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EXCLUSIVE
TRINNY

“I won’t be defined
by my age”

REAL LIFE

“The mistakes
that made me!”

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DECISIONS
WORK OUT FOR
THE BEST

**FIND THE
BALANCE**

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slow down
A-Z of herbal
health heroes
Great gut health
= feel fabulous

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OF **MENTAL
HEALTH** IN
2022

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Editor's welcome

The inspired magazine for inspiring women



Hello!

And welcome to this month's Platinum. I've been in touch with a lot of readers recently and regulars will know it's one of my favourite parts of being an editor. One of the most interesting aspects of women our

age is that so many of you have amazing hobbies — and lots of you have taken it one step further and you've turned those hobbies you love into a small business.

That business might not be paying as much as you once earned but it's providing you with riches in another way — freedom to be your own boss, use your time in the way that works best for you and spend the time when you do work doing something you absolutely love. For many of you, that compensates for a bigger pay cheque you might have walked away from.

Maybe your amazing hobbies were in the back of my mind when I read a leaflet that popped through my door. It was a flyer advertising a new drumming class in the community space not far from me.

Now, I'm not claiming I'm going to give up being Platinum editor to become a full-time drummer but

somehow I'm drawn to this class. It sounds fun and I can't imagine anything more stress-relieving than whacking a drum kit a couple of times a week. So I'm going to give it a go!

I hope you enjoy our interview with the inspirational Trinny. I suppose you could argue that she took a love of make-up and turned it into an international business, though I'm sure it was much more complicated and harder work than I've made it sound! I really enjoyed finding out more about her and it was particularly lovely for me that Gayle Anderson wrote the feature.

I worked with Gayle many years ago when we both started out in journalism. She was editor of the glorious Jackie magazine and I was her deputy. I learned a lot from Gayle, and her interview is as good as I knew it would be when I commissioned it. Women supporting other women just makes the world a better place.

I hope you have a wonderful month!

ALI KIRKER
PLATINUM EDITOR

This month I'm...

READING

Again, Rachel, the follow-up to the 1.5-million selling *Rachel's Holiday* by Marian Keyes is simply a joy. Highly recommended.



TREATING MYSELF

This simple necklace is a perfect finishing touch. Izzy circle rainbow necklace, £54, Bryony Bel.



CELEBRATING EASTER

I love this pretty Easter centrepiece, £28, Next. ■



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1. Euromonitor International (2020). 2. Kempf, K et al (2021). Nutrients, 13: 1-12. 3. Oliveira, C et al (2020). American Journal of Clinical Nutrition; 00:1-12. 4. Deibert, P et al (2004). Intl. Journal of Obesity; 28(10):1349-52. 5. König, D et al (2008). Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism; 52(1):74-78. 6. Kempf, K et al (2017) Diabetes Care; Jul 40(7): 863-87. 7. Vitamin C and Zinc contribute to the normal function of the immune system. *Substituting two daily meals of an energy restricted diet with meal replacements contributes to weight loss.

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INTERVIEW WITH
TRINNY WOODALL



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PLATINUM PICKS



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A STUNNING SEASIDE GETAWAY

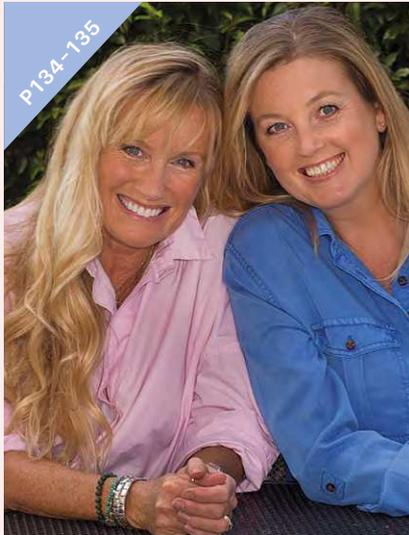


Our experts

OUR TEAM OF TRUSTED EXPERTS SHARE THEIR ADVICE AND INDUSTRY SECRETS THAT YOU CAN TRUST EVERY MONTH. FROM FASHION TO FOOD AND DRINK AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN, THEY'VE GOT YOU COVERED.

DOTTIE & BOO ►
FASHION & BEAUTY

Our style experts Dottie Monaghan and Boo Hill take you through rocking red from head to toe.



◀ RUBY HAMMER
BEAUTY

Iconic make-up artist and beauty expert Ruby Hammer puts some of the best health and beauty tech to the test, as well as sharing her ideal products and ways of applying lip-liner.



◀ JASMINE BIRTLES
FINANCE

Finance writer Jasmine looks at how property experts increase the value of homes, without breaking the bank.



VALENTINA HARRIS ►
FOOD

Our favourite cook and food expert, Valentina Harris, shares her tips on boosting your nutrient intake with delicious and healthy salad ideas.





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◀ **GAIL ROLFE**
FASHION

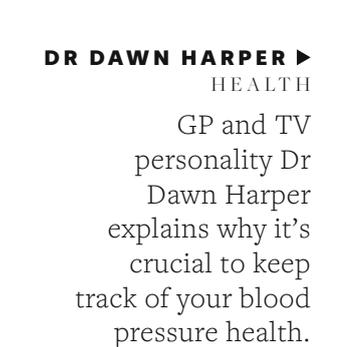
Former fashion editor Gail Rolfe knows how to style an outfit for every occasion. She shares her advice for the best occasion-wear — and how to save on pricier items.



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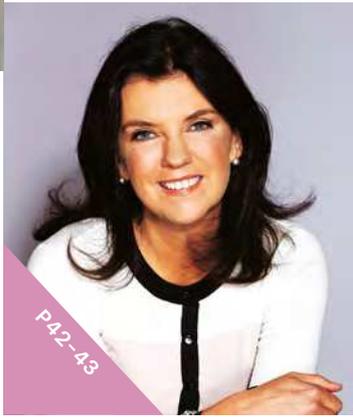
◀ **JANE MOORE**
COLUMNIST

Witty and fabulous, our columnist Jane Moore explores women's safety rights, bonding over food and letting kids run wild.



DR DAWN HARPER ▶
HEALTH

GP and TV personality Dr Dawn Harper explains why it's crucial to keep track of your blood pressure health.



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JOANNA SIMON ▶
WINE

Drinks expert Joanna Simon shares some of the best craft gins to try this spring — this really isn't your everyday G&T.



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GUEST EXPERTS



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◀ **JULIE LEONARD**
PEOPLE

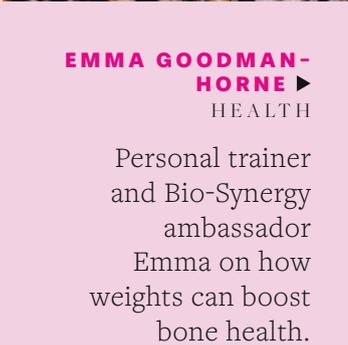
Life coach Julie shares her advice on dealing with the midlife mean girls, with tips on how to avoid the nastiness.



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◀ **ROZ CHANDLER**
HOME & GARDEN

Owner of Field Gate Flowers, Roz Chandler, explains why we should be making our gardening more eco-friendly. ■



EMMA GOODMAN-HORNE ▶
HEALTH

Personal trainer and Bio-Synergy ambassador Emma on how weights can boost bone health.



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CARA WHEATLEY-MCGRAIN ▶
HEALTH

Author of *Calm Your Gut*, Cara shares her expert advice of the 4Gs of good gut health, with simple changes that help.



P82-84



Ceramic bowl, £55, **Rose & Grey**



Cardigan, £12.50, **George**



Chair, £1790, **LuxDeco**



Alarm clock, £12.95, **Rex London**



Candle holder, £14, **Talking Tables**



Vase, £9.99, **Homesense**

platinum PICKS

SELF SOOTHE WITH SPRING GREENS THIS MONTH. SAGE, MINT AND EMERALD ARE SO PRETTY.



Sunglasses, £35, **Dune London**

Creates a waist!



Dress, £18, **Matalan**



Mug, £13, **Quince & Cook**



Egg wreath, £19.99, **Homesense**



Summer MUST-HAVE

...

Sandals, £55, **Office**



Blouse, £85, **Kitri Studio**



Scalp.Spa Treatment, £33, **Kevin Murphy**

SCALP TLC



Chance Eau Fraîche Eau de Toilette Spray, £73, **Chanel**

SMELL DIVINE



Ring, £35, **Milina London**

ADD SPARKLE



Bag strap, £14.50, **Oliver Bonas**



Cushion, £20, **Sass & Belle**



Trousers, £35, **Kaleidoscope**



Wine glasses (set of four), £50, **Rose & Grey**



Box of 6 lacquered candles, £24, **Rebecca Udall**



Ornament, £3.99, **Homesense**



Clearly Clean Make-Up Meltaway Cleansing Balm, £32, **Farmacy**



Footstool, £29.99, **Homescapes**

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“I WON’T BE defined BY MY AGE.”

Exclusive
INTERVIEW



Trinny is a true fighter for women and their right to feel utterly fabulous in their own skin, every day, whatever their age.

FASHIONISTA AND MAKE-UP TRAILBLAZER, **TRINNY WOODALL** HAS TURNED HER LOVE FOR BEAUTY INTO AN EMPIRE. **GAYLE ANDERSON** WENT TO HER MEET HER TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HER SELF-DETERMINATION AND THOUGHTS ON THE TERM ‘ANTI-AGEING’.

“OK, darling, this is what we’re going to do. We’re

going to put on something that’s so wonderfully quick. Once you get that glow, it will change your beauty routine forever, I promise!”

Rewind. Less than a minute before, I’d arrived at Harvey Nichols in Edinburgh, for my interview with style and beauty guru, Trinny Woodall. She’d turned up bang on time. A shimmering vision in silver and neon green. I was pretty much under her spell from then on in. But there was no time to stand there simpering.

Before you could say Miracle Blur she’d led me by the hand to a stool in the Trinny London pop-up store that’s promoting her new skincare range. Once I was perched, blinking under the lights, she instructed John, her make-up artist, to set to work.

This was quickly turning into the strangest, yet most glamorous interview ever. With John adding the finishing touches, Trinny picked up my phone and recorded precise instructions for my new make-up routine. “That’s it.” She nodded. “I’m finished. Let’s do your interview.” »



“Not caring about superficial stuff is empowering.”

Her first business, age 16, was selling velvet hair bows to Harvey Nichols. I ask if being back here now feels like a full-circle moment.

She stares, wide-eyed. “Can I just say — you’re the *only* person who’s ever made that analogy. Well-researched! Yeah, it’s so true. I love that!”

I’M PRETTY CERTAIN I’M BLUSHING UNDER MY NEW MAKE-UP. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD SELF?

“I’d say all that worry was a bit unnecessary. My teens and my 20s were probably the unhappiest time of my life. I felt very, very insecure. The only time I *did* have confidence was when I had my little business, Bows Unlimited. It was such a coup selling something in Harvey Nichols. I can remember seeing my bows on the round display table at the front of the store and I was so proud. But, like lots of things I’ve tried, it sort of faded away. The energy wasn’t there to follow through and complete it.”

After school, a severe case of impostor syndrome prevented Trinny from applying for university. Instead, she power-suited her way through a range of jobs in the city, including a spell as a commodities broker.

Then, in 1996 she and fellow socialite Susannah Constantine began writing a newspaper fashion column together. TV shows *What Not To Wear* and later, *Trinny and Susannah Undress The Nation* followed, turning the brutally-honest pair into household names.

For over a decade they were the fairy godmothers of fashion. Everything they touched turned to gold (with coordinating shades, obviously). Then, in 2008 it was over. Their TV series was cancelled, and they went their separate ways. But Trinny didn’t flounce off in a flurry of sequins. Instead, she began

A pop of colour is all it takes. "You're never too old to wear bright colours."



researching an idea that had been kicking around in her head for ages — a digital make-up brand.

WHAT GAVE YOU THE DRIVE TO DUST YOURSELF DOWN AND START AGAIN?

“What drives me is the control having your own business gives you. 15 years ago I was doing TV and travelling the world, but every August I’d be thinking, ‘Will my contract be renewed?’ People see you as super-successful, but internally, you’re stressed out of your head. Now, I’m actually building something, watching it grow. It’s not just going to disappear overnight. I have a business, a team of 200 people and I’m learning how to be a good CEO.”

FRIENDS SAY YOU'RE THE MOST SELF-SUFFICIENT PERSON THEY'VE EVER MET. IS THAT A FAIR DESCRIPTION?

“Absolutely. And for me, self-sufficiency works best when you’re not worrying about your finances. When the telly work stopped, I was left with a big mortgage and no income. I cut out all the little extravagances like paying someone to walk my dog, or sending piles of stuff to the dry cleaners. Then it got to a stage where I needed to raise some money.

I had tons of clothes, so I just sold them. 3000 strangers came round to my house to rummage through my clothes. Two separate sales raised £60,000. It gave me another year of being able to research and fund the business. When that ran out, I just sold the house.”

THE TRINNY LONDON MOTTO IS 'BE YOUR BEST' — WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE 50+ WOMEN ON BEING THEIR BEST?

“The menopause can take a lot of self-confidence away. It can drain you. The way you look is an important factor. If you wear colour, if you wear ageless make-up, when you walk down the street you won’t feel invisible. And you evolve in your 50s. You become stronger because you stop giving a sh*t! Not caring about superficial stuff is empowering. That’s why I’m such a mad person on Instagram. I really don’t care!”

ONLINE CONTENT IS A HUGE PART OF THE TRINNY LONDON BRAND. WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

“We’ve been a digital-first brand since our launch in 2017. To make this business work, I needed to »

know how women were feeling — what they wanted. Social media is perfect for that. We have around two million followers on Facebook and one million on Instagram. We also have the amazing Trinny Tribes. Over 100,000 Trinny London fans in Facebook groups in 18 different countries. We're a proper community. And it's a two-way thing. I learn from our followers, and they learn from me. There's trust there, too, because I only recommend things I truly believe in. Some days though, I wake up and just think, 'I need a good laugh, I bet some other women are needing a laugh, too.'"

IS IT TRUE THAT YOU READ AND ANSWER YOUR FEEDBACK DAILY WHILE ON THE LOO?

"That's one hundred per cent correct. I do a lot of phone interviews from there too so you're lucky this is face-to-face!"

DO YOU EVER SLOB AROUND IN A TRACKSUIT?

"Never! I enjoy dressing up. The slobbiest I get is lying in bed in my PJs eating chocolates from Fouquet in Paris. My daughter, Lyla, brought me three boxes back recently. My heart melted. I mean, she's 18 and it was just so thoughtful."

“When you look in the mirror you shouldn't feel tired, you should feel energised.”



Cutting down on sugar, a great sleep routine and vitamins are some of Trinny's best health hacks that we can all adopt.



WHAT ANNOYS YOU?

“Ageism annoys me. All these young tech guys were telling me I needed to sell to 20–30-year-olds. I was like, ‘no, that market’s already being addressed. I want to sell to these ladies who are being ignored.’ They just didn’t get it. One of the highlights of my career was going to their annual tech conference last year. I bumped into about eight of these guys who’d turned me down for investment. They all came up to me and said they’d been wrong. People need to stop being so judge-y.

“We don’t use the word anti-ageing in any of our marketing. I won’t be defined by my age. No woman should be. With our skincare and make-up, when you look in the mirror you shouldn’t feel tired, you should feel energised.”

She turns my stool to the mirror and we both look back at ourselves. “I want you to feel energised, Gayle.”

After spending time with Trinny, it would be impossible not to...

Trinny’s tips

Trinny shares her favourite health and nutrition hacks.

- Exercise — particularly strength training — is super important. Our bone density changes in our 50s and strength training is the key to flexibility and mobility. Try to build it into your daily routine.
- Cut down your sugar intake. Sugar will inflame everything — it’s the enemy! Less sugar means less achy bones and less swollen ankles. Just replace your usual sweet treats with an occasional bar of dark chocolate or some peanut butter. It’s not about depriving yourself — it’s about finding the right balance.
- Get enough sleep! Some days I’ll wake up and if I’ve had a good enough sleep, if I’ve taken care of myself, I’ll wake up with the energy to damn well know I’m the best person to do this job. But if I’m not looking after myself and if I’m not sleeping enough, I’ll lose my confidence. Making sure you get up at the same time every day no matter when you went to bed is key.
- Read *The Hormone Solution* by Dr Erika Schwartz. To me, the way she deals with hormones is a little bit ahead of other menopausal doctors.
- Taking vitamin supplements helps. I invest in putting good things in my body because I don’t believe that the orange I eat is fresh off the tree. I won’t get the vitamin C I need from it. This is not pre-war Britain — food is not fresh from the farm. You need to supplement it.
- You’re never too old to wear bright colours. Colour lifts you when you’re feeling flat. Colour boosts your confidence. Everyone can wear every colour — you just have to choose the right shade for you.
- It’s never too late to rethink your routine. Many women have been following the same make-up routine for decades. The thing they forget is that their face may have changed quite a bit in that time. Experimenting with new simpler and softer routines could be a revelation. ■

Poncho, £85, and blouse, £130, both **Pure Collection**
Scarf, £25, **WoolOvers**
Trousers, £69.99, **Red Button from Colmers Hill Fashion**
Shoes, £110, **Vionic**
Hat, £89, **Hicks & Brown**

Stylist: Boo Hill
Photographer: Oliver Suckling at Cliqq Studios
Assistants: Toby Essex and Dominic Compton
Hair & make-up: Laurence Close
Model: Josie at Sandra Reynolds

The great outdoors

SPRING TRENDS ARE ENCOURAGING US TO SEE DRESSING FOR THE EVERYDAY AS A MORE ENJOYABLE, AFFIRMING EXPERIENCE TO EXPRESS WHO WE ARE. HERE, WE SHOWCASE THE SIMPLE AND EASY WAYS TO UP YOUR STYLE GAME.

Shot on location at
Essex Wildlife Trust
Site, Abberton Reservoir,
Essex. A partnership with
Essex & Suffolk Water.

Earrings, £18,
Oliver Bonas



Scarf, £16.99,
M&Co



Perfect sleeves

Mac, £59.99,
M&Co



Dress, £99,
Phase Eight



Bracelet, £44.95,
Seol + Gold



Hat, £21,
Joe Browns

SUITS ALL SHAPES

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New Look



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ANYDAY



Watch, a selection
at **Vivienne Westwood**

PASTEL PERFECT

Soft shades of blue, pink and lilac, with a dash of brights is on the fashion menu. Fresh gingham and florals can't fail to make you smile.

Cardigan, £49,
Sonder Studio



Jumpsuit, £125,
Guess



Handbag, £56,
Oliver Bonas



Trousers, £69,
Phase Eight



Jeans, £29.99,
Zara



Get the LOOK

Loafers, £24.99,
M&Co >>



Say it with stripes



Jumper, £36, **Lipsy**

Scarf, £16.99, **M&Co**



Cashmere jumper, £59, **John Lewis & Partners**



Necklace, £26, **Oliver Bonas**



Ring, £125, **Monica Vinader**



Skirt, £89, **Phase Eight**



Ideal size

Handbag, £27.99, **Zara**



Dress, £130, **Phase Eight**

Flattering on the waist



Jeans, £30, **ANYDAY**



Trousers, £32.99, **New Look**



Belt, £27.99, **Zara**



Shoes, £22.99, **Zara**

STEP UP

BRILLIANT BRIGHTS

Bright and bold patterns and shades turn everyday casual into something a little more joyful. Dopamine dressing shows no signs of slowing down, so consider this your signal to get involved. Simply choose the hues that give you a feelgood glow and add some attitude.

Cardigan, £145, and jumper, £165, both **Pure Collection**
Jeans, £29.99, **T.K. Maxx**
Shoes, £80, **Vionic**



Dungarees,
£39.99, **M&Co**
Shirt, £72,
Beaufort & Blake
Jumper, £165,
Pure Collection »



Jumper, £62, and scarf, £39, both **Woolovers**
Trousers, £39.99, **T.K. Maxx**
Shoes, £120, **Vionic**



Dress, £29.99,
Zara



All in the frills

Blouse, £59,
AND/OR



Necklace, £14,
FatFace



WORKS WITH FLATS OR HEELS ...

GREAT VALUE

Handbag, £65,
Dune London



Dress, £49.99,
Mango



Blazer, £38.99,
New Look



MIX AND MATCH

Experiment with bold statement shades and don't be afraid of a touch of colour-clashing. It's all part of the fashion fun. A pair of jeans or white smart trousers are such a versatile addition to any wardrobe. Accessorise with silk scarfs, great jewellery and bright bags.

GO BOLD

Top, £49,
Kin



Skirt, £27.99,
Zara



Flattering PLEATS

Earrings, £9.50,
M&S



Trainers, £75,
Oliver Bonas



Jacket, £79, and jumper, £49, both **WoolOvers**
Trousers, £80,
Pure Collection



Cardigan, £65,
Woolovers
Scarf, £25, **Powder** from
Colmers Hill Fashion
Shirt, £39, **Luella** from
Colmers Hill Fashion
Trousers, £75,
Beaufort & Blake





Top, £35.99, **M&S**



Scarf, £28, **Oliver Bonas**



Blouse, £55, **Oliver Bonas**



Watch, £24.99, **T.K. Maxx**



Shirt, £22.99, **Zara**



Shirt, £49, **Aligne**

Great for layering



Dress, £89, **Phase Eight**



Handbag, £75, **Dune London**

PRINT POWER

Adding great prints makes such a style statement. Trends for spring and summer focus on florals (a classic), checks and stripes, which are always easily wearable. Never imagined you'd wear striped trousers? Now's the time to give them a go. You might just love them.



Trousers, £125, **KITRI**

Pinstripe perfect



Skirt, £35.99, **Mango**



Trainers, £69, **John Lewis & Partners**

ON TREND



Jacket, £65.95, **Red Button from Colmers Hill Fashion**
 Tank top, £65, **Kettlewell Colours**
 Shirt dress, £85, **Foil from Colmers Hill Fashion**
 Shoes, £120, **Vionic**



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New Nordic is passionate about the forces of nature and has 30 years of experience with herbs and their vitality-giving properties. Using natural herbal molecules, we can activate life processes and functionality in our skin. You will experience both an immediate and long-term beauty effect with the new beauty range. There are great benefits to using the same active herbal extracts both from the inside out. By using the new skin care products you will experience some fantastic results that you have not experienced before.

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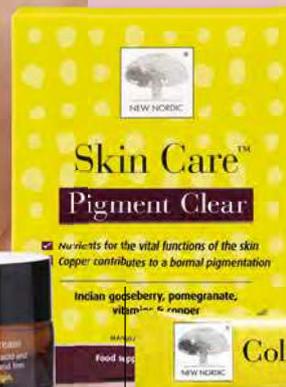
BEAUTY OUT FOCUS ON SYMPTOMS

The new skin care products from New Nordic have an immediate cosmetic effect and give a younger and more beautiful appearance. The products work in synergy with beauty supplements to give an optimal result.

AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE AT
www.newnordic.co.uk

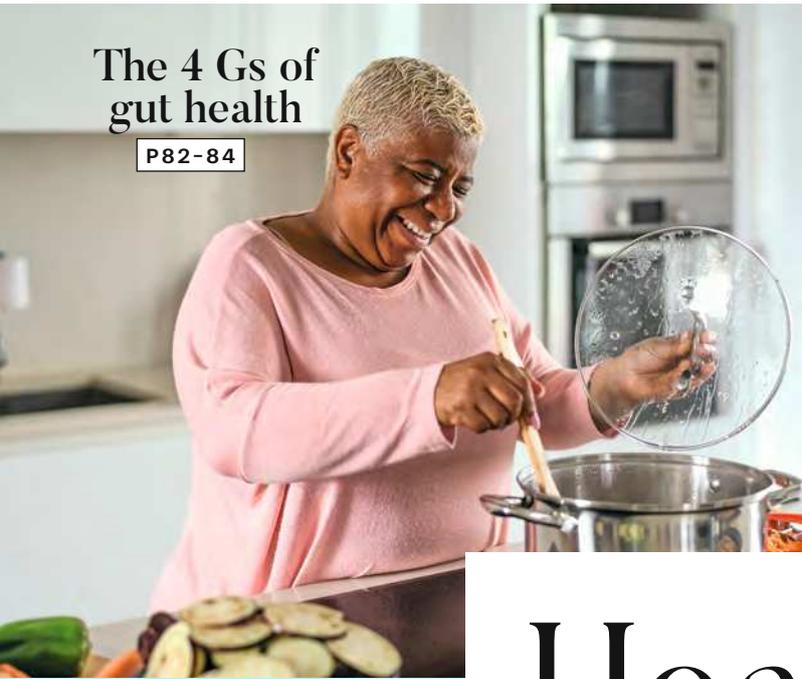
For more information please
call **0800 389 1255**

Holland&Barrett



The 4 Gs of gut health

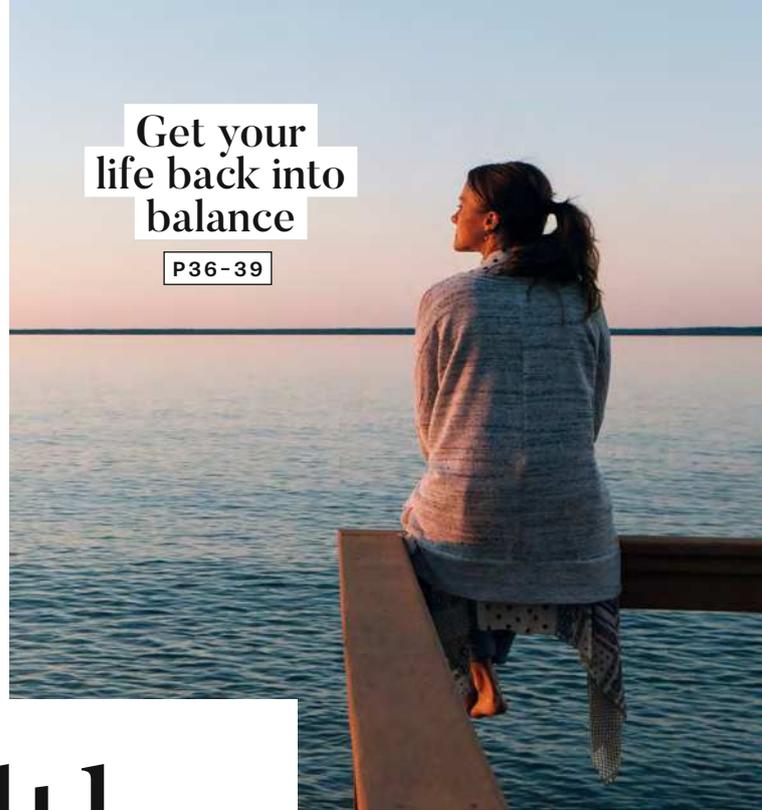
P82-84



Responsible for over 70% of our immune system, our gut is the key to good health, says gut health expert Cara Wheatley-McGrain.

Get your life back into balance

P36-39



For those feeling a sense of overwhelm, Siski Green's guide to slowing down and rebalancing will leave you feeling happier and healthier.

Health & wellbeing

Come along with us on our year of great health campaign as we explore herbal remedies, gut health and more.

What I wish people knew about dementia

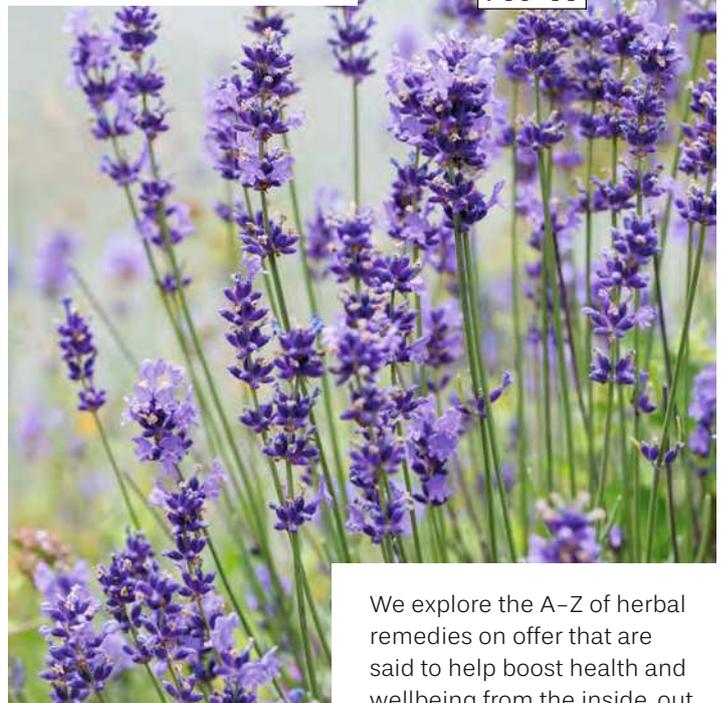
P120-123



Inspirational Wendy Mitchell shares her dementia journey with Louise Ramsay. This is such an uplifting read.

A-Z of herbal helpers

P30-33



We explore the A-Z of herbal remedies on offer that are said to help boost health and wellbeing from the inside, out.

YOUR YEAR
of GREAT
HEALTH

Supercharge your health this year with our essential guides to everything from boosting nutrition to strengthening your bones. Let's all aim to be fighting fit and ready to take on the world! »

a

AGNUS CASTUS

Agnus castus has a relaxing and calming quality and is useful as part of a soothing blend. "As women go through the menopause, they may find that premenstrual patterns merge into a wider and longer, sometimes congestive pattern — as though PMS is taking over. This is when you can consider agnus castus as part of a wider menopause support strategy," says registered herbalist Sebastian Pole, creator of herbalreality.com.

Boswellia

A natural alternative to anti-inflammatory drugs, boswellia can be used for inflammatory joint problems



like osteo- and rheumatoid arthritis, especially when any pain is relieved by heat. In one study of people with osteoarthritis, less pain and swelling were reported as well as an increased flexibility and ability to walk further in those taking boswellia, compared with those taking a placebo.



C

CHAMOMILE

Chamomile is one of the most widely used and well documented medicinal plants in the world. It is widely used for its relaxing properties and to calm the digestion. For some, it helps to reduce anxiety and aid sleep. It is also used directly for problems of the mouth and gums, and in steam for the upper airways.

THE **A-Z** OF *herbal helpers*

AROUND A QUARTER OF ALL PHARMACEUTICALS COME FROM NATURE — PLANTS ARE POWERFUL. READ ON FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT HERBAL HEROES TO HELP BOOST YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

D

DEVIL'S CLAW

Worth trying for the relief of back pain and osteoarthritis and managing aches and pains in the muscles and joints due to its anti-inflammatory action. In modern herbal clinical practice, devil's claw is used almost entirely as a herbal substitute for anti-inflammatory medicines.

e

Echinacea

Supporting the immune system has never been so important. New research confirms the powerful anti-viral effects of fresh herb extract of echinacea purpure at preventing respiratory tract infections. "Results identified how echinacea stimulates the body's defence system to first sense and detect viruses and then enhance the body's defences to deal with them," says immunologist Dr Ross Walton.



Echinaforce Drops
50ml, £10.50,
a.vogel.co.uk

F

FENNEL

A herb long associated with relieving indigestion, colic, wind and nausea, fennel can also be used when the body is fighting 'cold' conditions with symptoms such as heavy mucus production and digestive problems. It can be taken in the form of a tea or infusion.



HOPS

Hops are the flower of the hop plant (*Humulus lupulus*) used to make beer. They also contain compounds that have anti-inflammatory, anti-anxiety and pain-relieving properties. In recent years, scientists have confirmed that humulene and lupuline found in hops have mild sedative properties that may help improve quality of sleep and ease insomnia and feelings of mental stress.

h

k

Korean Ginseng

"In Chinese Herbal Medicine, Korean Ginseng is a herb long associated with being a male tonic to treat problems such as infertility and impotence," says Dr Etheridge.

"Recent clinical work suggests that it may also help reduce biological ageing, increase levels of antioxidants in the body and improve symptoms of fatigue in post-menopausal women."

Lavender contains high levels of naturally occurring essential oils



Ginkgo biloba

Traditionally used for alleviating the symptoms of poor blood flow, ginkgo biloba extract can be really beneficial if you suffer from icy cold fingers and toes, a problem linked to poor blood circulation. "Clinical evidence suggests that it can help memory and cognition function, especially in the elderly and has also been used in some cases of tinnitus, dizziness and headaches," says Sebastian Pole.

G

i

IRISH MOSS

"Traditionally, Irish moss, which is actually a type of algae or seaweed, has been taken as an infusion to soothe coughs, indigestion and acid reflux," says Dr Chris Etheridge, medical herbalist and Chair of the British Herbal Medicine Association (BHMA). "However, recent interest in Irish moss is due to a study showing that it has a prebiotic effect, aiding the growth of beneficial anti-inflammatory bacteria in the gut."

J

Juniper

Juniper berries are rich in essential oils and flavonoids that function as potential antioxidants and can help reduce inflammation. "Traditionally juniper has been used to improve lymphatic circulation, drainage and help fight water retention and cellulite," says Dr Tim Bond, herbal researcher for Pureessential, uk.pureessential.com

LAVENDER

"Lavender is a classic herb for cheering the heart and easing emotional pain. It contains high levels of naturally occurring essential oils that have a profound effect, helping to relax the nervous system, digestion and the mind," says Sebastian Pole. There is also growing evidence that lavender oil may be effective in the treatment of several neurological disorders. >>



m

Milk Thistle

Milk thistle extract contains a group of plant compounds called silymarin, which are known to have antioxidant, antiviral and anti-inflammatory properties. It has been used to treat alcoholic liver disease, acute and chronic viral hepatitis and toxin-induced liver diseases. "This year a review supported the use of milk thistle against insulin resistance, a growing problem as more of the nation head into diabetic territory," says Dr Etheridge.

QING HAO

Qing hao is a herb that has been used in Chinese herbal medicine for centuries and is now a source of artemisinin, one of the key actives used to combat malaria. Recent studies have also shown that it may have a role as part of an anti-Covid-19 regime.

N



NEEM

A primary herb for dealing with infection caused by bacteria, fungi and parasites. It can alter the environment within which invading pathogens thrive, effectively fighting infection in the digestive system and in the skin.



O

OATS

Oats have been used by herbalists for centuries as a tonic for the nervous system and to treat fatigue, insomnia, menopausal symptoms and for convalescence after illness. Extracts of the leaves have been shown in recent clinical studies to reduce stress, improve cognitive function and reduce tiredness.

Rhodiola

Rhodiola is another plant adaptogen which helps the body adapt to challenges both physical and mental. It can be effective in the temporary relief of symptoms associated with stress, such as fatigue, exhaustion and mild anxiety.



Schwabe Kaloba Pelargonium Cough & Cold Relief, £9.50, **Boots**

Pelargonium

"Pelargonium is a traditional herbal medicine used to relieve the symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections, including the common cold, such as sore throat, cough and blocked or runny nose," says clinical pharmacist Mike Waterman. It is the most well-researched herbal cough and cold medicine, with over 100 published trials worldwide."

SAGE

"Not only is this culinary herb useful for dialling down the heat during menopause and beyond but research has reported results in using sage leaf for regulating neurological processes leading to improved psychological symptoms for sufferers of anxiety and mental exhaustion," says Ali Cullen, nutritional therapist at A. Vogel. "There is also a positive trend seen for improved sleep and memory support."



A.Vogel Menoforce Sage, £13.99 for 30 tablets, **hollandandbarrett.com**

S

T

Turmeric

The anti-inflammatory actions of the yellow pigment curcumin in this popular spice can be beneficial for long-term conditions such as arthritis and skin conditions. "Turmeric also has wider benefits on gut health," adds Sebastian, "and, as a prebiotic, could play a part in helping to build a healthy gut microbiome, for example after a course of antibiotics or after any depleting illness."



Pukka Turmeric Gold Tea, £3, Victoria Health



U

URTICA

Urtica, or nettle, is rich in important minerals such as iron, magnesium, calcium and zinc and can be an excellent support for fatigue and convalescing after illness. "Nettle is classed as a diuretic and is reputed to remove the body's acidic metabolites through the urine," says Sebastian. "It also acts as a natural anti-histamine, calming allergic reactions, particularly on the skin."

VALERIAN

Valerian root has been taken for centuries to treat nervous anxiety, reduce muscle tension and relieve mild insomnia. It can be tried in any condition dominated by tension and anxiety. Valerian helps relax muscles and may be used for tension headaches and intestinal cramps.



V

W

Wormwood

Research suggests that wormwood (a bitter tonic used to make the spirit absinthe) can be beneficial when applied as an ointment to combat pain and inflammation in knee joints due to osteoarthritis.



X

Xia ku cao

Used in both Chinese herbal medicine and Western herbal medicine, where it is known as self-heal, xia ku cao is used to heal cool fevers. Its healing properties have recently been shown to accelerate wound healing.

YARROW

'Nosebleed', the folk name of this classic herb, confirms its traditional first aid use to stop bleeding. It is also used by herbalists for fevers, coughs, colds, healing wounds and infections. Yarrow can be made into a tasty tea, taken as a supplement or as a tincture.

Y



ZINGIBER OFFICINALIS (GINGER)

Stimulating and warming, ginger is the top choice for any symptom that is made worse by cold and damp or improved by heat. It's especially helpful for colds with congested airways and is widely used for an upset, weak or deficient digestion, particularly in countering nausea and vomiting. Its heat will relieve muscular aches, pains and spasms throughout the body.

Z

Stay smart

Keep safe and healthy

Always check with your GP that it's safe for you to take any herbal medicine or supplement, especially if you are taking any prescribed medication.

Look for products that display the Traditional Herbal Registration 'THR' logo on the pack, meaning that they have been rigorously checked for safety and quality.

Consider consulting a qualified herbalist. Organisations including The National Institute of Medical Herbalists (nimh.org.uk) or The Unified Register of Herbal Practitioners (urhp.com) can help you find a herbalist in your area. ■

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TRIED AND TESTED BY THE STARS

According to her personal trainer, Simone De La Rue, actor Sandra Bullock's most effective workouts are kickboxing, Pilates, hiking and weight training.



Helen Mirren reveals that to stay fit and toned, she follows the Royal Canadian Air Force XBX exercise plan. Created in the 1950s by physician Bill Orban, it's framed by ten basic exercises and was created to help women specifically. It works all muscle groups in a short space of time and suitable for an everyday workout. Find it online.

Time for DIY

New research by French National Institute of Health and Medical Research revealed a correlation between being handy with tools and sustaining language and problem-solving skills. Apparently, these skills all rely on the same neurological resources, which are located in the same part of your brain. It's time to finally pick up that tool box and start the upholstering project you've put off for the last six months.

YOUR YEAR of GREAT HEALTH

STAY MOTIVATED WITH OUR FASCINATING MEDICAL FACTS AND UPDATES. PAYING ATTENTION TO HEALTH IS ALWAYS WORTH IT.



Eating for your MIND

The MIND diet is predicted to be one of the most popular (and healthiest) trends of 2022.

A blend of Mediterranean and DASH (avoiding red meat, sweets and processed foods) diets, it also has a brain-health-focused twist. The acronym stands for 'Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay' and aims to help a dieter's brain by reducing the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia.

Filled with a good balance of healthy fats and carbohydrates, meal plans contain fruit, veg, whole grains, nuts and well-sourced, wild-caught fish and low-fat, low-sodium dairy only.

A plus is the addition of any superfoods known to support brain health — turmeric, dark chocolate, broccoli and omega-3s.

INSOMNIA AND OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNOEA WERE THE TWO MOST COMMON SLEEP DISORDERS IN 2021, AFFECTING UP TO **30%** OF THE POPULATION

Waitrose's 2021-22 Food & Drink Report found that

70% of customers said the carbon footprint of their food was important

UK SURVEYS HAVE FOUND THAT BRITS ATE EGGS FOR BREAKFAST **68% MORE** THAN IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR, WHILE BACON SALES WERE UP

21% AND PASTRIES WERE UP **25%**

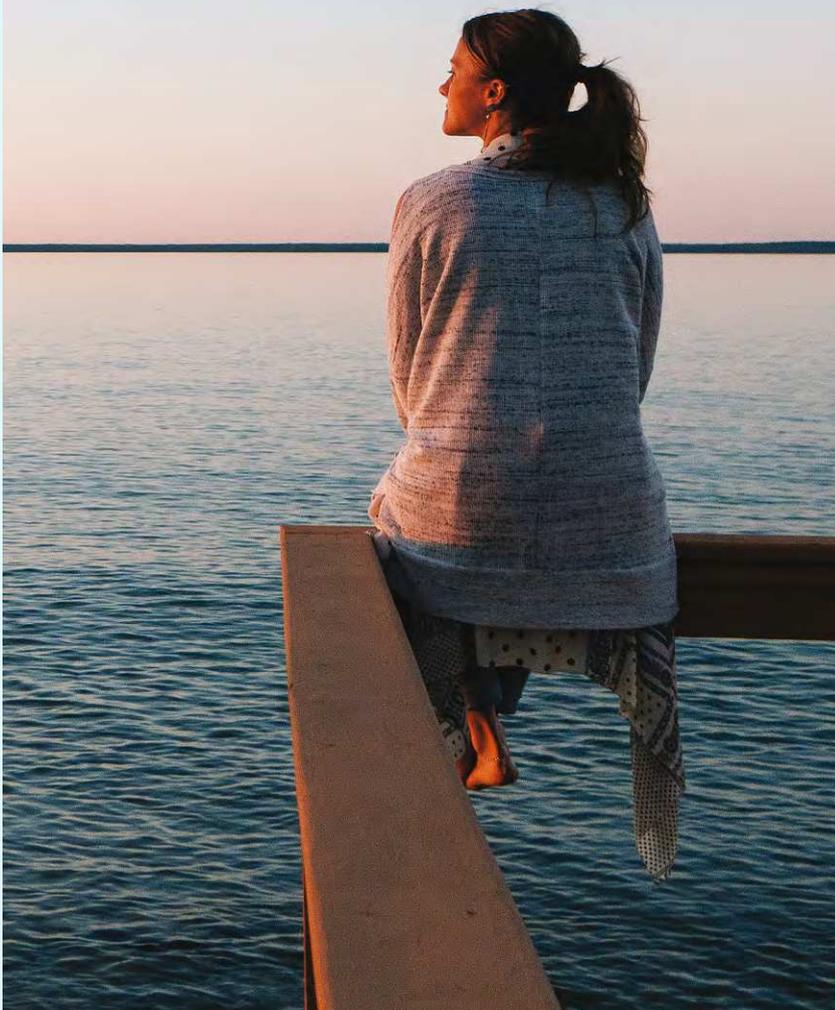
Since April 2021, mushrooms have doubled in online value in the UK and Ireland, sales increasing by **£34 million** from two million shoppers

Beating breast cancer

Specialised culture-based studies by The National Cancer Institute found that if black women begin mammography screening at age 40 instead of 50, their breast cancer deaths could be reduced by 57%. ■

GET YOUR LIFE

back into balance



IT COULD BE THAT THE FASTEST WAY TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE AND GET MORE OUT OF YOUR TIME IS TO SLOW DOWN, WRITES **SISKI GREEN**.

Each day is 1440 minutes, and of those, around 500 are usually spent sleeping. A thousand minutes may seem like a lot — and you get that every day! — and yet, ask any woman you know if they feel like they have enough time to do what they want, and they'll almost certainly answer no.

Work, family, relationships, friends, household tasks, cooking, eating, shopping — and just like magic, those 1000 minutes are gone, leaving you wondering why there just never seems to be enough time in the day.

Time-stress is real, and it hits women harder than most. Research from the Office of National Statistics finds that men have, on average, five more hours leisure time a week than women, so it's little surprise that women tend to feel time-poor.

It's tempting to become more 'time efficient', multi-task, do everything faster, and find ways to pack more 'value' into each of those 1000 minutes so you have more time. But the secret to more time might actually be... slowing down. It seems that certain aspects of life are actually improved and made more effective if they're enjoyed at a slower, more leisurely pace.

Less is more when it comes to 'leisure' time

Sometimes things happen to us that trigger a rethink on how we use time. "Being diagnosed with breast cancer as I was turning 40 dramatically changed the way I managed my time," says Micki Myers, now 55 (left).



"Suddenly becoming uncomfortably aware that time was what I was fighting for made it precious, and I could no longer be complacent about having

enough of it. I became derisive of 'wasting time' — that is, of seeing time-wasting activity as being a positive, even therapeutic thing."

Micki spent less time on those passive activities such as watching TV, playing online games or scrolling through social media, "the things we do today that ease 'boredom', which in times past would have been filled with tasks that had a productive value, be it chores or knitting, making things, tending a garden, mending, etc," she says.

"I don't view leisure in itself as a bad thing; leisure is important for balance with work, but some leisure activities are more productive than others such as exercise, play, etc." And Micki is right — when leisure time isn't actively enjoyed (such as when mindlessly scrolling through social media, for example) it doesn't feel like time well spent, leaving you unsatisfied and with less time.

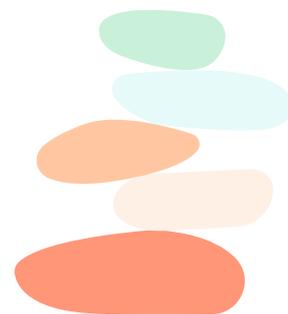
This is something that the author and BBC broadcaster Claudia Hammond explores in her book *The Art Of Rest*, which reports her findings from The Rest Test; a scientific study involving more than 18,000 people. It finds that leisure time is best enjoyed doing quality resting — things like a hot bath, reading and daydreaming — above things like scrolling on Facebook, which can leave people feeling more frazzled.

We often use 'not having enough time' as a reason for not achieving our dreams of writing a book or learning a new language or whatever, but, says Micki, using leisure time differently can allow you to do it all. "I get more done in a day than I would have thought possible.

"Being diagnosed with breast cancer changed the way I manage time."



Research from the Office of National Statistics finds that **men have**, on average, **five more hours leisure time** a week **than women**



"I teach full-time, run a successful business, have written and co-written several books, and manage a household. Changing the way I think about time has not just made my waking hours more productive; the habit of thinking this way has seeped into my sleep, such that I find myself figuring out tricky problems in the night while my body is at rest instead of when I can't focus during the day.

"This prepared me well for pandemic life because certain workloads have become more cumbersome and require more time to manage — teaching virtually and in person at the same time, for example, where multiple types of class preparation are necessary. I feel like I'm living my best life as I enter middle age — I've had a lot of practice at doing the things that enrich my life."

Slow food beats fast food

The pandemic helped many of us try 'slow food' in a way we hadn't before. Who didn't try cooking sourdough bread? Or pickling? And here's the thing — doing so might actually make your digestive system more efficient.

By taking time to prepare and eat food, your body has time to recognise that you're full in a way it cannot when you eat ready meals or fast food. By slowing down, paying attention to the flavours and textures you've created (or even if someone else has created it!) you leave the table feeling far fuller, not just in your stomach, but in terms of your other senses, too.

When you eat something you've spent time creating, you pay more attention to the food as you eat it. And as a result, when you digest that food, it is digested well — your saliva contains enzymes that break food down, so with more time in your mouth, the food is easier to digest.

Taking time by savouring food, chewing it properly, also gives the stomach more time to secrete acid and for the small intestine to prepare for digestion.

What's more, research from the University of Rhode Island found that when participants were asked to >>

eat fast or eat slowly and put down their cutlery between bites, the difference in what they ate was huge! Eating quickly meant eating an average of 646 calories in nine minutes, while slower eating meant ingesting 579 calories in 29 minutes.

The hunger hormone — ghrelin — would have decreased earlier, proportionally, in the eating process for those who ate slowly, which led to them feeling full sooner. Perhaps even more interesting is that the women who ate quickly also reported feeling hungry sooner after eating, compared with those who ate slowly.

Walk, don't run?

You might think exercise is at least one thing that should be done fast in order to be effective. And that's true up to a point, but there are advantages to slowing down, too. When lifting weights, for example, rapid movements won't give you stronger muscles in the same way that a controlled, full-range-of-motion lift will. You're also more likely to injure yourself if you attempt to lift heavy weights quickly.

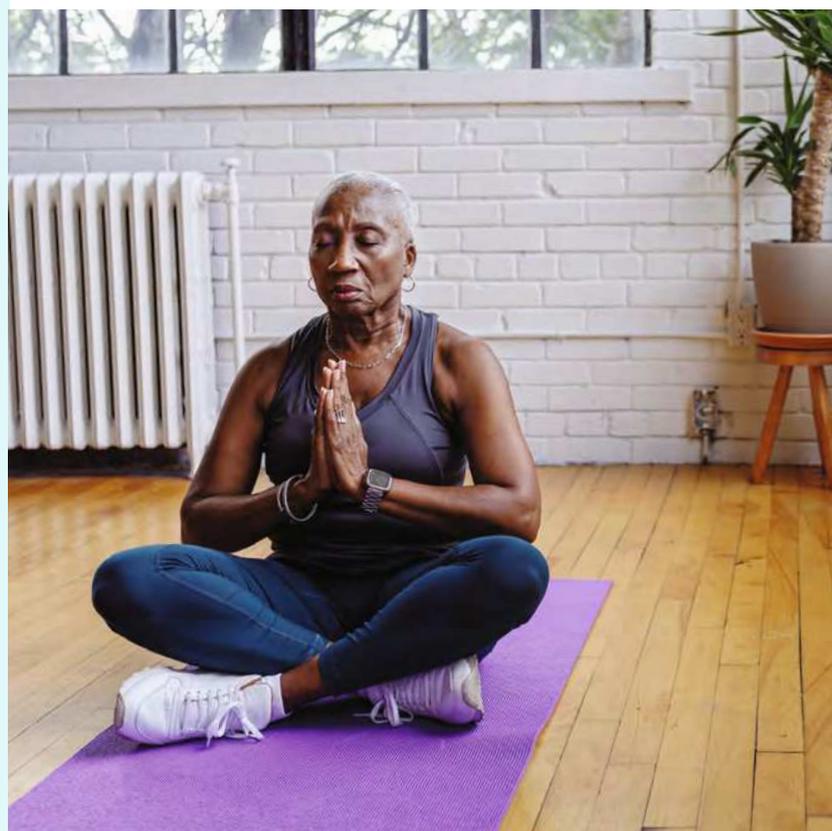
There is, however, plenty of evidence showing that fast workouts can be as effective as slower workouts if they're done in a certain way — and that could in turn save you time. For example, electro muscle stimulation (EMS) allows users to get nearly the same out of a 20-minute workout as they would in 90 minutes.

“EMS is the elicitation of muscle contraction using electric impulses,” says Lewis Thompson, of Exerceo Training. “The impulses cause the muscles to contract, so the result is similar to the actual movement and regular contractions of the muscles.”

“During traditional strength training, the brain sends impulses which stimulate certain muscles to contract. However, not all muscles have a well-developed connection to the brain and these muscles are not activated as easily, and therefore they will not develop so well. But by sending electric impulses directly to these motoric nerves, even the weakly connected muscles are activated while using EMS.”

You may not need a high-tech piece of equipment to increase your exercise output in a similar way, however. HIIT (high intensity interval training) also helps you burn more calories in a shorter period of time precisely because you push your body with less and more intensity in a short space of time.

The idea is that you have periods of one or more minutes where you push your body through an intense pace, then periods of around 45 seconds to a minute where you are still exercising but at around 75% in terms of effort. Exercising in this way can mean workouts are quicker — and so free up more precious time to write that novel!



Take a slow breath

Yes, even your breathing could do with adjusting if you want to get more out of every minute in your day. Thinking about how you breathe when you attempt certain tasks could help you get them done more quickly, simply because you are better able to focus.

“Our thoughts affect the way we breathe, and the way we breathe affects our thoughts. When we're trying to do anything quickly, we're usually thinking quickly, and that makes our breathing speed up,” says Stuart Sandeman, founder of Breathpod and host of BBC Radio 1's *Decompression Sessions*.

“When we're really trying to focus on a task, we often hold our breath. Our breathing becomes very erratic: we breathe quickly and then hold our breath, causing our carbon dioxide levels to rise, followed by a gasp of air to try and balance the body out.”

“Because our breathing rate affects our heart rate, and our heart rate sends signals to our brain, we develop an incoherent heart rhythm when we

“Our thoughts
affect the way
we breathe.”



rush tasks, and that confuses our brain and harms our performance. It's the same when we multitask. Though multi-tasking is really a myth, we're just jumping between tasks and losing productivity.

"I often talk about 'pre-task focus'. What we want is to be calm, energised and motivated before we begin work. And this is all about finding balance between our 'on' and 'off' states, which is what we mean by 'heart coherence'. I often tell people to 'box breathe' to get into this state. It's super simple and anyone can do it right away..."

"You breathe in for four, hold for four, breathe out for four, and hold for four. You can repeat that until you feel ready to go.

"When we sit down at our desk, we naturally enter this calm and focused state. You can start to do this by box breathing at intervals throughout the day and — this is really important — always trying to breathe through the nose and not the mouth. This small intervention will work wonders over time. I even have clients put tape over their mouths when performing tasks if they don't have to speak so that they get used to breathing through the nose. Believe me, it works!"

While multi-tasking may not be a good way to give yourself more time, there's nothing wrong with combining activities that are complementary — and that can save you time. Eating lunch while meeting a friend is a great way to combine two activities that work well together.

Meeting friends is something Barbara Jermyn, 73, has prioritised even more since the pandemic and she combines it with other enjoyable activities. "When I'm in France, I meet up with other women every Saturday morning down by the market near the quayside where we buy a coffee and chat.

"When in London I meet up with a group of women, 'The Jollies', every Friday in a cafe prior to going for a walk. This regular get-together means we can informally meet up without having to arrange dates and times. We can off-load our worries, support each other and laugh."

Use the time today, not tomorrow



Barbara makes time for fun.

For Barbara, the pandemic brought a realisation that time is not only precious but that now is the time to use it wisely. And while it's tempting to think you will get to writing that novel, learn guitar

or whatever else 'once you're retired' or when you have more time, it simply doesn't work that way.

In fact, busier people — whether retired or not — tend to have more time for their passions because they manage their time to ensure there's always space for what they really love to do.



Judy Green

Former teacher Judy Green, 75, has always had to be skilled with time management. Bringing up a family while being a full-time teacher and head of special needs, as well as being politically active, meant weekdays and weekends were full. But gardening has always been an

activity she dedicated time to. And now, retired, she allows herself to spend more time on that.

Judy volunteered at Bristol Botanic Garden for 15 years, and now spends much of her time on the conservation causes she has always been passionate about. "I've tried to raise awareness and encourage passers-by to plant pollinator-friendly plants by creating butterfly and bee-themed artwork for Window Wanderland (a Bristol-based initiative, where residents decorate their windows each year with a different theme).

"Along with others, I've had stalls at Bristol Botanic Garden Bee and Pollination Festival, and also set up stalls in the street where primary school children pass by, to help raise awareness of how to help pollinators — we found that selling butterfly cakes was a great way to draw them in! And now I've moved to a new house, I spend time cultivating a butterfly and bee-attracting garden myself.

"I spend a luxurious amount of time just standing out in my garden or in the local meadows, spotting and recording who visits. From the hurly-burly of the classroom to the buzz and flutter of my passion!" ■



Fashion INSIDER with Gail Rolfe



STYLE EXPERT **GAIL ROLFE** SHARES
HER ADVICE ON DRESSING UP FOR ANY
SPECIAL OCCASION THIS SPRING.

After 40 years of dressing for special occasions I have finally come to the conclusion that I was misguided in the way I approached very special 'dress up' events.

From the '80s onwards, each outfit took months of deliberation, from selecting the dress or suit, investing in a hat — on several occasions customising a plain straw hat with flowers that took hours to sew on — to the careful choice of handbag and shoes.

In 1986, I fell in love with a pair of shoes that were worn by Linda Evangelista and Christy Turlington in a Vogue fashion feature. They were red and cream striped canvas and leather slingbacks and became the starting point that determined my whole outfit for that year's weddings.

I don't regret for one moment the investments, as I still possess some of those most favourite items. But my rationale has changed. Now, I no longer wish to invest in dresses that scream, 'I am for special occasions only', only designed to be worn for 'best'. My wardrobe wants a dress and, perhaps, a jacket or coat, that are fit for multiple use. That can be jazzed up with a phenomenal hat, shoes, jewellery and a classy handbag for when I am asked to a wedding or a significant birthday party.

But I also want to be able to pair with flat Greek sandals, or even Converse trainers. This is how we seem to live our lives today, and onto that, our style. Although the outfit is the centrepiece, it is the carefully curated collection of accessories that will upgrade the finished look from the ordinary to the spectacular.

Peachy perfection

If you required proof that special occasion outfits need not break the bank, this glorious peachy pink chiffon dress with its feminine ruffles and tier is a fabulous example. While the chic straw hat adds a Parisian edge, I might be tempted to pay a visit, online or in reality, to the treasure trove that is VV Rouleaux and buy a few toning flowers to add that certain 'je ne sais quoi'. I love the contrasting tones of the earrings and the gold 'barely there' sandals.



Garden party chic

First of all, green is one of the most popular colours this spring and summer; secondly this soft jersey dress is almost guaranteed not to crease; and lastly it is highly flattering with the deep V-neck trimmed with a soft ruffle and the full sleeves that taper into a shirred cuff. As the dress is a bold and vibrant statement, I have kept the accessories in muted neutral shades. But don't worry, the impact is still there.



Hat, £8, **F&F**



Earrings, £62, **Aspiga**



Necklace, £42, **Agape**



Shoes, £89.95, **Massimo Dutti**



Dress, £130, **Boden**



Fascinator, £69, and bag, £75, both **Phase Eight**



Dress, £275, **Rixo**



Earrings, £34, **Oliver Bonas**



Shoes, £180, **Essen at Cult Mia**

Indoor wedding

A simple, sleek midi tea-dress with balloon sleeves that reach to the elbow is the kind of outfit that withstands intense scrutiny. It is effortlessly ageless, and a timeless fashion investment. A dress like this is an essential ingredient in almost any wardrobe. It's easy to slip on and a joy to wear. Everyone needs at least one dress that will never date. This will look just as amazing for any formal, smart occasion with all the "dress it up" accessories, as it will worn with ballet flats, sandals or white trainers and a straw bag.

Style tips



Rental is the new way to temporarily enhance your wardrobe. If you want to look understated and elegant, this is the style of bag I would choose. Chanel Coco Lady flap bag, from £145 for four days rental from Bag Butler.

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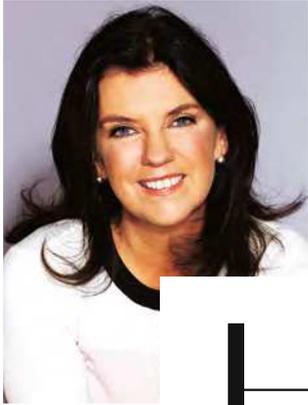


Invitation to a wedding, nothing to wear, and on a budget? Then renting a dress is the perfect solution. Dress by The Vampire's Wife costs from £173, while the retail price is £1,595, from Hurr.

.....



You've fallen in love with a pair of shoes that are way beyond your means, so instead borrow them for a few days. Chanel two-tone pumps, from £12 per day at Wardrobe HQ. ■



DR DAWN HARPER'S

HEALTH SECRETS

BLOOD PRESSURE — DO YOU KNOW YOURS? OUR EXPERT AND GP, DR DAWN HARPER, TELLS YOU WHY IT'S CRUCIAL TO KEEP TRACK OF YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE HEALTH.

You could probably tell me your weight and dress size in an instant. In fact, you may even know that you are one size in one retailer and another in a different store. But how many of us know important numbers like our blood pressure and our cholesterol level?

Last month, I saw a patient in surgery who, by her own admission, has lived life in the fast lane. She is at least a stone overweight, smoked as a younger woman and drinks significantly more than the recommended 14 units of alcohol each week. She has been, up until

now, “getting away with it”, but when I saw her with an unrelated problem recently and took her blood pressure, she was surprised to learn that it was very high.

Like so many people, she thought she would get a warning sign, a headache or blurred vision. Contrary to popular belief, most people with high blood pressure don't get symptoms, but undiagnosed hypertension increases the risk of serious illnesses like heart disease or stroke.

Blood pressure varies in all of us. It is supposed to go up when we are stressed, in pain or exercising, but it should come back down again.

I liken blood pressure to driving a car. If you occasionally put your foot on the throttle to accelerate past a slow obstacle, your car is unlikely to come to any harm. If, however, you put your foot flat on the floor every time you get behind the wheel and drive at breakneck speed, eventually the engine will come under strain.

It is the same with blood pressure — undiagnosed hypertension puts the heart under strain and just like your car, you may not have any idea by looking at the bodywork!



What is high blood pressure?

High blood pressure (hypertension) is diagnosed when there is a sustained rise in blood pressure. We measure blood pressure in two readings, systolic and diastolic. The systolic is the high reading, which is the maximum pressure in our arteries when the heart is pumping and the lower, diastolic reading, is the minimum pressure in the arteries when the heart is relaxing. It is measured in millimetres of mercury (mmHg). When I was at medical school, we were taught that blood pressure should be 100 plus your age (or less) over 80. That would mean that 160/80 would have been deemed a normal blood pressure for a 60-year-old. Today, we like everyone to have a blood pressure of 140/90 or less.



Regular exercise can help to lower blood pressure, says Dr Harper.



What causes high blood pressure?

Hypertension is what we call a multifactorial disease. Your risk of developing high blood pressure will depend on lots of factors, some which you can't do anything about and many of which you can.

Factors beyond your control which may increase your risk of hypertension include having type 1 diabetes, being of Afro-Caribbean or Asian descent, having a family history of high blood pressure or having other underlying medical problems like kidney disease.

The factors that you can influence include having type 2 diabetes, being overweight, not taking regular exercise, drinking to excess, having high stress levels, and eating a lot of salt.



When should you treat high blood pressure?

I have already mentioned that blood pressure changes all the time in any one individual. If your doctor suspects your blood pressure is high, they will probably repeat it on several occasions to confirm that it is consistently up.

If your blood pressure is between 160/100 and 140/90, your doctor may well suggest addressing some of the lifestyle measures mentioned above. If you are overweight and do little or no exercise, making small changes to your lifestyle may be all that is needed to bring your blood pressure into the normal range. If, however, you have a normal body mass index, eat healthily and exercise regularly, your GP will probably start medication sooner.

There are lots of different medicines available to treat high blood pressure. All drugs have side effects and, as high blood pressure usually causes no symptoms, it can be tempting to give up on treatment if it is making you feel unwell. Please don't, but do speak to your doctor. Some side effects lessen over time and if they don't there is always an alternative.



Should I use a home monitor?

I am a huge fan of home monitors. "White coat hypertension" (high blood pressure in clinic) is much more common than most people believe. I find it useful to ask patients to take their blood pressure at home twice a day, at different times of the day, every day for a week and then ask them to bring their machine and readings into surgery. If home readings are good but the surgery reading is high, if it correlates with my machine, I know we can rely on home readings. This has allowed me to reduce medication and even stop it on many an occasion. You can buy them from around £25.



Are salt substitutes worth taking?

Salt substitutes contain less sodium chloride and have added potassium chloride. They are now widely available in most supermarkets and have been shown to reduce blood pressure and risk of stroke and heart disease.

They are certainly worth considering, but I would advise against adding any salt to your meals. Human taste buds adapt very quickly. Initially your food will taste bland, but you can add flavour with herbs and spices and after just two weeks, your taste buds will have recalibrated. Try it for a fortnight and then try adding the salt you would normally have enjoyed, and you will wonder how you ever enjoyed such salty food!



What about smoking?

Interestingly smoking doesn't directly increase blood pressure, but it increases your risk of diseases we are trying to avoid like heart attacks and strokes, so anyone with high blood pressure should do everything they can to stop smoking. Your GP will be able to advise on local services. ■

4 WAYS TO WEAR electric florals

ABSTRACT, VINTAGE, BOLD AND DITSY; FLORALS ARE HAVING A MOMENT. TAKE A CLASSIC PATTERN, TEAM THEM WITH BRIGHTS AND SPARK THEM INTO SOMETHING COMPLETELY FABULOUS.

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...

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Jigsaw



Handbag, £19.99,
Mango



Blazer, £55,
Kaleidoscope



Trainers, £65,
Crew Clothing Company



FLORAL JOY

Handbag, £49,
Kaleidoscope



Dress, £70,
Cath Kidston



Leather jacket, £200,
Joe Browns



Bracelet, £23,
Jona Jewellery



Ballet pumps, £60,
Dune London



RETRO CHIC

Blouse, £135,
Hope Fashion

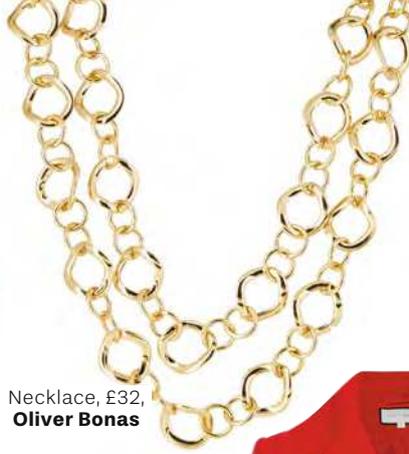


Scarf, £75,
Ted Baker



ALL IN THE DETAILS

Necklace, £32,
Oliver Bonas



Coat, £85,
Lipsy London



Earrings, £44,
Ana Luisa



Skirt, £165,
Rixo



Blouse, £35,
Joe Browns



Ring, £39.95,
Seol + Gold



Sandals,
£29,
Office



Finishing touches ...

Belt, £60,
Boden



Necklace, £28,
Oliver Bonas



Jumper, £35.99,
Mango



Handbag,
£17.99, **Zara**



Dress, £125,
Jigsaw



Blazer, £160,
Boden



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Putting Profhilo to the test

PLATINUM'S DEPUTY ED, ALI GRAVES, REVIEWED THE LATEST IN SKIN TREATS PROMISING TO BOOST SKIN WITH GLOWING DEWINESS. READER KAREN ALSO TESTED A NON-SURGICAL FACELIFT. THE QUESTION IS, DID THEY REALLY WORK?



Banishing fine lines and wrinkles. Smoothing our skin texture. Hydrating from the inside.

Phrases promised by many a beautician and clinic in recent years, but they can sometimes feel a little overwhelming. I love to do my bit to keep on top of feeling and looking refreshed and less, well, knackered — without attempting to look a decade younger. A few years younger though, maybe...

A keen guinea pig and excited by the newest option on the block, I was delighted when Dr Nestor's prestigious clinic in Edinburgh welcomed me to give a brand new in-salon treatment a whirl. Profhilo is the procedure, and once I'd gotten around to saying the name properly it was time to head to Scotland's capital to let the experts create a masterpiece, with my face as their canvas!

Dubbed as 'tissue remodelling', Profhilo is quite simply hyaluronic acid at its best. I'm very aware of beauty acids these days — we all are. Most are locked within the formulas of the many moisturisers, creams, serums and oils on

my dressing table, but this can only penetrate skin at a superficial level. Don't get me wrong, they can still do a good job, but Profhilo contains one of the highest concentrations of hyaluronic acid available and delivers prolonged efficacy, integrating into the tissue where it then really gets to work.

"It restores the levels of hyaluronic acid naturally found in the skin," says Dr Rona Forrest, aesthetic practitioner, GP and my expert beautician for the morning.

"Quite simply, it's effective. You can expect improvements in skin texture, elasticity and hydration, with the boost of an almost immediate tightening effect in some cases."

For best results, treatments are spread over two appointments, (around 4–6 weeks apart for optimum benefits) with each one lasting around up to an hour for the treatment itself, plus some

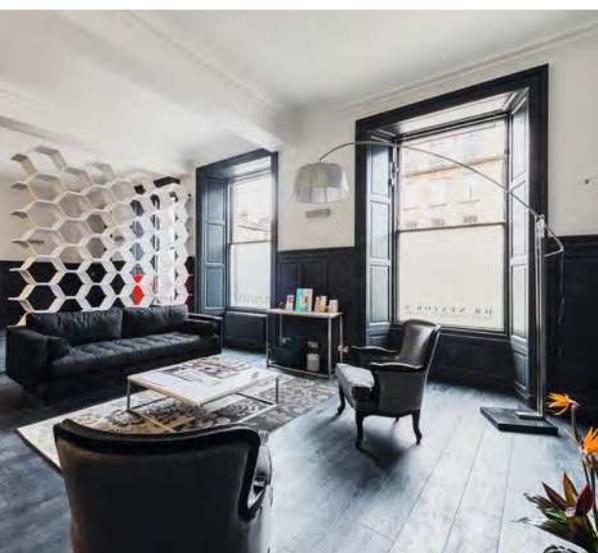
important chat time and health questions. Dr Forrest and I also discussed what I considered to be my problem areas — hello forehead lines, enlarged pores and reasonably deep-set nasal folds (the lines that run from your outer nostrils down to the corners of your mouth) — before getting into some important, post-procedure guidance. No sun, no make-up, no exercise and limited mask-wearing for the next 24 hours, if possible, to avoid any irritation. After all, I was about to be injected 10 times!

Dr Forrest assured me that although the procedure can sting a little, she's fast, gentle and attentive, and has a specially developed injection technique that helps to reduce pain and downtime.

I'll be honest. I'm no novice when it comes to the world of skin treatments. I'm partial to giving any newbie around a fair trial, from laser peels to fillers, and Botox to the latest facial. Nothing is off the treatment table for me, so I was excited to try Profhilo. I have a high pain threshold and enjoy the whole clinic experience — from lengthy, friendly chats with my beautician, to the finer details such as sensational clinic scents and the luxury and glamour of it all.

And Dr Nestor's plush clinic certainly »

Below: Deputy ed Ali with mum and Platinum ambassador Karen, post-treatment and glowing!



Profhilo contains one of the highest concentrations of hyaluronic acid.

doesn't disappoint. I have chatted to Dr Nestor on previous occasions about maintaining youthful skin. Hint — get out of that sun, or at least protect it for dear life! It really is the one major piece of beauty advice for all ages that I hear most often; sun damage to the skin is the most ageing and dehydrating thing you can possibly do to yourself.

We're all guilty of indulging in it a little too much over the years — ahem, Ibiza circa 2005 — but if you take anything away from this feature, get that SPF on, all year round.

The clinic is located a 10-minute walk away from Edinburgh's famous Princes Street, and it's easy enough to find parking, with a free and dedicated parking spot belonging to the clinic. It's busy so you'll have to be lucky to bag a space, but if not, there's ample street parking all around. Spacious, modern and bright,

the clinic feels clean and welcoming — and a complete contrast to the old-fashioned streets of the city outside. A quick toilet break before getting started also proved lovely with beautiful spa products to use — it's the little touches that make all the difference to my experience.

Dr Forrest, who carried out her initial aesthetic training in London's Harley Street and continues to work under Dr Nestor's mentorship, wastes no time in getting to work. Some professional 'before' photos later and I was up on the bed; comfortable, apprehensive but ready. My face was divided into sections, using a soft pencil to mark where my injection sites would be. Everyone is the same and will receive five injections to each side of the face, so 10 in total. And yes, you will need to count down to get through the procedure and yes, I did laugh at the prospect of holding

a squeazy stress ball at first... but by appointment two, I knew I needed it.

The pain level isn't something to be sniffed at — so be warned! Dr Forrest explained that the experts behind the creation of Profhilo considered a light anaesthetic cream or injection but deemed it unnecessary because of how fast the treatment is. The injection sites are equal on both sides of your face and are located on your chin, lower and upper jawline, outside of the eye and inner cheek — and they hurt. Some areas are worse than others, and of course everyone is different but I found them to be a bit of a slow burn. At first I felt a pinch then almost a wave of 'heat' or perhaps that's the pain, I wasn't sure. But Dr Forrest assured me that not only is this normal, it's a result of the thicker liquid consistency, meaning a thicker needle is needed. You can almost feel the pressure of it

being pushed into the skin. For those familiar with Botox, where a thinner needle and less viscous liquid is used, or even filler, which is a little thicker, but less so than Profhilo, you'll notice a difference. And if you're not familiar with other injectables — then good luck!

Joking aside, there's no long-lasting pain or side effects, and it's all worth the effort. You can expect potential bruising or swelling, although I experienced none of these, other than facial 'bumps' that had all but disappeared by the evening.

After as little as around 25 minutes of actual treatment time, I was all done and ready to head home. Then five weeks later, I returned

to undergo an identical second session.

What's also worth mentioning is that Profhilo isn't restricted to treating only your face. Plenty of clients are using it to spruce up other areas, too. Necks, elbows, hands and even knees have been smoothed and gently plumped, with incredible results. There's even a brand new Profhilo Body treatment, targeting areas such as wrinkled tums or loose underarms before heading on your next jolly.

You might read elsewhere that this procedure is perfect as a lunchtime pick-me-up but I wouldn't advise it. Although instantly pain-free as soon as the final needle left my skin,

those red bumps at the injection sites were considerable — some more prominent than others. This is normal though and should be expected.

"The consistency of Profhilo is almost honey-like so I have to use a little pressure to inject it into the skin layers and then it can take up to a few hours for the liquid to almost 'melt' and dissipate in the surrounding face," Dr Forrest explains.

"It's always nice to have this treatment then go home, just relax and let the magic happen."

And while the consistency is like honey, and the pain is akin to bee stings, I can confirm that no flying insect was involved or hurt during my skin-beautifying journey.

Will I be back? 100%! A little discomfort is far outweighed by the results. I'd say at around the four-week mark after session two, I really reaped the benefits. My skin looks and feels almost dewy, as if I've drenched it in a whole tub of moisturiser, except I might not have even put any on that morning yet. My enlarged cheek pores appeared 'filled' and smaller, with more plumped volume; my jowls felt tighter and lifted; and without a word of a lie, in photographs now, my skin looks as good as if I'd applied a filter. Now if ever there was a 21st century seal of approval, it's that right there! If you fancy trying Profhilo, I think you'll love the results.

Two recommended sessions of Profhilo at Dr Nestor's clinic will cost from £500+

To book, call 0131 467 1450, or visit drnestor.co.uk for more information.



Before



After



Before



After

Skin hydration



Skin texture



Pain factor



Overall effectiveness



PROS

- ✔ Beautifully dewy skin for up to six months
- ✔ Fast — all done and dusted in around an hour
- ✔ Softer results than from filler

CONS

- ✘ Two sessions recommended for best results
- ✘ The pain! Everyone's different and it's momentary, but expect to feel it
- ✘ Can be expensive if two sessions are needed, twice a year »

What is a non-surgical facelift?

Facial threads and Brow lift using Cog PDO threads are non-surgical, minimally invasive cosmetic procedures designed to provide a more youthful facial appearance without leaving scars, and with minimal downtime.

PDO threads are used to lift and tighten the face and the eyebrows and the part of the face above the eyes to remove wrinkles, brow lines, and correct saggy or drooping eyebrows, along with creating a more defined shape to the jaw and cheeks.

The latest innovation from South Korea, Cog PDO threads consist of a dissolvable suture made from a complex sugar called PDO (polydioxanone), which has been used in biomedical and pharmaceutical applications for many years. It's non-allergic, non-antigenic and is completely biodegradable, meaning the body will completely absorb the PDO material over time.

The insertion of threads to lift immediately provides a rejuvenating effect, whilst the PDO threads actually stimulate the production of collagen, helping to rejuvenate the skin over time, increasing firmness and volume.

IN THE KNOW

- Anaesthetic injections are used
- You can expect bruising, tenderness and inflammation afterwards
- Results last up to 18 months
- Prices from £350 - £850 depending on areas treated/ salon choice

“I needed a boost — and fast!”

A surgical facelift can feel extreme — and comes with risk — but non-surgical facelifts and brow lifts are readily available at aesthetic clinics across the UK. We spoke to Platinum ambassador, Karen Howe

(58), who is unsure about the commitment of a full-blown facelift, but fancied experimenting with its closest cousin first.

“The females of our family have inherited a rounded face and jowls, especially as we all age, and although when I was younger my rounder face actually kept me looking younger for longer, I looked in the mirror recently and finally had enough. I just didn't like the reflection I could see looking back. It's not that I'm anti-getting older, but more that I'm anti-looking-tired, and sleep, rest or days off work just weren't cutting it. I looked permanently exhausted. I needed a boost — and fast.

“It was at my local aesthetic clinic that I first heard of a 'non-surgical facelift.' In a far-off, Lottery-winning dream I'd definitely consider a proper facelift, but for now, this sounded like a real winner and I wanted to know more.

“Before I knew it, I had been in for my consultation, booked an appointment and it was all-systems go. My first appointment was for the Cog PDO Thread Lower Face Lift, which involves threads inserted up by my cheekbones to basically pull everything up. Natural collagen then builds around the threads so that once they dissolves, I was left with a lifted, youthful effect.

“The sorest part was of course the anaesthetic injections but after that I felt nothing, except the unusual 'tugging' and stitching sensation. I'd say the tenderness came afterwards. I was lightly bruised, but it felt more so, and strangely cold weather (I work all day outdoors) made the pain worse.

“My second appointment was to enhance my non-surgical facelift with a Cog PDO Threads Brow lift. Similar to my first appointment, but this time the threads were smaller and inserted high above my brow bone.

“The results from both were nothing short of incredible — and I don't know what was better, the results or how I felt about myself because of the procedures. Either way, a win-win for me.

“For me and my self-esteem this was worth it. The results aren't forever and I think anything's worth a go if you fancy it — why not? These treatments exist and are very popular for a reason.” ■



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STRONGER THAN EVER

TWO WOMEN FROM ORDINARY BACKGROUNDS WENT ON TO DOMINATE THE POP WORLD IN THE '80S. HERE, **PEPSI** AND **SHIRLIE** SPEAK TO **GEMMA CALVERT** ABOUT THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF THEIR INCREDIBLE CAREER.

As backing singers with Wham!, Pepsi Demacque-Crockett and Shirlie Kemp were the envy of every teenage girl. In the thick of '80s pop pandemonium, as bandmates George Michael and Andrew Ridgeley achieved meteoric fame, the 20-somethings travelled the world, performed in front of thousands, stayed in

the most luxurious of hotels and rubbed shoulders with the crème de la crème of show business.

Yet the pals, who first met in 1982 outside London's Finsbury Park Tube station ahead of a rehearsal before Pepsi replaced original backing singer Dee C. Lee, were never affected by the glitzy lifestyle they enjoyed.

Both Londoners who knew first-hand the meaning of financial struggle, Pepsi and Shirlie would turn down glamorous after-parties in favour of late-night chats over

a room service order of tea, sandwiches and crisps. For the girls, the greatest reward from their four *Wham!* years was the formation of their unbreakable friendship.

When Wham! disbanded in June 1986

following a farewell concert at Wembley Stadium, while George became a solo superstar, Pepsi and Shirlie re-launched as a pop duo, releasing tracks including *Heartache* in 1987 then *Goodbye Stranger*, which hit the top five in the same year.

A year later, Shirlie married her long-term love, Spandau Ballet bass player Martin Kemp, a relationship match made by mutual pal George. Then in 1990, a year after her first baby was born, she bowed out of the limelight to become a full-time mum.

40 years on, Pepsi and Shirlie's friendship has survived the test of time, even with 4,000+ miles now between them.

Pepsi, 63, real name Helen, lives a simple life in St Lucia where she moved 13 years ago, while Shirlie, 59, recently moved with Martin, 60, into a new home in Hertfordshire. On the afternoon of our group Zoom call, she is taking a well-earned breather after a day of painting and decorating.

"I've been working hard. All I'm thinking now is after this interview, I'm going to get in the bath, make dinner and be asleep by 9pm," says Shirlie, eliciting a knowing chuckle from Pepsi.

"Pepsi's laughing because she's called me before at 7pm and I've been in bed! I'm always so busy. Busy being busy!"

Shirlie, who has two children with Martin — photographer Harley Moon, 32, and Roman, 29, a TV regular and DJ with Capital FM — has dabbled in music over the years and in 2019 released a swing album with her famous husband.

Pepsi, who went on to work in musicals, now runs a sailing-chartering business in St Lucia with her husband, James Crockett. Then during lockdown, the friends collaborated for the first time in decades, to pen a joint memoir. The book, *It's All In Black And White*, delves into their years with Wham! and life afterwards...





From star-studded nights in LA to TV couches, Pepsi and Shirlie have seen it all.

HOW DID THE BOOK COME ABOUT?

P: I'd been writing a book based on my parents, who were part of the Windrush generation. I'd share chapters with Shirlie then we started talking about our own childhood, then pictures started coming out. When we started sharing memories, I said, "I think it's about time we did something with this" — retelling our story. Two young girls from ordinary backgrounds who end up being in one of the biggest pop bands in the '80s, travelling the world...

S: When we decided to do the book, I was worried because my memory is so bad. Pepsi would say something and I'd reply, "Did we?!" She'd hold up pictures she'd taken and it was like I was rediscovering my life. It was therapeutic.

P: Travelling the world with Wham! was our university and reigniting the memories brought on an appreciation for where we've been and what we had done.

Tell us about a forgotten memory that resurfaced.

S: When Pepsi and I went to America to hit the American market, our manager was Bob Ellis, who was married to Diana Ross. One night, Bob took us out for dinner in LA with Will Smith, who was just a young boy. I remember thinking, "Wow, how did we get here?" Bob was so old-school. It was such an experience to see how people reacted to him. That's an emotional memory, not about ego.

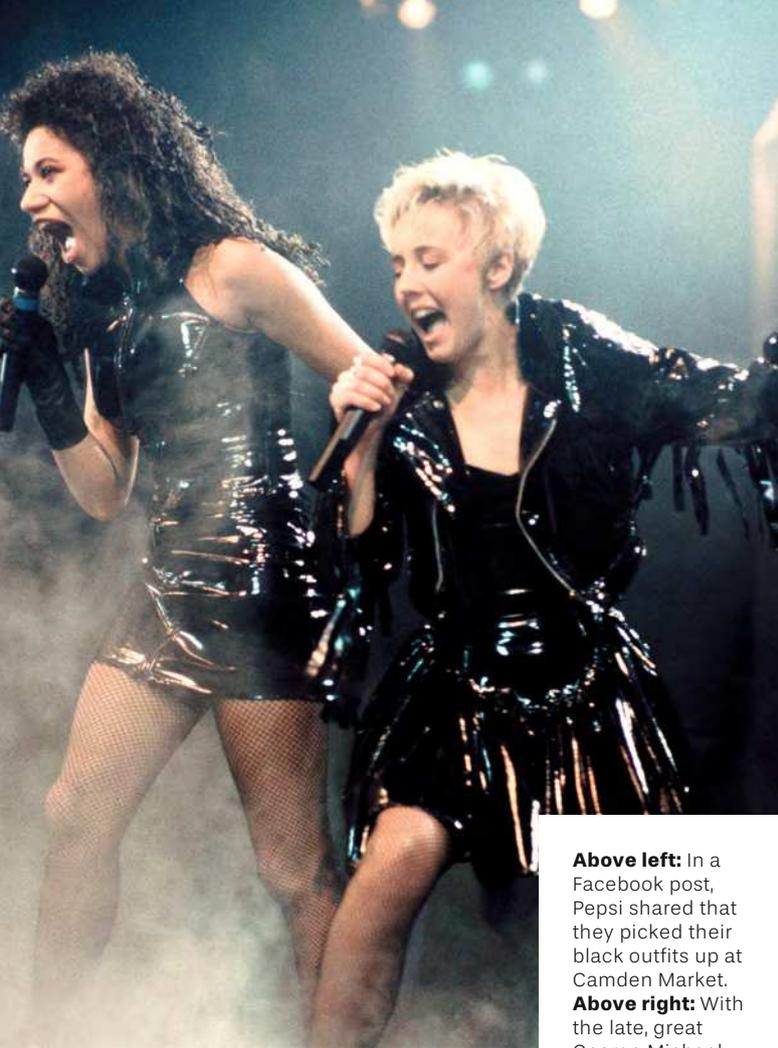
P: America was a big deal. When I first went there with Wham!, my mother said to me, "Find out if it's true that you can buy a gallon of orange juice in the supermarket" and "Is it true that plates are piled high with food?" At breakfast, Shirlie would have a little bowl of cereal, but I'd have a plate topped high with pancakes. I was living for my mother!

WHEN WRITING THE BOOK, WHAT PARTS OF YOUR LIVES WERE TOUGH TO REVISIT?

S: For years, I suffered from endometriosis and it ruined me. Every month, I had to take four to five days out because I'd be crippled in pain. I'd end up having methadone shots because I was so unwell and one time I collapsed and was rushed to hospital. I ended up having a hysterectomy in my 40s, which — thank God — finished all that pain. I felt sad looking back because endometriosis wasn't recognised then. When I was earning some money, I finally went to a private doctor and when she said the word 'endometriosis', after years of being told I simply had to suffer pain, it was incredible, but she warned it could make me infertile. I really needed to be a mother, so then I was like, "Martin, quick! I've got to have a baby!"

P: In the book, I mention having a miscarriage in 2003 and when that happened, I didn't share it with anybody. Realising "I can't have children — I've tried and I can't" made me question who I was as a woman and pushed me through into another phase of my life, where I looked at what I was doing and where I wanted to go. Not being a mother allowed me a certain amount of freedom, but at the time it was incredibly lonely. I felt like a failure. I'm so lucky to have such a wonderful bond with Shirlie's children. I remember Harley being a little baby in our hotel room in LA, crying our eyes out because the jet lag was real. Shirlie had her when she was a hard-at-work musician, trying to make things work. In the end, she said, "Pepsi, I can't do this any more" and I totally understood. Shirlie's a fantastic mother. She's there to support them, but allows them to be free. That's a beautiful thing. »

“Travelling the world with Wham! was our university.”



Above left: In a Facebook post, Pepsi shared that they picked their black outfits up at Camden Market.
Above right: With the late, great George Michael.



SHIRLIE, YOU MUST BE SO PROUD OF YOUR KIDS.

S: My pride lies in the fact that they're go-getters. They never come and ask Martin and me for anything. They go out in the world and make it work. Both of them are workaholics, but the bad side of that is I rarely see them. They work too much!

DURING THOSE EARLY DAYS WITH WHAM! WHEN DID YOU REALISE YOU WERE PART OF SOMETHING HISTORIC?

S: I never thought that. George and Andrew were my friends so when you're in a bubble, the bubble just keeps moving. I wasn't very ambitious as a young girl, I didn't think about earning money or anything other than, "Are we going out? Are we going to get something nice to wear?" Our riders were very simple — a cup of tea, a sandwich and some crisps!

P: I sensed something the first time I performed with Wham! at Capital Radio's *Best Disco In Town* show to 'try out'. I was on stage, doing a dance routine in front of these screaming girls, thinking, "Oh. My. Goodness. There's something in this. People like them."

Did Wham! fans ever try to get to the guys via you?

S: Girls would try to befriend us then say "What's George's room number?" or "Could we come and give you a gift?" I didn't blame them for trying. But no one got past us!

P: The Japanese fans would sob as they approached us and the more we tried to calm them down, the more they cried. They'd come with beautifully wrapped gifts for George and Andrew and seemed traumatised by the potential of having a connection with them through a gift.

WHAT ARE YOUR FONDEST MEMORIES OF GEORGE MICHAEL?

S: He was one of the loveliest people I'd ever met and the kindest friend I've ever had. We were childhood friends and he was a good confidant. Look at all the songs he wrote after I'd had a chat with him!

P: George was a very deep thinker. You always knew when he was thinking because he had this frown. Another thing I loved about him was when he came up with an idea in the studio, he always shared it with Shirlie and me. I valued that. Initially, I stood back, trying to be the professional newbie, but it didn't work for very long because all three of them — Shirlie, Andrew and George — embraced me and brought me into the fold.

SHIRLIE, WHEN YOU WERE RECORDING YOUR DEBUT ALBUM WITH MARTIN, YOU SPOKE ABOUT FEELING GEORGE'S PRESENCE. DID YOU AND PEPSI SENSE THAT WHEN WRITING THE BOOK?

S: I wanted him to be around to see us making that album because I know he would have loved it. The book is different, I don't think, "I wish you could read our book" because he knows our story.

P: For me, when I came to the UK to promote the book, I arrived in Gatwick, sat down at Costa and *Careless Whisper* came on the radio. I didn't want to ignore it. I thought, "Yeah, mate. I'm here. We're doing it." I took it as a bit of a sign.

ARE YOU TWO PLANNING TO RECORD ANOTHER ALBUM?

S: At the moment, we haven't got plans for it. We were writing songs and Pepsi was going to come over but because of Covid, she couldn't. To do music, we need to be together but if someone offered us [the chance] to do an album, I'd jump at it. I'd like to do another swing album.

P: I'm Ella (Fitzgerald) and who are you?

S: I'll be Doris. We could dress up! Doris Day was inspired by Ella Fitzgerald to become a singer, just as I'm inspired by you, Peps.

DESCRIBE EACH OTHER'S GREATEST QUALITIES...

S: How much Pepsi cares for me and forgives me. I can be really annoying sometimes but she lets it go or tells me off, if I'm out of control with my ideas or my bossing. When your husband's upset you and asks, "What's wrong?" you say, "Nothing!" With Pepsi and I, when something's wrong, we immediately snap it out.

P: Shirlie's an Aries and Aries women are quite bossy, but I can accept [that] and let it go, knowing she just wants to do the best she possibly can. She's also really kind... and has really pretty feet!

YOU DESCRIBE GOING THROUGH WHAM! UNIVERSITY TOGETHER. DO YOU STILL LEARN FROM EACH OTHER?

S: Yes. Only with Pepsi do I chat about philosophy. I don't have another friend with whom I can talk about my thoughts on a book we've read. We both went through a phase, especially in the '90s, of reading every self-help book on the planet, and even when Pepsi lived in New Zealand (in the early noughties), we would chat and compare the books. There's always a nice exchange about thoughts and life. We're always WhatsApping and FaceTiming and leaving voice messages.

P: Shirlie was very funny this morning. When I leave a voice message I tend to ramble and Shirlie was like, "Well, that was very long".



HAVE YOU BOTH BEEN OFFERED REALITY TV OPPORTUNITIES, FOR EXAMPLE STRICTLY COME DANCING?

P: I've been asked by a publicist if it's something I would do and I'm still umm-ing and ahh-ing about it. I love the idea of wearing the frocks, but I've never been a one, two, three-step dancer, despite doing theatre. I'd be really worried for my family, that I'd let them down!

S: Never say never but it's not an ambition. I would love to do comedy. Pepsi and I would be great with the whole *French & Saunders* [thing]. Their friendship is a bit like ours. When we're together, we start ad-libbing. All I've got to do is a voice and we're in character. Comedy is a dream job.

YOU BOTH LOOK INCREDIBLE. WHAT ARE YOUR STAY-YOUNG SECRETS?

S: I have Botox once a year. Pepsi's never had it and doesn't need it but I really like it. I think it makes a big difference. I go to bed really early, don't stay out late, don't drink much, have never smoked and I drink lots of water.

P: I love Lancôme lotions and potions but if I don't get my sleep, I look haggard and drawn and I'm miserable, angry and upset. As I've got older, like Shirlie, I go to bed really early and I adore getting up early in St Lucia to see the world wake up. Looking out of the window and seeing the palm trees and hearing the cockerels, then the dogs barking — it's a beautiful thing.

S: I've been to visit twice. The first time was when Martin and I got married in 1988 and the second time was in 2013 when we renewed our vows. What else can I do out there?!

ARE YOU PLANNING TO MEET UP SOON?

P: We're due a holiday, a really lovely family holiday. Even if we met somewhere in the middle in another part of the world, I think that's on the cards.

S: We could go to Florida.

P: Really?

S: I don't know. Anywhere's good at the moment!

Pepsi & Shirlie: It's All In Black And White by Pepsi Demacque-Crockett and Shirlie Kemp, £20, published by Welbeck. ■





Photos: RNLI/Anna Burn

'WILL YOU BE MY PROTECTION AT SEA, WITH A GIFT IN YOUR WILL?'

Daf Griffiths, Volunteer Crew Member, Trearddur Bay Lifeboat Station

'She was just metres from the rocks. A surfer in difficulty in the worst conditions I've ever experienced. It was a heavy, breaking sea, and almost the entire bay a seething mass of foam and spray. The rescue helicopter hadn't arrived yet, so we were her only hope.'

'I don't like to think what could have happened to her – or us – if anything had gone wrong.'

'With only seconds to spare, we pulled her into the lifeboat. Thanks to people like you, our equipment, kit and training kept us safe that day. Our lifeboat withstood the horrendous conditions. Our kit kept us warm and dry. And the helm's skilful boat-handling brought us all safely home.'

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A taste of the Algarve

P144-147



Retro, bold and full of colour

P58-61



Home & AWAY

Colourful home ideas and delicious food and drink in the Algarve are inspiring us this month.

A stunning seaside getaway

P62-65



Discover eco-friendly gardening

P67-69



With summer edging ever closer, we're embracing colour in all its joyful glory this issue. Head over to

p58 to get some fresh new ideas from the Gatenby family's restored Victorian semi, which they've turned into a colourful and fun home. Fans of Cath Kidston will love this property.

Ever thought about opening an Airbnb or boutique holiday let? Learn the ins and outs from a fabulous interior designer who shares the pros and cons of sprucing up a French seaside beach house — it's more hard work than you'd think, but the pay-offs are plentiful.

On p67 we visit Roz Chandler, the owner of Field Gate Flowers, who is trying to raise awareness of the environmental damage caused by importing flowers. Taking action, she set up a business to home-grow blooms of her own.

And for those foodies among us, you definitely don't want to miss our guide to the delicacies on offer in Portugal's glorious Algarve region! »

RETRO, BOLD & *full of colour*

JO AND JONNY GATENBY
HAVE TURNED A DATED
VICTORIAN SEMI INTO A
COLOURFUL FAMILY HOME.



Mirror £15, junk shop; Kalax shelf unit (white) £68.50, Ikea; Tea service from Frankie and Jonny's cookware shop in York.





The old kitchen was small, dark and dated, but by removing a wall and fitting new units, Jo and Jonny have created a practical family space.

As a dance teacher, Jo Gatenby was keen to bring life, movement and colour into the traditional semi she and her husband Jonny bought as a “step-up” family home.

“We knew we needed a bigger house with a garden for our girls to grow up in, but we had a budget to work to,” says Jo. “We found this place and knew we could make it our own by making changes to the layout and bringing it up-to-date.”

They loved its location, overlooking a suburban green and surrounded by trees, but the interior had not been touched since the '60s. The wallpaper was dated, there were electric fires in the main rooms and the units in the tiny kitchen were falling apart.

Rather than try to live in the house and renovate it piecemeal, they decided to complete all the structural work before they moved in.

“We lived with my mum and dad for six months,” says Jo. “We only moved in when the messy work was done and the new kitchen, bathroom and floors were all finished.”

They employed local builders to do all the structural work, starting with the ground floor where they knocked down internal walls between the kitchen, dining and sitting rooms to create a spacious L-shaped open plan living area.

They reopened a bricked-up fireplace, moved the boiler from the kitchen to the garage to create more space for units and replaced a characterless front door with a statement door of »



FAVOURITE *feature*

“The light. Since knocking out walls downstairs the light comes in from both ends of the house.”



solid wood and glowing stained glass.

“We wanted the front of the house to welcome people in, so changing the front door was important to us,” explains Jo. “We wanted to replicate the Art Deco style of earlier semis. Eventually we hope to replace the windows, too.”

With the renovation work completed and new kitchen and bathroom fittings in, Jo and Jonny spent every spare weekend and evening painting the walls, sitting on the floor to eat fish and chips between coats of emulsion.

Only when it was decorated did they move in and add the finishing touches.

“We spent a lot of weekends after that looking for bargain furniture,” says Jo. “We can’t resist anything retro, individual or a bit quirky.”

But when their second daughter, Martha, was born in 2016 they thought they might have to move again — until they realised they could convert the attic into a spacious en suite bedroom.

“There was just a hatch with a pull down ladder on the landing, and you could only stand up straight in one spot in the attic,” recalls Jo.

So in 2017 the builders created a second staircase, raised the ceiling height as much as possible and then installed four Velux windows to create maximum light.

They decided to keep the chimney breast and turn it into a full brick wall, created with additional reclaimed bricks to add warm tones and texture.

“Doing the attic transformed the house,” says Jo.

“It’s not only valuable space, it also makes the whole house feel bigger and it’s perfect as a guest room — although we do sleep in it sometimes because it’s a bit like having a mini-holiday!”

When it came to the finer details, Jo and Jonny already had a lot of furniture from their last home and a collection of colourful prints which reflect Jonny’s passion for ’60s music.

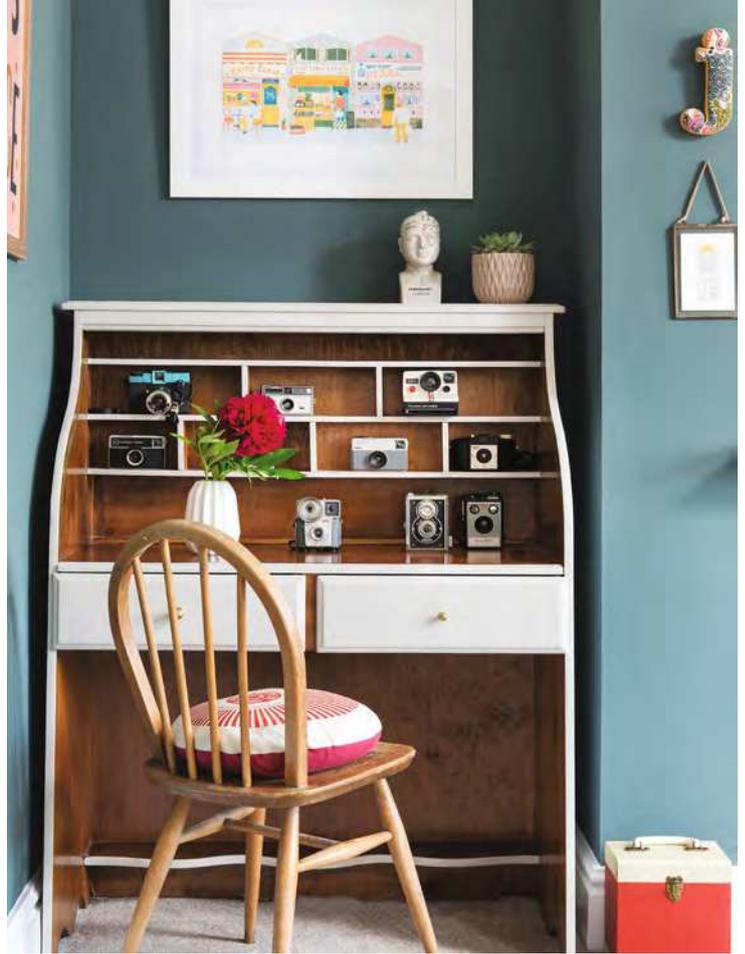
“We try to build on what we already have rather than buy on impulse,” says Jo. “We are drawn towards anything with personality and of good quality. We like strong colours and beautiful, simple lines.

“Jonny is a graphic designer so he has an eye for great design. What we have learned is that you don’t need to spend a lot of money to transform a place and create your own individual style.”



The builder supplied the sink as part of the renovation budget and fitted tongue and groove cladding, which Jo painted in Farrow & Ball Inchyra. Henley Cool Floor tiles £60/m2, Topps Tiles; Grey basket £15, Matalan; Copper toothbrush holder, £3, George at Asda.





FAVOURITE *room*

"The attic bedroom — we sometimes use it for a change and imagine we're on holiday!" ■



Jo loves to find bargain furniture online, like these mid-century drawers picked up on Gumtree.
Similar angle lamp: Tomons Wood Swing arm desk lamp, £27, Amazon; Yellow plant holder £50, Orla Kiely.

A STUNNING seaside getaway

By AMANDINE BERTHON

RIGHT ON THE BEACH, OVERLOOKING THE BAY OF ARCAÇON IN THE SOUTH-WEST OF FRANCE, THIS FAMILY HOLIDAY HOME IS DECORATED IN THE TRADITIONAL STYLE OF THE NEIGHBOURING OYSTER FARMERS' HUTS AND ALLOWS FOR A DREAM HOLIDAY.



The landscaper, Eddy Herriau, imagined the sandy garden, with its local plant species and wooden palisades, as a continuation of the beach. Armchairs from Leclerc. Glasses from Pomax.



Breakfast overlooking the bay is the perfect way to start the morning.

Down on the French Atlantic coast near Bordeaux sits the Bay of Arcachon, a long-time oyster-harvesting spot with sleepy golden-sand beaches.

Interior designer Sylvie Languaud worked with the expat owner, Marie Garnier, to create a stunning seaside holiday home.

"Finding this idyllic place was a dream come true for the sea-loving boaters. They bought it more for its location than for the building itself — a house with 1970s ochre plaster!" explains architect Sandrine Mercurio, who was in charge of the property's transformation alongside Sylvie.

"The clients really liked Sylvie's house that we built in Cap Ferret a few years ago. They gave us carte blanche," Sandrine explains.

The idea was to give local maritime colour to the future beach cabin's architecture and to crown it with the bay's typical ridgepoles.

As the former walls could not legally be destroyed, the stonework was covered in wood. The real challenge was to lodge three bedrooms and a dormitory into the house's footprint. »

"Finding this place was a dream come true."

Interior designer Sylvie Languaud.





"We weren't allowed to extend it. We therefore raised the roof to create an upper floor and arranged staggered levels. Getting all the rooms in was a bit like playing a game of Tetris!" admits the architect.

This rearrangement added 30 square metres to the original 103 square metres. The bedrooms were moved to the rear of the house, to leave the exposed framework and a high ceiling in the living room, thus increasing the feeling of volume.

The interior, harmoniously panelled to coordinate with the façade, captures the blue and white seaside theme. "The owners had no particular style requirements," recalls Sylvie. "They just wanted to give it a relaxed and easy-going atmosphere. This is a beach house where everyone is in and out the whole time!"

The designer limited herself to just two shades for the walls and the joinery. "I created a unity of colour and style throughout the house. The colour in the dining room recalls the kitchen's tones and is further reflected in the bedrooms and bathrooms.

"These subtle blues, tinged with greens and greys, blend in with the natural surroundings, as does the sandy garden. When the gate is open onto the beach, it feels as if it's all just one huge garden!"

The dining area was enhanced by a blue band to recall the tones of the ocean. **Below:** The welcoming lounge area is fitted out with a custom-made sofa bench where parasols and cushions can be stored.





Left: The garden opens onto the beach and the natural salt marsh reserves, covered by the ocean at high tide.

Below: The master bedroom overlooks the enchanting panorama thanks to its wide window.

Turning a house into a holiday home

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Looking for a property? Choose an area that you like visiting yourself — that way you can enjoy the benefits, too. Also, consider the type of people who might visit your holiday home and what they're looking for. Areas like the Algarve attract a lot of couples in their 50s and 60s who are interested in golfing and are looking to relax, so if you're interested in a property there, maybe consider an apartment in one of the many golf resorts, or close to the biggest towns like Vilamoura or Albufeira.

KEEP YOURSELF RIGHT LEGALLY

Speak to a solicitor and accountant about what you need to know to tick all the legal boxes. This includes claiming any allowances you're entitled to, making sure you've got the right mortgage for your property, notifying the taxman and keeping track of your books.

FURNISH IT SUITABLY

Remember you're not furnishing your holiday let for you to live in — it's for your guests. It needs to be the perfect mix of comfort, style and practicality and appeal to a wide range of tastes. For colour palettes, stick to soft neutrals and light, refreshing shades for any accents. Fluffy white towels and bedsheets never go wrong and add a luxurious feel. Consider the little added extras, too — a welcome basket, body washes and a range of teas and coffees never go amiss.

MAINTENANCE IS KEY

Stay a night every now and then to get a feel for where upgrades may be required. You might not notice that the kettle isn't working on a quick check-in, but staying over will let you really get a feel for how your guests experience your let. Schedule annual boiler services and deep-cleans every so often to keep the house in top shape.

SHOUT FROM THE ROOFTOPS

Now your place is all set up, you'll want to let people know about it. Hire a professional to take some well-lit, vibrant pictures and set up profiles — Instagram, Airbnb and Facebook are the most popular for staycations.

If you have the funds, hiring a part-time social media manager is always useful for promoting your property and building a following. ■



Platinum Partnership

Banish TROUBLESOME TRAVEL for good!

OPEN UP A NEW WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES THANKS TO THIS INCREDIBLE WHEELCHAIR, OFFERING INDEPENDENCE AND A NEWFOUND ZEST FOR LIFE.

When you are a mobility-challenged person, travel can be particularly tough. Whether you're travelling by air, rail, cruise ship or bus, you are often forced to depend upon pre-arranged assistance. All too regularly, people with difficulty walking lose their confidence and their independence, and end up travelling less, hampered and worn down by the obstacles that embarking on a journey can present. But thanks to the efforts of one man, that may all be about to change. Richard Williams invented the remarkable Traveller Chair.

Easy to use

The Traveller Chair is the first wheelchair of its kind anywhere in the world. Lightweight and compact, it can be carried on a shoulder strap, and folds out with ease and elegance into a fully tested transit wheelchair in less than 30 seconds. When you're finished with it, it folds away with similar ease, converting into a carry-on case that is small enough to store in an overhead locker, car boot or luggage rack. The Traveller Chair complies with hand luggage regulations on 41 different airlines. That means that it is with you for your whole journey, ensuring comfort and self-sufficiency for the entirety of your trip.

The creation

The idea for the Traveller Chair was born after Richard and his wife Jane, who has had cerebral palsy since birth, suffered a miserable experience upon landing at Heathrow from Asia. It was a grimly familiar scenario.

"We found ourselves stranded on the aeroplane, at 5.30 in the morning, waiting for our arranged assistance that didn't turn up — not for the first time.

"So I slept on it, and I thought about it, and turned it over in my mind. Then I thought, 'You know what? I can fix this!'"

And fix it Richard did — thanks to his background as a manufacturing specialist and professional engineer. The results were spectacular, and Richard and Jane have since taken many trips using the Traveller Chair.

Jane says

"I was overwhelmed with emotion when Richard told me about his idea, even more so now that I have seen it come to life. I think it's wonderful that our love for each other and for travel has led to this. It will change our and others' lives, as the chair stays with you all the way."

- ✔ In spite of being so lightweight and compact, the Traveller Chair can carry up to 16st (100kg) of weight
- ✔ Fully tested to wheelchair standards.
- ✔ Also available are matching luggage, backpack, and travel accessories that fit perfectly onto the chair, allowing it to act as a luggage trolley.

The Traveller Chair has revolutionised the way Richard and Jane travel, and now they want to share its benefits with the wider world. This extraordinary invention has the capacity to change lives, and to bring more autonomy, independence, and confidence to users.

*** This product qualifies for a VAT exemption.**

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For more information, including details of our try-before-you-buy offer, visit travellerchair.com or call us TODAY on **01773 823256**. ■





Discover ECO-FRIENDLY GARDENING

LOVE FLOWERS? TAKE A TIP FROM **ROZ CHANDLER** AND START GROWING YOUR OWN. ROZ SHARES THE IMPORTANCE OF ECO-FRIENDLY FLOWER FARMING WITH **LOUISE RAMSAY**.



Have you ever wondered what impact your high-street bouquet has in relation to the environment?

Many of us consider gardening to be one of the most eco-friendly acts we can do and by extension, flower bouquets are a product of this. We're less likely to notice the origin of a flower's growth than say, fresh fruit and veg. Why?

Roz Chandler, owner of Field Gate Flowers, is trying to raise awareness of the damage imported flowers can do to the environment, while also encouraging us to step up to the plate, trowel in hand, and grow our own blooms.

It makes sense. You may have noticed the rise in the price of your favourite high-street bouquet, due to well-documented supply shortages.

2020 saw the strain of the

pandemic hit the worldwide flower-growing industry, with many overseas growers not able to export to the UK, leaving fields of flowers to wilt and die. By 2021, global flower producers cut back their crops, resulting in a supply issue, meaning that numbers of flowers coming into the UK are now at an all-time low. It means prices are steadily increasing.

"This is the time for people to start growing their own British, seasonal flowers to cut and arrange or gift," Roz says. "Aside from the obvious cost benefits, growing your own blooms instead of buying has huge environmental benefits.

"Flowers are a natural occurrence and bring such joy, yet the regulations around them are non-existent. When you buy food from a supermarket, it has a label telling you where it has come from — that is mandatory. Yet, when you »





£2.2
billion

What the
UK's freshly
cut flower and
indoor plant
market is worth

.....
Kenya is
the leading
exporter of cut
roses, with a
38%
market share
.....



Roz has turned
a passion into
a business.



buy flowers from the same supermarket, they don't have to label their origins, so you can't make an informed choice as a consumer."

Roz has a tip. "The next time you're browsing the bouquets in your supermarket, take a sniff. With some pesticides, even the smell of gorgeous-looking flowers is starting to diminish. And isn't that half the joy of buying flowers, for their heavenly aroma?"

Currently, most of the flowers that arrive in the UK have originated from Ecuador, Columbia or Africa, heading to supermarkets and forecourts all over the country via Holland. This long-distance travel racks up the CO₂ emissions of your bouquet — and that's even before we consider the ecological impact of the way the flowers are mass-grown on international flower farms.

"Growing seasonal flowers in your garden not only cuts down on your carbon footprint, but it's also fabulous for local biodiversity, which is a huge plus for the environment," says Roz.

"You don't need a huge space to get started, and growing your own flowers is the most wonderful thing for health and wellbeing, giving you time and space outdoors to switch off and unwind."

The effects of the pandemic were felt at Field Gate Flowers, but it also helped spark Roz's future plans for more eco-friendly, sustainable gardening.

"Covid-19 devastated the weddings side of our business, but at the same time, my marketing role slowed down and it gave me the headspace to think about what comes next," she says.

"My 'why' for the business has always been that I wanted to reduce the number of flowers





imported into the UK, to be sustainable and eco-friendly. It all boiled down to these aims and I knew I needed an army to achieve those goals.

“I wanted to encourage others to grow their flowers to cut, no matter where they were or how small a plot they had to work with. Even a window box is a start.

“I devised two courses for people to join. The first was the Seed to Vase course, primarily about getting people to grow their flowers — from seeds to success.

“I thought people would join the courses because they loved flowers and the idea of growing their own, but the journey I went on with some of the people who signed up stemmed from something much deeper. For some people, it was about coping with a bereavement or a form of rehabilitation. For others, it was about increasing their wellbeing or just a love of being outdoors. Eight months on, and what started as a group course has turned into a community with new members joining daily, raising and supporting each other.”

She’s thriving now, but Roz didn’t always want to run her own business — in fact, she dreamed of a stethoscope rather than a trowel.

“Like most things in life, I accidentally fell into it. I had dreams of being a doctor, though that didn’t quite work out. But I had three science A Levels, so I decided to do an Environmental Sciences degree. I didn’t know what it was about, but I I loved it. Jobs in the environmental field and conservation

were relatively scarce in the early ’80s. At around the same time Prince Charles talked to plants, I put it to bed and did several other things in between — but my passion for the environment has always been there.

“For the first five years or so, it was a side hustle. I was a marketing director as a nine-to-five, and a flower farmer every other minute of the day. I had been in marketing for years and understood selling, PR, and digital marketing, which served as a great advantage. I understood that what I grew needed to yield a profit, so I started approaching markets with the idea. From there came weddings, and that side of the business grew year on year until the pandemic hit.

“It’s also about innovation — millions of people will have a wreath on their door over the festive period; many of them will be produced on a bed of oasis foam, which takes about 500 years to degrade. The wreaths we produce use a more planet-friendly alternative to the traditional foam bases.”

Inspired by Roz’s story? We might not be able to turn a joy of flowers into a thriving business. But growing our own blooms from seed and being able to gift bouquets and enjoy displays of our own home-grown flowers? Sounds perfect to us.



Flowers to plant now

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Gladioli

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Dahlias

Give late summer a pop of colour with dahlias. They’re straightforward to grow and can be planted in the ground from May, once the frost risk has passed.



We’d love to see your beautiful garden pics this summer. Send them to us at mail@platinummag.co.uk with your name and details. ■

A SWEET SWISS DELIGHT

WHEN **JOAN MCFADDEN** VISITED SWITZERLAND SHE WAS EXPECTING THE GLORIOUSLY ECLECTIC MIX OF OLD-MEETS-NEW, BUT IT WAS THE BREATHTAKING BACKDROPS, MOUTHWATERING CUISINE AND FRIENDLY LOCALS THAT REALLY MADE HER HEART SKIP A BEAT.

I decided to get into the mood for Switzerland by re-reading *Heidi* on the plane and was as enchanted by it as when I'd first read it at nine. I couldn't wait to explore when we landed.

Zurich Airport is about 15 minutes from the city centre and it was a really smooth transfer — everything we'd been told about how efficiently public transport runs proved correct. We bought a travel pass for the week that allowed us unlimited use of trains, trams and certain boats and ferries and it was definitely worth it, not just in money terms but in allowing us to hop on and off transport without buying tickets.

This was further enhanced by station notice boards on each platform advising you which area — A to F — you should stand in for the right carriage, also indicating where bikes can be stored. The tram app is even slicker, to the extent of telling you how many people are in each carriage, should you be looking for some space.

I expected Zurich to be a mad rush, as a financial centre and the largest city in Switzerland but in reality, there was a surprisingly relaxed feel there, especially when we reached the Old Town after a leisurely walk up the Limmat River towards the lake. I was glad I'd taken a good pair of walking shoes as we'd planned to do a lot of sightseeing on foot, and it will surprise no one to learn that Switzerland is hilly.



Stop off for exquisite coffee and local chocolates, watching the world go by. Below, Joan enjoys Swiss cuisine.



WHIMSICAL AND ENCHANTING

The Old Town is medieval, cobbled and enchanting, with tiny winding streets, wonderful old buildings and countless quaint shops, delicatessens, cafes and restaurants. It's always worth looking upwards in this beautiful country, not just at the stunning hills but to get a sense of the architecture and what appears to be a universal ability to blend old and new perfectly. People are welcoming, helpful and always ready to suggest a favourite or famous place to visit.

Lake Zürich is lined with lovely walks and parks, and in summer is particularly popular for sunbathing, picnicking and swimming in the lake. It's scenic at any time of year and popular for cruises as it offers beautiful views to the Glarus Alps. There are museums, impressive old churches, flea markets and food markets, and of course the option to head up the mountain railroad to the 871-metre Uetliberg. The most northerly summit in the Albis ridge, it gives you breathtaking views over the town and the lake.

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

There's traditional shopping in the upmarket Jelmoli department store and The Humidor is well worth a visit. This type of cheese shop is unique to Switzerland, with shelves of cheese quietly ripening at different stages and an amazing aroma that I could actually taste in the air. Confiserie Sprungli is another wonderful treat, with its tiny exquisite macarons of every possible flavour. And of course, there is chocolate everywhere, as only the Swiss make it. However my favourite foodie moment in Zurich was dinner at the Kronenhalle, which offers gourmet regional cuisine in a century-old restaurant, with art masterpieces lining wood-panelled walls. Long known as a popular haunt of artists, musicians and celebrities, with food often prepared at the table, this warm, lively venue is an experience not to be missed. We stayed in Hotel Marktgasse, which is within easy walking distance from the station and the Old Town, surrounded by both old shops and quirky boutiques and close to a tram stop.



The beautiful Rhine riverside in Basel, with the Minster church majestically overlooking.

“It's always worth looking up in this beautiful country to get a sense of the architecture.”

BEAUTIFUL BASEL

One extremely comfortable train journey later we reached Basel. We decided to take the tram part way — excellent tram app in use again — then walk to the Rhine so we could stop at the Kunstmuseum where the stunning Rodin sculpture in the courtyard set the tone for the collections here. *The Burghers Of Calais* is an extraordinary study in fear and dignity, featuring six anguished figures who sacrificed themselves to Edward III to save the rest of the town only for him to pardon them unexpectedly.

Cobbled streets, ancient ivy-clad houses with tiny windows and beautiful fountains — people in Basel may swim in all the city's fountains — peppered our route to the river, which threads through the city like the beating artery it proves to be. Some locals also spend their summer lunch hours swimming in the Rhine, their belongings in a buoyant swim-bag they take with them, as they glide downstream to lunch in one of the many riverside cafes and restaurants.

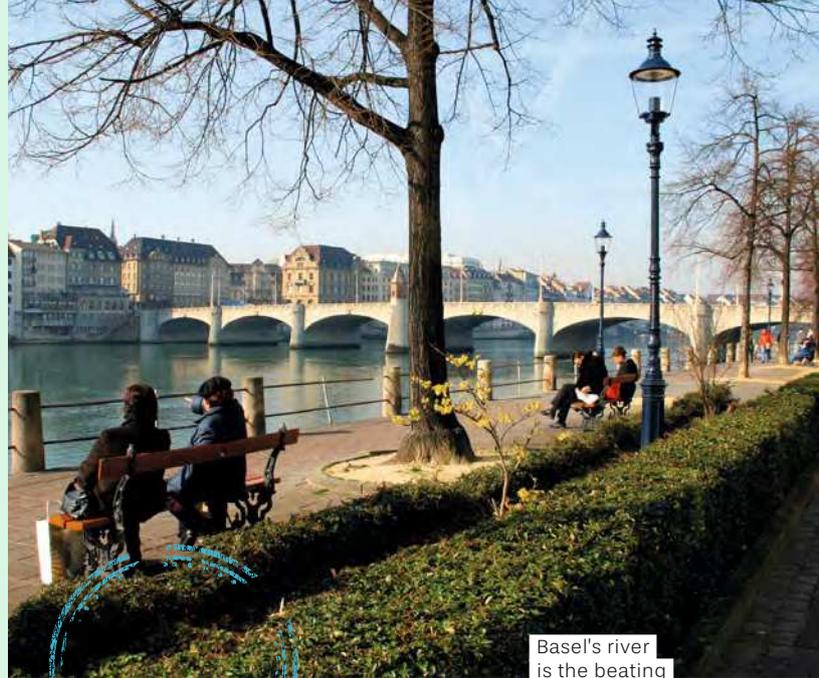
Our own lunch venue was stunning — an original fisherman's hut poised over the water on stilts. It's used by the Golden Star Inn, the oldest in the city, built in 1412. In the 1960s it was moved — brick by brick — to »

Travel

its present site by the Rhine. The food clearly needs to be carefully planned as it's transferred up and down reasonably precarious steps and ladders. Our main course was a huge platter of raw fish which we cooked ourselves, fondue-style, in an aromatic broth. The hut can take up to eight and is popular for events like fireworks — which must be amazing from such a vantage point — and for romantic dinners.

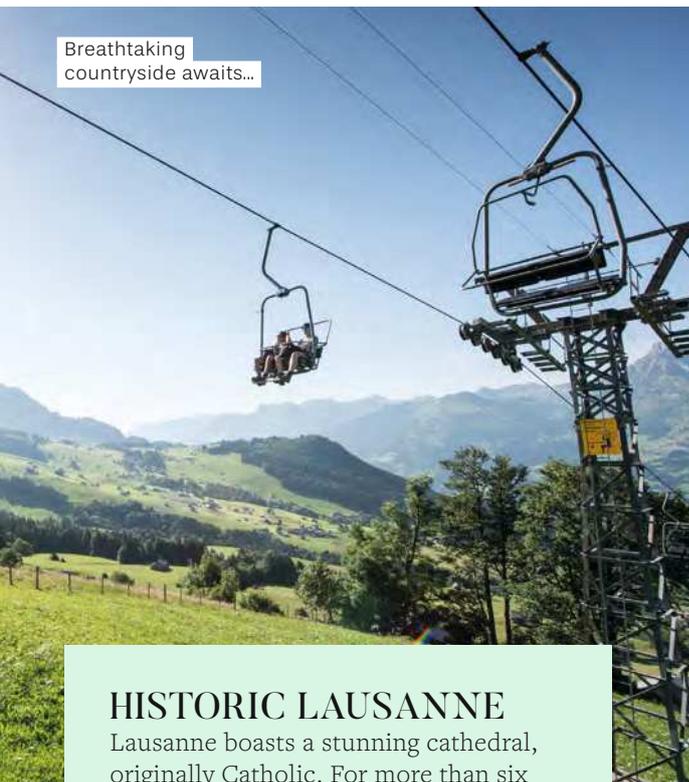
Basel is so accessible; a great base to drive to the Black Forest or France, and take a boat to Amsterdam, as well as enjoying Switzerland itself.

The Grand Hotel Les Trois Rois, founded in 1681 as an inn for gentlemen, was rebuilt in 1844. Wine and cigar cellars, the Cheval Blanc restaurant with its three Michelin stars, luxurious bedrooms and the beautiful brasserie have enchanted customers for centuries, Napoleon apparently included. We enjoyed leisurely exploration round ancient streets and admired the cathedral with its two towers.



Basel's river is the beating heart of the city.

Breathtaking countryside awaits...



HISTORIC LAUSANNE

Lausanne boasts a stunning cathedral, originally Catholic. For more than six centuries, a night watchman has circled the bell tower every night, calling out the hour in each direction, ready to warn citizens of fire or invasion. The old town is built on a hill; I'd suggest a taxi from the station to the Lausanne Palace hotel. Here there is the option to waken to the beautiful view of Lake Geneva in the morning mist. A boat trip was great fun, especially as our boatman skirted close to some stunning mansions. Our visit ended at Durig the chocolatier. The owner comes from Manchester, and has clearly learned from the best!

LUXURIOUS GENEVA

Arriving in Geneva at dusk, we walked the short distance to the gorgeous Hotel Beau Rivage. My room was the last word in comfort and luxury. In the Michelin-starred hotel restaurant, Le Chat-Botté, every bite was a delight. There's so much to see and do here — attractions on and by the lake, boat trips, train journeys, cable car rides to a glacier, a Mont Blanc day trip, museums and the cathedral, theatres and great shopping. We took a tuktuk to tour some vineyards, admittedly quite chilly, but we were well wrapped up and the wine-tasting at the end warmed us.

Switzerland was friendly, welcoming and lots of fun. We were too early for skiing but put the hiking miles in as we explored these lovely cities, enjoying every step. ■

Above: Whether town or countryside, Switzerland is full of glorious scenery and places to relax.



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- London

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Mr A. Gautama, Pharmacist

MAKING SENSE OF mental health

RECENT YEARS HAVE SEEN A WATERSHED IN THE WAY WE TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH. THIS CAN BE CHALLENGING TERRAIN FOR THE 50+, FINDS **SALLY HOWARD**, WHO URGES US TO LEARN FROM YOUNGER GENERATIONS WHEN IT COMES TALKING ABOUT OUR MENTAL HEALTH.



“It wasn't until I was in my 20s that I knew that there was a word for the way I felt: anxiety,” says Jo Howarth, 50, from The Wirral. “When I was a kid, I just thought that was how I was as a person and that was tough bananas; it was just something I had to put up with.”

On the school run the morning we spoke, Jo had broached the issue of mental health with her two daughters, aged 12 and 14.

Her eldest daughter, Jo tells me, nodded sagely and scrolled through the friends at school she knows who have been diagnosed with anxiety and have developed methods to deal with this sometimes debilitating mind-body condition when it strikes.

“It amazed me how freely this

generation talks about these things,” says Jo, a hypnotherapist whose own experience of mental ill-health led her to launch online peer support group, The Happiness Club. “In the '70s when I grew up there was somehow something wrong with you if you were struggling.”

“You have to remember it was the cultural norm only a few decades ago to encourage people to ignore signs of mental disquiet,” says Alivia Rose, spokesperson for the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) and a working psychotherapist since the 1980s. “People presented at their GP and the message was: ignore how you're feeling. Or, here's some valium: squash it down. Get rid of it.”

Alivia believes the turning point, societally, came around 15 years ago, when a new cultural acceptance of psychotherapy began to emerge as the stigma of talking about mental health struggles began to erode.



Jo Howarth



IN THE KNOW
 Nearly half of adults (7.7million) aged 55+ say they have experienced depression, according to new YouGov research for the charity Age UK.



For Jo, mental health literacy arrived in early motherhood, when she struggled with juggling the demands of work and keeping up with a young family and decided to try the services of one of the psychotherapists who proliferated across the UK from the 1990s on. "I just didn't want to do that British thing of saying 'no, no I'm fine', any more," she recalls. "I knew I needed therapy — and I told my very young daughters this at the time — to be a better mummy."

For writer Keith Grinsted, 68, the past two generations have been a steep societal learning curve around issues of mental health. "My parents met in the Second World War — he was a Marine and she was a Wren — and your emotions, what you'd seen in the war, you just didn't talk about back then," he recalls.



Alivia Rose

"Even when I was a kid, it was still very Victorian. You were either, quote, 'normal' or you weren't, and that conjured up the spectre of lunatic asylums and all of that. You have to remember our access to information was very poor compared to today's young people. We had no telephone, or TV."

“Younger people are so much more attuned to how they feel. They really take it seriously.”

Struggling with loneliness in lockdown, Keith decided to face up to his mental health challenges and set up Wellbeing Wednesday for his work colleagues and later Goodbye Lonely, a Facebook group to help people who are struggling with loneliness or mental ill health.

Partly this was inspired by Keith's 20-something daughters' ease in talking about mental health issues. "I've been married three times and gone through several redundancies so they [his daughters] didn't have it that easy as kids, but younger people are so much more attuned to how they feel. They really take it seriously," Keith says.

"My oldest is so emotionally mature for her age, all of her friends come to her with their problems and that's heartening to see." And this is something Keith wishes his generation would learn from. "The thing that worries me is how many older people are just entrenched in that thing that they learned in childhood where you've just got to buckle down and get on with it," he says.

For all of the benefits of talking about mental ill health, current teenagers and 20-somethings (popularly referred to as Gen Z) are also experiencing what's been termed an 'epidemic' of mental ill health.

Referrals of teenagers to NHS mental health services doubled in the year from 2018/2019 to 2020/21 as the pandemic's lockdowns took a toll on an age group who forge their identities and sense of belonging through social contact with peers. »

Opening up to someone can make us feel so much better.

“It’s so difficult to describe depression to someone who’s never been there.”

That said, there are downsides to a broader interest in mental ill-health, if that interest, perhaps fuelled by social media memes, leads to a tendency to mislabel a condition where no such condition exists, as this itself can lead to stigma.

"I'll often get younger people using fashionable phrases such as 'gaslighting' [a term referring to an abuser's tendency to project an alternative view of reality and events back to the abused party, inspired by the 1944s psychological thriller *Gaslight*] and not really understanding these phrases," Alivia continues. "Or believing they're clinically anxious when the emotions they're going through are just typical human emotions."

Alivia adds there can be a 'secondary gain' in young people, or indeed older people, assuming an identity based on a self-diagnosed condition.

Keith, who has 'worked through' the loneliness and depression he experienced during Covid lockdowns, welcomes the new terminology, as aspects of human suffering can seem opaque without them.

"For example, I was bullied at school, beaten up, knocked out, because I wore glasses and my dad was a policeman," he says. "It was only in later life when I later heard the word 'bullying' that I knew what I'd been through and knew that it was wrong."

Jan Cavelle, a 65-year-old retired entrepreneur, says that it is often the most successful over-50s — those at the peak of their power or with long, successful careers behind them — who are prone to bury their mental ill-health in work, or heavy drinking.

"If you're perceived as a strong leader you don't want to be seen as weak. Yet many successful people faced adversity as children and their success has come from powering through adversity."

Maisy Grace New, 17, is a singer songwriter whose songs delve into issues affecting teen mental health, including *5 Minutes*, which explores the pressure to ignore one's feelings for the sake of those around you and asks that we 'give ourselves five minutes'.

"I think older generations need to know that it is really hard to be young in our day and age," says Maisy, who is based in Cornwall. "School, friends, stress are all weighing down on us and it isn't easy just to be relaxed every day."

While there's a tendency for older generations to pooh-pooh the struggles of younger people ('you think you have it bad? When I was your age...') this is a tendency we should guard against in the current context, schools Alivia.

"There are very real reasons that young people might be anxious and depressed at the moment," she says. "There are genuine fears around climate change and the planet they will inherit, as well as stress from a non-stop news cycle and social media."

Jan welcomes the inflection point of Covid, for all of the pandemic's horrors, as a moment when even some of the most stoic, and seemingly strong, among us have started to speak more openly about our mental health struggles.

In recent years, celebrities across the age ranges, including Bruce Springsteen, Prince Harry, and astronaut Buzz Aldrin, have come out about their struggles with depression and anxiety, as has J.K. Rowling, who in 2010 told Oprah Winfrey that her episodic depressions inspired her soul-sucking literary inventions, the Dementors.

"It's so difficult to describe [depression] to someone who's never been there, because it's not sadness," she told Oprah. "But it's that cold absence of feeling; that really hollowed-out feeling."

IN THE KNOW

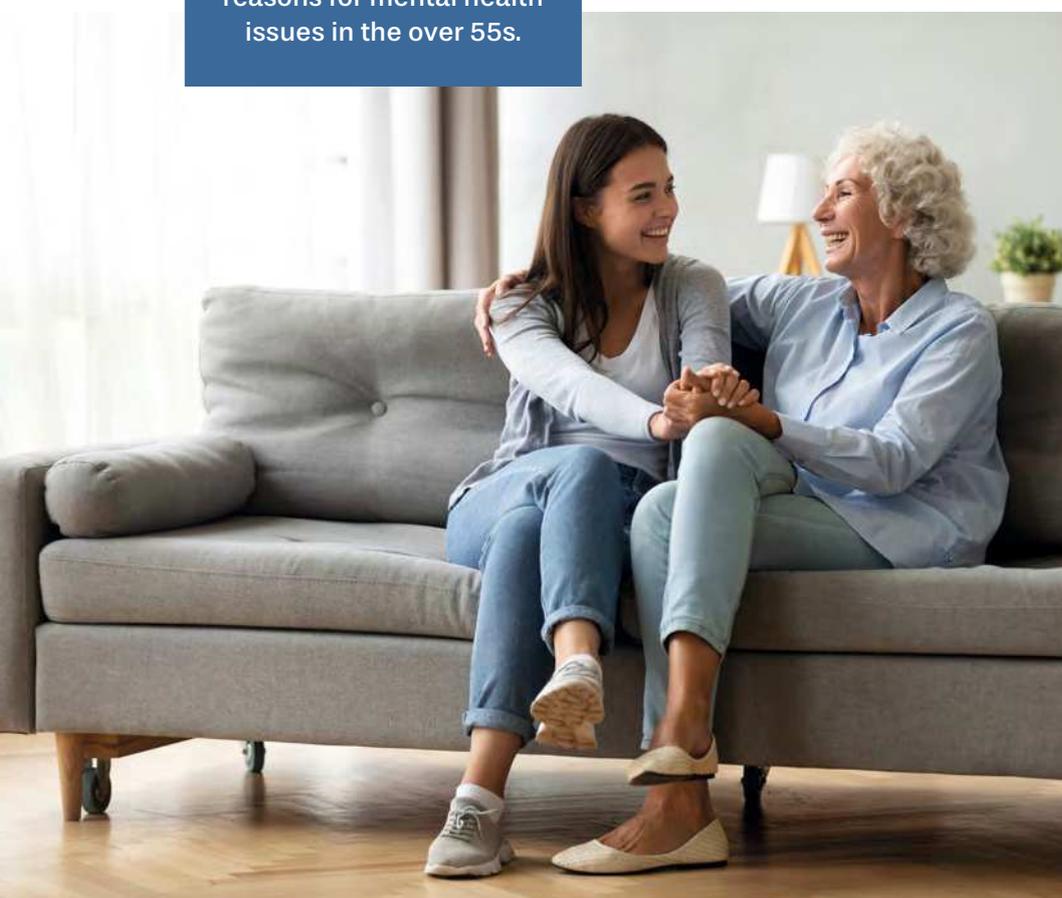
Death of loved ones and financial worries are two of the most common reasons for mental health issues in the over 55s.

Lauren Rosenburg, an anxiety coach, says that for over-50s, should they choose to pay renewed attention to their mental health, they should be in a good position, with a lifetime of dealing with adversity behind them.

"Maybe you've dealt with things in the wrong way before now, maybe you've allowed anxiety to overcome you, but you will have experience of these things that younger people don't have. That's why you can be a guide for younger people who are struggling; especially with external events like the pandemic or Ukraine."

Alivia Rose agrees that the moment we're in, wounded but reflective, gives her hope. "If we can find a common language and bridge the gaps in our understanding, we as older people can learn a lot from the younger generation's openness," she says.

Of the outdated notion that all emotional and mental issues can be solved with a stiff upper lip and a strong cup of tea, she laughs. "That said, don't discount a cup of tea. It can work wonders, too."



It's good to talk

Tips for communicating with family members about mental health.

Don't lecture; listen. It's easy to go into parenting or grandparenting mode as a defence mechanism when awkward conversations arise. Often, however, you're being asked for an ear rather than to 'fix' things or offer advice.



Respect mental health. Treat yours, and others', mental health with the same respect and consideration you afford their physical health. Ask yourself: would you tell a younger person to ignore their broken leg until it goes away?



Use stories to foster common understanding. Is there a character in a film you both love who has experienced bereavement or depression? Talking through the experience of a third person can help to open channels of communication.



If in doubt, signpost the person you're talking to to a professional service or **therapist.nhs.uk/mental-health/**





THRIFTY LIVING AFTER DIVORCE

STARTING OVER WHEN YOU ARE APPROACHING 60 CAN BE DIFFICULT ENOUGH, BUT WHEN YOU'RE HAVING TO DO IT ON A VERY LIMITED BUDGET, LIFE IS EVEN HARDER. **ELIZABETH LITTLE** SHARES HER EXPERIENCE OF DEALING WITH THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOLLOWING A DIVORCE.

I thought life was supposed to get easier as you got older. Mine certainly hasn't. A few months before my 60th birthday I became divorced for the second time. I hadn't worked for eight years due to a serious car accident, so we were already living on a reduced income. But after my divorce was finalised, money became even tighter.

On reduced finances I realised my days of enjoying foreign holidays, trips to the nailbar, dining out at restaurants, and weekends away on a regular basis would be a thing of the past. Honestly? I knew it was going to be hard financially, but the reality of the situation was far worse than I'd anticipated.

Following the divorce, I lived with my mum until my house purchase was finalised. And I'm afraid to say I then went a little wild. Weirdly, I felt like a giddy teenager again and was out most nights dancing, drinking, and socialising with friends until the early hours of the morning. For the first time in 40 years, I felt as if I'd got no responsibilities at all. How wrong I was!

That became apparent when I finally moved into my new home. My ex-husband had always dealt with our household bills. Whenever I'd enquired about the state of our finances, he'd always told me not to 'worry your pretty little head'. Now this 'pretty little head' was having a lot of sleepless nights wondering how it was going to cope. In fact, I'd often wake up looking like *Worzel Gummidge* after yet another restless night!

Fortunately, I'd managed to buy a house out of the settlement, so I didn't have to worry about paying a mortgage out of my small pension. However, once I'd paid the household bills, it didn't leave much money for anything else.

I quickly realised I had to keep a close track of every penny — and I mean every penny — if I wanted to retain my sanity and live a happy and peaceful life. The only way forward was to have budgets for everything, and I couldn't exceed those budgets. To be frank, I was pretty scared



to be in this position at this time in my life.

At first, even though I'd set myself strict budgets, I found it hard cutting down on unnecessary spending. Old habits die hard. I love to shop, eat out and pamper myself. Who doesn't? But after I'd transferred money from my limited savings into my current account a few times, just to pay the household bills, I soon learnt to economise.

These days I keep a constant eye on my finances. My banking app has never seen so much action! I'm not quite a skinflint, but it's close. I never

thought I'd see the day when I would cut the ends off the toothpaste and my eye cream just to squeeze out every last drop. But I do.

I've even raided my piggybank. But not before spending painstaking hours checking every coin to see if I had a rare treasure! I've also cut up my store cards and trusty credit card. No way did I want to be tempted into spending money I don't have. Do I really need to buy that vase, that throw, or those tempting 'three for two' offers when you only need one? No, I don't.

Undoubtedly, my lifestyle has changed completely. I used to be a lady who lunches. I enjoyed meeting up with friends for a gossip (sorry — meaningful conversation). But that extravagance is almost a thing of the past. These days I rarely eat out. The most my budget can stretch to is an occasional coffee and cake.

I'm a dedicated follower of fashion (oh yes, she is). In former times, I'd go shopping for a new white bra, and come home with said bra, matching knickers, a black bra, and a couple of tops I liked, but didn't need. I definitely had a weakness for buying clothes.

In fact, it only became apparent how many clothes, bags, and shoes I owned when I moved them from the family home. It took every inch of the front, back seats, and boots of two large cars. They were piled so high you could barely see out of the rear-view mirrors.



“You can still have a good life. It’s just a different life.”

I’ve found so many things I forgot I had. Items still with the tickets on, even the odd screwed up tenner tucked in the zip pocket of my little black bag. Personally, I reckon it was a wise move accruing so many outfits. In the long run it’s saved me a fortune. Nowadays, I only need to buy essentials and even then, I feel a sweat building as I part with my cash.

I feel living a frugal lifestyle is all about getting your priorities right. For me a pot of moisturiser is not a luxury — it’s just as essential as a bottle of milk. Thankfully I didn’t cut up my beauty points cards, which means I can still shop around for the best deals and find products at an affordable price.

In the past, the food bill was one of my biggest expenses. It isn’t any more. Gone are the days when I’d rush round the supermarket ending up with a trolley piled sky high, then gasp in surprise and shock at the enormity of my bill — only to throw half of it away at the end of the week.

These days, all my meals are planned out in advance. I pride myself on being a savvy shopper and I’m always on the lookout for the cheapest deals. So far, I’ve resisted the temptation to fight the bargain hunters huddled round the reduced counter. But it’s been close!

In my quest to live a thriftier lifestyle, I started to grow fruit and vegetables. I’ve discovered I’m no Charlie Dimmock.

My biggest mistake has been not labelling any of my efforts. Consequently, I couldn’t tell the difference between kale, cabbage, or spinach. But once it had been boiled and eaten — did it really matter? I think not!

Starting over on a strict budget has been stressful. That I can’t deny. However, once you’re organised, you can still have a good life. It’s just a different life.

I’ve even managed to add to my savings by stopping most of my unnecessary spending. As a result, I’m sure my dream of lying on a sun-drenched beach in a foreign location, will one day become a reality. I can but hope! ■

Easter bakes

WHIP UP THESE SWEET EASTER TREATS
THE WHOLE FAMILY WILL LOVE.



▲ Clotted cream meringue kisses

MAKES 25

Light, fluffy and with a delightful fruity hint of raspberry, these make for the perfect after-dinner treat.

3 large egg whites
250g caster sugar
2 tbsp freeze-dried raspberry pieces
1 x 200g tub Trewithen clotted cream

■ Preheat the oven to 90°C/gas 1/2 and line a baking tray with baking parchment.

■ Place the egg whites into a large bowl or bowl of a stand mixer. You'll need an electric hand whisk or stand mixer to get the volume required for great meringue, don't try to do it by hand. Whisk the whites until they resemble stiff peaks.

■ Add the sugar into the egg whites one spoonful at a time, and let each spoonful fully mix in before adding the next.

■ When all the sugar has been added, turn the speed up on the mixer and whisk for 8-10 minutes or until the mixture is really thick and glossy. If you rub a small amount between your fingers, you shouldn't be able to feel any grains of sugar. If it still feels gritty, continue to whisk for a few more minutes until it feels smooth. Fold in the raspberry pieces.

■ Open up a piping bag, fold over the top and fill with the meringue mixture. Use a little bit of meringue to secure the baking parchment to the baking tray, then pipe kisses all over the tray.

■ Bake for 1 hour-1 hour 30 minutes until the kisses feel dry to the touch, and if you pick one up the base should be firm when pressed. Allow to cool completely before sandwiching with clotted cream and serving.



Egg-cellent buys

Top up your choccy egg supply with these beauts for 2022.



Baileys Sundae Easter egg, £11, lirchocolates.com

That iconic flavour, dripping fudge, salted caramel crispies and chocolate buttons... yes please!



Bounty giant chocolate egg, £12, Tesco

This is not a drill — the egg contains sweet coconut pieces. Bliss!



Wicked Kitchen Poppin' Candy Orange Chocolate egg, £5, Tesco

This is delightful and crisp and children love it — as do many adults!



Guylian Easter egg, £8, Sainsbury's

Comes with 11 divine Guylian sea shell chocolates — sold! ■

▼ Easter egg cookies

MAKES 18

These cookies are a great way to get children involved with baking at Easter. If you don't want all of them in your biscuit tin, leading to temptation, simply freeze them in balls and defrost them as and when you want to bake them. If mini eggs aren't your thing, they can be substituted with milk, white or dark chocolate chips.

150g light brown sugar
50g caster sugar
170g Trewithen Dairy Unsalted Butter, softened
1 medium egg
1tsp vanilla extract
250g plain flour, sifted
2tsp cornflour, sifted
1tsp bicarbonate of soda
½tsp salt
100g dark chocolate chips
300g mini eggs

■ In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the beater attachment, cream the light brown sugar, caster sugar and butter together for 3-5 minutes until light and creamy.

■ Add the egg and vanilla extract and beat until combined.

■ Add the flour, cornflour, bicarbonate of soda and salt, then fold into the mixture with a large spoon or spatula.

■ Finally fold in the chocolate chips, then cover the dough in the bowl and chill for at least 1 hour, or up to 24 hours.

■ Heat the oven to 180°C/gas 4. Line two baking sheets with non-stick baking paper.

■ Divide the dough into 18 equal sized pieces and roll each into a ball.

■ Place the balls of dough on the lined baking sheets, spaced at least 4-5cm apart and away from the edges of the baking sheet. Gently press each ball down to flatten the bottom slightly.

■ Bake for 8 minutes. Meanwhile, roughly chop about a quarter of the mini eggs.

■ Remove the cookies from the oven and press 3 or 4 mini eggs into each cookie, then sprinkle with some of the roughly chopped mini eggs.

■ Return to the oven and bake for a further 6-9 minutes until the cookies are golden brown. Remove from the oven and leave to cool and firm up on the baking sheet for 5 minutes.

The centres should still be soft and chewy. Serve warm or leave to cool completely.



Recipes by
Trewithen Dairy.
For more ideas, head to
trewithendairy.co.uk

The 4GS OF GOOD GUT HEALTH

OUR GUT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR 70% OF OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM, SO AT A TIME WHEN WE WANT TO STAY WELL, A HAPPY, HEALTHY GUT HAS NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT, WRITES **CARA WHEATLEY-MCGRAIN**.

If you are among the growing number of people in the UK with a gut disorder like IBS (irritable bowel syndrome affects around 1 in 10 people) or IBD (inflammatory bowel disease impacts 500,000 people), then you'll have intimate knowledge of the distress, discomfort, and even pain, gut trouble can cause.

Cara Wheatley-McGrain, author of *Calm Your Gut*, shares her 4Gs of good gut health: Gut Knowledge, Gut Compassion, Gut Healing and Gut Integrity, designed to empower simple,

sustainable changes to support good gut health over time.

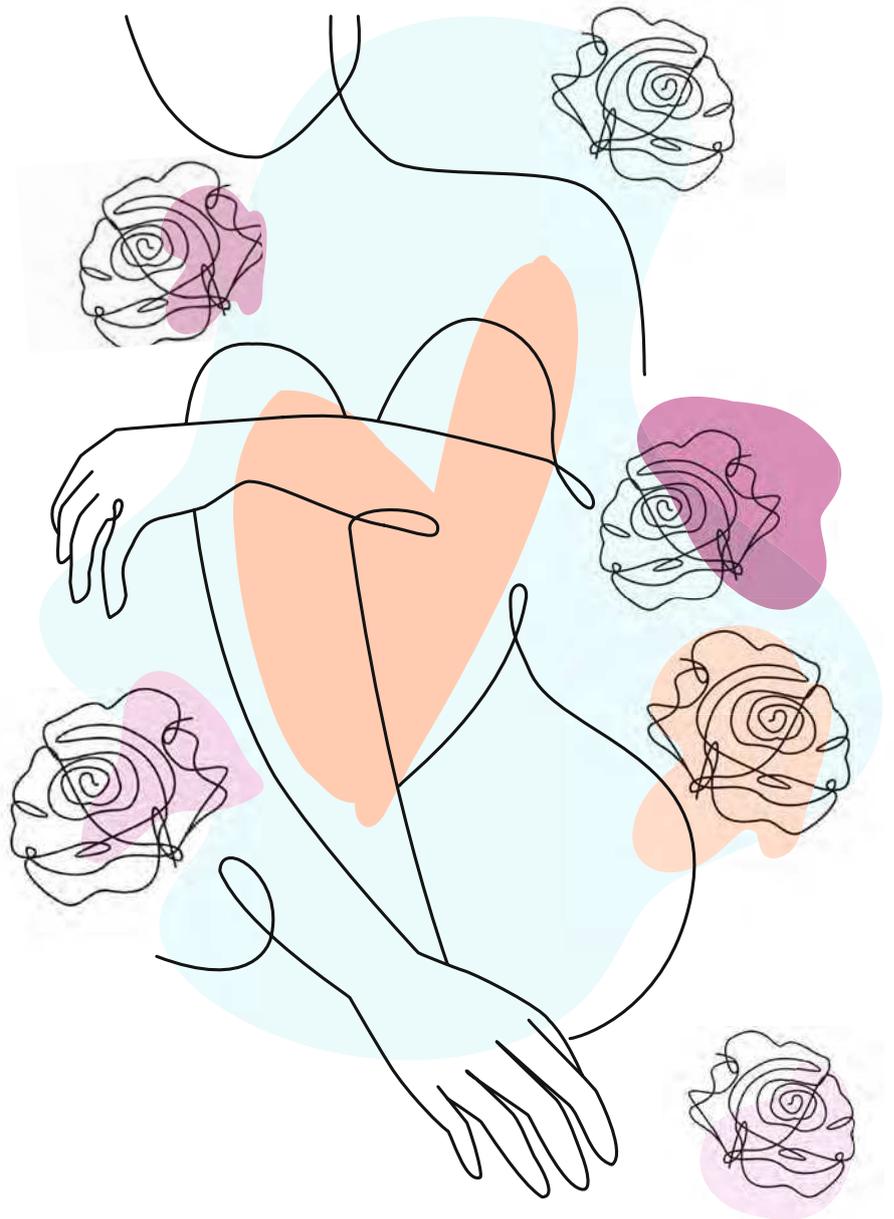
Cara has lived with IBS and IBD for 20 years, with the inspiration behind her

work being to offer hope to others so that they can heal and support their gut, and also to share her message of more mindful gut care.

She is a passionate advocate for the message that now is the time to 'de-industrialise' our gut and become the custodians of our own gut microbiome.



Cara Wheatley-McGrain



1. Gut knowledge

For many of us, our gut is often undervalued. Hidden away under layers of skin, we tend to only pay them attention when something goes wrong.

There are quite a few ways our gut can get into trouble. Rates of gut disorders are growing and around 11% of the global population reports a problem with their digestion. This figure is higher in more developed countries, and the cross-cultural studies by Professor Felice Jacka confirm that ultra-processed foods have an impact not only on our gut health but also our mental wellbeing.

Our gut health is shaped by our gut microbiome. We have around 100 trillion bacteria nestled in the intricate folds of our large intestine — the colon — and these bacteria play a vital role in informing our immune system, regulating our

Focus on eating probiotic-rich foods that have live bacteria, like kefir and kombucha.

metabolism, and even impacting our mood.

A helpful way to understand the inner world of our gut microbiome is to see it as an ecosystem — our unique gut garden. Our garden is rich in different species of interdependent bacteria. For our garden to flourish it needs three things:

1. Richness in the number of bacteria

To support this, try avoiding antibiotics where possible. Also, focus on eating probiotic-rich choices that contain live bacteria — try fermented foods such as kefir and kombucha. Consuming these can increase the number of bacteria in our gut garden.

2. Diversity in the range of different bacteria species

Think of eating the rainbow. When we eat different coloured plants and fruit, we are accessing a wide variety of phytonutrients that nourish and support our inner bacteria. Gut Expert Professor Tim Spector advises us to aim for 30 different plant foods across our week. So start counting! How many have you had today?

A simple tip is to alter your usual route around your local market so that you can see different stalls and track down more unusual vegetables like chicory, Jerusalem artichokes and pak choi.

3. Finally, our gut-garden needs balance

We can think of some of the less helpful bacteria as an overgrown area of weeds that compete with the more helpful flowers, plants, and insects. We can support our more helpful bacteria by avoiding excessive alcohol consumption, and steering clear of ultra-processed foods, while ensuring a plentiful supply of prebiotic-rich foods like apples, bananas, oats, and asparagus.



2. Gut compassion

Cultivating a sense of compassion towards our gut may just be the mindset shift we need toward good gut health. In fact, studies have shown that self-compassion has an anti-inflammatory effect on the body.

Moving our current relationship with our gut from one of indifference or frustration towards gut care is a powerful way of caring for this (at times neglected) organ. A simple way to do this could include a gentle belly massage to help us connect to our gut. Another way to care for our gut is to create a simple mantra: *May my belly be well, may my belly be happy, may my belly be calm*. When we repeat this it puts our caring attention on our gut and supports us to be more aware of our day-to-day food choices.

We can cultivate a sense of curiosity about our gut and our inner gut bugs. When we think about our lovely inner ecosystem of gut bacteria we are really aiming to support and protect it. Highly processed foods, emulsifiers, and preservatives are a little like pouring concrete on our gut garden, in effect industrialising our gut. Reducing these foods and increasing plant-based foods help our garden to flourish.

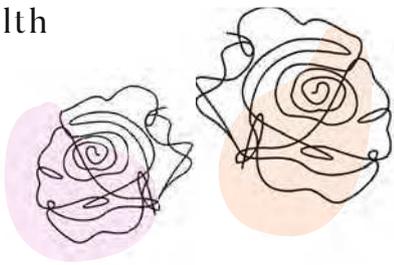
Self-compassion is the bridge between what we know and what we do. And to truly thrive, our gut garden needs care and attention.

What to do if I have an anxious gut?

When we experience anxiety, our gut symptoms of bloating or urgency increase. Repeated micro-stresses across our day can accumulate to create a churning sensation in our gut. At these moments it's essential to have a quick way to create a sense of gut calm.

One of the easiest techniques is to create a breathing practice. Base belly breathing supports us to tune into our parasympathetic mode in as little as 2 or 3 minutes. Try placing a soft open palm on your chest and one on your lower belly. Now, focus on breathing into the lower palm. As you exhale, imagine you are misting a mirror and making a soft 'ahh' sound. Repeat for a few breaths and you will start to notice an increased sense of calm. Deep breathing engages the vagus nerve, which acts in a bi-directional way across the gut-brain axis. Cultivating a sense of calm through breathing practice, mindfulness and yoga can support our gut health.

We now know our gut bacteria and metabolites can communicate from the gut via our vagus nerve to the brain, so supporting our gut bacteria through our food choices may also reduce our feelings of anxiety and depression. Our gut bacteria play a central role in synthesising our feel-good hormones such as serotonin and dopamine. »



3. Gut healing

The core message of gut healing is around creating an anti-inflammatory lifestyle.

Increasing intake of polyphenol-rich foods, which are anti-inflammatory and antioxidant, like blueberries, strawberries, grapes, green tea, black tea, and dark chocolate (with 85%+ cocoa) supports the environment of the gut.

To enable gut healing and to support our gut microbiome, there are some simple changes we can make to what we eat. Chief among these is reducing ultra-processed foods and slowly expanding our diet to include more plant-based fibre. Our gut bacteria love complex carbohydrates and fibre, and in particular, fibre that isn't easily digestible, so they remain intact in the large intestine and feed your gut bacteria: chicory root, onions, dandelion leaves.

What should I do if I think I have a sensitive gut?

One of the best things you can do is keep a food diary, so that you spot foods or situations that tend to act as a trigger for bloating or discomfort. A diary will provide you with a helpful overview of foods you may have an intolerance to. Two of the most common food intolerances are gluten and dairy, so you might wish to try a couple of weeks without eating one or both of these.

Time-restricted eating is a great way to give your gut a little rest and repair time. A few times a week, we can move our evening meal earlier and our breakfast later, to give our gut at least 12-14 hours break. This helps reduce the impact of postprandial inflammation, which occurs naturally after we eat. Extending the amount of time we rest our digestive system can have surprising benefits, including weight loss, lower blood pressure, better blood sugar regulation, and potentially even better brain health.

To be successful in sustaining our commitment to a healthy gut, we need to have a clear *why*.

4. Gut integrity

When we enable the gut to rest and recover, the physical integrity of the gut wall improves, and we are less likely to suffer from intestinal permeability or leaky gut. Don't underestimate the power of rest and recovery.

Our bodies and our inner gut garden have strong instincts. When it comes to intuition, our gut bugs have strong gut instincts, which may lead to specific food cravings. The good news is that as we take care of our good gut bacteria, we will feel increasingly drawn to foods that nourish them and us!

Making changes that stick is also about honouring the integrity of our gut. To be successful in sustaining our commitment to a healthy gut, we need to have a clear WHY!

What's your why? To support a strong immune system, feel calmer, more energised, to create a resilient and healthy gut?

What's important is to keep changes simple and be sure to celebrate the changes we do make. Sharing the changes we are making with loved ones, friends, family or colleagues, who will support us and hold us to account, is also helpful.

The key takeaway:

Like any ecosystem, our inner gut garden relies on balance and care. So how can you take care of your gorgeous gut garden today? ■



A gift of hope FOR THE FUTURE

TEN-YEAR-OLD JACK HAS A RARE DISEASE, DUCHENNE MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY. JACK'S MUM, CLAIRE SOWDEN, AND HIS PHYSIOTHERAPIST, LINDSEY PALLANT, EXPLAIN HOW YOU CAN HELP.

Claire's son, Jack, was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy when he was four. The team at Leeds are doing everything they can, but there's no cure for Duchenne yet.

Claire explained that she and Jack regularly make the three-hour round trip from their home in York to the Research Centre in Leeds because Jack is involved in trialling new drugs — and the trials are the only hope they have.

Jack is only 10 but he knows he is going to die. Jack has told his parents that he wants to take part in as many drug trials as he can. When Claire asked Jack why he wanted to take part in trials he explained, "Because I want to help other little boys like me."

The research that takes place in Leeds is the only way doctors will ever be able to help Jack and other children like him. Every day Claire and her husband wait to hear some good news from the research centre. Until then they are just taking it one day at a time. "Jack's life will be short. Unless we find a cure," Claire says.

Jack sees his physiotherapist Lindsey regularly. Lindsey explained that when she first started working as a physio, many boys with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy died in their teenage years.

Twenty years on, care has improved, but many still won't make it past their 25th birthday. There's still no cure. Lindsey added, "It's heart-breaking to look in a parent's eyes and tell them there's no cure for their little boy."

One glimmer of hope for parents is clinical trials. Lindsey would love to be able sit across from an anxious mother like Claire and see the relief on her face when she tells her they have the medicines that can change everything, that they can save her son.

That's why a gift left in a Will to Leeds Hospitals Charity is so important. Gifts of all sizes can provide vital funding for research trials that can help discover better treatments, better care and ultimately cures.



You can help

With a gift in your Will, of any size, you can help keep hope alive for families like Jack's. Visit the website to find out more and download your free gift in Will guide. leedshospitalscharity.org.uk/legacy



THE MISTAKE THAT MADE ME

LIFE RARELY RUNS COMPLETELY SMOOTHLY, BUT HOW DO YOU COPE WHEN YOU HIT A BUMP IN THE ROAD? **MARIE PENMAN** SPEAKS TO TWO WOMEN WHO TELL US HOW THEY MANAGED TO TURN THINGS AROUND.

CATHERINE, 50, STUDIED HARD, WENT TO UNIVERSITY AND BECAME A TEACHER. WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF STARTING IN THE CLASSROOM, SHE REALISED SHE HATED TEACHING...



I've always loved music, but when I was younger, my parents stressed the importance of getting a good education and career — music was just a hobby to them. They paid for me to go to private school

and I did A levels in maths, chemistry, biology and advanced maths, all of which I pretty much hated. I was allowed to do piano lessons as well and by the time I was 14, I'd passed my grade eight exams in music, which is the highest you can go.

Pushed by my parents, I applied to go to Cambridge, didn't get in, so instead did a degree at Durham. I really enjoyed my time at university but after graduating, my parents made it clear that it was time to be sensible and start a career. A lot of my former classmates from school went into law or medicine, which I couldn't face, so I became a teacher.

Within a couple of weeks of starting my first job in the classroom, I realised I'd made a huge mistake. I hated it. I'm quite a creative, free-thinking person and that just didn't fit in with the rules and discipline needed in a classroom. I was in a panic and didn't know what to do, especially as I knew my mum would go mad at me if I just packed in a good job.

“I started a career I hated, but it made me realise that music was my life”

I survived the first term, hating every minute, then went to London to stay with an old friend for a few days. While I was there, I heard about open auditions being held for the musical *Phantom of the Opera* and went along, just for a laugh... They tested my musical skills and my singing range, then asked if I could speak German as the show was about to go on tour to Hamburg.

I knew only one line of German, but they told me I had a good ear for accents. Not taking it seriously, I headed home to go back to work... Three days later, I got a call offering me a part in the show! It was crazy, but on impulse, I accepted.

So I basically ran away to join the theatre and became a cast member in *Phantom of the Opera*, produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber's company, performing eight shows a week, in a huge venue in Hamburg. It was a fantastic experience and I made loads of friends and earned a lot of money.

By the time I came back to the UK, years later, I had a lot more confidence in myself and was able to choose my own direction in life, without my parents' influence. Music has been my career ever since. I'm a vocal coach, teach piano to children and am a choirmaster for community singing, which I love.

I think my main mistake in life, apart from becoming a teacher, was allowing my parents to push me into doing what they wanted for me, rather than going my own way. I'm so glad I got there in the end.

“I was on the Pill, but ended up pregnant with twins!”

HEATHER, 60, HAD JUST ENDED HER FIRST MARRIAGE AND HAD NO INTENTION OF STARTING ANOTHER RELATIONSHIP. THEN SHE MET A YOUNGER MAN, HAD A FEW DATES AND DISCOVERED SHE WAS PREGNANT — WITH TWINS.

My first marriage lasted 13 years and during that time, we'd tried for ages to have a baby. It just never happened and even though we had loads of tests done, the doctors said there was nothing physically wrong with either of us — it was called 'unexplained infertility'.

Then my husband cheated on me and I kicked him out. That was in the October, and by Christmas, I was miserable and just wanted to stay home alone. My confidence had taken a real knock and I was in no mood for company. But my mum and my sister persuaded me to go to the local pub, which was open on Christmas night. And that's where I met Geoff.

He was nine years younger than me, which felt like a huge age gap, so I wasn't interested in him. But he started chatting to me at the bar and we had an obvious mutual attraction. I gave him my number and we went out the following night.

I still tried to play it cool — my marriage had only ended a couple of months earlier — but I couldn't stop thinking about Geoff. He phoned me again and we met up on New Year's Eve, then he came home with me. And that was it — we were a couple.

Around that time, I'd bought a new pair of navy court shoes, and I got a blister walking into work wearing them. The blister became infected and I went to the doctor, who prescribed antibiotics.

I was on the Pill at the time and I'd heard antibiotics could affect how it worked but, to be honest, I didn't think I could have children so wasn't



that bothered. A few weeks later, my period was late, but again, thinking I couldn't get pregnant, it didn't concern me.

However, I eventually did a test and was stunned when it showed a positive result. I bought another test, just to be sure, and that was positive, too.

I was very tearful and shocked and was shaking in disbelief. All sorts of things were going through my head — I was worried about the age gap between Geoff and me, worried that he'd feel he had to stay with me just because I was pregnant and worried about how I'd cope. It was just so unexpected.

Geoff came along to my place after work and I poured him a vodka and Coke and blurted out that I was pregnant. Although he was shocked, too, he was actually really happy and supportive right from the start.

Then we went for a scan at 12 weeks and the midwife asked if we had any twins in the family... That's when we found out we were having two babies, not one!

Christopher and Simone were born in the January, just a year after Geoff and I had gone on our first date, and they're now 26 — all grown up!

Geoff and I eventually got round to getting married, in New York in 2019, and we're still so happy together. I sometimes think it might not have happened like this if it hadn't been for those navy-blue court shoes! »



Heather and Geoff on their wedding day.

Over to you...

WE PUT THE TOPIC OF LIFE MISTAKES TURNING OUT FOR THE BEST TO OUR PASSIONATE BRAND AMBASSADORS. HERE'S WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY.

“I learned to trust my gut instinct”

SUSIE EXPLAINS HOW CUTTING OFF A TOXIC FRIENDSHIP MADE HER LIFE BETTER.

One of my biggest mistakes in life was 'trusting' a really good friend. I supported her through a divorce and when she lost her job, I gave her a new one through my business to help her earn money.

Six months into it, she was sharing horrible things to our circle of friends about how I wasn't there for her, I never helped her, etc.

I realised I personally can't be responsible for someone else's thoughts and actions. What a valuable life lesson I learnt that day, 20 years ago... To this day I allow my 'gut instinct' to be part of my values and integrity.



“I'm happy to be a single mum”



HER RELATIONSHIP DIDN'T WORK OUT, BUT SIMONE SAYS SHE HAS NO REGRETS.

A big mistake I made was getting married... I was young and had a baby and thought marriage was the next step I had to take, even though I wasn't happy and it wasn't right.

However, I got my two beautiful boys from it and after divorce, I learned to love myself and became very independent, which I wasn't allowed to do in the marriage.

I also went on to have another baby with someone different, which wouldn't have happened if I'd stayed in that unhappy marriage.

Although that relationship didn't work out either, I'm so happy to be a single mum to three amazing boys. I don't have regrets, I have lessons learned.

“Life is full of life-changing moments and I have had my fair share to be sure”



SHE LOST EVERYTHING, BUT HER EXPERIENCE HELPED GIVE KATHY A WHOLE NEW LIFE.

I was living in London and my family was grown up. My daughter had left home, and my son, although still living at home, was carving out a life for himself, too.

One night, I went up to bed as normal and left the TV on standby instead of turning it off as I usually did.

Although my son was supposed to be living with me, I hadn't seen him for a couple of months as he had been distracted by his new girlfriend. However, this night for some reason, he came home. I often ponder this thought, because if he hadn't have come home that night I might not be here now.

I woke up with a start and realised my son was knocking on my door shouting, "Mum! Mum! The TV's on fire!"

I got up and ran downstairs. The house was open-plan and the stairs were in the lounge. By the time we got downstairs the lounge was on fire. We rushed past the flames and I grabbed my phone, which was on the bookcase by the front door, put on shoes and a coat and ran outside.

We phoned 999 and jumped in my car and

watched our house burn. The fire brigade took ages to come... and by the time they arrived my house was completely engulfed by flames.

Thankfully my house was covered by insurance and it was completely rebuilt, new bathroom, new kitchen, new wiring, new windows, new walls, new decor, new furniture. It looked like a show home!

I had always wanted to move back home to Brighton where I had grown up and I soon realised that here was my opportunity.

My beautiful show home house was easy to sell and I sold it for the asking price on the day I put it up for sale. I moved back to Brighton, where my life changed completely, forever.

I met a wonderful man a year later, and a year after that I sold my house and we now live together in a wonderful house on Shoreham Beach.

I lost everything I owned in a house fire to find love and happiness and I have to pinch myself sometimes just to make sure it's true. ■

For a chance to be featured,
email a pic of yourself to
mail@platinum-mag.co.uk
with the subject line
Street Style.

HELEN

"I love bright
jewel colours,
but especially
yellow. It's such a
confidence boost
to wear."

MY STYLE IS...
**COLOURFUL
AND BOLD**



STREET *style*

These inspirational women have
nailed everyday chic — don't
they look amazing!

KIM

"My style is always about
the mix of masculine and
feminine: like here with a
fisherman-style sweater
and a bold silk skirt."

MY STYLE IS...
EVERYDAY ELEGANCE

PAULINA, 59

"My dress is from a
shop in Marbella. I
got it on my travels,
so I like that there's
a lovely story
behind it."

MY STYLE IS...
**NOSTALGIC
AND CHIC**





WENDA, 63
 "I'm out for lunch and wearing my favourite dress for the occasion."
MY STYLE IS...
FEMININE AND FUN



LIS, 61
 "I'm wearing a vintage Ralph Lauren jumper paired with a dress from T.K. Maxx."
MY STYLE IS...
NEUTRAL WITH A TWIST



DEBORAH, 51
 "I'm wearing a woolly tracksuit with my go-to cardigan."
MY STYLE IS...
PRACTICAL YET UNIQUE



LINDA, 58
 "Wear what you are comfortable in. Use a belt to add shape to a jumper, and wear your dresses as skirts."
MY STYLE IS...
BOHO AND EFFORTLESS

Some Photography by Kate Lindeman, others credit to the women

Talking beauty

with Ruby Hammer

MBE

This month, beauty expert Ruby Hammer MBE puts the best of beauty tech to the test.



All through my working life, I've been privy to a host of new and innovative products that I'm sent to try and to review as part of my job as a make-

up artist. This month, I'm focusing on the beauty tools and gadgets that I really rate and more importantly, that I actually use. I don't have the time or space for things that I won't use regularly and that just end up cluttering up my shelves and cupboards!

When I'm busy, well-designed tools not only help me to make the most of my time, but they also speed up the application process and enhance the performance of so many products. What's more, the right tool can also be used as a prep-step before applying a serum or cream or to boost the functionality of products by increasing their absorption and activity.

It's worth noting that beauty gadgets don't have to be hi-tech or overly complex. Let's not forget the genius of the humble eyelash curler! There are stacks of gadgets out there, but here are my personal 'tried-and-trusted' favourites.

FACIAL ICE GLOBES, £34.99, STYLPRO X ASOS EXCLUSIVE

These cooling glass globes can be kept in the freezer and used to de-puff eyes and increase the action of your daily eye cream or gel. For a quick fix, you can get similar results with a cold teaspoon gently pressed around your eyes.



JADE TRIO BALANCING FACIAL SET, £56.50, MOUNT LAI

I love jade rollers and Gua Sha tools as they can be used on their own to boost circulation, relieve tension and improve lymphatic drainage or to prep skin before serum or facial oil application. I find that they also increase skincare absorption when used

to gently press and roll products into the skin.

Daily Gua Sha massage also helps to exfoliate skin, firm and tone facial muscles and to restore radiance.

BODY DETOX SKIN BRUSH, £21, ELEMIS

I've championed the benefits of dry body brushing for years. Not only is it a brilliant way to kick-start your circulation, it also boosts lymphatic drainage and buffs away dead skin cells. This eco-friendly cactus bristle body brush is the perfect multipurpose tool. Use it before shaving to prep skin for a closer shave and to exfoliate before self-tan.

Two minutes of body brushing a day before you bathe or shower is all it takes to get your skin glowing. I also use it before I use a body scrub to 'double-cleanse' and exfoliate my body.



Remember that beauty gadgets don't have to be high-tech (or incredibly expensive) to be effective and worth your while.

BOOST LED BODY PATCH, £375, THE LIGHT SALON

I've found this award-winning Body Patch invaluable since becoming a grandma. By emitting a therapeutic combination of red and near infrared light, this patch soothes aches and pains, helps to speed up recovery after exercise and promotes relaxation. LED light also has plus points for skin as it's proven to reduce uneven pigmentation and fine lines and to boost collagen production. I pop it on wherever I need soothing — shoulders, back, arms and shins — especially beneficial after a day of carrying my grandson around!



FOOT FILE, £22, RUBYHAMMER.COM

A low-tech foot file is one of my all-time favourite beauty tools. I use a file to buff my heels and toes regularly, especially when sandal season is approaching. My glass foot file is gentle enough for diabetics and can be used wet or dry to achieve the smoothest results.

And to give my feet an extra boost after filing, I slip on a pair of Foot Masks for Total Conditioning, £5, Skimono Beauty. These serum-rich 'socks' work their moisturising magic while I relax. Perfect when you don't have time for a salon pedicure.



INFRARED SAUNA BLANKET, £399, MIHIGH

Not everyone has access to an infrared sauna, so a sauna blanket is the perfect portable alternative. While it's initially a considerable investment, once you've bought it, you can use it as often as you want, saving on trips to the spa or salon. I use it to detox, de-stress, to improve my sleep and to soothe everyday aches and pains — a bonus if you are menopausal. Just 40 minutes spent in my sauna blanket helps me to sweat out toxins, relax deeply and to sleep like a baby afterwards.



CALM YOUR BODY AND MIND WHILE DETOXIFYING AT HOME

Ruby's diary

This month, I've taken some time off work to help with my new grandson. Becoming a grandma has been one of life's most joyful events and I'm enjoying falling in love all over again. It has also made me realise that parenting doesn't stop; your child's needs just evolve, especially when they become a parent themselves. The bonus of having chalked up parenting experience myself is that I can guide my daughter through this stage of motherhood without all the anxieties and worries I had as a new mum. And having 'been there, done that,' I'm aware of what can be intrusive or annoying.

On Ruby's radar

While the majority of beauty trends are destined to be short-lived, I'm delighted to see that lip liner is back with a vengeance. Not that it's ever left my own make-up bag or pro kit! I love using lip liner to enhance my lips and I also use it regularly when I'm on photoshoots or working with celebrities. However, I'm not talking about the double-lined look synonymous with '90s supermodels.

Today's pencils are less rigid, much softer and more smudged in texture than the pencils we used in the '90s, blending easily to give a more natural finish. My tip is to use a pencil after you apply lipstick or lipgloss so that the edges blend together to create natural fullness. I also use the pencil to fill in the lips as a base for lipstick when I want a longer lasting finish. Pencils are perfect for creating extra definition, adding volume, enhancing the Cupid's bow and rebalancing asymmetrical lips. Lip pencils can also give an instant lift to lips with downturned corners.

If you're looking for a versatile all-rounder, you can't go wrong with Charlotte Tilbury Lip Cheat Lip Pencil, £17. Available in 17 lip-enhancing shades, including the iconic suit-all Pillow Talk Original and Foxy Brown, the perfect shade for darker skin tones, Lip Cheat is not only easy-to-blend, it also stays the day. ■

TURN TO P134 FOR MORE LIP ADVICE



SAVE 25% on PRAI BEAUTY

IT'S TIME TO FEEL AND LOOK FABULOUS BY TREATING YOURSELF TO SOME GORGEOUS BEAUTY GOODIES, THANKS TO THIS EXCLUSIVE DEAL, JUST FOR YOU.



PRAI Beauty was founded by beauty industry veteran and animal philanthropist, Cathy Kangas. Tired of seeing skincare brands excluding women over fifty, she set out to create something truly unique. Along with her highly skilled team, she developed a line of targeted, pro-ageing skincare solutions using the highest quality ingredients at affordable prices.

PRAI Beauty knows a good skincare regime doesn't stop at the jawline, which is why they've created a collection of targeted skincare solutions for some of the most forgotten areas including the neck, decolletage, arms and hands (just to name a few!). The award-winning Ageless Collection has become an international bestseller and has

given the brand the globally recognised name of the 'Neck-Xperts'.

PRAI products are award-winning, cruelty-free and contain clinically proven ingredients to deliver visible results in as little as 7 days.

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Easter bakes

P80-81

Delicious and fun sweet treats that the whole family will love.



Indian home cooking

P96-99

Park the takeaway this weekend and instead try out these Indian curry recipes. There's a main, sides and dessert to enjoy, chock full of vibrant flavours.



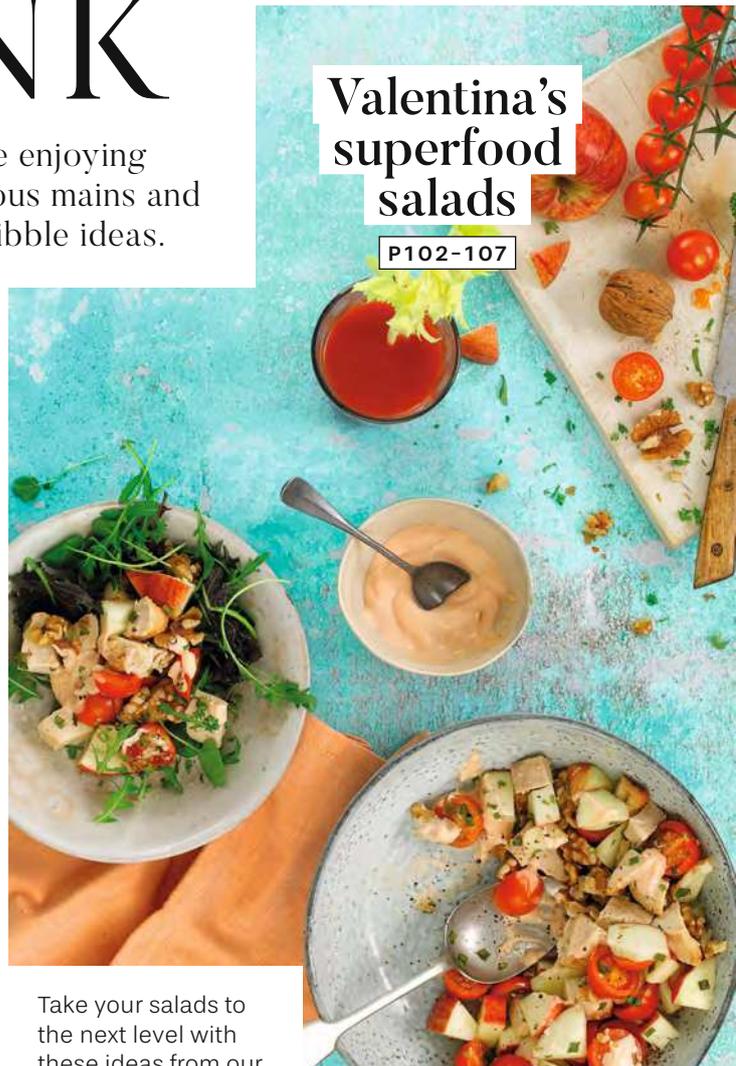
Food & DRINK

It's full-on spring as we share a delicious pick-and-mix platter of cheeses, fruit, crackers and bread to share with loved ones, all washed down with a fruity cocktail.

This month, we're enjoying nutritious, yet delicious mains and sides, plus tasty nibble ideas.

Valentina's superfood salads

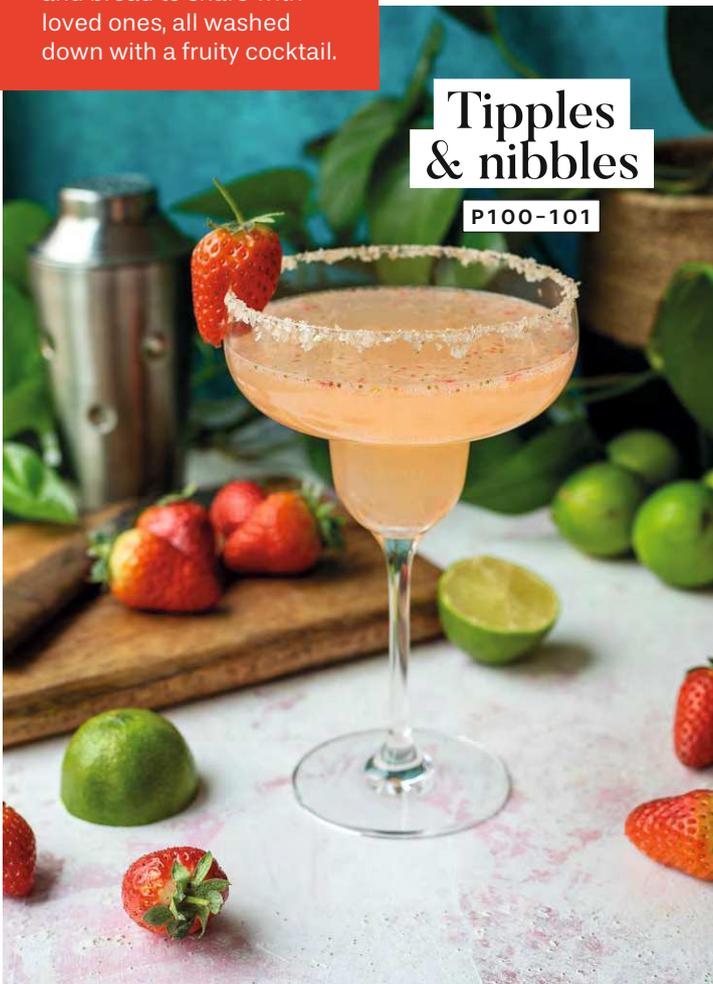
P102-107



Take your salads to the next level with these ideas from our resident food writer, Valentina Harris. >>

Tipplles & nibbles

P100-101



INDIAN HOME COOKING



FROM DIVINE SNACKS TO A BEJEWELLED
DESSERT, THESE INDIAN RECIPES BOAST
THE MOST INCREDIBLE FLAVOURS.

◀ **Nine jewel korma**

SERVES 6

1kg mixed vegetables
6 tbsp vegetable oil
2.5cm piece of cassia bark
2 green cardamom pods
1 clove
1 large bay leaf
2 large onions, cut in half and thinly sliced
3–4 garlic cloves, crushed
6-cm piece of fresh ginger, grated
2 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp chilli powder
½ tsp sugar
2 tsp salt
250g full-fat Greek-style yogurt
400ml thick coconut milk
2 tbsp ground almonds

■ Cut all the vegetables into evenly sized pieces and set aside on a tray.

■ Heat the oil in a deep pan over a medium–high heat. Add the cassia bark, cardamoms, clove and bay leaf, then immediately add the onions and fry until golden brown.

■ Add the garlic and ginger and stir for 1 minute, then add the ground coriander, chilli powder, sugar and salt and stir for 2 minutes.

■ Add the yogurt, lower the heat to medium and stir until most of the liquid has evaporated.

■ Add all the vegetables, stir and cook until tender. If the vegetables start to stick, add a splash of water.

■ When they are cooked, add the coconut milk and ground almonds, and stir until the gravy thickens.

■ Taste and adjust the seasoning before serving. This korma goes very well with any kind of rice or pulao, and is a great accompaniment for meat or fish.



▲ **Buttermilk chicken pakoras**

SERVES 4–6

This is a halfway house between a chicken nugget and a spicy pakora, which is sold in dhabas, or roadside eateries, along the Indian highway. These are very delicious and can also be fried in a deep-fat fryer, if you have one.

1kg boneless skinless chicken thighs, cut into 2.5-cm cubes
500ml buttermilk
2 cloves
2.5cm piece of cinnamon stick
2 bay leaves
3 tsp fennel seeds
3 green cardamom pods
2 tsp salt
150g rice flour
1 tsp ground cumin
1½ tsp chilli powder
125ml full-fat Greek-style yogurt
Vegetable oil, for deep-frying

■ Put the chicken in a pan with the buttermilk, cloves, cinnamon, bay leaves, fennel seeds, cardamoms and 1 tsp of the salt.

■ Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, for about 20 minutes until the chicken is cooked and tender. To check, take

out one piece of chicken and cut it in half to ensure it is no longer pink in the middle.

■ Remove the chicken from the buttermilk and spread out on a plate. Strain the liquid and keep aside; discard the spices.

■ Put the rice flour in a bowl, add the cumin, chilli powder and the remaining salt and whisk in 200ml of the strained buttermilk, followed by the yogurt, until evenly combined.

■ Heat the oil in a deep pan over a high heat. Drop a little of the batter into the oil to test if it is ready — it should immediately start to sizzle and darken. Using a slotted spoon, remove the trial batter and lower the heat to medium.

■ Dip the chicken pieces in the batter, ensuring they are totally covered, and then fry the pakoras in the hot oil in small batches.

■ Drain on kitchen paper as you take each batch out of the oil. Serve hot. >>

Fish omelette ►

SERVES 4

Omelettes are called mamlets in Bengal. For many Bengalis, a classic comfort meal is dim bhaja bhaat — like eggs and toast but in this case, it's eggs with boiled rice. This version of spiced omelette has a fish and onion stuffing. The older generation in Bengal, who grew up at a time when eggs were not easily available (unless you had your own chickens), treated eggs as a luxury and this may explain why in many Bengali households, eggs are not just eaten for breakfast but as a main meal.

400g firm white fish fillet
4 tbsp butter
1 large onion, thinly sliced
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1/4 tsp ground turmeric
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
1/4 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp salt
8 large eggs, beaten
4 tbsp chopped fresh coriander

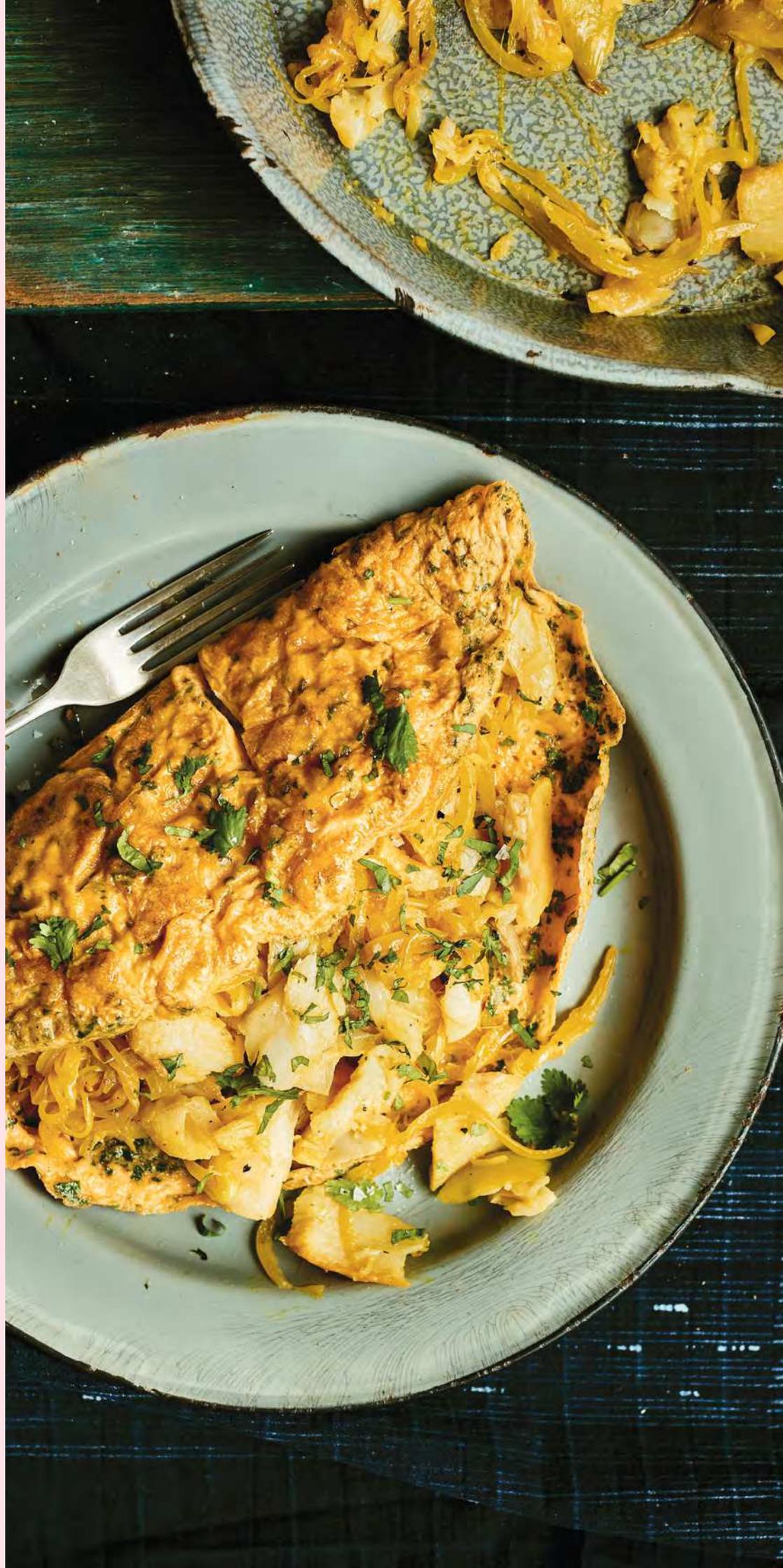
■ Poach the fish in water until it is just cooked then break into chunks and set aside.

■ Heat the butter in a non-stick frying pan over a medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic and stir for a minute, then add the turmeric, black pepper, chilli powder and salt and stir for another minute.

■ Add the fish and gently stir to coat it with the spiced onions and garlic. Remove the mixture from the pan and set aside while you make the omelette.

■ Wipe out the pan with kitchen paper and put it back over a medium-high heat, adding a little more butter if needed. Add the eggs and coriander and cook until almost set.

■ Put the fish filling on one half of the omelette, fold the other half over and serve immediately.



▼ Sweet rice with saffron and nuts

SERVES 4-6

Anyone attending a milad (religious gathering) or a Muslim wedding would have come across this saffron-infused glistening dessert. Saffron is one of the world's most expensive spices, but you only need a little, and infusing it in warm milk is a very effective way to bring out its flavour. The addition of nuts gives this dessert a further luxurious touch. Definitely serve with some thick or clotted cream on the side.

½ tsp saffron strands

2 tbsp milk

250g basmati rice

100g ghee or butter (or flavourless vegetable oil), plus extra for greasing

6 cloves

8 green cardamom pods

40g each shelled unsalted pistachios and unsalted blanched almonds, cut into thick slivers

30g dried apricots, cut into small cubes

150g granulated sugar

2 tbsp rose water

■ Put the saffron in a small bowl, warm the milk to tepid and pour over the saffron strands.

■ Gently wash the rice in a large bowl with cold water (not under running water as this will break the tips of the rice, which will make it sticky). Change the water several times until it looks clear, then soak the rice in cold water

for at least 30 minutes, or up to 3 hours.

■ Drain the rice well in a strainer. Bring 1.5 litres water to the boil in a large pan, then add the rice once the water is boiling and boil until it is half done.

■ Drain the half-cooked rice in a strainer and spread it thinly on a platter to cool and prevent it from continuing to cook. Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas 4, then heat the ghee or butter in a heavy-based pan over a medium-high heat.

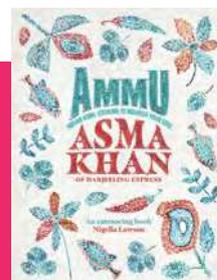
■ Add the cloves and cardamoms, followed by the pistachios, almonds and apricots. Add 250ml cold water and the sugar and stir until the sugar dissolves.

■ Butter a casserole dish and add the rice, then pour over the warm, spice-infused sugar syrup.

■ Add the saffron-infused milk and stir gently to ensure the saffron is evenly distributed. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 15 minutes.

■ Take the dish out of the oven. Gently fluff the rice, then re-cover and bake for another 10-15 minutes. Remove the foil and leave the dessert to stand for a few minutes.

■ Sprinkle the kewra or rose water over the warm rice before serving.



Extracted from
Ammu by Asma
Khan, £26, Ebury
Press. Photography
by Laura Edwards. ■

Tipplēs & nibbles

CELEBRATE EASTER WITH
A COLOURFUL PLATTER OF
NIBBLES AND A REFRESHING,
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◀ Strawberry & champagne mezcal margarita

SERVES 2

Everyone loves strawberries. Here, they're enjoyed with some champagne and mezcal for an upgrade on a strawberry daiquiri. Perfectly light, fruity and delicious.

60ml El Recuerdo Mezcal

25ml lime juice

25ml Cointreau or triple sec

6 strawberries, plus 1 to

garnish (optional)

Champagne, to taste

(alternatively use Prosecco or another sparkling wine)

Smoked salt

1 lime, zest and juice

■ Mix a generous pinch of both salt and lime zest on a small plate or saucer. Rub a little lime juice around the rim of each margarita glass, then tip the empty glasses upside down on the plate and rotate to create the salt/lime rim.

■ Add six of the strawberries to a cocktail shaker and crush using a muddler or rolling pin.

■ Add the El Recuerdo Mezcal, lime juice, Cointreau or triple sec, and a handful of ice, then stir for 30 seconds until completely incorporated.

■ Strain into the prepared glasses, then top with Champagne. Garnish with a sliced strawberry half.

RECIPE *by* JONATHAN HATCHMAN

◀ Apple & red onion chutney vegan cheese platter

SERVES 6-8

This is the perfect sharing platter for dinner parties or when dining al fresco. Grilled veggies and creamy cashew cheese go together perfectly, and the Jazz apple chutney is just the perfect accompaniment.

3 large red onions, peeled and finely sliced

1½ Jazz apples, finely chopped

1½ cups brown sugar

1½ cups apple cider vinegar

1tsp salt

1tsp pepper

1 bay leaf

For the platter

Roasted veggies such as carrots and pepper

Crackers of your choice

Cashew cheese

Olives

Grapes

■ Add the finely diced onion to a large pot with a dash of oil. Cook them on a medium/low heat until they are soft. Add all the other ingredients.

Bring the mixture to the boil and then simmer. Put the lid on and cook until all the liquid has evaporated, approximately 2 hours.

■ Let it cool down completely before serving it with the cheese platter. Store it in an airtight jar in the fridge for up to 2 weeks.

■ Serve with grapes, roasted veggies, crackers, breads, nuts and seeds for the ultimate feast. ■



Superfood salads

WITH VALENTINA HARRIS

BOOST YOUR NUTRIENT INTAKE WITH VALENTINA HARRIS'S DELICIOUS, YET SO-HEALTHY, SALAD IDEAS.



I've never quite understood the popular concept of suddenly eating lean and healthy right in the very depths of winter, in January. Through those grey days when one's morale is already low and nights so cold and bleak, sometimes only a

generous slice of cake or a big plate of pasta will do the trick!

Better surely to wait until the arrival of the first warm days of late spring/early summer, when there's a wide new range of freshly picked, seasonal produce to cheer and nourish.

It's the time of year when trips to the local farm shop or farmer's market nudge me, making me feel as if I want to gently detox and refresh my eating habits after months of comfort food, with freshly cut asparagus, foraged wild garlic, the first early strawberries and a whole host of other seasonal, colourful deliciousness to choose from.

Of course, it's not just about fresh vegetables and fruit, although I do always try to abide by the mantra coined by the food writer Michael Pollan in 2006: "Eat food, not too much, mostly plants", which has always seemed to me eminently sensible and super-simple to follow.

Opt for healthy meat

When choosing a healthy meat option to add in alongside your greens, chicken is perhaps the smartest food choice because it is very high in proteins composed of amino acids, the building blocks that help our bodies to function properly.

It's also rich in vitamins — especially B vitamins — but also D and A. Chicken meat has a low content of saturated fat compared to red meat such as beef or pork, and is rich in minerals such as iron, which helps red blood cells deliver oxygen to the cells; phosphorus, for strong teeth and a healthy brain; and selenium, which helps the body's defence mechanism.



So, as long as the chicken you pick is free-range and preferably organic, it's a great choice when choosing foods that can tastily help you to eat more healthily. Plus there is almost no limit to the number of wonderful dishes you can create around chicken, including lots of different kinds of salads.

Power up with protein

Much has been said about the many health properties of pulses, and the humble little chickpea is certainly one of the most adaptable and simple to prepare. Chickpeas are considered a complete protein because they contain all nine essential amino acids and like other pulses, (or legumes), are brimming with vitamins A, E and C plus minerals including choline, which helps your brain and nervous system run smoothly; and magnesium, potassium and iron.

Unlike many other foods, chickpeas offer up their many health benefits no matter how they are consumed because their nutrients are always "bioavailable", which means your body can reap positive benefits from them even, for example, when they are ground into flour.

My recipe combines the unassuming chickpea with the equally modest cauliflower, which in recent times



“It’s the time of year when trips to the local farm shop nudge me.”



found almost overnight culinary fame beyond its classic and indulgent presentation under a robe of rich cheese sauce, emerging as a light and carb-free rice alternative; or sliced into ‘steaks’, or served whole as a ‘roast’.

Boost heart health

Cauliflower possesses many health benefits but perhaps is best known for being a super heart-friendly vegetable thanks to a plant compound called sulforaphane. This acts as a potent antioxidant and reduces the inflammatory damage caused by oxidative stress — the process that plays a central role in the development of heart disease.

To turn this salad into a superfood recipe, I’ve added a bed of shredded raw cabbage, packed full of vitamin C, and the dressing itself contains chilli — another ingredient packed full of healthy benefits.

Reputedly, chillies can help to improve cognitive function and red blood cell formation; reduce blood pressure and prevent cardiovascular disease; act as a natural pain reliever; clear nasal congestion; soothe intestinal diseases and disorders; boost immunity and maintain healthy eyes.

Load up on oily fish

My final ingredient to finish off this roll call of superfoods for using in some easy-to-prepare salads is oily fish — in this case, delicious smoked mackerel.

Like many oily fish, mackerel is a fish that is absolutely at its peak when eaten as fresh as possible — if it can’t be eaten

within minutes or at most hours of being landed from a cold, salty sea then I think it is actually better enjoyed expertly smoked.

I fondly remember childhood fishing expeditions to Ireland — the day spent riding the wild green waves in a little wooden boat, hauling in net after net of skittering, shiny mackerel that slithered around under our bare feet.

Back at the harbour at sunset, all those not sold as fresh were quickly salted in huge wooden barrels or sent off to the smokehouse. The incredibly fresh taste of quickly grilled mackerel eaten with our fingers on the quayside is something I shall never forget.

The beautiful, silver, green and blue mackerel, with its silky skin and long, strong fins, is abundant in omega-3 fatty acids, known as essential fats.

They’re a vital part of cell membranes throughout the body: assisting in making hormones to control blood clotting, and contraction and relaxation of the arteries. The more fish you consume, the more omega-3 fatty acids you’ll absorb and since our bodies cannot produce them, it is important that you do get enough through your diet.

Mackerel is also a great way to get more vitamin K, which also has many benefits for your heart. Of many well-documented health benefits surrounding oily fish, one of my favourites concerns eating it for the vitamin E, to help keep your skin and eyes looking young and healthy.

So, let us celebrate April and May with plenty of fresh, seasonal green vegetables, some lean and tasty chicken, smoked mackerel, cauliflower, chilli and chickpeas: a real cornucopia of gorgeous superfoods as we move towards summer. Surely it’s easier to eat healthily and change any habits that might need changing when the sun is shining? »



▶ Smoked mackerel, red onion, pepper and spinach salad

SERVES 4

This is such a delicious and colourful salad, packed with great flavours — and it makes me feel super healthy even just looking at it! It is great to take on a picnic.

6 x smoked mackerel fillets

1 red onion

1 large red and 1 large yellow pepper, washed

1 large handful flat leaf parsley, washed and dried

Juice of ½ lemon

3-4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Sea salt and freshly milled black pepper

Lemon wedges, to serve

2 or 3 handfuls of baby spinach leaves, washed and dried

■ Remove the skin from the fish and check for any bones. Cut the mackerel into neat wedges, using sharp scissors.

■ Peel and slice the onion into crescents. De-seed and slice the peppers into thin strips.

Remove leaves from the parsley and chop them finely.

■ Put the mackerel in a bowl with the onion, peppers and parsley and mix together gently so as not to break up the mackerel.

■ In a separate bowl, whisk the lemon juice, olive oil and salt and pepper together and then mix this through the mackerel, onion and peppers.

■ Leave to stand for about 2 hours in the fridge, then serve on a bed of baby spinach leaves with some crusty bread. »





MACKEREL
IS HIGH IN
INFLAMMATION-
FIGHTING
OMEGA-3
OILS

▼ Chicken, apple, tomato and walnut salad

SERVES 4

This is a really light and crunchy salad dressed with a lovely mayo dressing. You can change the walnuts for almonds or pecans for a different nutty flavour, and if you want a stronger onion flavour, swap the chives for a couple of finely chopped spring onions.

3 large cooked, skinless chicken breasts, chopped into medium sized chunks

2 large red crispy apples, cored and cut into medium sized chunks

Juice of ½ lemon

12 cherry or baby plum tomatoes, washed and halved

3-4 tbsp walnuts, roughly chopped

1 tbsp chopped chives

For the dressing

100ml mayonnaise

1½ tsp ketchup

2 tsp grated onion

½ clove garlic, minced

1 tsp white wine vinegar

Sea salt

3-4 dashes Tabasco sauce

To serve

2 handfuls mixed salad leaves of your choice, washed and dried

■ Put the cooked, diced chicken in a large bowl.

Toss the diced apple in lemon juice to prevent

browning and then add it to the chicken.

■ Add the tomatoes, walnuts and chives. Mix together gently with the chicken and apple.

■ Put all the dressing ingredients into a small bowl and mix together. Add additional salt if desired. Refrigerate for at least an hour to allow the flavours to develop.

■ When you are ready to serve, add enough of the dressing to the salad to just coat lightly all over.

■ Arrange the salad leaves on individual plates or in a shallow salad bowl.

■ Spoon over the dressed chicken salad and serve at once. Offer the remaining dressing separately.



► Roasted cauliflower and chickpeas on shredded cabbage salad

SERVES 4

I used purple cauliflower for this recipe and combined it with black and white chickpeas, but you can use any kind of cauliflower or chickpeas you wish or can easily get hold of. You might think it's maybe a slightly more wintry kind of salad than the other two, but is really delicious, served cold or just warm. There are lots of different elements, flavours and different textures in this gorgeously spicy salad.

For the marinade

½ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp garam masala
1 thumb-sized knob of fresh ginger, grated
2 large cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
140ml Greek yogurt
2 tbsp coconut cream

For the cauliflower

1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 medium-sized whole cauliflower, stalk trimmed

For the salad

1 x 400g can chickpeas, drained
1 small red onion, peeled and finely chopped
½ tsp garam masala
½ tsp hot chilli powder
¼ white cabbage, shredded finely
4 tbsp chopped fresh coriander

For the dressing

5 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 thinly sliced fresh chilli
1 garlic clove, crushed
Sea salt and freshly milled black pepper

■ Pre-heat the oven to 200°C/ gas 6. Mix together all the marinade ingredients and season with sea salt and freshly milled black pepper.

■ Drizzle the oil over the base of a medium roasting tin. Use your hands to coat the cauliflower entirely in the marinade, and then place it in the oiled tin. Spoon any leftover marinade on top. Roast for 30 minutes.

■ Pour 100ml boiling water into the tin, and then cover loosely with foil. Return to the oven and let the cauliflower steam for a further 30 minutes.

■ Meanwhile, toss the chickpeas, onion, spices and salt and pepper together.

■ Uncover the cauliflower, scatter the chickpea mixture around it (the water should have mostly evaporated), then roast them together for 20 minutes until the onion is tender and the chickpeas are just crisping. The cauliflower should be golden and tender.

■ Mix the dressing ingredients together in a small bowl.

■ Combine the shredded cabbage with the chopped coriander and then drizzle over half the dressing. Arrange the dressed cabbage and coriander in a shallow salad bowl.

■ Place the roasted cauliflower and the chickpeas on top of the cabbage salad and serve, with any remaining dressing offered separately. ■



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WEEK ONE — NAIL THE BASICS

Getting used to moving more is the thrust of this first week.

Monday



Don't burn out too quickly. Start your day with a half-hour walk to get your blood pumping. To take walking to the next level, add a pair of ankle and wrist weights.

Tuesday



Boost your range of motion with stretches before cardio. Skipping is great for getting your heart racing — aim for one or two-minute bursts with 30-second rest periods.

Wednesday



Rest day. Nourish yourself with some lovely, healthy food. Why not try the ideas on our website?

Thursday



Try this cardio workout at your own pace: 20 burpees, 10 press-ups (you can do these on your knees if needed) and 20 star jumps. Repeat three times.

Friday



REST DAY

Saturday



Get friends (or dogs!) together for a walk around the park or along the coast. There's no better way to spend the weekend.

Sunday



Enjoy a Sunday evening with some slow-paced, Yin yoga stretches like happy baby (perfect for tight hips) and cobra. Find tutorials online.

WEEK TWO – PUMP UP THE VOLUME

Monday



Get a set of weights (and if you don't have any, a couple of tins or bottles will do!) and complete 20 bicep curls and 20 shoulder presses. Aim to stay slow and controlled.

Tuesday



Squats with light dumbbells will help fire up glutes, quads, hamstrings and hip flexors. Aim for four sets of 10.

Wednesday



Follow along on our half-hour yoga class with Barbara Currie using this QR code. You'll feel stretched and energised.

Thursday



REST DAY

Friday



Head to the gym (or use at-home weights) for an upper body workout. Strong arms, back, shoulders and wrists are good for maintaining healthy posture and preventing injuries.

Saturday



Kettlebells are a great full-body workout. Try some swings, overhead presses and Russian twists with a light weight.



Sunday REST DAY



Weights are a winner for women

Emma Goodman-Horne, a personal trainer and Bio-Synergy ambassador (bio-synergy.uk), explains why weights are fantastic for boosting bone health.

As we get older, our muscle mass naturally decreases, also known as sarcopenia. However, we can work towards preventing this by incorporating weight-bearing exercises into our regime.

Increasing your muscle mass through lifting weights or resistance training supports bone health, making your bones stronger and more resistant to injury. Resistance and weight-bearing exercises stimulate bone tissue to strengthen and grow.

Lifting weights will also give you more energy and help to manage your weight, alongside a healthy diet.

GRAB A SET OF DUMBBELLS (THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE MEGA HEAVY)

- ✔ Strengthen your arms and shoulders by lifting, curling, pushing, pulling and punching with a light set of weights.
- ✔ Hold on tight when you're squatting to fire up the legs and bum.
- ✔ Think about your posture throughout — core strength gives your spine support. Don't slouch.
- ✔ Consistency is paramount. Add a regular weights routine into your week and you will be stronger for life! »

WEEK THREE — BREAK A SWEAT

It's time to push yourself out from your comfort zone.

Monday



Try 20 of each exercise — jumping jacks, burpees and high knees.

Tuesday



Instead of a usual walk, break into a light jog to boost heart rate. If that's too much, do 'sprints' of 30 seconds jogging, 30 walking.

Wednesday



Find out if there's a boxercise class in your area, if not, make one at home! Try 20 jabs, and 20 front kicks. Do five sets.

Thursday



REST DAY

Friday



10,000 step walk and meditation — our mental health is as important as our physical health.

Saturday



Try a dynamic vinyasa yoga class. Yoga with Adrienne has some great tutorials.

Sunday



REST DAY

WEEK FOUR — GO FOR GOLD

Keep up the momentum with this last-week routine.

Monday



Dealer's choice. Go for the exercise you've enjoyed the most from the last month.

Tuesday



10 bicep curls, four sets. 10 shoulder presses, four sets. 10 squats, three sets, then follow with a walk.

Wednesday



REST DAY

Thursday



Take a HIIT class at your local gym or fitness centre. HIIT can help boost your metabolism for hours after your exercise.

Friday



REST DAY

Saturday



Head to a yoga or Pilates class and follow with a walk later in the day.

Sunday



Some Sunday night yoga stretches are in order. Choose five of your favourites to make a personalised sequence.

WEEK FIVE — FINISH ON TOP

Choose two of your favourite exercises. ■

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WHETHER YOU'RE LOOKING TO SELL YOUR HOME, OR YOU'D JUST LIKE TO LIVE IN A SWANKIER PROPERTY WITHOUT MOVING, THERE ARE QUITE A FEW WAYS TO INCREASE THE VALUE AND SALEABILITY OF YOUR HOME WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK, WRITES FINANCE EXPERT **JASMINE BIRTLES.**

Here are some tips from property gurus on how you can quickly and easily increase the value of the home you live in. From quick wins with polish and paint to more expensive options, most of us can increase the value of our properties and make them nicer to live in, too.



CREATE A MULTI-FUNCTIONAL HOME

Property developer and author John Howard says, "As more Brits continue to work from home, multi-functionality will soon become its biggest selling point. Look for ways you can adapt your spaces to make them more functional. This might be by converting a spare room into an office space, or splitting the open-plan living room using an open bookshelf or visually appealing dividers."

Gemma Caufield, residential branch manager and senior valuer at Bramleys, adds, "I think the most popular rooms of 2022 will be home offices and gyms. Many people are working from home indefinitely and require a permanent space to work that they can close the door on when the workday is complete. Health and wellbeing is becoming an increasingly popular priority, so I do feel many people will start to invest in gym equipment at home to fit in with their busy lifestyles."

If creating a home gym sounds a bit of a stretch for your budget, Gemma adds that you can search the web for second-hand equipment, which does the job and can look the part.

“You’re selling a lifestyle by showcasing the space.”

BE CAREFUL WITH FURNITURE

Tali Leggett, head of rental design at commercial property furnisher David Phillips, says, “Carefully consider the furniture layout to ensure there are clear walkways throughout the property and no narrow spaces or awkward obstacles to overcome which may raise a red flag to potential buyers. Choose furniture of an appropriate scale for the room to ensure spaces feel homely but not overcrowded.”

She adds that furniture and accessories should be of a style that is based on the design of the property and its location. “A loft conversion in Shoreditch will require a completely different selection of furniture and art versus a traditional town house or cottage,” she explains. “It can be worth bringing in a friend with ‘fresh eyes’ to point out anything that doesn’t tie in with the rest of your scheme and which can be stored elsewhere while you market the property.”

IT’S AS SIMPLE AS A, B, C AND D!

Property developer Gill Fielding, who runs the property training company Fielding Financial, says her first tip is always ‘A, B, C and D’, which means “Always Be Cleaning and Decluttering!” She adds, “Declutter the property of anything that isn’t needed or needs to be replaced. When in doubt chuck it out and *clean!* And then declutter and clean again — and again. Then look at what you have when it’s stripped bare and clean.”

John Howard agrees. “You are selling a lifestyle,” he says. “Clutter can have a real impact on your chances of getting the maximum value for your home. One study has shown that this was a large concern



A clean and well-styled room will help your efforts to sell tremendously.

IN THE KNOW

The worldwide home improvement market was valued at **£560 billion in 2020** and is expected to grow significantly over the coming years, according to Statista.

for one in four buyers. The most important tip to add value is that you are selling a lifestyle by showcasing the space and how it can best be utilised.”

DO A QUICK PAINT JOB

Interiors expert Elaine Penhaul, who owns the home staging company Lemon and Lime Interiors, says you can add another £4,000 to the value of your home by painting your front door blue! “Unappealing exteriors

can very much lose a sale before the buyer has even set foot through the door,” she says. “Placing an emphasis on exterior work can make your property the envy of the neighbourhood — kerb appeal is real. Spruce up your front door with a lick of on-trend paint and a hand-crafted house name or number, showing to buyers from the outset that efforts have been made to create attention to detail.”

She adds that sprucing up tired-looking window frames can add anywhere between £500 and £3,000 per window. “Many old wooden frames can look tired and weathered after a long period of time,” she says. “Rather than spending a fortune on fitting new frames, spray your existing ones with a lick of paint to give them a new lease of life, and possibly add up to £10,000 to your house value. Painting the exterior frames can link the interior colour scheme to the exterior and transform your house’s kerb appeal.”

Outdoor and indoor lighting can really enhance a property, often at low cost. Jonathan Rolande of HouseBuyFast says, “Attractive exterior lighting looks great in photos and can enhance key features. Garden lighting in trees or a pond and rockeries looks impressive, too.”

CONVERT A ROOM INTO A STYLISH BEDROOM

Holly Herbert, from We Buy Any House, says, “Use an existing room as another bedroom, especially if you have office space. Adding a bedroom to a property can increase the value by up to 20% and can be done easily enough with some redecorating and reorganising.”

So this means that one extra bedroom could add around £51,000 to the value of the average house in the UK.

Of course, having an office or a games room is desirable so, as a compromise, you could consider making a room dual purpose, allowing it to serve as both a guest bedroom and a home office. »

Another big project that could add up to 20% to the price of your home is to do a loft conversion. It does cost but it's helpful if you don't have spare rooms which you're able to convert, or if you want to increase the number of bedrooms while keeping your office space.

Jonathan Rolande of HouseBuyFast says everyone should make the most of the loft.

"Even if you don't create an actual room, clear it out, insulate it, board the floor and get lighting up there. It will wow buyers as it's a large extra store room and has visible potential."

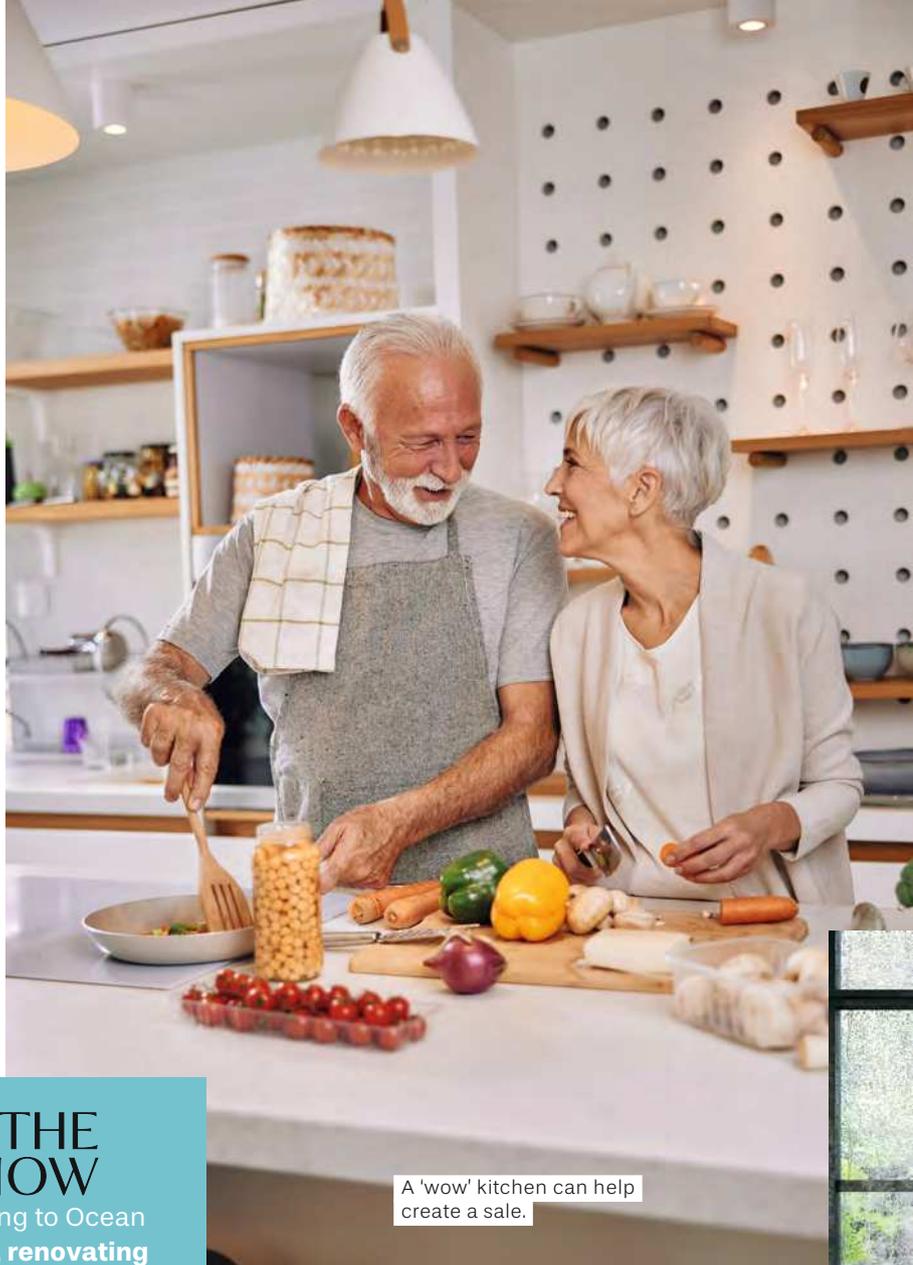
UPDATE YOUR KITCHEN

Property professionals say that the kitchen and bathroom tend to make or break a buyer's decision to purchase or not, so improving one or both will increase the value of your home.

It doesn't have to cost an arm and a leg either. According to Parminder Mew, construction director at Darcy Construction, simply replacing the doors and handles of your kitchen cabinets will make a big difference at a low price. "Replace your cabinet doors (keep the carcasses) for as little as £25 per unit. This is incredibly cost-effective as changing your doors can transform the look of your kitchen. Handles can be purchased for as little as £2.99 each, instantly changing the style of a kitchen," he says. Based on an estimate of 30 cabinets per kitchen, it would cost just £840 to replace the doors and handles.

Parminder adds that worktops can be updated for very little with vinyl wrap. "If your worktops are looking a little outdated and you're seeking an instant solution, covering them with a quartz overlay is a fantastic trick. Quartz overlays simply slot over your existing work surfaces and immediately refresh your kitchen's aesthetic." You can pick up quartz or marble vinyl for around £50 for 15 metres of wrap, which should be enough for a standard-sized kitchen.

In fact, knocking down an interior wall between the kitchen and living room and creating an open-plan area can add another 15% (£38,000 average) to the value of your home according to Holly Herbert of We Buy Any House.



IN THE KNOW

According to Ocean Finance, **renovating your kitchen, bathroom and bedroom costs an average of £13,500.** However, by carrying out these tasks yourself, **the price drops to £2,900 — saving you £10,600.**

A 'wow' kitchen can help create a sale.

“Unappealing exteriors can lose a sale.”

Interiors company VonHaus has found that a spa bathroom could add £10,000 to the value of your home. So, the addition of a top-quality bathroom with spa features such as air-bubble freestanding tubs, steam showers and Bluetooth speaker shower heads could bump up the value of your house by thousands. Watch the cost of this, though. Unless you're going to enjoy the bathroom yourself it may not be worth paying the extra for the luxury fittings just to sell it for more.

However, adding toilets and bathrooms can add another 5% to your home's value (around £13,000 on average), so it's worth converting a large cupboard or under-stairs area into one or both to create a more impressive number of those on the sales description.

Gill Fielding says, "Keep bathroom fittings white so you can add individual colour. Make sure the shower is a power shower that uses air pressure, so that it's economical."

INTRODUCE ENERGY-SAVING ELEMENTS

As the price of heating our homes goes up, properties that are well-insulated and clearly use less energy are becoming more popular. Having a low carbon-footprint is also a consideration as more buyers are concerned about the planet.

Danny Nieberg, co-founder of home comparison site Rezigo, says, "We're considering our carbon footprint more than ever, and industry estimates show that many younger buyers are paying 2–3% more for environmentally friendly features. Double-glazed windows, energy-efficient roofing and insulation, and smart technology are all important, so consider these changes."



Flooring Superstore analysed live Rightmove listings and found which home improvements have the potential to add the most value to a property. Here are their findings.

RANK	HOME IMPROVEMENT	POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PROPERTY VALUE	ESTIMATED % INCREASE
1	Loft conversions/extension	Significantly adds value	+17.5%
2	Well-maintained garden	Significantly adds value	+12.5%
3	New bathroom	Significantly adds value	+10%
3	New kitchen	Significantly adds value	+10%
3	Driveways	Significantly adds value	+10%
6	New windows and doors	Adds value	+8.8%
7	Restoring original features	Adds value	+7.5%
7	Open plan living	Adds value	+7.5%
9	Designated WFH space	Adds value	+7.25%
10	Underfloor heating	Adds value	+5%
11	Real wood floors	Adds value	+4.5%
12	Artificial grass in garden	Adds value	+3.5%
12	Balcony	Adds value	+3.5%
12	Real grass in garden	Adds value	+3.5%
15	Approved planning permission	Adds value	+2.5%
15	Smart home wiring	Adds value	+2.5%
17	Bath in bathroom (not just shower)	Adds value	+2%
18	Working fireplace	Neither adds nor damages	0%
18	Outstanding planning permission	Neither adds nor damages	0%
18	Solar panels	Neither adds nor damages	0%



THIS MONTH'S MONEY NEWS

■ We are well into the new tax year (it started on April 6) so if you haven't already set up a new ISA, now is the time to do it in order to make the most of the tax-saving time (up until April 5, 2023).

■ There's an old adage used in personal finance circles that 'men invest, women save' and it is borne out by the number of women who open Cash ISAs as opposed to Equities ISAs. According to

Hargreaves Lansdown, while women hold more ISAs than men — 52% of ISA holders are women — women are more likely to have a cash ISA than a stocks and shares option.

■ Sarah Coles from Hargreaves Lansdown says, "Women's reluctance to invest isn't due to any natural difference between the sexes, it's to do with circumstances. On average, women earn less than

men, and the more you earn, the more likely you are to have an investment ISA."

■ So make 2022 the year you take the plunge and invest in a stocks and shares ISA, making sure that it's money you can happily leave there for at least five years. Investment platforms like Hargreaves Lansdown, AJ Bell and Interactive Investor are all worth taking a closer look at. ■

Support and laughs

THE WOMEN LIVING TOGETHER

AS THE COST OF LIVING IN THE UK CONTINUES TO RISE AND MORE PEOPLE ARE EXPERIENCING LONELINESS THAN EVER BEFORE, CONCEPTS KNOWN AS CO-HOUSING AND HOMESHARING ARE TAKING HOLD IN THE UK. **ADRIANNE WEBSTER** SPEAKS TO THE WOMEN LIVING TOGETHER IN SHARED COMMUNITIES TO FIND OUT MORE.

It's become almost the natural order of things in the western world that as the years rolls by, and loved ones pass away, we can become increasingly isolated and lonely.

According to Age UK, two fifths of all older people say that the television is their main source of company, and we only need to look as far as our own elderly relatives and neighbours to see that this can be, for the large part, sadly true.

As a society in the UK, we often care differently for our older generations than other areas of the world where intergenerational living is normal.

A study by Care UK found that a third of us wouldn't take care of our elderly parents if they were ill, which hints towards the attitudes we have here.

This may be due to geographical reasons — many of us in the UK have moved away from family for work or marriage, become settled, and it's hard to give back and forth to look after our loved ones when they live on the other side of the country.

Not only that, but with an ever-increasing pressure on the care service — made worse by the pandemic and the cost of living skyrocketing, options for living healthily and independently as we get older can feel increasingly limited.

But some trailblazers have come up with a new option for the over-50s; co-housing.



A pioneering new look at housing

According to membership organisation UK Cohousing Network (cohousing.org.uk), co-housing is an intentional community, "created and run by their residents. Each household has self-contained, private homes, as well as shared community space. Residents come together to manage their community, share activities and regularly eat together."

The aims of many co-housing residencies are to support people to live independently, while giving residents the opportunity to socialise with each other through hobbies such as gardening and community work, and gain support from fellow residents.



Jude Tisdall.

“The main thing is to have ownership over how we live as we age.”

One such co-housing project is New Ground Co-Housing (owch.org.uk) in High Barnet, North London, whose motto is "a pioneering community for women".

Jude Tisdall, 70, a New Ground resident and convener of their communications team, explains, "New Ground was the first senior co-housing community with mixed tenure – that is both leasehold and tenanted flats. We range in age from 55 to 93, so in many ways we are intergenerational!"

"We moved in five years ago – it took 18 years to realise, from the very first idea of considering how to live as we got older, to bringing a group together, finding a site, planning, etc."

There are 25 apartments at New

Ground: 11 one-bedroom properties, 11 two-bedroom properties, and three three-bedroom properties, which include eight social rental units. There's also a common room, guest room that can be booked out by visiting family members to stay over, a laundry area and attractive gardens.

"Feeling part of the community doesn't mean that you are living in each other's pockets though," says Jude. "New Ground has generous shared space, but your own front door is just that. If you want to do your own entertaining or just have some 'down-time' alone, that's easy. The garden is really big and it's easy to find a little private nook somewhere when you want a quiet read."



Right: The women of New Ground enjoying some socially-distanced time together in their garden during Covid lockdowns.

Below: Getting the project off the ground.



Busting ageing stereotypes

New Ground lists its founding values on its website, and include 'acceptance and respect for diversity' and 'care and support for each other'. One of the most driving values is 'countering ageist stereotypes'.

Jude explains, "I think the main thing is to have ownership over how we live as we age. "Our oldest member is 93 and she still works, she still writes. She's inspirational."

"New Ground contradicts ageist attitudes – we are self-sufficient, forward thinking and have ownership of where and how we live. And community for us goes beyond ours."

"We are actively part of the wider community, working and volunteering in our area of North London."

"And even further afield – a group of women from New Ground will be travelling to Calais under the umbrella of the Steve Sinnott Foundation (stevesinnottfoundation.org.uk), having collected money and clothing needed." >>

Sharing is caring

Another interesting way that women are rejecting traditional living norms is by living together in homesharing arrangements. Share and Care (shareandcare.co.uk) is an organisation that matches elderly people with vetted 'sharers' (often a younger person), with benefits to both sides — the sharer can live somewhere for a low-cost, the elderly person receives low-level care, and both provide each other with company and support.

Amanda Clarke, one of the directors at Share and Care, explains, "We've been running a homeshare scheme since 2006. The idea is that we match an elderly person that needs some practical low-level support and company with a sharer, so that they can remain independent in their own home, and they live in the house like family friends."

Many of the sharers signing up for their scheme are the over 50s, who are looking for a sense of purpose, a way to give back, or simply a way to live low-cost with company. "A lot of women in their 50s and 60s have signed up to us — perhaps they're divorced, or they've looked after a parent and the house has been sold, and they think, 'Right, what am I going to do now?'" says Amanda.

"And they might go back to studying, or they might just think, 'I want to have a different life for a while'. So, they come to us looking for a homeshare."

"I also think the intergenerational idea of living together is becoming immensely popular," she says. "Other European countries look at us like we're crazy that we don't look after our elderly people in this way — generations live together in many cultures across the world.

"But it's something that Britain has got out of the habit of doing, so in a way, homeshare replaces that because it gives someone else a chance to go and live with an elderly person, and hear their stories and enjoy their company, whilst giving them a bit of a bit of practical help."



Amanda Clarke.

"The idea is that we match an elderly person that needs some practical low-level support and company with a sharer, so that they can remain independent in their own home."

BY 2033,
19%
OF THE HOUSEHOLD
POPULATION OF ENGLAND
IS PROJECTED TO **LIVE
ALONE**, COMPARED WITH
14% IN 2008.

ACCORDING TO
AGE UK, MORE THAN
**TWO
MILLION**
PEOPLE IN ENGLAND
OVER 75
LIVE ALONE.

THERE ARE CURRENTLY
19
LIVED-IN
**CO-HOUSING
DEVELOPMENTS**
ACROSS THE UK, WITH
**MORE THAN 60 IN
DEVELOPMENT.**

**OVER A
MILLION**
OLDER PEOPLE SAY
THEY **GO FOR OVER
A MONTH** WITHOUT
**SPEAKING TO A
FRIEND, NEIGHBOUR
OR FAMILY MEMBER.**



Iris (left) and Johanna.

A helpful companion

“I googled how to live cheaply in London to see if there was such a thing. And then this idea about co-living came up and I thought, ‘Wow, that’s such a good idea!’”

Johanna, 56, is one such person. She has been living with Iris, 92, in London for two years now, starting their arrangement just before the pandemic hit.

Johanna, originally from Sweden, used homesharing to help her study and make music in London while having a low-cost place to stay with lovely company.

“I was living in a houseshare in London where I was struggling financially and I thought, ‘I’ve got to see if there’s another way of not paying so much rent.’ So I googled how to live cheaply in London to see if there was such a thing. And then this idea about co-living came up and I thought, ‘Wow, that’s such a good idea!’”, explains Johanna.

“I got in contact with Share and Care, and now I’m here with Iris. We’re in our second year together and it’s going really well.”

“When you do a homeshare, you sign up for spending a minimum number of nights in the home, so it’s not like you can just kind of drop in every now and then — you actually are supposed to live here.

“It’s good that it’s regulated like this — you shouldn’t do too much and you shouldn’t do too little.

“Iris is 92, so she’s quite frail. She needs a little help with things around the house, and I help her with gardening because I love it.

“I’d say it’s like being a companion to someone. We were together during the pandemic and I was lucky because it’s a very nice area where we live, with lots of green spaces, so I could go out to the park, so that was really nice.”

The way forward

The health effects of loneliness are well reported; a study published in Sage Journals stated that loneliness can increase your risk of death by 29%, and it’s also been found that loneliness has been estimated to shorten a person’s life by 15 years, equivalent in impact to being obese or smoking 15 cigarettes per day.

When considering this alongside our want for longevity and good health as the years roll by, it’s easy to see why we need to revolutionise the ways we live.

As well as helping to reduce loneliness, co-living and co-housing can help give us a sense of purpose — helping out in the community garden or going shopping with a friend. The purpose and sense of community that can come with sharing your life with others has also been proven to have positive health effects; data from ten studies involving 136,000 men and women revealed those with a higher sense of purpose were at lower risk of developing conditions such as coronary artery disease, strokes and heart attacks.

Co-housing and homesharing might not be the best fit for all of us, but looking at ways we can integrate intergenerationally and with other like-minded people will surely only become ever more popular, whether that be through volunteering, community work, living together or simply chatting to the people around you more.

For the women of New Ground, co-housing has given them the chance to bond with other women, to support each other through this sometimes-challenging life stage and, most importantly, to thrive through it. ■

What I wish people knew about DEMENTIA

WENDY MITCHELL WROTE A BESTSELLING MEMOIR ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE BEING DIAGNOSED AND LIVING WITH DEMENTIA. NOW, SHE'S BACK AND READY TO DEBUNK DEMENTIA MYTHS AND SPREAD POSITIVITY, AS SHE EXPLAINS TO **LOUISE RAMSAY**.

DEMENTIA
AWARENESS
WEEK SEEKS BETTER
UNDERSTANDING OF
DEMENTIA AND THOSE
LIVING WITH THE
CONDITION. IT RUNS
FROM MAY 15-21. WEAR
PURPLE TO SHOW
YOUR SUPPORT.





On a sunny afternoon, Wendy Mitchell saw her father in her garden, smiling at her through the windows of her conservatory. She was indoors with a cup of tea, while he was standing wearing the baggy green cardigan he always wore, his fingers stained yellow with nicotine and his black,

Brylcreemed hair shining. She smiled at him, and he smiled back. A single moment of joy. Wendy smiled at him — for how long she doesn't know. Minutes. Maybe hours.

But her beloved father had passed away 20 years ago. There was no one out in the garden. This is one of the many vivid hallucinations Wendy has experienced, as she writes in her new bestselling book *What I Wish People Knew About Dementia*. At times she's experienced an escalator turning into a waterfall, a patterned carpet writhing with creatures and someone dressed in black transforming into a disembodied head floating above her.

But while some of these visions can be frightening, Wendy thinks of the trick dementia is playing as more of a gift. It gives her a chance to see her beloved dad again, after all.

"You can get very scared or confused when you hallucinate," Wendy says. "But this time, I allowed myself to relish this moment as it allowed me to see my father just one more time. I embraced the moment instead of turning away."

It's something many of us get wrong with dementia. Instead of considering memories to have the ability of shifting or changing, they think dementia is simply all about forgetting. And it's something that took Wendy by surprise, too.

"One of the main myths I want to debunk is that dementia is about only about memory," she says. "When people hear the word dementia, they skip straight to the end stages, forgetting there's a beginning and middle before the end and still so much life to be lived, albeit differently and with support; that you can live a fulfilling life with dementia.

"You can learn new skills and carry on enjoying those things you previously loved. You are still a valuable part of your community, as you had talents before a diagnosis — you don't suddenly lose those talents overnight.

"I want people to understand that it's about so much more

**“MY HALLUCINATIONS
ALLOWED ME TO SEE
MY FATHER JUST ONE
MORE TIME.”**

than memory. If memory is the only bit care partners concentrate on, they're missing helping and understanding us in so many other ways."

Wendy, now 65, was diagnosed with young onset dementia at 58. *What I Wish People Knew About Dementia* has done the remarkable job of taking an experience many of us would undoubtedly struggle with, and put an enlightening, more positive spin on it.

Wendy shines a light on dementia and the realities of living with the illness — her book shows that the diagnosis is what you make of it.

For Wendy, the diagnosis of dementia is not an end, but rather the start of a new chapter.

"I'm a glass half-full person," she says. "And so anything negative that comes at me, I try to turn it round into a positive. I never dwell on what I can't do any more because that would make me miserable."

She continues, "Dementia has left me with three emotions: happy, sad and content.

"I think I'm lucky, as some of my friends have been left with anger and negative emotions. What it means for me is events that are happy and sad leave me feeling immensely happy or immensely sad, and these occasions I rarely forget.

"The memories of how we feel never leave us, as that's a different part of the brain, so how someone makes you feel stays with us. The reason, or the words spoken, may be lost, but we'll remember how people made us feel."

Wendy finds solace in her blog. She started *Which Me Am I Today?*, after she was diagnosed. She wrote, "I started this blog to allow me, in the first instance, to write down all my thoughts before they're lost. Luckily, the part of my brain that allows me »

to type hasn't broken yet, and I find that easier than talking. I have calendars that take care of the future, but this blog serves as a reminder of what I've done and said in the past — it now serves as my memory. If anyone chooses to follow my ramblings it will serve as a way of raising awareness.

"It will hopefully convey the helplessness of those diagnosed with dementia, as there is no cure — the end is inevitable. However, I'm also hoping I can convey that, although we've been diagnosed, people like me still have a substantial contribution to make; we still have a sense of humour; we still have feelings.

"My fingers can type as though dementia never entered my world; they type quicker than I can think and speak the words," she says. "Like a string of fairy lights, each fairy light represents a different function of the brain. Different fairy lights flicker and fail for each of us. That's why I can type and others can't."

And her blog is read across the globe. "One woman in Hawaii has dementia and she said my drive has made her no longer afraid to live alone. It's amazing, that tiny connection, yet with so many miles between us," Wendy says.

People living with dementia (and those who care for and live with them) know the suffering it can cause can be difficult, but how the world treats those who live with dementia can be just as tough. Wendy discovered this in a hard way — her sense of self, and her way of life, changed when she first received her diagnosis and it took many years for her to find a way to live well with dementia.

Her ability to continually discover the light is admirable — but Wendy



doesn't want you to just sit and admire. She wants you to recognise that those with dementia should not be cast aside or forgotten. She believes we as a society can often be guilty of this.

Wendy describes dementia as "an unwanted guest in the house that came one day and has now fully unpacked its bags and decided to stay, and I can't get rid of it."

Yet she lives alone, independently, and refuses to allow her daughters — whom she raised as a single

mother — to be her carers. When they began helping her zip up her coat, she soon forgot how to do it herself. In her typically determined fashion, Wendy told them to stop trying to help her with her coat and slowly re-learned.

"For the kindest of reasons, people wrap us up in cotton wool, and it's the worst thing you can do for us," she told me. "While seeming kind, this does not help. If we

don't do something day after day, we soon forget, then you're left with performing that task for us forever more. What does it matter if we take an hour to put on our coat? It means you can do something else and

**“PEOPLE LIKE
ME STILL HAVE
A SUBSTANTIAL
CONTRIBUTION TO
MAKE. WE STILL
HAVE FEELINGS.”**





Left: Fearless Wendy skydiving.



we still have that self-respect that dementia often strips away from us.

"Don't concentrate on our losses and the things we can't do; instead concentrate on what we *can* do."

Imaginary smells are another thing that many don't think of when they consider dementia, but they can send Wendy searching the house for a non-existent source of burning. She doesn't experience hunger or thirst — losing the pleasure of her beloved cup of Yorkshire Tea hit particularly hard — yet she keeps up the daily habit because the daily warmth of the mug brings comfort.

Colour is another difficulty, as she struggles to make out contrast and tone — similar colours can

blend into each other. For example, she may be unable to see white rice on a white plate, so swaps it for a yellow plate. When she stopped using a plate, she simply swapped to a bowl. Her mantra is, 'there's always a way'.

Other practical tricks include having images on cupboard doors to show her what's inside, while she has a royal-blue colour bordering her light switches, so she can see them more easily on the walls.

She wrote on her blog on her 65th birthday, "I've achieved more in my 60s than in any other decade."

Her book, which she wrote with the help of Anna Wharton, includes the comments of friends who also live with dementia. It's a how-to manual both for living with the condition, and also caring for someone you know and the ways to effectively support them. It is divided into six sections — Senses, Relationships,

Communication, Environment, Emotion and Attitude — with each section subdivided into easily digestible pieces of guidance. It's informative yet joyful and packed to the brim with advice without feeling too science-heavy for the uninitiated. And as always, it shows Wendy's wonderful ability to shine a light and share the stories of others.

When Wendy received her diagnosis, she had been working as a senior NHS administrator for 20 years, rostering nursing shifts, and was known around the office as the 'guru' for her power of recall. She only realised something wasn't quite right when she started to fall while out jogging, taking nearly two years to find out why that was happening.

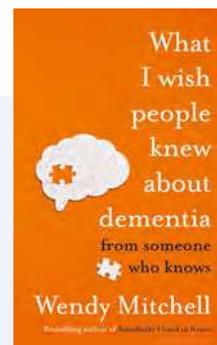
But looking back, she's once again turning it to a positive. "People with dementia can teach those without it so much about enjoying their life!" she laughs. "I was as guilty as anyone when I was working: I wished for the weekend, I wished for the end of the day, I wished for the next holiday. You're wishing your life away. The only certainty we have in this life is this moment, no one knows what the next moment will bring. So enjoy it."

On her blog, Wendy states, "What I want is not sympathy. What I want is simply to raise awareness." And raise awareness she has — with two bestselling books under her belt, media appearances and much more. Wendy, we salute you! ■

Over 55 million people have dementia worldwide, but this is estimated to rise to **130 million by 2050.**

▼
Over 60% of those living with dementia live in low and middle-income countries.

▼
Every three seconds, someone develops dementia in the world.



What I wish people knew about dementia by Wendy Mitchell
Bloomsbury,
£13.49 HB,
£10.49 EB/PDF

‘I feel like I lost her twice.’



Colin’s story

Long before some people die, their loved ones lose them to dementia.

‘I had been looking after my beloved, Trixie, for three years before we were supported by a dementia specialist Admiral Nurse, called Lorraine. She helped with the practical challenges of caring for somebody with dementia and was literally a lifeline.’

Our Admiral Nurses help people stay independent for longer, and support carers so they have the strength to cope with the bad days, and the energy to enjoy the good days.

Colin is one of many people in the UK who are remembering Dementia UK in their Wills. You can give the gift of specialist dementia care far into the future by leaving a gift in your Will to Dementia UK.

With your help, nobody will have to face dementia alone.

Order your free Gifts in Wills guide today.

Mr Mrs Ms Other

Name

Address

Postcode

Call: **0300 365 5500**

Email: **giftsinwills@dementiauk.org**

or return this form to:

Gifts in Wills Manager, Dementia UK, 7th Floor,
One Aldgate, London EC3N 1RE

No post please

We will use your address to send you your guide to gifts in Wills. We will also keep you updated via post on how you can support our work in future, unless you tick the box above. For full details of how we store and use your personal information, please see our Privacy Policy at dementiauk.org/privacypolicy

Platinum



DementiaUK
Helping families face dementia



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

Picture posed by a model.

Dementia UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1039404) and Scotland (SC047429)

STARTING *Over*

OUR COLUMNIST **ANGELI CORNELIUS** IS BACK IN THE WORLD OF DATING — BUT SHE KNOWS IT'S NOT GOING WELL WHEN HER DATE SNORES THROUGH THEIR FIRST MEETING!

Some of you have asked for more details about the boyfriend du jour, aka Carman. Well, he turned out to be slightly less 'separated' and hugely more 'married'. I should really have twigged when we were only meeting at my house and hotel rooms.

I suppose I was swept away by the romance and sexiness of it all. And someone in my life, other than a child/dog/workmate wanting my attention!

So life continues to be a learning process. My heart isn't broken, though I do miss him. But lying, deceitful, smug idiots need to be summarily dumped. Am I right, ladies?

Much as my head — and my wiser older sister — suggested giving up on dating for a period of reflection where I 'find myself' (where have I been?) and basically eschew men, I completely ignored this infinitely sensible advice and added more dating apps to my phone. Call me needy! At one stage I had four, including Tinder and Hinge.

My ex-husband told me Hinge is the posh one. I know that sounds all kinds of wrong, especially after I saw his profile on it (he's lopped 10 years off his age!). I screen-grabbed each page of his just to take the mickey out of him. He was not amused.

What started as man heaven with a multitude of sexy intelligent men clamouring for my attention rapidly degenerated into a cacophony of baby birds with their mouths open, craving attention and becoming royally upset if they didn't get it!

I'm busy enough with my kids/dog/business. To also have a multitude of men swiping me and wanting immediate messages/photos/sexy chat was exhausting. And I'm not very proficient at the sexy chat. I've only got as far as 'yes or 'no', the rest is too icky.

I soon cut back to only Hinge. But the good news is, I had a date!

Who was he? Mr E — political analyst. Pre-meet, he's funny, astute and clever.

For date night, we had tickets booked for the Old Vic, a fabulous play. I was very excited.

We met at a gastro pub. Tapas and fine wine were ordered. The scene was set.

Conversation waned very quickly and soon we sat



enveloped in an awkward silence. A large group of rowdy men came into the already packed pub.

This only served to make the tense situation with Mr E more fractious. He clammed up completely, wouldn't eat or drink. Suddenly he stood up, knocked the table sideways and sent a bowl of patatas bravas to the floor.

He turned to the offending group of men and bellowed at them to 'Shut up' — though a bit more explicitly than that. The pub fell silent.

Three of the group advanced towards us so I grabbed Mr E and guided him out of the door. I nipped back in to pay the bill and then re-

joined him outside, having given him time to cool down.

He apologised and said he had been nervous meeting me, so his stress levels were high. I suggested we walked to the theatre, grabbed a glass of wine and had a quiet chat. Thankfully, we began to chill and relax.

Darkness descended as the play began. It was a modern, two-headed performance, with passion, love, bitter arguments, recriminations. It had it all.

Well, I thought it was seat-gripping fodder. Then I heard a low growling noise. I turned to look at my date and my eyes met those of the woman seated on the other side of him. If looks could have killed... Mr E had slumped forward and was snoring — not quietly.

We emerged from the theatre an hour later into the night skies of Waterloo.

"Fancy another drink?" he asked. I declined. Sometimes enough is enough.

To his credit he sent me a very long message the next day full of apologies, but the moment had passed.

Never mind, things are looking up. Next month, I'll be telling you about the realisation of a dream.

Starting over after divorce isn't just about meeting men — far from it. ■



MOORE'S month

THIS MONTH, OUR FABULOUSLY FUNNY COLUMNIST AND *LOOSE WOMEN* PANELLIST, **JANE MOORE**, EXPLORES BONDING OVER FOOD, WOMEN'S SAFETY RIGHTS AND LETTING KIDS RUN WILD.



PLATINUM EXPERT
Jane Moore

Jane is a journalist and TV personality. Follow Jane on Instagram at @janepmoore for fabulous fashion inspiration and small brand recommendations.



David Beckham says one of his favourite evenings ever was when he had dinner with wife Victoria and she ate the same food as him.

You're probably reading this and thinking, "What's so special about *that*?" so let's allow the lovely David to explain further.

"I get quite emotional about food and wine. When I'm eating something great, I want everyone to try it," he says.

"Unfortunately, I'm married to someone that has eaten the same thing for the last 25 years. Since I've met Victoria she only eats grilled fish and steamed vegetables. She'll very rarely deviate away from there."

So now you can see why that single night of culinary abandonment has taken on such meaning for him.

Now I think of it, I saw it for myself when I dined with the couple several years ago at a Michelin-starred restaurant in Madrid where, despite a smorgasbord of exquisitely prepared Spanish delights, Victoria ate only a plate of something green and steaming while the rest of us happily tucked into whatever took our fancy on the extensive menu.

It was a level of self-control I don't possess. But then again, I don't run a multi-million-pound fashion and beauty business and have the world scrutinising my every lump, bump and pimple.

But Victoria's unadventurous, repetitive eating habits must sometimes be hard for her

husband to swallow, given his emotional connection to what he's eating and drinking.

It's the same story with a friend of mine whose husband has recently turned teetotal. She's not a big drinker, but loves an ice cold Chablis with dinner and now feels slightly awkward when pouring it solely for herself.

No such dilemma at Moore Towers where we both like a glass or two of fine wine. But when it comes to restaurant dining, our tastes differ markedly. I have lost count of the times we've sat and perused a restaurant menu full of adventurous options such as 'carpaccio scallops' or 'chicken paillard' and, without fail, The Husband says, "I'll have a steak and chips please."

Then, irrespective of its age, provenance, cut and seasoning, he'll smother it with a carpet of English mustard that obscures all other taste. It drives me nuts — particularly when he does it at home and it's *me* who's put all the effort in to making something delicious.

He won't eat "anything from the marrow family" either, as well as aubergines, peppers, chickpeas or quinoa — all of which I love.

So I've taken to treating him like a toddler and hiding them under rich sauces. Most of the time, he rumbles me and picks them out, but I successfully sneaked a smoked aubergine sauce past him the other day and he's still none the wiser.

However, despite our disparate tastes, we enjoy eating together and, if it's in a local restaurant, it's a nice opportunity to sit facing each other and have a proper conversation without the distraction of TV, mobile phones or the dog wanting to be let out for a wee.

LET THEM PLAY

Kids who built a woodland den were threatened with legal action for "breach of tenancy" and "criminal damage" by a housing association in Sussex.

Jazmin Saunders, 23, says her boyfriend helped her three-year-old daughter build it, along with the help of two other children, aged ten and 14.

What a sad indictment of our times. In my day, we'd spend hours in the woods at the back of our council estate, crafting hideaways from tree branches and furnished with whatever wasn't nailed down at home.

On weekends and holidays, my friends and I would play there for *hours*, only emerging at 6pm for tea. We fell over, picked ourselves up, had arguments, made up, and generally learned to problem-solve for ourselves.

It was a freedom that few children now enjoy.

With such heavy-handed bureaucracy attempting to crush any semblance of outdoor play, little wonder they spend so much time indoors on their phones and consoles.



Biba doesn't set rules for her children. Is this the right approach?

Is this equality?

The AA was accused of putting women at risk when a female driver who broke down as it was getting dark was told she couldn't be prioritised because "that's equality."

The driver — Dr Helen Mott, 52, of Bristol — said, "They've been trained to say it."

The AA apologised and its president Edmund King later explained, "We use common sense and prioritise women but by the letter of the law we can't say that."

And therein lies the "damned if you do and damned if you don't" problem for employers these days.

Common sense says one thing, but the law often tells you something different. And walking the line between the two can be a particularly precarious tightrope.

SHOULD YOU TELL YOUR KIDS 'NO'?

Mum Biba Tanya says she doesn't set rules for her young daughters and never tells them "no".

Consequently, Tabitha, seven, and Lola, four, often stay up past 10pm, eat mac 'n' cheese for breakfast if they so wish, and sometimes go to the beach instead of school.

"If more mums followed my lead, they would have healthier, happier children with fewer tantrums, less stress and fewer mental health issues," says Biba, 40, who's British but now lives in the Portugal's Algarve. Hmmm. Her kids are still young. As adults, unless they can earn a living off grid, they'll have to get a job. And it will be a short, sharp shock if it requires them to get there on time, be told what to do and get even mildly ticked off if they get something wrong. ■



Life hack

When I first started using HRT patches, it took effort to remove the sticky residue it leaves behind.

Soap and warm water failed to budge it easily, and I would use my nail to scrape it off, leaving a red mark.

Then someone suggested using oil. I use Palmers Cocoa Butter Body Oil (£6.99 for 250ml), and, after just one application, it comes off easily. It works with standard plaster marks, too.

STAYING IN GOING OUT

YOUR WHAT'S ON GUIDE FOR APRIL

THESE FILM, BOOK AND TV RECOMMENDATIONS WILL ENTERTAIN YOU BOTH AT HOME AND OUT-AND-ABOUT THIS APRIL.

Live experiences

Cheltenham Jazz Festival

APRIL 27 – MAY 2

Jazz lovers, rejoice! This year's Cheltenham Jazz Festival has a bumper line-up of incredible artists from jazz, blues and world music including Emeli Sande, James Bay, Jordan Rakei, Brian Jackson and many more. It's one of the UK's leading jazz festivals, running from April 27–May 2, 2022, with over 70 musicians including the Guy Barker Big Band and BBC Concert Orchestra, as well as BBC Radio 2's special broadcast to help celebrate the 25th Jazz Festival. Plus, you may spot guest appearances from Paloma Faith, Imelda May and Gregory Porter.

Simple Minds: 40 Years of Hits

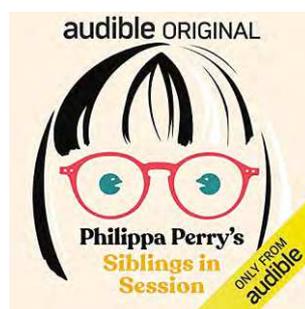
STARTS MARCH 31

With five number one albums and eight top ten singles here in the UK, as well as numerous chart-topping positions around the world, it's safe to say Simple Minds are one of the UK's most successful bands. Now the Scottish rockers are back for their 40th anniversary and celebrating the only way they know how, including a homecoming show at Glasgow's SSE Hydro. You can hear hits from their iconic debut album *Life In A Day* right through to their 2018 album *Walk Between Worlds*, which hit the UK top four. Get ready to dance the night away.



Catch Simple Minds on their latest tour

On-the-go listening



Philippa Perry's Siblings in Session

AUDIBLE

Find it difficult to speak to your siblings? This podcast may be for you, as Philippa Perry looks at the relationship we have with our siblings and how important those relationships are. In this series, she looks at six very different sibling relationships, and aims to bridge the communication gap within families. In a single intense session she goes under the skin of each of these relationships to find out what is working, what might not be and how reflecting on this often overlooked relationship might benefit everyone involved. It's fascinating stuff — and you may feel 'seen' in some conversations.

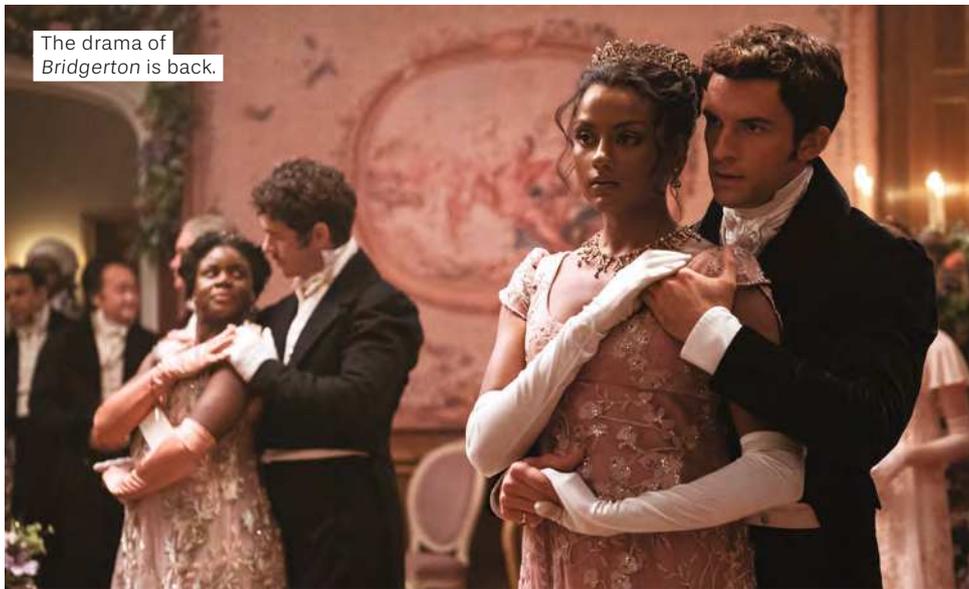
The Missing

AMAZON MUSIC

More than 1,000,000 people are missing at any one time around the world. And in the UK, a person is reported missing every 90 seconds — with 1% of cases remaining unsolved more than 12 months later. It's a heartbreaking situation and one this podcast is hoping to resolve. Brought to you by the charity Missing People and supported by Locate International, the podcast looks at those 1% of cases and tells the story of one missing person per episode. It's hoped that by producing this podcast, listeners will join the conversation and help look for the clues that could give families the answers they need. They believe every case could be solved with the help of listeners.



The drama of *Bridgerton* is back.



On the screen

Bridgerton

OUT NOW

Season two of *Bridgerton* lands on Netflix late March and we couldn't be more excited. Last season, we entered the world of *Bridgerton*, swept along on the journey of Daphne Bridgerton's debut into society and her quest for a true love match in marriage. Season two is a little different, as we move away from Daphne and follow the romantic journey of Lord Anthony Bridgerton, played by Jonathan Bailey, and his desire to uphold his family's prestige name by searching for a suitable woman to wed. Last season, the Viscount appeared reluctant to settle down and find a wife, yet it appears the tide is turning. But are his efforts to court Edwina Sharma entirely noble? Her sister Kate, dubbed 'the most meddling woman to ever grace a London ballroom', has her doubts and in typical *Bridgerton* fashion, drama ensues. It's the one to binge-watch this month, with reworked musical hits of Rihanna, Madonna and Nirvana, and high jinx aplenty.

The Northman

APRIL 15

If you're looking to go out rather than stay in, may we offer *The Northman* for your silver screen perusal? Directed by Robert Eggers (*The Lighthouse*, *The Witch*) and starring Alexander Skarsgård and Anya Taylor Joy, we follow how far a Viking prince will go to seek justice for his family. Action-packed, this epic revenge thriller set at the turn of the 10th century will have you on the edge of your seat.

Ozark

APRIL 29

Netflix's hit thriller is on its fourth and final season — and you don't want to miss it. The latest instalment of Marty and Wendy Byrde's story (broken up into two parts as so many series are these days) sees them negotiate a deal with the drug kingpin himself for their freedom. But a number of complications emerge for the Byrde family in the form of the FBI, as well as within the Byrde family itself.

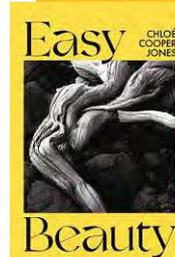
The tension racks up in the final season of *Ozark*



Great reads

Easy Beauty by Chloé Cooper Jones

APRIL 7



Chloé Cooper Jones writes a groundbreaking memoir of disability and motherhood, on moving through the world in a body

that looks different from most and living with a rare congenital condition called sacral agenesis. After she unexpectedly becomes a mother, she journeys across the world, reclaiming the spaces she'd been denied. Darkly funny, sharp and vulnerable, you won't be able to put it down.

Out April 7, £16.99,

Amazon.com

Welcome To Your Life by Bethany Rutter

OUT NOW



Heartwarming, funny and life-affirming, we follow Serena Mills in a love story, but not in the conventional way. Serena should be at

her wedding, but she isn't. In fact, she's left the man everyone told her she was 'so lucky' to find because she wants love. Real love. And she refuses to feel grateful for anything less, just because of how people see her. So she decides to set herself a challenge. 52 weeks. 52 dates. And 52 chances to find love.

£14.99, **Waterstones.com** ■

Midlife MEAN GIRLS



WE USUALLY THINK OF NASTINESS AND BULLYING AMONG WOMEN AS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENS DURING OUR TEEN YEARS, BUT, WRITES **BIBI LYNCH**, MATURE WOMEN CAN BE GUILTY OF UNSISTERLY ACTS, TOO.

I recently had the misfortune to be taught a comedy class by someone who appeared to dislike middle-aged women. To be fair, she seemed to dislike many in the class (I'm hoping her evident issue with the heavily-accented foreign man was a personality clash and not racism), but her insidious undermining digs were reserved for the women who were, that's right, the same age as her.

The younger comedy students she'd give up on or nurture (her style was a much-discussed mix of resignation/irritation/gushing) but, with her peers, she seemed to need to knock us. She actually made my classmate — and age-mate — cry and a (prompted) apology email was sent.

Yes, she shouted 'I can't hear you!' at some of the younger students, too, but she didn't contradictorily criticise the others and, most importantly, she didn't continuously refuse them the chance to actually try out material. To finish sentences. To, you know, speak, and be heard.

It was extraordinary. I'm not suggesting there should be 'women who hot flush together, stick together' favouritism — but I am saying something is off when they're effectively told to shut up.

The weirdest thing was, she was — seemingly — pro-women. "No quiet, scared women in my class!" she'd bellow. Before she stroked the boys' egos and figuratively turned her back on any woman over 45.

I didn't complete the course. I got ill, missed the final rehearsal, and didn't dare go back in case I told Jean Brodie exactly what I thought.

This whole episode shocked me. And, *Carrie*-style, got me thinking, yes, just like that, about how middle-aged women treat other middle-aged women: how

some are fiercely supportive, uplifting, sisters; and others are 'pull the ladder up after them' types.

I thought we were all supportive these days. That's what you see online/in mags/on telly, right? We're all following Davina's lead and helping each other through the midlife 'challenges' of menopause, ageism, being 'invisible' etc... Times have changed, no?

We know the midlife enemy now and it isn't other women. I even chatted with my friend Trish Halpin, co-host of the *Postcards from Midlife* podcast, about this recently — and we both concluded now was the best time ever to be our age because we didn't feel held back or lessened by it. Certainly not by the media, representation, or on social media.

But in actual real life...? By real-life women our age? Maybe the social show is just that: a show of support just for 'likes' that isn't actually real.

I know I boost my friends and my friends boost me. When they're not putting themselves down... (But that's inner conflict; that's not inflicting upon others.)

I asked my friend, author Lisa Edwards, what she thought. "Let's not forget," she said, "that girls and women are mean to each other because we're socialised to compete with each other for male attention. That internalised misogyny never goes away. It's just that some of us become aware of its presence and actively try to shed it. Blame the patriarchy!"

So some women are still stuck in patriarchal-based 'competitiveness' and are — slightly sagging — *Mean Girls*, like those in the 2004 film? But wouldn't they be so unfair to all women, then? Especially the younger ones? Or does 'same stage in life' make other midlife women a genuine threat? Your husband isn't really going to run off with a 20-year-old — but with your mate with the glint and Eau d'Experience? Who knows? Not me and my slightly foggy mind.



Nastiness isn't just reserved for the teens in the 2004 hit film, *Mean Girls*, says Bibi Lynch.



Friendship is invaluable. But when women don't support each other, it can really affect us.

“Lisa is right,” explains happiness evangelist and life coach Julie Leonard, “but it is more complex than that. There is evidence of a generational difference: that women in midlife came into the workforce at a time of few women in companies and where roles were scarce and competitive — so in order to succeed, they adopted more masculine EQ (emotional intelligence) and distanced themselves from other women.

“This is known as The Queen Bee syndrome. The Queen Bee is the successful woman who uses her power to undermine other women rather than help them. A syndrome we see far less in younger women where, perhaps, they came into the workforce when there were more opportunities for women.

“Pat Heim [corporate consultant and author of *Hardball For Women*] coined the term ‘Power Dead-Even’ in her book. She identified an unwritten rule that basically says two women will get along if they view each other as having the same power, success and self-esteem: ie if they are dead-even.

“If that shifts, they can turn on that woman. Most aren’t aware of this, which is why women sometimes don’t support other women. Plus, women are socialised to not display anger directly but indirectly — which often results in this kind of mean behaviour. [Women] are also

not comfortable confronting this behaviour and calling it out.”

This is still the patriarchy’s fault then? Isn’t that a cop-out? I mean, we’re not all mean.

Julie says, “People have their baggage. We are all the product of our upbringing and socialisation. People have issues, inadequacies and negative self-beliefs but often lack the insight or awareness to address them — so, instead, make themselves feel better by treating others in a mean way.

“What happens if we don’t learn to hold each other up? Well [former United States Secretary of State] Madeleine Albright famously said, ‘There’s a special place in hell for women who don’t help each other.’ That reflects the belief that women have the moral obligation to support one another. Until we address patriarchy and gender bias, this puts all the emphasis on women sorting it out; not men and women.”

Is there any hope? I wonder.

Yes, says Julie. “I really like the Shine Theory — a term coined by friends, writers and *Call Your Girlfriend* podcast co-hosts Aminatou Sow and Ann Friedman — to describe the commitment to collaborating with, rather than competing, against other women. Their quote is: ‘I don’t shine if you don’t shine.’”

Oh, that’s going everywhere. And not just on the comedy teacher’s website. »



"I'M HYPER-AWARE OF WOMEN NOT LOOKING OUT FOR OTHER WOMEN. ESPECIALLY IN OUR AGE-GROUP."



Nadira Persaud, 49, make-up artist and author from south London, shares her thoughts on feeling unsupported by friends through menopause.

"I cherish the sisterhood I'm surrounded by and I'm always astounded at the nastiness I see on social media. Most recently — on International Women's

Day — a Facebook friend put up empowering posts aimed at women — and the next day she posted a picture of Oprah Winfrey — with Ian Wright's face on it — really slagging her off her looks. It made me fume. One minute you're lifting women up and the next, dragging this woman down? And, yes, racist overtones. She eventually took the post down, but I still don't think she gets it.

"I feel I'm hyper-aware of women not looking out for other women. Especially in our age-group and with the whole menopause stuff. What's going on with my body — or not going on with my body — has taken me by surprise. I'm on menopause networks and sites and I'm reading loads of horrific stories about women not getting any support. We have to look after each other.

"The way I feel, going through all my changes, is, yeah, I don't have the same confidence I used to have — but I'm constantly trying to feel comfortable in my own skin. It just makes me want to be championing everyone and helping us all through. But I think these changes have made a lot more people feel insecure — and the way they can feel better is to slag other people off.

"I saw a friend and she asked how I was doing. I said 'It's been really awful with this menopause stuff' — and she completely ignored me. And that made me realise why I get so irked by her: she's not sisterly at all. She doesn't care. It made me realise I can walk away from people like her. I'm on a mission to have fewer of these types in my life."

"I FELT SO COMPLETELY ERASED."



Rosie Wilby, 51, comedian, podcaster and author of *The Breakup Monologues*, explains how comments her partner made left her feeling alone and hurt.

"I see and hear a lot of examples around me of women being mean to one another — especially in the world of lesbian breakups. A lot of straight women I know think relationships between women must be easier, because women are so lovely and understanding, right...?"

"Whenever you bring sexual and romantic love into the equation, things can get complicated. So I'm often puzzled by this idea of women leaning in together — or whatever it is we are supposed



How to deal with midlife mean girls

Life coach Julie Leonard shares her advice so you don't fall victim to nastiness.

DON'T TAKE ON THEIR ISSUES AS YOUR OWN FAILINGS

We can so easily internalise someone else's behaviour — leaving us feeling bad and lowering our self-esteem. It may feel personal but try to see it as their issues, not yours.

...

CHECK IN WITH HOW IT MAKES YOU FEEL

When we feel hurt, upset or angry, it is important to give ourselves time to reflect on what is behind that emotion. These emotions are telling us something is wrong. Ask yourself, 'What is it about what she said/did that makes me feel angry?...' 'What am I really angry about?...' 'Do I feel I can say something to her?...' 'If not, why not?' Explore and understand the root of what you feel.

...

BE CONFIDENT

It's easy to have your confidence shaken when facing a midlife mean girl. There is nothing nice about being on the receiving end of bullying behaviour. Continue to stand strong with self-worth and confidence

...

TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

You don't need to have women like this in your life. Where you can, remove yourself from them. Spend time with friends that are respectful and kind towards each other. If you still need to be around them because you are colleagues etc, don't engage in their behaviour. Walk away and be kind and supportive to other women.

...

For more information on Julie, visit julieleonardcoaching.com ■

to be doing — because I see a lot of deceit and Machiavellian behaviour...

"A relatively recent midlife experience I have talked about a little was when I fleetingly dated a bisexual woman who usually dates men. On one of our dates, we were chatting to mutual friends at a comedian's party, and she suddenly said, 'When I meet my next boyfriend, he'll probably be the kind of person that...'

"I felt so completely erased. And it seemed an odd, unsisterly thing for her to do — given that she would describe herself as a feminist and a supporter of fellow women.

"I don't think she's a bad or 'mean' person. But just that she was really unaware of her heteronormative privilege in being able to switch her queer identity on or off as it suited her.

"I was 45 and she was 47 when we were involved. I think we assume that by the time we reach our midlife, women have shed many of the insecurities we had when we were younger. Surely we've found our feet and our sense of exactly who we are? And, normally, with that comes some awareness. So we feel surprised when wise and experienced midlifers don't behave in the ways we'd expect."

HOW TO WITH Dottie & Boo

OUR STYLE EXPERTS SHARE THEIR INDUSTRY TIPS ON HOW TO ROCK RED WITH ATTITUDE.

THIS MONTH
RED



Dottie Monaghan

If you want the attention to stay on a fabulous red outfit, pair it with a nude

lip colour or a more natural tone, perhaps with a hint of brown.

This works well for a daytime look, as it gives a more laidback feel. A nude lip will also allow you to add a soft smokey eye without looking over the top.

However, if you want to ramp up your look, a red lip can make a statement, really brighten your complexion and will work on all skin tones as long as you find the shade that is right for yours.

A blue-red will suit more skin tones and can make your teeth appear whiter, while an orangey red can make them look yellow.

If you have a thin top lip or uneven lip line it is easier to correct when you have some colour on, allowing you to see the shape.

Apply your lipstick first and blot, then with a lip pencil in a similar shade draw around the lip to fill or even it out. Then, use a highlighter pencil and draw over the top of the Cupid's bow. It's like instant Botox, but remember to blend. Finding it difficult to embrace a full-on red lip? Tap



a little of the red lipstick on to your lips using the pad of your finger for a soft, stained effect. Finish with lip gloss or balm.

Lip care is paramount when wearing a red lip. If you have dry skin, don't be tempted to pick it off the lips. Instead, use a soft toothbrush to buff skin away, then apply lots of lip balm at night rather than before you put on your lipstick, as this may cause it to feather or move.

A primer will help set and hold colour in place all day.

- 1. She Fine Liner in Dream On, £8.50, Doll Beauty**
Pencils can enhance and even a lip line.
- 2. Scrub and Nourish, £8, Dr. Paw Paw**
A lip scrub evens and smooths your base.
- 3. Enrich & Enhance Lip Primer, £13.50, Green People**
Helps your lip colour stay long-lasting.
- 4. Armani Lip Power in Passione, £33, Giorgio Armani**
Enriched with oils to comfort and nourish.
- 5. Rouge Lipstick in 999, £32, Dior Beauty**
A perfect red in my opinion!
- 6. All Natural Lip Balm, £6.99, Skin Sapiens**
Lip care is extra important when wearing a red lip, so keep a balm in your handbag.
- 7. Retro Matte Lipstick in Ruby Woo, £17.50, Mac Cosmetics**
A beauty classic. I love its texture.
- 8. Lip Loving Liner in Cherry Flush, £18, It Cosmetics**
A cult favourite with a dark scarlet hue.



Boo Hill

There's no denying it, red is one of the most attention-grabbing

colours of the spectrum. It's the colour of positivity, energy, confidence and, of course, love! You may think red is not your colour, but it really can be worn by almost anyone, it's just a matter of choosing the right shade to suit you.

If you have true blonde hair and fair skin, go for a more muted red and avoid orangey tones. Darker hair that's more brown or black looks fantastic in strong shades of intense red, and in more ruby tones. If you have light brown or dark blonde hair, try out softer reds — burgundy will also suit you. If you're a silver sister rocking grey hair, try a red that has blue-based tones for a colour that is most flattering for you.

If a completely red outfit seems overpowering, try starting out with red accessories. Or if you want to wear a red outfit, but in a more subtle way, choose a printed red dress, perhaps in stripes or florals.

As red is so powerful, it can be tricky to know what other colours to wear it with. It's really is a much more versatile shade than you may at first think and can be worn with so many other shades.



There's the classic, timeless red and white look; red and black looks good, too. Alternatively, a mix of all three looks truly fabulous. Clashing colours also make a style statement. Pink and red used to be thought of as brave to put together, but now? This winning combination just looks effortlessly chic.

Another stylish way to wear red is head-to-toe, but choose different shades. Maybe a dark crimson jacket with a bright poppy-coloured top, paired with a red patterned scarf. Just add attitude!

1. Bag, £45, Joe Browns

This is gorgeous, perfect for picnics.

2. Leather jacket, £200, Joe Browns

Add street style to a simple summer dress with a classic leather biker jacket.

3. Dress, £109, Sonder Studio

Make a statement in this vibrant lace dress. Opt for metallic accessories to shine.

4. Earrings, £25, Orelia London

Add a touch of sparkle to the everyday.

5. Dress, £135, Aspiga

The perfect go-anywhere dress. Team with white pumps for day or dress up with heeled sandals for the evening.

6. Jumper, £26.99, M&Co

This winning combination of pink and red would look great with jeans, or dress up the look with scarlet trousers.

7. Dress, £16, George

Such a pretty tea dress. Perfect for hot summer days or worn with a bolero for chilly evenings.

8. Trousers, £29, Cotton Traders

Follow through with '50s style — wear a white shirt and neckerchief with these cigarette pants.

9. Bag, £39, Kaleidoscope

An accent of red accessories looks chic worn with white.

10. Heels, £90, Dune

Add a touch of elegance. ■

Gin o'clock

Leave your supermarket plonk on the shelf; **Joanna Simon** talks you through the finest craft gins to sample this spring.

Danny Cameron was sitting in a pub in the Dyfi Valley in mid Wales chewing the cud with his brother Pete about nine years ago, when they came up with the idea of making gin.

Not just any old gin, but one that would reflect the rich botanical diversity of their surroundings: the sparsely populated UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve of Dyfi, a paradise of diverse flora, exceptionally clean water and dark skies — home to ospreys, red kites, dolphins and much more.

Pete, a scientist, hill farmer, forager and beekeeper, had lived there for more than 30 years. “He came to study biology and botany,” says Danny, “and forgot to leave.” I can see how it happened.

Danny, meanwhile, had been working in the hospitality business, especially in wine and spirits (which is where I first met him), and had been observing the rise of gin — not least in two of his specialist areas, Spain and Portugal.

Artisan gins based on provenance, like wine, are common now, but back in 2013 the craft gin movement was in its infancy. Taking a botanical approach to express a sense of place was a new idea. So was setting out to use and sustain the immediate environment and contribute to the local rural economy with a small, new family business.

Dyfi Distillery opened with Dyfi Original Gin in March 2016. Even with the brothers’ complementary skills, it had taken two and a half years of R&D in two very small, customised stills — and “a lot of stuff thrown away”.

Six years on, four different gins issue batch-by-batch from a bespoke 327-litre still made for them by a master coppersmith in the Black Forest. Their newest gin, the navy-strength, is aged in an ancient Madeira barrel (see my picks). Another, Hibernation, is finished in a seasoned white port barrel. Danny drew on his old connections to get these rare vessels.

Foraging for the 28 Dyfi Valley botanicals they use (out of a total of 38) extends over ten and a half months of the



Joanna Simon is one of the UK's leading drinks experts. She gives gin the Platinum seal of approval only when it's met her high standards.

year. But it’s worth it, believe me. The gins are superb. No wonder they’ve won a clutch of top awards and are loved by Michelin-starred restaurants.

For all this, Dyfi Distillery is tiny and that’s the way the Cameron family likes it. “We’re not looking to buy an Aston Martin,” says Danny. Last year they sold a little over 10,000 bottles and there are just seven on the payroll: four full-timers, Pete, Danny and their wives, and three other family members.

They do everything themselves, including hand numbering, dating and signing each bottle. It’s a wonder they find time to talk to me, never mind to the fans who come from as far away as the US and Australia, but they do. There are no formal tours; just show up and you can browse, taste and chat.

John and Nicola Smith are also doing everything they can in-house since they opened Exmoor

distillery with Northmoor Gin in 2018.

“So, what don’t you do?” I asked.

“Make the bottles, but I’d love to try,” John said, emailing me off West Africa where his day job is managing a construction ship focused on deep water intervention.

He might even be serious about the bottles. After all, as an amateur cabinetmaker, he’s thinking about making some of his own barrels.

I used to think that wine had all the best stories, but the artisan gin vogue has brought a bevy of entertaining tales, along with the fabulous array of new gins for our G&Ts and negronis, and often they centre on people who’ve had no previous connection with the drinks business.

Go to the menu on the family-owned and run Old Bakery Gin’s website and you’ll find it also offers boilers; founder Ian Puddick still has a thriving leak detection and boiler installation company.

Sometimes Old Bakery Gin is delivered in Leakbuster-branded cars — although perhaps not to Buckingham Palace, to which Old Bakery Gin is an official supplier, such has been its rise to craft gin stardom.

Why gin? When Ian bought some run-down properties in north London in 2013, including an old bakery, he discovered that illegal gin had been made there 100-plus years before. As a gin lover, he thought he thought it would be fun to revive it. Legally.

Among the many testimonials on the Old Bakery's website is Jo's Brand's comment, "tastes of tuna". Don't believe her.

At much the same time, Rupert Holloway was a young quantity surveyor, an unhappy one, until he had a light-bulb moment: he would start Dorset's first gin distillery and use some local botanicals.

Luckily, his girlfriend went along with it. Fast forward to today. Conker Spirit Dorset Dry Gin is big enough to be in supermarkets, but is still made in Bournemouth with gorse flowers that Rupert, his school friend Fred (operations director) and their ten-strong team forage on the cliffs.

And they have a second string to their bow: Conker Cold Brew Coffee Liqueur, which is out-and-out delicious and the first of its kind.

Daniel Campbell changed careers without so much choice. He had a successful hand-roasted coffee and tea business in Edinburgh, but come lockdown "it disintegrated overnight." In the anxious time that followed, he found he was spending a lot of money on gin, until he thought, "Why don't I make my own?"

In July last year, he sold his first bottle of Great Glen Gin, having bought a 5-litre copper alembic still in June 2020 and started experimenting. He was soon joined by a chef friend, Adam Dwyer, who packed up his chefs whites when he tasted Daniel's prototypes.

They built the Lilliputian Great Glen Distillery on the western shores of Loch Ness themselves and make their own grain spirit (one of only seven distilleries in Scotland to do so) using water from their own borehole.

Great Glen Gin's signature botanicals include local purple heather and sorrel and, perhaps uniquely, frankincense. The business may be small for now, but the ambition is big. "Our goal is to be the biggest craft distillery in Scotland," says Daniel.

On that note, if I haven't tempted you to explore some craft gins for yourself, see if you can resist after you've tried my picks.

**Dyfi Navigation Gin, 57%
£42.95/50cl, Dyfi Distillery,
Master of Malt**

Exceptional, complex, barrel-rested gin; umami marine and spice flavours. I'd give it 5+* if I could!

★★★★★



Great Glen Scottish Gin, 43%, £39/70cl, Great Glen Distillery, Master of Malt

Lovely balance of juniper, floral and citrus. Botanicals include frankincense resin. Try the Pink, too.

★★★★★



**Sapling Gin, 40%
£35/70cl, Sapling Spirits**

A tree planted for each bottle sold of this climate-positive Cotswolds gin made using organic regenerative wheat. Elegant citrus, herb and juniper notes.

★★★★☆



Exmoor Distillery Northmoor Gin, 44% £36/70cl, Exmoor Distillery, Master of Malt

Juniper-led, smooth, dry gin with pepper-spice complexity, from Exmoor in West Somerset.

★★★★★



**Conker Spirit Nvy Strength Gin, 57%
£43/70cl, Conker Spirit, RNLI Shop, Master of Malt**

Juniper, pine and fern aromas with orangey sweetness in a powerful frame. £5 of each bottle sold goes to the RNLI.

★★★★★



Jo's drink hacks

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| New cocktail trend for spring evenings: Rosé Negroni. Simply swap the red vermouth for rosé vermouth. | : | Take care over your tonic. Fever Tree Refreshingly Light is my current go-to for G&T. Cushiedoos is a good quinine-free option. | : | The G&T garnish is up for grabs: try sprigs of rosemary, lemon thyme or mint, pared lemongrass, black peppercorns, star anise, green olive or a slice of cucumber. |
|---|---|---|---|--|



**Salcombe Gin Voyager Series Phantom, 46%
£75/50cl, Salcombe Gin**

Stellar, limited-edition gin rested in Château Climens Sauternes casks and made with 7 local botanicals.

★★★★★

I love a laugh in the sunshine

FAMED FOR HER EXPERT SKILLS ON THE TENNIS COURT, FREE SPIRIT **ANNABEL CROFT** TELLS **RICHARD WEBBER** HOW SHE'S HAPPIEST PRACTISING YOGA WITH STUNNING VIEWS AND MAKING PLANS TO TOUR THE UK IN HER BESPOKE CAMPER VAN.



Annabel is keen to get on the road with her newly kitted-out camper van.

Like all of us, Annabel Croft can't wait for the summer months, with fewer restrictions and being able to enjoy holidays again without worry. For the former champion tennis player, this year will be a bumper British staycation if all goes to plan as she hits the road in Vannabel, her renovated campervan.

During lockdown, Annabel's husband Mel announced he wanted to convert a van into a bespoke camper van for exploring the UK. So he bought an old DPD parcel delivery vehicle and set to work.

"At first, I didn't know what he meant until he showed me videos on YouTube and I discovered there is a massive community out there who live much of their lives in converted vans, some with a shower, toilet, wooden floor, double bed — it's remarkable," says Annabel.

"Mel is a former Americas Cup yachtsman who has sailed across the Atlantic so is very handy with a toolkit. After all, if you're out at sea and something breaks on the yacht, you must be able to fix it.

"So he's done a great job turning the van into a mini home and has just installed solar panels. So if we don't want to stop off and plug in at a campsite, we can park in a lay-by somewhere stunning and power the van completely by the panels — it doesn't have to be sunny, either. We have great plans and intend using it to explore possibly Scotland, Norfolk, Cornwall — anywhere which takes our fancy, to be honest."

Annabel — who's been married since 1993 after meeting Mel on the 1988 BBC2 TV series *Cudmore's Call*, filmed on Guernsey — is excited about their upcoming adventures. "I've really bought into the idea, it'll be great fun. I've done a lot of international travelling over the years playing tennis and, more recently, with my commentary work but feel there's plenty of the UK left to be explored.

"During this awful period everyone has been experiencing, there has been plenty of time to rethink your life, to consider what's important and what makes

“There has been plenty of time to rethink your life; to consider what makes you happy.”



you happy. So the idea of being free-spirited and stopping off at stunning locations really appeals — we can't wait.”

At first, the couple's three grown-up children — Amber, Charlie and Lily — thought their parents were entering a mid-life crisis.

“They couldn't understand what we were doing!” laughs Annabel. “Now, though, they're intrigued and I wouldn't be surprised if one or two of them borrow Vannabel when we've finished our road trip.”

With the last of her children just about to fly the nest, Annabel feels she's entering a new chapter of her life — one that is hopefully full of adventure.

Talking of real adventures, has she ever considered joining her husband sailing across the Atlantic? “We've thought about it. I think Mel — who's already done it a few times — has a dream of crossing with me onboard. But if we're going to do it together, it needs to be sooner rather than later because we're not getting any younger!” says Annabel, smiling.

It's clear that Annabel loves adventure and the freedom to take decisions in order to make the most of life. Perhaps it's as a result of her early years, which were focused on nothing but tennis. She began playing as a child and by twelve was representing England at international competitions.

Early successes include winning Wimbledon and Australian Open girls' tournaments in the 1980s. It marked the beginning of a gruelling period, which culminated in



Left: Annabel is enjoying a new pace of life with yachtsman husband Mel, pictured with daughter Amber.

Annabel quitting her professional career at just 21.

“I became fed up with the constant training and travelling. Although only 21, I felt more like a 35-year-old. I'd packed in much more than most people my age, dealing with managers, coaches, agents, sponsors and the press. It was a different childhood than other people experienced.

“So by the time I reached 21, I was ready to stop because I didn't want a lifestyle living continuously out of a suitcase.

“A change of direction was called for. I needed some space to consider the future rather than put on a tracksuit, training shoes and play tennis every day — something I'd done since I was nine.”

That change led to her embarking on a new career in TV, most notably as the helicopter skyrunner on the Channel 4 gameshow *Treasure Hunt*.

“Initially, I phoned up some TV producers seeking out opportunities and was incredibly fortunate to be asked to appear on Channel 4's Network 7 on a slot called *Survival*, where four people lived on an island off Sri Lanka for two weeks.

“After that, I was offered *Treasure Hunt* because Aneka Rice was pregnant and couldn't do the next series. The programme was such fun. I was very young when I filmed it and so green, having just come off the tennis circuit. One thing I notice when watching old episodes is how limited my vocabulary is. I cringe watching myself, especially because I seem to say ‘amazing’ every five seconds!”

As well as filming *Treasure Hunt*, Annabel appeared on, among others, an ITV magic show plus work on the stage and in panto.

“I explored lots of different avenues. Then when the Sky Sports and Eurosport channels launched, I returned to my roots and began my career in tennis commentating. »



Annabel is passionate about her tennis academy, based in Pine Cliffs Resort, Portugal.

“I love it and couldn’t be happier.”

Sport remains an important part of Annabel’s life, of course, and she couldn’t wait to see organised events re-starting — even if she never wants to play competitively again.

Another negative impact of Covid on sport, particularly women’s events, is that progress on equality has been set back, claims Annabel.

“I’m from a sport which is quite equal. When you think of tennis stars, names like Serena Williams will be high up the list. The equality in Grand Slams is fair, in my opinion, but on the tennis tour, some events are privately run so it’s up to the owner to seek sponsorship and agree prize money. Sometimes, that can lead to disparity between men and women. But every sport is different, some worse than others.

“But there is no doubting that tennis has made amazing progress in terms of equality. There are so many players now who are in the spotlight and known by almost everyone. That’s not the case in every sport, though.

“Sadly, the pandemic has made matters worse because just as they were starting to make headway and gain momentum, Covid brought everything to a halt. It’s such a shame but, fingers crossed, it’s picking up once more.”

Tennis still plays a part in Annabel’s regular fitness routine — but it’s not the only activity she

enjoys. “Usually, I play once or twice a week. I’m happiest when I’m just having a laugh in the sunshine with family or friends.”

Running plays a big part, too, and she’s just returned from a 5k session before our chat.

“I run with a group of local women. Normally, we meet four times a week and run early in the morning, around 8am, followed by coffee.”

Equally important for maintaining her overall fitness is yoga.

“I discovered it about nine years ago and the more I do, the more obsessed I am with it. I have these romantic ideas of when we’re out in the van, getting my yoga mat out at a beautiful location and linking up with a Zoom lesson.”

With her daughter having recently qualified as a yoga teacher, Annabel benefits from her lessons some days. “I love it and wish I’d found it when I was younger. I did try but couldn’t understand it properly so wasn’t able to take full advantage of its many plus points.

“As well as all that, I love walking. In fact, since getting older, I’ve enjoyed it even more. So if I don’t run in the morning, I’ll go for an hour’s walk.”

A committed fitness routine is among the reasons Annabel remains so fresh-faced, toned and never worries about getting older. “We’re all ageing so it doesn’t really matter,” she says, before stressing that she’d never consider cosmetic surgery.

“A lot of the treatments create a very strange look and make everyone appear the same. It’s very obvious to the naked eye when someone has had treatment and for many people, it can become obsessive. I’ve always thought that there must be better things to spend your money on.”

It’s important that Annabel — who lives in Wimbledon — keeps in shape because she’s just launched her own holiday company, for when we can travel the world freely and comfortably. Annabel Croft Holidays, which she runs with Mel, promotes the beautiful destinations around the globe which the couple have experienced personally.

One of the destinations featured is Portugal and, in particular, Pine Cliffs Resort where the couple’s tennis academy is based.

“It’s for kids, families — anyone who wants to learn how to play tennis. We set it up in 2013 and it’s very popular. Normally, Mel spends plenty of time there running the academy and I visit regularly, too.

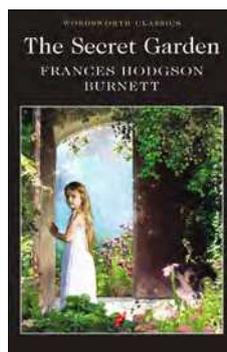
“We’ve holidayed in Portugal for over 30 years so it’s like a second home for us — and what a fine home it is, too!” ■

The books that made me



NOVELIST, BIOGRAPHER, CRITIC AND JOURNALIST **CRESSIDA CONNOLLY** SHARES THE BOOKS THAT HAVE SHAPED HER LIFE.

The book I loved as a child



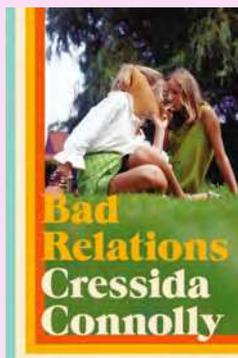
THE SECRET GARDEN

Frances Hodgson Burnett

My mother read this to me when I was small. She loved the cheery lad, Dickon, who helps heroine Mary Lennox remake the magical walled garden. But I was intrigued by the third child, Colin, who languishes upstairs. He reminded me of the first Mrs Rochester, up in the attic. It haunted me to think a boy could live locked up like that.

I was lucky enough to grow up in a house full of books and my favourite childhood game was playing libraries. I had a little rubber stamp set and I'd wear my father's spectacles to look the part. From early on I knew that stories could keep you company as well as take you on marvellous adventures.

Kingdoms of ice, time-travelling, wicked queens: everything was in books. They're still my greatest solace — and extravagance. I never leave a bookshop empty-handed. My own home has teetering piles of books everywhere, like stalagmites. These are some which have meant the most to me.



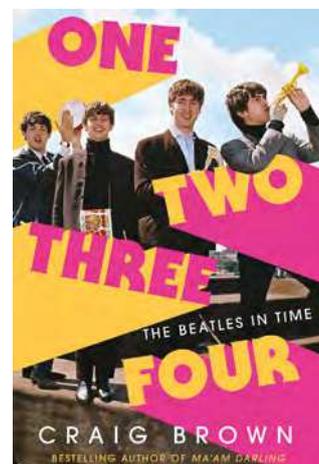
Bad Relations by Cressida Connolly, £14.99, is published May 19 by Penguin Books

The book that makes me laugh

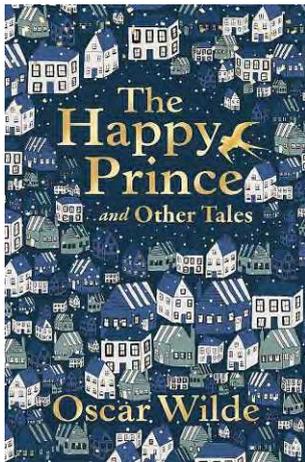
ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR: THE BEATLES IN TIME

Craig Brown

The Beatles, plus Craig Brown's matchless eye for the absurd, make a brilliant combination. It's written as a series of short vignettes and features lots of people who were on the periphery of the Fab Four. Even a seasoned Beatlemaniac will find new material here. It's a book you can return to time and again.



The book that makes me cry

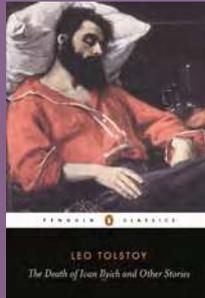


THE HAPPY PRINCE AND OTHER TALES

Oscar Wilde

This was another book my mother read to me, but it was hopeless as we'd both end up sobbing. I especially love the story of the Selfish Giant, who refuses to allow the children to play beneath his apple trees. Children have a strong sense of fairness which this tale speaks to.

The book that I always go back to



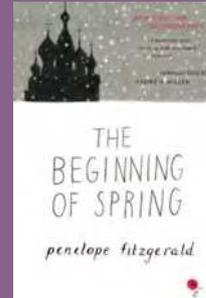
THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYICH

Leo Tolstoy

At first glance this is a pretty depressing story, but each time I

read it, there's a new angle. Tolstoy guides the reader through all the trivial stuff of life that gets in the way of what we're really here for. It expands the sense of what it is to be human.

The book that inspires me

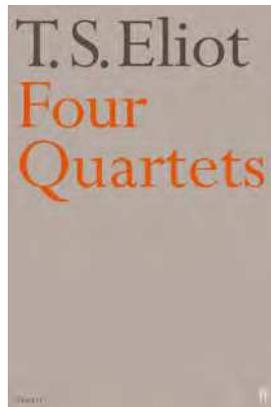


THE BEGINNING OF SPRING

Penelope Fitzgerald

This is a very peculiar love story, set just before the Russian Revolution.

The heroine disappears on the first page. We follow her husband and watch as he's tempted by a young woman. It's one of those books that, as a writer, makes you want to join in somehow.



The book that changed my life

THE FOUR QUARTETS

T.S. Eliot

I had cancer a while ago and reading these long poems really helped me. I don't claim to be able to understand everything, but there's so much mystery and beauty to savour in these lines. They're austere but oddly comforting, like the music of Bach. Last year, Ralph Fiennes toured the UK with his performance of them. Hearing them made me notice lines I'd never taken in before. It was a wonderful experience.

THIS MONTH'S AUTHOR

■ Cressida's collection of short stories, *The Happiest Days*, won a PEN/MacMillan Award, and her novel, *After the Party*, was selected as a Waterstones Book of the Month and shortlisted for the Walter Scott Prize in 2019.

■ In 2020, she was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, a society founded by King George IV to "reward literary merit and excite literary talent".

■ She has written for *Vogue*, *The Spectator*, *The Times*, *Literary Review*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian* among others. ■

Travel

The Almond House at Morgado do Quintão.



ATASTE

OF THE **ALGARVE**



WITH 300 DAYS OF SUNSHINE A YEAR AND BOASTING STUNNING NATURAL PRODUCE, **BRIDGET MCGROUTHER** TAKES US ON A GUIDE TO THE VERY BEST CULINARY TREATS THAT THE PORTUGUESE ALGARVE HAS TO OFFER.

The relaxing terrace at Bougain Villa, part of the Morgado do Quintão estate.



My birthday seemed like a very good excuse to break the duck of not travelling abroad for 18 months due to the pandemic. Portugal had shone as one of the safest destinations amidst the Covid chaos and the lifting of restrictions, combined with cheap flights from my nearest regional airport, seemed too good an opportunity to miss.

And so it was that after an early-morning departure to Faro followed by a short, 15-minute drive to the Algarve's capital, I was enjoying an al fresco breakfast with a small group of friends in the sunshine.



“I felt exhilarated that the world was my oyster once again.”

The traditional café sold freshly-baked pastries, bread, cakes and sweets of every mouth-watering description, but when in Portugal, nothing else can beat a heavenly, crisp, Pastel de Nata with a freshly-squeezed orange juice and hot, strong coffee. The sugar rush of the vanilla custard filling matched the sweet adrenaline that coursed through me, as I lapped up the foreign surroundings and voices as if it had been only yesterday I was here last.

After such a long time cooped up during lockdown, I felt exhilarated that the world was my oyster once again. Where better to relish that thrilling taste of freedom than in the Algarve, where the sun shines for 300 days a year and there are more than 100 beaches on which to soak up the rays. Over 200km of pristine coastline, dotted with colourful fishing villages and the craggy, limestone cliffs that this region is famous for, also guarantees that the seafood is superb.

Being a fanatical foodie, I was about to put this theory to the test as my friends and I had signed up for a cookery class to learn how to make the famous cataplana — a seafood stew in a clam-shaped pan. Tertulia Algarve Restaurante (tertulia-algarvia.pt) was easy to find and after being welcomed with a glass of wine and appetizers, we donned aprons to begin our prep.

Under the easy-to-follow, smiling instruction of the restaurant chef, we finely chopped tomatoes, peppers, garlic, onion, chorizo, presunto (cured ham) and chillies, adding fish, cockles, shrimps, langoustines and razor clams as well as fresh herbs, stock and wine to the cataplana. All the while we were given tips such as how to open the



The infinity pool at Quinta dos Vales and, below, Bridget with her finished cataplana dish.

steamy side of the pan away from us so that we didn't end up in an impromptu sauna. It was still incredibly warm in the kitchen, so the glasses of chilled white wine were welcome!

Afterwards, we proudly shared the delicious and impressive-looking fruits of our labour on the sunny terrace, where shooting jets of misty vapour cooled us down as we ate, drank and merrily chatted. Even more special as it had been so long that friends could reunite and dine together, it's a lunch I will never forget. As we were presented afterwards with the recipe and our cooking certificates as souvenirs, it's one I can rekindle on the home stove for my forthcoming birthday.

We had yet another treat lined up. Our Vines self-catering villas were next to a tranquil infinity pool overlooking the rolling vineyards of Quinta dos Vales (quintadosvales.pt), near Lagoa, an hour's drive away. We had to find out more.

Our long lunch had made us feel as full-bodied as the voluptuous sculpture displays that greeted us on arrival, but we were still eager to join the Winemaker Experience. »



Getting there

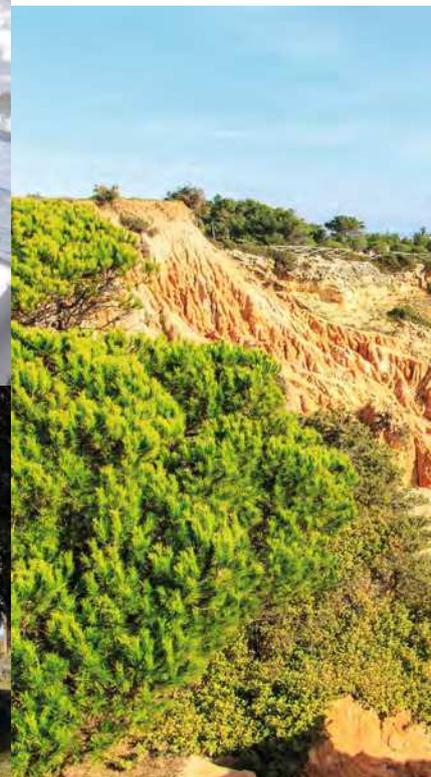
Low-cost airlines from regional UK airports fly to Faro's international airport. Rent a car on arrival for the approximate hour-long drive to Lagoa in the heart of the wine-growing region. Whet your appetite for more at visit algarve.pt/en



First, father and son wine makers Karl and Michael Heinz Stock demonstrated how to pick the ripe grapes from the vines — an unexpectedly therapeutic activity — before we were shown the process of turning the fruit into wine at their family-run estate, which uniquely offers vineyard plots for sale or rent to budding connoisseurs. It was then time to practise what we'd learnt at a blending workshop, sampling different grapes, pouring wines in a glass vial before re-tasting, discarding and re-pouring before deciding on our own personal favourite.

Opting for a blend of Aragonês, Touriga Nacional and Cabernet Sauvignon, my bottle was then corked and labelled by my own fair hand and has been carefully brought home and laid down to mature in time for an approaching significant birthday! That's not to say that we didn't enjoy the remainder of the open bottles and a smooth vintage port (it would have been rude not to) as well as Algarve cheeses, sausages, hams, olives and bread until late in the balmy night.

The vineyard-rich region between Lagoa and the Monchique Mountains is dotted with wineries which are beginning to get vintages from the Algarve noticed and included on Michelin star restaurant menus internationally. One such success story is Morgado do Quintão (morgadodoquintao.pt), a historic winery first founded in 1810 by the Count of Silves, yet still owned by the fourth generation of the original family. What's more, the winemaker here is a woman, Joana Maçanita, making strides in what was traditionally very much a man's world, by



“We were quickly discovering that Algarve hospitality is generous.”

introducing organic methods.

As we sat for a tasting lunch under the leafy shade of a 2000-year-old gnarled and beautiful olive tree, surrounded by vines heavily laden with the Algarve's uniquely indigenous gem of a grape, the Negra Mole, I made a note to self that this picturesque setting would be an ideal venue for a special birthday party, wedding or anniversary. Not only can the white-washed vineyard cottages with Instagram-worthy interiors be hired privately, but the array of Algarvian delicacies paired with excellent wines was extraordinary.

We were quickly discovering that Algarve hospitality is both genuine and generous. Our farmer's table was peppered with colourful dishes — carrots with coriander and olive oil; fava beans and chorizo; tuna and chickpeas; crispy codfish fritters, served with fresh, mineral Crato Branco white wine. Then Monchique pork, roasted with garlic, xerém with toucinho (like polenta with bacon lardons) and tangy 'torta del oranja', an orange-flavoured dessert made with

A perfect Portuguese spread





Ria Formosa Natural Park



Enjoy the crystal clear waters by Culatra Island.

egg, flour and lots of juicy fruit.

All the while, the comforting buzz of contented conversation flowed as easily as glasses were topped up with more award-winning wines such as Palhete and Clarete.

Who knew we'd have room for more when we later visited the simple but renowned Ramires Restaurant (restaurantramires.com) in Guia for a 'light' supper, near the just-as-popular beach resort of Albufeira. Never mind Nando's, this is the true home of the signature Algarve dish — piri-piri chicken, which was first conjured up at this very cafe in 1964, the recipe of which has been a closely-guarded family secret ever since! Inexpensive, but delicious, of course the spicy signature dish is served up with oodles of accompaniments from traditional cheese, olives and sardine pâté as starters to a trilogy of desserts made from locally harvested carobs, almonds and figs, which we couldn't resist sharing 'just to taste'!

You can't come to the Algarve without exploring the iconic cliff-side coastline and we were very happy to be able to squeeze in just one more foodie adventure on our last day before our evening flights home. On a famous nature reserve more renowned for its feathered friends such as flamingos, kingfishers, redshanks and the rare purple swamphen, a mascot of this wonderful lagoon system, our Ria Formosa Experience explored a different side of the islands.

The recipe for a grand day out led by our bubbly Portugal4U guide first introduced us to the vibrant Olhão Market, where bountiful produce includes everything from seafood and meat to fruit and veg, herbs and jams. Yet despite shopping until we dropped for bargain spices and tasty souvenirs, the best was yet to come...

Hopping on a water taxi, we were whisked across the crystal-clear shallows to neighbouring Culatra Island, home to colourful fishing vessels, white-washed cottages with postage stamp gardens of pomegranate trees, glorious stretches of white sand and tasty beach cafes. It was eco-friendly and sustainable ambassador Silvia we had come to meet, an enterprising community leader who has single-handedly kept international hotel chains and food distributors at bay to protect the oyster and clam beds here for local harvesters.

Removing our shoes, we paddled in Silvia's wake through the tidal flats as her extraordinary feats were brought to light, learning how she has helped to keep the island clean and plastic-free, forming a seafood co-operative and providing jobs for the young so that they don't need to leave the island for work. Resisting pressure to cave in to politicians or conglomerates, now the oysters and clams are in high demand across Europe.

No wonder. After we strolled around the tiny paradise island with its pristine shores, we headed to the outdoor plastic tables of harbour front Café Janoca, where a litre of wine costs only seven euros and a beer 90 cents. Yet what's even more heavenly is the chance to savour the freshest ocean-to-plate oysters you have ever tasted at a fraction of extortionate prices charged by much more exclusive, yet less idyllically located, restaurants.

So my advice is that, along with your suntan lotion and suitcase (leaving plenty of room for foodie souvenirs), bring your appetite to the Algarve. From the mountains and vineyards to organic farms and the sea, the richness of the gastronomy and fine wines will make your tastebuds smile. ■





An Irish adventure

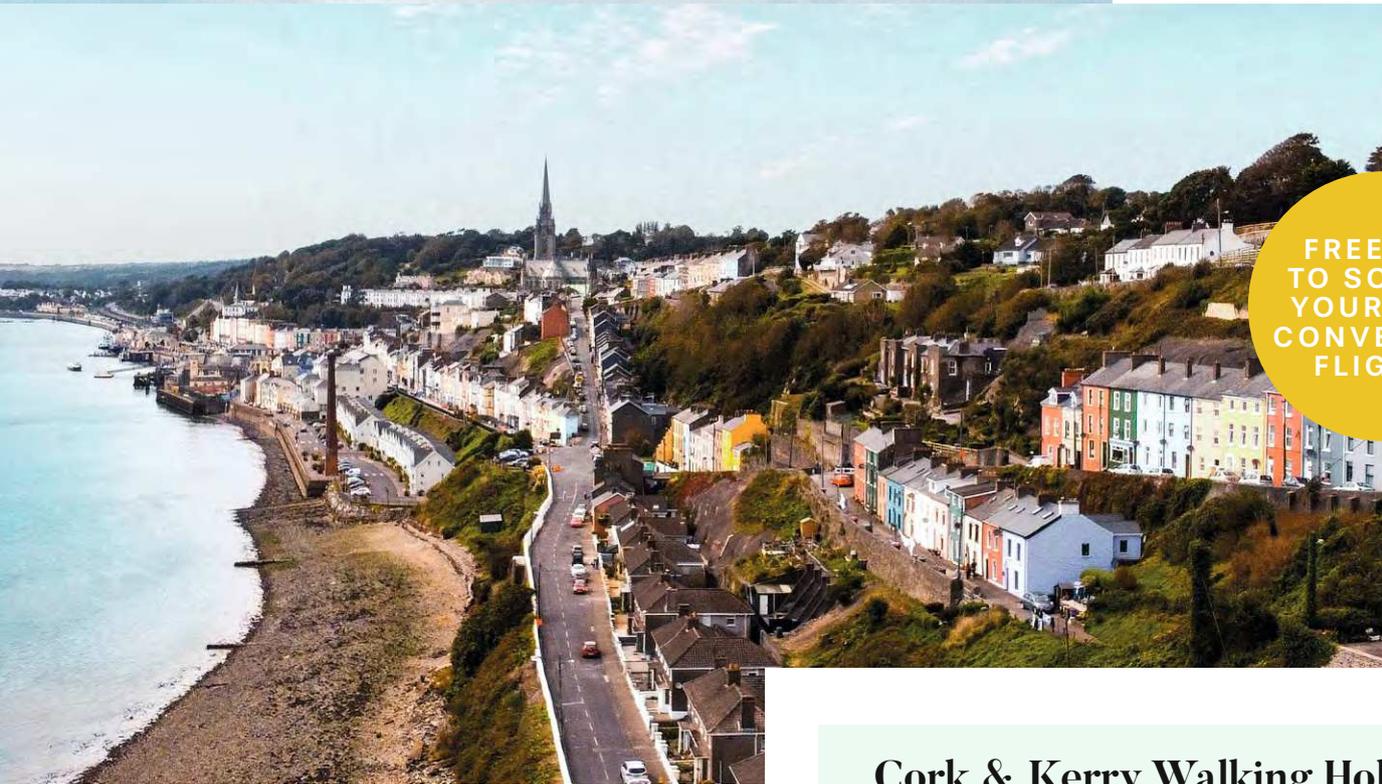
EXPLORE IRELAND AND IGNITE YOUR PASSION FOR THIS STUNNING ISLAND WITH ONE OF OUR WALKING HOLIDAYS. EXPERIENCE SOME OF THE INCREDIBLE HIKING TRAILS AND BEAUTIFUL SCENERY IN THE 'KINGDOM' OF KERRY.

Join this seven-night guided hiking holiday, where you'll experience some of Ireland's incredible hiking trails and scenery.

Your first hike will be the historic O'Sullivan Bere March walking route through the stunning Sheehy mountains. You'll also visit the Beara Peninsula, a lesser-known natural gem of Cork. You'll then travel to Kerry and take in the county's breathtaking scenery, where you'll take a vigorous hike up Mangerton Mountain in Killarney National Park and explore the Dingle Peninsula. Sometimes you don't need to venture far to enjoy a hiker's paradise, so join us on this Irish walking holiday and immerse yourself in the natural beauty Cork and Kerry.

We offer a moderate hiking level only on all hiking days. The average daily hiking distance on moderate hikes is between 11km and 15km, with a maximum daily hiking duration of up to 5 hours.





FREEDOM
TO SOURCE
YOUR OWN
CONVENIENT
FLIGHTS



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TD active Holidays is a collection of small group adventure holidays bringing you authentic action-packed experiences in some of the world's most exciting destinations. Holidays range from walking, yoga and photography to our Explore range of exciting small group tours. Accommodation and exciting excursions with an expert local guide are included. Enjoy the flexibility to arrange your own flights and we'll see you there for your next adventure. View the full range of tours at tdactiveholidays.com/dct

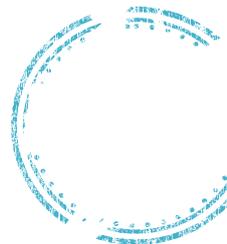
Cork & Kerry Walking Holiday

7 NIGHTS FROM £1,079pp (EXCLUDING FLIGHTS)

3* hotel accommodation

Departs September 6 & October 10 2022

- Discover the stunning landscapes on this guided walking holiday in Cork and Kerry.
- Stay 3 nights in Glengarriff, 2 nights each in Killarney and Dingle with easy access to the main sights and attractions.
- Experience highlights like the Beara Peninsula, Killarney National Park and Dingle Peninsula.
- Smaller group sizes and the highest possible safety standards on all our tours.
- Excursions carefully crafted to uncover wonderful places — less crowded and expertly guided.
- Packed lunches are included on all walking days.
- Please note, the average daily hiking distance is 12km with a maximum daily hiking duration of 5 hours.
- Enjoy the flexibility to make your own way there.



For more information, or to book please call **0131 608 1238** quoting **Platinum Magazine** or visit tdactiveholidays.com/dct ■

Operated by TD active Holidays. ATOL Protected 9373. Prices are per person and based on 2 sharing. Single room supplements apply. Prices and availability are subject to change. Booking conditions apply, please visit tdactiveholidays.com. E&OE.



IN OUR next ISSUE

OUR SUMMERY, UPBEAT AND
POSITIVE JUNE EDITION.

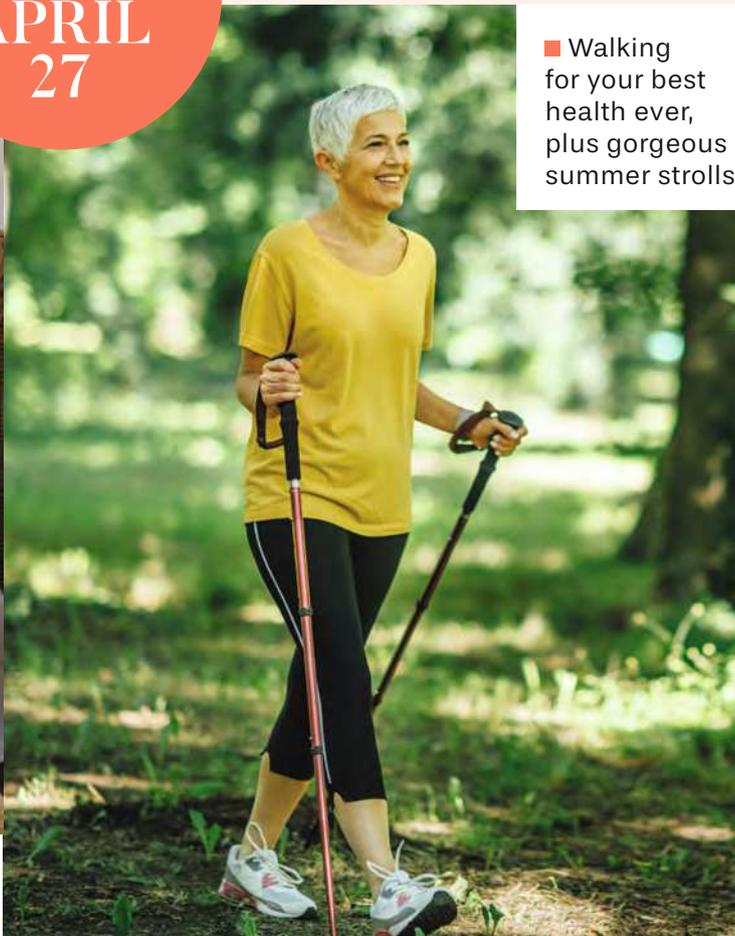
AS the sun starts to bring us late spring warmth, we can really see signs of early summer coming into focus. It's time to embrace the great outdoors and bask in that beautiful fresh air. Let's drape ourselves in the most beautiful summer clothing from on-trend denim, to bold colours — guaranteed to bring us endless joy. And why not? Fashion and fresh air bring us happiness and sing summer from the rooftops.

It's also time to get in your garden; making plans for al fresco dining. Just make sure to surround yourself with great food and even better company. Be loud, be bold, be brave, be you — summer's coming. Bliss!

ON
SALE
APRIL
27



■ How to dress joyfully in the sun



■ Walking for your best health ever, plus gorgeous summer strolls

You'll love

FOOD & DRINK

- The best craft beers and ciders for al fresco fun
- BBQ, grilling, smoking and roasting — the best ways with summer cooking this year

HEALTH & WELLBEING

- Endurance cycling — sounds intense, but you might just love it!
- Everything you need to know about alternative medicines

HOME & AWAY

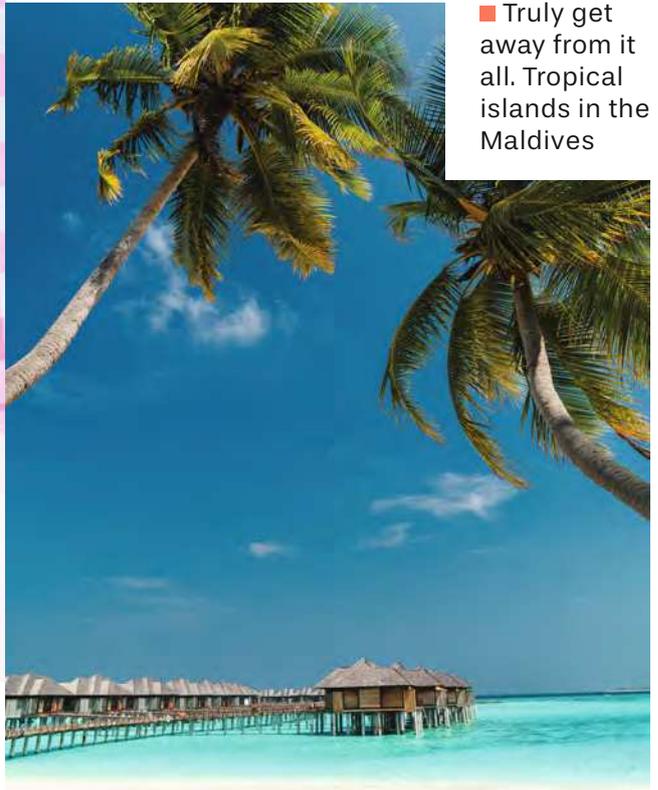
- The seaside beauty of Brighton
- Gorgeous gardening with Adam Frost's top hacks

PEOPLE

- Delia Smith as she steps away from food, and towards self-help for all
- Expert dog training advice



■ Showstopping summer bakes with Valentina



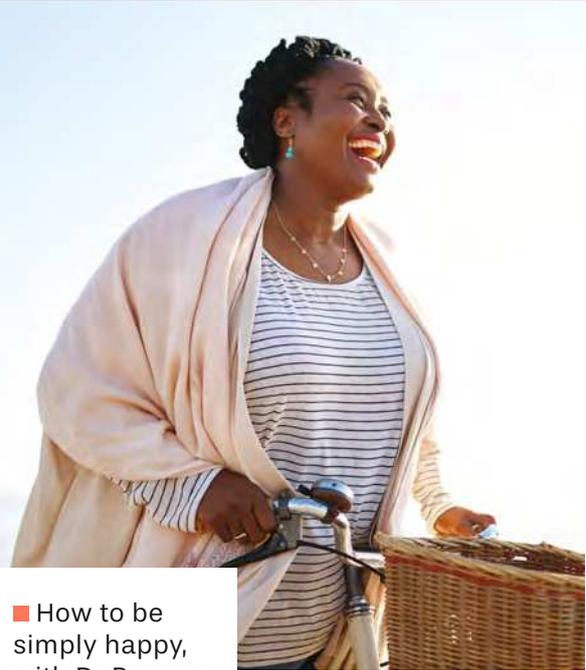
■ Truly get away from it all. Tropical islands in the Maldives

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■ Jenny Agutter talks feeling happy and all things wellbeing



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■ How to be simply happy, with Dr Rangan Chatterjee

+ Great reads

- The ultimate ways you can avoid being scammed, in all aspects of your life
- Let's talk about sex, baby, and more importantly that infamous big 'O'!
- Feel the wind in your hair. Inspiring inter-railing adventures for the 50+ ■

GIANT TRAILING FUCHSIA

NOTHING MATCHES THE BEAUTY OF THIS STUNNING, TRADITIONAL FLOWER, GUARANTEED TO BRIGHTEN UP ANY SUMMER BASKET DISPLAY.

All six varieties are awe-inspiring in size and vibrancy of colour from June to October, producing an avalanche of gigantic flowers up to 10cm across from your baskets, troughs or patio containers. Height 15-25cm, trailing 50-60cm. UK-grown 3cm diameter jumbo plug plants supplied.

Order the 30 Giant Fuchsia Collection for only £22.97 and **SAVE 50%** and receive five of each variety.

Order 18 Giant Trailing Fuchsia Collection for only £17.98 – Three of each variety, that's **12+6 FREE**

Order six of one variety for only £8.99 and choose from Snowburner, Deep Purple, Bella Rosella, Holly's Beauty, White King and Voodoo.



6 FUCHSIA
DEEP PURPLE

PD418 £8.99 + P&P

6 FUCHSIA
HOLLY'S BEAUTY

PD408 £8.99 + P&P



6 FUCHSIA
SEVENTH HEAVEN

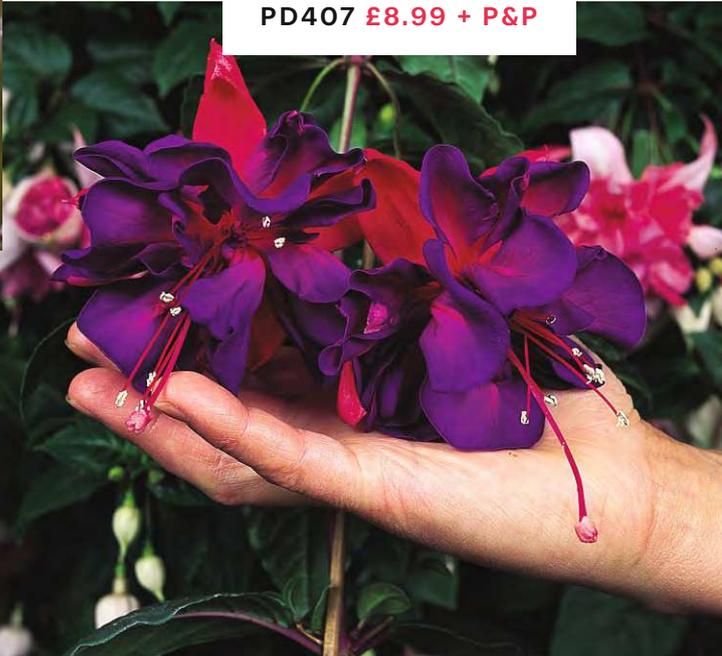
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FUCHSIA COLLECTION

DC393 £17.98 + P&P

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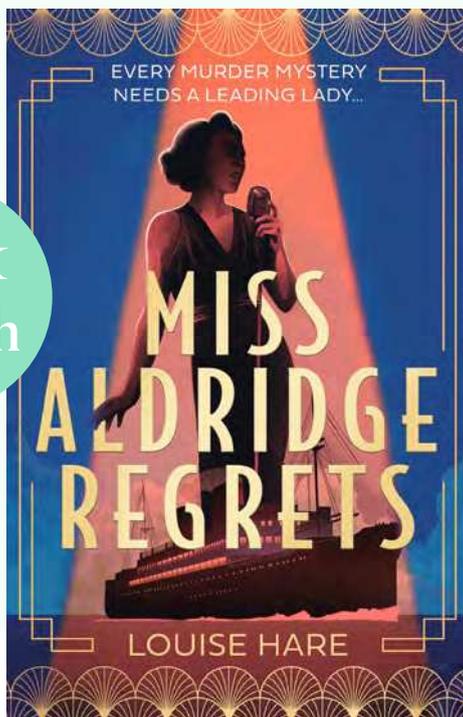
Lines open 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday.

Lines open Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. Closing date: 20 May 2022, while stocks last. Delivery from April. Mainland UK only – England, Scotland and Wales. P&P £3.95 per order to one address. ■

Call:

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Book
of the
month
...



MISS ALDRIDGE REGRETS

LOUISE HARE

Lena Aldridge is wondering if life has passed her by. Her ambitions for a dazzling theatre career haven't been realised. Instead, she's stuck singing in a sticky-floored basement club in Soho. Her romantic life is equally disappointing and dreary, as her married lover has just chucked her. When a stranger offers her the chance of a lifetime — a starring role on Broadway and a first-class ticket on the Queen Mary bound for New York — she leaps at it.

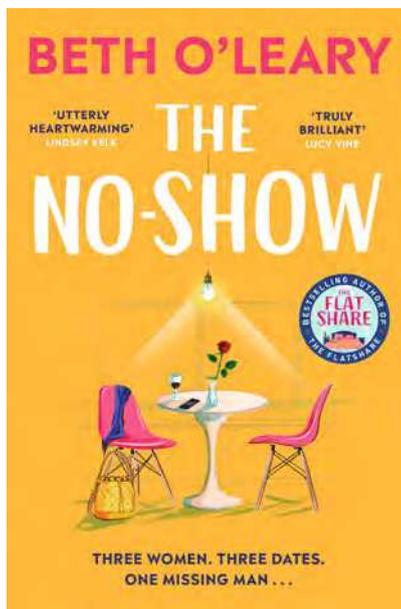
The timing really couldn't be better; since there has been a murder at the club, Lena hopes to escape England and the chaos and gloom of the murder. However, death follows her onto the ship in this brilliant murder mystery, which explores class, race and pre-World War Two politics. Hare delivers a wonderful Christie-esque mystery. Clever, evocative and immersive. I was transported to the 1930s where I was served up glamour in spades, but also reminded of the gritty reality of the time. Smart plotting and a compelling heroine will keep you turning the pages at speed.



GREAT READ

BOOK CLUB

AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR ADELE PARKS SHARES THE THRILLERS AND EXCITING DEBUT VOICES TO READ THIS MONTH.



THE NO-SHOW

BETH O'LEARY

This is a funny, touching and uplifting novel from the best-selling author of *The Flatshare*. We meet three women who are all expecting to meet the same man on the same day. However Joseph Carter fails to turn up to any of his appointments. Is he just a love-rat (as we used to say) or is there more to it?

Siobhan, Miranda and Jane are banking on meeting Joseph for lunch, breakfast and a party respectively. But are they over-reliant and do they have more to learn, not just about their missing-in-action date, but about waiting around in general? If you are looking for a fun and joyful read about dating and waiting, love and life's ups and downs, then this is the book for you.



HOPE & GLORY

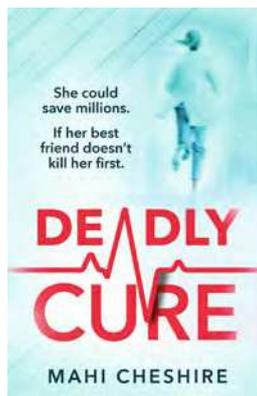
JENDELLA BENSON

Glory arrives back in Peckham, from her apparently glamorous life in LA, to mourn the sudden death of her father. However she discovers that her previously close family has fallen apart while she has been away. Her brother, Victor, has been jailed; her sister, Faith, seems directionless and needy; and their mother, Celeste, is heading towards a breakdown. Glory is distraught to find such disarray and decides not to return to America, but to stay in Peckham in order to reunite and fix her family. However, when she unearths a huge family secret, Glory begins to understand that her pursuit of truth potentially threatens everyone she truly cares about. I'm always excited to discover a new writing talent. This debut is a rich, heart-warming story of loss, love and family loyalties.

THE BIRDCAGE

EVE CHASE

A new novel from the author of *The Vanishing of Audrey Wilde* and *The Glass House*. Chase gives us an emotional mystery, full of dark secrets and twists. Readers are transported to the rugged, remote landscape of north Cornwall and into the lives of three half-sisters who share a famous father — and a terrible secret. The sisters have very distinct lives and personalities; however an invitation to Rock Point after 20 years apart brings them together again. Rock Point is the Cornish cliff house where the sisters once sat for their father's most celebrated painting. It's as beautiful as ever, but the air hangs thick with secrets. Although how long will those secrets remain hidden, when someone who knows everything is watching them?



DEADLY CURE

MAHI CHESHIRE

Deadly Cure is the story of two ambitious female doctors who will stop at nothing to achieve their goals. Dr Rea Dharmasena is devastated when she loses out on her dream job — researching a cancer vaccine — to her medical school rival and best friend Dr Julia Stone. When

it comes to light that Julia got the job using Rea's own cutting-edge research, their rivalry takes a ferocious turn. After a breakthrough that could change the course of medical history and cure millions, things take a dark turn. Julia is found dead. Now Rea has the job she coveted. But at what cost? This is a thrilling story with a compelling hook.

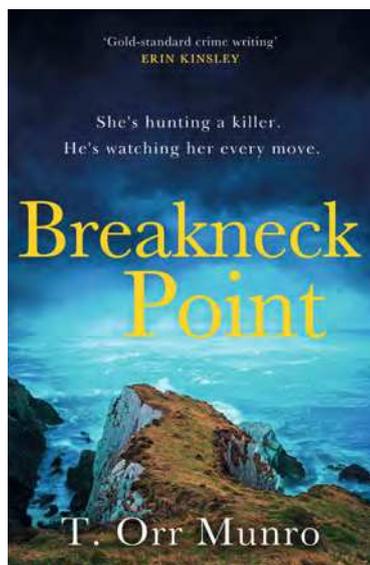
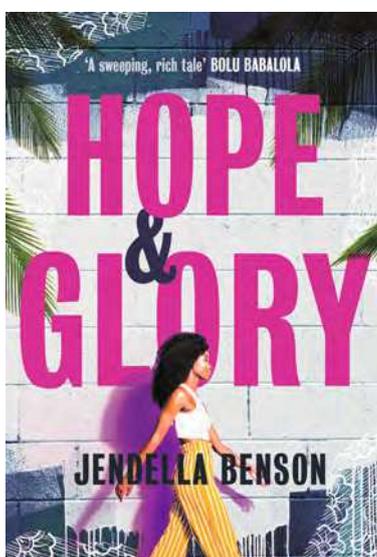
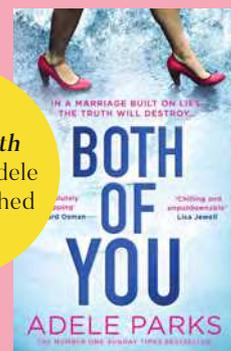


PLATINUM EXPERT
Adele Parks

Multi-million selling author Adele's latest book, *Both Of You*, is a *Sunday Times* bestseller and is out now. Her work has been translated into more than 30 different languages and she has published more than 20 bestselling novels. Adele's books are perfect page-turners.

FOLLOW ADELE ON TWITTER @ADELEPARKS AND INSTAGRAM @ADELE_PARKS

Pick up a copy of *Both Of You* by Adele Parks, published by HQ.



BREAKNECK POINT

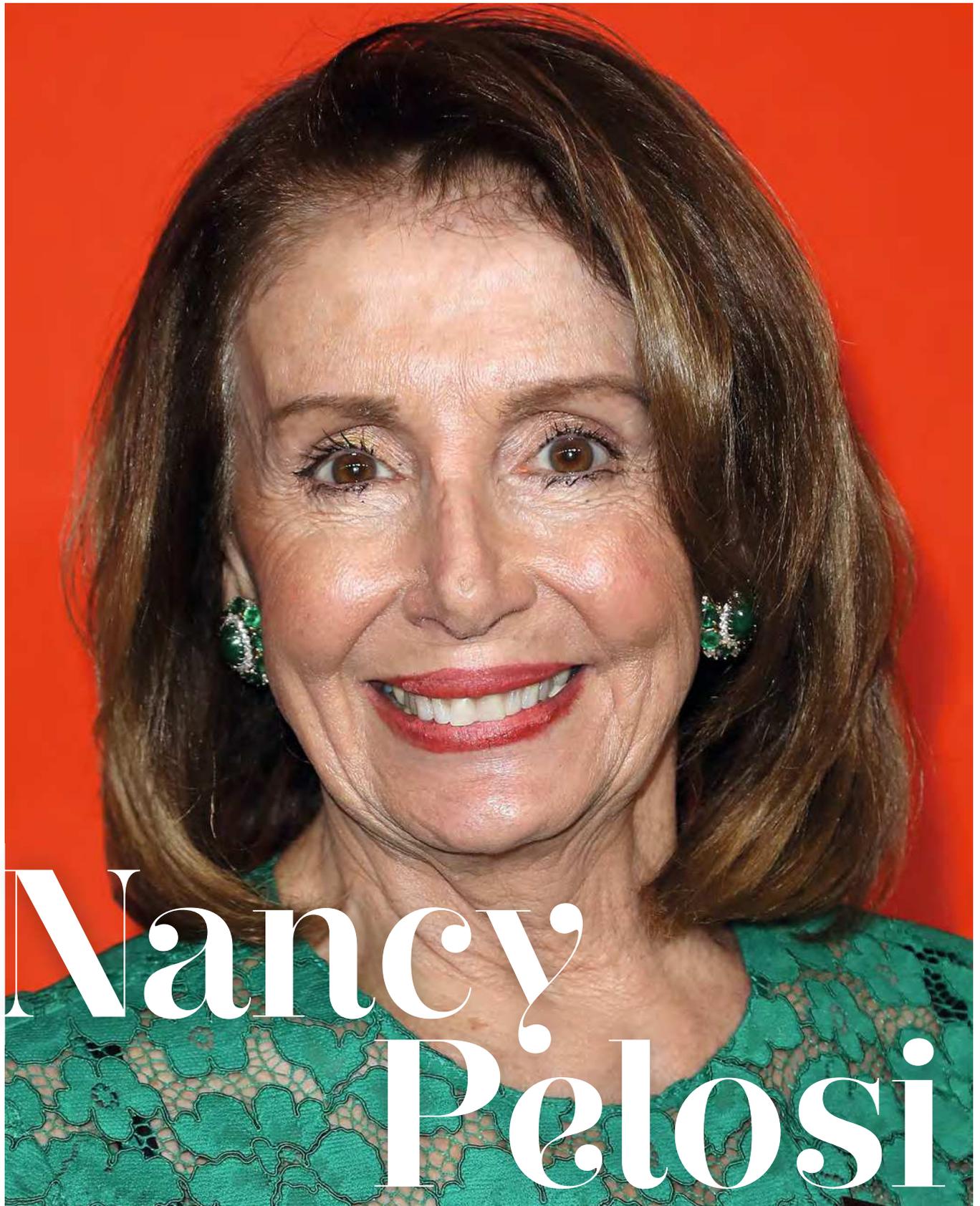
T. ORR MUNRO

Excitingly, the author of this thriller is a former crime scene investigator and crime journalist; that's possibly why we are gifted such an authentic and atmospheric crime fiction novel. Ally Dymond's commitment to justice has cost her — after exposing corruption in the ranks, she's stuck working petty crimes on the sleepy North Devon coast. Only when the body of 19-year-old Janie Warren turns up in the seaside town can Ally put her experience to good use. However, the evidence she discovers contradicts the lead detective's theory. No one will listen to the CSI who landed their colleagues in prison but time is running out to catch a serial killer no one is looking for — no one except Ally. A page-turner that will appeal to fans of *Broadchurch*.



What books have you loved recently — and what's on your to-be-read pile? Tell us what our next great read should be at mail@platinum-mag.co.uk For more must-read books, head to our website platinum-mag.co.uk ■

—PLATINUM SHE-RO—



EVERY ISSUE, WE PAY TRIBUTE TO A SHE-RO — THE WOMEN CHANGING THE WORLD AND MAKING HISTORY. THIS MONTH, IT'S THE TURN OF **NANCY PELOSI**, ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL WOMEN IN AMERICAN POLITICS.

“Nervous Nancy’s unhinged meltdown!” read the damning

caption. Donald Trump had posted a striking image of Nancy Pelosi, surrounded by a table of sheepish-looking White House men, pointing her finger firmly in the President’s direction. It was clear that she was giving him a spectacular dressing-down using what she calls her “mother-of-five voice”.

She was neither nervous nor unhinged, and she most definitely wasn’t having a meltdown. She was simply being the Nancy we so admire — fearless, bold, and passionate about standing up for what she believes in.

Trump wrongly believed that the photo cast the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives in a bad light. Nancy certainly didn’t — she immediately made it her Twitter cover photo, and gained a gaggle of new fans in the process.

Not-so-nervous Nancy rewrote the history books in 2002 when she became the first woman to be elected House Leader of the Democrats, and five years later she added “first female Speaker of the House of Representatives” to her CV.

In her first 100 days in the job, she raised the minimum wage, implemented recommendations from the 9/11 report, and scrapped tax breaks for major oil and gas companies. We’d probably just about manage to learn how our colleagues take their tea, locate the vending machine and memorise the number for the IT department in that time.

Her second stint as Speaker began in January 2019, and she hasn’t slowed down. At 81, Nancy isn’t just the most influential woman in Washington — she’s been hailed as the most powerful female politician

in US history, as well as the best Speaker in a century.

Her achievements are all the more impressive when you consider that she didn’t actually run for Congress until she was 47. Politics has always been in Nancy’s blood — her father was Mayor of Baltimore, and her mother was also a loyal Democrat — but she waited for the youngest of her five children to go to college before standing for election.

We’re in awe of her intelligence, her morals and her work ethic — but what we really love is that she’s first and foremost a mother and grandmother, and she never diminishes or undermines those roles to get ahead. Her family is her proudest achievement, and being a mother has helped her career rather than hindered it. “Having

five children in six years is the best training in the world for Speaker of the House,” she says.

As a vocal supporter of LGBTQ+ rights, women’s equality, the environment and affordable

healthcare, Nancy’s focus at work is to make the future a better place for everyone’s children.

She also refreshingly accepts the copious praise that’s heaped upon her with typical grace. “I take it as a compliment for all women,” she says, “because as the first woman Speaker I wanted to demonstrate that we could get a job done that has eluded others for a century.”

While we wouldn’t want to be on the receiving end of that formidable wagging finger, we would like to pop round to the Pelosi house for breakfast. Why? Well, it turns out the grande dame of Capitol Hill often eats chocolate ice cream before heading to the office.

Ben & Jerry’s and Trump’s tomfoolery — Nancy Pelosi can demolish both in a matter of moments. That’s our kind of woman.

She loves using her “mother of five” voice.



What Nancy says

“I always saw politics as an expansion of my role as a mom.”



“ANYBODY WHO’S EVER DEALT WITH ME KNOWS NOT TO MESS WITH ME.”



“If women have confidence in themselves, they will have confidence in other women.”



“NOTHING SURPRISES ME. ONE THING I DON’T EVER HAVE IN MY WORLD IS SURPRISE.”

Visit platinum-mag.co.uk for more stories of inspirational women. ■

puzzles

SOLUTIONS ON P160

FROM 10-MINUTE TEASERS TO MORE COMPLEX WORD WORKOUTS, PLATINUM PUZZLES ARE THE ULTIMATE RELAXATION

CODEWORD

23	20	21	16	5	8	23	4		20	1	25	13	24	21
5		13		8		20			8		19		14	
20	24	5	23	8	5	10	4		13	10	4	20	19	4
6		23		22		21		19		21		18		4
20	26	13	12	21		20	17	17	5	4	16	4	10	26
26		12		8		9		24		11				15
8	6	4	5	17	8	14	4	5		21	8	14	10	
		10				4		24				16		
	19	21	4	9		24	10	21	4	5	7	4	1	21
8				20		18		13		8		5		5
22	8	5	19	15	21	16	24	20		21	16	4	9	4
22		24		17		21		12		20		22		19
24	10	22	12	8	14		6	24	5	21	13	8	13	19
10		12		12				19		8		5		4
18	4	4	3	4	5		19	21	20	5	2	4	5	19

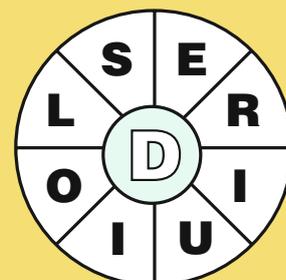
Each letter of the alphabet has been replaced by the same number throughout this grid. Use the decoded letters given to work out the identity of other letters and fill in the grid. The alphabet list and reference grid will help you to keep track of the letters you've decoded.

A B C D E F G H / J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
				R								
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
				A						I		

WORDWHEEL

You have ten minutes to find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each word must be three letters or more and contain the central letter. Use each letter once, and no plurals, foreign words or proper nouns are allowed. There is at least one nine-letter word.



AVERAGE: 40 words
GOOD: 45 words
EXCELLENT: 48 words

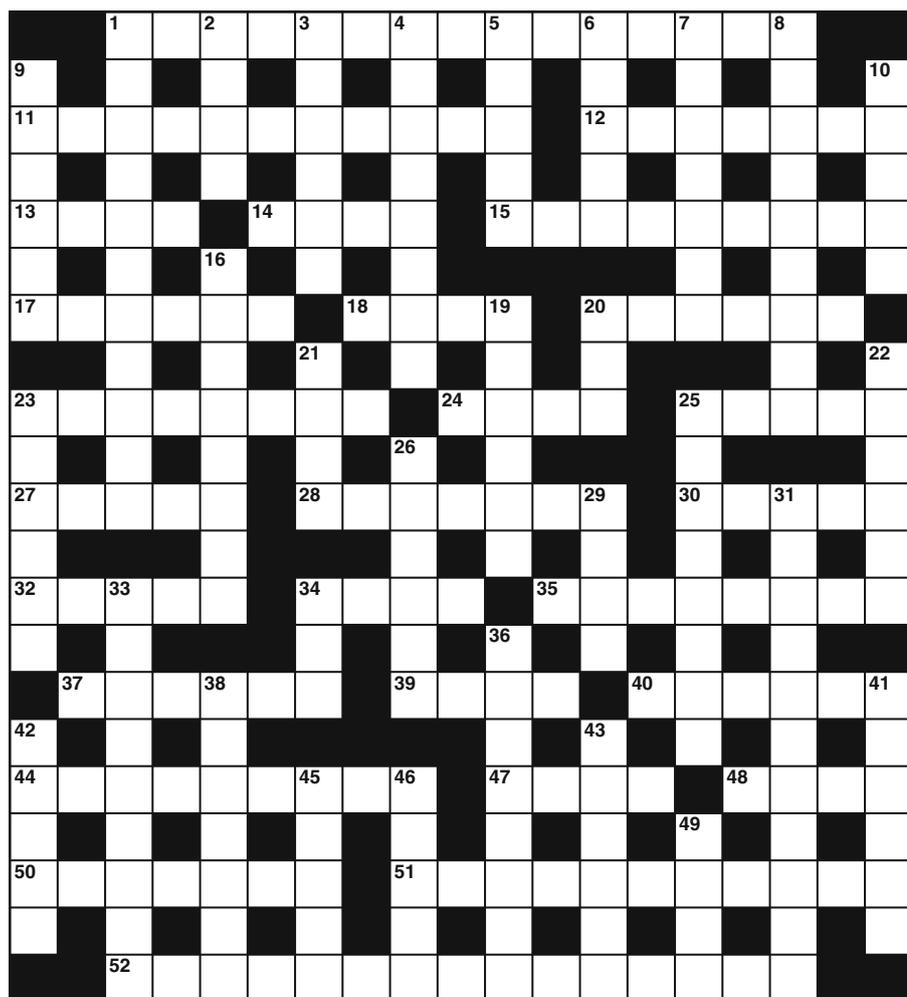
CELL BLOCK

			3		
6			5		6
		4			
	4		3		
			2		
		3		3	
6					4

		6			
		3		4	
		3		2	3
			4		
3	6		6		5
					4

Fill the grid by drawing blocks along the gridlines. Each block must contain the number of squares indicated by the digit inside it. Each block must contain only one digit.

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Philatelist's prized possession? (5,10)
- 11 Portrayal of a past event (2-9)
- 12 Stood against (7)
- 13 Give way (4)
- 14 Study (a subject) at university (4)
- 15 In music, play off the beat (9)
- 17 Unpleasantly ingratiating (6)
- 18 Steadfast, sturdy (4)
- 20 Prescribed amount of medicine (6)
- 23 Frozen fruit juice on a stick (3,5)
- 24 High-fibre part of grain (4)
- 25 Recurrent series of events (5)
- 27 Respond to a stimulus (5)
- 28 Extreme happiness (7)
- 30 Stun (5)
- 32 Diminutive (5)
- 34 Fit of sulks (4)
- 35 Table coaster? (5,3)
- 37 Obstacle, risk (6)
- 39 Assist (in a crime) (4)
- 40 Wine bottle with the capacity of two ordinary bottles (6)
- 44 On a frequent basis (9)
- 47 Chuffed (4)
- 48 Goad (4)
- 50 Bewilder (7)
- 51 Appallingly (11)
- 52 Spotless (5,2,1,7)

DOWN

- 1 Device that photographs fast vehicles (5,6)
- 2 Not quite shut (4)
- 3 Sound of tiny footsteps (6)
- 4 Take on too much (6,2)
- 5 Sacred water lily (5)
- 6 Sing softly in a sentimental manner (5)
- 7 Wicked, godless (7)
- 8 Fondly remembering (9)
- 9 Noisy disturbance (6)
- 10 Lazy person who avoids work (5)
- 16 Able to live forever (8)
- 19 Blank border of a page (6)
- 20 Clamour (3)
- 21 Chimney duct (4)
- 22 Begrudge (6)
- 23 Flood, surge (6)
- 25 Barbecue fuel (8)
- 26 Basket-weaving material (6)
- 29 Void (4)
- 31 Marzipan (6,5)
- 33 Painkiller (9)
- 34 Owned (3)
- 36 Line of bushes between fields (8)
- 38 Unsurpassed (3-4)
- 41 One who dies for a cause (6)
- 42 Pleasant smell (5)
- 43 Chinese form of exercise (3,3)
- 45 Man-made fabric (5)
- 46 Annual periods (5)
- 49 Expense (4)

SUDOKU

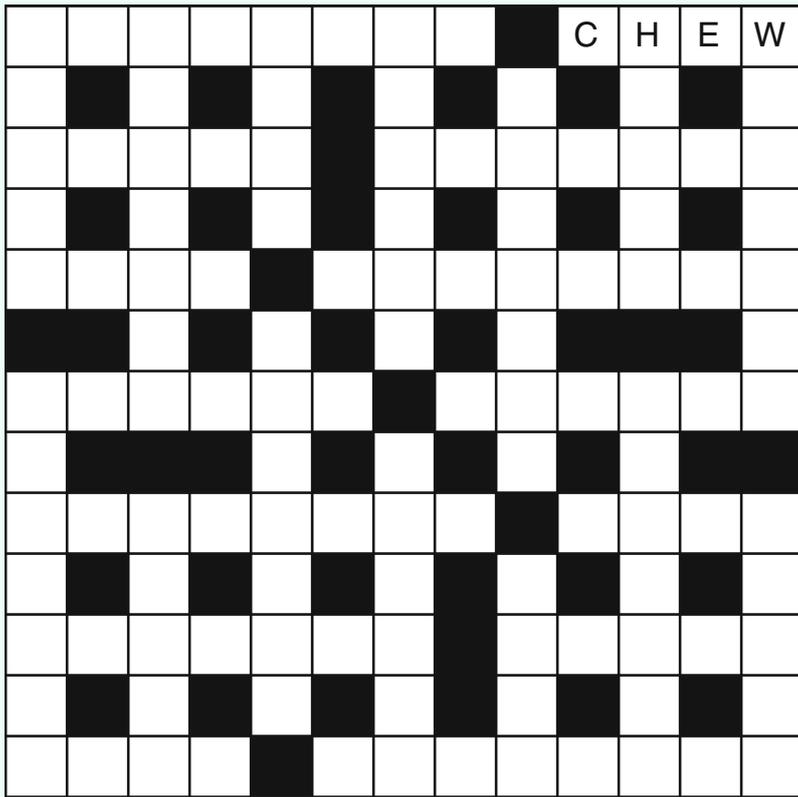
Fill in the blank squares with the numbers 1 to 9, so that each row, each column and each 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9.

	8							
6		9		1		4	2	
	7			2			6	
			8	4			5	
	2	7	1				3	8
						9		
	6				5	2		
	5	1	7	9				
				8				

In the know

The incredibly-popular game Wordle was created by the founder Josh Wardle as a gift for his partner Palak.

FITWORD



4 letters

- CHEW
- DEED
- HILT
- OMEN
- ORYX
- UGLY

5 letters

- HAUNT
- MANNA
- MYNAH
- NATTY
- NOONE
- YEARN

6 letters

- GENOME
- HARDEN
- LASSIE
- UNREAL

7 letters

- APOSTLE
- DEplete
- HAGGARD
- ORGANZA
- SNORKEL
- SUNBURN
- TITULAR
- WINSOME

8 letters

- GANGLING
- LIBRETTO
- MATRONLY
- PLANTAIN

How long will it take you to correctly fit these words into the grid?

SOLUTIONS

CODEWORD



CKZERVJOMNXLU
WYHPGSATFBIQD

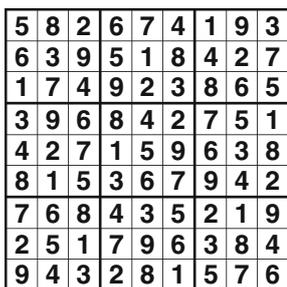
CROSSWORD



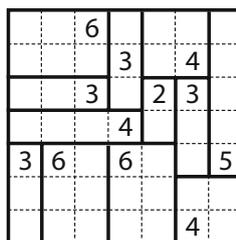
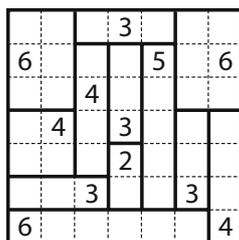
FITWORD



SUDOKU



CELL BLOCK



WORDWHEEL

The nine-letter word is DELIRIOUS.



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Complete Patio Potato Kit

NO Digging! NO Effort! NO Garden Required! Harvest in JUST 10 WEEKS From Planting!

COMPLETE PATIO POTATO KIT

JUST

£19.95
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SAVE £20.00!

Harvest up to 30lbs of simply delicious potatoes within weeks of planting! **SAVE £20.00** when you buy the Complete Kit for just £19.95!

Imagine growing the freshest, tastiest crops of delicious home-grown potatoes – all from your own patio, with no backbreaking digging whatsoever! Simply add compost and water and enjoy the unbeatable flavour of the freshest new potatoes just 10 weeks from planting! Plant now and pick your first crops as soon as May!

- The freshest, tastiest, most delicious 'tates' you've ever tasted!
- 6 'Turbo Tubers' each of 3 varieties selected for a range of harvest dates
- 3 durable and reusable 30L pots AND organic fertiliser included!
- Harvest in succession for 4 months from May

COMPLETE PATIO POTATO KIT

Includes: 6 turbo tubers each 3 varieties of seed potatoes - Charlotte, Pentland Javelin and Desiree, 3 Heavy Duty 30L Pots and 1Kg Organic Potato Fertiliser
NOW ONLY £19.95
SAVE £20.00!

SAVE £20!

HOW TO PLANT, GROW AND ENJOY IN 3 SIMPLE STEPS!



STEP 1 Half fill your 30L pot with compost and place your Turbo Tubers about 4" deep



STEP 2 As your potato plants establish and grow, just keep topping up the compost



STEP 3 Feed and water (don't soak) for a heavy crop of delicious, tasty new potatoes

YOUR COMPLETE KIT INCLUDES:

• 18 Seed Potato 'Turbo Tubers' (6 x 3 varieties)
Normally £5.99 each



'Pentland Javelin' (Early)
Fast cropper – just 10 weeks from planting. Abundant, gorgeous, soft new potatoes.



'Desiree' (Maincrop)
Red skin, yellow flesh. Great for boiling, mashing or as jackets with lovely crisp skin.



'Charlotte' (Salad)
All-time-favourite variety! Perfect as a new potato in salads or for boiling.

- 3 Heavy Duty 30L Pots Normally £14.99
- 1kg Organic Potato Fertiliser Normally £6.99



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Item	Description	Price	Qty	Subtotal
350007	Complete Patio Potato Kit SAVE £20! 6 'Turbo Tubers' each of 3 seed potato varieties, 3 Heavy Duty 30L Pots & 1kg Potato Fertiliser	£19.95		
350062	Potato 'Top Up' Collection SAVE £8! 6 'Turbo Tubers' each of 3 seed potato varieties & 1kg Potato Fertiliser	£16.96		
130011	4 x 30L Heavy Duty Pots SAVE £5!	£14.99		
120113	Potato Scrubbing Gloves FREE with Potato Kit SAVE £4.99!	FREE		
JOIN THE YOUGARDEN CLUB - Get £20.00 FREE vouchers & SAVE 10% on EVERY ITEM you order!				
820005	Renewal Subscription Membership* SAVE £15.00!	£5.00		
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DON'T FORGET! Deduct 10% (10p in every £1) if you joined the YouGarden Club:				
TOTAL ORDER VALUE				£6.99

*We'll automatically renew your membership every year, so you can keep saving - AND the price will NEVER go up... GUARANTEE! Full details at YouGarden.com/Club. Orders despatched within 7 working days. Delivery to UK only and a £6.00 surcharge will apply to the following postcode areas: AB, DD8-11, CV, HS, IM, IV, JL, KA27-28, KW, PA20-80, PH15-20, TR21-25, ZE. Offer subject to availability and in the event that this offer is oversubscribed, we reserve the right to send suitable substitutes. Images show mature plants. See website for full product details and T&Cs. Following Great Britain are a number of changes that prevent us from trading in N. Ireland. For further details please visit www.yougarden.com

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My DOUBLE GUARANTEE to you!
1 If you're not totally happy with your order, return it within 30 days and we'll replace it in full.
2 Should any hardy plants fail to thrive, we'll replace free of charge.

AD CODE PLAT104

Peter McDermott, Head Gardener

EXTRA BONUS OFFER NEED A REFILL?

POTATO 'TOP UP' COLLECTION

The perfect refill kit for filling your 30L black pots, or other growing pots and containers, back up with tasty spuds! This kit contains the ingredients you need to grow your own potatoes on your patio, terrace or even balcony all you need is a pot or container.

Includes 18 seed potatoes (6 x 'Charlotte' tubers, 6 x 'Pentland Javelin' tubers and 6 x 'Desiree' tubers) plus 1kg Organic Potato Fertiliser.

Item Code: 350062

£16.96 - SAVE £8!

A DAY in the life with

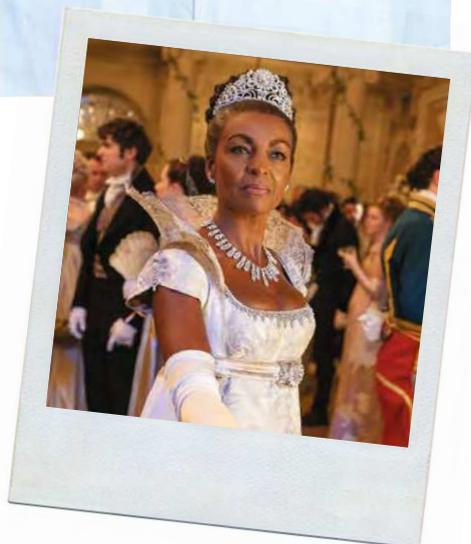
Adjoa Andoh

ACTOR, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER AND WRITER **ADJOA ANDOH**, LIVES IN LONDON WITH HER HUSBAND AND THEIR BELOVED DOG MILLIE. SHE'S STARRED IN *BRIDGERTON*, *SILENT WITNESS* AND *DOCTOR WHO*.



Credit: Suki Dhanda
Photo below: Courtesy of Netflix

“I love to entertain and have my friends round for dinner.”



4:30AM: If I'm filming *Bridgerton* it's a wake-up call of 4:30am in the pitch dark, or even earlier. A car picks me up and drives me to location and I go into hair and make-up. I like to listen to podcasts like *Americast* or *Reflections with Peter Hennessy*, so I'm up-to-date with the goings-on in the world, as I like to stay informed. I sometimes bring knitting, as I find it a great stress-reliever, so I will listen to podcasts or the radio and knit on my travels.

BBC Radio 4 or Radio 3 are my go-to stations and right now I'm knitting a jumper.

10 AM: If I'm not filming or having to be on set somewhere, it's a slower start. There are no two days the same, but I like the variety. I'll walk our dog, Millie, and try to catch up with a friend. Then it's out the door to a rehearsal if I'm working on a play, teaching, writing or voicing an audiobook. The calendar on my phone is my lifeline — it would be curtains for me if I lost it. And industrial-levels of coffee throughout the day, too.

12 PM: Lunchtime! I typically bring my own lunch to set, some lovely salads to refuel and of course, more coffee. I'm a bit of a coffee snob and like to have the proper stuff over the instant where I can.

6 PM: I love to entertain and have my friends around for dinner parties. Anytime I cook, the dishes will always have garlic, ginger and chilli. Maybe with some onion, fish and veg. I also love cooking with garam masala and making turmeric rice.

8 PM: This is usually my finish time of the day if I'm working, so I start to slowly wind down. My preferred wind-down is either by watching the news or crime dramas, especially those set in places I don't know much about. I love how writers can use a genre to tell a story and also show different places of the world. If I'm looking for a book, my husband will read to me, typically 1940s thrillers by Ross McDonald. He has an incredible use of language and doesn't waste a word.

10 PM: Now it's my bedtime routine. If I'm looking to fall asleep quickly, I love sleepytime tea. It's so soothing and does the trick. I'll do my skincare routine of cleansing, moisturising and flossing — flossing is so important so I make sure I do it. I also love to use the Kiehl's Midnight Oil, it's been my go-to for years. Then it's lights out. ■

Follow her on Instagram at [@adjoa.andoh](https://www.instagram.com/adjoa.andoh) and Twitter at [@andoh_adjoa](https://twitter.com/andoh_adjoa).



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