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SPRING 2021  
*Welcome...*

If spring is here, summer can't be far behind. With warmer temperatures, longer days and a loosening of lockdown I'm looking forward to spending more time out of the office.

This spring we are talking Shepherds Huts: Elham Valley Antiques and Shepherd Huts restore and make them to original designs, and Outdoorsy Living supply bespoke huts, plus glamping pods along with other outside structures, too.

When walks have been highlights of our day during this pandemic, it's been timely to listen to environmental groups such as Plastic Free Whitstable, who explain why we simply must respect and preserve our surroundings just as much as we look after our interiors.

There's much we can do in our gardens, too, to lower our carbon footprint and help wildlife, and our regular columnist has some good ideas for this. Being slightly less tidy sounds a great plan to me!

Enjoy the magazine and some freedom, too!

*Dawn*



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# What's inside

SPRING 2021

## 10 Spring gardening

What to do in the garden now

## 16 Low carbon gardening

Tips for making your garden more eco-friendly

## 34 Architectural heritage

We look at traditional Coade stone

## 39 Shepherd's delight

Traditional restored shepherd's huts

## 60 Kitchens through time

Working with the architecture of your home for a harmonious result

## 65 How to care for... Tiled floors

## 78 Cooking on the Big Green Egg

Two amazing BBQ recipes, plus win a copy of the Big Green Egg cook book

## 84 Rowena Hawtin's wine column

Rosé all day! Rowena's recommendations for spring and summer





- Softwoods
- Hardwoods
- Sheet materials
- Decking
- Machined to your design



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Spring is on its way and you'll soon be caught up in a frenzy of seed sowing, growing, and nurturing your garden as it comes back to life.

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## *Shed loads of fun*

Since the lockdown, garden sheds have become the focus for investment, decoration and adornment. Gone are the days of sheds as just storage for tools. It seems that record numbers of gardeners have been upgrading their garden shed into something more beautiful. So where do you start?

**1. Have a good clear out.** get rid of anything that's broken or that you don't use.

**2. Repaint it.** These days, wood stain can be more than brown or green! There is a huge range of shades and mixing two colours can give a great impact.

**3. Bling it up.** Make it your own with decorative touches, such as trellis, lanterns, hanging baskets and insect hotels.

**4. Now for the inside.** Treat the inside as another living space; neutral or muted colours are perfect for creating a relaxed environment, while bright and bold colours



can help alertness and concentration levels.

Adding storage and countertops to the shed will allow it to be used for a multitude of purposes from a home office to a relaxing hideaway. Storage cabinets and desks can be bought ready-made, making installation a breeze, or you could choose to make your own storage exactly to your needs - the sky's the limit!

# THREE TOP TULIPS

Whether used in formal or informal beds and borders, tulips make ideal bedding plants combined with annual or biennial planting.



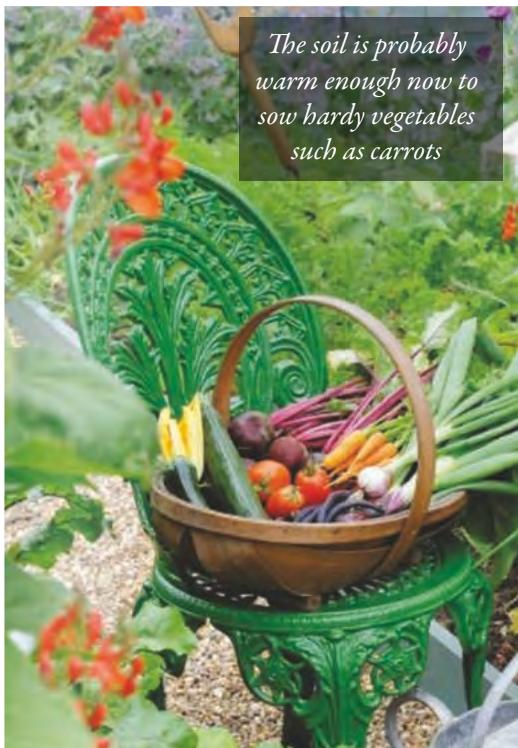
**Tulipa 'Apricot Beauty'** A pearly, soft apricot, single early tulip, excellent planted on its own.



**Tulipa 'Menton'** Produces large oval flowers with iridescent petals that resemble shot silk.



**Tulipa 'White Triumphator'** The classic lily-flowered tulip.



*The soil is probably warm enough now to sow hardy vegetables such as carrots*

## Seasonal gardening jobs

- Keep weeds under control.
- Protect fruit blossom from late frosts. Most top fruit and soft fruit are very hardy but once they start into growth in spring, flowers and buds are especially vulnerable to frost and may need protection to crop well.
- Tie in climbing and rambling roses.
- Sow hardy annuals and herb seeds.
- Start to feed citrus plants.
- Increase the water given to houseplants.
- Feed hungry shrubs and roses.
- Sow new lawns or repair bare patches.
- Prune fig trees.
- Divide bamboos and waterlilies.



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# LOW CARBON GARDENING

THE CLIMATE CRISIS HAS BEEN OVERSHADOWED BY THE PANDEMIC DURING THE LAST YEAR, BUT THE REALITY OF ITS EFFECTS ON OUR LIVES CANNOT BE UNDERESTIMATED.



**G**lobally the weather is changing, with extreme temperatures and weather events no longer just occasional.

Here in the UK our seasons are changing, with extreme heatwaves in summer, low temperatures in winter, and much stormier conditions making high winds and flash flooding regular occurrences, even during summer. Global temperatures have already increased by a full degree Celsius in the last century.

Reducing the amount of carbon we are releasing into the environment is key in reducing the impact of climate change. Many

of us are already trying to reduce our carbon footprints by consuming less and doing more 'green' things, and what better place to continue this but in the garden this Spring?

There is much we can do in the garden to lower our carbon footprint, in turn helping wildlife and creating healthier spaces for ourselves and the animals we share our gardens with.

## DITCH THE CHEMICALS!

The easiest way to 'go green' is to go organic. Chemical weed killers, slug/ant killers, and fertilisers harm bees and other pollinators

and mammals like hedgehogs. Make your own instead. White vinegar and Epsom salts make great weed killers, as does plain boiling water. Look into these natural alternatives.



### MAKE YOUR OWN PLANT FOOD

Soak stinging nettles, seaweed or comfrey in water to make a 'soup' and strain off the liquid.



You save on a journey to the shops and the plastic bottle if you search on your walk for ingredients and use an old bucket or bowl. It can be smelly

though, so be careful where you leave it! Use old plastic bottles to keep it in. Nettles are great for leafy green plants and comfrey for flowering and fruiting ones.

### AVOID PEAT

Peatlands are important carbon stores where carbon is sequestered (locked up) deep underground as organic matter. Draining and extracting peat releases huge amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. There is peat-free compost available so make a promise to buy only this. If it doesn't say peat-free, it probably isn't!



### COMPOST, COMPOST, COMPOST

Better still – make your own compost!

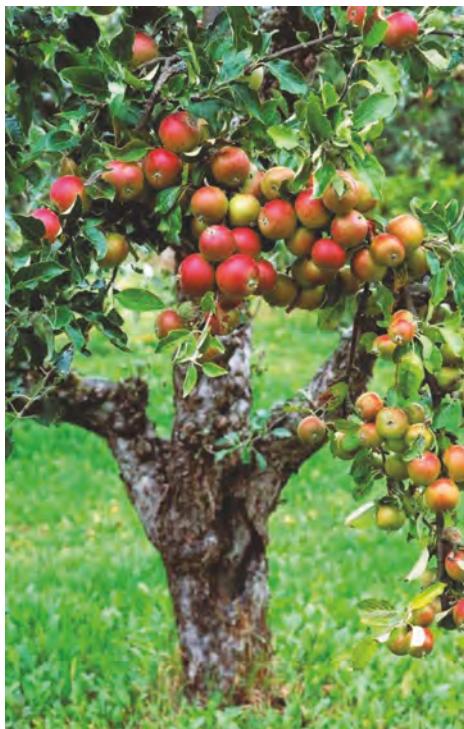
Kitchen peelings, tea and coffee grounds, cut flowers, hair, garden clippings, annual weeds and leaves are among many things that can make amazing compost! The easiest has to be leafmould: bag up leaves from autumn leaf fall and leave to rot somewhere at the side of a shed or similar for one or two years. It can be used as seed compost, mulch and soil improver especially for heavy clay soils or dry sandy soils. Wormeries are also a great way to make your own rich plant food and vermicompost and don't take up much space. Some can even be kept indoors. In many areas, community compost schemes are available if you don't have the space for your own compost heap or wormery.



By adding leafmould and homemade compost on top of the soil, the humus content is increased and the layer of organic matter builds up and locks the carbon into the soil for longer, creating a natural carbon sink.

Build healthy soil by adding plenty of organic matter every year and not disturbing the soil too much. The no-dig method keeps the carbon in the soil and saves your back, too!

See [www.audubon.org/news/the-hidden-carbon-trap-your-garden-its-all-about-soil](http://www.audubon.org/news/the-hidden-carbon-trap-your-garden-its-all-about-soil)



## GROW YOUR OWN

One of the best ways to cut food-mileage is to grow your own. You are already nourishing the soil with your homemade compost, so continue to reduce your carbon footprint by reducing the distance your food has to travel to get to you. Join local community groups/gardens for seed swaps and to buy or swap small vegetable plants. Many people grow too many and will happily give some away.

Many vegetables are easy to grow in something as small as a window box, such as lettuce, radish, trailing tomatoes, chives and many other herbs.

If you have the space, plant a fruit tree as they not only sequester carbon

in their branches, leaves and trunk but produce tasty pickings too! Many fruits are flown by air, which produces huge amounts of carbon. More exotic fruits like peaches and apricots can be grown in the south east of England against a sunny wall. Apples, pears, raspberries, blackcurrants and gooseberries are all very easy to grow and don't take up too much space. Think about growing them in your borders alongside ornamental plants.

Research good storage practices to make your homegrown food last longer, using old newspapers, cardboard, hessian and straw. If you don't have the space or are not able to grow your own, seek out your local community garden or allotments. Many sell produce and are a great place to go to meet people or get tips. Buying locally instead of from the supermarket is a good way to reduce your carbon footprint and can be much cheaper, too!

## PERMACULTURE AND FOREST GARDENING

If you already grow your own or are interested in doing more, the permaculture approach is a great way to reduce carbon even further. Bringing together the historical practices of indigenous cultures and the science of ecology,



permaculture is an ethical approach to creating healthy ecosystems, working in harmony with nature to produce food. For information see [www.permaculture.org.uk](http://www.permaculture.org.uk)

### MAKE A DEAD-HEDGE

By keeping all your garden prunings in the garden, you cut your carbon emissions and create a great place for wildlife. If you have a space where not much grows, a north-facing area for example, drive four wooden posts vertically into the ground and lay any branches and vegetation from pruning horizontally between the posts. As the branches rot down, space is created at the top for more prunings and it becomes a fantastic place for insects. If you have less space try a log pile. Simply pile up any old branches or logs, burying some in the ground for beetle larvae to feed on. Before you fill up that green bin, keep some branches back to create habitats.

### CUT OUT THE PLASTIC!

This is a huge topic that we are all very familiar with but it's important to look at our gardening practices and cut out the plastic here, too. Try to re-use any plastic trays and pots you have and when these fall apart, replace with wooden trays, newspaper pots and toilet roll tubes for seedlings, and clay pots for larger plants. Use reclaimed or upcycled containers instead of buying new plastic pots.

Get creative with plant labelling and instead of buying plastic, make your own from cut-up plastic bottles/yogurt pots,



bamboo, lollipop sticks or smooth pebbles. Some new trends in gardening are worryingly bad for the environment, so think twice before you consider fake grass. Made from plastic and unable to be recycled, it is often made many thousands of miles away and has no benefit to wildlife. Consider alternative ground-cover like shingle, or adding pathways so that you don't need to walk across the lawn.

### TAKE A BREAK FROM THE LAWNMOWER

Petrol-powered tools emit considerable amounts of carbon dioxide. A medium-sized mower running for an hour emits as much as a 15-mile car journey!

If you have a small lawn, a push-along mower is a great alternative and keeps you fit! A mulching lawn mower cuts out the need to add lawn feed and other treatments by leaving very finely-shredded grass to be drawn down into the soil by worms, releasing the nutrients back into the soil.

Think about reducing the amount of lawn you need to mow by letting it grow long or gradually turning it into a wild flower meadow. Meadows lock up more carbon and are better for wildlife than a clipped lawn. Meadow seed companies sell mixes for different soil types: [www.wildseed.co.uk](http://www.wildseed.co.uk)

#### COLLECT RAINWATER

Plants benefit from being watered with rainwater and we get so much rain during the winter that it makes sense to install a water butt, or increase by using an extension kit. A water butt saves 200 litres of water every time it's filled, helping to save on the 0.5% of UK's carbon emissions from the treatment and distribution of mains water.

#### BUY LESS

All these ideas will help reduce your carbon footprint, but the best thing we can all do is buy less!

Source plants and seeds from local groups rather than buying plastic-clad bedding plants that have been flown to the UK after being

raised in a heated greenhouse, creating huge amounts of carbon dioxide. Buy perennials over annuals, as these plants will come back every year saving you money. Sow hardy annuals directly outside from seeds instead. Re-use containers and other materials in your garden rather than throwing away and buying new. Get creative and upcycle things.

There are some great ideas online; check out [www.growveg.co.uk](http://www.growveg.co.uk)

*By Sarah@thegardencreative.com*

*www.TheGardenCreative.com*

*The Garden Creative designs and plants gardens that are beneficial to people and wildlife, partnering with 9-trees CIC who plant trees to off-set carbon emissions. [www.9trees.org](http://www.9trees.org)*



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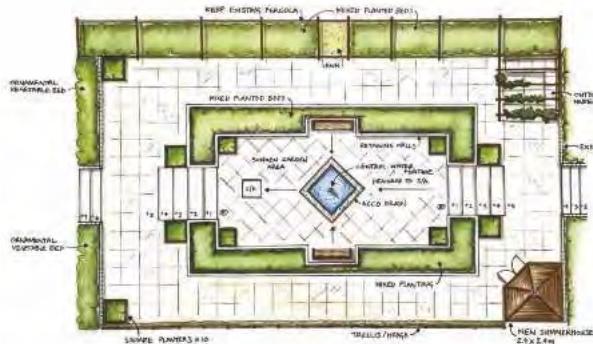
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With shepherd huts dating back to 1596, this unique mode of shelter and transport was developed to allow shepherds to remain with the sheep in their care – a valuable asset in those days. The use of shepherd huts peaked in the late 19th century but began to dwindle in the 20th century owing to the development of machinery, new farming techniques and electric power now widely available to farms.

More recently, shepherd huts have enjoyed a revival in the new glamping and luxury staycation scene, boasting modern additions such as toilets, showers and kitchen appliances. The Outdoorsy Living shepherd huts embrace the old and the new, offering two distinct styles of shepherd hut: traditional and contemporary. Both styles provide the same luxury accommodation and a chance to retreat from the outside world in a haven of style and relaxation.

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As a home-owner, arranging adequate insurance is an imperative aspect of protecting your valuable asset. This becomes even more vital when approaching a historic building, for numerous reasons. While these pieces of architectural history may have stood tall for many hundreds of years, they are under

increasing threat from a rapidly changing environment, with damage from storms, floods, and heavy rainfall becoming more commonplace, and it is more important than ever to have comprehensive coverage in place.

While the process of arranging insurance may begin in the same spirit as with a more typical property, there are further considerations that may require a more personal touch.

## A UNIQUE PROPOSITION

One of the key features of a Listed Building tends to be the construction itself, providing



a fine example of materials, and in particular the building methods that have, aside from an exclusive list of present-day master craftsmen, been all but lost to time.

It is here where your biggest challenge may lie, to the point where you may be unable to find the construction type in a multiple-choice list online, or encounter an agent over the phone who has simply never experienced a property of that ilk.

Just as you would prefer to have an artisan carry out any repairs to the fabric of your building, it is just as prudent to work with an insurance partner who truly understands what you are presenting to them.

#### CONTENTS COVER – GETTING IT RIGHT

Perhaps the most challenging area for homeowners is accurately estimating the replacement value of their belongings within. This can be

further compounded with Listed Buildings, particularly if the furnishings are in keeping with the period. This can make coming up with a new-for-old replacement value on antique pieces nigh on impossible.

It is advisable to keep abreast of the value of your contents regularly to ensure that the requirements you are disclosing to your insurers are adequate. For specialist pieces of art and antique furniture in particular, it may be prudent to have them valued every few years by professional opinion, to ensure you receive fair recompense so that you could replace them with a similar piece. The same can be said for jewellery and precious metals, where items over a certain value may require more regular valuations, perhaps once every two or three years.

Due to fluctuations in the value of precious metals, it is recommended and encouraged to ensure up-to-date valuations are maintained.



## LISTED BUILDINGS UNDER RENOVATION

From the 1970s, changes in planning regulations were implemented to protect the aesthetics of buildings themselves, as well as the surrounding area, leaving very little scope to alter the external appearance or add to the superstructure of a property.

While this may seem to be restrictive, modern building materials can still be utilised internally, allowing for a warm, energy-efficient environment to be created within. The fusion of historic and present-day can provide a perfect blend of contemporary open-plan living with beautiful period features, such as distinctive exposed timbers, exquisite hardwood floors, and spacious vaulted ceilings.

It is vital to note, however, that even if the fabric of the property will not be altered, and no Planning Permission is required for your project, you should still inform your existing insurance company of your plans. It is a requirement on most policies that renovations be disclosed, the scale of which notwithstanding, and your cover could be invalidated as a result of any omission. Furthermore, a studious insurance advisor can also assist in ensuring that any contractors completing renovations on your behalf are also adequately covered for the scope of the task at hand.

## OUR BACKGROUND

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**C**oade stone was first developed by Eleanor Coade, a highly successful businesswoman of her time. It was manufactured in Lambeth from 1769 until 1821. The recipe and the production process were both closely-guarded secrets, something which only added to the appeal of her product. Coade's commitment to employing high-skilled craftsmen and artists guaranteed consistent quality.

The stone was used for an extensive range of external embellishments: keystones, plaques, friezes, bas-reliefs, statues, vases and even garden seats. The success of Coade stone stemmed from its ability to provide fashionable ornaments in quantity. This was extremely useful for the builders and architects of the fast-expanding terraces and squares of London and

other cities.

Because Coade stone is remarkably resistant to the harshest weather, most pieces are in as good condition now as when they were first made over two hundred years ago. Its incredible resistance to weathering, often faring better than most types of stone in London's harsh environment.

Mrs Coade's death in 1821 left the firm without its energetic, entrepreneurial leader. Changing tastes also meant that artificial stone fell out of fashion. The company was wound up by 1840 and the secret of Coade stone was lost. In the last decade, the rediscovery of the recipe has meant that new Coade stone objects have begun to be produced again, allowing the replacement of sculptures like the Gothic Cross at Stowe which once seemed lost for good.

## PROBABLY THE MOST FAMOUS EXAMPLE OF COADE STONE

The Lion at the south end of Westminster Bridge in London originally stood atop the old Red Lion Brewery, on the Lambeth bank of the River Thames. When the brewery was demolished in 1950, to make way for the South Bank Site of the 1951 Festival of Britain, the Lion was taken down and put on display at street level.

The fine details remain clear after 170 years of London's corrosive atmosphere, caused by heavy use of coal throughout the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. The red paint was removed to reveal the fine Coade stone surface.



## NELSON'S PEDIMENT, OLD ROYAL NAVAL PALACE, GREENWICH

Modelled for the Coade manufactory by sculptor Joseph Panzetta in 1813, the pediment in the King William Courtyard of the Old Royal Naval College was a public memorial to Admiral Lord Nelson, who died at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. The sculpture was based on a painting by Benjamin West and depicts the dead Nelson being offered to Britannia by a winged



Victory. The stonework was cleaned by specialist conservators, DBR Limited in 2016.

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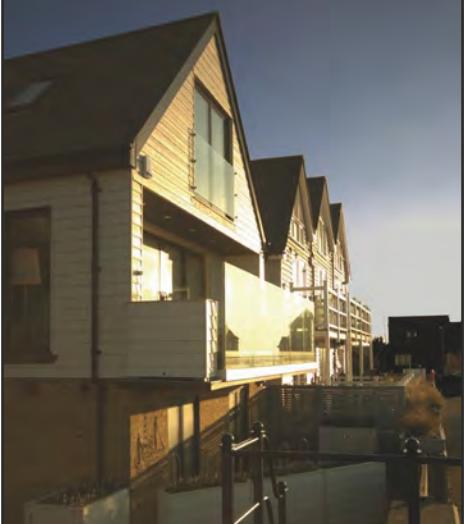


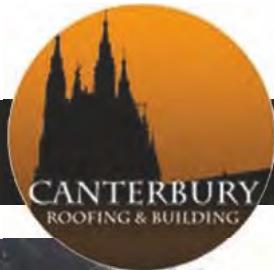
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# SHEPHERD'S DELIGHT

MAINTAINING A TRADITIONAL FEEL BUT WITH MODERN DAY COMFORTS, HAND-CRAFTED AND RESTORED SHEPHERD'S HUTS ARE FULL OF CHARACTER AND MAKE A BEAUTIFUL SPACE THAT CAN BE USED ALL YEAR AROUND.

After the difficult times we've all been having, fun and holidays have been in short supply. Whilst the braver amongst us may be contemplating getting on a plane in search of escape, despite the fear of quarantines and ever changing rules, when current restrictions allow this, others maybe well be considering the 'staycation' as the safer option for our desperately needed R & R.

Glamping get-a-ways in idyllic countryside

settings with the all-important touch of luxury and an unusual quirky twist are soaring in popularity. A quick web search reveals all manner of unusual accommodation available like yurts, teepees, log cabins and various huts. At one time the thought of staying the night in something like a shepherd's hut was unthinkable, unless you really were a shepherd tending your flock throughout the lambing season. Now, there are many of these



throughout the land that you can stay in without a hint of roughing-it, most offering the kind of accommodation and facilities the original occupants would think they had died and gone to heaven if they saw.

So what or who is behind this growing trend to restore these shelters, that on first glance, appear to be the love child



of a traditional gypsy caravan and vintage railway carriage? One of the companies in the South East that has taken up the challenge of supplying the growing demand and doing it justice is Elham Valley Shepherd's Huts.

Julian Chambers, who is the driving force behind the operation, has 30 years experience in antiques and architectural salvage under his belt. Over a decade ago, whilst walking on Romney Marsh, Julian and his wife Lin had the good fortune to discover an old, abandoned shepherd's hut in a sorry state.

They persuaded the farmer to sell it to them and so began the restoration journey.

Using his knowledge of antiques of all kinds and even vintage agricultural machinery, Julian sympathetically returned the hut to more than its former glory by careful conservation of the existing useable parts and also the introduction of reclaimed components, whilst retaining its

unique character. The finished result was a triumph; it created a compact, self-contained and deluxe accommodation that when located in a suitable countryside setting becomes a desirable relaxing, rustic haven for vacationers. And it's no surprise that it was snapped up

immediately by buyers who wanted exactly that, for their B & B business.

From there onwards they searched for other huts to rescue and restore, sometimes the hunt would take them many miles away, maybe only returning with a wreck,

a chassis or other salvageable parts. Luckily Julian's experience means he has an eye for spotting just the right items that can be adapted to be re-used on the body, exterior and interior of the huts, which means he's built up a useful collection of parts including vintage wheels, draw bars, turntables, reclaimed floorboards and items of antique furniture to adapt for

some of the interior fixtures.

The previously mentioned high demand for shepherd's huts inevitably leads to a drain on what is a finite resource. There were only a certain number built, so there aren't many left now to save and Julian and his small team of dedicated craftsmen are obviously not the only ones intent on saving these little beauties for us to enjoy.



*"The finished result was a triumph; it created a compact, self-contained and deluxe accommodation."*





They are however, not like some of the others, committed to creating high quality, bespoke amazing spaces.

The larger huts have full sized shower rooms with a toilet, a kitchen with hobs, butler sink, storage and mini-fridge. There is ample comfortable seating that converts into a double bed. The reclaimed floorboards and doors add to the romantic charm and a sense of times gone by. They are also fully insulated with the addition of a wood burner to give year round toasty warmth. The finished result is exquisite, charming and understated luxury, a testament to the team's attention to detail and desire to produce a thing of beauty.

So will the lack of huts left out there to be rescued spell an end to this restoration business? For those, like the Elham Valley team who are doing it well and with a passion, hopefully not. The encouraging news is Julian

has fortunately found some plans from one of the companies who made many of the original shepherd's huts in the late 1800s, he's uses these to ensure he make authentic replicas of parts like the wooden axels, which he makes from English green oak. The plans help him get the dimensions and proportions true to the original specifications when he is replicating original elements and he has built up many contacts with reliable and trustworthy professional service providers and suppliers in his local area, for everything from electrics to welding, which is good for the local economy too.

It's great that these little gems that could've been lost forever have not been left to rot and they are now being conserved and re-used for happy holidays for many years into the future, the team has certainly raised the baa!

**Find out more at: [elhamvalleyshepherdhuts.com](http://elhamvalleyshepherdhuts.com) or call 01303 840874**



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# Tools of the trade

WE TALK TO PHIL OF OLD ENGLISH TOOLS ABOUT HIS PASSION FOR TRADITIONAL, QUIRKY AND UNUSUAL FINDS FOR THE HOME AND GARDEN

Tools of many traditional trades are Old English Tools' speciality. Need a billhook, an axe or drawknife? Want equipment for hedge-laying or coppicing? Or would you like a new wooden handle for your favourite spade, fork or axe? Then head for Phil's shop in Faversham to find expert advice and the right tools for the job, from a hammer or chisel to an industrial lathe or workbench.

Old English Tools is a treasure-trove for tradespeople and enthusiastic collectors alike. Handily situated in the historic Monks Granary building at Standard Quay next to a boatyard – which generates some business right on his doorstep - Phil's shop has a wide reputation for quality restoration and supply of specialist tools to craftsmen and women in traditional trades.

He says that tools and equipment made in the 1920s and 30s were built to last and his customers appreciate that longevity. A few collectors visit, but 90% of the business is in providing tools to be used in a variety of trades, such as boatbuilding, blacksmithing, carpentry, basket-making, hedge-laying, timber-framing and more. In addition, many have been purchased by publicans or landlords as features for rural public houses, and more recently for photo shoots as well.

Phil got into the business 15 years ago, moving on from landscaping which sparked his interest in traditional tools. The heart of rural Kent is an ideal area for his business, as there is a lot of coppicing work in the county, and many

other traditional trades that continue to this day.

Old garden tools are built to last, and Phil spends a lot of time lovingly restoring them to their former glory. As well as re-handling, he offers a sharpening service, sometimes while-you-wait if he's not too busy, or within a few days when they can be collected ready to use again.

Next door to Old English Tools, Phil's partner Sarah Perry runs a complementary business called Country Clobber, offering rustic and rural finds for home and garden. There's an eclectic mixture of salvage and quirky items – Sarah can't resist anything featuring animals, especially chickens! Her website [www.countryclobberltd.co.uk](http://www.countryclobberltd.co.uk) even has a dedicated page to 'chickeny things'... as well as a section for Old English Tools.

In normal times Phil and Sarah exhibit at many shows, fairs and other rural events, such as Country and Steam Fairs, Game Fairs, Wood Fairs, Horse Trials and more, and they also spend a lot of time carrying out specialist clearances of barns, farms, workshops etc, but such is their reputation that many individuals simply bring in interesting items to the shop. The pair can't resist anything quirky and unusual!

As lockdown eases and days out become something to look forward to, Standard Quay on Faversham Creek is a fascinating destination and Phil and Sarah are ready to share their wares with you.



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# LIFE EVENTS *and your financial future*

THERE ARE SOME KEY MOMENTS IN LIFE THAT  
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From marrying or having children to starting a business or retiring, these major life events can change your priorities. This in turn can have a big knock-on effect on how you intend to manage and use your wealth. It can be hard to confidently manage your finances to ensure you are well prepared for life's big changes.

## BE PREPARED

So how do you prepare your finances for these major events? Even if you're financially savvy, it can be hard to confidently manage your finances to ensure you are well prepared for life's big changes; and plan how to make the most of your wealth. It might be that you lack time to give your finances the attention they really need. Or perhaps you have lots of assets in different places, such as multiple pensions funds. Then there are the challenges of wading through the complexities of financial products, the accompanying jargon and tax planning. And of course, there's life itself: things change, your goals change, and your financial planning needs change with it.

## SEEK ADVICE

Thankfully, you're not alone; an NFU Mutual Financial Adviser can help ensure you're financially prepared for life's big moments. They'll listen to your circumstances and find

out your financial aspirations in order to help you make the right financial decisions to achieve your goals. Crucially, they can assist you and your family in having the right protection in place when it's really needed.

Few of these life changes are bigger than retirement. Say the end of working life is drawing near for you: the options available are numerous



and can be complicated, not least because the pension rules may change. You'll have some big questions to think through, including whether you've got enough money squirrelled away to fund the lifestyle you want. Even if you plan to retire gradually, rather than giving up work all at once, it's a major step that requires a lot of thought. You'll also inevitably start considering how best to preserve as much of your wealth as possible for your loved ones. At the same time, you need to ensure you have enough money to maintain the lifestyle you want. Inheritance Tax planning is complex but essential.

Are you aware of the tax reliefs available? This is one of those times where professional financial advice is invaluable.

Sean McCann, Chartered Financial Planner at NFU Mutual, says: "Financial Advisers give people the confidence to make informed choices. Financial products can be full of jargon and complex rules. Financial advice is about helping you to navigate your way through that and giving you the confidence to make the right choices."

#### DON'T JUST MAKE A PLAN AND FORGET ABOUT IT

But while it's important to have a financial plan in place – especially to prepare for life's big events and landmarks - you can't simply file this plan away and forget about it. After all,

things change. Sean says: "It's important to review things with your Financial Adviser regularly. Don't make plans and just put them in a drawer and forget about them. Rules and regulations change, tax laws change. So it's really important to stay in touch with your Financial Adviser, to make the most of them."

Whatever stage of life you're at, when it comes to planning your finances, you shouldn't wait



until one of life's big moments draws near to get your finances into shape.

Whatever your financial goals are, our Financial Advisers are ready to help. NFU Mutual Financial Advisers advise on NFU Mutual products and selected products from specialist providers. They will explain the advice services and charges. Financial Advice is provided by NFU Mutual Select Investments Limited

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# lifestyle

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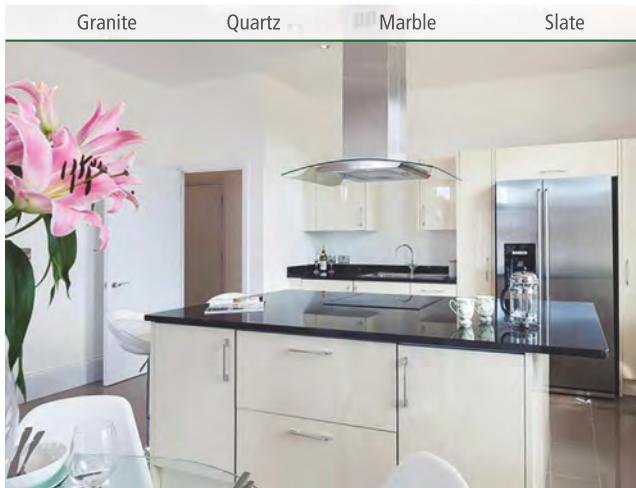
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# KITCHENS THROUGH TIME

FOR A KITCHEN TO FEEL TRULY COMFORTABLE IN A HOME, IT NEEDS TO WORK WITH THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE SPACE, RESPECTING THE FEATURES FOR A HARMONIOUS RESULT.

## GEORGIAN

If you're lucky enough to live in a Georgian home, we'd recommend trying to capture the elegance this period is known for by focusing on symmetry and grand proportions. A sense of light and space is also important in your modern interpretation of the Georgian kitchen – they loved balance and harmony and paid particular attention to the hidden details and craftsmanship in hinges and dovetail joints. Kitchen cabinets and walls were often hand painted in pale shades with a matt finish. An ornate cooker hood, will echo the grand detailing of the period, while neat, oval, burnished brass cabinet handles, reflect the focus on simple elegance.

It's also worth noting that a traditional Georgian kitchen would've been in the basement, the domain of servants, but that, since then, many have been reconfigured to sit on the ground floor, more conveniently close to the living spaces (something you might want to consider if yours is still in the basement).



Suffolk: A kitchen suited to people who want a pared back look in their home and who can never quite find the right word to describe their style because they're somewhere between classic and contemporary.

Depending on the colours, the work surfaces, the handles and the styling you choose, the Henley kitchen from Neptune is capable of many different looks. From manor houses to country cottages, its down-to-earth simplicity gives it a timeless look.

## VICTORIAN

Much as today, the range cooker was the focus of the Victorian kitchen, with the rest of the space usually divided into sections – a food prep area, the scullery where the sink was housed, and

a cool larder. For a modern interpretation, you could consider a large larder with its cavernous storage space and cool marble shelf, and a ceramic double-bowl butler's sink. Another Victorian trait that's passed on to today's kitchen is the central wooden table. This was where food prep took place, and the family (or servants in larger properties) ate. Usually made of pine, it was scrubbed clean with sand, soda



and water giving it the distinct matt finish we still appreciate today. And of course, the dresser was also a key element of the Victorian kitchen. With this period's classic high ceilings, they could reach up to seven foot. You could create a similar effect with a combination of cabinets, reaching as high as your ceilings allow. And for those final touches, consider cast iron radiators as a feature and lots of copper pans on display.

## EDWARDIAN

Edwardian architecture tends to be airy and roomier than its Victorian predecessors – spaces are slightly wider with similarly high ceilings, coupled with intricate patterns on floors and architrave. Unlike the darker shades favoured by the Victorians, Edwardian kitchens tend to be fresh and white (there was a new focus on hygiene during this period) so go for pale and airy colours on cabinets and walls. Glass-fronted cabinets became popular during this period.



## 1930s to 1950s

Parquet flooring was a style statement during this period, though many working class houses still had simple pine floorboards and rugs. If you're looking to complement your properties' features with flooring, oak flooring would be a good solution in a 1930s property, or for a more modern flourish, you could try a parquet design. Kitchens in this period were the domain of the housewife and were compact and functional rather than social. Today, a sympathetic solution would be to knock through a kitchen and dining room but keep the areas defined by flooring or decor. Some design rules need to be broken!

## 1950s to 1970s

Mid-20th-century architecture is all about open, light-filled and airy spaces. Windows tend to be large and wide, and open plan living was key when these homes were designed. Details are minimal and unfussy – from the windows to the lack of radiators (thanks to underfloor heating). Clean lined cabinetry work well in modern spaces when the focus is on precise lateral lines, that echo the simple architectural style. And true to the social nature of a modern property, we're big fans of a bench seating system, which is not only space efficient but gives the sense of a streamlined, pared back American diner.

Limehouse might have a decidedly contemporary character – it's never going to be a traditional country kitchen – but that doesn't mean there isn't room for personal expression.

## 1970s onwards

Broadly speaking, new (or newer) build houses tend to be a bit more of a blank canvas than any other. Unless you've been lucky enough to build your home yourself, in which case you can add whatever character to the architecture that suits you, the trend has been to create homes that are much more minimal and open to their owner's interpretation. Far from being dull, we think this style of building means you have the exciting opportunity to bring your own sense of style to the interior décor without feeling restricted by the architecture's style. While the aesthetic is almost entirely open to anything though, you'll still want to design for the proportions of the room. In particular, many new builds have lower ceilings, so you may find that a mix of open shelving, countertop cabinets and full-height cabinets feels less heavy than all round wall cabinets.





## COTTAGES

Cottage architecture is more of an evolution than a set period of time but most share irregular characteristics such as low ceilings, exposed beams, uneven floors and awkward nooks. Historically, cottage kitchens comprised of freestanding – and often un-matching – furniture, so a pine wood table would happily sit in front of an oak dresser on a sandstone or slate floor. As cottage kitchens can be small, it's best to keep the colour scheme pale, and you can't go wrong with timeless greens (try

Sage or French Grey in a kitchen that opens onto a country garden). In fact, cottages are distinctly linked to the countryside, so where better to draw inspiration for the kitchen's décor than nature's palette. We'd recommend choosing fabrics that capture the beauty of the countryside, such as garden roses, and mix these patterns with neutral plains. A dresser with open shelving and a scrubbed wooden table complete the cottage aesthetic, perfect in its imperfections.

*Words and photos courtesy of Neptune.com.*

# HOW TO... CARE FOR TILED FLOORS

Knowing how to maintain encaustic floor tiles is key to keeping a Victorian or Edwardian hallway in top condition. It's not uncommon for tiles to crack or become loose. While you can repair original tiled floors on a DIY basis, if yours is in very poor condition we advise seeking specialist advice.

- Sweep or vacuum regularly.
- Refix loose tiles. Dampen the floor bed and back of the tile. Prime both with one part PVA diluted with five parts water. Allow this layer to dry. Next, apply neat PVA to the floor bed and back of the tile and firmly press back into place. Wipe away surplus glue with a damp sponge and place a weight on top. Leave for 24 hours.
- Remove floor coverings that prevent the floor from breathing.
- Remove ingrained dirt by giving the floor a thorough clean with hot water and a mild detergent such as conservation grade Vulpex Spirit Soap (from [conservation-resources.co.uk](http://conservation-resources.co.uk)). Don't allow water to pool on the surface. Sponge off the surplus as you scrub away. Finally wipe over the tiles with clean water, rinsing the mop frequently.





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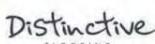


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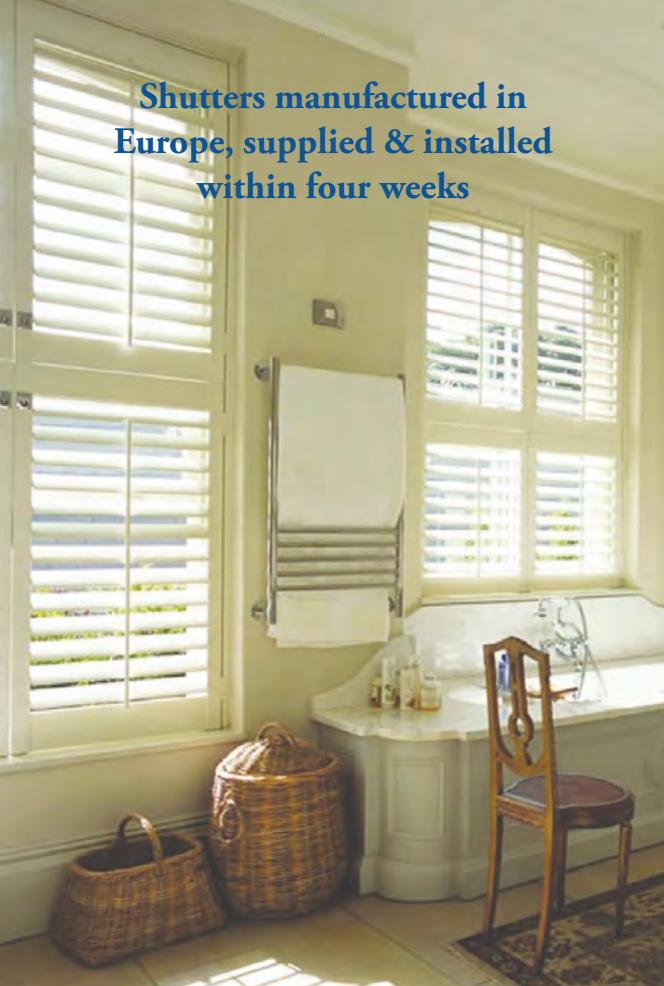
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# PLASTIC PERIL



ONE OF LIFE'S LITTLE PLEASURES OF SITTING IN A COFFEE SHOP FOR HALF AN HOUR – MAYBE FOR A SOCIALE CATCH-UP OR FOR SOME RECUPERATIVE 'ME-TIME' WAS ABRUPTLY PUT PAID TO BY COVID 19.

**I**t became no longer possible to linger over a steaming china cup at a pleasant café table. Many coffee shops stayed in business – thank goodness – by serving take-away food and drink, but that has meant greater use of disposable cups and accessories, setting back the burgeoning plastic-free environmental movement.

The working group of Plastic Free Whitstable say things were going well, their message gaining momentum among the public with the support of many local authorities and small businesses, then Covid hit and outlets went take-out only, and some were reluctant to handle customers' own brought-in cups.

Inevitably some of the resultant rubbish is carelessly dropped on beaches or in green areas – and there has been a double whammy because voluntary litter-picking groups have

had to halt their operations because of social distancing requirements. Whitstable's Marine Environment Group (WMEG) had collected three tonnes of litter from the harbour to West Beach over four years and the Tankerton group were gathering up about 42 kg a month.

Why is all this so concerning? Groups like PFW and Surfers Against Sewage say that not only is plastic rubbish unsightly but it lasts a very long time and is harmful to wildlife. Plastic stirrers and straws are the top sea polluters, with a straw enduring for 100 years. Some more facts and figures: every year in the UK we throw away 7m single-use coffee cups; plastic bags fragment in 100-300 years but will remain in minute form indefinitely; microplastics from plastic bottles enter the food chain at every level – less than 60% are recycled; millions of dog poo bags are not biodegradable.



WMEG says that every decision matters: what we buy, how and where we shop. Buying local produce, supporting small businesses, refusing plastic bags and packaging can all make a difference both to our local environment and further afield.

There is some hope, however, especially once things settle down again post-Covid:

- Canterbury City Council has joined the local Plastic Free movement and enabled many water fountains to be installed so people can fill their own bottles when on the move.
- Canterbury, along with other councils in Kent such as Thanet, Swale, Tonbridge and Malling, and Dover, have banned the release of helium balloons and sky lanterns on their land. These take years to biodegrade and meanwhile some entangle and even kill wildlife.
- Some take-away food shops are using cardboard boxes in preference to plastic bags.
- Hopefully litter-picking volunteers will soon return in force to their mighty task.

As travel restrictions continue a little longer and summer beckons we will all spend more time outdoors, so this could be an opportunity to learn to look after what we've got. Wouldn't it be great if something positive like this came out of the pandemic?



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## MACKNADE'S FIVE SMALL CHANGES





THE TEAM AT MACKNADE, KENT'S FAVOURITE FOOD HALL, IS ENCOURAGING CUSTOMERS TO MAKE FIVE SMALL CHANGES TO THEIR SHOPPING HABITS FOR THE GOOD OF THE PLANET.

**W**hile the diets may have slipped and Dry January was scrapped soon after lockdown three was announced, there are some small changes we can easily embrace to make us feel good about our choices all year. Macknade is well-known for putting environmental considerations at the forefront of its decision making, having already initiated a major reduction in plastic packaging, repurposing excess fruit and vegetables, and switching to renewable energy sources. It is these small changes in local business and community that are creating greater global shifts.

*Shop sustainably with Macknade with these five small changes:*

- 1. BUY SEASONAL, BUY LOOSE** Shop for seasonal produce and limit food waste. Check out some of these recipes on the Macknade blog for in-season and leftover inspiration.
- 2. SUSTAINABLY SOURCED** Choose pasture-fed British meat and sustainably caught fish from Macknade's Faversham butchery.
- 3. UNPACKAGED** Use the dried goods dispensers in Faversham for your rice, pulses, nuts and muesli. This can reduce excess packaging, limit waste, and save money.

**4. YOGHURT DISPENSER** For locally made, thick and creamy Ottie's yoghurt, try out the only yoghurt dispenser in the country, available at Macknade's Faversham Food Hall.

**5. REFILL** Bring your own containers from home. You can visit either store and choose cold cuts of meat, cheeses, olives & salads to be weighed and placed in your own containers on the deli counters. There is also a refill station in Faversham for your oils and vinegar.

“There is no doubt that more of us are reflecting on our food choices, considering not only taste and quality, but also provenance, value and the environmental impact of our purchases. We are keen to demonstrate that it is possible to enjoy local and convenient shopping whilst also being conscious of the environment. We’ve put in place numerous systems so that customers can still enjoy their favourite products whilst doing their bit to reduce unnecessary plastic and waste,” comments Commercial Director Shane Godwin.

*For recipes and more information about shopping sustainably with Macknade visit [macknade.com](http://macknade.com) or join the Macknade Cooking Club on Facebook to share your recipes.*

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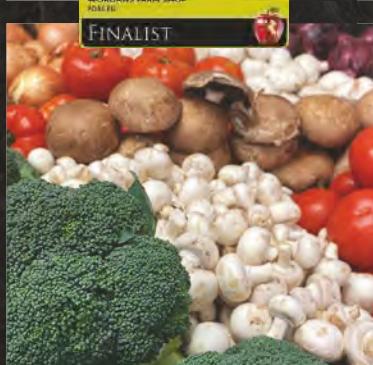
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# Cooking on the BIG GREEN EGG

## PORK BELLY WITH MEMBRILLO ALIOLI

Pork and smoke are a wonderful combination and one of those classic BBQ flavours. I'm guessing that when you bought your EGG, a big hunk of pork was on your list of things to cook first. With this recipe you are managing a temperature change during the cook. You will find yourself having to do this to crisp up, sear or finish a dish in plenty of recipes. This works equally well with a boned and rolled pork collar roasting joint. Adding wood chips here is very much a matter of personal taste. I think it can get a bit much on slow cooks, and if you are using a quality charcoal there is plenty of flavour already. I suggest you master these recipes without wood chips and then experiment once you are confident. That way you will have a base flavour to compare 'chips vs no chips', safe in the knowledge you have not made a mistake in the cooking process.

### YOU WILL NEED

Piece of pork belly or collar, about 1.5kg / 3lb 5oz, removed from fridge before lighting the EGG, skin scored with a sharp knife

*For the membrillo alioli*  
1 plump garlic clove

250g / 9oz membrillo (quince paste)

150ml / 5/8 cup oil (equal parts extra-virgin olive oil and sunflower oil)

Lemon juice, to taste

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

### METHOD

Season the joint all over with salt and pepper on the flesh side.

Place on the grill skin side up, close the lid and roast for 1½–2 hours, until the internal temperature of the meat reaches about 60–65°C / 140–150°F.

While the pork is roasting, peel and crush the garlic with a little salt then add to a blender. Add the membrillo and blend slowly, adding the oil in a thin stream, stopping a few times, until all the oil is emulsified into the membrillo. Add salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste.

Increase the temperature of the EGG to 180°C / 355°F and turn the pork skin side down to crackle the skin. Check every 2 or 3 minutes, moving it away from any hot spots near the edge if it looks like it might scorch before crackling. Allow to rest for 20 minutes before carving or slicing and serving with the membrillo alioli.

### EGG SET UP

Indirect set-up; convEGGtor in legsup position with the stainless-steel grill on top of the convEGGtor legs.

Target temp: 130–150°C / 265–300°F, then 180–200°C / 355–390°F.



SERVES

6-8

SERVES  
4-6



# HERBED SIDE OF SALMON OR SEA TROUT

If it will fit, the side can be cooked whole. If it won't, just cut it in half. The thinner edges will be a little more cooked than the middle, so share out different sections when serving. This is a wonderful summer centrepiece.

## YOU WILL NEED

1 side of salmon, centre cut (the thickest section), or a large trout fillet (about 600g /1lb 5oz)

Extra-virgin olive oil, for brushing

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 large shallots, finely chopped

Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon

A couple of small bunches of herbs (tarragon, chervil, chives or flat-leaf parsley), leaves and stalks separated and roughly chopped

## METHOD

Brush the salmon fillet all over with a little olive oil and lay on a baking tray. Season generously with salt and pepper, then top with the shallots, lemon zest and the chopped herb stalks.

Place the tray on the grill, close the lid and bake the salmon for about 30–40 minutes. You can tell it is done when the fish feels just firm to the touch and the white juices are just starting to break through the surface. You can rest it for 10 minutes then serve right away, or let it rest, covered in foil, for up to 2 hours before serving.

Gently brush the herbs and shallots off the salmon and add a squeeze of lemon juice, keeping the remaining lemon to serve as wedges at the table. Pull the salmon into big flakes and put onto a big platter or onto plates, topped with the chopped herb leaves.

Serve with a salad of raw vegetables and leaves, grilled vegetables, or a baked whole beetroot.

## EGG SET UP

Marinate the fish before lighting the EGG.

Indirect set-up; convEGGtor in legsup position with the stainless-steel grill on top of the convEGGtor legs.

Target temp: 90–110°C / 194–230°F.

Extracted from *Cooking on the Big Green Egg* (Quadrille, £25)  
Photography © Sam Folan



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[www.birdiesrestaurant.co.uk](http://www.birdiesrestaurant.co.uk)

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*FREE DELIVERY to Chilham and neighbouring villages*

# PIZZAS READY TO GO!!

Jon Crwys-Williams, of Nomad Pizza in Whitstable, says there's nowhere to hide with a pizza: the base must be nice to eat – his hand-crafted dough is so thin and light that no-one leaves the crust – and the toppings should be of the highest-quality.

Jon and wife Vicki opened the High Street business last August at what might have been viewed a difficult trading time, but in fact exceeded all expectations and quickly won a national award, Best Independent Pizza Takeaway at the PAPA Industry Awards 2020. “It was amazing, considering we had only been going a short time,” says Jon.

They're no strangers to success: with a similar enterprise in Cornwall, they won awards from Cornwall Food and Drink and also Taste of the West.

It's been a great start for Jon, Vicki and their staff – ‘a team of fantastic people-oriented

IT'S SURELY THE BEST RECOMMENDATION WHEN A TAKE-AWAY OWNER SAYS HE NEVER TIRES OF EATING HIS OWN PIZZA...

people’, Jon says – and they're looking forward to an even tastier future.

[www.nomadpizzawhitstable.co.uk](http://www.nomadpizzawhitstable.co.uk)

[Facebook: NomadWhitstable](#)

[Instagram: nomad\\_pizza\\_whitstable](#)



## ENTER OUR PRIZE DRAW TO WIN A NOMAD PIZZA MEAL

Nomad Pizza are giving away a tasty feast for two in our spring prize draw. To enter please send your name, email address and telephone to [dawn@cnkent.co.uk](mailto:dawn@cnkent.co.uk).

*First prize:* any two pizzas of your choice, a side (of garlic bread, doughballs or mozzarella salad) and a bottle of Chapel Down Bacchus sparkling white wine.

*Three runners up:* win any two pizzas of your choice. Closing date: 30th June 2021.



# Rosé all day

WITH SPRING HERE AND SUMMER ON THE HORIZON  
- OUR THOUGHTS TURN TO ALL THOSE LOVELY ROSE  
WINES - LIGHT, FRUITY, CRISP AND REFRESHING!

The good news is that the cool English climate is perfect to produce first-class still and sparkling rosé wine because they both need the grapes to be harvested when the natural acidity is still quite high, but at the same time the grapes need to be ripe with fresh red berry fruit flavours.

Why do the grapes need to be harvested with high acidity? Most sparkling wine, including Champagne, undergoes a second fermentation after the base wine is made and if the acidity is too low at the beginning of the process, it will drop too low on the second fermentation and the wine won't have that structure from the acidity that is so important for this style of wine. Similarly, rosé wine is most often made in a fruity, floral, fresh, crisp style and that can only come with grapes that are harvested with a higher acidity than is the case to make red wine. Most still rosé is made from black grapes that have been gently pressed to give a degree of colour (decided by the winemaker) and fermented off the skins as with a white wine. Some rosé wines are made by blending a proportion of white and red wine together and some are made by 'bleeding off' a proportion of wine from a red wine fermentation. Here, in England, the most common method is the first method - direct pressing.

*Discover the Vine has chosen six rosé wines – four sparkling and two still which definitely showcase the high quality of our English rosé.*

#### CHARTHAM VINEYARD, ROSÉ DE NOIR 2017

A delicious sparkling rosé made from 100% Pinot Noir – harvested October 2017. It has a salmon pink colour, a delicate mousse with aromas of strawberry and peaches, and a rich textured creamy palate – made in the Champagne style giving it that characteristic brioche style and zingy acidity.



#### ROSÉ BRUT RESERVE 2017, GREYFRIARS VINEYARD

Pink in colour, it has fresh red berry aromas with a touch of spice. There's a complex palate from blending different parcels of wine before the second fermentation to add richness and roundness, but at the same time retaining a crisp refreshing acidity. Drink on its own or with some prawns and/or smoked salmon.

#### TERLINGHAM VINEYARD, SPARKLING ROSÉ 2016

From the champions of natural winemaking, this is vegan friendly and produced by natural fermentation. Made from the three classic Champagne grapes of Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay, it has a soft rose colour and vibrant flavours of raspberry and strawberry and a gentle persistent mousse.



#### GUSBOURNE ESTATE, KENT

#### SPARKLING ROSÉ

(100% Pinot noir)

Delicate pink salmon with aromas of summer fruits such as raspberry, strawberry, cherry, apple and nectarine. It's a creamy mouthfeel with hints of pastry and brioche. As an aperitif serve with prawn cocktail, smoked salmon or why not just some strawberries!



#### SIMPSON'S RAILWAY HILL

#### ROSÉ, KENT

100% Pinot Noir

Pale salmon colour as in Provence style – it has aromas of grapefruit, lychees and lime with a touch of stone fruit on the palate, textured creaminess and a crisp mouthwatering finish.



#### WIMBLEDON BREWERY, WIMBLEDON PARK – WIMBLEDON PINK ENGLISH ROSÉ

(awaiting 2021 vintage)

Produced in conjunction with Greyfriars vineyard – the grapes were hand harvested in late October 2019 and the wine expresses both freshness and complexity. A delicate pink salmon colour with aromas of summer berries couples with a crisp acidity – light and dry. It is a great rosé for those long summer evenings or to drink whilst watching the tennis – probably on TV this year. The 2019 has sold out, but by the time this article is published the 2021 should be available.



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Friday 28th May, until late

## Then hurrah! Back to normal!!

Mon-Thu, 9am - 5pm

Fri & Sat, 9am - late

Sunday, 10am - late

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