

# Reader's digest

APRIL 2017

**Talking Trees:  
Are We Listening  
To Our Forests?**

PAGE 56

**Solving Crimes:  
7 Secret Uses  
Of Smell**

PAGE 36

**Pam Ferris:  
On Fairy Tales  
& Life Lessons**

PAGE 20



[vk.com/stopthepress](https://vk.com/stopthepress)

FRESH MAGAZINES EVERYDAY

СВЕЖИЕ ЖУРНАЛЫ НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ В ГРУППЕ  
[VK.COM/STOPTHEPRESS](https://vk.com/stopthepress)

# Look at cleaning from a different angle



Made in Germany

**SEBO** is a world leader in professional vacuum cleaners, meaning we know all about making durable, high quality machines that clean exceptionally well and are designed to work. In fact we do such a good job that many flooring manufacturers only recommend **SEBO**.

So, if you want to upgrade your vacuum cleaner, choose the brand used by professionals – **SEBO**.

Best Buy

Which?

Vacuum Cleaners March 2016



Applies to Felix models



For a chance to win a SEBO vacuum cleaner, enter our monthly draw at:  
[www.sebo.co.uk](http://www.sebo.co.uk)

APPROVED BY

Ashminster carpets | Beautiful British Design

carpet 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalier ulster

01494 465533   [info@sebo.co.uk](mailto:info@sebo.co.uk)   [www.sebo.co.uk](http://www.sebo.co.uk)

# Contents

APRIL 2017

## FEATURES

### 12 IT'S A MANN'S WORLD

Olly Mann reflects on the art of working in a coffee shop

#### Entertainment

### 20 PAM FERRIS INTERVIEW

The actress opens up about fear, fairy tales and important life lessons

### 28 "I REMEMBER": RAYMOND BLANC

The chef on how he went from a glass washer to the toast of the culinary world

#### Health

### 36 THE FUTURE OF SMELL

How this humble sense is saving lives—and many other remarkable feats

#### Inspire

### 56 THE TREES ARE TALKING

We meet the expert behind the astonishing claims that trees can communicate

### 66 WEDDING STORIES

The photos that capture heart-warming moments from across the globe



### 76 BEST OF BRITISH: REACH FOR THE SKY

There's plenty to enjoy if you simply look up

### 84 HOW TO APPEAR CLEVER

There's more to intelligence than using big words

#### Travel & Adventure

### 90 THE LOST WINES OF HUNGARY

Rediscovering the vineyards that once produced the most popular wines in the world

### 102 A MOUNTAIN OF TROUBLE

A father and son's climbing trip turns disastrous

## IN EVERY ISSUE

- 6 Over to You  
8 See the World Differently
- Entertainment**  
17 April's cultural highlights
- Health**  
44 Advice: Susannah Hickling  
50 The Nutrition Connection  
52 Column: Dr Max Pemberton
- Inspire**  
72 If I Ruled the World:  
Emma Bridgewater
- Travel & Adventure**  
98 Column: Cathy Adams
- Money**  
110 Column: Andy Webb
- Food & Drink**  
114 Tasty recipes and ideas  
from Rachel Walker
- Home & Garden**  
118 Column: Lynda Clark
- Technology**  
120 Olly Mann's gadgets
- Fashion & Beauty**  
122 Georgina Yates on how  
to look your best
- Books**  
124 April Fiction: James Walton's  
recommended reads  
129 Books That Changed My Life:  
Cathy Hopkins
- Fun & Games**  
130 You Couldn't Make It Up  
133 Word Power  
136 Brain Teasers  
140 Laugh!  
143 60-Second Stand-Up:  
Dr Phil Hammond  
144 Beat the Cartoonist

## EDITOR'S LETTER



**AMONGST OUR  
REGULAR BEVY** of  
diverse features, this  
month we're getting  
back to nature.

On p56 writer Craig  
Stennett travels to Germany to meet  
forester Peter Wohlleben, discovering  
the fascinating secrets behind how  
trees communicate with each other—  
and it's mind-boggling.

We move from forests to mountains  
on p102, with the story of a father and  
son who set out on a rock-climbing  
trip and face incredible challenges in  
the process. On a rather more relaxed  
note, we visit Hungary on p90 and  
uncover both its unique terroir and its  
delectable wines, while on p28 we  
chat to Raymond Blanc about his  
encounter with an earthworm—and  
how it inspired his glittering career.

Of course, it's easy to forget that  
we're a part of nature too. With that in  
mind, we look into one of our most  
primal senses on p36—and learn how  
smell might hold the key to saving  
lives and solving crimes.

I hope you enjoy the edition.

Fiona Hicks

theeditor@readersdigest.co.uk

facebook.com/readersdigestuk

twitter.com/readersdigestuk

pinterest.com/rdigestuk

google.com/+ReadersDigestUK1

**FREE SAMPLE**  
on [alwaysdiscreet.co.uk](http://alwaysdiscreet.co.uk)

how could  
protection for  
sensitive bladder  
this incredible  
be  
**this thin?**



*always*  
*discreet*

It's brilliant. Even with this much liquid\*, the super absorbent core turns liquid to gel. So I get incredible protection in a surprisingly thin pad.

**Always Discreet for sensitive bladder.**





# Reader's digest

**EDITOR** Fiona Hicks

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR** Anna Walker

**CULTURE EDITOR** Eva Mackevic

**ADVERTISING DIRECTOR** Simon Fulton

simon.fulton@readersdigest.co.uk

0203 701 5936

**ADVERTISING ACCOUNT DIRECTOR** Mike Allen

mike.allen@readersdigest.co.uk

0203 701 5935

**SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER** Richard Cooke

**GENERAL MANAGER** Gavin Suen

**TRUSTED MEDIA BRANDS INC (USA)**

**President and Chief Executive Officer**

Bonnie Kintzer

**Vice President, Chief Operating Officer, International** Brian Kennedy

**Editor-in-Chief, International Magazines**

Raimo Moysa

For all subscriber enquiries, please use the customer services number below

---

## WRITE TO US! SEND US YOUR STORIES, JOKES AND LETTERS OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE

### WE PAY...

£50 for the star letter and

£30 for regular letters.

Email [readersletters@readersdigest.co.uk](mailto:readersletters@readersdigest.co.uk) or go to [readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us](http://readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us)

### WE ALSO PAY...

£50 for the true stories, anecdotes, jokes in **Laugh!** and **You Couldn't Make**

**It Up...**, and contributions to **end-of-  
article fillers** and **My Great Escape**.

Email [excerpts@readersdigest.co.uk](mailto:excerpts@readersdigest.co.uk) or  
go to [readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us](http://readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us)

### SORRY!

We cannot acknowledge or return unpublished items or unsolicited article-length manuscripts. Do not send SAEs. Article-length stories, poetry and cartoons are not requested.

### CUSTOMER SERVICES

Contact Customer Services for renewals, gifts, address changes, payments, account information and all other enquiries. Call 0330 333 2220\* or email [customer\\_service@readersdigest.co.uk](mailto:customer_service@readersdigest.co.uk)

### TALKING MAGAZINES

Reader's Digest is also available in audio and accessible eText editions from RNIB Newsagent, for blind and partially sighted readers. Call the RNIB Helpline on 0303 123 9999 or visit [rnib.org.uk/newsagent](http://rnib.org.uk/newsagent)

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Visit [readersdigest.co.uk](http://readersdigest.co.uk) or write to: Reader's Digest, PO Box 7853, Ringwood BH24 9FH. **UK:** £45.48 a year. **Republic of Ireland:** €61.20 a year. Prices include delivery. For gift subscriptions, contact Customer Services.

**SMALL PRINT:** Ensure submissions are not previously published. Include your name, email, address and daytime phone number with all correspondence. We may edit letters and use them in all print and electronic media. Contributions used become world copyright of Vivat Direct Ltd (t/a Reader's Digest).

Reader's Digest is a member of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (which regulates the UK's magazine and newspaper industry). We abide by the Editors' Code of Practice and are committed to upholding the highest standards of journalism. If you think that we have not met those standards, please contact 0203 289 0940. If we are unable to resolve your complaint, or if you would like more information about IPSO or the Editors' Code, contact IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or visit [ipso.co.uk](http://ipso.co.uk)

 PAPER FROM SUSTAINABLE FORESTS. PLEASE RECYCLE © 2016 Vivat Direct Ltd (t/a Reader's Digest). British Reader's Digest is published by Vivat Direct Ltd, 57 Margaret Street, London W1W 8SJ. All rights reserved throughout the world. Reproduction in any manner, in whole or part, in English or other languages, is prohibited. Reader's Digest is a trademark owned and under license from Trusted Media Brands, Inc. and is registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. All rights reserved. Printed by Pindar Scarborough Limited. Newstrade distribution by Seymour Distribution Limited.



## All creatures great and small

There's something oddly therapeutic about petting a fluffy rabbit or bottle feeding a lamb. With spring underway, it's the perfect time to visit newborn animals in farms across the country.

We've got the lowdown on Britain's best petting farms—ideal for an Easter day out with the family. Visit [readersdigest.co.uk/petting-farms](http://readersdigest.co.uk/petting-farms)

## Sunday lunch with a twist

Easter is a time to gather together and celebrate the very best of British spring food.

If a traditional roast isn't your bag, here are ten ideas for Easter

lunch with a twist, from miso honey-roast lamb to squash and basil amoretti lasagne. Visit [readersdigest.co.uk/easter-lunch](http://readersdigest.co.uk/easter-lunch) for recipes. ■



YOU'VE GOAT TO BE KIDDING ME



Discover why goats are our new favourite animal at [readersdigest.co.uk/goats](http://readersdigest.co.uk/goats)

WE ASKED FACEBOOK...

for weird reinterpretations of the word "catachresis"

Angelica Rosario answered:

"When you realise that your 100 pet cats are becoming a problem"

Ironically, it actually means using a word incorrectly.



While this is a common reaction from family members, you do need to be sure and be strong if you enter into a relationship with an older man or woman. If you truly love each other, then—and only then—will you experience the total happiness you deserve.

SUSAN HOLMES, *Norwich*

## SNUG GLOVES

Susannah Hickling's feature "8 Weird Ways To Keep Warm" was brilliant. I tried out the suggestion of wearing marigolds over a pair of gloves, which was a bit like double glazing for the hands, and was surprised by how warm it kept me during a long, frosty winter hike. My rubber gloves were black so they didn't stand out as much as the usual yellow colour, and one person in my group even asked if I was wearing leather gloves!

I'm a convert and, odd as it seems when you put them on, there's no way I'd be without them now.

ANDREW BERRY, *Lincolnshire*

## FULL OF MEMORIES

It was wonderful to read "Best of British: Fish & Chips". I'd just returned from a lovely lunch with my elderly mum at Sea Urchin in Dewsbury—her favourite chippy—when your magazine landed on my

doormat. As I'd over indulged somewhat, I curled up with a cup of tea and read about seven of Britain's best chippies!

The next day my mum and I spent a good hour reminiscing about all the chippies we'd ever visited on family holidays—the good and bad experiences! MELANIE LODGE, *Yorkshire*

## SEARCHING FOR A CURE

I never feel happier than when I learn of new and successful treatments for all manner of illnesses, so your article "Good Health News" brightened my day.

Blood tests for the early detection of Alzheimer's disease, smell tests to do the same for prostate cancer, breakthrough drugs for breast cancer, quicker recoveries for stroke victims...it is all wonderful news.

My father died of motor neurone disease and my mother-in-law of Alzheimer's. One day I feel sure there will be a cure or preventative remedies—and I hope it's sooner rather than later.

The best news of all would be if medical research could have limitless funds. The public donates generously, but there are plenty in need of all the help they can get.

SHULAH CLARKSON, *Norfolk*



WE WANT  
TO HEAR  
FROM YOU!

Send letters to [readersletters@readersdigest.co.uk](mailto:readersletters@readersdigest.co.uk)

Please include your full name, address, email and daytime phone number. We may edit letters and use them in all print and electronic media.



PHOTOS: © CATERS NEWS AGENCY

**SEE THE WORLD**

Turn the page ➔



## ...DIFFERENTLY

Yves Rossy can reach speeds up to 180 miles per hour with his self-built jetpack. This flying machine comprises four small-scale jet engines mounted to a carbon fibre wing and, once airborne, is steered solely through Rossy's bodily movements. The futuristic flight-suit has already propelled the former Swiss Air Force pilot across both the English Channel and Grand Canyon. Particularly impressive, however, was a recent formation flight over Dubai with an Airbus A380 (previous photo)—at an astonishing altitude of more than 1,200 metres!





Olly Mann regularly opts to work in his local coffee shop—complying with a host of unspoken rules

# Friends, Foam & Table Rent



*Olly Mann is host of The Male Room on Radio 4, and presents many podcasts including The Modern Mann and Answer Me This!*

## • THERE'S AN ART TO WORKING IN A COFFEE SHOP.

I don't mean making the coffee itself—though I understand baristas can attend advanced courses, and win awards for pouring foamed milk into hot water at funky angles. I mean: when you're a customer, sitting there on your laptop, checking your email and totting up your spreadsheets, while ordering just enough coffee to keep the manager happy but not drinking so much that your teeth rattle—there's an art to that.

My late father could never comprehend this. "Why," he would exclaim, "when you have a perfectly serviceable home office, would you choose to hunch over your laptop in a coffee shop?"

But Dad didn't understand coffee shops generally, being of the generation that either went out for lunch at a restaurant, or went for a drink at the pub. Sitting around yapping while sipping hot liquid was, to his mind, an activity exclusively reserved for wrinklies at National Trust tea rooms.

**I TRIED TO EXPLAIN NUMEROUS TIMES**—almost as many times as he asked me why we were required to stand to order our drinks, rather than have a waiter come and serve us, despite our coffee costing almost a fiver—that the point of me setting up a remote franchise of my business empire in a corner of our local coffee shop was that this helped me feel part of the community. Tapping away as people live and



ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL MITCHELL

breathe around me makes me feel like I'm creating something purposeful and relevant, rather than just cranking out evermore digital ones and zeros to bounce around a distant cloud.

But, really, that's only partly true. I hang out in coffee shops because a) I was a teenager in the 1990s and *Friends* has influenced my lifestyle expectations on some deeply profound level; b) I'm hopelessly

addicted to caffeine and, even when I experiment making espresso at home with that posh machine that looks like a Cadillac, I still can't create a cup that's quite pleasurable enough; and c) if I solely worked from home I'd never get out of my pyjamas, would check Facebook every ten seconds, and would fester in a world of daytime television and endless tubes of biscuits.

Basically, I don't trust myself to remain at home for protracted periods of time and successfully avoid distraction for long enough to actually get any work done. This is why I've never written a novel. That's what I tell myself, anyway.

But still, the community argument remains. I don't actually speak to anyone in the coffee shop, obviously, because I live in South East England and all my fellow patrons are equally absorbed in their own laptop, smartphone or—if they're feeling particularly needy—drinking companion. Although we've all chosen to come to a public place that's explicitly designed to facilitate friendly conversation around warm beverages, there's an unspoken mutual understanding that we'd all

much rather sit alone in silence, trying to ignore the bland corporate jazz music, and chat on social networks to people we once knew who are now on the other side of the world. But, you know, occasionally I'll flirt with the girl who sells the chocolate pralines, or do a suppressed smile at someone queuing for the loo, so: community.

“

**It's only  
once you've  
spent, say,  
20 hours  
working in  
a coffee shop  
that you can  
acquire my  
Jedi-level skills**

“

**AND, LIKE I SAY,  
THERE'S AN ART TO IT.** For instance, the serious coffee shop freelancer doesn't *ever* eat the cake. The cake is expensive, sugary, calorific, slump-inducing and moreish. Indulge in just one bite, and before you know it you might find yourself committed to daily cake, or even twice-daily cake; it's not unheard of to suddenly begin a ten-pound-a-

day cake habit. The cake is there for the mums, the pensioners, the book-clubs; the fleeting passengers who stop by maybe once or twice a week and make a big song and dance about ordering some cake because they're feeling a bit "naughty" and they'll have just a slither as a "treat" to themselves. These people, these cake people, are not serious coffee-shop people. They're cake tourists.

It's only once you've spent, say, 20 hours working in a coffee shop that you can acquire my Jedi-level skills. I can effortlessly maintain a blob of useless creamy froth at the bottom of my mug, so it permanently looks like I haven't finished. Thereby, my mug remains uncollected, and I can continue to hog the sofa without further "table rent". I can quickly identify when a fellow punter is about to leave without their newspaper, and swoop in on it

immediately, so I never have to buy one. I can sit right next to the ice blender in summer, as it crunches out its endless fruity fluid, and I don't even hear it.

I would regale you with yet more tales of my genius, but I've just noticed there's only one bagel left, so I'd better go ahead and order it or else I'll be stuck eating bircher muesli for lunch.

That loyalty card isn't going to complete itself! ■

\* \* \*

### IF I WON THE LOTTERY...

*Twitter users revealed how they'd make use of a windfall:*

**"I'd pay off my student debt, and then buy a pack of chewing gum with what's left over."**

"I'd run for president. Not really—no one is stupid enough to vote for a rich guy with no political experience."

**"I'd pay to design windscreen wipers that don't miss that little triangle at the bottom of the window."**

"I would pay Morgan Freeman to narrate my life...'Chris woke up at noon today. He's thinking about making a sandwich.' "

**"I'd rent out an IKEA and sleep in a different display bedroom every night."**

"I'd install safety nets around the perimeter of my home so I could jump out of any window whenever I felt like it."

**"I'd fund a Death Star. Not to blow people up, but to leave the planet."**

"I'd buy a couple of nice goldfish with a goldfish bowl, fish food and some nice coloured rocks to put on the bottom."

**"Let's be honest—I'd just complain about the taxes."**

# GET 20% OFF!\*

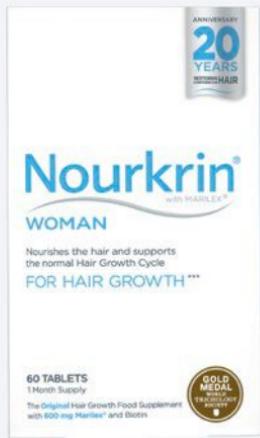
USE THE PROMOTION CODE: RD20

\*Terms and conditions apply. Discount available when purchasing Nourkrin® products using promotional code RD20 only at shop.nourkrin.co.uk before 31st May 2017.

## Good hair, it's as simple as Nourkrin®

60% of women deal with hair growth disorders at some point in their lives, yet many feel alone. Hair growth disruptions have many causes, but there is just one natural and safe solution to maintain normal hair growth.

Nourkrin® WOMAN – FOR HAIR GROWTH is a safe and drug-free supplement for women to support and maintain normal hair growth\*\*.



### GLOBAL RECOGNITION

The only hair supplement in the world to have been awarded the Gold Medal from the hair loss experts at the World Trichology Society.



### LOCAL RECOGNITION

Voted in 2014 and 2015 as the award-winning product within its category by UK pharmacies.

**FIND OUT MORE AT: [www.nourkrin.co.uk](http://www.nourkrin.co.uk) or Tel: 0845 894 9680**

\*\* With proprietary Marilex®, Biotin and equisetum arvense which helps to support normal hair and promote hair growth and strengthening.

**HOLLAND & BARRETT**

**Lloydspharmacy**  
Healthcare for life

**day lewis**  
Pharmacy

**Boots**

+ Good Independent Pharmacies and Health Food Shops

# Films

BY EVA MACKEVIC

Movie  
of the  
Month

## ■ COMEDY *FREE FIRE*

All hell breaks loose when a simple gun deal goes terribly wrong in Ben Wheatley's latest crime comedy. Sam Riley, Cillian Murphy, Brie Larson, Michael Smiley and many others make up a tasty assortment of quirky characters, each with their own agenda in mind. The setting is simple: one rusty warehouse, one transaction, one suitcase full of money—yet despite the lack of complexity, the plot's dynamic pacing and Wheatley's on-point direction mean every second of the film is brimming with explosive pizzazz. Packed with sharp dialogue ("Vernon was misdiagnosed as a child genius and never got over it"), big laughs and great acting, *Free Fire* is a must-see for any Tarantino fan.

## ■ DOCUMENTARY: *I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO*

**NEGRO** This powerful cinematic document provides a sobering look at the meaning of race in America, through the lens of novelist James Baldwin. Half-biography, half-history, the film interweaves archive footage of the eloquent yet defiant Baldwin with Samuel L Jackson's mesmerising narration and modern-day news footage. It's a work of profound relevance today.



*The dapper 1970s costumes are a part of Free Fire's hilarious appeal*

## ■ DRAMA *THE SENSE OF AN ENDING*

**A** symphony of nostalgia, regret and curiosity plays out as a British divorcé (Jim Broadbent) receives a mysterious letter, prompting a haunting trip down memory lane in search of closure on a bygone relationship. Ritesh Batra directs this thoughtful adaptation that will trigger many an introspection, reaffirming himself as a master of capturing and finessing the human condition on-screen .





Florence Pugh  
in her second  
major film role

**■ PERIOD: LADY MACBETH** This fierce adaptation of a 1865 Russian novel will send chills down your spine. Florence Pugh (who previously starred in *The Falling*) delivers a masterful performance as a young woman sold into marriage to a bitter man twice her age. Bored and lonely, she embarks upon a passionate affair. Seemingly quiet and restrained, *Lady Macbeth* bubbles with furious lust and obsession that takes some disturbing, dark turns...

### ■ CRIME: CITY OF TINY LIGHTS

A private eye with a troubled past (Riz Ahmed) takes on a missing-person case, which leads him on a dangerous roller coaster ride of political games and religious fanaticism. Billie Piper is his long-lost love, whose re-emergence brings ghosts of the past to life. *City of Tiny Lights* is a stylish take on the classic film noir in the vein of Bogart-Bacall, set in the seedy underbelly of modern-day London. Perfect if you're a fan of the genre—but don't expect to be surprised by anything particularly fresh or new.



## On Your Radar Kevin Briggs, training coordinator

### WATCHING: *The IT Crowd*

A particular favourite amongst our family at the moment. It's hilarious!



### ONLINE: Online surveys

They only take a few minutes and you can earn a few pounds by doing them.

### READING: *The Amber Spyglass* by Philip Pullman

I'm currently reading it to my son but, I must admit, I'm enjoying it equally myself.

### LISTENING: *I'm Sorry I*

*Haven't a Clue* My dial switches between BBC Radio 5 Live and Radio 4, but *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* is still my all-time favourite.

**Fancy appearing in this section? Send your current cultural favourites, along with short descriptions, to [readersletters@readersdigest.co.uk](mailto:readersletters@readersdigest.co.uk)**

# Music

BY EVA MACKEVIC

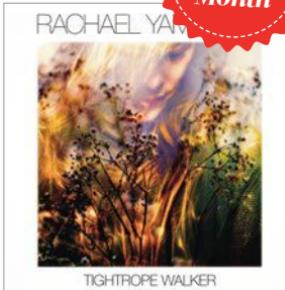
***Tightrope Walker*** by**Rachael Yamagata**

Inspired by high-wire man Philippe Petit, singer-songwriter Rachael Yamagata's new album ponders why we do things in life. It's a warm, homey, Sunday-morning kind of record defined by her one-of-a-kind vocals: a smoky, chocolaty alto, ranging from velvety crooning to gutsy, Joplin-like howls—both of which she makes the most of on this album. Similarly, she doesn't shy away from experimenting with genre: there's the bossa nova-inspired "Tightrope Walker"; the edgier blues-rock riffs of "Nobody" and even some string arrangements in "I'm Going Back"—all of which the singer pulls off with effortless ease. And then there's "Let Me Be Your Girl": a soulful, hearty ballad with 1960s girl band-style backup vocals, horns and mellow guitar filling every nook and cranny—pure bliss. Yamagata's consistent warmth and disarming simplicity will make this record a solid comfort staple in your music library.

**Key tracks:** "Nobody", "Let Me Be Your Girl", "Over"

**LIKE THIS? YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...*****Tidal*** by Fiona Apple

Though coming from a much darker place, Apple's husky vocals and jazzy ballads evoke the same kind of primal, soul-feeding emotions. *Tidal* remains one of the most important records of the 1990s and feels as fresh today as it did 20 years ago.

**Album  
of the  
Month**
**On Our Radar****Bath Comedy****Festival, April 1-17.**

Top-class comedy acts that are bound to bring the house down! Visit [bathcomedy.com](http://bathcomedy.com) for details.

**Harrogate Spring Flower Show, April**

**20-23.** Enjoy a wonderful day out and become inspired to transform your own garden. Visit [flowershow.org.uk](http://flowershow.org.uk) for details.

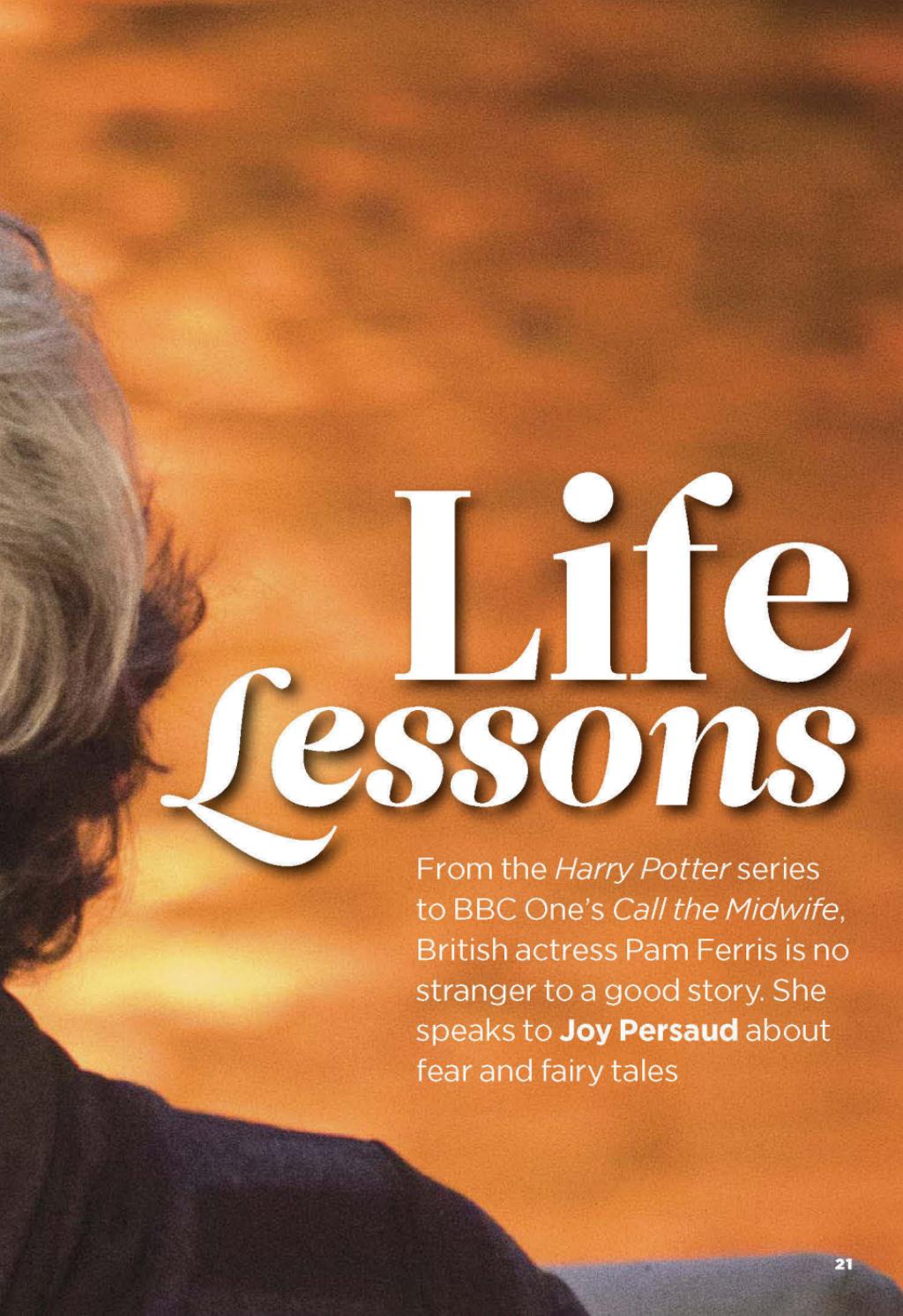
**Food & Folk****Festival in Chichester, April**

**29-May 1.** The very best of the South East's produce and folk traditions, including classes, music and talks.

Visit [wealddown.co.uk/events/food-and-folk](http://wealddown.co.uk/events/food-and-folk) for details. ■

ENTERTAINMENT



A close-up, profile photograph of a woman with dark hair, looking towards the right. The background is a soft-focus sunset or sunrise, with warm orange and yellow hues blending into darker tones at the top.

# Life Lessons

From the *Harry Potter* series to BBC One's *Call the Midwife*, British actress Pam Ferris is no stranger to a good story. She speaks to **Joy Persaud** about fear and fairy tales

**T**he problem with children's stories today, according to Pam Ferris, is that they're simply not scary enough. Pam, whose familiar voice brings life to the character of Grandma in Channel 4's animation of the Michael Rosen classic, *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, believes that learning about life's harsher side through storytelling is an important part of childhood.

In mellifluous tones that reveal her Welsh heritage, Pam recalls her parents telling her stories that she found frightening yet fortifying.

"Nowadays, we clean up fairy tales," she observes. "We make them not frightening. What's clever about this version of *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* is that they've added on the expanded story of the family being in a state of grief because their granddad died recently. The idea is that you can't go over it and you can't go under it—you have to go through it—and grief is one of those things you really have to go through. You have no choice—and that's a genius message for children.

"I firmly believe that giving children—in a safe and loving



GRIEF IS ONE OF THOSE THINGS YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH. YOU HAVE NO CHOICE—THAT'S A GENIUS MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN

circumstance—a dose of fear and anxiety and later telling them, 'It's OK, you can go to sleep now,' is one of the best life lessons."

After dozens of screen and stage roles that include Aunt Marge in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* and Sister Evangelina in *Call the Midwife*, Pam found working on the animation, which was crafted by the team behind *The Snowman and The Snowdog*, a refreshing experience.

"One of the differences, unbelievably, is that you get a lot more direction," she smiles. "You have closer contact with the director and producer than you get on a television set. Shocking isn't it? The pressure of television has reached a point where sometimes your longest conversation with the producer and the director is in the interview to get the job.

"But you turn up in a sound studio and because there's so much less technical work to do—no make-up, no costume—it's all imagination and sound. As an actor, I much prefer it. After you've been in the business a while—and I'm coming up to 50 years—you don't want to fly blind or



do things on instinct. You really want to be able to exercise your judgment and fine tune things."

Pam's meticulous approach to her art is often inspired by real life. Take her character in *Call the Midwife*, for example.

"My gardener, Eileen, is a really grumpy kind of lady, and I based quite a lot of Sister Evangelina on her. Eileen has just been diagnosed with pre-diabetes. She's given up sugar

*Starring as the terrifying Miss Trunchball in the 1996 adaptation of Roald Dahl's Matilda*

and her moods have improved and she's got a lease of life. She's 84. Still, there's a grumpy response from Eileen, pretty much every time [we speak], but once you get past that, she's adorable.

"I loved Sister Evangelina—I was really passionately in love with that woman. Knowing that she was a real person. Knowing some of her history, which never made it to the screen...she was dropped by



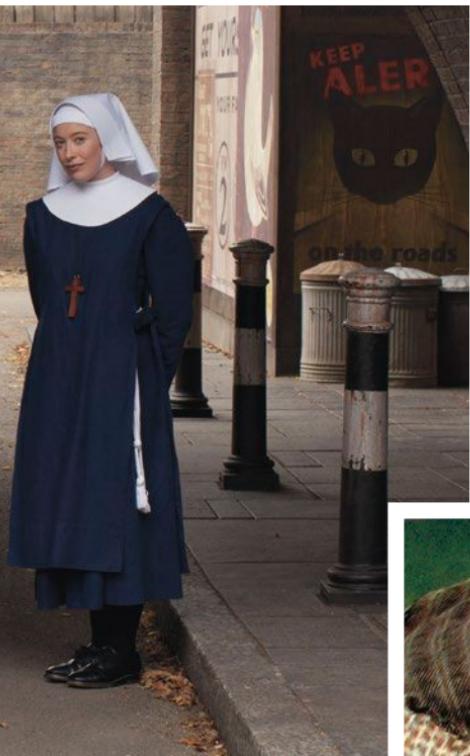
parachute to the front line in the war when she was only 18. The survival rate of nurses dropped was 50 per cent—astounding, isn't it? What incredible courage.

"She was one of those people who literally barged through. There was a day when Tower Bridge was up and she couldn't get across to a patient on her bicycle so she whistled up the bargees and she ran across. She side-hopped from barge to barge to get to the other side of the Thames, and she

was in her 50s when she did that. She was a very tough woman. I'd love to have shown more of that toughness on screen but you can't line the barges up on the Thames now."

#### SPEAKING OF PHYSICALLY

**DEMANDING ROLES**, it may surprise *Harry Potter* fans to hear that her character—the villainous Aunt Marge, who's seen expanding to great proportions in *The Prisoner of Azkaban*—was not a result of CGI



wizardry but reality, as Pam was strapped into a heavy inflatable suit.

"It was terribly challenging, physically," she remembers. "I had a double layer of airtight suiting on and they fired compressed air between the layers to make me expand. That was done in three different stages, so at the end I couldn't get through a

doorway. I had to be wheeled on to the set. It was quite a weighty costume, and there were many days on set where I was simply exhausted.

"Also, you are sewn into your costume so you literally can't go to the loo. You time it—you stop drinking so you dehydrate, and you get in as much filming time as you can. And because the costume and make-up takes so long, you'd try and get a good five hours work out of yourself and there comes a point where you can't go on any more. The director Alfonso Cuarón was wonderfully supportive.



"There were nights where I could hardly stand and he would send a masseur to my dressing room as a personal present. He was a lovely man to work with."

After so many years performing, Pam is in the enviable position of turning work away. Instead, she chooses to savour the rural home that she shares with her husband, actor Roger Frost, after the couple moved away from London seven years ago.

"I'm very happy to turn stuff down," she explains. "My philosophy is that there are plenty of women of my age and older who don't have a loving partner. I have a perfectly good husband here, and I miss him. It's time to spend time with him, really.

"That's not to say that if the right



THERE WERE DAYS WHERE I WAS EXHAUSTED. THERE COMES A POINT WHERE YOU JUST CAN'T GO ON ANY MORE

thing does come along I won't do it," she adds. "Just this morning we had a fast walk with the dogs in the woods as the sun was coming up and I found it absolutely blissful. It's heavenly after spending years of jumping out of bed at 4.30am, you know? Luxury." ■

**We're Going on a Bear Hunt** is out now on DVD.



### BERRY FUNNY

*Everyone likes a good, clean, fruit-based joke:*

**What happens to grapes when you step on them?**  
**They wine.**

What do you call a sad strawberry?  
A blueberry.

**Why did the orange stop?**  
**Because it ran out of juice.**

What's a vampire's favourite fruit?  
A neck-tarine.

**Why was the tomato blushing?**  
**Because it saw the salad dressing.**

SOURCE: BUZZFEED.COM

No more strained, sore or tired eyes

Revolutionary light  
gives you back  
crystal clear  
clarity and  
vivid colour.

Try risk  
free for  
30 days



Serious Readers is a British company totally dedicated to the purity of light. Our lights offer incredible clarity and brightness, in fact our lights are used by surgeons, forensic scientists and fine art restorers – basically anyone who needs to see clearly and accurately.

- Unique Daylight Wavelength Technology projects all of the light onto the page
- Reading is easier, faster and more enjoyable
- Recommended by over 400 independent qualified opticians
- Delivered fully assembled
- 5 year guarantee

## Special Offer

Purchase a Serious Light by 14.04.17 & get a FREE portable reading light & accessories, worth over £100.  
QUOTE PROMOTION CODE 4735.  
WHEN ORDERING ONLINE ENTER  
4735 AT THE CHECKOUT.

For advice or to request a brochure  
Call Free 0800 085 1088  
or visit [seriousreaders.com/4735](http://seriousreaders.com/4735)





**Raymond Blanc**, 67, is one of Britain's leading chefs. He runs a double Michelin-starred restaurant in Oxfordshire and has appeared on numerous TV shows, including *Saturday Kitchen* and *The Restaurant*

# *Raymond Blanc* “I Remember”

**...I WAS IN THE GARDEN** and I was cutting a big, wriggly worm into pieces with an old plastic knife I'd found. When it extended itself, it was about 18cm—a little earthy monster. I cut it into 20 or 30 pieces and decided to eat it. I was two and it was my first gastronomic experience.

My mum showed up at the end of the process. She wasn't too pleased and she reprimanded me, saying that I shouldn't eat that as we cook good food at home.

**...WHEN I WAS ABOUT SIX**, my mum found the perfect Christmas present in the shop for me. It was a

completely unaffordable German tank and my father didn't like it at all, as it had a white cross on top of it. He was in the resistance at 18; he was a hero. He went to Germany and accompanied the Germans right to the heart of Berlin.

At Christmas, I opened my present and what did I see? My tank with the white cross on it. It went backwards, it went forwards, it was spitting fire—it was unbelievable! I was so happy.

Once, I went to mass with my siblings and I left the tank in my room. When I came back, it was broken into thousands of little pieces. It was my eldest brother who did it



*Raymond is  
camera-ready at  
the Hampstead  
and Highgate  
Literary Festival*



*With his first wife Jenny, opening his first restaurant; (right) as a child at school*

and I was mad. But then he put back every part of the tank together—he would go on to become a very well-known engineer, working for micro companies and doing things that nobody else could.

**...LIVING THREE AND A HALF MILES FROM THE SCHOOL.** Our winters were seriously harsh—one metre of snow in one night. There were blizzards all the time. Even at the age of four, still in nursery, we

would walk every day in the blizzard and snow. We had to pass by nasty places where they would throw stones or do something tricky to you.

We were soaking wet and freezing, our skin was red and we couldn't feel our hands. When we came home, we'd have a bowl of hot chocolate.

**...MY MUM WOULD JAR, PICKLE AND DRY THE FOOD FROM OUR GARDEN.** There were vegetables all over the floor. Carrots, potatoes, turnips, beetroot and Jerusalem artichoke would all be covered

with a black jute and hidden from any form of light. On the shelf there were thousands and thousands of pots of fruit, wild mushrooms and all the vegetables from the garden.

The cellar had a single dangling lightbulb and it diffused this extraordinary

halo of light. Papa would buy the cheapest local plonk and it was put into a big barrel for three or four months and it dripped. I can still remember that heavenly smell...

**...ONE DAY MY PAPA DID SOMETHING INTERESTING**—he scooped a whole handful of earth, which was dark and beautiful. He turned to me and said, “Look, Raymond,” so I looked at it. “Smell it,” so I smelled it. “Taste it.” And you

“

**I was a rich young man  
at the age of ten—  
whatever my mum  
couldn't cook, I would  
sell at a restaurant**

didn't argue with your Papa. The man was quite a fearsome character.

Oh, my God. It felt as if my whole mouth had disappeared. It was sucked out by the astringency, the acidity, the tannins—a bitter, sour note. It was only a few years [after] that I told Papa, "I can understand why you told me to look at the earth, because by looking at it, I can understand which minerals there are. But why on earth did you make me taste it?"

And that's when I discovered that my father had a sense of humour. He said, "It was a joke." I wanted to kill him but he was too big.

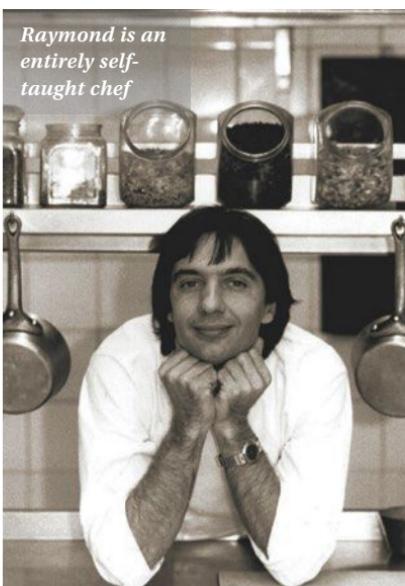
**...WE WOULD SOMETIMES HUNT BY SMELL.** The *petit-gris*, one of the world's best mushrooms, grows in little bundles under pine trees. You can't see them so you have to follow the wind and smell them, like they did millions of years ago. And you know they're there, under the moss. You take your knife and you start there and then you know. You remove them all and you see

hundreds of mushrooms as they grow in huge colonies. I tell you, I was a rich young man at the age of ten. Whatever my mum couldn't cook, I would sell at a restaurant, never for a lousy price.

**...I WORKED HARD FOR MY FIRST BOSS.**

I was afraid of him because everyone was afraid of him. One afternoon, when I was about 19, I was in the middle of taking orders and I'd just filled up my tray with lemonade. A young girl was passing by and she pushed the tray out of my hands. I was terrified. He looked at me and I looked at him and I knew I would get a serious beating.

The young girl noticed the whole



*Raymond is an entirely self-taught chef*



thing and she crouched down and helped me pick up the glass. It may sound corny but she said, "I'm sorry," and I fell in love with her. She said these words and she broke my heart. I did get the biggest possible beating afterwards.

### **...MY PARENTS DECIDED THAT I WOULD BE A DRAUGHTSMAN.**

The problem was, I hate—*hate*—squares, rectangles, prisms. Anything that has a rigid defined shape. I love anything that is asymmetric.

### *Welcoming the late Queen Mother to his restaurant in Oxfordshire*

Obviously, I wasn't made for that job and equally, in my heart of hearts, I saw my father failing. He worked in a factory where he'd craft gold, tin, aluminium or copper, but because he was a working-class man he'd never dare to set up his own shop. He was conditioned by the ideas about working-class men.

It had a profound impact on me. I decided I would find my talent. I became a very good trainee nurse in a hospital in Besançon. I loved

“

**I ended up in the hospital.  
My jaw and teeth may  
have been broken but it  
was my ego that was  
seriously bruised**

looking after people and I was in the leukaemia department where I saw about 12 young people die. I stopped because I couldn't take it emotionally.

I then found myself in a factory and it was a frightening moment in my life because I realised I was just a number there. Nobody knew my name; nobody knew how I felt. I was just a shadow clocking in and clocking out.

**...ON A  
BEAUTIFUL  
AUGUST NIGHT**

there was a big, illuminated tent in a courtyard in my town centre, where couples were holding hands and waiters were carving and flambéing. They wore their Bordeaux jackets, ballerically moving between the tables. I said, "Oh my God,"

and I just fell in love, in love like never before. It was love so big, it filled my body, my heart, my brain, my ears.

I was given a job as a cleaner so I became the best cleaner I could be, and then I became the best glass washer. Meanwhile, I was reading about food, great chefs, great scientists, great nutritionists. I connected everything to food: food-love; food-sex; food-nutrition; food-science; food-family; food-geography.

**...AFTER SIX MONTHS AS A GLASS WASHER, I KNEW EVERY WINE.**

I memorised every single one. I understood that a great restaurant only works if everyone knows what they're doing. And I quickly became very popular—but not for long

*With his sons  
Seb and Oli*



because I started advising the chef on sauces and he was a bigger man. I once told him that his sauce was a bit too salty. I wanted a chance to communicate as a chef and talk to him about food.

I was completely possessed by food. I would dream about it in the day and have nightmares at night. But the chef hated me. Once, when I was about to approach him, I saw his moustache bristle, his eyes darken and I knew something bad was about to happen. And it did—a fist slammed into my face. I ended up in the hospital. My jaw and teeth may have been broken, but it was my ego that was seriously bruised.

**...I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT WHEN I GOT MY FIRST MICHELIN STAR.** And the second star was even more unbelievable. I will always remember Albert Roux phoning me, in full

service—you never disturb a chef when he cooks. Eventually, after 25 rings, I took the phone and started barking at him.

He said, “Raymond, Raymond. Albert Roux. I’m a friend.”

“What do you want? I’m in service,” I replied.

“Raymond, tonight you sleep on two pillows. You have two Michelin stars.”

And I went, “Waaaaah!” And then you start dreaming of a little place, with two or three bedrooms, a large garden—you’re aiming for a tiny little place, but then you fall in love with a manor house with acres of land, dry rot and you say, “Yes, that’s it—that’s the love of my life.” ■

**As told to Joy Persaud**

---

**Raymond Blanc's book, *Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons—The Story of a Modern Classic* is out now.**

---



### EYE-POPPING FACTS

If the human eye were a digital camera, it would have 576 megapixels.

**All blue-eyed people can be traced back to one person who lived near the Black Sea almost 10,000 years ago.**

We spend about ten per cent of our waking hours with our eyes closed, blinking.

**Goldfish can't close their eyes, as they have no eyelids.**

Researchers have successfully used the game Tetris to treat “lazy eye” in adults.

**People with blue eyes have a higher alcohol tolerance.**

SOURCE: FACTSLIDES.COM

An Exclusive Offer For  
Reader's Digest Readers

The Real Pie™  
Company

ONLY  
**£25!**

Save over  
30%



# Award Winning Celebration Pies Delivered To Your Door

The Real Pie Company have won **Great Taste Awards**, British Pie Awards and most recently **Sussex Food Producer of the Year**. Join the celebration with our **Celebration Pie Pack**, a selection of our very best pies. Truly artisan, our handcrafted pies, pasties and sausage rolls, use only the best cuts of meat. A Real Pie is 'crammed to the crust' with flavour and topped with a tasty golden puff pastry crown. Baked in Britain in small batches then delivered to your door.

**ORDER OUR CELEBRATION PIE PACK TODAY  
AND GET OVER 30% OFF!**

**YOUR CELEBRATION  
PIE PACK INCLUDES  
12 PIES**

- 2 x steak and stout
- 2 x steak and mushroom
- 2 x peppered steak
- 2 x steak and mature cheddar
- 2 x chicken and ham
- 2 x chicken and mushroom.

Normal price: £37.20  
**OFFER PRICE: £25.00**

It is delivered to your door in our special chill boxes.

**How to order:** Order today either by calling 01293 550997 or online at [www.therealpieco.co.uk](http://www.therealpieco.co.uk) use code: RDG317



From reminiscing to saving lives,  
new scientific developments are defining...

# THE FUTURE *of* SMELL

BY JO CARLOWE

**S**MELL IS ONE OF THE LAST FRONTIERS OF NEUROSCIENCE, and, according to experts, the least understood of the five senses.

This is set to change. The National Science Foundation in the US has awarded £12 million to help scientists crack the code for smell.

When the research—made up of three separate projects—comes to fruition next year, it's hoped we'll better understand how humans and animals identify and use smells to navigate through life.



One person who's thrilled is Duncan Boak, who has lost his ability to smell. He's the founder of Fifth Sense, the charity for people affected by smell and taste disorders.

"We have five senses and they're all equally important," he states. "They all come together to help us experience the world around us." Boak says smell loss is frequently overlooked by the medical profession—but perhaps this is now set to change.

## The science of smell

From humans to bacteria, smell is universal. Animals use it to perform remarkable feats: birds to migrate across continents, and to recognise their own eggs; mice to detect stress in their peers; and we already know that smell can evoke memories in humans.

A large interdisciplinary team of US academics are working together to unlock the science of smell. It's no easy task—odour receptors in the brain make up about three per cent of the entire genome.

At their disposal, the researchers have access to brain-imaging technology and mathematical modelling, through which they hope to better understand both the mechanics of smell and how it influences behaviour.



Odours are chemicals that move through the air, which we detect through cells in our noses (antennae in insects, and tentacles in snails) called "olfactory sensory neurons", which then send signals to our brains.

"The brain uses this information in many different ways," says neuroscientist Professor Nathan Urban of the University of Pittsburgh, "to differentiate between the smell of lemons and limes, or to find the source of an odour such as a campfire or gas."

Professor Urban and his team are focusing on how animals use smell

to find resources, such as food and sexual partners. His colleague, Jonathan Victor, professor of neuroscience at Cornell University, says their findings could one day lead to the creation of algorithms that allow robots to "sniff out" bombs, cancer or drugs. And, by interfering with the way insects such as mosquitoes use odour cues to find their hosts, it may be possible to better control disease, or to limit crop damage by pests.

In a second project, scientists are



## ONE DAY, ROBOTS COULD SNIFF OUT DRUGS OR CANCER

trying to figure out how the brain identifies odours and attaches significance to them. So how, for example, we differentiate between a good wine or rotting food, or how a mouse knows the stench of urine from a big cat signals danger.

In order to leave no smell stone unturned, in a third project, US researchers are mapping the olfactory circuitry of fruit flies, and analysing how they encode the sensations and memories of odours in their natural environment.

"The olfactory circuit of the fly is small enough to be analysed but complex enough to be interesting,"

says Professor Aravi Samuel, of the Centre for Brain Science at Harvard University. He describes a "remarkable parallel" in the structure of the olfactory system in both insects and humans, suggesting these findings will have significance beyond the world of tiny critters. In fact, harnessing the full potential of smell could affect many areas of our lives.

### How smell can help us

As the following examples show, smell can affect our mood, enhance our memories, and even change our behaviour.

**SMELLS CAN PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION.** A trial set up in a surgical intensive-care unit observed over 400 healthcare workers and visitors to see if they used a hand sanitiser before entering a patient's room. In the control group only 15 per cent did so. However, when a citrusy smell was emitted, hand-washing was boosted by almost 50 per cent.

**SMELLS CAN MAKE US HAPPY.** When we're happy we produce chemical compounds in our sweat, which others can smell. Dutch researchers say the scent of happiness induces a "contagion of the emotional state", so that those around us start to feel good too. Meanwhile, experiments that compare the impact of pleasant

odours with odourless placebos have found the former dramatically improves mood.

**SMELL AFFECTS OUR PERCEPTION OF TIME.** A study found that people exposed to a pleasant fragrance felt time went faster, compared to those exposed to no odour.

#### SMELL CAN IMPROVE OUR MEMORY AND RECALL.

Psychologists pumped a room with the smell of cassis, while playing video footage. A week later, when tested for their memories of the film, those exposed to cassis during recall recounted far more details. Music was similarly used to see if that too could be a trigger but smell was far more effective.

**SMELLS CAN PREVENT MALNUTRITION.** Patients convalescing from illnesses or people with early dementia sometimes lose their appetite, which can lead to malnutrition. "Ode", an appetite-stimulation device, has been developed to provide aromatic cues, such as the smell of Bakewell tart. This stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, creating feelings of hunger that prompt people to eat.

A STUDY FOUND THAT PEOPLE EXPOSED TO A PLEASANT ODOUR FELT TIME WENT FASTER, COMPARED TO THOSE EXPOSED TO NO ODOUR

**SMELLS CAN SAVE LIVES.** Last year, a study revealed that scent profiling could be used to improve search-and-rescue missions. Scent dogs were trained to recognise the change in the odour of the living compared to the dead. Now rescue teams can deploy human-scent dogs versus human-remains detection dogs when seeking survivors during earthquakes and other disasters.

#### SMELL AND REMINISCENCE.

It's not uncommon for specific smells

to trigger vivid memories and emotions from childhood.

Incoming smells are processed by the olfactory bulb, which starts inside the nose and runs along the base of the brain, connecting directly to the amygdala (associated with emotion), and the hippocampus (linked to memory).

Consequently, identical smells trigger vastly differing emotional responses. For example, most of us would associate brown sauce with a British fry-up. But for a person who grew up in Aston, West Midlands—right next to the HP factory—opening a bottle of the pungent sauce is like uncorking an entire childhood.

"As we encounter smells for the



*The smell of oranges and cinnamon reminds most people of Christmas*

first time we link them to moments, to people or to things,” says fragrance expert Lizzie Ostrom. “When we smell the aroma again, the brain makes a fast association. That’s why oranges and cinnamon instantly remind us of Christmas.

“In fact, when we smell something, we have an emotional response to it before our brain is able to process the language or description that might accompany that response. Hence smells seem to hit us, and we feel ambushed and overcome by the strength of our reaction.”

It’s this ability to transport us back in time that has made smell a useful prompt for reminiscence therapy.

But it’s not just the elderly who can benefit.

Ostrom runs “vintage scent sessions” to help people of all ages appreciate the fragrances of times gone-by.

“When I’m theming an event around a very early part of the 20th century, the fragrances are a point of enquiry to try to appreciate the past. As we go forward in time, attendees start to say, ‘Hang on, didn’t Aunt Carol wear this?’

“Once we reach the 1970s, they’re reminiscing about their own lives. People say they feel they’ve been able to revisit their old selves and deal with the ghosts of exes.”



## Is this milk off?

**Julie Wilson, 53, a sign-language interpreter from Tayport, in Fife, lost her sense of smell 15 years ago. Today, she's the voluntary coordinator for the Scottish hub of Fifth Sense. She says:**

"I became anosmic for no apparent reason.

The loss occurred gradually. One day I could smell scent, flowers, sweat, food—then the next only three of the four.

I saw my GP, who was dismissive and said the sense of smell would probably return. Another clinician said the loss is likely due to allergies, of which I have many.

Everyday, you realise you've lost your sense of smell because other people are appreciating things you cannot, or being repulsed by things you're rather glad you can't smell.

I miss the smell of newly mown grass, flowers, the sea, coffee, garlic—everything really. I'd dearly love to be able to smell my husband, Tony. We met later in life and I don't know what he smells like after a shower, or even when he's "unpleasant". He says that's probably why we're still married!

Oddly, I can "remember" smells: I can conjure something up inside my head if I think of that delicious "baby" smell, or what chocolate

smells like. It's still there somewhere. I have to ask my husband for help a lot: "Is this milk off?"; "Please tell me if I'm offensive in any way to anyone." The latter means I'm completely obsessed with keeping myself clean, and about dental hygiene too.

I also have to ask for help when buying perfume, as I cannot tell what suits me.

I haven't been in a dangerous situation so far, but using gas to cook, for example, would mean checking things are safe all the time.

Smell loss is linked to losing interest in food. I have to use lots of herbs, spices, chillies and strong flavours in what I cook. Fortunately, my long-suffering husband likes those things too.

It does affect your mood at times—feeling somehow cheated, missing out, and "Why me?" But you have to get on with it.

Finding out there are other people with the same condition has been a massive help. The condition is "invisible". Raising awareness is a big part of what Fifth Sense does and that's vital because it needs to be taken seriously and treated with empathy by clinicians.

Are there advantages to anosmia? Well, you can always be the first to volunteer to change nappies."



## Smell loss

Imagine life without scent. For many people this is a reality. Duncan Boak, founder of Fifth Sense, believes around five per cent of the population have impaired olfactory abilities—most with “anosmia”, the technical name for smell loss, and others with “hyposmia”, which refers to a reduced sense of smell. Loss of smell can be complete, come suddenly or occur over time.

Allergies are thought to be responsible for most olfactory disorders, while others lose their sense of smell following a virus, including colds or flu.

Head injuries can also cause smell loss, and occasionally people are born without smell.

“Sense of smell acts on a



subconscious level,” says Boak. “It’s only when you don’t have it any more that you realise how important it is.” ■

### A COMIC TURN

*Actor (and father) Ryan Reynolds delights his Twitter followers with his sardonic statements:*

**“On our 6am walk, my daughter asked where the moon goes each morning.**

**I let her know it’s in heaven, visiting Daddy’s freedom.”**

“People in LA are deathly afraid of gluten. I swear to God, you could rob a liquor store in this city with a bagel.”

**“I’d walk through fire for my daughter. Well not FIRE, because it’s dangerous. But a super humid room. But not too humid, because my hair.”**

SOURCE: TWITTER.COM

# Well, Good Morning!

BY SUSANNAH HICKLING



Susannah is twice winner of the Guild of Health Writers Best Consumer Magazine Health Feature

**WHEN IT COMES TO OUR HEALTH**, research shows time and time again that it pays to be a morning person. Think carefully about your schedule if you're planning to:

**HAVE AN ANAESTHETIC.** You may not get the choice, of course, but if you need surgery it's better to have it in the morning. A study from Duke University Medical Centre in the US found that you're more likely to suffer side effects if you're put under in the afternoon.

**GET A JAB.** According to research from the University of Birmingham, morning flu jabs produced a bigger increase in antibody concentration a month later, promising better protection against the lurgy.

**DO SOMETHING PAINFUL.** That jab might also hurt less if you have it in the morning. In 2014, Israeli scientists found that men were least sensitive to pain at the beginning of the day.

**STICK AT THAT FITNESS REGIME.** Studies have found that people who work out in the morning are more likely to stick to their exercise regime, because they get it out of the way first thing. Plus you'll produce endorphins that will boost your mood for the rest of the day. Perfect timing!



**CUT YOUR RISK OF SKIN CANCER.** Research from the University of North Carolina recently suggested that UV rays might be less likely to damage our skin if we're exposed to them in the morning, making before lunch the optimum time to go to the beach.

**CONCENTRATE.** This will come as no surprise to schoolteachers, but Canadian researchers showed that older people also worked better in the morning. They consistently performed better on the researchers' cognitive tasks and were less likely to be distracted when they did them before 10.30am.

## LIGHTEN UP

**Light therapy** is an established treatment for seasonal affective disorder—also known as winter depression—but a recent study shows that it can also aid depression at other times of the year. In the study, published in *JAMA Psychiatry*, 44 per cent of those treated with lightboxes for 30 minutes a day felt much better after eight weeks. So, if you're still very blue even now that spring is here, this could be a solution for you.

If very bright light doesn't agree with you, simply aim to be in the sunshine as much as possible and take plenty of exercise. Even a quick lunchtime walk will do you good. Make your home and workplace as light and airy as you can, and sit near the window whenever possible.



## HEALTH HINT: STRAIGHT AND NARROW

Slumping while sitting or typing is a common cause of fatigue, carpal tunnel syndrome and back pain.

Every hour, or whenever your phone rings, straighten your back, throw back your shoulders and lift up your neck.

# 10 Things You Need To Know About Nosebleeds

- 1** Most nosebleeds are caused by putting your fingers in your nose. Other traumas, such as blowing your nose too enthusiastically, or a football landing on your conk, can also cause a bleed.
- 2** Off-target nasal sprays are sometimes to blame. Allergy sufferers who shoot the spray at the septum rather than into the nasal cavity could have problems.
- 3** Dryness tends to be an issue in winter, when central heating can dry out the nasal mucosa and make it prone to cracking.
- 4** Moisture heals and prevents most nosebleeds. An over-the-counter saline spray used up to three times a day may be the answer.
- 5** If your bleeds are heavy or frequent, you could have a broken blood vessel. If so, your doctor can cauterise it.
- 6** Some drugs, particularly blood thinners, can cause noses to bleed.
- 7** The most effective method for stopping a nose bleed is to apply pressure to the septum and lean



forward for ten minutes. This encourages clotting.

- 8** Go to A&E if you still have a problem after 20 minutes, if you're losing a lot of blood or you're having trouble breathing.
- 9** If none of the treatments helps, you may need to see a specialist. Your doctor can refer you to the hospital ear, nose and throat department for further investigation.
- 10** Once the bleeding has stopped, take it easy. Don't blow your nose, lift heavy weights, over-exercise, lie flat or drink alcohol or piping hot drinks. Try to sneeze with your mouth open to ease the pressure.

# BATHING DIFFICULTY?



The most complete bathing solution ever from Nationwide Mobility!

Beautifully contoured, the brand new Ultimate Shower

Bath is the most comfortable yet.

- Easy access door
- 100% watertight seal
- Cushioned headrest
- Optional powered seat, 23 stone capacity
- Easy to use handset
- Fits into the same space as your old bath

**FITTED IN JUST A DAY\* No mess, No fuss**

FOR A FREE COLOUR BROCHURE FREEPHONE NOW ON

**0800 316 9798**

**ASK FOR EXT. 61834**

Or visit

**www.nationwide-mobility.co.uk**

\*Based on a straightforward fitting. \*\*Not in conjunction with any other offer.

**Nationwide  
Mobility**

# Skip To Good Health

If you think jumping rope is for schoolchildren, think again.

**Ten minutes' skipping is the equivalent of running a mile in eight minutes,** but there's less stress on knees, ankles and hips.

**It also helps you burn calories.** It's possible to burn over 1,000 calories an hour—but that's a lot of skipping. It's best to stick to short bursts.

Just 15–20 minutes will burn the equivalent of a chocolate bar.

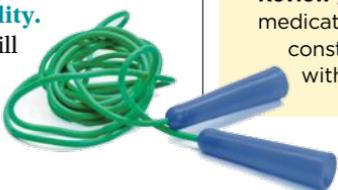
**You get a full-body workout.** You'll be using your abs to keep your body stable, legs for jumping and arms and shoulders to turn. As with any aerobic exercise, it's good for your heart.

## **Skipping builds bone density.**

Because rope-jumping is a weight-bearing exercise, you'll be cutting your risk of osteoporosis. It's best to jump on a wooden floor to reduce risk of injuries if you trip over the rope.

## **Jumping rope improves your balance and flexibility.**

Your coordination will be improved by skipping too.



## MEN'S HEALTH

### NO STRAIN, NO VEIN

Straining when you go to the loo raises men's risk of varicose vein problems by 94 per cent. There's also a link between constipation and male bowel cancer.

So what can men do to ease the strain and avoid the vein?

- **Drink plenty of water.** Dehydration can lead to constipation, which is often behind all that pushing.
- **Get fit.** Walking or running or other regular exercise will help you stay well, regular.
- **Eat kidney beans or raspberries.** Both are high in fibre, which is handy, as you should aim to get at least 25g a day.
- **Try self-acupressure.** In a clinical trial at the University of California, 72 per cent of participants found that massaging the area between the anus and genitals helped relieve constipation.
- **Have a hot drink.** A cup of hot coffee can help get things moving again, as caffeine has a bowel-loosening effect.
- **Rest your feet on a low stool.** This brings your knees up above your hips, making the process easier.
- **Review your meds.** Some medications can cause constipation. Check in with your GP. 

# Daily Supplements

Ensuring an adequate intake of calcium is vital for men and women of all ages, as evidence suggests that healthy practices early in life—including the adequate consumption of calcium and trace elements—contribute to normal bone health and optimal bone mineralisation. Peak bone mass, obtained during childhood and adolescent growth, is known to be of major importance in maintaining bones later in life. The UK Department of Health recommends that people aged 65 and over should take a daily supplement of 10mcg of vitamin D. Osteocare Liquid provides a rich source of calcium, carefully balanced with co-factors including magnesium and zinc, which contribute to the maintenance of normal bones. The great tasting liquid, developed for those with

difficulty swallowing tablets, also contains vitamin D, which contributes to normal absorption and utilisation of calcium.

Osteocare Liquid is suitable for children aged from three and is especially beneficial for men and women over the age of 50, during pregnancy and breastfeeding, and during and after the menopause.



**VITABIOTICS**  
SCIENCE OF HEALTHY LIVING

Osteocare Liquid RRP £4.95 for 200ml and £11.95 for 500ml, available from Boots, supermarkets and pharmacies, health stores including Holland and Barrett and online at [www.osteocare.com](http://www.osteocare.com)

## THE NUTRITION CONNECTION

# The Low-Down On Oils

BY FIONA HICKS



Fiona studies Naturopathic Nutrition at the College of Naturopathic Medicine, and is a member of the Nutrition Society

EATING OILS is a great way to amp up your healthy-fat intake. Here are some of the best—plus one to avoid.

## BEST FOR SALADS: HEMP SEED OIL

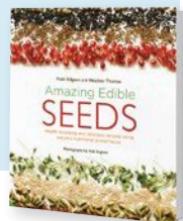
Regular consumption of hemp seed oil can help with a range of health issues, from high blood pressure to dry skin. However, its omega-3 fats are unstable in heat—so enjoy drizzled over cold meals and hearty salads instead.

## BEST FOR DIPPING: EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

This contains a whopping 73 per cent monounsaturated fat, which, as several studies confirm, can lower your risk of

## GOING NUTS FOR SEEDS

Seeds are nutritional powerhouses, but it's not always easy to know how to incorporate them into our diets. A beautiful new book, *Amazing Edible Seeds* (Jacqui Small, £20), delves into the history and health benefits of 20 different seeds, as well as providing inspirational and mouth-watering recipes that use them. Read this and you'll be whipping up pumpkin-seed pesto and seedy smoothies in no time.





heart disease if eaten in place of saturated fat. Make sure you choose an unrefined version, and try as a dip for crusty wholemeal bread.

#### BEST FOR SAUTÉING: GHEE

A foundation of Indian cooking, this is butter with the milk solids removed. With no milk solids, there's no sugar (lactose) to burn, which means you can cook with it at higher temperatures. Use it to sauté vegetables for a delicious side dish.

#### BEST FOR ROASTING: COCONUT OIL

This is composed of special medium-chain fatty acids. A review in *The Journal of Nutrition* found that this type of fat increases energy expenditure as it's broken down and,

because it's so satiating, it can lead to lower energy intake overall. Coconut oil also had a very high smoking point, so can be used safely at high roasting temperatures.

#### BEST FOR GRILLING: AVOCADO OIL

Derived from the flesh of the fruit, this is chock-full of monounsaturated oleic acid, which can help reduce your cholesterol. It's so stable that you could use it to deep-fry fish—but grilling is a much healthier alternative!

#### BEST AVOIDED: SUNFLOWER OIL

Scientists found that when heated, sunflower oil releases high levels of aldehydes—chemicals that have been linked to cancer, heart disease and dementia. It's best to steer clear. ■

# Where Are All The Flowers?

BY MAX PEMBERTON



*Max is a hospital doctor, author and newspaper columnist*

“YOU DID WHAT?” asked the consultant, her eyes wide and wild.

My friend Toby and I looked at each other in panic and then back at the consultant. “Erm,” we said in unison.

It was our last day on our psychiatry placement in the fourth year of medical school. We’d come for our final tutorial with our consultant, in which she’d give us our grades. But things didn’t seem to be going to plan.

“Did we do something wrong?” asked Toby, wincing. We’d spent the past month on the ward and had developed a close relationship with the patients. It was usual for medical students to buy the nursing staff a card or box of chocolates to say thank you, and sometimes this extended to the patients.

That morning, as Toby and I went to the hospital, we passed a florist and it occurred to us that it might be nice to get the patients some flowers for their dining room. We got them all a card and thought nothing more of it.

**FROM THE LOOK OF DISBELIEF** on the consultant’s face, we assumed we must have done something wrong.

“No, you haven’t done anything wrong,” she said eventually. “It’s just that I’ve realised that in the 30 years I’ve worked in psychiatry, I don’t think I’ve ever seen a psychiatric patient get a bunch of flowers.”

At first I was baffled by this: when you’re unwell, surely one



of the small perks is that you get a get-well-soon card, a bunch of flowers and box of York Fruits?

But since that day I've paid particular attention to this whenever I'm on a psychiatric ward and I have never—and I mean never—seen a single card, let alone a bunch of flowers. This is in sharp contrast to when I worked in surgery, where everyone got cards and some patients would get so many bouquets that I'd spend most of the ward round trying to spy the patients, David Attenborough-style, through the assorted foliage and blooms.

I've often thought about why there's such a marked difference in our reaction when something goes wrong with someone physically and when something goes wrong mentally.

There's no doubt that part of it is the stigma attached to mental illness; it's something that should be hidden and ignored. Physical illness doesn't challenge our understanding of what it is to be human and to experience the world in the same way, and is therefore easier to acknowledge.

**THE IRONY IS** that needing to be cheered up is practically part of the criteria for admission to a psychiatric ward. So what could be worse than feeling depressed and suicidal and not even getting a bunch of freesias?

Cards and flowers are an invaluable connection to the outside world; a reminder that you're loved and missed. When you're feeling at your lowest point, something like that might make all the difference.

## MEDICAL MYTHS—BUSTED!

# If You're Thirsty, Then You're Already Dehydrated



### WHERE DID THE MYTH COME FROM?

Someone said this to me recently, as I was gulping down a glass of water. You hear it everywhere, usually from someone scolding you for allowing yourself to go so long without water that you're actually thirsty—as though we can no longer trust our body to tell us when it needs something.

Yet the idea that if we're thirsty then we're already dehydrated is not true. It's just as much a myth as the idea that you should drink eight glasses of water a day.

### WHAT'S THE TRUTH?

Your body is actually incredibly good at regulating water percentage to ensure that it's in balance.

The more concentrated the blood is, the less fluid there is. This concentration is known as the "osmolality". When it's very high, then the blood is more concentrated and the person is dehydrated.

Research suggests that the sensation of thirst sets in when the concentration of fluid in the blood rises by two per cent. Clinical dehydration is the rise in the concentration of the blood by five per cent. So thirst kicks in well before actual dehydration.

### SO NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT?

The vast majority of people can trust their body. If they're thirsty, then they should drink—and if they're not, then they shouldn't worry. Those who've had changes in blood flow to their brain (caused by strokes, for example) can be an exception, and may need to have their fluid intake monitored. ■

# Bathmate's MAGIC Air-cushion!

TRY  
IT FOR  
YOURSELF -  
FREE HOME  
DEMO

Bathmate is the safest, simplest way to enjoy a proper bath - anytime, anywhere. Bathmate's UNIQUE air-cushion forms a comfortable seat and back rest.

- Over 40,000 sold
- Suits most baths, even small ones
- No installation required



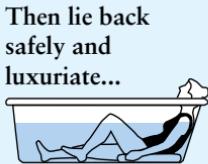
IN

Deflates...  
easing you  
gently down...



RELAX

Then lie back  
safely and  
luxuriate...



OUT

At the touch of  
a button...up  
and safely out...



For a FREE brochure  
**FREEPHONE 0800 072 9898** **ASK FOR EXT 76157**

Visit [www.nationwide-mobility.co.uk](http://www.nationwide-mobility.co.uk) or write to Freepost Nationwide Mobility

For more information and a FREE colour brochure return  
this coupon to **Freepost Nationwide Mobility**



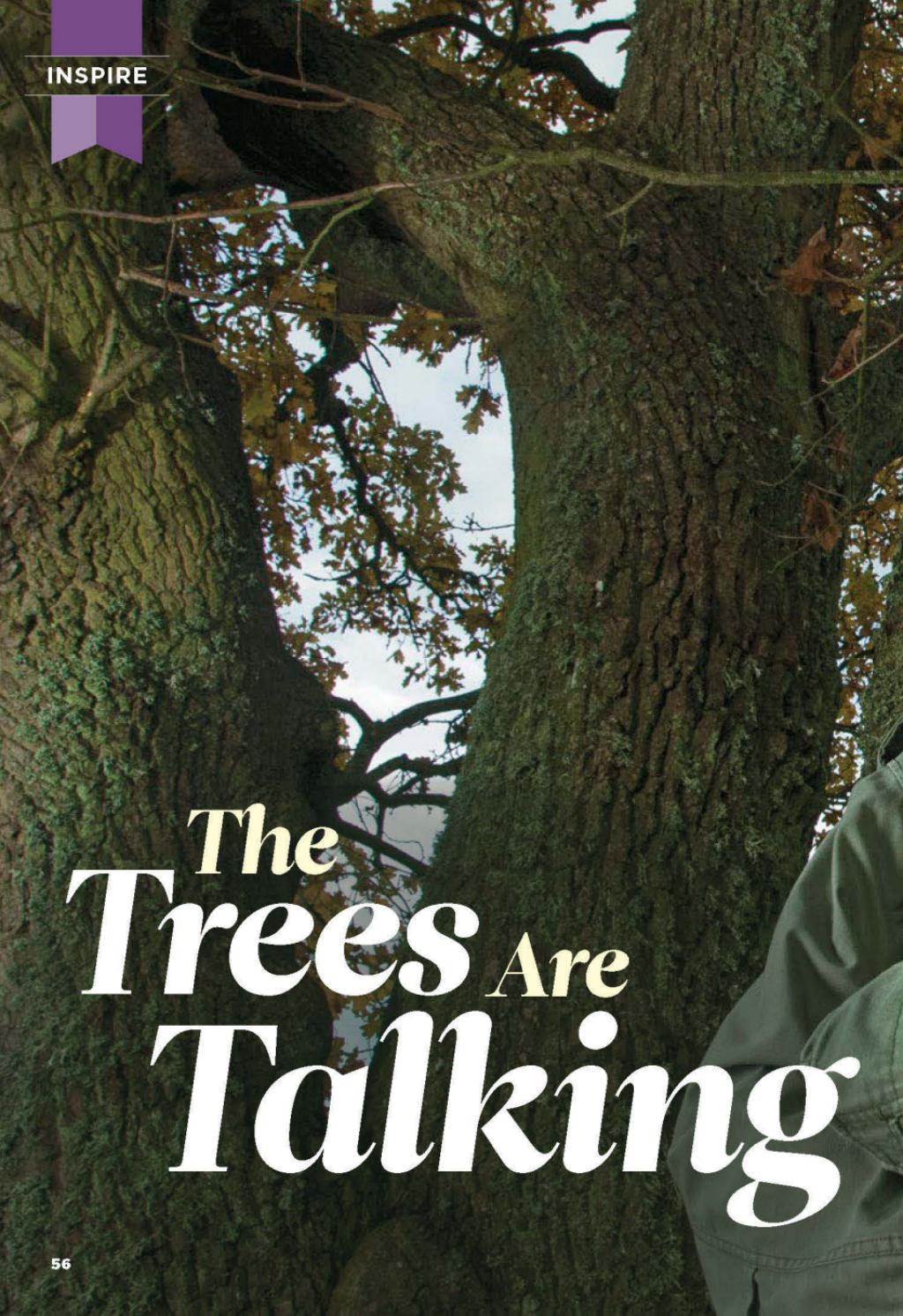
**76157**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No. \_\_\_\_\_

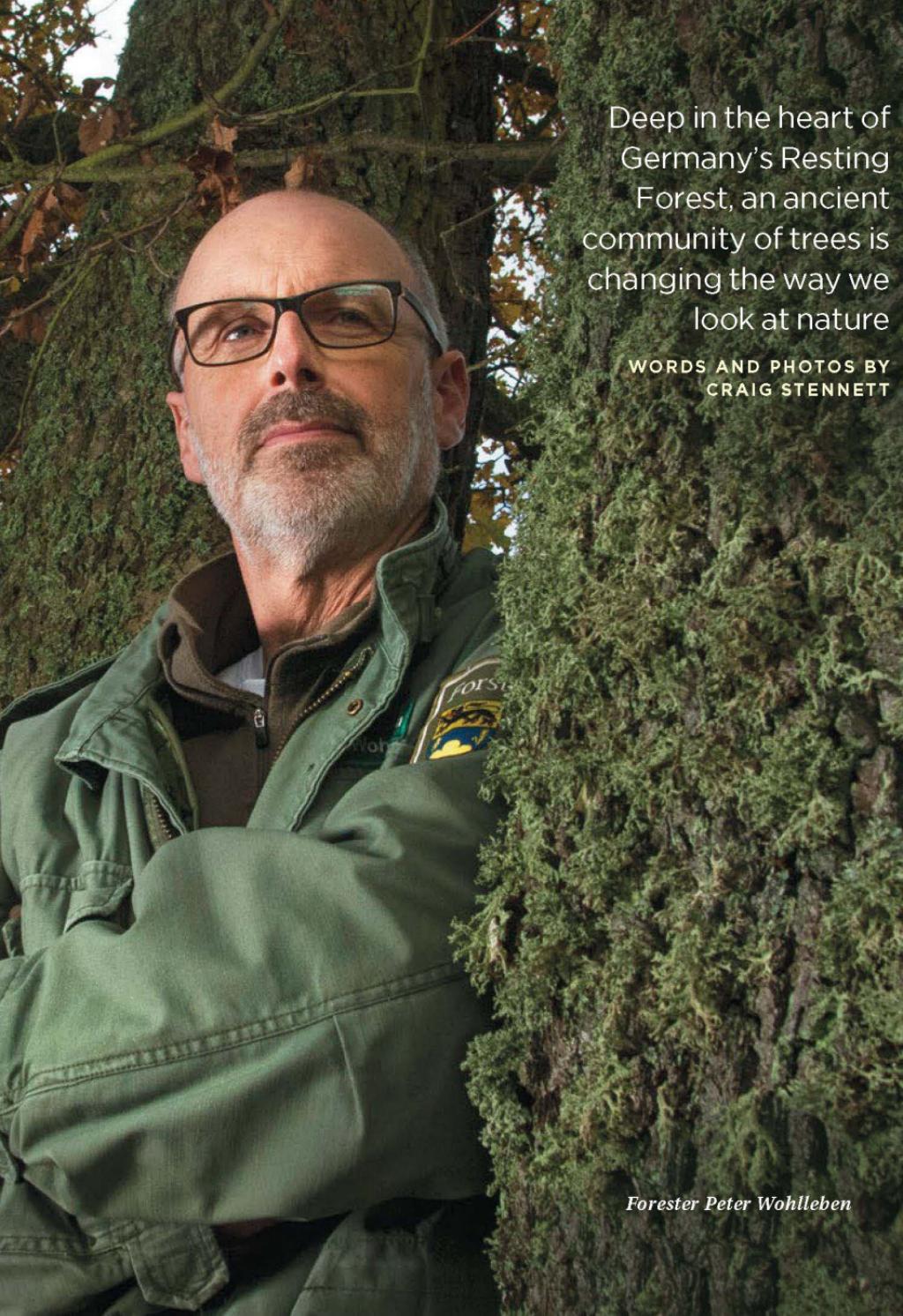
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Nationwide  
Mobility



# The Trees Are Talking



Deep in the heart of  
Germany's Resting  
Forest, an ancient  
community of trees is  
changing the way we  
look at nature

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY  
CRAIG STENNELL

*Forester Peter Wohlleben*

In his mythical trilogy *Lord of The Rings*, J R R Tolkien tells the tale of a magical ancient wood inhabited by Ents—walking, talking tree herders tasked with the protection of Middle Earth's primeval woodlands. Today, situated within middle Europe, there stands another ancient wood—but unlike Tolkien's fantasy, this one is real.

In the German state of Rhineland-Palatinate, nestled tightly along the Belgium border, sits the 4,000-year-old *Ruheforst*, comprised of beeches, West Germany's indigenous tree species. A visit to this woodland entails a journey of twisting single track roads, densely bordered by monocultured forestry plantations stretching to the horizon. Even by mid-morning, the mists haven't lifted from the road and the surrounding forests are dark in character. It's a landscape that seems saturated with legends.

Peter Wohlleben has been caring for the *Ruheforst* (which translates literally as "Resting Forest") for the last ten years. The 52-year-old could easily be described as the modern-day version of one of Tolkien's fictitious tree herders. Standing at a slender six-foot-four, he mirrors the

stature and presence of his surrounding beeches. Born in Bonn, the former German Republic's capital prior to reunification, Peter was trained as a traditional forester. Having already published quite a few titles, he struck gold in 2015 with *The Hidden Life of Trees*.

In his book, Peter knits together recent scientific discoveries on trees and their forest communities with his own practical knowledge as a forester in language that is accessible

to the layman. The manuscript is meticulously indexed with supporting scientific research papers.

"Most things sound unbelievable when you first hear about them," Peter

PEOPLE MIGHT THINK  
I'M A BIT CRAZY, SO  
IT'S IMPORTANT  
TO HAVE SCIENCE  
TO BACK  
THINGS UP

admits when we meet in the forester's lodge. "I wanted to give readers the opportunity to do their own research into what I'm saying. I was also aware that people might think I'm a bit crazy, so it was important to have the science in there to back things up."

**PETER'S REFERRING TO THE SCIENCE** that proves that there's more to trees and their forest environment than we've ever imagined. Biologists have long been aware that trees can count, remember



and learn from their experiences. They also pass their knowledge on in real time to the seedlings growing around them. Future seedlings receive handed-down wisdom from mother trees—the oldest and most dominant trees in a forest—while sick trees are supported by their community of tree neighbours. The sharing and redistribution of food and nutrients from one tree to the next takes place within the intertwined web of root systems throughout an ancient wood, something Peter refers to as “mother trees suckling their young.”

*Peter's book, The Hidden Life of Trees, was a bestseller*

Communication between trees, or “talking” as Peter prefers to call it, takes place by electrical signals via the mycelium, a fungal and root network just below the ground surface. It’s referred to by scientists as the “Wood Wide Web”. This web is key to systems of communication and mutual support within the forest. When under attack from foliage-eating insects, trees can disperse warning signals as a scent (specifically ethylene), which is carried by the wind, as well as electrically circulated alarm messages produced by the roots. This warns the rest of the forest

---

community to be prepared and activate their own defence mechanisms.

At the entrance to the forest we pass a crucifix several feet high and surrounded by wreaths. It soon becomes evident why this wood earned the name Resting Forest. As part of a wider strategy to make the community forest financially self-supporting, Peter has embarked on utilising the woodland as a burial ground. Ashes can be spread at the bases of the beeches and a plate with the family name is added to the trunk of the tree, acting as both a gravestone and marker for the burial spot. A fee is charged for this service. Alongside guided forest walks, the cemetery provision has enabled the forest to become profitable and so remain unfelled.

On approaching an old stump on the forest floor several feet away from a still-thriving beech, Peter pulls away the moss to expose fresh solid tree bark that's devoid of rot. "This stump is still alive", he explains.

It is this phenomenon, confirmed by scientific research from the University of British Columbia, that



***Resting Forest is so named because it also serves as a burial ground***

is so thought-provoking. "This tree was felled some 400 to 500 years ago. The inner section of hard wood has rotted but the bark is new and the layer beneath, where the essential sapwood and cambium lies, is still alive. Without photosynthesis from leaves in its canopy, it should have died. Yet it's still here. This means that its roots are being fed a sugar solution by the surrounding beeches.

Other trees—its forest friends or family—are keeping it alive!"

Amazingly, these processes are only observed in ancient woodlands.

---

I STARTED TO FEEL CONCERNED. I THOUGHT, *WHAT AM I DOING? I'M JUST DESTROYING EVERYTHING*

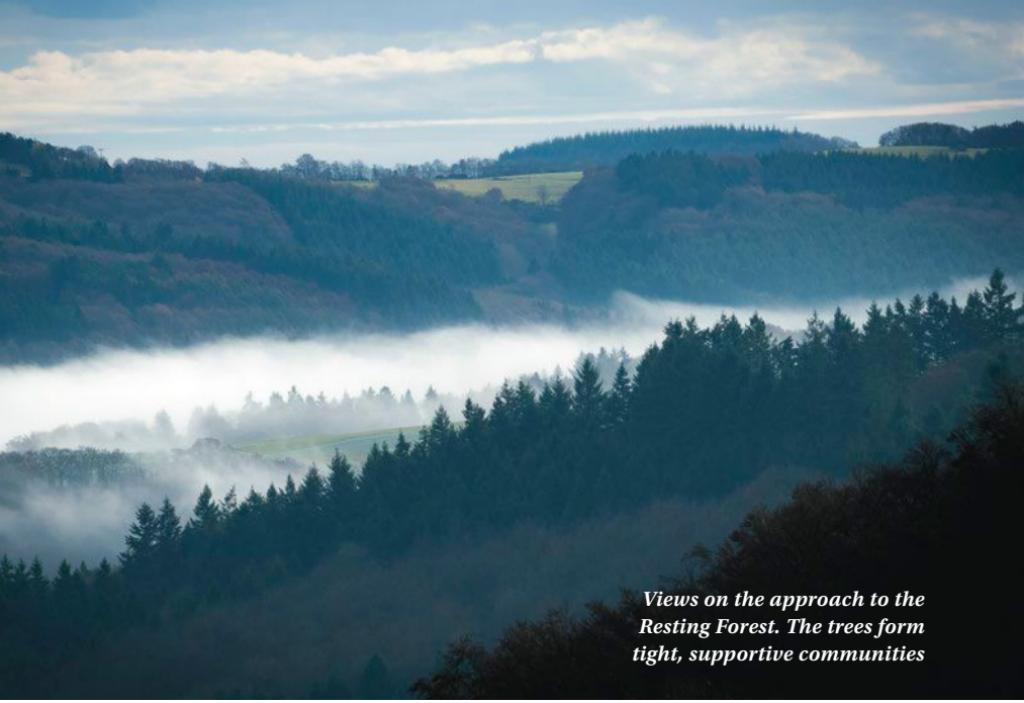
---

Modern-day forestry plantations produce only isolated trees, devoid of the all-important fungal and root network below ground. They therefore don't benefit from the

sharing of nutrients and other types of communication. These new monocultured forestry plantations are designed for quick tree growth. But they're silent woods and produce trees and timber that are markedly less healthy and strong than their wild forest cousins.

"On visiting private woods in Germany and Switzerland, which treat their forests more lovingly, I discovered that the timber they produced was stronger and more economically valuable," remembers Peter. "Twenty-five years ago, my training taught me to look at the forest in a very simple way. You judged a tree in milliseconds on its economic value, never really understanding the bigger picture."





*Views on the approach to the Resting Forest. The trees form tight, supportive communities*



As we walk among the towering beeches, he continues, “Traditional foresters know as much about a forest as a butcher knows about animal welfare. A tree’s well-being is only important in terms of the lumber that can be produced from it.

“At the beginning of my career, I

didn’t know any better either. That was just how we were taught then.”

Recalling his own journey to understanding the forests, he says, “When I started my career in 1987, I worked like all the foresters—felling trees and spraying logs with insecticides. But then I just started to feel concerned about it all. I thought, *What am I doing? I’m just destroying everything.*”

“About 20 years ago I was organising log-cabin tours and survival courses for tourists in the woods. Things the visitors would notice and pick up on made me re-evaluate my own perceptions.”

He started to read extensively on the behaviour of trees and learned

that, in a natural state, trees operate as communal beings. "It's like communism," he explains. "They support the other members of their forest community unreservedly."

Continuing with his observational and holistic approach to forestry work, Peter decided to stop using heavy logging machinery—a cause of acute damage to woodland due to the compaction of the soil, which destroys the essential mycelium layer. Instead he reintroduced horses to the land, using old breeds such as Rheinisches Kaltblut to work the forest as in bygone times. He's also eliminated the use of insecticides and is letting his woods develop naturally.

"Nature doesn't always mean the survival of the fittest, as we've all been taught. Darwin was a revolutionary in his time, but nowadays we've moved forward from this thinking. We now understand that many species work together to achieve success and forests are inherently social networks."

"In a forest, fast growth is always a negative. Mother trees shroud their offspring with the huge canopies they produce, so only three per cent of light reaches the ground. Slow growth of young trees is proven to be a prerequisite of longevity. Fast growing always leads to an early demise within tree years."

**AS WE LEAVE THE PEACE** and tranquillity of this enchanted space, Peter, in a philosophical fashion, comes to a conclusion about our human relationship with the "elephants of nature" that surround us.

"Time for trees is of a different order to humans. They're operating so slowly that it seems to us that nothing is happening. But in truth, it's us that are moving too fast." ■

---

*The Hidden Life of Trees, What They Feel, How They Communicate* by Peter Wohlleben is available now, published by Greystone Books.



#### TREE-MENDOUS ARCHITECTURE

*These beautiful buildings work alongside nature—with stunning results:*



SOURCE: BOREDPANDA.COM

PARTNERSHIP PROMOTION

# Concerned About How To Protect Your Family's Nest Egg?



You've worked hard all your life to leave something for your children and grandchildren—isn't it important that you protect it as much as possible?

If you're like many people, one of the biggest worries as you grow old is being able to give your family a helping hand. Like most, you'll want to make sure that when you die, what you've worked all your life for goes to the people you love the most.

It's a sad fact, but as you grow old, you have to pay for many things that you have once done yourself. And these things—such as help at home, getting around and care fees—can soon make a big difference to that nest egg you'd planned to leave for your family's future.

## COULD YOU USE A TRUST IN YOUR WILL?

Many people have "mirror" or "joint" Wills, with a couple leaving their share of the family home and savings to each other and then children, grandchildren or other relatives. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to use a trust in your Will to help protect what you've worked hard for. The right type of trust allows you to provide for those you care about the most, without seeing your share of the home and savings being used to

fund their care fees, or passing outside your family through relationship breakdowns.

## HAVE YOU PUT LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY IN PLACE?

Impairment of the mind shouldn't just be associated with illnesses such as Alzheimer's—as an accident or illness, for which there is often no warning, can leave an individual unable to manage their own finances. Many people wrongly assume a spouse or children can automatically step in, but without an Enduring or Lasting Power of Attorney in place, both solely and jointly owned accounts can be frozen. A long, complex and expensive court process then awaits your loved ones to gain control of your affairs.

## WHAT NEXT?

Request your **FREE** information pack by calling *Reader's Digest Legal* on **0800 031 9516** and quoting reference **RDL 20**.

*Reader's Digest Legal is a service provided by Co-op Estate Planning*

**PLAYING WITH LIGHT AND COLOUR.** The newly wedded couple steps out of a French registry office in Provence and into a shower of colourful confetti. The tradition of throwing rice—a symbol of fertility and abundance—at the bride and groom has fallen out of favour. Nowadays, wedding guests throw flower petals or paper confetti instead.



A globe-trotting photographer  
finds emotion rather  
than perfection in couples'...

# WEDDING STORIES

BY MARINKA PUŠLAR  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAMO ROVAN

**► INDIAN BRIDE HOLDING A COLOURFUL BOUQUET.**

She solemnly stares ahead, moments before she will step into the garden of the Villa di Maiano near Florence, where the ceremony is to take place. Flowers were a compulsory part of wedding ceremonies even in the times of the ancient Greeks and Romans, who believed that the herbs in the bride's hair chased away evil spirits.

**► A FORTUNATE FUSION OF NATURE AND CIVILIZATION.**

The wedding couple, surrounded by bridesmaids and groomsmen, kiss in a typical Irish coastal landscape. In the past, the wedding kiss was legally binding and had the same meaning as signing a wedding certificate today. Apparently, the kiss in the picture is so hot that bridesmaids and groomsmen have to fan themselves to cool down.

**► A PLAYFUL MOMENT AT A WEDDING IN PERU.** The bride laughs as the bridegroom struggles to remove the garter from her leg with his teeth. This is a centuries-old tradition: in the old days, everything that the bride wore at the wedding ceremony was thought to bring good luck, so everybody grabbed at her. They say that the tradition of throwing the bouquet was originally introduced to stop the grabbing.



► **PORTRAIT OF A BRIDE WITH A FISHERMAN.** The bride stands on the pier and stares at the narrow strip of light on the horizon. Will her marriage be as calm as the sea stretching in front of her? Coastal weddings are a beautiful way to celebrate the happiest day in the life of a couple. One of the reasons is that choosing wedding decorations requires a pile of money and hours of worry, but this simple ocean setting offers the perfect backdrop—without the stress.

► **FLORINE, THE SWEET-TOOTHED DONKEY, FANCIES A SNACK.** And what is the donkey doing at the wedding? This is a so-called barn wedding, increasingly popular even with couples of urban background. The wedding in question took place in Lübeck near Hamburg, Germany. Donkey pens were in the immediate vicinity of the wedding venue.

▼ **DRAMATIC AND PASSIONATE.** The newlyweds dance their first dance as man and wife at a wedding in Paris. Music is one of the many details to consider when planning a wedding. And what are some of the most popular tunes couples choose as a centrepiece of their reception? "At Last" by Etta James, "A Thousand Years" by Christina Perri, "By Your Side" by Sade and "Can't Help Falling in Love" by Elvis Presley. ■





Pottery designer and businesswoman **Emma Bridgewater** set up her iconic brand over 30 years ago, after failing to find a special cup and saucer to give her mother

# If I Ruled the World Emma Bridgewater

**☛ I'd get rid of takeaway cups.** Instead of rushing out of cafes, people would take the time to sit down, reflect and enjoy their tea or coffee with a proper cup or mug. Disposable cups are a source of litter and make whatever drink you have in them taste disgusting too.

**It would be illegal to build social-housing projects without proper infrastructure.** New developments should have good transport systems factored in, along with schools, a village green and cafe to make the best possible place for people to live. I'd be glad to subsidise architects to ensure that houses are beautifully designed—everyone deserves somewhere they're proud to call home.

**I'd sit all the bishops down and tell them to stop fussing about sex.** There's a lot of real and important work the Church ought to be doing instead—such as putting kindness at the top of their agenda. My



ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES SMITH

grandfather was a clergyman so the Church has always been a part of my life, but I feel that its members should become more engaged in our society and prioritise helping those in need.

**Every mile of railway track shut down in the 1960s by Dr Beeching would be re-opened.** I'd make it easier for people in this country to travel around on an enlivened rail network, getting to know our marvellously varied landscape and historic architecture. I'd love to have dining cars back in trains again—with proper cups and saucers, of course. I'm longing to explore Wales; I'd make the journey by train and eat and drink in style on the way.

**Glass bottles would be part of a deposit-return scheme.** The success of the plastic-bag levy has proved that we're quite happy to have a legislative nudge that says, "You want to behave better for the environment". Countries with deposit-return systems have benefitted from a positive impact on reduction of litter and an increase in recycling. When my brother and I were kids, we'd rush around finding old soda bottles that we'd exchange for money—which we re-invested in retail by spending on sweets!

**We'd talk more about the benefits of privately owned companies.** At the moment the tax system rewards you for selling your business rather than

encouraging you to keep it in the family. This is a shame because shareholders are encouraged to make decisions based purely on profit margins, rather than making socially responsible decisions a priority. For instance, our company has forsaken making extra profit by keeping our workforce in Stoke-on-Trent, rather than going somewhere like Indonesia. But we're so proud to be one of the largest employers of potters in the area.

**Pubs would have live music once a week.** Not for acts that are looking to get famous, but simply to entertain people and give them a great night out in their local pub.

**I'd run a campaign to show people how politically powerful they can be by taking a second to consider where things are made.** When we buy cheap clothes, we all know they may have been made in unpleasant circumstances by people with minimal rights and pay—and we should never be exploiting that. In this country, there are laws that prevent that from happening. And isn't that what we should all be aiming for—understanding the real cost of things? ■

**As told to Caroline Hutton**

---

**Details of new Emma Bridgewater spring products and more can be found on her website, [emmabridgewater.co.uk](http://emmabridgewater.co.uk)**

# Life Stories; From The Queen's Coronation To My Grandma's Biscuit Tin

BY TOM HARNETT

**E**veryone has a story to tell and, yes, yours is every bit as interesting as anything you'll find on the shelf in your nearest bookshop.

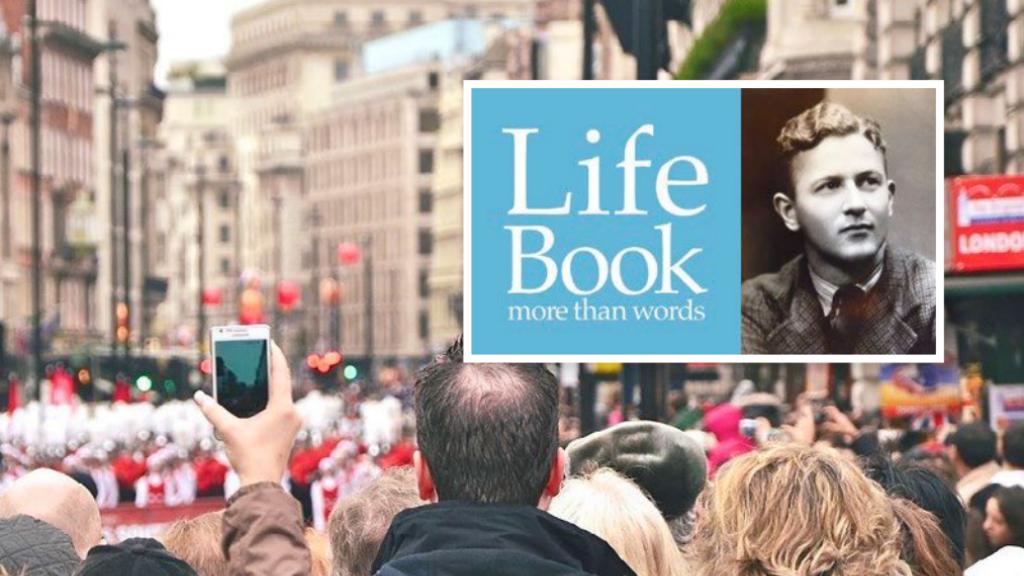
Your life story is shaped by your experiences, your memories and your own stamp on social history. Look at any historical event; people witness these together and retell the story from their point of view. This is the fascinating truth.

Think how many millions of people would recount the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II differently.



Alternative versions of the story would be told by a person who was there amongst the crowds, by the family who rushed out to purchase a TV set just for the occasion or even by the Canadian citizen watching the film that had been flown over the Atlantic by the RAF (a story in itself!).

Your life story, those hard-learnt lessons and experiences that sculpted the person you are today, all of which describe your legacy, is important. You might be thinking "Who would be interested in my life?" You may think no-one or perhaps only you would want to read about it, but have you



**Life  
Book**  
more than words



Call us on **0800 999 2280**  
or email **digest@lifebook.com**

ever told a story and observed all the while your audience hanging onto every word? Have they ever laughed when you laughed or cried when you cried? There is always an audience for your story—the audience who will hear, read and feel your words, transfixed by them.

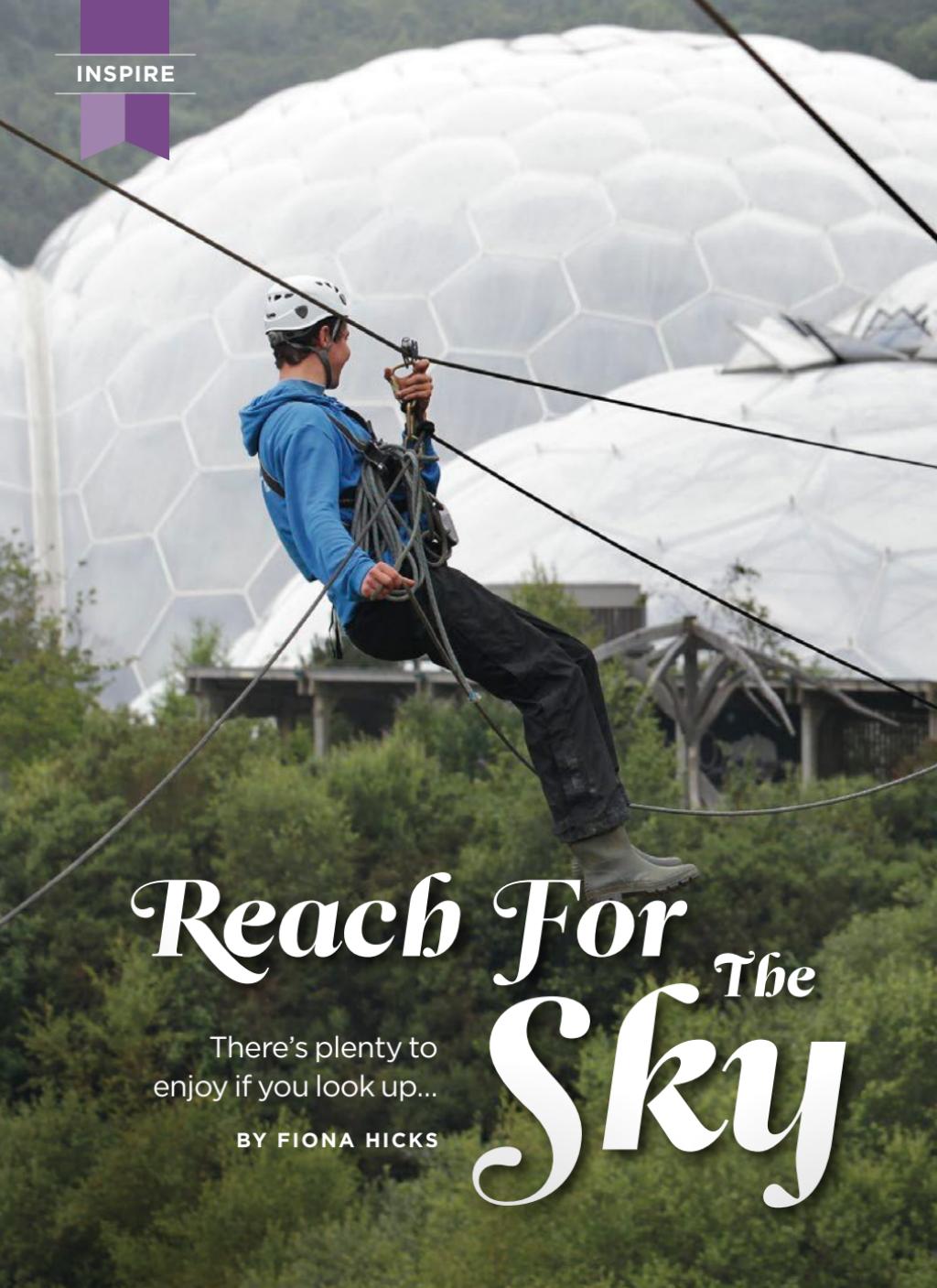
There are so many stories about our lives that our families have never heard, and those little details that can surprise and stupefy. I once learnt that my great-grandmother effectively rendered my grandma an orphan by giving her up as an infant, only for Grandma to later be found and raised by the family's matriarchal Great Aunt Olive instead.

How did my grandma comment when I asked her about this? "I wasn't too fussed—Mother did have a terrible habit of entering people's marriages and running off with their husbands, anyway." Thanks, Great-Grandma!

The fact of it is, these stories are lost in time if nobody undertakes the task of committing them to a tangible, written life story. I can no longer have a conversation with Grandma over muddy tea and slightly off-brand biscuits from her enigmatic biscuit tin, hearing about about how she has always been a little bit psychic.

Honestly, I miss listening to her stories and I stupidly never thought to write any of them down.





# Reach For The Sky

There's plenty to  
enjoy if you look up...

BY FIONA HICKS



## Skywire

### CORNWALL

We've all dreamt about being able to fly—and the Eden Project in Cornwall offers an experience that's as thrillingly close to the real thing as you can get this side of the Land of Nod.

At an eye-watering 740 metres, Skywire is the longest zip wire in Europe. Simply don a fetching red jumpsuit, goggles and a hard hat, and you can hurtle head-down the wire at an exhilarating 60 miles per hour. The "flight" takes you right over the top of the Eden Project's biomes, and the views of the surrounding gardens really do make you feel more like a bird than a human.

Admittedly, it's all over rather quickly, but there's plenty else to see at the site—and what better way to bring yourself back down to earth than by taking a trip through a rainforest?

■ Visit [edenproject.com](http://edenproject.com) for details



## Wingwalking

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE

You can sit in a plane, jump out of one and—if you can believe it—you can even walk across one *while in flight*. The Breitling Wingwalkers are a display team of experienced pilots and brave (and beautiful) ladies who perform atop the wings.



*The wingwalking team perform their "aerosuperbatics" all over the country*

The team tour the country during air-show season, putting on a spectacle of "aerosuperbatics" and human acrobatics.

But ordinary, less bendy folk can get on the wings too. From a First World War airfield in the Cotswolds, visitors are attached (very securely) to the wings of the plane and propelled

to the skies to experience flypasts, zoom climbs and steep dives.

Says pilot Steve Hicks, "We fly all sorts of people on the wing of our aeroplanes. I've even flown a 91-year-old...and he clambered on to the wing nearly as fast as I can!"

■ Visit [breitlingwingwalkers.com](http://breitlingwingwalkers.com) for details

## Paragliding

### DERBYSHIRE

Running off hillsides might not sound like the ideal pastime, but the floating through the air that follows may make you think otherwise.

Paragliders are known for being a friendly bunch and, with active clubs up and down the country, it's likely that there's a vibrant group near you.

Those who live in (or are visiting) the Peak District can make the most of the 30-year-old Parapente Paragliding School. They offer well-designed and comprehensive courses, covering intricacies of meteorology and air movement before moving to practical lessons.

All the instructors have years of experience and lessons are staggered—so any fear is gently blown away as you progress from low-level hops to cross-country travelling.

**■ Visit [fly-paragliders.co.uk](http://fly-paragliders.co.uk) for details**



## Skydiving

### CUMBRIA

This is something of a marmite activity: some can't think of anything worse than hurling themselves out of a plane; others can't think of anything more exhilarating. Our opinion is that if you are going to free-fall from 15,000 feet, you may as well have a nice view on the way down.



Skydive Northwest is one of the country's longest-established skydiving centres (which is, let's be honest, reassuring). Visitors can choose to do a tandem jump—when you're comfortably attached to a professional—or you can jump from a little lower in the air by yourself using a "static line", which opens up your parachute automatically. Either way, you'll be rewarded with a fantastic aerial view of Morecambe Bay and the glittering Lake District below as you descend.

■ Visit [skydivenorthwest.co.uk](http://skydivenorthwest.co.uk) for details

## Flying Tours

### SCOTLAND

With mountains, lush greenery and breathtaking coastlines, the Scottish Highlands can boast some of the most stunning views in the world. The trouble is, they're not easily accessible—unless, of course, you go by air.

Fly Scenic Scotland offers ten tours that cover Argyll and the West Coast of Scotland. Depending on the fly path you pick, you can zip across the Bridge over the Atlantic (also known as Clachan Bridge), zoom over Castle Stalker and even encircle Ben Nevis. If you look really closely, you may just be able to spy a determined climber or two.

The pilots at Fly Scenic are renowned for putting even the most nervous flyers at ease. For those who get a taste for the high life, there's even an option to take their own flying lessons in the region.

■ Visit [flyscenicscotland.co.uk](http://flyscenicscotland.co.uk) for details





## Kite Flying

### PEMBROKESHIRE

A spot of good old-fashioned kite flying is another great way to appreciate the vastness of the sky—and for this excursion, you can keep both feet firmly rested on the ground. Conveniently, Britain is Europe's windiest country, so there are plenty of blustery places ideal for

launching your own colourful, homemade contraption.

One site that's certainly worth a visit is the remote Barafundle Bay in Pembrokeshire. Widely regarded as one of the UK's most beautiful beaches, its expansive white sands make a brilliant



runway for a launch and the surfing thermals will keep your kite flying for minutes on end.

There's something wonderfully meditative about mastering a kite—and if the exertion gets you a little hot, you can always cool off in the clean water of the bay. The gentle waves make the pristine waters ideal for paddling.

■ Visit [visitpembrokeshire.com](http://visitpembrokeshire.com) for details

*Look out for spectacular views  
of our nearest neighbour, the  
Andromeda Galaxy*



## Stargazing

### NORTHERN IRELAND

Britain now boasts over 100 "Dark Sky Discovery" sites—places that are especially good for stargazing during a clear night. The first class of dark sky is the kind you'd find in the middle of the Australian outback. Our small (and densely populated) isle may not be able to offer that degree of darkness, but it does offer some sterling class-two and -three locations.

One of these is at the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre at Oxford Island, near Craigavon. City dwellers (or those close to much light pollution) can typically see 100 stars with the naked eye; in a cloudless night at Lough Neagh, gazers can not only see



*The Andromeda Galaxy*

The Milky Way, but also Andromeda—our nearest neighbouring galaxy that's home to more than 200 million stars. Take a thermos and while hours away contemplating the universe. ■

■ **Visit [oxfordisland.com](http://oxfordisland.com) for details**

---

**Has something skyward caught your eye?  
Email [readersletters@readersdigest.co.uk](mailto:readersletters@readersdigest.co.uk)  
and tell us about it!**

INSPIRE

Fool others about your intellect...or  
discover that they're fooling you!

# How To Appear Clever

BY LISA FIELDS



**S**HEEPISHLY, Kevin Adkins admits that when he's insecure, he uses big words to appear smarter.

"Only when I need to impress the person," says the 41-year-old. "Dates with women? Definitely. At the supermarket? Not so much."

Recently, when flirting with a stylist at the barber shop, he asked her to give him a "symmetrical" haircut, instead of just telling her to trim it evenly. And when he gave an attractive woman directions, he made a point of telling her that the two options they discussed were "equidistant," rather than simply saying that both were about the same distance.

Adkins isn't alone. Researchers have documented how people try to appear smarter or use criteria to decide whether others are smart. Many judgments are rooted in stereotypes, yet they persist.

**"PEOPLE LOVE TO TAKE** shortcuts when forming impressions of people," says Bogdan Wojciszke, a professor of social psychology in Poland who studies how people form impressions of other people. "We tend to make judgments based on easy cues, without thinking too much."

Because people know, consciously or unconsciously, that others form impressions of them after a glance or a short conversation, they may work

harder to give the "right" impression. There may be no validity to these impressions, yet people still value others' perceptions.

"It's almost a game that two people are playing," says Eric Igou, social psychologist at Ireland's University of Limerick who also does studies on the subject. "If the observer, person B, doesn't have the same theory, it can backfire." Person A may be perceived as pretentious instead of intelligent, for example.

Want to seem more intelligent? Here are some tips from the latest studies.

### **COMMUNICATE CLEARLY**

If you use a thesaurus when you're composing your emails, you may be guilty of trying to boost your intelligence perception.

"Smart people tend to have good vocabularies," says Daniel Oppenheimer, professor of cognitive psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles. "People think, *If I can show that I have a good vocabulary, I'll sound smarter.*"

But Oppenheimer's research shows that authors are deemed smarter when writing is easier to understand. Using big words just to impress people may actually have the opposite effect.

"People associate intelligence with clarity of expression," Oppenheimer explains, adding that smarter people *do* use longer words in their writing—but their aim is still to write clearly.

## WEARING GLASSES MAY HELP

According to a survey by the UK-based College of Optometrists, 43 per cent of people think that glasses make people look smarter, and 40 per cent of people consider wearing clear lenses to seem intelligent.

"Glasses are easily noticeable and allow us an instant inference without



A FRENCH STUDY FOUND THAT WOMEN WHO OVERHEAR MEN TELLING JOKES BELIEVE THEM TO BE SMARTER AND MORE ATTRACTIVE

effort," says Wojciszke, who teaches at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Sopot, Poland. "Many people considered wise—such as professors and mature statesmen—wear glasses more frequently than fools. So any cue associated with wisdom—thick books, fluent speech, even grey hair—may give rise to the impression of smartness."

## MEN: TELL SOME JOKES!

A French study published in the journal *Psychological Reports* found that women who overhear men telling funny jokes believe them to be smarter and more attractive than men who converse about mundane

topics. There may be some validity to this, because a certain level of intellect is required to consistently make humorous remarks.

"People with a good sense of humour show higher intelligence," Wojciszke confirms. "So men can use humour as an easy and honest—hard to fake—sign of intelligence."

## SMILE AUTHENTICALLY

People whose smiles appear authentic, with wrinkles around the eyes, are judged to be more intelligent than people whose smiles seem fake, according to a study in the *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*. There's no correlation between smiles and smarts; judgments are fuelled by hunches.

"People often rely on two types of biases when forming impressions," says study author Susanne Quadflieg, lecturer in experimental psychology at the University of Bristol. "The so-called 'halo' effect: if they have a spontaneously favourable impression of a person—and authentic smiles can elicit a rapid favourable response—they tend to judge other characteristics, such as intelligence of the person, more positively too. And the 'what's beautiful is good' effect: if people find someone else attractive—and an authentic smile tends to enhance attractiveness—they are inclined to assign other good qualities to them, such as intelligence."

## READ UP!

One survey discovered that more than half of Britons admitted to pretending they'd read classics such as *War and Peace* to sound smarter. You may seem more impressive in the moment, but you may not be able to keep up the ruse.

"Most of our daily interactions with others are very short and superficial," Wojciszke says. "However, we're less easily fooled during prolonged or repeated interactions."

## MAKE EYE CONTACT

If someone looks at you while you're talking, you're more likely to think they're clever.

"Good eye contact means the other person is responsive to what you're doing or saying," Wojciszke says. "If they're not responsive, this means that either you're dull or they're dumb. With such a choice, no wonder most of us prefer to think they're dumb."

This perception may be grounded in truth: researchers at Brandeis University in Massachusetts, US found that conversationalists who maintained eye contact rated higher on IQ tests than those who avoided someone's gaze.

## PASS ON THE BOOZE

Alcoholic beverages lower perceived intelligence levels. A study in the *Journal of Consumer Psychology* found that people holding wine or beer are judged less intelligent than those holding soft drinks or water.

"We frequently see some degree of cognitive impairment following alcohol consumption," says study author Scott Rick, professor of marketing at the University of Michigan. "That acts as a lens through which we view people who drink."

## BEING NICE COUNTS, TOO

Wojciszke's research has shown that self-esteem rises when people perceive themselves to be intelligent, but others appreciate different traits.

"People will like you not because of your smartness, but because of your warmth and kindness," he says. "However, besides liking, there's also respecting, and this is indeed based on intelligence."

"So when you want others to like you, present yourself as a person who is nice rather than smart. But if you want others to respect you, present yourself as intelligent rather than nice." ■



## GOOD INVESTMENT?

In 2011, a woman bought a "non-visible" piece of art for more than £6,000.

SOURCE: NEATORAMA.COM

# *Should I* **DOWNSIZE MY HOUSE?**

It used to be that downsizing a house was just for those whose children were grown up and had left home—but more and more people are now choosing to downsize for a wide variety of reasons



If you have no mortgage and a house that's bigger than you now need, you could be sitting on a small fortune. And even if you do have a mortgage, the continual rise in property prices over the past few years may mean you could downsize and still walk away with a cash lump sum.

Jonathan Rolande of *Reader's Digest Property* comments, "The reality is that downsizing is one of the most common reasons people over 60 sell their property.

"Selling can of course be scary, but it can also be an exciting time to start a new chapter in a new location or somewhere close to your current home.

"Releasing the tied-up cash in your property means you could then help your children out with house deposits, retire early or splash it on the trip of a lifetime."

## **Some of the most common ways people spend the money they get from downsizing are:**

**RETIREMENT** To help them retire or take early retirement.

**ON THEIR CHILDREN** Rising university costs mean some parents now downsize to fund their children's education or to help them raise a deposit to get on the property ladder.

**PAY OFF DEBTS** Downsizing can be a viable way of paying off the debt and regaining control.

## **BUY A DREAM PROPERTY ABROAD**

Either as their main residence or a second home.

**A MORE SIMPLE LIFE** Downsizing can provide less clutter, less cleaning/maintenance and more spare time.

## **Should I downsize my house?**

Before taking the plunge and downsizing, it's important you work out all the cost—such as legal fees, stamp duty and estate agent fees. All of these eat into the money you will have at the end of the sale. It can also be a time-consuming and stressful process if there's a lengthy property chain or legal hold-ups.

If you do decide that downsizing is for you, *Reader's Digest Property* provides a hassle-free way to sell your property quickly. We provide a guaranteed cash offer for your home, with no fees and a sale completion time to suit you.

Call us on **0800 433 7979** and quote "RD17" to find out how much you could receive or visit **[readersdigest.co.uk/property](http://readersdigest.co.uk/property)**

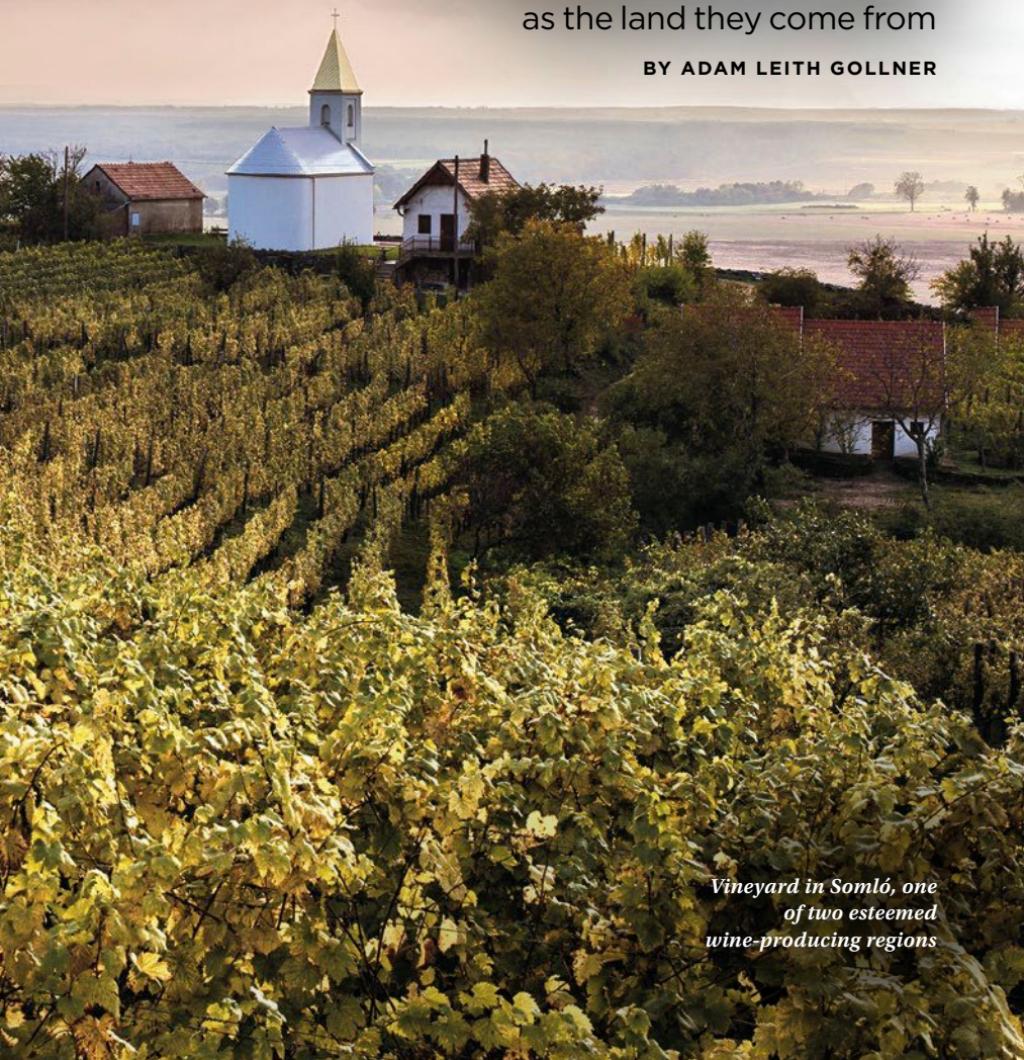
# The Lost Wines of Hungary





Once the best wines in Europe, they disappeared under Communism. Now they're back—and are as unique as the land they come from

BY ADAM LEITH GOLLNER



*Vineyard in Somló, one  
of two esteemed  
wine-producing regions*

**T**HERE ARE 27 VILLAGES in the foothills of Tokaj—all of them buried in fog. Everything is grey-white gauze: the raisins on their vines, the medieval castles, the volcanic Zemplén Mountains themselves.

It's a result of airborne moisture from the Bodrog and the Tisza rivers—but there's a primordial, ancient-in-every-way quality to life here on the far side of the Danube, where feeling stuck in the mists of time is a daily occurrence.

Bodó slows to avoid some figures that appear in the gloom. It's kids doing BMX tricks in the street. They wave at Bodó through the condensation.

"They're always here, riding around in the traffic," she says. "It's dangerous, so I'm going to hold an auction where winemakers sell old bottles of wine and donate the proceeds to build a bike park."\*

The kids are wearing headbands, punk rock t-shirts and skateboard shoes—and they make me think of my teenage friends when my family lived in Budapest in the early 1990s. My friends and I hung out in the

*“There’s a primordial quality to life here on the far side on the Danube, where feeling stuck in the mists of time is a daily occurrence”*

Driving can be difficult, which is why you still see horses and buggies navigating these backcountry roads. Fortunately, Judit Bodó, the 39-year-old winemaker at Bott Pince winery, has come to pick me up at my inn.

"It'll be better this way," she states, knowing I'd get lost trying to find the cellar. As we drive along the main road in the village of Tokaj (pronounced "TOKE-eye"), the centre of this region in northern Hungary,

local school grounds, playing football, making out, listening to the Ramones on boom boxes, and—because there was no enforced legal drinking age in Hungary then—drinking Hungarian furmint, the name for a local grape variety and one of Hungary's most distinctive white wines.

At that time, my father grew grapes on Mount Szent-György overlooking Lake Balaton, an hour and a half southwest of Budapest. Each year, the *szüret*, or grape harvest, was an occasion for family and friends to gather, drink first-run juice, and eat

\*She has since held two auctions and the BMX track was opened earlier this year.



*A dinner for  
winemakers in Somló*

paprika-laced beef stew cooked in a cauldron over an open fire. We would pick the fruit by hand, filling our baskets with grey-green bounty, and then toss it into a Kremlin-era grape crusher. My dad's wine, a thin white olasz riesling, wasn't sold commercially. Other than sweet Tokaji—the name for the wines from the region—and a few other mass-market bottlings, it seemed inconceivable that Hungarian minerally dry whites would ever find an international market.

Things have come a long way since then. Having dinner not long ago at an haute-hipster pizzeria in New York,

I was astonished to see not one, but five Hungarian wines on its list. The sommelier suggested Béla Fekete's white juhfark, a grape variety from Somló. It was incredible: smoky and rich, yet full of minerality.

**WHETHER HUNGARY WILL REGAIN** the stature it enjoyed from the 17th to 19th century—when it produced the best-regarded and most expensive wines in Europe—remains to be seen. What's clear, as I learned when I visited the two esteemed wine-producing regions, Somló (30 miles north of my father's vineyard) and Tokaj (about three hours from

Budapest in the opposite direction), is that the quality of Hungarian dry white volcanic wines has never been higher. Word isn't fully out about them yet, so they're still available at a discount. Many talented young growers are learning from legends such as Fekete how best to capture their regions' singular attributes, which bodes well for the future.

Fekete recently retired and sold his winery, but some of his wines still in barrels will be sold under his name. The label on Fekete's juhfark—the one that spurred this Hungarian adventure—recommends his wine be “ideally enjoyed with wild fowl by candlelight.”

“Wild pheasant works especially well,” affirmed Fekete, when I met him at his modest (now former) home in Veszprém near Somló. “And candles just make everything seem more romantic.” He spoke about romance and wild game with the kind of authority that only an 89-year-old winemaker known as “The Grand Old Man of Somló,” who often sports thick-lensed, government-issued glasses, can command. There’s an ancient folk belief that drinking Somló juhfark on one’s wedding night (as the Habsburg emperors did) would lead to the birth of male children. Let’s put it this way: it’s a white wine filled with testosterone.

Fekete made several wines, all white, all grown on the volcanic

hill of Somló. They also matched splendidly with pretzel sticks, as I learn when Fekete’s wife, Bori, put some out for us to snack on.

“The truth is, dry white Somló is good with everything,” she noted, pouring us another glass of their golden wine. “Wild meats, especially, but anything savoury.”

On the evening I arrived in Somló, I joined a party of winemakers

## TRAVEL TIPS

### LODGING

**TOKAJ:** Kisfalucska Vendégház, Bodrogkisfalud, Petofi u. 16. Charming guest house.

**SOMLÓ:** Sallai Vendégház, Somlóvásárhely, Somlóhegy 1321 hrsz. No-frills inn.

### DINING

**TOKAJ:** Sárga Borház, Mezőzombor 37. Classic country cooking; on the same property as Disznóko winery.

**SOMLÓ:** Kreinbacher Estate, Somlóvásárhely, Somlóhegy 1674 hrsz. Traditional Hungarian cuisine meets contemporary bistro.

### WINERIES

Make arrangements in advance for tours or sampling.

**TOKAJ:** István Szepsy, Mát, Batthyány út 59.; Bott Pince Winery, Tokaj, Szerelmi Princses 11.

**SOMLÓ:** Fekete Winery, Somlóvásárhely, GPS 47.138758, 17.378597; Somló Wine Shop, Somlóvásárhely, Somlóhegy 1321 hrsz.

in the vines on a hillside where a large black cauldron of stew hung over burning logs, and the scent of paprika was in the air—just as I remembered from my childhood.

Somló was formed millions of years ago from the lava-encrusted remains of a volcanic eruption. Whereas the Tokaj region consists of a number of volcanic mountains, the hill of Somló rises out of the flat plains like an immense pith helmet (hence its local name: “The Forgotten Hat of God”). The wines grown on these slopes take on the

destroyed. And throughout the Communist era, people were forced to make industrial wines to be exported to the Soviet Union. So nobody remembers what they used to be like. We’re still trying to rediscover how things are supposed to be.”

**BODÓ ECHOES THIS SENTIMENT** in Tokaj, a half-day’s drive away, where her winery is known for its distinctive dry whites.

“As in Somló, we don’t really know what the wines are supposed

---

***Throughout the Communist era, people were forced to make industrial wines to be exported to the Soviet Union***

---

soil’s smoky characteristics and are described as “fiery”—filled with an almost magma-like intensity.

“In the past, Somló wines were drunk when they were well-aged,” Imre Györgykovács explains, when we meet for a tasting at his ancient cellar midway up the hill. “They were full-bodied wines with a good balance of high alcohol and acidity.”

Did they taste anything like Somló’s wines do today?

“It’s hard to say what they tasted like,” he says, shaking his head. “During the Second World War, all the old stocks of local wine were

to be like,” she tells me. “People used to know which varieties did best in which climate, but under Communism all the wines here belonged to the government, and all they cared about was quantity.”

Since the end of state rule in 1990, winemakers have been finding new ways to allow Tokaj’s terroir to express itself. The soil here too consists of volcanic hillsides, although the region is much vaster than Somló.

Bodó views the region’s historical challenges in a hopeful light. “I don’t see the rupture of 1945 to 1990 as

a tragedy," she explains. "We're the first generation in Tokaj with the opportunity to get quality levels back to where they're supposed to be. We're basically a new wine region with 500 years of history—how amazing is that?"

This notion of moving things forward by maintaining traditions was echoed by the last person I met with in Hungary, the country's most important winemaker: István Szepsy. In many ways, he's the strongest remaining connection between the Hungarian wine world of today and its past. Not only did he make wines for the state during the Communist era, but his ancestor Máté Szepsi Laczkó (a priest in the 1600s) was

the first to set down in writing the method of making a type of sweet aszú wine. Given this lineage, it's no surprise that Szepsy today makes magnificent aszú, along with extraordinary dry wines.

Driving later that day, Szepsy shows me shrivelled raisins hanging on the vines, which will be used to make his award-winning sweet wines. We get out of the car and, standing on a dormant volcano, Szepsy gestures over the fog-coated valley beneath us.

"This is where I believe it is possible to produce the most exceptional dry wines in the world," he says. "It will take time to get there. But we're on our way." ■

FROM SAVEUR (JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2016) © 2016 BY ADAM LEITH GOLLNER, USED BY PERMISSION OF THE WYLIE AGENCY (UK) LIMITED.



## YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING

*Parents offered a snapshot of life with their little darlings:*

**"My four-year-old's timeline for getting dressed:**

7am: No socks on.

7.08am: One sock on.

7.38am: Two socks on.

7.39am: One sock on."

**"My six-year-old's superpower is knowing he doesn't like what we're having for dinner two hours before I've even decided what I'm making."**

**"One of the hardest parts of teaching your kids to be independent is watching them tie their shoelaces for eight minutes."**

**"I took my kids' screens away so we could spend some quality time together and it turns out they're really terrible to be around."**

SOURCE: BUZZFEED.COM

# Upgrading The Smartphone By Adding Simplicity

## SMARTPHONE TECHNOLOGY

**IS EVOLVING** every day, with an ever-increasing range of functions and uses becoming available from your handset.

For one manufacturer though, alongside all of the research and development into technical improvements, their most important evolution has been the addition of simplicity.

Doro, the world leader in easy-to-use mobile phones, is working hard to make smartphone technology accessible to all—regardless of age or ability.

The Doro Liberto® 820 Mini is undoubtedly a powerful smartphone, with all the functionality of the many competitors on the market, but



because of the simple and highly visual instructions, smartphone beginners particularly will be able to do more, faster.

Large icons clearly identify where to find each function, from making a call, to sending a message or accessing the internet, the 820 Mini has a simple logic. It also has loud and clear sound, and is hearing aid compatible.

In addition, for each of the main functions, there are step-by-step guides built into the phone to help the new user get familiar with the technology at their own pace.



## SPECIAL READER'S DIGEST OFFER!

Buy a new Doro Liberto® 820 Mini smartphone today, for the special price of £150, which **includes** an Anywhere SIM card connection and £40 of credit, allowing you to roam the UK with signal from O2, EE, Three and Vodafone.

**PLUS**, if you buy now, we will give you, **ABSOLUTELY FREE**, a protective cover for your phone (rrp £18).

Simply go to [readersdigest.co.uk/mobilephones](http://readersdigest.co.uk/mobilephones) or call **03454 133 953** and quote "Reader's Digest offer".



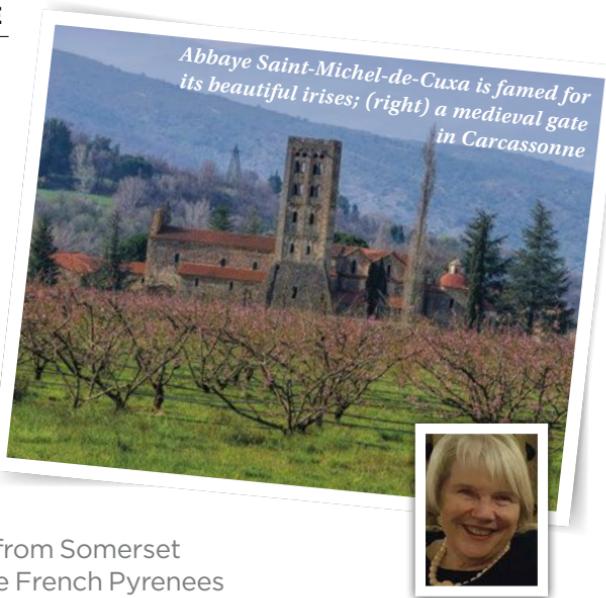
BY CATHY ADAMS

# My Great Escape: Familiar France

**Catherine Drinkwater** from Somerset revisits the towns of the French Pyrenees



*Cathy has danced in Rio, been microlighting in South Africa and hiked the mountains of Oman*



**S**TOP TWO DECADES AGO, I owned two mills in the foothills of the French Pyrenees. Nowadays, I don't get to go back very often, which is why I relished the opportunity to pay a visit with two friends last year.

May is the perfect time to travel to Southwest France. The weather is warm but not scorching, the cherries are ripe and the wildflowers abundant. I wondered how much could have changed in 20 years.

After flying into Toulouse, we hired a car and passed through the village of Prades, with its rose-marble pavements, up to the Abbey of Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa. To our delight, irises of every shade carpeted their field. The austere abbey walls were the perfect backdrop for the irises' frills.

Nearby is Villefranche de Conflent, a perfectly restored walled town overlooked by Fort Liberia. My energetic companions climbed the 740-odd steps to reach the top, but this time I went by 4x4!

We travelled north towards the town of Carcassonne. A small detour enabled us to clamber up to Château de Quéribus, one of the Cathar castles in the region. Despite

the ferocious wind, it was worth the climb for the breathtaking view across the snow-capped mountains.

The first glimpse of Carcassonne is magical, especially at sunset. Even the souvenir shops could not detract from its grandeur.

No amount of commercialisation can take away the delights of visiting this well-known part of France—and I haven't even mentioned the wine yet! Mountains and monuments, flowers and fruit, it will continue to draw me back.

#### ■ **PACK FOR THE PYRENEES**

easyJet flies to Toulouse from £22.49pp one-way ([easyjet.com](http://easyjet.com)). For more information on accommodation in the region, visit [chambresdhotes.org](http://chambresdhotes.org)



**WE WANT  
TO HEAR  
FROM  
YOU!**

Tell us about your favourite holiday (send a photo too) and if we include it on this page we'll pay you £50. Go to [readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us](http://readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us)



#### ***Postcard From... Madagascar***

THE INDIAN OCEAN ISLE cast off East Africa is enjoying a comeback, with new tours, infrastructure and hotels—including mega-luxe resort Miavana. Whether you come for the sparkling blue waters and pristine coastline, almost uninhabited lands carpeted with baobab trees or the incredible biodiversity (90 per cent of Madagascar's wildlife is found nowhere else on earth), the country is an otherworldly place to tick off your bucket list.

#### ■ **MAGNIFICENT MADAGASCAR**

G Adventures offers eight-day Baobab and Tsingy Explorer tours from £1,039pp (0344 272 2040, [gadventures.co.uk](http://gadventures.co.uk)).

# Things To Do This Month



## ZAGREB IN TWO MINUTES

■ SEE: ST MARK'S SQUARE Thanks to new direct flights with Monarch, the Croatian capital of Zagreb is more accessible than ever. Start by exploring the pretty, cobbled St Mark's Square—home of the colourful 13th-century St Mark's Church ([infozagreb.hr](http://infozagreb.hr)).

■ STAY: PALACE HOTEL Zagreb's original and best property, the recently renovated Palace Hotel, is a luxurious choice to relax in after a day's sightseeing. Its *strukli*, a traditional Croatian dish of bread stuffed with various fillings, is the best in town. Rooms start from £79 (+385 1 4899 600, [palace.hr](http://palace.hr)).

■ DO: THE MUSEUM OF BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS This bizarre museum is dedicated to failed relationships—and the objects left behind by past lovers. Weird but fun ([brokenships.com](http://brokenships.com)).

## SHORT/LONG HAUL: WINE HOLIDAYS

### SHORT: Douro Valley, Portugal

This region is famous for its zingy white wine and port. Explore with a self-driving holiday, which takes you from Porto, along the Douro River and vineyards and back again. Caminos offers trips from £450, excluding flights (01223 328721, [caminos.co.uk](http://caminos.co.uk)).



### LONG: Margaret River, Western Australia

This area is celebrated for its chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon. See it from the air with the Flying Corkscrew tasting tour. From around £360pp (+61 0403 847 607, [flyingcorkscrew.com.au](http://flyingcorkscrew.com.au)). ■



## TRAVEL APP OF THE MONTH

### Café Wifi, Free, iOS and Android.

Looking for free wifi while on holiday?

The app conveniently maps all nearby cafés with a connection and reviews the coffee.



# Three great reasons

to take Saga Travel Insurance with you



## Cover for most pre-existing medical conditions

Simply let us know about them before you buy.



## No upper age limit

Our cover is for the over 50s, with the option to add travellers of any age to your policy.



## High levels of cover

Up to £10,000 for cancellation and up to £10 million for emergency medical expenses.

*“I want to let you know how impressed I am with your customer care and service. I was alone in hospital in Lanzarote, and it was comforting to know you were available 24/7.”*

Mrs Woodham, Isle of Man



Saga's range of insurance products is designed specifically for our customers and is unique to us. Saga Travel Insurance is provided by Cigna Insurance Services (Europe) Limited who meets our high standards of quality and service.

If you're over 50 and would like a quote,  
call our UK-based advisers on

**0800 092 3568**

stating reference GP3716

or visit [saga.co.uk/travelinsurance](http://saga.co.uk/travelinsurance)



A backpacking trip turns disastrous, and a boy must make a heart-rending decision: should he leave his severely injured father to look for help?

# A MOUNTAIN OF **TROUBLE**

BY KEN MILLER

## **THE FRANK CHURCH—RIVER OF NO RETURN WILDERNESS**

is the broadest sprawl of untamed landscape in the United States, covering 2.4 million acres of central Idaho. Among the area's most spectacular attractions is the Bighorn Crags, a jagged range of 10,000-foot peaks set amid glittering alpine lakes. Near one of those pools, just after dawn on a cloudless summer day, 13-year-old Charlie Finlayson crouches inside his tent, getting ready for a long hike. He stows a water bottle and some snacks in his day pack, along with a sleeping bag, in case he has to set up temporary camp.



*David Finlayson snapped this photo of his son, Charlie, in the Bighorn Crags shortly before they attempted their most complex climb*

He leaves another water bottle for his father, David, fills the cooking pot to the brim with water from the creek and also sets out a week's supply of energy bars. Then he takes a GPS reading of the campsite.

He turns to David, who lies pale and gaunt in a bloodstained bedroll, his forehead marked with a purple gash, his jaw clenched in pain, his leg bandaged. "I'd better get moving," Charlie tells him.

"Good luck, kiddo," David says quietly. "Just take it slow and steady."

Outside the tent, Charlie pauses and mumbles a prayer. "I'm not coming back without a helicopter," he calls over his shoulder as he sets off.

**AT 52, DAVID FINLAYSON HAD ALREADY EXPLORED MANY OF THE WORLD'S WILD SPACES,** traversing major summits in Alaska, Europe and South America. David, a respected defense lawyer, had split up with Charlie's mom shortly after Charlie was born. The boy lived with his mother in a suburb of Boise, Idaho, but spent most summers with his father. Although Charlie was as calm and contemplative as his dad was voluble and restless—David called him "the Zen master" and "Good-Time Charlie"—both were passionate about nature. When Charlie turned 13, David introduced him to rock climbing.

By the time they set out for the Bighorn Crags in August 2015, Charlie was ready to take on complex climbs.

The pair crammed their packs with enough supplies to last two weeks. After driving six hours from Boise, they hiked for two days to reach Ship Island Lake, a mile-long jewel shadowed by tall, pointed rocks. In their first week, they completed two long climbs.

Their next ascent began on a Monday morning. Around noon, David was inching his way across a granite spire 800 feet above the valley floor, searching for a line of cracks that would lead them to the top. Charlie stood on a ledge a dozen yards to the right, lashed to a tree for safety as he fed rope to his dad. Reaching up, David dislodged a small stone, which tumbled off into the void. In the next moment, he heard a sharp crack from above as something larger broke loose. He barely had time to scream before everything went black.

When Charlie saw his father sailing through the air alongside the massive boulder that had struck him, he yanked on the rope. An instant later, an automatic braking device arrested the fall.

"Dad!" he called. "Are you OK?" There was no answer.

**DAVID HUNG 40 FEET BELOW HIS SON,** each hidden from the other's view. A minute passed before he managed to call out, "Charlie, are you there?"

"I'm here! Are you hurt?"



*"Charlie and I are alike," says David. "We love to be outside, away from everybody"*

Beneath David's dented helmet, his head was throbbing from a concussion. His left arm and foot were shattered; the shin bone protruded through the skin, and blood was dripping onto the rocks below. A vertebra in his upper back was fractured. The pain came from so many places that it nearly knocked him out again.

"I think I've broken some bones," he shouted.

"What do I do? What do I do?" Charlie sounded frantic.

"Can you lower me about 20 feet? There's a ledge there."

Charlie let the rope play out slowly. When David reached the ledge, he yelled for his son to lower his climbing pack, which held a first-aid kit. But Charlie was still anchored to a large pine tree, and the pack kept

getting stuck in the branches. After readjusting the anchor, Charlie managed to land the pack perfectly.

With his right hand, David slathered his leg wound with antibiotic cream, covered it with gauze compresses, and began wrapping it in athletic tape. He felt detached from his own body, as if it belonged to someone else, but he didn't want Charlie to have to see the jutting bone. Once it was covered up, he called for the boy to abseil down and join him, shouting instructions all the way. When Charlie arrived, the two of them added more tape and tightened it. "Tell me it's going to be OK," Charlie pleaded, struggling to control his fear.

"It's going to be OK," David told him, trying to believe it. "But we need to get off this mountain." He proposed a plan: Charlie would lower David half a rope length at a time, then lower himself to the same level, set a new anchor, and begin again.

Although the pulley system enabled the 6.5-stone child to bear the weight of a 13.5-stone man, the process proved agonising for both of them. David was dizzy and nauseated, and whenever his left side touched the cliff face, the pain was almost unendurable. With each pitch, he had to hammer a peg one-handed into the rock, and Charlie had to untangle 50 yards of rope and thread it through the anchor. As the hours passed, David fought to remain

conscious. "If I pass out," he said, "don't stick around. Hike back up the trail as fast as you can."

"You won't pass out," Charlie assured his father, and himself. "We're going to make it."

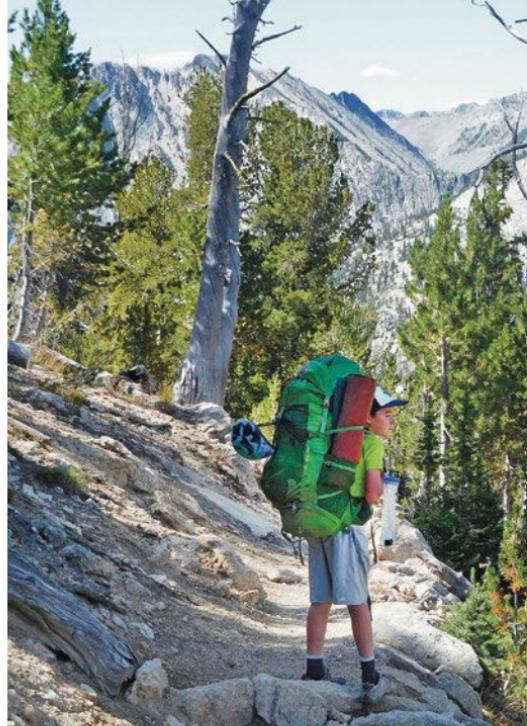
## **IT WAS NEARLY DUSK WHEN THE EXCRUCIATING ABSEILING FINALLY**

delivered David and Charlie to the base of the cliff, and the temperature had dropped to four degrees. In his shorts and light jacket, David was shaking with cold and exhaustion. "That's enough for today," he said. "You'll have to go get our sleeping bags so we don't freeze to death."

Their gear was in their tent, more than a mile down a steep slope.

Charlie took off running. He grabbed the sleeping bags and stuffed a backpack with warm clothes and energy bars. Realising they would need water, too, he used his filter pump to fill several bottles from the lake. By the time he found his way back, night had fallen.

David saw a pinpoint of light—his son's headlamp—floating toward him through the blackness. "Good-Time Charlie!" he exclaimed through chattering teeth. Charlie zipped him into a sleeping bag. He propped the injured leg on a rock to slow the bleeding. He made sure his father ate some dinner, then crawled into his own bag.

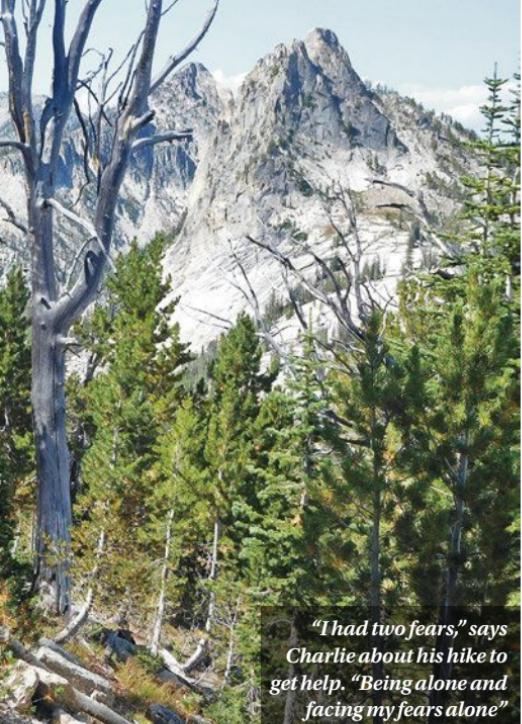


Worried that David would die if he fell asleep, Charlie kept the conversation going; they talked about past travels, the constellations, the accident. Eventually Charlie allowed himself to catnap—immediately checking on his father each time he awoke.

David, however, was in too much pain to drift off. He tried to distract himself by counting out his breaths. But breathing was painful, so he counted stars.

*There's a chance I'll survive, he thought. But there's also a good chance I won't. And then what would happen to the kid?*

David kept counting.



*"I had two fears," says Charlie about his hike to get help. "Being alone and facing my fears alone"*

## WHEN THE SUN ROSE ON THEIR CAMP, CHARLIE WAS RELIEVED TO SEE

that his father was awake and alert. But the mile-wide cordon of boulders, many as big as cars, was a far less welcome sight. The pair huddled in their sleeping bags for an hour or two, until the chill lifted. "Let's go, Dad," Charlie said. "This could take some time."

After wrapping more tape around the blood-soaked bandage on David's leg, they started down the slope. David dragged himself through the obstacle course inch by inch, leaving a trail of red. When he couldn't manoeuvre between

the rocks, he hauled himself over them, crawling up one side and sliding down the other. Sometimes he lost control, landing on one of his shattered limbs and blacking out briefly from the pain. He woke each time with Charlie's tense face looming over him.

"I'm fine," David would say, attempting to smile. The boy ran ahead periodically, scouting for the least torturous path, then trotted back to offer guidance. "Just another foot," he coaxed. "Just a few inches."

They reached their campsite around 4pm. David plunged his leg into the lake to clean it, and Charlie—unfazed by the gore—covered it with a new dressing.

Toward evening, Charlie cooked dinner on the propane stove. He wolfed down his portions of pepper steak and chicken teriyaki, but his father was too nauseated to eat more than a few bites.

"Charlie," David said, "you're going to have to go look for help in the morning."

Picturing himself separated from his father by vast tracts of wilderness, Charlie burst into tears. "What if I never see you again?" he wailed.

"I'm sorry, kiddo," David said. "We don't have a choice."

That night, Charlie slept with his arms around his dad. David stared out through the tent's mesh window, counting stars.

Just after dawn, Charlie lifted his

pack onto his back and headed off on the trail, hell-bent on bringing back a helicopter that would carry his father to safety.

## **CHARLIE'S DESTINATION WAS THE TRAILHEAD, 12 MILES AWAY,**

where a couple of volunteers lived in a cabin equipped with a two-way radio. The path rose gently at first, but Charlie knew it would soon grow steeper, reaching 9,400 feet before plunging into a valley and climbing again. Grizzlies and mountain lions frequent the surrounding woods and as he walked, Charlie blew his emergency whistle to ward them off.

After a mile, the route met a trail to another lake. Following his father's instructions, Charlie took the detour, shouting to anyone who might be camped there. After a few hundred yards, however, he stopped to calculate the odds: it was a weekday, when visitors to the wilderness are more sparse. If he continued on the detour and encountered no one, he'd have thrown away a valuable hour. He muttered a swearword under his breath and hurried back towards the main trail.

The hike grew more strenuous as the trail climbed up toward the pass. As Charlie's heart rate rose, so did his anxiety level. Images flit through his mind of Dad writhing in agony, eyes rolled back. He focused instead on the rhythm of his footsteps.



*David and Charlie, pictured just days after the accident, have plans to go rock climbing together again*

## **AROUND THE THREE-MILE MARK, HE HEARD VOICES AND SHOUTED,**

"Hello! Can you help me?"

Sprinting up the path, the boy encountered two tall, stubble-faced men on their way down—Jon Craig and his 19-year-old son, Jonathan. Choking back tears, Charlie described his plight to the pair and showed them the campsite marker on his GPS.

The Craigs debated whether to turn around and accompany young Charlie or forge on to find his father. "Please go to him," Charlie said, insistent but calm.

"There are three groups camping by Airplane Lake in the next valley," Jon told Charlie, circling the location

on his map. "They can help you get where you need to be." The two men disappeared down the trail.

After cresting the pass, Charlie took the side route toward the lake. His heart sank as he realised that none of the groups were there any longer.

Back on the trail, Charlie heard more voices in the distance. He blew his whistle hard and called out, and the voices answered.

Following his ears, Charlie groped his way through the pines until he came across a different pond, half a mile away. There he stumbled upon a married couple, their three children and their family friend, Mike Burt.

Hearing the urgency in Charlie's voice, Mike, a former marine, offered to run the demanding nine miles to the volunteers' cabin, where he hoped to call in medical aid for David. Charlie followed him to make sure that help was indeed coming.

## SOMETIME THAT EVENING, DAVID FINLAYSON AWOKE

in hospital. Doctors had immobilised his arm and leg and stabilised his spine with a brace. Over the coming months, he would undergo several major surgeries and eventually be able to climb again. But on this night, through the morphine glow, he tried to remember his rescue.

He recalled the Craigs arriving at his campsite. When they told him they'd spoken with Charlie, he forgot his pain; he wanted to get up and dance. A young ranger (dispatched after Mike Burt reached the volunteers' cabin) showed up soon afterward. She kept David company until he was lifted into a helicopter.

The next day, Charlie arrived at David's bedside. Through the tangle of ropes that are IV drips, father and son hugged. Good-Time Charlie, the Zen master, had kept his promise. He brought back a helicopter. ■

\* \* \*

### KEEP IT MUM!

*Twitter users reveal the funniest texts they've received from their mothers:*

**"Aunt Mary died. Lol." She thought lol meant "lots of love".**

**"You're amazing" autocorrected to, "You're adopted".**

**"Where are you? Your friend Matt is here. He is drunk. I gave him Nutella."**

**"How are you question mark."**

**"Can you come over? I want you to take a selfie of me."**

SOURCE: BOREDPANDA.COM

# Could You Remortgage And Save Money?

Switching to a new mortgage payment deal saves many people lots of money—but is it right for you?

BY ANDY WEBB



Andy Webb is a money expert at the Money Advice Service. Visit [moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://moneyadviceservice.org.uk) for details



A THIRD OF HOMEOWNERS plan to cut back their monthly mortgage payments by switching to a new deal this year. The savings can be big, but there are things you need to watch out for.

The low interest rates on mortgages seen recently mean it could be possible to reduce your monthly payments. Research from TSB suggests that someone with a £100,000 mortgage would save £96 a month on average by switching, adding up to £1,152 over a year.

Comparison sites are a great way to get an idea of what deals are available. However, it's not as simple as just finding a cheaper deal and switching to it.

So how do you figure out if you should remortgage? I have six key questions for you to consider.

## 1. How long is left on your mortgage?

If you're on a fixed mortgage, you'll know how long you have left before you need to get a new deal. Fail to remortgage when the deal ends and you'll be moved to a standard variable rate tariff, which is usually far more expensive.

## 2. Are there any fees on your existing mortgage?

You don't have to wait until your current fix ends to get a new deal, but read the terms and conditions to see if there are any penalties. You might be charged for leaving the deal early.



### 3. Are there fees for the new mortgage?

Likewise, though new deals might have far lower interest rates, any fees might make the overall cost far more expensive. The arrangement fee is likely to be the biggest one, but other costs might include legal and valuation fees.

### 4. Has your home increased in value?

As well as cutting the interest rate on your mortgage, you might be able to get a better loan to value (LTV).

Mortgage deals are calculated as a percentage of the total value of the house. The lower the LTV, the lower the rates of interest.

When you first bought your home, you might have only had a deposit of

ten per cent, meaning your LTV was ten per cent. But if your home is now worth more, the amount you've already paid could mean you can get a better deal.

### 5. How much is left on your mortgage?

If you don't have a huge amount left to pay, the savings you'll make in interest might not be huge. In fact, the fees involved could actually cost you more money.

### 6. What will you do with the money saved?

If you reduce how much you pay, could you put that money back into the mortgage and overpay it? If you want to do this, find out if the mortgage you move to will allow it.

# Free Debt Advice Can Help Ease Money Worries

If you've got debts you can't handle, it can be scary to acknowledge them. But new figures from the Money Advice Service reveal that getting free advice really can help. Sixty-five per cent of people who received regulated debt advice were repaying the money they owed or had repaid in full within three to six months.

Free debt advice is widely available across the UK, helping people to stop worrying and start repaying.

Some of the ways people improved their finances after seeking advice included regularly checking their income and expenses, opening up their bills in the post, planning to pay bills in priority order and keeping to a spending plan.

## Relieving the burden

The Money Advice Service research also found that getting debt help has a huge effect on well-being.

Almost three quarters (73 per cent) of people who sought debt advice felt



less stressed about dealing with their finances, and a similar number (69 per cent) said their relationships improved. Two thirds (62 per cent) were able to sleep better, and seven in ten found they were performing better at work.

## Getting free debt advice

Debt advisers won't judge you or make you feel bad for any decisions that caused the problems. Instead they'll suggest ways to deal with the debt, and offer advice on ways to better manage your money.

You can access free advice online, over the phone or face-to-face wherever you live in the UK. What you discuss will also be confidential.

# How To Stop Wasting Your Money

Fed up with wasting money? Most of the time you know you're doing it but need a nudge to change it.

## The admin we put off

Most of us can admit to having bills and contracts that we ignore and simply leave to auto-renew.

However, you could be saving huge amounts of money here.

For example, using a comparison site to find a cheaper energy deal can take less than 20 minutes and yet save you around £300 a year.

## The things we don't really use

Memberships and subscription services are among the biggest

ways that people waste their cash in this category.

To get a sense of how much you do this, take a quick look at your bank statements. If you're seeing recurring payments you don't recognise, find out what they are, and cancel them if you don't really need them.

## The spending we're just too lazy to change

From expensive lunches to late payments on bills, we often waste money because we can't be bothered to make a change.

The key is in planning ahead. You can avoid late credit card bills by setting up a direct debit; you can stop overdraft fees by setting up reminders to check your balance on your mobile banking app; you can even save money on food by cooking more the night before and taking the leftovers to work with you. ■



Easy-to-prepare meals and accompanying drinks

# Chilli Con Carne & Help-Yourself Sides

BY RACHEL WALKER



*Rachel Walker  
is a food writer for  
numerous national  
publications. Visit  
[rachel-walker.co.uk](http://rachel-walker.co.uk)  
for more details*

CHILLI CON CARNE IS BRILLIANTLY VERSATILE. It's easy to scale up, and big batches are ideal for feeding a crowd. Dress it up with an array of help-yourself sides: sour cream, guacamole, grated cheese and nachos. Leftovers taste even better the next day, and a bowl of chilli con carne with easy-cook rice makes a quick and comforting mid-week meal. My only warning? A rushed chilli con carne is a sad thing. Bestow a bit of time and love on your chilli and you'll reap the benefits.

## Serves 6

- 2tbsp olive oil
  - 2 onions, diced
  - 2 celery sticks, sliced
  - 3 garlic cloves, crushed
  - 500g quality minced beef
  - 1tbsp ground cumin
  - 1tbsp ground coriander
  - 1-2tsp hot chilli powder
  - 2 x 400g tin of chopped tomatoes
  - 2tbsp tomato purée
  - Beef stock
  - 400g tin of red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
  - 1tsp dried oregano
  - 450g long-grain white rice
- Optional serves:**  
grated Cheddar/  
Red Leicester, sour  
cream, guacamole,  
crushed nachos

1. Preheat the oven to 160C.
2. Heat the oil in a casserole dish. Sweat the onions, celery



and garlic. Add the minced beef, and brown—stirring it with a wooden spoon until there's no pink left. Add the dry spices, and cook for a further minute, until the spices become aromatic.

3. Tip the chopped tomatoes and tomato purée into the casserole dish. Then make up one empty tomato tin's worth of beef stock, and add it to the chilli. Finally, add the red kidney beans and dried oregano. Bring the chilli up to a simmer, put on the lid and transfer to the oven for 1–1.5 hours.

4. Ten minutes before serving, start cooking the rice as per pack instructions. Take the chilli out of the oven, and simmer—lid off—so the sauce reduces. To serve, spoon the rice into a shallow bowl, and then top with the chilli. Put out bowls of grated cheese, sour cream, guacamole, and crushed nachos on the table, so guests can help themselves.

### TIP...

Struggling to get children to eat their vegetables? Peel and grate three carrots, then stir it into the chilli. It adds sweetness, and if you top the chilli with grated Red Leicester, then it's impossible to identify the grated carrot anyway. Cunning, eh?

# Red Zinfandel

The big flavour of chilli con carne needs a big wine to match. Where better to look for something to go with this Tex Mex classic than in California—just north of the border? Zinfandel is just the ticket: it's dark and jammy, with a whack of liquorice and peppery spiciness. The perfect bottle to stand up to a brawny chilli con carne.

In Britain, “Zinfandel” is usually associated with White Zinfandel—which, confusingly, is actually a blush rosé. It boomed in popularity when Californian giants, such as Blossom Hill and Echo Falls, churned out bucketloads of the stuff.

Red Zinfandel is less well-known. It only makes up 15 per cent of total Zinfandel production, but is a great wine if you want something with a bit



of body but more finesse than some of the New World, high-alcohol reds.

The Ravenswood is great value—it has a ripe roundedness and is packed with plummy-cherry fruitiness. Brazin Old Vine has a similar hit of fruit, with lingering mocha-chocolate notes, and the Jacktone Ranch really is a bargain bottle, which stands up to those big, beefy dishes.

Of course, there's no need to stick to wine. If you've cooked a big chilli con carne to channel a fiesta feel, then salt some margarita glasses or simply stick a slice of lime in the bottle neck of a Modelo beer—and let the party begin!

## BOTTLES TO TRY

- **Ravenswood Lodi Zinfandel (14.5%) £9.99, majestic.co.uk**
- **Brazin Old Vine Zinfandel Lodi (14.5%) £12.99, waitrosecellar.com**
- **Jacktone Ranch Zinfandel (13.5%) £5.50, tesco.com**
- **Modelo (4.5%) £5.50/four bottles, sainsburys.co.uk**



Pudding  
of the  
Month



## Chilli Chocolate Mousse

You could use regular milk or dark chocolate, but chilli chocolate is a great way to round off the meal. It's becoming more of a mainstream ingredient with companies such as Lindt now extending their ranges to include a chilli bar.

**Serves 4**

- 2 eggs
- 125g chilli chocolate, grated
- 125ml double cream

1. Separate the eggs, and whisk the egg whites to a stiff peak.
2. Heat the cream so it's just off a simmer. Tip the grated chilli chocolate into a mixing bowl, and tip the hot cream over it—stirring until everything is combined. Beat in the egg yolks.
3. Finally, fold in the egg whites, and then divide the mixture between four small glasses.
4. Place them in the fridge to set for 2 hours. ■

BOOK



*Home Cook!* by Thomasina Miers, £17. Over 300 family recipes from the chef behind Mexican chain Wahaca.

BARGAIN



*Sommar 2017*, Ikea, £1.25 each. Sour cream and guacamole look lovely in these bowls.

BLOW OUT



*Tweeling ramekins*, Ibbi Interiors, £11.50. Hand-painted dishes to channel the fiesta feel.

BY LYNDA  
CLARK

*Lynda Clark  
is a homes,  
property and  
interiors expert,  
and editor  
of First Time  
Buyer magazine*

# Spring Has Sprung

GET READY FOR EASTER by adding spring-inspired accessories to your home. This look is the definition of homespun charm, inspired by Beatrix Potter and the picturesque Lake District.

Delightful rabbits, ducks, flora and fauna decorate an array of unique accessories. The effect is full of character and old-fashioned appeal, but also quirky and modern.

The delicate colour palette includes fresh spring yellows, duck egg blue and highlights of honey and sherbet lemon.

**Aisha double bed, £169; ducks double duvet set, £11;  
white tone jar, £6; brass stick lamp, £20; trinket box, £10;  
tray table, £42.**

■ All available from George at Asda ([george.com](http://george.com))

## Get The Look

Charming accessories to welcome in the new season.

- **Bunny cushion, £5, [george.com](http://george.com)**
- **Pastel hanging tealights, £6 each, [tch.net](http://tch.net)**
- **Rabbit plate, £4, [george.com](http://george.com)**
- **Easter jug, £8, [sainsburys.co.uk](http://sainsburys.co.uk)**



## IN BLOOM

Glamorous, opulent florals create a romantic look around the home



This lavish five-drawer cabinet is perfect for the bedroom or lounge, £360 ([mialfleur.com](http://mialfleur.com)).



Digitally printed cushion with Sweet William flowers, £55 ([reflectandrepeat.com](http://reflectandrepeat.com)).



This wool rug looks and feels like silk, £1,199 ([therugseller.co.uk](http://therugseller.co.uk)).

## A "MIGHTI" NEW WAY TO MOW YOUR LAWN

Flymo have launched the Mighti-Mo 300 Li, its first lithium-ion battery mower. It can mow a lawn the size of a tennis court on a single charge.

The mower features five cutting heights, a 30-litre grass box, handle for easy transportation and a safety key. The cordless mower can be neatly stored and, with zero emissions, it's perfect for eco-conscious gardeners (£199, [flymo.com/uk](http://flymo.com/uk)). ■



Gadgets to keep you connected, entertained and video-ready—wherever you go

# Lights, Camera, Action

BY OLLY MANN



*Olly is a technology expert, radio presenter and podcaster*

## MEVO BY LIVESTREAM, £320

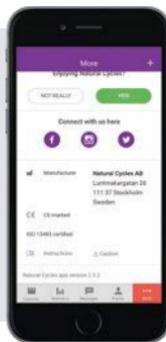
If you fancy setting yourself up as a YouTube star, most smartphones now provide a camera, mic and editing software to do you proud. But with the advent of live-video networks on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, what if you want to broadcast live? Mevo is an HD camera, with built-in stereo mics, which syncs to an iPhone app and allows you (or a friend, if you're the one on-screen) to cut between different parts of the shot.

It creates the impression of a multi-camera live shoot, in real-time as you stream to the world. A professional product at a hobbyist's price.



## APPLE APP OF THE MONTH: NATURAL CYCLES, £6.99/MONTH

Fertility apps, which track a woman's menstrual cycle and predict the optimum day to conceive, have facilitated



many a bundle of joy. But this one is aimed at couples who want to avoid pregnancy too. The app monitors your temperature and advises when, in your monthly cycle, barrier contraceptives need not be worn.

## HUMAX H3 ESPRESSO SMART MEDIA PLAYER, £79.99

When I was at uni, I had a coat hanger plugged into my telly, doubling as an aerial. Nowadays I'd buy one of these little coffee-coloured boxes (hence "Espresso"), which offers live streaming of Freeview channels conveniently from its homescreen. Perfect for students—or anyone lodging in a place where there's plentiful wi-fi, but not necessarily a decent rooftop aerial.

That said, if you prefer your TV on-demand, I'd advise getting a Roku instead: the Espresso has apps for Netflix and YouTube, but not Amazon Prime, iPlayer or Now TV.



## GLOCALME G2 PERSONAL HOTSPOT, £100

UK holidaymakers are charged through the nose for data-roaming outside the EU, and securing local SIM cards for multiple devices can be a pain.



Enter GlocalMe—a pocket-sized gizmo that connects to 4G with no need for a SIM. Data is around £4/GB (depending on the conversion rate), and can be shared by up to five devices at once. Still, it can't find a signal where there isn't one: we tested it on a 450-mile train ride across the US, and on occasion it had less signal than our phone. In general, however, it's a useful tool for services such as Maps, WhatsApp and Skype.



## ANDROID APP OF THE MONTH: POINTLESS, £6.99

If you like playing along with the popular TV quiz show, then you'll enjoy this app, which features the same music, graphics and gameplay. Although there's a lot of fun to be had playing against your Facebook friends, it's hard for avatars to replicate the warmth of the hosts and the questions seem more difficult than they are on TV—no doubt because you have to pay a premium to reveal some pointers! ■



BY GEORGINA  
YATES

*Georgina is a fashion and beauty editor for numerous travel titles and a blogger at withgeorgia.com*

# Moisture Hit

DOES YOUR FOUNDATION become patchy in certain areas? This is a common sign of dry skin. Aside from drinking plenty of water, you can tackle this problem head-on by mixing a few drops of organic oil with your foundation before applying it.

I like **Ushvani's** hydrating Coconut and Hibiscus Oil (£42.50, [ushvani.com](http://ushvani.com)). Use the back of your hand as a palette and, using either an applicator sponge or foundation brush, mix together a couple of drops of your chosen oil with a pump of your foundation. The consistency is slippery, but keep working it into the skin and touch up as you go along.

Use cream-based products to complete your look, and finish off with some setting spray to prevent the products from sliding off. This tackles dry patches of skin and creates a youthful, dewy complexion.



## HIGHS AND LOWS

Clinique's cream-based contouring chubby sticks (£19 each, [clinique.co.uk](http://clinique.co.uk)) will complement oil-based foundations perfectly. The stick applicator makes it very easy to target the areas you'd like to sculpt and highlight.



## BLEND IS YOUR FRIEND

The **Beauty Blender** (£16, [cultbeauty.co.uk](http://cultbeauty.co.uk)) is essentially a hi-tech sponge that's great for working your foundation into your skin. Use the pointed tip to cover all the hard-to-reach places, such as underneath your eyes, and blend in.



## GORGEOUS IN GINGHAM

For  
Her



■ Moonlight the latest trend for checks in the "Gingham Moonlight Top" from White Stuff (£45, [whitestuff.com](http://whitestuff.com)).

■ Preen's collection for Debenhams is full of eye-catching gingham prints this spring (£65, [debenhams.com](http://debenhams.com)).



■ Your feet don't have to miss out! Why not wear the trend from head-to-toe with these gingham platform sandals? (£140, [bimbaylola.com](http://bimbaylola.com)).

For  
Him



■ A gingham shirt can be paired with jeans or a suit for a more on-trend look (£32, [debenhams.com](http://debenhams.com)).

■ Who says underpants can't be fashionable? Stay in-style from the inside-out with these gingham boxers (£15, [boden.co.uk](http://boden.co.uk)).



■ Another option from White Stuff, which is all-shades of Americana. Pair with dark jeans for a smart, cool outfit (£39.95, [whitestuff.com](http://whitestuff.com)). ■

This month an older man reclaims his life, while younger men claim the lives of others...

# April Fiction

BY JAMES WALTON



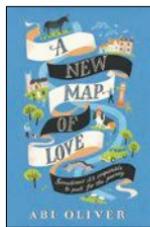
*James writes and presents the BBC Radio 4 literary quiz The Write Stuff*

## A New Map of Love

by Abi Oliver (Macmillan, £12.99)

On the face of it, George Baxter isn't an obvious choice of fictional hero. A 56-year-old antiques dealer living in Oxfordshire in 1964, George has just been widowed when the novel begins. His wife was apparently "the least intimidating woman he'd been able to find", and their marriage seems to have been one of low-level, even cheerfully resigned dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, when she dies, George feels a guilty sense of excitement. Could now be the time to give rein to his long-buried romantic impulses? And if so, how—given that, on the whole, he finds women rather baffling?

In fact, though, George is a delight to be with: his essential decency and frustrated longings both funny and poignant. There's a strong supporting cast too—mainly in the shape of those baffling women. And without making much fuss about it, the book is also extremely good on how rural Oxfordshire adapts to the social changes of the 1960s. (Basically, quite slowly.) Add to that a series of neat plot lines, all satisfyingly



## NAME THE AUTHOR

(Answer on p128)

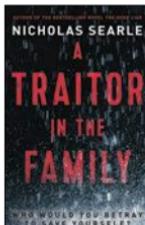
Can you guess the writer from these clues (and, of course, the fewer you need the better)?

1. His last major book was a history of spiritualism.

2. His most famous fictional character's first words are: "You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive".

3. The same fictional character featured in the most-watched television drama of the 2016–2017 festive period.

resolved, and the result is an enjoyable and warm-hearted read.



## A Traitor in the Family

by Nicholas Searle  
(Viking, £14.99)

It's clear from his closing acknowledgements that Nicholas Searle once worked for British

intelligence. We might have guessed—because this is one of those thrillers whose thrills come not just from a fast-paced plot, but also from the fact that we're being given privileged access to a hidden world.

The setting is Northern Ireland in the 1990s, when the IRA's leaders are still sending out men to commit atrocities, while secretly having talks with the UK government. They know, too, that their organisation is riddled with British spies.

Featuring a range of characters from both sides, the book explores the many complexities involved, as well as providing plenty of information about how the IRA operated. Searle does this without ever abandoning his commitment to an exciting story, and reminds us that all this violence and horror took place amid normal domestic life—as, for example, in the novel's startling first sentence: "While her husband prepared to murder a young man he had never met, Bridget O'Neill completed her packing for Christmas with her in-laws."

## PAPERBACKS

■ **Seriously Senior Moments** by Geoff Tibballs (Michael O'Mara, £7.99) A collection of funny and recognisable anecdotes about the ageing brain—all somehow presented in a kindly way. The subtitle is "Or, Have You Bought This Book Before?"

■ **The Museum of You** by Carys Bray (Cornerstone, £7.99) A 12-year-old girl investigates the life of her dead mother in this sharp and touching novel.

■ **Katherine Howard** by Josephine Wilkinson (John Murray, £9.99) An enormously readable account of Henry VIII's fifth wife who, according to Wilkinson, has been much maligned by history.

■ **Before the Fall** by Noah Hawley (Hodder, £7.99) Thriller from the creator of the TV series *Fargo*, complete with relentlessly increasing suspense.

■ **Fingers in the Sparkle Jar** by Chris Packham (Ebury, £8.99) In his enthralling and honest childhood memoir, the wildlife presenter writes beautifully about animals—but also deals bravely with his own Asperger's syndrome.



**RD'S RECOMMENDED READ**

One man's extraordinary tale of survival against the odds—in more ways than one

# Moving Mountains

IN 2007, BUSINESSMAN JULES MOUNTAIN (right) nearly died of cancer. Eight years later, he set off to climb Mount Everest.

For some books, this would be a remarkable-enough story on its own. Here, though, it's perhaps the least of the author's triumphs over the odds—because what took place at the Base Camp

transforms *Aftershock* from a richly vivid account of a modern Everest expedition into something else entirely.

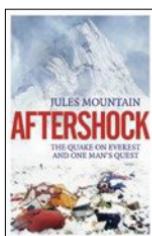
Actually, "Base Camp" is a rather misleading name for a place that's higher than Mont Blanc. To reach it requires a ten-day trek through a string of small Nepalese villages,



which combine a centuries-old way of life with lots of shops selling upmarket mountaineering equipment.

The same odd mix of ancient and modern also applies to the Camp itself—whose impressive range of facilities, from booze to televisions, have been transported by either helicopter or yak. Once you're there, your main jobs are to acclimatise to the altitude and to hang about until it's your expedition's turn to head for the summit.

Which was exactly what Jules Mountain (his real name, apparently) did for five weeks—until, after a night of partying had helped to pass a bit more time, this happened...



***Aftershock: the Quake on Everest and One Man's Quest*** is published by Eye Books on April 10 at £9.99.

**“**I'm lying in my minute tent at Everest Base Camp. It's -2°C. My breath rises from my mouth like plumes of smoke as I try to catch a midday nap.

Suddenly and without warning, the ground I'm lying on moves half a metre to the left.

I open my eyes with a start. Did that really happen? Did the entire earth just shift beneath me? Or was it last night's whisky?

Again, I feel the earth move. The ground lifts me up half a metre, as if something is pushing into my back, before suddenly shunting to the right. What the hell's happening? I am lying on a glacier of 100 tons of ice—nothing could move that!

I heave myself up out of my sleeping bag; rip the tent zip open. The snow in front of me, calm and serene, blissfully unaware of the plans the mountain has in store for it, clings to me as I half-crawl out and stand upright.

I see Donat and Iwan [fellow climbers], staring up at Pumori as if hypnotised. Usually, with Everest looming so majestically overhead, there's little reason to look at the Goliath's smaller sister, but right now...Careering down Mount Pumori is the biggest avalanche I have ever seen. Coming right at us...

The entire sky is filled with a giant, cascading wall of white. A beautiful and deadly collision of debris—rocks, ice and white dust—and all of it heading straight for me.

## MORE FROM AFTERSHOCK

*The night after the earthquake, Jules thought he had his patients safely asleep in the (very makeshift) medical tent. But then came the first request for the toilet—from Richard, who was in great pain from his broken ribs:*

“We locked our arms under his and lifted him slowly to his feet. Richard wasn't a small guy and his entire weight was on us. We hauled him up with everything we had. He yelled with pain.

He was now standing—swaying—upright. I fetched a discarded washing-up bowl. ‘I'll hold this for you,’ I said. ‘Can you pee into it?’

Richard said he could. He grimaced, clearly in a lot of pain. I held the bowl. He managed to do the rest, thankfully.

We looked away—as if privacy was a major concern at this point, as if anybody really cared about that any more, as if we were still civilised.”

It rolls, turns, tumbles every which way, as it surges invincibly on down the mountain.

From ground to sky there is

boots; just socks on my half-frozen feet. Could I run? I glance over my shoulder.

Running is out of the question. The

“

## ***There's nothing I can do but accept I'm about to be swept away by an avalanche***

nothing else; just this wall of whiteness thundering towards us, oblivious of all in its path, full of heartless violence.

Nothing exists in the world, but this...

This is it—I'm dead! There's nothing I can do but accept that I'm about to be swept away by an avalanche. After all the near misses of my life, after all the lucky escapes from hospital, I must exit here, thousands of miles from my loved ones.

My daughters, my girlfriend, my family in England drift into my mind; time seems to be slowing infinitely to allow me to think about them all, one last time. It feels as if 15 minutes have passed since I emerged from my tent, but it's actually only a few seconds.

I look down. I'm not even wearing

avalanche is hurtling towards me at 150 kilometres an hour, and the ground is an obstacle course of rocks, guide ropes and ice. I am sure to trip. And anyway, where to run?

I have to get down. Now. I dive headfirst into my tent, and hit the floor, burrowing my head into the ground.

The avalanche is on me, all around and on top of me. I am being buried alive in snow.

”

This was the 2015 Nepalese earthquake, which killed nearly 9,000 people—including 22 at the Base Camp, making it the deadliest day in Everest's history.

Having dug himself out, Jules discovered he was miraculously unhurt. But then comes an extraordinary section when, amid the chaos, he sets up a medical tent for the injured (some of them seriously).

And after his patients have been helicoptered down, the question—amazingly enough—becomes whether he and his fellow survivors should try and reach the summit of Everest anyway... ■



### **AND THE NAME OF THE AUTHOR IS...**

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes—and in later life, a firm believer in being able to contact the dead.

# Books

## THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

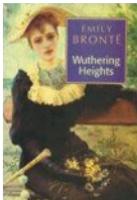


Novelist Cathy Hopkins has sold over six million books, including the hugely successful *Mates, Dates* series, published in 35 countries. Her first novel for adults, *The Kicking the Bucket List*, is out now.

### **Wuthering Heights**

BY EMILY BRONTË

Growing up as a teenager in Manchester, I wasn't much enamoured of the spotty boys on mopeds. So discovering the character of Heathcliff and his passionate love for Cathy in *Wuthering Heights* appealed to every fibre of my romantic 15-year-old self. The book awakened in me the notion of soulmates—and it certainly made me dream that my soulmate might be out there somewhere beyond the streets of my neighbourhood.



### **Siddhartha**

BY HERMANN HESSE

This lyrical novel tells the story of Siddhartha as he embarks on a journey of self-discovery. In the process he spends a long time as a renunciant and then many years steeped in sensual

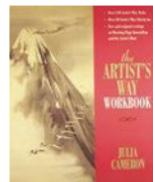


pleasure. Yet he knows something is still missing—the balance we need to achieve our personal happiness. I was at art college when I read it and, like many of my peers, was looking for answers on how to live my life.

### **The Artist's Way**

BY JULIA CAMERON

If I hadn't taken up this book and followed the course in rediscovering my creative self, I don't know if my writing career would ever have taken off. Before then I was at a crossroads in my life. I'd written some non-fiction books but really wanted to write fiction. *The Artist's Way* is a series of exercises you do at home—like doing something every week that lifts your soul. It's full of inspirational quotes and, as the course progressed, I became motivated to achieve my goals. Not long after I got a contract to start writing for teenagers. ■



**As told to Caroline Hutton**

# You Couldn't Make It Up

Win £50 for your true, funny stories! Go to [readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us](http://readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us) or [facebook.com/readersdigestuk](https://facebook.com/readersdigestuk)

**AFTER DATING** his girlfriend for about a month, my friend was invited to a potluck dinner at her parents' house. He likes to cook and wanted to make a good impression, so he really worked on perfecting his recipe.

As he handed over his carefully considered rabbit paella, he felt a tug on his leg, and looked down to see a rabbit pulling on his trousers. It was Barry, one of the three beloved house rabbits his girlfriend's parents worshipped.

Everyone agreed his chicken paella was delicious and the meat especially tender!

SARAH-JANE EGAN, Caerphilly

**RECENTLY MY HUSBAND** spent an afternoon painting in the garden. When I asked how it'd gone, he replied, "I didn't do any. I had to cut a chlamydia plant down instead and that took most of the day."

I laughed so much it took me ages to tell him it was actually a clematis. I do hope he didn't catch anything!

LEE HALL, Kent



*"Try not to think of it as subsidence... more a window on history."*

**I GAVE MY SON** a shopping list for the ingredients that I needed to cook a Bolognese that evening. As it was the first time he'd ever shopped for me, he was really excited about going. The list had five numbered items on it.

He soon returned home pleased as punch, having bought one packet of spaghetti, two mushrooms, three red peppers, four onions and five garlics!

JAYNE WILE, Gwent

**AT PARENTS' EVENING** we were glancing through my son's language book and came across a worksheet with pictures on it. He'd been tasked with describing each one.

One picture showed a sweet boy playing a violin. Underneath it, my son had written, "This boy is a nerd." The teacher gave him a good telling off, and rightly so.

JOHN BYRON, Liverpool

**THE PILATES CLASS** that I attend in my local village hall is made up of mature ladies who don't take themselves too seriously.

Last week our instructor introduced us to a new piece of equipment called a "magic circle".

"Lie on your front," she told us, "and position your magic circles over your buttocks."

My neighbour Vi called out, "Bigger circle needed over here!"

"Nonsense," the teacher responded good-humouredly, "your bum's not that big!"

"Oh, it's not for me!" Vi shot back.

BELINDA HARDISTY, by email

**I TOOK MY** eight-year-old niece for an early-bird meal at my local village pub. We had to order before 6pm and, as you might expect, we were the only people there.

"It's not very busy, is it?" I said to her. "There's nobody here."

"No," she replied. "Only us and the servants." ANDREW BERRY, Lincolnshire

**MY COUSIN'S WIFE** went into labour while at home one evening. Anxious, he rang the emergency services for help.

"Is this her first child?" the call handler asked.

"No, of course not," my cousin responded, angrily. "It's her husband!"

JILL COHEN, Leeds

**I WORK IN A COLLEGE** and was talking to one of my pupils about a journey he'd taken with his family.

When they stopped at a petrol station, his dad asked him to fetch water—some for the engine and some to drink. The student took a large sip and gave the rest to his dad, who started pouring it into the car.

Pausing for a moment, he asked, "Harry....did you get strawberry water for the car?"

TEJJI SHAH, by email

**WHEN WINSTON CHURCHILL** was seriously ill, the BBC were providing regular broadcasts on the politician's deteriorating health.

My then three-year-old daughter asked me, after one of these updates, why they kept shooting him.

She had misunderstood the announcement, "There will be another bulletin in three hours".

MALCOLM ELLIS, Nottingham

**AFTER A TRYING DAY**, I heard my daughter ask her dad, "Is mum wearing her angry eyebrows tonight?"

MOLLY BURTON, Clywd





IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR

# Word Power

---

*Thousands of English words—from archery to zest—have their origins in French. Think you're a word connoisseur? Take a tour through this petite list of terms, then sashay to the next page for answers.*

BY EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

---

- 1. raconteur** *n*—A: skillful storyteller.  
B: blackmailer. C: court jester.
- 2. faience** *n*—A: false pretences.  
B: fidelity. C: glazed pottery.
- 3. couturier** *n*—A: head chef.  
B: fashion designer. C: museum guide.
- 4. laissez-faire** *adj*—A: festive.  
B: non-interfering. C: done by women.
- 5. cabal** *n*—A: plotting group.  
B: young horse. C: crystal wine glass.
- 6. fait accompli** *n*—A: done deal.  
B: lucky charm. C: partner in crime.
- 7. au courant** *adj*—A: on the contrary.  
B: with cherries on top.  
C: up-to-date.
- 8. interlard** *v*—A: encroach on.  
B: vary by intermixing. C: fluctuate in weight.
- 9. soupçon** *n*—A: wooden ladle.  
B: swindle. C: small amount.
- 10. milieu** *n*—A: environment.  
B: thousand. C: armed force.
- 11. aubade** *n*—A: gold pendant.  
B: inexperienced babysitter.  
C: morning song.
- 12. pince-nez** *n*—A: clipped-on eyeglasses.  
B: rude interruption.  
C: narrow hallway.
- 13. sangfroid** *n*—A: intense heat wave.  
B: composure under strain.  
C: mind reading.
- 14. fracas** *n*—A: wool scarf.  
B: noisy quarrel. C: complete and utter failure.
- 15. roué** *n*—A: very thick meat sauce.  
C: illegal gambling game.  
B: rakish man.

## Answers

- 1. *raconteur***—[A] skillful storyteller. “No one would call me a *raconteur*—I tend to ramble and say ‘um’ a lot.”
- 2. *faience***—[C] glazed pottery. “Catherine hoped to sell the rare *faience* she’d found at the boot sale for a huge profit.”
- 3. *couturier***—[B] fashion designer. *Couturiers* such as Christian Dior and Jean-Paul Gaultier have shaped fashion history.”
- 4. *laissez-faire***—[B] non-interfering. “In our family, Mum’s the enforcer, while Dad takes more of a *laissez-faire* attitude.”
- 5. *cabal***—[A] plotting group. “There’s a *cabal* among the dictator’s aides, who are all vying for control.”
- 6. *fait accompli***—[A] done deal. “Well, we’ve painted the bedroom dark purple—it’s a *fait accompli*.”
- 7. *au courant***—[C] up-to-date. “To stay *au courant*, Rafael snaps up all the latest apps.”
- 8. *interlard***—[B] vary by intermixing. “I didn’t understand your film—why did you *interlard* the narrative with all those bizarre dream sequences?”
- 9. *soupçon***—[C] small amount. “Dylan detected a *soupçon* of sarcasm in his teenage son’s remark.”
- 10. *milieu***—[A] environment. “‘The briar patch,’ said Brer Rabbit, ‘is my natural *milieu*.’”
- 11. *aubade***—[C] morning song. “Ah, the tuneful *aubade* of my alarm!”
- 12. *pince-nez***—[A] clipped-on eyeglasses. “I’ve never understood how you keep your *pince-nez* on your nose while you dance.”
- 13. *sangfroid***—[B] composure under strain. “We had to admire Magda’s *sangfroid* as she stood up to her obnoxious boss.”
- 14. *fracas***—[B] noisy quarrel. “I wouldn’t call it a *fracas*. It’s just a difference of opinion.”
- 15. *roué***—[B] rakish man. “I’d advise you to steer clear of that guy Casanova—he’s a shameless *roué*.”

### WORD OF THE DAY\*

#### TRANSPONTINE

From the other side of the ocean.

#### Alternative suggestions:

“What a drunken trainspotter says when he’s asked where he’s been.”

“A country next-door to Transylvania.”

“A method of transport used to reach a typical English holiday resort.”

### VOCABULARY RATINGS

**9 & below:** good  
**10–12:** excellent  
**13–15:** exceptional

# Are You Covered?

The trend of travellers looking for more adventure from their holidays has continued over the past year. Where once the promenades of British resorts or Spain's sandy beaches were considered for the annual holiday, holidaymakers are now seeking more exotic destinations

**THE COST OF TRAVEL INSURANCE** is always of interest, so it's reassuring to know good levels of travel cover are available at a competitive price. *Reader's Digest Insurance Services* offer an annual multi-trip policy from £120\* for two adults upto the age of 64.

*Reader's Digest Insurance Services* have reported a surge in extended-stay travel policies, covering trips of three to four months. These single-trip policies are available for travellers up to age 84 and are popular with those visiting relatives in locations such as South Africa and Australia.

Other important factors to consider



when arranging travel insurance are the levels of cover for cancellation, emergency medical cover, medical conditions and age limits. Always check what cover is included—know the level of excess and be aware if cover for items such as personal possessions are included.

**To discuss your travel insurance requirements—and to obtain a competitive quotation—call us today on**

**020 8069 3102**

One of our expert advisers will help provide the travel insurance policy that matches your requirements

\*The cost of cover depends on a variety of factors including age and medical conditions.

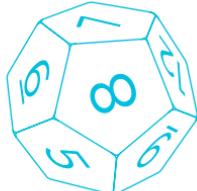
Vivat Finance Limited trading as *Reader's Digest* are an Introducer Appointed Representative of Higos Insurance Services Ltd trading as *Reader's Digest Insurance Services*, who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN no 302690

# BrainTeasers

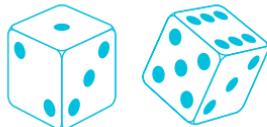
*Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on p139.*

## SEVEN UP

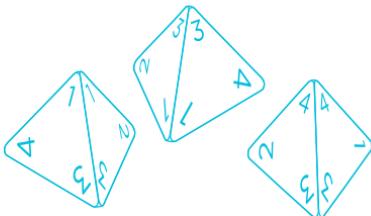
If you wanted to roll a total of seven or higher, which dice would you rather use?



A. ONE 12-SIDED DIE (1-12)



B. TWO SIX-SIDED DICE (1-6)



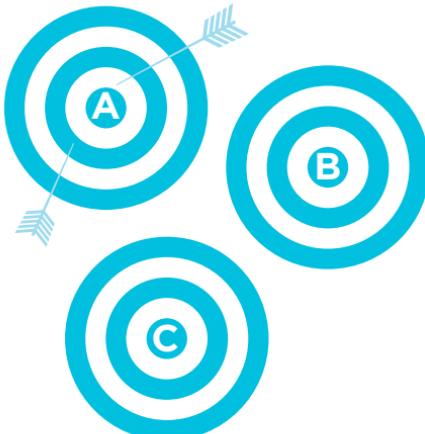
C. THREE FOUR-SIDED DICE (1-4)

## ON TARGET

In an archery challenge, there are three targets labelled A, B and C, and each are worth a different number of points.

- Hitting targets A and B scores 20 points.
- Hitting targets A and C scores 23 points.
- Hitting targets B and C scores 15 points.

Kathy shoots two arrows and they both hit target A. What's her score?



## FILL IN THE BLANKS

The same three numbers are missing from the boxes in each operation. What are they?

$$? + ? + ? + 2 + 9 = 26$$

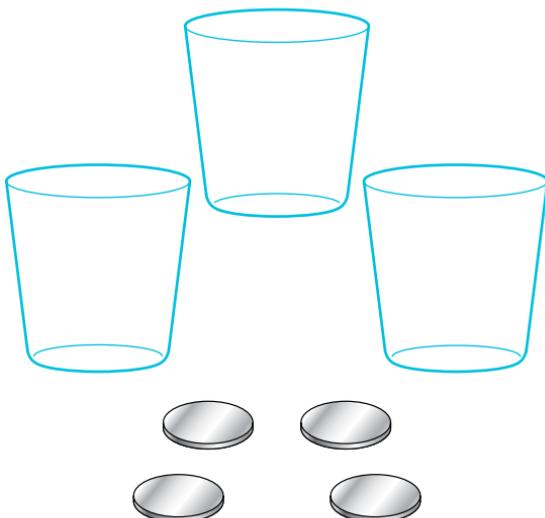
$$? \times ? \times ? \times 2 \times 9 = 2,250$$

## FILL MY CUP

Three cups and four coins are on a table. You must place the coins in the cups according to the following two stipulations:

- No cup can be left empty.
- Two of the cups must contain two coins each.

How would you do this?

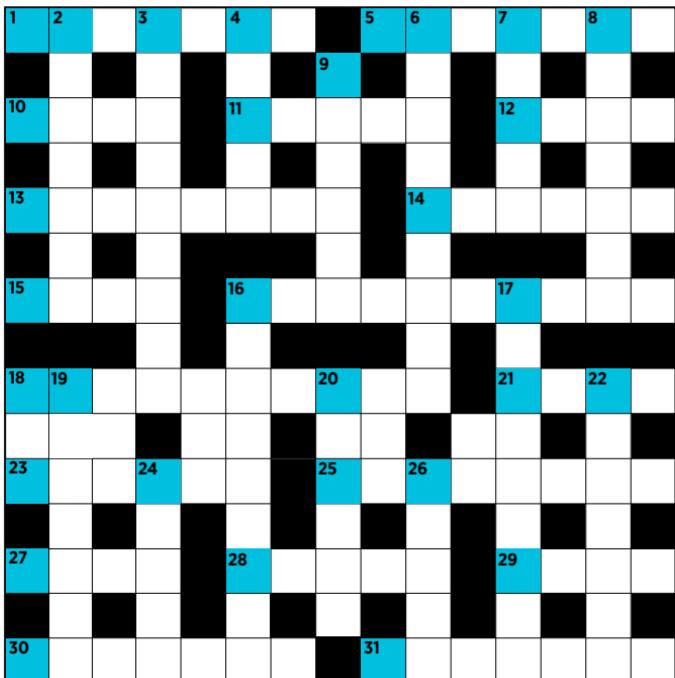


## LETTER LOGIC

Complete this grid so that 12 of the 16 cells contain a letter, while four are left blank. Use two copies of each of A, B, C, D, E and F. Four letters are already entered. Fill in the other eight to satisfy these rules:

- No more than three letters may appear in any row or column.
- Identical letters may not occupy the same row, column or diagonal (not even a short diagonal).
- One of the Es is adjacent only to a C. ("Adjacent" means next to it in any direction, even diagonally.)
- No B is adjacent to a C.

		D	
B		E	
	A		

**CROSSWISE**

Test your  
general  
knowledge

**ACROSS**

- 1 No good whatsoever (7)
- 5 School, instruct (7)
- 10 Lighting device (4)
- 11 Assumed name (5)
- 12 Opposed to (4)
- 13 Someone not known (8)
- 14 Variety of nut (6)
- 15 Half-attached house (4)
- 16 In one continuous period (2,1,7)
- 18 Light-textured gateau (6,4)
- 21 Adorable (4)
- 23 Person living in solitude (6)
- 25 Walkers' track (8)
- 27 Speak indistinctly (4)
- 28 Vote into power (5)
- 29 Lazy (4)
- 30 Tour de France competitor (7)
- 31 Variety of nutty brown bread (6)

**DOWN**

- 2 Travel back and fourth frequently (7)

- 3 Person who works with books (9)
- 4 Informal language (5)
- 6 Take to pieces (9)
- 7 Attract, captivate (5)
- 8 Liner sunk by an iceberg (7)
- 9 Radio code word between *Romeo* and *Tango* (6)
- 16 State of being watchful (9)
- 17 Departure from the rule (9)
- 19 Elvis\_\_\_\_\_, rock 'n' roll legend (7)
- 20 Cake-burning king (6)
- 22 One who gossips indiscreetly (7)
- 24 Lesson of a story (5)
- 26 External (5)

**DOWN:** 2 Presley 20 Alfred 22 Tatler 24 Moral 26 Outer  
7 Charm 8 Shuttle 3 Librarian 4 Slang 6 Dismantle  
19 Sponge 28 Elect 29 Idle 30 Cycist 31 Granaary

**ACROSS:** 1 Useless 5 Educate 10 Bulb 11 Alias 12 Anti  
13 Strange 14 Almond 15 Semi 16 At A Stretch  
18 Sponge Cake 21 Culture 23 Hemilt 25 Footpath  
27 Slur 28 Elect 29 Idle 30 Cycist 31 Granaary

**ANSWERS:** 1 Useless 5 Educate 10 Bulb 11 Alias 12 Anti  
13 Strange 14 Almond 15 Semi 16 At A Stretch  
18 Sponge Cake 21 Culture 23 Hemilt 25 Footpath  
27 Slur 28 Elect 29 Idle 30 Cycist 31 Granaary

**Brainteasers: Answers****SEVEN UP**

C. A gives you a 50 per cent chance (6/12). B gives you a 58.3 per cent chance (21/36). C gives you a 68.8 per cent chance (44/64).

**ON TARGET**

**28 points.** The sum of the points in the three examples (58) is the score for hitting each target twice. Half of this (29) is therefore the score for hitting each target once. Since B and C together give 15 points, A is worth 14 points.

**FILL IN THE BLANKS**

$$5 + \boxed{5} + \boxed{5} + \boxed{2} + \boxed{9} = \boxed{26}$$

$$5 \times \boxed{5} \times \boxed{5} \times \boxed{2} \times \boxed{9} = \boxed{2,250}$$

**FILL MY CUP**

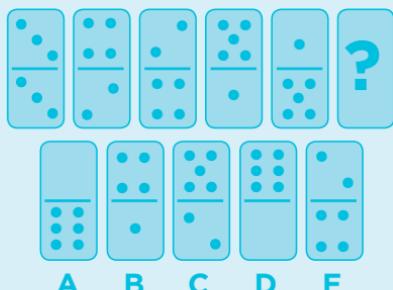
By placing one cup inside another, the same coins can be in more than one cup:

**LETTER LOGIC**

	F	D	B
B		E	A
F	A	C	
C	D		E

**£50 PRIZE QUESTION****Answer published in  
the May issue**

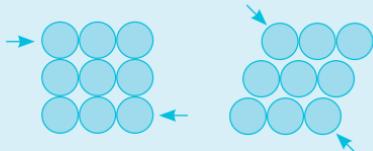
Which domino (A, B, C, D or E) should fill the empty space?



The first correct answer we pick on March 29 wins £50!\* Email [excerpts@readersdigest.co.uk](mailto:excerpts@readersdigest.co.uk)

**ANSWER TO MARCH'S  
PRIZE QUESTION**

Put your fingertip on the two coins indicated by the arrows below



Then gently push them towards each other until they touch the middle coin (making three rows, three columns and one diagonal from top left to bottom right)

**AND THE £50 GOES TO...**

Gay Jacklin, Worthing



# Laugh!

Win £50 for every reader's joke we publish! Go to [readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us](http://readersdigest.co.uk/contact-us) or [facebook.com/readersdigestuk](https://www.facebook.com/readersdigestuk)

**A PRINCE WAS ONCE** put under a spell that meant he could only speak one word each year.

If he didn't speak for two years, the following year he could speak two words and so on.

One day, he fell in love with a beautiful lady. He refrained from speaking for two years so that he could call her "my darling".

After that, he wanted to tell her that he loved her, so he waited three more years.

At the end of these five years, he wanted to ask her to marry him, so he waited another four.

Finally, as the ninth year of silence ended, he led the lady to the most romantic place he knew in the kingdom and said, "My darling, I love you! Will you marry me?"

And the lady said, "Pardon?"

LEE HALL, Kent

**WHAT DO YOU CALL** an alligator wearing a vest?

An investigator.

GAVIN RICHARDS, London

**LOOK AT THE SEA** and think of your evolutionary past. Look at the sky and imagine the future. Look at the land and think of the present.

And at the most profound place—where land, sea and sky meet—there ye shall play volleyball.

COMEDIAN SIMON MUNNERY

**MY FRIEND KEEPS** saying, "Cheer up pal, it could be worse. You could be stuck in an underground hole full of water"

I know he means well...

SEEN ON REDDIT.COM

**A MAN HATED HIS** wife's cat and plotted to get rid of him by driving a mile from his home and leaving it at the park. As he returned, he was shocked to see the cat walking casually up the driveway.

The next day he drove the cat five miles away, put the beast out and headed home. But when he returned, there was the cat!

He took the cat further away but it would still always beat him home.

At last, he drove 20 miles away, turning right, then left, past the bridge and right again, until he reached a safe distance from his home and left the cat.

Hours later the man called home. "Jen, is the cat there?"

"Yes," the wife answered, "why?"

Frustrated, the man answered, "Put him on the phone, I'm lost and need directions!"

**SEEN ONLINE**

**A WOMAN WANTED TO** take a milk bath, so she went to a dairy farm and asked the farmer if she could buy enough fresh milk to fill up her bathtub.

"Pasteurized?" asked the farmer.

"No," said the woman. "Just up to my shoulders."

**SEEN ON REDDIT.COM**

**A COUNTRY STORE** displays a sign proclaiming: "Beware of the dog!"

Inside, a customer sees a harmless old hound lying fast asleep in the middle of the floor.

"Is that the dog we're supposed to be wary of?" he asks the owner.

"That's him," comes the reply.

"He doesn't look very dangerous to me. Why would you post that sign?"

"Well, before I posted it, people kept tripping over him."

**SEEN ONLINE**

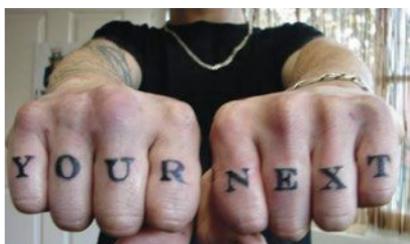
**MY GIRLFRIEND AND I** often laugh together about how competitive we can be.

But I laugh more.

**SEEN ON REDDIT.COM**

## ISN'T IT IRON-INK?

These tattoos that prove that some mistakes are permanent (from [sadanduseless.com](http://sadanduseless.com)).



**TWO PIRATES MEET** in a bar. Sol has a patch over one eye, a hook for a hand and a wooden peg leg.

"Ye gads, matey," says Morty.  
"What happened to ya?"

Sol replies, "Well, me pirate ship was attacked, and a lucky shot lopped off me leg. So now I've got me a wooden peg."

"And yer hand?" asks Marty.  
"When me ship sank, a shark bit me hand off. So now I've got me a hook."  
"OK, I see. But Sol, what's with the eye patch?"

"I was standin' on a dock, and a huge seagull pooped right in me eye."

"But ya don't go blind from poop."  
"True," says Sol. "But it was me first day with the hook."

COMEDIAN JASON ALEXANDER

**I'VE JUST ORDERED** a chicken and an egg from Amazon.

I'll let you know. **SEEN ON REDDIT.COM**

**THE WAY TO A MAN'S HEART** is through his hanky pocket with a bread knife.

Although I don't really know why you'd bother, it's not like there's a cake there.

COMEDIAN JO BRAND

**A COUPLE WERE** visiting Wales for the first time and stopped to eat in a roadside cafe.

The lady said to the lad behind the counter, "We don't seem to be able to pronounce this place correctly...could you tell us, slowly, where we are?"

To which the lad replied,  
"M...C...D...O...N...A...L...D...S".

ANDREW BERRY, *Lincolnshire*



## DON'T TAKE THIS BADVICE

*Comedian Jimmy Fallon asked the audience of The Tonight Show to tweet the worst nuggets of advice they'd ever received:*

**@MicahWilliams24:** "A guy at work tried to give me marriage advice and finished with, 'Trust me, I've been married three times'."

@2OmarSC1: "Whenever someone had a cold, my grandma used to tell them to drink tequila because you'd either lose the cold or forget about it."

**@Britbrhodehouse:** "I was told to sprinkle talcum powder on my sheets to freshen them up—and woke up looking like a powdered doughnut."

@Kellygator: "I accidentally bought a car that smelled like cigarettes and was told vinegar would fix it. Now my car just smells like pickled cigarettes."

# 60-Second Stand-Up

We had an appointment with funny physician **Dr Phil Hammond**

## DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE JOKE?

Laughter is always the best medicine. Unless you have syphilis, in which case it's penicillin.

## HAVE YOU FOUND ANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY FUNNIER THAN OTHERS?

Someone gave me a urine sample in Canterbury. I diagnosed a urine infection. She came to a comedy gig and left with a prescription.

## WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE ONE-LINER?

My late friend Miles Kington used to say, "Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit, wisdom is knowing not to put one in a fruit salad."

## ANY MEMORABLE HECKLES?

I was performing in a double act called "Struck Off and Die" and someone yelled, "You killed my Ethel."

We used to offer discounts to people whose relatives we've [the NHS] killed, so I deserved that one.

## IF YOU WERE A FLY ON A WALL, WHOSE WALL WOULD YOU BE ON?

Donald Trump's disgusting golden lift, although I'd probably suffocate from the smell of his aftershave.



## IF YOU COULD HAVE A SUPER POWER, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

To be able to point at people and make them instantly kinder. As my Aunt Queenie used to say, "Let compassion be your compass." Kindness should unite us all.

## WHAT INSPIRES YOUR COMEDY?

On stage I can say all of the things I'd like to say to patients in my consultations but have never been brave enough to. ■

"Dr Phil's Health Revolution" is touring the UK now. For tickets and information, visit [drphilhammond.com](http://drphilhammond.com)

# Beat the Cartoonist!



Think of a witty caption for this cartoon—the three best suggestions, along with the cartoonist's original, will be posted on our website in mid-April. If your entry gets the most votes, you'll win £100.

Submit to [captions@readersdigest.co.uk](mailto:captions@readersdigest.co.uk) or online at [readersdigest.co.uk/caption](http://readersdigest.co.uk/caption) by April 14. We'll announce the winner in our June issue.

## February's Winner



It's been a hard month for our cartoonist, Guto Dias. His caption, "**Helen, cancel all my other patients today**" received only 11 per cent of the votes, leaving him languishing in third place. It's a very

different story for (the coincidentally named) Helen Rouen, who impressed an incredible 62 per cent of the votes. The winning caption? "**Come quickly! He's started acting funny!**"

Thank you to all who entered. Until next month!

CARTOONS: GUTO DIAS

IN THE  
MAY  
ISSUE



## "I Remember": Charley Boorman

The motorcyclist reflects on his many adventures.



## My Son's Suicide

A mother's heartbreaking yet inspirational story.

## Plus

- The Future of Driving
- Best of British: On the Farm
- Changing Careers

**Gtech**  
**AirRam**



# Introducing the new Gtech AirRam Mk.2

Our best vacuum just got even better.

When we launched the original AirRam in 2012 the Daily Mail said “**10/10 – Is this the best vacuum cleaner ever?**” Well now we’ve made the AirRam EVEN BETTER!

#### What do you hate most about vacuuming?

Whatever it is, we designed the powerful new Gtech AirRam Mk.2 to make it disappear: The cord that holds you back. Gone. The dust cloud when you empty the cylinder. History. And it weighs just 3.5kg (7.7lbs).

#### High performance cordless cleaning

The new AirRam Mk.2 outperforms the original in every test, with cleaning performance proven on both carpet and hard-floors. And you can still glide from one to the other with no settings to change. The AirRam Mk.2's powerful rotating brush bar also makes it ideal for pet hair, even lifting troublesome embedded hair from your carpet. The new LED searchlights mean there's now no place for dirt to hide.

#### New AirLOC technology

The new AirRam Mk.2 is equipped with Gtech's patented<sup>†</sup> AirLOC system. It effortlessly picks up larger objects, but is uniquely designed to also lift dust and fine debris, leaving your floor pristine.

#### New cleaner emptying

The new AirRam Mk.2 collects the dirt into the head of the vacuum, moving it just 4cm before compressing it into the unique snail-shell bin. This compression technology gives the AirRam Mk.2 enhanced dirt storage capacity. You can then eject this tubular bale straight into the bin with a satisfying slide of the dirt ejector arm.

#### Lightweight

Thanks to its revolutionary design, which does away with so many bulky parts, the AirRam Mk.2 weighs just 3.5kg (7.7lbs). The AirRam Mk.2's edge cleaning technology helps you get into those awkward corners and makes it great for cleaning the stairs.

#### Long run-time

AirRam Mk.2's 40 minute\* run-time gives you the ability to clean two average UK homes on one 4-hour charge. A 1-hour short charge will deliver an additional burst of cleaning time.



New cleaner emptying



Unique new AirLOC system

**ORDER DIRECT - £199**

with FREE NEXT DAY DELIVERY including Saturday and Sunday\*\*

0800 051 83 53 (24 hour orderline)

[www.gtech.co.uk](http://www.gtech.co.uk)



\*Runtimes quoted may vary depending on floor surfaces cleaned. †Patent pending. \*\*Excludes UK islands and highlands where delivery is still free of charge but takes 2-3 days. 6pm cut-off for next day delivery. See www.gtech.co.uk for full details.



As hydrating as the 10 best selling  
£100+ night creams **even the £450+ one.\***

Formulated to provide deep hydration when you most need it – overnight.

It penetrates 10 layers deep while you sleep, so you can awake  
to firmer looking skin.

#AGELESS

\*Euromonitor research conducted September 2016. For more information visit [www.olay.co.uk/en-gb/3pointnight](http://www.olay.co.uk/en-gb/3pointnight)