show in our changing eating habits, Salt says.

"We define sophistication in metropolitan Australia by the breadth of our cuisine. How we can absorb, adapt and show off to each other about how cosmopolitan we are plays up to insecurity about how far removed we are from the rest of the world."

Beyond the kitchen, demography has dramatically changed social behaviour.

"Men and women started to kiss each other on the cheek. That's a continental affectation that didn't exist in the 1960s," he says.

"Men began wearing black and shaving their heads. You could be in Milan instead of Paddington or walking up Flinders Lane."

But a wedge has been driven between inner-city dwellers and people living on the "American edges" of Sydney and Melbourne.

Terms like McMansion and "nappy valley" have been coined to disparage people living on the edge of cities. Salt believes that tension is intensifying as the inner city integrates further with the rest of the world. "The centre of Sydney is a global city, but that global city stops at Burwood."

Life-changing event Leaving immigration detention

Alireza Moezipour

My journey began when I converted from Islam to Christianity. As you know, in Iran, it's very dangerous for people to convert, especially to Christianity. There were too many troubles. I had to leave.

In February I went from Tehran to Istanbul. After that the people smuggler told me I have to leave for Bangkok; then to Sri Lanka; then to India; then to Abu Dhabi; then finally to Australia.

I lived in each country for two weeks. I had to move in secret; I couldn't come out of the house. Totally, I paid about \$US20,000, little by little, to the smuggler's agent in each country.

I lived with a fake passport. First Italian, then Indian and at last Australian. Before every new one I spent one or two hours memorising the new ID. For my first weeks in Australia, I forgot my real name. I didn't know who I was.

The people smuggler told me, as soon as you arrive in India you must make contact with me. I went to buy a SIM card. At the store they asked for my ID card.

I said, "I don't want one [any more]". They called the police. They came and checked my passport and said "No problem".

I owned two gyms in Tehran. I was judged Mr Asia-Pacific in the 1980s. I love bodybuilding. On my way here, I dropped from 90 kilo-

grams to 69. As I arrived in Sydney airport, as the smuggler had told me, I introduced myself to immigration and said, "I want to be an asylum seeker; I have no passport".

They said: "Oh, welcome to Australia".

They interviewed me in the airport for about six hours. After that they sent me to Villawood. I ran and exercised every day.

I was in Villawood about four months. I always thought I would make it out. But I can remember when my case manager told me, "Alireza your visa is ready; the government has granted your visa". Oh my god, I started crying. I was shocked.

I stayed with my pastor for one week, and then Settlement Services International provided me to rent my own house. They did everything for me.

I enrolled in TAFE classes to get a [personal training] qualification recognised here. I start next year.

Last month, I got back in the gym. It takes at least nine months to become [contest] ready.

I am always on a diet: boneless chicken breast, lettuce, tomato and salmon. I am in the gym five days per week.

My main goals for my new life are to find my own business and to raise the Australian flag in bodybuilding competitions next year.

Interviewed by James Robertson



New home: Alireza Moezipour left Iran for a new life in Australia. Photo: Rachel Murolo

Tomorrow
In Summer
On the map

Anne Davies tours Sydney's past (and sometimes strange) political hotspots

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