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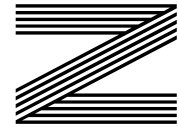
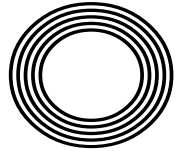
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# PETER KAY

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Ballingdon Hall also offers wellness retreats which explore alternative therapies and spiritual practices to help our guests rest, restore and refocus. For instance, if you are interested in Healing, come and see June Hayes who has 30 year's experience in a wide range of healing practices including Spiritual, Theta, Reiki, Crystal and Rahanni Angel Healing.

June teaches Meditation and Mindfulness courses as well as Psychic Development workshops to enhance people's psychic skills including Mediumship, Healing, Tarot, Psychometry, Chakra reading and contacting your Guides. She also offers a luxury LA stone and crystal hot and cold healing Facial. This completely natural rejuvenation therapy is extremely popular and enhances skin renewal and rejuvenation, chakra balancing and emotional healing.

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# Editor's notes...

DECEMBER 2022



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Halstead Braintree. What a difference a year makes. This time last year, we still had the threat of lockdowns looming.

Thankfully, this year feels much more normal - apart from a World Cup with the Christmas decorations up, which certainly feels odd.

I think the past two years have made us robust as a nation, and if we haven't been a fan of change previously, we have certainly been forced to be flexible in recent times.

This Christmas, try to spend your money locally, rather than buying from the bigwigs. Every pound you spend with a local business will make a huge difference.

Personally, I love this time of year, especially since I've had kids. Now they're getting a bit older, the magic reflected on their faces makes it all worthwhile.

I wish a very merry Christmas to all our readers and advertisers, and here's to a successful 2023.

In this month's edition our cover star is Peter Kay who has announced his first tour in 12 years. He is also the first artist in the world to perform a monthly residency at the O2 Arena in London.

*Nik Allen*

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# WHIPPING UP A STORMZY

**S**tormzy'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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MOTORING

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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.

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## HOW TO *untangle* CHRISTMAS LIGHTS



HOME & DIY

**D**ecorating 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.







# 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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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*

LOCAL NEWS HALSTEAD



## Dementia friendly choir receives funding boost

A Halstead community choir for people living with dementia has received a funding boost.

Halstead Empire Theatre's Dementia Friendly Choir received a £1,000 grant from Braintree District Council's community grants scheme to help it continue to run its weekly rehearsals.

A spokesperson for the Empire Theatre said: "Many people have a special connection to music, and this can be particularly powerful for people with dementia. "While the search for a cure continues, we all must

work together to support people affected by dementia so everyone can live meaningful lives. Music is a wonderful way to do this."

The choir will perform at a Christmas concert at Halstead Empire Theatre at 7.30pm on Saturday, December 17. For tickets, please visit [www.empire-theatre.co.uk/christmas-concert-2022](http://www.empire-theatre.co.uk/christmas-concert-2022)

The choir rehearses at Halstead Empire Theatre every Wednesday from 11am to 12.30pm and the sessions are free to attend.

## Humbugs hit best form for the festive season

At the time of writing, the Humbugs have hit their best form of the season to date, with two wins on the trot.

The first was an important 2-0 win away to bottom side Southend Manor on November 12, followed by possibly their best result of the season so far, when the same score line was repeated in an entertaining home match against high-flying Redbridge on November 15. With the bottom two teams being relegated, these

six points have moved the Humbugs up the table and have given them a cushion from the drop zone.

Last month also saw the club celebrate a season's best crowd of 425 at their match against Saffron Walden on Friday, November 4.

Twenty-four hours later, the club held its annual fireworks display, which was a huge success.

Details of all the club's upcoming fixtures can be found at [www.halsteadtownfc.com](http://www.halsteadtownfc.com)



Photo credit: Saffron Walden

# Templars hold their heads high as the year closes

Halstead Templars head into the Christmas break in the bottom half of the Eastern Counties Division 1 (South), but with heads held high as one of few teams in their position who have fulfilled all of their fixtures.

Six members of the team also recently travelled to Bishop's Stortford to lend a helping hand to Saffron Walden, who were struggling in the league.

Both the union and touch sides are actively recruiting players and the club are getting involved with the community to encourage more people to join.

Recently, club members lined the streets to marshal the Remembrance Sunday parade that marched from the Public Gardens to St Andrew's Church.

Earlier this month, in between Christmas parties, training sessions and the final matches of the calendar year, members of the club undertook more marshalling duties during the Annual Torchlight Procession on Wednesday, December 7.

If you are interested in joining the club, please get in touch via email at [HalsteadTemplars@gmail.com](mailto:HalsteadTemplars@gmail.com)

## Witnesses sought after several cars vandalised

Police are seeking witnesses following a series of criminal damage incidents in Halstead.

Police received 14 reports of criminal damage on November 26 and 27 in Kings Road, Tidings Hill, Ronald Road and Lock Road.

It is believed that all the offences took place between 10pm on the Saturday and 1am on the Sunday.

Residents in the Halstead Community and Street Watch Facebook Group reported that numerous car tyres had been slashed.

A window was also vandalised at a property at Tweed Close, which is believed to be connected.

A spokesperson for Essex Police said: "We are currently investigating a series of criminal damage reports, where victims have had the tyres of their vehicles slashed in Halstead this weekend.

"This series of reports remains under investigation and no arrests have been made at this stage. We are appealing to anyone who may have witnessed anything or have any information to contact us."

Anyone with information should get in touch with Essex Police at [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk) or by calling the non-emergency number 101, quoting incident 42/288825/22.

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LOCAL NEWS BRAINTREE

# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*

## Drink driver jailed

A drink driver who was found to be four times over the legal limit while driving in Braintree has been jailed for 12 weeks.

Police were notified of a Vauxhall Insignia being driven erratically on Tuesday, November 8. Officers stopped the vehicle on the A120 and breathalysed driver Piotr Mroczko.

Mroczko, of York Road, Maidstone, was charged with drink driving after he arrived at Harlow Police Station. He was remanded in custody and appeared at Colchester Magistrates' Court on Friday, November

11, where he admitted a charge of driving with excess alcohol.

Roads Policing Sergeant Chris Bramhill said: "We want to thank the member of the public who called us to report their concerns when they saw Piotr Mroczko driving dangerously along the A120 that night. Being drunk, he wasn't fully in control of the car and was a real threat to the safety of other road users.

"When police found him, he almost caused a collision and was speeding. It took two police vehicles to bring him to a safe stop."

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## Conservatives lose two seats in by-elections

The Conservative Party suffered losses in both local by-elections last month.

Following the resignation of two councillors from Braintree District Council, two seats were up for grabs in the Braintree South Ward and Coggeshall Ward.

Labour candidate for Braintree South Martin Green beat Conservative Stephen Canning by a margin of 60 votes, in a ward that saw a turnout of only 17.43 per cent.

Braintree South Ward, covering the part of the town south of the railway line, has historically been a safe Conservative seat.

Meanwhile, in the Coggeshall Ward, Independent candidate Dennis Abram beat Conservative Chris Siddall by 130 votes.

An Independent candidate also won the Coggeshall Ward seat in 2019 after controversy over a waste incinerator damaged the Conservatives' campaign.





# Everything's going TO BE OKAY

## 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.





KIDS

# CHARACTER CHRISTMAS CREATIONS

**D**o 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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# 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 so many different ways that 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 they are served.

## 3 WAYS TO COOK CHESTNUTS

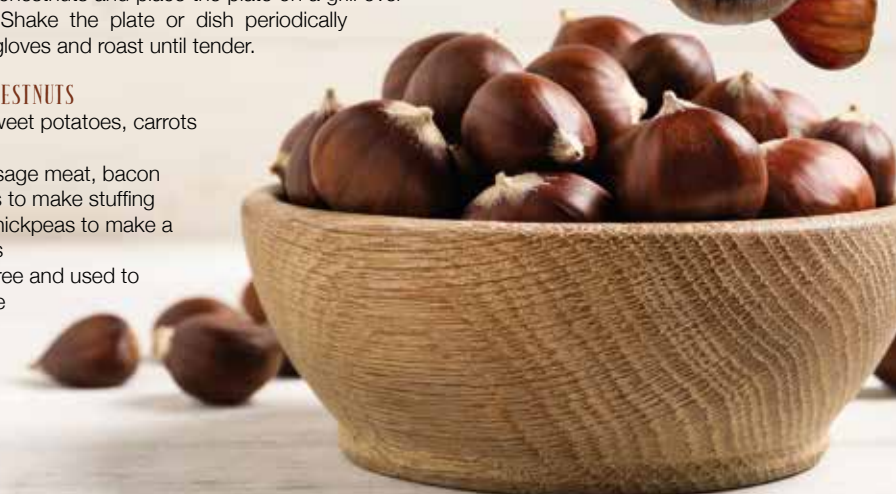
**Boil them:** To boil chestnuts, you first need to score them, before placing in a saucepan of cold water. Bring the water to the boil and allow to simmer for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and then carefully scoop out a few at a time, peel off the shell and skin with a knife.

**Roast them in the oven:** To roast chestnuts, you first need to pierce each nut to prevent them from exploding due 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, stirring occasionally. Wait until they are just cool enough to peel and serve warm.

**Roast them on the fire:** Take an aluminium pie plate or tin foil 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 heat proof 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 puree and used to make chocolate chestnut cupcakes.



# Seriously good food



The Blackwell family has been farming in the Coggeshall area for four generations. The ethos of the award-winning farm shop, butchery and deli is to support local producers and farmers with over 90 per cent of the produce being sourced from within a 30-mile radius.

The high-quality meat within Blackwells butchery counter is either sourced from its own farm or local farmers known and trusted by themselves for their good husbandry skills. The friendly, knowledgeable butchers are always on hand to help with cuts of meat and are always happy to help source the more unusual meats.

Beside the butchers counter you will find the delicious deli counter which is brimming with cheeses, traditional hams, cooked meats and Dingley Dell's Artisan selection of air-dried meats. On the shelves you'll find a large supply of traditionally grown seasonal vegetables and fruits, plus a variety of products from local producers such as Peter Watts Winery, Two Birds Spirits, Maldon Salt Company, Bradfields Farm Dairy and Laura Rose Candles.

The talented in-house chefs produce a selection of seasonal pies along with soups, sausage rolls, pasties,

and dishes such as beef lasagne, cottage pie, Moroccan lamb stew, and lasagne.

For those with a sweet tooth, the in-house bakers create delicious cakes, pastries, and desserts.

## Christmas

On the Blackwells website you will find a new section called 'Christmas Shop' which we have packed full of festive goods. Our chefs have created a variety of fantastic starters, trimmings, desserts, and party foods, saving you all the hassle at home. We have also included a selection of the finest roasting joints, classic hams and gammons, and must-have partridges and pheasants.



## Blackwells Catering

On hand to create the perfect menu for events and functions, Head Chef Mark Woodward, and his team, are committed to working with customers to plan their menu whether it be for a formal wedding breakfast, buffet, BBQ, hog roast or three-course meal. Blackwells' creative bakers are also part of this service offering personalised cakes and bakes for special occasions.

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**S**oft, 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.

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

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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

**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

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.

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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.







# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

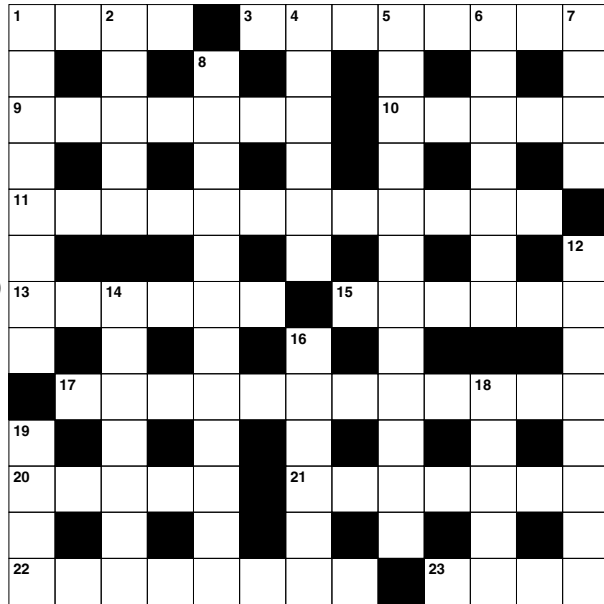
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

## ACROSS

- Prima donna (4)
- Stated emphatically (8)
- Shackle (7)
- Animal that walks on two legs (5)
- Narcissism (4-8)
- Contributes information (6)
- Not noticed (6)
- Easy to converse with (12)
- Person who flies an aircraft (5)
- Pays no attention to (7)
- Where photographs are developed (8)
- Stitches (4)

## DOWN

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



- Liked by many people (7)
- Flat-bottomed boat (5)
- Moved quickly (4)
- Gambling house (6)

## 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			

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# Take me to the MOUNTAINS



TRAVEL



*Pikes Peak*



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*Mauna Kea*



*Mount Everest*

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.





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GARDENING

# 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.







# Queen for 70 years

## BUT COULD IT HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT?



**W**ould 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.

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# KFCキクラジ!

**D**id 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 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.

## 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.

# BOWLED OVER



## ENGLAND CLINCH T20 WORLD CUP SUCCESS

**E**ngland'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 to 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.

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