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April 2015

Rock the Ages

The new iconic
fragrances from
Jo Malone

Fashion Edit

Springtime fashion you'll
be drooling over

April's Hot Picks

This month's must have gifts and accessories

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Welcome...



Hi Everyone

Ever felt a little down, then all of a sudden your favourite song comes on the radio and as if by magic your mood lifts page 35 tells you more.

We love The Embankment in Bedford it is one of our favourite places for food and drink, having recently undergone a makeover and the arrival of a new manager, we popped along to sample some of the delights off the new spring menu – Our verdict – turn to page 42 to find out.

Spring is well and truly in the air and with that comes the thought of revealing our bodies for summer, as a woman it's those wobbly, orange peel effect legs that have me worried the most, so out of the kindness of my heart I have brought you 7 of the best cellulite/toning creams around (Page 12).

This month looks at two completely different travel destinations, one is a River Cruise around Myanmar (page76), and the other a Scottish Island hideaway on The Isle of Eriska (page74) both though will have you wishing you were here!

See you next month!

Jane x



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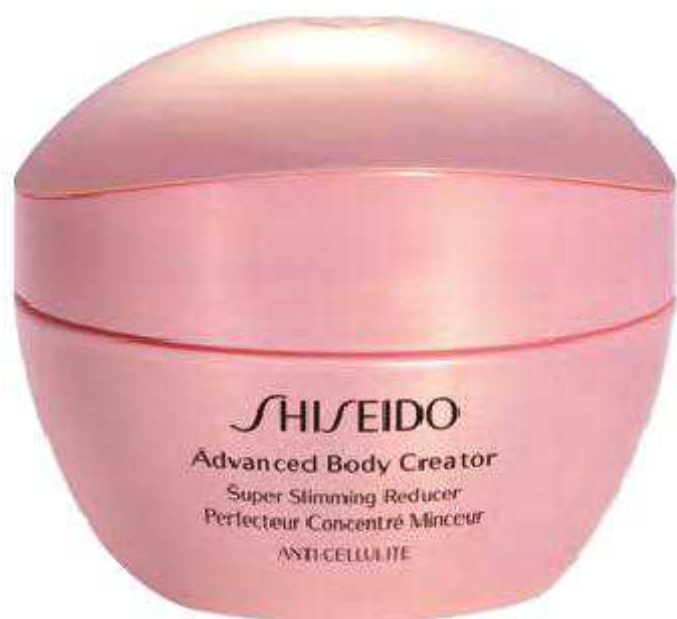
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Smooth and Tone

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The Road to Post-Work Out Recovery

As the weather begins to improve lots of us seize the opportunity to start new fitness regimes. But often we don't realise the importance of cool down, nutrition and rest.

In a new fitness regime, rest can be just as important as exercise. When getting fitter, longer or more intense workouts put the body under stresses and we need to allow time for our body to adapt. A good recovery period consists of rest, nutrition, cool down stretches and massage.

Nelsons arnicare® have collaborated with renowned nutritionist Emma Wight-Boycott to put together an easy to do at home post workout recovery plan, great for any new exercise regime.

Post Workout Meal

Main – Salmon

Salmon is a runner's friend as it is a good source of protein. Protein contributes to the growth and maintenance of muscle mass – so it's important you include it in your diet when you take on a new fitness regime. Salmon is also high in Omega 3 fatty acids known as EPA and DHA which contribute to the normal function of the heart.

Sides – Carrots

Vitamin A and Selenium contribute to the normal function of the immune system and so it is good to make sure that you include these in your diet as carrots are a great source of both.

Pudding – Banana

Potassium-rich bananas are ideal for pudding or as a snack when taking on a new training regime. Potassium contributes to normal muscle function helping us to get on with training.

Post Workout Warm Down

A combination of stretches and massage will ensure your muscles are warmed down effectively. When it's cold outside make sure you do some stretches whilst your body is still warm - you can do this through moving stretches (rather than static ones) such as stretching your arms whilst you walk or lunge walking to stretch your groin. When in the warm, try massaging your legs to ease aches with Nelsons arnicare Arnica Cooling Gel (£5.15 from Holland & Barrat and Boots). It containing grapefruit and menthol to help cool hot legs down.

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Rock the Ages

I love perfume, in fact I would go as far as to say I may be slightly obsessed, so when I saw and smelt the newly launched fragrance collection from Jo Malone I was just a little excited and hastily made room on my dressing table for all 5 bottles from the collection!

Aptly named "Rock The Ages" the aim of this collection is to depict different periods of British history through the inspiration of drama, atmosphere and characters of each of the periods.

The collection contains the following scents:

Tudor Rose & Amber evokes the bloody and turbulent Tudor era. The fragrance contains damask and Tudor rose as well as ginger in the heart, a spicy beginning of pink pepper and clove and the base of golden amber, patchouli and white musk.

Lily of the Valley & Ivy is inspired by the Georgian era of pastel tenderness, green landscapes, gardens and ivy-covered fences. The fragrance opens with green ivy, pink grapefruit and sparkling black currant, with a delicate floral heart of lily-of-the-valley and narcissus and the base

of beeswax, amber wood and white musk.

Geranium & Verbena is a fragrance inspired by the aristocracy of the Edwardian period. This fougère fragrance of garden parties contains notes of bergamot, basil and verbena in the top, geranium, neroli and coumarin in the heart, and vetiver, patchouli, vanilla and cedar in the base.

Pomegranate Noir evokes the Victorian period and decadence with this rich scent developed by

Jo Malone. It contains notes of pomegranate, raspberry, plum, watermelon and rhubarb on the top, Casablanca lily, jasmine, clove, frankincense and pink pepper in the heart, guaiac wood, musk, amber and patchouli in the base.

Birch & Black Pepper is the scent of modern Britain with contrasts between tradition and punk culture. It opens with accords of mandarin, cardamom and black pepper. Patchouli and birch are in the heart, followed by the base of gurjum, vanilla and ink.

Each 30ml collectible bottle is trimmed in a fabric of the time and costs £42.



Fashion in a Bottle

This Limited Edition collection from Christian Louboutin contains three miniature 6ml nail colours inspired by the designer's Python Vulcano fashion collection. Enclosed in a decorative box adorning the signature Python Vulcano print, this treasurable set will make an ideal gift for yourself or a friend. Available for £65 from Selfridges.



Not Just for Pregnancy

Kadria Skincare has been discovered! Originally formulated for pregnant ladies and babies, the range's Balancing Facial Oil is being snapped up all over the place by women suffering from hormonal skin imbalances. Available to buy from £16 - £36 online from

www.kadriaskincare.com.

The Balancing Facial Oil combines a unique blend of essential oils and Omega 3 and 6 to nourish, protect and restore uneven skin.



Organic Hands

Deeply nourishing and beautifully scented, this limited edition hand cream trio from Neal's Yard Remedies makes perfect pampering for your hands, made with skin softening, nourishing and protecting plant extracts it is the ideal treat for your hands, priced at £24 and available online from nealsyardremedies.com.

BEAUTY UPDATES

Beat the Blemish

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What Difference
Could an Hour
Make?

Once the clocks have moved forward (29th March) research shows losing an hour in spring is more difficult to adjust to than gaining an hour in the autumn. Just like jet-leg can be harder to deal with when you travel east and lose time, versus gaining time when flying west. Trying an 'earlier' bedtime may be hard and could cause more wakefulness during the early part of the night. All of which can leave us feeling more tired and fatigued than usual!

So, is there anything we can do to help our internal clocks adapt more quickly? Here are a few small tips and tricks to get you feeling back to normal in no time:

- Instead of having something sugary, try eating a snack, which will raise your blood sugar levels slowly and keep them up. Good options are a handful of nuts, oatcakes with peanut butter or raw carrots with hummus.
- Instead of having that cup of coffee make sure you stay hydrated throughout the day. Aim for 6-8 glass of water throughout the day and never wait until you feel thirsty before drinking, as it means that you're already dehydrated.
- Instead of overeating at lunch, have a light meal that contains both proteins and complex carbohydrates, and then a snack in the afternoon. If you can, try and get away from your desk for half an hour at lunch to help you feel more alert in the afternoon.
- If you can, aim for eight hours sleep a night and have a regular time when you go to bed.
- Exercise is not always possible in the middle of a working day, but a brisk 10-minute walk can actually do wonders and boost those energy levels.
- Keep the bedroom as dark as possible. Light suppresses the secretion of the sleep-inducing substance melatonin. So it is important to expose yourself to the light during the waking hours as much as possible, and conversely, do not expose yourself to bright light when it is dark outside.
- Practice good sleep hygiene, by this we mean create a sleep-friendly environment that enhances your chances of falling asleep, staying asleep and sleeping well. This includes a cool temperature (around 18 degrees), eliminating distractions (i.e. banning mobiles, tablets, etc in the hours before bed), reducing your caffeine and alcohol intake and implementing a good wind down routine to help you relax (think a warm bath, a milky drink and reading a book).

If you can't sleep, don't lie there worrying about it. Get up and do something you find relaxing until you feel sleepy again – then go back to bed.

Midlife Madness



Grump Off!

Although I have been known to have the occasional rant, and like everyone there may be days when I am not my usual sunny self, on the whole I am an optimistic, happy person. That is not to say that there has always been good reason to be optimistic and happy, I just think that generally, if bad stuff happens being grumpy about it usually doesn't help.

Notice I said generally, like everyone there are moments when a good old grump does actually make you feel a lot better. But surely, for our own sakes as well as everyone else's these should be kept as a sort of occasional treat, rather than daily routine.

I would also acknowledge that I am probably a morning person - some in my family may disagree but what do they know? They may think I have just been lying in bed but actually while my body has been doing just that, my razor sharp, wide awake mind has planned a week's meals, redesigned the lounge, and updated my 'you really need to pay me more and here's the reasons why' speech for my boss - just in case the right occasion to deliver it happens anytime soon.

As a fairly new member of the 'Commuting to London Club' I must say I have been struck by the downright grumpiness of the commuting population as a whole. Now, I get it, the 7.09 train is early and if you are at the station by then, fully dressed usually, though I must confess to being surprised at how many women do their make up on the train and one woman the other day still had 'rollers' in her hair - I assumed she knew, then clearly even if you live near the station you have been up early and if you don't then there is the additional challenge of parking somewhere that is near enough to the station not to make a taxi necessary and costs less than you are likely to earn before lunchtime! Not easy I can tell you!

But the fact is that if you are commuting then you probably exercise SOME degree of choice over that, and okay you may feel tired but you have made it to the station, and even if getting out of bed is one of the low points of your day then by the time you get to the station

then it's done, over with, you won't have to face that particular challenge again for least a day.

I also know that getting to the station is only the first part - then you have to deal with the delays and cancellations (even if you don't commute you will have heard about them on the news) and when the train does arrive, having being told first class is at the rear, so all the economy class, (worker ants like me), move dutifully to the front end of the train only to find that, once again, it was misinformation. Either there are serious communication problems within the rail networks - surely someone knows where first class is, or there are some real jokers working there, who just enjoy the ensuing chaos of people charging up (or down) the platform, elbows out, coffee spilling, without a 'sorry' in sight as the 'pack' hustles towards the doors in the vain hope of a seat.

And for anyone out there who thinks that £50 buys you a seat - let me put you straight - often all £50 buys you is a little bit of standing space, complete with general prodding from umbrellas, or other such items, burns from spilled coffee, trodden on toes from feet or those wretched, wheelie case things and, of course, secondhand air - full of all kinds of pathogens.

Having said all that, I have been lucky and on all days, except once, so far I have managed to get a seat, (no, of course, I am not going to tell you how!) and then it can be a pleasant experience, a cup of tea, some fruit toast, or porridge, a magazine of TV programmes to watch on the tablet, what's not to love?.....

I'll tell you, there I am in my happy little world sitting on the train and when I look up all I see are grumpy faces!! Not just from the standers, I get that, but also from all the people who are in seats and really ought to be enjoying the privilege of said seat!

So commuters of the world remember, you are never fully dressed without a smile, it doesn't cost and it would make MY journey a whole lot better. Do I sound like a bit of a grump.



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Get Glowing...



Spring is well and truly on its way and Y Spa at Wyboston Lakes Hotel have introduced an incredible package to get your skin ready for springtime. The Elemis Glow Day is the perfect day spa package to leave you feeling truly revitalised and uplifted after the winter season.

Y Spa have worked closely with the team at Elemis to create a wonderful day, it includes the new Brightening Facial for even skin tone - ideal for a springtime pick me up.

The package also includes a full day to soak up the thermal spa, and a fantastic Elemis Replenishing Night time Collection worth from £36.00. If that isn't enough the Elemis Glow Day Package includes a retail voucher worth £10.00 as well as a delicious 2 course hot or cold lunch, all for just £64.50 per person.

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5. Fringed Clutch £35 **Dorothy Perkins**
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7. Butterfly by Matthew Williamson £40 **Debenhams**
8. Fringe Bag £58 **Next**
9. Halie Suede Bag £69 **Phase Eight**
10. Leather Fringe Bag £65 **Accessorize**
11. White Bag £15.99 **New Look**
12. Pink Bag £30 **Dorothy Perkins**
13. Fringed Mini Bucket Bag £180 **Karen Millen**



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Yellow Peril



Mac £75
Next



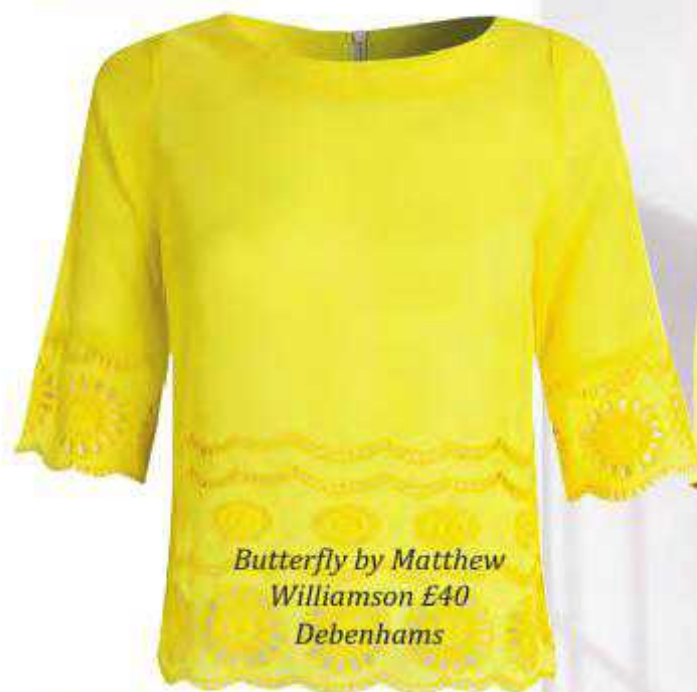
Mini Skirt £30
Next



Scarf
Monsoon



Principles by Ben
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Uplift your Mood with Music



Whenever you are feeling down in the dumps, listen to music I beg anyone not to have a little dance if they listen to Pharrell Williams – Music can literally lift your mood.

A lot of people turn to upbeat music whenever they feel sad or depressed, and it comes as no surprise why it is a viable solution for people feeling blue. For many years music has made a lot of individuals happy. That's because soothing tunes foster the release of serotonin, a hormone that fosters happiness and a general sense of well-being. It also flushes the body with dopamine, a neurotransmitter that makes you feel good. Music also paves the way for the release of norepinephrine, a hormone that brings about euphoria and elation.

It's a safe and cheap way to improve your mood. And with a better disposition, you can have a better life.

So whenever you are feeling down in the dumps, listening (even singing) to "I Will Survive" at the top of your lungs can give you the strength and motivation to pick yourself up.

Happy Listening!



Train your Partner Like a Puppy!

Celebrity relationship expert Sloan Sheridan-Williams believes that using puppy psychology on your partner leads to lasting love

What I have found when working with couples in relationship coaching is that those who follow a few simple rules tend to have healthy loving partnerships based on the four pillars of relationship success - honesty, trust, respect and integrity.

Many of these rules are the same psychological ones we use during puppy training. The way you would behave with a puppy actually says a lot more about you than the puppy. Puppies offer unconditional love and attention but this all depends on how we treat them to elicit good behaviour.

Here are my top eight tips to develop a better relationship with your partner using puppy psychology.

1. Say What You Mean

We don't give mixed messages to puppies. We say no when we mean no and make clear distinctions between good and bad behaviour. Communicating your wants and needs clearly to your other half in the way you do to a puppy helps you draw boundaries as to what you will and won't tolerate. You will have a healthier relationship if you avoid making the unacceptable acceptable as that only leads to resentment.

2. Be Consistent

Owners who never feed their puppy from their plate find their dog will grow up to never beg for food because it knows not to waste energy on a fruitless task. Being consistent in your response to your partner's behaviour is key to a successful relationship, as they will quickly realise that if they do action A you will always have reaction B so the burden to change is on them not you.

3. Everything in Moderation

Puppies do not know how to regulate their eating, playtime hours or even how to approach other dogs, so it's up to you to help control their impulses and moderate their behaviour. Similarly don't offer your partner everything they want on a plate without them earning it because, like a puppy, they need to learn early on to respect you if they want to be rewarded, otherwise they will never know how to appreciate you.

4. Show no Fear

Being fearful or clingy around your puppy can make them lose trust and confidence in you, making them more difficult to handle. Applying the same psychology to your partner, it is imperative that you do not show fear of losing them or they will respond differently to you than they would have. The best way to reduce the fear of rejection is to focus on boosting your self-esteem and ensure your confidence comes from within and not from your partner.



5. Reward don't Punish

Most dog owners agree that punishment doesn't work and that rewarding good behaviour and ignoring bad behaviour is the best way to develop a well behaved puppy. Identify rewards that work for your partner and plan to deliver one immediately after a positive act. Focus on rewarding things that your other half does which add value to the relationship and be consistent to compound good behaviour. You should also refuse to acknowledge unhelpful behaviour but don't be a pushover.

6. Get them to do the Chasing

Every dog owner knows that walking in the opposite direction is far more likely to get their puppy to start chasing them rather than another dog. Chasing after your partner or always being available to them, will lead to complacency at best and push them away at worst. If you feel your partner pulling away, get them to come running back to you by creating scarcity and spending time doing your own thing, be it going out with friends or taking up a new hobby.

7. Avoid Exhibiting Negative Behaviours Yourself

Puppies block out constant yelling of their name until they decide to react. Likewise humans filter out the voice of a partner who nags, complains, whines or makes them feel a negative emotion, so they no longer respond and react. You can avoid your partner blocking you out by not displaying such negative behaviours, keep difficult

conversations clear and concise and immediately moving on to a more positive or interesting topic.

8. Practice Makes Perfect

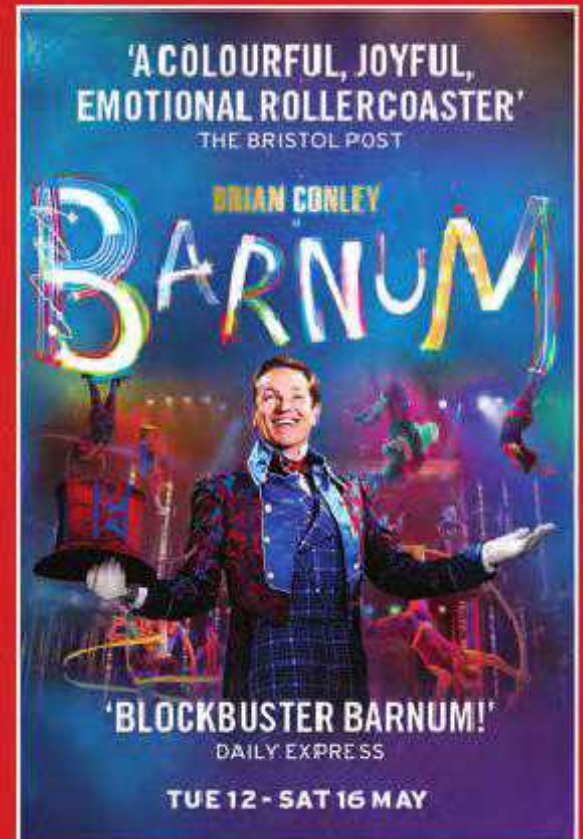
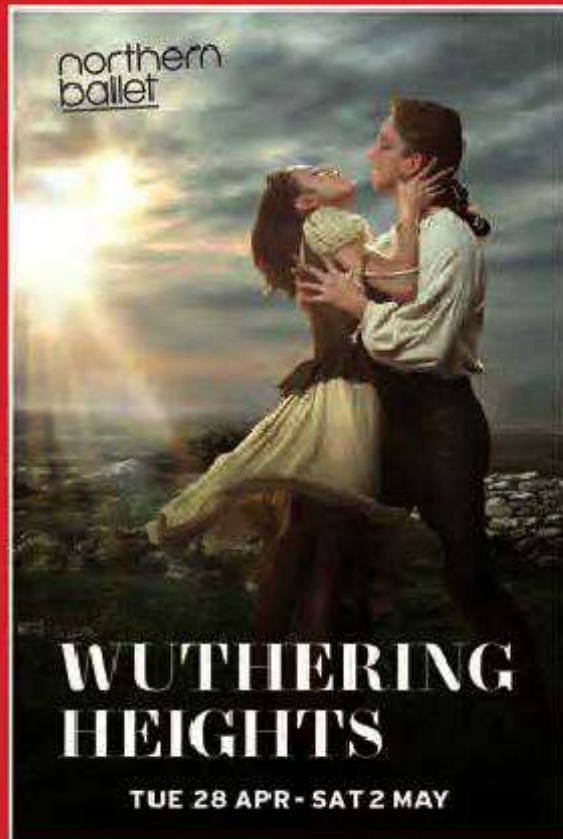
It's important to remember that practice makes perfect and if you don't succeed at creating a change in your partner with the first attempt, then try again. This is all about making changes in yourself and you need to keep applying positive actions to help you progress forward to the relationship you want and desire. If you feel it is worth the effort then keep applying these principles over and over again, compounding the change until you get lasting results.

Modifying your behaviour and ultimately changing your partner's response to you should be a fun process. Your ultimate goal is to move away from unhelpful emotions such as fear, lack of trust, and game playing towards positive emotions such as forgiveness, love and acceptance. If you have tried everything and are still unhappy with your partner then sometimes it is better to give him up, so he can find a good home with someone else.

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Pan Chai Petite

Pan Chai the UK's first and only pan-Asian franchise has expanded with the recent opening of Pan Chai petite at Bicester Village, Oxfordshire. The temporary pop-up site is planned to operate until 12th April 2015, with a plan to move within a permanent site within the complex following this. Pan Chai petite serves a menu of pan-Asian cuisine, from small plates - with a selection of sushi and dim sum to mains including Nasi goreng, Thai green curry, Vietnamese Pho (choice of Chicken or Beef), and Black cod with sweet soy glaze. Asian soft drinks available include Malaysian pulled tea, Glass jelly and Bubble Tea.



Spring Forward

If you can't shake off feeling tired all the time, you may not be getting enough iron from your diet so why not try taking a natural iron supplement like SPATONE to help maintain healthy iron levels. SPATONE contains Spatone iron rich water sourced from the Welsh mountains of Snowdonia National Park - which has been scientifically proven to help top up iron levels, whilst causing fewer of the unpleasant side effects often experienced with conventional iron food supplements.

Priced at £8.75 for 28 sachets and SPATONE Apple is priced at £10.55 for 28 sachets. Available from Boots, Holland & Barratt and all good independent health food and pharmacy stores.

Egg-quisite Easter

Lancaster London's Easter Champagne Afternoon Tea, priced from £40 and available from 3rd until 6th April 2015, will offer an array of delicious seasonal, spring-time treats. Freshly baked hot cross buns will be added to the menu, as well as slices of delectable Easter Simnel Cake. The Easter Afternoon Tea is accompanied by a selection of the finest fresh loose leaf Novus teas, as well as either a glass of Laurent-Perrier Champagne or an egg-stra special cocktail. Choose from the 'Royal Hot Chocolate' or 'Divine Martini' - what better way to enjoy the holiday!

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Spring Dining

After re-opening its doors after a super spruce up, which has made its spacious bar and eatery an even lovelier place to visit, along with its new look there is a new face at the helm of The Embankment in the form of Ben Paul who comes from The Embankment's sister pub, The Black Horse in Woburn. Ben and his team continue to bring customers the warm and friendly atmosphere that has always been part of The Embankment's appeal!

We went along to sample some of the dishes created by head chef Sam Collins for the new Spring menu and what a treat we were in for.

The first dish of free range chicken and tarragon terrine, piccalilli and sourdough toast was utterly divine, the homemade piccalilli with its crunchy vegetables was an absolute treat.

Salt baked beetroot, with goat's curd and toasted walnuts followed. The tastes complimented each other perfectly, whilst still maintaining their individual taste.

BBQ glazed ham hock, sweetcorn puree, spring onions

and chilli with cornbread croutons looked stunning and tasted just as good.

Roast hake, cauliflower, Iberico ham & leek vinaigrette was just as perfect, and looked as delightful.

The Cornish lamb cannon, minted new potatoes, olive, tomato and baby artichokes was the final savoury dish and certainly didn't disappoint, presentation was faultless and the taste was delightful with a clever combination of flavours.

Dessert in the form of iced blood orange parfait, pistachios & toasted marshmallow was our final dish, a delicious dessert to finish off a menu that was full of mouth watering exquisite dishes.

With its sleek new look, warm and friendly staff and a menu offering varied and delicious dishes there is no doubt guests will return time and time again.

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*Wild Mushroom Stroganoff,
Fried vegetable rice*

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Ingredients

Small knob of butter
1 onion sliced
2 cloves of garlic crushed
600g, sliced mixed wild mushroom (available from most good supermarkets)
(can be swapped with flat mushrooms or another of your choice)
4 teaspoons paprika
Small glass of white wine
100 ml vegetable stock
200ml double cream
300g long grain rice
150g vegetables for rice for example: peas, courgette and peppers

Method

Fry the garlic, onions and mushrooms in the butter with a small amount of oil for 5-6 minutes until they start to colour. Add the paprika and cook for a further minute, next add the white wine and vegetable stock and reduce by half. Finish with the cream and simmer until the sauce reaches the required consistency. Cook the rice in plenty of boiling water and once done drain very well.

Heat a frying pan with a small amount of oil add the choice of vegetables for the rice and fry for a few minutes until cooked, then add the rice and fry for 5 minutes until the rice just starts to colour. Serve the fried rice along side the stroganoff and garnish with parsley

This dish serves 4 and is brought to you by the Chef
The Millhouse Hotel and Riverside Restaurant,
Sharnbrook, Beds



Errazuriz 'The Blend' White 2011

Pale yellow in colour, this wine's moderate aromatic intensity offers tremendous elegance and complexity. Nutty and dried fruit aromas typical of Roussanne and Marsanne are accompanied by sweet floral notes of acacia and honeysuckle. Mandarin orange and other citrus flavours appear on the long and pleasing finish.

£22, Waitrose, The Wine Reserve

Errazuriz 'Aconcagua Costa' Pinot Noir 2011

Clean and bright ruby red in colour, this Pinot Noir presents a very intense and fresh nose with tremendous varietal typicity and aromas of red fruits such as cherries, raspberries, strawberries, and subtle floral notes recalling red roses. The wine is elegant, vertical, and mineral with juicy, vibrant acidity that makes this a gastronomic product with excellent aging potential

£17.99, Harrods



Errazuriz Estate Series Cabernet Sauvignon 2013

Deep red in colour with good concentration, this wine maintains a nice balance between its fresh fruit and notes from oak aging. Tart and sweet cherries as well as blackcurrant subtly intermingle with toasted notes lead to a well-balanced palate. Medium-bodied, with firm tannins, and good grip; juicy on the palate with bright acidity.

£9.99, Waitrose, Morrisons



Bakewell tart, French vanilla custard

Ingredients

For the pastry:

175g flour
75g butter
2-3 tablespoons cold water

For the filling:

4 tablespoons raspberry jam
125g butter
125g castor sugar
125g ground almonds
1 egg
50g flaked almonds

For the custard:

250ml milk
250ml double cream
100g castor sugar
6 egg yolks
1 vanilla pod split length ways

Serves 8

Method

To make the pastry, rub the butter into the flour until it resembles breadcrumbs, then add the water to form a soft dough, roll the pastry out on a floured surface and use it to line a 20cm baking tin, refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat your oven to 180c and line your pastry with foil and baking beans or alternatively you can use rice (this rice is only good for baking with now), bake the pastry in the oven for 15 minutes then remove the foil and beans or rice and return to the oven for a further 5 minutes

Spread the jam evenly across the base of the pastry. To make the filling melt the butter in a pan, remove from the heat and stir in the sugar followed by the ground almonds and egg. Pour the mixture into the pastry case and sprinkle with the flaked almonds.

Bake in the oven at 160c for about 40 minutes. If the almonds start to colour cover the tart with tin foil

To make the custard, heat the milk and cream with the vanilla until it boils, meanwhile mix your yolks and sugar together, pour the cream mix onto the eggs and whisk.

Put the custard base back in the pan and back onto the stove, heat it slowly over a low heat whilst stirring continuously until it starts to thicken. When it coats the back of the spoon remove it from the stove and strain into a bowl. To serve cut the tart into 8 and drizzle with the custard.

This sweet is brought to you by the Chef

The Millhouse Hotel and Riverside Restaurant, Sharnbrook, Beds



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Picture perfect



*Alex Wilson, Owner-manager,
Alexandra Wilson Interior Design*

We have been decorating our walls with art since cavemen times. The reasons may be many; perhaps it is something to do with our love of art, the emotions it can stir or the memories it can evoke. Perhaps it is simply that we have a need and desire to create interest, symmetry and harmony. I am not saying that every wall needs a picture, but to me, even the most beautifully designed room will lack impact and interest and can appear to be unbalanced if it lacks some carefully chosen pictures or artwork.

What to hang on a wall is largely one of personal choice and taste, and it is not the intention of this article to dictate or advise what is in vogue and what is not. Rather, the purpose is to give you some practical advice on the 'DOs and DON'Ts', and some top tips, which will make your job easier and help to create the look you wish. There are some

traditional rules for displaying art and whilst you're free to accept or reject them expert they are worth considering.

Art can have an impact but the impact will vary dependent on where it is hung. When you hang a large important picture, repeating some of the dominant colors in other accessories throughout the room is a good idea. Relating the painting to other objects in the room help harmonise the scheme and create a sense of unity.

When it comes to buying art, buy what you love and can afford. Art should speak to you, it should invoke emotion so don't buy something that bores you – it should make you sing, jump for joy, feel nostalgic or inspired. Make sure that you will enjoy looking at it, and that the palate will go well with your décor and furnishings. Above all, see it as an investment and take your time - there is no need to rush such decisions. Also, don't be afraid of mixing different types of art together. The main rule here is anything goes as long as it looks good together. That said there are some conventions you might wish to take note of:

An erotic nude painting hung in the living or dining room is a 'no-no' and beauties au naturel should be reserved for the bedroom or bathroom. In a similar way, still life pictures of food and fruit will appear incongruous when hung in the bedroom but at home when displayed in the kitchen or dining room. Likewise, don't hang too many family or wedding photos in the living room; instead opt for portraits and avoid art depicting blood, guts and war and in the dining room. Flowers, landscapes, and seascapes are



welcome just about anywhere. Floral subjects are usually considered feminine, boats and seascapes masculine, and whimsical themes childish. Finally, collections of similar or complimentary pieces can create an impact that is greater than the sum of their parts. As previously stated these are conventions; and will help you make uncontroversial decisions; however if you have an educated eye and sense of adventure you may wish to ignore them.

There then comes the thorny issue of how to hang your pictures and art; whether it's a single picture or a multiple piece collection; bungled hanging can spoil the intended impact. The easiest way to avoid mistakes in this area is to first lay your arrangement on the floor and arrange each piece in turn so that the grouping is pleasing to the eye. Next, using brown craft paper or newspaper make a template for each piece, and place onto the wall using masking tape, moving them around until the arrangement looks right. But before you settle on the final placement make sure that the arrangement is also compatible for your eye-line. Most people hang pictures too high; you should

not have to strain your neck to see them. The general rule is to make the centre of the picture roughly five feet from the ground, you should not end up looking down or up at it. When satisfied that the arrangement is correct and in proportion to the space, mark where the nail or hook will go for each picture. This will vary from picture to picture so check each individual piece and remember to use the correct type of fixing for your wall. The final step is to ensure your pictures are straight. I find it is sufficient to stand a few feet away and be guided by my eye to achieve this, but you could also use a small spirit level to achieve the same result. As a final top tip, a little white tack (the same as blue tack) on the bottom corners of the frame can be used on the to ensure your pictures stay in position. Have fun!

Alex Wilson is the owner-manager of Alexandra Wilson Interior Design based in North Bedfordshire. For further information please contact her at www.alexandrawilsoninteriors.co.uk.

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Learning to Go with your Gut!

Let's be clear right at the start, I am not talking about fibre, indigestion or even your five portions a day. What I am talking about here is developing the skill of being intuitive.

I am sure many readers will have had the experience of having the feeling they should do something that they maybe hadn't planned, like taking a different route home, or calling a particular person, but only to find later that there were road works on the road they usually take or the person they phoned really needed to talk to them. These are examples of using our intuition. Acting not just on rational thought and reason but going with a gut feeling, even if we don't understand why.

What is Intuition?

The free dictionary www.thefreedictionary.com/intuition defines intuition as :

"The faculty of knowing or understanding something without reasoning or proof, or an impression or insight gained by the use of this faculty."

Many of us see intuition as a hunch, that feeling we have, usually unbidden, about a particular situation or course of action that we sense we need to take.

We all have examples but here are a couple of mine -when I went into labour with one of my children my husband was away and, being the middle of the night I was unsure that I'd be able to contact my 'reserve' person but when I phoned she said she'd been awake for 10 minutes and knew I would call. On another occasion I remember looking at a house with a view to buying it and having a gut feeling that there was something not right about it, though on the surface it ticked all our boxes. A long time later I noticed it was still up for sale and when I enquired I was told that it had major subsistence problem, so while

several people had started the process no one had actually bought it. Obviously a survey would have revealed this, but we'd have wasted a lot of time and some money.

Are we all intuitive?

Many people believe that it is our ability to reason that makes us different from animals - they act on instinct - whereas we can be rational and logical, we can apply our powers of reason to our instincts.

In many ways this is a good thing, we certainly don't want to make every decision or act 100% of the time on instinct. But neither is it something we should block out entirely, or even think of as unscientific. Intuition comes from our subconscious and so will be driven by a lot of past experiences, and previous learning. This may not always be helpful but that doesn't mean it never is.

In fact, sometimes we are quite prepared to follow our intuition, if we are, maybe walking alone and get a feeling we shouldn't walk up a particular street, many of us would follow our instinct. Buying houses, booking holidays, even going for new jobs you will often hear people say that something 'didn't feel right' or that 'it just felt right' - there may be elements of logic and reason, but there is also a sense of intuition or instinct.

In fact the US military is actually investigating how they can train personnel to be more intuitive, when making a decision or judgment, and the use of intuition in business and management is something that is becoming increasingly recognized as an important tool in the decision making process.



Intuition is something that we all have, it is indeed a sixth sense but for many of us having had years of telling ourselves, or others telling us, not to listen to that intuitive voice it can take a bit of practice to 'hear' it again.

Steps to becoming more Intuitive

Be Quiet

Intuition is a whisper rather than a shout and if our lives are busy and we constantly have phones, tablets, radios and TV's and, of course, people, demanding our attention, it can be hard to hear.

"Intuition is seeing with the soul."

— Dean Koontz

Be Creative

Very often intuition is associated with creativity, certainly using the creative part of our brain seems to put people in greater touch with their intuition.

Be Observant

Taking notice of things is a great way to improve your intuitive powers, intuition comes from within but is often based on previous experiences or learning and being observant seems to help the process.

Be Present

How often do you find you do things automatically, often

I suspect, and that's fine, it's one of the ways we can manage to multi task. BUT if we always do that we are robbing ourselves of being present in the moment. How many times have you listened to a friend but actually been planning a meal or deciding what you'll buy when you go shopping. By really listening or being 'in the moment' mentally we can learn to hear the quiet voice of our intuition.

Be a Dreamer

When you look at the lives of people who are really successful they often dream big – and they often follow hunches. They buy or sell shares at the right time, they meet the right person, in fact often their lives consist of not only hard work but of following instincts.

"At times you have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. What you'll discover will be wonderful. What you'll discover is yourself."

— Alan Alda

For more information about any aspect of the article or to find out how you can become more intuitive contact Attuned Education on

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Fry's Footie Corner



As we enter April, the push for promotion in all three divisions in the Football League is tighter than ever. In fact, I cannot remember a time where there was so much to play for at both ends of the table.

The Sky Bet Championship is always a competitive league. It is one of the toughest to get out of in Europe, but this year, it is as close as I can recall with six or seven sides in with a genuine chance of clinching automatic promotion and a whole host of teams behind them shuffling themselves into a position where they can challenge for the play-offs. A good run of results can see you move up a number of places and on the flip side, a poor trot of results can have the opposite effect. At the time of writing, the two sides that have demonstrated that fact are Watford and Derby County.

The Hornets lead the way after a fine run of form and this is despite a topsy-turvy season off the pitch with several managers arriving and then leaving Vicarage Road in a short space of time. On the pitch though, you cannot fault their efforts and in Troy Deeney, they have one of the

country's most consistent marksman.

While Watford are flying, the Rams are plummeting and it just goes to show how important a strong squad is to your chances of success. Derby have lost key players at a vital time of the season with Chris Martin and Darren Bent both sidelined with injury. They are a young side and I am sure Steve McLaren will be desperate for a fully fit squad for the run in.

In League One, it is just the same with four teams in with a shout of joining Bristol City in the Championship. The Robins are well clear now and after seeing them at close quarters recently, I fully expect Preston North End to join them. They are well equipped for the Championship, they are organised and have some very talented players in forward areas.

Of course with Swindon Town and Milton Keynes Dons in with a shout of automatic promotion, it does mean that two teams will slip into the play-offs. Those last two spots are up for grabs as this league has been full of inconsistency and teams that

started the campaign well have suddenly lost form and face a relegation battle.

In terms of where the relegation hits hardest, you have to take a glance at the foot of League Two. Nobody wants to drop out of the Football League and time has proven that once you do, it takes a long time to get back to the Promised Land.

Hartlepool United were dead and buried at the beginning of March, but Ronnie Moore's men won two away games on the bounce to give themselves a shot of avoiding the drop. Cheltenham Town and Oxford United are also battling against the tide and in the latter's case, it really would be a huge shock if a club of that size lost their status as a Football League club.

As Sir Alex Ferguson once said, it is 'squeaky bum' time whether you are battling for promotion or battling for your lives at the other end of the table. It is going to be interesting that is for sure!

Up the Posh!

Barry Fry



Best Foot Forward



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*Turbo Cobalt Shoes £55
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*Skate Trainer £29.95
White Stuff*



A Little Serenity

"Celebrating the historical role played by silk as a symbol of ultimate elegance, the Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Bespoke Design team has created a magnificent one-off Phantom which will set a new benchmark for luxury individualisation in the motor industry, and reaffirm that Bespoke is Rolls-Royce."

Rolls-Royce have created Serenity, a one-of-a-kind Phantom with a made-to-order interior, hand-crafted to be the "ultimate luxury." And I have to say it has to be one of the most amazing interiors I have ever seen.

Rolls-Royce Motor Cars brought Serenity to last month's Geneva International Motor Show, unveiling the new standard in authentic, bespoke luxury motoring.

The exterior of the car -- painted in a one-off, shimmering mother-of-pearl added three-stages and hand-polished

for 12 hours -- opens to reveal a pale green interior the designers say was inspired by the opulence of royalty.

"This tranquillity made us think of the Oriental tradition where Emperors would take to their private gardens to reflect in solitude under the blossom trees," said textile artist Cherica Haye, who together with Michelle Lusby worked with Rolls Royce to design the one-off commission. "The blossom motif is one that is cherished in Far Eastern culture and has been beautifully applied to royal robe design over the centuries. We felt it was the perfect representation of tranquillity and serenity for a beautiful modern interior from Rolls-Royce."

Serenity's interior is lined with silk, hand-dyed a colour called "Smoke Green," hand-spun, hand-woven, then painstakingly hand-embroidered and painted with cherry blossoms that fan out over the interior.



Each panel took up to 600 hours of work, from the dyeing process through to the final stitches.

"From renaissance times to the modern day, eminent people have surrounded themselves with rare fabrics such as silk to signify their power and position in society, whether at home or on the move," said Rolls-Royce Director of Design Giles Taylor.

"The desire for the finest, most opulent fabrics endures amongst the cognoscenti around the world, including many Rolls-Royce owners. The thought that fabrics such as silk have been discounted from use because of their delicacy only spurred us on to go further than any other

car maker is capable of doing. The result is Serenity." The seats are upholstered in white leather, while smoked cherrywood, carefully inlaid with mother of pearl blossoms, makes up the panelling, embellished with bamboo accents, with white leather upholstering the front seats, luggage compartment and driver's compartment.

Finishing touches include the clock, with a mother of pearl face and ruby chips for hour markers, and two matching parasols stored in loops in the lid of the boot.

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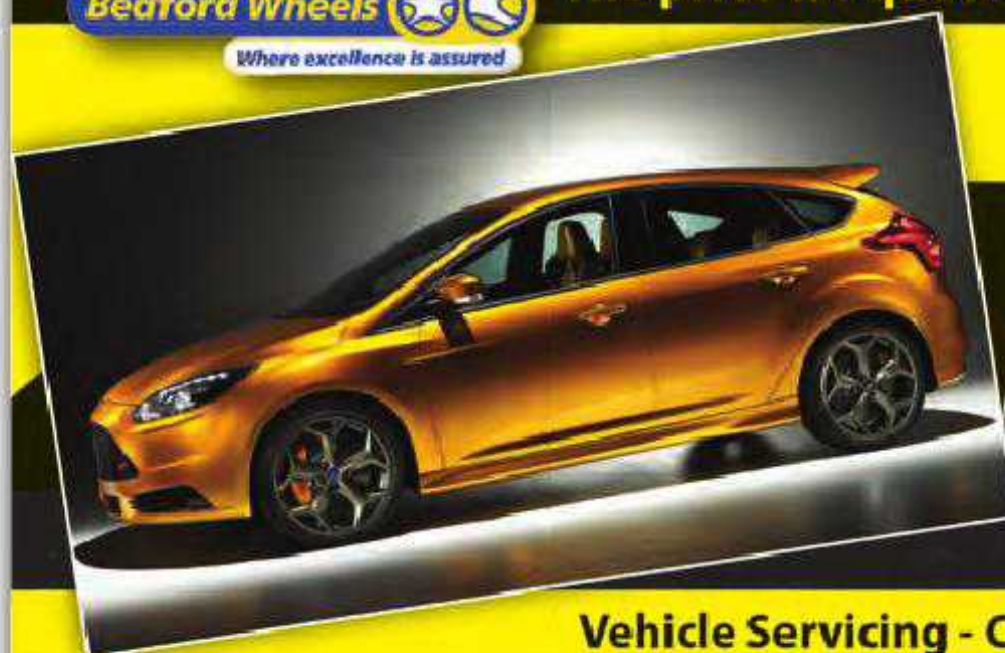
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Poldark at Chavenage House





The BBC's remake of Poldark, the romantic saga set in 18th-century Cornwall and based on the novels of Winston Graham aired last month amid great anticipation. The original series was a huge success when it was shown in the 1970s, and this remake is expected to be nothing less than spectacular.

During the series, Chavenage House in Tetbury, Gloucestershire is the setting for the Poldark family's Cornish home, Trenwith.

It is thought that a house has stood on the site of Chavenage since the 14th-century, and parts of the present-day house date to the medieval period. In 1564 when Edward Stephens of Eastington purchased the house he started the massive project of a major reconstruction of the site. In 1576 Stephens gutted the medieval building he found, and

put on the two wings and the porch to create a manor house of the classic Elizabethan style, as we see today. The house has numerous Civil War connections including tapestry-lined rooms stayed in by Cromwell and his second-in-command, General Ireton, in 1648.

Like the majority of properties represented by the Historic Houses Association (HHA), Chavenage House is a lived-in family home. It has only been owned by two families during its history, and has been occupied by the Lowsley-Williams family since 1891. It is currently lived in by three generations, David and Rona, their younger daughter Joanna, Joanna's husband James and their children Henry and Annabel. Less than a cricket ball throw away, in the Garden Cottage, is the eldest of David and Rona's children George, and in the Laundry Cottage you will find Caroline.





This is something which was hugely important to the Poldark production team, a spokesperson for Poldark stated, "We chose to film at Chavenage because we wanted the Poldark family house to have a wonderful lived-in feel, which it most certainly does." Rather than feeling like a museum or film set, using a family home provides an air of reality, allowing viewers to connect with the characters and their surroundings.

Caroline Lowsley-Williams stated, "We were thrilled they decided to choose Chavenage as one of the main locations for Poldark. We can really imagine what it would have been like for the family living here in the 18th-century and now the viewers will be able to as well. It seems like it's going to be a wonderful series and it's important to us that other people are able to

experience the house and all of its charm. Now if people are unable to visit they can at least gain a glimpse behind the doors."

Chavenage House has also been used for filming for BBC's Wolf Hall, in addition to earlier productions including Lark Rise to Candleford and Tess of the D'Urbervilles.

The house is open to visitors on Thursday and Sunday afternoons during the summer season (May-September) plus Easter Sunday and Monday. Group visits can be arranged on any day throughout the year.

www.chavenage.com



The King's Speech

Most people have seen the film, and a lot of people watched the original stage play in the West End, now *The King's Speech* is embarking on a tour, a prestigious co-production between Chichester Festival Theatre and Birmingham Repertory Theatre, starring Jason Donovan (Festen, Sweeney Todd) as Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue and Raymond Coulthard (Mr Selfridge, Hotel Babylon) as King George VI.

It's 1936. As the world stands on the brink of war, King Edward VIII has abdicated for the love of Wallis Simpson. Bertie, his brother who has previously shied away from the public eye because of a terrible stammer, is to be crowned King George VI of England. With the support of his wife Elizabeth (the future much-loved Queen Mother), Bertie meets Maverick Australian speech therapist and failed actor, Lionel Logue, at an office in Harley Street.

Coulthard gives a superb performance as the vulnerable Bertie, royalty's second son, while a barely recognisable

Jason Donovan shows he has matured into a top class character actor.

David Seidler's story is packed with warmth and humour. At one point Bertie, now King George and preparing for his coronation, dances furiously around the room while shouting out a string of expletives – not quite strictly, but highly entertaining nonetheless!

The King's Speech is the true and heart-warming story of one man's struggle to overcome his disability and, in his country's darkest hour, deliver the now iconic speech broadcast across the globe to inspire his people.

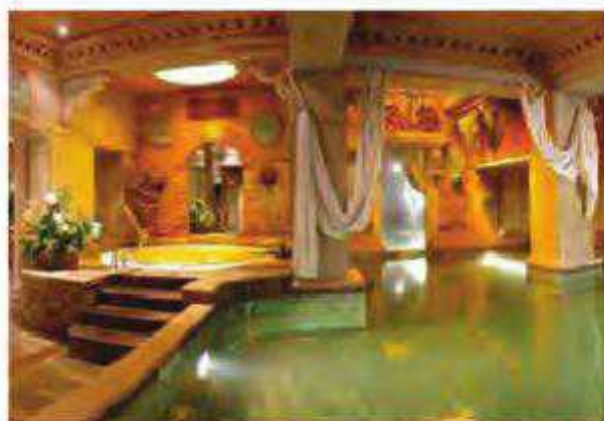
A masterful night's drama.

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The Bedford Swan Hotel is an 18th Century hotel full of character and history with a unique setting overlooking the River Ouse in the heart of this historic market town.



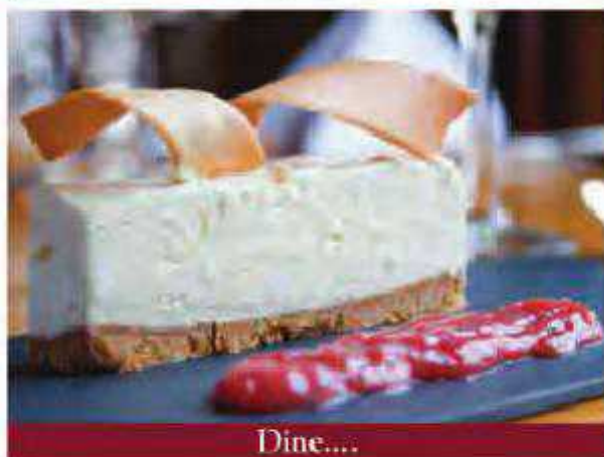
Pamper.....



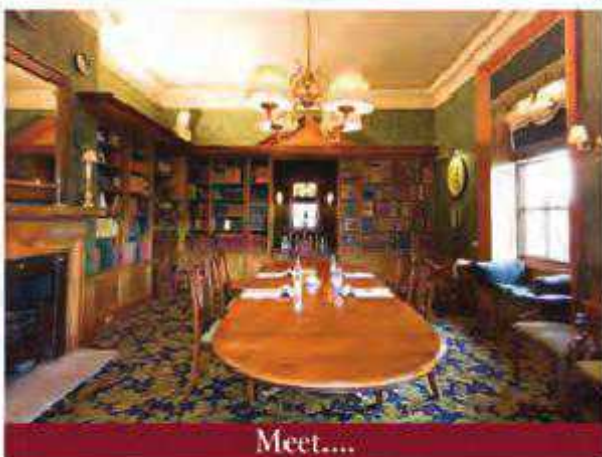
Refuel.....



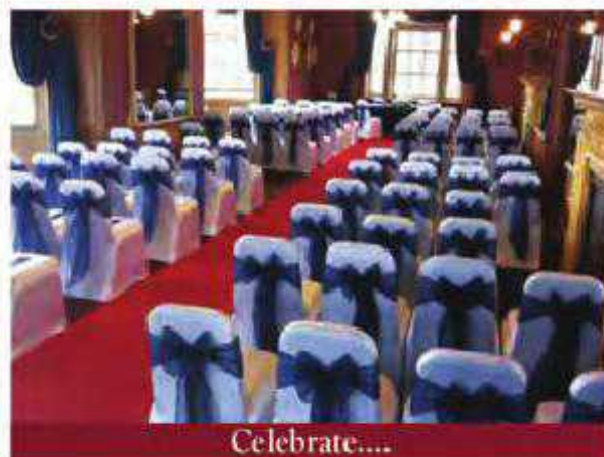
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All About...

Juliet Russell

One of the music industry's most in demand vocal coaches, Juliet Russell, has swapped singing with the stars for the road to promote her new album, with ground breaking performances with community choirs across the UK.

Hundreds of voices will perform her new album, *Earth Meets Sky*, creating a series of unique live performances. These will be recorded, filmed, and broadcast throughout the tour on social media.

Juliet Russell, a singer-songwriter and vocal coach has a long and established pedigree. She has worked with Grammy award, Mercury Prize and Brit nominees and performed with Damon Albarn, Imogen Heap, Paloma Faith, Brian Eno and Yoko Ono.

We caught up with Juliet as she kickstarted her tour at Milton Keynes last month.



Describe yourself in 3 words

Creative, tenacious, optimistic.

Your top 3 movies?

Today it's Once Were Warriors, Cabaret and Birdman

What do you do to relax?

I meditate daily, which really sorts me out. I'm on the move a lot so it's good to be still and stop twice a day. I take our dog for a walk as I love being outdoors and I spend time with my friends, who are guaranteed to make me laugh and make me think.

Your most extravagant purchase and why?

Probably a cream carpet. It was expensive for me at the time and I still spend money cleaning it.

**If you could be anyone or anything what would it be?**

I'd be a superhero and I'd use my special powers to create a planet where we stop destroying each other and our environment. I'd need a lot of super-strength for that and probably a massive team of superheroes.

Describe your ideal man

Funny, big-hearted and tall (my boyfriend).

If you were stranded on a desert island what would you take with you?

A swiss army knife with all the gadgets, a lighter and a sleeping bag with a built in mosquito net. I'd make musical instruments so I wouldn't get bored and a shelter using my swiss army knife, light a permanent torch and have a warm, bite-free night's sleep.

What would you do if you had a time-machine?

I'd definitely visit the future and try out a jetpack.

If you were a biscuit, what would you be and why?

These questions are brilliant. It has to be a jammy dodger.

You can't leave the house without and why?

I'd love to say my keys, but I've left them many times! I'm the kind of person who has a massive bag full of everything; computer, phone, i-pad, headphones, adaptors, make up, receipts, coins at the bottom, lyric sheets, hair bobbles, umbrella, brush, purse, a notebook, badges, pens, hair gel, keys (usually), a scarf, moisturiser, a memory stick. I basically carry my life with me in a bag.

If I take a look in your fridge, what will I find?

Lots of healthy food. I live just off Portobello Road and there's a brilliant fruit and veg market so I'm always well stocked. You won't find any meat or dairy. I was vegan for a long time, but I've recently started eating fish again. My mum has Alzheimer's and omega 3 plays a crucial part in creating new brain cells so I've made a change. I'm still not completely sure about the decision, but that's where I'm up to!

Who is your inspiration / role model?

I find it inspiring how people step up and reach beyond themselves for the greater good. Nelson Mandela is an obvious example and I recently watched Selma, which makes you appreciate how many people stood together to create real change. People power exists. Daily, I'm inspired by people who actively make change happen, especially when it benefits other people and the world we live in.

Artistically I find Bjork inspiring because she makes brave creative choices and continues to explore and grow musically. She also engages with issues such as the position of women and environmental causes, while simultaneously embracing technology and the world as it is.

If you could meet anyone dead or alive who would it be?

David Attenborough is someone I would love to sit down with for a few hours to talk about all the incredible things he has seen and experienced. If anyone can fix that for me, they can have free singing lessons for a year.

What is the one gadget you couldn't live without and why?

It's got to be my phone. I think we live in such an amazing time for technology. It's like having a hard drive for your brain that you can carry with you. I use mine to record song ideas, and rehearsals with choirs that I'm working with for the tour. It's so easy to share things instantly so I love that phones can be creative as well as practical tools now.

Where do you see yourself in ten years?

I've never really have a specific plan. I tend to follow what feels right at the time. At the moment I feel I'm starting a new chapter as I'm about to get married and I'm embarking on a really creative period. I honestly have no idea where this will take me. I do still plan to be married and creative in ten years time though!

What would your last meal be?

If I knew it was my last meal, I'm not sure that I could eat anything at all. My boyfriend makes a brilliant curry. I'd have that, eat it very slowly, and then depart graciously.

What actor would play you in a film?

Cate Blanchett. She's a brilliant actress and it would be great to pretend that is actually how I look.

For tickets and further announcements go to www.julietrussell.com



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Peace and Tranquility

The Isle of Eriska

The stunning five star Isle of Eriska Hotel and Spa have recently launched their new stylish and luxurious self-catering lodges. Each complete with their own private hot tubs; the two lodges boast stunning views across the sea, with the Isle of Lismore in the distance. Guests can sit back in the evening on the large external decking or in the hot tub with a glass of champagne in hand and witness some of the most breathtaking sunsets to be found anywhere in the world.

The Hotel have launched their Hilltop Spa getaway that gives guests a chance to completely enter a 'world of their own', with long strolls along the beautiful untouched beaches and plenty of time to soak up the tranquility and enjoy the unique experience of staying on a private island. Eriska is inhabited by countless species of wildlife such as otters, seals and red deer and all around the island there are nature trails with information points just waiting to be discovered.

Located just a two hour drive from Glasgow this exclusive

Hilltop Spa Getaway is for a three night stay and costs £499 per person, it includes accommodation in the new lodges, the Hilltop Reserves; two indulgent hour-long ESPA treatments in the spa; and a dinner in the hotel's Michelin starred restaurant.

The spa has a brand new state of the art thermal suite with sauna, steam room and Rasul room. In addition to this, there are also new luxurious treatment rooms, with statement baths, showers and stunning sea views over Loch Linnhe; as well as a new Life Fitness Gymnasium.

Guests will also be able to make the most of the five star private island's heated indoor pool, sauna, steam room, Jacuzzi, driving range, indoor tennis courts and 9-hole golf course.

The second-to-none views and serene location all help to give Eriska a magical feel that truly is unrivalled making it the perfect destination to discover for a spa getaway.

www.eriska-hotel.co.uk





Magical Myanmar

AmaWaterways the Award-winning river cruise line have recently added a new ship and new river cruise on Myanmar's (formerly Burma) Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy) River.

One of the world's most secretive, mysterious and fascinating places, Myanmar has a unique, centuries-old culture and spectacular architectural wonders, including sacred structures gilded with gold leaf and encrusted with precious gems and AmaWaterways' have carefully designed their itinerary to take in all the highlights of this

- **Bagan** – A cultural treasure trove of more than 2,200 temples, stupas and pagodas, on par with Cambodia's massive Angkor Wat temple complex.

- **Mandalay** – The country's last royal capital

and second largest city, the "Golden City" of Mandalay is regarded as Myanmar's cultural heart, renowned for its master craftsmen and its patronage of the arts.

- **Mount Popa** – The stunning shrine perched at the top of Mt. Popa is considered the legendary home of spirit gods worshipped by Burmese Buddhists.

- **Ancient Royal Cities** – Inwa (Ava) was the capital of the then Burma for more than 400 years. Amarapura has the world's longest teak bridge, Sagaing is famous for its tranquil atmosphere and Mingun has many historic sites to explore.

- **Yangon (Rangoon)** – The "Garden City of the East," retains much of its colonial charm with cobblestoned streets, tree-lined avenues and Victorian architecture.





Guests will cruise the Ayeyarwady aboard the custom-built AmaPura and takes its name from the former royal capital of Amarapura (Sanskrit for "City of Immortality"). Designed to provide an ultra-comfortable experience, this vessel is beautifully furnished with a combination of modern and traditional motifs and its shallow draft allows it to navigate the river nearly year-round. The AmaPura has 28 suites featuring either a French Balcony, an Outside Balcony or Twin Balconies, as well as a well-appointed en suite bathroom. The ship's elegant public areas include a restaurant and main lounge and bar. There's also a gift shop, spa, refreshing pool and a Sun Deck perfect for lounging, enjoying a cocktail, or simply gazing out at the ever-changing scenery.

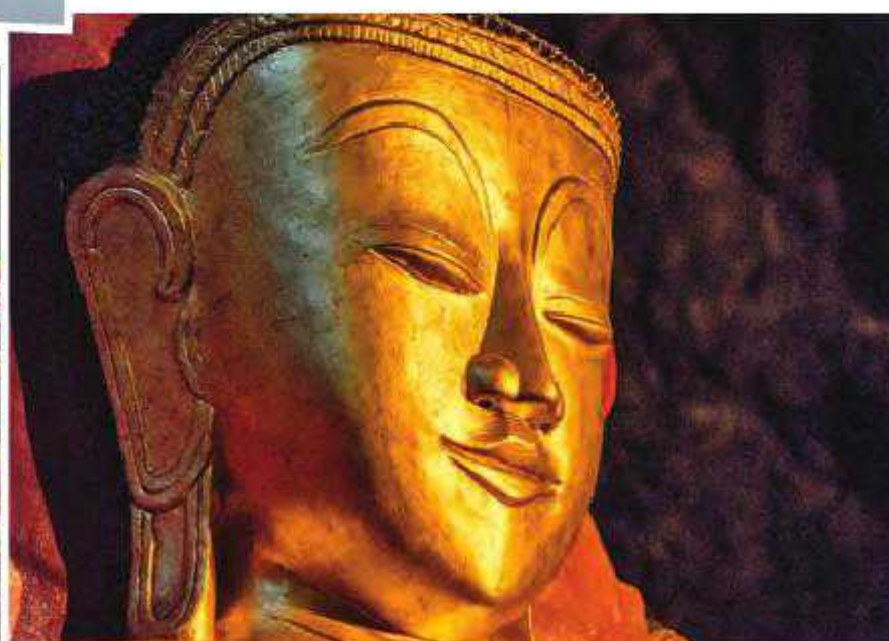
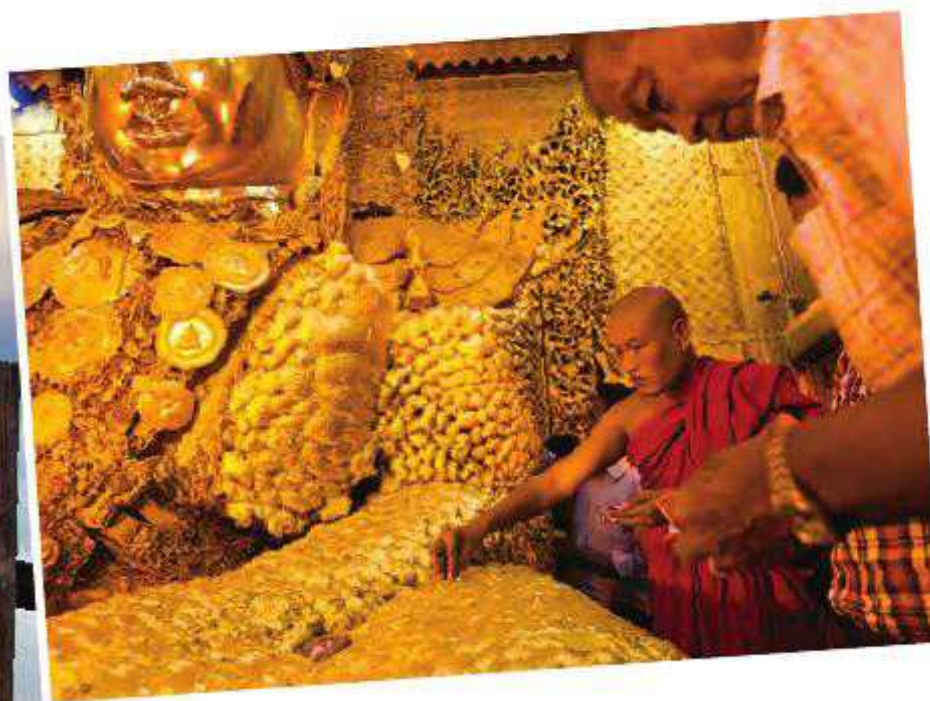
The AmaPura is designed to provide you with a serene home away from home for the duration of your Myanmar voyage. After a full day of sightseeing, there is no greater luxury

than to return to a peaceful, comfortable ship and be welcomed aboard with a cool drink and chilled towel. The friendly and resourceful staff will be at your service throughout your entire river cruise.

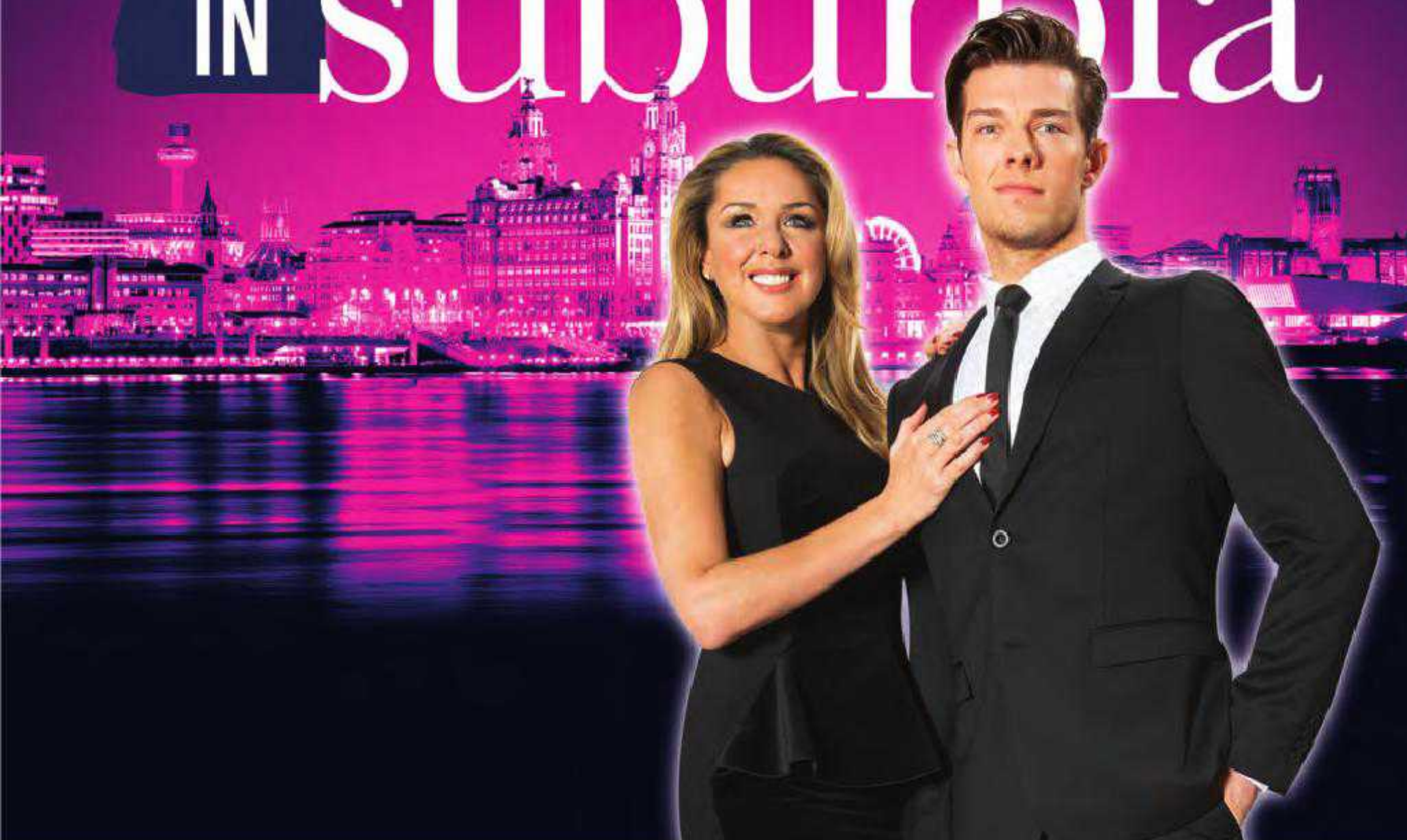
An optional four-night post-cruise land extension is available on both itineraries, featuring three nights in Inle Lake and one further night in Yangon.

The Golden Treasures of Myanmar itinerary costs from £4999pp, including return UK flights from London, two nights pre-cruise and one night post-cruise stay in Yangon, transfers to and from the ship, ten nights on board the ship, all tours, all meals, complimentary wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, on-board entertainment including cultural shows and lectures, and port charges.

www.amawaterways.co.uk



sex IN suburbia



Planning a girls' night out in the next few months? Then tickets for this fabulous brand new comedy is an absolute must.

We've all spent nights with our girlfriends exchanging bad date experiences, the horror, embarrassing, funny stories that come out you could write a book and that is exactly what Claire Sweeney has done – not quite a book but she has co-written a brand new comedy about dating, men and finding Mr Right!

Although Sex in Suburbia is technically about the mysteries of men, it's also about the other side in the battle of the sexes, about the humour and camaraderie shared by women.

Set in a radio station phone-in, Penny Crowe is the host of a late-night radio phone-in and as Britain's leading Agony Aunt, she takes calls about every date from hell and the occasional one from heaven.

Anyone who has ventured into the world of dating, at any age, can fall foul of any number of faux pas and partner pitfalls.

The trials and tribulations of the casts' love lives resonate with the audience, and Claire promises to break the fourth wall as the cast interact directly with the crowd.

Brave audience members are invited up into the agony aunt's radio show to share their own dating disasters – are you brave enough to share?

Packed full of sensational songs including I'm Every Woman, I Want To Break Free and Somebody Else's Guy, this show will make you laugh, cry and dance in the aisles. Based on real stories from real women, this is the story of all of our lives!

Make a date for your very own one night stand at Milton Keynes Theatre next month on Thursday 21st May!

Milton Keynes Theatre
0844 871 7652
www.tickets.com/miltonkeynes



What's ON!...



Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom

Holly is a young Fairy Princess, who is still learning how to fly and her magic doesn't always go quite according to plan. Her best friend, Ben the Elf, doesn't have wings and he doesn't do magic, but he runs very fast and flies on the back of Gaston the Ladybird. They live in the Little Kingdom, a tiny land where flowers and grass rise high above them and every day is an adventure.

Join Ben and Holly, and their friends on this exciting and enchanting musical adventure packed full of games, songs and laughter. This story of elves, princesses and childhood innocence will delight all the family.

4th – 5th April: The Royal and Derngate, Northampton,
Tickets from £14.50, Box Office 01604 624811,
www.royalandderngate.co.uk



The Shires

Country duo Ben Earle and Crissie Rhodes aka The Shires come to their home county for an evening of country influenced music straight out of Nashville.

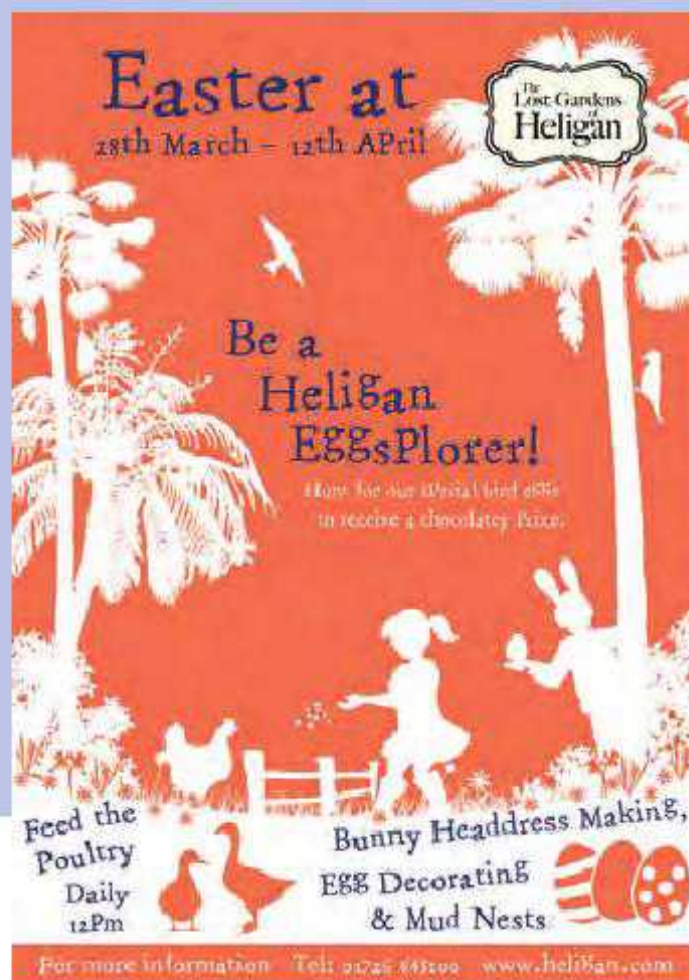
Powered by Crissie's powerful but subtle and supple vocals and Ben's perfectly complementary tones and acoustic guitar, The Shires have literally found a piece of country to call their own.

27th April: Bedford Corn Exchange. Tickets can be purchased at www.bedfordcornexchange.co.uk or call 01234 718112, or in person from the box office.
www.thepadpresents.com

The Lost Eggs of Heligan

If you're holidaying in Cornwall this Easter then why not be a Heligan Eggsplorer and join in the search for the special Heligan bird eggs to be found hidden around the Heligan gardens. Find out what a swallow's egg looks like, see where the woodpeckers like to make their nests and discover the size of an Emu's egg! At the end of the Heligan egg hunt participants can collect a yummy Easter treat. There will also be spring arts and crafts for families with egg decorating, Easter Bunny headdress making, and natural nest building with mud, straw, sticks and foliage. For even more eggciting fun there will be traditional egg rolling too.

28th March - 12th April: All activities are included in the Garden admission price. Adults £12, Seniors £10, Children (5 - 16) £6, Children (Under 5) Free, Family (2 adults & up to 3 children) £30.
www.heligan.com



Affinity Wedding Showcase

Wyboston Lakes Hotel's Executive Centre plays host to our Wedding Showcase later this month.

Visitors will be greeted with bubbles and canapes together with a goody bag supplied by Debenhams bridal department, this will also include the Affinity Weddings bi-annual wedding magazine. The showcase is Free entry and features exclusive bridal fashion shows by George James Bridal along with a host of wedding suppliers including florists, photographers, grooms wear, caterers, chair covers and so much more allowing you to create your perfect dream wedding

26th April: Wyboston Lakes Hotel, Great North Road, Wyboston, MK44 3AL, 11am - 3pm For more information or to pre-register contact Jane on 07507 602401 or jane@affinitymag.co.uk



Late Night Comedy

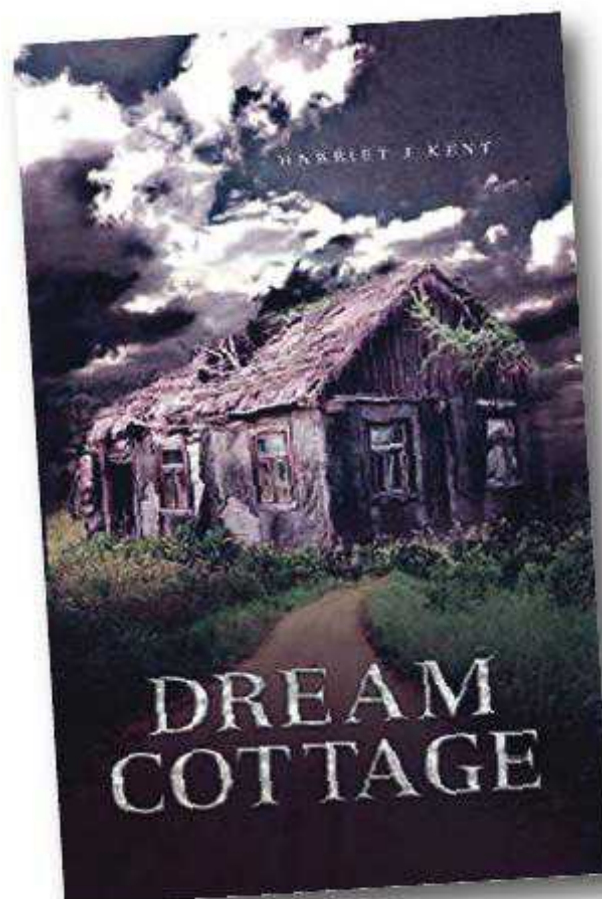
This rib-tickling night of live entertainment includes a fantastic live compère, Two hilarious stand-up comedians, delicious basket food supper.

Food is served from 8.30pm with acts taking to the stage from 9.30pm 24th April: Tickets are just £15.50 per person and are available on 0333 7007667 (option 4), www.wybostonlakesbookings.co.uk

A quiet night in...

Dream Cottage by Harriet J. Kent

During a weekend visit to her parents' house, on the Isle of Wight, reluctant city slicker Greta and husband Max discover a remote rundown cottage. Determined to realise her dream of buying a home on the island, Greta tracks down the owner Reverend Oliphant, who, after showing them around the cottage, agrees to sell, albeit much to the chagrin of neighbouring farmer Marcus Mowbrie. During their extensive renovations, Greta accidentally falls through a hole in the kitchen floor and discovers a hidden passageway. Unable to resist, she follows the path to an underground room, where she uncovers an old and mysterious wooden box. Greta's curiosity runs wild, and she realises only too late that she has unleashed a fright of ghosts from the past, determined to exact revenge and seek justice for a mysterious death that took place in the cottage many years before. Struggling to understand the supernatural crisis she has invoked - and desperate to protect her beloved cottage from these dangerous forces - Greta seeks the help of local celebrity medium, Nonie Spangler. But with her brother scheming behind her back and Reverend Oliphant taken seriously ill with an unknown affliction, Greta doesn't know who or what she can truly trust. Greta Berkley must battle against the undead as her dream home descends into a nightmarish reality, her fate, and that of her home, both eerily uncertain.



Fast and Furious 7

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Release Date: 3rd April

Dumb and Dumber To

Jim Carrey and Jeff Daniels reprise their roles as lovable imbeciles Lloyd Christmas and Harry Dunne in this sequel to Dumb and Dumber from original directing duo Bobby and Peter Farrelly. The movie revisits the titular duo of dumb Harry and dumber Lloyd, 20 years after the events of the first film: Harry pays his first visit to his parents since the early '90s, and discovers a two-decade-old postcard from a gal he hooked up with (Kathleen Turner) informing him that she's pregnant. It turns out she had a daughter and put the girl up for adoption. Harry is moved by the prospect of having an adult child out there somewhere (and it just so happens that he needs a kidney transplant), so he and Lloyd embark on a road trip to track down his daughter. They get mixed up in many wacky situations along the way, like finding and stealing their old "Shaggin' Wagon," and being duped into pleasuring an old lady in exchange for her hearing aids!

Release Date: 20th April





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