

BEST EVER FESTIVE RECIPES

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HAIRY BIKERS

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WEEKEND
MAGAZINE



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Xmas
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guide

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Bonanza for bargain hunters as struggling retailers launch sales

HALF-PRICE CHRISTMAS!

By **Sean Poulter**
Consumer Affairs Editor

MAJOR stores are mounting half-price sales in a desperate bid to shift their unsold stock before Christmas.

With takings falling short of forecasts, retailers are trying to lure bargain hunters with huge discounts.

Analysts blame the cost of living squeeze for knocking a predicted £3billion off festive spending this year.

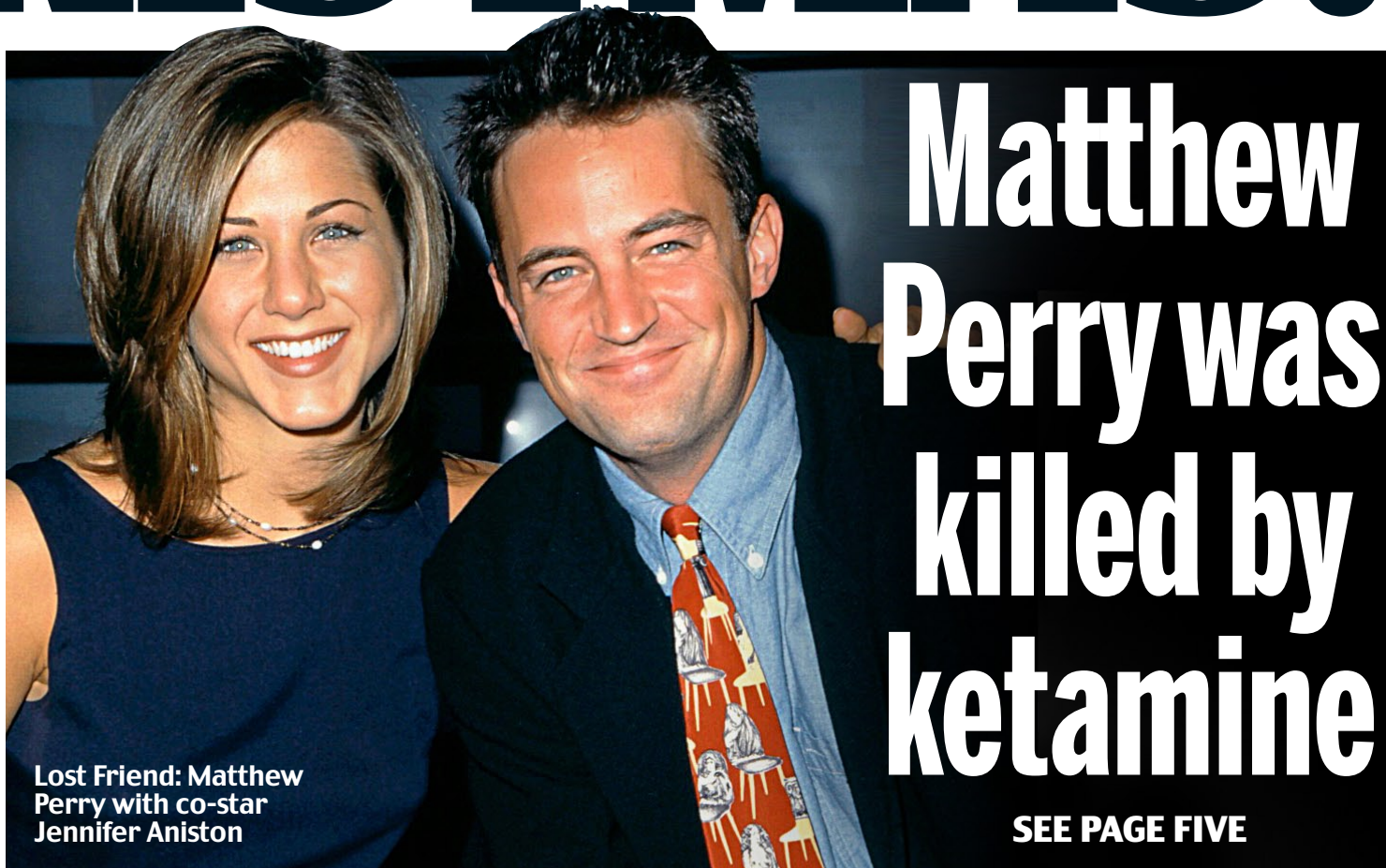
And an Office for National Statistics study found that almost half of families are trying to make ends meet by splashing out less cash on presents and food.

House of Fraser, Flannels and Sports Direct are already offering reductions of at least 50 per cent. John Lewis is promoting half-price gifts and fashion and there are similar reductions at Argos, Boots and Debenhams. Their high street rivals are expected to follow suit quickly.

The PwC consultancy believes spending on presents and festivities will drop from £23billion to £20billion – an annual fall of 13 per cent. The expected outlay is £400 a head, which is £40 less than last year.

PwC spokesman Lisa Hooker said some

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Lost Friend: Matthew Perry with co-star Jennifer Aniston

Matthew Perry was killed by ketamine

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