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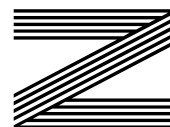
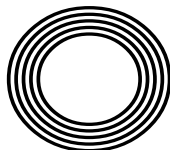
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**ANNIE MAC**

Radio DJ steps down after 17 years

Laura  
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Presenter back in the limelight with new series of Love Island



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JULY 2021

# Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** Rayleigh Wickford. Has anyone else noticed it's light at 4.30am these days? I reckon the demand for blackout blinds is right up there with England flags and disposable barbecues.

While we're doubtless all hugely frustrated by the extension to the current lockdown restrictions, we can at least rely on the day's glorious wake-up call as light, air and energy come flooding into our homes.

This is why I love the summer. The days feel impossibly long, the nights only give way to darkness as we're thinking about bedtime, and each day feels full of optimism.

For me, it's the time of the year when I can change my habits, such as getting up as the sun rises in order to sample the peace and tranquillity. But the trick is to extend that positive frame of mind into other things - to go for a walk, to talk to the neighbours, to undertake new work targets and initiatives.

Of course, we still have challenges, but the vaccine is here, the sun is out, and the sense is the world is opening up again with positivity and confidence, as fear ebbs away. Let's embrace this new dawn, and just as importantly, as I always say, let's be nice to each other as we do it.

*Nik Allen*

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

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CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Geraint Roberts

At the time of print all content in **VISION** was relevant and up to date according to COVID-19 government guidelines Inside pages recyclable

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# BRIDGE

**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,

# TOO FAR?

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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#### 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.

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#### WINDMILL WATERMELON CUTTER

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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: jom.com, hyperchillerus, amazon.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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# STEP UP in style



HOME & DIY

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

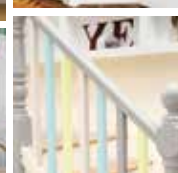
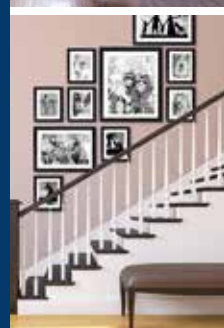
Often overlooked, your staircase's spindles provide the perfect opportunity to update your staircase. Whether you opt for a bold colour matched with a natural wood handrail, or you go wild and paint each spindle in a different shade, make sure you keep the rest of the staircase white for maximum effect.

## 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.







# 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

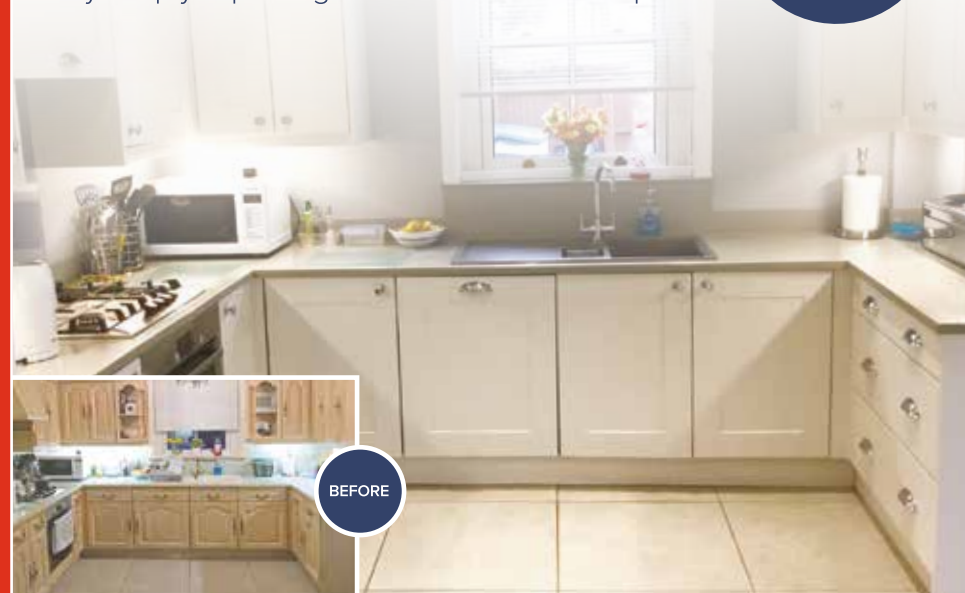
inches (25–30cm) each.

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.

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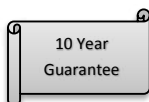
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# YOU'RE il I need

Olive oil is a storecupboard staple for most households, being used to roast veggies, drizzle over salads, rustle up home-made hummus and so much more. However, you may not know that its uses extend beyond cooking...

### To shine stainless steel

If your stainless steel items are looking lacklustre, all you need to do is put a dab of olive oil onto a soft cloth and rub to help prevent streaks, water spots, tarnish and corrosion. Finish by buffing with a dry cloth. A dab of olive oil can also be used to slow down the tarnish of silver items.

### To remove sticky labels

Getting sticky labels off glass, plastic and wood can be a nightmare. Fortunately, by saturating the paper labels in a few drops of olive oil and leaving for 15 minutes, you should be able to peel them off with ease.

### To protect wood

Any wooden items that you have in your home can be nourished and protected with a light coating of olive oil. Simply let the oil sit for five minutes and buff with a soft cloth to prevent cracking and discolouration.

### To silence squeaky hinges

Whether you have a squeaky door, window, cabinet or appliance, a few drops of olive oil on the hinges is all that is needed to silence the squeak in a matter of seconds.

### To remove water rings

Water rings don't have to spell disaster for real wood and can easily be removed with just a little bit of warm olive oil. Apply gently to the affected area with a soft cloth and then buff with a dry one. Ideal for also repairing small scratches.

### To condition leather

Buff any leather items in your home with a few drops of olive oil and a cloth and enjoy softer, more supple leather furniture, gloves and shoes.



HOME & DIY



# 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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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



## Care home celebrates well-earned accreditation

A care home in Rayleigh has celebrated after achieving its accreditation with the Gold Standards Framework (GSF).

Sweyne Court Care Home achieved the Beacon status – the highest award in the GSF programme – last month after years of dedicated work by its team.

The GSF is the UK's leading training provider in end-of-life care for frontline team members.

Beacon status certifies that the home is dedicated

to providing quality, dignified care to a person up until the end of their life. If a care home sustains this achievement in future accreditations, it can be awarded gold and platinum statuses.

Maxine, manager at Sweyne Court, was delighted with the team for their achievement.

She said: "To have received the award is truly amazing and well deserved; it will be a benefit to the residents and all who work in the home."

## Free parking scheme for volunteers continues

Rochford District Council (RDC) has announced that it will continue to provide free parking for key workers and volunteers.

This means the council will continue to accept the government COVID-19 health, care and volunteer workers parking pass. This will be kept under review and a new local scheme, supporting NHS volunteers, will be implemented at a later date.

RDC's portfolio holder for IT, tourism, housing and parking, councillor Daniel Efde, said: "We are delighted to announce that the council will continue to accept the COVID-19 free parking passes for key workers and volunteers, as they continue to make sacrifices and work hard to keep us all safe."



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## MARK FRANCOIS MP



Member of Parliament for Rayleigh and Wickford



LOCAL NEWS RAYLEIGH

Last month, I voted against my own government in opposition to extending the COVID-19 restrictions until July 19. As your MP, I thought I might take the opportunity of this article to explain to my constituents why I did so.

In short, more than a year since the first lockdown, I believe we now have to learn to manage COVID-19 as best as we can – similar, in some ways, to how we manage flu, which can also be fatal in some circumstances.

What we cannot do is slam our economy back into lockdown every time we discover a new variant. Over the last year, our government has borrowed some £300 billion, more than in any comparable period in peacetime history. While this may have been fully justified to keep the economy and businesses afloat, we can't do that indefinitely, as eventually we would need significant tax rises to finance the debt – which I suspect none of my constituents really wants to see.

We now have a world-class vaccination programme, with the vast bulk of our adult population having had at least one jab. We know the vaccines dramatically reduce the risk of hospitalisation and death – unfortunately, many of those admitted to hospital with the Delta variant had initially refused to have the jab.

I hope the continued success of the vaccination programme will mean we can finally lift COVID-19 restrictions in July, recover our individual liberties, and set our country on the path to economic recovery.

I fully appreciate that, in a democracy, not all constituents will agree with how I voted. But, if nothing else, at least it shows you have a local MP who is not just a soft touch for government whips.

You can get in touch by calling 020 7219 8287 or emailing [mark.francois.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:mark.francois.mp@parliament.uk)

## Driver fined for racist abuse

A driver who racially abused another driver has been ordered to pay £1,700 in fines and costs.

Andrew Hudson, 51, shouted and swore at the woman, who was driving at the speed limit, on the A127 in Rayleigh on May 8 last year.

He drove close to her car and flashed his headlights, before undertaking her and shouting abuse through his window.

He continued to shout abuse when they reached two sets of traffic lights.

Hudson, of Ashes Road, Shoeburyness, admitted using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour that was racially aggravated, when he appeared at Basildon Magistrates' Court on Monday, June 14.

He was fined £900 for the offence and another £90 for breaching a suspended sentence. He was also ordered to pay £620 in court costs and a £90 victim surcharge.

Inspector Paul Hogben said: "This was disgusting and vile behaviour, which caused the victim a great deal of distress.

"Racism and prejudice have absolutely no place in Essex and I'd urge anyone who is a victim of hate crime to please report it so we can investigate."

You can submit a report online at [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk) or use the live chat button to speak to an online operator between 7am and 11pm.

Alternatively, you can call 101. Information can also be given 100 per cent anonymously to independent charity, Crimestoppers, on 0800 555 111 or at [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)



Photo credit: Google Maps





# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



## Fun for the whole family at garden centre's Food and Drink Festival

The Meadow Croft Garden Centre in Wickford will be hosting a Food and Drink Festival on the weekend of August 7 and 8.

Visitors will be able to enjoy a range of eat-in and takeaway foods, including locally produced wines from New Hall Vineyard, craft beers from Crouch Vale Brewery, and handmade chutneys, pickles, jams, crêpes, pizza and more.

The festival will be a mix of outdoor and undercover stalls in the marquee, with a live music stage entertaining guests from 11am on both days, including sets from The Blazin' Aces, The Thumping Tommys and two local acts, Josh Brough and George Bone.

On the Sunday, the music continues with sets from D'ukes, The Daisy Bowlers and a second appearance from Josh Brough.

The Party Kingdom will be creating fun for the whole family with its old-fashioned, fete-style games.

Meadow Croft's Mini Meadows Golf Course and the garden centre play area will be open on both days, while Trudles Doodles will be along to decorate faces.

The garden centre and restaurant will be open as usual. Meadow Croft provides free parking and can also be accessed via the local bus service running between Wickford and South Woodham Ferrers.

The nearest train stations are South Woodham Ferrers and Wickford, both of which have taxi ranks.

For more information, visit [www.meadow-croft.co.uk/meadow-croft-food-and-drink-festival](http://www.meadow-croft.co.uk/meadow-croft-food-and-drink-festival) or follow the event on Facebook @MeadowCroftGardenCentre

Tickets are £3 on the gate for adults, £10 for a group of four, and children under 16 go free.

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## Three leisure centres get complete facilities upgrade



Everyone Active facilities in the borough have undergone a full-scale revamp to improve the leisure experience for residents.

Wickford Swim and Fitness Centre, Basildon Sporting Village and Eversley Leisure Centre have all benefited from makeovers, with a total replacement of gym equipment, fitness suites, and new changing and shower facilities.

With the aid of new technology, all three centres have added virtual classes to their group exercise programmes and new exercise spaces, including a modern fitness studio for interactive classes.

Chairman of the Leisure and Environment Committee, councillor Craig Rimmer, said: "These three centres are brilliant facilities to have in our borough, and the improvements will only make the experience of visiting them even better for the community.

"It was tough for gyms and fitness centres to have to be closed for so long throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. But now they're open again with these fantastic improvements, these world-class facilities can continue to be the release they are for so many of our residents."

## Major improvements at station after £4m investment

Greater Anglia has carried out improvement works to prepare Wickford railway station for the introduction of its new trains.

Between June 3 and June 21, platform 1 was extended to be able to accommodate Greater Anglia's new, longer trains.

The improvements are part of a £4million project which will include a new ticket office with two ticket office windows and a new accessible waiting hall, with charging points and seating.

New toilets will also be installed, including accessible stalls. A shop where customers can buy food and hot drinks will be added to the station.

The old station building has been demolished and a temporary ticket office has been installed to ensure minimal disruption to customers.

Paula Wilson, Greater Anglia's area customer service manager, said: "We are investing in Wickford to make it better for our customers. The proposed work will transform the station, bringing in new facilities for the 2.2 million people who use the station each year.

"This work is essential to allow us to run our new, longer trains to and from Wickford and it is a good opportunity to also upgrade customer facilities at the station."

## Resident charged after unlicensed music event

Four men, including one from Wickford, are due in court this month to face charges in connection with an unlicensed music event in East Hamdon.

Hundreds of people attended the New Year's Eve event at All Saints' Church, which was a blatant breach of the government's COVID-19 regulations.

The church itself was damaged and the officers who responded reported having objects thrown at them.

One man has already been handed a £10,000 fine for organising the event.

Four other people who were arrested have now been summoned to appear at Basildon Magistrates' Court on July 22 to face a charge of holding or being involved in holding a rave-type gathering of more than 30 persons indoors in a Tier 4 area.

Essex Police have thanked the public for providing information in connection with the event, which resulted in the issuing of seven fixed penalty notices.





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# Plastic fuelling

DISCOVER THE NEW TECHNOLOGY THAT IS ABOUT TO CHANGE THE WORLD BY CONVERTING PLASTIC WASTE INTO JET FUEL

More than 10 million tonnes of plastic enter our oceans every year. The aviation industry and air travel account for more than 2.5 per cent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions. Combined, these industries are among the largest polluters in the world. Researchers at Washington State University have been able to develop a new, innovative way to prevent plastic from going to waste – and jet fuel from using up so many precious resources.

Today, the environmental crisis is more imminent and severe than ever, and while scientists are aware of the damage of plastic pollution on the environment, recycling plastic is still challenging.

Most recycling methods today leverage a process that melts and remoulds the discarded plastics or uses extremely high reaction temperatures to create new plastic products. Both methods use up great quantities of energy, time, resources and money. These obstacles make it impossible for these methods to be adopted at a commercial level, which causes more than 90 per cent of plastic to end up in landfill.

Chuhua Jia and Hongfei Lin, researchers at the Gene and Linda Voiland School of Chemical Engineering and Bioengineering, have addressed the costs and extended time frames involved with recycling plastic.

First, a mix of waste plastic products was ground and turned into fragments. The granules were then placed in a tube reactor on top of activated carbon. In the process, the activated carbon acts as a catalyst, which is a substance that facilitates a specific chemical reaction while being immune to the reaction itself. In this case, the carbon breaks down the chemical bonds in the plastic, releasing hydrogen – an essential component of jet fuel.

Thanks to their innovative catalytic process, the researchers were able to convert up to 90 per cent of plastic waste to jet fuel. All this while also shortening reaction times to under one hour and reducing temperatures to 220°C.

This technology is still in development and far from entering the market commercially. However, it does already represent a beacon of hope in the fight to reduce plastic waste, minimise pollution and protect the environment.



TECHNOLOGY



# 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.







# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

## PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

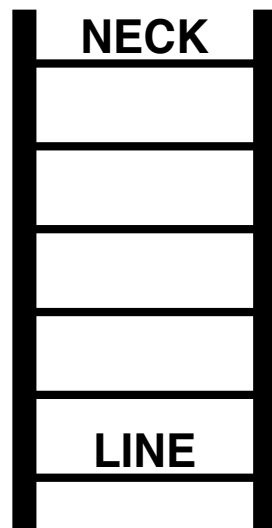
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- ▶ JOHNSON
- ▶ KENNEDY
- ▶ MADISON
- ▶ MCKINLEY
- ▶ MONROE
- ▶ NIXON
- ▶ OBAMA
- ▶ REAGAN
- ▶ TRUMP



## 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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# WHAT CAN £250,000

*buy you in each region in England?*

**H**ave you ever wondered where you can get more bang for your buck when it comes to property investment? With the extension of the stamp duty holiday until September on home purchases below £250,000, let's see what you can buy on or under budget in each region.

**NORTH EAST:** Asking prices in the North East have increased by 5.4 per cent in the last year, seeing one of the biggest changes across the country. However, you can still purchase a 3-bedroom property for a little more than £150,000.

**NORTH WEST:** Boasting the biggest price increase, up 7.3 per cent in the last 12 months, the average asking price for a 3-bedroom property in this region is £193,357. Expect to be able to find a 4-bedroom detached new build under the £250,000 threshold.

**YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER:** With prices up a modest 2.8 per cent, the average price of a 3-bedroom property is £188,538. Head to Bradford or Kingston upon Hull for the cheapest homes in the region.

**MIDLANDS:** The East Midlands is another fast-selling region and you can find some beautiful 3-bedroom detached homes in sought-after, semi-rural areas such as Sutton-on-Sea for around £245,000.

The West Midlands is one of the regions that takes the least amount of time to find a buyer (on average 65 days). You can purchase a 3-bedroom semi-detached house in the popular area of Maypole for £250,000.

**EAST OF ENGLAND:** The third most expensive region in the UK, you can still find some areas where your budget will stretch that little bit further, such as in Norwich where you can get a 3-bedroom detached home for £250,000.

**SOUTH EAST:** After London, this is the most expensive region in the UK, with the average asking price of 3-bedroom properties being £372,655. However, we did find a 3-bedroom end-of-terrace house for sale in Deal, Kent, with an asking price of £250,000.

**SOUTH WEST:** With prices rising by 3.4 per cent in the last year and the average asking price of a 3-bedroom property at £291,861, head to the county of Somerset to find 3-bedroom terraced properties within budget.

**LONDON:** Surprisingly, London is the only region to experience a drop in prices in the last 12 months. However, the average price of a home is still twice the national average. Barking and Dagenham and Bexley are the cheapest boroughs in London, where you should be able to find a 2-bedroom flat within budget.



## ARE YOU PREPARED FOR NIGHT ONE?



You've searched the local market, sorted finances, spent your weekends viewing properties, found your dream home, had your offer accepted and after months of sales progression moving day has arrived are you to prepped for your first night in your new home?

**Night one box....**label a night one box and add everything you need for your first night such as enough plates, cups and cutlery for your family for the first night. Make sure you put chargers for your electronics and phones so you know exactly where these are. You might treat yourself to a takeaway on your first night, you will need breakfast for your first morning so don't forget to add bowls and your favourite cereal.

**Cleaning....**create a bag of cleaning products so these are easy to locate when you get the keys to your new property so you can clean before you add your belongings.

**Pack an overnight bag....**packing an over night bag with an outfit for the first morning, toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush and shower gel this will save you time trying to find this and allow you to unpack your boxes at your own pace.

**Other essentials...** if you or anyone in your family take regular medication, set an alarm on your phone to remind you when you need to take it, moving day is busy and time runs away with you so this way you won't forget and have medication labelled and left in your overnight bag. It might not seem essential to you but when moving with children if they have a favourite blanket or soft toy make sure this is in your night one box so you can settle them down as close to their usual bedtime as possible with as little distress and disruption to their usual routine.



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# A WILL WRITER'S WORDS OF WISDOM

## WORRYING PROBLEMS

If a married couple dies together, and where there is no Will, the eldest is deemed to have died first, so only the family members of the surviving spouse will inherit

A beneficiary or their spouse should not be a witness to a Will, or they will disinherit themselves

Unless it has a Contemplation of Marriage clause, marriage or re-marriage invalidates a Will, requiring a new arrangement

Without a Will, spouses and civil partners are NOT automatically entitled to all of the estate assets on death, and the Government could inherit your estate if you die with no surviving traceable relatives

If a couple dies simultaneously, the elder is deemed to have died first – s184 Law of Property Act 1925, leaving only the younger spouse's family to inherit

Without a Will, even grandparents have NO automatic Legal Guardianship of their orphaned grandchildren

Without a Will, the Rules of Intestacy, ie 'The Government Will', could land the children with an IHT liability

A beneficiary or their spouse should not be a witness to a Will, or they will disinherit themselves

Although divorce does not invalidate a Will, marriage will indeed invalidate a Will, unless a marriage clause has been embedded

If you have no surviving parents, siblings, grandparents, uncles or aunts, then under the Intestacy Rules, the whole estate goes to the Crown or the Duchy of Lancaster or the Duke of Cornwall

## PEACE OF MIND SOLUTIONS

Always appoint charities as your final beneficiaries, to avoid your estate being claimed by the Government

By the use of a Property Protection Trust, you can ensure that if you pre-decease and your spouse re-marries and has more children, your own children benefit from your share of your home, and not the new spouse. BUT if Probate is not completed, the Trust Deed will not be set up and notified at the Land Registry

If children have special care needs, an appropriate Discretionary Trust could avoid loss of State benefits on them inheriting your estate

A Grant of Probate confirms to Executors that they have the authority to act and carry out the wishes of the deceased

Provide in your Will for continuity of your business on your death

If you own property abroad, you should arrange a Will for your assets in that country, to avoid costly fees and much Probate delay

If a Named Beneficiary, Executor, Trustee or Legal Guardian changes their name, e.g., on marriage or by Deed Poll, it is not necessary to amend the Will: documentary evidence, eg Decree Absolute, is sufficient

A properly worded Will could ensure that half the value of your home is potentially protected against Local Authority care home fees

There is no Inheritance Tax liability if the deceased spouse has left their entire estate to their surviving spouse or civil marriage partner

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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.





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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

Photo credit: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk), [www.driving.org](http://www.driving.org)







Adopt  
me!

**W**hether 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*

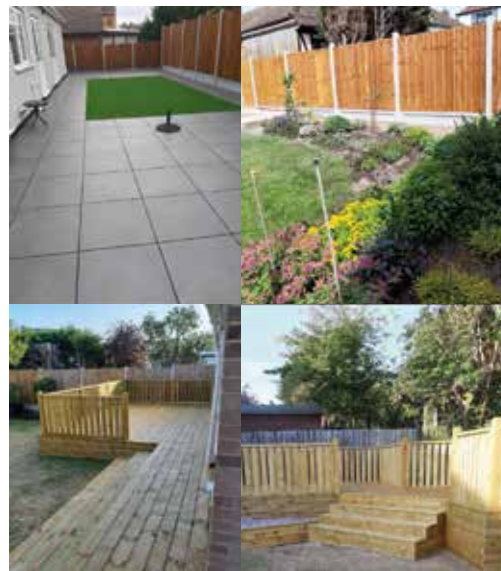
If you are thinking about approaching a breeder, you should know that this can be a very expensive route to go down. However, when adopting from a shelter, animals are often microchipped, spayed or neutered, and vaccinated already, saving you a pretty penny.

#### *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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# 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.

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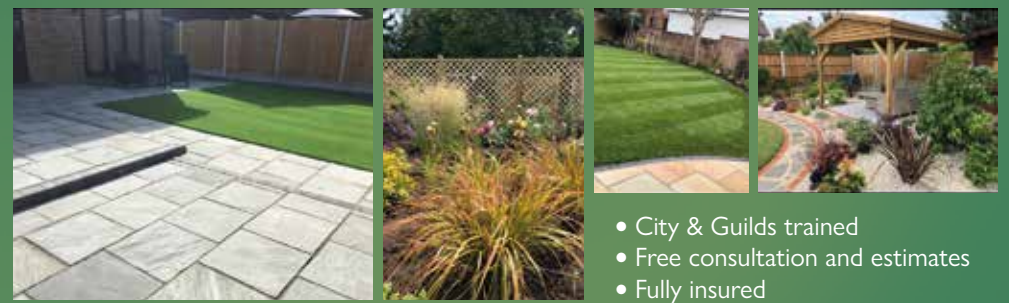
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GARDENING



## Forest Feast

*A basic guide to foraging*

Not 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.



# 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.

## 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

- > 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.

## 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.




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## HOW TO PACK THE PERFECT PICNIC

**FOOD & DRINK**

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 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: thesimpplings.com



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## HOW TO SAFEGUARD YOUR sunglasses

**P**rotecting your eyes from the sun's powerful rays is a must, but don't forget that you also need to safeguard your sunglasses from both accidental damage and general wear and tear.

### *Protect from scratches*

Whether you have plastic or glass lenses, you should always store your sunglasses in a hard case to protect them from scratches. If you do not have a hard case, a microfibre pouch is your next best option.

### *Remove smudges*

Sunglasses are prone to smudges from sun cream, make-up and your skin's natural oils. To smooth away smudges, rinse your glasses under warm water and, using your fingers, apply a few drops of mild washing-up liquid. Rub gently, rinse and dry with a microfibre cloth.

### *Avoid harmful cleaners*

Never use rubbing alcohol, vinegar or any other standard household cleaners on your sunglasses, as these can potentially damage the lenses. Also

refrain from breathing on them and wiping, as this can cause deterioration.

### *Do not leave in the car*

Leaving your sunglasses in your car on a hot day can cause the lenses to delaminate, making them less effective in protecting your vision from the sun. Particularly avoid placing them on the dashboard, where heat is more intense.

### *Don't place on top of your head*

Although you may like how this looks, placing your sunglasses on your head can cause the screws to loosen and fall out. Plus, it can damage the nose-pads.

### *Don't take designer sunnies to the beach*

If you have spent a lot of money on designer glasses, you may want to wear them all the time. However, the combination of sand granules and seawater is a major hazard. Sand can scour away at the lenses and delicate hinges, while the salt in seawater can cause lasting damage to metal components and lens coatings.





# PROTECT YOUR SKIN

## from UVA and UVB rays

**W**e 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.



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# 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 keeping 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!







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

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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.

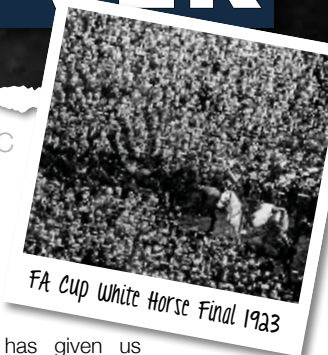
In the modern game, COVID-19 notwithstanding, the semi-finals and final at Wembley are watched by crowds in excess of 85,000, and while other competitions – notably the Champions League –

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



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