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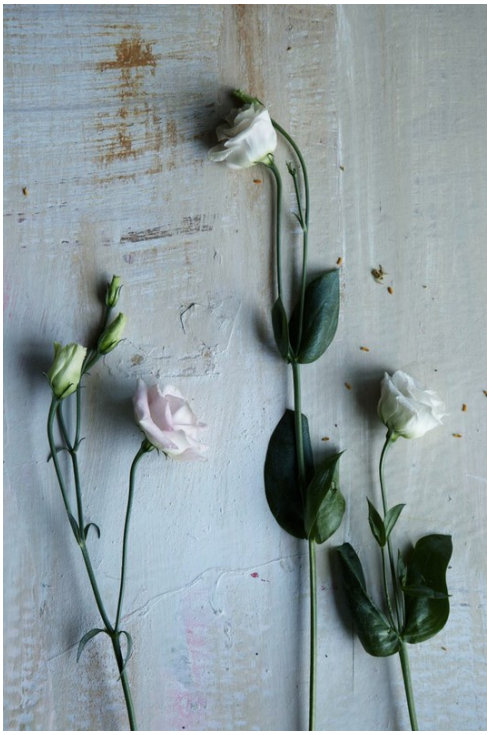

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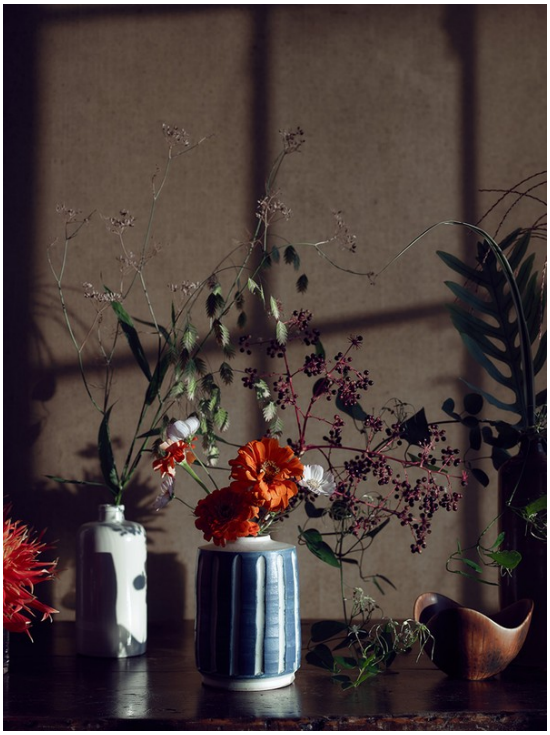

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GOOD LIVING

Home, Garden, Craft

TABLEAU

PERFECT UNION

There's no rule against combining dried plants with fresh blooms; the effect, in fact, can be unexpectedly striking. Here, feathery dried grasses and a large cecropia leaf add whimsy, texture, and height to a bright arrangement of cut flowers: pink 'Blushing Bride' protea, spiky blue-green eryngium, and over-size white protea.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTYN THOMPSON

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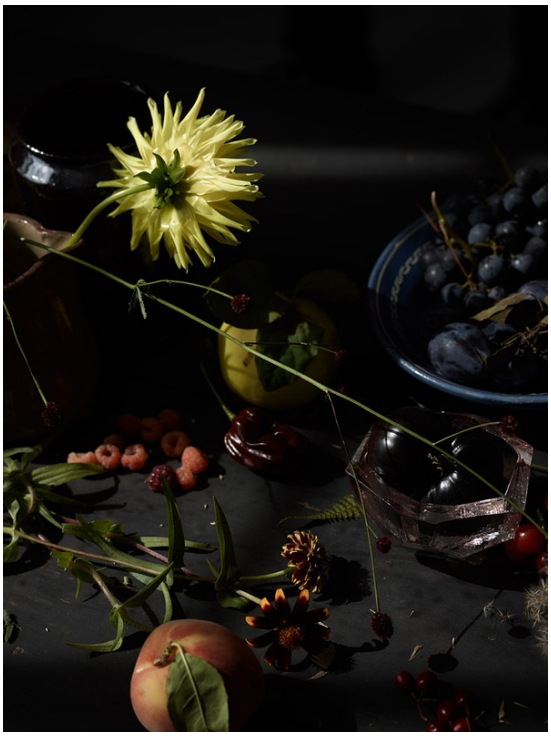

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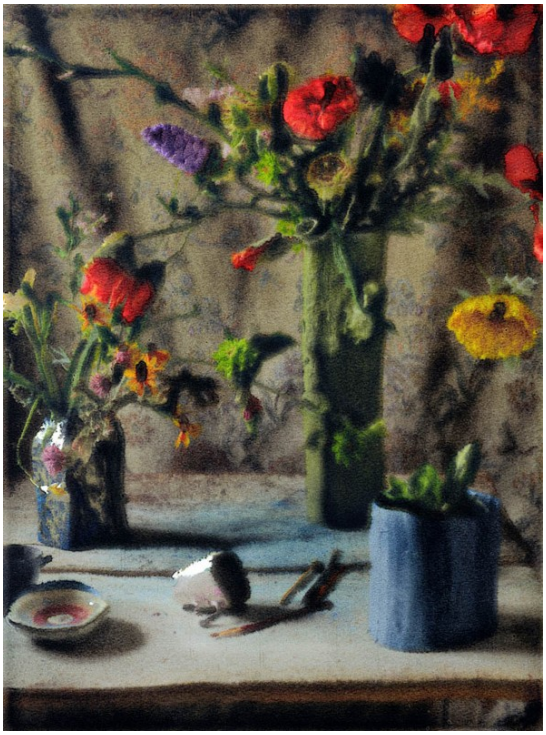

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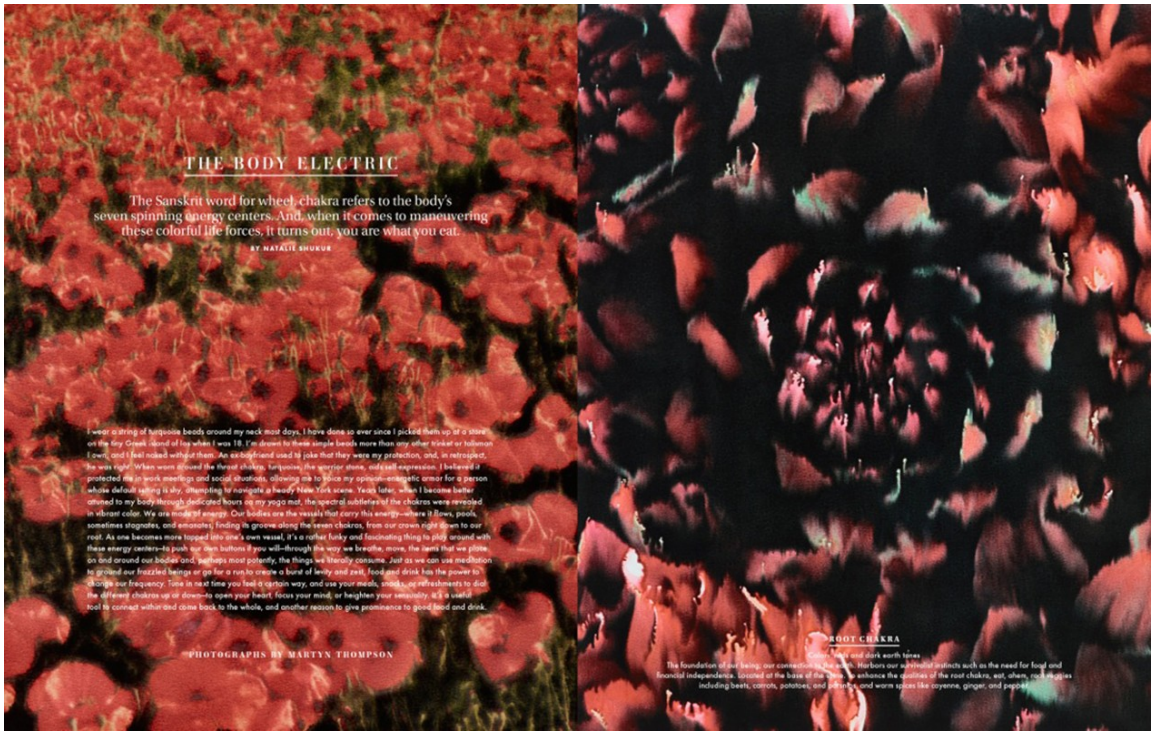

THE BODY ELECTRIC

The Sanskrit word for wheel, chakra refers to the body's seven spinning energy centers. And, when it comes to maneuvering these colorful life forces, it turns out, you are what you eat.

BY NATALIE SHUKUR

I wear a string of turquoise beads around my neck most days. I have done so ever since I picked them up at a store on the tiny Greek island of Ios when I was 18. I'm drawn to these simple beads more than any other trinket or talisman I own, and I feel naked without them. An ex-boyfriend used to joke that they were my protection, and, in retrospect, he was right. When worn around the throat chakra, turquoise, the warrior stone, aids self-expression. I believed it protected me in work meetings and social situations, allowing me to focus my opinion—energetic armor for a person whose default setting is shy, attempting to navigate a heavily New York scene. Years later, when I became better attuned to my body through dedicated hours on my yoga mat, the spectral subtleties of the chakras were revealed in vibrant color. We are made of energy. Our bodies are the vessels that carry this energy—where it flows, pools, sometimes stagnates, and emanates, finding its groove along the seven chakras, from our crown right down to our root. As one becomes more tapped into one's own vessel, it's a rather funky and fascinating thing to play around with these energy centers—hit push our own buttons if you will—through the way we breathe, move, the scents that we place on and around our bodies and, perhaps most potently, the things we literally consume. Just as we can use meditation to ground our frazzled beings or go for a run to create a burst of levity and zest, food and drink has the power to change our frequency. Tune in next time you feel a certain way, and use your meals, snacks, or refreshments to dial the different chakras up or down—to open your heart, focus your mind, or heighten your sensuality. It's a useful tool to connect within and come back to the whole, and another reason to give prominence to good food and drink.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTYN THOMPSON

ROOT CHAKRA

Colors: reds and dark earth tones

The foundation of our being, our connection to the earth. Harbors our survivalist instincts such as the need for food and financial independence. Located at the base of the spine, to enhance the qualities of the root chakra, eat, ahem, root veggies including beets, carrots, potatoes, and yams, and warm spices like cayenne, ginger, and paprika.

SACRAL CHAKRA

Colors: oranges and copper

Our pleasure center. Located around two inches below the navel, inside the body. This is our connection to new experiences and relationships with others, and to our own sense of well-being and sexuality. Sweet fruits including melon, mango, coconut, and pineapple, as well as nourishing nuts and aromatic vanilla, cinnamon, sesame, and carob, stimulate this chakra.

SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA

Colors: yellows and golds.

Located in the upper abdomen area, this is the body's power center. Focus here to feel strong, in control, and confident. Comforting, satiating foods such as pasta, bread, rice, and grains and digestive and immune-boosting herbs and spices like turmeric, chamomile, and fennel help to heal the emotions and fuel this chakra.

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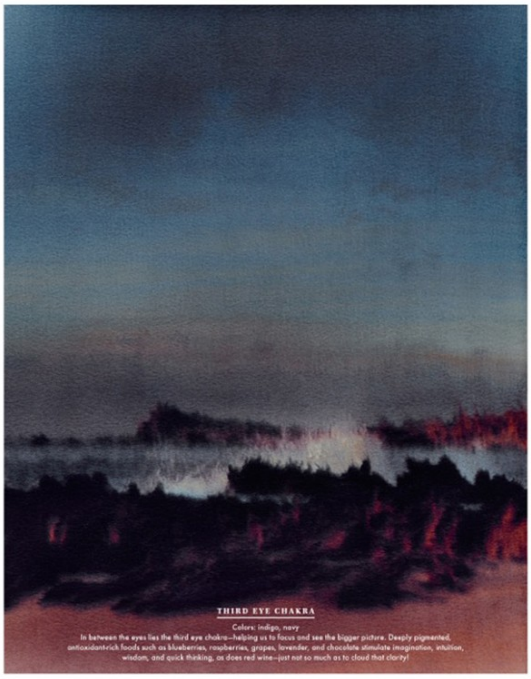

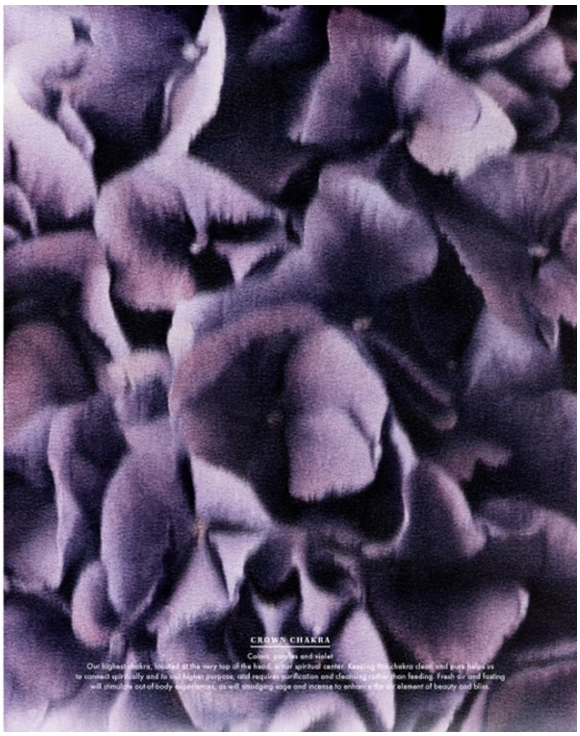

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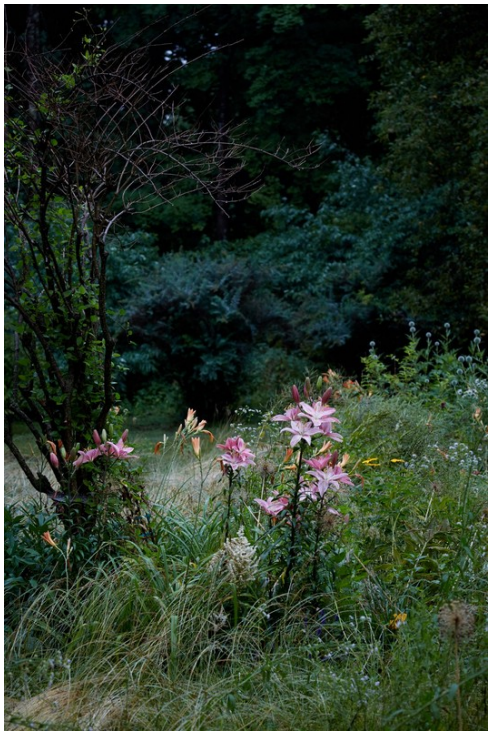

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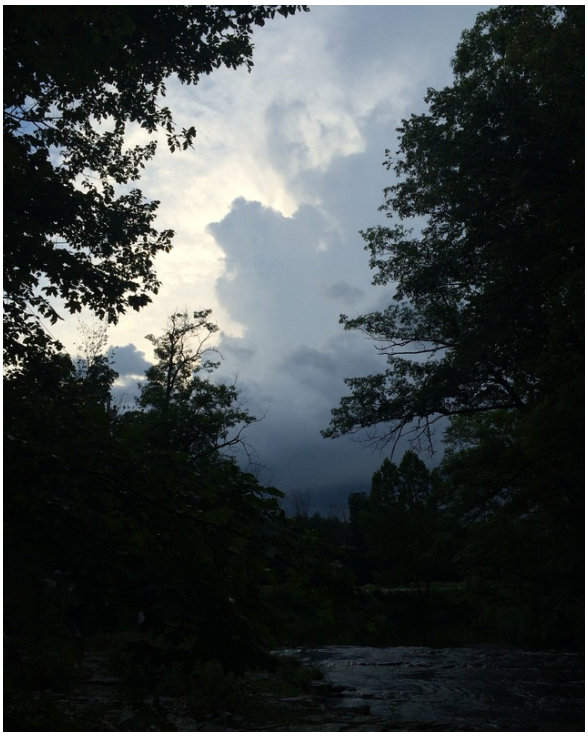

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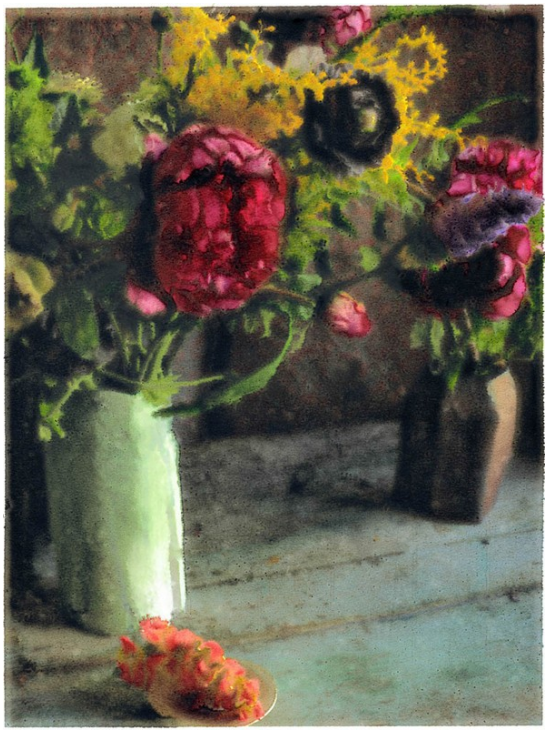

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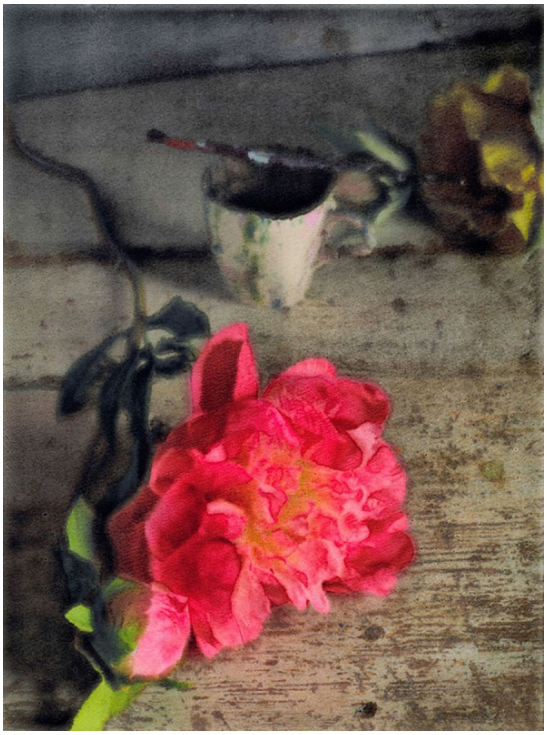

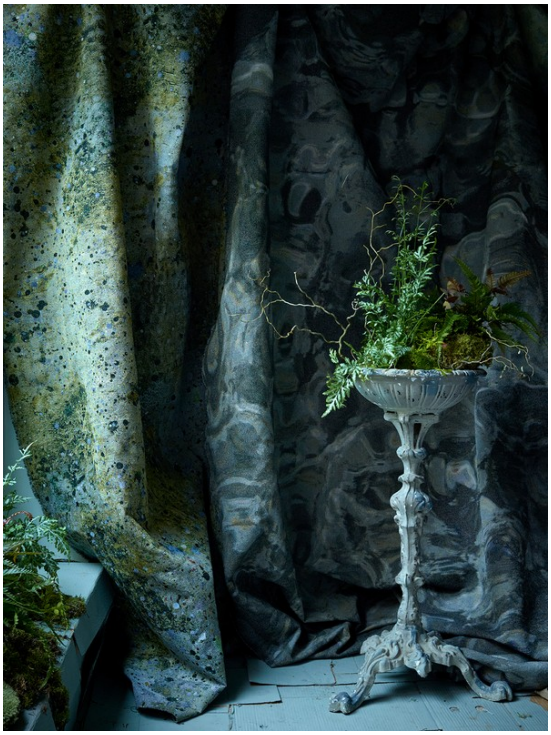

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