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Woman's Weekly

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BAGS TO KNIT**



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Beat ANXIETY

and smile through life's stresses!



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**BLUEBELL
WOODS**



Samantha Bond

My husband keeps me on the straight and narrow!

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Hello!

20



Islands in the sun

“There’s just something about the Caribbean that has a particular attraction for the people of our nations – for some, it’s the dream exotic holiday destination. And that connection goes back centuries. The pirates of the 17th and 18th century, drawn to its tropical waters in the hope of stealing treasure, were mainly British and Irish, West Indian rum has long been popular over here, and many of our citizens have ancestry on the islands. The first official James Bond film was unsurprisingly *Dr. No*, with its glamorous Caribbean setting. So don’t miss our new serial on page 50, set on the fictional island of St Adina.



38

Inside this issue

ON THE COVER

- 8 Celebrity** Actor Samantha Bond on her work and family
- 10 Celebrating Britain** Beautiful bluebell woods
- 12 Health** Mood-boosting moves to beat anxiety
- 18 Fashion** Flattering looks for special occasions
- 22 Cookery** Simple, speedy suppers
- 34 Cookery** Light teatime bites to have with a cuppa
- 47 Knitting** Create a pair of elegant make-up bags
- 50 New serial** *Never to be Told* by Gabrielle Mullarkey

GREAT READS

- 4 Good to share**

- 15 It’s a funny old world** Actor Wendi Peters
- 17 Beauty** Try the new trend, lip tints – we’ve 10 to choose from
- 20 Real life** Meet three inspiring women who are thriving in male-dominated careers
- 25 Good to know** Looking at handheld steamers vs steam irons
- 38 Travel** Discover Jutland in Denmark

HEALTH

- 27 Your wellbeing**
- 28 Dr Gill** Coping with hay fever
- 31 Here to help**

YOUR HOME

- 32 Homes** Easy ways to update your hallway



32

- 41 Craft** Sew a handy dog-walking pouch, with a clip, for treats
- 42 Gardening** Growing veg on a pint-sized plot

FICTION

- 37 Short story** *Lipstick*
- 44 Short story** *A Second Spring*
- 53 Books** Our book editor’s favourite picks for the week

LAST BUT NOT LEAST...

- 54 Puzzle time**
- 57 Your weekly stars**
- 58 Rosemary**

COVER PHOTOS: GETTY, RICHARD BUTCHER, SHUTTERSTOCK

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FROM US TO YOU

Good to SHARE

Scampering squirrels, *My Fair Lady* in London, and a hungry little robin

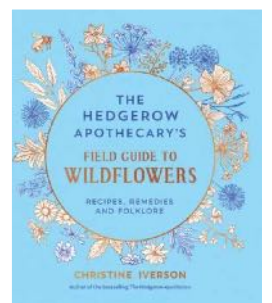


Fascinating fungi

While an extra 260,000 hectares of English woodland are planned, upland areas earmarked for planting can be challenging environments for new trees. Mycorrhizal fungi – the microscopic soil organisms that form essential partnerships with tree roots – are vital for tree health, but there are many different types. A project in Cumbria, led by Cumbria Connect along with other groups, including the RSPB, aim to find out which fungi are present where trees do well, and how to rebuild the network if they're missing, giving new treescapes the best chance of success.

Did you know?

You can make a tea from dock root that will relieve an upset tummy. You'll find folklore galore along with recipes and history in a fascinating new book from Christine Iverson: *The Hedgerow Apothecary's Field Guide to Wildflowers* (£14.99, HB, Summersdale).



BEAUTIFUL BOTANICALS

Thai painter Phansakdi Chakkaphak is the winner of this year's Shirley Sherwood Award for Botanical Art. Dr Sherwood says, 'His work combines scientific rigour with artistic sensitivity in a most compelling way.' You can see *Water Firework* (above), *Japanese Pine Cone* and *Cacao Flower and Young Pod* at the Shirley Sherwood Gallery, Kew Gardens.

* kew.org



On this day in history

30 April 1958 The musical *My Fair Lady* opened in London after two triumphant years in New York. Julie Andrews played flower-seller Eliza Doolittle, with Rex Harrison admitting he was nervous about performing as Professor Higgins for a London audience. The show also marked the first appearance of ticket touts, selling top seats at £5 – five times more than their face value.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

National Trust's Upton House, in Warwickshire, is hosting an intriguing project by artist Emily Allchurch. Using hundreds of her own photos in collages, she has recreated seasonal paintings created by Pieter Bruegel the Elder more than 400 years ago. Her work reflects changes in how people relate to nature. In *Late Summer* (below), Emily replaces Bruegel's hard-working haymakers with families of picnickers!

* *The Six Seasons* is on until 5 July.
nationaltrust.org.uk/upton-house-and-gardens



NATURE NOTES

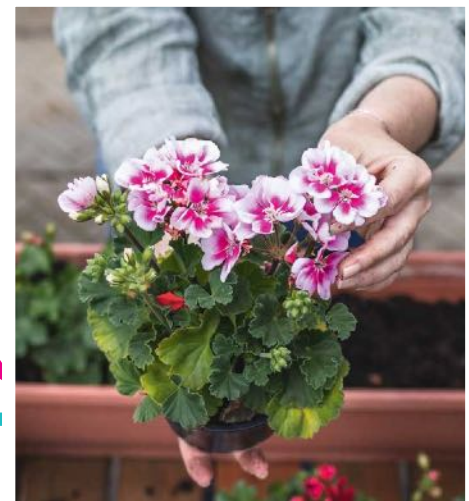
From Louise Midgley



I've had a number of robins nesting in my garden over the years, and each and every one that I've discovered has been built in a rather unorthodox position. Wellington boots, old broken pots and a watering can are among many of the quirky homes that have nurtured a brood of babies. This year I didn't spot a nest but there must have been one close by because a baby robin, all wide-eyed and inquisitive, has been shadowing me while I'm weeding the borders. He will perch on a branch, puff out his speckled breast of yellowish-brown feathers and patiently wait for edibles to be exposed.

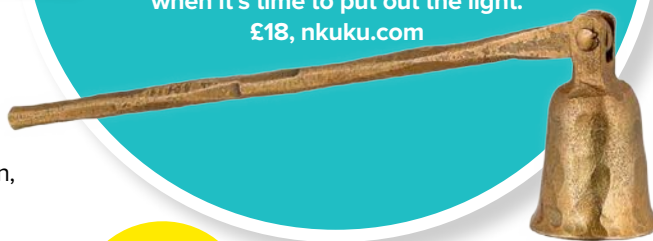
My garden week

This week, I potted up some window boxes with tender bedding plants. I will protect them from the cold nights until I'm sure all risk of frost has passed.



OUT, OUT, BRIEF CANDLE

If you love burning candles indoors or out, this old-fashioned style Jyoti candle snuffer in antique brass will keep smoke and wax to a minimum when it's time to put out the light.
 £18, nkuku.com



Money-saving tip

Dig deep

Simple maintenance can keep your garden tools in good condition for longer. A drop of linseed oil or a squirt of WD-40 on your shears will work wonders on stiff joints. Use a wire brush to remove any old soil from trowels or forks, and keep rust at bay by putting tools away at night.

CATHERINE AS MARY

The ever-versatile Catherine Tate has just stepped into a new role as Mary Todd Lincoln, downtrodden wife of US president Abraham Lincoln. It may sound gloomy, but this play is definitely a comedy.

* *Oh, Mary!* is at London's Trafalgar Theatre until 18 July;
ohmaryplay.co.uk



FROM YOU TO US

Good to SHARE

We love to hear what you've been up to, so do get in touch!

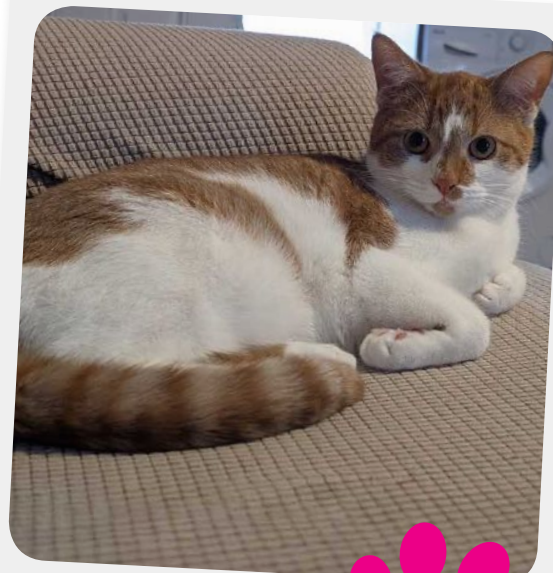
Fighting the litterbugs

I had to smile when I read the column by Samantha Giles [3 February issue] when she wrote about telling someone they had 'dropped' some rubbish from their car. It reminded me of a time when I was walking past a queue of traffic, stopped at a red light. Suddenly a cigarette packet flew out of the open window, landing just in front of me. Without thinking, I picked it up and posted it back through the window, saying that they'd dropped it. The woman in the passenger seat was not at all happy and shouted. She looked as though she was going to get out of the car and chase me – but thankfully the lights changed and she had to drive on!

Anne Emmett, Grantham



Letter of the week



PAWS FOR THOUGHT



This is Hamish, my 10-month-old furry companion. He loves his cuddles and waking me up at 5.30am every day without fail... who needs an alarm clock?

Elizabeth Cunningham, Halifax

* Got a pet pic that makes you smile? We can give it a good home

GET IN TOUCH

WE LOVE LETTERS

Woman's Weekly, Future plc, 121-141 Westbourne Terrace, London W2 6JR.

P.S. It really helps when you put your details in capitals.

* We do not return photos (apart from You Wore It Well) so please do not send originals.

EMAIL US

womansweeklypostbag@futurenet.com

Tell us your full name, address and daytime phone number, please.

A VERY WELCOME GIFT

Thank you to the anonymous reader who sent in this 1949 copy of *Woman's Weekly* to our London offices. The entire team enjoyed looking through its historic pages!



Important! All contributions to *Woman's Weekly* must be original and NOT duplicated to other publications. £25 will be paid to the writer of the 'Letter of the week' for all rights in each letter printed. The Editor reserves the right to modify any letter. Future plc reserves the right to reuse any submission to *Woman's Weekly* in any format or medium, including social networking sites. We regret that we cannot enter into personal correspondence. Photos of children under 18 must be accompanied by written permission of a parent/legal guardian. All details correct at time of going to press.



LOOK WHAT SHE MADE

This was knitted from a *Woman's Weekly* pattern by my 91-year-old mother, Pat Parrans of Swadlincote, Derbyshire. She made it for one of her penguin-loving great-grandsons, who enjoys visiting the penguins at the zoo.

Jane Steel, by email

WHAT YOU'RE WEARING COMPILED BY ANNE HARTNETT

What you're WEARING



Lisa Isvy, age is unimportant!

Tell us about your look

I love my orange cardigan and quite a few people have complimented me on it. Funnily enough, it was actually a gift from a friend who knows me very well! My jeans are from Re/done, the boots are Tod's and the brown mini shoulder bag is from Uniqlo. I think it's one of its most popular bags.

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

The years of life experience that I have.



Tanya Baird, 53

Tell us about your look

It's usually a mix of vintage and high street. I found my coat at a vintage fair in Farnham, Surrey. It's such a lovely shape. My floral-print blouse is by Reiss, the jeans and bag are from &Other Stories, and my trainers are Adidas. My sunglasses are Ralph Lauren. I also love collecting vintage jewellery.

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

My strength – both physical and mental.



Penny Calnan, 59

Tell us about your look

I'd say my style is modern/classic. My tan suede jacket is from the French brand, Sézane. I love the loose, easy shape. My shirt is by Wyse, the jeans are Zara and the bag is Anya Hindmarch. My pumps are from Crispins, which specialises in elegant shoes for larger sizes.

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

My blue eyes. I love that I have my father's eyes.



Anna J, 61

Tell us about your look

My tweed jacket is by Massimo Dutti. It's such a classic, neat shape and goes with everything from jeans to smart, tailored trousers. Today I've given it a modern update with this satin skirt by Ralph Lauren. My loafers are Gucci and the bag is Valentino. Good accessories always add extra polish.

What's your favourite thing about yourself?

My loyalty.

YOU WORE IT WELL

Irene Mumford (right), 1953, sent in by her daughter Katy Mumford

I thought you might like to see this photo of my mother with her sister Barbara. My mother was aged 21 and on holiday with my father's family on the Isle of Man. They are both very smartly dressed – my mother is even wearing a pair of gloves!



* We'd love to see how great you looked in any era up to and including the 1980s. Please send a good-quality photo with your name, address and daytime phone number clearly written on the back, to: Fashion Dept, *Woman's Weekly*, Future plc, 121-141 Westbourne Terrace, London W2 6JR. Photos will be returned.

'My husband is my positive influence!'

Actor Samantha Bond on shunning *The Celebrity Traitors*, disappearing from her home and why she's happy to plod along

The final of *The Celebrity Traitors* pulled in a whopping 11 million viewers last November, making it one of the UK's biggest shows of 2025. Yet for Samantha Bond, who is back on our screens as amateur sleuth Judith Potts in another series of *The Marlow Murder Club*, the hit show remains something of a mystery – and one she's happy not to solve.

'I tried to get into it,' she says of the BBC1 juggernaut, which comedian Alan Carr won, scooping an £87,500 charity prize. 'I know Celia Imrie and Mark Bonnar, and I was aware of all the hype, but I just didn't get it. I watched the first episode. Then I watched two more and I thought, "That's an hour of my life I'll never get back."'

Sam won't be signing up to sweep through a Highlands castle in a velvet cloak and wipe out fellow celebrities after dark in the next series – but she gets why others would.

'If someone wins £100,000 for their chosen charity, that's significant,' she says, recalling

her fundraising stint on *The Great Sport Relief Bake Off* in 2014. 'Two of the most terrifying days of my life. I'm not a baker.'

Nine years before that, she triumphed on ITV game show *Spelling Bee*, hosted by Chris Tarrant. 'Macmillan got £25,000 because I won. That paid for a nurse for a year. So when celebrities win money for charity, that's significant.'

For Sam, 64, the biggest pull professionally is a carefully written script, which is why she's back for a third series of *The Marlow Murder Club*. Adapted by *Death in Paradise* creator Robert Thorogood, from his own novels, the U&Drama show

follows Judith and her pals – vicar's wife Becks and dog-walker Suzie – as they untangle

more sinister mysteries in the leafy Buckinghamshire town.

'We had a wonderful time shooting it. We just need the audience to love it now,' says Sam, who needn't fret. The

second season drew over two million viewers, securing a swift renewal for a third outing and cementing the show's status as one of TV's most addictive crime dramas, both in the UK and in America.

In the past, Sam has spoken openly about her disdain for the label 'cosy crime', but she now confesses her viewpoint has adjusted slightly.

'When we last spoke, I was a bit irritated because it seemed quite patronising, as we all happen to be women. The scripts are so good and so complex, and the only reason we're a cosy murder is because you don't ever actually see

violence. But I'm very happy to be in that particular niche at the moment.'

Filming last summer involved three months living Monday to Friday in charming Marlow. Days shooting were followed by nights of line-learning and chatting on the phone with her actor husband Alexander Hanson, 65, who also visited.

'I very much wanted him to come and meet my world,' says Sam. 'It's important that he can visualise where I am. It's a good thing, me disappearing and having that time, but he's the one left at home.'

During lockdown, when the acting industry ground



The star with her husband Alexander

to a halt, that home in west London was where Sam, Alex and their actor children – Tom played Cardi in *Brassic*, while Molly has appeared in *Doctors*, *Father Brown* and the first series of *The Marlow Murder Club* – created their own short series.

'We did it to keep ourselves sane,' laughs Sam. 'We'd shoot a dinner scene at the kitchen island. I had to cook the food, then I'd say, "Just a minute, I've got to clear up because we're coming back to this scene." We'd eat it, I'd wash up, and then carry on.'

Sam found fame in the BBC's *Mansfield Park* in 1983, before becoming known to millions as Money Penny in the James Bond films, starring opposite Pierce Brosnan from 1995 to 2002. Later came the role of Lady Rosamund in *Downton Abbey* and another in ITV's *Home Fires*.

Talking to Sam, the adoration she feels for the profession that has held her tight for more than four decades is palpable. She

'Pilates is good for your mind'



Sam with Pierce Brosnan in 1995's *GoldenEye*, and as Judith in *The Marlow Murder Club*





smiles recalling how, long before the arrival of email, brand-new scripts would be delivered discreetly to her front door.

'Once, a brown envelope came through my letter box. It was a [Sir] David Hare play called *Amy's View*, and it was to play Amy alongside [Dame] Judi Dench, who was cast as the mum, Esme. I sat down at the kitchen table, read it and thought, "David Hare knows so much about my life." It was extraordinary. It was like it had been written for me.'

That production opened at the National Theatre, transferring to the West End, then Broadway. Now, Sam would 'love to go back to the theatre' and says choosing the right role simply boils down to that little 'S' word.

'It's always the script,' says Sam, whose next calling is *Forever Home*, a series adapted from a novel by Graham Norton and filmed in Hexham, Northumberland.

When asked if and how she manages to maintain a fitness routine when work keeps her so occupied, Sam chuckles, stating that while filming *The Marlow Murder Club* she was up at 5.50am and 'had a cup of tea and a shower' before heading to location at 6.20am. At home, though, Alex is a positive influence.

'My husband is an incredibly healthy eater, so he keeps me on the straight and narrow. I don't walk as much as I should, but I walk as much as I can,' she says. 'Pilates is incredible. It keeps you strong and supple, and it's good for your mind.'

Ask Sam if she's had any big personal changes lately and she shakes her head. 'No dramas, thankfully. Just plodding along nicely.'

And that is exactly why the castle can for ever wait.

*** *The Marlow Murder Club* airs Wednesdays at 8pm on U&Drama; all episodes are available to stream on U.**



CELEBRATING BRITAIN

Bluebell BEAUTY

Discover the best of nature with a carpet of lovely woodland gems during April and May

There are few sights as enchanting as a wood or copse that has erupted with a sea of radiant bluebell flowers. The plants take many years to colonise an area, which

explains why they are often found in old and ancient woodlands. Look out for the rare white or pink blooms dotted among the pack: these only occur in approximately one out of every 10,000 blooms.



ESSENTIAL FOR THE ECOSYSTEM

Bluebells radiate their colour and scent far and wide from woodland floors, making them an easy target for pollinators to find. They are a crucial, early-spring source of nectar and pollen for woodland bees, hoverflies and butterflies. Higher up in the food chain, woodland birds prey on the insects among the blooms to feed their young during the breeding season. These transient beauties come into flower slightly earlier in the south than in the north of the country.



BEST BLUEBELL WOODS IN THE UK



Bluebells under attack

The UK is home to more than half of the world's population of English bluebells, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, making these iconic wildflowers part of the country's natural heritage. Over the past few decades, bluebell woods have been reduced by around 50% and are under serious threat, not just from habitat loss but from a vigorous garden escapee, the Spanish bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*. This invasive species hybridises with the English bluebell to produce vigorous offspring, which outcompete the delicate natives. It's easy to differentiate between the two.



English bluebells carry sweetly scented, violet-blue tubular flowers on one side only of their stems, and the top of the stalk gently nods under the weight of the blooms.



The Spanish bluebell is an altogether stronger-stemmed flower, and carries its unscented blooms all the way round the stalk in an upright manner. It also continues to flower well into June.

PWLL-Y-WRACH POWYS

In late spring, bluebells mix with the starry white blooms of wild garlic to saturate the air with their distinctive fragrances. Pwll-y-Wrach nature reserve is set in Bannau Brycheiniog National Park, which contains 43 acres of ancient woodland and a spectacular double waterfall.

* welshwildlife.org



Protect our bluebells

Stick to the marked paths and keep dogs on leads when visiting bluebell woods to avoid trampling on them, as they are sensitive to soil compaction. Crushed leaves are unable to fully photosynthesise; this causes the plant to die back and it may struggle to recover for several years. It is illegal to pick or dig up English bluebells, as they are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).



Roseberry Topping

NORTH YORK MOORS

Make the effort to climb this much-loved landmark of the North Yorkshire moors and you will be rewarded with the most amazing views of a landscape painted in blue. The National Trust recommends a visit in early May.

* nationaltrust.org.uk



HOLE PARK GARDENS

KENT

Kent has long been a stronghold for magnificent swathes of bluebells in spring. The extensive estate of Hole Park Gardens puts on one of nature's most magnificent displays. To help its visitors see native wildflowers at their best, the garden's website has a live 'Bluebell Barometer' for regular updates on the progress of the blooms.

* holepark.com



GLEN FINGLAS STIRLING

Set within Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, the Glen Finglas bluebell extravaganza is usually at its peak in early May. Be sure to take the Lendrick Hill walk, widely considered to be a top spot to see thousands of bluebells covering the woodland floor.

* woodlandtrust.org.uk



Wix Wood Walk at Hatchlands Park

SURREY

Secreted in the country estate of Hatchlands Park sits an ancient woodland, thickly carpeted with a riotous hue of English bluebells. They're guaranteed to take your breath away. Follow the well-defined meandering paths for a thoroughly enjoyable 2.88km round walk.

* nationaltrust.org.uk

WORDS: LOUISE MIDGLEY. PHOTOS: ALAMY, GETTY

Brilliant stress BUSTERS

Beat anxiety and keep smiling with these mood-boosting moves

Feeling low or lost your motivation? The idea of working out might not fill you with joy when you're down or exhausted, but movement could be just what you need

to feel lighter and brighter. 'Exercise plays a huge role in helping us to feel healthier and more energetic, and the effect it has on our mental wellbeing is significant,' says fitness expert Laura Williams.

'It alters and increases the activity of neurotransmitters in the brain and powerful hormones, and can make you feel clear-headed and more optimistic.' Here's what to try for a natural mental boost.

Challenge yourself

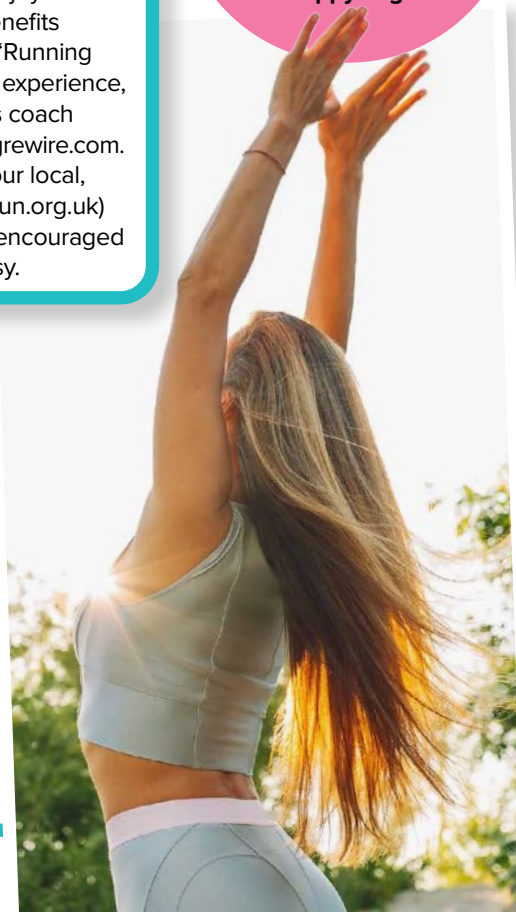
Hiking a big hill or setting a challenge you'll have to train for may feel daunting, but doing an activity that's out of your comfort zone can be surprisingly good for you. 'Regularly pushing yourself into a controlled state of discomfort helps train your nervous system to handle stress and regain balance in your life,' says surf therapist Josh Dickson*. Visit timeoutdoors.com for challenges, active trips and charity events that might inspire you.



Be a slow runner

Think you can't run? Start much slower and resist the urge to speed up, so you don't get puffed out. There's no shame in sticking to a relaxed plod – you'll enjoy it more and still get the benefits of movement outdoors. 'Running should be a pleasurable experience, not one you dread,' says coach Jules Scudder of runningwire.com. To jog with others, try your local, weekend parkrun (parkrun.org.uk) – walking the course is encouraged if you need to take it easy.

HAPPY HORMONES
Exercise increases levels of the feel-good brain chemicals serotonin and endorphins, giving you a happy 'high'.



SALUTE THE SUN

Kick-start your day with sun salutations. This flowing set of yoga poses aligns with your breath to create a dynamic, energising stretching sequence – doing it for 30 minutes can reduce stress and anxiety, according to research. Find a demo you can follow on YouTube or start with one big stretch to wake up your body and mind in the morning. If the weather is good, try this outdoors for an extra hit of fresh air.

*** Stand tall, feet together and arms by your sides. Then inhale and sweep both arms upwards, stretching as high as you can towards the sky. Feel your spine extending and your chest opening. Exhale and slowly lower your arms to your side, then repeat several times.**

HOP ON A BIKE

Remember the carefree feeling you had when cycling as a child? Recreate that happiness in your local park or on a forest trail. 'Most of us will have grown up having learnt to ride a bike and therefore it's pretty easy to get into,' says fitness trainer Elliot Hasoon. You'll even benefit from spending time in nature. Wear a helmet and reflective clothing, and visit cyclinguk.org for routes.

GET OUTDOORS

Engaging in any exercise outdoors improves your mood in just five minutes, found researchers at the University of Essex.



MEDITATE IN MOTION

Originally a martial art, tai chi is a popular form of gentle exercise for all ages and abilities. It's performed as a series of slow, controlled movements that encourage deep, relaxed breathing. 'At a basic level, you can escape your day-to-day stresses and develop a connection with your body,' says instructor Pauline Brennan**. Want to get started? Visit taichiunion.com to find a class or try a free session on YouTube.



CALMING BREATHS

Feeling overwhelmed? Try this quick trick to regulate your breathing and calm an overstimulated nervous system, says chartered psychologist Suzy Reading***.

*** Chicken wing shoulder roll**

Put your fingertips on your shoulders to create a little chicken wing. Breathe in and sweep your elbows forward and up. Breathe out and slide your elbows back and down. Repeat three times.

'This circular action helps you breathe better because lifting your elbows up allows you to take a deeper breath in, while dropping your elbows relaxes the diaphragm to help you more completely empty the lungs,' says Suzy.



FOUR WAYS TO WALK YOURSELF HAPPIER

Heading out of your front door for a stroll is one of the easiest ways to clear your head. 'Walking requires no skill, costs nothing and is extremely accessible to people of all abilities,' says Elliot. 'It's also simple to integrate into your daily life and to do it socially.' Here's how to boost the benefits.

1 Go early Exposure to natural daylight first thing in the morning keeps your body clock on track, helping you feel alert throughout the day and alleviating sluggishness in the afternoon.

2 Absorb positive podcasts Feed your brain by listening to podcasts of inspirational interviews, wellbeing advice or engaging debates – you'll hit your steps goal without even realising.

3 Take a pooch People walking with a dog are likely to go further and for longer, a study revealed. Pet ownership has been linked to improved social connections in the community. Don't have a four-legged friend? Offer to walk a friend's or neighbour's pet.

4 Tune into birdsong Paying attention to the twittering sounds of birds has a calming effect on the body's nervous system, so it is a great way to alleviate stress, according to The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.



IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR HEALTH, TALK TO YOUR GP. *RESURFACEUK.COM. **WILLOWTAICHI.CO.UK. ***SUZYREADING.CO.UK

IT'S A FUNNY OLD WORLD

'I just can't sit still!'

THIS WEEK'S COLUMNIST Actor Wendi Peters

“ If I'm on my own, I never stop. It drives my partner Gareth a bit mad. I had a week off recently and I said, 'I'm just going to rest.' He came home from work at dusk on Friday night and he couldn't find me. I was down the bottom of the garden, up a ladder, chopping down trees! I'm not very good at sitting still.

We've been together for two-and-a-half years, and we moved in together last January. My girlfriends had a drunken night with me and put me on this dating app, and within a few weeks, Gareth and I had met and the rest is history. I'd sort of thought, 'Oh, I can't be bothered starting up again.' But thank goodness my friends did put me on it because it's nice to be going through life with somebody else.

He's not a theatre bod. He doesn't particularly understand it all, which is great. His business is carpets and I know nothing about that! The fact that we have different jobs makes life interesting, and it separates my work and my life outside of my work, which is lovely.

I played Cilla in *Coronation Street* for

* *Glorious!* is on tour until 6 June. Book tickets at gloriousplay.com

a long time, but I'm more than happy doing what I do now – I love the variety, flipping between theatre, TV, panto and voice-overs. I'm currently playing Florence Foster Jenkins – the worst singer in the world – in a nationwide tour of *Glorious!* It's a true story and I laughed out loud when I first read the script.

She was a 1940s socialite who got an absolute thrill out of singing, but she was deaf in one ear! The play follows her journey as she prepares for her biggest-ever recital at New York's Carnegie Hall. The singing is horrendous, but it's meant to be horrendous and the audience love it.

I trained in musical theatre and I've been singing for nearly 40 years, but what's great is if I'm feeling a little tired towards the end of the week, it really doesn't matter if I breathe in completely the wrong places during a song!

It's great to play somebody who is having the time of their life. She was an amazing woman who really didn't care.

I guess as you get older you become a bit like that anyway – you have your friends and you don't really care what anyone else thinks.

My dog Dorothy is on tour with me too. The other night I came off stage and she was fast asleep on a towel under my desk with her head on her sloth toy. She loves coming to the bar for a drink afterwards and going for walks in all the different parks.

I'm really enjoying this time of my life. I've got my home life in Leicester with Gareth and his family, who are all nearby, and then I go down to my flat in Chorleywood and see my friends and my daughter, and we go into London. I've got a really nice balance.

'My friends put me on this dating app'

'My funny old week'

WHERE I'VE BEEN During the *Glorious!* tour, we've visited lots of seaside towns, including Poole and Eastbourne. We've had lots of bracing fresh air and Dorothy has been swimming in the sea every day, which she's adored.

WHAT I'VE SEEN *I Swear*. I've watched it twice. I paid to watch it when it first came out and I watched it again on Netflix. It's a very sad film, but it's an inspirational story and funny as well.

WHO I'VE MET I had a lovely trip to Birmingham to meet my friend Loula. We did a musical together 13 years ago. She calls me her stage mamma and she's my stage daughter.

WHAT I'VE BOUGHT Some new bird feeders on Amazon. We love sitting in the morning with our coffee watching the birds in the garden. How old am I?!



Robert Aramayo and Maxine Peake in *I Swear*

Woodland Appeal



Hillside Animal Sanctuary

The commonly used phrase 'time is of the essence' so often applies at Hillside. When dealing with an urgent situation that could cost an animal its life, quick decisions have to be made and there's no time to ponder.

And so it was when we discovered that 10 acres of unprotected woodland was going up for auction, right on our doorstep. There was local concern that the wood may be lost to developers, vital habitat torn up and the wildlife, including a large herd of resident deer, displaced.

We had no time to waste and no time to send out an appeal. 'Time was of the essence' so, using funds set aside for future emergencies, we leapt into action and placed our successful bid. Our dream of a large and natural wooded deer sanctuary is now much closer to reality.

The woodland will be fenced from the roads. So many of the deer we are called out to rescue are road casualties.

As you can imagine, this unmissable, but important purchase has diminished our reserve somewhat. So, if you feel you would like to contribute to the saving of this habitat and its next stage of sensitive transformation into the safe haven we want it to be, we would be very grateful.



With the benefit of a stream, the woodland offers total support for the wildlife living there. There is also a pond. A natural sanctuary we can preserve as a safe haven for our rescued deer and which will continue to be a refuge for the wild deer and all the other animals who inhabit it.

Become a 'Woodland Friend'...



...to receive annual updates on the woodland and the animals who live there. This support will help fund the required renovation and ongoing woodland maintenance.

You will receive a 'Woodland Friend' Keyring



Picture: Hillside night camera



The woodland is already home to a herd of around 100 Fallow deer, and other wildlife, who now have a safe haven in perpetuity. Those we have rescued will have a separate area dedicated to their continued recovery.

Please send me:	Price	No of items	£	p
Norfolk Wildlife Cards	£7			
Hillside Bookmark Deer or Badger	£4			
Wildlife Christmas Cards (30 cards)	£14			
Stag design Breakfast Mug (boxed)	£12			
I would like to become a 'Woodland Friend' (Including Keyring)	Minimum £25			
Reg. Co. No. 03027338	Gift Total			
Woodland Appeal/General Donation	Total			

Please make cheque/PO payable to Hillside Animal Sanctuary Ltd or debit my Visa/MasterCard No.



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Please send me a FREE NEWSLETTER with details of Hillside's work, Gifts & Open Days

Please post to: Hillside Animal Sanctuary Hall Lane, Frettenham, Norwich NR12 7RW

Orders sent by return post

Wildlife Gifts to support our Woodland Appeal...



Norfolk Wildlife Cards Pack of 6 different animal designs (8"x6") £7

Hillside Bookmarks Deer or Badger £4



ALL Prices include P&P

YOU MAY SEE OUR FULL WOODLAND APPEAL OR DONATE BY SCANNING THIS QR CODE



Hillside Animal Sanctuary was founded in 1995 to help, and campaign, for animals in need, particularly those suffering every day in the intensive factory farming industry. We are home to 2500 rescued horses, ponies and donkeys, 750 cows, 300 pigs, 850 sheep and goats, and many other animals including dogs and, of course, lots of deer...

Donation/Order Helpline

01603 736200

9am-9pm 7 Days

www.hillside.org.uk

10 OF THE BEST

Lip TINTS

Try the new trend – subtle shades with nourishing formulas

1 DESIGNER DOUBLE
Primark has a remarkable skill of recreating much more expensive formulas and this bargain is no exception. Providing a stylish 'blurred' finish, it's matte without being too flat or dry, and it's available in four shades, including three pink tones and a zingy coral. **PS... Blur Lip Tint in Pink, £3, Primark**

2 FRENCH KISS
This French brand has created the perfect understated lippy. It's a buildable, slightly sheer colour with a diffused, soft matte finish. This peachy shade is more uplifting than a nude, but will still go with all your outfits. **Violette_FR Bisou Balm in Mon Cheri, £30, libertylondon.com**

3 GET GLOSSY
A lip gloss which has all the best elements – a luxurious-looking finish and plumping benefits, minus the sticky feel. It's lightweight, comfortable to wear and glides effortlessly on to lips. Available in 10 shades, from neutral nudes to deep berry reds. **Revolution Pout Lip Gloss Stick in Cherrylicious, £6.99, Superdrug**

4 STAYING POWER
Lip stains are making a comeback, but the new formulas are much less drying. This buy adds the prettiest tint – a 'your lips, but better' look that lasts all day. It comes in four shades, but we find this scarlet the most versatile. It can be used on cheeks, too. **E.l.f. Sheer For It Tint in Left on Red, £6, Boots**



5 EASY APPLICATION
The cult classic from Clinique is now available in more shades, including this perky pink. It's hard to beat a chubby stick – the formula never dries out and you're left with a sheer, flattering wash of colour. **Clinique Chubby Stick Moisturising Lip Colour Balm in Bursting Blossom, £24, clinique.co.uk**

6 BARGAIN BUY
We're blown away by the price tag, but what's more impressive is how well it works. Sweep on to lips for a pretty, wearable pop of colour that won't dry out your lips. It's available in seven wonderful shades. **Essence Hydra Kiss Lip Stain in Vintage Rose, £2.49, notino.co.uk**

10 SATIN FINISH
If you prefer the look and feel of a traditional lipstick, you'll like this. It has a silky texture and a brilliant colour pay-off, while the serum formula contains nourishing oils. This deep pink will look lovely on cool-toned complexions. **Maybelline New York Serum Bullet Satin Finish Lipstick in Fit Check, £8.99, Boots**

9 HIGH SHINE
This isn't a lip oil, serum or stain – it sits somewhere in between all three. It has the nourishing benefits of an oil, the light texture of a serum and the staying power of a stain. Its colour will last up to 12 hours. We love this joyful pop of red. **Laneige Juice Pop Box Lip Tint in Red Classic, £20, sephora.co.uk**

8 MULTITASKING MARVEL
The fact that this product can be used on both the cheeks and lips makes it even more of a bargain. Dab on to the apples of your cheeks before blending out with your fingertips, then apply to your lips for a stylish, monotone look. **Collection Cosmetics Cheek and Lip Stain in Blossom, £3.99, collectioncosmetics.com**

7 PLUMP IT UP
Hyaluronic acid helps keep your skin plump and bouncy, and it can do the same for your lips. This formula uses four forms of the ingredient, which will smooth out your pout and help it look fuller, without any stinginess. **Vaseline Gluta-Hya Lip Serum Gloss in Cherry Crush, £9.99, Boots**

FASHION

solutions

Woman's Weekly
OCCASIONWEAR
SPECIAL

Occasion dressing made easy with these figure-flattering styles and fabulous fascinators

FANCY TOPS

Separates offer a contemporary and chic take on modern-day occasionwear dressing. Effortlessly elegant, a fancy top allows you to create a look that feels personal and polished. Satin jacquard fabrics, puff sleeves, waterfall ruffles, bows and subtle embellishment add texture and interest while offering the versatility to style each piece beyond any occasion.



£19.99, sizes xs-xl, Zara



£49, sizes 4-18, omnes.com

Luxe for less



£29.99, sizes xs-xl, Zara



£95, sizes 6-18, theshirtcompany.com



£36, sizes 6-18, River Island

FULL SKIRTS

Bringing a touch of glamour to spring dressing, the feminine 50s silhouette is having a moment this season. Styling-wise, many brands are offering coordinating designs, taking the hassle out of choosing your top half. Alternatively, pair yours with a pussy-bow blouse, or a satin or crisp white shirt. Tuck in and finish with statement earrings.

£119, sizes 8-18, Phase Eight



£29.50, sizes 6-20, F&F at Tesco



£72, sizes 6-24, FatFace

Matching top available



£14, sizes 8-24, George at Asda



£54.99, sizes 6-22, H&M





Dress, £179, sizes 12-28, liveunlimitedlondon.com; other items, stylist's own



Skirt, £89, sizes 8-18, shoes, £99, and bag, £109, all Phase Eight; other items, stylist's own

DRESSES

If you traditionally prefer dresses over separates for something special, you can be sure to find a style that flatters your figure. Try chic, belted designs to cinch the waist, fit-and-flare silhouettes that skim the hips or dramatic cape sleeves for an elegant way to flatter the upper arms.



£65, sizes 6-24, M&S



£100, sizes 4-20, forevernew.co.uk



Polka dots are timeless

£94, sizes xs-xl, roseandnancy.com



£64.99, sizes xs-xxl, H&M



£135, sizes 8-22, Kaleidoscope at Freemans

FASCINATORS

The ultimate accessory for weddings, race days, garden parties and other special occasions, fascinators are the perfect finishing touch to elevate your outfit. For a royal-inspired look, keep your shades tonal and match head to toe. Try brown with blush pink or cream and baby blue.

£69, John Lewis



£49, Phase Eight



£60, Accessorize



£30, jonrichard.com

£22.80, Debenhams



Changing THE WORLD

Meet three women thriving in careers that are mainly dominated by men

'Women are the most surprised when they see me'

Tori Callaby, 47, is a kitchen appliance engineer for British Gas. She lives in Spalding, Lincolnshire, with husband Rob, 47, and their four-year-old twins.

At school, I was discouraged from following a trade by teachers, because I was a girl. They steered me towards office work. But my dad was an upholsterer and antiques restorer, and my childhood was spent handing him tools and woodworking, which was normal to me. It was hard finding apprenticeships, especially because I wasn't a boy. I got a job as a canoe instructor for the adventure holiday company PGL.

When I was made redundant, I saw British Gas advertising for white goods and electrical engineers. The white goods role sounded interesting. I applied and haven't looked back.

During my interview, I wired up a fuse box and was told afterwards, they thought that



I was comfortable handling tools and knew what to do. I spent nine months training and a year working with a colleague before going out alone. I was terrified and worked slowly, but soon got up to speed.

I've been in the role for 14 years now. I cover a 60-mile radius, so there's lots of driving and I do about five or six jobs a day. I go into customers' homes and fix white goods –

fridge-freezers, dishwashers, microwaves and ovens – everything except extractor fans. I mentor and am currently working with my second trainee, which I'm really enjoying.

For many years I was the only female kitchen appliance engineer, although there are women in other roles. Now there are two of us. It's not a career choice that's widely



promoted to boys or girls, but that's slowly changing.

Women are the most surprised to see a female engineer. 'Why are you doing this job?' they ask, but I love it. I am constantly learning as the technology evolves.

As a female engineer, I've never had a problem with male colleagues. Customers do try to move things, though, when they should leave that to me. As a woman, I think I'm more careful and I've been professionally trained.

Every day is different. Our customers are lovely and many request me because they know and appreciate my ability, and the high standard I work to.

'I am constantly learning'



'We're less intimidating, and more empathetic'

Erika Morris, 38, a private investigator and founder of Assist Investigations, lives in Windsor, Berkshire, with her husband and three children.

Being a woman in what is considered a male-dominated job has its advantages. I started my own private investigation business in 2024. Before that, I worked in the Metropolitan Police for 16 years, stepping away after the birth of my third child to build a career with a better work-life balance.

My policing background has



'I'm aware I don't fit the stereotype of a firefighter'

Lucy Macleod, 45, is a borough commander with London Fire Brigade in Hammersmith and Fulham. She lives in west London with Blue, her working trauma and wellbeing dog.

'If you can see it, you can believe it, you can be it,' I tell pupils during school visits. I'm passionate about representation and challenging misconceptions about what a firefighter looks like, and the language around my profession. I joined the force late, at 29, after starting as a non-operational staff member in 2009. I became a firefighter two years later.

Before, I had my own business teaching first aid. After the financial crash, a friend working for the London Fire Brigade suggested I apply to train people in trauma care, and mentioned I'd make a good firefighter. I'd never thought about it before. I never saw

it as an avenue open to me. I applied, was interviewed and immediately got the job.

Within 18 months, there was an opportunity to complete a three-year programme to become operational and hit the first rung of senior management. Not only am I a firefighter and borough commander, I'm the

I still get called a fireman'

only female national tactical adviser for Urban Search and Rescue in the UK.

I'm aware I don't fit the stereotype; I'm 5ft 2in, have

long, blonde hair and size-three feet. When I started, there were no fire boots to fit me properly.

I regularly get called a fireman. That's where the idea for my *Lucy and Blue* children's books came from. We need more education. People aren't malicious, they just don't have the right language. I wanted to do something positive and encourage all types of people to consider the fire service for themselves. I want to inspire



younger generations to be firefighters. I've written 10 books, all with a story and safety message, that give educators the chance to use the right language, which is key to changing things.

It's hard – women are built differently to men. Only 9% of operational firefighters nationally are women. Not everyone can do it, but there are other opportunities, such as call operators. There are lots of capable people out there for whom the fire service is not even a career choice because there is little or no representation – I want to help change that.

*** lucyandblue.com**

helped. The first professional event I attended was mostly men and retired officers of a certain age. As a relatively young woman, I did feel up against it.

In tasks like surveillance, women can get away with more. When we knock on doors and ask people about things, we're more likely to get information; we're less intimidating and forceful than men. We are also more empathetic.

In the process of serving legal documents, going to someone's house in the evening, people are less likely to answer to a man. They're not expecting a woman, either. I've served

papers on people who were quite difficult to track down.

I work closely with solicitors, corporate organisations and private individuals, delivering a wide range of investigative services. My work is varied as it is unpredictable. Some days

I'm sitting quietly in a car for hours, waiting for one moment, one photograph, that makes all the difference. Other days I'm delivering

sensitive legal documents, tracing people across Europe, or helping to reconnect families who thought they had lost each other for good.

No two cases are ever the same, and success quite often depends on patience,

adaptability and an ability to earn trust quickly in challenging situations.

I joined the police to help people; now I just do it in a different way to get people answers, I tell friends.

As a female private investigator (PI) in a traditionally male-dominated industry, I'm passionate about ethical investigative practice, and about showing women it's never too late to pivot, retrain or build something of their own.

I'm the co-founder of the UK's first independent Women's PI Network, which recently launched. It supports, connects and champions women

working in investigations. We have physical and online events to help get more women into the industry and support those coming in.

*** assistinvestigations.co.uk**

'I help people get answers'



Simple SUPPERS

Refresh your recipe repertoire with these meals, which take 30 minutes or less to make



COOK'S TIP
White pepper is the secret ingredient, adding a gentle warmth that complements the spice of the chilli.

PER SERVING
374 cal, 10g fat,
2g sat fat,
50g carbs

Drunken noodles

This Thai-inspired noodle dish gets its name as it's usually served with an ice-cold beer or as a foolproof hangover cure.

SERVES 4 READY IN 20 mins

- * 200g rice noodles
- * 3tbsp cooking oil
- * 2 large carrots, thinly sliced
- * 250g Tenderstem broccoli, cut into bite-sized pieces
- * 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- * 2-4 bird's-eye chillies, finely sliced, plus extra to garnish
- * 250g raw shelled tiger prawns
- * ½tsp ground white pepper
- * 1 bunch Thai basil, leaves picked and roughly torn (or regular basil leaves)

FOR THE SAUCE

- * 3tbsp oyster sauce
- * 1tbsp light soy sauce
- * 1tbsp fish sauce
- * 1tsp sugar

1 Mix all the ingredients for the sauce in a small bowl and set aside. Cook the noodles according to the pack instructions, rinse under cold water, toss with 2tsp oil and set aside.

2 Measure 30ml water into a small bowl or a jug and place near the hob. Put

a large wok on a high heat, then add the remaining oil. Once shimmering, stir-fry the carrots and broccoli for 2 mins, then add the garlic, chillies and prawns, stirring briefly. Add the water and fry for 2 mins more in the steam, until the veg is tender and the prawns are pink.

3 Add the white pepper and basil, and stir-fry for 2-3 mins more. Now add the sauce. Let it bubble for 1 min, then take off the heat and toss through the noodles to coat them. Divide between bowls and scatter over some extra chilli, if liked.

Chicken burrito bowls

This zingy, high-fibre burrito bowl uses a few tricks and pre-prepared ingredients for a satisfying supper.

SERVES 4 READY IN 15 mins

- * 1 red onion, finely sliced
- * 2 limes, 1 juiced and 1 quartered
- * 2 x 250g cooked wholegrain rice pouches
- * 1tsp Mexican-style spice mix or tajín seasoning, plus extra to sprinkle
- * 400g tin black beans, drained and rinsed
- * 2 cooked chicken breasts, sliced
- * 1 tub fresh tomato salsa
- * 340g tin sweetcorn, drained
- * 1 large avocado, halved and sliced
- * 150ml soured cream (optional)
- * 2tbsp sliced jalapeños, drained if in a jar
- * 15g fresh coriander, leaves picked

1 In a small bowl, mix the onion with a large pinch of salt and half the lime juice; set aside to lightly pickle.

2 Heat the rice according to pack instructions and stir in the remaining lime juice, plus the spice mix and beans. Divide between 4 bowls, then arrange the chicken over the warm rice. Mix the tomato salsa with the sweetcorn, then spoon it over the chicken and rice, followed by sliced avocado, and soured cream, if using.

3 Drain away any liquid from the onion mix, then scatter the onion slices, jalapeños and coriander leaves over the chicken. Sprinkle with spice mix and serve with lime quarters for squeezing.

PER SERVING
450 cals, 16g fat,
6g sat fat,
43g carbs



COOK'S TIP
Get everything to room temperature before assembling to let the flavours shine.

Charred steak with anchovy and caper dressing

Steak may feel like a bit of a treat, but it's simple and quick to prepare at home for a special night in.

SERVES 4 READY IN 30 mins

- * 800g new potatoes, halved, or quartered if large
- * 5½tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- * 6 anchovy fillets in oil, drained and mashed
- * 1tbsp capers, drained, rinsed and roughly chopped
- * 1 small garlic clove, crushed
- * 10g each flat-leaf parsley and mint, finely chopped
- * 1½tsp red wine vinegar
- * 2 sirloin or rump steaks, about 150-200g each
- * Rocket or salad, to serve

1 Put the potatoes in a pan, cover with cold water and add a big pinch of salt. Bring to the boil and simmer for 15-20 mins, until just soft.

2 Combine 5tbsp of the oil with the anchovies, capers, garlic, herbs, vinegar and a pinch of sugar in a small bowl. Add salt to taste – it might not need any, as the anchovies and capers are salty. Set aside.

3 Brush the steaks with the remaining oil and season. Heat a frying pan or griddle over a high heat and, once smoking hot, sear the steaks for 3 mins per side for medium-rare or longer to your liking. Remove to a plate, cover and set aside.

4 Drain the potatoes and steam-dry for 2 mins, then return to the frying pan. Pour any juice that has collected around the steaks into the potatoes and stir in a third of the dressing, breaking up a few of the potatoes as you go.

5 Slice the steaks, then divide between 4 plates and drizzle with the remaining dressing. Serve with the potatoes and rocket or a salad.

COOK'S TIP
This punchy dressing is also great spooned over roast chicken, vegetables or fried halloumi.

PER SERVING
410 cals, 20g fat,
5g sat fat,
30g carbs



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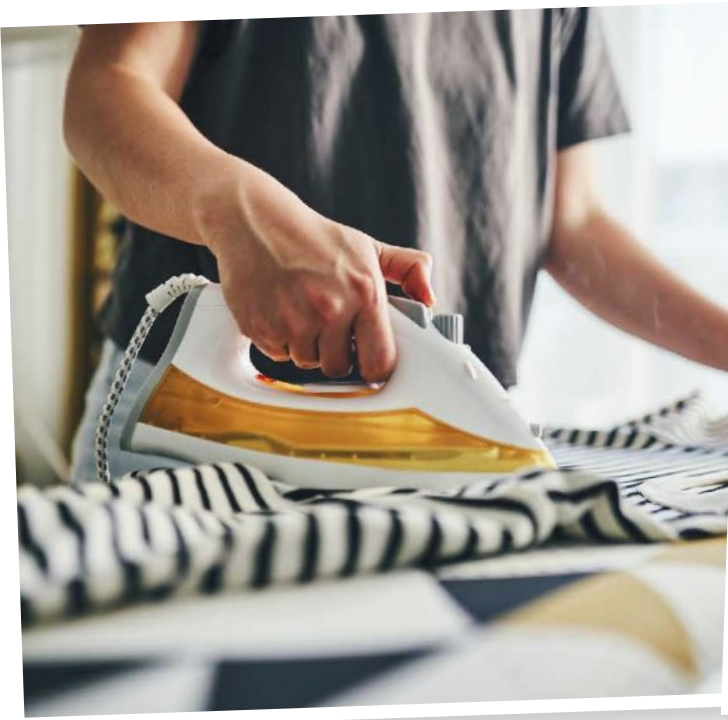
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IRON *US* STEAMER

Are you an iron lady or is it full steam ahead?

While some people love the feel of a crisply pressed shirt, ironing has become one of our most hated chores*. And with the modern world's move to less formal clothing styles, is there an easier, quicker and energy-saving alternative?

Lots of us now use a modern handheld steamer instead; they heat up quickly, produce more powerful steam and some have suction, helping to hold fabric taut. While 90% of over 45s have an iron and use it regularly, a Lakeland survey found that 30% of 18-34-year-olds do not. So what's best?

Handheld steamers

Looking like a hairdryer, one of the biggest pluses of the steamer is its size. Compact, so there's less to store, steamers heat up fast. As the steaming is vertical, you won't need an ironing board. This makes them a quick, energy-efficient and

convenient solution to removing wrinkles from clothing, as all you do is pop the item on a hanger, pull the fabric taut and watch the creases melt away.

They're good for freshening up fabric too, so you might get another wear out of something, and they can be used on delicate fabrics, such as silk or wool. Plus, if you're travelling, a handheld steamer can be brilliant for easing the creases out of a crumpled outfit.

Where handheld steamers aren't as useful is if you're tackling a pile of ironing. 'Handheld steamers are less powerful than traditional irons,'

says Basak Camangaoglu, garment care expert at Philips. 'If your clothes are mostly heavy fabrics, many models will be unable to combat creases. They have small water tanks, meaning that you can only steam a few items before having to refill.'

Steam irons

For pressing a large load of laundry, experts agree that it's hard to beat a steam iron. Their bigger tanks mean no stopping to refill, plus there's plenty of power for tackling creases on heavier fabrics.

'An iron is the better choice when precision is key,' explains Eleanor Bell, senior product manager at Tefal. 'Dress shirts, trousers and suits often require sharp creases and a polished finish that only an iron can provide. Irons are indispensable for sewing and crafting tasks too, such as pressing seams or applying heat-transfer materials.'

'In essence, while handheld steamers are excellent for quick touch-ups, irons remain the go-to tool for achieving a crisp finish.'

IS A HYBRID THE ANSWER?

If you're unsure which to buy, a hybrid iron/steamer could be a good fit. They'll be able to press garments flat while also steaming vertically. However, they tend not to match the power of a dedicated steam iron, so check a hybrid's steam output and wattage before you buy.

THREE TO TRY



Morphy Richards Turbosteam 2-in-1 Garment Steamer and Iron, £49.99, Currys

Philips All-in-One Ironing Solution, £189.99, John Lewis



Polti Vaporella Vertical Styler GSM50R, £39.99, polti.co.uk



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Your wellbeing

LATEST HEALTH SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR MIND AND BODY

3 SIGNS TO...

Seek help for snoring



1 LOUD, CHRONIC SNORING

'Loud snoring on a near-nightly basis is the body signalling that the airway is under strain

during sleep,' says sleep expert Aaron M. Fuhrman*. It could be a sign of obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA), a condition that may be serious if not diagnosed and treated.

2 MAKING GASPING, CHOKING OR SNORTING NOISES This is a sign of OSA when the airway becomes fully blocked and the body jolts itself awake to restore breathing.

3 FEELING VERY TIRED DURING THE DAY This can also be a sign of OSA. 'If you recognise several of these signs, speak to your GP,' says Aaron. They can refer you for tests.

CURING MY IBS MEANS I CAN RUN AGAIN!



Anne Muir, 52, is from Perthshire.

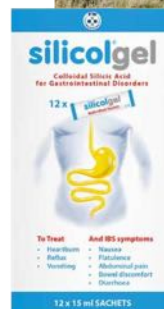
From my early teens, I regularly experienced stomach pain and discomfort, bloating and frequent changes

in bowel movements, including sudden episodes of diarrhoea. But it wasn't until I was in my late 20s that my GP finally diagnosed irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), and advised me to take an over-the-counter medicine and peppermint tablets.

It was a relief to have a formal diagnosis at last, but, unfortunately, neither treatment relieved the pain. I also tried charcoal tablets for the bloating, which helped a bit.

Exercise helps me feel physically fit and mentally well, but I was starting to feel like my gut was in control of my life. I had to make sure I'd been to the toilet multiple times before I could even think about working out. Local runs were manageable, but I really enjoy long-distance running.

Any kind of stress would trigger painful bloating and I started getting anxious about eating out. I learnt about the FODMAP method of identifying foods that may trigger the IBS-related



diarrhoea. It's complicated and I found it a challenge to work out what was triggering my symptoms.

Then a friend recommended Silicolgel. It has really helped me get control over my symptoms. I can now enjoy a normal social life, dining out with friends with confidence, knowing that I can always take a sachet to head off feelings of anxiety and feel more in control, as I know I can start managing the symptoms should they strike.

Running is even back on my agenda. I don't have to worry about aborting a run due to stomach pains. I've even felt confident enough to start training again towards an ultramarathon later this year.

* Silicolgel, £12.30 for 12 x 15ml sachets, Boots.

NEWSFLASH



AI could spot breast cancers missed by doctors

Detection rates for breast cancer increased by 10% when AI was used to assess mammogram scans alongside

human specialists, says a new study**. The research, led by the University of Aberdeen, looked at the AI screening tool Mia used to support routine breast screening for women in the local NHS area. The findings will now be extended to a UK-wide trial for the AI introduction.

What's that?

It's a stylish way to keep tabs on your meds. NICE*** estimates that around half of all people diagnosed with high blood pressure don't have it as well controlled as it should be, often because we don't take our medication properly. Make sure you're not that person by keeping careful control over your pills with this Dosey 7-Day Pill Compact, £23, anthropologie.com.



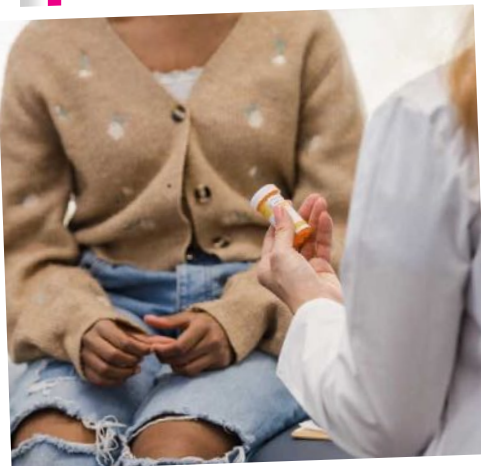


Doctor Gill

ADVICE FROM OUR WOMAN'S WEEKLY DOCTOR

Statins safety update

Over seven million UK adults take statins to reduce blood LDL cholesterol levels. Studying 123,940 participants found similar numbers of side effects in people taking statins and those taking placebo. Statins only increased the risk of liver function test abnormalities, urinary composition and oedema, but didn't increase memory loss, depression, sleep disturbance, erectile dysfunction, weight gain, nausea, fatigue and headaches, when compared with placebo. Patients starting or increasing statins should have their liver function tests checked after three months.



SLOW TAPER OF ANTIDEPRESSANTS

A systematic meta-analysis of 76 randomised controlled trials has shown relapse rates were substantially higher when antidepressant drugs were stopped abruptly or tapered rapidly. For adults who have recovered from depression with the help of antidepressant drugs, a combination of slow tapering and psychological support prevents relapse as effectively as remaining on medication. However, it's best to talk to your doctor about both accessing talking therapies and reducing or stopping medication.

Coping with...

HAY FEVER

An allergic reaction to pollen and spores affects your nose, eyes and throat

This condition occurs when the body makes allergic antibodies (IgE) to substances, such as pollen, house dust mites or mould, known as allergens. Symptoms are usually worse during warm, humid or windy weather, when the pollen count is at its highest. However, this will depend on which allergen (plants, fungi or moulds) you are allergic to.

The most common allergen is grass pollen, usually released from May to July, but tree pollen, in the air from February to June, and weed pollen and mould spores, from June to September, may also induce allergic reactions. For some with perennial allergic rhinitis, symptoms occur year round, usually relating to indoor allergens such as house dust mites, pet hair or moulds.

Symptoms include sneezing and coughing, a blocked or a runny nose, sore, itchy, red or watery eyes, an itchy throat, mouth, nose and ears, reduced smell/

taste, sinus pains, headaches or tiredness. If you have asthma – part of the atopic triad of hay fever/eczema/asthma – you may notice chest tightness, breathlessness, wheezing and coughing. Hay fever can last weeks or months, whereas a cold causing similar symptoms usually only lasts one to

'Hay fever symptoms can be managed'

Ways to help

* AVOID OUTDOOR POLLEN

Check the pollen count on the Met Office website (metoffice.gov.uk). Stay indoors during high-pollen-count weather, and keep windows and doors shut.

*** REDUCE INDOOR DUST** Use a HEPA filter vacuum regularly, remove dust with a damp cloth and don't have fresh flowers indoors. Use pollen filters in your car air vents.

*** REDUCE GARDEN POLLEN CONTACT** Don't cut grass or walk on grass. Shower and change your clothes after you've been outside to wash off pollen, and dry your clothes indoors.

*** PROTECT YOUR FACE** Put Vaseline or other barrier balm around your nostrils to trap pollen. Wear wraparound sunglasses to protect your eyes. Wash your hands and face regularly.

two weeks and affects one in four people.

It's unclear why only some people get hay fever. For most, it's mild and just a nuisance, but more severe cases affect quality of life for a few, limiting activities and ability to work. There is a genetic link, as it tends to run in families. It can't be totally prevented and there's currently no reliable cure for hay fever, but episodes can be



**True
or
false?**

Autism is as common in girls as it is in boys

True. Autism spectrum disorder rates are roughly equal for men and women, according to a new study. While the neurological and developmental condition appears more common in young boys, by the age of 20, the male-to-female ratio evens out. Women and girls are more likely to mask signs of autism, making it harder to identify the challenges they face.

4 FIXES FOR...

Athlete's foot

1 KEEP FEET CLEAN Wash feet twice daily, drying them after washing, particularly between your toes. Use a separate towel for your feet, and wash it regularly.

2 WATCH YOUR FOOTWEAR Wear clean – preferably cotton – socks daily. Wear well-fitting shoes made from natural materials to allow your feet to breathe. Take shoes off at home.

3 KEEP YOUR SKIN SEPARATE Don't share towels, socks or shoes. Don't walk barefoot in shared areas. Wear protective footwear if using gyms, showers and swimming pools.

4 SEE THE PHARMACIST They will advise about washes, antifungal creams, sprays and powders, and advise generally if you are at higher risk.

avoided or symptoms managed, especially when the pollen count is high.

Your pharmacist will advise about a variety of treatments, including antihistamine eye drops, tablets or nasal sprays, all available without prescription, and may suggest self-care methods to manage episodes. Your GP may be able to organise allergy tests if needed, and prescribe treatments for hay fever. They may suggest a steroid treatment, such as a steroid nasal spray or a course of steroid tablets. If these don't work, your GP may refer you to a specialist in allergies or immunology, or to an ENT specialist. They may offer different types of specialist immunotherapy, including one where you'll be given small amounts of pollen as an injection or tablet to slowly build up your immunity to pollen, but this treatment takes several months before the hay fever season begins.

Q Is an OCT scan a diabetes eye test?

A Digital retinal photography gives the simple 2D picture used in annual diabetic retinopathy screening.

Optical coherence tomography (OCT) scans use over 1,000 images to create an incredibly accurate 3D image of the eye's layers and its structures. Using reflected visible light from a low-power laser, OCT is safe and non-invasive. OCT is especially useful for early detection of potentially sight-threatening conditions, including diabetes, glaucoma, detached retinas and macular disorders, before they start to impact your vision. This includes changes in the vitreous (jelly-like body of the eye), retina, macula (central retinal area responsible for focused vision), and the



optic nerve, which transmits messages to the brain. Distinguishing the different layers of the retina using an OCT scan allows opticians to pinpoint abnormalities in a specific layer, providing clues about possible causes, differentiating between conditions with similar clinical signs and symptoms but requiring different treatments, such as for dry and wet macular degeneration. Most opticians now offer OCT scans.

Ideal Home

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Here to help

LET COUNSELLOR KEREN LIGHTEN YOUR LOAD

Online dating woes

Q I've been internet dating for the past nine months. I've spoken to a lot of people online and by text, and have noticed that the person I meet is completely different from the one I've been talking to online. They are nothing like their messages. I am struggling to work out what is happening.

Lucy, Bedford

A You're not alone noticing this: sadly it even has a name! It is called chatfishing. People are now using ChatGPT to write their messages and even write a script for their online phone calls. Of course, when they are there in person, they often can't find the phrases and the ability to ask the right questions or to respond appropriately. This can be very disconcerting. It's very important, especially with this new twist, that you meet somewhere public so you can assess the person for yourself and be sure that they are a good match.

I don't want them there

Q I split up from my husband when my children were 10 and 12. I have had birthday parties for them every year, and they celebrate with their father when he sees them. My son is turning 18 and I want to have a big party for him. He has asked me to invite his father, his stepmother (who my husband was having an affair with when he left) and his half-siblings. I don't want them there. It's not their party.

Name and address withheld

A Whose party is it? You're right: it's not your ex-partner's party or yours, even if you're arranging it. It's your son's birthday and his wishes are what matter here. He wants to celebrate with all his family. I understand it's annoying and doesn't suit you, and that you would

Our relationship expert Keren Smedley has over 20 years' experience. Keren welcomes your letters, emails and texts, but she cannot reply to individual cases and will select correspondence at random for publication.

He won't let me help

Q I'm a single parent and my 14-year-old son is concerned that he isn't developing properly. He won't let me have a look. He says he's too embarrassed to go to the doctor. I've said I'd go with him but that hasn't helped. I'm sure he's fine but I need him to believe it.

Name and address withheld

A It is very understandable that your son wants privacy and not to undress in front of his mother. Equally understandable is that he is shy to undress in front of the GP. I think it would be helpful to have a discussion with him about why you're suggesting a doctor is consulted.

Try explaining it's no different from if he had a sore on his arm and was concerned. Tell him you will book an appointment with

like it to be different.

It's clear from your letter that you want to do the best for your son, so this is a time to put your needs on the back-burner and just be there for him. Children, however old, want their parents to be together, especially on these special occasions. If you can honour this for him, he will feel very wanted and valued.

She has taken my things

Q I'm friends with my neighbour and we have keys to each other's houses in case we ever get locked out or need to water plants when one of us is away. I noticed I couldn't find a few things and worried I was becoming forgetful. I mentioned this to my neighbour and she



a male doctor. Explain to him that modesty and health don't go hand in hand. Also tell him about the times you've been embarrassed at the doctors and how you've managed this. You could also talk to the school and ask if this topic could be raised in PSHE (personal, social, health and economic education), as your son won't be alone feeling anxious about seeing a GP for both physical and emotional issues.

said she'd borrowed them when I was away and meant to give them back. I don't like the idea of her rummaging through my drawers for things.

Pat, London

A I'm not surprised you don't like this. No one has any right to look anywhere in your house when you haven't explicitly given them permission, or to take anything that's yours. Removing things without permission is stealing, although I don't think for one minute she thought she was stealing. It looks like she has a very different view of boundaries from you. I suggest you sit down with her, thank her for helping when you're away and then say you need to make some agreements as to how you both behave in each other's houses. Make sure that she agrees with you so this doesn't happen again.

Easy hallway UPDATES

Make the most of your home's entrance with colour, accessories and storage

1 COLOUR COVER-UP

If you live in a busy home with children and dogs, painting your walls a dark shade can be the perfect solution to disguising knocks and scuffs. Pick a scrubbable option that can withstand wear and tear.

* **GoodHome tough and durable matt wall and ceiling paint in Saint-Maxime, £18 for 2.5ltr, B&Q; other items, stylist's own**



3 ON REFLECTION

'Those with smaller entryways should consider a mirror to create the illusion of space and make the hallway feel airier,' says Lena Gierasinska, head of product and displays at Barker and Stonehouse. If space allows, opt for a floor-length style, great for last-minute outfit checks.

* **Light Grey Oak Veneer Slim Console Table, £135, and similar mirror, £105, both Click Style; other items, stylist's own**



2 PERSONAL TOUCH

'A characterful hallway welcomes guests and sets the tone for the rest of the home,' says Shelley Cochrane, accessories buyer at Furniture Village. Go bold with a brightly coloured rug to add personality. If you don't have much space, a doormat will work just as well.

* **Hello Goodbye coir mat, £9, Online Home Shop**





5 FIRST IMPRESSIONS

'Halls are often the first part of your home that a guest will see, so make a style statement with a striking piece of artwork or furniture,' says Lena. Keep the rest of your decor muted, with neutral shades and natural materials.

* Covington bench, £199, vintage birds framed print, £110, cushions, from £79 each, waffle throw, £39, faux fern potted plant, £29, and Avant cream rug, from £99, all Barker and Stonehouse



4 SLIMLINE SOLUTION

If you have a long, narrow hall, you may not have room for much furniture, but don't let that hold you back. Look for wall-mounted units or radiator covers that function as small sideboards, providing a surface for placing keys, post and table lamps.

* Malvern radiator cover, from £199, Next; other items, stylist's own



6 TIDY STORAGE

'Most people in the UK do not have large hallways or space for huge amounts of storage, so vertical shelving is a clever way to add some much-needed storage without taking up too much floor space,' says Shelley. Pick a style with doors or drawers to hide away untidy items and secure keys.

* Stockholm shelving unit, £549, acoustic wall panel, £119, and Stockholm wooden dining chair, £399 for two, all Furniture Village; other items, stylist's own

Teatime

LIGHT BITES

Perfectly sized to enjoy with a cuppa



PER SERVING
462 cal, 19g fat,
11g sat fat,
53g carbs

Sweet potato farls

A twist on the classic, served with tinned salmon to make them ideal for tea.

SERVES 4 as a light meal
PREP 20 mins **COOK 20-24 mins**

- * 360g (about 2) sweet potatoes
- * ¼ red onion, thinly sliced
- * 2tbsp white wine vinegar
- * 30g butter, plus 1tbsp for cooking
- * 170g plain flour
- * ½tsp salt
- * ¼tsp black pepper
- * 165g pack soft cheese
- * 170g tin red salmon
- * 1tbsp capers, drained
- * A few chives, finely chopped
- * 1 lemon, cut into wedges

1 Prick the sweet potatoes all over with a fork. Microwave on high for 6-9 mins (turning halfway), until soft. Set aside to cool for 5 mins.

2 Meanwhile, put the red onion in a bowl with the vinegar and a pinch of salt. Set aside to pickle.

3 Peel and scoop 275g of sweet potato into a mixing bowl. Mash in 30g butter until smooth and melted. Fold in the flour, salt and pepper until it comes together. Cut the dough in half and roll each to a 5mm-thick round. Cut each piece into quarters.

4 Melt 1tbsp butter in a non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Fry half the farls at a time for 5-6 mins on each side, until golden.

5 To serve, top with soft cheese, salmon, capers, chives and pickled red onion. Serve with lemon wedges for squeezing.

Welsh cakes

Make a batch of these traditional delights with a gloriously crumbly texture.

MAKES 15

PREP 20 mins, plus chilling

COOK 8 mins (in batches)

- * 250g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
 - * 70g caster sugar, plus extra for dusting
 - * 1tsp baking powder
 - * ¼tsp each grated nutmeg and ground cinnamon
 - * 60g lard, chilled and cubed
 - * 60g butter, chilled and cubed, plus 1tbsp for frying
 - * 90g currants
 - * 1 medium free-range egg, beaten
 - * 2tbsp whole milk
- YOU WILL NEED**
- * 6cm fluted biscuit cutter

1 Put the flour, 70g sugar, baking powder and spices in a food processor. Whizz to combine, then add the lard and butter. Pulse until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.

2 Tip into a mixing bowl, and stir in the currants, egg and 1tbsp milk. Mix together, adding more milk if dry, to make a soft dough with no floury patches. Wrap and chill for 30 mins.

3 Roll out the dough on a floured surface to 1cm thickness. Stamp out rounds with the cutter, rerolling and stamping as many from the scraps.

4 Melt a little butter in a frying pan on medium heat. Fry the cakes in a few batches for 4 mins on each side until lightly golden. While warm, dredge in sugar, then serve.



PER WELSH CAKE
170 cal, 8g fat,
4g sat fat,
23g carbs

**PER
SERVING**

(for 6)
365 cal, 12g fat,
6g sat fat,
50g carbs

Goat's cheese and walnut 'pizza'

This faff-free topped bread is delicious served hot or cold.

SERVES 4-6

PREP 20 mins

COOK 20-25 mins

FOR THE BASE

- * 115ml lukewarm water
- * 200g natural yogurt
- * ½tsp fine salt
- * 335-390g plain flour
- * 2½tsp baking powder
- * Polenta, for dusting
- * 3tbsp passata
- * 150g goat's cheese log, cut into rounds
- * 2tbsp caramelised onion marmalade/chutney
- * Small handful walnuts, roughly chopped
- * 1tsp honey
- * Rocket, to garnish

YOU WILL NEED

- * 38x26cm baking tray

1 Heat oven to 220C Fan/Gas 9.

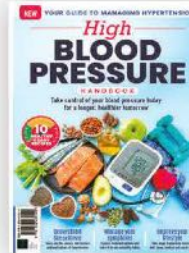
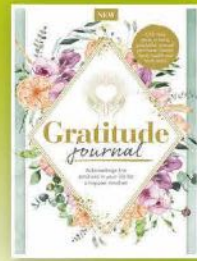
Put the water in a measuring jug, and mix in the yogurt and salt. Put 335g flour and the baking powder in a mixing bowl. Mix in the yogurt mixture to make a shaggy dough. If the dough is too wet to handle, add the remaining flour. Scoop the dough on to the worktop and knead a little to shape into a ball.

2 Lightly dust the baking tray with polenta. Stretch the dough to a rectangle roughly the size of the tray. Lay in the tray and, using your fingers, press it as close to the edges as you can to create an even thickness.

3 Spread the passata over the top and dot with the cheese, chutney and walnuts. Bake for 20-25 mins until puffed and golden. Slide the pizza on to a board, and top with a drizzle of honey and some rocket leaves.

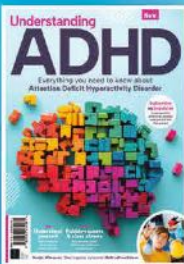
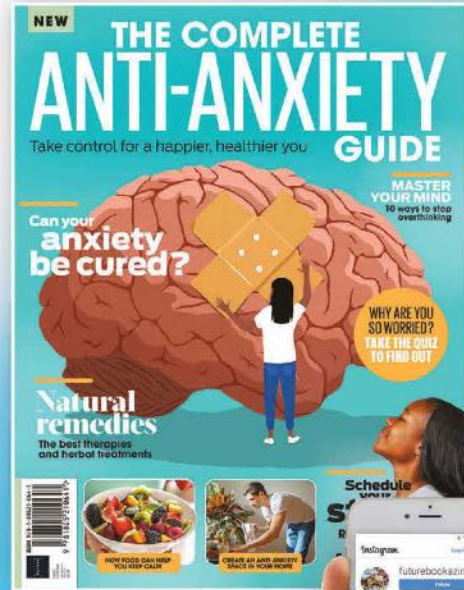
COOK'S TIP

Use this dough as a base and dress it up with any topping you fancy.



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Lipstick

Jean's beloved Nana made a big impression on her

Every time we visited Nana, I left with her lipstick smudged on my cheek.

Nana liked wearing make-up. Tawny powder, too dark for her skin tone, applied with a powder puff from an old-fashioned compact. The painted picture of a bird that decorated the lid had faded into a blur long ago.

Nana would hold her lips wide in her special way and look into the speckled, aged mirror as she coated them in thick pink lipstick, the colour of candyfloss.

She made homemade cheese scones and fruit cake for tea, baking to test how much our tummies could hold.

I never concentrated on the food, just that moment when we'd leave. First Nana's hug, then the smackaroo that would stamp a perfect image of her pink mouth on my cheek. It only happened to me. Other family members, clasped to her ample bosom and kissed, left as fresh-faced as when they arrived.

Nana's no longer with us, but I still have her powder compact. I like to open it when I'm feeling down. Most of the powder has gone. There's a little around the sides, exposing the metal base, but it still smells of Nana. A mixture of lavender and vanilla. Recently, I've needed the comfort of her compact more and more. My boyfriend Terry went to Spain on a golfing holiday and met a woman called Sal who owns an English bar in Fuengirola. He told me in a text he wasn't coming home.

I don't like to wear make-up.

I've never mastered the art of applying it. I've had disasters with streaky foundation, creased eyeshadow and clown's cheeks.

I tell myself the natural look is best. Terry used to say he liked me that way, but I've sneaked a look at Sal on her social media. She's made up to the nines, like she's ready to work on a beauty counter.

'Stop moping about! There are plenty more fish in the sea.'

I'm out with Cathy. We've been friends for years. We both love a glass of Prosecco. She's right, she always is.

'I'll think about it,' I say. I need time to get my head around joining the dating scene again.

'What's to think about? It's never not a good time to fall in love.'

So here I am, swiping left and right. It's different from dancing around my handbag, hoping someone will notice me.

I got cold feet before my first date and chickened out. On my second, I made it as far as the pub door. Then I saw him sitting on a bar stool. Somehow, he seemed to have aged 20



years since his online photo. I ran home.

I'm seeing a man this afternoon. We're meeting in the cafe at the local arts centre. He's got sandy hair and kind blue eyes. He likes cooking and gardening, like I do.

He is already there when I arrive. I've bought a new outfit, nothing fancy. A simple sweater dress. I've put on some warpaint. It took me three attempts. Cathy insisted. Tinted moisturiser, a little mascara and peach lipstick. I hadn't the heart to try any powder.

'Hello, Jean,' he says. 'I'm Teddy.'

'Oh, I wasn't sure if it was you,' I say.

'I don't normally wear them.' He points to his metal-framed glasses, missing from his photo on the dating site.

'I lost a contact lens yesterday,' he adds. 'Just my luck.' He smiles as he speaks, like a small boy trying to please.

'And these are for you, Jean. They're from my garden.'

He reaches under the table and hands me a large

bunch of flowers.

'Carnations are my favourite,' I reveal.

We spend the rest of the time talking like old friends.

'I hope we can meet again,' Teddy says at the end of the evening.

'I'd like that,' I reply.

He hugs me goodbye.

I can't resist giving him a little peck on his cheek. It's a moment of spontaneity, quite out of character.

As he moves away, I can see the imprint of my lips on his cheek. I should tell him. People will notice. They'll snigger. I search for the words.

'Bye then!' he chirps.

He's gone before I can call after him.

When I get home, I find he has sent an email. He said he wondered why he was getting some strange looks. He only realised when a copper asked him if he wanted to report a make-up crime.

Three years later, I've given up cosmetics for good. But Teddy and I still laugh about the day a policeman gave him a tissue to wipe lipstick from his face.

THE END

Barbara Compton

It was the colour of candyfloss



Enjoy the charming island of Hjarnø



Drifting in DENMARK

Wide skies and restful shores make Jutland a dream destination, says Chris Morley

For a destination that's easy to reach, Kystlandet on Jutland's east coast is wonderfully unspoilt and unhurried. It's only 90 minutes by plane from the UK to Billund Airport, plus another hour's drive, but this region where the countryside

meets the Kattegat Sea is a haven for anyone seeking a leisurely pace. Come to tread shoreline paths with seabirds for company, cycle quiet lanes or ferry-hop between islands.

Discovering the Fjordmino

The regional capital, Horsens, is well placed for exploring. Once a busy port, it now has a laid-back, arty feel. From our hotel, my husband Dean and I pick up e-bikes to pedal the Fjordmino, a 52km trail around Horsens fjord, where Viking longboats once sheltered. Rumbling over cobbled streets and through rejuvenated docklands, we soon swap tarmac bike lanes for forest tracks and country roads. The cycling is blissfully easy, especially when you can whoosh up an incline at the press of a button.

We cross a road bridge on to Alrø island. At its southernmost tip we sit on the jetty and watch the sun dance on the waves while a woman plucks mussels from the rocks.

Boarding the tiny bicycle ferry, we head to Hjarnø, an island seemingly paused in time and home to just 100 residents. There's a sprinkling of cafes, a vineyard and a modest church where a model ship hangs in the nave, honouring the island's Viking past. Along the shoreline lies its most remarkable Viking relics: the 'Kalvestenene', boat-shaped burial stones.

On to Rabbit Island

After a night at Hjarnø's comfortable campsite we sail back to the mainland and on to Endelave, aka Rabbit Island. Its

harbour sits at the end of an enticing kilometre of powdery sand bookended with a swimming platform. Scooting through the village of traditional houses painted mustard and russet, we stop by the thatched parsonage, now a museum furnished as a 1920s home. Its shipping memorabilia offers a glimpse into a life dominated by the sea.

Leaving our bikes, we set out on the Kanino, a 21km circular route named after the snowy-bottomed bunnies ('kanin' in Danish) that gather in gardens and hedgerows. Passing salt marsh and woodland where the trees have been sculpted



Visit Horsens' historic city centre

The 125m-high Himmelbjerg Tower





Hike around Horsens
Fjord and lap up the views

by the wind, we reach Øvre, the most northerly spot, and watch ponies and goats nibbling on wild roses and heather.

In the fading light, and feeling ravenous, we retrace our path back to inn with rooms, Kroen Endelave. I order 'stjernesud', aka 'shooting star', a local dish that's an ode to an abundant sea: an open sandwich of plaice, shrimp and roe drizzled with creamy sauce. Washed down with a mimosa, it was a satisfying end to a day spent in the elements.

Sun-splashed Tunø

Back on the mainland we cycle the return leg of the Fjordmino, then swap two wheels for four. Driving to Odder (pronounced Ultha), we board our final ferry to car-free Tunø, a community of just 75 residents. On board, there's the buzz of expectation for a grand day out: walking groups share flasks of coffee, and schoolchildren shoulder rucksacks and camping gear. Morten, who's on his way to repair Tunø's church pipes, tells us the island is renowned for its fine weather, and sure enough, the early mist rises to reveal an

outline of tawny cliffs and white-painted houses.

After docking, we pick up the 8km-long flat coastal path, spotting rare black guillemots and eider ducks bobbing on aquarium-clear waters. Arriving back in the village, we wave to Morten taking a break outside the church, which doubles as a lighthouse. With an hour to kill before the ferry back, we soak up the sun on the deck at Mejeriet (mejeriet-tunoe.dk), sharing a delicious raspberry roulade made by the owner's grandmother.

High points

On the mainland once more, we visit Himmelbjerg Tower, a 19th-century memorial to King Frederick VII, standing on one of Denmark's highest points at 147m – the first proper hill we've climbed since arriving.

That evening brings another high: Restaurant Rummelig (restaurantrummelig.dk). Its menu is a tribute to seasonal produce – from pillowy scallops to foraged Mirabelle plums. Healthy and fun, it captures the joys of Denmark's most restful coastal corner.

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Accommodation

The newly upgraded and modern 4-star Valamar Parentino Hotel is surrounded by gardens, and the stunning Adriatic seafront and blue flag pebble beach is just 200m away.

The hotel has an outdoor swimming pool (seasonal), sun terrace, bar and a buffet restaurant. The well appointed twin and double bedrooms have an en-suite bathroom, a balcony, safe, hairdryer, satellite TV and WiFi.



Relax at Jørgensens Hotel



BOOK IT

* Double rooms at Jørgensens Hotel in Horsens from £129, including breakfast; jorgensens-hotel.dk

* Kroen Endelave has double rooms from £80, excluding breakfast; kroen-endelave.dk

* For more information and ideas, visit kystlandet.com

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Stitch this dog-walking pouch,
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YOU WILL NEED

- * 20x28cm dog-patterned cotton
- * 26x28cm turquoise cotton
- * 8cm length of 15mm-wide turquoise elastic
- * 2cm diameter orange button
- * Lobster clasp key ring
- * Matching sewing thread
- * Hand-sewing needle
- * Sewing machine
- * Scissors
- * Pins

STOCKISTS

Ruff Day Dogs white fabric, £16.80m,
and Kona Capri fabric, £11.60m,
both Sew Hot

1 Cut two 14x20cm pieces from patterned fabric and two 14x20cm pieces from plain fabric. Plus a 6x8cm piece from plain fabric for the hanging loop. Fold the hanging loop piece in half lengthways with wrong sides together. Open out and press the edges in towards the fold line, then fold along the original crease. Press and topstitch down the sides.

2 For the outer bag, pair up a patterned and plain piece with right sides together, sandwiching the folded loop along one long edge, 5cm from the top and with raw edges aligned. Pin and sew around the side and bottom edges with 1cm seam allowances. Repeat for the other

fabric pieces to make the lining bag, this time without the hanging loop. Leave a 4cm gap along the bottom edge for turning.

3 Turn the outer bag right sides out and place it inside the lining bag, matching up the fabrics. Line up the top edges and pin. Slot a loop of elastic between the two plain fabrics and pin in the centre. Stitch all the way around the top edge with a 1cm seam allowance. Turn right sides out through the turning gap and topstitch closed. Push the lining into the outer bag.

4 Sew the button on to the front, making sure the elastic loop can reach around it easily. Thread the lobster clasp key ring on to the fabric loop.

Patio to PLATE

How to grow your own veggies on a pint-sized plot

Mini menu

You don't need a sprawling allotment, or even beds and borders, to cultivate fruit and veg. With a little planning and some space-saving ideas, you can be harvesting fresh crops this summer to help supplement the weekly shop. From high-yielding varieties that are pretty enough to grace a tabletop, to tomatoes and strawberries cascading from hanging baskets, there's plenty to savour on a small-space menu.

Bucket list

A group of pots, buckets or growbags in a sunny spot will make a fine patio allotment – just make sure the containers have drainage holes. Don't skimp on size, as larger pots and bags will deliver bigger crops and stop the compost drying out too quickly. A width and depth of 45cm is usually plenty, but check individual



Spice things up with some chilli plants

needs – for instance, potatoes need more (60cm deep), and salads less (10cm). Remember, too, that the spacing between plants will also affect the crop size. The same goes for regular watering and feeding, so no slacking!

Tabletop treats

Heat-loving chillies and mini aubergines can be grown indoors on a sunny tabletop or windowsill. They will also

appreciate a trip outside on warm days. Both need a long season to ripen, so opt for small plants rather than growing from seed. Mr Fothergill's Nicely Spicy collection offers fast-maturing chillies (3 x 9cm pots, £14.95, mr-fothergills.co.uk), or try aubergine 'Patio Baby' (3 x 9cm pots, £14.95, dtbrownseeds.co.uk).



Mini aubergines thrive in a sunny spot



Strawberries and potatoes on a terrace



Cascading 'Hundreds and Thousands' tomatoes



Potato plants can be grown in bags



Balcony planters
maximise space

Hanging fruit

Grow trailing strawberries and tomatoes in a hanging basket or wall planter. Being raised up gives plants the advantage of receiving more light. It also makes crops easier to pick (no bending down) and less likely to be devoured by slugs. On the downside, baskets dry out

quickly, so you need to be keen when it comes to watering.

A 30cm diameter basket will take three or four plants grown around the edge, where they will trail prettily over the sides. Try strawberries 'Ostar' and 'Seascape', and heavy-cropping tomatoes 'Cherry Falls' and 'Hundreds and Thousands'.

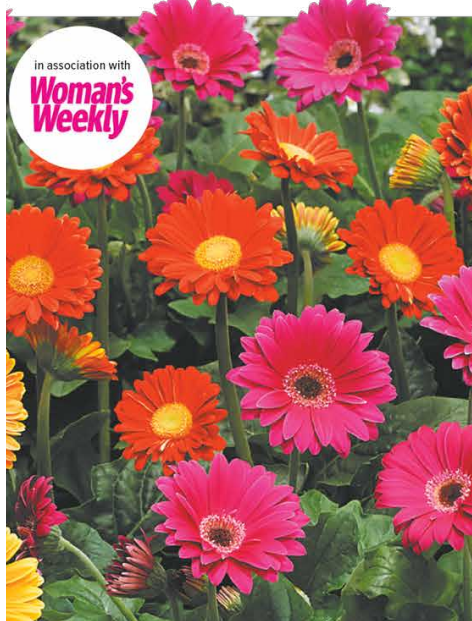
BEANS, PLEASE!

Beans and peas take up little ground space and have beautifully bright flowers and luxuriant leaves. Runner beans, like scarlet bloomed 'Red Rum', can reach 3-4m, so fix a wigwam for them to entwine. If you prefer something self-supporting, runner bean 'Hestia' is compact at 45cm high. Add a few plugs of lettuce or spinach at the base, where they'll flourish in the cool shade cast by climbers.



WORDS: CHRIS MORLEY. PHOTOS: ALAMY, GETTY

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A second SPRING

Her friends meant well, but Tina needed to finally find her own way

The ticking of the clock marked every discontented second of Tina's life as she sat crocheting. It wasn't something she wanted to do, but she had been cajoled into it – like everything else she'd done these last three lonely years since Alec had died, leaving her a widow at 54.

As much as she enjoyed making blankets, jam and pickles to sell at the Women's Institute Spring Fayre, she often thought that there must be more to life!

How had she become a woman of routines – Tuesdays the WI, Thursdays the book club, Fridays a ramble through the park with Magdalene and Jo, her best friends since schooldays. How had they changed from the easy-going pals to the directors of what she should do? Activities that filled her days, but not her heart.

Dropping her half-crocheted square on to the pouffe, Tina rose and went to the window. The house echoed with silence. Still, she expected to hear Alec's key in the door, to feel the day's stubble on his chin gently tickle her as he kissed her.

The garden came into focus through her tear-filled eyes. The daffodils they'd planted nodded in the breeze, a scatter of green breaking through the earth.

A peaceful scene, and yet, Tina felt as unsettled as the tangled rose canes.

As she ran her fingers through her shoulder-length dark hair – helped by monthly colourings at the hairdresser's – she spotted Jo at the gate, waving in an encouraging way.

Why did her friends treat her like she needed badgering into a different mood from the one she felt herself in?

Passing the mirror in the hall, Tina glanced at her reflection, her clouded blue eyes reflecting her mood.

'Hi, you!' Jo said as she entered. 'Do I detect a morose mood? You looked very wistful, love.'

'Morose, no. Wistful, yes. I'm fed up, Jo.'

There! She'd said it!

'That'll soon pass, love. I've come to keep you company, we can crochet together, but I'll make us a nice cup of tea first, eh?'

'Yes, to the tea, but no to the crocheting.'

'What's all this yes-no business? It's not like you, Tina. You need to...'

'I need to be *me*, Jo. Not an extension of you or anyone else who frequents the meetings you drag me along to!'

Pausing for a moment as she

registered Jo's shocked expression, Tina felt compelled to have her say.

'The clubs are fine, the walks and everything, and I know you're trying to be kind, but I long for more – a wider world, a deeper connection, a sense of purpose...'

She swallowed hard. 'I missed the feel of a hand in mine, the thrill of anticipation. But I've been afraid to voice my longings for fear of what you and Magdalene would think of me.'

Jo dropped her bag on the floor and held out her arms. 'Welcome back, my lovely, feisty friend. Oh, I've missed you. Come here and give me a hug.'

A grin creased Tina's face, and she found herself in Jo's

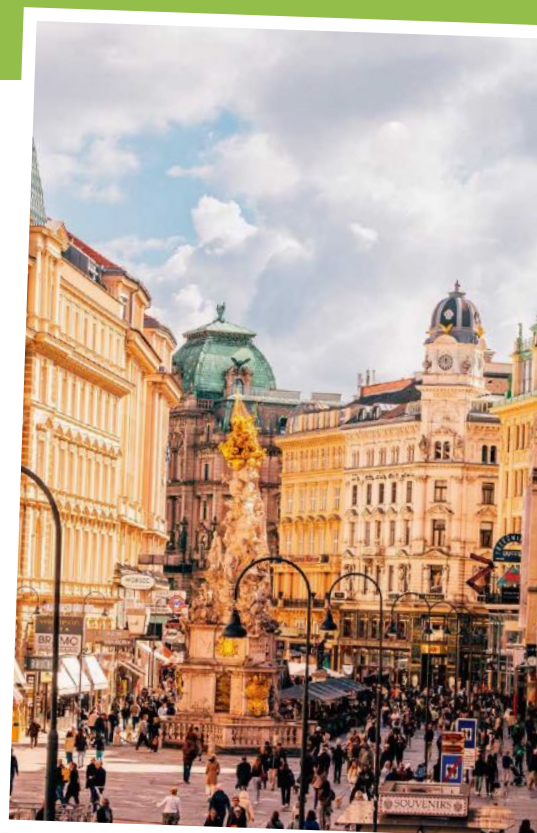
arms. 'I want my old pals back!'

'Oh, that's good to hear!' Jo said. 'Magdalene and I have racked our brains trying to come up with ways to make you

live again. Truly live. Not just exist, doing everything we suggested and thought would be good for you.'

As she came out of Jo's arms, Tina said, 'Maybe it was. Maybe it showed me the person I wasn't. I feel I want

'I know you're trying to be kind'



to be me again, do the things I've always longed to do!

'It took a while, love. But then, they say time is what is needed to heal. This feeling that you want to live again, does it mean you're letting go of your old life?'

'No. I will always cherish that... Well, not the last bit, when my darling Alec was ill.' Taking a deep breath, Tina steadied her emotions as she revisited the devastating time of losing her husband.

'Helping Alec to go peacefully tore me apart and yet, gave me something I cannot put a name to. He will always be with me, nestled in a corner of my heart.'

'Alec is setting you free,' Jo said gently. 'The world is your oyster – though, not all of it. Don't even think of gadding off and leaving us.'

As they hugged again, Tina realised that's just what she did want! To explore fresh horizons. Somewhere exciting and new.

That night, as she tidied away her hot chocolate mug, brushed biscuit crumbs from the settee, and straightened the pile of magazines she'd flipped



through, an advert on the back of one of them caught her eye... *Group tours for the over 50s – discover Europe.*

Tina's heart flipped. She'd never been abroad. Alec had always said they would go one day. 'When the time is right.' Now it seemed the time was right for her.

Tearing the advert out, she picked up her diary, telling it, 'Mr Diary, things are going to change! No more noting minutes from club meetings and deadlines for finishing crafts! A giggle escaped her as she tucked the advert inside. 'From now on, your pages will tingle with excitement!'

The next morning, her resolve built slowly, like the first light of dawn, then became courage and determination as she picked up her mobile and dialled the number.

'I'd like to book a coach trip to Vienna, please.'

When confirmation later pinged into her email inbox, Tina sat back and imagined strolling through cobbled streets, the sun warming her and the magic of Viennese life bustling around her.

Closing her eyes, images she'd seen of the Austrian capital in springtime came to her – cherry blossom, magnificent buildings, and the gentle sunlight glinting on fountains and pathways. It would be a dream come true – a dream she'd shared with Alec, telling him they would go to Vienna when he was well.

He hadn't been fooled. He had taken her hand and told her, 'Don't wait, Tina, my love. The world's not going to come to you. Enjoy every moment of your life.'

Wiping away the tear that had trickled down her cheek, she looked heavenward. 'I will, my beloved, I will. I'll live it for both of us.'

A tap on the side door had her pushing her feet into her mule slippers and going to answer it, her memories not hurting now as she allowed her world to fill with possibilities she hadn't dared to consider for a long time.

Opening the door, she was met by Jo... 'You look like I did on my wedding day.'

'Oh? How is that, then?'

'Happy, full of anticipation – not that it lasted long for me, though Billy still can make me feel like that when he's in the mood!'

'Don't tell me any more!' Tina said, holding up her hand. 'But I *am* happy, Jo. Well, mixed really. Come in, I'll get the kettle on. I've a feeling I'll need a strong cuppa to negotiate your objections.'

'What objections? Oh, make tea for three. Magdalene's on her way round, she wants to see this new you I was telling her about. And to help me to encourage you to go for it – whatever plan you're cooking up, that is!'

Just an hour later, the ever-practical Magdalene was

climbing the attic ladder, her quest being to retrieve and dust off the suitcase that had been tucked away since Tina and Alec's last holiday.

The three of them giggled and bantered about which dress she should take, which shorts, and which floppy hat.

'Now your dream can begin,' Magdalene said. 'Group hug?'

The hug felt so good to Tina. 'You're my besties,' she told them.

'We are,' Jo smiled. 'No more behaving like mother hens – mission accomplished!' Then they all laughed.

Vienna didn't disappoint. The scent of spring blossom permeated the air. The breathtaking baroque palaces, the gilded opera house, the grand cathedrals, the lively open-air markets, where Tina sampled fresh pastries, and admired stalls brimming with flowers and painted eggs.

In the evening, she enjoyed dining out, the banter and laughter of the lively group – some couples, some single, all eager for adventure.

On the third afternoon, wandering through Schönbrunn Palace gardens, Tina found herself alone, entranced by the beauty of everything around her.

She stooped to sniff a bloom, almost colliding with a fellow traveller when she stood.

'I'm terribly sorry!' he said, stepping back. His hazel eyes held kindness, and he had a shy, gentle manner. 'I'm Michael, I wasn't looking where I was going.'

Tina laughed, cheeks flushing. 'I'm Tina. I'm afraid I've lost the group.'

'Me too. Shall we be lost together?'

They strolled through the gardens, talking easily. She learned he was a retired architect from Manchester.

'Miles from me, I'm from Surrey,' she told him.

They lingered by a fountain, discussing everything about themselves, even admitting the courage it took to travel alone.

Tina felt something unfurl inside her – a warmth, a spark she'd thought had been extinguished long ago.

Over the next few days, they spent many hours together. It was as they sat in the corner of a quiet cafe off the beaten track that Michael said, 'You know, we've talked about everything, except the one thing we are running from – loneliness.'

'You feel it too?'

'Yes. Ever since I lost Patsy. I'm surrounded by friends and family, all helping to sort out my life, but none giving me what I really need.'

'That's just how it has been for me,' Tina said.

'Maybe, we can change that together,' Michael replied.

'Maybe.'

That wasn't what she wanted to say, but a shyness had come over her.

'Let's exchange phone numbers and addresses... That's if you want to, of course. Only, I'd like to keep in touch.'

Suddenly the thought of parting from him made her heart hurt. 'Yes, I want to.'

Back home, the clubs, the park walks, the crocheting continued – but Tina no longer felt trapped by them. Her world felt richer, full of opportunity. Michael had done that for her. His phone calls and messages, and the arranging to meet again.

Her life was no longer marked by loss, but by hope. Her days were no longer measured by routine, but by possibility – and the promise of a second spring.

THE END

Mary Wood

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**Difficulty
level**

Instructions overleaf

Knitting

MEASUREMENTS

Width 14 (22)cm/5½ (8¾)in.

Depth 11 (14)cm/4¼ (5½)in.

MATERIALS

1 x 100g (208m) ball of Emu Cotton DK (100% cotton) in each of Cream (002) and Orange (Grapefruit 007)*. Pair of 4mm (No. 8) knitting needles; lining fabric; zip fasteners of appropriate length.

Yarn is available from theknittingnetwork.co.uk.

TENSION

24 stitches and 48 rows to

10x10cm, over pattern, using 4mm needles.

ABBREVIATIONS

K, knit; **sl**, slip; **st(s)**, stitch(es); **wyib**, with yarn in back; **wyif**, with yarn in front.

NOTES

Yarn amounts are based on average requirements and are approximate. Instructions are given for small size. Where they vary, work figures in round brackets for larger sizes. Figures in square brackets are worked as stated after 2nd bracket.

SIDE PANELS (MAKE 2)

With 4mm needles and Orange (Cream), cast on 33 (53) sts.

LARGER SIZE ONLY

Next row: With Orange, k1, [sl1 wyib, k9] to last 2 sts, sl1 wyib, k1.

Next row: With Orange, k1, [sl1 wyif, k9] to last 2 sts, sl1 wyif, k1.

Next row: With Cream, k4, *[sl1 wyib, k1] twice, sl1 wyib, k5; repeat from * to last 9 sts, [sl1 wyib, k1] twice, sl1 wyib, k4.

Next row: With Cream, k4, *[sl1 wyif, k1] twice, sl1 wyif, k5; repeat from * to last 9 sts, [sl1 wyif, k1] twice, sl1 wyif, k4.

Next row: With Orange, k1, [sl1 wyib, k9] to last 2 sts, sl1 wyib, k1.

Next row: With Orange, k1, [sl1 wyif, k9] to last 2 sts, sl1 wyif, k1.

BOTH SIZES

1st row (right side): With Cream, k2, *[sl1 wyib, k3] twice, sl1 wyib, k1; repeat from * to last 11 sts, [sl1 wyib, k3] twice, sl1 wyib, k2.

2nd row: With Cream, k2, *[sl1 wyif, k3] twice, sl1 wyif, k1; repeat from * to last 11 sts, [sl1 wyif, k3] twice, sl1 wyif, k2.

3rd row: With Orange, k3, *[sl1 wyib, k1] 3 times, sl1 wyib, k3; repeat from * to end.

4th row: With Orange, k3, *[sl1 wyif, k1] 3 times, sl1 wyif, k3; repeat from * to end.

5th row: With Cream, k2, *sl1 wyib, k7, sl1 wyib, k1; repeat from * to last 11 sts, sl1 wyib, k7, sl1 wyib, k2.

6th row: With Cream, k2, *sl1 wyif, k7, sl1 wyif, k1; repeat from * to last 11 sts, sl1 wyif, k7, sl1 wyif, k2.



7th row: With Orange, k5, *sl1 wyib, k1, sl1 wyib, k7; repeat from * to last 8 sts, sl1 wyib, k1, sl1 wyib, k5.

8th row: With Orange, k5, *sl1 wyif, k1, sl1 wyif, k7; repeat from * to last 8 sts, sl1 wyif, k1, sl1 wyif, k5.

9th and 10th rows: As 5th and 6th rows.

11th and 12th rows: As 3rd and 4th rows.

13th and 14th rows: As 1st and 2nd rows.

15th row: With Orange, k1, [sl1 wyib, k9] to last 2 sts, sl1 wyib, k1.

16th row: With Orange, k1, [sl1 wyif, k9] to last 2 sts, sl1 wyif, k1.

17th row: With Cream, k4, *[sl1 wyib, k1] twice, sl1 wyib, k5; repeat from * to last 9 sts, [sl1 wyib, k1] twice, sl1 wyib, k4.

18th row: With Cream, k4, *[sl1 wyif, k1] twice, sl1 wyif, k5; repeat from * to last 9 sts, [sl1 wyif, k1] twice, sl1 wyif, k4.

19th row: With Orange, k1, [sl1 wyib, k9] to last 2 sts, sl1 wyib, k1.

20th row: With Orange, k1, [sl1 wyif, k9] to last 2 sts, sl1 wyif, k1.

These 20 rows form the pattern. Pattern 30 (40) rows more. Cast off.

TO MAKE UP

Cut lining using knitted pieces as templates, adding 1cm extra all around for seam allowance. Join knitted panels along three sides, leaving cast-off edge free. Sew in zip.

Join lining pieces in same way as knitted pieces. Insert lining into bag and attach corners on inside. Slip stitch lining in position. Make a small tassel and attach to end of zip puller.

*** If you have any queries about this pattern, please contact knitting and crochet editor Sarah at sarah.neal@futurenet.com**



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Never TO BE TOLD

When Carol received a letter, terrible memories of a secret in her past came flooding back

Fishing for her keys in her bag, Carol had the strangest feeling that she was being watched. The town centre street was still fairly quiet at that time of the morning, so her senses were heightened.

As hairs prickled along her neck, she glanced up cautiously, only to see a handsome piebald magpie swagger along the kerb. It was regarding her with a quizzical expression.

Laughing nervously at her skittishness, she murmured instinctively, 'Morning, Mr Magpie. I hope Mrs Magpie and all the little magpies are well.'

Superstitious habits died hard, especially when the old rhyme of 'One for sorrow, two for joy' ended in the warning 'seven for a secret never to be told'.

She unlocked her shop, its name picked out in silver over the door... Seven.

Originally, the site of her vintage clothing shop had been simply number seven The Row, one of several shopfronts here in the centre of the large town where she'd lived for the past four years.

When she'd taken on the lease of the shop, she'd

decided to spell out the word 'seven' with a swooping wing on the capital 'S'.

'So you see,' she murmured, with a look over her shoulder at the watching magpie, 'I've always associated the number seven with the rhyme about you and your kind.' And she put a finger to her lips as the bird continued to observe her.

Entering the shop, she hurried to the stockroom, then plunged through a beaded curtain into her kitchenette. She was gasping for her morning cuppa.

First, though, a pause to check the latest emails on her phone. She always waited until she arrived each morning before she discovered what the day had in store.

She read an email from a regular supplier, asking if she'd be interested in a trio of 1950s taffeta ball gowns. She flicked down to the quoted price and replied, *Yes, please!*

As she resumed scrolling, a text pinged in from her mum... *I'm getting booked up for summer activities, love, so hope to see you before too long!*

Carol felt a familiar twinge of guilt.



June, in her mid-60s, had moved nearby when Carol opened Seven. She now pursued an independent life as a member of various retirement clubs. In fact, her social life made Carol feel dizzy!

June's text was a reminder to Carol (though not an intentional one) that Carol didn't see her mum as often as they both might want.

June often clucked that Carol worked too hard, which was probably true.

However, there was little alternative when you were self-employed. The end result was that Carol sometimes felt she neglected her mother.

Of course, June understood this, and often told her daughter how proud she was of her achievement in opening Seven.

Still, despite the success she'd made of her business, there were days when Carol panicked that she was a far from ideal daughter.

Trying to banish those

feelings, Carol flicked on the kettle and replied to her mum's text, promising she'd sort out their next get-together asap.

She opened the shop promptly at 9am, and was soon busy with customers.

In a lull before lunch, she went into the stockroom to tidy up.

Then she heard the bell clang over the shop door again. Pausing with her hand on the box of vintage fascinators she was about to open, she hurried back into the shop with a welcoming smile.

The man who'd come in was wearing a dark suit, despite the springtime warmth outside. 'Miss Lyons?' he asked.

When she nodded, he said, 'I'm Philip Chatwin from Meyer & Robins solicitors. Our company HQ is in London. It's nice to meet you.'

He approached to shake hands, Carol trying to think on her feet. Why would a solicitor visit her? Surely it couldn't have anything to do with... what had

*She put
a finger to
her lips*



happened all those years ago? Her heart beating rapidly, she shook his hand and watched him pull a padded envelope from his jacket pocket.

'I came to deliver this personally, Miss Lyons.' He held the envelope out to her. 'Perhaps it's best if you open it first and then I explain more about its contents. You'll find another envelope inside.'

Carol took the padded envelope and lifted its flap with trembling fingers.

She reached in and drew out a smaller, cream envelope. Something inside felt bulky.

Watched by Philip Chatwin, she opened the cream envelope. A piece of jewellery fell into her palm. It was a gold chain necklace with a little charm dangling off the end.

Her heart stood still. The charm was of a magpie in flight, elegantly designed in black and white metal.

She knew at once who had sent the letter...

Sadie – Sadie Bishop – once her playmate and school friend.

But oh, so long ago.

After a fateful moment they had both shared, Carol and Sadie had made a mutual decision to go their separate ways. Without spelling it out, they'd both known it was for the best if they never met again. To this day, Carol still thought of the line 'parting is such sweet sorrow' whenever she recalled her time with Sadie. They had parted with bittersweet sadness rather than rancour on either side.

So there could be only one reason why Sadie would reach out to Carol after all these years.

She looked up at the solicitor. 'What kind of trouble is Sadie in?' she asked.

Philip Chatwin replied, 'Perhaps you're aware, Miss Lyons, of a recent, shocking event on the island of St Adina?'

When Carol looked blank, he added, 'It's in the Caribbean. Mrs Savannah Nolan – aka your friend Sadie – is at the heart of this event, I'm afraid.' He paused. 'She's been accused of murder.'

Carol blinked at him in disbelief. 'Murder! But... that's impossible. Sadie would never...'

'It's best if you read the letter she's written to you,' interrupted Mr Chatwin gently, indicating the cream envelope she held. 'It's all in there. Forgive me for dropping it on you like this. My firm is representing Mrs Nolan indirectly, through the legal team we have a reciprocal arrangement with on St Adina. Mrs Nolan is currently on remand on St Adina. She sent the contents of the envelope here, with instructions to bring them straight to you.' He paused again. 'Her oldest friend.'

Carol gulped, the cream envelope – and the necklace – like live coals in her hand. 'Wh-what can I do for Sadie? I'll help in any way I can.'

'She'll be glad to know that,' nodded Mr Chatwin. 'I believe she's enclosed details of exactly what it is she requires of you. I'll leave you to read her letter in peace.'

He drew out a wallet and handed her a coral-coloured business card. 'This is my direct line. Feel free to get in touch after you've had time to digest the contents of the letter.'

He was on his way soon after.

In a daze, Carol locked up the shop and raced into the stockroom to sit and read the letter properly.

She drew a sheet of paper out of the cream envelope and unfolded it...

Dear Carol. I know I'm the last person you expected to hear from after all this time...

Carol read on avidly. Sadie provided an outline of her life since she'd left school at 16, over 15 years ago.

By then, Carol and her mum had moved on themselves, leaving Hawkestone, the Kent coastal town where Sadie and Carol had met and become friends.

Sadie wrote that she'd

travelled the world as a croupier. Then, five years ago in Atlantic City in the USA, she'd met a wealthy American property developer, Brad Nolan. They'd married and moved to his beachfront home on the Caribbean island of St Adina.

I suppose we've been happy, wrote Sadie with a puzzling insouciance. But all that is by the by. I just wanted to give you some background, bring you up to speed on my life to date.

But now we get to the terrible event I'm writing to you about. Carol... I've been accused of murdering our housekeeper, Isobel! You can get all the details off my legal team.

I'm contacting you not only to plead my innocence – I hope you'll take that as a given – but also, to ask directly for your help. Please, please come to the island! My lawyer here,

***I need you
by my side***

Rachel, is a tigress, who'll fight for me all the way, but I need you by

my side, now that both my parents are dead.

Carol put down the letter for a moment. Sadie was opting for emotional blackmail with that line 'both my parents are dead', the 'both' underlined.

But who could blame her?

Carol returned to the letter and read on... *You may be wondering what sort of 'help' I expect of you. I already have a legal team working on my behalf, and a husband who is standing by me. So what I really crave is confirmation of your faith in me by flying to my side in my darkest hour. Please, at least consider it.*

Naturally, if you don't want to come, I'll understand. The past that binds us together remains the past. If you prefer to leave things as they are, I'll never bother you again.

Carol felt overwhelmed. For starters, she'd been too hasty with that assumption of emotional blackmail.

Sadie was also reminding her

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

that she had no intention of divulging the secret they shared, no matter what Carol decided.

Yet how could Carol deny her plea? They had parted in good faith, neither of them responsible for the wedge that fate had driven between them. Perhaps it was fate now that Sadie needed her.

Trembling with emotion, Carol opened her laptop and looked up St Adina. It was one of the smaller Caribbean islands, known for its tourism and tight-knit sense of community. Which was why the murder of Isobel Planter had sent shockwaves through the island.

The whole lurid case against Sadie was there online, with a photo of Sadie arriving at the main courthouse in handcuffs, looking wan and terrified.

Carol bit her lip, the image tugging at her heartstrings.

She'd never found an online presence for Sadie, whose full name when Carol knew her was Savannah Bishop. And Carol had no idea if Sadie had ever seen the website for Seven.

But it was clear from Carol's internet browsing that the story was gaining traction beyond St Adina itself. It had the ingredients that amateur sleuths relished – a gilded couple who seemed to have everything, torn apart by tragedy on a sun-drenched island.

Carol sat back, feeling sick. Instead of torturing herself with the tragic details of the case, and the conjecture of online strangers, she should go and see Sadie, find out for herself what had happened.

And yes, offer what support she could. It would mean closing the shop for a while, but what was that compared to Sadie's predicament?

The past was the past and they had resolved never to contact each other again.

But now, surely, all bets were off.

She plucked Mr Chatwin's

card from her pocket and decided to ring it without delay. He would be able to help with travel arrangements and put her in touch with Sadie's lawyer on St Adina, this 'tigress' Rachel.

'I'm coming, Sadie,' she murmured, as if her oldest friend could hear her across the miles that lay between them. 'Whatever I can do, I will. I promise you that.'

The die had been cast – Carol had told Mr Chatwin that she would travel to St Adina as soon as possible, hear what Sadie had to say, then offer what assistance she could, even if it only amounted to moral support. But she must never forget that a woman at the heart of this terrible story had lost her life.

Back at her small flat that evening, Carol went in search of her childhood scrapbook.

Flipping past the pressed flowers and – yes – even a pressed magpie feather, she found the photos of her childhood friendship with Sadie Bishop.

There they were, comparing the size of their candyfloss clouds at the Hawkestone summer fair, and in another picture, hanging off the monkey bars in the park next to the harbour.

Who had taken the photos? Must have been either June or Sadie's mum, Kaye.

Carol sat back on her heels, frowning. Should she tell June about the tragedy on St Adina?

No, she decided. Best keep it to herself for now.

She brushed a hand over the scrapbook. June had been a single mum, raising Carol alone. Carol's earliest memories were of moving towns at short notice, usually because June had been evicted from some poky flat.

June would try to make an adventure of it... 'Off on our travels again, Carol, hon. Where will we pitch up this time,

I wonder? I bet you can't wait to find out!'

But as she grew a little older, Carol had resented and blamed her mum for uprooting her just when she got settled somewhere.

With adult hindsight, however, she saluted June's fortitude and resilience, always making the best of the next place they fetched up in.

And then they'd arrived in Hawkestone. Carol had been nine, wearily anticipating another move in the not-too-distant future.

But Hawkestone had become home. June had landed a steady job running a penny arcade on the seafront. And at school, miracle of miracles, Carol had forged a blossoming friendship with the most popular girl in her class, Savannah 'Sadie' Bishop.

Everyone had wanted to be Sadie. She had golden ringlets, a ready smile and a mum and dad who owned a big house at the top of a winding cliff path.

In choosing Carol as her friend, Sadie had ensured that Carol had an easy time of it at school, despite being shy and awkward.

Carol knew that adults might have seen her as the mousy foil to Sadie's shining star, but it had never been like that between them. Sadie never made Carol feel second best, except in one respect, which lay outside her control.

Although Sadie often stayed over at Carol's after school, Carol was never invited to Sadie's home.

An embarrassed Sadie would mumble something about her parents ruling out visits because they were always decorating or renovating.

But Carol, though she never said anything, knew there was more to it. She had met Sadie's dad, Mike, at the school gates



a couple of times, and he'd been cold and snobbish to her.

Carol never mentioned this to Sadie, sensing her friend's distress and embarrassment.

And Carol said nothing to June about it, either. Carol reckoned that Sadie's dad was a snob about June being a single mum, so naturally, Carol didn't want to make her mum feel bad about that.

Besides, what did it matter, Carol decided. She was friends with Sadie, not her dad.

Fathers were of little interest to Carol anyway. All she knew of her own was that he'd abandoned her mother before Carol was even born.

Meanwhile, Sadie's mum Kaye, who Carol encountered now and then, was perfectly friendly in a distant, grown-up kind of way. Carol sensed that it wasn't Kaye's decision to keep Sadie's friend at arm's length.

Now Carol shook her head, suddenly impatient. She put the scrapbook away and got up. She couldn't abandon Sadie.

Like it or not, she and Sadie were bound together by a secret that also divided them.

They were the only two people in the world who knew what had really happened to Sadie's father on the day he'd disappeared all those years ago.

TO BE CONTINUED
Gabrielle Mullarkey

*** The Ones Who Never Left by Gabrielle Mullarkey (£2.99, Spiral Books) is out now on eBook.**

'Whatever I can do, I will'



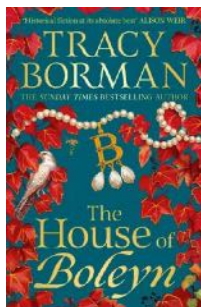
Great reads

Zoe West shares her picks for the week

The House of Boleyn

by Tracy Borman (£22, HB, Hodder & Stoughton)

If you've ever felt that Henry VIII's wives were overshadowed by him, this historical fiction is a great way to bring one of the most controversial of them to life. Tracing the rise of the Boleyn family, through to Anne's infamous fall, the book imagines not just their relationships, but also those who lived with them at Hever Castle. While there's a reasonable amount of artistic licence, overall, this fresh take on an old story makes for a satisfying read.

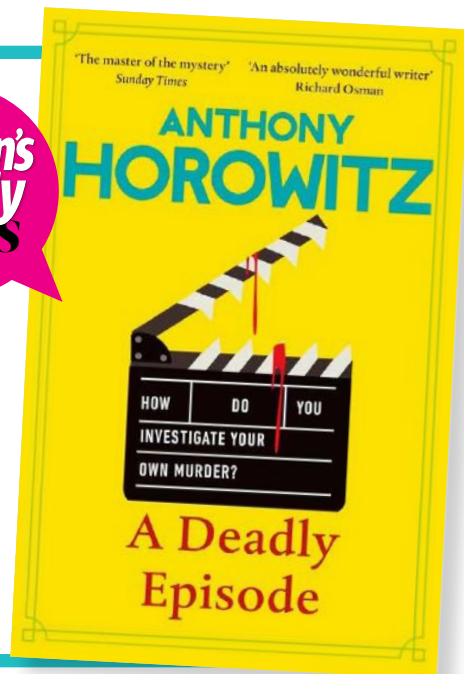


A Deadly Episode

by Anthony Horowitz (£22, HB, Cornerstone)

The latest instalment in the Hawthorne cosy crime series sees eccentric detective Daniel Hawthorne and writer Anthony Horowitz team up again as the first book, *The Word is Murder*, is being made into a film. All is not happy on the set, but things become much worse when the actor playing Hawthorne is stabbed. Not only does the real Hawthorne have to find the murderer of his character, it's entirely possible he was the real target all along. An engaging, cleverly plotted mystery-within-a-mystery that's peppered with humour, suspense and chaos.

Woman's Weekly LOVES



The Lottery Winner Widows Club

by Ely Vine (£20, HB, Headline)

This crime debut is a wickedly fun cocktail of grief, glamour and very bad luck. When Paula's husband dies in a freak car accident and she wins the lottery days later with a ticket he bought, she discovers she's not alone. A clique of dazzling, newly rich widows share the same story – dead husbands, winning tickets. As more cases emerge, friendship blurs with suspicion in this sharp, twisty, darkly funny thriller about money, power and reinvention.



If I Ruled the World

by Amy DuBois Barnett (£16.99, HB, Simon & Schuster)

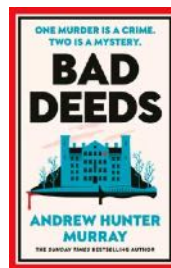
For those anticipating *The Devil Wears Prada 2* hitting cinemas very soon, this story plunges into the cut-throat world of 1999 magazines – when gossip, fashion and insider scoops ruled. Nikki Rose, a talented editor tired of being told 'Black girls don't sell magazines', quits her job to rescue a struggling publication. With high-stakes deadlines, wild parties and an ex determined to sabotage her, Nikki learns to chase success on her own terms – messy, bold and fun.



Bad Deeds

by Andrew Hunter Murray (£18.99, HB, Cornerstone)

Fans of clever, fast-paced storytelling will be hooked from page one. Alex, a reformed burglar now testing security systems legally, seems to have it all – a steady job, a girlfriend, a normal life. But one impulsive decision – a stolen vial of mysterious white powder – turns his world upside down. Chaos ensues, friendships are tested and danger lurks at every turn. With wit and unpredictability around every corner, it's a riveting read, and a fantastic follow-up to his third novel, *A Beginner's Guide to Breaking and Entering*.



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PAY LESS THAN IN THE SHOPS

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Puzzle TIME

Wordwise

You have 15 minutes to find as many words as possible using the letters in the grid. Each word must contain four or more letters, one of which must be the central square. No proper nouns, plurals or foreign words are allowed. There is one nine-letter word in the grid, for which the clue is: **Makes much greater.**

D R O
E **B** L
S U E

Average = 25 More than 45 = well done

Crossword

Try the easy or cryptic clues, then rearrange the letters in the shaded squares for the answer.

CLUE: Jam is added to make better (9).

EASY CLUES

Across

- 1 Good luck symbol (9)
- 5 There it is! (5)
- 8 Close by (4)
- 9 Exact opposite (10)
- 11 Edible stalks (7)
- 13 Contestant (7)
- 15 Track and field events (9)
- 17 Pile of rubbish (9)
- 19 Coiffure (7)
- 21 Fuss (5-2)
- 23 Road for horses (6,4)
- 24 Swerve (4)
- 25 Securely fastened (5)
- 26 Trained (9)

Down

- 1 Number in a century (7)
- 2 Stunted vegetation (5)
- 3 Driver's appliance (9)
- 4 Exclusive group (5)
- 6 Unsteadiness (11)
- 7 Item of value (5)
- 10 Impetuous type (7)

- 12 Weakening (11)

- 14 Current (7)

- 16 Children's game (9)

- 18 Similar (7)

- 19 Routine (5)

- 20 Get narrower (5)

- 22 Thames, eg (5)

CRYPTIC CLUES

Across

- 1 Nags: 'Work in the garden – it could be lucky' (9)
- 5 I love to trade in musical instrument – there you go! (5)
- 8 Some fine art within reach (4)
- 9 Criminal is hesitant to show opposition (10)
- 11 Regret an insult, we hear that it's nonsense (7)
- 13 Starter for ten, strangely, ends with angry tirade (7)

- 15 His cattle going wild for sport (9)

- 17 Dump that man following fight about pets, primarily (9)

- 19 Spooner's caution – shack's particular arrangement of locks (7)

- 21 Commotion as vehicle on edges of railway overspun (5-2)

- 23 Wandering idler quietly visiting Bath on country road (6,4)

- 24 Turn over having missed the start, catching end of episode (4)

- 25 Thing that regularly goes fast (5)

- 26 Practised oboe, perhaps, capturing hearts and ears (9)

Down

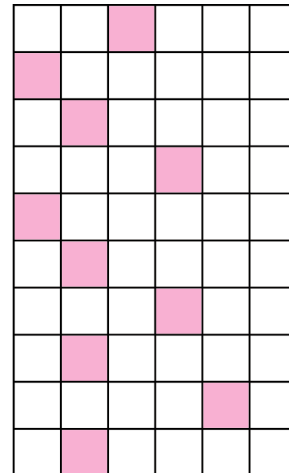
- 1 Dog drops ring beside Red Square (7)
- 2 Rub one down vigorously with bit of soap? (5)

LINKWORDS

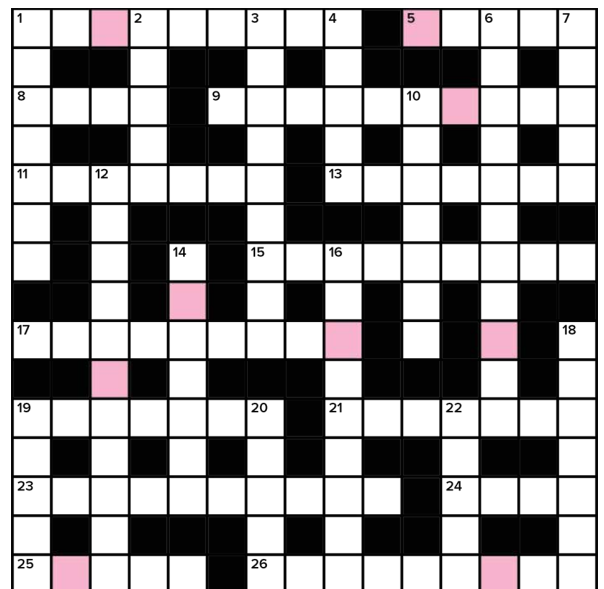
Fit 10 words into the grid so that each links with the end of the word on its left and the beginning of the one on the right. Then unscramble the letters in the shaded squares to make a word.

CLUE: The Sorcerer's __, 2010 fantasy film.

HANGING
MORNING
COURT
UNSALTED
PASS THE
HAND-
WIND
INNER
BIRD
CARBON



PEAS
OVER
MAN
CUP
POST
UP
VISION
INDUSTRY
SCHOOL
AGENCY



- 3 Assistance with stop, we hear? (9)

- 4 Cream eclair oddly goes ahead of tea, mostly (5)

- 6 Trendy student, on the outside, has capacity to show insecurity (11)

- 7 Like fixed property (5)

- 10 Headstrong person's gung-ho, the advert reveals (7)

- 12 Damaging or mending ruins, mostly falling apart (11)

- 14 Contemporary and very hot, right away (7)

- 16 Game has beer ingredient almost added to whisky (9)

- 18 Considerate, like blood relatives (7)

- 19 Policy of hotel, rather (5)

- 20 Peter out to attend party, eating rice for starters (5)

- 22 Motorist removes cap to find flower (5)

Jumbo puzzle

Read down the letters in the shaded squares to spell out a celestial object (7,5).

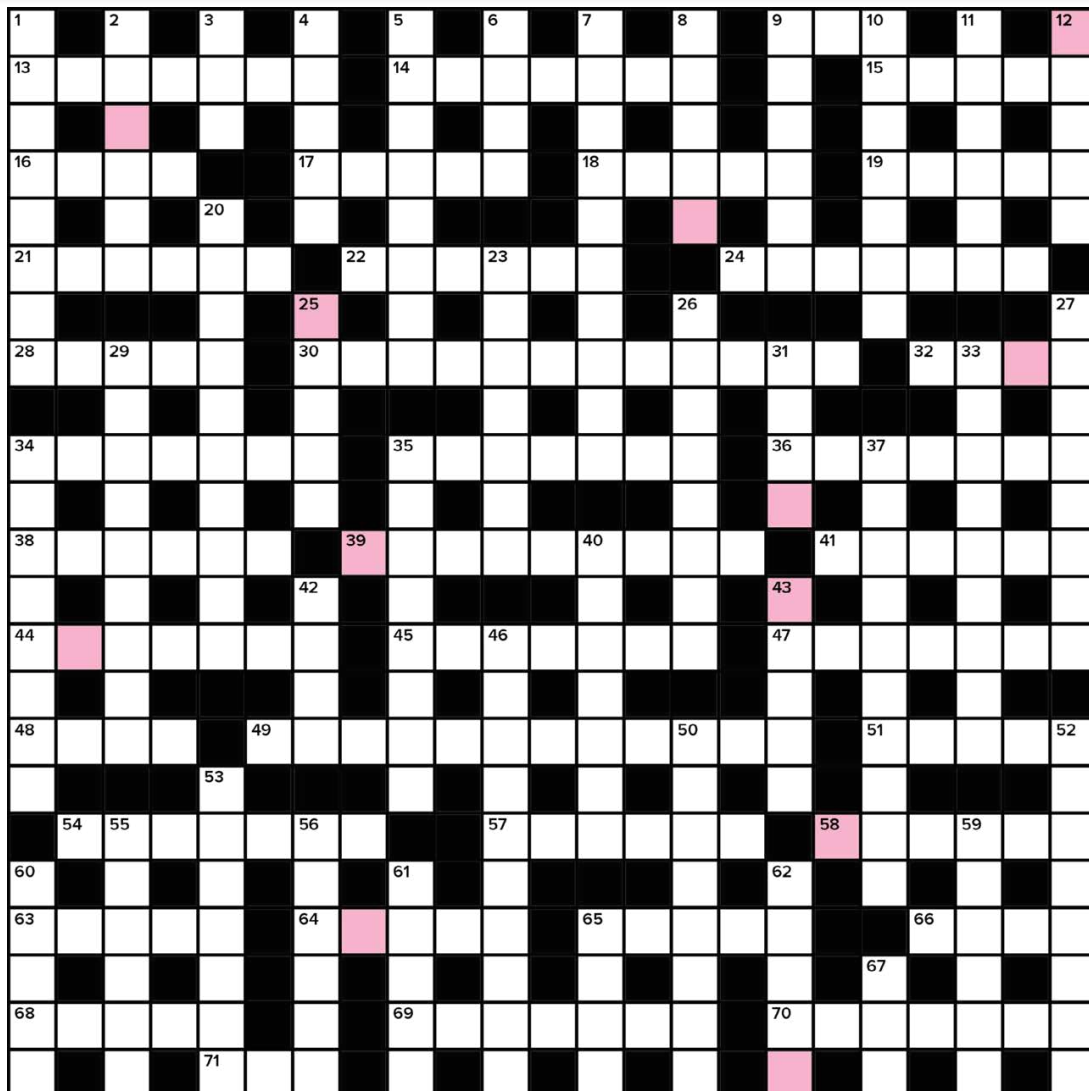
ACROSS

- 9 Lower limb (3)
- 13 Biased (7)
- 14 Versus (7)
- 15 Similar (5)
- 16 Not any (4)
- 17 Emblem (5)
- 18 Each (5)
- 19 Provincial (5)
- 21 Musical dramas (6)
- 22 Appals (6)
- 24 Acknowledged (7)
- 28 Playground item (5)
- 30 Descriptions (12)
- 32 Ode (4)
- 34 Corsairs (7)
- 35 Determined (7)
- 36 Glens (7)
- 38 Rue (6)
- 39 Physical matter (9)
- 41 American state (6)
- 44 Pistol case (7)
- 45 Sees the world (7)
- 47 Gap (7)
- 48 Ride on waves (4)
- 49 Drawing (12)
- 51 Posts (5)
- 54 Inferior goods (7)
- 57 Bureau (6)
- 58 Fails to hit (6)
- 63 Terse (5)
- 64 Respond (5)
- 65 Face part (5)
- 66 Without charge (4)
- 68 Speak (5)
- 69 Turn (7)
- 70 Scowled (7)
- 71 Drinking vessel (3)

DOWN

- 1 Beliefs (8)
- 2 Fruit (6)
- 3 That man (3)
- 4 Sphere (5)
- 5 Suffering (8)
- 6 Strongbox (4)
- 7 Comprehend (10)
- 8 Alloy of iron and carbon (5)
- 9 Legal professional (6)
- 10 Liquid measurements (7)
- 11 Round shape (6)
- 12 Greeting (5)
- 20 Least well behaved (10)
- 23 Opportunities (7)
- 25 Dog harness (5)
- 26 Railway-carrying bridges (8)
- 27 Shattering (8)
- 29 Abnormal (9)
- 31 Warships of a nation (4)
- 33 Surgical procedure (9)
- 34 Buy (8)
- 35 Unlikely (8)
- 37 Management (10)
- 40 Medium (7)

- 42 Spoken or verbal (4)
- 43 Metal money (5)
- 46 Good-looking (10)
- 50 Contained (8)
- 52 Hangs from above (8)
- 53 Verify (7)
- 55 Lives (6)
- 56 Bold (6)
- 59 Jumped (6)
- 60 Concerning (5)
- 61 Fur (5)
- 62 Ray of light (5)
- 65 Dairy product (4)
- 67 Thick mist (3)



**YOU CAN
WORK IT OUT...**

*** Find the puzzle answers on the horoscopes page.**

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Puzzle TIME

Arrow word

Which explorer gave the Pacific Ocean its name?

Solve the puzzle by following the arrows and writing in your answers. Then, read down the letters in the shaded squares to find the answer.

Awaited	↓	Breaks suddenly	↓	Implore	↓	Lady _ Just Dance singer	↓	Miserable	Novel, A Tale of _ Cities	Sitcom, _ Brown's Boys	↓	Weird, bizarre	Amphibian	Arrival actor, _ Adams
Exploit	→		↓	Copy, mimic		Skill	→		↓	Duty list	→			A
Betrothed	→					Age, epoch				Notion				M
	↓	Ribbon-like fish		Golf score				Deity	→			24-hour period	D	A
		Follow orders		Craggy hill		Unreturned serve in tennis	→			Earnest requests		Small feline	Rubbish, garbage	Bob _ singer
	→		↓	Urban area	Group of three	Collision	→							Magic _ 2012 film
Missing		Aquatic mammal Scarlet	→					Type of paint		Military land force	→			
Blunder	→					Seb _ former athlete	→			Track or follow				
				The Prince of Wales	→							Jamaican music genre	→	
Change the colour of		James Bond film (2,2)	→			Ernie _ golfer	→					At what time?	→	

YOUR ANSWER:

WORDSEARCH

Which superhero made their debut in a 1938 comic, a copy of which sold at auction for \$6 million in 2024? The answer is the one missing from the grid.

D	V	F	R	X	W	B	N	J
E	I	R	O	N	M	A	N	Z
A	S	B	B	F	M	T	S	H
D	I	W	I	T	I	M	S	P
P	O	P	N	M	K	A	A	T
O	N	A	R	L	L	N	N	H
O	D	O	U	F	M	B	G	O
L	T	H	I	N	G	Q	E	R
S	V	B	E	A	S	T	L	U

YOUR ANSWER:

- | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| ANGEL | FLASH | SUPERMAN |
| ANTMAN | HULK | THING |
| BATMAN | IRON MAN | THOR |
| BEAST | ROBIN | VISION |
| DEADPOOL | STORM | WASP |

Mini crossword

1		2	
		3	4
5			
		6	
7			

The shaded boxes spell out a word.

ACROSS

- 1 _ Lipa, singer (3)
- 3 Peaked hat (3)
- 5 Dove's call (3)
- 6 Uncooked (3)
- 7 Very bad action (3)

DOWN

- 1 Waterbirds (5)
- 2 Oak tree seed (5)
- 4 Animal feet (4)



Your stars

For 29 April to 5 May with Bracha Goldsmith
yourastrologysigns.com

ARIES 21 MAR – 20 APR

Events are likely to unfold with great speed this week. Early nights and plenty of rest will help you to navigate wisely.

TAURUS 21 APR – 21 MAY

You've made more progress than you realise. Give yourself credit for your successes. New doors are beginning to open.

GEMINI 22 MAY – 21 JUN

There are many positive aspects indicated in your stars. Keep taking baby steps and you'll profit from the opportunities these present.

CANCER 22 JUN – 23 JUL

Your finances may need to be given more detailed attention. Don't procrastinate and deal with unfinished business. You'll be glad you did.

LEO 24 JUL – 23 AUG

This week you should focus on your health and wellbeing. You know what you need to do, so go ahead and get started!

VIRGO 24 AUG – 23 SEP

You may be searching for a deeper meaning to your life. Listen to the subtle signs giving you clues for your next moves.

LIBRA 24 SEP – 23 OCT

This is not a time for pushing ahead relentlessly. If necessary, accept and surrender. You'll be surprised with the result.

SCORPIO 24 OCT – 22 NOV

All kinds of synchronistic events can happen now. Trust your intuition, and let it guide all your thoughts and actions.

SAGITTARIUS 23 NOV – 21 DEC

You have great inner strength and resources yet untapped. Don't allow little things to pull you down now. Maintain your innate optimism.

CAPRICORN 22 DEC – 20 JAN

This is the perfect time for self-development. You may change your image completely. The old you is in the past and a new being is emerging.

AQUARIUS 21 JAN – 19 FEB

Playful, fun and creative endeavours are in the spotlight. Lighten up and let your inner child shine, and have some fun.

PISCES 20 FEB – 20 MAR

You may be tempted to avoid a potentially sensitive issue. It must, however, be faced. And the sooner the better.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

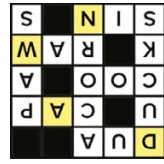


ARROW WORD Answer: MCELLAN



WORDSEARCH Answer: SUPERMAN

Answer: DAWN



MINI XWORD

JUMBO PUZZLE Across: 9 Leg 13 Partial 14 Against 15 Alike 16 None 17 Badge 18 Every 19 Local 21 Operas 22 Shocks 24 Grated 28 Swing 30 Explanations 32 Poem 34 Pirates 35 Decided 36 Valleys 38 Regret 39 Substance 41 Hawaii 44 Hotel 45 Travels 47 Opening 48 Surf 49 Illustration 51 Seeds 54 Seconds 57 Agency 58 Misses 63 Brief 64 React 65 Mouth 66 Free 68 Utter 69 Revolve 70 Frowned 71 Mug
 Down: 1 Opinions 2 Orange 3 Him 4 Globe 5 Hardship 6 Safe 7 Understand 8 Steel 9 Lawyer 10 Gallons 11 Circle 12 Hello 20 Naughtiest 23 Chances 25 Lash 26 Viaducts 27 Smashing 29 Irregular 31 Navy 33 Operation 34 Purchase 35 Doubtful 37 Leadership 40 Average 42 Oral 43 Coins 46 Attractive 50 Included 52 Suspends 53 Confirm 55 Exists 56 Daring 59 Sprang 60 About 61 Hairs 62 Shaft 65 Milk 67 Fog
ANSWER: HALLEY'S COMET
CROSSWORD Across: 1 Horseshoe 5 Voila 8 Near 9 Antithesis 11 Rhubarb 13 Entrant 15 Athletics 17 Scrapheap 19 Haircut 21 Carry-on 23 Bride path 24 Veer 25 Tight 26 Rehearsed
 Down: 1 Hundred 2 Scrub 3 Handbrake 4 Elite 6 Instability 7 Asset 10 Hothead 12 Undermining 14 Topical 16 Hopscootch 18 Kindred 19 Habit 20 Taper 22 River
ANSWER: IMPROVISE
LINKWORDS GARDEN, PAPERS, ACTION, BUTTER, PARCEL, PICKED, TUNNEL, BEAUTY, FEEDER, DATING
ANSWER: APPRENTICE
WORDWISE Beds, bed sore, beer, bled, bleed, bleeds, blouse, blue, blued, bluey, bluey, bluey, bluey, bore, bodes, bold, bolder, bole, bolus, bore, bored, bores, boulder, boulder, boused, bread, prede, prede, prede, breeds, brose, buds, burl, burred, burs, burs, burse, buses, debur, deburs, double, double, double, double, drub, drubs, dubs, lobe, lobed, lobs, lube, obese, obese, orbs, rebel, rebel, robes, robe, sober, sober, sort, sorbed
ANSWER: REDOUBLES

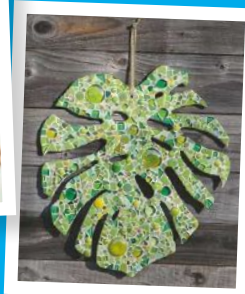
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IN YOUR NEXT ISSUE



SIMPLE STEPS TO HEALTHIER, BRIGHTER TEETH

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I WENT TO STAY ON ORKNEY – AND NEVER LEFT!



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Living the HIGH LIFE

We enjoy a luxury break, but don't really fit in



“Brushing a speck of dust from his velvet Armani dinner suit, Mr Dear asks, ‘Can I tempt you to some more of this delicious caviar?’

‘Honestly, love, I couldn't eat another spoonful,’ I reply.

‘Well, how about some more of this? I don't know what it is, but it tastes very expensive.’

‘No, I couldn't eat another thing. I'm pretty much ready for my bath.’

‘Right, I'll ask the maid to run it. Champagne or soya milk and honey?’

As you might have noticed, this week Mr Dear and I are living the high life. Or rather, we are lying in a very comfortable hotel bed and imagining what the proper high life must be like.

The truth is, we are interlopers. We are sampling a weekend of comparative luxury under false pretences. We are at this rather swanky hotel because we won a raffle at the rugby club.

‘Are you still too hot, love?’ says Mr Dear, who has spent the last 10 minutes fiddling with the air conditioning.

‘No, no, I'm fine. Having the window open has helped.’

I don't want to give the impression that we have a long record of living it up in swanky hotels – we think Premier Inn is rather smart – but I do remember the days when guests were trusted to operate the windows.

These days, if you want a bit of fresh air, you can prise open the window a centimetre and you have to take deep breaths.

‘Bed's comfortable, don't you think?’ says Mr D.

‘Quite big.’

‘Eh?’

‘The bed,’ I say, raising my voice so that it would carry across the cavernous wastelands of super-emperor-size bed linen. ‘It's quite big.’

‘Yes, well. That's how you can tell this is an upmarket hotel. The bigger the bed, the posher the hotel. At least, I imagine that's how it works.’

There are two types of people that you meet in hotels. One set is very much at ease. They stride about the place looking as if they belong.

They stand confidently at the bar. They do not hop from foot to foot at the ‘Please wait here’ sign in the restaurant, wondering when one of the staff will notice them.

They can summon even the grandest of waiters with the slightest elevation of an eyebrow. They know which wine goes with fish. They can be presented with an entire battalion of cutlery, all lined up, and know instinctively which to use.

And no matter what they are wearing, they feel properly dressed. If they are not properly dressed, they don't really care.

We are not those sort of people. We are the second type, who always feel a bit out of place. We are apologetic when asking for the slightest thing: ‘Are there towels in the room? Oh good. We did bring our own, just in case. Sorry. Are we too early for lunch? Oh, sorry.’

It doesn't help that everybody seems to know who we are. ‘Oh,’ says the receptionist, a very pleasant young man. ‘You're the raffle winners. We know all about you. We've got strict instructions to look after you.’

It's the lady from Gogglebox

Linda and Jeremy, who run the hotel, and another one closer to town, are apparently also having a weekend away, presumably staying somewhere even more upmarket.

‘We won't be there,’ said Linda, ‘but we'll make sure the staff know who you are. They're very good, and you should have a lovely time. Just treat the place as your own.’

Presumably she didn't mean for us to put out the recycling and blacklead the grate.

‘Are you the raffle winners?’ said the lady at the restaurant at dinner. ‘We have a special table for you.’

The table in question was set aside from the others, but still managed to be the centre of attention from the sheer numbers of waiting staff that hovered around us, asking if everything was to our satisfaction.

Which, of course, it was. Although did I detect the slight raising of an eyebrow from the head waiter? Perhaps he thinks Appletiser doesn't go with beef Wellington.

As we left, I was waiting by the door, waiting for Mr D to catch up, when I overheard a couple at the table by the door glancing in our direction. ‘Who are they?’ she said.

‘How should I know?’ he said.

‘Well, they're obviously famous.’

‘Really? I don't recognise them.’

‘Wait a minute, I've got it now,’ she said. ‘It's the lady from *Gogglebox*.’

‘Oh,’ said the man.

‘What's *Gogglebox*?’

Rosie XX

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