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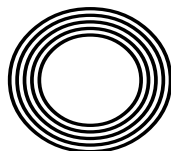
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DECEMBER 2022

Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**EppingTheydon. Like many people concerned about the cost of living at the moment, I've been reviewing my bills and expenses to see where I can make savings. It comes down to luxury versus necessity, but make sure you think twice before deciding what you can do without.

Some businesses may be thinking they should cut down on their advertising and marketing in the current climate. However, I'd argue that it's now more important than ever to do all you can to generate income for your business. I have always used the phrase, 'If nothing changes, nothing changes.' This can be used in life as well as in business.

Of course, if you need support or help getting visibility for your business, please get in touch with us and we'll see what we can do to help.

It seems no sooner are the Halloween decorations taken down than the Christmas decorations start appearing. As a child, the festive season seems to take forever to come around, while as an adult, it comes round all too quickly - and goes by just as fast. So it's important to enjoy every second while it lasts.

Please also try to spend your pound locally and support your local businesses this Christmas. I'm sure they will appreciate it. Wishing everyone a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Brett Shohet

This is your town's hyperlocal magazine, delivering to homes and businesses every month.

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WHIPPING UP A STORMZY

Stormzy's appeal is widespread – a musician, a fashion icon, a fulcrum for equality in what is a complicated social landscape, and the first grime artist to headline Glastonbury. With a new album out, the rap star – real name Michael Ebenezer Kwadjo Omari Owuo Jr – explains that his journey to greatness is no accident, but the result of sheer determination and hard work.

Stormzy will never be everyone's cup of tea. His music is genre-splitting but ultimately relies on a listener's ear for rap, grime and dubstep-infused combinations. Meanwhile, his politics often lean on diversity, equality and race, leading to an unapologetic prevalence of support for Black artists, musicians and students.

Yet whether you respect the 29-year-old Croydon native for his take on music and life or not, the fact he has battled back from depression, and is vocal in promoting good habits and good actions as methods for combating the mental and psychological ills of modern society, mean he deserves the stage he finds himself on.

Stormzy also possesses the humility to talk about the wider elements that influence his music, rather than simply pushing the marketing button for *This Is What I Mean*, his third studio album.

"Nothing would be possible without having a clear head and knowing what it is we have to do in this world to survive," he begins. "I realised a long time ago that exercise was the only mechanism that would truly keep me straight, and that's why so much of my focus is on building physical and mental strength.

"When you put on muscle, people are quick to label you as someone who wants to pose or show off, but it's nothing like that for me. Strength is just a by-product of a fitness regime that keeps my brain, my head, in the right place.

"If I didn't do it, some days I don't think I'd be able to cope."

Pushing his own vulnerability at potentially falling back into "the darkness" is an interesting slant, particularly in a music genre where confidence and bravado play such a big role in the promotion game. Yet while the rapper does accept imperfections in his armour, Stormzy is never less than 100 per cent driven to achieve.

"I find it strange and uncomfortable to aim for anything less than the greatest," he offers, with typical bravado. "That doesn't even make sense for me, that.

"If I was going to be an engineer or I was going to be a baker, or I was going to be a fireman, why would I not aim to eventually be the greatest at my job?

"I've never understood why I should just try to be the best rapper in London, or even the best rapper in the UK. I don't want to be the best rapper in the UK. I want to be the best artist in the UK."

Stormzy's new album will doubtless take him another step closer to his goal. It is a collection of 12 tracks revolving around race, love, fame, influence and contentment. "All our experiences get us to a certain place, and right now this is where I am," he says. "It feels right to be putting this record out – it feels good."



Photo credit: Tracey Welch/Shutterstock

Blind Ambition

CELEBRATING INFLUENTIAL BROADCASTER
AND BLOGGER LUCY EDWARDS

There's not a teenager out there who hasn't had to overcome setbacks – disappointing A Level results, the pain of unrequited love, and more.

For Lucy Edwards, the pain was rather longer lasting. When she was 17 years old, a life-changing operation designed to cure a rare genetic condition called incontinentia pigmenti turned out to be the most temporary and painful of reprieves. Lucy's sight returned to its fullest state, yet for a brief and tormenting four hours only.

Now aged 24, Lucy's sight has deteriorated to the point where she is holding on to the very last bits of light perception. However, she refuses to buckle under the pain of missed experiences or opportunities.

Instead, by "owning" the condition, she has styled for herself a career at the BBC – she was Radio 1's first-ever blind presenter, and is a notable fashion and style blogger/vlogger, with more than 650,000 YouTube and 150,000 Instagram followers. She regularly posts under the #blindnotbroken hashtag and has also published a book, *The Blind Beauty Guide*.

In everything she does, Lucy looks to give hope and encouragement to countless others looking to get their life ambitions back on track following disability setbacks.

"It is the trauma that drives me forward," she says. "I thought I should be open about my feelings because this brings about change. If I didn't share my life online, I don't think others would be as knowledgeable about blindness.

"It is important to show that anyone can do anything if they want to."

An important element of that is a new perception of beauty. For Lucy, her beauty routine is a holistic exercise that doesn't just rely on visuals. It's about taking time for herself, relaxing and unwinding with candles, music and aromas.

She adds: "As a blind person, these are things that mean so much to me."

Photo credit: lucyedwards.com, BBC, Twitter @lucyedwards



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Ravishing reds



BEAUTY

There is nothing like a bold slick of red lipstick to signal the start of the festive party season, and the right shade has the ability to transform any look from okay to outstanding.
Here's how to get the perfect red lip, plus how to choose the right shade for your skin tone.

STEP 1: Prep your lips – Always buff your lips before you apply lipstick as this will help to ensure that your lips are free from flakes and plumped up ready for application. Use a clean toothbrush or lip scrub, followed by lip balm.

STEP 2: Apply foundation – Foundation makes a great base for lipstick and can help your chosen shade stay put for longer. Use your normal foundation for best results.

STEP 3: Use a nude pencil – Rather than using a red lip pencil, a nude one is more forgiving of mistakes and can help you to achieve the perfect shape.

STEP 4: Fill in the colour – Use a lip brush to gradually build up colour on your lips rather than applying the lipstick directly. Add several coats for best results.

RED LIPSTICK SHADES FOR EACH SKIN TONE

Universal shades: True red shades that boast equal amounts of blue and orange look good on every skin tone.

Fair complexions: Opt for a pink-based undertone such as raspberry, which will complement the pink tones in your complexion.

Light complexions: Both neutral and warmish complexions suit orange-based reds as these will pick up the golden undertones of your skin.

Medium complexions: If you tan easily, then you should change your lip shade based on the season. In the summer, choose an orange-based red. During the winter, opt for a cherry red.

Olive complexions: With yellow-green undertones, you should look for a brick- or rust-coloured red that will warm your complexion.

Dark complexions: Dark and golden skin tones boast a yellow undertone so can pull off a bold red lipstick.

Alternatively, blue-based reds give a more natural look.



Wan WAY OF LIFE

AUTHOR, ACTOR, STYLIST, CHEF AND BUSINESSMAN, GOK WAN MBE CELEBRATES 15 YEARS ON OUR SCREENS

Gok Wan MBE has spent the last decade as a fashionista, an agony aunt and a leading light for empowering men and women to love their bodies. He has endured a sometimes arduous journey on the road to fashion individualism and finesse, starting out in murky make-up rooms before personality and precision forged his path into magazine shoots, then onto our TV screens, where he has remained ever since.

"I was a terrible make-up artist," he laughs. "I made everyone look like a drag queen."

Yet despite working the celebrity circuit and becoming a magazine regular, the now 47 year old was "petrified" about making the leap to TV when asked to audition for a show.

"The producers wanted me to be really horrible to a woman. I walked out thinking, 'I wouldn't do that to anybody on set'. I wouldn't go up to a model and say, 'You're not good enough'. I definitely wouldn't go up to a celebrity and say, 'Your bum looks fat in that dress'."

Instead, Gok – who as a teenager weighed 21 stone before battling anorexia in his early twenties – saw TV as an opportunity to celebrate women, advancing the notion that being a stylist is about creating the best solutions and broadest fantasies for everyday people.

Much of this success came via *How to Look Good Naked*, whereby Gok repeatedly challenged the taboo that stops women from celebrating their bodies regardless of shape, and set about installing a sense of confidence within the female population.

Success breeds success, and across *Easy Asian*, *This Morning* and *Say Yes to the Dress*, the fashion guru – always instantly recognisable by his glasses, which he rates as his "best friend, and which can guide me sometimes and help me vanish in others" – has remained relevant and respected in a fast-changing world.

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ARE YOUR **SLIPPERS** *ruining* YOUR HEALTH?



Soft, warm and oh so comfy, slippers are a staple for many. However, could they be doing more harm than good to your feet? Let's find out.

INSUFFICIENT HEEL SUPPORT: Your choice of footwear should provide both support and protection, especially if you are wearing them for long periods of time. However, with every step you take in slip-on footwear, your toes are forced to grasp the slipper to lift it off the ground and carry it, which has a negative effect on the muscles and joints of the foot.

INSTABILITY ALL UP YOUR BODY: Slippers challenge all the joints in your body owing to their lack of ankle support. In fact, an unstable ankle can drag both your knees and hips in, downwards or outwards, depending on your body type. This can cause a whole host of problems, including pain and poor posture.

HIGHER RISK OF FALLS: For the elderly, who are already at a greater risk of slipping and falling, slippers can be extremely dangerous. Slippers provide very little grip compared to other types of

footwear, which means that you are more likely to lose your balance, especially when walking on tiled, wooden or vinyl floors.

NON-BREATHABLE: Although slippers are meant to keep your feet cosy, they can easily make them too hot if they are made of poor-quality, synthetic fabric. This can create a breeding ground for fungi and bacteria and increase your risk of athlete's foot.

SO WHAT SHOULD YOU WEAR ON YOUR FEET IN THE HOUSE?

Opt for supportive, lace-up shoes that stay on the foot as you walk as these will cushion and protect your feet.

Some of the most supportive footwear brands include:

- > Birkenstock Milano
- > FitFlop
- > TOMS
- > Kalahari

It is also a good idea to walk around barefoot sometimes as this can help to strengthen and stretch the muscles, tendons and ligaments in your feet. This helps to improve balance and to prevent injury, knee strain and back problems.



HEALTH & FITNESS



Kitchari

IS THIS THE ULTIMATE CLEANSE?

Do you love a good cleanse? Offering you the opportunity to reset your eating habits and rest your digestive system, kitchari cleanses are common in Ayurvedic medicine and offer a whole host of health benefits.

What are the benefits of a kitchari cleanse?

Eliminate toxins from the body | Aid weight loss | Improve energy | Improve digestion and restore regular bowel movements | Promote overall good health

How to perform a kitchari cleanse

Pre-cleanse: A pre-cleanse period typically takes place one week before the cleanse. During this time, you should cut back on sugar, caffeine, alcohol and processed foods.

Cleanse: During your three-day cleanse, you should aim to eat a grain-based dish for breakfast, such as oatmeal with warming spices, and then a bowl of kitchari for lunch and dinner. Aim to drink 8-10 servings of water or herbal tea each day.

Post-cleanse: In the 7-10 days following your cleanse, you should slowly reintroduce other foods into your diet. You may want to continue eating kitchari for one meal a day for the first few days to avoid upsetting your digestive system.

Kitchari recipe

You will need:

1 cup white basmati rice | ½ cup yellow mung dal | 2 tbsp ghee | Kitchari spice mix (¼ tsp black mustard seeds, ½ tsp cumin seeds, ½ tsp turmeric powder, 1½ tsp coriander powder, ½ tsp fennel powder, 1 tsp fresh grated ginger) | 1 tsp natural mineral salt | 6 cups water | 2 cups of vegetables such as asparagus, carrots, celery, green beans, sweet potato, squash or courgette, cut into bite-sized pieces

How to make:

1. Soak the mung dal overnight.
2. Strain the soaking water and then combine the mung dal with the rice.
3. Rinse the mixture until the water runs clear then set it aside.
4. Warm the ghee over a medium heat and add the seeds until they pop.
5. Add the rest of the spices.
6. Stir in the rice and mung dal and then sauté for a few minutes.
7. Add the water and bring to the boil.
8. Add the salt, reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
9. Add the vegetables.
10. Cook for a further 20 minutes.

NB: The consistency should be thick – more like a stew than a broth.

Photo credit: One Green Planet

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HEALTH & FITNESS

The Benefits of WINTER WALKING

When the weather gets wintry, it's tempting to hang up your walking boots and stay indoors. But instead of curling up on the sofa with a tub of chocolates, why not get outdoors? Recent research has shown that it could be just what your mind and body need, and it's a great way to escape the Christmas bustle.

A walk in the countryside during a downpour could improve your mood, your respiratory system and your body's immunity. This is all down to the sweet compounds released by plants, trees and soil – and the negative air ions created when water and air collide.

To get the maximum effects, go walking in the woods. Researchers found that there are twice as many negative air ions in woodland as in the open countryside. And if it's a muddy wood, so much the better – because mud contains an extra dose of health-boosting microbes.

Cold weather is another good reason to go for a wintry walk. That's because there's a type of fat in our body called 'brown fat', which helps control our weight and the sugar levels in our blood. For

some reason not yet clear, brown fat works better when we're cold.

If you want to join others for some local winter walking, check out the following:

RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

This is Britain's walking charity, which organises Ramblers Wellbeing Walks – free, fairly short walks suitable for all, organised by local volunteers. For longer walks, you'll need to take out membership with the association.

> Website: ramblers.org.uk

> Telephone: 020 3961 3300

LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION

The home of everything to do with long-distance walking, including a network of local groups.

> Website: ldwa.org.uk

There are lots of other local walking groups, some for specific groups within the community. To find out more, have a look online or visit your local library or community centre.



Time for TIRAMISU

CELEBRATING THE BOOZY ITALIAN DESSERT THAT ALWAYS OFFERS A LIFT

We're used to hearing about the history and provenance of our culinary loves – tales of family traditions and secret recipes that have been handed down for centuries.

To say that tiramisu doesn't fit into that category perhaps sounds like an attempt to besmirch it slightly, but the opposite is actually true. Instead, this is a dessert whose parentage is surprisingly recent.

The dish was invented by Italian restaurateur Ado Campeol in 1972 – thus the tiramisu has just completed half a century of service in cafés, restaurants and kitchens. In that time, it has been popularised the world over.

Now is an apt moment to celebrate the dessert, as Campeol passed away at the age of 93 this October.

The pudding has an impressive legacy, especially

as a combination of eggs whipped with mascarpone cheese, coffee-soaked biscuits and bitter cocoa powder perhaps doesn't sound like the most obvious taste combination.

The name 'tiramisu' translates to mean 'lift me up' in Italian due to the kick offered by the coffee, while rum or marsala is typically added to the mix to offer a premium, eclectic edge.

QUICK TIRAMISU RECIPE

INGREDIENTS:

3 tsp instant coffee granules | 3 tbsp coffee liqueur
| 250g tub mascarpone | 85g condensed milk |
1 tsp vanilla extract | 4-6 sponge fingers |
1 tbsp cocoa powder

STEP ONE: Mix the coffee granules with 2 tbsp boiling water in a large jug and stir to combine. Add the coffee liqueur and 75ml cold water. Pour into a shallow dish and set aside.

STEP TWO: Make the cream layer by beating the mascarpone, condensed milk and vanilla extract with an electric whisk until thick and smooth.

STEP THREE: Break the sponge fingers into three pieces and soak in the coffee mixture for a few seconds. Put a few of the sponge pieces in the bottom of two wine or sundae glasses and top with the cream mixture. Sift over the cocoa and chill for at least one hour before serving.



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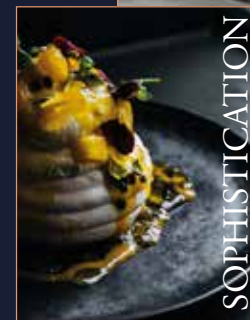
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FOOD & DRINK

HOW TO COOK WITH CHESTNUTS

When it comes to festive food, chestnuts go hand-in-hand with Christmas. However, did you know that there are many different ways you can cook and enjoy these mouthfuls of nutty deliciousness?

ABOUT CHESTNUTS

Chestnuts are the large edible fruit of the chestnut tree and are popular in both Europe and China. When you cook chestnuts, they produce a delicate and slightly sweet flavour, with a soft texture that has a similar consistency to baked potatoes. You cannot eat raw chestnuts so they must be cooked before serving.

THREE WAYS TO COOK CHESTNUTS

Boil them: To boil chestnuts, you first need to score them, before placing in a saucepan of cold water. Bring the water to the boil and allow to simmer for three minutes. Remove from the heat and then carefully scoop out a few at a time, before peeling off the shell and skin with a knife.

Roast them in the oven: To roast chestnuts, you first need to pierce each nut to prevent them from exploding owing to internal pressure. Then place on a baking sheet in an oven that has been preheated to 200°C/180°C fan/gas mark 6. Roast for 15-20 minutes, turning occasionally. Wait until they are just cool enough to peel, and serve warm.

Roast them on the fire: Take an aluminium pie plate or tinfoil pudding dish. Make cuts in the chestnuts and place the plate on a grill over white-hot coals. Shake the plate or dish periodically using heatproof gloves and roast until tender.

HOW TO ENJOY CHESTNUTS

- Mashed with sweet potatoes, carrots or cabbage
- Mixed with sausage meat, bacon and cranberries to make stuffing
- Blended with chickpeas to make a festive hummus
- Made into a purée and used to make chocolate chestnut cupcakes.



COMPANIONS at Christmas

Christmas is a time to relax and spend time with your loved ones. And your four-legged family members also love the chance to enjoy more time together, as well as greeting visitors, taking in different sights and smells, and giving you puppy-dog eyes for extra treats.

Your dog can bring joy this Christmas, and hanging out together can also help you escape from the seasonal stress.

Dog behaviourist Zoe Willingham, who has 23 pups, shares seven magical moments you can enjoy this Christmas.

1. Count down to Santa Paws' arrival with their own doggy advent calendar and make them happy every morning.

2. Give them a special toy to play with when you dress the Christmas tree so they're not jumping up at the baubles.

3. Top up your training to make sure they have the essential skills to wow your guests and anyone you visit with their impeccable manners.

4. Get social and enjoy a festive feast at your favourite dog-friendly pub or restaurant.

5. Wrap up warm and get outdoors together. It might be chilly, but being in the fresh air, taking in the scents, and spending time with you means your dog will be happy and content.

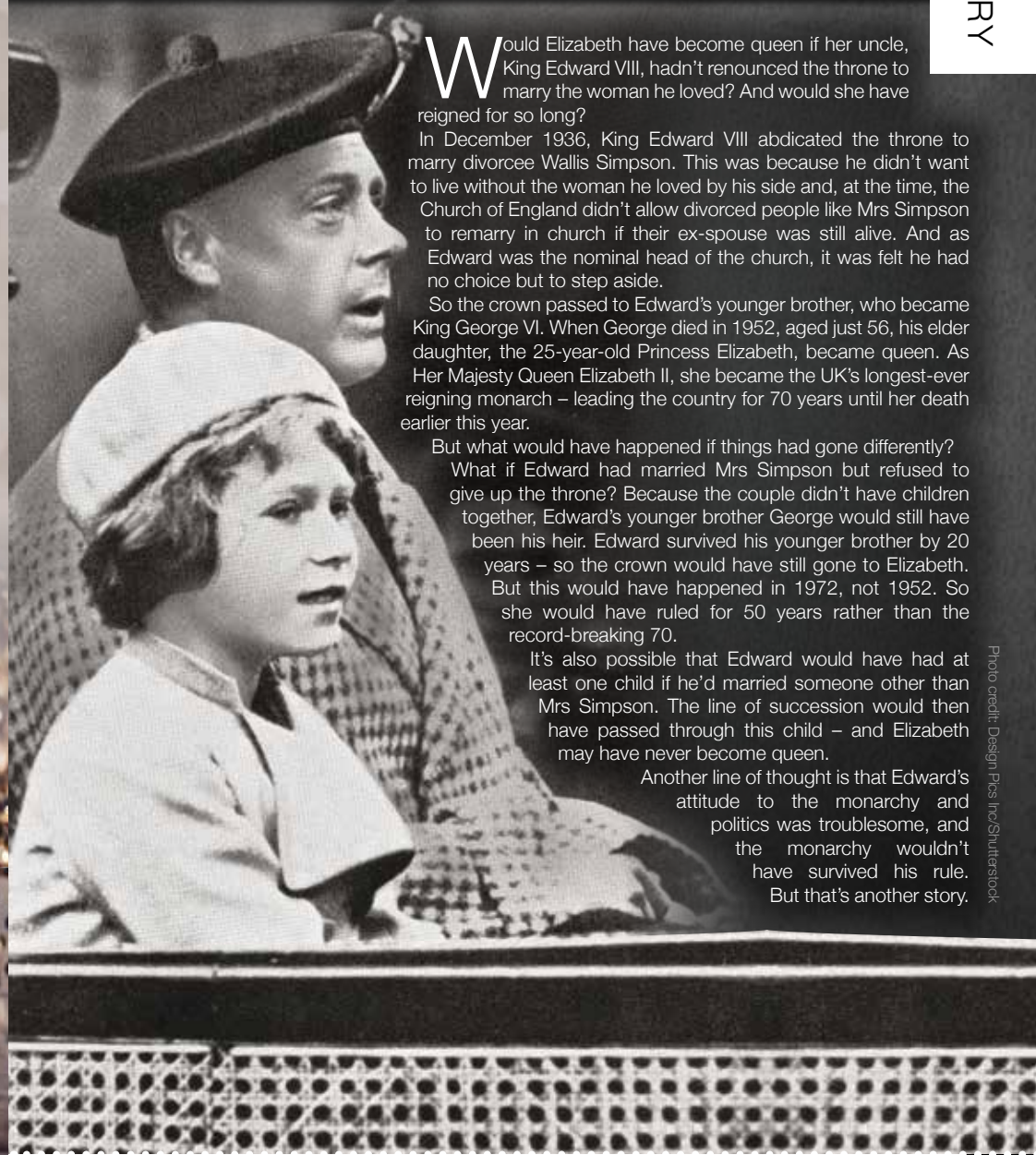
6. After your wintry walk, what's cuter than seeing your dog curled up snoozing while you watch your favourite Christmas film?

7. Your pup is sure to be top of Santa's Nice List, so make sure they have a doggy stocking packed with fun toys and healthy treats to open on Christmas morning.

Want to chat about fun activities you can enjoy with your dog or ask a question about training? For more tips and advice, please visit www.bestbehaviourdogtraining.co.uk



Queen for 70 years BUT COULD IT HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT?



Would Elizabeth have become queen if her uncle, King Edward VIII, hadn't renounced the throne to marry the woman he loved? And would she have reigned for so long?

In December 1936, King Edward VIII abdicated the throne to marry divorcee Wallis Simpson. This was because he didn't want to live without the woman he loved by his side and, at the time, the Church of England didn't allow divorced people like Mrs Simpson to remarry in church if their ex-spouse was still alive. And as Edward was the nominal head of the church, it was felt he had no choice but to step aside.

So the crown passed to Edward's younger brother, who became King George VI. When George died in 1952, aged just 56, his elder daughter, the 25-year-old Princess Elizabeth, became queen. As Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, she became the UK's longest-ever reigning monarch – leading the country for 70 years until her death earlier this year.

But what would have happened if things had gone differently?

What if Edward had married Mrs Simpson but refused to give up the throne? Because the couple didn't have children together, Edward's younger brother George would still have been his heir. Edward survived his younger brother by 20 years – so the crown would have still gone to Elizabeth. But this would have happened in 1972, not 1952. So she would have ruled for 50 years rather than the record-breaking 70.

It's also possible that Edward would have had at least one child if he'd married someone other than Mrs Simpson. The line of succession would then have passed through this child – and Elizabeth may have never become queen.

Another line of thought is that Edward's attitude to the monarchy and politics was troublesome, and the monarchy wouldn't have survived his rule.

But that's another story.

Photo credit: Design Pics Inc/Shutterstock

HOW TO *untangle* CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Decorating your home for Christmas should be a joyous occasion but, if your Christmas lights are a tangled mess, this task can quickly turn into a full-on stressfest.

STEP 1: Get in a positive frame of mind

If you are already feeling frazzled and frustrated, then things are only going to get worse when you start trying to untangle your lights. Therefore, you need to make sure you are feeling relaxed and in the right frame of mind. Pop on some festive songs, pour yourself your favourite festive drink and take a few deep breaths before you begin.

STEP 2: Make sure you have enough space

You need to make sure you have sufficient space to lay your lights out on a flat surface, such as on the floor or across a large table.

STEP 3: Start with the plug

Always start with the plug when untangling your Christmas lights. Once located, gently work the plug through the knots. Be careful not to pull too hard as this may damage the lights.

STEP 4: Use a pencil or pen

If you come across any knots that are preventing you from unravelling your lights, gently use a pencil or pen to tease them out.

STEP 5: Keep your lights in a straight line

As you untangle your lights, make sure you keep them in a straight line to prevent further knots. It can be beneficial to enlist a helper to do this with you and to help you hang your lights on the tree.

HOW TO STORE YOUR LIGHTS TO PREVENT TANGLING:

- > Wrap your lights around a piece of cardboard and then wrap tissue paper around them to prevent damage.
- > Alternatively, wrap them around a wire coat hanger and store somewhere safe.

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Christmas CACTUS

A popular winter flowering houseplant that will make a great addition to your home this festive season and beyond, the Christmas cactus is easy to care for and maintain.

Why choose a Christmas cactus?

You may have already seen Christmas cacti in your local garden centre as they seem to be everywhere at this time of year, and with very good reason. A blooming succulent which is very easy to grow, Christmas cacti boast stunning flowers, and when tended to properly, can live for up to 100 years. They also release oxygen at night instead of throughout the day, which means they can help to improve your quality of sleep.

How to plant a Christmas cactus

Christmas cacti are easily propagated by cutting

a short Y-shaped segment from the stem tips of healthy plant foliage. Plant the segment a quarter of its own length deep in slightly sandy soil and then evenly moisten it. Place the cutting in a well-lit area but not in direct sunlight.

How to pot a Christmas cactus

When choosing a pot for your Christmas cactus, you need one that features a drainage hole at the bottom. This will help to prevent the soil from becoming too wet. Christmas cacti thrive in almost any type of potting mix that is formulated for succulents.

How to care for your Christmas cactus

Unlike other cacti, Christmas cacti are not native to hot and arid environments, which means they require completely different care. This houseplant should be kept in bright but indirect light, with an ideal daytime temperature of around 21 degrees and an evening temperature of 15-18 degrees. Water your Christmas cactus around once every 2-3 weeks, but only when the top one-third of the soil feels dry to the touch.



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HOW TO DEFROST YOUR FREEZER

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DEFROSTING AND CLEANING YOUR FREEZER

Can you remember the last time you defrosted your freezer? If not, then it is probably long overdue.

Although it's not one of the most enjoyable tasks, but if you don't defrost your freezer, it won't work as efficiently and will be more prone to faults.

To speed up this process, you can position a fan near the door so that room-temperature air circulates into the freezer, but make sure to keep it away from any water on the floor. If you don't have a fan, you can use boiling water in pans and place on the shelves, but be careful if there are children or pets around.

STEP 1: TURN OFF AND UNLOAD

First, turn off your freezer and unplug it from the socket. Then, remove all the food and place it in a cooler to prevent thawing.

STEP 2: DECIDE WHERE THE WATER WILL GO

If your freezer has a drainage hose, then you can place this in a bucket to assist with the drainage process. Alternatively, lay towels or plastic liners on the floor to soak up the water.

STEP 3: ALLOW THE ICE TO MELT

The simplest way to defrost a freezer is to allow the ice to gradually melt on its own. After you have unplugged the appliance, simply leave the door open and wait for the ice to melt.

STEP 4: MOP UP AND CLEAN

As the ice melts, mop it up with a rag or towel to prevent any damage to your flooring. Once all the ice has melted, you can start to clean the inside of your freezer. Mix one tablespoon of baking soda with four cups of hot water and then apply to the walls, racks and door of your freezer with a cloth. Wipe with a damp cloth to remove any residue.

STEP 5: TURN IT BACK ON AND REFILL

Once your appliance has fully dried, shut the door, turn it back on and then wait for it to reach the required temperature. This typically takes a few hours, but it can vary from one appliance to another.

Lastly, put the food back in. Repeat once a year or more if needed.



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DULUX COLOUR OF THE YEAR 2023

Wild Wonder

For the past two decades, the design experts at Dulux have been translating global insights into their Colour of the Year, and the chosen shade for 2023 has been revealed as Wild Wonder. A warm and fairly neutral colour, there are many ways that you can incorporate Wild Wonder into your home in the new year.

WHAT IS WILD WONDER?

Wild Wonder is a mix between green and mustard yellow, and is a great choice for those who prefer warmer and more neutral shades in their home. Dulux says that this colour was created to "capture the wonders of the Earth" and hopes that it will "inspire creativity and bring a sense of nature's magic to your living and working spaces in 2023".

WHAT COLOUR HUES COMPLEMENT WILD WONDER?

As a colour for your home, Wild Wonder is quite hard to visualise with others, which is why Dulux has

created four colour palettes to support it:

- > Lush – soothing forest tones
- > Buzz – vibrant shades that celebrate the biodiversity of a wildflower field
- > Raw – a warm and enriching palette that embodies nature
- > Flow – shades to bring balance to your home

HOW TO USE WILD WONDER IN YOUR HOME

- > In your bedroom: Pair with other neutral tones such as sage or olive green to transform your bedroom into a restful retreat.
- > In your living room: Team with pastel pinks and blues for a contemporary look that is fun and fresh.
- > In your kitchen: Try using Wild Wonder on your ceiling, your kitchen units or as an accent behind open shelving.
- > In your bathroom: Paint your bathroom walls with Wild Wonder and then add layers of forest hues from the Lush palette in your bathroom accessories.



Photo credit: dulux.co.uk

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ONE OF BRITAIN'S BEST-LOVED COMEDIANS RETURNS

For a few years, it seemed you couldn't turn on the television or open a newspaper without seeing a mention of Peter Kay.

The larger-than-life Bolton-born comedian always seems to have had the Midas touch since bursting onto the scene when winning Channel 4's *So You Think You're Funny?* contest in 1997.

A year later, he was nominated for a Perrier Award for his stand-up show at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and by the time the Millennium came round, he was a regular on our TV screens, extolling a brand of observational yet irreverent comedy across multiple successful sitcom series. Included in these is the iconic *Phoenix Nights* – which, despite its legacy, only totalled 12 episodes – *Max and Paddy's Road to Nowhere*, *Peter Kay's Car Share* and *Peter Kay's Comedy Shuffle*. Switching almost seamlessly between filmed commitments and hilarious stand-up, it seemed Kay could do no wrong.

Kay's self-removal from the public eye was the subject of much speculation after he wrapped up his last TV projects back in 2017. It happened when his 90-date *Have Gags, Will Travel* tour planned for 2018/19 was cancelled.

He broke cover on events shortly afterwards, referencing The Lily Foundation, which works to raise awareness of mitochondrial disease in the UK.

He wrote: "The Lily Foundation is an inspiring charity that helps to improve the lives of children with mitochondrial disease."

Mitochondrial disease is a term that covers a range of often devastating conditions involving the failure of mitochondria, which live inside cells and which play a key role in providing energy. If they do not work properly, this can lead to serious problems for the body.

"I've had first-hand experience of the foundation's work and I'm proud to raise both awareness and much-needed funds to help with the inspiring work it provides to children and their families," said Kay.

With his family's health issues now, seemingly, in a place where he can refocus on work, the funnyman, now 49, is getting back to what he does best with his first UK tour in 12 years. Aptly titled *Peter Kay Live: Better Late Than Never*, he will visit Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Belfast, Newcastle, Dublin, Glasgow, Cardiff and Nottingham between December 2022 and August 2023.

However, such was the demand for tickets that the Ticketmaster site crashed under the weight of demand. Subsequently, additional dates have been added for 2024 and 2025.

Kay insisted that the ticket prices reflect the £35 cost from his last UK tour, way back in 2010. "The cost-of-living crisis has hit most and will hit everyone at some point," he said. "It's something I would do for free if I could. But even if I can't do that, this isn't a money-making exercise – it's an honour to be in demand still after all this time and I'm excited about having a laugh with people in a live setting all over again.

"I also may be a bit rusty... hence the freezing of the ticket price," he joked.

In addition, Kay, the recipient of four BAFTAs and a National Television Award, has been announced as the first artist in the world to perform a monthly residency at the O2. At a time when what we're allowed to laugh at seems under more scrutiny than ever before, it seems we could all benefit from knowing the way to Amarillo... or the North Greenwich arena, at least.



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Photo credit: Google Maps, Essex Police

Man is sentenced following burglary charge

A man has been sentenced to 42 months in prison just over a month after a burglary took place in Epping.

Nicky Love, 31 (pictured right), of Gallery Road, London, pleaded guilty to burglary of a dwelling, at Chelmsford Crown Court on November 17.

The investigation started on October 7 after a home on Allnutts Road was burgled. Officers attended the scene within an hour and gathered the evidence needed to identify the suspect.

Love was arrested a couple of days later and charged with burglary of a dwelling.

Detective Inspector Tony Atkin said: "This is a great result and an example of how committed we are to getting justice for victims of burglary.

"This man travelled in from London with the sole intention of committing these crimes and he showed

little regard for how his crime would impact these victims.

"Essex Police will aim to attend all residential burglaries and if we don't, then there must be a good reason for this. In this investigation, the quick reporting allowed us to attend within the hour and carry out the enquiries we needed to. If you have been burgled, we ask that you report it as quickly as possible."

According to CrimeRate, Epping is among the top 10 most dangerous small towns in Essex, with the overall crime rate in 2021 at 87 crimes per 1,000 people. Burglary, however, has declined year on year since 2018.

Epping Forest District Council offers resources, in collaboration with Essex Police, to help prevent burglary. To find out more, visit www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/crime-and-safety/burglary

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Community marks Remembrance Day



Photo credit: Epping Forest District Council

The Epping community came together to remember the fallen last month.

Councillor Mary Sartin, chair of Epping Forest District Council (pictured above second from right), led the Remembrance ceremonies, starting on Friday, November 11, by laying a wreath at St John's Church

in Epping and at the Commonwealth War Graves in Epping Cemetery.

The 56 Squadron, led by Wing Commander Richard Podmore, also joined the ceremonies for the first time since receiving the Freedom of the District.

Cllr Sartin said: "Remembrance honours those who serve to defend our democratic freedoms and way of life. We unite across faiths, cultures and backgrounds to remember the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces community from Britain and the Commonwealth. As a council, Epping Forest district is proud to play its part every year."

The Civic Offices in Epping were also lit up in red to commemorate Remembrance Day on November 11 and Remembrance Sunday on November 13.

Free parking offered in run-up to Christmas

Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) has announced free parking in council-run car parks across the district on weekends throughout December to encourage shoppers to buy from local businesses while they do their Christmas shopping.

EFDC has offered the discount in previous years with the intention of promoting local businesses and enabling shoppers to invest in the local economy.

In Epping, the Bakers Lane Car Park, Civic Offices Car Park and St John's Temporary Car Park are all included in the scheme.

Councillor Sam Kane said: "We are very pleased to continue offering free weekend parking throughout the month of December for residents and visitors to enjoy

their local shops, bars, cafés and restaurants leading up to Christmas.

"We encourage residents and visitors to visit our towns and help support local businesses."

For a list of EFDC-operated public car parks, visit www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/parking-and-travel/pay-and-display-car-parks

Much-anticipated playground opens after three years

The new playground at Lower Swaines Recreation Ground officially opened last month after three years of fundraising by the Epping Playground Association.

The group set a fundraising target of £120,000, and was able to raise £84,000 thanks to donations from local businesses and the community, as well as from grant applications.

A financial contribution from Qualis Group, as part of the Greenspace Improvement contributions from its nearby St John's redevelopment, allowed the target to be exceeded and the playground to be delivered.

The new playground officially opened on Saturday, November 5.

Councillor Holly Whitbread, Epping Forest District Council's housing and community portfolio holder (pictured below second from left), said: "I was delighted to see the completion of the new playground at Lower Swaines in Epping.

"After years of underinvestment, Epping Lower Swaines finally has the playground it deserves. Epping Playground Association has done a wonderful job of raising the funds with the support of the community, including the district and county council, local businesses and residents.

"I was delighted to help secure £50,000 of funding from the Section 106 payments for the new developments in the centre of Epping and ensure the monies were brought forward.

"This is a brilliant playground for all ages, and I look forward to seeing children and young people in Epping benefit from it."



Photo credit: Qualis Group



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LOCAL NEWS

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LOCAL NEWS THEYDON



Photo credit: Google Maps

Census 2021 reveals high Christian identification

The Census 2021 second phase results have been released, alongside national identity, religion, language and ethnic group information that reveal the changes Theydon has undergone in the last decade.

Despite the Census revealing that, for the first time, less than half of the population of England and Wales are Christian, 56.8 per cent of respondents in Theydon Bois identified as Christian. A total of 30.4 per cent said they held no religion, while 4.3 per cent identified as Jewish.

The Epping Forest local authority also had an above-average proportion of those identifying as Christian when compared to the rest of the country.

Epping Forest residents identified with at least one UK national identity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British and Cornish) at a higher rate than the rest of the UK.

Although a slight decline from 2011, 90.3 per cent of residents identified with a UK identity across the country, rising to 91.4 per cent in Epping Forest.

Other data from the Census revealed that the population of Epping Forest increased by around 3,000.

Epping Forest also had a higher proportion of married or civil partnership couple households when compared to the rest of England.

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Business advice programme expanded

Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) has announced an expansion to its support for small businesses, including those in Theydon Bois, offered through its partnership with Colbea.

While advice regarding minimising carbon emissions and reducing running costs was already being offered, local businesses will now be able to gain advice on a wider range of topics.

These include consultancy delivered on a one-to-one basis, how to respond to the challenges of Brexit, consultancy on imports and exports, introduction to finance and more.

Councillor John Philip, EFDC's cabinet member for finance and economic development, said: "EFDC is keen wherever possible to develop business support

services that can help local businesses thrive and develop through a challenging economic climate."

Simon Mead, Colbea's chief executive, said: "Colbea is very pleased to have expanded the service on offer to Epping Forest businesses. It is a particularly difficult time for the UK economy.

"In response, over the past 12 months, Colbea has worked with hundreds of clients to help them overcome challenges and develop their businesses.

"We look forward to providing even more of this support in the local area, thanks to the ongoing support and partnership with EFDC."

To access any of the services offered, businesses can contact Colbea directly on 01206 548 833 or email enquiries@colbea.co.uk

Mutilated cat left cruelly displayed in garden

A pet cat was found mutilated and displayed in a neighbour's garden in Theydon Bois.

The 18-year-old cat, named Lucky, had its head severed, which has not yet been found.

The incident is being investigated by the South Norwood Animal Rescue and Liberty organisation, which confirmed Lucky's death was human-related, as the cut was too clean for an animal.

The owner posted on the Theydon Bois Nextdoor app, saying: "My cat was killed last week and there have been a few others local exactly the same.

"The perpetrator cuts their head off and other pieces then takes the parts, leaving the body laid out for people to find, then at a later date is likely to return with the head and again place it for people to see."

An RSPCA spokesperson said: "This is very sad, and would have been very unpleasant for the person who found the cat. Our thoughts are with the cat's owner.

"If anyone has any information about the incident, then we would ask if they could contact the RSPCA's inspectorate appeal line on 0300 123 8018."

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Create your own SENSORY GARDEN

A sensory garden is designed to stimulate the five basic senses of sight, smell, sound, touch and taste, and has the ability to enhance your sense of wellbeing, reduce stress and calm the mind. Find out the best sensory garden plants and features below.

CURRY PLANT: An evergreen shrub that boasts silvery grey foliage and pale yellow flowers, the curry plant provides a beautiful aroma and is known for attracting bees and other pollinators. Plant in a sunny, sheltered spot in well-drained soil and trim regularly to help it keep its shape.

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES: Ornamental grasses such as pampas grass and architectural seed heads add structure and movement to a sensory garden. Pick creeping, hanging and straight standing grasses for maximum effect.

LAMB'S EAR: Featuring velvety foliage that looks just like a pair of lamb's ears, this evergreen perennial produces stunning purple-pink flowers in the summer months that promise to add colour and depth to your garden. Plant them in open borders with other perennials or grow in containers.

WILD STRAWBERRIES: Wild strawberry, known as *fragaria vesca*, produces small and super-sweet fruit that is perfect for stimulating your senses of smell and taste. This plant loves partial sun and fairly damp conditions.

LAVENDER: Easy to grow and care for, lavender can add both scent and colour to your garden, as well as attracting pollinators. Weave in among other summer-blooming flowers or plant near your home to enjoy its strong aroma whenever you pop your head outside the door.

A WATER FEATURE: A water feature such as a pond, fountain or bird bath makes a great addition to a sensory garden. Providing beautiful reflections, calming sounds and contrasting texture, it will also attract wildlife and a wide variety of colourful birds.



Epping Forest District Council



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WHY IT'S VITAL TO KEEP YOUR GUTTERS CLEAR AND RUNNING SMOOTHLY

The sight of water either pooling in a gutter or, worse still, spilling out over the side of it, can signal real issues for your home. The autumn and winter months bring together the ultimate combination of factors that mean it pays to check your gutters now before any problems have the chance to get worse.

Your utter gutter nightmare is started by an accumulation of plant debris, sticks, twigs, leaves and bracken. This can be blown onto your roof, dropped by flying birds or, as far as moss goes, may have grown there.

This accumulation of dead matter can form an impenetrable path for rainwater, leading to leaks, damp and mould. A constant drip of liquid over a surface will soon compromise brick material and coatings, with the water penetrating through gaps in the mortar. It will eventually hit your internal plaster layer, often getting trapped behind paint and wallpaper, whereby it will spread across the wall.

The first you may know about this is a discolouration of wallpaper, or a slightly wet stain that's cold to the touch. At this point, that handful of stuck leaves may have compromised an entire wall, which will require drying out and possible replastering.

Externally, blocked gutters can also rot wooden fascia boards around your roof. These are in place to deflect water and wind from the property, and when they deteriorate, their effectiveness drops.

Finally, blocked gutters can also lead to foundation damage; and if you have a cellar or basement – or any other room below surface level – this will be particularly susceptible to flooding.

While you may imagine scaling a ladder in order to hook out a handful of decomposing matter is easy, it often pays to enlist professional help to ensure the job is done properly.

Gutter maintenance specialists will know what to do if they encounter animals or nests, and they may also be able to attend to other quick bits of maintenance, such as replacing loose or broken tiles.



KIDS

CHARACTER

CHRISTMAS CREATIONS

Do you love creating handmade cards and gifts for your family and friends at Christmas? These handprint and footprint designs are super cute and offer the perfect way to personalise a wide range of presents this festive season.

If you are making a custom plate or mug, after following the below steps, apply a glaze with a brush or sponge to protect from water and wear and tear.

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer

YOU WILL NEED:

Child-safe paint (red or brown) such as finger paints or poster paints | Red pom poms or buttons | Goggle eyes | PVA glue | A small bell | Ribbon | What you would like to print on – A4 card, a roll of paper to make wrapping paper, plate, etc

HOW TO MAKE:

- > If making a card, fold the A4 card in half.
- > Dip your child's hands in the paint and place on the front of the white card – these are the reindeer's antlers.
- > Dip one of your child's feet in the paint and place on the card below the handprints – this is the reindeer's face.
- > Glue the eyes to the top of the footprint.
- > Glue a button or a red pom pom to the centre of the footprint for the nose.
- > Glue the bell and ribbon to the heel area of the foot.

Father Christmas

YOU WILL NEED:

Red and white poster paint | Cotton wool | PVA glue | Goggle eyes | Black marker pen | What you would like to print on – card, wrapping paper, plate, mug, etc

HOW TO MAKE:

- > If making a card, fold the A4 card in half.
- > Paint your child's fingers in white paint.
- > Paint the lower half of their palm and thumb red.
- > Paint the top of their palm peach (mix some red and white paint together to make this colour).
- > Press down on the coloured card.
- > Once dry, draw on Santa's face and glue on the eyes.
- > Stick cotton wool at the end of the thumbprint and along the top of the red to form Santa's hat.
- > If painting an item of crockery, omit the cotton wool; use enamel paint instead and apply a clear gloss glaze to finish.



Photo credit: Thank! UK

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THE TREND FOR COMMUNAL LIVING IS HERE, AND IT'S CALLED COLIVING

Our cities are not only more crowded than ever before, but more expensive too; yet the desire for young people to thrive in the heart of these fantastic urban spaces is real.

The solution to those priced out of traditional accommodation is something called Coliving.

It is an innovative social construct that uses a new blueprint for accommodation design, whereby tenants in a space have individual rooms, but shared social and kitchen areas.

The concept is much the same as you would have in a student house, though the target market is very much young professionals, and the architectural and interior finish reflects a demographic who are in employment and looking to build careers and interactions with like-minded people.

While in terms of location, Coliving can provide a huge advantage with reductions in commuting time and cost, an additional environmental impact comes by way of shared amenities, all-inclusive bills and

communal events and facilities.

While for some young people the idea of being thrown into a space with a number of strangers may be daunting, Coliving spaces are typically extremely careful to maintain high safety standards for residents, with letting agents carefully screening both residents and staff, and most include a 24/7 concierge service to help manage the building.

Coliving also provides flexibility for residents who don't want to be caught in long-term renting situations; nor might they have the ability to put a large deposit down. Instead, a rental term might be for just a few days up to a few months, and longer if desired.

What people therefore get is a ready-made community of like-minded people, excellent facilities, and all the social and practical benefits of living in a central, busy part of town.





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ケンチキ KRAZY!

Did you know that while you're tucking into your roast turkey and all the trimmings on Christmas Day, over in Japan, they're chowing down on crispy chicken with a selection of sides?

HOW DID THIS TRADITION START?

This peculiar demand for KFC at Christmas came about because of a campaign that was inspired by Takeshi Okawara, the manager of the first-ever KFC in Japan. Shortly after it opened in 1970, he woke up at midnight with the idea to sell a 'party barrel' of fried chicken on Christmas Day. In 1974, the marketing campaign went national, calling it Kurisumasu ni wa Kentakkii, or Kentucky for Christmas. The rest, as they say, is history.

WHAT DOES THE KFC CHRISTMAS MEAL CONSIST OF?

As well as buckets of fried chicken, families in Japan tuck into lots of sides, cakes and even wine. Some of this year's offerings include:

- > A box of chicken for 3,780 yen (around £22)
- > A party box with eight pieces of chicken, a lasagne and a chocolate cake for 4,000 yen (around £25)
- > A premium roasted chicken and sides for 5,800 yen (around £35)

On average, these packages account for a whopping one-third of the chain's yearly sales in Japan.

HOW DO THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?

In Japan, Christmas is still a secular holiday as less than one per cent of the population identify as Christian. Instead, they use this holiday as a time for families and friends to have parties, make plans for dinner and enjoy general celebrations.

WHAT IS THE JAPANESE KFC CHRISTMAS CRAZE?

An estimated 3.6 million Japanese families treat themselves to KFC every festive season, with what has to be one of the world's most unique Christmas food traditions.

In fact, demand is so high that locals often have to queue for hours to get their hands on a bucket or two of this popular cuisine.

Take me to the MOUNTAINS

If mountain climbing is on your bucket list, there's no better day to start planning your trip than International Mountain Day, which takes place on December 11.

Mountains are home to 15 per cent of the world's population and about half of the world's 'biodiversity hotspots' – areas with the richest concentration of threatened plant and animal life. But go carefully and you can experience all the thrills of the mountain, while also helping local communities and protecting fragile ecosystems.

Here are three mountains suitable for a range of abilities – though remember, you'll still need a high level of fitness and endurance to tackle any mountain.

MOUNT FUJI, JAPAN – 3.776M

The hike along the most popular route to the peak of Mount Fuji takes around eight hours. Most climbers start at night to reach the summit at sunrise. The official hiking months are July and August.

PIKES PEAK, COLORADO, UNITED STATES – 4.302M

This 21km hike in the Rockies lasts the whole day and takes you to the highest point on the US mainland. As well as stunning views at the summit, there's also a state-of-the-art visitor centre.

MOUNT KILIMANJARO, TANZANIA – 5.895M

Most trails up Africa's highest mountain take five or six days, allowing climbers to acclimatise to the thin air as they go. If you're brave enough, you can even spend a night camping in the mountain's crater.

MOUNTAIN FACTS:

- There are 1,187,049 mountains in the world.
- The tallest sea mountain in the world is Mauna Kea in Hawaii at 10,205m, but more than half of it is underwater. Everest is the world's highest mountain, at 8,848.86m above sea level.
- Bhutan is easily the most mountainous country in the world – nearly 99 per cent of it is made up of mountains.
- Annapurna I in Nepal is widely regarded as the most difficult and dangerous mountain to climb.
- Around 300,000 people a year climb Mount Fuji, making it the world's most frequently climbed mountain.



Pikes Peak



Kilimanjaro



Mauna Kea



Mount Everest

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MOTORING

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WITH NEWS THAT THE FORD FIESTA IS TO TAKE A PERMANENT SIESTA, WE CELEBRATE THE LEGACY OF THIS BRITISH MOTORING MAINSTAY

If there is one car that portrays the modern era of motoring, it is undoubtedly the Ford Fiesta.

It was 1976 when the first Fiestas rolled off the Ford production plant in Dagenham, arrowing their way to the driveways of motorists looking for an affordable, fuel-efficient and fun way to conquer the roads.

The Fiesta has always been instantly recognisable among an ever-increasing and sometimes perplexing range of Ford models. Indeed, even though its lifespan traverses four decades and eight generations, the car that has shifted more than 22 million units – one fifth of those in the UK – has always stood out as the ultimate fun run-around.

The car has come in saloon, hatchback and even convertible versions – always nippy, always chic, and with a speediness that belies what has always been a modest price tag.

Indeed, the Fiesta epitomised a new generation of car buyers through the 1980s, who were keen to ditch the clumsy, clunky motors of the era, looking instead for a rather more streamlined and sporty approach.

Yet while the model arrived as a mark of practicality and fashion, it has found its exit governed by the same elements, ultimately being undone by the green car revolution. Hence Ford is also ditching the Galaxy and the S-Max, with the last of these being produced next April. Instead, the manufacturer – which has slipped to fifth globally in recent years, behind Toyota, Volkswagen, Hyundai and General Motors – is channelling all its energy into three new electric passenger vehicles and a further four new commercial models.

The Fiesta's day may be done, but the car's presence will be celebrated on our roads for many years to come.

Photo credit: emithankamuk/Shutterstock.com, redbubble.com



PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

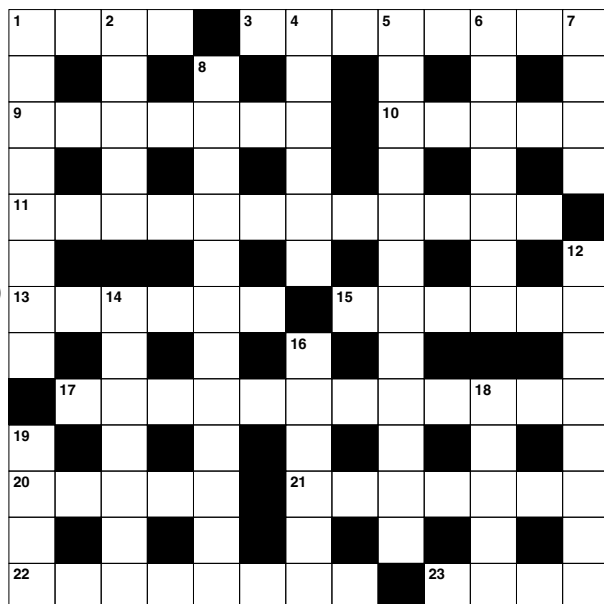
Answers: see end of The Vision Listings

ACROSS

1. Prima donna (4)
3. Stated emphatically (8)
9. Shackle (7)
10. Animal that walks on two legs (5)
11. Narcissism (4-8)
13. Contributes information (6)
15. Not noticed (6)
17. Easy to converse with (12)
20. Person who flies an aircraft (5)
21. Pays no attention to (7)
22. Where photographs are developed (8)
23. Stitches (4)

DOWN

1. Relating to the home (8)
2. Type of plastic (5)
4. Constructs a building (6)
5. Intricate and confusing (12)
6. Retaliatory action (7)
7. Extinct bird (4)
8. Author of screenplays (12)
12. Opposites (8)



14. Liked by many people (7)

16. Gambling house (6)

18. Flat-bottomed boat (5)

19. Moved quickly (4)

DID YOU KNOW?

- Christmas takes place on December 25 – the day the Roman Catholic Church chose to mark Jesus' birthday. No one actually knows the exact date Jesus was born.
- Not everyone celebrates Christmas on the same day. For example, Greek Orthodox Christians often celebrate on January 7.
- Many Christmas traditions come from the Victorian era, including crackers, roast turkey and gift-giving.
- Christmas trees were first seen in Germany in the 16th century, when fir trees were decorated with fruit and nuts.
- *Jingle Bells* was originally a Thanksgiving song written in 1850.
- It only took six weeks for Charles Dickens to write *A Christmas Carol*.

SUDOKU

			8			1		9
		9						6
	8			2			5	3
9	2				1		6	
	7		4				3	2
7	5			1			4	
8						5		
1		4			3			



SPORT

BOWLED OVER

CHAMPIONS

ENGLAND CLINCH T20 WORLD CUP SUCCESS

England's hard-hitting, bombastic-bowling T20 side are the best in the world – their clinching of the World Cup in Australia in the middle of November capped a memorable few weeks Down Under, in which captain Jos Buttler MBE's side battled back from adversity to lift their first world crown since back in 2010.

Chasing a modest Pakistan total of 137 in the Melbourne final, an early batting wobble was calmed by the inspirational Ben Stokes OBE, as England knocked off the required runs with an over to spare.

It was another monstrous moment for Stokes, who has made a habit of being England's go-to man for the big occasion. Indeed, when entering the crease with the side 45/3, there were fears his side might wilt at the final hurdle, having got themselves into the final despite a group defeat to Ireland and a rain washout draw versus Australia.

Perhaps we shouldn't have worried. After all, it's getting be something of a regular thing, both for Stokes and in the way the England team have showed real prowess in their white-ball cricket over the past few years.

Stokes was instrumental as the Three Lions clinched the ODI World Cup in 2019, and although he has stepped down from 50-over duties now, he will look to overturn the odds and inspire the Test side to victory over Australia in next year's Ashes.

In the final, he smashed 52 off 49 balls to steer his side home, with Buttler's 26 and Harry Brook's 20 other notable contributions.

No one can question the fact that England were deserving champions. On the way to lifting the trophy, they defeated T20 heavyweights New Zealand, Sri Lanka and India, and in the final, repelled the threat of arguably the most feared bowling attack in the game, as Pakistan failed to find the breakthroughs they needed.

Photo credit: Hamish Blair/Shutterstock, JOEL CAPRETT/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock



BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

A score to REMEMBER

Each month, we look at one of the most significant events in British sporting history. This month, we go back 21 years to England's famous 5-1 victory over the Germans at the Olympic Stadium in Munich.

"This is getting better and better and better," enthused John Motson OBE as Michael Owen sauntered through to propel England into a 4-1 lead against old foes Germany. And there was still more to come as Emile Heskey made it five, capping a special night for Liverpool, as all the goals were scored by Reds; for Sven-Göran Eriksson, who truly arrived as Three Lions' manager on that incredible Saturday evening; and for England fans everywhere, who finally felt justified in putting expectation over hope.

Of course, the expectations we had over the so-called Golden Generation were, in fact, misplaced. England crashed out to a freak Ronaldinho goal in the World Cup finals the following year, then suffered countless other false dawns throughout the Noughties, more often than not involving penalty

shoot-outs... for a change.

However, on that special night in Munich, all was good with the world. Very good. England had trailed to Carsten Jancker's fifth-minute goal, but Owen's hat-trick and Steven Gerrard MBE's piledriver on the stroke of half-time confirmed a special night for British sport.

Not only had England exorcised the spectre of Euros heartbreak five years previously, but they'd also exacted revenge on the Germans for the 1-0 defeat they suffered at the old Wembley Stadium in 2000 – a match that was to be Kevin Keegan's final game in charge.

That his replacement, the enigmatic Swede Eriksson, had turned the tide to such an extent in the 11 months in between, was a big part of arguably the most complete England performance of a generation (and right up there with the 4-1 hammering of the Netherlands at Wembley at the 1996 Euros).

The project may not have finished the way it should have, but we could revel in the glory for one night.

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