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N

Editor's notes...

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**SouthWoodFord.

We are rapidly approaching Christmas and, while the super organised among you might have already ticked off your shopping list, if you're anything like me, you'll still have a way to go!

_While ordering online might be considered to be easier, supporting your local businesses comes with a whole host of benefits.

Not only will you be helping to keep your local high street alive, but you'll also be making a huge difference to the staff and owner. A purchase from you could make their week or even their month. Money spent with local

businesses will also circulate in your community, spreading the joy even further.

I hope you take advantage of the festive period to spend plenty of quality time with family and friends. While Christmas is a time for celebration, it can also be stressful for a variety of reasons,

whether that's because of remembering lost loved ones or the financial burden. Please check in on those around you; simply reaching out can make all the difference.

Finally, I'd like to thank all those who have supported **VISION** this year. It's been a difficult time for businesses, so to have such a loyal and generous network behind us has helped us continue to thrive. I hope you have a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Brett Shohel

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

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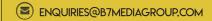
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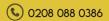
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THE ULTIMATE

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TAKING A LOOK AT THE TOP FIVE HIGHEST-GROSSING CHRISTMAS FILMS OF ALL TIME

hristmas movies have long been a staple of holiday cheer, embodying the spirit of warmth, family and festive joy. Many films have graced the silver screen, but a select few have transcended typical holiday fare to become phenomenal box office successes.

(All figures adjusted for inflation)

ONE: HOME ALONE (1990)

Box office takings: £1.1billion

Kevin McCallister, a mischievous and resourceful eight-year-old, is accidentally left behind by his family during Christmas vacation and turns his home into a fortress to fend off bumbling burglars.

This family comedy, starring Macaulay Culkin, blends slapstick humour and holiday warmth, becoming a perennial favourite and the highest-grossing Christmas film ever.

TWO: HOME ALONE 2: LOST IN NEW YORK (1992)

Box office takings: £915.95million

The sequel to the original hit follows Kevin as he mistakenly boards a flight to New York while his family heads to Florida. In the Big Apple, he again encounters his previous assailants and must outwit them in this hilarious, uplifting adventure.

THREE: DR SEUSS' HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS (2000)

Box office takings: £587million

This live-action adaptation brings the whimsical world of Dr. Seuss to life. Jim Carrey's portrayal of the Grinch offers a perfect blend of comedy and emotion, exploring the true meaning of Christmas beyond the commercial frenzy.

FOUR: A CHRISTMAS CAROL (2009)

Box office takings: £552million

This animated rendition of Charles Dickens' timeless classic uses state-of-the-art motion capture technology. It narrates the tale of Ebenezer Scrooge's transformation from a miser to a kindhearted man after being visited by three supernatural beings on Christmas Eve.

FIVE: THE GRINCH (2018)

Box office takings: £544million

Illumination's 2018 adaptation of Dr Seuss' classic tale reimagines the iconic green recluse with a heart two sizes too small. Voiced by Benedict Cumberbatch, the Grinch's journey from a Christmas-hating hermit to a holiday hero has charmed audiences worldwide.



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Inter can challenge your haircare routine before you know it, with cold temperatures and harsh conditions transforming your silky tresses into a dry, tangled mess. But it doesn't have to be like that. Follow these tips to keep your hair looking healthy and vibrant all season long.

- 1. Wear a hat: Cold weather can damage your hair, so when it's chilly, wear a hat with a soft lining.
- Cut back on shampooing: Daily shampooing removes natural oils, so aim to shampoo your hair no more than two or three times a week.
- Dry your hair before going out: Wet hair can freeze and break in cold weather, so always make sure your hair is dry before stepping outside.
- 4. Eat a balanced diet: Foods rich in vitamin C (e.g. citrus and berries) and omega-3 fatty acids (e.g. salmon and walnuts) will help keep your hair healthy.
- 5. Limit heat styling: Tools like curling tongs and

straighteners can dry out your hair. In winter, try embracing the natural look or, if you've got long hair, experiment with braids and buns. You might be pleasantly surprised by your styling skills!

- Tame the frizz: Use a laundry dryer sheet to smooth pesky static flyaways.
- Use nourishing products: Winter is the time to indulge in good-quality moisturising conditioners, hair masks and oils.
- Avoid bleach: Many hair dyes, particularly blonde shades, can seriously dry out your hair. So think about going natural for the winter – or choose a darker shade.
- Stay hydrated: Drinking plenty of water will keep your hair hydrated, making it shinier and less prone to breakage.

Winter doesn't have to mean bad hair days. With these straightforward tips, you can keep your hair healthy and glowing all season, whatever the weather.





WHAT IS LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE MASSAGE USED FOR?

Lymphatic drainage massage is used to relieve painful swelling in the arms and legs that is caused by lymphoedema. This type of massage is often used to relieve lymphoedema after breast cancer surgery, but it can be beneficial for other conditions, including:

Rheumatoid arthritis | Fibromyalgia | Chronic venous insufficiency | Lipoedema | Deep vein thrombosis

More recently, lymphatic drainage massage has become popular as a cellulite-busting treatment owing to its ability to boost the stimulation of lymph circulation. It can also be used to improve digestion, aid sleep, and support faster muscle recovery after exercise.

HOW DO YOU PERFORM LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE MASSAGE?

- 1. Use a light touch: Be careful not to press too hard as the lymphatic vessels are located right under the skin.
- Stretch the skin: Unlike most other types of massage, you should stretch the skin rather than move along it.
- **3. Massage with the normal lymph flow:** To stimulate natural flow, make sure you are massaging towards your trunk and heart.
- 4. Go slow: As you massage the lymph vessels, make sure you do so slowly. Ideally, take three seconds to perform each stretch.

WHERE ON THE BODY CAN YOU DO LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE MASSAGE?

Most commonly, this type of massage is carried out on the legs or the arms. However, it can be performed all over the body, including on the neck, shoulders, chest and stomach area.

ARE THERE ANY ASSOCIATED RISKS?

In most cases, lymphatic drainage massage is a safe treatment for lymphoedema and other health concerns. However, you should not undergo this treatment if you have:

A heart condition | Blood clots | Kidney failure | An infection

If you are pregnant, speak to your doctor before undergoing this treatment.

Yerba mate

A re you looking for a healthier way to get your daily caffeine fix? Yerba mate provides the energy kick of coffee with the healing properties of herbal tea. Plus, it can even help you to lose weight!

WHAT IS YERBA MATE?

Yerba mate is a type of herbal tea that originates from South America and is made by steeping dried leaves from the yerba mate plant in hot water. It can be served hot or cold and. like black and green tea, it contains caffeine which can help vou to feel more alert and focused. Yerba mate has a very distinctive taste that can be strong, bitter and slightly vegetal. In terms of aroma, it has been described as having a eucalyptus smell.

HOW MUCH CAFFEINE IS IN YERBA MATE?

Depending on how you brew it, the average cup of verba mate contains 70mg of caffeine. In comparison, the average cup of coffee contains 120mg of caffeine and a cup of green tea contains around 25mg.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH **BENEFITS?**

There are so many associated benefits of drinking yerba mate, including:

- > Improved mental focus
- > Enhanced physical performance
- > Protection against infections
- > Weight loss and reduced belly fat
- > Reduced risk of heart disease
- > Lowered blood sugar levels

ARE THERE ANY SIDE EFFECTS?

If you are sensitive to caffeine, you may experience some side effects such as an upset stomach. trouble sleeping, feeling nervous or restless or a faster heartbeat if you consume too much yerba mate. However, studies show that most people can safely drink up to 1.5 litres of yerba mate a day.

HOW TO PREPARE YERBA MATE

- 1. Add one or two yerba mate teabags to a mug these can be bought online and at most health food shops.
- 2. Moisten the teabags with cool water.
- 3. Fill the mug with hot water.
- 4. Steep for five minutes and then remove the
- 5. Flavour to taste with honey, sugar or sweetener.
- 6. You can also add mint, ginger or orange peel if

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the lids and press the edges to seal. 6. Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden.



#DISCOVERING ider England's Pionering Pole

market drink that lacked sophistication - knocked back rather than savoured.

AN ANCIENT TIPPLE

is changing all that.

Cider predates the Roman Empire, and even champagne owes some of its methods to the early days of cider making. Perhaps that's why, years later, cider makers are fighting back.

But the new breed of English cider makers

A NEW TYPE OF CIDER

Cider is now giving wine and champagne a run for their money in a rapidly changing landscape that has seen makers using locally sourced ingredients and experimental methods.

The process mirrors that of wine making, right down to the fact that cider is aged in oak barrels. Indeed, many types of

fine cider aren't carbonated at

or decades, cider was seen as a mass- all, but are more similar to white wine.

More attention is also being paid to the land where the apples are grown. Much like grapes determine the profile of wine, so too does the soil, the landscape and the climate influence the apples used to make this new breed of cider.

THE FREEDOM TO EXPERIMENT

Liam Tinston of Tinston Wines & Ciders in Sussex points out that cider making lacks the strict rules found in wine making. This freedom enables producers to experiment and produce drinks that defy consumer expectations, resulting in a staggering variety of ciders on the market to suit most tastes.

CHAMPAGNE'S NEW RIVAL?

Osip, a Michelin-starred restaurant in Bruton, Somerset, has teamed up with well-known local company Pilton Cider to create Osip cider. Together, they've created a tipple that tastes like a high-end sparkling wine. Restaurateur Merlin Labron-Johnson and cider maker Martin Berkeley selected the apple varieties together, and the blend of juices was then 'keeved'. This traditional artisanal fermentation process carbonates the drink naturally, using the juices' own sugars.

> Such is its increasing popularity and the skill required to make the drink, that cider could very well be many people's drink of choice this Christmas.

> > Like wines, ciders exhibit diverse flavours based on their origin and the apple varieties used. Finding your favourite wines requires tasting and exploration; discovering your preferred ciders demands a similar journey.

To get going, check out local producers or specialised shops near you - and try them with various foods to find your favourite pairings.









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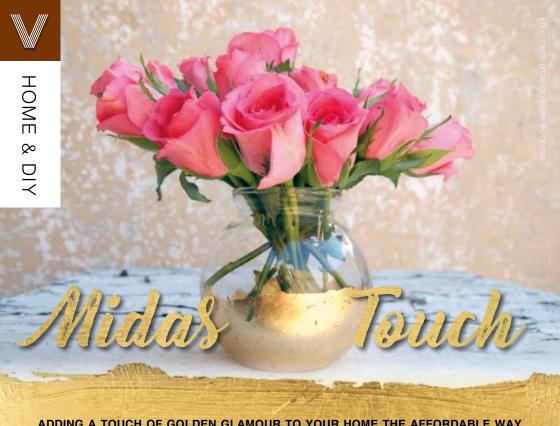
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(a) @lemahzenchocolatier









ADDING A TOUCH OF GOLDEN GLAMOUR TO YOUR HOME THE AFFORDABLE WAY

ooking to add a touch of contemporary sparkle and charm to your Christmas decor? You're in for a treat! In this DIY project, we'll show you how to transform plain glass vases, jars and votives into dazzling gold masterpieces. The best part? You don't need any special skills, though a steady hand is useful! And it's an ideal project to do with older children.

YOU WILL NEED:

Gold foil sheets | Gold foil adhesive | Adhesive brush A large brush (like a powder brush) for removing excess gold foil Small glasses or votives (make sure they're clean and dry - washing-up liquid and a piece of dry kitchen towel should do the trick).

All these items are available online or in most arts and crafts shops.

Carefully apply the gold foil adhesive to the areas on your glasses where you want the gold foil to stick. The adhesive will need some time to become tacky.

The time can vary with different makes, so follow the instructions on the packaging carefully.

Apply the foil

Once the adhesive is tacky, apply the foil directly from the paper it comes on. Press the sheet onto the glass where you've applied the adhesive. Then, carefully remove the paper backing, leaving the gold foil attached to the glass. If necessary, use your fingers to smooth it out.

Brush away excess and leave to dry

Using the large brush, remove any excess gold foil and let your decorated objects dry for a few hours. For extra protection, you can seal them with a suitable clear sealant or varnish specially made for glass and delicate surfaces - following the manufacturer's instructions.

Once complete, fill your glass items with a candle, fairy lights, flowers, winter twigs or pine cones. Sit back, admire your creations, or consider giving them as gifts to help spread the festive feeling.

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MADDUX CREATIVE



HOME

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ophisticated, playful, beautiful. That's how Maddux Creative describes its decorative style. Full of life and colour, each space it creates is unique, with designs that have won acclaim all over the world.

If you love bold colours, patterns and textures, then Maddux Creative will serve as the perfect inspiration to bring your interior aspirations to life.

THE STORY BEHIND MADDUX CREATIVE

Maddux Creative is run by Scott Maddux, originally from Tennessee, and Jo Le Gleud from the UK. They met on a dancefloor in the 1990s, and brought their shared creative experience together in 2011 when they founded their Peckham-based studio.

The pair describe their work as "an alchemy of design: an intricate tapestry of form and texture. A celebration of colour." Throughout their designs it's clear that these elements are central, using the features of the room to create spaces that are striking and unique. They take inspiration from a range of influences, which keeps things wonderfully refreshina.

RECREATING MADDUX CREATIVE'S STYLE

What's great about Maddux Creative's aesthetic is that there are no set rules, allowing you to recreate their style in your own home. Some tips to give you a dash of inspiration include:

- DIY > Be brave with colours and textures. Mixing and matching styles can add a quirky touch that keeps spaces fun and unique, so choose the pieces that you're drawn to and which reflect your personal style. Popular colour combinations include pinks and greens, blues and vellows, and reds with greys or gold.
- > Tonal looks can make a striking impression. Choose a solid base colour such as blue or green and add lighter/darker accents in the same shade - using furniture and accessories in different shades to create a multilavered look.
- > Plants and flowers add life and can make your space feel more lived-in - an affordable way to transform your decor.
- > Floral patterns add a classic touch that still feels modern in the right setting. From patterned lampshades to tapestries and cushions, you can use florals or stripes to add some individual touches that will bring the different styles in your space together.

Wonderfully unique and making colour popular again, Maddux Creative provides the perfect inspiration to go bold and have fun with your interior design.















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his is one of the most greatly anticipated announcements in the world of interior design: Dulux Colour of the Year 2024 has been revealed as Sweet Embrace.

What colour is Sweet Embrace?

Sweet Embrace is a delicate pale pink that is both soft and comforting. A metameric colour, meaning it changes tone with the light, in the early morning it appears crisper before turning into a more blush pink as the day goes on. Referred to as a 'modern neutral', Sweet Embrace can help to unite the different elements in a room and create an uplifting atmosphere.

Why was Sweet Embrace chosen?

This colour was chosen by the experts at Dulux as a shade that represents the global mood and a universal need for clarity and joy. Marianne Shillingford, colour expert and creative director at Dulux, said: "While being a beautiful stand-alone colour, it's a hue that matches perfectly with so many other shades, so that decorators can use it as

a backdrop to build a totally individual space upon."

Ways to use Sweet Embrace in your home Paint your window frames

As a metameric colour, Sweet Embrace is a perfect colour choice for painting your window frames, enabling you to capture its light-changing qualities throughout the day.

🖳 Colour-drench a roon

Colour-drenching involves drenching a whole room in one shade to create a sense of calm cohesion. This means painting all the surfaces rather than just the walls, and it can make a room appear more spacious and contemporary.

S Update vour woodwork

This versatile shade is ideal for use as an alternative to white to update the woodwork in a room, such as the skirting boards and door frames.

Ombre is making a big comeback in 2024 and, as a neutral colour, Sweet Embrace has the ability to seamlessly blend into other soft shades to create a stunning sunset effect.



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iscover Greensted Church in Ongar, a unique hidden gem with a story that spans more than

Celebrated as the world's oldest wooden church. its walls have stood for more than a millennium. offering a glimpse into the early periods of English Christian heritage.

Tracing its origins to the ninth century, the church's earliest timbers, dating to around 1060, mark it as a distinguished survivor from before the Norman Conquest. These timbers, visible even today, underscore the church's enduring presence and historical significance.

Originally a modest structure, perhaps built for a Saxon nobleman, Greensted Church has evolved

through the centuries. It bears the marks of various architectural styles and religious practices that have influenced its design over time.

The church's walls, crafted from vertically set split oak trunks in a technique known as 'stave construction', are particularly

noteworthy. This method is complemented by the 19th-century brick chancel and Victorian restorations, together presenting a harmonious blend of various historical

Greensted Church's connection to St Edmund, the martyred king of East Anglia, further elevates its historical importance. As the site where his body reputedly rested in 1013 en route to burial, the church has long been a focal point for pilgrimage and reflection.

More than a religious site, Greensted Church stands as a cultural beacon, embodying the continuity of faith and community. It serves as a serene witness to the evolving landscape and societal changes surrounding it.

Venturing into this sacred space, visitors are transported beyond the confines of the present. Each step within its walls is a journey through time, connecting the present to a past that remains vibrantly



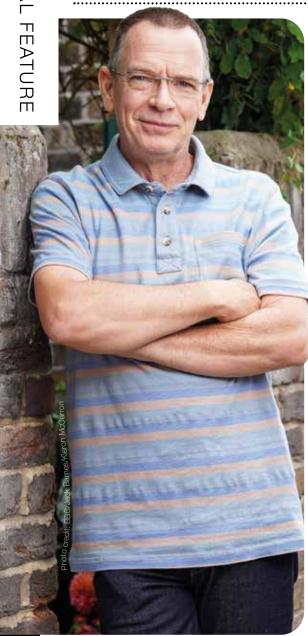
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'Essex has always been a part of who I am'



I hile Adam Woodyatt owes much to his long-standing role as lan Beale in the BBC soap opera EastEnders, we reveal why the actor likes to heap equal praise on the influences of his childhood, and in particular, his time spent in Essex.

Adam Woodyatt was born in Walthamstow in 1968. Although the Victoria Line suburb had renounced its ties with Essex three years previously, the outgoing schoolboy would soak up the influences of Chingford and South Woodford in his early life.

Perhaps it is an appreciation for that simple 1970s suburban upbringing - Woodyatt attended Forest School in Epping Forest, before the family relocated to Wales - that permeated so perfectly into his authentic portrayal of the rugged, pessimistic businessman Ian Beale.

"Essex has always been a part of who I am." he begins. "It's in my blood and has significantly shaped my approach to life and acting. I love its honesty!"

The actor, who is half Welsh, frequently travelled to London for castings as an aspiring young actor, and was working as a butcher when the call to join EastEnders came. Since 1985, his portrayal of Beale has captivated viewers, and his return to Albert Square this year excited fans.

"lan is hapless in many ways, though ultimately always trying to do the right thing, and I think there's a fair amount of that in me too," says the actor, who recently volunteered to work in a fish and chip shop in Southendon-Sea to pass the time.

Bevond the confines of Albert Square (and serving up cod), Woodyatt's versatile talent has illuminated stage and television screen alike. And recently, his stint away from fulltime acting has offered the star the chance to tour his native Essex... in a camper van,

He said: "Feeling free, getting on the road, and hunting out all those childhood places of old, has been a magical ride for me, and one I want to continue taking."





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THE ROYAL BALLET: THE NUTCRACKER

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Tuesday, December 12, 7.15pm

Join Clara at a delightful Christmas Eve party that becomes a magical adventure once everyone else is tucked up in bed.

Peter Wright's much-loved production for The Royal Ballet, with gorgeous period designs by Julia Trevelyan Oman, keeps true to the spirit of this festive ballet classic, combining the thrill of the fairy tale with spectacular dancing.

Tickets cost $\mathfrak{L}20$ for adults and $\mathfrak{L}15$ for children under 15. For more information and to book, please visit www.bitly.ws/33als

CHRISTMAS WREATH WORKSHOP

CRATE Walthamstow, 17&Central, Selborne Road, Walthamstow, E17 7JR Wednesday, December 13, 7pm – 9pm

In this workshop, you will create a fresh foliage wreath starting with a moss and willow base, then adding seasonal flowers, berries, foliage and grasses. Although flowers and foliage will vary, there will be a

selection of colours and tones for you choose from. At approximate 40cm diameter, this fully compostable wreath is the perfect size to be hung on your front door or used as wall decoration. All materials provided.

Tickets cost £65.71 and are available online from www.bitly.ws/33alA

CHRISTMAS CABARET

Mother's Ruin Gin Palace, Unit 18, Ravenswood Industrial Estate, Shernhall Street, Walthamstow, E17 9HQ

Friday, December 15, 9pm - 10.30pm

Set in an era of decadence, this Christmas comedy cabaret is brought to life by performer Lizzy Renihan and her vibrant choir Natural Voices. Guest appearance by actor Luke Shaw and the host is star of stage and screen lan Burfield.

Tickets cost £5.50 from www.bitly.ws/33alK

IDMC GOSPEL SOUL CHOIR PRESENTS A GOSPEL CHRISTMAS

Woodford Baptist Church, 32 George Lane, South Woodford, E18 1LW Sunday, December 17, 7pm

This special Christmas concert will get you in the mood for all the celebrations ahead.

Led by award-winning musician, choir director and founder John Fisher, the choir has created nine albums and various single releases containing legendary gospel soul funk classics.

They were also finalists in the BBC Songs of Praise Gospel Choir of the Year and won both Premier Gospel Radio Gospel Choir of the Year and an Urban Music Award for Best Gospel Act 2018.

Tickets start from £8.30 and are available to book via www.bitlv.ws/33alZ





MARIO: The Italian plumber from the titular Nintendo franchise is the Japanese company's flagship character, and actually got his name from the resemblance to the Nintendo Washington warehouse landlord.

The Mario franchise has sold more than 776 million copies worldwide.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG: It's been more than 30 years since Sega's official mascot came to our screens. The hedgehog character first appeared in his own standalone game on the Mega Drive – later called the Genesis – in 1991.

However, the blue anthropomorphic hedgehog actually made a cameo appearance slightly earlier that year on the arcade driving game *Rad Mobile*, Sega's first 32-bit release.

LARA CROFT: The *Tomb Raider* franchise arrived on the scene in 1996 with Lara Croft, the ultimate feminist hero, about to alter perceptions further in an already fervent era of girl power.

The archaeologist travelled the world in search of ancient artefacts, and did so with such dynamism that she spawned a string of successful movies, played by Angelina Jolie in 2001 and 2003, then reprised by Alicia Vikander in 2018.

DONKEY KONG: Nintendo game director Shigeru Miyamoto, whom we can thank for the creation of the Mario character, also created *Donkey Kong*. With 80 million copies of the game sold since its release in 1981, it also has seven Guinness World Records to its name, including First Use of Visual Storytelling in a Video Game.

Donkey Kong was developed in a bid to beat another arcade classic, Pac-Man. Mario features in the original version as 'Jumpman'.

PAG-MAN: Upon its release in Japan in 1980, *Pac-Man* wasn't the hugely successful videogame it has since become. A slow-burner that has become synonymous with arcade machines, alongside Galaxian and Space Invaders, the cute characters weren't an instant hit with users, but are now seen as iconic. The eponymous character tries to eat all of the dots and evade the ghosts in a maze.

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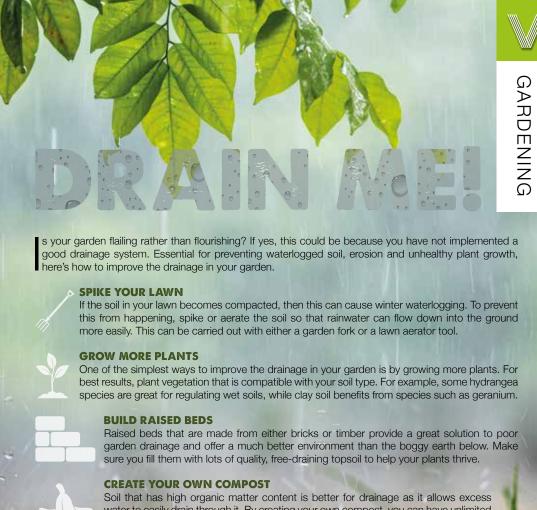












water to easily drain through it. By creating your own compost, you can have unlimited access to organic matter that is perfectly suited to your garden and its soil.

INCORPORATE SLOPING SURFACES

Surface water is a problem in many gardens but can be easily managed with the use of sloping surfaces. For example, you could combine steps and raised beds, create depth with tiered planters, or arrange large slabs of rocks to help direct water.

GARDENING CALENDAR

January

 \square Plan and prepare for the year ahead.

☐ Take stock of inventory (seeds, pots, etc) and assess your garden layout.

☐ Put out water and seeds for the birds.

February

 $\hfill\square$ Start sowing seeds indoors, such as tomatoes, peppers and aubergines.

☐ Add compost or organic matter to your garden soil.

March

☐ Sow cool-season crops such as lettuce, spinach, carrots and beetroots directly in your garden.

☐ Protect tender plants from late frosts.

☐ Clean and tidy your greenhouse.

April

☐ Transplant seedlings that require a longer growing season, such as tomatoes, peppers and herbs.

☐ Plant perennial flowers and pot-grown fruits, such as strawberries.

 \square Turn over the soil in your garden to loosen compaction.

May

☐ Regularly water your garden and apply mulch around your plants to conserve water and stop weeds.

☐ Use bedding plants to fill your garden with colour.

June

- ☐ Monitor your garden for weeds and remove them.
- ☐ Regularly fertilise your plants with organic fertiliser.
- ☐ Water and mow your lawn frequently.

July

- ☐ Water your plants deeply and less frequently.
- ☐ Monitor plants for aphids and spider mites.
- ☐ De-head bedding plants.

August

□ Harvest your summer crops, preserving excess produce through canning, freezing or drying.

☐ Start planning your autumn garden by removing spent plants and amending the soil.

September

- ☐ Directly sow seeds of salad greens, rocket and Swiss chard.
- ☐ Harvest mature summer crops.

October

- Prepare your garden for winter by harvesting the remaining autumn crops, removing any debris and dead plants and adding compost or organic matter to replenish nutrients.
- ☐ Trim and shape your hedges.

November

- ☐ Clear up fallen leaves, especially from lawns, ponds and beds.
- ☐ Plant tulip bulbs for a spring display next year.
- ☐ Wrap young plants and trees to protect them from frost.

December

- Reflect on your year's gardening journey and plan for the year ahead.
- Order seeds and supplies for the year to ensure you have everything you need.

HOW TO MAKE A DIY PET

CHRISTMAS CRACKER

o you like to involve your pet in the excitement of Christmas Day? If yes, then you are going to love making them their very own Christmas cracker complete with edible treats and festive toys.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A toilet paper roll or kitchen towel roll | Tissue paper, wrapping paper or newspaper | String or ribbon | A selection of edible treats and small toys

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Take an empty toilet or kitchen towel roll, depending on how big your pet is and how many treats you want to include. For medium-sized and large dogs, a kitchen towel roll is best as you can fit more in.
- > Stuff your chosen treats/toys into the toilet or kitchen roll. Don't worry about overstuffing!
- Cut your tissue paper, wrapping paper or newspaper so that you have enough to wrap your roll, leaving 5cm of paper at each end.

> Twist off the ends and loosely secure with string or ribbon.

You could also make a personalised name tag using a small piece of card and a felt tip pen or by writing directly onto the paper. NB: Do not stick on any embellishments such as bells or plastic decorations as these are potential choking hazards. Make sure you remove the tissue/wrapping paper once they have got to the treats so that they do not try to eat it. Always monitor your pet when they are opening their Christmas cracker, and do not include a "bang" element as this may scare them.

What to put in your DIY pet Christmas cracker

- Edible treats such as chew sticks, meaty bites and biscuits
- Small festive toys such as a felt bauble with catnip or a candy cane plush
- A small paper hat or festive bow and a pet-themed joke.





how to make SITCHES SITCHES

f you're after a tempting but simple festive cookie to make this Christmas, look no further than these cute melting snowmen biscuits. They taste delicious and are a great way to involve kids in the kitchen – but be prepared to get sticky!The below recipe makes 10 biscuits.

YOU WILL NEED:

For the biscuits: 100g butter | 100g caster sugar | ½ tsp vanilla extract | ½ a beaten egg (about 2 tbsp) | 200g plain flour (and a bit extra)

For decorating: 10 standard white marshmallows (not the mini ones) | 100g icing sugar | A tube of black writing icing | Some ready-to-roll orange fondant icing | Chocolate beans

HOW TO MAKE THE BISCUITS:

- Heat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas mark 6 and line a baking tray with parchment paper.
- In a large bowl, beat the butter and sugar together till smooth using a wooden spoon. Then beat in the vanilla extract, egg and finally the flour to make a dough. Chill in the fridge for 15 minutes.
- On a floured surface, roll out the dough with a rolling pin to roughly 5mm in thickness.
- Using a 9cm biscuit cutter or the rim of a 9cm glass, cut out 10 shapes.
- Bake for 8-10 minutes till golden, then cool.

HOW TO DECORATE:

- Put the icing sugar in a bowl. Add cold water, a teaspoon at a time, till the icing is just runny.
- Spread the icing on the biscuits and pop a marshmallow near the edge of each one.
- Use the black icing pen to draw the arms and eyes.
- Use the orange fondant to create a carrot nose.
- Then add the chocolate beans for the snowmen's buttons.



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or many, the thrill of going on holiday is enough. For a proportion of others, though, it's only half the attraction, and venturing away from home to push levels of bravery and bravado is much more the ticket. With that in mind, then, here are four all-adventure destinations for dynamic daredevils to tick off their bucket list.

ONE: Patagonía. Split between Argentina and Chile, Patagonia is a huge area that surrounds the Andes mountain range, showcasing everything from National Parks to glaciers, hikes, caves and volcanoes.

Combining staggering natural beauty with all the risk and reward of different landscapes and a very different culture, going off-piste in Patagonia could just be the most daredevil thing you can do.

TWO: Iceland. A country of extremes, Iceland is as beautiful as it is challenging, and many adventurers cannot resist the urge to hike and climb around glaciers, waterfalls, gevsers and volcanoes.

While dealing with the ice or diving deep into the Silfra fissure is a thrill a minute, it's also rewarding to hire a car and venture off on the Iceland Ring Road (also known as Route 1) - an 800-mile highway that circles the country.

The Dolomítes. We associate Italy with relaxing, restorative experiences around great food and passionate people, yet the Dolomites - and a vast array of climbing, mountain-biking and hiking options - will take you off the beaten track, inviting you to test your mettle against some punishing terrain.

The rewards for adventure seekers are stunning views and crisp-clean air.

the area's stunning coastline.

FOUR: South Africa. We know Cape Town as a beautiful, cultural city, but it also has a reputation as an adventure junkie hotspot, with surfing, abseiling (off Table Mountain, no less), diving with great white sharks and a prevalence of gyrocopter aircraft flights that can be taken as a way of enjoying





iceland



The Dolomites

Newton's pple Tree

WOOLSTHORPE MANOR THE BIRTHPLACE OF BRIGHT IDEAS

ir Isaac Newton, one of history's greatest scientists, was born on January 4, 1643 (Christmas Day 1642 Old Style) in Woolsthorpe Manor, an old farmhouse near Grantham in Lincolnshire.

Newton lived at the manor until he left to attend the University of Cambridge in 1661. When the Great Plague of London erupted in 1665, Newton returned home. And it was here that he embarked on some incredible work, developing new ideas about light, optics, calculus, motion and gravity.

AN APPLE A DAY

The most famous story about Newton and Woolsthorpe involves an apple. The story goes that when Newton saw an apple drop from a tree in the orchard, he started to think about the forces that make objects fall. This led him to develop his Law of Universal Gravitation. The law explains why things fall to the ground. And it explains why objects in the universe move towards each other.

The law is usually written as: $\mathbf{F} = \mathbf{G} \frac{(\mathbf{m}^1 \times \mathbf{m}^2)}{\mathbf{m}^2}$

F - force, or the pull between two objects

G - gravitational constant, which is a special number used to figure out the strength of gravity

m - mass, or the size of the two objects

r - the distance between the centres of the two objects

DYNAMIC DISCOVERIES

As well as his work on gravity, Newton developed three laws of motion that helped us understand how things move and interact with each other, and laid the groundwork for much of modern physics and engineering.

WHAT CAN I SEE AT WOOLSTHORPE?

You can see the tree that inspired Newton's work, although it's probably a more recent tree that regrew from its original roots.

You can also visit the manor itself, including a recreation of Newton's workroom. In addition. there's a hands-on science centre.

For more information, visit www.nationaltrust.org. uk/visit/nottinghamshire-lincolnshire/woolsthorpemanor or call the National Trust on 01476 860338.





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The online betting industry has radically changed not just our lifestyle habits, but the way we view competitive sport too.

From an era where betting was only ever the domain of somewhat scruffy men in high street bookmakers, often with the smell of beer and cigarettes lingering in the air, to a modern reworking where the option of placing money on a sporting event can be done from the comfort of one's armchair.

The online betting market is always a topic of much debate and conjecture. Whether or not you believe there is a moral issue at play, the success of those who pioneered the industry is undisputed. When Denise Coates - who was awarded a CBE in 2012 for her services to community and business - registered the bet365 domain name in the year 2000, neither she nor co-founder John, her brother, could have foreseen the incredible changes to the industry that were to follow.

In fairness. Denise did have some previous knowledge of the industry - her father, Peter Coates, known for his chairmanship of Stoke City Football Club, had run a successful bookmaker firm, Provincial Racing, which she joined after graduating from university with a

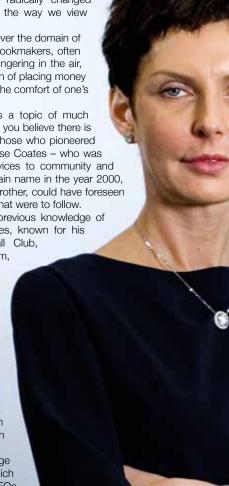
Using a £15million loan secured against the company's betting shop estate, bet365 was one of the first to try out the untested online market, at a time when the internet was awash with uncertainty and suspicion over online transactions.

first-class degree in ergonomics.

Wind forward 20 years, and bet365 is one of the leading players in the market with annual revenues of more than £2billion, thanks to more than £36billion in betting transactions each year.

Coates rewards herself tidily – her wage in 2020 was said to be £421million, which is higher than all FTSE 100 Index CEOs combined.

It is an amount that reflects perhaps not her workload, but certainly the game-changing element brought about by one of the UK's most powerful female entrepreneurs.



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SPORT

UNUSUAL SPORT:

DODGEBWW

classic 2004 box office comedy film Dodgeball involved what most people thought was a new sport, yet its roots actually go right the way back to the turn of the 20th century.

And yet, there is now a new take on the idea that has emerged in recent years. Utilising foam-tipped arrows that are fired from low-poundage bows, competitors created something of a hybrid between dodgeball and archery - dodgebow.

The sport was invented by three friends from Montreal, Canada. The trio had played combat archery and wanted to develop the idea further. Subsequently, the company Dodgebow was created. The sport sees two teams of up to 12 members battle for 45 minutes in a weapon-laden arena filled with inflatables which can be used as obstacles or objects to hide behind.

The aim is for the teams to gather weapons from the centre of the arena, position themselves strategically, and then eliminate each of the

opposing team's players by shooting them. A player can bring back an eliminated teammate by catching

Dodgebow, also known as archery tag, is a rapidly growing sport and is already played in more than 30 countries around the world.

There are also extensions to the game, including Bullseve (all opposing team targets can be hit instead of striking out players), No Loyalty (a 'Blue on Blue' hit means the receiving player must change teams), and Capture the Flag (one of three opposing team flags must be taken

> back to your own base). Using safe equipment means dodgebow is fun and exciting to play, with emphasis on both working as a team and individual brilliance.





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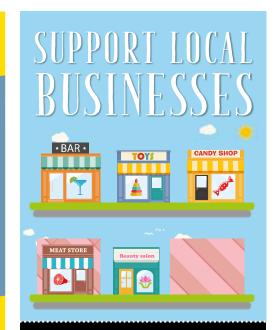
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YOUR WINTER CHECKLIST TO ENSURE YOU'RE PREPARED FOR THE ROAD AHEAD

If your car broke down or you got stuck in a really bad traffic situation during the winter months, would you be able to keep yourself and your family warm and safe until help arrived or you were able to be on your way again?

What to keep in your car during winter:

- A torch and batteries do not think that you can rely on the torchlight on your smartphone
- Warm clothes such as a coat, hat and gloves, and blankets
- Ice scraper and de-icer to keep your front and rear windscreen clear
- In-car phone charger
- ✓ High-visibility clothing
- Jump leads or jump-start cables
- An empty fuel can
- ✓ Food and drink, including a hot drink in a flask
- ✓ Shovel in case of a snowstorm or blizzard
- Two warning triangles
- A pair of sunglasses to minimise glare from the winter sun

P is for petrol (or diesel). Do you have enough petrol/diesel? Do you know where you can fill up?

O is for oil. Check your oil levels before you leave. W is for water. Check both your radiator and your screen washer.

D is for damage. Check your wipers and lights for signs of wear and tear. Make sure your windscreen and windows are free from snow and ice.

E is for electrics. Check that your lights, indicators and controls are working as they should.

R is for rubber tyres. Make sure that your tyres are well inflated and free from damage.

Y is for you. Are you fit to drive? Have you slept well? Are you taking





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12. PASSAGES, 15. INCLUDE, 16. LISTEN, 18. GAMMA, 19. ETNA DOWN: 1. RIFT, 2. DECENCY, 3. ASTROLOGICAL, 4. OCCUPY, 6. SHRUB, 7. OUTWEIGH, 8. OLD TESTAMENT,

17. SIGNIFICANCE, 20. GYMNAST, 21. EXULT, 22. SNAG, 23. ANATHEMA ACROSS: 1. RADIATOR, 5. OSLO, 9. FACET, 10. CULPRIT, 11. INHOSPITABLE, 13. ANYHOW, 14. ASKING,



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ACROSS

- 1. Object that gives out heat (8)
- 5. Capital of Norway (4)
- 9. One side of a gem (5)
- 10. Guilty person (7)
- 11. Unfriendly (12)
- 13. In a careless manner (6)
- 14. Requesting (6)
- 17. Importance (12)
- 20. Flexible athlete (7)
- 21. Show triumphant joy (5)
- 22. Obstacle (4)
- 23. Formal curse by a pope (8)

DOWN

- 1. Crack (4)
- 2. Propriety and modesty (7)
- 3. Relating to horoscopes (12)
- 4. Hold a position or job (6)
- 6. Small woody plant (5)
- 7. Be heavier than (8)
- 8. First part of the Bible (3,9)
- 12. Corridors (8)
- 15. Have as a part (7)
- 16. Heed (6)

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- 18. Third Greek letter (5)
- 19. Volcano in Sicily (4)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Reindeer hooves are specifically adapted for their environment. The cloven shape spreads their weight more evenly, helping them to walk across snow and soft ground, while their sharp edges provide traction in icy conditions.
- Some types of reindeer do actually have red noses as a result of densely packed blood vessels, which help to regulate their body temperature.
- ►In spring, reindeer sometimes form superherds of 50,000 to 500,000.
- ▶ Reindeer fur is hollow, helping to trap air and providing insulation to stay warm. This also makes them excellent swimmers.
- ▶ Reindeer migrate an average of 12 to 34 miles per day, travelling as much as 3,100 miles each year in their search for food.

SUDOKU

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