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magazine

february / march 2020

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Welcome to lifestyle



By the time you are reading this Brexit will have happened and we will no longer be members of the EU.

Whether you voted to Leave or Remain now is the time for everyone to be united and ensure we can all move on in a positive manner.

If there was any doubt regarding the vote in the Referendum which split the country in two, there can be no argument following the Government's General Election success that the majority voted to move on with the "oven ready" Brexit - whatever that means?

In reality I suspect it will make little difference to the majority of us going about our daily lives.

I was unaware of any impact on my life and business during the past 40 years and I am sure that things will carry on pretty much the same - I will certainly be doing my best to ensure it has no impact on my family life and carry on regardless.

I certainly aim to be as positive as possible as

uncertainty and division achieves little.

That was my new year's resolution and I aim to stick to it!

So with Brexit done (and hopefully not half baked) and Spring just around the corner let's all be positive and look forward to the year ahead, leaving those in power to sort out the devil in the detail - good luck with that!!!

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Revealed: The world's most 'Instagrammable'

Instagram is not only a social media platform, but a guide to new enticing opportunities; from where to eat, to what clothes to buy and where to travel next, we take to the 'gram for inspiration.

With that said, Taxi2airport.com decided to have a look at the most 'Instagrammable' forests around the world to help you decide on your next picturesque trip.

By collecting the number of hashtags per forest, Taxi2airport.com has identified which one would make the best Instagram-worthy place to visit next.

In first place we find Germany's popular Black Forest, which has gathered a whopping 1,489,943 hashtags on Instagram. This dark, dense forest spoils us with its beauty and diversity. This mountainous terrain is home to many waterfalls and even the Danube River, so it comes to no surprise why it's so popular.

In second place is the very famous Amazon Rainforest. The world's biggest rainforest, the Amazon is estimated to have 16,000 tree species and 390 billion individual trees and an impressive fauna, so it's no surprise that it has garnered 197,615 hashtags.



Sherwood Forest, England.

e' forests

Home to the legendary Robin Hood, England's Sherwood Forest comes third with an impressive 142,011 hashtags.

Please refer to the table to see which forests made the top 20.

*Data represents live Instagram scores, collected on 07/01/2020. All hashtag variations of forest names are included in the results to acquire the most accurate results possible.

Which forest around the world is the most 'Insta' famous?

	Country	No. of hashtags
The Black Forest	Germany	1,489,943
Amazon Rainforest	Brazil	197,615
Sherwood Forest	England	142,011
Arashiyama Bamboo Forest/Sagano Bamboo Forest	Japan	83,821
Daintree Forest	Australia	67,258
Mossy Forest	Malaysia	64,564
Atlantic Forest	Brazil	52,863
Jiuzhaigou Valley	China	52,774
Sequoia Forest	US	50,164
Bialowieza Forest	Poland	50,068.
Olympic National Forest	US	42,994
Cocora Valley	Colombia	40,351
Boreal Forest/Tiaga Biome	Canada	35,792
Redwood National Park	US	32,268
Great Bear Rainforest	Canada	25,892
Monteverde Cloud Forest	Costa Rica	16,004
Tongass Forest	Alaska	15,647
Cevennes National Park	France	3,642
Crooked Forest	Poland	2,040
Hallerbos Forest	Belgium	1,869





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The best country for older people to live in

A study has been undertaken by Age UK, to determine the best country for older people to live in.

It combined multiple factors across 105 countries around the world, comprising of:

- The country's average life expectancy
- The country's Health Care Index score
- The country's safety
- The country's happiness
- The country's cost of living
- The country's property prices
- The country's pension start age

Finland was determined as the best country in the world for older people to live in, thanks to consistently high scores across almost all categories, including topping the list for the happiest country in the world.

Four of the five top-ranking countries also happen to be European, with Denmark in second, the Netherlands in third, Austria in fourth and Australia in fifth.

As for the UK, the country finished down in 17th place but outperformed one of the top 2 countries in regard to life expectancy. However, it was let down by a high cost of living and a mediocre performance in other categories including safety and property prices.

Many might be surprised to learn that the United States of America finished down in 28th place, with its cost of living and safety playing a factor in its less than stellar ranking. At the bottom of the list came Ukraine, Kenya and Iraq respectively.

World's
top 10
best
countries
for older
people

1. Finland
2. Denmark
3. Netherlands
4. Switzerland
5. Australia
6. Austria
7. Canada
8. Norway
9. New Zealand
10. Spain

Suggs reveals all about a life of Madness

Get ready for a little Madness next autumn as Madness frontman Suggs heads to town with a musical storytelling session.

Graham McPherson – AKA Suggs – is back on the road following his first tour-de-force, smash-hit show 'My Life Story'.

If the first show was about how on Earth he got there, Suggs: What a King Cnut - A Life in The Realm of Madness is about the surprises that awaited him when he did.

From vertigo on the roof of Buckingham Palace and nearly blowing the closing ceremony of the Olympics, to the embarrassing stuff that happened at Glastonbury, this fascinating show is set to recount an astounding 40-year career.

Things have gone a smidge surreal since Suggs was a twelve-year-old in shorts on the tough streets of North London.

Constantly expecting that inevitable tap on the shoulder to hear "what are you doing here, Sunshine?" or "how have you got this far?", Suggs knows that in this business you can be washed up at any minute.

Fame is a tightrope and Suggs has fallen off many times.

With help from Deano, his trusted pianist, Suggs tells his story in words and music when he heads to Parr Hall on Saturday 24 October 2020.

With the help of some old classics and a couple of original songs, it would be Madness to miss out!

Tickets for the show at Warrington Parr Hall on Saturday October 24, are priced £28,50 and are now on sale via www.parrhall.culturewarrington.org or call the Box Office on 01925 442345.



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Critically acclaimed artist Jamie Cullum to tour UK and Ireland with his latest album

Taller

The critically-acclaimed artist is soon to head out on a headline 2020 UK and Ireland tour which includes two nights at the London Palladium. Beginning in Dublin on the 9th March, the now 14-date tour will see Jamie perform live at venues across the UK including two consecutive nights at the iconic London Palladium. His dynamic live performances have always captured the attention of the audience through Jamie's undeniable energy, boundless talent and stage presence.

Jamie says, 'It's going to be so fun playing this new music out on tour with my incredible band. We're going to draw on these new songs and reinvent plenty of old ones too. The Taller 2020 tour is going to be a memorable one!'

Triple Platinum selling musician and multi-instrumentalist, Jamie Cullum, released 'Taller' (Expanded Edition) - ten of his original songs, accompanied by eight new and unheard tracks. Disc 2 included two brand-new Christmas songs, as well as six tracks from his covers project, Song Society.

The latest album 'Taller' sees Jamie bravely explore more personal subject matter with a fresh sense of authenticity, each song reflecting a desire to grow and learn and explore life for the beautiful muddle it is.

Title track 'Taller' lyrically shows an emotional honesty which is explored throughout the album. Of title track 'Taller', Jamie says, "Historically there has been jokes about my physical stature and being married to a taller woman - so I wanted to own it. Using this as a jumping off point it became a song about the need to grow within your relationship and meet each other eye to eye, allowing room for both darkness and light."

Other tracks on the album have prominent funk, pop and gospel influences such as 'Usher', 'Drink' and the powerful 'Mankind,' whose lyrics are a soulful collective call for an alienated society. What's obvious throughout the album is that Jamie is not seeking approval, but writing music which feels true to him, letting his feelings dictate the creative process.

Jamie says, "This album is really a love letter to my wife. It's an album of my songs that takes stock of where I am right now. They were my working notes for life. My 'Fortysomething' if you will. I wanted to put aside whether it was a jazz record, whether it was ticking this or that box. The songs would be king and they would be honest. I feel more proud of this than anything I've done"

With 10 million album sales to date and his successful BBC Radio 2 Radio show, Jamie Cullum is a celebrated musician the world over with loyal fans in every corner of the globe. With a career spanning over 20 years, his legendary live shows have seen him perform and work alongside artists as diverse as Herbie Hancock, Pharrell Williams, Kendrick Lamar and Lang Lang, whilst the success of his major label breakthrough, 'Twentysomething' and its follow up 'Catching Tales' saw him nominated for a BRIT, Grammy and numerous other awards around the world.

In addition to his enduringly successful recording career, he has also established himself as a multi-award winning music broadcaster. He approaches all aspects of his career, as he has from the beginning, as both a fan and a student with seemingly boundless creativity and enthusiasm.

Full March 2020 Tour Dates:

9th	Ireland, Dublin
11th	York, Barbican
12th	Glasgow, Armadillo
13th	Sheffield, Sheffield City Hall
15th	Birmingham Symphony Hall
16th	Oxford, Oxford New theatre
18th	London, London Palladium
19th	London, London Palladium
20th	Gateshead, Sage 1
23rd	Liverpool, Liverpool Philharmonic
24th	Cardiff, St David's Hall
25th	Manchester, Bridgewater Hall
27th	Portsmouth, Portsmouth Guildhall

Tickets on sale now

A man with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket over a white t-shirt, is sitting at a light-colored table. He is looking towards the camera with a neutral expression. The background features red and gold vertical stripes, a decorative gold border, and a framed picture of flowers. The text 'Taller' and 'mie Culum' is visible on the left side of the image.

Taller
mie Culum



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Stars of Strictly Come Dancing take their

The amazing Karen Hauer - star of BBC smash Strictly Come Dancing - has teamed up with fellow pro Gorka Marquez to put together a spectacular tour, Firedance.

The aptly named show will see the Latin sensations perform sizzling authentic routines from their homelands of Venezuela and Spain, including Argentine Tango, Flamenco, Contemporary, Paso Doble, Samba and Salsa. We caught up with Karen and Gorka to find out more.

Q: *It must be special to bring to the stage these interpretations of dances from your heritage?*

Karen: "I love the fact that we've managed to have time to come up with such a great concept of dancing from our backgrounds. Gorka is from Spain and I'm from Venezuela so we have all this passionate dancing in our blood, what we've grown up with really. All these incredible fiery dances that people really love and connect with. It's about the dances that really demonstrate that passion that people have towards one another and that really connect to us and that chemistry we have. It's quite electrifying for us and we have been able to bring in new ideas and fresh

choreography."

Gorka: "Yeah, I think it has helped that we have a shared heritage. It's very easy because we both have our cultures have a similar feel, we see each other's perspective or like music we have a lot of common interests and loves. So it was very easy when it came to find out the way that we wanted to put the show on. It was very easy. We all like to play, we would be laughing and you know we always like making jokes and it's just fun. We both want to create something different. And we both understand dancing the same way. We come up with the same ideas, the same looks, and the same vision. We see the same thing. So that is making it easier and we will communicate with the audience and show our point of view. So maybe that's cultural, because we are both Latin. For the British public and because of the shows that they have seen it was more about the glam whereas we have chosen to bring passion and fire. Yet unconsciously there is a lot of Latin music on the radio and things now so I think it will connect well with people."

Q: *You and Gorka seem to have really struck up an amazing partnership - have there been flare-ups with two fiery Latin tempers on show?*

Karen: "Not at all, actually, because I guess we both respect each other so much. We're very temperamental, yes. We know that we're both fiery, yeah, but I guess the fact that we know that about each other means it doesn't need to come out, it doesn't clash, it means we can work together. We're so invested in what we're doing. From the music to the costumes, to every single little detail that's going to be on that stage has come from Gorka and myself. We're going to have a great team around a great band, great singers, and us. We're going to be able to input and be across everything that people are going to be seeing so it is very nice to be able to have that access. It's coming from a place of, of truth.



spectacular new show on the road



It's something that we need, that we're really passionate about. It's always a plus that you get to put out there what you really want to put out there. I love working with Gorka. He's such a lovely man and a beautiful dancer who I really look up to."

Gorka: "As soon as Karen and I started dancing together we were like - wow, this is fun. We were getting on so well from the start. I remember when we met for our first shows. We had to do five numbers and we had them like, in two hours. So we realised, this is a thing you know, when you click with someone, and the ambition, the connection, it was like we were able to see in each other's brains at the same time. I was gonna say something but she was already doing it. So it's easy to work with someone like that and it's enjoyable so then we knew we needed to do something together. We think the same; we see the dance the same way. From the very start it was very, very good and it's very easy when it's like that, it makes everything easier and more fun."

Q: *What makes this tour so special - is it because it's so authentic and so personal to you both?*

Karen: "What I love is that we're focusing on certain dances. Because sometimes, if there's too many things, then it can kind of bleed too much,

it can just get a little bit fluffy but we wanted to focus on those fiery dances. Those dances that kind of get people emotionally and let people know that we really want to show that power, that strength but also the beauty that all of the dancers have within them. We've narrowed it down to some specific dances because people really love watching the tango or whatever, because they are dances that are really meaningful and that really kind of connect with people and have that power behind them. So we thought let's connect to those dances. That's the ticket right there."

Gorka: "I always wanted to do this. I wanted to do something different. We knew it would be a great opportunity. Karen and I have been dancing

CONTINUED OVERLEAF



CONTINUED

and doing shows for the last year together and we felt like we were locked in. Even as we continue together we have a very good partnership, so whenever the idea came up, we felt like it was a great idea from the click we had already and when we sat down with the shows producers to try to create ideas, what we will do, and how we have a vision of what we want to show and share. We realised we just had the same ideas on so much. We want to take on what people have seen and show them it can be even better. There are so many shows right now that we wanted to create something different, something from a different perspective and I think it's very good that both of us are Latin, we share that kind of mentality and point of view of what we want to show and be more passionate, more fiery, with strength. It's all about passion. Not like classic sparkly ballroom, even the outfits, it's more street fashion with a Latin feel. Less sequins and more fire."

Q: *The tour Firedance come to theatres all over the UK and you'll have an amazing live band with you on the stage?*

Karen: "We have a beautiful band. We have a couple of strings, drums, guitars; brass, specific instruments that really pull you into the dance and that are going to give that power. And also very beautiful singers. They they're going to be

singing in different languages as well, Spanish and English. We wanted a really strong but small band that can connect with the audience and connect with us while we're on stage. There's nothing like dancing to a band on stage when you feel that drama, there in your stomach, you feel those strings in your heart. It's absolutely amazing."

Gorka: "I think having a band on the tour gives it all more punch, makes you feel more involved with the show and gives us more opportunities to play because if you have a track, you know where the music is, but if you have a live band, even if it is the same it will never be the same every night. That gives you that extra space to improvise and make the show different every night. If someone comes to see us twice it will be different each time."

Q: *Karen, your story is amazing - going from Venezuela to New York and the Fame School?*

Karen: "I was born in Venezuela and I pretty much grew up with salsa dancing, music playing in the background every morning. My family had a lot of parties there would be 20 people in the living room dancing, there's always a celebration in a Latin house. Funny enough, when I got to New York, things changed a bit for me. I started doing more classical dancing but I still love the drums. I definitely had to grow up really quickly when I got to New York, especially when you go into these dance companies The Fame School. You have to be on your game and you have to know where you're going and what you want the focus and discipline behind it, because everybody wants what you want. I love to learn, I was like a little sponge."

Q: *Gorka this sounds similar to your own thoughts on competition and doing your own show?*

Gorka: "I'd like I think you feel like a rock band or singer when they create a song and they get to perform in front of thousands of people. For us as ballroom dancers first of all, we never imagined it. We end up being on the biggest TV show in the world. And then because of that we get the chance to create our own show and not just be part of the biggest show, we've also created our own show. When I used to dance when I was young I used to compete. And I always say I loved it but I'm not really like a competitive person. I used to never get stress because I was able to dance and share my emotions, my feelings, how I interpret



a dance and I want to share with everyone. That's what his show is about. We do a show. We are not being judged. We are not being criticised just sharing how we see a song, and what we want to communicate, and maybe people enjoy that. So that's what we want to do.

I started when I was young, I was 11. Which is not as young as for some kids, like six, seven. Like I said my background was ballroom competition. And then I joined a dance company when I still competed, I had to get all my knowledge just as like a performer, in theatres, I'd never seen anything like that. And then pretty much a very quick shift from competition to shows, and then I ended up doing Strictly and that brings me to this with Karen."

Q: *Karen, you moved to the UK when you got the job on Strictly - is that how you met?*

Karen: "Even to this day I have to pinch myself. Now that I'm in a completely different country and in the best TV show and then I'm going on my own tour with Gorka, I can't actually believe this is happening. When I got the call for Strictly I fell on my knees and I cried, I hadn't worked for four months and was living on my savings. None of the dancers that were there then are there now except Anton and myself. He's the longest running male and I'm the longest running female. I've been in it for eight years. It is incredible it really is and a joy to be around. I'm gonna be there until they drag me out. I still can do at least another five to seven years. Gorka and I first met on Strictly, I saw that he loved salsa and he loves the flamenco and those are the dances and I loved as well. But we actually only started dancing together this year. We just clicked; this is the best partnership ever. We get along so well. We choreograph together so well too. We both said I think we should take advantage of this and do something more and see what happened. And all of a sudden Firedance was born."

Q: *Gorka, how far do you want to take this?*

Gorka: "I would love to go international with this, there's not so many dancers who can do that. I would love to be able to go back to Spain and do this show in Spain. All my family are there but the biggest things I have done have been in the UK so to show over there even for a night or two nights to my family and friend what I have done would be incredible."

Firedance Tour 2020

6 March	High Wycombe Swan
7 March	Guildford G-Live
8 March	Manchester The Bridgewater Hall
10 March	Ipswich Regent Theatre
12 March	Sheffield City Hall
15 March	Basingstoke The Anvil
16 March	Bromley Churchill Theatre
19 March	Scunthorpe Baths Hall
20 March	Grimby Auditorium
21 March	Dartford Orchard Theatre
22 March	Bournemouth Pavilion
23 March	Northampton Royal & Deragate
25 March	Peterborough New Theatre
26 March	Chatham Central Theatre
27 March	Glasgow Royal Concert Hall
28 March	Dunfermline Alhambra
4 April	Cambridge Corn Exchange
5 April	Southend Cliffs Pavilion

Tickets available now from:
firedancelive.co.uk





Nice 'n' Naughty looking to empower women

To celebrate the opening of their new look boutique shop on the high street in Warrington town centre, Nice 'n' Naughty are looking to support their loyal women customer base.

Director Simon Prescott said: "We at Nice 'n' Naughty are looking to support those who support us and with our increasing customer base of liberal empowered women, whatever their sexual preference, we are looking to sponsor any movements that greater empower said women in their leisure time.



"This could be simply sponsoring a female football or netball team through to female actions groups of any type in the community. Having previously supported our male clients with the sponsoring of Warrington Wolves and their players, we would now like to put our support behind our exploding female clientele and in general thank them however we can for believing in us.

"At present our ventures are modest, but still empowering women to follow their dreams, an example being a local family run restaurant in close vicinity to our Warrington shop, where all our staff enjoyed lovely authentic family Thai recipe food cooked by a lady really giving it a go, the family was struggling not with the food side of the business but rather the financial management side of it and we provided them with free legal and accountancy advice.

"We are proud to say we transformed their fortunes and enabled a proud female cook to keep doing what she does best, on her terms, and selfishly we all still enjoy amazing home cooked 'Thai food!'"

For more details regarding sponsorship email simon.prescott@nicennaughty.co.uk

Tropic empowering women

by *Yukwah FitzGerald*

If you have not heard of Tropic before hopefully you will fall in love with the products like I did 6 months ago. I joined Tropic because I wanted to make some extra money to go towards some extra treats for my family. It has led to meeting some wonderful friends and learning some new skills along the way. I also love helping my customers with skin issues such as eczema, psoriasis, acne, rosacea, dry and oily skin. The products we offer can be very effective, I have had a lot of customers who have found the products so effective they have stopped needing to use medication and steroids which can have side effects. I love that there are no set targets and it fits in easily alongside my main job and family life. Tropic has allowed me to make fantastic memories with my family, even my little five year old girl loves getting involved and enjoys using some of the products.

What is Tropic

It is no surprise Tropic is the fastest growing beauty company in the UK with over 150 awards. Our beautiful products are all 100% naturally derived, using the most beautiful, exotic and nutrient rich ingredients. All of the products are made in the Surrey based beauty kitchen and the products are that fresh that unlike other skincare products you will even find best before dates.

Any products you apply to your skin gets mostly absorbed into your blood stream within 45 seconds of application. It is super scary how many toxins and chemicals go into your bloodstream on a daily basis.

You will not find any nasty chemicals or toxins, parabens, SLS or any other nasties in our products. Please download the app 'Think Dirty' it is an independent guide on an unbiased rating system of the health impacts associated with each product. Check out the rating of how clean the products you currently use are with this fantastic app. They are numbered between 0-10, 0-3 is clean made with all natural ingredients and on the other end of the scale 7-10 is frightening dirty with products made from a lot of chemicals and toxins.

Tropic believe that as well as your skin being your largest organ it's also your greatest asset and deserves to be looked after from not only the inside but the outside too. You should be able to trust and know what you are putting on your

skin, therefore only freshest, premium, natural ingredients are used such as seed butters and fruit extracts.

All products are Cruelty Free and they are never tested on animals neither do they contain any animal derivatives that would cause them distress. Tropic is recognised by Cruelty Free International, the Vegan Society and PETA as a 100% cruelty free brand, now and always.

Tropic are one of only 400 compaies in the world certified carbon neutral company, investing in conservation projects to double offset their carbon emissions.

From September 2019, Tropic have also partnered with United World Schools to fund education for children living in some of the world's poorest, remote communities though every Tropic purchase. For every collective £50 spent, Tropic will donate one school day to a child who would never have had the opportunity to have been able to have gone to school.

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Spice Girl shares her top tips to help families achieve positive digital life balance

Spice Girl Emma Bunton has joined forces with Vodafone to launch the Vodafone Digital Family Pledge – a fun online tool that helps families create tech ground rules together and then turns them into their very own family pledge.

The free, personalised and interactive activity helps families to set their digital 'house rules' together in an easy, fun way with the pledge covering everything from rules about devices at the dinner table to how they will use social media, with all family members agreeing to stick to it – parents included! The online tool encourages positive conversations about the role of technology in a family's life.

The tool was launched after new research looking into the digital wellbeing of families in the UK, commissioned by Vodafone in partnership with YouGov, revealed that 54% of parents say they aren't aware of what their children are doing

online; yet they don't feel prepared to have conversations as a family, with almost four in 10 parents stating that they've never been given advice on their children's online behaviour. Four in 10 (40%) of parents also worry that their children are hiding online activity from them, with this rising to over half (52%) for parents of older children (12-16 years).

Vodafone challenged the Bunton-Jones family to take the Digital Family Pledge and make a commitment to each other about how they will use tech and act online.

Here are Emma's top tips on how to she makes it work for her family:

1. Set ground rules as a family

My first tip would be to set ground rules as a family. Using the pledge helped us to work as a family to decide what the rules should be together,





so we weren't just dictating them to Beau and Tate. It also got me and my partner, Jade, to think about our own habits.

2. Use tech together

Instead of worrying so much about what our kids are doing online we now try to get involved. It's impossible to be there all the time, but we might watch YouTube videos together or Jade and Beau will game online.

3. Quality over quantity

I used to think that it was all about managing the time the kids spent online. But I've realised it's more important to focus on what they're doing online rather than the exact amount of time spent. If they're watching and playing the right stuff, it can be really educational and beneficial to their development.

4. Lead by example

It's not just about the children, I realise that Jade and I are guilty of sneaking a look at our phones at the table or getting distracted by work emails. We're using the Digital Pledge to set limits for ourselves too!

5. Be kind online

Being in the spotlight, I've had plenty of experience with people being unkind online and I've worried about what Beau and Tate see there. My final tip is to remind everyone that they need

to think about what they say online remember that there's a person at the other end of the screen who might be upset by unkind comments.

Vodafone Digital Parenting ambassador Emma Bunton said: "Doing the Digital Family Pledge was a really simple way of getting up to speed on the latest facts, sparking a conversation and agreeing some boundaries together - Jade and I included! The kids are at that age where they want to play with new apps and games and are getting more interested in social media. At the end of the day, it's about being open and finding the right balance and the Pledge is a great way to help families do this."

Vodafone's Digital Parenting is a free resource that offers the latest information and advice from researchers, psychologists and tech savvy parents. Launched as a free print magazine for schools, local authorities and GPs surgeries in 2012, and available online, Digital Parenting has served as an easy-to-digest resource for families for almost a decade. The January issue of Digital Parenting magazine is available now.

The Digital Family Pledge is available now at www.vodafone.co.uk/familypledge. To request a copy of Digital Parenting magazine, see Emma Bunton's tips on finding a good digital-life balance or find out more about the Digital Parenting workshops and in-store tech masterclasses near you please visit www.vodafone.co.uk/digitalparenting.

A photograph of two women laughing and eating ice cream outdoors. The woman on the left is wearing sunglasses and a grey patterned top, holding a large ice cream cone with pink, yellow, and red scoops. The woman on the right is wearing sunglasses and a white floral patterned top, holding a smaller ice cream cone with yellow, pink, and red scoops. The background is bright and sunny, suggesting a beach or park setting.

Laugh again

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Get loved up for Valentine's Day with this Vegan Raspberry and Chocolate Pudding

by *Michele Butterworth*

Shelly's Restaurant, Bold Street, Warrington

Ingredients

1 pkt 200g vegan fruity flapjack cookies

1 tablespoon of Agave Nectar

Blitz together and divide into four glasses

100g fresh raspberries

Tablespoon of Raspberry gin liqueur

Blitz together but save four raspberries to decorate and place in dish in fridge for later.

In a microwave gently melt in bowl 100g vegan chocolate.

Add 1 tablespoon vegan Hazelnut & cocoa spread, 1 tablespoon of maple syrup, 1 teaspoon vanilla essence. Blitz 349g silken firm tofu, add the jug of melted yummy mess on top of the base in the glasses.

Divide 50g fresh raspberries. Spoon on top of the chocolate /tofu mixture. Place in fridge for a few hours or overnight.

To serve.

Divide the blitzed raspberry mixture and gin



spoon on top of set chocolate /tofu with a raspberry on each one. Sprinkle with icing sugar. Serve with ice cold glass of something bubbly.

This is my very first attempt at a vegan dessert! You will not believe it's vegan dairy free Wohhhhh!!



4 Eco-Friendly Practices to Incorporate at Home

With climate change and plastic waste impacting our everyday lives, there has never been a more important time to adopt eco-friendly practices at home. Rebecca Snowden, Interior Style Advisor at FurnitureChoice.co.uk, shares 4 ways to lead a more sustainable lifestyle.

1. Repurpose old furniture

Defined as a process by which used objects are transformed into new products of higher value, upcycling is a sustainable way to kickstart an eco-friendly lifestyle. It breathes new life into old furniture and is a cost-effective and crafty solution to update home decor. "Upcycling conserves the environment by fully utilising what we already have," Rebecca explains. "It prevents furniture from being thrown into landfills and is instead updated with a new look."

"The key is to start small by picking a simple DIY project such as repainting your headboard in the bedroom. It's an enjoyable activity that you can do in your own time and saves you the money of having to buy new furniture. With its tranquil and lively appeal, opt for green as it perks up the rest of the decor by injecting a soothing feel to the space."

2. Switch to non-toxic paint

Making the switch to eco-friendly products has a huge impact on the planet, home and overall health. It's these small steps that help reduce harm on the environment and pushes people to lead a healthier lifestyle in the long-run. Take this concept to the walls with non-toxic paint which is free from volatile organic compounds (VOC) and removes chemicals such as formaldehyde in the air for a clean breathing space at home.

"Bring the positive qualities of non-toxic paint and the psychological benefits of colours together with a feature wall in the home office," Rebecca says. "Hobby Wood by Earthborn is a good pick as it exudes relaxation while providing that optimistic boost."

"Meanwhile, non-toxic paint adds colour and personality to your child's bedroom while creating

a clean and healthy playing environment for your children. Go for Earthborn's Rosie Posie and Secret Room for that playful, whimsical touch."

3. Incorporate plants into decor

Going green at home literally and metaphorically would not be complete without including houseplants into the decor. Apart from purifying the air, houseplants also create a more welcoming atmosphere. And with proper attention and care, indoor plants will flourish in the right environment and provide plenty of room for experimentation.

Starting an indoor garden in the kitchen is a sustainable solution for urban living. "Being self-sufficient is an important part of an eco-friendly lifestyle," Rebecca explains. "Learn to grow your own herbs, fruits or vegetables at home which can later be used for cooking. Or if you're interested in building a green display, a staghorn fern mounting wall appeals to those who favour a raw and natural aesthetic with its warm wood tones. Aside from green plants, you can also channel a rustic, natural vibe by incorporating dried flowers as part of the decor."

4. Use natural materials

Bringing the outdoors in has become an increasingly popular way to infuse nature into the home. Known as biophilia, it's a concept that combines a love of nature with innovative design to improve health and wellbeing.

"The calming elements of nature are a welcome respite to the senses in the chaotic world we live in," Rebecca says. "Decorating with natural materials such as wood, cotton and linen establishes a tranquil and relaxing atmosphere when you combine it with the right amount of natural lighting, greenery and colour palette. In the living room, turn your focus towards breathable materials which give the space a cosy and practical touch, such as with a linen sofa and cotton cushion covers. The ambience here is not just for the aesthetics, it's also about delivering a positive impact on our lifestyle."

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