## SUBSCRIBE NEWSLETTERS

## My Champagne Lunch with the 'Real Housewives of Auckland'

Finally, the Real Housewives franchise has sunk its manicured talons into New

Zealand television. Sure, the show celebrates everything that's hideous about the

world but three episodes in, I've completely drunk the Kool-Aid. Needless to say,

when the chance came up to lunch with two of the show's stars-media darling

Follow Us On Discover \*

By Sasha Borissenko

Make Us Preferred In Top Stories

September 1, 2016, 8:00pm

Louise Wallace and self-proclaimed "Champagne Lady" Anne Batley Burton-I jumped on it faster than a housewife on a tennis coach. Just a bit of context—I live in a poorly insulated and overpriced house in central Auckland, that's also home to a garden of mould. All my clothes smell like wet dog right now and I don't know how to fix it. So I felt completely at odds meeting two ladies of luxury so far removed from the issues plaguing New Zealand that have

been dominating headlines—be it the **housing crisis**, growing rates of **child poverty**, and homelessness. "I love that colour on you," Louise begins, the French champagne is already ordered. "Those earrings are fabulous, where'd you get them?" I don't know how to dodge this question, these earrings set me back a hefty \$15. "They're cheap, oh God..." I stumble. "No, you wouldn't know the place." Louise smiles, "That's amazing. So

good of you to get them on the cheap, Anne and I are not obsessed with labels."

Unless of course the label is Roberto Cavalli. Anne sports Cavalli all day, everyday. "I

like form-fitting little dresses because I'm small. I want to show off my neat trim little

figure," she explains. "There's no point throwing something big on me because I'll look like a blob. I like classy, elegant, sexy chic." Louise, meanwhile, is a self-confessed "pants girl." I'm a bit worried how she'll fare on a show that's lifeblood is drama. Her idea of a good time is "to sit in my study,

with my husband with a cat on each lap, and to eat dinner and watch Netflix. That's

my idea of heaven. I lead a very sedate life most of the time."

they say.

to watch them."

nouveau riche."

meant to be *real* in the show is the title.

cringes, and says blobbing out with her husband (who she calls Cuddly Bear) is far from her idea of fun. "I'll be damned if I stay at home being a housewife while Cuddly is out having fun and forgetting about me," she barbs, draining her glass. I ask whether they are sick of being asked by the media what they are wearing. Of

course not, they love it. Would a man be getting the same treatment? Who cares,

Both women describe themselves as feminists, they aren't housewives in the

traditional sense—both have had amazing careers and made their own wealth.

Anne, topping up her glass of champagne—seriously it's like water to the woman—

Although inheritance helped, too. "My father once told me to never ever be reliant on a man for money. I'd hate to have to sing for my supper," Anne quips. "You mean groan for your supper," Louise chimes in with a giggle.

Louise offers some advice—beauty is currency—you'd be stupid in this day and age

stunning beautiful Ragdoll and she knows it. Anything that's beautiful knows it. There

aren't any ugly people on television, aside from Nigel Latta, because you don't want

Anne is not so sure. "I've had no work done, at all. But I don't think I look too bad

not to take whatever is on offer, be it botox or fillers. "I look at my cat, she's a

actually. My attitude is, if you look pretty good, you look after yourself as best as you can," she explains. "I do not want to become one of those desperado women who's out there every bloody week having another damn needle stuck in my face, or a filler for this, or a botox for that, with my eyes not smiling and all that." I do wonder if Anne has actually ever seen Real Housewives. The only thing that's

She doesn't do Asian cuisine, either, but wants me to know she's not racist. One of the first controversies of the season came when Anne took issue with being forced to take her shoes off at a fellow housewife's house, a custom she said was "very

"The only time I've had to take my shoes off was in Japan and now I have the fear of

because as I say I have a very, very, VERY close friend who is Chinese. I said to her

Louise was also appalled to have to take her shoes off in episode two. "A floor's a

floor's a floor. The only reason why I'd make someone take their shoes off is because

Speaking of animals, it's the pussies that get Anne talking. She's, of course, referring

the Orient," she explains. "But I wouldn't want people to think I've got a problem

The waiter comes past and takes our order—I go for creamy pasta, both Louise and

anything spicy. I'm just wanting simple. I'm wanting some really nice fish. Nothing

Anne opt instead for the market fish. "I'm so sorry to be difficult, I can't have

fried, no pepper on it, no chilli, no nothing, just nice fish," Anne says.

that we've got to post more photos together on the Facebook."

invariably someone might have dog shit on their shoes."

party, they'll be there like a shot."

tagline, "broadcaster and journalist."

TV show.

to her sanctuary that houses 140 abandoned cats. This isn't her first pussy enterprise. There was the Parnell Pussies, and the Pensioner Pussy-for old cats in need. "I don't know why people have an issue with the word pussy. People in my day used

to say pussies. Everyone talked about their pussies," she recalls. "It's cute. It makes

makes people sit up and listen. If I just talk about stray cats no one will listen. But I

tell men to come help me with my pussy foundation or come to my pussy galore

Reconciling myself with the fact this lunch is ridiculous, it's actually proving to be

quite enjoyable. We order up another glass of champagne. Louise and Anne are

unashamedly frank, and live by the simple philosophy of giving zero fucks. It's no

surprise they've been revelling in the success and profile that comes from the reality

Louise doesn't see any irony with being a cast member on a reality TV show with the

"I tell you how I deal with [the perceived contradiction] is that a lot of journalists I know are champagne socialists and they make out that they're terribly left wing and mightier than thou," she says. "But my god, if someone offers them a bottle of Bolly they'll drink it. They might not pay for it, but they'll drink it. To me, champagne socialists are some of the biggest hypocrites I have ever known in my life so I don't

And while I scurried off to pay the bill after our goodbyes, I realised I'd failed to ask

them what the hell a "Bolly" was, whether they would be a second season of the

mesmerised and exhausted by both of them-my internal conflict of horror and

show, if they thought a Real Housewives of Wellington could work. I was too

Share:

amusement, the nails, the hair, the drama, the champagne.

give a flying rats."

CHAMPAGNE LUNCH NEW ZEALAND REAL HOUSEWIVES TELEVISION VICE BLOG

**ACCESSIBILITY** 

Tagged:

Follow Sasha on Twitter

VICE MEDIA

0

Login / Sign Up