

CONSERVATION NEWS

Kent

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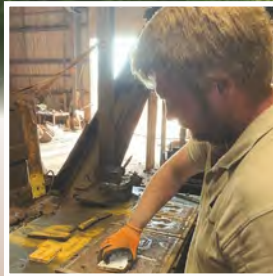
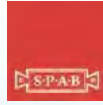


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Welcome... WINTER 2020

... to our final magazine of the year – and what a strange year it's been.

Our first sympathies must go to those who have suffered from Covid 19, their families, and the dedicated health professionals who have cared for them.

It's been a difficult time for many local retailers and tradespeople who deeply appreciate the continued support they receive from the people of Kent. They will need that support well into 2021 in order to continue providing skills which we just can't afford to lose.

This magazine showcases plenty of examples of that expertise, including Darren Hole of Dude & Arnette who is a national expert in looking after the distinctive white cowls on oast houses, and Tony Bones, a specialist in reclaiming and restoring period doors. We also report on a project by SPAB, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, at Boxley which shows just what expert craftsmanship can achieve.

Here's hoping for an easier time ahead for everyone.

Dawn

Competition winners Autumn issue: The winner of the Landmark Trust Handbook was Ursula Glover from Canterbury and the winner of the Lost Orchard cookbook by Raymond Blanc was Stella Cosgrove from Ashford.





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22

What's inside

WINTER 2020

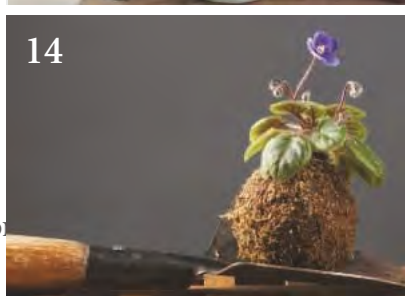
- 10 **Gardening**
Winter gardening
- 14 **Creating Kokedama**
Why not try something a little different?
- 22 **The art of kitchen design**
Stylish ideas from Collins Bespoke
- 28 **It's a wrap**
Responsible and reusable gift wrapping is not just for Christmas... it's for life!
- 42 **Je t'a'door**
Tony Bones – The Old Door Restorer
- 56 **The Old House Project**
We take a look at one of SPAB's ongoing restoration projects
- 70 **The New Ivy**
Two recipes from The Ivy restaurant
- 80 **Rowena Hawtin's wine column**
Pinot Noir – it's picky but it's worth it!



56



28



14

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WINTER GARDENING

Winter doesn't have to be white in the garden, even if there is a blanket of snow covering the soil. Most of the colour comes from berries: hollies, firethorn, and other winter-fruited plants that add unexpected splashes of reds and oranges to your winter garden.



CHRISTMAS AT BEDGEBURY

Surround yourself with sparkle this Christmas as the after-dark trail at Bedgebury lights up for its third year. Enter a world festooned with seasonal cheer enhanced by a soundtrack of festive classics. Wander beneath unique tree canopies drenched in Christmas colour. Explore the light maze and look out for giant bubbles and snowflakes where you least expect them. And don't forget to glimpse Father Christmas and his elf amongst the pines, spruce and firs along the way. To book your time slot visit christmasbedgebury.co.uk

Plan ahead with holly

If you have a berrying holly, it's a good idea to cut some boughs for Christmas early. How many of us have glanced at a holly bush in November and looked forward to seeing the berries indoors for Christmas, only to notice two weeks later that everything has been stripped by the birds? Holly boughs will last perfectly well in a bucket of water in a sheltered corner close to the house.



OVERWINTER SWEET PEAS

If you haven't already sown your sweet peas, you can do this now under cover. Sown now they'll give you earlier flowers in greater numbers and a longer season. All legumes, these included, thrive with a long root run, so deep pots are ideal. Some heat will speed up germination, but it is not essential. They'll germinate in about ten days, but watch for mice as they love them!





SEASONAL SENSATION

For vibrant indoor colour at the darkest time of year, poinsettias beat all other houseplants hands down. Although they usually have vivid scarlet bracts, they come in a variety of colour combinations from rich, creamy whites and golds to lush, dreamy pinks. Once you've brought your plant home, protect it from chilly draughts and direct sunlight, water sparingly and feed monthly.

GROW GARLIC

Home-grown garlic takes up little space and requires hardly any effort to get a good crop. It's a good crop to grow with children, as garlic is easy to grow, and the cloves are the perfect size to be planted by small hands. There are two types of garlic to grow: softneck garlic and hardneck garlic. Softneck garlic is easier to grow and stores well but hardneck garlic, while less hardy and not as long-lasting as softneck garlic, is said to have the best flavour. There's also elephant garlic, which bears giant, mild-flavoured bulbs, which you can grow for a lighter garlic



What to do now

- Plant out spring bedding displays of pansies, violas and primulas.
- Plant bare root roses – they can be planted any time between now and March.
- Before the birds eat them all, cut a few stems of holly with berries for making Christmas garlands. Stand them in a bucket of water in a sheltered spot.
- Divide mature clumps of rhubarb once they are dormant.
- Prune apple and pear trees between now and February.
- Clean out the greenhouse thoroughly. Wash the glass and floor with horticultural disinfectant.

MAKE TIME FOR THE BIRDS

Natural food sources for birds are in short supply in the depths of winter, so help your garden birds by regularly putting out food for them. It is better to feed them little and often, and always put out some fresh water too, especially when temperatures are freezing. Winter is a time to provide high fat treats to help keep them warm.



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The art of making KOKEDAMA

This winter, why not try something
a little bit different?



Kokedama is a traditional Japanese art evolved from bonsai. It is a process of wrapping a plant's roots in moss and string. The kokedama can then be placed in a bowl, upon a plate or hung up to create an interesting and unique talking point. Why not try a cyclamen for the festive table, or an orchid to hang in your home or as a beautiful gift for a loved one? It's a great way of showing off vintage crockery, too!

As well as creating something sensational, the process of moulding the moss with your hands is a very meditative and calming activity. Couple that with the great feeling you get when you've successfully made your kokedama, and this is the ultimate feel-good craft for this winter!

Most plants can be used for kokedama, but

some are trickier to work with than others and their requirements will be different depending on where they grow in the natural world.

Orchids are a great plant to use as they love to hang. This is how they would grow in the wild, their roots attaching to trees and rocks. An orchid kokedama will be happy out of direct sunshine, hanging in a north or east facing room; a bathroom is perfect!

Cacti and succulents are also good plants to use. Being drought-tolerant means that they will require less watering. They will need direct sunlight and heat though, so hang or place your finished cactus or kokedama in a sunny window.

The smaller the plant, the better for beginners, as it's easier if you can get your hands around the roots to create the moss ball.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A small plant: cactus, succulent or orchid
- Moss – renewable sphagnum moss (sold for hanging baskets). You can also use sheet moss and other fancy mosses. Wet with water until malleable.
- Soil – for orchids use orchid compost, for cacti and succulents use cactus compost
- Perlite – from garden centres (for cacti and succulents only)
- String – natural twines are perfect. Natural string will decay quicker in wet environments, so man-made strings are best used for ferns etc.
- Coir or coconut fibre (this is optional for orchid kokedama only)
- Bowl, newspaper, scissors and a jug of water



KOKEDAMA WORKSHOPS

If you'd like to have lessons in kokedama or treat a friend to a class, look out for my workshops held at The Hive co-working space, Umbrella Centre, Whitstable, or contact sarah@thegardencreative.com for details and private classes.

If you have been inspired to make a kokedama and share your results on Instagram, Facebook or Twitter, please mention [@thegardencreate](https://www.instagram.com/thegardencreate).
www.thegardencreative.com

RECOMMENDED READS

There are several great books available with tips, advice and inspiration including:
Hanging Kokedama, by Coraleigh Parker
Moss, by Ulrica Nordstrom
The Inspired House Plant, by Jen Stearns

MAKING YOUR KOKEDAMA

1 Cut four lengths of string approx 60cm long and tie together in the centre. Place the knot in the centre of a bowl and arrange the strings across the bowl like a spider.

2 Spread a thick layer of moss on top of the string so it fills the bowl, and press down. Enjoy the process of feeling the natural materials in your hands. Use water to wet the moss to a workable consistency. It needs to be able to be moulded into a ball.

3 On top of the moss, add a layer of your chosen soil or compost.

4 Gently remove your plant from its container and tease the soil away from its roots. Place the plant gently on top. Add more compost around the plant, covering the roots.

5 Cover the top of the plant with moss and press firmly into place.

6 Taking opposite strings, tie knots at the top of the plant as firmly as possible. Now you should be able to remove the plant from the bowl. You can tie more string around it to keep the moss attached. Use your hands to shape the ball by squeezing gently but firmly and wrap the string by winding it around the ball as much as you need to secure all the moss in place. The ball should be firm and tight by the time you've finished wrapping.

At this point you can stop and keep your ball wrapped in moss, or for orchids you can add a layer of coconut fibre or coir. This will secure the orchid and create a humid atmosphere for the roots, while still allowing water to drain away from the ball.

7 Spread a layer of coir on the newspaper and use your hands to wrap it around



the ball. Secure with string by winding or wrapping it around and tying knots.

8 Trim excess moss/coir and strings with scissors to create a neat ball.

9 When you're ready to tie your hanging string, choose a strong cross-over of string on the ball about two-thirds up towards the plant. Using the end of the scissors, tuck the end of a long piece of string under this cross-over and tie in a knot. Do the same on the opposite side, checking that the ball hangs how you want it to, before tying and trimming the ends.

You have finished your kokedama... Feel proud, you did it!

Water it when it's too dry; once a week is preferable for orchids, less often for cacti. Give it some plant food in the spring to keep it looking its best. Water by running the whole ball under the tap and leave to dry in a bowl before hanging back up, or plunge into a bowl of water for ten minutes then remove and hang to drip dry.



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Back in the summer of 2019, Collins Bespoke began work on their biggest project to date – the brand new Surrenden Manor Showroom - which has now, proudly, opened its doors. With owner and director Nick Collins' creative vision and the hard work from him and the team, the building has transformed from old offices, to an empty shell and rubble, into a beautiful showroom that's ready to inspire. A showroom which they are really proud of.

Kings Cross Lane kitchen



Nick began working as an apprentice for Kent-based rocking horse makers, Stevenson Brothers, in 1994. In 2001, he took a large leap into self-employment, where he started designing and making bespoke cabinetry and joinery from a small garden-based workshop. Demand for his work grew and Nick began working in a partnership and took on his first apprentice. Gradually, his team flourished and they moved into Old Surrenden Manor's industrial estate. Over the past eight years, Nick and his team have worked in a number of different premises on the estate, finally moving into the largest – The Surrenden Manor Showroom – this year. Within those years, he and his team established Collins Bespoke, where craftsmanship has been nurtured, refined and shared.

Surrenden Manor is home to three popular kitchen styles, plus a beautiful boot room and pantry, too!

With its pretty clean lines and simplicity, customers are greeted by a bright and modest Shaker kitchen. The natural light makes it the ideal spot to soak up inspiration and discuss exciting new projects. Next, step through into the luxurious Beaded-Shaker. Its finer detail and intricate mouldings break slightly from the Shaker's modesty, adding grandeur and opulence to



Shaker style kitchen

the showroom. And, if your heart is set on something a little different, Collins Bespoke's impressive Distinguished Collection is for you. The vibrant style brings a contemporary twist to the more traditional designs, adding a fresh modern element to Surrenden Manor.



Above: Byrbook House kitchen Below: Malaz House bootroom

With the workshop right next door, you can actually see the kitchens being made, too!

Collins Bespoke work with spaces – and, are inspired by them. Unique rooms, focal points, unusual spaces – their kitchens are far from standardised. No set designs – each kitchen totally unique to its owner. Which really is what makes Collins Bespoke different, and – that extra bit more special. Custom-made cabinetry: kitchens – ready to entertain family life, whilst being one of a kind.

Collins Bespoke is a Kent-based and Kent-bred family-owned and run business, working throughout Kent, Sussex, Surrey and London. The Surrenden Manor Showroom and workshop can be found just outside Ashford, Old Surrenden Manor, Bethersden, TN26 3DL, where they always have good coffee. If you'd like to book a free design consultation contact Crisi crisi@collinsbespoke.com – 01233 822595.



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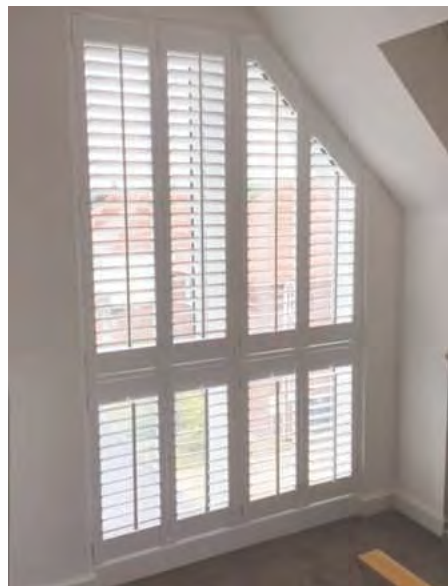
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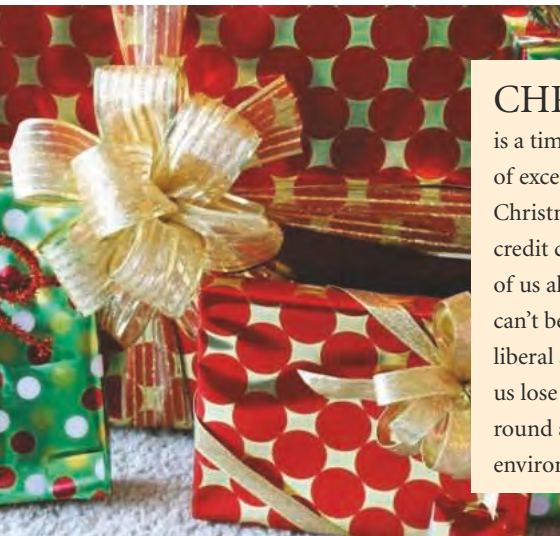
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CHRISTMAS...

is a time when we go overboard and excuse all types of excesses with the time-worn expression, 'Well it IS Christmas after all'. We over-indulge and max out the credit card on presents, and as if that's not enough many of us also indulge in excessive flashy wrapping that can't be recycled, made from mixed materials with a liberal sprinkling of glitter. Yuletide does seem to make us lose our sensible heads, but gifting goes on all year round and we're just as liable to irresponsibly purchase environmentally damaging 'tat' in June as in December.

It's a WRAP

Louise Tomlin explains why responsible and reusable gift wrap is not just for Christmas – it's for LIFE...

Unless you've been avoiding the news, I think it would be impossible for you not to have heard about the damage our over-use of plastic is doing to the environment. We're being urged to consider the impact our carelessness is having on wildlife on land and in the sea by respected thought leaders like David Attenborough.

I've tried to be more aware of plastics I allow into my home so, when I shop, I go for loose unwrapped veg in paper or no bags at all. I've ditched wipes, I opt for glass bottles and jars



instead of plastic... I do try but there's still a long way to go.

It's hugely upsetting how much harm microscopic particles of plastic can have on animals and fish who have no escape because they are living amongst them. In a recent TV programme on river walks along the Stour in Kent, a wildlife campaigner was showing children the creatures living in the river and educating the youngsters about the ecosystem.

She mentioned how sad it was to pick up a snail that had glitter embedded in its shell. It's

great that she is teaching children that using glitter is a no-no. It may look pretty but it gets everywhere, especially into water, and may well end up not just inadvertently glitzing up a snail's shell but in a fish's stomach, which then ends up being eaten by another creature, and so on.

And if you are the sort of person who doesn't give a fig about animals, how do you feel about the possibility that the food you are consuming may well have microscopic plastic particles in it, that end up inside you? Although if you are this type of person, I doubt you will have read this far...

Recycled paper



First up is this Curlicue gift wrap from wearthlondon.com: Stars at Dusk paper is suitable for any occasion and there are many other designs to choose from. All are 100% recycled and use vegetable-based ink in a waterless and chemical free printing process in the UK to keep the carbon footprint low (from £8).

So thank goodness there are now some viable options available in the shape of eco-friendly, zero-waste, recyclable products for everyday life (yes, not just for Christmas but all year round!)

I've been encouraged that so many companies are already on board with an amazing array of alternatives to what for most of us are the standard choices of wrappings for presents – remember most paper wrappings are laminated so they aren't recyclable, but fear not, there are lots of eco-friendly options to choose from now.

BENTO BAGS

I love these decorative cloth Bento bags. They are the perfect zero waste alternative for wrapping gifts and are reusable for many things besides wrapping another present or five! In Japan they are called Furoshiki and are often used to carry lunch. Being made from easily washable cloth, they have a long and useful life (from £6.99, wearthlondon.com).





Boxing clever

Priorydirect.co.uk is a Kent-based company with a lovely offering of eco-friendly gift boxes in a wide range of colours and sizes. They look clean, stylish and tasteful, with no glitter or shiny foil in sight, and can be used again and again (from £7.50).

COTTON PICKING

Here's the gift that keeps on giving – reusable linen gift wrap, made from 100% organic cotton, handmade in the UK. It can be used time after time to create a sustainable system of gift wrapping amongst a family or group of friends. Fold the linen wrap around the gift and knot to secure or use twine or ribbon (from £11 wearthlondon.com).





BACK TO BLACK

Less is definitely more if, like me, you are attracted by the minimal look so here's a super-tasteful option from thedanes.co.uk; black matt Kraft paper. It's also available in matt white or brown. If you are feeling really creative, you could add some simple twines or dried flowers or customise with paint (from £3.95).

Sumptuous satin

Wrapuccino.com have beautiful linen wraps as well as bags in many attractive colours and designs, but these sumptuous satin wraps caught my eye. They're ideal for those who are environmentally conscious but want to add a touch of luxury. The satin wrap is easily a gift on its own and can be reused as a scarf or hair tie (from £6.49). There are lush velvet reusable bags and wraps too (from £7.50). The company has some useful tutorial videos on their website with nifty tips on how to wrap gifts with fabric like a pro.



SHOP AROUND

I must point out that there are many other companies out there offering similar eco-friendly products and it was heartening to realise, whilst researching, that I found greener alternatives for products as wide-

ranging as skincare, cleaning and packaging. I previously had no idea that these were available and what's more, they are reasonably priced. So here's to a more sustainable way of consuming, that doesn't cost the earth.

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HOW TO...

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- Try to retain the original ones and only replace them if there is little or no alternative.
- Split boards can be glued then reinforced with a timber block screwed below, and weak boards can be strengthened below with battens and impregnated with beeswax.
- A good way to cure squeaks is to squirt talcum powder or powdered graphite between boards that rub together.
- Use castor cups beneath furniture and rugs or runners.
- Patch repairs are rarely successful; for an acceptable finish, scratched or worn varnish must be completely sanded back.
- When deciding on a finish, consider the wear the floor will get. Floor gel or floor oil will enhance the colour of the wood and give a hardwearing finish. When you notice signs of wear, clean thoroughly and apply a couple more coats.





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Bagham Barn in Chilham stocks many and varied pieces, from a few pounds to hundreds of pounds, to enhance what you already have or to give you inspiration to change your style. They love to share their knowledge and expertise, and their twenty traders search out heritage and quirky pieces including, furniture, ceramics, beautiful jewellery, silver, militaria, books, bronzes – it's all part of the fun to find something rarely seen; to research its past and the part it may have played in our social history. They also have one of the largest collections of Shelley china to be found; some rare, with exquisite designs and colours.

Another large collection is the vintage telephones. All beautifully refurbished, fully functional and guaranteed.

Six miles from Canterbury on the outskirts of Chilham village, the 17th century barn was part of Bagham Farm until being sympathetically restored between 2000 and 2003.

The Barn may look familiar to some readers as it has entertained the Antiques Road Trip many times over the years. Their experts always find items of interest, and on one occasion within minutes of an episode being shown, a person phoned as they had spotted something in the background, and wondered was it still for sale.

As well as the Antiques Centre, the Bagham complex includes services such as restoration and repair of furniture, clocks, ceramics and jewellery; and the Wedding Boutique with their exclusive prize-winning vintage dresses.

New to the Antiques Centre is the rocking



horse restoration service. Your heritage horse can be brought back to its charming former self, and the high quality work can be seen in the selection of restored rocking horses currently available.

Favourite teddy bears and dolls can also be given a new lease of life, and if you love bears they have all shapes and sizes living in the Barn just waiting for a new family to take them home.

A stroll through the Antiques Centre leads to Tearoom@BaghamBarn, serving freshly-made breakfasts, lunches and teas, either in the tearoom itself or (weather permitting) in the heated gazebo in the garden. You can also pre-order a take-away Afternoon Tea Box, which makes a super treat for yourself or a delightful surprise gift.

Never a dull moment at Bagham Barn sums it up – there's always something different coming in and treasures going out (hopefully fitting in the back of the car) and at the heart of it all is the beautiful historic barn.



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decoration, £10,
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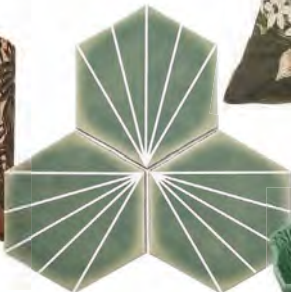
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JE T'A-DOOR...

The Old Door Restorer

WE TALK TO TONY BONES OF BONES TRADITIONAL WOODWORK
ABOUT HIS PASSION FOR SALVAGING AND RESTORING OLD
DOORS AND DOOR FURNITURE.

Regular readers may remember that in our autumn issue we ran an article on choosing the right doors for your period property, stressing the importance of matching the right style of door to the era of the property from the baffling choice available to ensure an authentic period feel.

As a result of reading this, someone came out of the 'woodwork' (we mean that in a nice

way). This is someone who has a lot more to offer on the subject, so as a follow-up we'd like to introduce you to Tony of Bones Traditional Woodwork, aka the Old Door Restorer.

A friend of Tony's father had a woodcraft shop and as a child, Tony spent a lot of time with his dad in a woodworking environment and even had his own toolkit at the age of three! There was never much doubt that he would follow in his Dad's footsteps and since leaving school he's been happily working professionally with wood for over 40 years.

Always interested in heritage, he decided around four years ago he wanted to concentrate more on restoring sash windows and period doors. However, he noticed there was plenty of competition in the sash window business but very few period door restorers. From there he has 'carved out his niche', finding something that sits well with his love of our historic built environment and his personal ethos to repair, reuse, restore and recycle, which is a passion of his that has developed over the years into almost an obsession.

He explains there are two strands to his period doors service. In an ideal world, the doors made at the time when the property was built will still be there and Tony has all the necessary skills and know-how to repair, restore and make them fully functioning again.





If the originals aren't there, however, he has built up a collection of period doors that he can 're-home'. The collection has grown with him over the years; he's not averse to liberating them from skips and is always on the lookout for a salvage opportunity. The vast majority of these doors are Victorian four-panels, along with some Edwardian, 1930s and Georgian doors. He spotted the dark grey Victorian four-panel, pictured here, in a front garden. It was painted sky blue and the owners were happy to have it removed. Now fully restored and fitted properly with vintage restored door furniture: brass knobs, black glazed ceramic fingerplate and

the chrome indicator bolt, it is now a perfect bathroom door. The effect is superb.

Tony explains further that there's no such thing as a standard size door in period properties, as they would have been made bespoke to fit perfectly when the house was built. When a client says, 'I need new doors', it's always best to look closely at what is there to check that is the case. Many times he has found that the ugly doors someone wants changing are in fact the original ones that have been masked or altered in some way. Hardboard was frequently used in the 60s and 70s to convert panelled doors into flush 'trendy' looking ones to fit with the



fashions of the time. He has often asked a client for permission to peel off the hardboard to reveal a perfect period door underneath that can then be restored. The photos here show the process of peeling back the hardboard, and the shocking pink one is the original door beneath ready to be restored and made beautiful again.



The photo above shows a close up of how hardboard was used to disguise panel doors and how it was cut around the original lock.

Something that adds to the aesthetic appeal of a period door restoration is of course the door furniture. Fitting the appropriate hinges, rim lock, knob and fingerplate lend authenticity. Tony's passion for old doors is equalled by his love of vintage fittings. His attention to detail has meant he has built up a wonderful collection of these, which he has lovingly restored to reuse. He says that the majority of cast iron hinges were made by Baldwin in their foundry in Stourport;



an interesting fact: three times Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin began working in this family business. Cast iron hinges are usually covered in paint, which prevents them from working properly. He removes the paint and gets them looking good and working well again.

The same care and attention is lavished on many different types of fittings including rim locks, which are mounted on the surface of the door and were common in the 19th to mid 20th century. Pictured here is a particularly interesting one with the maker's name on the little brass badge. Pryke and Palmer were ironmongers in Upper Thames St, London. (No.48 is now a Shepherd Neame pub).

In line with Tony's desire to reuse original items, he tries his utmost to never discard parts that may come in useful. Some doors he acquires are beyond repair – they may have been cut down too much or had several different locks fitted, but some of their parts can be salvaged and reused. He calls them 'donor doors', and he can make one door out of two or more damaged ones.

Having the vision to recognise the potential in what most people would see as waste and to make something useful and beautiful again is what qualifies him as the Old Door Restorer.

Find out more about Tony Bones and his work at boneskent.co.uk

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TOP OF THEIR GAME

WE TALK TO DARREN HOLE OF DUDE & ARNETTE, THE COUNTRY'S LEADING OAST HOUSE MAINTENANCE AND RESTORATION COMPANY.

Oast houses are familiar features of the Kentish countryside. Symbolic of the once prolific cultivation of hops for beer-brewing, they are now more likely to be converted into interesting homes or business premises.

One estimate says that about 5,000 oast houses were constructed mainly in the mid-1800s, with 3,000 in Kent alone. Smaller numbers were built in Sussex (about 20%) and Hereford & Worcester (15%). Only a handful are still in use today for drying hops.



Drive past one of these quirky and usually stunning conversions today – maybe with a pang of envy for the residents – and you can't fail to notice the distinctive white cowl on top. This used to act like a chimney, allowing hot air from hop-drying to be drawn up and out through the kiln roof. Specially designed to keep the rain out, the cowl turned in the wind to ensure the clearest path for the hot air to escape.

Not surprisingly, given the county's numerous oasts, the leading specialist in maintaining cowl is a family business based in Kent. Dude & Arnette claim that if you have an oast house anywhere in the UK (yes, there are a few scattered further afield) then the cowl is almost certain to have been serviced by them at some point in its history.

Darren Hole, Managing Director, is immensely proud of the maintenance and restoration work carried out by his dedicated team which includes wife Mandy who works in the office, and son Brandon who is set to take over the business one day. Former mechanic Darren took over the business from Mandy's father David Holmes, thereby keeping it in the family.

"I like the customers who own oast houses – often they are very interesting people," he says. "I like the work we do and keeping old traditions alive."





He explains that the team typically remove a cowl then transport it to their workshop in mid-Kent before sanding down, drying, repairing, sealing and then adding five coats of paint. Then the cowl is taken back and re-fitted. Sometimes a fibreglass cowl will be replaced with a wooden one which is more like the original and lasts longer. Darren says he enjoys ‘the best views in the world’ from the top of an oast!

Setting up the firm’s website

www.dudeandarnette.co.uk has proved an enormous help in driving business. “Before that I think many people just didn’t realise there were specialists like us,” says Darren. Now the team work on about 250 cowls a year. They also offer other roofing work, including repair or replacement of Kentish peg tiles.

Despite the two lockdowns this year, Darren says he has been busier than ever, with customers spending more time both at home and on their homes. It looks like a bright future for a firm whose business is the past, and who say they have a very modern approach to their keen sense of tradition.

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OLD HOUSE PROJECT

WE LOOK AT ONE OF SPAB'S ON-GOING RESTORATION PROJECTS WHICH AIMS TO SHOW WHAT CAN BE DONE TO BRING AN 'AT RISK' BUILDING BACK INTO USE

Although called a chapel, which was probably associated with the adjoining Boxley Abbey, Grade II* listed St Andrews Chapel became a house early on in its history. Dating from the 15th century, it has a colourful past: it was owned by Tudor poet Thomas Wyatt and acted as a local post office in the 20th century. The house still has its original open timber roof. It has been vacant and on the Heritage at Risk Register for many years and

remains as a hidden time capsule.

When the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) bought the building in November 2018 it was hidden behind an overgrown garden; vandal damage had left the site vulnerable; and parts of the roof were leaking. They are working with Historic England and others to bring the building back to life. Known as their 'Old House Project,' SPAB's aim is to showcase the very best



Photos: Ralph Hodgson





Photo: Ralph Hodgson

conservation methods and materials to repair this medieval building. Over the summer, there was a working party held at Boxley Abbey and a lime kiln was set up in the grounds of St Andrew's for the production of 'hot lime'.

The most urgent repairs are to prop the west gable which is moving away from the rest of the building as well as roof repairs, repointing, and guttering works.

SPAB are increasingly concerned about the decline of craft skills in the UK. A fifth of their housing stock is pre-1919 but much of the maintenance and repair work on these buildings is undertaken by people without specialist skills. In purchasing St Andrews SPAB have embarked on a five-year project to repair this characterful medieval building whilst showcasing the very best conservation methods and materials.



Photo: Christian Montez

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SPAB need quite a few tiles to repair the roof at St Andrews and are very excited to be working with a consortium of the country's leading clay tile specialists, who are helping to source the right clay, experiment with firing techniques and make each and every new tile needed.

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CHRISTMAS MURDER MYSTERIES: Enjoy delicious food and wine while helping solve a fictional crime staged by actors, then retire to your luxurious bedroom after the entertainment. On 12th December, The Great Pantomime; 19th December, Murder under the Mistletoe.

SHOPPING:

Christmas gifts and decorations are among more than 2,000 items on offer in the Leeds Castle shops. You can also purchase gift experiences such as falconry, golf, or adoption of a beautiful bird.



All visits must be booked and are subject to change. www.leeds-castle.com

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Its delights, long accessible only to the upper echelons of society, have been open to all since the last private owner died in the 1970s and left it to the Leeds Castle Foundation which still runs it today.

This, the 'loveliest castle in the world' according to Lord Conway of nearby Allington, is now a top tourist magnet visited by more than half a million people in

2019, according to the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions.

It offers something for everyone including stunning gardens, historical exhibitions, falconry displays, castle-themed playgrounds, a maze of 2,400 yew trees, a golf course, accommodation for special stays, and a busy programme of events including the popular summer outdoor classical concert.



The outdoor classical concert

While the building was closed in the November national lockdown, the grounds and gardens have remained open in line with government guidance. In these unpredictable times it is best to check the current situation with www.leeds-castle.com before visiting.

The Castle is normally available for weddings and other private events, and there is holiday accommodation both in the historic Maiden Tower, in nearby properties in the grounds and in Knight's Glamping, where you can sleep in a four-poster bed in a striped pavilion. Enjoy dinner or afternoon tea in the spectacular Castle View Restaurant.

There is a thriving conference trade. No doubt the Castle's combination of scenery and security influenced its choice as venue for



The Leeds Castle maze

the international meeting between Egyptian and Israeli foreign ministers in 1978 leading up to the Camp David peace process, and for Northern Ireland talks hosted by Tony Blair in 2004.

The Castle is built on two small islands in a lake formed by the River Len, originally connected by a drawbridge over water. Domesday attributes the land ownership to Bishop Odo, half-brother of William the Conqueror, and it is known that a simple stronghold was erected in 1119. A double-light window and a cellar survive from this early structure.

The estate came into the hands of King Edward I and his wife the Spanish Eleanor of Castile in the 13th century and the revetment



The stunning gardens

wall surrounding the larger island dates from this time. The keep on the smaller island was developed by Eleanor into what was called the Gloriette (from a Spanish word for 'outdoor pavilion'). Today the Gloriette and what is known now as New Castle on the larger island are connected by indoor corridors, so that visitors pass easily between the two buildings. It is likely that the bath house revealed quite recently beneath the Bailey (the larger island building) was created for Edward.

Edward and Eleanor began a tradition of Leeds Castle's ownership by England's queens, right up to Catherine of Aragon, another Spanish woman, who was Henry VIII's first wife in the 16th century. Henry transformed Leeds from a Norman stronghold into a royal palace for him and Catherine to enjoy. It was in royal ownership during The Field of Cloth of Gold, a magnificent tournament held in 1520 to

increase the bonds of friendship between Henry and his European rival, Francois I. A series of displays focus on this period of Tudor history and is accompanied by a children's trail.

The Castle passed out of royal hands when Henry's heir, the boy king Edward VI, gave it to Anthony St Leger for services rendered. A later owner demolished much of it and built a large Jacobean house. When Fiennes Wykeham Martin inherited this in 1821 it was in considerable disrepair and in danger of collapse, so he replaced it with a building in the Tudor style. The Gloriette was repaired, the moat cleared and cleaned.

One hundred years later the Wykeham Martin family had to sell up for financial reasons and the by-then neglected Castle was bought for £180,000 by the Hon Olive Wilson Filmer (nee Paget), who was looking for a country retreat in Kent. Lady Baillie (as she



Above: The Banqueting Hall Below: The Silk Drawing Room

became known on her third marriage) salvaged and restored the Castle: with the help of leading contemporary French designers, she dramatically altered the appearance of the interiors, including her bedroom, dressing room and reception rooms.

During the 1930s she was one of the great country hostesses of England, entertaining an A-list mix of statesmen, European royalty, and film stars including Charlie Chaplin and Errol Flynn at Leeds, where these guests enjoyed a cinema, tennis and squash courts, a swimming pool with wave machine – and zebras roamed



the grounds! World War II curtailed the socialising, and Lady Baillie allowed New Castle to be used as a rehabilitation hospital for burned airmen treated by the pioneering



The refurbished castle dining room

plastic surgeon Sir Archibald McIndoe at East Grinstead Hospital, while her family moved into the Gloriette.

At the same time, weapons research was secretly carried out in the grounds. The government minister responsible for this work, Geoffrey Lloyd, was a frequent visitor and later became the first chairman of the Leeds Castle Foundation, set up in 1974 after Lady Baillie died. It soon became obvious to the Foundation that opening the grounds, and then the building, to paying visitors was the only way to afford maintenance.

Work on this Grade I listed property is always ongoing. In recent years more than £2m has been spent on the outer stonework, replacing old harmful cement-based mortar with lime mortar. Where stonework needs replacing the

aim is always to use Kentish ragstone, to reflect the original appearance. Future plans include conservation of the Barbican and Fortified Mill, alongside restoration of the Castle turrets on the front elevation.

The Castle's historic interiors and collections are cared for by the Heritage team, from conserving faded tapestries to matching original paints and restoring luxurious soft furnishings.

The aim of the Charitable Foundation is 'the preservation of the Castle, its collections and interiors, and its estate for the benefit of the public'. All profits go towards this aim, and the Foundation receives no external funding.

Not surprisingly, it takes a lot of expertise, a great deal of care, and of course money, to preserve 'the loveliest castle' for posterity!



Glebe Farm, Sellindge

Glebe Farm is a particularly attractive period farmhouse with brick and tile hung elevations, leaded light windows and a traditional Kent peg tiled roof, draped in Wisteria to the front elevation and set in manicured gardens on the rural fringe of the village of Sellindge with its historic village church.

The farmhouse is simply quite stunning and offers accommodation arranged over three floors comprising; entrance hall with oak staircase, a double aspect sitting room and a wonderful vaulted roundel garden room, both with wood burning stoves, the lovely kitchen/breakfast room has a range of cupboards and an Aga. Two further reception rooms have back to back inglenooks, both with wood burning stoves and

enjoying views over the gardens to the front.

The first floor landing leads to a principal bedroom with en suite bathroom, bedroom two with walk in wardrobes, a third bedroom and family bathroom. On the second floor is a further bedroom and substantial playroom. The whole extending to 3,500 square feet.

In addition to the main house, there is a one bedroom annexe, a studio cottage and a one bedroom flat over a triple bay cart shed style garage. To the rear of the garage is a sizeable oak framed log store that has potential for conversion to a number of uses, subject to planning approval.

Glebe Farm is approached over a winding driveway with a stone bridge crossing a delightful stream and culminating in a parking



and turning area. The gardens have been a “labour of love” and are planted with numerous specimen trees and shrubs, a gurgling stream running through the grounds, and a number of focal points to include an octagonal gazebo and octagonal glass house, numerous clipped box

and topiary yew.

Glebe Farm is situated on the outskirts of Sellindge which has good local facilities including a primary school, church, sports club, village hall, farm shop and shopping for day-to-day needs.



The Details

Reception hall • Drawing room • Dining room • Sitting room • Roundel garden room • Kitchen/breakfast room • Utility room • Cloakroom • Master bedroom with en-suite dressing room & bathroom • Three further bedrooms • Two bathrooms (one en-suite) • Playroom • Self-contained ancillary accommodation • One bedroom annexe • One bedroom cottage • One bedroom studio • Gardens and outbuildings • Landscaped gardens • Stream • Double Garage • Workshop • Utility Room • About 1.2 acres

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The Ivy is the quintessential London restaurant, where people go to see and be seen, encapsulating everything that's glamorous and romantic about dining in the capital. The Ivy Now contains all the dishes, secrets and stories behind the restaurant's success. Charismatic Director and former maitre d' Fernando Peire tells the story – the history, the theatre, the celebrities and the scandal – and with classic recipes from Executive chef Gary Lee, including the Ivy's signature shepherd's pie, Asian-inspired salads, desserts and cocktails, this is the must-have book for a new generation of Ivy fans.

SLOW-ROASTED PORK BELLY WITH BACON, MARJORAM, PEARL ONIONS AND PEAS

YOU WILL NEED

2kg trimmed pork belly
1tsp salt
1tsp caster sugar
juice of 1 lemon
1 orange, zested
splash of light soy sauce
2tbsp chopped marjoram
30 pearl or button onions
(if you can't find these use
18 small shallots)
1tbsp sunflower oil
100g smoked bacon
lardons
300ml chicken stock
200g frozen peas
30g unsalted butter
sea salt and freshly ground
black pepper
roasted baby carrots to
serve

METHOD

Using a sharp knife, score the pork fat 5mm deep and in a criss-cross pattern. Rub the salt, sugar and lemon juice into the fat, rubbing it really vigorously for a good few minutes. Lightly dab the meat dry with paper towels. Turn the pork belly over and cut a shallow criss-cross pattern on the flesh side, then rub the orange zest, soy sauce and half the marjoram into it. Turn the meat skin-side up again, cover and leave in the fridge for 6-8 hours.

Preheat the oven to 220°C/fan 200°C/gas 7.

Place the pork belly, skin-side up, on a rack in a roasting tray and cook for 30 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 180°C/fan 160°C/gas 4 and continue to cook the pork for a further 1½ hours until the skin is very crisp and crunchy and the meat is cooked.

Meanwhile, peel the pearl onions and cook in pan of boiling water until tender, then drain.

Heat the sunflower oil in a large frying pan, add the lardons and cook until the fat starts to run. Add the blanched onions and continue to cook until the lardons and onions are golden brown.

Pour the juices from the pork roasting tray into the pan along with the chicken stock (broth). Add the frozen peas and simmer for a few minutes until the peas are cooked. Add the remaining marjoram and butter and stir until combined. Spoon into warmed bowls and serve the pork belly slices on top, along with the baby carrots.

**SERVES
SIX**



**SERVES
FOUR**



CRAB MACARONI CHEESE WITH LEMON BRIOCHE AND TARRAGON

Our chef's love this dish – it's just what we need after a hard night's service!

YOU WILL NEED

50g unsalted butter
50g plain flour
500ml fish or shellfish stock
100ml double cream
2tsp English mustard
1tsp Worcestershire sauce
½ tsp anchovy essence
pinch of cayenne pepper
finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
250g dried macaroni
150g grated mature Cheddar cheese
300g white crabmeat, picked
1tbsp chopped tarragon
75g fresh brioche crumbs
splash of olive oil
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas 6.

Melt the butter in a heavy-based saucepan, add the flour, stir well and cook for minute to cook out the flour. Gradually add the fish stock (broth) and keep whisking over a medium heat until you have a silky sauce.

Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the cream, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, anchovy essence, cayenne and a good squeeze of lemon juice. Season and mix until smooth.

Meanwhile cook the macaroni in a pan of boiling salted water until al dente. Drain the past and return it to the pan. Add the sauce, 100g of the grated Cheddar, three-quarters of the crab and the chopped tarragon. Mix well, spoon into a baking dish and bake in the hot oven for 12-15 minutes until bubbling.

In a bowl, mix the brioche crumbs with the lemon zest and olive oil. Scatter the remaining crab over the top of the bubbling macaroni, top with the lemon crumbs and remaining 50g cheese and cook under a hot grill for a few minutes until golden and piping hot.



Recipes taken from The Ivy Now by Fernando Peire, with recipes by Gary Lee and photography © Jenny Zarins. Hardcover published by Quadrille, RRP £30.



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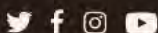
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WORGAN'S FARM SHOP

There was no doubt about Carl Worgan's future once he began helping out in his uncle's butcher's shop at the age of 12. "I just fell in love with the trade," he says, and spent all his spare time in the Wigan shop. "I could do everything by the time I was 14." He was working at Howarth's in Manchester when they were National Sausage Champions in 2007 and 2009.

He moved to Canterbury to become the resident butcher at the well-known Goods Shed food hall for several years, but leased his own premises at Bishopsbourne 18 months ago, taking his staff with him, and business has never been so good.

2020 was quite difficult for some retailers,

but it was a year of great steps forward for Carl. He introduced a baking room where delicious ready meals, pies and enticing sausage rolls are prepared on site – there's a curried sausage roll, and one made with pork and chorizo encased in a pastry which has been infused with flavours. He's also started selling fish, working with sellers from Broadstairs and Faversham.

Carl works long days in the shop, but also spends much time in the car searching out the best meat for his customers. Most is sourced in Kent, including pork from Dover and lamb from Chislet, but he's not afraid to hop over the border. "All our meat is English, and we are driven by quality and consistency of quality," he says. "We will travel a bit to get that."



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Pinot Noir is one of the big four international grape varieties along with Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah (Shiraz). All these grapes make a range of styles at various price points, but they are also noted for their ability to make many of the top wines across the world that sell for premium and super premium prices.

However, whereas the other three are very happy to bask in hot sunshine in places such as Riverina in Australia, the Central Valley in Chile and in California, Pinot Noir does not do well in hot climates generally and therefore does not translate so easily to high-volume inexpensive wine so readily as the others. In fact, Pinot Noir is quite picky. It prefers a cooler climate, but there has to be enough sunshine for the grapes to ripen fully; it doesn't like it too wet as its thin skin makes it susceptible to fungal diseases; it doesn't like it too windy as this disrupts the growth of the vine; it only likes certain types of soils; which, all in all, limits the areas and regions where Pinot Noir will flourish.

So, you might ask, why do producers and growers plant this variety if it's so difficult to cultivate?

A Pinot Noir is an excellent choice to go with the Christmas turkey and all the trimmings such as cranberry, bacon, parsnips, stuffing and Brussels sprouts. It is a wine with medium to high levels of acidity and low to medium tannins, which is best able to cope with the myriad flavours on our plates at Christmas. A young fruity New World wine would work really well, but if you can stretch to a top wine from Gevrey Chambertin, or Pommard in the Cote d'Or, you are in for a treat! We all have personal favourites and there is a range of options to select from.

The reason is that when it has the right conditions – climate, soil, TLC in the vineyard and good winemaking – the wines it produces can be outstanding. Furthermore, it is a key grape in the making of Champagne, so this little grape is worth its weight in gold and makes it worthwhile to undergo research in order to get the best out

of it in the environment where it is produced.

Let's take a look at the regions in the world that are noted for producing top quality Pinot Noir – not all needing a second mortgage to purchase! Burgundy in France and especially the Cote d'Or (the Golden Slope) has an international reputation for producing top quality Pinot Noir; the terroir, climate and the direction of the vineyards contribute to conditions in which Pinot Noir can slowly ripen to develop complex aromas and flavours and maintain high acidity and medium tannins to ensure longevity.

The vineyards in this area are graded according to the quality and style of wine they produce, with the generic village or commune appellation at the bottom of the hierarchy, then the Premier Cru vineyards and, at the very top, the Grand Cru vineyards.

For example, Vosne-Romanee is internationally regarded as the top village in the Cote d'Or for producing top quality red burgundy, but within the commune there are individual vineyards and the top wine here is called La Tache, made by Romanee Conti, whose wines sell for several thousand pounds a bottle.

The good news is that not all the wines in the region are this expensive. For example, Louis Jadot, a top negociant (wine broker) in Burgundy, buys up large quantities of grapes from smaller producers as well as from more well-known ones who have excess grapes for the wines they are making. These wines are sold under the Louis Jadot label starting from around £15 and have aromas of cranberries, redcurrants, a touch of forest floor, earth and spice. The acidity is high, and the tannins are firm with medium alcohol around 12.5% to 13%. These pair very well with triple cream cheese such as Epoisses, as the rich creaminess of the cheese goes excellently with the cranberry crunchiness and high acidity of the wine.

In England, Pinot Noir has to be the star of black grapes as the UK – the southern part – has an excellent climate to produce top quality Pinot Noir because it doesn't need really hot temperatures to ripen. The aroma profile is fresh raspberry, cranberry and red cherry with slight hints of vanilla. There are a number of excellent English wine producers who make

very good Pinot Noir and Rose and of course it is central to making sparkling wine where the UK has an international reputation.



OUTSIDE EUROPE

If we look at the New World, notable regions are Oregon in north west America and cooler regions of California such as the Sonoma coast, Los Carneros and the Russian River Valley; Central Otago in South Island, New Zealand; Mornington Peninsula in south east Australia; and Tasmania. All these regions have cooling influences, along with sufficient sunshine for the grapes to fully ripen.

New world wines in general emphasise the grape's fruity characteristics to a greater extent than in Europe and for Pinot Noir this is red cherry, red plums, violets and often some spice such as cedar and vanilla. If the region is slightly warmer, the fruit is more along the black spectrum such as black cherry and plums, with a fuller body and slightly softer tannins. Many of these wines are made in an early drinking style displaying medium ruby colours, red/black fruit aromas and flavours, and light to medium tannins for between £12 to £15. More expensive wines display more complexity in terms of the concentration of fruit, perhaps some dried cooked fruit aromas and flavours, and a richer texture along with some capacity for ageing.



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