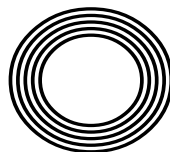


2020
V

BEAUTY
HACKS FOR
LEFTOVER
PUMPKIN

A guide to
ROOT VEGETABLES

Has political correctness
GONE TOO FAR?



FREE

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From teenage heart-throb to The Batman action hero



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October 2020

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Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**EppingTheydon. I hope everyone is doing well. As I sat down to write this column, I felt somewhat taken aback by the fact that it's already our October

edition. The year has truly flown by, no doubt owing to the once unimaginable challenges we've faced since January. Many will view the swift changing of seasons as a good thing. However, I would imagine there are some whose businesses have thrived in lockdown (sanitising and media streaming companies come to mind), and perhaps they aren't so keen to leave behind what could be their best year ever. For me, it's been a mixed bag. In fact, my COVID-19 experience can be perfectly summed up by the birth of my girlfriend's new nephew, baby Brooks. We're both delighted - however, owing to COVID-19 restrictions, we're still waiting for the opportunity to meet him. Brooks is a great example of how, while wonderful things have continued to happen despite the pandemic, they have often been somewhat tainted.

As always, I'm trying to stay busy with business - and with **VISION**Bishop'sStortford launching in November, that's not been a challenge! When I find myself with a bit of free time, I'm loving my visits to Topgolf in Chigwell, and walks with the dog. If you have any queries or contributions you'd like to share with us, please get in touch. Stay safe.

Brett

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HOW ADMIRAL LORD NELSON MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FOR HIS COUNTRY

He is a revered icon from a bygone era, where the forces of continents went head-to-head in battle.

In October 1805 no force was greater than the British, though a fearful fleet of French and Spanish combined enemies, spotted off Cape Trafalgar, between Cádiz and the Strait of Gibraltar, threatened that reputation.

Led by Napoleon Bonaparte, the French had already exerted their authority on the European mainland, and further moves to creep north came in the form of 33 battleships.

Nelson was outnumbered, but by dividing his 27 vessels he was able to position the fleet perfectly so that the enemy front could be sunk. And sunk it was – 19 enemy ships plummeted to the murky depths, with every one of Nelson's staying afloat.

Even before the Battle of Trafalgar, Admiral Lord Nelson had long been regarded a great leader of men and an expert tactician. He had bravery and fortitude and was shown to shoulder the burden of battle himself. Indeed, as the British forces sprang into life to repel the threat, in a famous battle cry he stepped to the edge of his ship, *Victory*, and declared, "England expects that every man will do his duty," and they did.

It is imagined that simply looking at Nelson would have summoned in any seafarer the will to battle for the preservation of the nation. At 47 years old, he had already lost the sight in his right eye at the Siege of Calvi, in 1793, in which his fleet captured Corsica. Then, four years later, doctors were unable to save his right arm after he came under attack at the failed Battle of Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

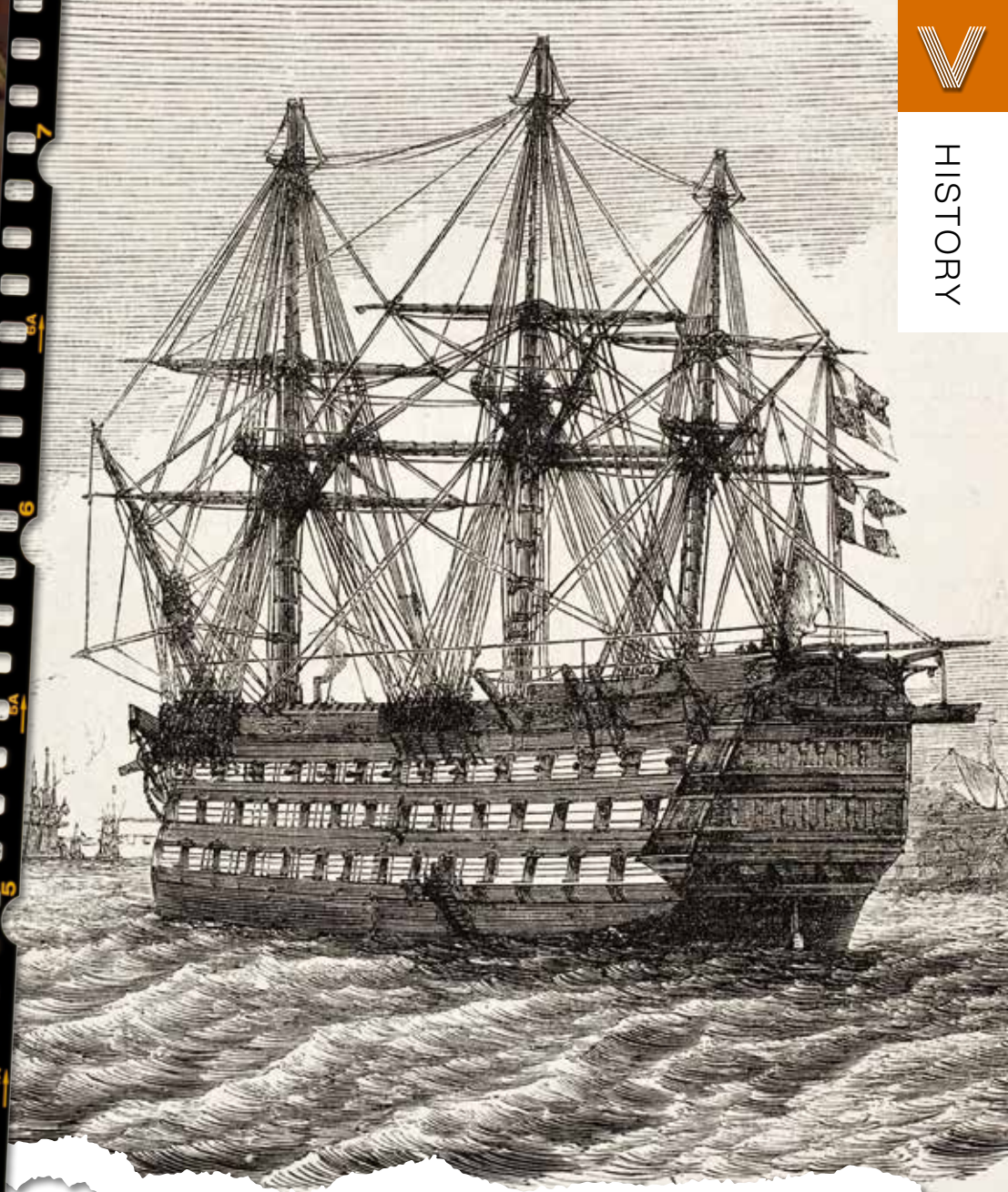
And yet, duty continued. Hardened and seemingly unfearing of death, at Trafalgar the leader was, ultimately, the truest exemplar of his word. On the afternoon of October 21, at 4.30pm, Nelson succumbed to the targeted enemy fire that rained in around his own ship, and was killed. As a leader of men he led the ultimate sacrifice – his own life.

The Battle of Trafalgar lasted only for a further 30 minutes, though its imminent conclusion was reported to Nelson as he lay on his deathbed. The Admiral, holding on to the last few embers of life, uttered the immortal words, "Now I am satisfied. Thank God I have done my duty."

So great was the shock at the loss of such an imperious leader that, in the time that passed, many have come to consider Nelson's death as the central point of the Battle of Trafalgar. While 1,500 of his British allies also lost their lives, his passing is always ubiquitous with the battle and the greater Napoleonic wars which it symbolises.

In reality, Nelson's sacrifice enabled the British to fend off the combined forces of the French and Spanish, preserving our reputation as the best and most powerful seafaring force in the world for the next 100 years, while, of course, ensuring Napoleon steered clear of the British mainland.

Nelson had a glorious funeral procession at St Paul's Cathedral in London, with Nelson's Column erected in his memory in the newly named Trafalgar Square. In 2020, Trafalgar Day, October 21, sees his historical efforts live on very much in the present.



Nelson's
LAST BATTLE

AGENDA NEUTRAL

~~mankind~~ humankind

~~chairman~~ chair

~~congressman~~ legislator

~~businessman~~ representative

~~policeman~~ police officer

~~landlord~~ owner

~~boyfriend/girlfriend~~ partner

~~salesman~~ salesperson

~~manpower~~ workforce

~~maiden name~~ family name

~~fireman~~ firefighter

~~husband/wife~~ spouse

TAKING A TOKE OF 'WOKE' AND WHY POLITICAL CORRECTNESS MAY HAVE GONE TOO FAR... AGAIN

It's common knowledge in life that when making efforts to please everyone, it becomes very easy to, in actual fact, please no one; and it seems the United Nations' (UN) efforts to broach gender neutrality, social differentiation and race relations have done just that.

When, in the middle of May, the UN released a set of guidelines designed to help people address others in modern, all-encompassing ways that wouldn't offend, it seems they succeed only in... offending people.

As examples, their recommendation was to hide away the supposed evils of capitalism and sexism by referring to businessmen as representatives. Mankind, meanwhile, should be termed humankind, while the cult of the evil of 'maiden names' was to be extinguished by labelling them 'family names'.

For all the good intentions of those who oversee peaceful and respectful action in our society, critics believe these sorts of moves tend to pander mostly to the whims of the minority. What's more, in forcing people to divert away from sensible, rational, everyday terms, the result is the creation of a splintering of and bitterness between groups – something that wasn't present in the first place.

The US Twitter storm around apparent offence at the term 'female' – the inference being it should be 'woman' or 'girl', because 'female' is apparently used in a derogatory fashion – blew itself out a few days later when the very same 'woke' authorities suggested 'woman' was no longer appropriate owing to the inference it categorised the fairer sex as the 'woe of man'.

Clearly, we have gone too far. The hope is that Twitter, the virus that has caused this political correctness storm, is also the antidote, because there is a concerted uprising of those who just want to get on with their daily lives without constantly checking over their shoulders... But for goodness sake, don't tell the UN.

Written by James Evans

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Are you BLUSHING yet?

With summer over, you are probably ready to banish the bronzer and bring on the blush. But do you know what type of blush is best for you?

Powder Blush

If you are not quite ready to give up that natural, sun-kissed glow that you have enjoyed over the last few months, then powder blush is the ideal choice for you. Available in a variety of colours, including red, pink, orange and peach, powder blush is long-lasting, easy to blend and offers a matte finish. Ideal for acne-prone and oily skin types.

Cream Blush

If you are looking for a dewy, fresh-faced finish, then cream blush can help you to achieve this. Arguably the best choice for those with dry skin, this type of blush lasts for around five to six hours and can be seamlessly blended into your skin. Be sure not to overapply or you risk a greasy-looking finish.

Shimmer Blush

Available in soft shine or a glittery formula, shimmer blush can set you up for the day and prepare you to party. It's great for highlighting your cheekbones. Make sure you build this blush up gradually to avoid a major make-up mishap. Shimmer blush can be used on any skin type.

Gel Blush

Although this type of blush is mostly recommended for the summer, it can be used to softly transition into autumn, allowing you to enjoy a healthy colour for longer. Best for light to medium skin tones, gel blushes can be easily blended with just your fingertips.

Tinted Blush

Otherwise known as cheek stain, tinted blush has become increasingly popular in recent years owing to its extreme long-lastingness and quick-drying formula. Plus, it can double up as a lip stain. Remember, less is more with this product.



BEAUTY



Love your LEFTOVER PUMPKIN

Don't throw away any leftover pumpkin from Halloween. Instead, pump up your beauty routine with these four DIY pumpkin beauty recipes that are guaranteed to give your skin and hair an autumnal glow.

BEAUTY BENEFITS OF PUMPKIN

Healthy skin: Pumpkin is full of vitamin A, zinc and antioxidants that are essential for healthy-looking skin.

Healthy hair: Pumpkin seed oil is antibacterial and antifungal, helping to maintain a healthy scalp and strong hair follicles.

PUMPKIN MOISTURISING FACE MASK

You will need: 200g pumpkin purée | 1 tbsp honey | 2 tbsp brown sugar | ½ cup yoghurt

How to apply: Stir all ingredients together | Evenly coat your face with the mixture | Leave for 10–15 minutes | Rinse with warm water

PUMPKIN LIP SCRUB

You will need: 1 tsp pumpkin purée | 2 tsp sugar

How to apply: Mix ingredients together | Massage onto clean lips | Wipe off | Finish with a coat of hydrating lip balm

PUMPKIN HAND CREAM

You will need: 50g pumpkin purée | 1 tsp olive oil | 1 tsp honey

How to apply: Mix all ingredients together | Spoon a generous blob into your palm and rub into your hands | Rinse with warm water

PUMPKIN DEEP CONDITIONING TREATMENT

You will need: 50g pumpkin pulp without seeds | 50g raw coconut oil (liquefied) | 50g raw shea butter (solidified) | 25g vegetable oil or olive oil | 1 tbsp oatmeal powder

How to apply: Separate seeds from pumpkin pulp | Add oils, butter, oatmeal powder and pulp to a bowl | Mix well and then blend in a blender until a smooth consistency is achieved | Apply to damp, clean hair and massage into scalp | Leave for a minimum of 10 minutes | Rinse with warm water

Don't throw away the leftover pumpkin seeds; instead, roast them for a tasty snack. They are great for encouraging hair growth, as they contain iron and L-lysine which both help to prevent excessive hair shedding.



CHECK mate!

If you are looking for a fashion trend that checks all the boxes, then look no further. The traditional checked pattern was seen across multiple AW20 collections including Saint Lauren, Miu Miu, Versace and Michael Kors.

Not sure how to make this print work for you? Don't worry, everyone and anyone can rock this form of plaid.

CHECKED SHIRTS

A checked shirt should be a key staple in everyone's wardrobe, never going out of style and providing a quick and simple way to look effortlessly stylish. Ideal for layering when the evenings turn colder; try adding an open-buttoned checked shirt over a plain tee for a chic and comfortable look.

CHECKED COATS

With the ability to suit both men and women, an oversized checked coat is a must-have this winter. Wear over layered knitwear, a tailored suit or even a party dress; this style of outerwear is incredibly versatile. For those who love to stand out from the crowd, choose a bold and colourful check such as red, yellow or green. Alternatively, monochrome check will always look classy.

CHECKED ACCESSORIES

If you are a little worried about trying out this trend, you may want to try starting with one checkerboard item such as a pair of black-and-white checked heels or a checked scarf. But make sure you don't sync the checks of your accessories with the checks of your clothes – this is never a good look!

CHECKED TROUSERS

You don't often see women wearing checked trousers, but when you do they nearly always look fabulous. So, why not give this daring look a go yourself? Pair with a hoody for a sporty touch, with a chunky sweater for a casual daytime look or with a silk shirt and leather jacket for instant edginess.

Photo credit: asos.com





STOP TOBER

How to help someone with an addiction

With Stoptober already under way, we thought it would be a good time to offer a few words of wisdom for those supporting a loved one with an addiction.

DON'T BE AN ENABLER

There is a very fine line between supporting someone with an addiction and actively enabling them. While you may want to help your loved one by carrying out household tasks, lending them money or apologising for their actions, this can actually stop them from making positive changes in their lives. Sometimes you need to let someone reach rock bottom for them to start their own personal recovery journey.

BE COMPASSIONATE

Although you don't want to stray into enabler territory, that doesn't mean that you can't treat your loved one with compassion as they struggle with addiction. In fact, studies have shown that negative social support is one of the biggest barriers for entry to treatment.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY HABITS

Addiction is linked to not only poor physical health, but also mental well-being, with common mental health issues such as anxiety and depression being greatly amplified by alcohol or substance dependency. Ways in which you can promote overall good health and well-being include encouraging healthy eating habits and regular exercise, as well as establishing a positive daily routine.

DON'T FORGET YOURSELF

Supporting an addict can be an exhausting and often fruitless process, so it is vital that you take the time for self-care. Think of this not as an act of selfishness but as a means of self-preservation. Focus on doing something you love and make sure you take care of your own physical and emotional needs.

DO... Focus on building trust • Be honest • Respect their privacy

DON'T... Threaten with ultimatums • Criticise or name-call • Expect too much too soon



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HEALTH & FITNESS

We could all be forgiven for feeling a little less than motivated right now. That being said, there comes a time when we need to stop languishing and start flourishing. Now is that time...

SET THE TONE FOR THE DAY

How often do you wake up on the wrong side of the bed and let that negativity continue throughout the day? Why not instead start your morning with a few enthusiastic affirmations? Even a simple, "Today will be a good day", can work wonders.

FOCUS ON THE GOOD

Although you may find it difficult at the moment to find joy in everyday life, by focusing on the good things, however small they may be, you will start to find yourself feeling more motivated and less eager to hide away from any of life's challenges.

LAUGHTER REALLY IS THE BEST MEDICINE

When you laugh, the body releases two types of

chemicals: endorphins and dopamine.

Endorphins help you feel happy and diminish pain, whereas dopamine, known as the reward hormone, contributes to feelings of pleasure and satisfaction. Finding humour in even the darkest or lowest of moments can help you get through a particularly bad day.

EMBRACE FAILURE

Whether you are struggling to home-school, are completely messing up your latest DIY project or you simply feel that nothing you do at the moment is right, try to focus on what you can learn from your mistakes.

BE PRESENT

If you are struggling with the current lack of routine and worry about not being able to set any short-term goals, other than getting out of bed each day, try focusing on the immediate present. What are you doing at this precise moment that is making you or someone close to you happy?

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THREE HAUNTING HALLOWEEN COCKTAILS

Put the boo in booze with these creepy cocktails that will make your hair stand on end. Literally. From a spooky smoking potion to a colour-changing creation, these Halloween drinks provide both a trick and a treat.

TEQUILA TERROR

You will need:

2 oz 100% agave silver tequila • 1 oz lemon juice • 8 blackberries • 5 sage leaves • 1 tsp maple syrup • 1 dash orange bitters • Dry ice

How to make:

Bash the blackberries and sage in a cocktail shaker until broken down and fragrant • Pour in the tequila, lemon juice, bitters and maple syrup • Give it a good shake • Pour over a cube of dry ice

Safety tip: Do not drink the cocktail until the dry ice has completely dissolved



Photo credit: wickedspatula.com

BLACK MAGIC

You will need:

2.5 oz black vodka • ¼ oz lime juice (freshly squeezed) • ¼ oz simple syrup • Ice • Pearl white edible dust (can be found online or at craft shops in baking aisle)

How to make:

Add syrup, lime juice and vodka to a cocktail shaker • Fill with ice to the liquid line • Vigorously shake for 30 seconds • Add a dash of pearl dust to the bottom of a martini glass • Pour and serve



Photo credit: ellieatalk.com

PURPLE RAIN

You will need:

Blue butterfly pea flowers • 3 oz cranberry juice • 1/3 cup gin • 1.5 oz elderflower liqueur (rose or violet also work well) • Juice of half a lemon • Ice

How to make:

Make a pot of blue pea flower tea and allow to steep • Leave to cool and freeze into ice cubes • When frozen, crush in a blender • Add the cranberry juice, gin, liqueur and lemon juice into a cocktail shaker half filled with ice • Shake vigorously • Fill two glasses with ice and divide liquid between them • Top with blue crushed ice and watch as it turns purple



Photo credit: supergoldenbakes.com



FOOD & DRINK



Spice UP YOUR life

A QUICK-FIRE GUIDE TO KNOWING YOUR HERBS AND SPICES

Spices and herbs are about so much more than heat. They provide colour, texture, flavour, aroma and more hidden pizzazz than you would expect.

The trick, when it comes to adding them to your food, is to choose those that complement your dish.

BITTER

Think of coffee, chocolate and beer, and you'll know we have a love/hate relationship with bitterness. From bay leaf to clove, horseradish to marjoram, peppercorns to turmeric, a bitter flavour is great for hearty foods such as roasts and stews, where spices creep in without overpowering the dish.

SALTY

Salty herbs and spices actually provide a sensible and health-focused alternative to sodium chloride. Consider paprika, cumin, onion powder and oregano as the perfect seasoners, and revel in spicy goodness without the negative side effects.

SOUR

The ability for sour spices to make our mouths water works perfectly when we match them with sweet

foods. Limited in quantity – the key sour spices are amchur, sumac and tamarind – they are powerful and purposeful with desserts and sauces especially.

SWEET

From caraway to fennel, nutmeg to sesame seeds, our love of sweet spices is something that means firm meats such as pork and poultry can be softened, while sour flavours in cheese can really be brought out with a dash of sugar-like life.

And one for luck – **UMAMI**, the cool younger brother of the spice world, boasting a savoury, meaty, seaweed flavour that bucks all the negative connotations of MSG despite using the same molecule, an amino acid called glutamate.

Of course, true aficionados will point out that limiting the range to just four or five varieties is doing spices a disservice. They will note a number of cooling, floral, earthy, pungent, nutty and woody variations, but as a starting point for understanding these most excellent essences, you've got more than enough umming, ahing, wincing and reaching for water to be getting on with.



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Return TO YOUR ROOTS *part 1*

With the weather turning colder, now is the time to shift away from salads and, instead, embrace more robust and hearty vegetables. Whether you are harvesting the veg yourself or you have opted for shop-bought, the below guide will help you make the most of your roots this autumn.

TURNIPS

A member of the brassica plant family, turnips are high in fibre, making them great for gut health. They also contain antioxidant and anti-cancer properties.
HOW TO STORE: Always cut off the greens of turnips before storing in the fridge. Lifespan: two to three weeks.
HOW TO COOK: With their delicate, sweet flavour, turnips make a great mash. Alternatively, use as a substitute for potatoes in dauphinoise.



CARROTS

These much-loved staples are cheap, versatile and contain carotenoids that are known for their ability to boost your immune system and protect your skin from sunburn.
HOW TO STORE: Cut their tops off and store them in a cool place such as the lowest shelf in your fridge. Wrap in a damp towel for prolonged crispiness. Lifespan: four weeks.
HOW TO COOK: Avoid boiling carrots; instead, look to roasting them with honey, grating them raw into a salad or stir-frying them.



PARSNIPS

Parsnips are incredibly high in fibre and are also a great source of folate that is needed for a healthy brain and nervous system.
HOW TO STORE: Store in the same way as carrots but avoid placing near apples or pears, as this gives them a bitter taste. Lifespan: three to four weeks.
HOW TO COOK: You can roast parsnips in the same way you would potatoes. They also work well in a gratin, to bulk out stews or grated into hash browns.



Look out for *part 2* in next month's edition where we will explore the beautiful beetroot, amazing artichoke and the super versatile sweet potato.

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MOBILE MADNESS

Some 35 years on from the first mobile phone call being made in the UK, we look at the limitations of the first available models.

It was a man named Michael Harrison, the son of former Vodafone chairman Sir Ernest Harrison, who made the UK's first ever mobile phone call. It happened on January 1, 1985, and it's fair to say that, in the 35 years since, we have come quite some distance in telecommunication technology.

Phones these days are powerful computers, with a bewildering array of functions, laser-sharp connectivity and a clarity that can enable you to FaceTime someone on another continent. Suffice to say, in 1985 things were a little more basic:

TALK TIME

The first mobile phones had a talk time of 30 minutes. At that point the battery would die and it would need to be recharged... for 10 hours. And no, it didn't work while charging.

WEIGHT

The latest iPhone weighs in at 188g; compare that to the Vodafone VT1, the first mobile phone, which totalled 4.7kg... that's the equivalent of 25 iPhone 11 Pros.

COST

The first mobile phone cost £1,650 – that's more like £6,000 today when factoring in inflation. And even up to the Millennium, call costs were hugely prohibitive in the UK, with fees of more than 50p per minute for mobile-to-mobile calls. And as for dialling numbers abroad... well, probably better to send a letter.

FEATURES

The first mobile phone was just that – a phone. It offered no additional features. Indeed, not until Nokia's rapid advancement into the market in the late 1990s did phones start incorporating text messaging and games (and yes, by games, we mean snake, and not a lot else).



Photo credit:
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HOME & DIY

BRUSH

UP ON DIY

Be honest. When you purchase a paintbrush from your local supermarket or DIY store, do you actually have any idea how to choose the right one for your particular project?

Don't worry, you are not alone. Fortunately, we are here to show you how, plus how to care for your brushes so that they last for the duration.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT BRISTLE

Paintbrushes are available in two different bristle types: synthetic bristles, or natural bristles that are made from animal hair. If you are using paint that can be cleaned off with water, you should choose a brush with synthetic bristles. However, if you are using an oil-based paint or varnish, a natural bristle brush is better.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT SIZE

This may seem obvious, but if you are painting a small area such as a skirting board, then you should choose a smaller brush for more precise control. If you are painting a wall, you will most likely be using a brush for cutting in and should opt for a 2-3-inch brush; any bigger and you will struggle.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT SHAPE

If you look at paintbrushes closely, you will notice that the bristles are either cut at an angle or they have square ends. As a general rule, angled-tip brushes are best for painting trim or cutting in, and square ends are ideal for wider, flatter surfaces.

HOW TO CLEAN YOUR PAINTBRUSH

> WATER-BASED PAINT

Scrape off any excess paint | Wash the brush in soapy water | Rinse the bristles in clean, cold water | Wrap the brush in heavy paper and fasten loosely with string

> SOLVENT-BASED PAINT

Wipe the brush clean of excess paint or gloss | Swirl the brush in a jar of white spirit | Leave to soak for 2 hours or longer | Wipe the brush clean with newspaper



WHO SAID NOSTALGIA WAS DEAD? NOT THE MILLENNIALS, THAT'S FOR SURE



Photo credit: livingat.com

If there's one thing we should know by now about interior design, it's that nothing is ever off limits, and that certainly applies to the mixing of styles, trends and ideas.

Across styles such as Japandi and mid-century modern, interiors take the best from supposedly contrasting looks to produce colour and texture, while stimulating the mind.



Millennials have been unfairly labelled as adopting only modern, run-of-the-mill design, yet the grandmillennial look turns that concept on its head, with modern, contemporary elements enriched with chintz, crochery, ornate patterns and antique furniture you'd expect to see at your grandparents' house... hence the name.

The idea is that we take up-to-date walls, floors, furniture and fabrics and drop in elements that scream sentimentality, respect the tastes of our elders and take us back to times of simpler design.

To pull off this look, think about ornate lampshades, consider select pieces of antique furniture and even throw in a Toby Jug. Perhaps even lay out a doily or two, if you dare.

There are no rules, no exceptions, and only the power of your imagination can hold you back when it comes to pulling off the look.

Embrace worn-out upholstery, floral prints, draped covers and a splash of patterned wallpaper.

And try to tell a story in what you do – of people, places, eras and fashions. Heck, even pop in for a cup of tea with a local octogenarian in the hope of inspiration.

There is perhaps one warning, though – don't go overboard. The idea is to retain a modern feel while patterning your living space with a sensible number of well-selected additions. Go too far and your front room, bedroom or hallway may look like something out of a 1950s episode of *Coronation Street*, and nobody wants that.

GO GREEN

How to make your home more efficient and save on your monthly bills

Whether you are planning to take advantage of the Green Homes Grant Scheme announced in July or not, it can be a good idea to look into ways in which you can improve the energy efficiency of your home, both for the environment and for your bank balance.

What is the Green Homes Grant Scheme?

The aim of this scheme is to enable homeowners and landlords to upgrade their homes or properties with energy-saving features. You can apply online from September for vouchers worth up to two-thirds of the total cost, although those with low incomes will be eligible for 100 per cent funding.

Solid wall insulation

If your home was built before 1920, it might have solid walls, rather than cavity walls, which are highly unlikely to be insulated. You can choose to have either internal or external insulation completed, with the latter helping to warm colder rooms in your home and alleviate damp.

Savings per year = £225*

LED and CFL lights

Lighting accounts for roughly 15 per cent of an average household's electricity bill, so making the decision to install energy-efficient bulbs can save you a decent amount of money.

Savings per year = £100

Triple glazing

Most homes in the UK are now double glazed, but if you want to save even more money on your energy bills, you may want to consider investing in triple glazing, which has the added benefit of noise reduction.

Savings per year = £105*

Install a water meter

If you find your water bill creeps up every year, you may want to think about installing a water meter, as this will encourage all members of your family to reduce their water usage.

Savings per year = £55*

*based on an average semi-detached house





Radiate SOPHISTICATION...

...with these DIY radiator covers



Undoubtedly, radiators serve a purpose in your home, but why do they have to be such unattractive space wasters? Thankfully, a well-placed radiator cover can work wonders for hiding your heater without withholding the warmth.

THE 'PERFECT PALLET' RADIATOR COVER

If you are looking for a raw style that will cost you virtually nothing, then this is the DIY radiator cover for you. The wide slats allow for maximum heat transmission, and you can choose to paint your pallet or simply leave it in all its rustic glory.

Top tip: Be sure to thoroughly remove any spills to avoid unpleasant smells when your radiator heats up.

THE 'CLEVER CANE' RADIATOR COVER

Cane is the ideal material for building a radiator cover as it will effectively hide your radiator while at the same time allowing heat to easily pass through its fibres. You can find cane webbing in sheets or rolls, either of

which can be simply stretched across the front of your radiator cover frame.

Top tip: Soak the cane in water first to make it softer and more malleable.

THE 'SPACE-SAVING SEAT' RADIATOR COVER

If you are lacking seating options in your home, then this multipurpose radiator cover can help you. All you need are 15-20 vertical hardwood slats to create an L-shaped radiator cover that doubles up as a bench.

Top tip: Add a few pillows across the top for added comfort.

THE 'IKEA SLAT BED BASE' RADIATOR COVER

You can purchase an IKEA slat bed base for as little as £20 and repurpose it to create a stylish and multifunctional radiator cover.

Top tip: Use the additional table surface as a pop-up bar and you'll never have to go to the pub again.

Photo credit: Lantiv via theprice.com, rhythmofthehome.com, erikestenbaum.com, projectophile.hiles.wordpress.com

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BEFORE



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THE RISE OF

ROBERT BAT-TINSON

It's taken eight years, 19 movie roles and a complete revision of his status as the teenage heartthrob of his era, but in landing the role of Batman in the latest incarnation of DC Comics' ultimate action hero, Robert Pattinson has emerged from the gloomy, seedy shadow of *The Twilight Saga* into the dazzling, dangerous surrounds of, well... his local gym.

We've always known him best for his vampiric swagger and lofty presence, and for being followed around by a posse of adoring young teens, but since the Sky series in which he made his name, Robert Pattinson has dabbled in everything from serious drama, horror, crime, action and even biopics.

And while excelling on screen in the likes of *The Lost City of Z*, *Good Time*, *The Rover*, *The Lighthouse* and *Tenet*, as the latest ripped and action-ready Batman, this is surely his biggest project yet.

The big-budget Warner Bros movie represents for him a defining moment, both physically and mentally – it's the final piece of the jigsaw in the ascent of the accomplished Londoner to true movie icon status, and by his own admission, the removal of self-doubt that accompanies it is a relief.

"Doubt is in the genetic make-up of any actor," he begins. "You are always wondering what's around the corner and whether you can live up to your best role, your last role, your future potential... whatever it will be."

Taking on Batman represents the same mental challenge, but RPatz sounds more secure in himself than ever before.

"I think any actor will go through periods where they will question whether they can live up to a character in a script, or even the expectations that go with it.

"Batman, for me, means pushing boundaries and building up to a point where I know, in the flesh, I can do justice to the physicality required.

"You look at the true warriors of the superhero genre – Hemsworth, The Rock, Downey Jr – and wonder if you're putting yourself in the wrong place. And yet, having spoken to a few I know, everyone is nervous when the opportunity comes about."

Of course, the legacy of those to have played Batman goes back right to the early days of movie-making. People were still awaiting the conclusion of the Second World War when actor Lewis G Wilson first stepped up to play the caped hero in 1943. Wilson's physique saw critics perhaps unfairly deride him as "thick about the middle", and actors who assumed the role thereafter were toned in a way rather more fitting for a character adept at taking down a range of enemies without, in fact, the use of any superhero powers at all.

From Robert Lowery and Adam West – who played Batman for two decades – through to Michael Keaton, Val Kilmer, George Clooney, Christian Bale and Ben Affleck in the modern era, style and stamina has often gone forward before age – something that stands Pattinson in good stead.

"This feels like the start of a new era for me, and I hope fans come along for the ride."

In 2020, Pattinson talks, behaves and interacts like a very different person from when he was only known as Edward Cullen from *The Twilight Saga*. His evolution into an accomplished actor of variety, veracity and vigour is now surely complete.



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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

LOCAL NEWS EPPING

Photo credit: Epping Forest District Council



£6million makeover for council civic offices

Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) is spending £6million on a refurbishment programme that will turn its civic offices, which date from the 1980s, into a community hub.

The hub will provide flexible office space for businesses, organisations and council staff.

Work began in July as part of a makeover that council leader Chris Whitbread says will help the town centre's post COVID-19 recovery by cutting costs to council tax payers, reducing the council's carbon footprint and improving the quality of life for many employees.

Councillor Whitbread visited the site on September 3 and described the work so far as "an amazing internal transformation".

He said that construction firm ISG Plc is "on time and budget" to complete by the new year.

He added: "Gone are the small offices with their artificial barriers to communication and in are new collaborative workspaces designed to make the most

of the talents of our staff and deliver the best possible services to our residents."

Cllr Whitbread explained that many staff members will continue to work from home even when the new building is completed, resulting in fewer car journeys and lower carbon emissions and an improvement in the work-life balance of employees.

The restructuring of the civic offices is part of a more extensive plan by the council to redevelop the 1960s Conder building for housing.

Loughton resident Mark Howson, 51, said of the project: "On paper it seems a great idea, but I hope the overall service level from the council remains unaffected."

Cllr Whitbread said that EFDC is "heralding a new era" that will see new and established businesses prospering within the new offices and that the rental income will benefit both residents and public services alike.



Black Lion pub wins best floral display



The Black Lion pub on Epping High Street has won the town council's 2020 Rosebowl award for best floral display at business premises, being the second time the pub has been recognised in this way.

The Grade II listed building, which dates from 1539, is Epping's oldest pub and the town's oldest timber building; it is said to have links to the infamous highwayman Dick Turpin.

Laura Willis, who has been running the pub with her father Alan Willis for six years, said she was "delighted" to have been presented with the Rosebowl by Epping Town Council's mayor, councillor Grahame Scruton.

She commented: "The judges said that they were overwhelmed by all our green areas, the garden, the decking and the front display. It is a great achievement for the pub."

Both Laura and Alan Willis thanked their friend Stuart Yeoman for his talent and hard work in maintaining the pub's floral displays.

Prizes for new women's rugby squad

Four players were recognised for their talent at the Epping Upper Clapton Rugby Football Club women's rugby awards ceremony, which took place outdoors on August 29.

Following a terrific first season, the squad covered itself in glory, with Donna McDonald winning the prize for player and players' player of the year; Jane Elmer winning the spirit of rugby award; and Ella Hoyer and Laura Chalcraft winning backs player and forwards player of the year respectively.

Club president and women's team coach Mr Danny Elmer, 55, said: "The women are so inspirational and have taken the club to a different level."

The celebration follows news that North Weald

Bassett Parish Council has agreed to plans for a new all-weather pitch and function rooms, and that two coaches have joined the girls' team.

Man honours late father in Virtual London Marathon

A new dad from Epping was due to run the Virtual London Marathon on October 4 in memory of his father, just weeks after recovering from COVID-19 and breaking his ankle in August, as **VISION**EppingTheydon went to print.

Accountant Scott Calver, 31, caught the virus earlier this year, soon after the birth of his daughter Ivy, and he also broke his ankle while training.

Undaunted, Scott and his sister Beth, 28, will be running from Essex to Kent, via London, to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy UK (MDUK), the charity that meant so much to their late father Martin Calver, who was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at 60, just as he was retiring, and who died of COVID-19 in April aged 64.

Scott said: "Although COVID-19 was the ultimate cause of death for my dad, his condition made it difficult for him to fight."

Scott and Beth have already raised £17,000 for MDUK and hope to raise even more by running 26 miles from Epping to their childhood home in Beckenham, passing the house in Peckham where their father grew up.

Scott continued: "Getting COVID-19 and being away from my newborn daughter, to then losing my dad hasn't been easy."

"I want to do something positive during this terrible year for me personally and also for people all over the world."

The 31-year-old hopes to continue raising money for MDUK.

He added: "My dad would love to have seen the fundraising amount we are currently on, and if we can keep pushing that higher, it will be really amazing."

To donate to Scott's virtual marathon, visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Scott-Calver1



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Hospice supporters walk in memory of loved ones

Supporters of St Clare Hospice from Theydon Bois joined hundreds of others for the Walking in Memory 5k walk last month as the annual flagship sponsored fundraising event went ahead with COVID-19 secure rules in place - raising around £8,000 for the hospice charity.

Starting from St Clare Hospice, the 5k route wound through the beautiful fields and footpaths of the local Hastingwood countryside, taking participants on a journey as they remembered lost loved ones.

Event organiser, St Clare challenges and events fundraiser Emma Broadbent, said: "It was a privilege to be able to put on this thoughtful remembrance event for the people of West Essex and East Herts. A number of families who joined us at the event were remembering family members and friends who had

died during the past, very difficult, few months and whom they had not had a chance to honour because of COVID-19 restrictions at their funerals."

However, Walking in Memory meant so much more than only the event itself - with participants' tickets and sponsorship money totalling around £8,000 in vital funding for the hospice.

Emma added: "We'd like to thank everyone who attended and volunteered their support - the money that we raised at Walking in Memory is needed this year more than ever as we tackle the impact that the coronavirus has had on our fundraising income. This funding will be channelled back into our care services supporting local people at the end of their life, and through bereavement."

For more information, visit stclarehospice.org.uk



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Drama society brings down curtain until 2021



Theatre lovers in Theydon Bois will be eagerly anticipating next year after the village drama society announced it will be cancelling all productions until March 2021. Theydon Bois Drama Society was due to perform *California Suite* in March in the week lockdown was announced.

A spokesman said: "The set was built and everything was in place, but the safety of our members and of the public was of course our priority. We aim to be rescheduling that one during 2021."

The society will be concentrating its efforts on March 2021 when it hopes to offer *Talking Heads* by Alan Bennett.

The spokesman added: "Many of our members will have enjoyed these on television earlier this year and we hope that our loyal audience will be pleased to support us when the time comes. Let's hope that the restrictions will be eased by then."

Later this year, the society hopes to engage with audiences to obtain suggestions for future productions.

Support charities by playing lottery

People in Theydon Bois are being urged to play the Essex Lottery to support good causes across the county facing financial hardship following the lockdown. Players have a chance to win a weekly £25,000 jackpot.

Currently, more than 260 charities and good causes are signed up to benefit from the Essex Lottery – from animal welfare, education and arts groups to organisations supporting children, disadvantaged groups and the elderly. Local good causes include community groups, sports clubs, Brownies or Scouts and school PTAs. Players are able to select the good

causes they wish to support.

Causes that can be supported by playing the Essex Lottery include the East Anglian Railway Museum, South Essex Wildlife Hospital and Colchester Foodbank.

Prize draws take place every Saturday evening when a six-digit winning combination is picked. Prizes will be given to players with tickets that match the first or last two to six numbers from the winning combination. Match all six and you win the jackpot.

Every week there are prizes to be won – of free tickets and cash prizes of £25, £250, £2,000 and £25,000 – to players whose numbers match the winning number combination.

To find out more, visit essexlottery.co.uk or call the Essex Lottery support team on 0300 302 32 32.

Village association secretary steps down

The honorary secretary of the Theydon Bois Village Association, who has retired after around 15 years in the role, has paid tribute to the organisation.

Carol James stepped down last month and said the organisation has been like a second home.

She explained: "My husband was already on the committee and I was asked to go along to help the secretary take the minutes of a meeting. She became unwell so I took over from there. I'd been to the hall before and got involved in the activities."

Carol said she has a lot of happy memories.

She revealed: "We used to run the open garden days and that was a nice thing to be involved in. We're such a happy committee and get on so well. It's been a good experience and I've enjoyed working with a lovely group of people. Linda Blake will take over and I hope she enjoys it as much as I have."



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HORTICULTURE HEROES:

James Wong

James Wong is the green-fingered botanist and foodie who puts variety and practicality into every gorgeous green vista.

To give him his proper title, the 39-year-old Londoner is an ethnobotanist.

In simple terms, that's the study of a region's plants and their practical uses through the traditional knowledge of a local culture and people.

A big part of his passion is edible plants. You won't find him foraging for raspberries and blackberries, but get him talking about such things as sunflowers, nettles and dandelions and he's in his element.

"Most people will assume that because something appears exotic or is hard to grow it must come from the tropics," he begins, "but I'm a scientist, not a gardener.

"So-called 'British crops' like potatoes and cabbages actually come from places like Peru and Afghanistan, with climates nothing like ours. Kiwi berries, though – a very small fruit with a thin edible skin that you can pop in your mouth just like a grape – come from climates almost identical to ours. We should be embracing these because anyone can grow them.

"They're for sale in places like Waitrose for stupid money, but are easy to grow, and in this era we need to experiment, throw away the rule book and look for new things."

Being a botanist inevitably has led to garden design, with the influences of south-east Asia – Wong spent time growing up in Malaysia and Singapore – helping him become a four-time Royal Horticultural Society medal winner.

Wong's greatest passion is soil, given it's the basis of all plant growing.

"Nothing about gardening needs to be flash or expensive. It's about diversity and taking pleasure out of what we see. If you recycle anything in my local neighbourhood the council gives you free compost – I go maybe once a month, pick up some big old bags and distribute around the garden, that's all you need to get going," he says.



OCTOBER BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH

GARDENING

Marigold

If you were born in October, your birth flower is the vibrant marigold. Native to the Mediterranean, this plant is also known as the 'herb of the sun' owing to the fact that its flowers open when the sun is shining. Incredibly versatile flowers, marigolds can be used as bedding plants or grown in containers.

What does the marigold symbolise?

With its intense orange colour, it's hardly surprising that the marigold symbolises both passion and creativity. In medieval England, the leaves and flowers of the marigold were combined with ground egg shells and added to heated ale as a treatment for the plague. Whereas, in Mexico, they are the official flower for the *Día de los Muertos* – the Day of the Dead – as their scent is believed to help guide the spirits from the cemetery to the altars.

What does this birth flower say about you?

If your birth flower is the marigold, you are said to be a warm and inviting person who has the ability to brighten any day. You are full of drive and are often the one that others turn to for advice or help. Personal growth is also important to you.

How to grow marigolds

Marigolds enjoy full sun and grow well in both dry and moist soil. You can plant marigold seeds directly outdoors in spring once the threat of frost has gone, or start seeds inside for up to eight weeks before planting outside. These flowers require little maintenance and only need watering if the weather has been dry for more than two weeks.

Fun facts about marigolds

- Marigold flowers are edible
- Marigolds are a natural insect repellent
- They contain carotenoids that can lower your risk of heart disease and some cancers



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Vetting process

Things to consider...

Word of mouth

Whether your passion is a dog, cat, budgerigar or Burmese python, pet owners are a social community and rarely shy away from sharing opinions, both positive and negative. The pet parents among us will always be the best source of reviews, so jump on social media and see who is well rated locally.

Read the paw print

Pet healthcare is often pricey, so transparency is key when it comes to vets and finances. It is always wise to have pet insurance, but you also need to check that your vet is willing to cooperate with your policy provider to provide a seamless, stress-free service. In the event of having no insurance, make sure you're happy with the potential fees.

Listen to your animal instinct

The best care often means feeling comfortable and happy from the minute you walk in the door, so visit your prospective surgery and make sure it

suits you and your pet. Perhaps you have a place that specialises in care for gregarious guinea pigs, or maybe it's the welcome that wins you over. Clean bowls of water, blankets and toys for anxious animals are all good signs your pet will be in good hands.

Follow the pack

A busy veterinary practice is generally a good sign that it offers decent care for reasonable prices. So as long it isn't so oversubscribed that you can't get an appointment, don't be put off by a little paw traffic.

Stay on your turf

We all know that medical emergencies rarely fit a sociable timetable, and is vital to know that you can get your pet the help it needs any time, day or night. This means not only choosing a practice that you can get to easily, but also one that can facilitate emergency care without you having to venture too far afield.



HOW TO ENJOY A

SOCIALLY DISTANCED HALLOWEEN



As traditional trick or treating may be cancelled this year, unless you want some seriously disappointed children, you may want to look into alternative ideas for celebrating Halloween as a family. Don't worry, there will still be lots of sweet treats to be enjoyed!

HOST A VIRTUAL PARTY

If you normally host a massive Halloween party for all your family and friends, why not use your new-found knowledge of Zoom to host a virtual party instead? Adults can enjoy some spooky cocktails and a chat, whereas the kids can show off their costumes and even play Halloween games such as bobbing for apples via the app. Alternatively, you could host a virtual scary movie night or virtual Halloween sleepover.

ORGANISE A NEIGHBOURHOOD DECORATION PARTY

In the same way that neighbours got together to decorate the outside of their homes and the local streets for VE Day, you could bring the local community together to put up some creepy decorations. That way, instead of trick or treating, children can enjoy a spooky walk on Halloween.

SET UP A HALLOWEEN PHOTO BACKDROP

A great way to make dressing up for Halloween fun despite restrictions, one or more local families could host a Halloween photo backdrop at the end of their driveway or in their front garden. Children can then take turns coming up to get their photo taken, creating long-lasting memories of Halloween 2020.

DECORATE A FACE MASK

A fun Halloween activity for children of all ages. Either buy some plain disposable face masks or make your own and then get your children to decorate them. Some great Halloween-themed decorative ideas include creepy grins, animal faces or pumpkin patterns.

OTHER IDEAS INCLUDE:

Bake some sweet treats • Visit a pumpkin patch • Carve a pumpkin face

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the isle of Wight

Forget long slogs to foreign lands – holiday utopia could be much closer to home, because it's alright on the Isle of Wight.

With so many holidays abroad having restrictions and a quarantine period once you return to the UK, a good, less-stressful option could be to look for a break closer to home.

A short hop on the ferry across to the Isle of Wight could be just the ticket, and here's why:

Tube Train: Speaking of tickets, the Isle of Wight's first unique tourist attraction is the former underground train that connects those arriving on the mainland at Ryde Pier Head to Shanklin, some eight and a half miles away. The British Rail Class 483 rolling stock dates back to 1938.

Alum Bay: While Alum Bay gets most of the publicity, from Colwell to Compton, Sandown to Shanklin, so many of the island's sumptuous, sandy beaches are a delight to behold.

The Needles: These iconic chalk stalks and resplendent lighthouse have always been a major tourist draw, as well as sparing the lives of countless sailors.

Blackgang Chine: A piece of the Wild West, a voyage into a fairy wonderland, or perhaps something else... Located in the south of the island, the amusement park is the oldest in the UK, having first opened in the 1840s, and will transport kids and adults alike back to a simpler age.

Freshwater Bay: So typical of the history hiding behind the island, Freshwater Bay's serenity disguises the caves pirates used to hide their wares in, situated at the foot of the cliffs.

Osborne House: For those who like their history to be rather more regal, sample Queen Victoria's favourite retreat, which remains almost untouched from when it used to welcome dignitaries over 100 years ago.

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YOUR HOME

under the hammer

The pros and cons of auction properties

Daytime reality TV shows have given us a unique insight into the workings of the auction room, but where buying a home is concerned, the stakes are considerably higher than when bidding on a Nissan Micra, or perhaps an antique teapot.

The plus side is that buying a home at auction can save you tens of thousands of pounds. You can also find yourself unearthing some unusual properties that high-street estate agents wouldn't look to market, and as far as renovation projects go, auctions tend to attract every brand of dilapidated property going.

It's also a fast process – when the bidding ends the process kicks off... There's no hanging around for estate agents, and within weeks the property can be yours.

And yet, when buying under the hammer, the

phrase 'buyer beware' certainly rings true. Firstly, the time in between the catalogue being published and the auction itself – typically about three weeks – is all you have to arrange a survey on the property and get a solicitor to check over the legal pack. If you don't take these steps, you're buying blind and that could be costly.

Auctions also require finance to be in place – if you're the highest bidder, you are contractually bound to go through with the process, and on day one that will mean a deposit of 10 per cent.

The other downside is it's easy to get swept along with the cut and thrust of the auction room. Setting a spend limit is sensible, but sticking to it is vital, and can be easier said than done when you sense you are only one bid away from clinching something that will become a home or an investment.



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BUSINESS & PROPERTY



ONE FOUR ALL

Is the four-day week a commercial and social experiment that's here to stay?

While none of us needs reminding of the devastation COVID-19 has brought to society, an unexpected upside has been the way we've all been encouraged to reset, recalibrate and readjust.

Businesses and individuals have stripped back processes and preconceptions, but if you think this all begins and ends with Zoom, think again.

While many corporations will insist staff return to a central place of work rather than work from home and lose the valuable mechanics of 'the team', it could be that retaining the sort of four-day week many businesses have trialled has a bit more longevity.

Advantages for the employer:

- > Research shows staff embed processes better on longer shifts (perhaps 10 hours) over four days than they would do across five. This so-called 'super-efficient' mode can be up to 40 per cent more productive.
- > Work needing to be completed in a shorter time frame brings about urgency and removes an

employee's tendency to be distracted (such as checking social media or news sites).

- > The modern nature of the four-day week is great for the image of a business, and staff can still field calls and enquiries on the fifth day.
- > A 'three-day weekend' removes Friday afternoons from the work schedule, notoriously the most inefficient segment of the working week anyway.
- > Overheads are reduced.

Advantages for the employee:

- > 'Four on, three off' means extended breaks.
- > The perception is staff will make the most of their additional day by taking up new pursuits and hobbies, meaning better mental health and greater efficiencies when back in the workplace.
- > A reduction in the cost of travelling to and from work.

The success of a concept widely embraced on mainland Europe is dependent on the business sector and employee buy-in, but the idea of a three-day weekend is a prospect many will relish... even those in charge.

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From naff to NEAT

CARS WE MOCKED IN THE 1980s THAT NOW HAVE ICONIC STATUS

When the shapely, streamlined, smooth curves of car manufacturing in the 1990s came about, the cars we'd been driving over the previous decade suddenly seemed lazy, lumbering, clumsy things that were headed to one place only – the breaker's yard.

Yet those motors that survived the cull are now being brought back to their former glory, with many of us asking if we were perhaps a bit hasty in dismissing these bold, booming examples of classic engineering. These vehicles' price tags – all more than £10,000 – certainly suggest we may have put the handbrake on a little too readily.

TOYOTA COROLLA

Famously uncool in every car showroom the length and breadth of the country when Kylie and Jason were number one, this motor now screams 1980s chic, with its pointing bonnet, nodding headlamps and completely useless sidestep that only served to graze knees upon entry and exit.

FORD CAPRI 2.8

A classic Ford, with a frontage that had Essex written all over it. And if you think the bonnet was big on one of these premium vehicles from a classic era, check out how the Capri tapers into an exhaustive abyss at the rear. A beauty.

ROVER SDI VITESSE

The Rover was a brand your dad loved as he toured around the south-east flogging double-glazing. A bold, ballsy, impossibly solid motor that said 'family' and 'midlife crisis' in the same breath, the Rover was always sleek and has aged incredibly well, and offers a little peek into the UK's fine motoring magnificence of the era.

RENAULT 5 GT TURBO

For a car that appealed to young drivers while still retaining a small amount of Gallic flair from those famously French roots, the Renault 5 had the lot. A nippy thing that looked ready-pimped on the forecourt and had the engine power to match.



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SPORT

JÜRGEN KLOPP: THE WORLD'S BEST MANAGER?

Liverpool's narrow opening-day Premier League victory over newly promoted Leeds United provided an interesting array of feedback from pundits suggesting the Reds' profligacy in defence would see them struggle to repeat last season's saunter to a first league championship in three decades.

Perhaps those naysayers have forgotten the fact that Liverpool possess Jürgen Klopp, possibly the world's best manager when it comes to drawing every last ounce out of his squad.

The way he does this is through charisma and unity, and that's obvious to anyone who has witnessed the German in press conference mode – he is charming, charismatic, funny, reflective... yet fiercely competitive at all times.

Klopp's playing career saw him a decent footballer with Mainz who, by his own admission, exceeded the limitations of his talent. That type of personal elevation is what he now expects of his players, and all those at the club. It is a philosophy of unity that begins right at the top and ends with programme sellers and stewards.

The ethos of self-improvement has decorated his own life – he worked multiple jobs through university and his early playing career; then returned to higher education aged 28 while a professional footballer, to gain a diploma in Sports Science.

The simple psychology he emits has transformed 'eight of out 10' footballers such as Salah, Milner, Robertson and Wijnaldum into truly global stars, and the confidence he has in both himself and his troops means the 53-year-old has resisted the urge to splash the cash this summer.

While the doubters will circle, hopeful of a slip from the world's best side, anyone who truly believes Liverpool will sink back again into the also-ran abyss should probably take another look at the talismanic German at the helm, and think again.



Photo credit: Paul Ellis/AP/Shutterstock

for those who LAVA BOARDING

VOLCANO BOARDING IS ONE OF THOSE EXTREME SPORTS THAT DOES WHAT IT SAYS ON THE TIN... THOSE EASILY SCARED NEED NOT APPLY

We've all found ourselves sitting at home on a weekend stuck for something to do, and in that regard, Zoltan Istvan was no different. Yet while most of us will put on a film, head out for a stroll or bed in down the pub, the National Geographic adventurer, journalist and daredevil decided he'd take his sandboarding equipment to a live volcano and check out what lurks beneath.

The concept is simple – surf your way down, into and around one of Mother Nature's most wondrous and terrifying sights. The choice is twofold: select a dormant terrain or risk life and limb by traversing a route down an active volcano. Pursue the latter and the dangers are obvious – you can be cut off by rough volcanic ash, find yourself overcome by poisonous gases or even end up dodging lumps of flying molten ash.

The protective gear – including bodysuit and goggles – will only take you so far, so using local expertise (in an environment that is ever evolving), planning a route and sticking to it are essential.

"For me it was a passion for boarding and a fascination for volcanoes," says Istvan. "It was natural that I should want to marry the two together, and when I did, it provided the ultimate thrill."

The American has been volcano boarding now for two decades and lives on to tell the tale. Others have been less fortunate, so the option of using a dormant volcano is arguably a better option if preserving your life is high on your list of priorities... or just stay in and put on a boxset.

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