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Good Things

Gourmet food & luxury travel

Guest chef **Richard Corrigan**

*The colourful Irishman
chats ingredients and
tricky customers*

*Raymond
Blanc's*
**LEGENDARY
KITCHEN
GARDEN**

Body art

*Chefs and why
they love tattoos*

PLUS

TIM HAYWARD TALKS KNIVES
CHILLIN' AT THE ICE HOTEL
JAMAICA'S FOOD HOTSPOTS
FAVOURITE SPA RESORTS

Tom Kerridge
**'THE FOOD THAT
CHANGED
MY LIFE'**

**DINING
REDEFINED**
*Top drawer
eating out in a
whole new
light*

Eat, dine & recline

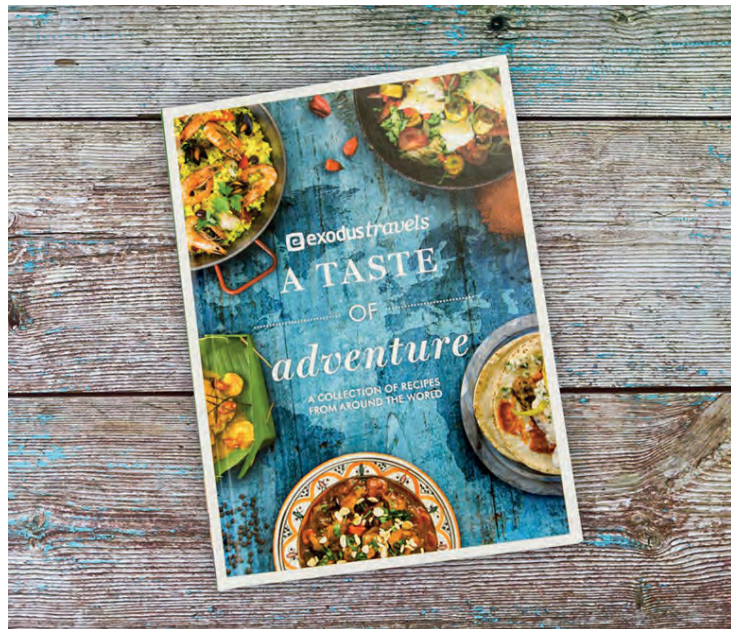
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Adventure holiday specialists, Exodus Travels, are proud to introduce their brand new cookbook – 'A Taste of Adventure'. This book bridges the gap between adventure and our everyday lives – turning meals into a trip down memory lane, or a chance to get a taste of somewhere new. So even when you're at home, you can send your taste buds travelling for you!

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Red hot chillies and oodles of noodles lure culinary enthusiasts in, whilst colonial history lingers in the scent of freshly baked baguettes being sold from bicycles. Most street food can be tailored to your taste buds: add your own salty fish sauce; turn up the heat with red hot chillies; or lift the flavours with a dash of citrus and piles of fresh herbs. We celebrate Vietnam's famous freshness from plant to plate with a cycle ride round the herb village of Tra Que, get a taste for home cooking on the Mekong Delta, and enjoy a candlelit seafood dinner floating on the calm waters of Halong Bay.

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discover the best
delicacies and dishes
the world has to offer
than to break bread
with the locals, see
where the best
ingredients are
sourced, and even try
learning the recipes?



Pho Recipe

Straight from the Exodus cookbook, Leader Phuong Tran shares a recipe from a restaurant in Hoi An for Pho, a classic Vietnamese noodle soup dish...

You'll need:

Serves 4 as a main

- 2.5 litres of good beef stock (shop bought or you can make your own!)
- ¼ piece of a star anise
- 1 black cardamon pod
- 1 cinnamon stick, 4cm
- 2 cloves
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 50g ginger piece, skin on, grilled
- 1 white onion, peeled and grilled
- 2 cups bean sprouts
- 500g flat thin rice noodles
- 350g of cooked beef fillet cut thinly into slices
- ½ cup spring onion curls
- 1 tbsp peanuts, ground finely
- 1 tbsp Chinese coriander, shredded
- 16 spring onions, white part only
- ½ cup Thai basil leaves
- 2 tbsp shallot pickle
- 2 tbsp sliced papaya pickle
- 1 lime quartered

How to:

1. Bring 2.5 litres of stock to the boil, add star anise, cardamon, cloves, fish sauce, grilled onion and ginger.
2. Simmer for 15 minutes. Strain well through a fine muslin cloth and return stock to the heat.
3. In a small basket heat bean sprouts in hot water for 30 seconds, place even amounts on 4 small side plates with coriander leaves, some basil leaves, shallot and papaya pickle and a lime wedge as accompaniments.
4. Heat rice noodles in hot water for 30 seconds, strain well and place into 4 bowls.
5. Heat beef fillet slices for 3-5 seconds in the same water and divide slices among the bowls, ladle over hot broth and garnish with spring onion curls, shredded coriander and peanuts.
6. Serve each bowl with side plate of accompaniments.
7. Enjoy!



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Welcome to Good Things



I'm going to start this issue's welcome letter by saying just how much I love my job. With the UK leading the way with some stunning new restaurant and hotel openings, it's such an exciting time to be working in the food and travel industry.

This month I've been blown away by amazing food at Aquavit and Veneta – two welcome additions to the London food scene, both located in chic St. James's Market. Next on my list? I can't wait to try Mere, Monica

Galetti's first restaurant, The Ivy Soho Brasserie, and hot-from-Paris Ferdi's, opening right next door to Kitty Fisher's in Mayfair.

The City is also welcoming an exciting new arrival: from the brains behind Soho House, The NED is a spectacular new hotel complete with a rooftop swimming pool and a Cowshed Spa.

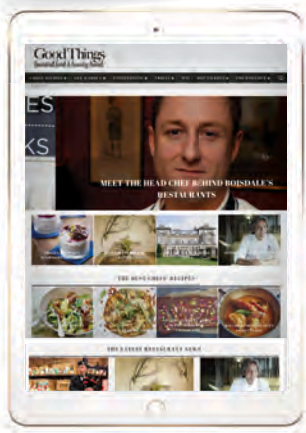
Novel openings are not just limited to London, either; chef Michael Caines is about to start inviting guests into his Exmouth bolthole, Lympstone Manor. And all this is happening within the first few months of 2017 – watch this space for news of a whole host of thrilling hot-ticket openings as the summer approaches.

For this issue, we were delighted to have been invited into Raymond Blanc's beautiful kitchen garden at Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons (page 52), and to chat to Tom Kerridge about how he shed an incredible 11 stone (page 58). On page 32, we take a look at how fine dining is becoming redefined – this feature might well make you think again about where to book your next dinner out.

In our travel section, the *Good Things* team carries on those healthy new year intentions by checking into some fabulous spas for a little detoxing and a lot of pampering – see our favourites on page 107. Out in the big wide world, we take you on a tour of some of the world's most fascinating emerging destinations. Fancy sleeping on a block of ice in the Ice Hotel, wild trekking in Finland, or following in the footsteps of the stars of the silver screen in Palm Springs? Then turn to page 81 and let the adventure begin.

From UK staycations to exotic overseas escapes, I would love to hear about all the places you've enjoyed visiting recently – so do take a minute and drop me a line at editor@goodthingsgroup.com

Carole Hamilton Editorial Director



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My good things THIS MONTH...



Greenery is the Pantone colour for 2017. I'm rather liking these vinyl leaf murals, around £350, pixersize.com



This ingenious egg yolk separator makes the task so easy – and no mess! £7.95, kitchengiftco.com



Trust Anthropologie to create a tea towel that looks like a work of art. Magnolia, £18, anthropologie.com

The NED promises to be the City's hottest go-to hotel



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Richard Corrigan talks
about his career in food



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Assiette Anne-Marie, see p55 for the recipe. Extract from *Le Manoir aux'Quat Saisons* by Raymond Blanc, £50, Bloomsbury Publishing



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Guest Chef **Richard Corrigan**

Just as happy in the Irish countryside as the London dining scene, Richard Corrigan is a chef who's never lost touch with his roots. He shares his life in food – and a little hospitality wisdom
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Caz Hildebrand

The author offers a fresh look at herbs and their health uses
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Harry Smith

Plot restaurant's co-founder proves himself to be a great dinner date
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Barbara Ross

Barbara gets creative with food as product developer for M&S
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Patrick Drake

From courtroom to food delivery service, – how he did it
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Raymond Blanc

Passionate about produce, the chef shows us his garden
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Tom Kerridge

How did the chef lose all those pounds? We learn his secrets
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Gill Meller

Create gorgeous British dishes with the River Cottage chef
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Hans Blomquist

Want to inject colour into your home? The interior designer shows you how
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Nacho Manzano

Iberica restaurants' executive chef returns to his homeland
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A knife guide from one of the sharpest tools in the box
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Out & About

Seasonal rhubarb • Restaurants with rooms • Chefs and tattoos

Nordic style, French flair

Judging by Helena Puolakka's Nordic-French cuisine, new London restaurant Aster won't need to fish for compliments. Located in Victoria's Nova complex, it features a café, restaurant and shop. Don't miss the vodka and aquavit-paired fish roe and blini tasting menu. aster-restaurant.com

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Our guest chef
Michelin-starred
Richard Corrigan on
getting back to the land

p30

My life on a plate
HelloFresh founder
Patrick Drake delivers
the goods

p32

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Restaurant of the month

Moor Hall

Mark Birchall's assured cooking has made the prospect of a visit to Lancashire's Moor Hall all the more tempting

Now that this impressive Grade II-listed gentry house has been transformed into a contemporary restaurant with seven luxury rooms, it's all the more alluring. In March, the opening of a renovated former barn housing a dining space, charcuterie and curing room, dairy, and meat-aging room will cement its reputation as an iconic gastro-getaway. Former L'Enclume executive chef Mark Birchall's stunning

cuisine joins Martin Nealon's classic-meets-contemporary interiors; Moor Hall's 50-seat restaurant featuring cheese and wine rooms along with an intimate private dining room hosting up to 14 people. Once you've worked your way through a tasting menu built upon local, seasonal modern British food, retire to one of the individually-designed, open-beamed bedrooms, and dream of the bountiful breakfast that will greet you the following morning.

Prescot Road, Aughton, West Lancashire L39 6RT • moorhall.com



The dining edit

Hot new bars, cool new restaurants and unmissable events
– Zoë Perrett knows where it's at



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High-kicking, high-falutin', lavish cabaret suppers that feature fine food and entertainment - and sell out almost as soon as they're announced. Stay tuned to theblackcat.info.

Take 3

BRILLIANT BAR EXPERIENCES

The sexiest snacks, the most decadent drinks



Alpha Beta Bar at The Modern Pantry
Award-winning bartender Ryan Chetiyawardana's cocktails pair perfectly with Anna Hansen's fusion snacks. themodernpantry.co.uk

Club Residencies at Bloomsbury Club Bar
The ongoing pop-up invites the world's best bars to feature exclusive menus. doylecollection.com



Top of the Fizz at Osteria
From Franciacorta to Cava, the monthly battles at this restaurant determine which bubbles are best. designmynight.com

RAW-INGLY GOOD WINE

From 12-13 March, Isabelle Legeron's Raw Wine Fair hits The Store at 180 The Strand allowing you to sample the world's best. rawwine.com



THE AGENDA

26 FEB Damian Wawrzyniak's Polish Feast, Birmingham
Dinner at the city's Centrala kicks off the chef's UK tour, showcasing the undersung diversity of Polish cuisine. £37, chefconsultant.co.uk



14-17 MARCH The Lucky Onion Club at No.38 The Races, Cheltenham
Celebrate the start of the racing season with breakfast, Champagne and oysters, dinner and an overnight stay. Room rates 14-17 March from £845, theluckyonion.com

30 MARCH-1 APRIL

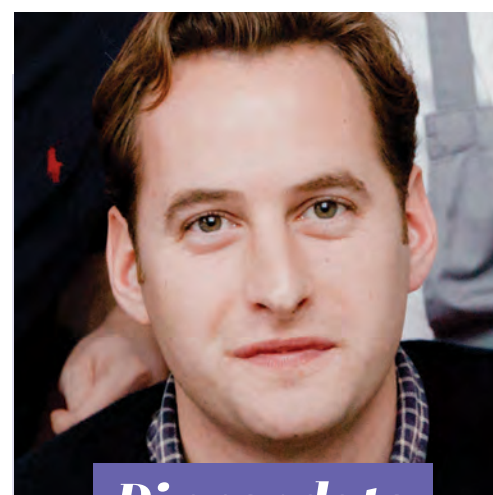
Cocktails in the City, London
The three-day cocktail extravaganza returns to the capital, showcasing brilliant bartenders and vibrant venues from around the globe. £15, cocktailsinthecity.co.uk



DINE ON CLOUD NINE This summer, eat suspended 100 feet in the air as part of the London in the Sky series. eventsinthesky.co.uk

Waste not, want not

Fancy a Michelin meal for £15? Until 2 April, visit Selfridges' WastED London pop-up and enjoy a meal cooked by the likes of Gordon Ramsay, Clare Smyth, Tom Kerridge and Dan Barber – all based on food that'd otherwise be binned.



Dinner date

HARRY SMITH

The Plot co-founder loves moules marinière and mint tea

After a hard night's service, where do you let your hair down locally?

After a post-work drink, we all head down to Tooting's Little Bar, where the cocktail list never lets me down. Any late-night indulgences are well worth the headache in the morning!

Everyone has that perfect romantic local – what's yours?

Crystal Palace Market is a great spot – a stone's throw from my flat. It has a fantastic fish counter and a very cosy vibe. You can't go wrong!

What's your go-to menu for a loved-up night in with your OH?

Anything that my girlfriend whips up. Her German roots never disappoint in the kitchen. Paired with a bottle of Pinot Noir and an episode of *Poirot*, I'm in heaven.

And what if you're the one getting hot and bothered in the kitchen?

Anything from the sea! Having grown up on the beach, there is something very nostalgic about tucking into a hearty helping of seafood. I love a big pot of moules marinière or some seared scallops.

What's your nightcap of choice?

Mint tea is always the last thing I drink before bed... Although it's usually preceded by a bottle of something rather harder.

Dine with the date: @plot_kitchen



Grilled octopus (@vickibarratt)

Instaview

Ben Tish has done it again with Veneta, a swish addition to the Salt Yard Group's restaurant collection.

@venetarestaurant

3 Norris St, St. James's Market, London SW1Y 4RJ

Gelato (@londonepictures)



Image: Getty Images



DINE LIKE THE STARS

Ever-envious of LA's Awards Season? Throughout February, taste star style at CUT at 45 Park Lane, where veteran awards chef Wolfgang Puck has co-created a very special menu comprised of past galas' highlights.

HOW NOVA-L Visiting Victoria's new Nova complex in London? Dine at Nordic-French Aster or Jason Atherton's Hai Cenato.



Meet the guest chef **RICHARD CORRIGAN**

The straight-talking Irish chef waxes lyrical to Zoë Perrett about fabulous produce, tricky customers and off-the-record anecdotes

Richard Corrigan is a chef who's as fond of the craic as he is fine food. Over multiple decades, his cooking has remained rooted in honest, humble fare – and he's managed to hone and elevate his cuisine to Michelin star level without losing sight of its heart and soul.

With a keen eye on new hospitality talent, a bar launching in the spring, and a grand refresh for Corrigan's Mayfair in the pipeline, 2017 is a big year for the affable chef.

Who are your culinary inspirations?

My mother was my first big influence – she

taught me to waste nothing! Today, many cooks and chefs inspire me on a daily basis; cooking is my craft and I find inspiration everywhere. Lessons are abundant, and only an arrogant chef will not see them.

You grew up on a farm in County Meath – what values did this instil?

A hardworking farming ethos that I continue to live by. In life, you reap what you sow.

Of your upbringing, you've said, 'we weren't educated about food, but knew a hell of a lot'. Should young chefs get

out of cities to farm, forage and fish?

I will answer this rhetorically: should an aspiring painter not visit art galleries and museums?

Your family 'made their own' from scratch wherever possible. What are you proud of making at your venues?

Our pies; whether it be Bentley's fish pie, or the award-winning seasonal game pies at Corrigan's Mayfair.

What are your favourite ingredients at this time of year?



Corrigan's Mayfair, London



Bentley's, London



‘I grew up in County Meath with a hardworking farming ethos that I continue to live by. In life, you reap what you sow’

I've had kale overload as I really love this little gem – crispy kale is both a lovely accompaniment and completely addictive on its own. And creamed cauliflower is currently a dish you will often find as an accompaniment on my beef trolley.

You own Virginia Park Lodge in Ireland, which has extensive kitchen gardens. Do you use what you grow in your London restaurants?

Everything that we can, from potatoes and tomatoes to grapes. If you can believe it, we even grew Borlotti beans! It has been a tough, steep learning curve for us all, but a very rewarding experience.

What's the most memorable feast you've shared with your team?

The one we had from the first harvest from the Virginia Park Lodge gardens. We worked >>

Dine with the chef

Pull up a chair at one of these classic Corrigan restaurants in London

BENTLEY'S Tucked away just off Piccadilly, Bentley's is sheer heaven for seafood-lovers.
11-15 Swallow Street,
W1B 4DG, bentleys.org

CORRIGAN'S MAYFAIR Classic Brit cooking and brilliant produce is the order of the day.
28 Upper Grosvenor Street,
W1K 7EH,
corriganmayfair.co.uk



Virginia Park Lodge, Ireland



In 2013 Richard bought Virginia Park Lodge – his wedding venue in 1991 – and threw his heart, soul (and savings) into it

so hard that whole year, and didn't get much in return, but what we did manage was the tastiest fare ever. We christened the harvest with magnums of Grand Cru Champagne, which made it hard to get up the next day.

As a *Great British Menu* judge, what are the most weird and wonderful creations you've encountered?

Too many to mention! Being young, naïve and brave can give birth to the predictable, the ridiculous and, sometimes, the inspired.

At your level, you must have a keen eye for promising new talent. What skills and qualities indicate potential?

Traditional French cooking methods are money in the bank for any aspiring chef, however, some have incredible palates and a clever way of reworking classic combinations. Never underestimate a great work ethic and sense of humour, as these things can be invaluable at the toughest of times. If you possess all these, apply here!

What drives you crazy in the British hospitality industry?

People who, when we do not have a table, seem to suffer from early onset amnesia... 'Do you know who I am?!' Arrogance and superiority are never pretty traits.

Where do you love eating out, and why?

Classically, Bentley's. I am not self-promoting, but part of the restaurant's success is owed to its inimitable sense of fun and familiarity. In terms of upstarts, I let my restaurant PR daughter Jessica show me the new and brilliant. She was recently listed in industry title *Code's* '30 Under 30' and is very opinionated – I really don't know where she gets that from!

You're launching Dickie's Bar at Corrigan's in association with NYC's Dead Rabbit – what's your go-to drink, and any late-night anecdotes to share?

I always go for a negroni or a whisky sour. Regarding stories, I have many – but they're strictly reserved for those 'off the record' discussions!

You first gained a Michelin star in 1994 at Fulham Road. Do you feel stars are something still worth striving for?

I believe that stars reward the consistently good, but these days people have their own scales and measures: price point, ambience, humour, and other criteria. They curate and publish instantaneously, thus creating their own judging systems and bringing to light little gems with passion for what they do. Not all blockbusters are made in Hollywood.

What's coming up for you this year?

The idea of Dickie's Bar has sparked a full refresh of my beloved Corrigan's Mayfair on Park Lane. It has come of age now, and we would like to feature even more home-grown produce from our gardens and farms. We have engaged a serious team of stars, including my eldest son Richard Corrigan Jr., who is taking the helm as GM. After studying in Switzerland and working for years in the restaurant scene, I have persuaded him to join our home team.

Am I releasing the baton? Not completely; he is a smart young man who has paid his dues, and it is time for him to step up and be counted. He is a quiet but assured and charismatic lad, things he gets from his mother, really. It's a proud moment for a dad to watch his son turn into a man.

Producer picks

Richard's favourite producers – and what makes them so special

LINCOLNSHIRE POACHER's double-churned butter, made by incredible traditional artisans with a passion for their product.

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Bentley's fish pie

Our fish pie has been voted the best in London: floury mash covering oozy sauce, and the fish just cooked inside. We make individual pies to ensure everyone gets a good mix of fish, and it's quite a craft making 20 or so a day. You can make a large one instead – just cook it for about 30 minutes.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

For the sauce

- 100g butter, plus a little extra for sweating the vegetables
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- sprig of thyme
- smoked haddock trimmings (see below)
- 150ml glass of white wine
- 2 litres milk
- 100g plain flour
- 1 tbsp English mustard
- handful of chives and parsley, chopped

For the pie

- 1½kg floury potatoes, peeled
- 2 egg yolks
- 1kg fish fillets, including salmon, smoked haddock, and white fish like pollack and haddock, skinned and cut into bite-sized pieces (save the smoked haddock skins for the sauce)

To finish

- lemon juice
- green Tabasco sauce
- handful of fresh breadcrumbs
- grated parmesan

METHOD

1. For the sauce, heat a little of the butter in a large saucepan set over medium heat, add the onion, garlic and thyme, and sweat until softened.
2. Add the haddock trimmings and wine and cook for a few minutes to burn off the alcohol. Add the milk and bring to just under the boil. Remove the pan from the heat, pass the contents through a sieve, and keep hot.
3. Melt the remaining butter in a heavy saucepan, add the flour, and cook over a low heat, stirring well, for 5 minutes. Pour the hot infused milk into the pan and whisk vigorously until the mixture is smooth and thick. Taste – if you can detect raw flour, cook for a little longer.

4. Whisk in the mustard and add the herbs. Check the seasoning and add more mustard if you wish. Leave to cool while you make the mash.

5. For the pie, preheat the oven to 180°C. Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil, add the potatoes, and cook until tender. Drain, then allow the potatoes to steam for a couple of minutes to rid them of excess moisture.

6. Transfer to a large bowl, mash, and season with salt and pepper. Add the egg yolks, mix well, and scoop into a piping bag – it needs to be hot in order to pipe easily. (If you prefer not to pipe it, spoon it on carefully, then plough lines across it with a fork.)

7. To assemble, spoon a little of the sauce into the bottom of each of 4 pie dishes. Arrange a selection of fish on top of the sauce. Season with salt and pepper, a squeeze of lemon juice, and a few drops of green Tabasco.

8. Completely cover the fish with sauce, then pipe or spoon on the mash. Mix the breadcrumbs and parmesan, and sprinkle evenly over the pies.

9. Place the dishes on a baking sheet and cook for around 20 minutes, until the top is golden brown and the centre of each pie is hot. To check, push a skewer into the centre – it should come out hot. Serve immediately.

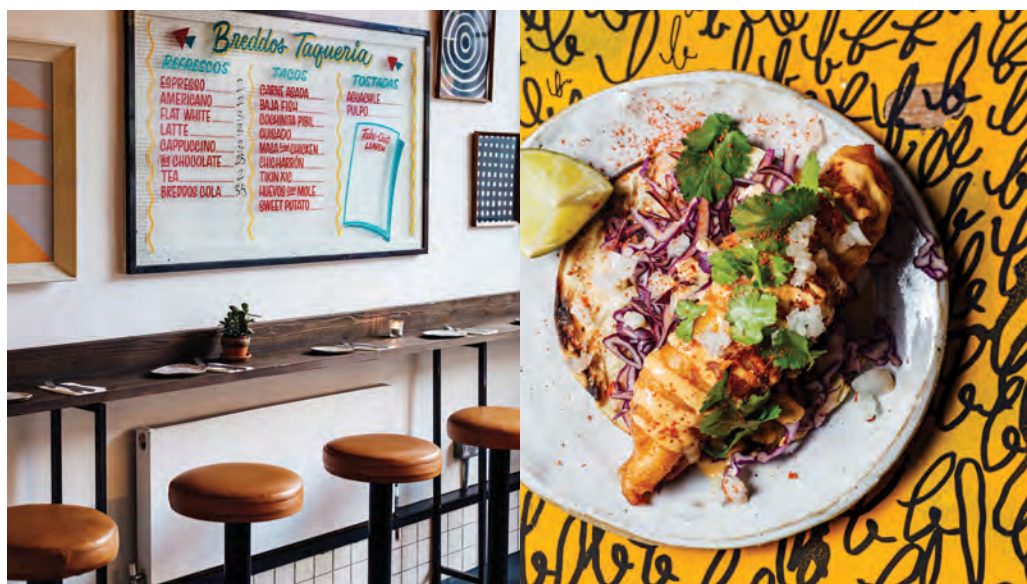
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Dispatches from the Dining table

Gannet-about-town Zoë Perrett reveals the three restaurants you need to visit right now



Breddos Taqueria

82 Goswell Rd, London EC1V 7DB

Until late last year, Breddos Taco-lovers who were less than in love with the idea of queues, disposable plates and jostling for dining space at a street food market were firmly out of luck. And then, in what their fans will remember as a sort of Christmas miracle, Nud Dudhia and Chris Whitney flung open the doors to their taqueria.

A short, sexy menu changes often but not radically; you'll never be bereft of many favourites, but there's always something new to tantalise the tastebuds. After all, almost every item here does just that, from fruit-laced margaritas through to post-prandial, palate-cleansing sorbets.

In between those items, order fast and furious. Heat wimps be warned: salsas make eyes water as much as mouths. But persevere – the habanero in particular is a fruity beauty and, scooped up with corn chips, they're the ideal appetite sharpener; whether munched at the counter, the communal table, or in a cosy booth.

Unless you, like LB, detest cheese, order chorizo-spiked queso fundido; a deep, molten puddle that'll make you feel euphoric, then fat, then not care a jot about

the latter because it's so gosh-darn good.

It's impossible to order too many tacos – certainly when they're of this quality. House-made tortillas are a fine foundation for the likes of slow-cooked short rib, masa fried chicken with heritage tomato pico de gallo, and an innovative affair topped with a soft-yolked egg and macadamia mole. Veering from the theme, we tuck into a vast grilled Old Spot pork chop, and are glad.

Traditions are made to be broken, and Breddos isn't in the slightest bit averse to some funky fusion; a kung pao pork belly taco a notable example. Balanced by its crisp tostada base, octopus is cooked into similarly-silky submission. Relishing the last mouthful, I inform cephalopod-phobic LB that the addition of bone marrow is an ingenious manoeuvre – as was the decision to open this tiny, mighty restaurant.

THE VERDICT

London is loco for tacos right now, and few do them so well as the Breddos boys. Your meal will excite tastebuds, ignite conversation and sate the soul.



Jikoni

19-21 Blandford Street, London W1U 3DH

If you want to see the gorgeous Ravinder Bhogal in her element, descend the staircase at the rear of her Marylebone restaurant – noting the Altro floor coating which references the chef's childhood school, and the cascading orange paper pom poms inspired by India's abundant marigolds – and take up residence at the chef's table in front of the open kitchen. From this vantage point, you'll see the nimble cook slicing, searing, seasoning, and turning out all the heritage-inspired, highly-original dishes she always wanted to serve in her very own venue.

Ravinder's culinary career began as a prolific pop-up artist under the moniker 'Cook In Boots'. Her fabulous food and effortless style – a legacy of working in beauty journalism – swiftly established her as one to watch and, years on, have kept her shining away under the spotlight.

Jikoni is a joy, and it's all I wanted it to be. More importantly, it's all she wanted it to be; the very embodiment of 'passion project'. It's like her home, and you feel at home dining among the beautiful textiles, covetable furnishings, and that air of good cheer that comes with dining in a great restaurant.

We sit at the bar-cum-communal table upstairs, which feels like gathering around a kitchen island at a house party – and everybody knows that all good house parties end up in the kitchen.

Like Ravinder's upbringing, the menu is a merry mashup of influences: East African Indian meets British meets whatever takes her fancy. We love prawn Scotch eggs with banana ketchup; we love lobster khichdee, South India's answer to risotto; we love the mutton shepherd's pie that brings a tear to my eye thinking about my late, great Nanny Win.

We love everything we eat, although we hate that we can't eat it all. And we love the waiter who tells us how happy it makes him to serve a couple who love looking at each other more than their phones. By the final bite of peanut-strewn banana cake with miso butterscotch and Ovaltine kulfis, we're ready to move in and let Ravinder feed us forever.



THE VERDICT

Sophisticated yet homely, casual yet impressive, authentic yet innovative, Jikoni is full of contradictions – and all the more delicious for it.



Perilla

1-3 Green Lanes, London N16 9BS

Perilla makes me wish I was local to Newington Green, and that, like that bar in *Cheers*, it was where everybody knew my name and was really glad I came.

The thing is, the superb staff don't know me from Adam when I walk in. But post-supper in the low-lit, natural material-rich room, I walk off into the wintry night with a spring in my step caused by an inkling that they were genuinely pleased to see me.

After beautiful, botanical cocktails, dinner begins with crusty hunks of seaweed bread with the whipped lamb fat butter that's currently whipping Instagram's fooderati into such a frenzy – and justly so. In fact, it's so good we use it to bracket the meal, later ordering another round to accompany cheese.

But before that comes a myriad of dishes to savour and share. Chef Ben Marks' Noma training is evident in every multi-textured, simple-yet-somehow-supremely-complex creation – notably a ménage à-trois of baked celeriac, earthy aged ceps, and apple-crisp fresh chestnuts.

Chopped seafood used as seasoning is a reoccurring and successful flourish: tiny bits of mussel add ozone depth to fried duck egg and parsley with more of that herb blended into a verdant sauce; minced cuttlefish bolognese cloaks cod beneath its

glossy green chard leaf wrapper.

Vegetable dishes are as interesting as their meaty counterparts; indeed, many are almost meaty in their own right. Rich umami aromas from a pot-roast of whole broccoli with various cabbages make our noses twitch like children in a Bisto ad.

Grilled slices of pork pluma hide more surprises than a game of pass-the-parcel – layered up with not only the advertised hispi cabbage and sauerkraut, but also nuts and headily-piquant cheese. Beef short rib glossed with quince sauce is a world away from that modish butch barbecued stuff; roasted hazelnuts and paper-thin slivers of radish apt accessories.

The single dessert option delivers. With a surface covered in meticulously-peeled, eyeball-like sultana grapes, the walnut custard looks like a surreal nightmare and tastes like a dream. Eaten alongside Winslade cheese, pears, and that aforementioned bread, it only pushes Perilla higher in my estimation.

THE VERDICT

The food is as exceptional as the venue is understated; both are endlessly elegant. Ben Marks is a master of restraint – and a little bit of a genius.



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Dispatches from the dining table

Angler

Carole Hamilton ascends to seafood heaven atop a chic City hotel



On a perpetual mission to encourage us to eat more fish, I'm eager to sample the menu at Angler – the restaurant sat atop the D&D South Place Hotel. The kitchen is in the skilled hands of Phil Howard's former head chef at The Square, Gary Foulkes, whose cooking indicates he loves seafood as much as I do.

The venue

Hotel restaurants can feel like something of an after-thought, but that's not the case at Angler. Located beneath a dramatic glass ceiling, this dining room oozes sophistication. My recommendation is to start with a glass of bubbly on the terrace, which even in January boasts a welcoming atmosphere, its fur-strewn seats encouraging you to linger. In summer, meanwhile, a retractable roof allows you to make the most of warm weather.

It's places like this that are transforming the City at weekends. Come Saturday, this area around Liverpool Street used to be completely dead, but now the streets are buzzing with people flitting between the myriad restaurants and bars.

The food and drink

A variety of menu options afford flexibility around time constraints. There's a seven-course tasting menu (£85), the drool-worthy seven-course 'chef's view' menu (£100), or an à la carte. At lunchtime, we opt for the latter, beginning with deliciously delicate chef's snacks ahead of my beautiful langoustine, rich oyster cream, crab, caviar and cucumber jelly, and my companion's hand-picked Dorset

crab with Granny Smith apple and Oscietra caviar. I start to appreciate what makes Angler so Michelin-worthy – creativity and freshness is often all you need to make a dish both delicious and memorable.

I'm pleased with my choice of Cornish monkfish with an innovative smoked potato and carbonara onions for my main, whilst the 'tasting of Iberian pork' with burnt apples and root veggies is enough to have my friend declaring it as one of the best dishes ever.

This kitchen evidently enjoys making dessert, and each appears as a picture of meticulous preparation. We can't resist the caramelised pear with brioche ice-cream or the warm baked chocolate with banana milk ice-cream – and the latter proves so moreish that my companion is lucky to get a mouthful. Truffles and a glass of warm, sticky Hungarian Royal Tokaji 5 Puttonyos send us into chocolate overload, and complete one of my favourite meals of the past twelve months.

THE VERDICT

Gary and his team pay elegant homage to seafood, and Angler's lucky diners benefit from some of the best fish dishes to be found anywhere in London.



Top tip Try the fantastic-value Evening Standard menu – £30 for three courses with an aperitif. Dine on a Monday to enjoy a selection of wines at half price.

SMEG



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Dispatches from the dining table

Roka

Modern Japanese food in the heart of Fitzrovia has Carole Hamilton busting her budget and enjoying every mouthful



The Charlotte Street branch of Roka is one of four in London and, as the location of my first blind date with my husband of two years, is a personal favourite. I have no idea whether it was down to the amazing food or my dazzling repartee, but he says he fell in love with me that very evening – so thanks, Roka!

The venue

This particular branch is always busy, and its loud, lively atmosphere is all part of the fun. The subterranean and rather sexy Shochu lounge is a great place to enjoy a fiery shochu infusion before taking your table in the main restaurant. 'Roka' literally means 'a meeting place where you share food with friends and heat' and, accordingly, much of the action takes place at the open, central robata grill where a repertoire of contemporary izakaya-inspired food is created. Ask for a table at the counter – made from beautiful, extremely tactile Japanese wood – and sit back and prepare to enjoy the show.

Food and drink

The long menu can prove confusing for newcomers to this style of food, so take steer from the charming, well-informed staff. I can't pretend that Roka isn't expensive, and it's easy to rack up a hefty bill if you get carried away. My advice? Keep the menu close to hand and order more if you need it. Speedy service means you never have to wait long for another plate or two to appear.

The tasting menu is always popular with first-time diners, incorporating the best Roka has to offer. Ours starts with a sea bass with pickled daikon, and yellowtail sashimi with truffle dressing. A sashimi platter comes elegantly presented over crushed ice, including awesome tuna with spring onions to be scooped on to crisp, black bread. We smile our way through seared beef and Wagyu sushi with Oscietra caviar, and scallop skewers with a wasabi kick. The black cod is as good as any I've had anywhere in the world – even in Japan – and diminutive Korean-spiced lamb cutlets are delicious.

A dessert platter featuring an impressive display of fruits and sorbets hits just the right note after all those different flavours. Although there's a strong wine list here, I urge you to try Roka's own sake. The tiny glasses of chilled firewater offer a wonderful accompaniment to the food.

THE VERDICT

I will always have a soft spot for Roka, but even without my romantic connection, it would be a favourite. Japanese food never comes cheap, and this is no exception, but the execution is flawless.



Tasting menu, £176 for two without drinks.

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Rhubarb cheesecake FIND THIS RECIPE AT GOODTHINGSMAGAZINE.COM/RHUBARB

Season's eatings... Forced rhubarb

Recipe taken from Cheesecake by Hannah Miles, with photography by Steve Painter, published by RPS, RRP £16.99

Whether it's memories of boiled sweets in the playground or poached stalks accompanying a panna cotta in a Michelin-starred dining room, many gourmets reserve a place in their hearts for tart-sweet rhubarb.

And, where the forced sort's concerned, there's no need to wait until the vegetable – for rhubarb is botanically thus – comes into season of its own accord.

Involving near-darkness and warm sheds, the forcing technique 'fools' the plant into thinking it's later in the season than is the case. The finest, grown in the West Yorkshire 'Rhubarb Triangle', has protected status.

Ready to harvest by February, forced rhubarb has a beautiful blushing hue and is splendidly tender; its elegant, slender stems

equally at home in sweet and savoury dishes.

Rhubarb is a frisky bedfellow, cosying up quite happily with myriad partners: ginger, mackerel, vanilla, pork, custard, gin, blue cheese, rose, foie gras, and orange to name just a few. It's a mean addition to a Persian lamb khorosh (stew), and has an amazing alchemy with strawberries; seeming to make them taste more of themselves.

Before spring kicks in, use the pretty pink stems to inject colour into grey-day cooking. Served alongside oily fish or fatty meats, forced rhubarb's tangy nature cuts richness in the same manner as apple or gooseberry sauces. Looking for dinner party points? Using it in a crumble, steamed sponge, or cheesecake like the one above will cement your status as a domestic goddess.

Cook it like the chefs

Forced rhubarb dishes to get guests talking

MARK JARVIS Anglo

'Rhubarb gin! Infuse the spirit with cubes of sugar-sprinkled rhubarb and leave in a cool, dark place for a week, shaking daily.'

BEN TISH Salt Yard Group

'For flavour intensity, I like roasted rhubarb. Toss batons in orange juice and sugar, and roast on very high heat for 5 minutes.'

RAVINDER BHOGAL

Jikoni 'I love it pickled with mackerel, or in spiced puddings like my rhubarb-pink peppercorn crumble.'

FRANCESCO MAZZEI

Sartoria 'Rhubarb is great with game; I like to cut it into chunks and add it to stews made with robust meats like venison or wild boar.'



My life on a plate

PATRICK DRAKE

The one-time lawyer now spends his time helping time-pressed food-lovers eat well at home. And the jury's verdict is... he's a runaway success

Patrick Drake came to cooking early on, recalling his culinary epiphany as the moment when, aged 16, he sampled the roux he'd rustled up and thought, 'Wow, I just made the thing that we usually buy in a jar, and it tastes amazing!'

From there, he says, he was hooked. So why, then, did his initial career see him heading for the courtroom, not the kitchen? 'Cooking never seemed like a viable career option. All my friends were getting so-called high-powered jobs, wearing suits and having conference calls ... It all sounded so important and impressive, I got sucked in.'

'I detested law, though,' he says, vehemently. 'The work was unfulfilling drudgery. So I started thinking about cooking again. I got it into my head that I'd like to teach people how to cook, and that the best way to do so was through television.'

A lofty aspiration for an unknown cook? But then, Patrick's always 'dreamed big'. 'I wrote at the top of piece of a paper that I wanted a TV show by X date, and to work in food for the rest of my life. Underneath I

wrote the steps I'd need to take to achieve those goals. And then I got to work – creating a YouTube channel and working for free in any kitchen that would have me.'

Learning with the master

One of those happened to be The Fat Duck. Finding himself at the same event as one Mr. Heston Blumenthal, Patrick snatched the chance to deliver his two-minute elevator pitch and begged for 'the honour' of peeling potatoes in the kitchen of the chef who subsequently 'took pity' on him, offering him a 'stage' at the restaurant.

Various freelance roles ensued until 2011, when Patrick co-founded meal kit delivery business HelloFresh. Six years down the line, the service is a success story but, as the chef reveals, it had humble beginnings.

'In January 2012, we packed our first 10 bags of shopping in my living room in Old Street, East London and hand-delivered them to the only people who'd even heard of us: our parents. Recipe-wise, things were pretty basic. I'd think about dishes I liked,

then cook and photograph them.

'Nowadays the process is a lot more detailed and nothing is left to chance. A team of cooks develop recipes, and another team tests them out before they're sent to customers.' But he doesn't expect HelloFresh users to passively accept every dish that comes their way. 'Each week, we analyse tens of thousands of feedback





Roast chicken & quinoa salad



Inventive summertime pea & mint salad



Lamb & feta burgers

‘If you have one rule about food, ensure any indulgence is worth it’

comments to see which recipes people are loving. Right now,’ he says proudly, ‘the prawn and prosciutto linguine I made back in 2012 is still a huge winner.’

Although he cites his mum’s shepherd’s pie as his ultimate meal, that prawn dish is Patrick’s go-to for a speedy supper. And, he reveals, it’s dead easy: ‘Fry some garlic and green chilli in olive oil, then add chopped prawns and prosciutto. Cook linguine in vegetable stock, then splash half a cup of the pasta cooking water into the frying pan. Stir a tablespoon of crème fraîche into the sauce and toss it through the drained linguine with some snipped chives. Done!’

Galloping across the globe

Having rolled out internationally, HelloFresh isn’t just a Brit hit. Although the ingredients supplied aren’t radically different, each country’s development team varies their use to suit local tastes. As, he says, ‘what works in the UK definitely isn’t guaranteed to work in The Netherlands’.

But this is a man of myriad talents and job roles. In line with that scribbled career plan, Patrick indeed made it onto the small screen, and now presents on Fox Network, National Geographic Channel and Travel Channel.

‘I spent six months travelling through

Italy’s regions for my show,’ he recalls, ‘and the food was so good, it would bring tears to your eyes. Dishes would use half-a-dozen ingredients of such incredible quality that they didn’t need any fanciness or fuss; and that vibe infused itself through my own cooking. I’m all about simple, hearty food that makes you feel strong and happy.’

Hearty food is all well and good, but it’s a well-known truism that the camera adds 10 pounds. Patrick’s clearly in shape – but is it through a healthy diet or a ‘feast now, sweat it off later’ mentality?

‘I get ‘hangry’ when I don’t eat!’ he laughs. ‘To counteract this, I don’t eat any refined sugar, white rice or pasta and, bar amazing sourdough, I stay away from bread. I also gave up coffee and anything that makes my energy peak and then trough.’

Healthy body, healthy mind

‘I think,’ he muses pensively, ‘if you have one rule: ensure an indulgence is worth it. Don’t mindlessly hammer through a family pack of cookies or a whole pizza if it isn’t utterly delicious. Save it for food which tastes truly amazing; it’ll heighten the experience and help avoid unnecessary, empty calories.’

His new mission is #DinnerTimeChallenge. ‘The news that 73% of the population think

sitting down for dinner is a thing of the past is really sad! At Hello Fresh we live and breathe dinner time and we understand the physical and emotional benefits of sitting around a table; food can bring friends and families together, so we’re trying to get people to commit to eat together as much as they can for 30 days and see the benefits.’

If he sounds a bit like a self-styled lifestyle guru, that’s perhaps because Patrick’s next aspiration is just that. His video-centric *60 Second Life* website is an extension of *The 60 Second Chef* online cookery course, in which he teaches essential skills and techniques in one-minute segments.

‘With *The 60 Second Life*, I teach people about mind and body matters in a really quick, simple way so that they can get the best out of life without having to digest pages of complicated concepts and lingo.’

He insists that he enjoys every moment. ‘A lot of my advice and tips are based on things I am doing for myself anyway. We all have a responsibility to be the best version of ourselves. I want to show people that this isn’t rarefied air – no matter what your dreams, you can achieve them with the right will and a good teacher.’

hellofresh.co.uk
the60secondchef.com
@patrickdrake
@patrickdrakechef

FINE DINING, *redefined*

Zoë Perrett urges you to forget everything you thought you knew about top-drawer eating out – because breaking the rules is so haute right now

For a long while, pop-ups and street food were the informal antithesis of high-end restaurant dining. But then it all went topsy turvy – and rather deliciously disruptive.

Top chefs started hosting pop-ups and serving street food, while pop-up cooks and street foodies started taking out leases on bricks-and-mortar properties.

The rules of fine dining have been redefined and, for the gourmet who thrives on excitement and innovation, there's never been a better time to be hungry in London.

CHEF-LED SUPPERCLUBS

#ALLGUNSBLAZING

What? If not quite 'all-singing, all-dancing', then 'very exciting'. Experimental food, unusual music, a night to remember.

Who? Maverick chef Ben Spalding, plus whichever chef he gets in on the action.

Where and when? Various locations/dates. benspalding.co.uk
 @ChefBenSpalding



CHEFS ON THE TUBE

What? Ever wanted to eat a Michelin-worthy meal in a repurposed tube carriage? Book these supperclubs.

Who? London's brightest culinary stars, including the likes of Smoke & Salt.

Where and when? Walthamstow, three per month. basementgalley.com
 @BasementGalley



GLOBAL TRAVELLER

What? The multi-course menu for each event takes you on a gastro-tour of an exotic location.

Who? Adam Rawson, former YBF Chef of the Year.

Where and when? Various location/dates. grubclub.com
 @adamrawson89



Globetrotting gastronome? DURING THE ANNUAL GELINAZ SHUFFLE, CHEFS WORLDWIDE SWAP KITCHENS IN A RANDOM LOTTERY – EXPECT SWEET CULINARY CHAOS. GELINAZ.COM



THAT HUNGRY CHEF

What? Clever, clever cuisine; from tasting menus inspired by perfumes through to modern regional Indian fusion food.
Who? Michelin-trained, ex-Cinnamon Club chef Pratap Chahal.
Where and when? Various locations and dates.
thathungrychef.com
 @thathungrychef

THE EIGHTY SIX LIST SUNDAY SESSIONS

What? Great food, wine and guests – these shockingly-affordable feasts are a favourite of hospitality pros. **Who?** Natalia Ribbe-Strok curates guest chefs like Silo's Blair Hammond (above left). **Where and when?** Various venues, monthly. eightysixlist.com @whats86ed

BLOODSHOT

What? This monthly all-night shindig kicks off at midnight and attracts top chefs both to cook and dine.
Who? Robin Gill and The Dairy team plus great guest chefs like Tomas Parry.
Where and when? Clapham, last Saturday of the month.
the-dairy.co.uk
 @robinwg4

PECKHAM MANOR SUPPERCLUB

What? A convivial supper – the theme for March's event (23 & 24) is chicken, served over four fabulous courses.
Who? Ex-HIX and *Great British Menu* chef Ronnie Murray.
Where and when? Peckham, monthly. wefifo.com
 @peckham_manor

DENIM'N DINE

What? That name alludes to the fact that this pop-up's seasonal plates are served in a former denim factory.
Who? Michelin-trained Pedro Passinhas; formerly of The Fat Duck.
Where and when? Walthamstow, various dates.
pedropassinhas.com
 @DenimDine



THE GUEST SERIES

What? A series of two-night residencies where global talents cook outside their comfort zones.
Who? Lyle's James Lowe plus the likes of Aaron Turner of Australia's *Igni* (March).
Where and when? Lyle's, Shoreditch; sporadic dates.
lyleslondon.com
 @lyleslondon

THE PRODUCERS

What? Producer- and supplier-led seasonal suppers which celebrate the companies that work with Paradise Garage.
Who? Neal's Yard (March).
Where and when? Hackney, last Tuesday of the month.
paradise254.com
 @ParadiseRow254

CAROUSEL RESIDENCIES

What? The Marylebone venue's full-time chef Ollie Templeton curates a series of hot-ticket chef residencies. **Who?** Iconic global chefs – think Sweden's Niklas Ekstedt and Japan's Toshio Tanahashi.
Where and when? Carousel, Marylebone, various dates.
carousel-london.com @Carousel_LDN >>



POP-UPS GONE PERMANENT (ISH)

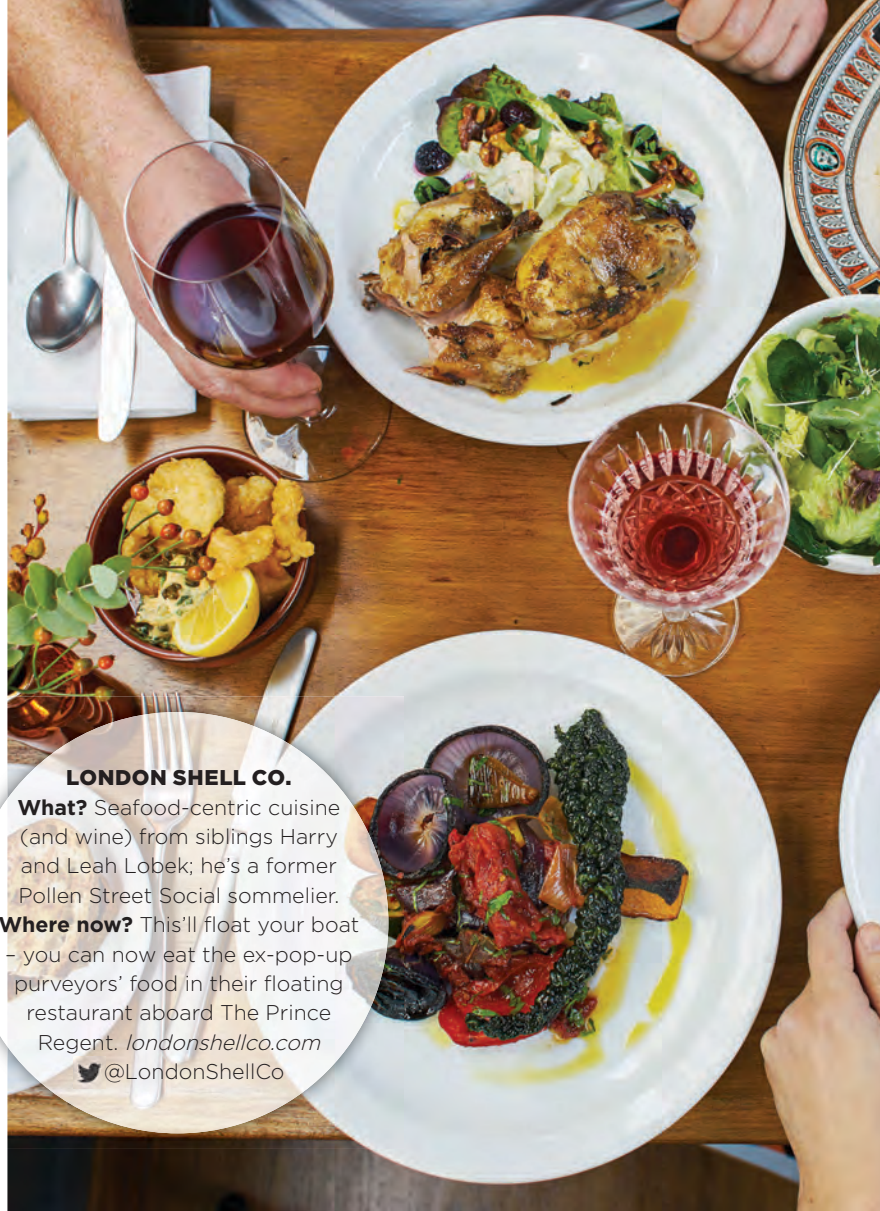
PERILLA

What? 'Fine dining without the fuss' provided by chef Ben Marks (ex-Noma) and front-of-house Matt Emmerson (ex-Polpo).

Where now? Team Perilla has crossed the river to Newington Green, earning rave reviews with a lovely neighbourhood local.

perilladining.co.uk

🐦 @perilladining



LONDON SHELL CO.

What? Seafood-centric cuisine (and wine) from siblings Harry and Leah Lobek; he's a former Pollen Street Social sommelier.

Where now? This'll float your boat – you can now eat the ex-pop-up purveyors' food in their floating restaurant aboard The Prince Regent. londonshellco.com

🐦 @LondonShellCo

KERBSIDE TO DINING ROOM

BAO

The trio (two siblings and a wife) behind BAO started off selling stuffed Taiwanese steamed buns from Hackney's Netil Market – and the same food that shot the gang to fame now commands queues from a duo of central London properties. **Where?** Soho and Fitzrovia.

baolondon.com 🐦 @BAO_london





Coming soon...

DARJEELING EXPRESS

What? From supperclub to residency, few critics failed to pour praise on Asma Khan's heritage Calcutta cuisine.

Where now? Your guess is as good as ours - but rumour has it that 2017 is the year where Asma Khan will finally put down permanent roots in London. darjeeling-express.com

🐦 @AsmaKhanCooks

SMOKE & SALT

What? Remi Williams and Aaron Webster pool their experience in a host of international kitchens with innovative results.

Where now? Following huge success with a year-long residency in Islington, the boys are seeking a permanent property. smokeandsalt.com

🐦 @SmokeandSaltLDN



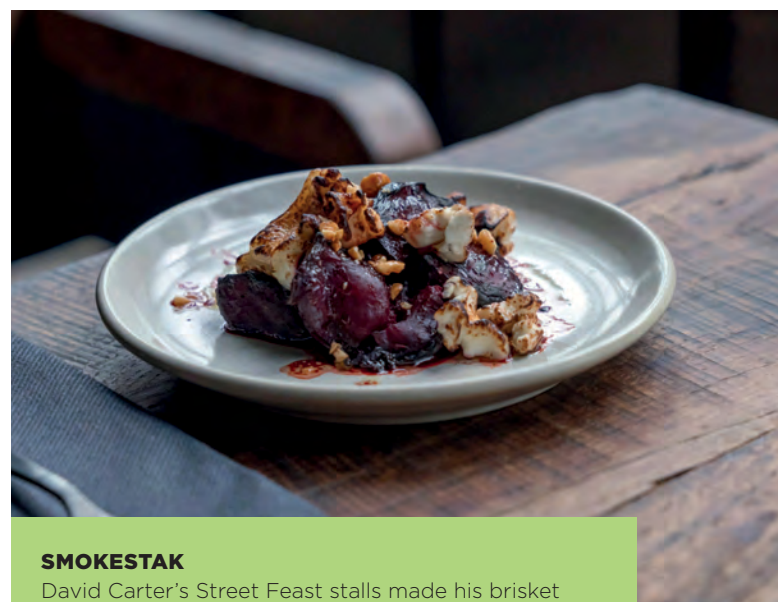
Ear to the ground FIVE SITES THAT KEEP YOU IN THE LOOP WITH WHAT'S BUBBLING UNDER: CODEHOSPITALITY.CO.UK, HOT-DINNERS.COM, GRUBCLUB.COM, TABL.COM, WEFIFO.COM



BREDDOS

Not content with a cookbook, creators of incredibly edible tacos Nud Dudhia and Chris Whitney opened the doors to their all-day taqueria just in time for Christmas - and what a splendid gift to the capital it's proved itself to be.

Where? Clerkenwell
breddostacos.com
🐦 @breddostacos



SMOKESTAK

David Carter's Street Feast stalls made his brisket rolls the stuff of London legend and Insta-fame. In autumn last year, the opening of a moody industrial-glam barbecue restaurant offering an expanded menu sent Smokestak's star stratospheric.

Where? Shoreditch
smokestak.co.uk 🐦 @smokestakUK

OUR CHOSEN CHARITY



THE SOCIAL KITCHEN SUPPER CLUB

Dani also hosts buffet-style pop-ups showcasing menus taken from the cookbook. For details and forthcoming dates, visit thesocialkitchen.org



Living legacy

Dani Tucker's beautiful *Social Kitchen* cookbook celebrates the life of her late mother Shally, and raises vital funds for Dermatrust

When her mother Shally passed away from various rare autoimmune skin diseases, Dani Tucker decided to keep her memory alive by self-publishing *The Social Kitchen* – a beautiful book filled with favourite recipes, family photographs and images of the myriad knick knacks and bits and bobs that Shally held so dear throughout her life.

The ribbon bookmark in each copy makes the highly-personal project yet more so; each one selected from Shally's own extensive collection. *The Social Kitchen's* recipes are simple, comforting and as soul-satisfying as the knowledge that the price of your purchase is donated to Dermatrust's vital charity work.

The Social Kitchen by Dani Tucker, published by Social Kitchen Publishing, RRP £25



Travel to *Ecuador* Through its exquisite flavors.

Biodiversity, fertile land, endemic species, a singular geographical configuration, a multicultural society, and ancestral customs are just some of the factors that come together to make Ecuador a land with unique culinary wealth.



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Jennifer Lyn Parkinson
HEAD CHEF AT LONDON'S
ULTIMATE CATERING SPOKANE,
WASHINGTON

I texted all my friends and family and asked them, 'if you were a fruit or veggie, which one would you be?'. I still have all my friends from high school and I have met many amazing people along the way; every single one of them has made me who I am today, and every single one of them texted me back a different answer. It's made a wonderful tattoo, and I am very proud to carry them on my arm.

Monica Lo

CREATIVE DIRECTOR AT NOMIKU AND CANNABIS
COOK AT SOUS WEED, SAN FRANCISCO

I'm collecting herb seasoning tattoos for every major milestone of my life - rosemary and thyme for the eight years I hustled in NYC, coriander blossoms on my back for the new life I created in

San Francisco, lingonberries to commemorate a food tour of Oslo and Copenhagen, where I had the opportunity to dine at Noma. Hopefully, by the time I die, I will be well-seasoned.

Skin DEEP

They say a picture says 1000 words. Here, four US chefs reveal the meaning behind the vibrant designs they've had inked indelibly onto their bodies

Brant Dadaleares

OYSTER SHUCKER AND PASTRY ASSISTANT, EVENTIDE OYSTER

I've worked in kitchens since I was 14, and I've been a pastry chef for the last eight years. The sleeve is built around a hoyo vine, which blooms on my shoulder. Starting at the wrist, the flowers are: a phalaenopsis orchid, an anthurium, a columbine, a water

lily, two solandra maximas in varying ages, fall blooming asters, a tree peony, a passion flower on my elbow, a cereus, and finally the hoyo bloom on top. As a passionate gardener, these are all plants I've grown in the past or grow now.

Catherine Doyle

SOUS CHEF AT CALIFORNIA SPORTSERVICE, SAN DIEGO

At the large corporation where my dad worked, he took all sorts of training courses: one day, an e-mail alerted him that he was overdue for beryllium awareness training. It was probably a mistake, but it sounded so goofy that he took the course. My sister Emy found this hilarious. Beryllium awareness was a running joke between them. During my sister's last Christmas, she gave him a

beryllium t-shirt. She died three months later from cancer.

My dad brought the beryllium t-shirt with him when he hiked the Appalachian trail. Another hiker saw the shirt's atomic number 4 'Be' symbol and suggested my father take the trail named '4be'. After my dad finished the trail, I got a tattoo of four bees, for beryllium, in honour of him and my sister Emy.



Knives & Ink by
Isaac Fitzgerald &
Wendy MacNaughten,
published by
Bloomsbury,
RRP £14.99

A top-down view of a rustic wooden cheese board. The board is laden with several types of cheese: a wedge of white cheese, a wedge of yellow cheese, a wedge of orange cheese, a rectangular slab of yellow cheese, and a rectangular slab of orange cheese. Accompanying the cheese are several almond and cranberry breads, a pear, a pomegranate, a whole apple, and several figs cut in half. A small knife with a wooden handle is also on the board.

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cheese, handmade and aged
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A day in the life...

THE PRODUCT DEVELOPER

If M&S is your go-to store for party food, it's safe to say you'll have eaten something created by Barbara Ross



Is there anything more pleasing than great party food? To many, what's on the canapé tray has the potential to make or break an event. And, for Barbara Ross, it's especially vital that each item she offers is nothing short of top-notch. After all, she's M&S's Party Food and Deli Product Developer...

How did this role come about?

I trained as a Home Economist at Bath University and spent the last two decades in food development across magazines, manufacturing and retail. I always wanted to be a product developer for M&S; in retail, it doesn't get any better! Now I've been with the company almost 11 years.

Where are you based?

M&S's London Head Office, where I split my time between kitchen and office. I also visit suppliers and production facilities in the UK, Europe and Asia.

Talk us through a typical day...

It's highly variable! A day might entail meetings, development sessions, checking out new

restaurants, presenting potential new products, attending focus groups or photo shoots, sensory analysis, factory visits, quality control, writing creative briefs, or admin.

Which product are you proudest of?

One of my first – a Fairtrade chocolate dipping sauce which is still on shelves. It was the first grocery product advertised on television. I called it 'Prada for the larder'; it's so versatile, you can make chocolate truffles from it too.

...And which was trickiest to perfect?

Miniature savoury verrines with vegetable jelly layers – something for Christmas 2014. It took over 30 trials to get the set right!

Has anything exceeded expectations, or not done as well as you'd hoped?

Rollitos are a huge hit; a very simple, classic Spanish combination of Serrano ham and Manchego. Our BBQ pulled pork stacks were a great idea, but just had too many prep steps.

Which products excite you the most?

My biggest personal passion is Italian cuisine, but it's party food, without a doubt. You can be playful, reinterpret classics, take inspiration from global cuisines, and do Lilliputian versions of just about any food or dish.

Is there anything you'd love to get on shelves, but haven't yet managed to crack for the retail market?

Yes, a quail egg canapé. But I'm not giving up!

So hot right now

Exciting food trends to look out for...

Hybrid foods	Seaweed
Fermentation	Personalisation
Extreme ageing	Layered flavours
Hawaiian cuisine	Comfort reinvented

Which chefs do you most admire?

For ground-breaking creativity and perfectionism, Heston Blumenthal, David Chang, Ferran Adrià, René Redzepi, Grant Achatz, plus Suz Mountfort, co-founder of the London's immersive dining group, and Harry Parr of Bompas & Parr.

How do you stay on top of food trends?

By keeping an eye on social media, global trend reports, food markets, book launches and restaurant openings. I also revisit classics, cook at home and travel.

Biggest job perks and pitfalls?

I get to eat in amazing restaurants, travel the world and work for a great British retailer. On the downside, long days of tasting can be tiring and there's a lot of admin.

In my spare time I...

Travel and spend time with family.

What's your career plan B?

Interior design or floristry – I love flowers!



WINE, DINE & RECLINE

Lovers of exceptional food and fine wine can now combine dual pleasures thanks to a host of excellent restaurants with comfy rooms. Carole Hamilton knows where to eat, drink, sleep and repeat



ECKINGTON MANOR, WILTSHIRE

Fans of *Masterchef*, *The Professionals* will be familiar with 2015 winner Mark Stinchcombe, chef at this picturesque hotel nestled in the Avon valleys. Mark and his wife Sue run the kitchen, and dishes are picture-pretty. Favourites include Eckington Manor beef ribeye with marrow bone crust and charcoal emulsion, and local venison with smoked beetroot and blackberries. The popular on-site cookery school offers a wide range of classes – from dinner parties made easy (£99) to preparing restaurant dishes at home (£175). **SO TO BED...** The 17 comfortable bedrooms are spread out over four converted farm buildings, each of them lovingly restored to make the most of their original period features – some of which date back to the 12th century. *A three-course dinner without wine, £48 per person. Double rooms from £149, including breakfast. eckingtonmanor.co.uk*



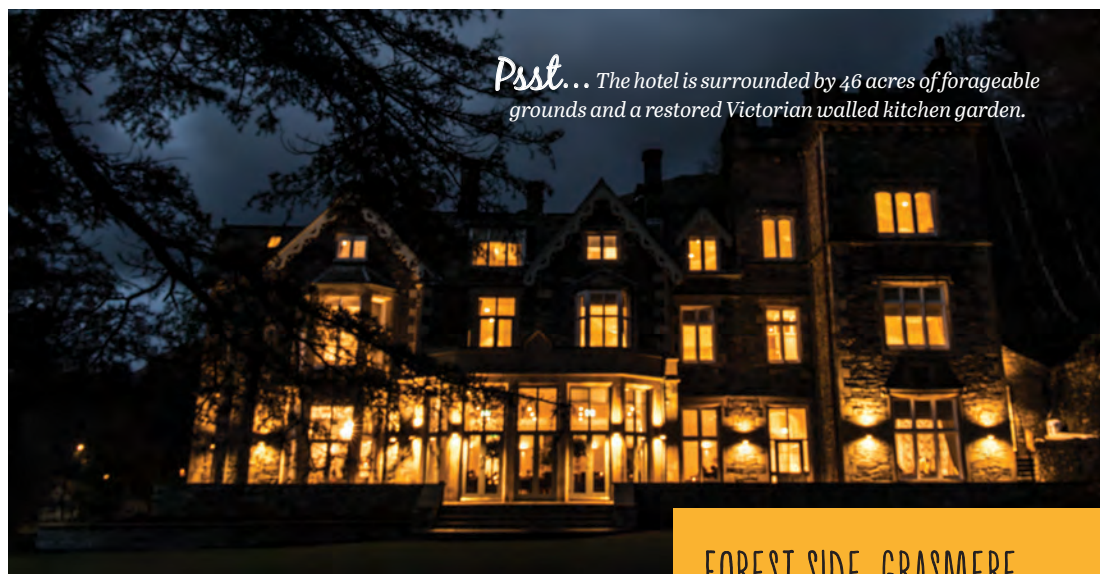


ROCKSALT, FOLKESTONE, KENT

The view from the floor-to-ceiling windows at this harbourside restaurant is nothing short of spectacular – and the food isn't half bad either. Mark Sargeant is Rocksalt's chef and co-owner and, having worked previously as Gordon Ramsay's right-hand man, the quality of everything that leaves the kitchen is no surprise. The menu leans towards local seafood; we started with 'Hot Shells' – prawns, clams, mussels, razor clams with samphire in a velvety shellfish velouté – and potted crayfish tails given just the right amount of heat from a hit of Cayenne pepper. Catches of the day were Dover sole, grilled with a little butter and lemon, and cod with a herb beurre blanc on a pile of samphire.

SO TO BED... Four bolthole bedrooms are found a short stroll along the harbour in a converted Smokehouse, all with sea views, where you'll wake to the chugging of the fishing boats on their way to catch your lunch.

Lunch for two with wine, around £110. Rooms from £85, including a breakfast box. rocksaltfolkestone.co.uk



Psst... The hotel is surrounded by 46 acres of forageable grounds and a restored Victorian walled kitchen garden.



FOREST SIDE, GRASMERE

Opened in early 2016, Forest Side earned its first Michelin star within just eight months – little surprise when the kitchen is run by former L'Enclume sous chef and head forager Kevin Tickle. The hotel is beautifully located in the heart of the Lakes, just minutes from Grasmere. Forest Side's exciting, daily-changing menu depends on what's available in the grounds: we enjoyed venison pastrami, smoked juniper yoghurt, swede, Old Winchester cheese and pickled allium flowers, plus West coast scallop, parsnip, duck prosciutto and mead.

SO TO BED... Warm, welcoming bedrooms make the most of local designers and craftspeople, and each one takes its name from a tree or plant from the grounds – think Mulberry, Pine, and Silver Birch.

10-course tasting menu, £70 per person. Dinner, bed and breakfast from £299, based on two sharing. theforestsideside.com >>



L'ENCLUME, CARTMEL, CUMBRIA

With two Michelin stars and a reputation for showcasing home-grown ingredients from its farm, Simon Rogan's iconic restaurant needs little introduction. Four-times 'best restaurant in the UK', it's set within an old ironmonger's; the dining room's rough walls, bare wooden tables, and lack of music and wifi keeping the focus firmly on the food. First, choose between tasting menus – currently comprising seven or 20-course options – then you get to see a menu. Subtle flavour combinations send tastebuds into overdrive; it's fun not to peek and try to work out what you've just eaten. Of our seven-course lunch, venison with pear and beetroot, and desserts of apricot, cherry and blackcurrants lingered in the memory.

SO TO BED... The 16 bedrooms are sited in the pretty village of Cartmel, and include dinner at L'Enclume and breakfast at Simon's other restaurant, Rogan & Co.

Seven-course lunch, £55 per person plus £40 for the wine pairing. Double rooms from £250 in a superior room including breakfast. lenclume.co.uk



Psst... For a special treat, book a seat at Aulis at L'Enclume, the experimental kitchen with a chef's table for six, Friday and Saturday evenings only. £150 per person, plus £80 for wines.



Psst... The Halfway Bridge near Petworth – the sister venue – is also worth a visit, with an excellent restaurant and six rooms in the inn's former stable yard. halfwaybridge.co.uk



CRAB & LOBSTER, WEST SUSSEX

For a spot of escapism, The Crab & Lobster at Sidlesham ticks all the boxes. Sleepy Pagham Harbour is a bird-lover's paradise, and although the surrounding marshland has some lovely walks, the food alone is worth the trip. The kitchen excels at transforming already-fabulous produce into something even better – baked Selsey crab and seared scallops burst with flavour, cod with smoked haddock chowder had us craving seconds, and custard terrine with poached rhubarb was pure comfort. From the well-priced wine list, try a glass of cherry-laden Catalan Mataro red dessert wine. Breakfast is suitably-relaxed, featuring heavenly poached eggs on homemade muffins.

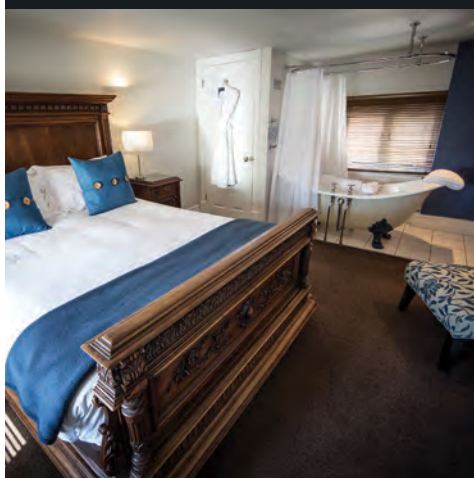
SO TO BED... The Crab & Lobster has four double bedrooms upstairs, and a self-catering cottage next door.

Dinner for two with wine around £95, B&B from £165. crab-lobster.co.uk.

RESTAURANT SAT BAINS, NOTTINGHAM

'Marooned in an industrial wasteland' is how one visitor described the location; the chef himself noted it as akin to 'finding a diamond in a turd'. The two-starred Nottingham restaurant's setting isn't picturesque, but who cares when you can enjoy food this good? With a choice of seven or 10-course tasting menus, you'll enjoy an eating experience rather than just a meal. Highlights? Treacle breads, the insanely pretty, infamous *Great British Menu*-winning egg dish, grouse with watercress, nuts and chocolate, lime ice-cream lollipops with fennel, and a strangely-successful chocolate cherry dessert with a dash of tobacco. Enquire about a seat at the 8-seater chef's bench (an extra £10 per person), where you can marvel at the chefs' expertise close-up.

SO TO BED... The six bedrooms are individually designed – with a private patio, room seven is a favourite. *Seven-course tasting menu, £85 per person. Double room from £190, including breakfast.* restaurantsatbains.com



5 more foodie favourites...



THE RED LION, BLEWBURY, OXFORD

Phil and Arden Wild's cosy hideaway lies at the end of a tree-lined lane in the heart of Oxfordshire, and welcomes diners with excellent cooking and three bedrooms. Locally-sourced produce creates a host of pub classics. *Around £90 for two with wine. B&B from £95.* theredlionpubandkitchen.co.uk



THE MILK HOUSE, SISSINGHURST, KENT

Being welcomed to this former 16th-century timber framed hall house with a glass of bubbles from the local vineyard is the perfect way to start a weekend. Tuck into a menu based around seasonal produce – fluffy twice-baked Stilton soufflé and mustard pork fillet with sweet potato mash, then retire to one of four contemporary-styled bedrooms. *Around £90 for two with wine. B&B from £80.* themilkhouse.co.uk



Psst...

Wine-lovers will appreciate the impressive 450-bin wine list and the 60 different wines served by the glass.



Psst...

The daily three-course set menu is great value at £24. A la carte dinner with wine is around £120 for two people.

YORK & ALBANY, LONDON

This delightful, relaxed townhouse restaurant/hotel near Regents Park is part of the Gordon Ramsay group. From breakfast eggs through to meaty barbecued dinners, there's always something tasty on the menu. Many of the nine cosy bedrooms boast original features. *Double room with breakfast, from £215.* gordonramsayrestaurants.com

HIPPING HALL, KIRKBY, YORKSHIRE

Once described as 'a rural retreat where a city girl can feel at home', Hipping Hall does country house relaxation with a big dollop of style. The kitchen is run by the talented Oli Martin, and the five renovated rooms in The Old Stables offers a chef's kitchen and dining room. Why not opt for exclusive hire and throw a house party? *Five-course dinner plus B&B for two, from £269.* hippinghall.com



DOG & BADGER, MEDMENHAM, BUCKS

Just outside Marlow, The Dog & Badger has six new bedrooms, making the prospect of a trip to sample Shaun Rowlands' food all the more tempting. From the open kitchen comes an innovative menu that's strong on vegetarian and gluten-free options; plus delights like sharing platters of oysters, plancha-grilled fish, and meats from the wood-fired oven. *Around £110 with wine for two. B&B from £155.* thedogandbadger.com



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Carole Hamilton Editorial Director



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Entertaining & interiors

Exploring herbs • Brewing kombucha • Sharpening up on knives

p52

Raymond Blanc

The chef on the kitchen gardens that grow the magic at Le Manoir

p58

Eat yourself thin

How Tom Kerridge lost 11 stone (while still enjoying good food!)

Gold standard

Move aside stainless steel - there's a new kid on the chopping block, and it looks sensational against monochrome kitchens and slate worktops.

We adore this Rockett St. George Gold Measuring Spoon Set (from ½ tsp up to 1 tbsp). £14, from a range of gold accessories at rockettstgeorge.co.uk

p76

Setting the mood

Colour palettes for a smart spring makeover

The interiors edit

Bring home a dash of new season style with Carole Hamilton's top picks



We love...

The new Comic Relief apron designed by fashion photographer Rankin. £12.99, rednoseday.com

Cool or what?

Every stylish garden needs its very own mini Eden Project for year-round al fresco dining. The transparent, zip-up PVC dome is surprisingly spacious, has two window vents and is portable – festival, anyone? Garden Igloo, £649, cuckooland.com



HOW TO... DESIGN AN INDUSTRIAL KITCHEN

Clever tips on creating a cool new-look kitchen from the experts at neptune.com

1

Strip back the plaster to reveal raw elements such as concrete walls or floors and aged copper pipes.

2

Instead of traditional wall cabinets, get creative by upturning Crittal-style steel side tables and use them as shelving instead.

3

Take matching coffee tables and stack them to form an unusual kitchen island.



4

If you're up for a bit of extra work, change your work surface to a matte black finish, then choose a statement tap – co-ordinating black or contrasting copper.

5

Develop the look by using old copper pipes as rails for utensils or herbs, and for lighting.

6

Go for Edison-style filament bulbs on long flexes for an industrial feel.

Henley Oak Kitchen, from £13,000



LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE
Multi-strand lights have been popular for the last couple of seasons but these fabric shades add a new twist to the trend. £129, marksandspencer.com



Show off

We've long been fans of The White Company's stylish furniture and the new collection is full of covetable items. This display cabinet is perfect for your kitchen and is a big favourite with the GT team. £995, thewhitecompany.com

CLEVER STORAGE

Kitchen drawers don't come much better looking than these oak crate-style accessories. German brand Schüller's classy collection also includes ingenious oak cross dividers for storing your wine bottles smartly. Stockists at inhouseltd.co.uk



We love...

This bargainous light box to add a smile to your kitchen or home office. It comes with three different messages in three colours, or you can create your own. Mount on the wall for maximum impact. £32.95, prezzybox.com

Take 3

GREAT NEW GADGETS



1

Tefal Cuisine Companion, £699
tefal.co.uk

2

Ninja Coffee Bar, £179.99
ninja.kitchen.eu



3

SMEG Coffee Machine, £279.95,
johnlewis.com



SPOT ON

Bring a little Nordic style to your dining table with the new Sabichi Ombre Spot 12-piece dinner set, £27.99; Eclipse 30-piece cutlery set, £49.99, and Mango serving board, £12.99, all very.co.uk



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try-rye.com

Available from

Waitrose

 ocado.com
The online supermarket



Seeded
Organic Rye bread



Organic Rye bread

Cold as ice

With clean flavours and beautiful presentation, Nordic cuisine just won't fall from favour. Comprising rich liquorice ice-cream, tart rosehip and raspberry sorbet, and crushed white chocolate, we think this organic Winterspring dessert is a surefire way to your lover's heart this Valentine's Day. £7.99, selected Waitrose



Dressed to thrill

Healthy diet advisors always tell you to eat a rainbow, and now you can do just that with your dressings. Tigg's four-strong, vibrantly-hued Perfect Match range is apple cider vinegar-based and comes in tomatoey Sweet Original, Basil & Pea, Beetroot, and Pepper & Mustard varieties. £3.99, ocado.com



Shelf spy

Turn your shop list into a top list with our pick of the hottest products



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Adopting a tree through Pomora gives you much more than fabulous Italian olive oil – it offers a glimpse into the production process and supports skilled growers. Every three months, you'll receive a trio of oils; from delicate new season to complex extra virgin and boldly-flavoured varieties. The company can even help facilitate a trip to its groves. From £29 per quarter, pomora.com



Snack happy

Rove the globe with Tyrrell's Nibbles; welcome Chinese New Year guests with Hoisin & Ginger Rice Crackers, or inject some Peruvian panache into snack time with Giant Salted Corn. From 99p, Waitrose

Take 3 THIRST QUENCHERS



1

The adult soft drink trend is here to stay and Belvoir's Citrus Chardonnay Pressé is a crisp, complex tippie that really hits the spot. £2.29, Tesco



2

Sign up to Fortnum's monthly delivery of The Tea Post – two beautiful blends from the iconic store. £15 per month, fortnumandmason.com



3

Pack in the protein from the word go with FUEL 10K's Liquid Breakfast in Vanilla, Banana, Strawberry, Chocolate or Caffè Latte. £1.49, ASDA



THE 4 seasons

Join us on a tour of the beautiful gardens surrounding Raymond Blanc's legendary restaurant-hotel, then try his favourite recipes at home





Set in the rolling Oxfordshire hills, Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons is a bastion of haute cuisine, and a beacon of l'art de vivre. Beyond the wonderful food, the kitchen gardens add yet another dimension to your culinary adventure. Certified by the Soil Association, the garden is 100% organic and, throughout the year, supplies 90 types of fresh vegetables to the restaurant. Cloche tunnels hide hundreds of courgettes, grown for the flowers of which, in summer, the kitchen can use up to 200 per day. There's also a herb garden, a mushroom valley, an orchard with 800 apple and pear trees, an English water garden and a Japanese tea garden. If you think the bronze scarecrow overlooking the vegetable garden looks familiar, you'd be right – because it's modelled on Raymond. >>





Salade d'Aubergine

Aubergines grow surprisingly well in Britain. At Le Manoir, we always trial at least 10 varieties before we choose. This allows us to find those with the best taste and texture – year after year, Money Maker is the winner.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 80g dried chickpeas, soaked in plenty of cold water for 12 hours
- 4 ripe aubergines
- 1 tsp cumin seeds, toasted and finely ground
- 10g mint leaves, julienned
- 2 pinches rock salt
- pinch of caster sugar
- ½ lemon, juice only
- 70ml extra virgin olive oil
- 80g Medjool dates, stoned and quartered
- ½ a red chilli, finely chopped
- 10g coriander leaves, roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp aged balsamic vinegar (at least 8 years old)

To serve

- 4 thin slices of rye bread, toasted
- 80g ricotta cheese, patted dry and crumbled
- 10g flaked almonds, toasted
- 8 mint tip sprigs

METHOD

1. Drain the chickpeas. Tip into a saucepan, cover generously with fresh cold water and bring to the boil. Lower the heat and simmer for about 1 hour until tender. Drain thoroughly.
2. Using the tip of a sharp knife, score

each aubergine once on each side, to about a 3cm depth.

3. Heat a large griddle pan over high heat. Griddle the aubergines for 15 minutes, turning every 4 minutes until the skins blister and char. Transfer to a tray and leave for 10 minutes.

4. Slide the aubergines onto a board. Using a sharp knife, cut off the stalks, then slice through each aubergine from top to bottom and open them up.

5. Using a spoon, scoop out the flesh in long ribbons. Remove and discard the clusters of seeds, and discard the charred skins.

6. Spread out the aubergine flesh on a large tray. Season with the cumin, mint, salt, sugar and lemon juice. Drizzle over 40ml of the oil, then taste and correct the seasoning.

7. In a small bowl, toss together the chickpeas, dates, chilli, coriander, the remaining oil and the balsamic vinegar.

8. To serve, arrange the seasoned aubergines on a platter, and spoon the dressed chickpeas and dates over and around them. Break up the rye toast and scatter the pieces over the aubergines. Scatter the crumbled ricotta and flaked almonds over the salad and top with the mint tips.

COVER RECIPE



This vibrant plate of vegetables represents the full cycle of spring, from start to finish. It has been served at Belmond Le Manoir since our first spring in 1984 and embodies my cuisine. It is cooked to order from the garden to the plate and therein lies simplicity and purity.

INGREDIENTS

- 15g dried small morels, soaked in 150ml warm water for 6 hours
- 2 tbsp dry sherry or Jura vin jaune
- 2 tbsp whipping cream
- squeeze of lemon juice
- 1½g powdered lecithin
- 20g fresh morels, washed
- 20ml water
- 10g unsalted butter
- sea salt and black pepper

- 4 baby courgettes
- 200g garden peas
- 1 sprig mint, leaves picked and chopped
- 1 sprig marjoram, leaves picked and chopped
- 20ml extra virgin olive oil
- 4 whole courgette flowers, stigmas and stamens removed and reserved
- sea salt and black pepper

- 20g butter
- 150ml water
- 4 baby carrots
- 8 white asparagus spears
- 8 green asparagus spears
- 4 pods of garden peas
- 30g freshly podded broad beans
- 30g freshly podded peas
- reserved courgette stamens and stigmas
- 12 pea shoot sprigs
- sea salt

- 10g chives, finely chopped
- 20g fresh goat's cheese curd

1. Fold the chives into the goat's cheese curd and set aside.
2. For the morel jus, drain the soaked morels, squeezing to extract the juice. Reserve the liquid and the morels.
3. In a small pan, bring the sherry or vin jaune to the boil and bubble for 30 seconds. Add the morel liquid, then the whipping cream. Bubble for 1 minute.
4. Remove from the heat, taste, season with a small squeeze of lemon juice. Add the lecithin and set aside.
5. Put the fresh morels in a saucepan with the soaked morels. Add the water, butter, salt and pepper. Set aside.
6. For the courgettes, trim the ends off the stalks but leave intact. Slice

7. Bring a small saucepan of water to the boil, blanch the peas for 20 seconds, drain immediately, and refresh in cold water. Drain thoroughly, tip into a small bowl, and crush with a fork. Add the mint, marjoram, two pinches of salt, a pinch of pepper and the oil. Mix well, taste and correct the seasoning.

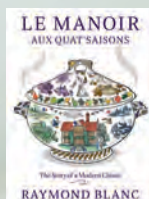
9. For the vegetables, put the butter, water and a large pinch of salt in a medium saucepan and bring to the boil. Add the carrots and white asparagus, cover and cook for 6 minutes.

11. Turn off the heat and add the pea shoots. Taste and correct the seasoning. Drain the vegetables and strain the cooking emulsion through a fine sieve. Reserve.

13. Arrange a stuffed courgette flower and a fanned courgette on each plate. Scatter the morels and other vegetables around. Reheat the vegetable emulsion and drizzle over.

14. Reheat the morel jus and pulse briefly with a hand blender to aerate and create a light foam. Spoon around the plate. Crumble the curd cheese between the vegetables and serve.

Crèmeux
chocolat
caramel et
crème gla



Extract from *Le Manoir aux Quat Saisons*
The Story of a Modern Classic
Raymond Blanc,
£50, Bloomsbury
Publishing



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ENGLAND



TASTES GOOD, LOOKS *great*

For the gourmet aesthete, looks are every bit as important as taste – so fill your kitchen with these seriously-stylish edible treasures

It's not just what's in the bottle, jar or packet that counts; it's what's on it. From artist-brand collaborations to talented food producers who boast a keen eye for graphic design, gourmet food has never looked so good.

1. ROCOCO

Anyone who enjoys fine chocolate will be familiar with Rococo's iconic graphics, found on bar wrappers, labels, and textiles. Much of the imagery depicts old artisanal French chocolate moulds, first spotted in an antiquarian book by company founder Chantal Coady. rococochocolates.com

2. APHRODITE'S FOOD

You only need to glance at a jar of Aphrodite's pomegranate ketchup to know it's something special. The elegant label is the work of Borough-based agency Midday Studio. Illustrations by Harry Potter book artist Andrew

Davidson are first carved out of wood, then printed. aphroditesfood.com

3. YUYO TEAS

A South America trip inspired couple Rosie Marteau and Charles Grummitt to bring yerba mate tea to the masses; local street art and colourful flora inspired the vibrant packaging. The result of a collaboration with renowned artist Olaf Hajek, each product features a unique character. yuyo.co.uk

4. BAR TERMINI NEGRONIS

The bottle-aged cocktail has been perfected by drinks master Tony Conigliaro; from the Classico available to drink at home, to the further trio served in his Soho bar. The second label series features a quartet of AS-CC's pastel-bright Italian landscapes, rendered in a Ligne Claire style adorned with embossed gold lettering. amathusdrinks.com

5. TONNIX

You'd expect slick style from a brand co-created by art-loving

restaurateur Mark Hix. The name is a portmanteau of his surname and that of co-founder Mitch Tonks, and the range includes Portuguese wines, port, and olive oil. Initially conceived around a single, seafood-friendly white wine, the labels are designed by artist – and Hix's close friend – Tracey Emin. hixrestaurants.co.uk

6. SQUARE ROOT SODA

Botanical illustrations indicate the fact that Square Root is devoted to creating wholesome, seasonal, all-natural soft drinks (think herbal tonic waters and traditional root beer). Artist Not Nat is responsible for the initial drawings, whilst company co-founder Ed Taylor colours and prints. squarerootsoda.co.uk

7. 58 GIN

Think the logo for Mark Marmont's small-batch gin is tattoo-like? You're right – it was created by Mo Coppoletta of Soho's The Family Business tattoo parlour. The gin-maker requested a design featuring his door number (58), wings – referencing

his flat's Angel location – and a Thirties aesthetic nodding to prohibition (and the fact 58 Gin started illegally on the kitchen bench). 58gin.com

8. OCELOT CHOCOLATE

Wrappers are created by co-founders Matt and Ish Broadbent. Flavours and packaging are often inspired by the food, atmosphere and architecture of events or holidays. After a discussion, Ish draws or takes photographs, Matt works on them digitally, and the couple finalises the design. ocelotchocolate.com



THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING CHEF

Tom Kerridge recently lost an impressive 11 stone by adopting a low-carb, stay-happy diet. Sophie Ritchie discovers his secret to weight loss and eating well



Chef-patron of two Michelin-starred The Hand & Flowers pub in Marlow since 2005, Tom Kerridge has spent 25 years working in professional kitchens. The food-centric environment took a physical toll and, as the chef approached his 40th birthday, he knew he had to shed a serious amount of weight. He tells us how...

How did the weight wake-up call occur? I was always a good party animal. Chefs have a reputation for being up late and playing hard, and I was world-class at that. As my birthday approached, I decided that I should make changes. I didn't want to go on a diet, but instead look at an entire lifestyle overhaul.

The new book came from my own personal weight loss journey – I'd spent a long time trying different diets, but nothing really worked. When I started to replace the usual carbs and sugar with more protein, I saw results. It was so easy. I didn't have to count calories, and could fit what I was eating

around a busy lifestyle. Meals became simple as I could eat what I was cooking at work – a steak; even two steaks. Rather than craving other foods, sticking to protein made me feel really good. I had loads of energy, and it didn't feel like the usual restrictive diet at all.

I started researching and found all the foods I was eating had one thing in common – they all trigger the release of the 'happy hormone' dopamine, which makes you feel good. So you start to look forward to what you're going to eat.

You named your book *Dopamine Diet* – which foods are high in the hormone?

Good-quality meats like beef, chicken and turkey, and dairy products like double cream and yoghurt. Coffee's great too, as is vanilla. I call them my 'dopamine heroes'.

How did you choose the recipes in the book and what are your favourites?

It was a case of trial and error – a lot of the dishes are variations of what I was cooking for myself throughout my own journey. The omelette makes a really great alternative to pizza, and I love the spicy Indian egg rolls.

You must have a few guilty pleasures...

Resisting the temptation of dessert can be hard! But it's okay to enjoy a little bit of what you fancy now and then, just get up a little earlier and go to the gym the following day so you stay on track. Everything in moderation.

You clearly enjoy your diet's flexibility – where do you stand on faddier regimes?

I don't have anything against fad diets – different things work for different people. If you're looking for a quick fix to drop you half a stone, they're great. But I had a lot of weight to lose, so I needed something long term and sustainable. It took me over three years to get to where I am now!

Curried cauliflower soup

I've eaten a lot of cauliflower on my low-carb diet. When it's puréed like this, it assumes such a rich, creamy texture that it feels quite indulgent.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 50g dried onion flakes
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 50g butter
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, grated
- 1½ tbsp curry powder
- 1 litre water
- 1 chicken or vegetable stock cube
- 1 large cauliflower (about 800g), broken into florets
- 200ml coconut cream
- 200g full-fat cream cheese
- 4 tbsp chopped coriander, including tender stems
- 2 hot green chillies, sliced, including seeds
- 1 lime, zest only
- sea salt and Cayenne pepper

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Scatter the onion flakes on a baking tray, trickle on the oil, give it a stir, and season with salt. Bake for 5 minutes, or until the onion flakes are golden brown. Set aside to cool.
2. In a large saucepan, melt the butter over a medium-low heat. Add the onion and garlic and sweat gently, stirring from time to time, for 10–15 minutes, until soft. Sprinkle on the curry powder and cook, stirring, for 2–3 minutes.
3. Pour in the water and crumble in the stock cube. Bring to the boil and add the florets. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 5–10 minutes, until the cauliflower is soft.
4. Stir in the coconut cream and cream cheese until fully combined. Return to the boil, then remove the pan from the heat.
5. Blitz with a stick blender, or in a jug blender or food processor. For a silky texture, pass the soup through a sieve into a clean pan. Warm gently, and season to taste with salt and Cayenne pepper.
6. Ladle the soup into warmed bowls, scatter over the toasted onion flakes, coriander, chilli and lime zest, and serve hot.

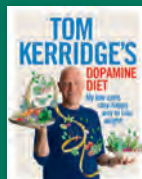
‘Chefs have a reputation for playing hard, and I was world-class at that’

KERRIDGE IN THE CAPITAL

Fan of Tom's food? You'll be delighted to know that the chef's first London restaurant is in the pipeline. Slated to open in 2017, it'll be set within the Jumeirah Carlton Tower in Knightsbridge, and occupy the space currently home to The Rib Room.

CARB COUNT
17g per person

Tip This rich creamy soup takes on spices beautifully



Tom Kerridge's *Dopamine Diet* by Tom Kerridge with photography by Cristian Barnett, is published by Absolute Press, RRP £20



CARB COUNT
14g per person

Coffee, chocolate & chia seed pudding

This is very quick – just mix it up and chill it in the fridge. The chia seeds make everything set to a soft, mousse-like texture. The pairing of orange and chocolate is always a winner and the coffee takes it to another level.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

For the pudding

- 500g full-fat yoghurt
- 70g chia seeds
- 1 tbsp orange extract
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 20ml freshly made espresso
- 1 tbsp erythritol (sugar replacement)

To finish

- 2 tsp grated chocolate (with 80% cocoa solids)
- 2 tsp cacao nibs
- 2 tsp roughly crushed espresso beans

METHOD

1. Put the yoghurt into a bowl and whisk in the chia seeds, orange extract, cocoa powder, espresso and erythritol.
2. Divide the mixture equally between 4 serving glasses, cover with clingfilm,

and refrigerate for 12–24 hours.

3. When you're ready to serve, remove from the refrigerator, sprinkle with the grated chocolate, cacao nibs and crushed espresso beans, and serve.

MORE ONLINE
goodthingsmagazine.com



Lamb shank hot pot



Spring clean **YOUR SUPPER**

Stuck in a rut? Allow a week's-worth of Gill Meller's glorious recipes to inject a vibrant dose of colour and flavour into your cooking

MONDAY

Slow-roasted mutton shoulder

For this recipe you'll need at least six or seven hours; a table, simply laid; two or three bottles of wine; and the capacity to share with half-a-dozen kind people.

Serves 8-10

INGREDIENTS

- 1 bone-in mutton shoulder (3-4kg)
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 bunch mixed herbs (such as rosemary, sage, tarragon, thyme, bay leaves, marjoram and fennel tops)
- 2 garlic bulbs, halved around their circumference
- 1 glass cider
- 1 heaped tbsp plain flour
- 300ml vegetable, chicken or lamb stock
- 2 tsp fruit jelly (such as redcurrant or crab apple)
- salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Place the mutton shoulder in a large roasting tray, rub all over with the olive oil, season generously, and cook for 35-40 minutes, until the meat has colour.
3. Remove from the oven, and add the whole herbs, halved garlic bulbs, and cider. Cover the joint with baking parchment, then the whole tray with foil, crimping it tightly around the edges to keep in the steam.
4. Reduce the oven temperature to 120°C and return the mutton to the oven. Cook for 6 hours, until the meat is really tender and giving, then remove from the oven and leave to stand for 20-25 minutes before removing the foil and parchment.
5. Carefully lift the mutton from the tray to a wooden board or a platter. Use a large spoon to skim excess fat from the juices and lift out any whole herbs so you can use the juices for gravy.
6. Set the tray over a low heat, add the flour and, using a wooden spoon or spatula, work it into the remaining herbs and soft, roasted garlic, scratching free any caramelised sticky bits from the base of the tray. Add the stock and the fruit jelly, stir, then bring to a simmer and cook for a few minutes to thicken. Pass through a sieve into a clean saucepan and return to a simmer.
7. Season to taste, then serve the mutton with the gravy and some simple seasonal vegetables.



Tip Keep aside some of the prettiest mint leaves as garnish

TUESDAY

Trout with pickled cucumber, spelt & herbs

This quick, warm salad always lifts my mood. With a light air of spring about it, it's an excellent way to use up leftover trout, or any fish for that matter – try sea bass or bream. Be generous with the herbs, lemon and olive oil, which turn this into something quite magical.

Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

- ½ a firm cucumber, peeled, halved, deseeded, cut into 1cm half-moons
- ½ a small red onion, finely diced
- 2 tbsp cider vinegar
- 2 tsp golden caster sugar
- 150g pearled spelt
- 1 small bunch mint, leaves picked and chopped, stalks and a few leaves reserved
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 200g cooked trout, cooled, skin and bones removed
- 1 small bunch coriander, chopped,

a few sprigs reserved

- ½ a lemon, juice only
- salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Place the cucumber half-moons in a bowl and add the onion, vinegar and sugar, along with plenty of salt and pepper. Stir to combine, then set aside to marinate.
2. Place the pearled spelt in a sieve and rinse well. Transfer to a large saucepan, cover with cold water, and set over a high heat. Bring the liquid to a simmer,

then add the mint stalks and cook for 15-20 minutes, until the spelt is tender but retains some bite. Drain, and set aside to stand for 10-15 minutes.

3. In a large bowl, combine the spelt with the cucumber slices and their dressing. Add the olive oil, season well, and stir to combine.

4. Flake the trout into large pieces and gently turn it through the warm grains. Add the chopped herbs, then spoon onto a serving dish and drizzle with the lemon juice. Scatter over the whole herbs and serve. >>



THURSDAY

Spring cabbage salad with honey & sprouted lentils

This salad is all about crunch, and the honey-sweet warmth of the punchy dressing. The iron flavour of mixed sprouts goes beautifully with the dressing. Once you have everything to hand, it comes together in minutes.

Serves 4-6

INGREDIENTS

For the dressing

- 20g ginger root, peeled and finely grated
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and finely grated
- ½ an orange, juice and finely grated zest
- 2 tbsp tamari (or soy sauce)
- 1-2 tsp dried chilli flakes
- 50g runny honey
- 2 tsp coriander seeds, toasted and crushed
- 2 tsp sesame oil

For the salad

- 1 firm hispi cabbage (about 400g)
- 4 white or red spring onions, thinly sliced
- 150g mixed sprouted lentils and/or beans
- 2-3 tsp sesame seeds, toasted

garlic, orange juice and zest, tamari or soy sauce, chilli flakes, honey, coriander seeds and sesame oil in a small bowl, and whisk to combine. Set aside.

2. For the salad, trim any rough or discoloured outer leaves from the cabbage and halve it lengthways. Remove the thickest part of the stem and slice each half into ribbons no thicker than 1cm. Wash, drain well, and, if you have a salad spinner, dry briefly.

3. Scatter the cabbage over a large platter, or onto smaller plates. Spoon half the dressing over the cabbage, then scatter over the spring onion.

4. Place the sprouted lentils and/or beans in a small bowl. Drizzle over 3 tbsp of the dressing and tumble together. Scatter the sprouts over the plated cabbage and spring onions. Scatter over the toasted sesame seeds, drizzle over the remaining dressing, and serve.

METHOD

1. For the dressing, combine the ginger,

WEDNESDAY

Whole roasted pollack with garden herbs & pancetta

You can buy really good-quality pancetta made from free-range pork in independent delis and at deli counters. Look for the stuff with a generous marbling of fat, which brings so much flavour and sweetness to the fish.

Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole pollack (1-1.5kg), scaled, gutted and cleaned
- 100g fatty pancetta, cut into chunky lardons
- 1 small bunch of mixed herbs (such as bay, rosemary, thyme, sage, parsley leaves, fennel tops and chives)
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Select a roasting tray that provides a snug fit for your fish. Scatter the pancetta pieces and the hard herbs (bay, rosemary, sage and thyme) evenly over the pollack. Drizzle over the olive oil, then season well.
3. Place the fish in the oven and cook for 25 minutes, until cooked through (test by inserting the tip of a small

paring knife into the thickest part of the fish and seeing if the flesh comes away from the bone).

4. Meanwhile, prepare the tender herbs (parsley, fennel tops and chives) ready to scatter over the fish when it comes out of the oven: chop the parsley leaves and fennel tops, slice the chives thinly, then place everything in a bowl and mix to thoroughly combine.

5. As soon as the fish is cooked, remove it from the oven and scatter over the herbs while it's still in the tray.

6. To serve, bring the whole roasting tray to the table and use a knife and small spatula to lift generous portions of fish from the bone and place them onto individual warmed plates with the herbs, crisp pancetta and roasting juices. Serve immediately, accompanied by hunks of good bread, new potatoes and a green salad.



FRIDAY

Spider crab with raspberries, lemon zest & fennel tops

The acidity of the berries goes so well with the sweet, tender meat of the spider crab. This fresh combination gets a little bump from lemon zest, and cool, green notes from aniseed-y fennel tops. If you can't find spider crab, make the dish with the meat from brown crab or velvet swimming crabs.

Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

- 200g freshly-picked white spider crab meat, plus a little brown meat, (optional)
- 1 small punnet of raspberries (about 100g), roughly chopped in half
- a few roughly torn fennel tops
- a few fennel flowers, if available
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ½ a small lemon, juice only
- salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Pick over the crab meat to make sure there are no traces of shell. Scatter the white crab meat over a large serving platter, or two individual plates, and dot over the brown meat, if using.
2. Place the raspberries in and around the crab meat. Scatter over the fennel

tops and the flowers (if using), drizzle over the olive oil and lemon juice, and season to taste.

3. Serve immediately, with freshly toasted sourdough bread.



Recipes from *Gather* by Gill Meller with photographs by Andrew Montgomery, published by Quadrille, RRP £25

Gill's fast favourites

CHEF? I don't have a particular favourite, but I do have a huge amount of respect for all kinds of people in this business. I like people who have a story behind their food.

INGREDIENT? It's got to be a toss-up between good eggs, cured pork and honey.

SPEEDY SUPPER? A good rarebit, ideally made with strong Cheddar and beer.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT? My gorgeous knife, made by Dan Prendergast Knives (danprendergastknives.com).

DINNER COMPANIONS? Family and friends.



Tip During summer berry season, make this with loganberries



BONING KNIFE

FILLETING KNIFE



OYSTER KNIVES



SHARPEN UP

A cook is nothing without the right knives. Tim Hayward shares cutting edge knowledge on choosing and using the best



PARING KNIFE

BREAD KNIFE



CHEF'S KNIFE





STEAK KNIVES

MEZZALUNA



SANTOKU

Tips for keeping knives in fine fettle



1. LEARN TO SHARPEN There are lots of good videos online (including my own), and sharpening stones can be had for little money.

2. NEVER PUT KITCHEN KNIVES IN WATER Keep a damp cloth next to your chopping board and use it to clean the blade between foods and after use. If you put your knife in the sink, or, God forbid, the dishwasher, you'll crack the handle off first, then probably cut yourself horribly immediately afterwards.

3. INVEST IN A MAGNETIC KNIFE RACK It holds your knives safely away from uncaring hands, displays them to your admiring friends and, for their preservation, stops them banging against one another in a drawer.



Knife by Tim Hayward, with photography by Chris Terry, is published by Quadrille, RRP £20



Tim Hayward ON CHOOSING AND USING KNIVES

What are the key things to consider?

Try before you buy. Any good knife shop will let you have a go; some actually provide fruit and veg for the purpose. Personally I don't take the chance and bring my own. A sharp knife should cut a mushy tomato without squashing it, and shouldn't skid off an onion's papery skin.

How do you know a knife is right for you?

It's worth thinking about your sharpening skills and tools before you buy. A carbon steel blade is easy to sharpen but loses its edge quickly and wears away fast; stainless steel is tougher to sharpen but keeps its edge longer. The salesperson should advise you so that you get a knife that suits your skills. Beyond that, it's a matter of what feels best.

How much should you look to spend on a really good set of knives?

I always feel that knife 'sets' are about decoration rather than work. Different types of knife will fit you better for different tasks, so it's extremely unlikely you'll get them all from the same manufacturer. I think of my knife roll as ever-evolving. New knives as my skills and needs develop; old ones retired as they wear out. In terms of price, I wouldn't baulk at spending £60 on a favourite main knife – a chef knife or Santoku – but I wouldn't be in the least bit shocked to fall in love with one that cost considerably more. I've currently got three basic chef knives in my collection, and I'd take any of them to a desert island. One cost £300, one £70, and one I found in my roll after catering a party – it looks like it cost a tenner. And all of them are brilliant in their own way.

Are there any 'knife accessories' you recommend as worthy purchases?

I use cheap plastic blade guards on my knives for safety when I'm transporting them and, when they're not on the knife rack, I store them in a metal toolbox.

Do you use any of your specific knives for unconventional purposes?

I have a specialised Japanese chicken boning knife that's very good at taking the insides out of tomatoes. And once, for a bet, I used my 'usuba' vegetable knife to shave. It stung for days!



Taste-tea

Lightly-sparkling, pleasantly-sour and super-healthy, kombucha is the drink du jour. From cleansing infusions to naughty cocktails, Louise Avery shows you how to DIY

Kombucha might be the word – and drink – on everybody's lips right now, but not everybody knows what it is. Quite simply, it's a fermented tea that's renowned for its myriad health benefits. What's more, unlike many other so-called elixirs, it actually tastes good... and it's easy to make your own at home. Whether you want a simple, unflavoured version, a floral treat, or a mocktail, these recipes have you covered.

KEY BENEFITS OF kombucha

Regular consumption may help to...

- Improve digestion and gut health
- Detox the liver
- Relieve joint pain
- Strengthen immunity
- Boost energy levels



Unflavoured kombucha

This basic recipe for making kombucha can vary depending on the type of tea used, and the steep. There is scope for experimentation once you gain confidence. Like anything, learning to brew a precise taste profile takes time.

Makes 2 litres

INGREDIENTS

- 2 litres water
- 2–3 tsp loose-leaf tea (I like a mixture of black and green) or 4–6 teabags, to taste
- 160g caster sugar
- 1 SCOBY (see right)
- 30ml distilled white vinegar or 125–200ml unflavoured kombucha (from a previous batch or store-bought)

Equipment

- a 2½ litre heatproof brewing jar, sterilised
- a tea ball (if using loose-leaf tea)
- a close-weave cotton cloth
- pH strips (optional)

METHOD

1. Bring the water to the boil in a large stainless steel saucepan. Leave the water in the pan or transfer to the heatproof brewing jar, as pictured. Add the tea (if using loose-leaf, put it in the tea ball) and allow to steep for 4–8 minutes, to taste. Remove the tea ball or bags and, using a wooden spoon, stir the sugar into the tea to dissolve. Allow to cool completely to room temperature (adding the SCOBY to hot water will damage it).
2. With clean hands, gently lower the SCOBY into the tea with the paler side facing upwards and any yeasty strands facing towards the bottom. Add the

vinegar or kombucha starter liquid.

3. Cover the jar with the cotton cloth and secure with an elastic band. Set aside at room temperature, out of direct sunlight, for at least 7 days.
4. After 7 days, taste the kombucha – you should notice a vinegary flavour. Taste daily; when you find the perfect balance of sweet and sour, it's time to bottle the kombucha for the secondary ferment. (I often wait 30 days – test with pH strips if you want to be certain it is ready to drink. The ideal range is between 2.8 and 3.2.)
5. Decant into bottles, leaving a 1cm air space at the top, then seal and refrigerate until ready to use.

The SCOBY

- This acronym stands for 'Symbiotic Culture of Bacteria and Yeast' – a living home for a mixture of bacteria and yeast that ferments sweetened tea, producing kombucha.
- The SCOBY colony ferments the tea by eating the sugar and producing enzymes and acids. In a similar way, living bacteria and yeasts are used to make natural ginger beer, kefir, vinegar and sourdough.
- I recommend buying a SCOBY from a well-known supplier, such as happykombucha.co.uk



Pear, cardamom & lime sour

I wanted to create an evening drink which was a viable non-alcoholic cocktail. This is the kombucha equivalent of a whisky sour – a refined drink that will be an instant favourite of guests who like to guess the secret ingredients.

Serves 2–4

INGREDIENTS

- 1–2 pears, juiced to yield 100–150ml juice
- ½ a lime, juice only
- seeds from 1 cardamom pod
- tiny pinch of salt
- 400ml unflavoured kombucha, to top up

Equipment

- a cold-press juicer
- 1 x 500ml glass bottle with airtight lid

METHOD

1. Pour into the bottle with the lime juice, cardamom seeds, salt and kombucha, leaving a 1cm air space at the top, then seal tightly.
2. Transfer the sealed bottle to the refrigerator and allow the cardamom seeds to infuse for at least 24 hours and up to 3 days.
3. Reawaken the juice the following day by giving the bottle a gentle shake, pour and enjoy. >>

Tip IF YOU'RE ENTERTAINING AND WANT TO MAKE THIS INTO AN ALCOHOLIC TREAT, TRY ADDING A SHOT OF WHITE RUM, VODKA, TEQUILA, OR A LIGHT WHISKY FOR A BOOZY KICK



5 minutes with Louise Avery

What first got you into drinking kombucha?

I fell in love at first taste six years ago on a trip to Vermont, where it was on draft in a health food store. I was excited that there was a fizzy drink which could have a positive effect on your health. On my return to the UK, I searched for a similar microbrewed version, and, unable to find one, started making my own.

What's your favourite recipe in the book?

I love the pear, cardamom and lime sour (see recipe), and also like to add neat kombucha to a Virgin Mary mix for a tangy kick.

Do you find drinking kombucha delivers any particular body benefits?

Yes, it helps remedy indigestion, boosts energy, and is a wonderful alternative to alcohol.

Have you converted friends and family to kombucha?

My friends and family have been supportive even with my most crude efforts six years ago. My American boyfriend is both my biggest fan and harshest critic – he's been drinking kombucha for over 10 years, and won't hesitate to tell me if I've messed up a batch.

Do you use your home-made kombucha anywhere else in your kitchen?

Not in cooking, as high heat kills the beneficial bacteria, but sometimes I use it as a base for salad dressings.

Your favourite places to drink kombucha?

Yauatcha in Soho has a couple of good kombucha brands on the menu, and I love Jarr Bar at Crate Brewery in Hackney where kombucha is on draft.

Rose petal tea

Rosebuds and rose petals create a delicate, fragrant kombucha that feels like a luxurious treat. You can purchase edible rose petals online or from health food shops, or pick roses from your garden and use them in cooking or brewing as long as they have not been exposed to chemicals.

Serves 2-4

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tsp dried rosebuds, 4 tsp fresh rose petals, or 1 tsp rosewater
- 500ml unflavoured kombucha

Equipment

- 1 x 500ml glass bottle with airtight lid

METHOD

1. Put the rosebuds, rose petals or rosewater in the bottle and top up with kombucha, leaving a 1cm air space at the top, then seal tightly.
2. Leave the sealed bottle at room temperature, out of direct sunlight, for 3 days before testing for carbonation.

Refrigerate when the taste and fizz are to your liking. Serve cold.



From *Living Tea* by Louise Avery, with photographs by Clare Winfield, published by Ryland Peters & Small. To order a copy for the special

price of £9.99 (RRP £12.99), call Macmillan Direct on 01256 302 699 and quote 'HU5'.



Tip CHERRY BLOSSOM MAKES A WONDERFUL ALTERNATIVE TO ROSE PETALS IN EARLY SPRING



Blood orangeade

I lived in Rome for a long time, and every morning between December and May, I would go to the market square in Trastevere and sit by the fountain and order a freshly-squeezed blood orange juice with my morning coffee.

Serves 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- 1 blood orange, juiced to yield around 100ml
- 500ml unflavoured kombucha
- a few drops of Angostura bitters, to serve
- a twist of orange peel, to garnish (optional)

Equipment

- 1 x 500ml glass bottle with airtight lid

METHOD

1. Add the freshly-squeezed blood orange juice to the bottle, top up with the kombucha, leaving a 1cm air space at the top, then seal tightly.
2. Leave the sealed bottle at room temperature for 1 day, then refrigerate for up to 1 week before serving.
3. Serve cold in ice-filled glasses with a few drops of Angostura bitters. Garnish with a twist of orange peel, if using.



Sleek modernist glassware is the perfect way to serve iced tea



Time for tea

Forget the quick cuppa - turn a delicious brew into something worth lingering over



This stylish stainless steel strainer transforms making loose-leaf tea into an art form



Where to find it

1. Harlequin Collection Cup & Saucer, £40, wedgwood.co.uk
2. Personalised teacup and saucer, £12.95, thekitchengiftco.com
3. Tom Dixon Tank Jug, £95, heals.com
4. Glass teapot, £27.95, theteamakers.co.uk
5. Skulls cup and saucer set, £20, Natural History Museum, nhmshop.co.uk
6. Tea for one set, £32, anthropologie.com
7. Miss Darcy teacup, £17, bombayduck.com
8. Alice in Wonderland tea party teapot, £35, whittard.co.uk
9. Tom Dixon Etch the Clipper Polly, £12, johnlewis.com
10. Ted Baker Portmeirion Rosie Lee teaspoons, £18 (set of four), portmeirion.co.uk
11. Pip Studio teapot, £50, johnlewis.com

MADE USING
THE SAME
UNIQUE
BREWING
PROCESS
AS IT WAS
IN 1903



WE SAY "CHING DOW"

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drinkaware.co.uk for the facts

Well-connected

The feed feed

Your in-print guide to the best of online: the websites to bookmark, the blogs to subscribe to, and the social feeds to follow

Gone viral

PLANT BUTCHERY

Forget fake meats whose tastes and textures blandly emulate the real thing – this trend sees vegetables treated just like their animal counterparts. From pulled barbecue jackfruit to veggie burgers which ‘bleed’ beet juice, it’s a novel way to get your five-a-day.

Try the trend: Read *Vegetable Butcher* Cara Mangini’s column on thekitchn.com

Blogroll

WHAT THE BLOGGERATI DO WITH... BLOOD ORANGES

‘WhiteOnRice’ couple Todd and Diane supercharge a G&T. whiteonricecouple.com



Thyme & Honey’s Gabriella creates a fennel & blood orange salad. thymeandhoney.co.uk

Edd ‘The Boy Who Bakes’ Kimber fancies up DIY Jaffa Cakes. theboywhobakes.co.uk



From blog to book

At just 20 years old, blogger Flora Shedden is publishing *Gatherings* – expect more of the gorgeously-styled-and-shot dishes and straightforward recipes that earned her such a loyal following. (£25, Octopus)



Fill your basket

THE FOODIE BUGLE SHOP

The online marketplace for this bath-based shop-tearoom will make your cupboards – and home – the envy of your friends. thefoodiebugleshop.com

Insider info

Want to know where London’s chefs, artisan producers and fooderati eat, drink, shop and hang out? tastetrippler.com’s ‘locals’ section reveals all – including a profile of Good Things’ editor, Zoë Perrett.



My style on a plate @FRAISE_SAUVAGE

Frais Sauvage pastry chef Terri Mercieca’s latest, greatest creations...

Dessert collection for Harrods

Rhubarb and fraise de Bois self-saucing cheesecake with berry milk crumbs and English sparkling wine jelly

Bergamot posset with tonic jelly and marshmallow, mandarin, juniper and fresh citrus fruits

PAY A VISIT fraisesauvage.com



Who I follow

Insta-picks from Nuno Mendes (@nunoviajante)

@**tataeatery** I’m always curious to see how Meng and Ana are merging Portuguese and Chinese cuisines.

@**leocarreira** A dear friend and incredibly talented chef. I can’t wait for his new restaurant to open.

@**sebastianm86** This sarcastic Aussie chef looks at food in an exciting way which I really connect with.



FRESHEN UP YOUR FEEDS

 @**kaleandhearty** Healthy, beautifully-shot recipes and lifestyle inspo from Leonie Lee and team.

 @**ladytredwell** Behind the scenes with chef Chantelle Nicholson - Marcus Wareing’s right-hand woman.

 **Etsy** It’s not just an online crafter’s marketplace. Etsy’s Youtube channel shows you how to DIY. youtube.com/user/etsy



WAVING NOT DROWNING In this podcast, *the-pool.com*’s agony aunt Viv dishes out life advice



Sow, cook, heal

Caz Hildebrand takes a fresh look at herbs; from growing and cooking to rustling up your own home remedies

*Echinacea is...
great for immunity,
striking to look at, perfect
for decorating the home*

Echinacea

The name comes from the Greek for 'hedgehog' because of the conical seed head's prickly scales

GROW An attractive garden plant in its own right, Echinacea needs full sun and fertile, well-drained soil. Avoid damp spots. Sow seeds under cover as early as possible in the year to allow for maximum growth.

CONSUME Make an echinacea tea with dried echinacea leaves, lemongrass, spearmint and stevia leaves to taste.

HEAL Take an infusion of fresh leaves for colds, chills and 'flu. Tinctures treat urinary infections; mouthwash a sore throat; a cream can be applied to boils and sores. High doses can cause nausea.

Parsley

Legendary 19th-century food writer Mrs Beeton calls this herb 'the emblem of joy and festivity'.

GROW Parsley's Med origins mean that it grows best – usually from seed – in moist, well-drained soil, in full sun.

CONSUME Great with almost all savoury ingredients. Make a salsa verde: finely chop 2 garlic cloves, 2 tbsp capers, 6 anchovies, 2 large handfuls of flat-leaf parsley and a small bunch each of basil and mint. Mix with 1 tbsp Dijon mustard and 3 tbsp red wine vinegar, then stir in enough extra virgin olive oil to make a thick sauce. Season, taste, and tweak the flavour to your liking.

HEAL Whizz a bunch into any juice, or infuse it in boiling water for 20 minutes. Parsley tea is a good source of iron and can help to clear a troublesome complexion. >>

*Parsley is...
verdant, a natural breath
freshener, supremely versatile,
rich in iron and superb for skin*

*Oregano is...
a natural anti-
inflammatory that
brings a taste of the
Med to your cooking*

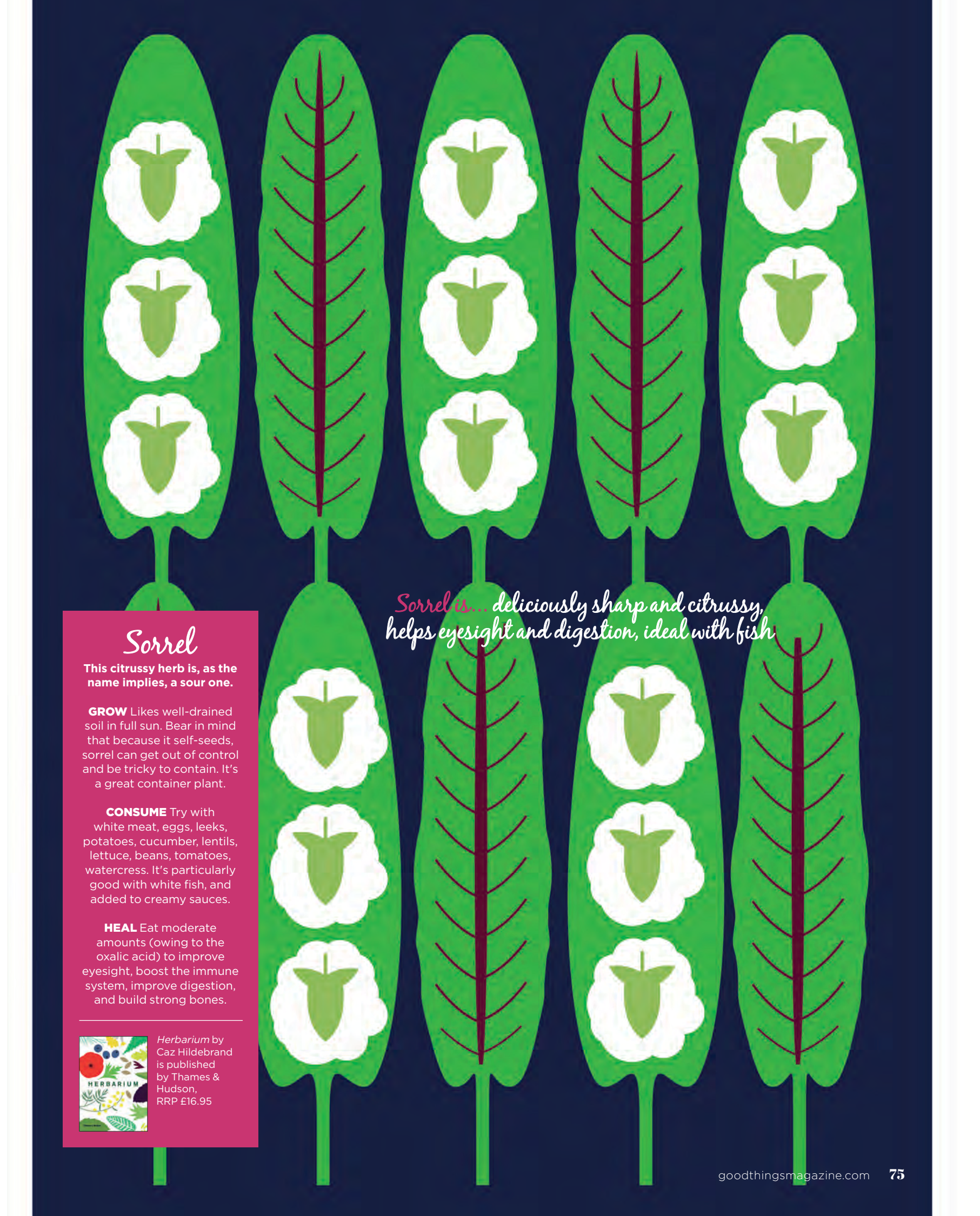
Oregano

The herb's hint of camphor and warm, slightly sharp taste is best communicated by stewing, not frying.

GROW Start it indoors from seed or cuttings, and transplant it outside to well-drained, sunny soil when temperatures rise above 7°C.

CONSUME Lovely with most meats, fish, shellfish, chickpeas, root veg, cabbage, spinach, peppers, tomatoes, eggs, garlic, citrus fruits. Add to tomato sauce for an authentic Italian flavour, include in stuffings for vegetables, add to marinades, and infuse into syrup for citrus sorbet.

HEAL A natural anti-inflammatory and painkiller, used to treat respiratory tract and gastro disorders, acne and dandruff.



Sorrel

This citrusy herb is, as the name implies, a sour one.

GROW Likes well-drained soil in full sun. Bear in mind that because it self-seeds, sorrel can get out of control and be tricky to contain. It's a great container plant.

CONSUME Try with white meat, eggs, leeks, potatoes, cucumber, lentils, lettuce, beans, tomatoes, watercress. It's particularly good with white fish, and added to creamy sauces.

HEAL Eat moderate amounts (owing to the oxalic acid) to improve eyesight, boost the immune system, improve digestion, and build strong bones.

Sorrel is... deliciously sharp and citrusy, helps eyesight and digestion, ideal with fish.



Herbarium by
Caz Hildebrand
is published
by Thames &
Hudson,
RRP £16.95

In the mood for **COLOUR**

There's nothing like a little early spring sunshine to make you want to grab a paint brush and brighten up your home. Hans Blomquist, Swedish stylist and art director, offers colourful advice

Mellow yellow

When it comes to choosing a bold yellow colour for your home, you can either go for a clear, bright shade inspired by sunflowers and rapeseed flowers, or opt for a dirtier mustard tone. All yellows work equally well as the main and accent colours, but pure yellow shades will result in a lighter and brighter interior, whereas duller, greener yellows will create a slightly moodier look, so your choice is all down to the effect you are hoping to achieve. To my mind, you can never really go wrong when you choose a yellow colour scheme for your home, as it will always give you a happy outlook and be comfortable to live with.

"All yellows work equally well..."

GO FOR A CLEAR, BRIGHT SHADE INSPIRED
BY SUNFLOWERS AND RAPESEED
FLOWERS, OR OPT FOR A DIRTIER
MUSTARD TONE"

"Grey is a very easy colour to work with..."

WHETHER YOU PREFER A PARED-DOWN LOOK
OR A FULLER AND MORE DECORATED STYLE,
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO CREATE AN INVITING
AND CHIC SPACE"

Elegant grey

Smoky grey walls make any room feel supremely elegant. It's a very easy colour to work with when it comes to furnishing the space, as nearly everything looks good with grey. Whether you prefer a pared-down look or a fuller and more decorated style, you'll be able to create an inviting and chic space that will be easy to live in. If you are someone who likes to change and update furniture, accessories or textiles, a grey backdrop will make things simple, as this flexible neutral works successfully with any other colour. Soft pastels will look as good against it as a scheme made up of other neutrals, and if you want to add pops of brighter colours, you won't fail either. Easy on the eye, smoky grey is a safe option for walls and I am sure you will be very happy with the result. >>





Spring greens

Adding touches of green to your home – whether in the form of plants, furniture or accessories – makes any room come to life. Mixing different green hues together and introducing them as colour accents in either a dark or light interior will give equally beautiful results. Combining the more muted range of green shades with either bright or soft pastels will look very natural and will give you a subtle, tonal display. Working with the same colour base but mixing darker tones with the lighter shades achieves a very textural look with great depth, but it also gives a multi-coloured effect, even though the shades are all from the same colour range.

*"Makes any room
come to life..."*

COMBINING THE MORE
MUTED RANGE OF
GREEN SHADES WITH
EITHER BRIGHT OR
SOFT PASTELS WILL
LOOK VERY NATURAL
AND WILL GIVE YOU
A SUBTLE, TONAL
DISPLAY"

Snow white

White is the first choice for many when it comes to choosing colours for their home. In Sweden, where I am from, it is certainly the preferred colour for walls, and often for furniture, too. I have a conflicting relationship with all-white interiors: I love their fresh, pure look, but at the same time they can feel a little boring and safe. To create a successful pale interior, it is important to work with layers of different textures and the lighter shades of various pigments, and to add vintage surfaces into the mix.



"I love the fresh, pure look of white..."

IT'S IMPORTANT TO WORK WITH LAYERS OF DIFFERENT TEXTURES AND THE LIGHTER SHADES OF VARIOUS PIGMENTS, AND TO ADD VINTAGE SURFACES INTO THE MIX"



"I am a huge fan of dark colours..."

THEY HAVE SUCH IMPACT AND CREATE A SENSE OF DRAMA, YET AT THE SAME TIME GIVE A VERY CALM AND COCOONING FEELING"

Moody blues

Dark and moody colours can be hard to digest for some but are loved by others. Many people may long to try them but don't dare to take the bold step of adding deeper shades to their home. I am a huge fan of dark colours and wish I had used more of them in my own home. They have such impact and create a sense of drama yet at the same time give a very calm and cocooning feeling. The different dark pigments to choose from include deepest indigo, inky black, thunder grey and earthy brown shades. Variations on these colours will work well with any style of architecture and decor, whether your home is super-modern or more traditional.



From *In the Mood for Colour* by Hans Blomquist, with photography by Debi Treloar and Hans Blomquist, published by Ryland Peters & Small, RRP £19.99

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Travel & Culture

Frosty Finland • Island feasting in Jamaica • Exploring Asturias

Art of the countryside

There's nowhere prettier to spend an autumn afternoon than a stroll through the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. The forest has its own Sculpture Trail - a 3½ mile loop that takes in 17 sculptures. Our favourite is this 15-foot stained glass window that gives the forest an amazing cathedral effect. forestofdean-sculpture.org.uk

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Lift off

Marvel at the world's most beautiful airport terminals

p116

Gourmet Greece

The new cuisine of the Cyclades

p96

Silver screen style

Movie stars and modernism in Palm Springs

The travel edit

The hot ticket destinations this month, guaranteed to beat those winter blues



WHAT TO WEAR... in Marrakech

To take in the exotic sights and sounds of Marrakech, invest in this season's colourful prints, and don't be afraid to clash with dash. Stay in a Riad, we love the Almaha (above), and immerse yourself in the culture.



1. Pony print mules, riverisland.com
2. Capri earrings, maviada.co.uk
3. Trouser suit, Max Mara Weekend, houseoffraser.com



Chefs making waves

Enjoy a cooking masterclass or gastronomic shore excursions with a host of top chefs. P&O Cruises has signed up Marco Pierre White, Eric Lanlard, Atul Kochhar, and James Martin for cruises during the year. Olly Smith will also be sharing his love of fine wines on selected dates. From £499 for seven nights in March. pocruises.co.uk



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

How about renting a luxury lakeside property in Muskoka in Canada? Two hours north of Toronto, this beautiful region is known as the 'Hamptons of the North' - so you can be sure of great restaurants and shops to tick the retail therapy boxes.
jaynescottages.com



DANCE LIKE NO ONE'S WATCHING

Festival lovers have two legendary weekends coming up. SXM Festival on St Martin in the Caribbean (15-19 March) features some of the world's global house and techno bands (sxmfestival.com), while at Coachella, the A-list's go-to Californian festival (mid-April), the fashion is as important as the music. Make sure you dress to impress (coachella.com).

HOT TICKET IN HAMPSHIRE *Luxury hotel and spa Chewton Glen is opening a bespoke cookery school and restaurant from 1 March, fronted by James*

DATES FOR THE DIARY

You can always rely on Lonely Planet for great inspiration and advice. Now all those great ideas are contained in one beautiful new book, *Where To Go When* (£19.99), containing 30 suggestions for each month of the year.

3 of the best FEBRUARY

The Blue Mountains, Australia
Ta Prohm, Cambodia
Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania



3 of the best MARCH

Pigeon Point beach, Tobago
Almond blossom, Moscarì, Mallorca
Rice terraces, Vietnam



WIN! a luxury weekend in London

For probably the best view in the Capital, the Cheval Three Quays is a must-stay addition to your wish list. Luxurious and perfectly placed overlooking the Thames, right next to Tower Bridge and The Shard, with the Shard framed in your bedroom window, the location has wow factor all the way. Inside is pretty special too - why book a hotel room when you can have a whole apartment for much the same price, including a luxurious bedroom, bathroom, sitting room and bijoux, fully equipped kitchen? There's even a balcony so you can really relish the spectacular view.

One lucky *Good Things* reader and a plus-one will win a two-night stay in a river view apartment at Cheval Three Quays. The prize includes an organic welcome hamper, continental breakfast, use of the gym, free WiFi, and a bottle of chilled Champagne to start the weekend off in fine style.

For more details of Cheval Three Quays and other Cheval Residences across London, see chevalresidences.com

T&Cs The prize is valid from 1 April to 31 December 2017, and all dates are subject to availability. Travel to London is not included. There are no cash alternatives to the prize and winners must be over 18 years of age.



ENTER ONLINE

Go to goodthingsmagazine.com/chevalthreequays by 31 March



We love
 ...laredoute.co.uk
 for affordable
 swimwear for all
 shapes and sizes.
 Everything has
 a nice dollop of
 French chic.



The taste of a place

Four Seasons has launched 27 Taste the Place experiences looking at local culinary traditions, from a gastro tour of hams and cheeses in Parma, to high altitude dining in the Rockies involving a helicopter and cocktails on a glacier! fourseasons.com



Martin. Expect guest chef slots from fellow kitchen maestros Tom Kerridge, Richard Corrigan, and Dan Doherty (chewtonglen.com/thekitchen)



"The best biscuit for
cheese out there"

2015 Great Taste Awards judges



The natural
choice for
cheese.



www.petersyard.com



PETER'S YARD



Hotel of the month

The PIG at Combe

A former Tudor pile in the Otter Valley is now the ultimate in quintessential country weekends

The long drive from the quiet Devonian village entrance to the PIG at Combe, up to the door of the Elizabethan mansion-turned-luxury bolthole gives you time to decompress. By the time you step into the enormous great hall – now a bar complete with roaring fire and jolly staff – you’re ready for a weekend in the country comprised solely of the highlights of rural living. Borrow wellies to stomp around the

3,000 acres, and indulge in organic cuisine including mammoth breakfasts. Explore the enormous kitchen garden which supplies the dining room’s inventive British menus with heirloom species. An old folly has been transformed into a casual café space that seriously ticks the ‘rustic luxe’ box, the Potting Shed offers gorgeous massages, and the spacious Laundry bedroom suite features a round copper bath big enough to accommodate several adults.

thepighotel.com



FLYING THE FLAG for high style

They say the journey is as important as the destination - and when yours takes you through one of these beautiful airports, it certainly adds a little je ne sais quoi to the experience

LLEIDA-ALGUAIRE

CATALONIA, SPAIN

All that remains of the period of excess that preceded the Spanish recession are herds of white elephants throughout the country. One such project is this airport. Designed to have an annual capacity of 400,000 passengers, it now welcomes fewer than 40,000. Despite being relatively inactive, the airport is still impressive architecturally. Designed by Spanish architect Fermín Vázquez, it boasts a 133-foot control tower, and side walls are curved where they join the roof of the terminal building, resulting in an unusually unified space. The cladding on the front of the building is striking and refreshing: metal plates in various shades of olive, green and brown decorate the tower and roofs in homage to the colours of the surrounding countryside.



MARRAKESH MENARA

MARRAKESH, MOROCCO

Once used by people fleeing the country, this airport has become a classic example of the way in which modernity and tradition can be combined. Working in partnership with E2A of Casablanca, French firm CR Architecture created one of the world's most beautiful airports. The curved concrete roof of Terminal One features rhombus cutouts in the roof of the overhang, allowing sunlight to enter and create fantastical shadows. Large triangular windows are painted with Arabian designs. The ceiling of the building, officially opened in 2008, is a steel structure clad in white aluminium. Instead of glass, the numerous skylights feature pyramids made of photovoltaic modules, set on the diamond-shaped windows in order to generate power. They, too, are arranged along traditional lines.

THE ART OF THE AIRPORT
THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL TERMINALS

TXL	MAD	JED
CPH	MUC	JFK
RAK	STN	LED
SZX	ILD	MVD
WLG	SDU	KIX
ROS	DCY	90NM
XXX	BOM	CDG

The Art of the Airport: The World's Most Beautiful Terminals by Laura Frommberg, Stefan Eiselin & Alexander Gutzmer is published by Frances Lincoln, RRP £25

WELLINGTON



WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

An ancient legend about two sea monsters who created the dangerous cliffs now known as Cook Strait inspired the architects at Studio Pacific Architecture and Warren and Mahoney to create 'The Rock', a building intended to appear from the outside like the cliffs. Elaborately-worked copper plates on the front of the building mimic the cliffs' wild, angular structure, the material reflecting light like water on stones. With time, the copper will take on new and vibrant colours. Internally, The Rock's warm, wild feel is achieved through apt choice of materials and astutely-positioned high windows that allow focused pools of light to enter. Where possible, ramps are used in place of steps and escalators.

ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

The architectural aim was to provide passengers with a foretaste of St. Petersburg's famous skyline, and the arrivals hall ceiling is a modern, inverted version of the famous roofs. The windows feature traditional patterns and create the impression of modern church windows. By extending the buildings into various island areas and using a large number of bridges, the designers hope to recall the landscape of the city and its many canals. Open areas give travellers the same kind of feeling that they might have in one of the old imperial capital's many squares. As the first and last place visitors see, the architects believe that the role of the airport is crucial in forming their impressions.

PULKOVO





IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC

Georgina Wilson-Powell spends an extremely cool weekend chilling out at Sweden's ICEHOTEL





Polar bear, polar bear, polar bear,' I mutter under my breath. I'm kneeling in deep drifts of snow in the midst of a pine tree grove trying to light a fire. The small stack of twigs and birch bark peelings, arranged like a hashtag, is smouldering. A few minutes ago there was a flame, but now I have eyefuls of smoke.

'That's it,' says Johannes, our wilderness survival guide. 'If you get smoke in your eyes you have to say polar bear.' Daft mutterings aside, in just over three hours he has taught us to light a fire with nothing but flint and soggy twigs whilst knee-deep in snowdrifts, showed us how to survive in a snowstorm and made pine needle tea – which took an hour to bring to the boil on our sad excuse for a fire.

The battle won, we kick snow over our hard-fought fires and head back to Sweden's ICEHOTEL across the frozen Torne river.

It's this river, the last unpolluted river in Sweden, that gives up 1,000 tonnes of frozen water every spring to create-crystal clear blocks of ice – most weighing over a tonne.

The frozen palace

While the ICEHOTEL looks more like a low-slung igloo complex when it emerges from the snow every December, this year it has a taller sister hotel, the ICEHOTEL 365, which will be kept at -5°C all year round, meaning you can sleep on ice even in summer. It's a 15-minute drive from Kiruna airport in the north west – I'm above the Arctic Circle and, in December, sunlight only hits the frozen snow for around an hour a day. In January, there are just 20 minutes of non-darkness.

I visit the 27th ICEHOTEL just before Christmas. At this time of year the temperature is usually -15°C. This year, it's hovering around 0°C, but feels a lot colder. Everyone gets one night 'sleeping cold'; each of the art suites is a different fantastical ice landscape, each like sleeping in a different dream. Every year, the ICEHOTEL chooses a number of artists to create the icy rooms, but this year a number of suites in the new all-year-round hotel have their own (warm)>>





*‘The trick is to create something out of nothing;
a hotel from water, art from ice’*

bathrooms and saunas, plus ice armchairs, ice goblets and a bottle of bubbly. It feels like a Bond villain's lair from the Seventies.

Each of the ice suites are open for people to look around during the day, and I pop into each in turn, glimpsing staircases, huge-type letters, fantastical fawns and even bear paws the height of the room – all carved with fantastic precision from the icy blocks. Each room glitters like a frosty fantasy, and each has a double bed with reindeer skins waiting for the night's visitors to snuggle down.

‘Don't take off your makeup or wash your face three hours before you go to bed, or it will freeze on your face,’ advises one of the dressing room staff. I start to feel a little apprehensive about our eight hours sleeping amongst the icy flames in our room.

At bedtime, we cosy up in a double sleeping bag, take selfies, and sleep in icy silence.

Out on the ice

The ICEHOTEL sits on the bank of its life-giving river, which freezes every winter, enabling a range of activities from tobogganing and sleigh rides to snowmobile tours. The next night, I mount a snowmobile for the second time in my life and gun the engine. I shoot forward, slide out across the ice, and follow my guide into the darkness. Out here the only light pollution comes from the small village surrounding the hotel where

dogs outnumber people five to one.

We head along snowy tracks, through forests coated with snow like a pouring of thick cream, and get up higher into snowy fields to try and see the northern lights. Up here the dancing hues of pink and green are visible between October and April, but on a freezing foggy night I wasn't lucky enough to see them. Further up the snowmobile track, we stop for a wilderness dinner. Traditional Sami wooden huts are circular with a fire in the middle and everyone sits facing in. A steaming hot bowl of reindeer stew chases the night's cold away, while a large dollop of lingonberries in the centre adds a sweet-savoury kick. The fire leaps and licks the birch trunks, and it's all too easy to drift off into a half-sleep in this simple cabin in the woods.

Lighting the flame

‘Three, three, three,’ reminds Johannes the next day as we gather to learn how to make a

fire in the snow. ‘You can survive without food for three weeks, without water for three days and without oxygen for three minutes.’

He is the archetypal Scandinavian guide: sensible, hardy, preferring nature to nightclubs. He lends us knives and flints and shows us how to create fire. Magnesium sparks fly off the flint like magic, our hour of daylight disappears, and we're lit by headtorch, trying to conjure magic into heat, sparks into fire. It's a lot harder than it looks.

As is the ICEHOTEL's ice-sculpting class. Breeze blocks of ice sit frozen to columns ready to take on whatever form I can perform my magic on. Much like the rest of the ICEHOTEL, the trick is to create something out of nothing; a hotel from water, art from ice. I end up with something that resembles a melting house. I step back, defeated, and leave it to the professionals. I'm content to let the ICEHOTEL work its tricks while I merely enjoy them – art from ice, a hotel from water.

Make it real

Travel from the UK to experience **ICEHOTEL #27** from London Heathrow to Kiruna on Discover the World's exclusive, direct 3 ½ hour **ICEFLIGHT**, operating from December through to March.

Three-night breaks at **ICEHOTEL**

#27 from £1,070pp B&B, based on two sharing (one night on ice and two in warm accommodation), including return flights from London Heathrow to Kiruna, airport transfers and a sauna. Book at **discover-the-world.co.uk/icehotel** or on **01737 214 291**.

Hitting new heights

When it comes to long-haul flying, there's a lot to be said for an airline that believes in creature comforts, from departure to landing and beyond...



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See p121 for your chance to win two Cathay Pacific business class tickets

Far-flung travel equates to significant time in the sky, so why settle for less than the best? If you're inspired to visit a new and exotic destination, you want to be sure you're travelling in high style – and there's no better way to do that than with five-star airline Cathay Pacific.

Now offering flights from Gatwick as well as Heathrow and Manchester, the fabulously design-centric carrier believes in 'life well-travelled'; not to mention pampering its passengers with state-of-the-art amenities at every opportunity, from check-in right through to landing.

Passengers using the new Gatwick service will be able to enjoy the spacious Airbus A350 aircraft which refreshes cabin air every three minutes, so you should arrive feeling that little bit more refreshed, too.

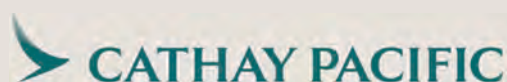
There are also sumptuous new Business and First Class Lounges at Heathrow, beautifully designed by celebrated interiors

guru Ilse Crawford, so you can wait for your flight in style and comfort.

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Whether you're yet to fly with Cathay Pacific, or have already had the pleasure, it's safe to say you're in for a journey that's as memorable as the holiday itself.

For more details, and to book your next flight, go to cathaypacific.com



ONE love

Charlotte Ellis discovers the heart and soul of Jamaica on a gourmet escape to the Caribbean



Burwood Beach in Trelawny

Think Jamaican food and, no doubt, jerk chicken, rice and peas is one of the first dishes to pop into your head. And while that national treasure is the islanders' go-to favourite, Jamaica's cuisine has so much more to offer.

As land of the Rastafari, who follow a strict 'ital' (vegan) diet, Jamaica was championing vegan cuisine long before the rise of today's insta-famous #eatclean tribes. The lusciously green country quite literally bursts with delicious organic produce; bananas and plantain, avocados (known as pears), ackee, almonds, coconuts, mangoes, pawpaw, yams, lemongrass, peppers – and that's just scratching the surface.

Making vegetables sexy

Lisa and her husband Chris, the duo behind Stush in the Bush (stushinthebush.com) have

made 'sexy vegetarianism' into a fine art. At their impressive home in the hills, Zionites Farm in the parish of Saint Ann, they offer a must-try farm-to-table dining experience.

The pair's hilarious daughters – and front-of-house team – greet us with a rum and lemongrass iced tea. With the pet dogs also present, it's like turning up at a family home for Christmas. The vibe is super relaxed, with breathtaking views of the north of the island.

Seasonal menus are determined by what's ripe on the 15-acre organic farm. Our lunch begins with guacamole, chimichurri with plantain chips and spicy pumpkin soup with focaccia. Impressive platters of freshly-picked leaves, green beans tossed in garlic, beetroot carpaccio, and baby fennel in passionfruit dressing are complemented by delicious wine.

And that's just for starters. Vegan pizzas arrive, topped with callaloo – Jamaica's most

popular greens – aubergines and plantain, made exceptional with the addition of Lisa's infamous Blow Fyah Gourmet Pepper Sauce. Coconut bread and Lisa's home-made preserves wrap up the feast.

Chris tells us how the daily swallowing of a minuscule pepper that he grows has lowered his high blood pressure and, when my friend presents a recently-twisted ankle, he massages in a potion containing huge centipedes soaked in rum and hemp. Over the course of the next few hours, the ankle returns to normal – as if by magic. Definitely nothing to do with the Malbec.

Island feasting

Bustling Ocho Rios lies a 45-minute drive over the hill. Set back from the street vendors, crowds and honking car horns is Miss T's, a favourite haunt of Jamaicans island-wide. >>



Crab cakes

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

For the jerk mayonnaise

- 200g mayonnaise
- ½-1 tbsp jerk sauce, or to taste

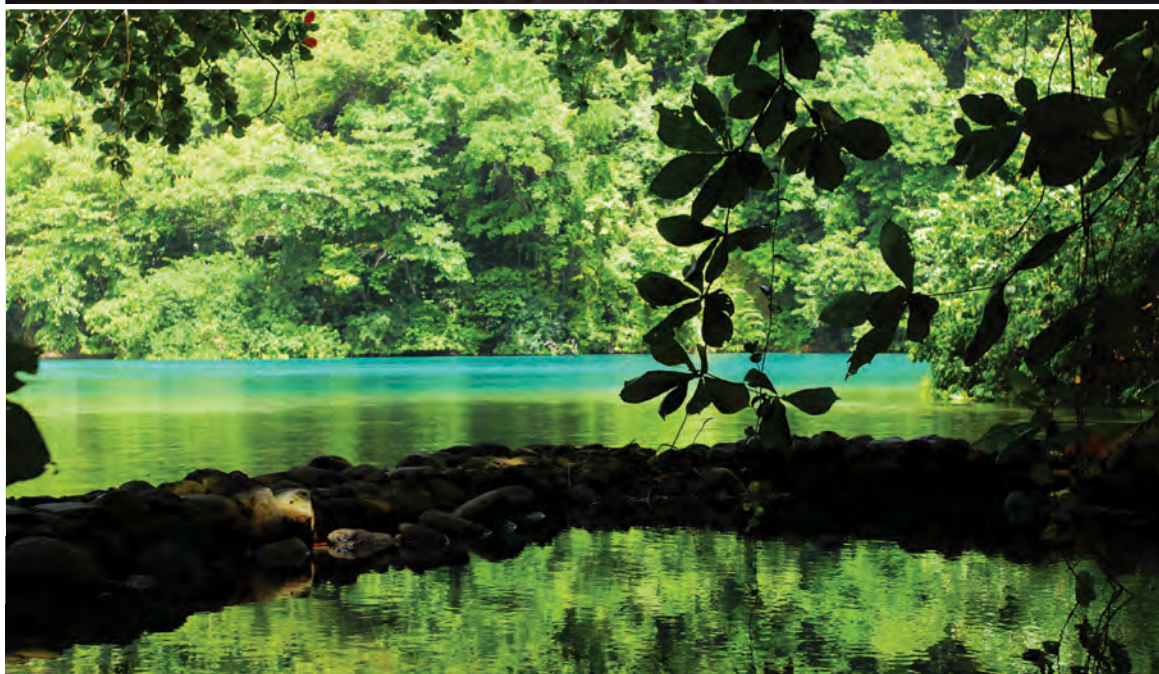
For the crab cakes

- 350g flaked white crabmeat
- 2-3 tbsp finely chopped spring onion
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 300g potatoes, boiled
- vegetable oil, for deep-frying
- salt and black pepper

METHOD

1. For the jerk mayonnaise, mix the mayonnaise with your chosen amount of jerk sauce and refrigerate until needed.
2. For the fishcakes, combine the crabmeat, spring onion, onion, lemon juice and a pinch each of salt and black pepper in a large bowl.
3. Using a coarse grater, grate the potatoes, add to the crab mixture, and mix well. Form the mixture into evenly-sized cakes
4. Heat the oil for deep-frying and carefully fry the cakes until golden-brown on both sides. Serve with the jerk mayonnaise, garnish and lemon.

Recipe courtesy of Barbara Walker from the Mockingbird Hill Hotel



Jamaican breakfast (below) and Snapper (left) by chef Christopher Golding at The Sugar Mill Restaurant



Exploring the Rio Grande



Old Tavern Coffee Estate



Visit this shack-style restaurant for a taste of very good home-style cooking – ‘all of our favourite food, cooked just like mama’s’ says Cheree, our guide. Rich oxtail stew with butterbeans and dumplings melts in the mouth. Whole jerked snapper is fiery. Succulent coconut lobster is packed with flavour, as is ‘barbie-fry’ chicken in a tomato and pepper sauce. On the side, we dig into copious quantities of plantains and rice and peas. There’s no fear of ever going hungry.

East of the island, over yet more hills – you can’t get far without conquering hills and windy roads – is Port Antonio Bay. Hop on a raft (about \$72US for two) and sail 45 minutes down the spellbinding Rio Grande to Belinda’s, where Belinda herself prepares exceptional food over a big open fire. Ask your raft captain to call ahead to place your order – we chose crayfish coconut rundown, featuring gargantuan, river-fresh crayfish in a secret coconut and pepper sauce served with bammy (a dense type of fried bread), and savoury-doughnut-like festival. We’ve never been so happy to get our hands (and faces) dirty: this is an absolute taste sensation, and a chilled bottle of Red Stripe offers the perfect accompaniment.

Traditional with a twist

A 30-minute drive from the Rio Grande in Port Antonio, you’ll find eco-friendly, hilltop hideaway Mockingbird Hill Hotel (hotelmockingbirdhill.com), owned and run by Shireen Aga and keen chef Barbara Walker.

Before dinner, we enjoy a Mockingbird Mojito and the blissful ocean views. Barbara’s sophisticated adaptation of typical Jamaican dishes is peppered with inspirations from her extensive travels; we try a dense, delicious fishcake, jerk chicken skewers with the lightest, coconut milk-soaked bammy, local fish in Italian-style pomodoro sauce. We think we have room for nothing else, then devour bananas baked in rum and coconut.

The luxurious Half Moon Hotel (halfmoon.com) is yet another great place to stay in Montego Bay – and one of Prince Harry’s favourites. Head chef Christopher Golding serves finely-crafted dishes; oxtail is stuffed

into elegant ravioli, jerk chicken takes on the guise of bite-sized arancini, and smoked local fish is served as ceviche. It’s all wonderful. Like a rock star, finish your meal with a glass of Appleton Rum on the rocks.

For a taste of Kingston, do as the Obamas and the Camerons do, and stay at the retro high-rise Pegasus Hotel (jamaicapegasus.com), where the amazing ice cream was voted fourth best in the world. After (or, indeed, before) that sweet treat, dine on steamed snapper with lime and caper sauce and sweet potato pudding at Red Bones (redbonesbluecafe.com), a favourite of both the Rolling Stones and Grace Jones.

Make it real

- The **best time to visit** is December – April.
- **Fly** with Virgin Atlantic (virginatlantic.com) from London Gatwick direct to Montego Bay.
- To **see the best** of the island, hire a car – or a driver. Jermaine from Paradise Travels (paradisetravelsinjamaica.com) knows every nook, cranny, bend and hotspot in Jamaica. He also has an excellent reggae collection.
- **Head up the picturesque Blue Mountains** to Old Tavern Coffee Estate, the wonderful home of David and Christine Twyman, whose plantation produces beans that are a favourite of our Queen. On a tour, you’ll see beans being picked and roasted. Christine and David have grand plans to build an eco-village where guests can stay – watch this space.
- While in the mountains, **watch helicopters** shuttling

the likes of Beyoncé and Jay Z from the airport to the luxurious, eco-conscious Strawberry Hill hotel. Visit Eits Cafe – this hotspot offers great fusion farm-to-table organic food.

- Keen rum drinker? **Take a trip** to the 18th-century Hampden Estate (hampdenrumcompany.com) for a tour, tasting, and meal at Jerk Kitchen. For more information, see visitjamaica.com



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Movies & modernism

Ahead of this year's Modernism Week, Georgina Wilson-Powell explores the movie-star glamour of Palm Springs



Palm Springs has always been the epitome of Californian style, and visiting in 2016 is like taking a step back in time. The achingly-glamorous area is intimate but impressive; fuelled by movie star connections and beautiful modernist architecture. Take a trip and you, too, can experience A-List living.

Reel beginnings

Imagine being a hotshot actor in the Thirties or Forties, signed to a big LA studio with the caveat that you need to live within a two-hour drive. Palm Springs would have been top of your list. Here, everyone could be anyone.

The area's 20th-century history reads like a gossip column. Frank Sinatra was married at the Sunnyslands estate, and moved into Twin Palms with Ava Gardner. You can stay in his minimalist estate, which still bears the scar of a fight involving Gardner and a loaded gun!

Back then, cocktail hour never ended. The Rat Pack would spontaneously perform at places like the Riviera – one of the many glitzy hotels and bars anchoring each part of town. Meanwhile, local tennis clubs served up as many cocktails as they did aces.

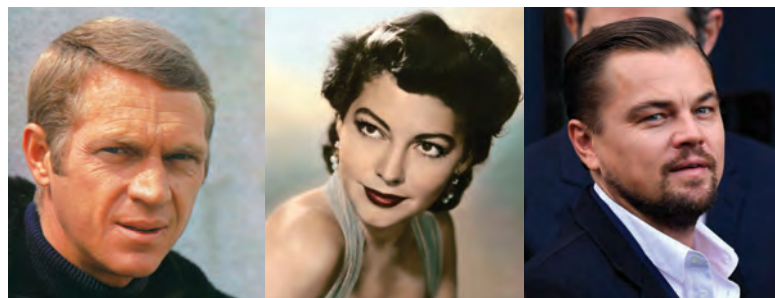
And it wasn't just actors who loved Palm Springs. Studio bosses like Samuel Goldwyn (MGM) and Jack Warner (Time Warner)



Perfect for posing
– The Parker

CELEB SPOTTING

The A-list have sparkled on Palm Spring down the decades, from Ava Gardner (centre) in the early Fifties, and Sixties heartthrob Steve McQueen (right), to 21st-century movie icon Leonardo diCaprio (far right)





BUILDING ON ITS HERITAGE

During the town's annual Modernism Week (16-26 February 2017), talks, workshops, parties, tours and auctions cover all aspects of mid-century modern architecture. modernismweek.com

Eating & drinking

It's always cocktail hour somewhere in town, so pull up a stool and order up.

MR. LYONS For the best steaks in the city and a slick 1920s New York vibe. mryonsp.com

KAISER GRILLE A 1950s-style menu in a classic mid-century modernist building. kaisergrille.com

LAS CASUELAS TERRAZA Head here to enjoy Mexican food, margaritas, and bands playing in the courtyard. lascasuelas.com

The modernism

Palm Springs is paradise for the mid-century architecture-lover and, with myriad tours and events, Modernism Week (16-26 February) offers a great excuse to explore.

In the Fifties and Sixties, local banks and businesses became clients of architects like Albert Frey, Walter Cody, Donald Wexler and A. Quincy Jones. Wander the downtown area to spot these buildings – the petrol station's huge angular canopy is an iconic visitor centre, and the previously-undesirable Uptown Design District is now decadent.

On the residential side, many of the hundreds of protected modernist homes in districts like Old Las Palmas have been carefully restored to their heydays: low-slung buildings sport butterfly roofs, floating car ports, and understated frontages hiding indoor/outdoor pools – and all sorts of stories. Houses once owned by Elvis Presley, Liberace, and Bette Davis look positively atomic.

A sunny outlook

Sunnylands is a Palm Springs institution. Built by diplomats and philanthropists the Annenbergs, the sprawling estate is an enormous open-plan space with floor-to-ceiling windows to make use of year-round sun. A pink statement roof extends into shade

strips, and industrial beams and lava stone walls cement the house's directional style. Presidents, actors, British royalty and global aristocracy have all been hosted – in its day, it was a veritable Californian Camp David.

Iconic local architect Albert Frey's Frey II house is perhaps the pinnacle of Palm Spring's modernist homes. Now owned by the art museum, opened occasionally for small tours, its creator spent a year tracking the sun in order to build the house at the right degree.

By combining natural resources with cheap industrial materials, he created something unique and exceptional. 50 years on, the town retains the same allure as it did when Frey completed his remarkable property.

Make it real

FLY to LA. Air New Zealand flies daily from London to LA. Return flights start from £514pp in Economy and £853 in Premium Economy. For latest fares, visit airnewzealand.co.uk

STAY at The Saguaro – a classic motel repainted to resemble a paint chart, where the pool and tequila bar attract the cool crowd. saguaro.com
More information at palmsprings.com

commissioned estates, and the cinematic connection has endured. Steve McQueen was a resident, *Diamonds Are Forever* was filmed in the Bob Hope house, and *Ocean's Eleven* was shot partly in local homes. Today, Leonardo DiCaprio owns the old Dinah Shore house backing onto Kirk Douglas' place.

Celebrity favourite The Parker is all about retro Palm Springs glamour. Cabanas surround the pools, fire pits and tree swings dot the estate, and the maze-like garden is filled with bougainvillea. At Norma's, it perpetually feels like brunchtime.

Vivacious VIETNAM

Food writer Uyen Luu takes a trip to her homeland
and discovers a cultural and culinary paradise



Authentic travel experiences are 10 a penny. So, too, are luxury escapes. But some trips offer it all; exceptional local cuisine and culture, stunning accommodation and unrivalled hospitality. Chef Uyen Luu is famous for bringing a slice of Vietnam to London via her sell-out pop-ups and cookbook; so we sent her to Banyan Tree's Lăng Cô resort to reconnect with her roots – and give her baby daughter a taste of her heritage and luxury living.



Uyen and Olive with head chef Heshan Peiris

‘We are in the valley of paradise. Under blue skies, rich green palm trees, banana leaves and bamboo shade exotic flowers, shrubs and wildlife. The air reverberates with the sounds of birds and crickets. The stone paving is devilishly hot and every passing breeze is gratifying. My busy life, my new life as a mother, and all those niggling worries lift from my tense shoulders as I take in the beauty of my home for the next five days: the Banyan Tree resort in Lăng Cô, Central Vietnam.

Touchdown in paradise

We receive a warm reception in the arrivals hall at Da Nang airport, and the resort has even arranged for a baby car seat for 11-month-old Olive, who's landed in her homeland for the first time after an 11-hour flight. To my relief, the travel had proved no problem; she was thoroughly entertained by books, toys and giggly cuddles from beautiful Vietnamese flight attendants, and didn't seem flustered by the attention or by the new hot, humid climate.

A 60-minute drive past Da Nang city along the exquisite teal coast takes in mighty evergreen mountains and ancient rice paddies. Then we arrive at the resort – off the beaten track, secluded in the depths of unspoilt nature.

Genuine smiles from the staff make for a warm welcome – the Vietnamese are the most friendly, hospitable, kind and amicable people. A lady in the traditional áo dài dress gifts me and my partner, James, a branch of magenta orchid flowers then, refreshingly freed from the hassle of checking in, we're whizzed up to our hilltop villa in a golf buggy, taking in the resort's splendour as we ascend.

Sumptuous surroundings

The first glimpse of our villa reveals a spacious, airy apartment larger than

our London flat. There's a dining room, living room, a bed that could comfortably accommodate four people, and even a beautiful white cot for Olive. Sliding windows lead to our private terrace where, over the coming days, we'll sunbathe, dine, and swim in a panoramic pool. The villa's valley and sea views are breathtaking – and blissfully visible from the free-standing bath.

While Olive naps, we spend our time lazing around the pool; floating on our backs in the still turquoise water as the sun radiates on the slow ripples caused by our limbs, watching gold and orange dragonflies and yellow butterflies flit by above us.

Food for the soul

Food is abundant and excellent. From limitless breakfast buffets featuring Tattinger Champagne and Italian lunches, to poolside cocktails and coconuts, dining at the resort is a delightfully luxurious experience.

One lunchtime, we visit Angsana – the family-orientated sister resort next door, where Banyan Tree guests can also enjoy facilities such as a 300-metre swimming pool – to eat at Moomba. Heshan Peiris is the head chef here; joining Banyan Tree more than a year ago, he now looks after all the resort's restaurants.

Uncovering culinary secrets

Heshan tells me stories about venturing to towns and villages in and around the provinces of Hue to discover local specialities. He even brings back a noodle dish in the hope that I can try to help him discover its secret ingredients but, alas, its secrets stay intact.

We sample Moomba's new Vietnamese menu, gobbling up a small mountain of frogs legs as dish after dish flows onto the table. A peanut-sauced sea bass noodle salad is exceptionally moreish, and thick cuts of >>

Seeds of change

Seedlings is a café with a conscience; launched by Banyan Tree with the aim of mentoring and helping disadvantaged local youths into flourishing, sustainable careers in five-star hospitality.

The Hôi An eaterie is a vibrant hotbed of rising talent where hands-on training occurs in a live restaurant setting. The traditional Vietnamese food is good; but a meal at Seedlings is about much more than just what's on your plate – it's about changing young lives for the better.

seedlingshoian.tumblr.com



‘We gobble up a small mountain of frogs’ legs as dish after dish flows onto the table’



shaking beef are succulent and tender.

My favourite is a flat, crisp tapioca cake with prawns and pork crackling. It comes from a local village where only one family makes and sells the clever iron press which Heshan had to seek in order to recreate them.

We also eat exquisite Thai food at Banyan Tree's awe-inspiring signature restaurant, Saffron, where the many highlights include theatrical overhead lampshades, brushed gold cutlery, and duck curry to die for. At Rice Bowl, meanwhile, the menu is a truly international affair – here, we feast on sushi and rendang.

Getting to the nation's heart

I enjoy chatting to staff in Vietnamese, and discover that they either live in Angsana or a nearby hotel, transported to and from work via shuttle bus. They seem very happy with their jobs; something that's important to me, as I know how tough the country and its people had it just a generation ago.

Each time I travel back to my birth country, it amazes me how fast it grows and flourishes. We take a day excursion to the UNESCO-listed 15th-century town of Hôi An, which had seen flooding just the day before, and is often like Venice in the rainy season. I last saw the city about five years ago, and what was then a quiet, sleepy place is now a tourist haven.

Looking to the future

I love visiting riverside social enterprise canteen Seedlings, where we order a Hôi An speciality, white rose dumplings. The rose-shaped, pork-and-prawn stuffed tapioca dumplings are delicious, as are the hand-made cao lầu noodles with pork and pork scratchings and a verdant heap of herbal leaves.

It feels like life can't get any better. But then we spend a few refreshing, rejuvenating hours in the spa, and indulge in a destination dinner eaten on the beach...

Suffice to say that there simply isn't room to list all the highlights of this trip – it's one that needs to be experienced first hand to be believed. >>>

STAY IN *Style* Two resorts, one unforgettable experience...

BANYAN TREE LĂNG CÔ lies at the epicentre of Central Vietnam, putting the intriguing region's historic sights and authentic sounds and tastes within easy reach. The luxury resort is tucked behind the Truong Son mountain range; facing a 3km sandy beach, with stunning views of the East Sea.

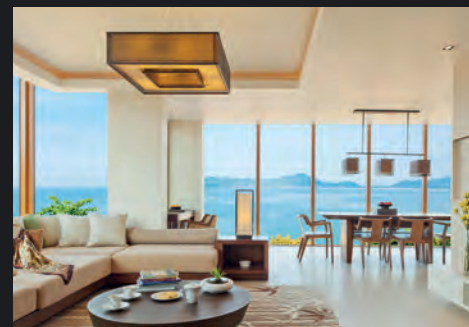
Decor-wise, the boutique resort takes its cues from a traditional Vietnamese village, with each of its 61 villas featuring natural materials and local handicrafts along with private pools, pavilion decks and king-sized beds. An 18-hole golf course designed by Sir Nick Faldo enables you to discover the grounds, while the world-renowned Banyan Tree Spa is nothing short of a heavenly haven.

Fine cuisine is one of Banyan Tree's major strengths, and the Lăng Cô resort offers gastronomic delights from all corners of the globe. There's an international buffet restaurant, The Water Court; Royal Thai delights at Saffron, the resort group's signature Thai restaurant; sophisticated Italian fare served beachfront at Azura; and all-day gourmet grazing at Thu Quán, with snacks, teas and cocktails.



ANGSANA LĂNG CÔ is set among three stunning UNESCO World Heritage Sites and, with over 100 couple- and family-friendly activities on offer, there's plenty to do. The 229 stylish suites bear distinctive, authentic Vietnamese design flourishes, with over 100 of them boasting private pools. Water babies will be delighted to know that a 300-metre long serpentine pool also lies within the resort. A tranquil swim paves the way for a treatment or two in the deluxe Angsana Spa, whose 10 treatment rooms offer a range of pampering therapies delivered by expertly-trained practitioners.

Whatever the mood or meal, it's impossible to eat badly at Angsana Lăng Cô. Local dishes join international cuisines on the menus at both Market Place and Moomba, whilst Rice Bowl celebrates the Vietnamese love for the staple with a plethora of rice-based Asian dishes. The Rice Bar is the resort's exclusive drinking den, and al fresco eating is catered for at Upper Deck, with its picturesque East Sea views. But, with a dedicated in-room dining service, you need not even leave your villa to eat exceptionally well.



SPECIAL GOOD THINGS TRAVEL OFFER

- **Angsana Lăng Cô Early Bird Advantage**
 - save up to 20% by booking 30 days in advance, with daily breakfast for two and complimentary non-alcoholic daily minibar (valid until 31 March 2017)
- **Banyan Tree Lăng Cô Stay 3 Pay 2**
 - enjoy 1 complimentary night* with minimum 3 nights' stay, including daily breakfast at the Water Court Restaurant (valid until 28 March 2017)

*Complimentary night(s) will be granted at check-in



FOOD FOR FRIENDS

Uyen Luu shares her delicious Vietnamese favourites and invites you to taste them for yourself at our exclusive Supper Club

Lemongrass beef in betel leaves

Make these lovely starters into a more substantial meal by serving them accompanied by a noodle salad.

Serves 4-6

INGREDIENTS

For the marinated beef

- 300g rump steak, thinly sliced
- 1 lemongrass stalk, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp dried chilli flakes/dried hot pepper flakes
- 1 tbsp sugar
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds
- 1 tsp sesame oil
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp honey
- ¼ kiwi, finely chopped

To assemble

- 150g betel leaves (or shiso leaves), stalks removed, washed and dried
- 2 tbsp sesame oil

For the dipping sauce

- 2 bird's eye chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1½ tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsp cider vinegar
- 2 tbsp fish sauce
- 3 tbsp roasted peanuts, crushed

For the pickle

- 2 carrots, shredded
- ½ daikon (white radish), shredded
- 5 tbsp cider vinegar
- 5 tbsp sugar

To serve

- 300g thin rice vermicelli, cooked
- lettuce leaves
- mixed herbs - Thai sweet basil, coriander, cockscomb mint, shiso

METHOD

1. For the marinated beef, mix together all the ingredients in a large bowl. Rub the marinade into the meat well, and refrigerate for 20 minutes.
2. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
3. Put a couple of slices of steak on each leaf, then roll up tightly. Place seam side-down in a roasting tin. Repeat with the remaining leaves and filling, packing snugly in the tin to prevent unrolling. Drizzle with oil and bake for 12 minutes for medium-rare.
4. For the pickle, mix all the ingredients in a bowl, then set aside for 15 minutes. Drain, wringing out with your hands, and set aside until ready to serve.
5. Meanwhile, for the dipping sauce, mix all ingredients and set aside.
6. Serve the beef rolls alongside the cooked vermicelli, lettuce leaves, herbs, pickle, and dipping sauce.

Date for the diary

**THE GOOD THINGS
SUPPER CLUB ON 6 APRIL**

Uyen will be cooking at an exclusive Good Things Supper Club on 6 April.

Tickets and details at
goodthingsmagazine.com/supperclub



MORE ONLINE
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Sai Gon
fresh
summer
rolls

Hue noodle soup with beef & pork

My grandmother was a great entrepreneur; in order to support her family, she opened up her front room to sell bún bò hue, the best noodle soup I have ever eaten. It originates from Hu (the city of temples, emperor's palaces and dynasties in central Vietnam) and is spicy, bold and invigorating.

Serves 6-8

INGREDIENTS

For the meat

- 1 kg rib of beef
- 500g beef shin/flank
- 600g chopped, boneless oxtail
- 2 pig's trotters (optional)
- 2 tbsp salt

For the soup

- 2 litres chicken stock
- 1 large onion, peeled and trimmed
- 6 lemongrass stalks, bashed
- 40g rock sugar
- 1 daikon (white radish), peeled
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp shrimp paste
- 1 tbsp pork bouillon
- 1 bún bò hue stock cube (optional)
- 4 tbsp fish sauce
- 3 tbsp cooking oil
- ½ bulb of garlic, cloves separated, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 lemongrass stalks, finely diced
- ½ tsp chilli powder
- ½ tsp annatto powder

For the dish

- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 8 sprigs of coriander, roughly chopped (including stalks)

- 450g thick rice vermicelli
- cha chiên Vietnamese ham, thinly sliced
- 8 sprigs Vietnamese hot mint, leaves only (optional)

To garnish

- lime wedges
- Thai sweet basil
- sliced bird's eye chillies
- beansprouts
- banana blossom (optional)
- curly morning glory (optional)
- cockscomb mint (optional)
- shiso/perilla (optional)

METHOD

1. Place the meats and salt in a large, saucepan, cover with water, and boil for 10 minutes. Wash, drain, and set aside. Wash the pan, then add 3 litres of water, and bring to the boil. Return the meat to the pan and bring to a gentle simmer, skimming any scum and fat from the surface. Add the stock.

2. Heat a dry griddle pan over high heat. Add the onion and lemongrass stalks and char on both sides. Add to the broth with the sugar, daikon, and salt. Cover the pan and simmer for at

least 2 hours, occasionally skimming off any scum and fat from the surface.

3. Remove the beef from the pan and set aside to rest briefly. Slice the rested meat thinly and store it in a sealed container until ready to serve. Add the shrimp paste, pork bouillon, stock cube (if using), and fish sauce to the broth. In another pan, heat the oil over medium heat and fry the garlic, lemongrass and chilli powder. Add to the broth with the annatto powder and simmer.

4. For the dish, mix the onions and coriander together in a bowl. Place the vermicelli in a lidded pan and cover with boiling water. Cover the pan and set aside for 20 minutes or as advised on the packet. Drain and rinse.

5. To serve, divide the vermicelli between large, deep soup bowls. Put the cooked beef on top and sprinkle with the red onion mixture and mint (if using). Bring the broth to the boil, then pour enough over the vermicelli to submerge the noodles.

6. Squeeze the lime wedges into the soup and serve, accompanied by the remaining garnishes. Advise guests to add them to the soup as desired.



Crème caramel

In Vietnam, people don't often have ovens, so this is usually steamed.

Serves 8-10

INGREDIENTS

For the crème

- 120ml double cream
- 200g sweetened condensed milk
- 250ml semi-skimmed milk
- 1½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 egg yolks
- 4 whole eggs
- 40g (caster) sugar

For the caramel

- 140g caster sugar
- 100ml strong coffee

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C.
2. For the crème, beat all the ingredients together in a bowl.
3. For the caramel, put the sugar and coffee in a saucepan over medium-high heat and stir to dissolve the sugar. Cook for 15-30 minutes. Drip a little in a ramekin with a spoon. If it hardens quickly, it is ready.
4. Once the caramel is ready, pour a thin layer into the cake tin or ramekins (enough to cover the base) and swirl around very quickly to coat the base before it sets. Allow to set and harden.
5. Pour the crème into the tin. If you are using ramekins, pour about 3cm into each ramekin. Place in a roasting pan and pour enough water in to come halfway up the tin/ramekins.
6. Bake the crème caramel for 20-25 minutes (if cooking in ramekins) or 40 minutes (if cooking in a tin). Cool, then chill for at least 6 hours, or overnight.
7. To serve, run a thin knife all around the edge. Turn upside down onto a dish and tap it to help the dessert/s pop out. The caramel should drizzle down the sides, forming a puddle.

My Vietnamese Kitchen, by Uyen Luu with photography by Clare Winfield is published by RPS, RRP £16.99

WILD & free

Georgina Wilson-Powell finds that Finland's oft-overlooked middle region of Karelia is full of snowy surprises

With the delights of Helsinki in the south and Lapland in the north, many visitors skip Finland's lake-filled centre. But in winter, Karelia offers a wonderfully wild escape.

A religious experience

It's not every day I get to have dinner with monks. The small band of monks at Valamo in Heinävesi love to welcome guests to their snow drift sanctuary, where you can enjoy a quiet break, or take part in religious services, paint icons and use the incredible library.

The monks also make berry 'whisky' and 'wine'. Of course, their efforts are no match for a fine vintage, but they evidently really enjoy both creating and drinking it.

A night here is the perfect way to transition from hectic city life to the nature-driven rhythm of a rural Finnish winter. The morning finds us driving across a frozen lake on a seven-kilometre stretch of 'road' open only in the depths of winter.

Ice fishing is hugely popular around nearby Lake Höytiäinen. Although my own efforts are fruitless, it's beautifully peaceful – the lake is ringed with pines, and the sky throws up glimmers of the Northern Lights.

Koli National Park is one of Finland's most famous places. The park's snow-covered peaks were captured by bohemian artists before the country's 1917 independence, giving Finns a visual identity centred around freedom, nature and a distinctive landscape.

Within minutes of leaving the hotel, tennis racquet-like snow shoes clamped to my feet, I'm wading through knee-high drifts of snow. Vague paths up are signposted so you can explore on your own, but to do so safely, you need to possess the practical nature of a Finn.

The park covers 100 kilometres of forest, hills and lakes. We waded up to the 'temple of silence', a natural shrine located 347 metres above sea level. This is a pilgrimage for a country full of outdoorsmen – many consider Koli to be a holy place.

The outside exploration is tempered by an afternoon at Break Sokos Hotel Koli's wonderful spa complex, where we soak in whirlpools, bubbly in hand, and explore a range of hydrotherapies.

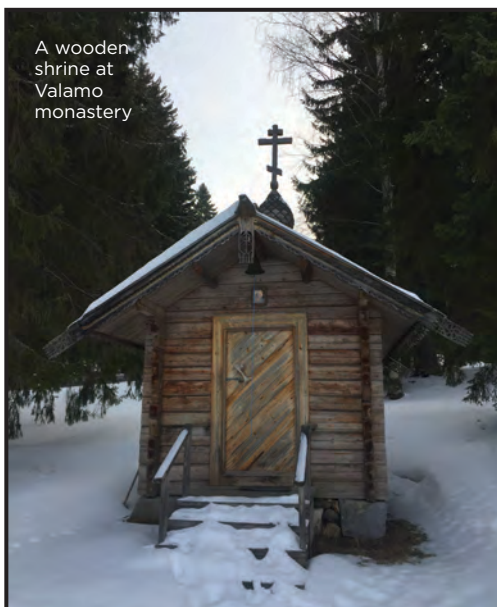
Sledding and sauna

The forest grows thick and silent up near the Russian border in Lieksa, and a blanket of snow masks all but the loudest noises. During



Huskies are incredibly powerful and can run up to 50km a day





A wooden shrine at Valamo monastery



Images: Georgina Wilson-Powell, Téa Karvinen

dog sledding in the Ruunaa hiking area, teams of huskies bark and pull at their reins. Wooden sleds bounce and jolt in a mildly alarming manner as the dogs beg to be let loose on the frozen terrain.

Rather than simply enjoying the ride, I'm in charge of six dogs. I stand with one leg on each of the thin wooden rails and grip the sled's curved top tightly. As we move off, the dogs' strength means that my arms are almost separated from my body. For the next two hours I hold on for dear life as we whizz across frozen lakes, weave through ancient forests, and hurtle down slopes at more than 20mph. It's primal, physically demanding, and totally exhilarating.

It is actually quite a feat to get the dogs to stop. Soon, our lunch area is a whirling mess of dogs as the mushers bark commands for calm. We cook sausages and soup over an open fire, slurping mugs of bitter local coffee as we stare into Finland's timeless forest.

We ski-mobile back to the activity centre. Once we're out on a frozen lake, the appeal of these machines is hard to resist. I feel like James Bond whizzing along on pristine snow, gunning along the riverbank as icy water tumbles along in the river below.

Embracing the cold

Karelia fully embraces harsh winter weather. Rather than fight it, the Finns use everything they have to create comforting experiences,

dashed with blasts of icy cold, which they believe keeps them in rude health.

On Lake Pielinen, I find Guesthouse Herranniemi, a quaint wooden guesthouse which, for four generations, has built a traditional ice sauna on its lake. I stick to the hot part, and we tiptoe across the lake from a more traditional smoke sauna to sit in one built entirely of ice, whose inner walls shimmer above the heat from the wood fire and which, impossibly, should last all winter.

There is a ritual to the sauna in Finland. It's a communal activity, as families and friends take to the sauna on a weekend afternoon the way we Brits do the pub. They sit, sweat, gossip and share advice, retreat to shower, drink beer and relax.

To-ing and fro-ing between hot and chilly lulls me into a state of pure bliss. In Karelia's wilderness, people and rituals envelop you, warming both body and soul, even in the cold.

Make it real

FLY to Joensuu with Finnair, finnair.com

BOOK Valamo monastery, valamo.fi, or

Holiday Centre Huhmari for ice fishing,

lomakeskushuhmari.com

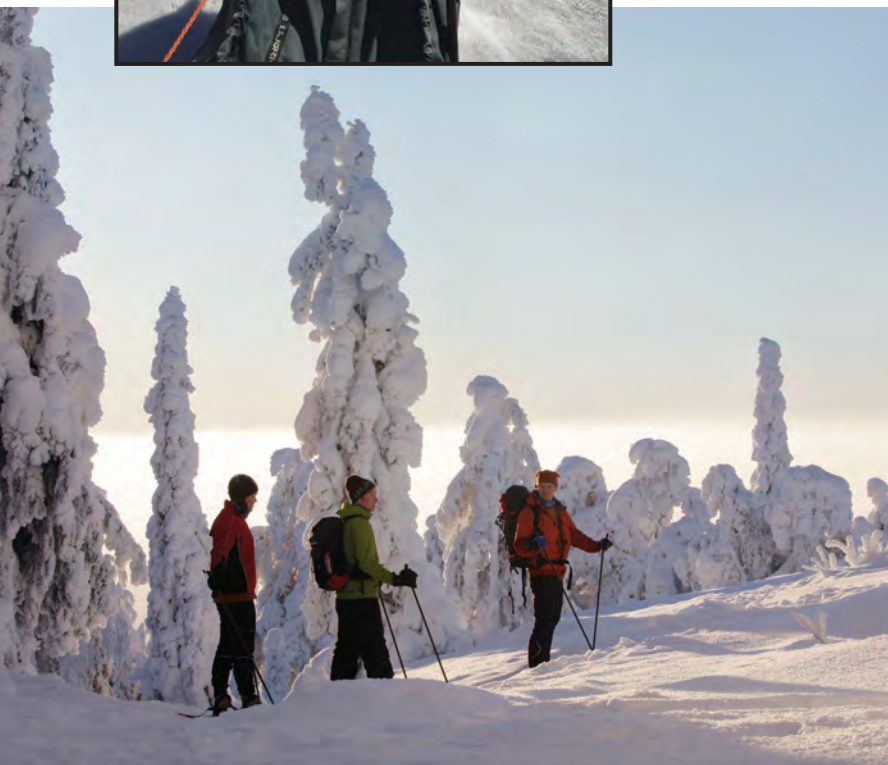
STAY at Koli National Park with Sokos

Hotels, sokoshotels.fi, or a traditional

guesthouse, vuonis.net

More information, visitkarelia.fi

‘Rather than fight the cold, the Finns use it to create comforting experiences’



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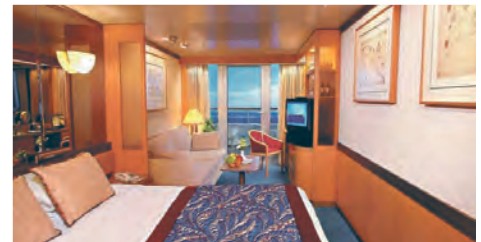
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SO SPA, so good

The *Good Things* team checks into some of the world's most fabulous spa hotels, where serenity meets luxury and design

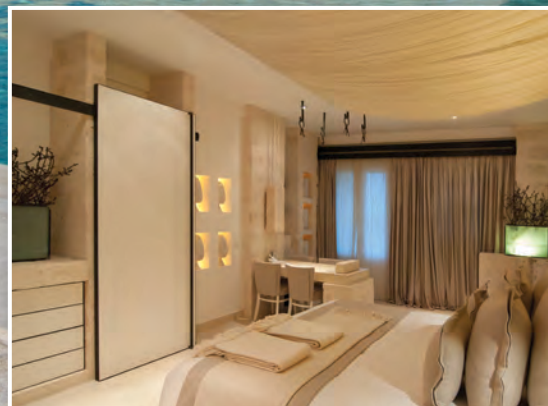
EDITOR'S CHOICE

BORGO EGNAZIA *Italy*

This heavenly, luxurious beachside retreat in Puglia is home to the revolutionary 2000-square metre Vair Spa, where the emphasis is on inner beauty through wellbeing and engaging all five senses as part of 'life changing' experiences. Spend the day immersed in a sensory adventure involving everything from naturopathy, aromatherapy, hydrotherapy and meditation, to discovering true escapism in a saltwater floatation tank. Massage and beauty rooms offer more traditional spa treats, plus there's a hair and make-up area and a yoga studio. Six restaurants and weekly cookery lessons make up the gastronomic offering, their menus linked by Apulian heritage. >>

MAKE IT REAL From €220 per night (B&B), based on two sharing a Corte Bella Room. Visit borgoegnazia.com. Or enjoy a 20% early booking reduction with Carrier. From £1070pp* (B&B), based on two sharing, with return flights from Gatwick and private transfers. Visit carrier.co.uk

The emphasis is on inner beauty through wellbeing and engaging all five senses



* Valid for travel 7 Jan - 13 Apr, 8 Apr - 30 June and 27 Aug - 6 Jan 2018. Book by 31 Jan 2017.

SPA STAYCATIONS

Beauty Editor Vic Black chooses three of her favourite UK destinations

BORINGDON HALL *Plymouth*

This beautiful stately home is high on a hill, just a short taxi ride from Plymouth train station. Latticed windows, elaborately decorated soaring ceilings, and worn flagstone floors are made cosy by giant stone fireplaces and truly lovely staff. The Gallery Restaurant overlooks the rather grand main hall, and I'm given a detailed description of every dish on the menu – and its provenance. Recommendations are right on the money, and the food is delicious. My only regret is coming to this romantic retreat solo.

The brand-new Gaia Spa is gorgeously designed; with white, open spaces, lots of glass, and just the right amount of wood creating a warm, inviting environment. I start my spa experience with a dip in a pool that's long enough to make me feel like I've

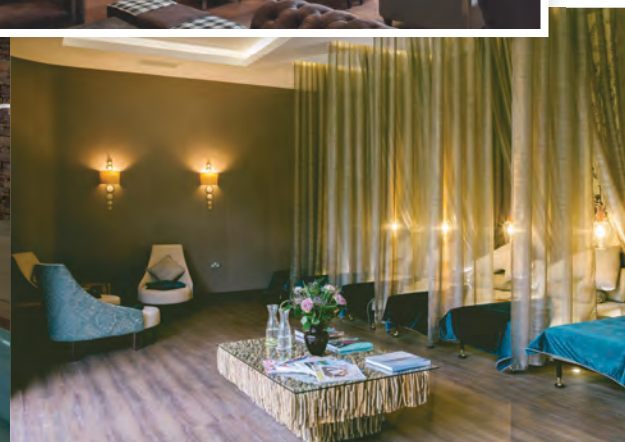
really had some exercise. I then feel I've earned the right to languish in the 80°C Finnish sauna, supposedly improving my blood circulation and immune system.

There's also an aromatherapy steam room, a laconium, and a herbal sauna, so leave plenty of time to hop between all four. If you're still in need of relaxation, book a Poulitice Massage (£120 for 60 minutes) which uses heated muslin compresses filled with fresh herbs – both supremely relaxing and deeply exfoliating, leaving my skin as smooth as glass. All in all, the Gaia Spa experience is up there with some of the best I've had.

Open spaces and lots of glass creates a warm, inviting experience



MAKE IT REAL One night's B&B from £141. Sublime Sunday Spa Break, including B&B, dinner for two, a spa treatment and full use of the spa, from £269. boringdonhall.co.uk



THE ROYAL CRESCENT HOTEL & SPA *Bath*

There's something very satisfying about actually being able to walk into one of the beautiful Grade 1-listed Georgian buildings that tourists so admire on Bath's Royal Crescent - especially when you know you're staying the night.

Following a recent refurbishment, the already-elegant Royal Crescent Hotel is now even more decadent; every room decorated with striped or checked pale pastel fabrics along with the odd floral. It's all very English, and it's terribly tasteful.

When you're hungry, take a short stroll through the pretty walled gardens at the hotel rear and dine at the Dower House Restaurant, where I'm served the most delicious piece of bream I've ever eaten.

Also across the walled garden is The Bath House Spa - a lovely, stone-clad building housing a 12-metre heated relaxation pool, a vitality pool whose jets give you a good pummelling, a Himalayan salt-infused sauna, and a fantastic steam inhalation room where I do a few relaxing stretches, and emerge totally rejuvenated.

There's a great selection of ESPA treatments and, although I adore a facial or



a massage, on this occasion I throw caution to the wind and go for reflexology (from £75 for 60 minutes). The therapists are experts, deftly locating various pressure points on my feet. Gentle pressure results in a feeling of release and relaxation that other treatments don't necessarily impart - great for addressing that little niggle in your lower back or a bit of bad digestion.

MAKE IT REAL One night's B&B from £295. Two-night Spa Retreat including B&B for two with one treatment per person, afternoon tea and use of the spa, from £680. royalcrescent.co.uk



THE SPREAD EAGLE HOTEL & SPA *Midhurst*

Built in 1430 and one of England's oldest coaching inns, The Spread Eagle in West Sussex is jam packed with authentic, olde-worlde charm. Floors slant, low-beamed ceilings hover just overhead, and narrow, panelled corridors wind in every direction - leading you to one of the hotel's 39 quaint bedrooms or, perhaps, its well-stocked Gin Bar. If it's here you end up, settle yourself into one of several leather wing-backed chairs for a tippie or two, after which you'll probably not notice the wonky floors.

But it's not all tapestries and coats of arms here. There's also a bright conservatory where you can stop and have a coffee, and a beautiful garden where you can get a breath of that wonderfully fresh Sussex air.

You wouldn't think that a modern spa with a Scandi-style panelled, spotlit ceiling and a cascade spa pool could join this ancient building, but the sensitively-designed additions look right. There's a large pool, Turkish steam room, Scandinavian sauna, and a fitness room. An extensive range of treatments use Temple Spa products - I finally settle on the I'll Be Back (£59 for 45 minutes). After a deep cleanse and skin exfoliation, warm mud is slathered over my skin, later removed with lovely hot mitts that leave my skin feeling squeaky-clean before a massage so relaxing, it has me nodding off blissfully. >>

MAKE IT REAL One night's B&B from £119. The Indulgent Spa Break including B&B, dinner for two, massage, and use of the spa from £154.50. hshotels.co.uk

Gentle reflexology results in a feeling of release that other treatments don't impart



BRIDAL TREATS

Bride-to-be Becky Turnbull enjoys some 'me time' at two of the most luxurious spas in the Cotswolds



CALCOT MANOR *Jetbury*

Find everything you need for a lazy weekend of relaxation here – from squashy sofas and roaring fires to an easy-going spa. The delightful setting and friendly staff ensure you feel both at home and wonderfully pampered. Stay in one of the cosy, stone-clad cottages in the midst of the idyllic grounds, with a background of birdsong and kids playing. This hotel is family friendly, but there's plenty to occupy little people, so they don't spoil your downtime.

Things for your tick list? A morning walk across the 220 acres of fields, snuggling up by the fire with a wonderful cheeseboard from onsite pub, The Gumstool Inn, and sipping Champagne in the hot tub with the fire crackling close by.

With its heated outdoor hot tub and indoor and outdoor pools, the spacious spa complements this country house retreat brilliantly. Treatments include massages and facials, with products from Elemis and Aromatherapy Associates. My favourite? The Deeper Than Deep Hot Stones (£80 for 55 minutes), which worked wonders on my tense Bridezilla neck and shoulders.

The hotel's bright, airy Conservatory restaurant has wonderful views right out across the grounds, and serves a menu centred on fresh, local produce. There are plenty of healthy options if you're determined to stay on track, but I'd recommend indulging in the luscious Calcot organic beef and oyster pie with cabbage and mash.

Family-friendly but with plenty to occupy little people, so they don't spoil your downtime

MAKE IT REAL Rooms from £199 based on two sharing. The Mid-week Spa Break, including bed and breakfast, full use of the spa, and £45pp to spend on treatments, from £304. calcot.co



BARNESLEY HOUSE

Cirencester

The breathtaking arrival indicates that this is everything you want from a country house hotel, revealing a 17th-century, golden stone Manor House set within famous gardens.

The experience starts as soon as I'm shown to my beautiful top-floor room. It overlooks the garden, and the bathroom alone makes me want to extend my stay. With ultra-chic decor and friendly staff who know exactly when to appear and disappear, this relaxed, sophisticated retreat is one for the grown-ups.

The stylish spa is hidden in a garden dell, and the team have added imaginative touches like drying herbs outside the sauna so their scents pervade the air. The outdoor thermal pool overlooks fields, has an outdoor fire, and is heated to a perfect 36°C. For the stressed bride, I recommend the Elemis Biotec Radiance Renew (£80 for 55 minutes) – it's the best facial I've ever had.

Stunning gardens supply the award-winning Potager restaurant, where the seasonal produce, meats and cheeses are all sourced locally. Dishes have that clever, unfussy appeal that you know is anything but simple to execute, and your meal can be served wherever takes your fancy, so you don't even have to leave that comfy sofa.

Beyond the grounds, dine at the delightful Village Pub down the road, also owned by the hotel. Don't worry about stumbling back in the dark – they thoughtfully supply flashlights.

MAKE IT REAL Rooms from £200 based on two sharing. The Winter Spa break, from £399, including £90 allowance per room towards treatments, and £40pp for dinner. barnsleyhouse.com



EAST MEETS WEST

Fashion Editor Charlotte Ellis hops across to Alicante to sample one of the world's great spas

SHA WELLNESS CLINIC *Spain*

Opened eight years ago, and voted Condé Nast Johansens Best Destination Spa in the World 2017, the SHA Wellness Clinic's walls are lined with awards. The spa's friendly, informed medical approach combines ancient Eastern traditions with the best in Western technology and practices, teaching the macrobiotic diet and way of life to help you 'live longer and better'.

Nestled in the hills overlooking the ocean, the ultra-modern building is festooned with plants. Interiors are chic, with luxurious bedroom suites, faultless hospitality, and a super sleek, space-age wellness centre. Then there's the Shamadi restaurant, where all the macrobiotic meals from breakfast to dinner are delicious, inventive and Michelin-worthy. Most of the ingredients are grown in the SHA's own garden, planted by organic and lunar planting expert Mariano Bueno.

For the full benefit, SHA recommends you stay for at least a week but, for a taster, there's a four-day discovery package. When it's up, it's

unlikely you'll want to leave, just like the 40 percent of returning guests.

On arrival, you're handed an 'agenda' outlining times for meals, treatments and classes, along with an optional daily schedule of activities like Nordic walking, yoga, cardio workouts, and two-hour group cooking sessions where you'll learn up to five delicious recipes like Japanese shiitake detox broth.

The treatment list is extensive and impressive. State-of-the-art machinery offers treatments like Indiba (breaking down fat and eliminating toxins via a warming massage administered by both a therapist and a machine), to more holistic treatments like reiki, reflexology, acupuncture, lymphatic drainage, and hydrotherapy.

With an oxygen and tea lounge administering pure oxygen, an organic hair salon, a gym, hydrotherapy circuits, steam rooms and aqua beds, a rooftop infinity pool, tennis courts, a library, and a cinema, this really is a spa like no other.

*All meals are macrobiotic
– delicious, inventive and
Michelin-worthy*



MAKE IT REAL The four-day Discovery programme from €1,100pp, including all meals, consultations and treatments. Mountain View Deluxe Suites from €460 per night based on two sharing. Monarch Airlines operates year-round flights to Alicante from all major UK airports, from £75 return. shawellnessclinic.com. monarch.co.uk



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The wellness edit

Treat your mind, body and soul with Leonie Lee's guide to healthier living



Aerial fitness

In a spin trying to find the right fitness class? Try lyra, an aerial hoop that's increasingly popular with exercise enthusiasts of all ages and abilities. Classes tone and strengthen the whole body, targeting the core and upper body, improving balance and strength.



THE SPA WARDROBE

Comfort is key, but so is style...

1. Silver OM jumper – slouch-fit with a fleece lining. £65, behereandlove.com
2. Cashmere and cotton pants – super-silky against your skin. £35, woolovers.com
3. Candice Cooper Gloss Rock low-tops – a gloss finish adds glamour. £159.99, julesb.co.uk
4. Sporty waistband modal briefs – no irritating labels. £9.50, blackspade.co.uk

So hot right now

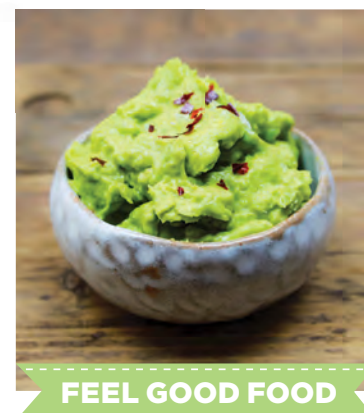
The wellness trend to watch

MATCHA

Calming, energising, antioxidant-rich green tea which promises to boost your energy levels and improve concentration and memory.

Put it to the test

Take Pure Chimp's 14-day Challenge: drink a single cup of matcha a day and reap the benefits. purechimp.com



FEEL GOOD FOOD

Quick & easy avocado dip

Super-versatile: dunk, spread or simply stick a spoon straight in.

Serves 1-2

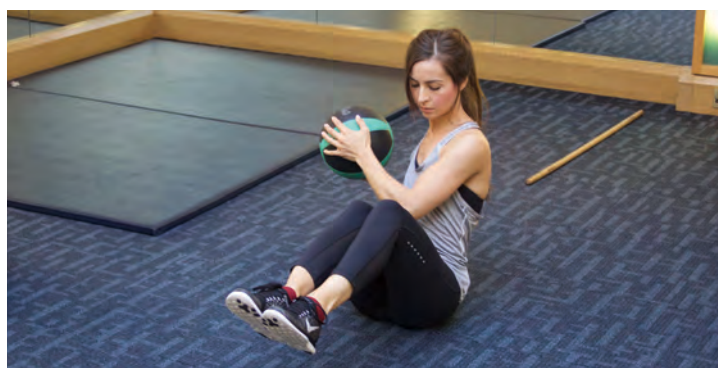
INGREDIENTS

- 1 ripe avocado, peeled and destoned
- ½ a lemon, juice and zest
- pinch of sea salt
- pinch of sumac
- black pepper, to taste
- crushed chilli, to taste

METHOD

1. Place everything except the chillies in a blender and pulse until completely blended with a light, whipped texture.
2. Add chillies to taste, and serve.

Recipe from kaleandheartykitchen.com



STRETCH YOURSELF

This issue's exercise comes courtesy of Ben Poole, personal trainer and founder of The Health Kitchen

WHAT? The Medicine Ball Abdominal Twist

WHY? An excellent all-round abdominal exercise that works the trunk rotators called the obliques. Great for the core.

HOW? Pick a ball or weight
1. Take a seat on the floor, draw in your navel and lean

back until you feel tension in your abdominal muscles.

2. Rotate through your shoulders, dropping the ball to either side of your body.

3. Do 20 reps (full rotations) To increase difficulty, lift your feet off the floor (as shown) and/or speed up.

MORE @thkthehealthkitchen

Take 3 SPA PRODUCTS



1. **Eye Revive** A cream created with skin experts Deciem. £20, thewhitecompany.com
2. **Gaia Lip Balm** Paraben- and sulphate-free and super-hydrating. £12, gaia-spa.co.uk
3. **Pai Skincare Rosehip Bio Regenerate Rapid Radiance Mask** Tired, dry skin? This does exactly what it says on the tin. £30, paiskincare.com

EAT HERE, FEEL FAB... At Pomonas, food makes you feel as great as it tastes (47 Hereford Road, London W2, pomonas.co.uk).

BETWEEN THE SEA & THE SKY

Nick Harman heads to the Asturian mountains with Ibérica restaurants' Nacho Manzano to visit the executive chef's double Michelin-starred restaurant – and discover his inspirations

The early morning clouds twist outside my hotel window in constant motion; obscuring the view entirely one moment, breaking to reveal tantalising views of snow-capped peaks and verdant valleys stretching out into the distance the next. Bells on the necks of grazing cows below provide the soundtrack.

Tucked between Galicia to the west and Cantabria to the east, Asturias is a small region characterised by its rugged coastline and towering mountains. The Bay of Biscay laps the coast but, just a kilometre or two's drive inland, the ground rises steeply on its journey into the Picos de Europa.

Chef Nacho Manzano's restaurant, Casa Marcial, lies halfway between the highest point of the Picos and the sea. It's unassuming from the outside, with a simple conservatory-cum-front entrance where mum reads Spanish *Hello!*, daughter practises English, and I eat three of 17 remarkable dishes.

The remainder of that stunning lunch takes place in the restaurant proper, and includes a plate of clams in cold water, parsley juice and seaweed emulsion. A fabulous Asturian fava bean stew is a nod to Nacho's mother. Unusually, it features miso, while paired wines are rather more local. The chef joins me, and we go into the kitchen so he can make his daughter a sandwich: fried strips of pork layered between slices of crusty bread



Hake salad with
Hollandaise
and dried roe



‘My stunning lunch includes clams in cold water, parsley juice and seaweed emulsion’

dipped in cooking fat. It looks so delicious that I'm almost hungry again.

Nacho tells me that his father Marcial originally opened the restaurant, and its focus was always simple food for locals. His mother did the cooking; Nacho watched, learned, finally took over, and took it to new heights.

Produce is king

This chef's cuisine is all about Asturias's seasonal wealth. His brother-in-law is his fishmonger, his sister has her own one-starred restaurant – La Salgar in Gijón – and he chooses all his suppliers very carefully.

Take cheese. In Cofiño, a town packed with cheese shops, we meet Juan, responsible for the smoky Gamonedo that Nacho serves. Traditionally made in dairies at the mountains' base, the wheels are hand-carried to the high peaks, slow-matured in caves.

Parking near the summit of the Picos, Juan walks us to one of his caves through pouring rain and thick cloud, over slippery paths. As he hops from rock to rock with an agility that belies his 70+ years, we stagger slowly behind. Our reward is a big cheese for the restaurant.

An apple a day

To wash down cheese you must have cidra, or cider. Asturias is Spain's cider centre, and Nava is its capital. Nacho takes me to Sidra Zapatero, one of the town's many makers, but one of the few to still make it traditionally. Apples are crushed with a press, and the juice is still fermented in enormous handmade wooden barrels, not stainless steel tanks.

Cidra is Asturias's regional 'wine'; blending sour crab apples with sweet or bitter types. It's low in both alcohol and gas, aerated by skilful 'escanciar' pouring – from dizzyingly high into a glass held as low as possible; drunk quickly before those bubbles disappear.

At Casa Marcial, Sidra Zapatero accompanies desserts. 'My cooking is so attached to this land, the producers, and all the things I feel familiar with,' Nacho says in the car as we journey back up the mountain. 'There's always so much here to inspire me.'

Nature & nurture

'When I started, my focus was just on perfection, on creating the finest food. The first Michelin star was a surprise, to be honest. I try to be faithful to the past but also evolve; and not be scared of what Michelin



might think. I always do what I feel is right.'

'I like to help small, local producers grow. They have the knowledge. I like to visit them with my team to hear what's happening,' he tells me, as we say our goodbyes.

Parked up at the vertiginous viewing point above Nacho's restaurant later, I am once again transfixed by the panoramic landscape of endless mountains and valleys. Asturias is a land filled with nature's goodness – it's no wonder the chef savours it so very much.

Make it real

EAT at Casa Marcial, La Salgar, s/n, 33549 Arriondas-Parres, Asturias
casamarcial.com

NEAREST AIRPORT Santander
STAY at Hotel Puebloastur s/n, 33548 Cofiño, Asturias,
puebloastur.com, located 10 minutes from Casa Marcial

FOOD OF THE GODS

Move over moussaka and hold onto your plates. On a gourmet odyssey to the Greek islands, Cathy Howes finds the cuisine is hitting dizzy new heights

THE CYCLADES

Who knew that the humble cherry tomato could become a national hero? During Santorini's 1956 earthquake, when many people were out in the fields early for the tomato harvest and safely away from collapsing buildings, this little fruit saved countless lives. The legacy of the quake can still be seen in the dramatic views over the lagoon at Fira, the modern capital, where white roofs and balconies cling perilously to the cliffs and amaze a million visitors a year.

Equally amazing is the local food and wine. Forget tourist experiences like souvlaki and chips or plate-smashing: the most exciting chefs are catering to a more discerning palate. Our guide warns us to bring hearty appetites, because the Greeks love feeding people.

He wasn't joking. It's not long since breakfast, but Yiannis, the owner of Nomikos Estate, is keen for us to try his wares. He's a major player in local produce, growing split pea-like fava, pink peppers, white aubergines, and prickly pears, and we feast on home-baked bread, tomatoes and fava dip. The fresh produce bursts with sunshine – you can taste the care that's gone into growing it.

Yiannis also grows pistachios and capers, whose leaves, buds and berries are all marketed. Traditionally carried by ants, caper seeds tend to grow in rocks where it can be hard to harvest, especially on arid Santorini. Cultivating them is no mean feat, but Yiannis does it with aplomb.

Gourmet Santorini

Fine dining is now as easy to find on Santorini as fabulous produce, and at the hilltop Selene Restaurant in the village of Pyrgos, dishes are big on theatrical presentation. The 'Seascape'

concept delivers an intriguing medley of sea urchin, clams, mussels, Greek coffee-scented bottarga and a vial of oil. Rabbit stifado is the pick of the mains, featuring black swine prosciutto and liver mousse with a biscuit of dried black olives. Aside from a mastic-based digestive called Skinis, everything hits the spot. The latter may well be a local favourite, but it's definitely an acquired taste.

Dimitris Papadimitriou, chef at the Ifestioni Restaurant in the stylish Aressana Spa Hotel in Fira, describes his style as 'nouvelle but not molecular'. From an olive oil bonbon presented on volcanic rock to seabass carpaccio served smoked in an upturned glass, his menu is pure culinary art. His enthusiasm for his ingredients – down to the best way to soak capers (in milk) – is infectious. Santorini has clearly worked >>





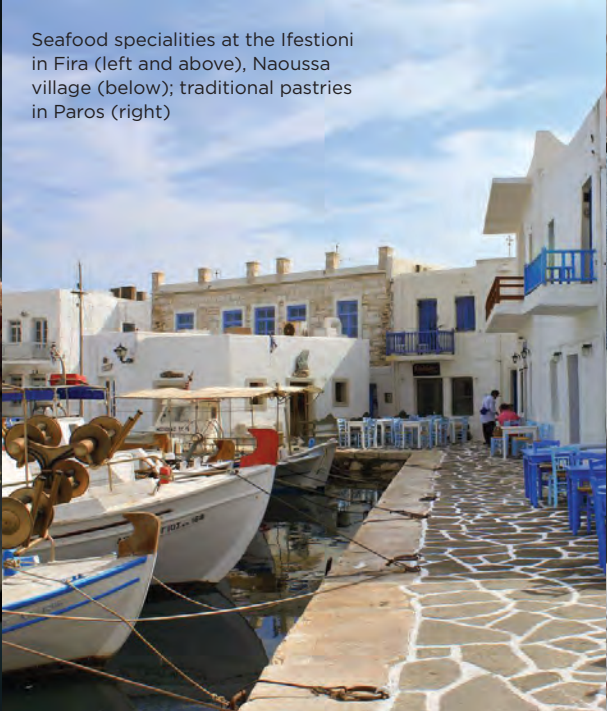
Selene restaurant
Pyrgos, Santorini



Local cheeses at the beachside
Marathia Tavern on Tinos

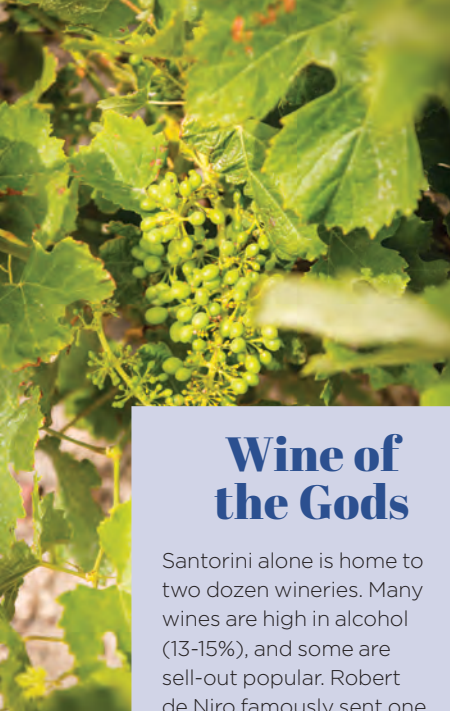


Images: Greek National Tourist
Organisation; Tinos Municipality



Seafood specialities at the Ifestioni
in Fira (left and above), Naoussa
village (below); traditional pastries
in Paros (right)





Wine of the Gods

Santorini alone is home to two dozen wineries. Many wines are high in alcohol (13-15%), and some are sell-out popular. Robert de Niro famously sent one restaurant owner into a tailspin by wielding a photo of Hatzidakis' limited-edition Assyrtiko de Louros on his phone demanding, 'I want that one!' (Happily, a bottle was eventually sourced.)

Assyrtiko is king of the island's grapes, grown in coiled baskets to protect it from heat by day and wind at night. But along with traditional methods, new blood runs through the industry - including Yannis Valambous, who returned from London in 2010 to start up Vassaltis Vineyards with oenologists Elias Roussakis and Yannis Papaeconomou.

'Greece has sold itself on Retsina and Zorba the Greek for years and, yes, it is who we are, but it fails to recognise the new generation,' he says. 'Greece is an old-world wine market that's just started to export.'

FILL YOUR GLASS WITH...

Thalassitis (Gaia Wines)
Apple, pear, green pepper and grass. Eat with: seafood, or lamb with lemon.

Aidani (Hatzidakis Winery)
An organic wine - fruity and floral with citrus notes. Eat with: fish, or salty cheese.

Nychteri (Domaine Sigalas)
The name of this citrusy, herb-and-honeysuckle wine means 'night', going back to when grapes were picked at night for the cooler temperatures. Eat with: duck in orange sauce.



A new generation of winemaking at Vassaltis Winery on Santorini



Isteria Village on Tinos

on its gastronomy, but at its heart is local produce lovingly grown by characters like Yiannis Nomikos.

Bounty of the sea

Paros - Santorini's quieter, equally-stylish cousin - lies just two hours away by Seajets ferry. Travelling on winding roads from the port of Paros, we pass sun-baked white buildings with iconic blue shutters to arrive at our next base, Naoussa, often called the most beautiful fishing village in Greece.

Unsurprisingly, local menus groan with seafood and fish. At the pretty harbour of Piso Livado, 12km to the south of Naoussa, we seek shade in the waterside Halaris Ouzeri, whose owner suggests a meze of typical dishes. A succession of excellent specialities follows: cheese-stuffed sardines, stingray with spring onions, creamy herring dip, sea urchin eggs. We finish with traditional spoon sweets - Greek yogurt with home-made black grapes, orange rind, sour cherry and walnut compotes. In a clear case of greed over need, our return journey is broken with a stop at Hamilothoris Pastry Shop to sample karydato - a sugar-coated mixture of walnuts, orange rind, cinnamon and vanilla.

Forging new footpaths

Another day, another breakfast - this time on the terrace at hotel Porto Naoussa, a charming new collection of boutique bedrooms and, this time, just omelette and fruit in order to leave room for the day ahead.

A couple of hours more at sea take us on to Tinos where we check into the peaceful, sun-baked Anthea Hotel. The unspoilt island is home to just 10,000 inhabitants, but what it lacks in numbers, it makes up for in passion, evidenced by projects like Footpaths of Tinos. Founded in 2015 by a few likeminded folk, this network links farms to restaurants, and showcases local producers.

One of its ambassadors is Alexandros Kourou, founder of the Nissos Brewery. 'If my job was just about brewing beer I'd

be in Athens, where 80% of the business is,' he says flipping the tops off ice-cold craft beers. 'But here I can see dolphins playing in the sea from my office window.'

The fact that Greece is not a hop-growing region doesn't bother him. 'You Brits own the tea culture with tea from Sri Lanka, and it's the same with Italians and coffee,' he explains. 'It's about added value and perception. At the European Beer Star awards in Bavaria, we won the Silver Beer Star for our Pilsner!'

With the beer, we snack on strips of pork called louza, made by Yiannis Kritikos, our next port of call. He makes 200kg of the stuff a week and is, we're informed, far too kind to be a butcher. His pork is soaked in wine with fennel and cloves and dry-cured for 40 days, and, because it would be rude not to, we try some - along with his garlic sausage.

Beachside dining

The setting for lunch is beach restaurant Mariatha at Agios Fokas. Given the morning, 'picky bits' are just what's called for, and owner Marinos brings out a fine spread of cheeses, chutneys, and bread... plus menus. I scan mine for the lightest choice. Fish soup. Brilliant. That I can manage. But far from being a light option, it comes brimming with scents, seasonings, and a side plate of a whole grouper head with steamed veg. As our guide said; you don't go hungry in the Cyclades.

Lunch digested, we head into the villages built in the mountains in the days of pirates, calling on yet another Yiannis. This one is a civil engineer turned cheese-maker whose yield is 50-70kg a week. Like the others who subscribe to Footpaths of Tinos, he believes creating something is the future for Greece.

Just a few hours later, we sit down at Metaxi Mas in the busy (by Tinos standards) Pallada area of Tinos Town. Whole squid comes stuffed with cheese, served with a mustard sauce. Want beer battered sun-dried tomatoes with that? Why not. With cooking this good, anything other than an empty plate would be an insult to our hosts.



Spectacular views from F Zeen Retreat in Lourdas

KEFALONIA

If Captain Corelli's Kefalonia captured your imagination, the island's beauty up close will not disappoint. What you won't find, however, is much old-world architecture from WW2 and before – most of it was destroyed by earthquake in 1953.

Happily, the island – to the West of mainland Greece among the Ionian islands – rebuilt itself, and the cosmopolitan capital of Argostoli now features pedestrianised shopping and a waterfront promenade of cafés overlooking a bay of bobbing yachts.

Yet up on the windswept mountains, where the goats have grazed for hundreds of years, you wouldn't know what century it was. Which is why, for all its contemporary charm, Kefalonia is an island that begs to be explored.

Climb every mountain

Activity specialists Outdoor Kefalonia's hilarious and indefatigable Giorgos is our guide for a hike from the top of Atheras Bay. Watched languidly by the mountain goats, the former firefighter and one-time Special Forces medic promises us the marvel of Fteri

Beach as he leads us down the hillside. It's steep and challenging in places, not my idea of 'easy-to-moderate', but the payoff is magical; a completely isolated, white sand beach.

Later that evening, we all bundle into Giorgos' jeep and climb for over an hour through the earthquake-emptied villages, navigating perilous mountain turns to reach the peak. The views are astonishing, and we catch the sunset before the plummeting temperatures chill us to the bone.

Time to unwind

There are no such worries about the temperature at our hotel in Lourdas, part-hidden from the road behind high wooden doors. From a daybed on the side of one of the two pools at adults-only F Zeen Retreat, you can catch the rays from dawn till dusk.

There's a full gym overlooking the bay, and a spa where a post-flight massage is a must-have. The experience begins with deep

reflexology, followed by a robust loosening of the hips, then shoulders right up to the jaw. 'You may ache tomorrow, but the next day you will feel amazing,' my therapist promises. And she is right – on both counts.

With just 28 suites dotted up the hillside, F Zeen never feels busy. The philosophy here is relax, reflect, and enjoy delicious food from a terrace with spectacular views. Menus are authentic and wholesome without ever feeling Spartan. It's the kind of food you could eat every day without getting bored – think home-made preserves, whole baked fish and vibrant salads such as halloumi with beetroot, orange, rocket and pine nuts.

We're up with the lark the following day for a yoga session in a pavilion overlooking the sea. Teacher Tasia awakens our senses as we breathe and stretch to the sound of the cicadas. And up there on the terrace, in the peaceful, early-morning sunshine, it's easy to feel at one with those goats.

‘UP IN THE MOUNTAINS, TIME HAS STOOD STILL’



Make it real

THE CYCLADES

Aressana Spa Hotel & Suites, Fira, Santorini. Doubles from £155 with breakfast, aressana.gr

Porto Naoussa, Paros. Doubles from £109 with breakfast, portonaoussa.com

Anthea Hotel, Tinos. Doubles from £60 with breakfast, anthea-tinos.gr

KEFALONIA

Classic Retreats at **F Zeen Retreat** from €160 with breakfast, uniquekefalonia.com.

For kayaking, jeep safaris and hiking, visit outdoorkefalonia.com

For more details go to visitgreece.gr

GLITZ, GLAMOUR & generosity

A recent trip to Hong Kong prompts third generation chef Jeremy Pang to look at sharing as part of Chinese culture



Hong Kong's skyscrapers and neon lights are quite possibly two of the city's biggest attractions. However, 'glitz and glamour' are not the only adjectives I'd pick to describe the nature of its culture and people. Hong Kong centres around the generosity of its people, alongside an almost paradoxical sense of tradition that embraces the modern world. I've not long flown back from visiting, and even the plane ride seemed to emulate what Hong Kong culture exudes: ample entertainment choices, the luxury of pot noodles (a guilty pleasure worth exploring), and posh ice-cream on demand ensuring that no-one had to experience hunger or boredom.

The prestige that Hong Kong has built up over its years as the 'Pearl of the Orient' runs through both the people and the city itself.

Locals are proud to be Hong Kongers, and love being a stone's throw from China, with all the opportunities that affords them. Hong Kongers also love sharing their wealth; whether it's knowledge or experience, or purely picking up the check after a shared meal.

In both Hong Kong and China, food culture is firmly founded on generous spirit, and many dishes are considered auspicious. Uncut noodles symbolise longevity, dumplings are thought to resemble ingots – and, therefore, money – and the presence of a whole fish on a dining table indicates abundance and unity.

Food as pleasure

In Lin Heung dim sum tea house in Sheung Wan one day, I watched little old ladies pushing dim sum trolleys around the restaurant. It was impossible to ignore their huge, endearing smiles as they handed guests their plates or baskets; they genuinely took pleasure from serving others the delicious morsels of food.

During this experience, our communal table was shared with a few strangers. Halfway through the meal, the lady next to me seemed intrigued as to why we, 'foreigners to Hong Kong', were at a dim sum restaurant so early in the morning. I explained that we were there to soak up the atmosphere as well as the food.

Sharing is caring

The woman seemed intrigued as to why I hadn't ordered the 'juk' or Chinese porridge. We were already incredibly full, yet after a few polite British refusals, we found ourselves with a full bowl of porridge in front of us. Our new friend insisted on sharing her meal with us and, with her simple gesture, we reached such a level of comfort, it was as though we were old buddies. The Chinese believe that sharing a meal around a table can help create a sense of family and companionship – a concept that, perhaps, we should all embrace a little more.

Gong Hei Fat Choi (a very happy Chinese new year) to you all!

HONE YOUR CULINARY SKILLS

Jeremy is founder of the award-winning School of Wok in London's Covent Garden, where you can master Asian and Oriental recipes, learn new techniques and have a lot of fun doing it! schoolofwok.co.uk



Images: Tor Pearce and John Arandhara-Blackwell of Darkwater Design. Recipe image: Martin Poole. Media enquiries: adrienne@schoolofwok.co.uk



Crispy bream with pickled red onion & sweet chilli dressing

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

For the pickle

- ½ a small red onion, finely sliced
- 4 tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 tsp granulated sugar
- ½ tsp salt

For the sauce

- 3 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
- 1 tbsp light soy sauce
- 2 tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 tbsp granulated sugar
- dash of dark soy sauce
- 3 tbsp water

For the fish

- 1 x 500g sea bream, scaled, gutted and de-gilled (ask the fishmonger to do this for you)
- thumb-size piece of ginger, cut into matchsticks
- 200g cornflour, seasoned with ¼ tsp salt and ¼ tsp black pepper
- vegetable oil, for deep-frying

METHOD

1. Combine all the pickle ingredients in a bowl and mix together well. Set aside for at least 30 minutes.
2. For the sauce, mix all the ingredients together in a small bowl and set aside.
3. Make 3 diagonal cuts in either side of the fish, deep enough to hit the bones and open up the flesh slightly.

Place the fish in a large bowl.

4. Scatter the ginger inside the cavity and over the fish. Rub the cornflour into the cracks, over the head, inside the cavity, and into the slashes, until the whole fish is covered.

5. Half-fill a large pot, wok or deep-fryer with the oil and heat to 180°C.

6. Carefully lay the seasoned fish into the hot oil, ensuring it is covered entirely, and deep-fry for 1-2 minutes.

7. Reduce the heat slightly to around 160°C, and continue to deep-fry for a further 8-10 minutes, until the fish is cooked through and is golden brown all the way to its tail. Remove carefully with a pair of tongs, and drain well on a plate covered with kitchen paper.

8. Meanwhile, put the sauce in a separate saucepan or small wok and bring to a vigorous boil over a high heat. Remove from the heat and pour over the cooked fish. Spoon over the pickled red onion slices, and serve.



Recipe from *Chinese Unchopped* by Jeremy Pang, with photography by Martin Poole, published by Quadrille, RRP £20



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*The prize is two Business Class return tickets from London Heathrow or Manchester Airport to Hong Kong on Cathay Pacific Airways to a destination on their network from the UK of your choice. Subject to availability and restrictions apply.

The land of Malbec

Always on the hunt for fine wine, Philippa Carr's latest oenophilic trip takes her to Cahors

Cahors strides the banks of the River Lot in South-west France, on the pilgrim's path to Compostela. The town is one of monumental, medieval beauty, and the eponymous region is famous for prehistory, castles, truffles... and wine.

In spite of stunning attractions like cave paintings and local cuisine, it's your glass of local red wine that most closely captures the fascinating hidden history of the region's success, decline and reinvention.

Cahors was famous for its blockbuster Malbecs many decades ago, long before Argentinian examples rode into our

restaurants and Mendoza became the go-to origin. But the French region has rallied, and its Malbecs – once so deep-coloured that they were called 'black wines' – are now lighter, fresher and tastier than ever before.

The rise and fall of a region

Malbec grapes, and Cahors itself, have a glorious past in France. Malbec was the main grape in Bordeaux during the 19th century when Cahors was a commercial hub, sited on a major trade route. Sent along the River Lot, the wines were enjoyed across Europe and Russia. Then the vine-destroying

phylloxera pest struck, and the railways arrived, taking trade away from river-based Cahors. By 1914, the local population had fallen by 50 per cent.

The Black Wines lay dormant. That world-famous reputation was buried, along with the fact that the wines were made from the now-fashionable Malbec grape. Visitors could explore the prehistoric cave art, but

‘Cahors was famous for its Malbecs long before Argentinian examples rode into our restaurants’



Following in his father's footsteps – Bertrand Vigouroux



Fill your glasses

During a visit to the region, try these Georges Vigouroux wines...

Château du Mercuès 2009

Rich, supple and intensely fruity.

Château de Haute Serre 2014

Géron Dadine

Named for the 16th-century owner, this 100% Malbec is rich, savoury and fragrantly fruity.

Back in the UK, try these Cahors beauties..

Cahors, Clos La Coutale 2014

(£8.25, The Wine Society)

A fruit-driven style, great with fried duck or pork in a piquant mustard sauce.

Jean-Luc Baldès Malbec du Clos Cahors

(Waitrose, £8.99) Silky, supple and a good match for steak or hard cheese.

Places to visit

SAINT-CIRQ LAPOPIE

Perched on a hill above the River Lot, this beautiful village gives a glimpse into life in the Middle Ages.

Wood-carving remains an occupation, recalling Saint-Cirq Lapopie's fame as the place where taps for Cahors wine barrels were made.

PECH MERLE Book well in advance for a tour of the colourful prehistoric cave paintings discovered in 1922 by two local teenagers.

Woolly mammoths, reindeer, horses and handprints are all depicted. pechmerle.com

CAHORS The region's capital is alive with the past, from the medieval streets and 14th-century Valentré bridge to the Roman amphitheatre remains and scallop 'shells' embedded in the pavements - which guide pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela.

Bertrand is an admirer of Argentinian wineries like Vina Cobos, Catena, and Clos de los Siete, his own efforts share a unique – and lovely – lightness of touch.

These are not Argentinian Malbecs; these are French – food-friendly and with a character all of their own. According to Bertrand, the dry climate, cold nights, limestone soil and location of Cahors make it the 'perfect place for beautiful Malbec'.

Château de Mercuès's Relais & Châteaux hotel is a sublimely elegant foil to Bertrand's wines. With wide stone staircases and glorious valley views from ordered gardens, there is a sense of light and space. Bedrooms are individually decorated, and luxury is afforded to every guest.

If you've ever dreamed of sleeping in a château, this is the real deal. For a true Rapunzel experience, you can even choose to stay in a turret – an experience best enjoyed after a few glasses of that wonderful wine.

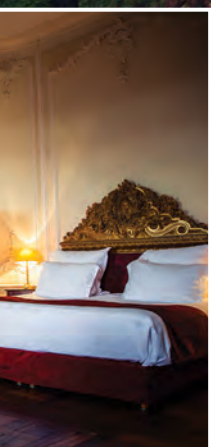
For more information, visit chateaudemercues.com

it would take committed pioneers to unearth the true beauty of Cahors wine.

The resurrection

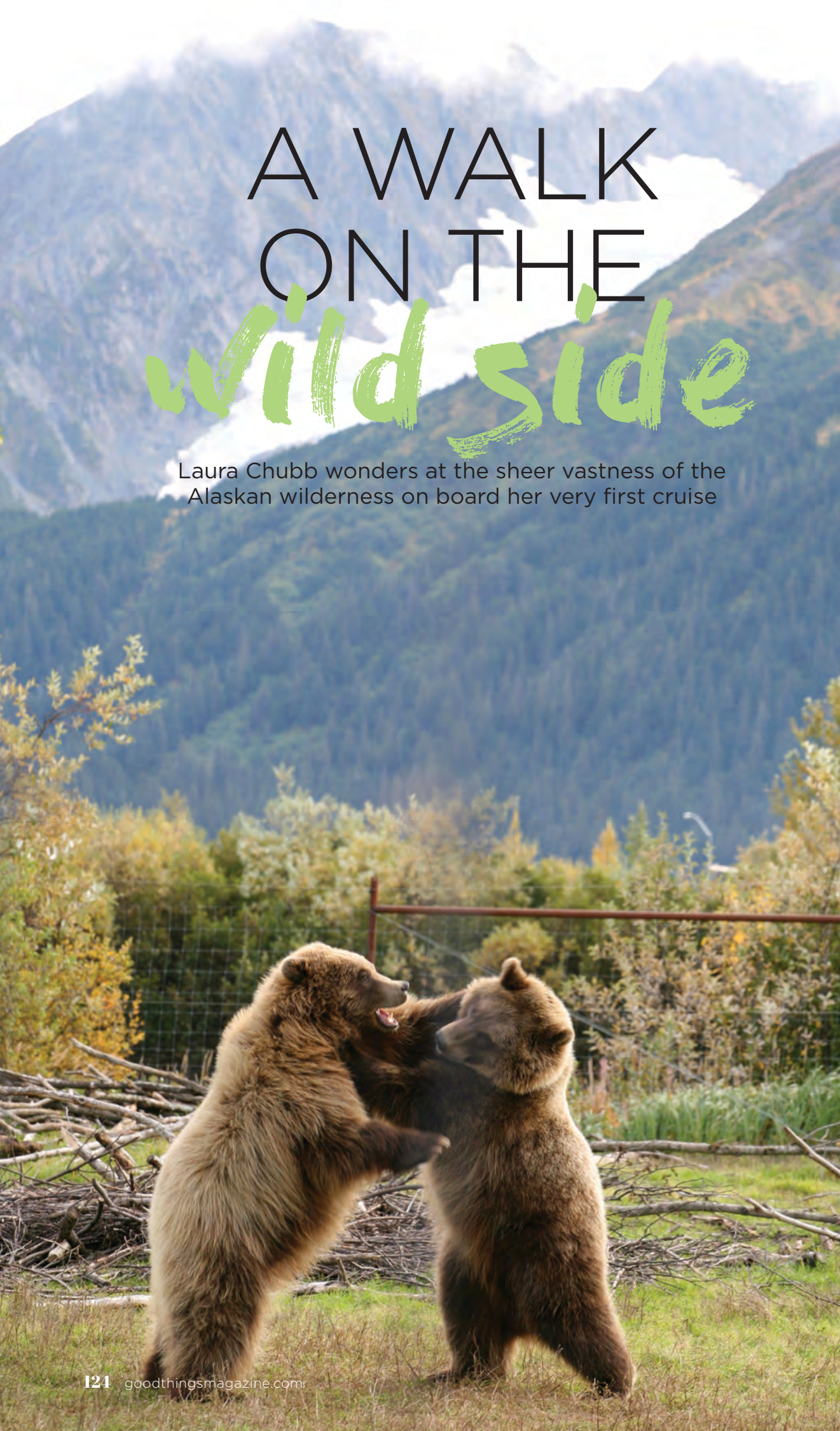
One of those people was Georges Vigouroux who, in the Seventies, re-introduced the Malbec grape to his property, Château de Haute Serre. His son Bertrand followed in his footsteps, and his experimental winemaking won the Vigouroux's other property, Château de Mercuès, a Gold Medal for the 1990 vintage. Tasted today, this wine remains beautifully ethereal and poised.

The Vigouroux's wines are unexpectedly elegant and supremely delicious, and, whilst



A WALK ON THE *wild side*

Laura Chubb wonders at the sheer vastness of the Alaskan wilderness on board her very first cruise





My first morning in Alaska, I open my curtains to see a pod of whales by my balcony. It's a delight, but I rapidly learn that this sort of scene is par for the course in the United States' northernmost corner. Over the next five days, I see brown bears bathing; enormous bald eagles hunting and swooping; and rafts of sea otters giddily sunbathing. Of course, such closeness to life in the wild can't always be cute. One afternoon, I spot a wolf scurry into the bushes with a shiny-slick seal pup hanging limply from its jaws. I'm in awe, but also a little bit heart-broken.

The last great wilderness

There couldn't be a better time to discover Alaska. Last year marked a century of the United States' National Park Service, celebrating North America's epic beauty, from its rust-red canyons to its pine-coated cliffs. Alaska is simultaneously the US's largest and most sparsely-populated state, and the entire territory could pass for national park.

Huge swathes are protected – Wrangell-St. Elias National Park alone is bigger than Switzerland – ensuring Alaska remains the last great wilderness. Hell, the state capital, Juneau, can only be reached by boat or plane. At a time when the US's modern cities command the most attention, it feels only proper to remember this colossal country offers more than cronuts and craft beer.

My journey starts in Seattle, where I board Holland America's MS Westerdam on a characteristically overcast afternoon.

This will be my first cruise, and while sharing a holiday with 1,999 other people has never topped my travel list, it's a matter of practicality in this state. Alaska's lack of infrastructure, size and terrain – rugged mountains, thick forests, rough seas, and Arctic tundra – makes independent exploration dangerous and expensive.

Happily, this cruise makes the destination and shore excursions top priority, with minimal time at sea and a more low-key on-board experience than I feared.

A day of sailing later, we're in the state capital. Stepping from gangway to pier I see still jade-green sea reflecting forested cliffs on all sides. The docked cruise ship adds to the drama; a humongous thing dwarfed by nature. 'You've caught Juneau on a beautiful day. It's never like this,' - the bus driver is as surprised as I am by the blazing sunshine and 20°C+ temperatures.

Scaling new heights

I've booked a helicopter flight onto the 13-mile long Mendenhall Glacier – Alaska's most accessible, about 12 miles from Juneau. As the bus pulls away, passengers enquire about the whereabouts of downtown. 'You're in it,' the driver laughs. 'Downtown Juneau is about a minute's walk each way.'

At the airfield, we pile into choppers so lightweight, I think ours might fall apart if I sneeze. But Alaska is full of fearless bush pilots, used to landing on crevasse-stripped glaciers with ease. The helicopter buzzes through wispy clouds and over goat-peppered >>



How to spend your Seattle stopover

Holland America's Alaska cruises depart from Seattle and the Pacific Northwest's largest city is well worth exploring

1. Pike Place is the oldest US farmers' market, and hawks seven acres-worth of great local produce. Don't miss Chukar's luscious chocolate cherries.
2. At the heart of the market lies 'Bubblegum Alley', where a row of buildings has been completely covered in colourful, chewed-up gum. Icky, but oddly photogenic.
3. The Chihuly Garden & Glass is a trippy museum of Tacoma-born Dale Chihuly's avant-garde glass art, set in the shadow of Seattle's landmark Space Needle.
4. Salty's Sunday brunch buffet is a fabulous, calorific carnival of American proportions – with unparalleled views of the Seattle skyline.
5. Newly refurbished, the lavish Fairmont Olympic features personal touches such as honey cider produced using its rooftop beehives. fairmont.com/seattle



peaks. On the glacier, I do the 'glacier push-up'; laying on my front to drink meltwater from the bright-blue surface, whose colour comes from a lack of air bubbles in the tightly-packed ice. Its cold purity is exhilarating.

Unrivalled views

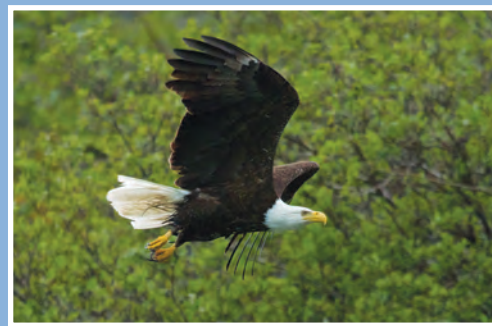
Juneau's grandeur is a fitting introduction to Alaska, but Sitka is epic. The town – a jumble of native, Russian and American history – is a tiny detail in the landscape's crushing vastness. Surrounded by snow-dusted mountains and pine-wooded islands, it's little wonder the town store parking lot once won 'best view from an American grocery store'.

Once-threatened, toddler-sized bald eagles glide overhead. At a bear sanctuary, I watch brown bears sneaking a cooling dip, and raucous black bear play-fights – all from a safe vantage. Still, this feels like a wild place, its grandness a reminder of my own smallness.

Talking of size, Alaska accommodates

eight national parks – seven within the US's 10 largest. One of those is Glacier Bay (a mere 3.3 million acres), where the Westerdam spends yet another gloriously sunny day cruising. Meltwater renders the sea an unearthly blue-green; black mountains are iced with dazzling snow; hulking tidewater glaciers advance into the bay. Days on the Westerdam are filled with this sort of mad beauty; whether it's dinner spent watching whale breaths spurt from waves, or sunset cocktails sipped to a CGI-like backdrop of mountains veiled in mist.

Our final stop is an anti-climax. In Ketchikan, the rain capital of Alaska, I'm told that carrying an umbrella marks you out as a tourist, because locals know nothing can protect from the weather's ferocity. On an underwhelming boat trip into the Misty Fjords (whose mistiness obscures any views), our guide tells tales of maddening isolation when she moved here 40 years ago: people raised on canned food and powdered milk



because supplies couldn't get in; the drought where bears ate people's dogs in place of salmon. Back then, bars only closed between 5am and 6am; what else was there to do?

As we pull away from this grey town, I linger on these realities. The isolation has been seductive, but I'm grateful for my connected London life. And yet, while I might like being in the world rather existing at its fringes, there's no feeling quite like living on the edge.

'Days are filled with mad beauty – dinner is spent watching whale breaths spurt from waves'

Make it real

Holland America Line's 7-night Roundtrip Seattle cruise on MS Eurodam departs 27 April 2017, from £819 based on two sharing an inside stateroom on a full board basis. hollandamerica.co.uk
Return fares from Heathrow to Seattle start from £602 with British Airways. ba.com



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