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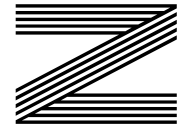
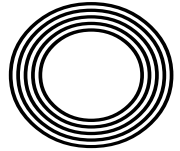
150 years of The FA Cup

**ANNIE MAC**

Radio DJ steps down after 17 years

*Laura*  
**WHITMORE**

Presenter back in the limelight with new series of Love Island



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# Editor's notes...

JULY 2021



Emma Caulfield, Editor

Hello and welcome to the first edition of **VISION** Halstead, the new voice for your town.

It is a real pleasure to have Halstead as part of the **VISION** family. In Essex, East Herts and Suffolk alone, **VISION** already features 15 other titles. Our promise is a simple one: to deliver to the residents of Halstead a magazine that showcases the best local news, events, community issues and lifestyle content. All this on your doormat every month for FREE.

**VISION** has built itself on a passion for being hyperlocal and 100 per cent relevant. Across our many existing titles, we know our readers want

to connect with each other; they want to know the good, the bad and, yes, sometimes

the ugly. They want to shop nearby, use local tradesmen and feel connected to this great community, whether that's having a coffee at an independent café, lunch at a local restaurant, or finding a local group where they can meet new people and learn new skills. You'll find this and much more in **VISION**.

Most importantly, this is your town and your magazine, so if you have a local news story, an event that needs to be publicised or just want to get something off your chest, please get in touch and let us begin a conversation. Thanks for reading and I hope you enjoy the first issue.

*Emma Caulfield*

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

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# BRIDGE

# TOO FAR?

**IT HAS BEEN JUST 50 YEARS SINCE LONDON BRIDGE WAS SOLD AND MOVED TO LAKE HAVASU CITY, ARIZONA. BUT HOW AND WHY DID THIS COME ABOUT?**

As far as the architecture of London goes, 50 years seems like only a very short period of time. For context, other recognisable landmarks in the capital built at the start of the same decade, the 1970s, include Euston Tower and the Barbican Estate, with the likes of the Lloyds Building and NatWest Tower built only a few years later.

So it's astounding to consider that the London Bridge that we know, love and recognise – the elegant five-line concrete box girder bridge that connects Monument on the north bank to London Bridge station on the south – has only been in place for five decades. It's even more astonishing that its forerunner now spans a small conurbation in the desert of western Arizona.

That a London landmark which had been in place since its construction 130 years previously ended up being dismantled, one brick at a time, shipped 4,000 miles around the world and reassembled, is one of those eccentric curiosities we would most likely expect of the Victorians. But this happened just eight years before Margaret Thatcher came into power. London would never look the same again.

In fairness, the old London Bridge had seen better days. Although it had survived the Luftwaffe's rain of bombs during Second World War, structural issues caused by ageing, combined with the increased weight and frequency of traffic, meant the bridge was sinking into the Thames at a rate of one inch every eight years. Surveyors were left querying the affordability of renovations.

At first, it seemed the bridge might have to be broken up and scrapped. But a city councillor by the name of Ivan Luckin decided he would capitalise on London's historical reputation by heading abroad to market the 1,000ft construction.

While the peculiar proposal largely fell on deaf ears, it did pique the interest of eccentric American businessman, Robert McCulloch. An industrialist who had made millions through oil and motorisation,

he was keen to market Lake Havasu City, which sits equidistant between Phoenix and Las Vegas, as a global tourist destination. In need of a talking point and a centrepiece that would define both his and the city's ambition, he agreed to purchase London Bridge for the not inconsiderable sum of \$2.4million.

The bridge was subsequently dismantled, with workers numbering each individual granite brick and carefully marking its position on the huge structure. It travelled to North America via the Panama Canal, before landing in Long Beach, California. It was then transported in trucks to its final destination.

The bridge, which originally spanned a section of desert before the growth of the city, was reinforced with a steel shell in order to circumnavigate the same issues over weight of traffic that had brought about its demise in the first place. On October 10, 1971, it was finally opened to a flurry of fanfare. London's Lord Mayor attended and a banquet comprising the meal that had been served when the bridge was first constructed back in 1831 was prepared.

While McCulloch died in 1977, his bridge over the desert lives on, with the attraction bringing an estimated two million visitors to Lake Havasu City each year.





## THE LEGENDARY RADIO 1 DJ ANNIE MAC MOVES ON TO PASTURES NEW AFTER 17 YEARS

There can be little disputing the impact Annie Mac has had on our understanding and appreciation of dance music over the past two decades.

Having joined Radio 1 as a producer back in the early Noughties, the Irish DJ breathed fresh energy into an ailing electronic music scene, overseeing a number of breakthrough genres, including dubstep, trap and drill, while continuing to celebrate the house and techno sounds that have defined a generation.

Yet now, at 42, the pioneer has announced she is leaving behind two decades of influence in order to focus on more private ventures, including writing a book and spending time with her family.

There is also the small matter of her podcast work, and of course the return of live gigs – both of which go to show that a DJ cannot spend too long out of the spotlight. That said, we might assume a

musical legacy that has educated, informed and inspired is now coming to an end – for now, at least. Annie wrote on her Instagram page that she would be coming back to radio broadcasting when the time was right.

The Dubliner first got her foot in the door at the BBC working as a broadcast assistant on the Steve Lamacq show. By 2004, she had her own slot, *Annie Mac's Mashup*, and for the past six years has presided over the weeknight *Future Sounds* show.

Always one to push boundaries and extol the virtues of music across genres well beyond the norm, the famously curly-haired Annie has, among other things, hosted *The Culture Show* and *Top of the Pops*. She is also the curator of AMP Lost & Found Festival.

Now, a new set of sounds awaits this airwaves innovator, and no doubt we'll be tuning in.

Photo credit: Dawn Fletcher-Park/SOPA Images/Shutterstock

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# (NOT SO) GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT



HOME & DIY

Six handy products you didn't know you needed



#### MICROWAVE CLEANER

We've all despaired at the stubborn splashes and stains that linger on the insides of our microwaves. Yet you can banish these with Angry Mama/Home-X – simply fill with water and white vinegar and set her gradually spinning for seven minutes to effectively steam the stains away.

#### HERB SCISSORS

While we all believe we can chop herbs with the flourish and finesse of Michel Roux Jr, in truth, having a pair of multi-bladed herb scissors at hand is a much more sensible way of ensuring equal consistency and flavour in our food. Simply chopping into herbs with the scissors will instantly produce a spray of greenery ready for use.

#### FOOD VACUUM SEALER

It looks like something you'd expect to find in the local stationery superstore, but this natty vacuum sealer will do wonders for preserving the freshness of your food.

Using bags that are heat-sealed after oxygen is expelled, vacuum sealers are a quick and sensible option for conserving goods and preventing food waste.

#### WINDMILL WATERMELON CUTTER

Simple and incredibly satisfying, this watermelon cutter powers through watermelon flesh to produce neat cubes of fruit ready to be enjoyed.

#### BUTTER SPREADER KNIFE

For so long, spreading hard butter has accounted for the destruction of innocent pieces of bread, yet this three-in-one spreader knife – with holes that sail through even the hardest, most stubborn piece of butter – will bring smoothness and joy back to break times.

#### ICED COFFEE MAKER

With the warmer days, many of us will be reaching for iced coffees, and this clever gadget from HyperChiller can produce a cooling caffeine drink in minutes without it being watered down.



Photo credit: pom.com, hyperchiller.us, amazon.com





# STEP UP *in style*

Make the most of your staircase with our top design ideas for summer 2021. From the simple to the elaborate, there is something to suit all spaces, budgets and tastes.

### GO DARK AND DRAMATIC

Although you may think that staircases need to be light and airy, if you want to create an imposing and sophisticated area that demands to be seen, then painting your woodwork either black or dark charcoal grey is the way to go. Contrast with white walls for a chic and contemporary look.

### CREATE A GALLERY WALL

A gallery wall is a highly popular option when it comes to decorating a staircase. For the best results, choose matching frames and pictures with a clear theme, such as your pampered pooch, your child's artwork, black and white family photos, or art deco pictures.

### MAKE A STATEMENT WITH SPINDLES

Often overlooked, your staircase's spindles provide the perfect opportunity to update your staircase. Whether you opt for a bold colour matched with a natural wood handrail, or you go wild and paint each spindle in a different shade, make sure you keep the rest of the staircase white for maximum effect.

### WALLPAPER YOUR TREADS

If you don't fancy carpet or it's a bit out of your price range, why not brighten up your staircase treads with some boldly patterned wallpaper? Choose eye-catching graphics and add further pops of colour in the hallway or on the wall, focusing on primary colours for best results.

### LAY AN OMBRÉ STAIR RUNNER

Stair runners are a great way to add warmth and colour to your wooden stairs without covering them completely with carpet. If you are not a fan of patterned stair runners, an ombré version is the ideal choice for you, offering a fun and fresh look without being too overpowering.



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**DIY PVC SHOE STORE**

Keep your shoes organised with this simple and unique DIY shoe storage – made out of PVC tubes

Keeping the whole household's shoes organised might seem impossible. With your family and friends going in and out of the house multiple times a day, the mudroom or entrance of your home can quickly end up accumulating a messy pile of shoes, flip-flops, trainers, football boots, dancing shoes and so on.

If you have not yet found a solution that suits the needs of your family and your home's design, but you have DIY skills to spare, why not trying creating your own shoe storage out of PVC pipes?

- WHAT YOU'LL NEED**
- PVC tubes – at least 6 inches (15cm) in diameter
  - 220 grit sandpaper
  - Handsaw or hacksaw to cut the tubes
  - Soap, hot water and a sponge
  - Adhesion primer
  - Paint
  - Wallpaper strips (optional)
  - PVC glue

- HOW TO CREATE YOUR SHOE STORE**
1. Cut the PVC tubes into 10–12 lengths of 10–12

2. inches (25–30cm) each.
2. Smoothe the tube sections' edges by using 220 grit sandpaper.
3. Wash the tube sections with hot water and soap to eliminate any dust or debris.
4. Apply a layer of adhesion primer to ensure your painted shoe storage will withstand daily wear and tear.
5. Once the adhesion primer is dry, paint the tubes and apply wallpaper strips (if desired) – depending on the kind of style you are looking to achieve.
6. Leave small horizontal sections unpainted and without wallpaper on each tube so that you can glue together the different sections.
7. Once both the paint and wallpaper glue are dry, apply a line of PVC glue on the section of the tubes left unpainted.
8. Glue the sections together to create your desired design.
9. Keep the glued sections in place with clamps until the glue is dry.

Now you can start enjoying your DIY shoe storage creation.

Photo credit: diyprojects.ideas2live4.com





# CREATING THE perfect GREEN KITCHEN



Using the colour green is one of the biggest kitchen trends at the moment, and here is how you can get it right.

### DARK GREEN

If you want to use dark green in your kitchen, it needs to be done carefully. Because it is such a deep colour, it will look dramatic, but it will also not reflect light to make it seem warm and welcoming. Make sure that the room has a lot of light so you can achieve this.

Keep windows plain and undressed to let in as much natural light as possible. You should also use a pale colour for backsplashes as a contrast. Warmer accents like brass, gold and copper for details will help to bring some warmth into the room.

### GREY-GREEN

If dark green seems like too much for you, then you might want to go for a lighter grey-green option. This is warmer than some options when it comes to grey and can bring a sense of peace to the space.


Adding wood tones for extra warmth is a good idea. You might also want to pair it with white fittings like cabinets and sinks to bring in even more warmth. For a little bit of contrast, add in black accents to bring it all together.

### GREEN ACCENTS

To incorporate green into your kitchen without making it the main aspect, there are many avenues you can take. You can do this by adding green accents or pieces to the decor, such as lampshades, artwork or tableware. If you have a kitchen island, you may want to paint the island green instead of the walls or cabinets.

Photo credit: Wickes via ideahome.co.uk, Matt Antropius via ideahome.co.uk, plainenglishdesign.co.uk

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LOCAL NEWS

# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



Photo credit: Braintree District Council

## New football pitch named after respected community figure

A new artificial football pitch in Halstead, named after a beloved teacher from The Ramsey Academy, was officially opened to the public last month.

The Calum Leys Memorial Pitch at Halstead Leisure Centre was officially opened on Thursday, June 24, by Calum's wife, Lorraine, along with The Ramsey Academy school captains, Cobi Berkane and Ellie Pratt, in a small ceremony to comply with current COVID-19 restrictions.

Rob James, executive headteacher at The Ramsey Academy, said: "Calum wanted the students to have a holistic learning experience. He knew academic qualifications are important, but so are the life skills and learning experiences that allow the students to challenge themselves and be ambitious.

"Sport was obviously an important part of these experiences. It is a fitting tribute that the new artificial grass pitch was officially opened and named in his memory. The Calum Leys Memorial Pitch will be a tangible reminder of his contribution to the local community."

The recently replaced full-size artificial grass football pitch was completed ahead of schedule at the start of June and boasts not only a full-size pitch, but also nine-, seven- and five-a-side pitch markings.

Councillor Peter Tattersley, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, added: "This new state-of-the-art 3G artificial football pitch is a fantastic asset to the Halstead community and a welcome improvement for the residents of the town."

# J. FRANKS

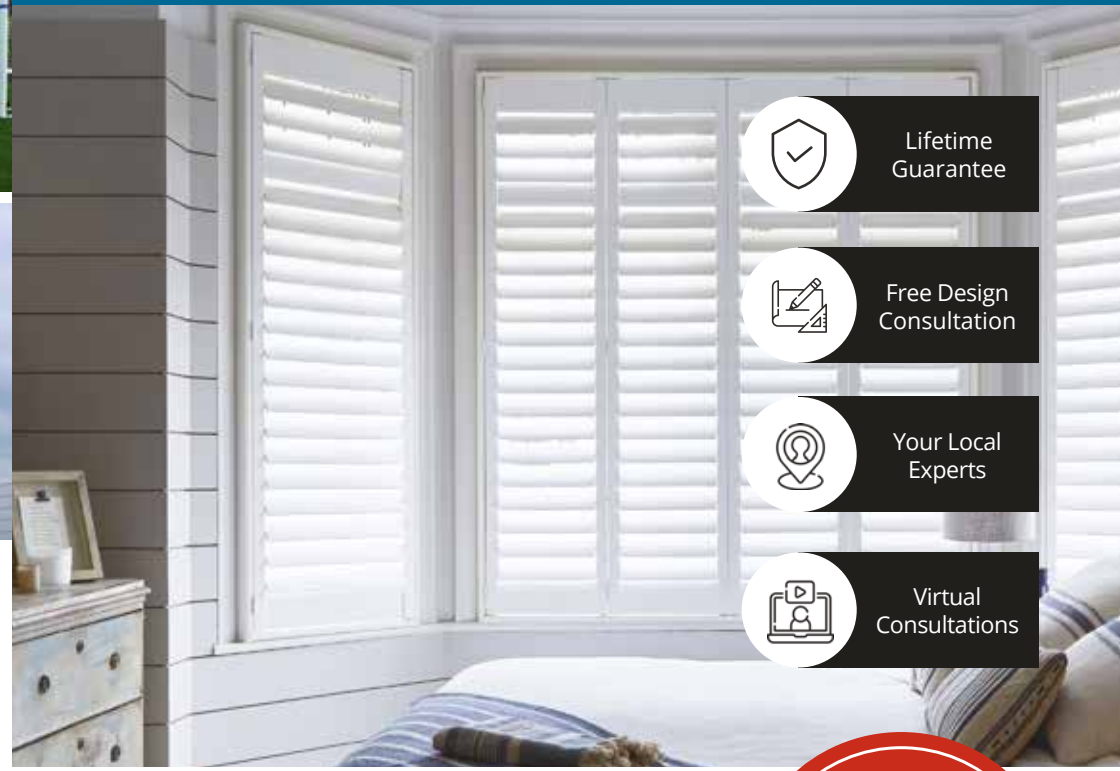
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## New inclusive children's play area unveiled



Photo credit: Braintree District Council

A new children's play area has been launched in Halstead Public Gardens, just in time for families to enjoy over the summer.

Council bosses, the Halstead in Bloom volunteer group and pupils from Little Pickles Nursery all attended the launch in June.

A spokesperson for Braintree District Council said: "Our new all-inclusive play area in Halstead Public Gardens has officially opened, and we must say we absolutely love how it is looking.

"The park focusses on the six senses of inclusive play – touch, smell, sound, sight, proprioception and vestibular. All of the equipment inside the park uses one or more of these senses and allows children of all abilities to play alongside each other, including a roundabout and trampoline for wheelchair users.

"A huge thanks to all those who helped bring this project to fruition – Halstead in Bloom, Friends of Halstead Public Gardens, Halstead Town Council, PARC, Acorn Children's Centre, Barnardo's and Essex County Council."

## Footbridge reopened to public after years of closure

Halstead residents are now able to enjoy the Riverside Footbridge again after it finally reopened.

The footbridge, which crosses the River Colne near the Chapel Street car park, was closed for a number of years owing to structural concerns, but was reopened towards the end of May.

After purchasing the bridge from Crown Estates, the council set up a working group led by councillor Andy Munday.

Cllr Munday wanted to thank those who had made the reopening possible, including Braintree District Council, Ad-Tek Products, Milbank Concrete Products and Halstead in Bloom.

He added: "The work done so far allows the opening of the bridge and use by residents. However, there

is one further stage of reinforcing the foundations of one side of the bridge, which will be done when conditions allow.

"It's great to see the bridge reopening after such a long time and hopefully residents can once again enjoy the convenience it brings."

Councillor Mick Radley, Mayor of Halstead and chairman of Halstead Town Council, said: "I would like to thank Andy and all of those involved with doing such a great job in delivering this very important improvement for the town and for the benefit of residents and visitors who use the bridge."

## Driver admits to causing elderly woman's death

A drug driver has admitted to causing the death of an elderly woman after a fatal collision in Halstead.

Barbara Bragg, 87, died after she was struck by a green Nissan Micra in Mount Hill in Halstead on the morning of October 12, 2019.

The driver, 23-year-old Callum Brankin, was arrested and later charged with causing Barbara's death.

On June 2, Brankin, of Oxford Meadow, Sible Hedingham, appeared at Ipswich Crown Court, where he admitted causing death by careless driving while over the drug drive limit.

Detective Sergeant Steve Holmes, from the Serious Collision Investigation Unit, said this case shows the possible consequences of driving with drugs in your system.

He said: "Drugs affect your ability behind the wheel – they affect your judgement and your reaction speed.

"Drugs can stay in your system for days after you last had them, and even if you don't feel impaired, you still can be and you can still test positive for them.

"I hope anyone contemplating getting behind the wheel after taking drugs will see this case and think again."

Brankin was due to be sentenced at Ipswich Crown Court as **VISION**Halstead went to print.



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# Housing plans get the go-ahead despite opposition

Developers have been granted full planning permission to build 71 dwellings on land off Mount Hill in Halstead.

Plans for the new homes have been given the go-ahead by Braintree District Council, despite objections from Halstead Town Council (HTC) surrounding flooding concerns and the impact the plans could have around the A131.

Before the vote, Halstead councillor Jackie Pell said: "You will be aware that HTC objected in the strongest possible terms to the outline planning application, which was subsequently approved on appeal.

"We consider that the sustainable drainage system scheme is inadequate to deal with existing run-off without the inevitable increase created by the buildings and associated hard surfaces."

The original proposal, which was submitted in 2018, was initially rejected before being approved on appeal in 2019.

The proposal was approved on May 28, 2021, for the erection of 71 dwellings with associated garages, garden curtilages, a sustainable urban drainage system, public open space, and hard and soft landscaping.

# Town centre bank branch set for closure



Photo credit: Google Maps

Halstead has been hit with a blow after it was announced that the Lloyds Bank in the town centre will be closing down.

The branch, located on the High Street, is one of 44 branches across England and Wales which will be closing following an announcement on June 23.

Vim Maru, retail director for Lloyds Banking Group, said the decision was made after a decline in transactions at the 44 branches in question.

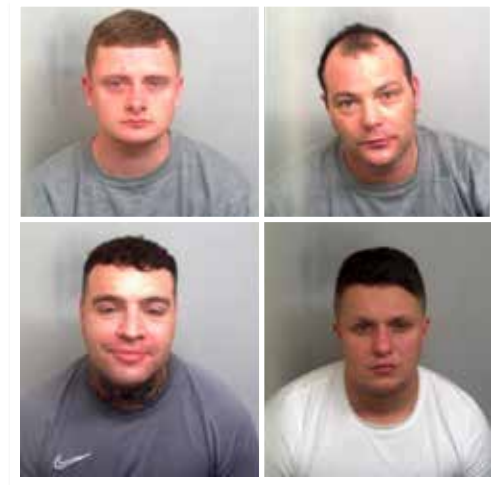
He said: "We've also seen our digital banking customers grow by more than four million in five years, to almost 18 million.

"Like many businesses on the high street, we must change for a future where branches will be used in a different way, and visited less often."

Unite the Union, the largest trade union in the UK, has spoken out against the decision, arguing that the bank is "walking away from local communities".

Unite national officer, Caren Evans, said: "The closure of 44 bank branches will deny our communities essential services, such as access to highly trained staff."

# Men jailed for 30 years for drugs conspiracy



Four men have been jailed for a total of 30 years and three months for selling drugs in north Essex.

The men processed the drugs at a house in Halstead and buried them in rural locations in Colchester, before retrieving and selling them.

The group of men, led by Jake Gregory (pictured bottom left), processed drugs at James Martin's (pictured top right) home in Trinity Street, Halstead.

During an investigation, officers found 2.5kg of drugs with an estimated street value of up to £180,000.

William Locke (pictured top left) and Jake Holliday (pictured bottom right) were the runners who retrieved the drugs from the hiding places and sold them on.

All four pleaded guilty in January to conspiracy to supply cocaine and were sentenced at Ipswich Crown Court on Friday, May 21.

Gregory, 28, of no fixed address, was jailed for nine years and four months.

Holliday, 26, of Devon Road, Colchester, was jailed for eight years and eight months.

Martin, 44, formerly of Trinity Street, Halstead, and Locke, 23, of no fixed address, were both sentenced to six years and three months.

Gregory and Holliday were made the subjects of Serious Crime Prevention Orders, which will come into force on their release from prison.

Detective Chief Inspector Steve Nelson said: "The court hearing is the conclusion of a lengthy investigation to dismantle an organised crime group involved in drugs and firearms.

"Four other members were previously jailed in the last six months for firearms offences, and together these eight individuals have been given sentences totalling more than 59 years."

# Plans to change area's constituency borders

The Boundary Commission for England has published its initial proposals for new constituency boundaries.

The Halstead area has been part of the Braintree constituency since 2010, with Conservative James Cleverly as MP.

If the proposals are approved, Halstead will leave the Braintree constituency and form a new constituency with Haverhill.

With an electorate of 70,787 people, the new constituency would become the Haverhill and Halstead County Constituency. It would reach from Haverhill to as far south as Gosfield and the Colnes.

The proposals are at an early stage and an eight-week consultation is currently offering residents the chance to provide feedback. The consultation will close on August 2.

To find out more and have your say, visit [www.bcereviews.org.uk](http://www.bcereviews.org.uk)

# Theatre delighted to relaunch dementia-friendly screenings

A cinema in Halstead has announced the exciting relaunch of its dementia-friendly cinema in partnership with Care UK.

The screenings will take place monthly at the Empire Theatre in Halstead and are aimed at people living with dementia, carers and vulnerable members of the community.

A spokesperson for the theatre said: "We have a large auditorium, with ample capacity. The entry and film are free, as well as the tea, biscuits and cake.

"Our presentations are designed to give you the best possible experience. We have the houselights on low and the sound at a comfortable level. Plus, we have staff on hand to assist where necessary."

To find out more, visit [www.empire-theatre.co.uk/dementia-friendly-cinema](http://www.empire-theatre.co.uk/dementia-friendly-cinema)



Photo credit: Google Maps







HISTORY

# State of INDEPENDENCE

CELEBRATING JULY 4 – AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY – AND ITS HISTORY

Independence is a real buzzword at the moment – from Brexit to the failed European Super League to our friends north of the border, everyone appears to want to be free.

Of course, the most famous example of this was undertaken by the Americans on July 4, 1776, when the Yanks broke away from us Brits, who had been resident in North America for more than 200 years.

Back then, people living in the 13 colonies – New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina – had to pay taxes to Britain, even though they had no representatives in Parliament.

Tired of being ruled by a superpower some 4,000 miles away, the rather wordy Colonies' Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia came together to put forward a document – the Declaration of Independence – which was sent to

the UK on July 4, 1776.

The British did not want to give up the United States without a fight, and battles ensued.

The war ended on September 3, 1783, with the British Parliament finally granting America's wish to go it alone.

By 1880, Independence Day was recognised as an official holiday, and 60 years later it became a paid holiday, ensuring people could come together to recognise what is effectively regarded as the birth date of the United States of America as we know it today.

In 2021, the day is marked with parades, barbecues, fireworks, concerts, political speeches, and parties. It reinforces the fierce patriotism Americans have, and in troubling times seeks to bind together everyone who lives and works under the stars and stripes in the world's most powerful country.

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# We're loving LAURA

## WHO CELEBRATES A DECADE ON TERRESTRIAL TV

Laura Whitmore is the perfect example of someone who knows when to split. The Irish presenter has worked across multiple TV projects over the past decade or so, preferring to stand up and embrace new challenges rather than playing it safe.

As fresh-faced and dynamic as any of the new wave of TV presenters on the circuit, despite having spent more than 10 years in the spotlight, Whitmore has returned with the new series of *Love Island*, which began on June 28.

Set in Mallorca, the six-week bounty of dating, dirty dealing and dodgy dalliances has become an institution on British TV. The last series, in 2019, pulled in an audience of more than four million – with viewers keen to take a somewhat voyeuristic glance at the love lives of others.

“It’s escapism, isn’t it?” Laura says. “I think some viewers are living out holiday fantasies; others are just interested in the ins and outs of romance, of flirting and, dare I say it, sex.”

“You certainly have to be a special type of person to be on the show, though it’s been proved time and time again that the rewards are all there for anyone brave enough to take the plunge.”

Having an ability to step into the unknown and risk disappointment is certainly true to who Laura is, so in that sense she is the perfect presenter for the show. The 36-year-old struck gold when she applied for an MTV Pick Me campaign in 2008, with victory securing her a role on *MTV News*.

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“WE ALL NEED TO BE PUSHED AND TESTED FROM TIME TO TIME. YOU GET NOTHING FROM SITTING BACK AND RESTING ON YOUR LAURELS.”

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Landing the *I’m A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here! NOW!* role in 2011 was Laura’s first introduction to reality TV, one that she held onto through stints on *The Hit* (on RTÉ Two) and the *Eurovision Song Contest Semi-Finals*, right through to appearing in the 14th series of *Strictly Come Dancing*.

“Strictly was a really interesting shift because it was good to put myself back in the firing line,” she says. “I think that’s a good lesson – we all need to be pushed and tested from time to time. You get nothing from sitting back and resting on your laurels.”

Away from the camera, Laura wrote Sunday Times Bestseller *No One Can Change Your Life Except For You*, a book about fear, hope and inspiration. She also recently had her first child with husband, Iain Stirling, who narrates *Love Island*.

“What’s a priority right now is ensuring work doesn’t interrupt the time we want to spend with our baby,” Laura commented recently.

First spotted out and about with her new daughter, Stevie Ré, in March, Laura is clearly the proudest of mums: “It is a wonderful next step for us and while we are very public people – it’s the nature of what we do – we do want to be able to grow our family with a sense of privacy.”

That’s certainly more privacy than will be afforded to those *Love Island* contestants this year.







Adopt me!

Whether you are looking to get your first pet or you want to add another furry friend to your household, there are many reasons why you should choose to adopt a pet from a rescue centre or animal shelter.

**The chance to save a life**

Sadly, even with the best will in the world, some shelters are forced to euthanise animals owing to a lack of space and resources. By adopting a pet from one of these over-stretched facilities, you could be literally saving an animal's life.

**To fight against puppy mills**

When you buy a puppy from an online seller, or even from a pet store, it is highly likely that this animal came from a puppy mill. In factory-style breeding facilities that always put profit above welfare, puppies from puppy mills are often kept in shockingly bad conditions and tend to have behavioural problems as a result.

**You will save money**

If you are thinking about approaching a breeder, you should know that this can be a very expensive route to go down. However, when adopting from a shelter, animals are often microchipped, spayed or neutered, and vaccinated already, saving you a pretty penny.

**You will get a great animal**

Contrary to popular belief, most animals from rescue centres are not damaged or dangerous; they are happy and healthy pets that, through no fault of their own, have been made homeless.

**Where can you adopt a pet?**

Pet Adoption UK is a great online service that allows you to find a pet by relevant search criteria, such as age, type and location. With thousands of pets looking for homes each day, you can also search for local charities that have specific pets looking to be rehomed, such as Cats Protection and Dogs Trust.



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# 150 years of the HIGHWAY CODE



The Highway Code is something everyone is familiar with – but only a few know where it comes from and what it first looked like.

Every driver in the UK has looked through the strict set of rules that make up the Highway Code at least once. However, only a few know its history and how it has changed over time. First introduced in April 1931, the original Highway Code looked a lot different from the one we know today.

The one-penny, 24-page-long booklet was the first attempt to reduce the whopping 7,000 fatalities occurring every year on the road – at a time when there were only 2.3 million motor vehicles circulating in Great Britain.

The first edition of the Highway Code contained some advice modern drivers will be familiar with – such as being mindful of others and always putting safety first. However, the original Highway Code did not mention mirrors (as they weren't a requirement for motor vehicles at the time) and recommended drivers sound their horn while overtaking.

Most of the pages of the original booklet were dedicated to describing hand signals to be used by drivers, pedestrians and police officers – recommendations that are today collected on a single page of the 189-page modern Highway Code.

The changes in motor technologies and road design led to the introduction of new colour illustrations, a dedicated section to motorway driving, and road sign diagrams – even if there were

only 10 described in the second edition.

Although these facts might sound curious to today's drivers, the modern Highway Code still contains some unusual rules. For example, under the Road Traffic Act 1998, it is illegal for drivers to splash pedestrians with puddles, sleep in their car if drunk, and pay at a drive-through using their phone.

Undoubtedly, the Highway Code will continue to adapt to any future changes in technology and the road environment, but so far, the results of its introduction have been impressive. Today, while the number of cars in the UK has skyrocketed to 33 million, fewer than 1,700 people are killed on the road annually.

Original



Current

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# The Surge of CONNECTED FITNESS

The pandemic caused gym closures – but it hasn't stopped people from looking after their health and fitness... the home gym market just thrived

Over the past few years, the home fitness equipment market has been expanding steadily, with an annual growth rate of 2.75 per cent. But the pandemic – and related gym and sports centre closures – has been the game changer no one could have foreseen.

Today, the market for fitness apps – which was valued at a little more than \$3.3million at the beginning of 2019 – is predicted to grow by 25.6 per cent annually up to 2025, reaching an impressive valuation of more than \$13million.

So, apps and home gym equipment – such as Sweat, the Echelon Fit Bike, Runkeeper, MapMyRun and Strava – have been gaining a larger percentage of the market. But it is the Peloton phenomenon that investors are still marvelling at. As home-bound, health-conscious consumers started to invest in the firm's treadmills and stationary bikes, Peloton reported a 172 per cent surge in sales, translating into Peloton shares (NASDAQ: PTON) being up by 220 per cent.

The firm reports that the number of subscribers skyrocketed by 113 per cent by the end of June 2020, hitting the 1.09 million mark – and it is expected to reach a whopping two million by September 2021.

Peloton apps and virtual classes, which currently have more than 1.6 million subscribers, are not the only

'connected fitness' tools to look out for. The sector, which provides a safer, more accessible way for consumers to reach their fitness goals, is expected to report a compound annual growth rate of 31.2 per cent and reach a staggering \$5.96billion by 2025. Combining a consumer's digital life and fitness goals, home gym equipment, online workouts and fitness apps are taking over the market and reshaping the health and fitness industry.



BUSINESS & PROPERTY





# Find your perfect GARDEN ROOM



If you are considering building a garden room, it is important to understand the different types and the benefits of each.

## POTTING SHED OR GREENHOUSE

If you are into gardening or want to learn more about it, then having a designated potting shed or greenhouse can be helpful. A room like this can help you break into the world of gardening or expand your interest in growing different kinds of plants. If you have a small garden with minimal planting space, this is a good option for you, as you can grow a lot in one area.

## PURPOSE-BUILT GARDEN ROOM

A purpose-built garden room is a more expensive option for those looking for some more living space. This style can work with any type of house. It is the most versatile option as it can be used for different purposes, such as a home office, a place to entertain friends, a playroom for children, a home gym, a garden kitchen, a lounge bar area or even a guest room. Also for this option, you may want to consider adding a water and electricity supply, which will allow you to add components such as a sink, fridge/freezer, TV, computer, lighting, electronic gym equipment and so on, depending on your needs. With a purpose-built room, you will have to ensure that you have a strong foundation for more stability; if not, this will need to be created.

## POP-UP TENT

A pop-up tent is a great, affordable option for those looking for something quick to assemble that is also easy to remove. They come in many different sizes to suit different gardens. It can be a playroom for children, a place to entertain friends, a place to keep plants safe from the elements, or even for camping. This option is mostly suitable for the summer months.

## SHEPHERD'S HUT

A shepherd's hut can be used as a place to entertain guests when you grill or cook outdoors. This type of garden room works best with country-style homes. You could use the hut to create a guest house, a chill-out zone, hobby room or home office. This option also requires a foundation to be added underneath.

Photo credit: Harrison James Contemporary Garden Rooms via housebeautiful.com, rajtentclub.com, cotswoldcottages.co.uk



# Forest Feast

## A basic guide to foraging

**N**ot only is foraging a brilliant way to explore and learn about the great outdoors, but the food you pick is also healthy and organic. Plus, chances are you'll be cutting down on your weekly food bill. Here are five tips for food foraging:

**ONE: Be brave.** From garlic to mushrooms, berries to nettles, dandelion to seaweed, one of the attractions of foraging is appreciating the variety that exists on our doorsteps, so be brave and bold in what you choose.

**TWO: Be certain.** Everything you pick, however small and seemingly insignificant, is taking away from the flora and fauna, so be absolutely certain that what you're choosing is edible before you take it.

**THREE: Be careful.** Some parts of nature's rich bounty just won't agree with the human constitution. Mushrooms generally get referenced as the items we should be most careful about foraging, but hemlock, foxgloves and the ominous fool's parsley are all to be swerved.

**FOUR: Be sparing.** While it's tempting to bask in a spread of tastes, flavours and textures by picking

enough to see out the winter, true foraging – as outlined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 – is about taking small amounts to satisfy our immediate appetite, always ensuring there is something left for someone else.

**FIVE: Be respectful.** While it's a day out for us, remember we're actually encroaching on plant and animal habitats. Try to stick to designated routes, abiding by farmland, private property and nature reserve guidelines and designated boundaries to prevent disruption to animals and other people.

## FORAGING CALENDAR

- > **JANUARY:** Winter fruits (blackberries, crab apples), pine nuts and chestnuts
- > **FEBRUARY – MARCH:** Mushrooms, nettles and edible plants such as dandelion, mint, watercress and wild onion
- > **APRIL – JULY:** Plants, herbs and edible flowers such as bellflower, elderflower, garlic mustard, chives, fennel and garlic
- > **AUGUST – OCTOBER:** Wild plants, nuts and berries such as hawthorn berries, strawberries, raspberries, bilberries and rosehips
- > **NOVEMBER – DECEMBER:** Edible winter plants such as bittercress, bullace, pine and hops.







# Natural IMMUNITY

THE FOODS YOU SHOULD EAT TO BOOST YOUR NATURAL IMMUNITY

Having a good immune system helps fight off infections and maintain your health, yet it can sometimes be confusing knowing which foods we should be consuming to take our body's natural protection to the next level.

Here are four consumables that will have a positive effect on your immune system as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

**GARLIC:** Highly nutritious, low in calories, full of vitamins, laced with nutrients and perfect for combatting sickness and the common cold, garlic also lowers blood pressure and reduces cholesterol. There's even evidence to suggest the antioxidants it contains can prevent long-term diseases such as Alzheimer's and dementia.

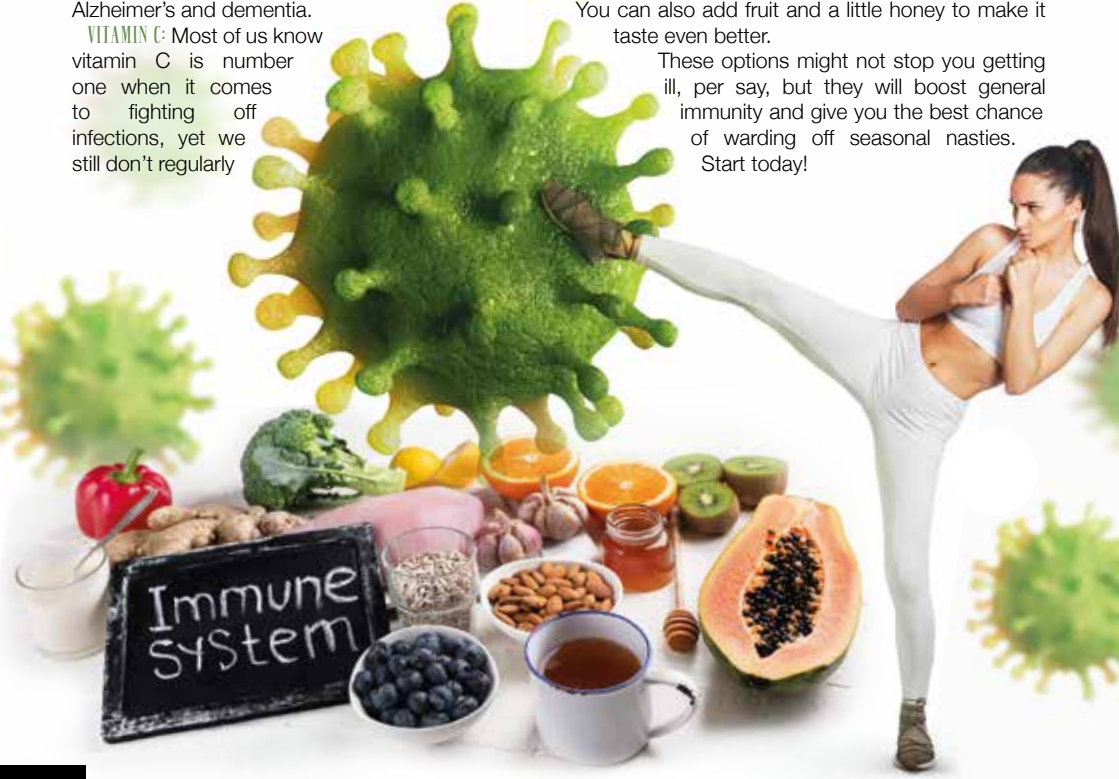
**VITAMIN C:** Most of us know vitamin C is number one when it comes to fighting off infections, yet we still don't regularly

take supplements. Vitamin C is an antioxidant that helps the body grow, develop and repair, maintaining your body's natural defenses.

**STEAMED BROCCOLI:** Some of us don't like our greens, but a bit of broccoli or spinach as part of a healthy meal or drink (spinach is especially good in smoothies) can really boost immunity. Steaming broccoli (not boiling) is also thought to be the best way of keep the nutrients in. Both of these green options are loaded with vitamins, minerals and nutrients.

**YOGHURT:** Another good option is yoghurt, which can be added to cereal, shakes or eaten by itself. Look for Greek yoghurts with live and active cultures, and choose natural rather than flavoured. You can also add fruit and a little honey to make it taste even better.

These options might not stop you getting ill, per say, but they will boost general immunity and give you the best chance of warding off seasonal nasties. Start today!



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TRAVEL

# LONDON'S Top 10 attractions

What better way to celebrate our return to some normality than by ticking off London's best tourist attractions? A lack of overseas travel means that, in 2021, these iconic hotspots will be less busy and more accessible than ever.

**TEN: Borough Market**

Based in Southwark, this iconic centre for high quality food and sustainable production has been pulling in admirers for almost as long as London has existed and dates back to the 12th century.

**NINE: Natural History Museum**

Showcasing modern science interspersed with taxonomy and biodiversity, the Natural History Museum, based in South Kensington, is a maze of walkways and corridors that continues to enchant adults and children alike.

**EIGHT: St Paul's Cathedral**

Sir Christopher Wren's London masterpiece, St Paul's, is an example of architectural and ecclesiastical excellence dating back well over a thousand years.

**SEVEN: Victoria and Albert Museum**

Design, art and style come to the fore at the V&A in a celebration of culture and craft from the UK and beyond.

**SIX: Westminster Abbey**

The setting for every royal coronation since 1066, Westminster Abbey is one of the most important Gothic buildings in England.

**FIVE: The British Museum**

A celebration of more than two million years of human history and culture, and it's free to enter.

**FOUR: National Gallery**

Towering over Trafalgar Square, the National Gallery is also free to visit, showcasing some of the finest artists from the UK and overseas.

**THREE: Churchill War Rooms**

This popular attraction allows visitors to explore the offices where Winston Churchill and his team plotted Britain's fight against the Nazis during Second World War.

**TWO: Tower Bridge**

Take in stunning panoramic views over the Thames from Tower Bridge's walkway and explore the atmospheric Victorian engine rooms.

**ONE: Tower of London**

And finally, a fortress, a palace and a prison all in one – learn how royalty reigned in London over the course of a thousand years.





# PROTECT YOUR SKIN from UVA and UVB rays

We all know the importance of using sunscreen, not just when the sun is shining, but all year round. However, do you know what sun protection factor (SPF) you should be using for your skin type? And whether your make-up contains SPF?

### Why is SPF so important?

A good sunscreen will block the harmful effects of the sun's UVA and UVB rays, which can wreak havoc on the health of your skin, causing not only premature fine lines and wrinkles but also an increased risk of skin cancer. When buying sunscreen for the body or face, look for two things: the SPF, which protects your skin from UVB rays, and the UVA rating, which ideally should be five stars. In the UK between March and October you should wear at least SPF30 with a four-star UVA rating. However, for maximum protection, wear SPF50 with a five-star UVA rating.

### SPF by skin type

**OILY SKIN:** Many sunscreens that offer a high SPF tend to be thick on the skin, causing already oily skin further issues such as blocked pores and blackheads. Prevent this by opting for an oil-free sunscreen or using a lightweight moisturiser with SPF included.

**SENSITIVE/ACNE-PRONE SKIN:** Avoid sunscreens that have too many chemicals or unnecessary ingredients, such as fragrances and preservatives. Instead, choose a non-comedogenic sunscreen or a mineral powder sunscreen that feels weightless on the skin.

**DRY SKIN:** Dry skin sufferers can benefit from an SPF serum which simultaneously protects and hydrates the skin. Alternatively, try a dry oil spray with SPF, although this will need to be applied several times a day for maximum protection.

### Does make-up with SPF work?

Skin experts state that you need 1-1.5tsp of sunscreen to adequately protect your face from the sun, so it is highly unlikely you are applying sufficient foundation to use this as your sole form of protection. Plus, most SPF make-up only protects against UVB rays, not against harmful UVA ones, which can cause skin cancer.

**BEST SPF MAKE-UP:** Charlotte Tilbury Magic Foundation | bareMinerals Original Foundation Broad Spectrum SPF 15 | L'Oréal Paris True Match Super-Blendable Compact Make-up | Neutrogena Healthy Skin Compact Make-up.

Remember, make-up should be worn as a second line of defence against the sun, after your chosen UV protection product.

# Empire Theatre

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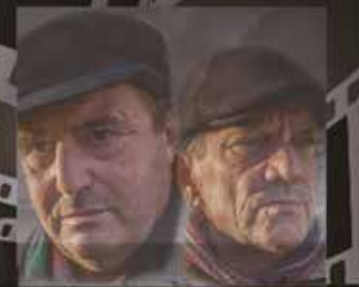
## Lucas and Albert Film Premiere

Friday 16th July 2021 - 7.00pm for 7.45pm

This is an independent film from an independent film production company and the Empire Theatre are proud to be supporting independent film and cinema.

The film has been shot in some well known Essex locations, the evening presentation will be preceded by an Introduction and Q&A by A.G. Longhurst.

See website for further details. All Tickets £10.00



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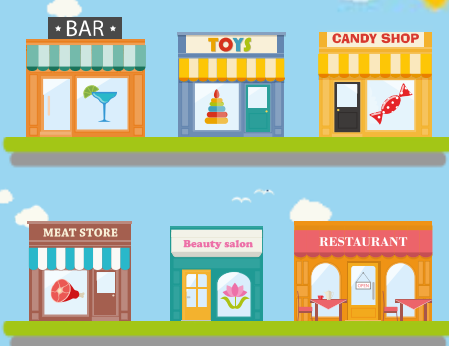
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KIDS

# PAINT YOUR OWN WATER BOTTLE

Keeping your kids hydrated can be a challenge – at least, it was before you helped them create their very own, personalised water bottle. Cheap and easy to do (depending on the design you choose), this craft requires minimal supervision.

### YOU WILL NEED:

1 white stainless steel water bottle | A paint brush | Acrylic paint in their chosen colours | Gloss sealant or varnish

### HOW TO MAKE:

#### 1. CHOOSE YOUR DESIGN

Depending on the age of your child and their personal preferences, there is a wide range of different designs you can choose from, some of which are super simple and others that are a bit more complex.

Design ideas for younger kids: Hand prints, flowers, fruits, footballs, princesses, animals, robots or vehicles such as cars, trains or aeroplanes.

Ideas for older kids: Just their name (à la Love Island), their favourite sports team, floral or geometric patterns, or their favourite artist.

#### 2. PENCIL ON YOUR DESIGN

If you have younger children, you may want to do this step for them, although if they want to have a go themselves, why not let them? Lightly draw their chosen design directly onto the water bottle. Don't worry about pencil marks, as the paint will cover them up.

#### 3. PAINT YOUR DESIGN

Starting with the outline of your words or images, carefully start painting. Once you have finished the outline, fill in the rest of the shape. If you are worried about smudging, leave each part to dry before moving on to the next.

#### 4. APPLY GLOSS SEALANT OR VARNISH

Once you have finished painting your entire design, leave your water bottle to dry completely. Then all you need to do is apply a coat of gloss sealant or varnish as per the manufacturer's instructions.





# Unusual veg of the month: Cardoon



Considered a delicacy in Mediterranean countries, the cardoon is a large, stalky vegetable that is closely related to the artichoke. Although it takes some time to prepare, its tender texture and distinctive flavour make it well worth the wait.

- > Gently remove the outer portion of the stalk as you would with celery
- > Cut into ½-inch pieces and soak in water and lemon juice to avoid browning.

### HOW TO COOK

Cardoons are typically used in a similar way to artichoke hearts and can be steamed, braised, sautéed, blended into a soup, added to a stew and even eaten raw. Many recipes call for cardoons to be pre-cooked for 15 minutes in boiling water to remove bitterness.

### WHAT DOES IT TASTE LIKE?

With a similar, yet slightly more bitter taste to an artichoke, the exact flavour of a cardoon will be dependent on its growing conditions and maturity. For a sweeter cardoon, opt for the lightest in colour.

### IS IT GOOD FOR YOU?

The cardoon is a nutrient-rich vegetable that contains protein, fibre, carbohydrates, calcium, potassium, iron and a whole host of important vitamins. It is also low in calories and boasts high levels of folic acid.

### HOW TO PREPARE

- > Peel off the spines and thorns on each side of the cardoon using a peeler

### WHERE TO BUY

Cardoons can be found in farmers' markets from midwinter to early spring. Alternatively, choose to grow your own. Cardoons can be planted outside from late April until August/September.

### HOW TO STORE

Store whole unwashed cardoons in the vegetable drawer of your fridge for up to one week. Cooked cardoons will last up to three days in an airtight container in the fridge. Brined and canned cardoons can last up to one year.





# Whispers

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# HOW TO PACK THE PERFECT PICNIC

Whether you rely too heavily on your local deli or you tend to throw in whatever you can find in the fridge, to help you celebrate National Picnic Month, we are going to show you how to plan the perfect picnic.

## PREP YOUR PICNIC

The simplest way to make picnic prep more manageable is by preparing your main dish ahead of the day. Then you can simply divide the dish into portions once seated and ready to eat. Great options for picnic mains include quiches, tarts, tortillas, pies and picnic loaves.

## PROVIDE PORTABLE SNACKS

No picnic would be complete without an array of easy-to-carry and fuss-free snacks. As well as all the usual suspects, such as sausage rolls, sandwiches and chicken drumsticks, why not be a bit more adventurous and try empanadas, falafel or smoked salmon scotch eggs?

## RUSTLE UP SALADS AND SIDES

When it comes to picnic salads, it is best to focus on more robust dishes, such as potato salad and pasta salad, which will not wilt or become damaged in transit. Dips such as hummus, and even a mackerel pâté, are all great options and can be enjoyed with crudité's or sliced pitta breads. Other delicious sides include boiled eggs sprinkled with chilli powder and garlic salt, or orzo and mozzarella salad.

## PICK PICNIC-FRIENDLY PUDDINGS

Puddings for picnics are notoriously tricky, although there are a few tried and tested desserts that will save the day, such as traybakes, loaf cakes, brownies and cookies.

## DON'T FORGET DRINKS

Whether you want boozy beverages or virgin varieties, you need to pack something to sip on in the sun. Choose from family-friendly options such as mint iced tea or fruit-infused lemonade. Alternatively, for a tippie that packs a punch, you can't go wrong with a classic Pimm's, a wine-based spritzer or a convenient cocktail in a can.



Photo credit: Ebury/AP/Shutterstock



# That cup that FLOWETH OVER

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF THE FINEST DOMESTIC KNOCKOUT COMPETITION OF THEM ALL

Living in the UK, we can end up taking for granted many things that, to us, seem relatively customary, and the FA Cup arguably falls into that category.

Yet when you hear of overseas players having spent a childhood enthralled by the trials and triumphs of our most famous domestic knockout competition, the true status of the cup comes to the fore. We may have grown more complacent about a tournament that welcomes in almost 900 club sides every season, yet the FA Cup is truly a competition we should feel proud to marvel over.

July 20 marks the 150th anniversary of the FA Cup being formed. The competition began in 1871, with 15 teams allowed to enter. The final, which attracted a modest crowd of 2,000 people, saw Wanderers triumph over Royal Engineers.

In the modern game, COVID-19 notwithstanding, the semi-finals and final at Wembley are watched by crowds in excess of 85,000, and while other competitions – notably the Champions League –

have wrestled some of the attention away, the competition retains huge importance for clubs of all sizes.

Over the years, it has given us tremendous, defining memories. The famous White Horse (Billie) Final of 1923 was notable for its crowd of an estimated 300,000 people inside Wembley; while the Stanley Matthews showpiece in 1953 saw the legendary footballer lead Blackpool to a 4–3 cup success against Bolton Wanderers.

The 1981 final saw Ricky Villa score a memorable Wembley goal to see off Manchester City, and seven years later the crazy gang defeated the culture club as Wimbledon stunned Liverpool 1–0. Of course, giant-killings on the road to Wembley (think Sutton United, Hereford United, Colchester United, Wrexham and more) are part of the fabric of this great competition.

The FA Cup may have had to evolve over recent years, but its value remains.



FA Cup White Horse Final 1923

Photo credit: thesimplethings.com



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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

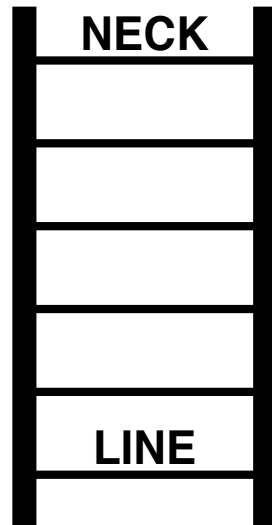
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- ▶ MADISON
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- ▶ MONROE
- ▶ NIXON
- ▶ OBAMA
- ▶ REAGAN
- ▶ TRUMP



## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ You can tell the outside temperature by counting the chirps of a cricket. Count the number of chirps in 14 seconds and add 40 to get a rough temperature in Fahrenheit
- ▶ The coldest temperature recorded on Earth was -89.2°C in Antarctica in 1983
- ▶ During a heatwave, the temperature can make train tracks bend, often causing delays
- ▶ The rainfall in Kerala, India, was red in July 2001
- ▶ Damage caused by Hurricane Andrew in Florida caused captive pythons to escape
- ▶ Some frogs are noisier before rain arrives as their croaks are reflected and magnified by the low clouds
- ▶ Earthworms come up closer to the surface when it rains

## WORD LADDER



**THE AIM:** Change the word at the top of the ladder one letter at a time to make the word at the bottom.

**HOW TO:** Change one letter on each step to make a new word. By the time you reach the end, you should have created the new word.

**DO NOT** rearrange the order of the letters.

**TIP:** There is usually more than one way to solve this puzzle.

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