

SHOP & BUY ROUND-UP

GET DEALS GALORE AT THE PARAGON SALE THIS GSS

THE annual Great Singapore Sale (GSS) will be here again from next Friday to July 21, and Paragon is dishing out promotions and discounts for shoppers in The Paragon Sale.

From next Friday to June 24, the Orchard Road mall will reward shoppers and Citibank Paragon MasterCard members with a slew of privileges such as shopping vouchers, and Georg Jensen and Dior gifts – on top of the GSS promotions at participating shops.

A visual-merchandising installation will also be on display at Paragon's main atrium from June 26 to July 21. The display will showcase the array of merchandise available at the mall and help shoppers to discover spectacular buys.

ROBINSONS' NEW FLAGSHIP STORE TO GO HIGH-TECH

ROBINSONS will open its largest store at The Heeren shopping mall by next year.

Spanning over 150,000 sq ft, Robinsons' new flagship store will feature shopping applications that allow customers to interact with Robinsons digitally.

The Robinsons Group, which is part of the Al-Futtaim Group, will invest \$40 million in the project.

The Heeren will undergo a major overhaul from the third quarter of the year.

TURN YOUR KID'S BEDROOM INTO A WONDERLAND

THE June school holidays are just around the corner, so how about treating your child to a bedroom makeover?

Children's lifestyle display-centre Casa Kidi has a wide range of bedroom furniture and accessories that would make a child's cutest – or wildest – dream come true.

Your child can be king of the jungle with jungle-themed bedroom sets; or a princess who lives in a pink castle, complete with curtains and a slide. Casa Kidi is located at 23 Tampines Street 92.

SWENSEN'S NEW MENU PACKED WITH GOODNESS

CELEBRATE your special occasions this month with yummy items from the revamped menu at the Swensen's restaurant.

New items include seafood dishes such as Spiced King Prawns & Chips (\$16.50), as well as Swensen's take on well-loved local classics: Laksa Aglio Olio with King Prawns (\$14.90) and Crabmeat Fried Rice (\$13.90).

Desserts include a sundae inspired by Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay. The Rock (\$8.20) comprises three ice-cream flavours – Hazelnut, Cookies 'N' Cream and Rocky Road – with garnishes and toppings, all served on a bed of dry ice.

Look and feel good when you run

By JOY FANG

WITH Singaporeans becoming increasingly marathon-crazy, it is natural for them to desire fashionable digs while engaging in their favourite sport.

Indeed, the running calendar here has burgeoned in recent years, with runs for everyone from newbies to hardcore ultra-marathoners. New runs are added every year, and there is a race almost every other week.

The number of people who entered the Standard Chartered Marathon Singapore, for instance, leapt to 65,000 last year, up from just 6,000 in 2002.

Running-shoe brands have been keeping pace with the growing interest – with new innovation, designs and different lines to suit various needs.

New Balance, for example, moves an average of 100 pairs a day, and saw a 15 per cent rise in sales so far this year, compared to the same period last year.

Mr Eugene Yeo, New Balance's assistant marketing manager, said he sees more runners now than five years ago.

"Nothing is more natural than running and it is at the heart of most sports," he said.

That is why the brand is always looking to expand its range with the changes in running trends, he added.

Mr Vijaya Kumar Jayaraj, marketing manager at Nike Singapore, said it is evident that the nation is crazy about running. The company's running events, such as the Nike Goddess 5K for women and Nike We Run SG 10K, "are usually met with sell-



RUNNING ENTHUSIASTS: The writer (left) and my paper's foreign editor, Ms Chew Hui Min, in running shoes by Puma and Asics, respectively. (PHOTO: JAMIE KOH)

out demand".

Nike's global earnings rose 15 per cent to US\$5.8 billion (S\$7.3 billion) from December last year to February.

Puma's head of marketing, Mr Gabriel Yap, said there is increasing demand for "stylish and colourful running shoes".

"Running is an easy sport that can be (incorporated into) our lifestyle... It is a sport that one can easily do with peers, too," he said.

Puma sells an average of 300 pairs from the FAAS line per

month. It recently launched a Spring/Summer Social collection with a series of lifestyle footwear that is a throwback to the sneakers of the 1960s.

A Facebook game application that allows consumers to build their own social dream team has also been released.

Singapore is not the only nation mad about trotting. In Taiwan, sales of sports shoes rose 16 per cent last year from 2010, with total sales exceeding 8.5 million pairs. The industry's market value jumped

25 per cent to reach US\$488 million last year.

joyfang@sph.com.sg

HELPPDESK 我的字典

Ultra-marathoners: 超级马拉松运动员
chāo jí mǎ lǎ sōng yùn dòng yuán

Stylish: 时髦的 shí máo de

Throwback: 复古 fù gǔ

Trotting: 小步跑 xiǎo bù pǎo

A SHOE FOR EVERY RUNNER



FOR THE NEUTRAL RUNNER

Puma FAAS 300
A lightweight foam provides the shoe with cushioning, flex and stability.

The Tech: It uses a BioRide Technology to give a more natural rhythm and enhanced speed. The shoes have sufficient cushioning to take the stomps.

Verdict: This pair attracts with a funky, preppy design. It is also light and flexible, thanks to a thin sole, giving runners a minimalist feel. I love that it is soft and comfortable, and could take me through 9km without me feeling a twinge.

Own them: \$119



FOR THE ENTRY-LEVEL BAREFOOT RUNNER

Nike Free Run+ 3
This line of shoes is designed to emulate natural motion, or a barefoot-like run.

The Tech: A stretchy mesh innersleeve, and an adaptive-fit technology that allows a skin-like fit which moves with each stride.

Verdict: Easily one of my favourites, the shoe epitomises one thing – comfort. The design, albeit very fashionable, may look a little chunky for a barefoot-like shoe. But it is lightweight and an absolute ease to run in. A 7km run was smooth-sailing, with no resulting blisters. Its firm, grooved sole also provides a lot of support and friction, so runners like myself, who tend to overpronate while running, will find it useful.

Own them: \$179



FOR THE SWIFT RACER

adidas adiZero Adios 2
Super light with a cool mesh, this baby adds speed and ease to your running.

The Tech: This line uses a continental rubber outsole that grips hard, even in wet weather, while the heel moulding improves heel fit.

Verdict: I was sold on the bright shocking colours and slim mesh design. As for performance, it is feather-light, and the structure tends to be a little rigid. But it makes up for it with an ability for fast speeds and tight traction.

Own them: \$189
JOY FANG

FEEL THE GROUND IN THESE SHOES

FOR THE 'NAKED' RUNNER

New Balance Minimus Zero
The thin, flexible soles help you find your natural form and provide some bounce, albeit no support.

The Tech: Both the road and trail versions come with new patented Vibram soles. The "Zero" in this new version of the Minimus series refers to a zero foot drop, which means a neutral sole – essential for barefoot running.

Verdict: The Vibram soles are very supple, yet provide more cushioning than I had anticipated, given their ultra-thin profile. Plus, they are so light that I will have no excuse not to go running when I'm travelling. When trying them on, make sure they fit your foot snugly with no potential abrasion, because they are designed to be worn "naked" – that is, without socks. Great for minimalist runners but, if you are a heel striker, ease into these slowly.

Own them: \$165



FOR THE LIGHT RUNNER

Asics Gel-Blur 33
These light-mesh trainers are for the runner who wants a light, but not quite so minimal, ride.

The Tech: This is a new interpretation of the Impact Guidance System that has been incorporated in many Asics shoes over the years. The number 33 here is a reference to the 33 joints in the foot that promote natural movement.

Verdict: A snug, almost airy, shoe, these lightweight trainers provide some cushioning without overdoing it. If you would like more of a minimalist shoe, but are hesitant to take the plunge, these can be the compromise. They are certainly versatile, as I would wear them for walking, as well as during a gym workout. Plus, they look so good that they could work as streetwear as well. An all-round winner – and looker.

Own them: \$179



FOR THE SERIOUS RUNNER

Mizuno Wave Rider 15
The latest version of Mizuno's popular neutral runner is a workhorse for the frequent runner.

The Tech: There are minor tweaks, like the Parallel Wave plate that has been moved up 2mm for better cushioning. By and large, the designers have not messed with Mizuno's tried-and-tested Wave Technology.

Verdict: There is a reason why the Wave Rider is into its 15th iteration – the shoes are simply a joy to run in. They diffuse impact, but give sufficient ground feel, and provide stability but still feel much lighter than they look. My only "problem" with the shoe is that they make running too easy. If you need one more reason to get these, it also comes in a gorgeous limited-edition ruby red.

Own them: \$189 (standard); \$199 (limited edition)



CHECK OUT THESE TOO

COLUMBIA POWERDRAIN

An amphibious shoe with drainage ports that lets you splash across streams or run by the beach without the squish and squelch.

Own them: \$159



LI-NING ARC RUNNING SHOES

A brightly coloured, flexible running shoe from Chinese sports brand Li-Ning that is good for both sports and everyday wear.

Own them: \$89.90



MONTRAIL ROGUE RACER

An ultra-lightweight trail-racing flat for trail racers who want minimalism with performance and protection for those rocky trails.

Own them: \$189



BOLT LITE LOW

Design that is inspired by Olympic champ Usain Bolt and Puma's Faas technology updates this retro-liciously funky sneaker.

Own them: \$99
CHEW HUI MIN



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