



WOM

M A G A Z I N E

CHRISTMAS EDITION

2018

Christmas

Special edition

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS THROUGH WORD OF MOUTH

Welcome to Word of Mouth Magazine: Christmas 2018 Edition

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR...



In the words of Tom Petty: “...it’s Christmas, all over again....” And what better place to enjoy the festive season than in London? The concept of Christmas being on the 25th December was first mentioned by Roman Emperor Constantine in 336 AD, and since then it’s snowballed.... if you’ll pardon the pun. So, we’ve had a lot of time to build up our Christmas traditions and learn how to artfully decorate the tree!

With every passing year Christmas gets bigger and bigger as a celebration and becomes more and more inclusive of the whole of our wonderful, multi-faith, multi-cultural society. No matter what your religious denomination, Christmas envelopes us all. And some of the best things about being in London over this holly-wreathed, tinsel-covered time takes place on its very streets. Roasted chestnuts, artisanal stalls, open air ice rinks (for the brave!) and of course the Christmas pop-up markets where you can find a gift for just about anyone.

If it’s family fun that you’re after, you can check out Santa’s grottos that are dotted around the capital and see the spectacle of Christmas lights being switched on. Plus, it’s worth heading over to the Southbank Winter Festival. There’s a wide spread of entertainment including magical fairy lights, craft corners for children, festive family Christmas shows, and some of the best seasonal street food around. Plus, mulled wine for the adults.

Cheers everyone! And a merry Christmas to all. X

Sarah Haynes

Guest Editor

Word of Mouth Magazine

What do you think of our Winter 2018 issue?

We’d be delighted to hear what you think.

Tweet us @WOMMagazineUK

WOM

MAGAZINE



@WOMMAGAZINEUK @WOMMAGAZINEUK @WOMMAGAZINEUK @WOMMAGAZINEUK

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS WITH WORD OF MOUTH MAGAZINE: SALES@WOMMAGAZINE.CO.UK



PAGE
30



PAGE
42



PAGE
12



PAGE
5

WOM

MAGAZINE

Christmas 2018 Edition

LET'S MULL. 5 TOP TIPS FOR MAKING SURE THAT YOUR HOMEMADE MULLED WINE IS A WINTER WINNER. *PAGE 6*

THE FESTIVITIES. ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT KEEPING YOU HAPPY AND HEALTHY THROUGHOUT CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR. *PAGE 8*

5 IDEAS FOR SPENDING CHRISTMAS OUTSIDE LONDON. *PAGE 12*

HELPING THE HOMELESS AT CHRISTMAS. *PAGE 24*

LET THERE BE LIGHTS. YOUR GUIDE TO A LIT-UP LONDON. *PAGE 30*

3 CHRISTMAS COCKTAILS TO MAKE AT HOME. GIVE IT THAT PERSONAL TOUCH. *PAGE 34*

JUST WEIGHING IN. KEEPING AN EYE ON YOUR WEIGHT OVER CHRISTMAS. *PAGE 42*

SPACE SHIFTERS AT THE HAYWOOD GALLERY. *PAGE 42*

WONDER(FOOL) MAKE UP. SOMETIMES OR ALWAYS? *PAGE 55*

YOUR CANDLES AT CHRISTMAS. *PAGE 56*

THE FUTURE FATE OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE NATIONAL SPORTS CENTRE? *PAGE 61*

CHRISTMAS FOR YOUR BUSINESS. *PAGE 66*

PAGE
89

CRACKERS AT CHRISTMAS. WHERE DID IT ALL START? *PAGE 71*

THE GROWTH OF THE GOOD GYM. FITNESS WITH A TWIST. *PAGE 74*

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS FAR AND WIDE. *PAGE 78*

KEEPING YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EASY. *PAGE 84*

WINING AND DINING AT CHRISTMAS. *PAGE 89*

THAT'S A WARM WRAP! WHICH WRAP IS RIGHT FOR YOU. *PAGE 94*

CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE.. AN INSIDE VIEW OF CHRISYMAS ANTICS IN THE SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN HEMISPHERE. *PAGE 100*

CHECKOUT SOME OF THE ADDITIONAL SERVICES WE OFFER AT WORD OF MOUTH MAGAZINE, TO GET STARTED, EMAIL US AT SALES@WOMMAGAZINE.CO.UK.. *PAGE 78*

[g+@WOMMAGAZINEUK](#) [f @WOMMAGAZINEUK](#) [@WOMMAGAZINEUK](#) [@WOMMAGAZINEUK](#)

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS WITH WORD OF MOUTH MAGAZINE: SALES@WOMMAGAZINE.CO.UK



LET'S MULL IT OVER!

5 TOP TIPS FOR THE BEST
MULLED WINE OF THE SEASON.

Written by Sarah Haynes | Photographs by Dina Belenko

Ah, mulled wine! A Christmas staple and usually to be found in the punchbowl of every festive party. As well as a refreshment during ice skating, at Christmas markets of course and door-to-door carol singers can often be found with a glass in their hands. The mulled wine season is officially upon us, so whether it's for a party, a gift or just as a great standby for guests, it's time to formulate a tip-top recipe to make your mulled wine the best of the best. How is it done?

TIP NO. 1: Your base wine. Think carefully about which one to buy. You don't want the cheapest, supermarket wine because you will be tasting the flavour, but equally don't buy super expensive wine because some of the flavour will get lost during the process.

TIP NO. 2: Flavouring rules. A fuller-bodied wine will pair best with baking spices like nutmeg, and for a lighter-bodied wine, think green spices. Basil and cardamom are a good place to start.

TIP NO. 3: Don't exclude white wine. Traditional mulled wine recipes use red wine, but why not mix it up every once in a while with white wine? Its dry, acidic base can be a refreshing change to red wine; a new spin on an old classic. Just don't forget to add something sweet – sugar and brandy both work well.

TIP NO. 4: Don't let the temperature rise. Once you've got the perfect recipe sorted, it's time to think about serving it. Never let the wine get too hot, always keep it simmering. If it boils, then the sugars will caramelise and the whole mix will burn and spoil. With mulled wine and heat, less is definitely more; you'll only need it to simmer for about ten minutes.

TIP NO. 5: Garnishing. For the final stage of your perfect mulled wine recipe, feel free to experiment with different garnishes. Sweeteners like palm sugar can be good, or dried fruit, to put a unique stamp on your creation. And if you're feeling particularly adventurous, you can add a dash of kirsch.

If you're after something different, a little more quirky yet with a contemporary feel, then a Middle Eastern inspired mulled wine recipe is a great choice. The ingredients to combine for this are: raw palm sugar, tangerines, pomegranate molasses and pink peppercorns as a final garnish.

And last but not least – serve with a smile. It is, after all, the season to be jolly!



KEEPING FIT FOR THE FESTIVITIES

fitness strategies to keep you
happy and healthy throughout
Christmas and New Year.

Written by Sarah Haynes | Photographs by M_a_y_a

Christmas can often be one of those times of year where your exercise regime comes under fire and suffers from all the good stuff going on; tempting mince pies, brandy butter and Christmas nights out. Especially if you will be spending time away from home and without access to your usual gym facilities. Studies have shown that up to 90% of people gain half a stone or more as they leave the old year behind and begin the new one. But there are ways to minimise the interruption and help ensure that you won't have to start dieting the minute Big Ben strikes 12. There are several strategies you can use which will help you stick to your usual exercise regime as much as possible and really pack a punch over Christmas and New Year. The three key areas to focus on for festivity fitness are:

- **Time efficient exercise plans.**
- **Maintenance of exercise routines where possible.**
- **Ideas for calorie saving.**

AN EVEN KEEL.

With those aims in mind, keep a watchful eye on your diet, avoiding excess calories where you can. It makes your job a lot easier as you go into 2019 if you haven't got weight to lose, or fitness to regain. Don't panic if you have a heavy calorie day, just be more careful the following one and it should all even out. Make simple changes, like swapping sugar-laden wine for lighter G&Ts.

LET'S GET PHYSICAL.

Maximise the time you have by doing more intensive workouts. Resistance training is good for this, and although rest time during sets is an important part of training, you can use the time instead to swap between different sets of muscles:

- **Triceps and biceps.**
- **Quads and hamstrings.**
- **Abdomen and lower back.**
- **Chest and upper back.**



There are several strategies you can use which will help you stick to your usual exercise regime as much as possible and really pack a punch over Christmas and New Year.



CV (cardiovascular) workouts can burn a lot of calories. Instead of doing a steady session, aim to do interval training –Two minutes as fast as you can, followed by two minutes rest. If you want a more intensive strategy, then cut the recovery time in half.

If it's practical, hold onto as much of your normal routine as you can. But look carefully at it to decide how you'll handle any changes. It's no good looking for a rowing machine if you're up in the wilds of Scotland with family. If you're going to be away from home, work out where you'll be able to slide in exercise opportunities. You don't have to hit the nearest gym, even walking the dog at a fast pace will help maintain fitness levels. Substitution is also your friend. Don't be afraid to swap a squash session for a run and do whatever you can to get your heart rate up and the blood pumping. And if all else fails, chasing around after the children can be surprisingly effective!

KEEPING IT REAL.

Be realistic about your aims, depending on what you want to achieve over the festive period. Are you looking to maintain your weight or keep up with marathon training? Depending on your schedule, you can change your routine without compromising it. Swap days around, go running first thing in the morning before anyone else is up and take advantage of any log chopping to be done.

As for so many things in life, the bottom line is prevention rather than cure. So enjoy the festive season whilst making sure that you hit the fitness ground running in the New Year. Cheers!

5 PLACES TO SPEND CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR OUTSIDE OF LONDON

December is a tempting time to jet somewhere far-off, shunning turkey dinners and poor-quality cracker-jokes in favour of Santa hats on the beach or a glass of sangria in hand. Once the realm of solely the mega-rich, jetting off during the festive period has become attainable for us mere mortals with the arrival of low-cost airlines from regional airports, package holidays and the improvements of hotel resorts. Even if Christmas at home sounds like a no-brainer, why not use up your 2018 holiday allowance on a long weekend away? We've compiled a list of the best holiday destinations outside of London for you to soak up some sweet December sunshine, or simply delve into the snow somewhere different.

Written by Sara Macauley | Photographs by Getty Images



Abu Dhabi

Not as far away as you might think, you can get from London to Abu Dhabi with only six hours flying time. Here, you're pretty much guaranteed a sunny Christmas day, with highs of 26 and lows of 17 degrees. If it's luxury you're after, head to Saadiyat Island, where you'll find serene natural shores and an increasing number of 5 star resorts.

Madeira, Portugal

Hidden away 1000 miles from mainland Portugal, Madeira is the ideal exotic island to escape to for some winter sun. Awaiting you there are lush green landscapes, vibrant gardens and a beautiful coastline. With average temperatures during winter staying put around 18-20 degrees, it's perfect weather for sightseeing, golfing and drinking in the panoramic views.

Nuremberg, Bavaria

Nuremberg boasts arguably one of the best Christmas markets in Europe. Dating back to the early 1600's, every year the market attracts over two million visitors. With stalls full of unique gifts like the Zwetschgenmännle (a figure made from dried prunes and walnuts), it's the ideal place to do some pre-Christmas shopping. If you're feeling fancy, take the horse-drawn stagecoach on a ride through the cobbled streets, or just sip some traditional gluhwein – mulled wine, to you and I.



Grindelwald, Switzerland

Switzerland is known for being a magical country full of breath-taking scenery, and for Christmas, Grindelwald is the region to visit. A beautiful village located high in the Swiss Alps, during the festive period you'll find the streets laden with snow and stalls offering all the Swiss cheese and chocolate your heart desires. What's not to love?

Canary Islands, Spain

With Winter temperatures hovering above 20 degrees, the Canary Islands are where you should head if you're seeking some sunshine. Visit the lava-encrusted volcanos of Lanzarote, or for a tranquil getaway, head to the lesser known La Gomera for unspoilt landscapes and unique traditions.





HOMELESS AT CHRISTMAS

Written by Sarah Haynes | Photographs by South_agency

Being homeless at any time of the year is an ordeal, but during the winter – and particularly around Christmastime – it can be especially hard to deal with. Not only is the weather usually inclement with rain and driving winds seen more often than not, but loneliness becomes a big factor. With most shops featuring gifts, Christmas goodies, turkeys, crackers, festive jumpers and glittery lights, many homeless people will feel their situation more keenly. Very often, these homeless people have not much more than a blanket or two, and a sleeping bag. Shop doorways and other sheltered spaces are suddenly at a premium for people desperate to escape the misery of sleeping rough and the death rates among the homeless rise.

A report from Shelter says there are 307,000 Brits who are sleeping rough or in temporary housing, and, sadly, this figure is on the increase, which is why it's important for as many people as possible to gather together and help in any way they can. There are dozens of homeless shelters across London, so you're very likely to find one in your area where you can support those who need help in your community. A list can be found at <http://www.streetsoflondon.org.uk/volunteer>. These shelters are always in need of volunteers who are keen to turn their free time into something productive to help the homeless.

HOW CAN I HELP AT THIS TIME OF YEAR?

Understanding and compassion towards the vulnerable who are living on the streets goes a long way. Many of them will have serious mental health issues and addictions which mean that they struggle to live a normal life. Figures from homeless charity Shelter suggest that 1 in 10 of those sleeping rough will either have, or be recovering from, a drug addiction and a quarter from an alcohol problem. Volunteers are an integral and vital part of the fight to end homelessness.


Demand for shelter facilities is always at its highest at Christmastime. The cold snaps mean that extra emergency shelters are opened across the City and therefore more volunteers are needed. If you aren't sure how best to help, there are a few options available to you, both at a grassroots level and a higher one, such as maintaining public awareness of this issue and keeping it high on the political agenda. There are lots of ways of engaging. Paul Noblet, Head of Public Affairs at the youth homeless charity Centrepont, suggests these guidelines for donation:

Never give money directly to the individual on the streets, as it will almost certainly be misused on things like drink and drugs. Monetary support should only be given to the charity or shelter itself, in the short term they will use this money to provide: somewhere warm to sleep overnight, basic food for dinner, plus a warm, filling breakfast. If you'd prefer a more general donation, then charities such as Crisis, the national charity for homeless people, are always worth supporting. If you can, a monthly donation would enable the charity or shelter to help the maximum number of people.

Food donations are always appreciated, but it's definitely worthwhile checking with your shelter what food they would appreciate the most. As a general rule it's cupboard stocks only and nothing like meat or fish or anything that will expire quickly or needs to be chilled or frozen. There also specific items which they may always be low on, such as sanitary protection for women, or plasters, so it's definitely worth contacting the shelter beforehand so you can make your donation spot on.

Clothes and sleeping bags are always needed. Warm jumpers, coats, socks, scarves, etc. in reasonable condition are an excellent way to help out.

Fundraise for the cause. Getting together a larger amount will go a long way towards providing the care and services badly needed by the homeless.



A report from Shelter says there are 307,000 Brits who are sleeping rough or in temporary housing, and, sadly, this figure is on the increase, which is why it's important for as many people as possible to gather together and help in any way they can.



SPECIFIC PLACES THAT YOU CAN VOLUNTEER:

The Day and Night Centre at St Martin-in-the-Fields. This offers immediate access to free, emergency shelter to 45 homeless people per night. Street Outreach teams are used to find these people and they can wash clothes, have a hot meal and have access to computers which means that they have an opportunity to contact relatives or friends.

Shelter From The Storm. This is a free shelter, open 365 days per year, it can accommodate 42 homeless people per night and it's funded solely by donations. This forward-thinking outfit is fundraising for a new, purpose built, homeless shelter to accommodate more people who are currently sleeping rough. Shelter From The Storm also works closely with the local community to promote understanding of homelessness and alleviate any fears. It needs volunteers who are able to work in shifts for the evening, overnight and breakfast.

No Second Night Out. This concept has been pioneered in London. Outreach workers are used to scour the street each night to find those who are sleeping rough for the first time. As well as beds and food, it also offers access to support workers who can help these people with things like medical attention and social services.

So, whether it's time or money that you can offer, there are plenty of ways that you can help a homeless person have a better Christmas.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

The days might be getting darker, but this winter there's a plethora of events that are lighting up London. From streets covered in decorations to twinkling parks and historic buildings that are positively glowing, this is your 411 to having a lit winter.

Written by Chloe Laws | Photographs by Getty Images



CHISWICK HOUSE

This eighteenth-century villa is getting bathed in colourful lights throughout November and December. You can wander around the house and its gardens for £11.20, or if you fancy something even more special, you can book yourself into a super club that'll get your tastebuds lighting up.

OXFORD STREET

If you can face the tourist-filled roads, Oxford street truly does have some of the capital's best decorations. For a two-in-one trip, pop around the corner and gawk at the lights on Carnaby street, complete with the lyrics from Bohemian Rhapsody.

COVENT GARDEN

Boosting 40 mistletoe covered chandeliers, 700 glistening berries and the biggest Christmas tree you'll probably ever see – Covent Garden is a dazzling spectacle. Plus, it's surrounded by some of London's best restaurants so you can enjoy a meal with your view.

KEW GARDENS

This already stunning location is getting a magical makeover for the festive season. With, literally, over a million tea-lights, this is one event you won't forget. There's even a moonlit Laser Garden hidden in the woods this year – making this a family-friendly night out.



LONDON ZOO

London Zoo has created a one-mile lit-up path, full of multi-coloured tunnels and thousands of small sparkling lights. We didn't think lights could overshadow exotic animals, but this definitely does. This is a hotspot for Instagrammers, and an ideal location to take this year's Christmas card photograph.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

Continuing a long-standing tradition, Norway will gift London a Christmas tree that will sit in Trafalgar Square. This gifting has happened every year since 1947, making the festive makeover historic and pretty. The fountains even get a touch of Christmas magic, with them glowing as they change.

SOUTH BANK

People may go to South Bank for the wintertime market, but they stay for the lights. The display lines the waterfront, with a lit up London Eye completing the view. Warm up with mulled wine as you admire the decorations and eat international delicacies sold on the stalls.

London comes alive at Christmas, so make the most of living in this wonderful city by touring the many light shows and events to get in the festive mood.



3 CHRISTMAS cocktails

TO MAKE AT HOME

A Christmas party wouldn't be the same without a festive tippie, so we've rounded up recipes for 3 of our favourites for you to re-create at home. These boozy drinks are guaranteed to get everyone in the festive spirit, and best of all – they're quick and easy to make. With a little wiggle room for prep time, these recipes can be knocked up in a flash. No need to spend hours mulling wine or getting stressed mixing up a storm.

Written by Sara Macauley | Photographs by Getty Images



SUGARED CRANBERRY GINGER *mimosas*

Recipe from thecookierookie.com

YOU WILL NEED:

For sugared cranberries:

12oz fresh cranberries

2 cups white sugar

For mimosas:

2-3oz ginger beer

2-3oz cranberry juice

2-3oz champagne

1. On the morning of the party, prep the sugared cranberries. You'll need to heat $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar in a saucepan over medium heat. Once the sugar has dissolved and the water is simmering, remove from heat and add the cranberries. Allow to soak for 10 minutes.
2. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the cranberries to a baking sheet in a flat, single layer and allow to stand for 30 minutes. Pour the remaining sugar over the cranberries and stir to coat. Leave for an hour until the sugar dries.
3. Before the party, combine the ginger beer, cranberry juice and champagne in a champagne flute and top with the sugared cranberries.



WINTER Sangria

Recipe from www.bakednewengland.com

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 bottle of sweet red wine
- 1 bottle sparkling cran-apple cider
- 2 clementines, sliced thin, peel on
- 2 granny smith apples, cored and diced
- 1/2 cup pomegranate arils
- 1 cup cranberries sliced in half
- Rosemary to garnish each glass

A truly simple recipe, this Winter Sangria contains lots of lovely festive flavours. All you need to do is mix the wine, cider, and fruit in a large pitcher, serve over ice and garnish with rosemary. Voila, an impressive drink with next to no effort.



SPICED APPLE RUM moonshine

Recipe from www.roughmeasures.com

YOU WILL NEED:

- 500ml organic cloudy apple juice
- 70ml spiced rum
- 1 orange
- 1 lemon
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 tablespoons Christmas Spice Mix
(combine ground cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, juniper berries and all spice)
- 2 teaspoons unrefined brown sugar

1. Add the apple juice, cinnamon sticks, sugar and spices to a saucepan and stir. Simmer on a low heat.
2. Slice the orange and lemon and add 2 slices of each to the pan
3. Stirring constantly, wait until the sugar has dissolved before removing from heat and allowing to cool down slightly
4. Split the rum between your glasses, then top with the spiced apple juice and serve.

So, there you have it, 3 delicious and easy to make Christmas cocktails. If you're feeling extra fancy, wash out some jam jars and serve these Christmas drinks in them for a homely touch. Go forth and wow your guests.



JUST WEIGHING IN

Written by Sarah Haynes | Photographs by unsplash.com

We all know that Christmas is traditionally a time for calorific over-indulgence. Mince pies, roast potatoes, chocolates, Christmas pudding, wine, cake.....the list goes on. And whilst you're keen to celebrate the festive season with friend and family, you may also be worried about piling on excessive weight unnecessarily and having a huge amount to lose in the New Year. So, is there a happy compromise between Christmas feasting and famine? Of course!

- Firstly, work out how you're going to track your calories. Decide on a daily goal and stick to it. Apps like My Fitness Pal can really help to keep you on the straight and narrow.

- Be prepared. Use your calendar to identify the days when realistically you're likely to consume more than average calories (Christmas parties, Christmas Day, etc.). Be realistic about how many calories you're going to consume so you can balance out those days with days when you can eat a little less to compromise. You know the wave of rich food is coming so get ready to surf it.

- It's an old trick by now, but a good way to keep your weight stable more easily is to avoid carbs where you can. Obviously, you can't go without potatoes that have been roasted in goose fat but looking elsewhere to swap carbs for protein is definitely going to keep you leaner.

- Don't deprive yourself. A little bit of what you fancy will do you no harm, and if you tell

yourself that you won't be eating any naughty treats then you won't have boundaries in place if you do decide to eat those chocolates and you'll be more at risk of over-eating. Likewise, if you ration yourself to one glass of festive mulled wine, then you've got nothing in place to stop you drinking litres of the stuff (BAD idea. Your head won't feel normal for days).

- Keep drinking water. Drinking plenty of fluids will help you to feel fuller and ease the pain of Christmas-induced hangovers. So get into the habit of having a glass of water at regular intervals, or keeping a bottle of water on you if that's a better option for you.

- Choose low cal alcoholic drinks. Out with the Baileys and in with the Prosecco. Out with the wine and in with the gin and tonics (low cal tonic water, of course). These are simple switches you can make to drastically reduce the amount of empty calories that you're taking on board just through alcohol.

- Make smart eating choices so that you aren't raiding the fridge an hour after a festive meal. Up the protein and lower the carbs – more turkey, less toast. Eat more slowly, your brain doesn't recognise that your stomach is full until around 20 minutes after you've eaten.

These are just some of the tips that can see you through the festive period wearing the same clothes at the end as you did at the beginning. There's no need for deprivation, just a little more forward planning!

A photograph of the Hayward Gallery at dusk. The building's modern architecture is highlighted by interior and exterior lighting. A large, illuminated portrait of Roy Lichtenstein is visible in the glass facade. The London Eye is visible in the background to the right.

SPACE SHIFTERS

AT THE HAYWOOD GALLERY

BY RONA SMITH

Photographs by getty images & Rona Smith



With Christmas approaching, it is not long before our streets will be adorned with attention stealing fairy lights, baubles and shimmering spectacles. On the South Bank at the Haywood Gallery, a much more subtle show of delicate beauty is currently on display at Space Shifters.

This exhibition shows the work of twenty artists exploring our perception of reality through the use of mirrors, glass, polished surfaces and translucent materials. In Alicja Kwade's immersive installation 'WeltenLinie' (2017) for example, double sided mirrors transform a network of steel framed spaces containing twinned stone and wood sculptures. The experience of these sculptures and the space they inhabit is thrown into a delightful chaos as I navigate the work, as is my own reflection.

Indeed, in the context of selfie culture and the narcissism prevalent in our digital age, this exhibition is very timely indeed. Wandering through Space Shifters I am continually confronted with the image of myself within the installations, however here that reflection is distorted, blurred or fragmented through the means of sculpture rather than an Instagram filter.



It is not just my own reflection that takes on a new guise however, the whole of the gallery space and indeed the world outside becomes implicated in the exhibition's seductive trickery. Anish Kapoor's mirrored dish 'Sky Mirror, Blue' (2016) for example sits slanted on the Haywood's roof top, slick and gleaming against the Haywood's Brutalist concrete, turning the sky and its fringe of London's skyline a satisfyingly deep azure. In Yayoi Kusama's 'Narcissus Garden' (1966) the floor teems with large, polished, mirrored spheres sending the gallery walls and ceiling into a kaleidoscope of endlessly repeating worlds in which there are no straight lines. It is a mesmerising and soothing experience, however peering closer I find it unsettling, my distorted face replicated across the floor as far as I can see.

Richard Wilson's '20: 50' (1987) is again a stunning yet unnerving experience. I walk tentatively along a narrowing channel cut into a massive tank filled with engine oil. The surface of the engine oil is a perfectly crisp black mirror and the acrid smell fills my lungs. There is a disquieting and foreboding atmosphere and I gather my scarf close, lest it trail in the threatening substance. It is breathtaking.

This is a sumptuous and sensual show which presents more than a series of clever tricks or gimmicks. I believe the artists are asking us to consider the illusory nature of everything around us and the often imagined or deceptive perception we have of ourselves. Aside from such philosophical ponderings there is, of course, endless opportunity for a novel selfie.

Rona Smith is an artist based in Crystal Palace working in sculpture and public art. She has three permanent public works in London in New Burlington Mews, Regent Street, Lumen United Reformed Church, Bloomsbury and Z Hotels, Soho. Her work is online at www.ronasmith.co.uk and her sketches and models on Instagram @ronasmithartist.



LOVING LONDON

A rich, chequered history spanning decades, the home of cultural diversity and some of the best wine bars that you'll ever visit all go into making the world renowned metropolis that is London, a city close to many people's hearts. This city, known worldwide as the capital of England, has historic events stretching back over hundreds of years and there are all sorts of fascinating facts to accompany it. Here, we've picked out ten of the very best:

Written by Sarah Haynes | Photographs by unsplash.com



As a result of **London’s cultural diversity**, there are over 300 languages spoken. These include: Punjabi, Mandarin, Bengali, Cantonese, Polish as well, of course, English



The Millennium Dome. This structure is so vast that it’s the biggest of its kind in the world. It’s 365m in diameter, 52m high in the middle and as a symbol of days, weeks and months it also has 12 supporting poles. As a comparison, the Dome could easily fit the Great Pyramids of Giza under its roof!



Not many of us would have linked London and subterranean rivers, especially because a vast proportion of **London’s transport system** runs under the city. So, it may come as a surprise that over 20 of these rivers are flowing along beneath the streets of London.

Don’t panic, but the Jubilee, Central, Northern and Victoria tube lines are all driven by computers. There is a ‘driver’ onboard, but his responsibilities only extend to opening and closing the doors and being on hand in case of an emergency.



Experience doesn’t count for much when it comes to being a London taxi driver. If you want to follow this hallowed career path, you must pass a test known as ‘The Knowledge’. It’s no mean feat however, since it involves memorising every single street, road and landmark in the capital. This is a huge amount of information to digest and it can take between 2-4 years to learn it all.

Most of us don’t get a choice about where or when we shuffle off the mortal coil, but just in case, it’s worth remembering that it’s actually illegal to die in the Houses of Parliament. You don’t need to worry too much though, it would prove exceptionally hard





London has one of Earth's greatest collection of cultural attractions. Whatever your preferences, there's guaranteed to be something, somewhere to satiate your desires with a mix of castles, cathedrals, royal palaces and of course the Palace of Westminster which has 3 miles of passageways if you fancy a spot of exercise.



The infamous Great Fire of London in 1666 was responsible for the destruction of more than 13,000 Tudor, Medieval and early 17th century buildings across four fifths of the city. As a result, there remains very few examples of the early dwellings within the capital.



The world's oldest and most prestigious tennis tournament is held annually at Wimbledon in south west London. This impressive event attracts thousands of spectators, but tickets are allocated through a ballot, so it's advisable to get in early if you're keen to attend.

London has evolved continuously since the first dwellers arrived to build their wattle and daub houses. Nowadays we consider London to be one of the most advanced and forward thinking cities in the world. It may come as a surprise therefore to learn that the speed of traffic in central London moves no faster than the horse drawn carriages of old, pulled through the roads with a steady clip-clop instead of today's roaring diesel engine.





WONDERFOOL MAKE UP

Photographs & words by Antonia Zengin

It's a common misconception that special effects (SFX) make-up, or extreme make-up, is confined to Halloween, when you can't move for witches, warlocks and zombies. But this is definitely not the case. If you're dressing up for a themed event or night out, then the best place to start is with your make-up - the extreme version that is. Costumes can always be fitted around it.

Using this type of make-up as part of your outfit has a place all year round, whether it's for themed events, parties, competitions or even just your standard Saturday night. There's a wide choice, ranging from the simple, clichéd vampire look using just black eyeliner and red lipstick, to more risqué and extreme make-up looks with much bolder colours and even those using prosthetics - if you feel like you need a little 3D added to your body.

Since Thepsis in the 6th century BC with his red cinnabar and white lead smeared on his face, SFX make-up has been used theatrically to enhance, paint and alter the face, body and hair of the actor. It can transform appearance and helps the audience to recognise the character. In fact, using extreme and special effects make-up is an excellent way of wearing your character on your face.

One of my simpler looks is creating my interpretation of the Mad Hatter from Alice in Wonderland. It was an effective look and relatively simple to create; using just normal make-up techniques and coloured contact lenses. Blending is the key here to get a softer, seamless look with any eyeshadow.

Alice in Wonderland herself is a favourite choice of character. You can create so many different looks, from the sweet, innocent diminutive girl with a pale face and pink blossom lips, to a much darker depiction of Alice with smoky, smudgy eyeliner, electric blue eyeshadow and bold red lips. A palette of colours with strong pigmentation can transform you into an Alice look so convincing that Wonderland will seem your natural habitat. **Find Antonia on instagram @tosia155**

A lit red candle sits in a window, casting a warm glow. The window is decorated with snow and pine branches. Several small, glowing red lights are visible in the background. The overall atmosphere is cozy and festive.

THE BEST CHRISTMAS *candles*

TO FRAGRANCE YOUR
HOME THIS WINTER

Whether you're well versed in the art of hygge, or just want to make your home a little bit more festive this winter, candles are the perfect no mess, no fuss option.

Tealights, jars, candelabras – whichever form you choose, dotting candles around your home creates an undeniably cosy, tranquil atmosphere. We've rounded up a list of the best festive candles to get your home smelling lovely this season.

Written by Sara Macauley | Photographs by Tom Baker / EyeEm



it's perfect for creating a magical Christmas atmosphere.



BEST FOR: AMBIENCE

Woodwick Crimson Berries

Woodwick candles are blended with sustainable soy wax, which is one of the many reasons they're loved by us. Designed for a slow, clean burn, their candles burn for 60-100 hours, which is great news for those of us who have a candle burning at every possible moment. The main sell of these candles is their specially designed wick which crackles as it burns. Who needs a log fire when you have one of these? The Crimson Berries scented candle is made up of a blend of juicy Christmas berries, with a touch of warm spice and mistletoe essence. If it's a festive feel you're after, this candle should be top of your list.

BEST FOR: A TOUCH OF LUXURY

Jo Malone Pomegranate Noir

The mecca of candles, there's a reason Pomegranate Noir is one of Jo Malone's best-selling candles. If it's a luxurious scent you'd like, this cult classic is a crowd pleaser. A rich and fruity scent, it's blended with juicy pomegranate and raspberry with heady notes of Casablanca lily and guaiac wood. The glass packaging of this candle with its signature Jo Malone logo is just as good as the scent itself, so this is one to set pride of place on your coffee table or mantle piece.

BEST FOR: AESTHETIC

Diptyque Amande Gourmande

Diptyque are renowned for creating beautiful scents year round, but their AmandeGourmande candle is truly a winter showstopper. With notes of bitter almond essence, heliotrope and tonka bean, it evokes a magical scent that'll fill your room with fragrance. Plus, its presentation is top notch. Presented in a beautiful jar with geometric prints, and folklore-inspired artwork, it's a candle that will attract compliments.

Best for: A Christmas Feel

Crabtree & Evelyn Noel

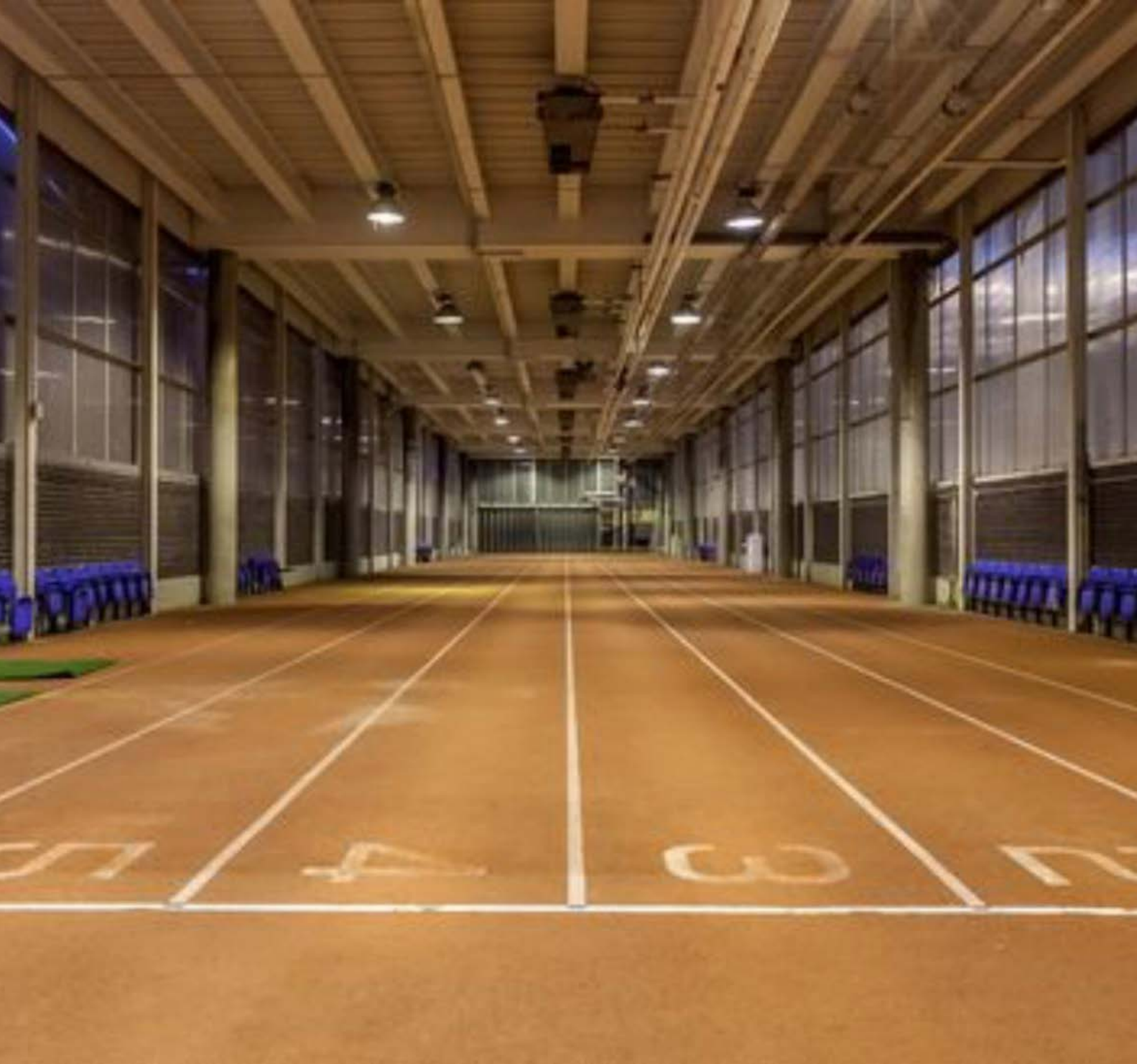
For an unmistakably Christmassy candle, look no further than Crabtree & Evelyn's deliciously festive Noel version. Blended with festive scents like mulled spices, Fraser fir spruce and zesty citrus cutting through the top, it's perfect for creating a magical Christmas atmosphere. The candle should burn for approximately 20 hours, creating a twinkling glow in your home and leaving you feeling suitably excited for Christmas day.





IS THE FUTURE A GLITTERING ONE FOR THE CRYSTAL PALACE NATIONAL SPORTS CENTRE? OR HAS THE DEATH KNELL ALREADY SOUNDED?

Written by Sarah Haynes | Photographs by Getty Images



“The key to the future is a good integrated multi-sport solution, based on an athletics facility that would appeal to many sports and not just track and field”

This world-renowned sports centre was first opened in 1964, intended as a replacement for Prince Albert’s fire-destroyed Crystal Palace Exhibition which was lost in 1936. The Crystal Palace NSC was opened with dual aims in mind - providing excellent sports facilities for Londoners and to serve professional sportspeople. It was the first multi-use sports centre designed in the UK, including the Grade II listed sports hall and pool building, plus the 17,000-seat capacity stadium.

A rich sports history has graced this site. Stretching back over a hundred years, it has played host to FA Cup finals, England’s first international game against the All-Blacks and the very best of English cricket. There’s no doubt that this sports centre was once a dynamic venue for competitions and events across several different disciplines. It saw vibrant action from athletes and prided itself on having state of the art facilities. There was a thriving bustle of multi-talented sportspeople bringing life to the NSC, but they have fallen silent and a grey gloom hangs over the once brightly coloured tableau of sport. More than 50 years old, suffering from decades of disinvestment and with the capital’s international athletics and swimming facilities now re-planted in the Olympic Park, what’s going to happen to this once-proud establishment?

Regeneration is proving a tricky path to navigate, and particularly due to its Grade II listed status as an example of modern concrete design. Because of this, the GLA has an obligation to maintain that building to a decent standard. However, this is not so for the athletics track and stadium, nor the outdoor courts or indoor training area. With the resultant leaking roofs, water damage and crumbling concrete around the original stands, it’s being suggested to the public that the cost of repair or refurbishment is simply too high.

As one would expect from a sports centre of this size and calibre, there have been plenty of public consultations going on to try and reconcile its future. The cynics amongst you would ask why the dates for these ‘public’ consultations have been chosen to fall into times when large swathes of potentially interested community members might find it more difficult to attend. John Powell, renowned athlete and chair of the CPSP, said:

“That early events of this new process have been scheduled for summer bank holiday week frankly beggars belief, with all the schools still off and a huge number of people still away.....What worries me immensely though is the absence of appropriate advanced marketing material. With barely a week to the first consultation event, no posters were on display anywhere in, or outside, the centre to advertise this process and the workshops.....That will do nothing to reduce the cynicism among some that this is all little more than lip service, with an agenda already set. At the very least it questions the sincerity of this latest campaign.”

Strong words, from a man very much in the know. And it seems to back up a sorry tale of bad publicity, dis-interested business consultants and a less than motivated approach from outsourced Centre management to engage with the focus groups and drop-in sessions that have been set up to try and shore up this sinking ship. Top name athletes

spearheading the NSC campaign are undoubtedly a boon. But without proper support from the business hierarchy, efforts to help could well fall on deaf ears.

So, what happens if these public consultations don't gain the ground that many are hoping for? There must be another option? There are indeed options, the trouble is that very few of them revolve around being solvent. But no worry – enter Chinese billionaire Ni, who has had his sights set on snaring London land for quite some time. Back in 2013, Boris decided that the site should simply be bulldozed and shortly afterwards a plan came to light that Ni and Boris Johnson had been in cahoots for the former to take over no less than half of the public park on a 500 year lease. And during this tenure, which may as well be for all eternity as far as today's campaigners are concerned, Ni would be able to build whatever he wanted on the land, being completely unanswerable to local government. Happily, that plan came to nothing – but with the likely incipient demise of Crystal Palace NSC, Ni has once again stuck his toe into south London waters. Those waiting with bated breath on the side lines are rightly uneasy.

Is it better, therefore, to accept a diminished version of the NSC? Because it certainly looks like things might be going this way.

There is no longer any intention of staging major international events at Crystal Palace, which neatly and effectively consigns the venue to a training centre. As a direct result, the stands could well be demolished – if that is what those pesky planners in City Hall want to do. And no bookings for events are being taken past March 2020; there's an indicative decision if ever there was one.

“The key to the future is a good integrated multi-sport solution, based on an athletics facility that would appeal to many sports and not just track and field,” said John Powell. “We can't have a stand-alone facility; it's not a viable business solution. This also has to work alongside an improved management model and a robust marketing strategy for the whole centre, which has been completely absent for many years now.”

Possibilities such as getting rid of the indoor athletic training area could be the final straw for Crystal Palace NSC, because even if it remained up and running, it would lose its status of a centre of excellence. Why would professional track and field athletes come to train outside during the dark, cold, winter months? There's no sensible answer.

And now, what of their competitors? There's currently nothing south of the river which comes close as a rival, but out towards the suburbs sports facilities are making themselves known. Take the Guildford borough of Shalford, for example. It boasts an expansive piece of land which has impressive facilities; four, full size, football pitches to name but one. It isn't the existence of Shalford Park which is the problem, it's the fact that they are offering far superior facilities in their chosen sports, meaning that it will become the go-to place for those interested in the discipline. The NSC has built its reputation on having one of the largest, comprehensive sites in England. But professional sportspeople don't necessarily want access to a multi-sport site, they want superb quality training areas in their own specialism. So even if the indoor track is allowed to remain standing, without significant upgrade it will not be able to compete with its rivals.

Keep up with the information at www.cpsp2020.com



“We can't have a stand-alone facility; it's not a viable business solution. This also has to work alongside an improved management model and a robust marketing strategy for the whole centre, which has been completely absent for many years now.”

CHRISTMAS FOR BUSINESSES

Written by Sarah Haynes | Photographs by kira-auf-der-heide

Christmas, and its run-up, is always going to be a busy time of the retail year as people are searching high and low for the perfect gifts for their loved ones. Whether it's a piece of jewellery, a holiday or a purchased experience to drive a Ferrari – there's a guaranteed market and there are going to be customers looking to spend their money with you. It's important to harness their interest as far ahead of time as you can, after all - you need to catch onto the natural, festive season, shopping enthusiasm to maximise your profits. For most businesses, the profit they make in the last couple of months of the year is a substantial part of their overall annual sales, sitting between 20-40% of the total. Therefore, pouring time and effort into festive sales to put you in a stronger position as trade tails off after the New Year is the secret to surviving the leaner months, ensuring that you maximise sales and profits during the peak times.



Here are a few key suggestions on how to go about making your winter retail figures hit the high notes:

1 Grit your teeth and start advertising Christmas bargains early. It may go against the grain, but the facts are that the longer Christmas-orientated products are around, the longer customers have to buy them. This also allows consumers to spread the cost of their Christmas over as long as possible time period.

2 If you have a shop window to dress, do it carefully and with your target market in mind. Will it be tasteful, chic and thoughtful? Or will your customers would prefer a bolder approach of suggestive slogans on tight t-shirts? Dressing a window well will always pull in more customers. It's the groundwork that underpins selling success.

3 And speaking of slogans, they can be an important marketing tool. Use them to generate more sales from unsure, or indecisive customers: '50% off until the 1st of November!', 'Order now for guaranteed delivery before Christmas', 'Buy one get one half price on all clothing until 21st December'.

4 If you have an online business, or a substantial subsection of your business to do online, then the Christmas period can be very profitable if nurtured properly. Staying within the data laws, use your customer database to get the details out there – the what, where, when and why they should be buying your products. Tell them about these bargains you're offering and how they can catch them. Send out a marketing email every week, rather than every two, so your brand name is a familiar sight in the inbox of your customers.

5 And don't forget your social media. Promote your business on every online platform that you can to create a strong brand image and encourage those customers through your door. Promote reviews, ask satisfied consumers for feedback and to give you a rating; good recommendations from those who have bought previously are a strong persuading factor.

Bid your business a merry Christmas!



A group of people are gathered around a dining table covered with a red tablecloth, celebrating Christmas. In the foreground, a young boy wearing a blue and white Santa hat and a white shirt is holding up a lit sparkler. To his right, a man with a beard and star-shaped glasses is also holding a sparkler. Further right, a woman with blonde hair and pink star-shaped glasses is holding a sparkler. The table is set with a roasted turkey, bread, vegetables, and lit candles. In the background, a decorated Christmas tree with lights and ornaments is visible, along with a window with white blinds and string lights. The overall atmosphere is festive and warm.

WHY DO WE GO *crackers* AT CHRISTMAS?!

Written by Sarah Haynes | Photographs by EvgeniyShkolenko

One of our most established Christmas traditions, crackers are almost always part of a festive get-together, whether it's a party or just a Christmas meal. Here in the UK, they are a traditional Christmas favourite, combining paper hats, a small toy or trinket and a joke (usually a bad one!).

But how did all this cracker fun begin?

Back in the 19th C., there was a man called Mr Tom Smith, who was a London sweet maker. Around 1845-50, Tom Smith discovered the French 'bon-bon's' – sugared almonds wrapped in pretty paper. Well, he thought, why not bring this idea to England and wrap his sweets in pretty paper? This continental idea seemed a good one. So, on his return, he tried this, however, unfortunately, it wasn't well received. But our Mr Smith was not easily daunted, so he spent some time thinking about how he could improve the packaging of his sweets. As legend would have it, Tom was sitting by his log fire, one dark winter's night, idly watching the flames as they crackled over the wood, and he had a sudden idea. Now, what if, he thought to himself, what if he could combine the crackle of the fire with his sweet wrappers? So that when they were pulled apart, there was a small 'crack' sound? The rest, as they say, is history.

The cracker evolves.....

Upon Tom Smith's death, his sons, Henry, Tom and Walter took over the family cracker business and, showing the same entrepreneurial spirit as their father, they expanded the cracker even more. They added more things into the cracker, so as well as sweets, there were also paper hats, a small trinket of some kind and a fortune telling message written

on a minute piece of paper (this then became the jokes we get today). However, by this time, rival businesses were beginning to cotton on to this popular cracker idea. In an effort to stay ahead of the game, the Smith brothers travelled the world looking for inspiration for their cracker contents, and this spawned the idea of themed crackers. They developed crackers for spinsters and bachelors, war heroes and even Suffragettes. For the wealthy there was the 'Millionaire's Crackers', the 'crack' would reveal a solid silver box with an item of gold or silver jewellery inside. These themed crackers proved very popular, and the products we see today are not too far removed from them. Further evolution of the cracker saw manufacturers display their wares within traditional scenes, usually for the big shops of London, which is how crackers became synonymous with Christmas.



FUN FACT: To this day, the British Royal Family still have crackers especially made for them.

Some examples of the famously poor cracker jokes:

Q: Why does Santa have three gardens?

A: So he can 'ho, ho, ho'!

Q: Why did Santa's helper see the doctor?

A: Because he had low 'elf' esteem!

Q: What do you call a Christmas cat in the desert?

A: Sandy Claws!

Q: What did the sea say to Santa?

A: Nothing, it just waved!



THE GROWTH OF THE GOOD GYM

Written by Sarah Haynes

With the rising obesity crisis, the world of regular exercise is seeing a resurgence in popularity. And that will only increase as we head towards January 1st, the traditional day when people vow to ditch their unhealthy habits, lose weight and tone up. All kinds of gyms have popped up over the last few years, as well as the elite health clubs we now have 24 hour gyms, women only gyms, gyms with no contract, gyms that specialise in certain areas of sport. But the Good Gym philosophy is unique, and especially important as we approach the holiday season.

WHY GO TO THE GYM?

Health is the main factor, things such as increasing or maintaining fitness, losing weight, building up muscle, recovering after surgery – all of these are the most common reasons and gyms certainly see a healthy footfall through the door. But as well as why you go to the gym, what about what you get out of it, other than fitness? Pounding away on a treadmill might be good for your heart, but it can also be mind-numbingly boring and see you wishing the minutes away, thereby devaluing your exercise time. Lots of people do classes aqua aerobics, Tai Chi, Legs, Bums and Tums – and one of the principle reasons gym-goers do this is for company. To have their exercise experience shared with others. If this is what you're looking for in your fitness regime, then there's good news folks! The Good Gym is exactly that.

GOOD BY NAME AND GOOD BY NATURE.

Working on the dual concepts of exercise for the body and exercise for the mind, there are Good Gyms groups in dozens of towns and cities across the UK available to join. They work on the simple and yet innovative concept of bringing something extra to your exercise by involving the wider community in your efforts. Good Gyms allow for your internal benefit to match your external benefit. Over 1 million people aged 65 or over admit to always, or often, feeling lonely. And 17% of people who live alone see family or friends less than once a week and this is only going to intensify with the festive season rapidly approaching.

Christmas is a peak time for elderly people to feel lonely. It's very easy to watch others celebrating with their families, sharing happy photos on social media and feel very detached from all of that. Just have memories to go on. And there might also be those who struggle with the bigger tasks, like putting up a Christmas tree, decorating their home, sometimes wrapping gifts is a bit too much for old fingers – there are lots of reasons to participate.

To combat loneliness, difficulty and promote happiness at the jolly festive time of the year, there are three main ways that the Good Gym operates, and you simply choose the one that most appeals to you:

1. Coach runs. With this approach you combine your run with a visit to an elderly person who might otherwise never have conversation day to day. You pre-organise your visit, so you can tie it in neatly with your planned route.

2. Mission runs. With these, you combine your run with stopping off to help a vulnerable person with a task that is just too big for them to manage alone. In the warmer weather this would include things like painting a fence or planting seasonal bulbs. But at this time of the year you might be needed to get Christmas decorations down from the attic, write Christmas cards or wrap gifts. Helping someone to lift the weight off their mind that they might ordinarily struggle with.

3. Another type of mission run is running with a group and taking part in something community-orientated along the way, ensuring a regular, steady flow of volunteering streaming into your community. And along with this volunteering, don't forget that taking part in this group exercise also means that you get to meet new people, make new friends and above all – have a reason to run! If enthusiasm sometimes deserts you, this could be an excellent way of getting in shape for the festive season. Sausage rolls, mince pies and Baileys are far better enjoyed knowing that your scheduled run will burn off any extra calories.

THE GOOD GYM AVAILABILITY.

These are some of the areas where The Good Gym operates: Brent, Bromley, Camden, Croydon, Hackney and Greenwich, to name just a few. You can visit www.goodgym.org/areas to check out whether there's a group set up that's local to you. Wherever you are, it's almost certain that you'll find a Good Gym group nearby.

DON'T JUST TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT!

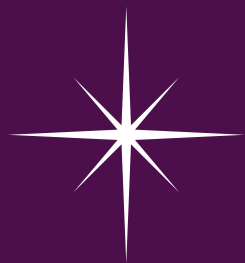
The Guardian newspaper had this to say: "The Good Gym offers an imaginative alternative to conventional gyms, tapping into the human potential of local communities." It's also Lottery funded and endorsed by big names such as BT. It's gathering force and becoming a mass moving body – so don't miss your chance to help others as you help your health!

To know more check out www.goodgym.org

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS AROUND THE WORLD

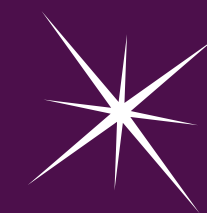
Written by Sara Macauley | Illustrations by Cienpies





Christmas in Britain follows a very traditional format. We might differentiate slightly in the order we do things – some of us have our Christmas dinner before the Queen’s speech, some after. Some of us have a Christmas tippie first thing in the morning, and for some of us the perfect time for a Bailey’s is when we’re sitting on the sofa, bellies full of turkey and paper crowns on our heads. Some go to church in the morning, others prioritise visiting family. Across the world, though, Christmas is celebrated in myriad ways. Below we’ve highlighted some of the weird and wonderful ways in which different countries celebrate.





Germany

In Germany, children write to St Nicholas, who visits on the 5th and the 6th and puts the presents into their shoes, which are usually placed by doors. Children in South East Germany also write letters to 'Das Christkind' and leave them on their windowsill at the begging of advent. In Nuremberg, each year a little girl is chosen to participate in a parade dressed up as Das Christkind, wearing a white and gold dress and a crown. Who knew?

Italy

Move over Father Christmas, in Italy, people believe that all the action occurs on January 5th when a witch named Belfana visits. Much like Santa, Belfana enters the house down the chimney and fills childrens' stockings with treats like wine as well as local delicacies.

Norway

The award for perhaps one of the most fantastically strange traditions we've ever heard of goes to Norway, where on Christmas Eve people hide their brooms in their houses. The tradition dates back to centuries ago, when Norwegians believed that witches and evil spirits came out on Christmas Eve. Many people today still tuck away their brooms, just in case.

Venezuela

In the capital of Caracas in Venezuela, every morning on Christmas Eve residents make their way to Church on roller skates. The tradition is so popular that many roads are closed to cars at 8am in the morning so people can skate to church in peace, before coming home for a Christmas Dinner of tamales.

Austria

While British Children are well acquainted with Santa's 'naughty and nice' list, spare a thought for the kids of Austria, where an evil creature called Krampus is said to wander. St Nicholas' nasty equivalent, Krampus searches out badly-behaved children at Christmas in the streets. If you visit, expect to be terrified by ghoulishly masked men playing pranks on adults and children alike.

Iceland

Another peculiar fact is that people in Iceland traditionally believed that at Christmas time, a giant cat would roam the countryside, devouring everyone in its path. Farmers would use the legend as incentive for workers: those who worked hard would be rewarded with a set of new clothes, but those who slacked would be left to the mercy of the Yule Cat. Nowadays, everyone is given a set of new clothes at Christmas, in case the cat is prowling.

As it turns out, Christmas around the globe looks different depending where you visit. Whatever your favourite tradition, we hope you have a good one. Merry Christmas!





christmas

SHOPPING MADE EASY

Written by Chloe Laws | Photographs by Geber86



Modern women don't have time to trawl down Oxford Street on a weekend or stand in never-ending queues in Selfridges.

Christmas shopping is notoriously stressful and time-consuming, but it needn't be this way. At the push of a button, you can order tailor-made gifts at the best prices. Below is a compilation of the most helpful tools to help you get your present buying done quickly and cost-effectively because there's prosecco to be drunk and turkey to eat...

TICTAIL

Tictail brings independent shops to your mobile, allowing you to browse marketplaces from the comfort of your home. You'll be supporting smaller businesses' whilst also getting your loved ones truly unique gifts. They, very handily, have some brilliant gift guides – such as “for the bookworm” and “free shipping finds”.

WISH

Wish claims to make shopping fun, and they aren't wrong. There are thousands of products at can't-believe-it prices; just make sure you stay strong and don't end up buying yourself a completely new wardrobe. Wish has everything from fashion, to gadgets and home décor – it's a one-stop shopping destination.

GIFT FINDER BY NOT ON THE HIGH STREET

This app is perfect for finding unique stocking fillers and thoughtful presents. The best bit? They've put together a 200+ page guide of Christmas gifts so you can sort out your whole to-do list with a quick swipe and tap.

SWIFTGIFT

This app does exactly what it says on the tin – gets your gifts delivered swiftly. It's perfect for sending presents to people who live far away. So how does it work? You buy a gift on Swiftgift, the recipient instantly gets a virtual version on messenger which asks them to provide their delivery address, and ta-dah, the gift gets sent to their door.

GROUPON

Most people will love an experienced-based gift, especially your significant other (plus you'll get to go along too). Groupon lets you find deals on the best stuff to do, see, eat and buy (up to 70% off); so buy someone special a more adventurous gift this season, like a spa day or tickets to a great comedy show.

Get in the shopping spirit this season, without having to brace the cold weather or even leave your bed. Your loved ones won't know the difference, and you'll save yourself a lot of time and even money. Christmas is for having fun and relaxing, not spending your evenings in shopping centres fighting over perfume sets with other customers.



Wine and Dine on Christmas Day

Written by Julia Lambeth | Photographs by Anchiy

One of my favourite things about Christmas is picking out wines to go with Christmas lunch. This can seem like a difficult task but in fact it should be a fun activity! When deciding on what to drink the first thing I would encourage you to think about what wines you like, and what would go well with your lunch. Remember, the most important thing is for you to have something that you are going to enjoy! That said, there are some wines that may work better than others. So I've listed my recommendations and reasons below, which can be found at different price points. Enjoy!



Starters

While starter will vary, the main aim is the same, to get you ready for that main course. So often you will looking at something light, fresh, with a bit of acidity to get your mouth watering. And so the wine match should be the same:

White - typically a fresh white wine with a good concentration of flavour and a fresh streak of acidity. Such as Picpoul de Pinet, Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc, or Sancerre.

Red option -Light reds: For the starter you want a red wine that is light and will freshen your palate. Beaujolais or light Pinot Noir would be ideal options. Light in tannin and body, with fresh red fruit flavours, this is one of the few red wines that can be served with fish and can also be served chilled if you wish.

Sparkling: If you are feeling decadent why not open a bottle of something fizzy? A champagne will normally have the level of acidity required to provide freshness, along with bubbles and a more rich flavour than the white wines. Or of course you could go for some English Sparkling!

The main event:

Number one tip for this is: go with a wine that makes you happy! If you've got a bottle you've been saving, or a style you enjoy above all others, then this is the time. Aside from that, it depends what you are eating:

Turkey:

White - Chardonnay - preferably oaked. Think Chilean at lower end at Meursault at the top end with everything in between. It should have intensity, complexity, body and a fair dose of acidity. With roasted foods flavours are often intensified. It is this along with all the accompaniments (gravy, stuffing, roast potatoes, pigs in blankets etc) that you want to match to. Pinot Gris is good for those that don't like oak.

Red - Pinot Noir - preferably New World. Many people would recommend a French Pinot, but personally I think New World is best, purely for the aforementioned intensity. Unless you've got the budget for a VosneeRomanee I would argue that something from Central Otago would be much better suited to your meal. Turkey being a white meat, it better suited to something not too high in tannins. Bottle aged red are also a good way to go (e.g. Rioja Gran Reserva, aged Bordeaux)

Other meats:

If you prefer a bit of beef or something a bit gamey, you can go for wine that are a little different.

White - I'm going for something a little more left field here - but a Hungarian dry Furmint would be my top match. Unoaked yet spicy, this is full of flavour, body and character. When you go for wines to match with red meats, they need to have substance to stand up to it, which this certainly does. Again, Chardonnay would work, or a ripe Viognier.

Reds - much more traditional with this - Bordeaux, or a lovely Italian Chianti or Barolo or a Spanish red from Priorat or Ribera del Duero. Old world works much better for me as I don't want to be overpowered by a fruit bomb of a wine. Particularly with beef, where all the protein is just going to melt any tannins in the wine you can for something bold and hearty.



Veggies:

I'm not going to forget the veggies and vegans out there! If you're going for a nut roast the options I would recommend are:

White – something oaky. Many oaked whites have a lovely roasted hazelnut or almond flavour to them, which would match to the flavour of the dish. Plus you need something with body and intensity, so maybe stick to New World, a South African Chenin Blanc would be perfect.

Reds – I would stick to something fruity but not too tannic. If you like New World a Malbec or Shiraz would fit in perfectly here, or if you prefer something more traditional a Spanish Rioja Reserva would be lovely.

Dessert

Whether you are having a Christmas pudding, Yule Log, Trifle or anything else, if you are having a dessert, the only wine to match with it is a sweet one. Here's a few of my favourites:

Sauternes – French dessert wine, marmalade, apricots and honey, great with fruity desserts

Port – Black fruit and spicy, perfect with your pudding. Great with cheese too.

PX Sherry – Thick, viscous, dried fruit and intensely sweet, I'd have this with anything!

I hope that's given you a few ideas. And of course if you want to find out more about any of the above wines you can always join in one of our wine tastings at *South London Wine School* to discover more!

Here is a small list of Christmas and New year events at the South London Wine school

- Wed 5th Dec - Gin Tasting Masterclass December £30.00
- Thu 6th Dec - Alsace Masterclass £30.00
- Fri 7th Dec - Chocolate And Wine Workshop Greenwich £30.00
- Thu 10th Jan - Introduction To Wine Tasting January £22.50
- Fri 11th Jan - Cheese And Wine Workshop Greenwich January £30.00
- Thu 17th Jan - Sake Tasting Evening £30.00
- Fri 18th Jan - Gin Tasting Masterclass January £30.00
- Thu 24th Jan - 8 week World Of Wine Course January Greenwich £200.00
- Thu 24th Jan - World Of Wine: Burgundy And The Loire Jan £27.00

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO MAKE A BOOKING, PLEASE VISIT
SOUTHLONDONWINESCHOOL.COM**



THAT'S A WRAP

Written by Chloe Laws

Christmas is fast approaching, and with that comes an influx of novelty jumpers filling the high-street. Flashing baubles and Rudolf motifs don't appeal to most fashion-lovers, but it can be hard to find alternatives that keep you in the festive spirit and looking stylish. Throw-away Christmas jumpers are bad for your fashion quota and the environment, so for those of us striving to have a more sustainable capsule wardrobe, these jumpers will do the trick. A pinch of seasonal charm here, a dash of longevity there and a load of on-trend details...



KNIT TO KNOW

BY Cos

Modern, functional and oh-so-on-trend. With wide turn-up cuffs and a ribbed texture, this jumper is anything but boring. The moss-green incites festive feelings but would look equally as fashion forward all year around.



FOR THE FRILL

By Bimba y Lola



This BIMBA Y LOLA ivory jumper in a mohair blend is a great gift to yourself. It's high quality, features on-trend pleating and will go with everything in your wardrobe. Wear yours with some cord flares and a baker boy hat and look stylish on your winter walks.



ALL THE TRIMMINGS

By Zara



This Zara limited edition bejewelled sweater is a show-stopper – complete with multicoloured sequin and rhinestone appliqués. This is the ultimate party-piece, wear yours with a silk skirt and mules to turn some heads.



ALL THAT GLITTERS

By & other Stories



Is it even Christmas if you don't wear glitter? This colour block crewneck knit is a party-ready but sophisticated piece, which is rare for metallic designs. & Other Stories are known for their minimalist designs with a twist, and this knit is no exception.



HOLIDAY HUES

By TopShop



Red is a traditional colour for Christmas, from cranberry to mulled-wine hues, there's a red for everyone. This rich chenille yarn is super soft and looks a lot more high-end than it is. Be the best-dressed guest at all your friends and family gatherings this season, whilst everyone else wishes they weren't wearing a jumper with Santa's face on it.



EXPERIENCING, A NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS ...

It's late on a warm summer night and too hot to sleep. The only comfort is found in turning the pillow over every now and then to press your cheek into its cool underside, as delightful as a freshwater pool on a long walk.

Your bedroom window is open but there is no breeze tonight, only warm fragrant air and insects that are drawn to the strip of light beneath the door. But it is neither the heat nor the insects that keep you awake.

Written by Emma Kirsopp | Photographs by Lisegagne





You cannot sleep tonight because you are seven years old and tomorrow is Christmas Day.

Growing up in southern NSW, Australia, December brought a conflation of childhood joys: the summer holidays, Christmas and New Year were all packed into a magical five or six weeks of freedom and February's drudgery of back-to-school seemed barely a speck on the horizon.

We lived in a small country town and from late November the shop windows would begin to frost over with spray-on snow. The town's various festive committees oversaw the installation of street decorations with stars and angels dangling from the street lights. Christmas carols piped through supermarket speakers describing sleigh-filled days, frozen evenings and reindeer.

By mid-December, Red-suited Santas with nylon beards would appear with their photo booths in the air-conditioned malls while tired, hot families queued for photographs, children's hands still clammy with melted ice-cream.

Our own house would be filled with the fresh resin smell of the Christmas tree, which was usually the decapitated top of a radiata pine that grew in the backyard.

I remember the sticky conifer dominating the tiny lounge room, adorned with rocking horses, tiny

nutcracker dolls and angels, all exquisitely hand-crafted in painted wood. The decorations were from Germany, a gift sent to us by distant cousins before I was born.

Cotton wool 'snow' was draped over the branches, bright glass icicles hung among its needles and a shard of glittering crystal, like a star, bent the top slightly, as the tree wilted in the midsummer humidity. Even now, I cannot walk past a pine furniture shop without being transported to that tiny lounge room with its immense and perfumed tree.

At the time this juxtaposition of seasons, where opposite points of the year converged, never struck us as odd. It was taken for granted that the central motif of all our summertime celebrations was Northern Hemisphere midwinter.

Christmas Day for us commenced very early beneath our tree. We opened our presents in the bright morning light, among its dropped needles, before the long drive to the coast where we would spend the day with relatives.

Lunch was the main event but unlike many Australian families, we did not gather around a barbecue. Ours was heavily imbued with recent European heritage and the table was laid with every kind of roast bird, potatoes were served in savoury salads (not roasted) and the whole ordeal was punctuated with liqueur sweets, sour plumb cake, ginger biscuits and of course our Aunt's pavlova.

There is something ancient and magical about celebrating Christmas in the heart of winter. As wet streets reflect the city's lights, the snow-flaked cards and reindeer make sense now. Carols about warmth (inner and outer) feel right.



When I moved to London, I left my family on the other side of the world. Shifting Hemispheres shifted my perception and what was normal to me, what I had built my expectations on had to change.

Lunchtime was also a refuge from the heavy coastal heat and everyone gathered about the table, or (with plates balanced on knees) in front of a television that silently showed movies about Christmas miracles and redemption in the snowy streets of distant cities

After lunch, nauseated and half crazed from sweets, we would venture down the road to play on the beach before the hot drive home.

I was in my thirties when I experienced my first Northern Hemisphere Christmas, only a few short months after moving to London. During the build-up to December, Christmas Day itself and its precise order of activities, made me realise how casual the festive season had been for me growing up in the Southern Hemisphere. A Christmas of bright days and short, hot nights has become wet, cold and busy with shopping, meeting friends or undergoing that right-of-passage that is the office Christmas party.

There is something ancient and magical about celebrating Christmas in the heart of winter. As wet streets reflect the city's lights, the snow-flaked cards and reindeer make sense now. Carols about warmth (inner and outer) feel right.

Trees are bundled-up and sold in 'Christmas tree pop-ups' and unlike our lopsided radiata, I know these

cultivated things will not drop their sour needles on the floor.

When I moved to London, I left my family on the other side of the world. Shifting Hemispheres shifted my perception and what was normal to me, what I had built my expectations on had to change.

Our own tree stands in the corner of the room, as it has always done, though (sadly) this one is a plastic number from the pound shop. But its lights illuminate the room all day and enjoying the moment and the company I am in is the motif of Christmas now.

And when I am at my cosiest, on the night before Christmas, the same juxtapositions occur. As I call home, I know that my parents will pick up the phone on a bright midsummer morning and while I am looking through the closed window into the cold and dark, speaking with them I remember looking through an open one, which let in the warm air and the insects, on a hot December night.

Emma Kirsopp is an Australian-born artist and Technical author

**Creative work, visit emmakirsopp.com
For work as a Technical Author, visit
<http://linkedin.com/in/ekirsopp>**





Advertise Your Business with Word of Mouth Magazine

We are passionate about supporting local business through Word of Mouth, we have a team of experts available to support you and your business on all platforms online that increase your use ability.

Why not try a couple of our very popular additional services
Social Media Management

In our fast-paced digital world, time is money, and there's no reason to sugarcoat the fact. At Word of Mouth Magazine, our sole mission is to equip your business with the tools of the trade needed to keep your online presence in the spotlight, 24/7. Social media marketing is perhaps THE most successful way to interact on the web. But to be able to influence people and leave them hungry for more means you must be able to capture their attention from the outset and maintain their interest with vibrant and relevant ongoing content.

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are 3 top networking platforms to establish a strong brand identity, showcase your business and gain more valuable customers. Additional platforms that may also prove very relevant to your business include Google+ and YouTube, a little underutilised, these roads less travelled are an absolute must for search engine optimisation. If you want to raise your social profile, build brand awareness and loyalty with your customers, we are here to take the process off your hands..

For more information on how we can take over the management of your social media accounts, please email us.

Email: sales@wommagazine.co.uk | **Website:** www.wommagazine.co.uk



LET'S GET SOCIAL!

Word of Mouth Magazine is active on the following social media platforms:

[g+@WOMMAGAZINEUK](https://www.google.com/+WOMMAGAZINEUK) [f @WOMMAGAZINEUK](https://www.facebook.com/WOMMAGAZINEUK) [@WOMMAGAZINEUK](https://www.instagram.com/WOMMAGAZINEUK) [@WOMMAGAZINEUK](https://twitter.com/WOMMAGAZINEUK)

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS WITH WORD OF MOUTH MAGAZINE: SALES@WOMMAGAZINE.CO.UK

Blog Management Services

Are you constantly thinking about exciting ways to establish trust with your on-line visitors? Blogging is a cost effective avenue to explore if you want your brand to stay ahead of the content curve, without getting lost in cyberspace. Google SEO rankings are worth their weight in gold when it comes to promoting products and services across the web, so it makes sense to use blogging to benefit your business wherever possible. Now more than ever there are a million and one reasons to go down the blogging route, including relationship building, building trust to through resourcing, lead generation and SEO to name a few. High quality blogs are great if you want to add a personal touch to your business or brand. Blog posts can be written for many purposes - to inform, educate, promote or entertain your online audience as you encourage them to check out what else your website has to offer. Well crafted blogs provide the perfect platform to showcase your knowledge on a particular industry, niche or subject. Blog content serves to position your business online as an authoritative entity.

Maintaining an active voice with current blog content helps to drive more traffic towards your website. As a result, an increased number of online visitors often leads to more customer purchases and repeat business.

For more information on how we can take over the management of your Blogging for business, please email us at sales@wommagazine.co.uk

Contact Word of Mouth Magazine and Unlock the Full Potential of Your Business

To advertise your business directly with our social media campaign service, or to be featured in one of our future issues, please call our 24 hr answering helpline on 0843 7130 0432.
We will return your call by the next business day.

Alternatively, you're welcome to email our sales team directly:
sales@wommagazine.co.uk

