CAMDEN PEACE GAMES - FAMILY MOVIE NIGHTS
FITNES'S CLASSES - FARMER'S MARKET - SIGNATURE EVENTS

CONNECT THE LOTS 2017

CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

ANNUAL REPORT

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WHAT IS CONNECT THE LOTS?

CONNECT THE LOTS is a community-driven initiative that activates Camden's parks and underutilized spaces through the implementation of artistic, cultural and recreational projects and activities. The goal of the initiative is to engage Camden residents in neighborhood transformation, creating safe nodes of activity and bring vibrancy to Camden's corridors and public spaces.

The Connect the Lots (CTL) initiative is a replicable model for utilizing creative placemaking to improve personal and environmental health outcomes, housing conditions, community engagement, public safety, and neighborhood physical conditions through project implementation, planning, policy, and advocacy.

Connect the Lots began as a handful of events in only two neighborhoods during its pilot years 2014-2015. Now in its fourth year, CTL completed its most successful season with a full citywide program schedule. With a mix of fun new and returning programs and events, Connect the Lots 2017 included weekly movie screenings in parks throughout the city, a variety of free outdoor fitness classes, a weekly farmer's market with live music, signature special events like Camden's Got Talent showcase and more.

Connect the Lots has expanded its mission from a singular focus on artistic activation of open space. The initiative focuses on the areas most critical to Fostering Community Stability in Camden — physical condition, health, community engagement, and civic pride.



2017

BY THE NUMBERS





750 CAMDEN CHILDREN RECEIVED FREE SCHOOL SUPPLIES





13,000+

CAMDEN RESIDENTS AND VISITORS PARTICIPATED

OPEN SPACES ACTIVATED THROUGHOUT CAMDEN CITY

65%
OF FEATURED TALENT
FOR EVENTS WERE
CAMDEN RESIDENTS



700 PEOPLE ENJOY MUSIC, MASSAGES AND PRODUCE AT THE WEEKLY FARMERS MARKET

BIKE RIDERS PARTICIPATED IN THE INAUGURAL "I BIKE CAMDEN' EVENT



TRANSFORMING SPACES

Connect the Lots is centered on the activation of vacant and underutilized spaces in Camden. In Camden, this includes many parks that have suffered from years of neglect and fallen into disrepair. The physical transformation of Camden's parks from nuisances to neighborhood assets cultivates the community pride at the heart of CTL. The City of Camden, Camden County, and Cooper's Ferry Partnership, have partnered together to improve neighborhood parks and create new signature open spaces. Completion of improvements to Pyne Poynt Park, Roosevelt Plaza Park, and Northgate Park have provided the perfect backdrop for Connect the Lots outdoor movies, fitness classes, and concerts.

COOPER'S POYNT WATERFRONT PARK

In 2014, CFP held its first Camden Night Gardens festival on the site of the former Riverfront State Prison in North Camden. The festival was established to reanimate what was a forgotten waterfront space while also celebrating local culture and talent. CFP hoped to show government officials, funders, stakeholders, and residents the great potential that the site had for the creation of a signature waterfront open space. Just two years later it is a reality!

Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park, formerly the site of the Riverfront State Prison, opened June 5th with a ribbon cutting ceremony on the Delaware River in Camden, just north of the Ben Franklin Bridge. The five-acre park includes an ADA accessible playground, grassy areas for play, landscaping, lighting and views of the Ben Franklin Bridge and Philadelphia. The park also includes a half-mile multi-purpose trail for biking, walking and running on the Circuit Trails, Greater wPhiladelphia's Regional Trail network and one of America's largest trails networks that currently includes more than 320 miles of completed trails.

The project is the result of a collaboration between the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, the City of Camden, Save Our Waterfront (SOW) and Cooper's Ferry Partnership (CFP). Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park is a flagship project for the future build-out of the North Camden waterfront and revitalization of the core neighborhood. The park's design was managed by the City of Camden and CFP, in consultation with Save Our Waterfront and neighborhood residents, funded by a grant from the NJEDA's Economic Recovery Board for Camden.

CUBES

"CUBES", a unique series of temporary interactive play sculptures was constructed and installed in Roosevelt Plaza Park in July. CUBES complemented the robust schedule of lunchtime, evening, and weekend offerings which took place at Roosevelt Plaza Park this summer, promoting health, wellness, and physical activity. The temporary feature provides the first and only youth-focused amenity at RPP. CUBES will remain in RPP through November 2017. The project is funded through the Kresge Foundation, The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey and the William Penn Foundation.





Top: Slides at Coopers Poynt Waterfront Park, former site of Riverfront State Prison.

Bottom: CUBES play sculptures await children at Roosevelt Plaza Park in front of Camden
City Hall.



INCORPORATING HEALTH STRATEGIES

Connect the Lots has teamed up with Get Healthy Camden to improve the personal health of residents by incorporating health strategies into environmental, arts/culture, and community development placemaking.

"This unique event showcases the beauty of our City from an entirely new perspective – the seat of a bicycle. Camden's beautiful bike trails attract cyclists from all over the region – we are proud these trails can be used to explore and discover, while also encouraging people of all ages to get up and enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle."

- Camden Mayor Dana L. Redd

FITNESS CLASSES

Free outdoor fitness expanded to five classes, five days a week, in five locations in Camden! From June through September, residents were provided with a variety of family-friendly fitness options to enjoy.

Residents could start their week with Zumba class on Mondays at Dudley Grange Park. On Tuesdays, residents could attend a yoga class from the Kroc Center Camden in Johnson Park. On Wednesdays, for the first time, House Party Fitness, an upbeat dance aerobic-style workout to the latest music, was offered in Pyne Poynt Park by local dance studio Dare 2 Dance. The very popular Bootcamp fitness class by Diva Richards moved north on the Camden Waterfront to the new Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park on Thursdays. And on Saturdays, residents could enjoy free Aqua Zuma classes at the North Camden Community Pool hosted by the YMCA of Burlington and Camden Counties.

Instructors of each class tailored their workouts to suit all types of fitness levels and age groups. Through regular Facebook and Instagram posts and videos, we encouraged residents to #GetHealthyCamden by attending a free class.

HEALTHY SNACKS

Sometimes small changes make a BIG impact. In 2017, Connect the Lots traded in the buttery popcorn provided at outdoor movie nights for healthy snacks and water. Instead of the typical movie pairing of candy and popcorn, CTL and GHC offered FREE water and granola bars, pretzel snack bags, fruit cups, and other healthy snacks to movie participants. Many parents expressed their appreciation for the new healthy variety and the kids got to try a new snack.

We carried on this trend by providing healthier alternatives, such as pita sandwiches and hummus instead of pepperoni pizza, for volunteers and participants at CTL festivals and events.



Granola and baked chips make great movie-night treats. CTL offers healthy snacks for the 2017 season.



Camden City Council President & Mayor-elect Frank Moran at the head of the pack as cyclists stop for a water break during the "I Bike Camden" event.

I BIKE CAMDEN

On Saturday, August 12th, approximately 60 cyclists gathered at Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park to participate in the inaugural "I Bike Camden" – a fun, family-friendly bicycle ride and community event showcasing the beauty of the City and its growing network of biking trails. The event kicked off with an easygoing, social 10-mile ride around Camden along the city's Circuit Trails – Greater Philadelphia's Regional Trail network and one of America's largest trails networks that currently includes more than 320 miles of completed trails.

The ride both started and ended at Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park, and allowed participating cyclists to get familiar with the trails and have firsthand experience riding the different routes throughout the City of Camden. During and following the ride's conclusion, all were invited to enjoy a variety of free, fun, family-friendly activities including youth bike lessons, music, face-painting, a bounce house and healthy food and refreshments.

Many Camden residents borrowed bikes, provided by the Camden County Bike Share program, to ride the City. For many participants it was their first bike ride in years. "I Bike Camden" not only highlighted Camden's potential to be the next great bikeable city, it showcased the beauty of Camden in a unique way, brought visitors to Camden's newest park and trail, and provided family-friendly fitness and fun. In a post-event survey, one participant wrote:

"This was only my second time in Camden, so I was happy to have a chance to explore the neighborhoods in the best way on bikes! I liked how you promoted health through riding bikes, also that it was a partnership amongst various groups to put it on."



Waiting for customers at Camden's sunny, downtown farmer's market

FARMERS MARKET & MUSIC

The annual afternoon concert series that began in 2016 grew into a weekly Farmers Market and Music event in Roosevelt Plaza Park every Thursday from July to September in 2017.

During the summer 2017 season CTL and GHC partnered with Virtua Health to join the Virtua Mobile Market with a free concert, and free chair massage for downtown employees (on the 4th Thursday of each month). Musicians from Camden and the region treated lunchtime visitors at Roosevelt Plaza Park to harmonic afternoons while the Virtua Health Mobile Market made a selection of fruits and vegetables accessible on the plaza. We were also able to provide live cooking demonstrations utilizing produce available at the Market along with healthy recipes for patrons to try at home. The Mobile Market is a 23-foot bus brimming with fresh produce, sells fruits and vegetables at significantly reduced prices in communities throughout Virtua's service areas in Burlington and Camden counties four days a week.

The Roosevelt Plaza Park location is one of Virtua's most successful and was a success for CTL as well. Approximately, 11% of survey participants at the summer's-end Camden Jam event reported interacting with the Farmer's Market & Music presentations. As a result of its success, Farmers Market & Music was extended beyond its original end date of August 31 to run through the month of September. And although the "music" will stop during the cooler months, the Mobile Market will continue to provide reduced cost fruits and vegetables on Tuesdays for the remainder of the year.



Get Healthy Camden was established in 2016, from the former New Jersey Partnership for Healthy Kids-Camden (2009-2015), to create, implement, monitor and evaluate policy, environmental and systems change efforts in building a culture of health in Camden. GHC's Action Plan includes goals and objectives in the following areas: Community Health & Wellness; Equitable Change & Sustainability; and Walkability & Bikeability.

500 FAMILIES HAVE BEEN SERVICED BETWEEN JUNE 8 -

AUGUST 20, 2017

40%

ANSWERED YES TO BEING "FOOD INSECURE".

USDA defines food insecurity as someone who "in the last 12 months, has worried about not having enough food to eat three healthy meals a day". 44% of shoppers reported that since starting the Virtua Mobile Market, they've had a positive reduction in food insecurity.

80% OF SHOPPERS

ARE WOMEN

40%

OF SHOPPERS HAVE USED SNAP* BENEFITS

*Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

FARMER'S MARKET, BY THE #'s

CONNECT THE LOTS ANNUAL REPORT - 2017



CELEBRATING COMMUNITY CULTURE & INCREASING PRIDE

Connect the Lots celebrates the unique culture and cultural identities of Camden through ongoing community engagement.

CAMDEN NIGHT GARDENS

While Memorial Day is known as the "unofficial" start of summer is many areas, in Camden, summer now begins with the Camden Night Gardens. Camden Night Gardens was held on Saturday, May 20 in Roosevelt Plaza Park at Camden City Hall. The event first debuted in 2014, and has grown each year, attracting more than 4,000 residents and visitors in celebration of Camden's rich artistic and cultural heritage.

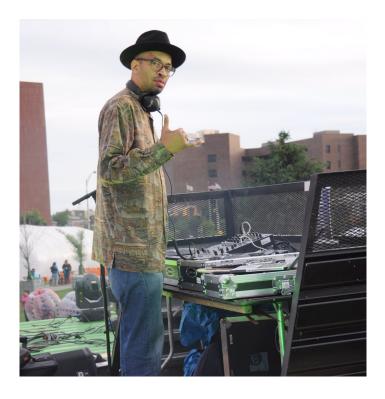
The theme of this year's festival was "RISE UP" – showcasing the unique talents of local Camden artists, musicians, DJs, performers and more. Roosevelt Plaza Park was completely transformed into a wonderland of light installations and projection mapping by New York City-based nightlife ninjas Nitemind and Wild Dogs International. Legendary Philadelphia-based DJ, Rich Medina kept the dance party going all night long, while local legends, the Camden High Marching Band, returned to deliver an innovative syncopated spectacle. There was also a giant inflatable pavilion set-up, showcasing an immersive cinema program on hip-hop heritage.

Throughout the evening, community arts activations occurred in the park, as well as a car show for attendees to enjoy. Additionally, break dancing workshops were offered, showcasing area talent and stars and providing tips to aspiring "b-boys." Some of the region's best food trucks were also onsite, offering attendees a variety of delicious food options and refreshments for purchase.

"Since its debut, Camden Night Gardens has continued to grow with each passing year," said Anthony Perno, Chief Executive Officer of Cooper's Ferry Partnership. "It now attracts more than 4,000 residents and visitors to the city – making it the perfect opportunity to showcase all that Camden has to offer."

4,000+

Top: DJ Rich Medina getting the party started Center: Automobiles on display at Camden Night Garden Bottom: Families enjoy all the fun activities at Camden Night Gardens













Left: Grammy winning artist Kelly Price at Camden Jam Top: Capturing the crowd through caricature Bottom: Elvis Alvarez gets the crowd hyped

The 2017 Connect the Lots season culminated on Saturday, September 9th with a free community celebration of music, arts, and culture! With the support of Cooper's Ferry Partnership, the City of Camden, Mayor Dana L. Redd, and the Connect the Lots Initiative hosted the third annual Camden Jam: Arts and Music Festival in Roosevelt Plaza Park.

Over 6500 people attended #CamJam17—more than double the attendance from 2016. The music element of the festival featured all day entertainment by artists both local and beyond. Performers included Kingsley Ibneche, Frantastic Noise, Marel Hidalgo, and Camden's Got Talent 2017 showcase winner Stefan Khalid, and more. Radio personality Dyanna Williams of Old School 100.3 returned to host the main stage with CamdenpopRock and Elvis Alvarez followed by Grammy-nominated headliners Bilal and Kelly Price.

During and between acts, attendees were also treated to a variety of food and merchandise vendors from across the region.

The festival also featured a wide array of free family-friendly activities, showcases, and giveaways. Attendees had the chance to create their own spin art, learn how to weave, snap silly photos and more between exploring county-wide sustainable initiatives in the Green Discovery Zone and interacting with some of the region's finest organizations in the Community Showcase section. Little ones had a blast at Camden Jam too -- the Kid Zone featured two bounce houses, face-painting, glitter tattoos, a caricature artist, and a back-to-school giveaway.

6,000+

ADVANCED TICKETS

RESERVED

321 SURVEY RESPONSES FROM CAMDEN JAM:

26%

HEARD ABOUT THE EVENT THROUGH OUR WEBSITE OR SOCIAL MEDIA.

58%

58% RESPONDENTS HAD BEEN TO BETWEEN 1 - 5 CTL EVENTS IN 2017

69%

ARE CAMDEN RESIDENTS, 88% NJ RESIDENTS

3'

37% HAD BEEN TO A PREVIOUS CAMDEN JAM



Top: Achieving lift off at the inaugural Camden Peace Games Bottom: It's all love as proud winners display trophies and medals

CAMDEN PEACE GAMES

"Peace is not merely a distant goal we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal." -Martin Luther King, Jr. This quote embodies the spirit to which Connect the Lots began planning its inaugural Camden Peace Games event.

Connect the Lots, in partnership with the Camden Salvation Army Kroc Center, Center for Family Services, City of Camden, and Camden County Police, embarked on an idea to build collective impact by utilizing sports as a stimulus for the creative development of peace throughout the City of Camden. Inspired by similar events in other major US cities, Camden held its first Camden Peace Games as a citywide basketball festival. The event was held on Saturday, June 10 in Rev. Evers Park.

The objective was to promote peace and brotherhood/sisterhood to youth ages 16-24 through sports activities. The basketball tournament hosted 8 senior level teams (ages 16-24) and 6 junior level teams (ages 13-15).

Senior Champs: Kroc Team Unity

Senior Runner-up: Above and Beyond South Jersey Junior Champs: Above and Beyond South Jersey

Junior Runner-up: Kroc Team Focus

In addition to the basketball tournament, this inspiring and uplifting event offered free food, face painting, giveaways, DJ, and more to over 500 attendees.

CAMDEN'S GOT TALENT

Back by popular demand, Camden's Got Talent returned for the second year on August 4th at Dudley Grange Park in East Camden. After rescheduling the event twice due to inclement weather, the amphitheater at Dudley Grange Park provided the perfect backdrop to a beautiful day to showcase Camden's uniquely talented residents. Ten performers graced the stage with a mix of dance, spoken word, rap, and song. One of the most memorable performances came from Anthony Lyles, who signed up 30 minutes before the show as he passed by on his way home from work. After stopping briefly at home, Anthony returned to deliver an acapella performance that energized the crowd and blew away the judges. Anthony was awarded our 2nd place prize. The 2017 Camden's Got Talent winner was Stefahn Khalid, a 17 year old student and former participant in the Camden Collaborative Initiatives Green Ambassadors Program. Stefahn delivered a unique dance act to an original poem.

"ALWAYS HAVE HOPE IN CAMDEN, AND OUR JOB IS TO SPREAD THE HOPE IN CAMDEN, SPREAD THE LOVE, LETTING EVERY ONE THAT ...
THERE IS A LOT OF TALENT IN CAMDEN."

- Stefahn Khalid, Winner, 2017 Camden's Got Talent



"In a dream I saw a city invincible." - Walt Whitman

MOVIE NIGHTS

As part of CTL's mission to increase family engagement in the city's public spaces, Connect the Lots hosted an Outdoor Movie Night event EVERY FRIDAY ALL SUMMER. Camden residents were invited out for a family-friendly activity followed by a popular film -- all for free! Outdoor Movie Nights, which took place in Roosevelt Plaza Park at Camden City Hall and Dudley Grange Park began with the offering of the week such as line-dancing, face-painting or karaoke. Once the sky became dark, the sights and sounds of Disney musicals (Moana, Beauty and the Beast), inspirational dramas (Queen of Katwe, Hidden Figures), and delightful comedies (Sing!, The Secret Life of Pets) played into the night.

"WEAVING COMMUNITY"

CTL partnered with Rutgers Camden Center for the Arts (RCCA) to conduct a project entitled, Weaving Community, comprised of sculptural and two-dimensional weaving workshops throughout July and August 2017. Participants created individual sculptures, weavings, or vessels/baskets. The artistic process design matched the age and skill sets of the community participants. A participatory large-scale weaving and two baskets were also created for community events—people of all ages added to the communal artworks. The project was led by Steven Carty, a qualified master basket weaver RCCA teaching artist with support from RCCA staff Noreen Scott Garrity, Carmen Pendleton, and Miranda Powell.

Summer camps and community groups who attend RCCA summer programs contributed to the ever-growing installation, and also created a hands-on art piece to take home with them. For community groups that did not

have transportation to the RCCA studio, or participating parks, RCCA brought a Studio On-Tour version of the program directly to them. Travel versions of the project were also developed for CFP events in Roosevelt Plaza Park and Dudley Grange Park.

Even though it appears complicated, participants as young as 6 or 7 made baskets this past summer. The types of baskets created were: wood bottom baskets, garlic baskets, doorknob baskets, and Napkin baskets. At the open studio workshops, Camden residents and families paused for a few moments from their busy schedules to make baskets; most people found it to be a relaxing and meditative process. Over 500 people participated in "Weaving Community", not including approximately 150 who added to the communal weaving and/or made their own baskets at Camden Jam, where it was a very popular activity among the young and young at heart.

CITY INVINCIBLE Installation

The 2015 Camden Night Gardens Spring Festival featured a number of attractions, including a new collaborative mural along the Delaware River that spelled out the phrase "CITY INVINCIBLE." The "CITY INVINCIBLE" sign was comprised of 14 twelve-foot letters, each designed and painted by a different artist that was selected through an open call. In 2016, the letters were repurposed as seating for a picnic grove at the 2016 Camden Night Gardens—Intergalactic Block Party. In 2017, CTL found a permanent home for these letters in a prime gateway into Camden from Philadelphia, on Admiral Wilson Boulevard at 16th Street. There a wall fence provides the perfect backdrop to showcase the "CITY INVINCIBLE" phrase transforming a bleak and desolate strip of highway into an artistic gateway.

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STAY CONNECTED! TEXT 'CTLCAMDEN' TO 41411 FOR EVENT UPDATES OR VISIT: www.connectthelotscamden.com

THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO MADE THE CTL 2017 SEASON A SUCCESS!

FUNDERS

The Kresge Foundation William Penn Foundation The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey Campbell Soup Foundation Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

INAUGURAL SPONSORS

Camden County College PSE&G Dilworth Paxson, LLP

Republic Bank

Salvation Army-Camden Kroc Center Contemporary Graphic Solutions

CTL PARTNERS

Camden City Fire Department Camden Collaborative Initiative Camden Community Celebration

Camden County

Camden County Bike Share Camden County Police Department

Camden County College Camden Promise Zone Camden SMART Initiative Camden Special Services District City of Camden - Human Services City of Camden - Public Works City of Camden - Mayor's Office

Cooper Grant Neighborhood Association

Cooper Hospital EMS

Covanta Dare 2 Dance Diva Richards Fairview Neighbors Get Healthy Camden

Parking Authority of the City of Camden

Respond, Inc.

Rutgers Camden Center for the Arts

Rutgers University-Camden

Rutgers - Rowan University Board of Governors

Salvation Army Kroc Center - Camden

Save Our Waterfront St. Joseph's Carpenter Society Virtua Health - Camden

YMCA of Burlington and Camden Counties

CTL PARTICIPANTS

13 Sound LLC 5SM Photography

Adventure Aquarium Center for Aquatic

Artsy Fartsy Facepainting Balanced Living & Wellness

Boyd Photography

CamCare Health Corporation

Camden AHEC

Camden County Cancer Screening Project Camden County College - Recruitment

Camden County Girl Scouts **Camden County Library**

Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority Camden County Office of Sustainability

Camden High School Marching Band

Camden PowerCorps **Camden Printworks** Camden SMART Initiative Caricatures by Schay **Center for Family Services**

Charlie Ahearn

Cooper Medical School Students CrazyFaces Face Painting & Body Art Delaware River Keeper Network

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Division of Youth and Family Services, Camden

East Local Office DJ Rich Medina Elite Landscaping Games on the Go **Girl Scouts**

Greater Quality Custom Ridez Hopeworks 'N Camden

I Am Phresh

Jennifer Montgomery Art

Jumpspire

KIPP Cooper Norcross Academy

LAEDA

LaShaunda Carter Maria Smith

MIO Myrmidon Films

NJ Conservation Foundation

NJ Department of Environmental Protection

NJ Fifth Legislative District Office of Congressman Norcross On Da Chace Photography Parents for Great Camden Schools Premiere Outdoor Movies Renewed Nutrition & Fitness

Retra Studio Roberts Event Group

Rutgers Camden Civic Scholars and Honors Col-

lege Students

Rutgers Camden Office of Civic Engagement,

Rutgers Camden School of Nursing

Rutgers Center for the Arts

Samiya Scott

Sanctuary Foundation for Veterans Shoemaker Entertainment South Jersey Land & Water Trust

Strength

Sustainable Haddon Heights

Tatiana Maxwell Time for Fun Jumpers Trenton Circus Squad Trininty Echevarria TriState Transportation **Triton Security Uncommon Schools Urban Promise**

Urban Promise BoatWorks Visionary Entertainment Wild Dogs International

PERFORMERS

Anthony Lyles

Camden High School Marching Panthers

Camden PopRock

CJamir David Kelly DJ Cyrus Saxon Dubway Reggae Band

Elvis Alvarez y la Nueva Fuerza de la Bachata

Forte Jazz **Forte Sounds** Frantastic Noise Jahlil Love Kelly Price King Shinobe Kingsley Ibeneche Lorraine Rogers Marel Hidalgo and Friends

Mary Groce Otyanna Russell Roshad Williams Saffire Chantal Stefahn Khalid

Taureen Hall Yung Poppa

CTL VENDORS

BMB Creations

Chasing My Dreams Clothing

El Guaco Loco **Essence Fitness**

Festival Food Management

LaUnique African American Bookstore

My HeartBeatz Clothing

Payne Catering Primo Waterice Raymond Alvira **RD Shadez Responsive Catering** Slade Unlimited, LLC

Southern Twist Bakery Boutique

The Collective Untold Boutique Virtuous Fragrances Yama Design **Zoelily Empanadas** Zola's Place