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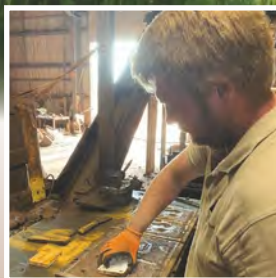


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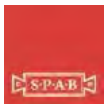
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Welcome

Autumn 2021



It's so exciting to be launching the new West Kent & Weald edition of Conservation News; and thank you for all the wonderful feedback we've received so far.

Our sister publication, Conservation News Kent, has been around for over ten years and has an ever growing readership, so our hope is that this new venture will be just as popular.

In this first edition, we're embracing everything cosy. Autumn is the perfect time for making your house a home: with the children back at school and the weather still bright enough to work outdoors (we hope), you've got all the time and space you need to take on that special project or renovation that will revolutionise your living space.

We've got lots of articles to inspire you, plus gardening, local news and more – so grab a cuppa, put your feet up, and get ready for an amazing autumn with your brand new West Kent & Weald Conservation News!

Dawn and Nadene



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conservationnews.co.uk

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Autumn 2021

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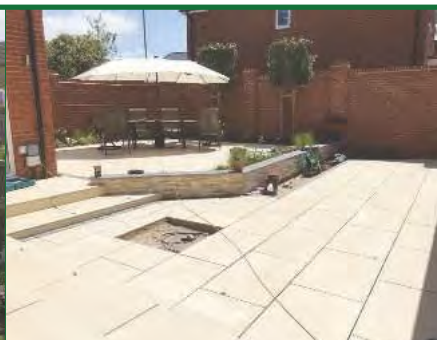
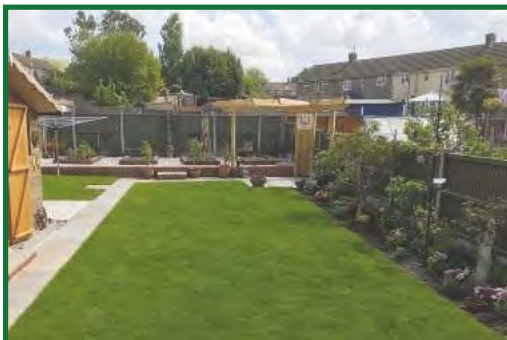
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PLANT IT NOW

Autumn is the best time to plant garlic because it needs a bit of winter chill to encourage it to do its best in the coming year. One interesting variety to try is Serpent Garlic which gets its name from its extravagantly coiled stems known as 'scapes'. The scapes are edible and are regarded as something of a delicacy. They can be picked in summer. Harvest the bulbs as normal later in the year. Two for the price of one!

Prickly pals

Follow these steps to make your garden a hedgehog haven.

- Avoid pesticides and chemicals.
 - Put an escape route into your pond.
- Hedgehogs are quite good swimmers, but if your pond has steep sides they will have trouble getting out.
- Be careful with power tools. Hogs love to hide in piles of vegetation or overgrown areas.
 - Netting for protecting vegetables can be a problem. Try not to leave them lying around.
 - A nicely built bonfire looks like a perfect nesting site to a hedgehog.
 - If your dog tends to chase things, watch her carefully when you put her out at night.

Garden NOTES



Autumn is upon us, the evenings are gradually drawing in and winter is fast approaching. This is the time for trees and hedging; fruit trees and fruit bushes; roses and bulbs; and garlic.



Vineyards in autumn...

Now that's a sight worth seeing. Tour some of our favourite vineyards and you'll see a spectacle of autumn colour, harvesting and vines laden with grapes. If you don't know where to start (Kent has quite a few vineyards), The Wine Garden of England website is the perfect guide, but we love Chapel Down, Gusbourne, Hush Heath, Biddenden and Simpsons, for their award-winning wines, magnificent views, tours and tastings.

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RED CASCADE

Euonymus varieties offer both foliage in brilliant shades of red, and hanging lobed fruits to the autumn garden, and do well in a range of conditions in most soils in sun to part shade. Grow as a specimen shrub, in mixed borders, in a semi-woodland setting, or massed as an informal hedge. One of the advantages of growing Euonymus is that they are tough plants which will tolerate less than ideal conditions, making them suitable for growing in a difficult area of the garden.

FADED BEAUTY

With its huge blooms, Hydrangea macrophylla makes a great show all through the summer. By autumn the flowers are beginning to go over, but don't be in too much of a hurry to lop them off. These faded blooms have a gentle, understated charm which will continue to add colour and structure to your garden for a couple more months. Although conventional wisdom dictates pruning hydrangeas immediately after flowering, this is entirely optional. Some gardeners like to hold off the secateurs until winter starts to bite. As long as they are pruned by mid-spring your plants will not suffer.



What to do now



- Pick apples frequently before they become damaged so they won't deteriorate in storage.
- Revamp your bedding. Remove tired summer flowers, then plant new frost-tolerant ones.
- Continue planting out spring bulbs, such as daffodils, hyacinths and crocuses.
- Make leaf mould.
- Harvest cabbages.
- Plant lettuces in a cool greenhouse for daily salads this winter.
- Collect and store seeds somewhere cool and dry until next spring.

RICH PICKINGS

Kent offers plenty of places to pick the perfect pumpkin, from farms to independent shops: you're sure to find a super treat to creatively carve or cook into a cosy autumn dish. So if you're searching high and low for a pumpkin to make the neighbours stop and scare! Visit www.visitkent.co.uk for ideas.



HOW TO...

RESTORE ORIGINAL IRON RAILINGS

Although extremely durable, over time the aesthetic appeal of wrought iron can degrade. Usually the first thing to greet guests at your home, it needs to create a good impression.

- Remove any debris or vegetation. Grass, weeds and leaves can build up and cause rust and corrosion.
- After washing, use a metal scraper or wire brush to clean off algae and patches of flaking paint. Pay special attention to cleaning intricate curves, designs and hinged areas.
- Smooth the surface with an abrasive paper and apply a proprietary rust remover.
- Check the structure. In some cases welding may be required to reattach areas that may have degraded beyond simple repair. Check hinges.
- Clean and prime. Applying primer before paint will protect your gate or fence from rust and corrosion. Wait until the primer is completely dry before applying the enamel paint.
- Be sure to use an enamel paint that is rust-inhibitive, exterior rated and is designed to be used on metal. Black enamel is the most common colour to use and is considered 'period correct' for historic homes. Aerosol paint is the best way to go for uniform coverage.





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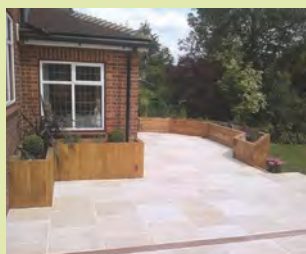
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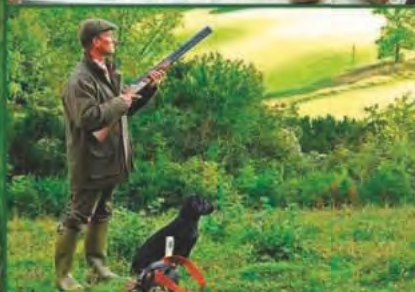
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KNOCK, KNOCK...

Door knockers are more popular in England than in any other country and can be found everywhere, even in the most remote locations.

Door knockers have a bit of a dark past, with the earliest thought to originate from Ancient Greece where slaves were chained to a heavy ring attached to the door by a plate in order to greet any guests. In the event the slave had fallen asleep, the guest would tap the knocker to raise the attention of the slave or the homeowner.

The Romans continued with the use of the knocker and it spread across the empire, and so the heavy knocker remained as a means for visitors to announce their presence until around the 15th century.

Until the 16th century door knockers were generally fairly plain, but as blacksmiths developed their skills wealthy people began

to have more detailed designs, often relating to local patterns and traditions.

Until the end of the 18th century, door furniture would have been made of iron or wood or, if extremely grand, bronze. Doors were either barred and bolted from the inside or fitted with box or rim locks fixed to the inside of the door which opened with large unwieldy keys; however these were extremely easy to pick. Two inventors solved this problem: Joseph Bramah patented a mortice lock in 1784, followed by Jeremiah Chubb in 1818, both producing improved and more impenetrable locks using smaller keys.

One of the first UK foundries was Kenricks in West Bromwich. Founded in the 1760s, the family firm exported everyday cast iron goods such as kitchenware worldwide. They also produced a range of ornate items for the home and garden reflecting the fashions of the time including door furniture.

At the beginning of the Georgian period door knockers were generally still simple, cast iron and painted black, but during the 1800s as they became more widely used, so it became fashionable to have more elaborate door knockers, such as lion's and sphynx's heads often cast in brass or bronze.

The later part of the Georgian era saw brass become the main material for door furniture including door knockers. It also was the time when bell pulls came into use (1830s) and the penny post began (1840s), starting the need for letter boxes.

BRASS DOCTOR'S DOOR KNOCKER

The Brass Doctor's door knocker is based on an early Georgian design and was named the 'doctor's door knocker' as it was used to identify the front door of a doctor's house.

Throughout the Victorian period the door knocker remained (despite some being removed and replaced by the bell pull), often as a show of wealth in elaborate designs and highly polished brass.

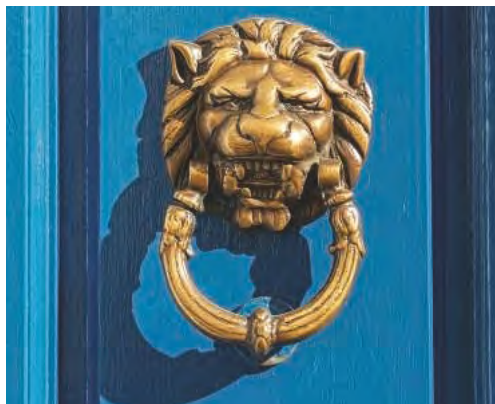


One of the most recognisable doors in the world is No. 10 Downing Street. The famous lion's head door knocker and brass letterbox date back to the 1770s.

The letterbox is inscribed 'First Lord of the Treasury', the title held by every Prime Minister since Sir Robert Walpole.

LION HEAD DOOR KNOCKERS

As the door knocker became more elaborate over time many designs were inspired by mythology and religion. The lion head door knocker with its mouth gripping the ring became particularly popular in the early 19th century and has remained a favourite. The lion has been used as a symbol of Great Britain and is thought to signify strength, pride, protection and power.



HAND SHAPED DOOR KNOCKERS

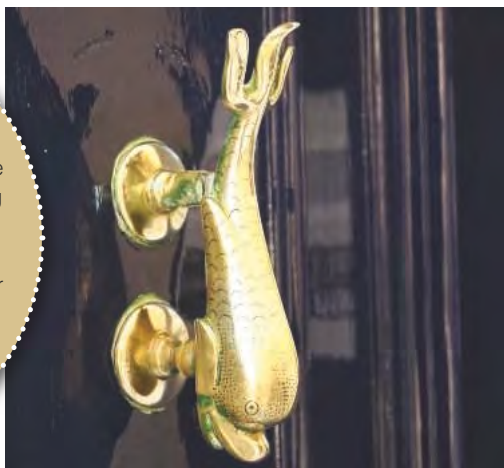
Another beautiful door knocker spotted the world over is the hand shaped door knocker. Considered to have originated in Muslim countries and said to symbolise the Hand of Fatima (recognised and used as a sign of protection) it would indicate that a person of Muslim faith lived in the house.

It is also suggested that two types of hand door knocker exist: male and a female, both of which would be present on the front door each with its own distinct sound. The visitor would then knock the appropriate knocker according to their gender.



Fish Shaped Door Knockers

Thought to originate from Scottish foundries, knockers with a maritime theme were often seen on the homes of shipping merchants. There are a wide variety of styles of dolphin and mythical fish knockers each with their own meaning, for example a carp is a symbol of good luck and abundance and a fish with a Poseidon fork design depicts power and a mastery of the seas.



Choosing door furniture for your period property

Unfortunately it is quite rare to see a front door with all its original furniture. As the postal service was set up so letter plates were installed, more sophisticated locks were added and as more switched to doorbells, knockers were removed. Today we are fortunate that there are many ways to recapture the grandeur of our doors.

The first place to start is to assess what remains on your door. Are you matching the knocker to existing pieces or starting from scratch? If you are adding to existing pieces, care must be taken to 'match' with the existing furniture. Most modern brass is much more yellow than the rich tones of antique brass. It also tends to be lacquered, so will not patina in the same way as older pieces.

Most companies that specialise in period properties should have a range of knockers in the richer brass that are also unlacquered. Have a look up your street: are there any originals left that can give you a clue as to what would have been there? They will not all be identical, but will give some insight and maybe even some inspiration. But if all else fails, a knowledgeable retailer should be able to give you some pointers given the age of house, location and your requirements.

In conclusion, when choosing your door knocker, bare in mind their interesting meanings and historical references and most of all, have fun with it.

Article courtesy of willowandstone.co.uk, sellers of carefully selected ironmongery, much of which is British made using traditional manufacturing processes and quality materials.

Where to buy...



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Cottagecore

Is domesticity the new rock 'n' roll?

Words: Liz Norton



Photo: Zara Home



Even if you're not familiar with the word, you'll be familiar with aesthetic of cottagecore. It's been around forever in one guise or another, but its adoption by the young and the terminally hip have made it chic enough to warrant its own nomenclature.

Put simply, cottagecore is the aesthetic associated with country cottage living. It's quintessentially British at heart and can be most easily recognised in designers like

Laura Ashley and Cath Kidston. However, cottagecore has become so much more than just a 'look': it's a whole way of life...

Why has it become so popular?

Despite the fact that it's been kicking about for years, we can really thank the pandemic for the newfound popularity of cottagecore. The word itself seems to have been coined within the past couple of years, and lockdown gave rise to a massive surge in the popularity of all things homemade. Put it this way: if you baked your own banana bread, took up knitting or blitzed your garden over lockdown, then you can call yourself a cottagecore aficionado.

Although social media influencers and people using the trend to sell their own brand of rustic charm can make the movement seem trite and clichéd, cottagecore is, at its heart, a fantastic movement. It represents a return to traditional values, and to the 'make do and mend' mentality that has seen us through so many tough times.

The Good Life

Like Tom and Barbara, proponents of cottagecore have turned their backs on a

culture of disposable tech and fast fashion, and are concentrating instead on sustainability and environmentalism.

Take gardening for example: growing your own herbs and veggies, whether you've got an acre of land or one window box, is incredibly satisfying and extremely good for anxiety – something that many of us have had to deal with through lockdown and beyond. The idea that we can be responsible for our own wellbeing and do our bit for the planet, no matter how small, is extremely comforting.

Indeed, even though cottagecore has found its home on social media platforms such as Instagram, embracing the movement actually helps us to step away from our screens and get back to nature, get back to our homes and our families, and get back to spending more time on ourselves.

People who found themselves working from home over lockdown also found themselves with a new appreciation for the simpler things in life, and this is cottagecore at its best.

Is cottagecore right for you?

Basically, yes – cottagecore in one form or another is for everyone. Whether you're throwing yourself into it completely or just contemplating spending more time in the garden, there's a way to make cottagecore work for you, so take some time for yourself, slow down the pace and embrace the good life!



1



2



3



1. Jug: www.melodymaison.co.uk
2. Glassware: www.neptune.com
3. Linen and china: www.puretabletop.com

GET THE LOOK

If you've enjoyed the good life this past year and are ready to implement a cottagecore aesthetic in your home, then take a few tips from us:



Above: www.woodchipandmagnolia.co.uk
Below: www.gardenesque.com



www.neptune.com

COLOUR

Autumn and spring are key seasons for cottagecore décor, so think oranges, reds, sage green and browns; or yellows, pinks, sky blue and pale green.

PATTERNS

Florals are the mainstay of cottagecore, but birds, butterflies, and bumblebees make a gorgeous natural addition to the look.

WOOD

Anything natural looking can be cottagecore, so think wooden furniture and accessories for a rustic look.

WARMTH

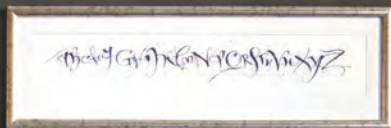
The key word associated with this movement is cosy. Real fires (see our feature on wood burning stoves on page 48), home cooking, and fresh herbs in recycled jam jars are all part of this aesthetic. Basically, if it makes you feel happy and reminds you of better times then you're on the right track.





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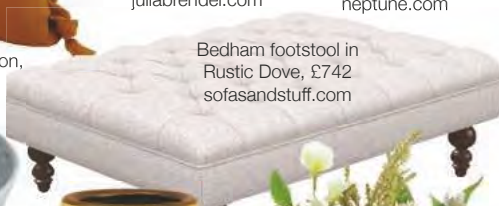
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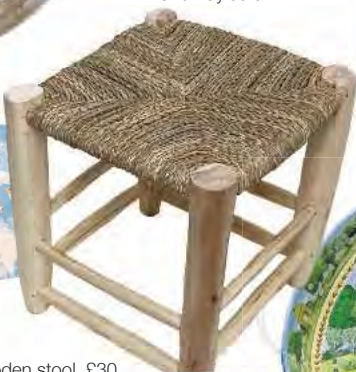
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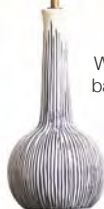
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- Sweep or vacuum regularly.
- Refix loose tiles. Dampen the floor bed and back of the tile. Prime both with one part PVA diluted with five parts water. Allow this layer to dry. Next, apply neat PVA to the floor bed and back of the tile and firmly 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). 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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A fantastic flooring experience

We take a look around Kentish Flooring's brand new showroom and talk to owners Ian and Gary about how they have built their business into one of the county's leading suppliers and fitters of quality flooring.

Mention 'Kentish' to a Kent local and there's a good chance they'll know you're talking about flooring! The Kentish Flooring has become so synonymous with the county that it barely needs an introduction, but you may not be aware of just how the business has been expanding over the past year.

From their beginnings in Rainham in 1997, Kentish has grown into one of the county's leading suppliers and fitters of quality flooring. Co-owners Ian and Gary have decades of collective experience in the field and have made flooring a family business, bringing both their sons on board to join their small but dedicated team of experts.



Of course the events of 2020 couldn't have been predicted by anyone, but Kentish immediately resolved to make the most of a bad situation by actioning their plans to extend into West Kent. The team worked tirelessly throughout lockdown: first from home and then, as restrictions lifted, on site -and the results speak for themselves.

A brand new showroom

The spectacular new Kentish Flooring Centre opened this summer in Seal in Sevenoaks, and showcases the very best in carpet, Amtico, parquet and more. With 160 square metres at their disposal, Kentish were determined to make this not just a showroom, but an experience.

As you enter the brightly lit, spacious interior, your first thought is 'quality'. Various hard woods have been used to floor the showroom itself, showing the grains and patterns to their best advantage. Kentish specialise in bespoke and reclaimed flooring, so the way the centre is decorated speaks volumes. Directly ahead, myriad examples of wooden flooring hang from the walls, with carefully placed objet d'art making this more than 'just' a showroom. To the left: a showcase of Ted Todd designer woods and capacious carpet room that bends round behind the main showroom. To the right: stands of high quality names such as Amtico and Riviera. Add to this a hardwood dining table and comfortable seating for customers to peruse their options and a large flat screen showing more of what can be achieved, and this becomes less of a shopping trip and more of an outing!



Something for all tastes

This isn't an 'off the peg' type of place: as well as custom-made hardwood and reclaim, Kentish offer bespoke rugs and all manner of design help.

They're also highly aware of customer needs, as Ian notes:

"We knew we needed to have good parking and easy access for our customers of course but, coming off the back of the pandemic, we were also acutely aware that some people still feel uncomfortable in social situations. Initially



when lockdown started to lift we were offering private appointments at the showrooms so that people could be sure they wouldn't need to mix. Now we have the showrooms fully open, but we've made sure that the area is spacious and uncluttered so that people can still social distance if required.

The size and scope of our showroom is unique to the area, so we wanted to make sure that the way it was presented was similarly exclusive. So far we've had fantastic feedback from customers and it's an absolute delight to

be able to provide tailor made solutions to such a wide variety of homes.

We're always happy to chat to visitors and advise them on their flooring, whether they want supply only or supply and installation. Hopefully, as word of the new showroom spreads we'll be able to bring the Kentish experience to more and more people throughout the county".

To find out more visit
www.kentishflooringcentre.com or
call the showroom on 01732 762074.

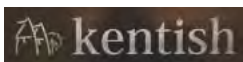
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To burn or not to burn?

...that is the question, thanks to statistics that show that traditional domestic wood burners are now the single biggest source of small particle air pollution in the UK. However, if you want a wood or multi fuel burning stove without the eco-impact, read on.



The Shoreditch, Chesneys

Government data shows that, whilst only 8% of the population have wood burning stoves, these stoves produce three times more pollution than road traffic; but the new generation of burners are employing technology specifically designed to curb this trend.

Small particle pollution is a major cause for concern, as it can enter the bloodstream and travel around the body, lodging in the internal organs. Because of this worrying fact, the government have introduced a total ban on the retail sale of 'wet wood' (green wood) and a gradual ban on retail coal sales, which will be in full force by 2023.

This move to dry wood and other solid fuels means that people can still have the warmth and ambience of traditional stoves in their homes, whilst minimising the impact of small particle pollution, but there's so much more that can be done simply by choosing to buy good quality stoves from a reputable supplier.

Clean burn technology

New stoves must be 2022 Ecodesign compliant, meaning that they will have passed stringent Ecodesign and Defra Approved emissions tests. The term 'clean burn' refers to the system by which a fresh supply of oxygen is introduced into the stove, and this oxygen allows extra gases to be burnt instead of escaping into the surrounding environment. This means that

Vogue small wood burning eco stove, Stovax



not only are potentially harmful gases safely utilised (referred to as secondary combustion), but also that the stove itself gives off more heat with less fuel, making it more efficient and cost effective. This process is accentuated by pulling the air through channels adjacent to the firebox, thus heating the air itself.

Within the UK there are several 'smoke control areas' – in which it is illegal to use certain combustibles. However, many clean burn stoves are approved for use in these areas because their emissions are so much lower. You can ask your supplier about approved models, and can contact your local council to see if you are in a smoke control area. You should also ensure that the fuel you are using is approved and of a sufficiently high quality.

Air wash technology

Air wash technology is another innovation designed to increase efficiency in your burner, but this also has an aesthetic impact: with Air wash, a flow of air is pulled into the stove via a vent above the glass panel. This air is forced down over the glass, washing away soot and keeping the glass door from blackening. This means that you have less maintenance to do and can always see the flames inside the stove, which is a big part of the draw with wood burners.



The Salisbury, Chesneys



Carron eco revolution woodburning stove

Stovax Riva Vision eco woodburning stove



Other considerations

Once you've decided on getting a wood or multi fuel burner, you need to start considering which model you want, and it's here that aesthetics really come into play. There are a lot of options available, so you needn't worry that your stove won't match your décor. Stoves can be traditional or contemporary, small or large and a variety of shapes and styles.

One thing that should influence you is heat output, and this will be based on the size of the area you wish to heat. In order to heat your room to around 21 degrees C when it's 0 degrees outside you would need approximately 1kw of heat output for every 14 cubic metres of space. For example a room that is 5m x 5m x 3m high gives 75 cu.m of space. Divide this by 14 and you get 5.3 which, rounded down, would mean you

require a 5kW stove. This may vary if you have larger than average windows/double glazing etc, but your supplier can advise you on any details. You also need to decide if you want your stove to heat water as well as air, and what sort of hearth you require (it should be big enough to ensure that any fallen fuel or embers land on it and not the surrounding flooring).

So should you go for it?

Stoves are a gorgeous, cosy heating solution. They make a fantastic focal piece and an excellent selling point should you ever move. As long as you bear in mind the type and quality of the stove, and ensure that it conforms to the necessary ecological standards and legislation, then a wood or multi fuel stove is a sound investment and a splendid addition to your home.



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Are you underestimating how much your bricks and mortar are worth?

Many of us are accustomed to estimating the value of our contents when reviewing our home insurance, but how confident are you that you've correctly estimated the costs for rebuilding your home? Unless it's your profession, it may not be something you're very familiar with, but it's the homeowner's responsibility to make sure the chosen insured amount is enough to cover the cost of a disaster.

This is known as the 'sum insured', and it's the maximum amount that an insurance company will pay out. In the event of needing to rebuild part, or all, of your property and the sum insured is too low, you could end up needing to make up the shortfall, which could stretch to several thousands of pounds. And particularly for high-value, larger or more unusual homes, calculating an accurate rebuild sum can be challenging.

So how can you make your way to a confident rebuild sum? Chyna Kenward, New Business Developer – High Net Worth at NFU Mutual Canterbury talks about some of the things to look out for and consider to avoid underinsurance on your building:

- 1 The insurance value is based on a mortgage valuation or a % of market value – neither of these are indications of what it will cost to reinstate the property and are therefore likely to be an inaccurate estimate for rebuilding costs.
 - 2 Listed buildings status or a conservation area location, may require additional permissions and specialist craftsmen and materials.
 - 3 The property's construction materials - for example, stone or non-standard materials such as 'green or high tech' can be unique and difficult to obtain.
 - 4 Extensive outbuildings, garages, store sheds, brick walls, courtyards, driveways and even tennis courts need to be included in the valuation.
 - 5 The age of the property.
 - 6 The fixtures and fittings within the property and any recent extensions, alterations or refurbishments.
 - 7 The location and access to the building and site.
- If you are in any doubt as to the accurate rebuild value of your property, please consult a surveyor.

If you're not sure whether your insurance is fully protecting your home and the things you treasure most, why not give us a call at NFU Mutual Canterbury on 01227 451088 or email canterbury@nfumutual.co.uk

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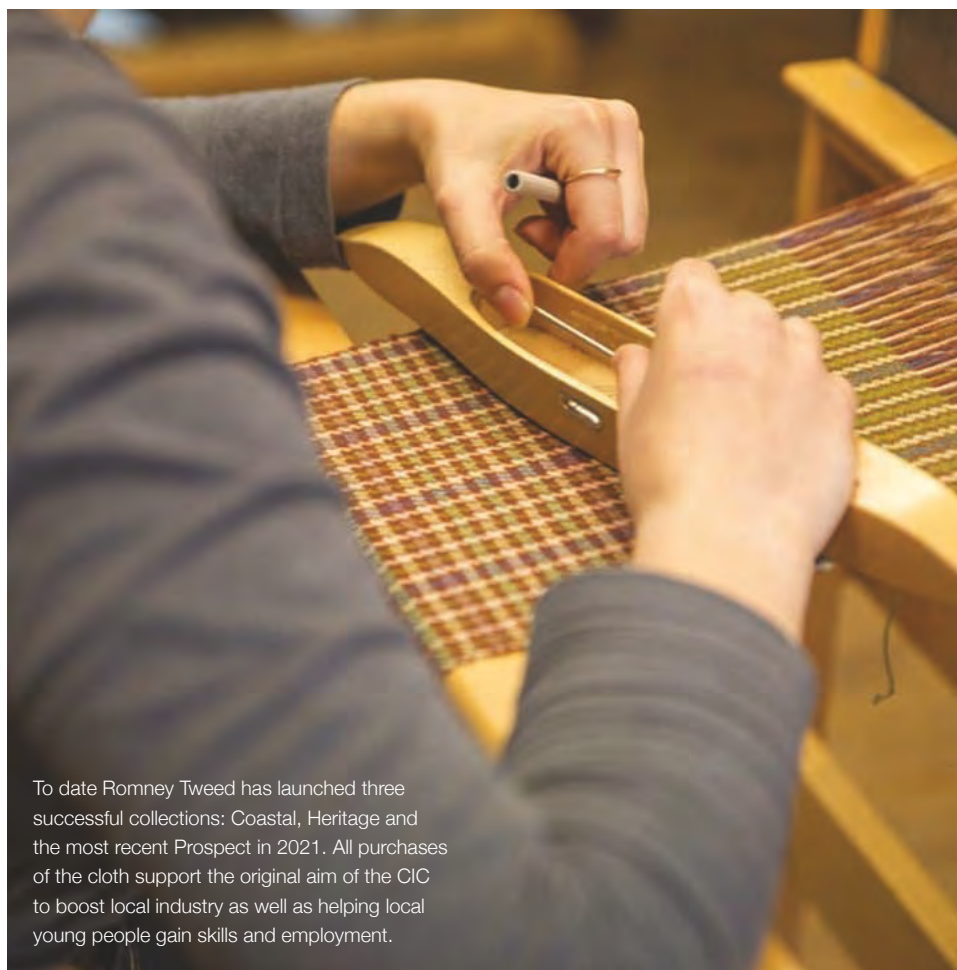
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WOVEN WONDERS



Born out of the bleak but beautiful landscape of the Romney Marsh come materials that are woven wonders, evoking the desolate and eerily enchanting scenery that has inspired many artists who have been captivated by its wild charm for years.

Words: Louise Tomlin



To date Romney Tweed has launched three successful collections: Coastal, Heritage and the most recent Prospect in 2021. All purchases of the cloth support the original aim of the CIC to boost local industry as well as helping local young people gain skills and employment.

It's not only those driven by artistic endeavours who have sparks of creative genius: Pat Alston had a eureka moment when considering the sheep that have grazed the Romney Marshes since the 7th century, an area that her family has roots in. Pat was concerned that the Romney area, already classed as deprived, would suffer further due to the planned decommissioning of the nuclear power stations at Dungeness.

As a natural problem solver, she was trying to find ways to help alleviate the impact of the loss of this major employer and to find ways to bring some wealth and opportunities back to the area.

Her flash of brilliance was in making a connection between the highly prized brand of

Harris Tweed from the Outer Hebrides during a conversation with a local County Official when discussing the wool from the hardy Romney sheep, which he informed her had to be sent to Wales to be woven. This sparked the thought, why not have a Romney Tweed, made from the wool of Romney Sheep, made by local weavers that used colours inspired by the natural habitat: the marsh, sky, sea and grassland?

Joining the dots further she realised it could be a social enterprise run by local people as a CIC, a Community Interest Company, to help revitalise the area that was suffering from the hardships of unemployment due to the Power Station shutting down. Once the thought came, Pat, who had no practical experience of weaving but who did have well-connected friends, amongst them a tailor in Savile Row,

St Thomas a Becket church, Fairfield, New Romney Photo: © Ashley Fuggle





who knew many people involved in the high-end cloth industry, found avenues of help and advice. This included an introduction to C and J Antich, a Yorkshire weaving company well known for producing superb quality and world-famous worsted cloth, definitely a very useful introduction for someone bent on creating a new brand of tweed. Along with her husband,

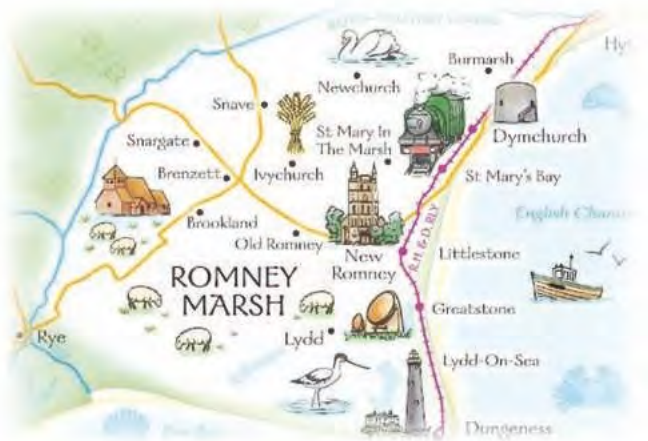
retired diplomat Robert Alston and others who were equally keen to help the local people and the area, the creation of Romney Tweed CIC began and it was established in 2014.

The journey continued with milestones reached including research and development visits to the mill in Yorkshire, which was the beginning of a long and extremely useful

relationship between the burgeoning Romney Tweed CIC and its nurturing weaving partner, that still thrives to this day. The realisation that the wool produced by Romney fleeces could be made into not just blankets and carpets, but a rather fine worsted cloth of apparel grade, saw the brand take on new heights of expectation of a future clothing line made from the fine woven threads.

Having the idea was great, but what was needed was someone with the design skills to take the plan to the next level. After discussions with a tutor on the textile design course at Central St Martins in London, Pat invited a group of the students from the course to visit the Marshes and immerse themselves in the delights of the beguiling place. The purpose of this was to give the students a design challenge on returning to the college: they had six weeks to design a tweed cloth that was the result of their inspiring trip.

It was through this process that Rosie Green, who is now the Designer and Weaver in Residence at Romney Tweed, was found. She was one of the three finalists whose designs were chosen by the judging panel. Her initial introduction to Pat and Romney Tweed has proven to be serendipitous; she stayed in touch and after graduating from her Masters, when an opportunity emerged for a collection to be created for the prestigious Royal St. George's Golf Club at Sandwich her involvement was key. Using her design skills in drawing on the colours of the flora native to the home of the



club, its rich heritage and the surrounding landscape to create the colour pallet that is evocatively woven into the tweed that is now synonymous with the famous golf club's brand.

To date Romney Tweed has launched three successful collections: Coastal, Heritage and the most recent Prospect in 2021. All purchases of the cloth support the original aim of the CIC to boost local industry as well as helping local young people gain skills and employment.

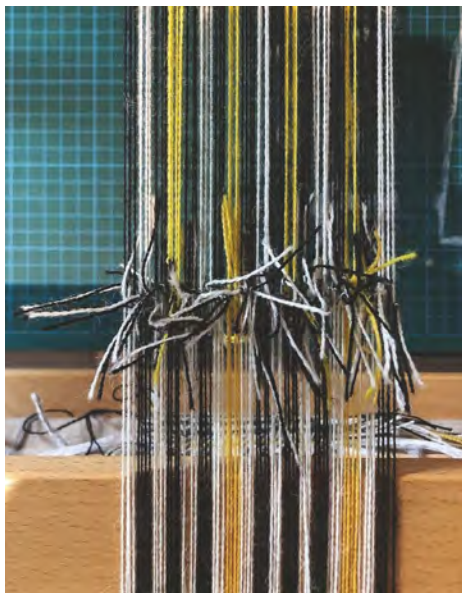
Rosie Green tells us, "Along with the very popular weaving courses for the general public, we run important initiatives in some local schools. We give young people a chance to explore our industry by giving them research projects and fashion challenges, enabling them to gain knowledge of the local heritage and of weaving and textiles. They learn about collections, create mood-boards, it's really important to foster knowledge of the industry that previously they may not have any idea about, this is a way of broadening horizons and showing them the possibility of choosing the textile industry as a future career path."

Rosie continues, "A subject that is often high on the agenda with the younger generation



and now is something that is on many people's minds is sustainability. We are very proud of being a brand with heritage and traceability; Romney Tweed is a biodegradable product, with 'cradle to grave' green credentials. We have a totally transparent supply chain, even being able to pinpoint the exact flock our wool comes from, and we have utter trust in our mills' processes, all water used is recycled and we have a zero-waste product."

The recent lockdown due to the pandemic gave the company an opportunity to focus on updating their website and to launch online sales both of their tweeds by the metre and their products which include soft furnishings, ponchos, flat caps, bags, dog collars. There are two new projects launching in Autumn 2021 a new herringbone cloth available in three colour ways, and also a bespoke personal tweed designed for the Sheriff Elect of the City of London, Alderman Alison Gowman. Rosie has worked closely with her to create a striking tartan that reflects Alison's personality with threads of postbox red and royal purple which



she will wear in her new role.

So it's onwards and upwards for this unique Community Interest Company born from altruistic ideals. The short history is already a rich and colourful pattern – long may it continue to weave its magic into a successful future. **Find out more at romneytweed.co.uk**



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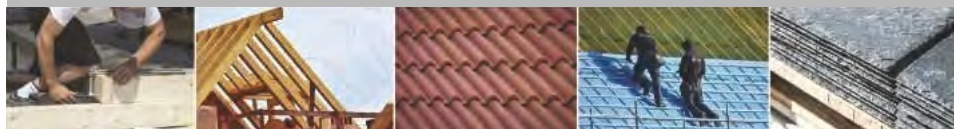
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OLD SMOCK MILL

The Old Smock Mill which had fallen into disrepair, after many years of neglect, has been lovingly restored by the present owners. Great care was taken not to lose the essence of the original building, and it is now an unforgettable and unique place to stay, with an atmosphere of tranquility and calm.



Benenden Mill, known as a smock Mill was constructed in the early part of the 18th century to mill grain.

It was one of a pair that originally stood in the area; the other having disappeared many years ago. It was a working mill right up till the second world war when it was then used as a gunner's look out.

The mill was then neglected and although it had its sweeps cap and fantail, the elements soon decayed the timbers. The cap was taken down in the early 70s leaving only the tower, as the sweeps had by now long gone to a mill in nearby Headcorn. However, the current owners are hoping to reinstate the sweeps cap and fantail in the future (funding permitting).

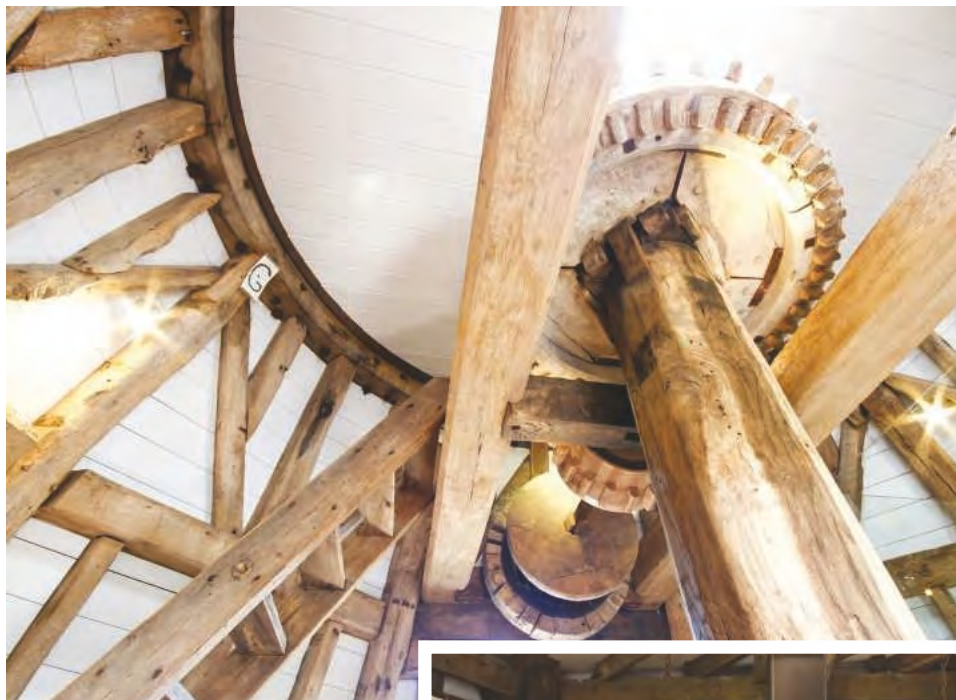


After many years of neglect, it has been lovingly brought back to life by the present owners. Throughout the restoration, a great deal of care was taken not to lose the essence of the original building and it is now an unforgettable and unique place, with an atmosphere of tranquility and calm.

The Mill has eighteen inch brick walls and a white weather boarded tower which stands out on the landscape and is set in a delightful 'cottage-style' garden which can be viewed from the wide, oak staging encircling the building at first floor level. The original function of the mill is clear in the heavy beams that support the giant spur

“ The original function of the mill is clear in the heavy beams that support the giant spur wheel and throughout, original machinery together with items salvaged from the restoration work, have been preserved where possible. The result is a breathtaking fusion of ancient and modern”.





wheel and throughout, original machinery together with items salvaged from the restoration work, have been preserved where possible. The result is a breathtaking fusion of ancient and modern – the interior is a floral-filled circular space that pays homage to trendy cottagecore style, with elegant soft furnishings.

Nestled among this wooden kingdom is one bedroom and one bathroom, complete with a free-standing bath. There are also quaint reminders of its industrial past, with massive preserved wooden beams spanning each floor carrying the original giant spur wheel and sack hoist.

The mill can accommodate two persons and is available for holiday lets.

For more information and to make a booking, visit www.oldsmockmill.com.







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Sutton Valence School

We take a look at the long and illustrious history of Sutton Valence School founded in 1576 by local benefactor William Lambe.

Sutton Valence School has been part of Sutton Valence village since it was founded by William Lambe, a local benefactor, in 1576. Lambe was a member of the court of King Henry VIII, a chorister in the Chapel Royal and a Master of the Worshipful Company of Clothworkers. He funded many social projects, including Lambe's Conduit in London, which helped to remove sewage from the streets.

In Sutton Valence School, he wanted to provide a free education for the boys of the village. Now a thriving co-educational independent school, the past 445 years have provided a rich history and tradition and a wealth of expertise which still inhabit so much of what we do today, especially the Christian values of love, tolerance and community.

The Clothworkers' Company, which had managed the School since its inception, handed governance of the School to the United Westminster Schools Foundation in 1910. Two years later, the burgeoning student roll required an expansion of the existing facilities and, accordingly, the School purchased land above the village. The subsequent construction of 'Main School'



with its two boarding houses, Westminster and St Margaret's, and stunning views overlooking the Weald of Kent has remained the heart of SVS ever since.

In the century that has followed, the School has continued to develop and evolve, becoming co-educational in 1982 and opening the girls' boarding house, Sutton, a year later. In the 1994, SVS incorporated Underhill School, now Sutton Valence Preparatory School, and opened a sister school in Tianjin, China in 2017. Looking





forward, the School's ambitious Masterplan 450, designed to celebrate the upcoming anniversary of its foundation, promises an impressive array of new School facilities to complement its rich history.

Whilst the School has gone from strength-to-strength, its former students have followed suit. The breadth of their professional successes reflecting the importance the School places on the diversity of its student interests. The recent Olympic games in Tokyo saw Susannah Townsend MBE play a leading role in the GB Women's Hockey Bronze winning team, following up her Gold medal from Rio 2016. She joins other eminent sportsmen including GB Hockey player Ashley Jackson, former England cricketer Mark Benson and long-distance runner Sydney Wooderson MBE. Away from sport, Old Suttonians include the esteemed coronation artist of the Queen – Sir Terence Cuneo CVO OBE, the award – winning journalist - Robert Fisk as well as BBC broadcasters Ben Brown and Katie Gornall.

This September, the School welcomed its 38th Headmaster, Mr James Thomas, who arrived with a wealth of leadership experience, most recently at the British School in Tokyo. Mr Thomas inherits a flourishing School where academic strengths are complemented by a total curricula approach structured around enrichment and sporting excellence. Above all else though, the School thrives on its community foundations which underpin everything it does as an institution.

This community ethos transcends our near 450-year history, and has ultimately moulded the School into what it is today. We pride ourselves on being forward-looking, but firmly rooted in our traditions, retaining many of the customs that have been established over the centuries. As such, our place at the Heart of Kent education is built not just on the quality of our educational provision, but on the continuation of the legacy of our founder, William Lambe.

To find out more, visit svs.org.uk.



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pupils who are hungry to learn”

THE
GOOD
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GUIDE



Pokehill Farm Oast, Tunbridge Wells

A stunning detached twin oast and barn conversion situated in a delightful semi-rural, yet easily accessible location away from main roads.

Pokehill Farm Oast has attractive elevations of brick partially relieved by weatherboarding under a pitched tiled roof.

The accommodation is light and thoughtfully planned retaining much character yet ideal for modern living.

On the ground floor the kitchen/breakfast/dining room dominates the space and connects

to the other principal reception rooms, drawing room, sitting room and the utility room.

The kitchen has been fitted by Clive Christian and incorporates an island and appliances.

The utility room is of a good size and incorporates the cloakroom. This is almost a secondary kitchen – ideal for entertaining.

The drawing room enjoys a triple aspect and doors to outside terraces.

On the first floor the four bedrooms are generously proportioned, two of which are in the roundels. The principal bedroom

A stunning twin oast and barn conversion situated in a delightful semi-rural setting far away from main roads yet easily accessible.



suite incorporates a huge en-suite bathroom (formerly the fifth bedroom), as well as a family bathroom.

Royal Tunbridge Wells is within easy reach and offers a comprehensive range of shopping, recreational and cultural amenities.

Schooling in the area is strong in both the private and state sectors and leisure activities in the area include riding and walking in the surrounding countryside, sailing on Bewl Water, and golf at a number of interesting courses located in the area.

The details

Entrance hall, drawing room, kitchen/dining room, utility room, cloakroom, sitting room, principal bedroom with en-suite, 3 further bedrooms, family bathroom, swimming pool, garden, pond, 1.19 acres
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All this makes Kent and The Weald outstanding places to eat out.

From contemporary Michelin-starred restaurants to characterful eateries graced by log fires or stunning sea views. Kent and The Weald offer everything from fine dining and gourmet Asian cuisine, to great grub in rural pubs. Kent is also renowned for its orchards abundant with apples, pears and cherries. Fertile soil, a favourable climate and centuries-old expertise create prime growing conditions.





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Oysters

Whitstable is renowned for its oysters and the local industry dates back to the 1400s. They used to be a cheap local food, but these days are thought of as something of a delicacy. One traditional way to enjoy them is as part of the Whitstable Dredgerman's Breakfast which is two doorstops of toasted bread with oysters and thick slices of fried bacon.



Traditional Kentish fayre

Huffkins

The huffkin is notable for the small indentation in the middle, made by the baker's thumb. Enjoy the huffkin on its own, or fill the indentation with a fresh cherry, a spoonful of jam, or a dollop of whipped cream. You often also find them filled with bacon as a lunchtime snack.

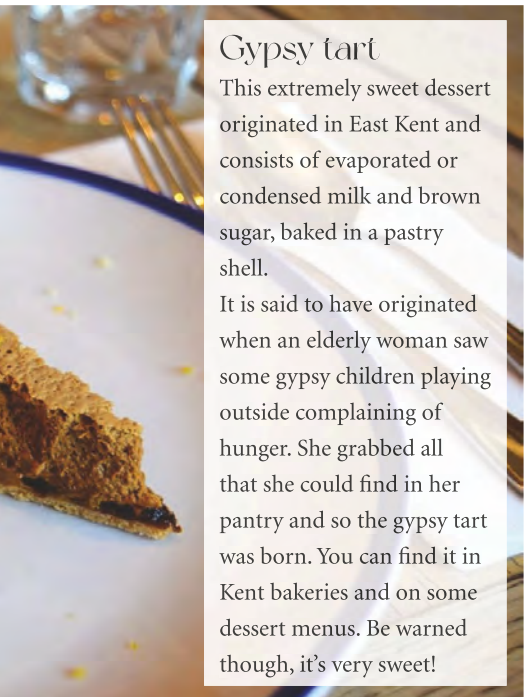


Kent has long been known as the Garden of England, and with good reason. Its location makes it a rich source of many different foods.

Cobnuts

This regional variety of the hazelnut is not as commonly grown as it was 100 years ago although it is making something of a comeback. Cooks can use cobnuts in many ways, including roasting them and mixing them with ginger in a cake.





Gypsy tart

This extremely sweet dessert originated in East Kent and consists of evaporated or condensed milk and brown sugar, baked in a pastry shell.

It is said to have originated when an elderly woman saw some gypsy children playing outside complaining of hunger. She grabbed all that she could find in her pantry and so the gypsy tart was born. You can find it in Kent bakeries and on some dessert menus. Be warned though, it's very sweet!



Canterbury apple pie

Some of the earliest known recipes for apple pie date back to Chaucer's time and the modern Canterbury apple pie is most likely an adaptation of those early recipes. It is an open-faced tart, made with both dessert and cooking varieties. If you want to follow the medieval versions, add saffron for a rich golden colour.



Beer and hops

Hops have been grown in Kent since the 1500s. Throughout the late 1800s and the first half of the 20th century, families from London's East End would flock to Kent for a working holiday to pick hops. Although hop-picking is now automated, oast houses, traditionally used for drying, still dot the Kent landscape as do plenty of small craft breweries.



Dover sole

The stretch of the English Channel between Kent and France has long been a fertile fishing ground. Dover sole is one of the flat fish that are plentiful in this area and so popular on many a dinner plate. They are often served grilled or fried with a lemon garnish and some locally-grown potatoes.



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**WEDNESDAY: 1st, 8th, 15th,
22nd & 29th** Rye

**THURSDAY: 2nd, 9th, 16th,
23rd & 30th**
Hastings; Rolvenden; Shipbourne

FRIDAY: 3rd, 10th, 17th, & 24th
Egerton; Sevenoaks; Tenterden

SATURDAY: 4th
Deal; Gravesend; Penshurst;
Tunbridge Wells; Whitstable
Castle; Wye

SUNDAY: 5th
Tunbridge Wells (Pantiles)

SATURDAY: 11th
Bridge; Deal; Gravesend; Hythe;
Tunbridge Wells; Whitstable

SUNDAY: 12th
Herne Bay; Lenham; Tonbridge;
Tunbridge Wells

SATURDAY: 18th
Deal; Gravesend; Tunbridge Wells;
Wye

SUNDAY: 19th
Aylesford; Rochester;
Tunbridge Wells

SATURDAY: 25th
Bridge; Deal; Gravesend; Hythe;
Knockholt; Tunbridge Wells;
Whitstable

SUNDAY: 27th
Cliftonville; Tunbridge Wells

OCTOBER

**FRIDAY: 1st, 8th, 15th,
22nd & 29th**
Egerton; Sevenoaks;
Tenterden

SATURDAY: 2nd
Deal; Penshurst;
Whitstable Castle; Wye

**TUESDAY 5th, 12th,
19th & 26th**
Capel-le-Ferne;
Hildenborough

**WEDNESDAY: 6th, 13th, 20th
& 27th**
Rye

**THURSDAY: 7th, 14th,
21st & 28th**
Hastings; Rolvenden, Shipbourne

SATURDAY: 9th
Deal; Hythe; Whitstable

SUNDAY: 10th
Herne Bay; Lenham; Tonbridge

SATURDAY: 16th
Deal; Wye

SUNDAY: 17th
Aylesford; Rochester;
Watlington

SATURDAY: 23rd
Bridge; Cranbrook; Deal;
Hythe; Whitstable

SATURDAY: 30th
Deal; Tunbridge Wells

NOVEMBER

**TUESDAY: 2nd, 9th, 16th,
23rd & 30th**
Capel-le-Ferne; Hildenborough

**WEDNESDAY: 3rd, 10th, 17th &
24th** Rye

**THURSDAY: 4th, 11th, 18th
& 25th** Hastings; Rolvenden;
Shipbourne

FRIDAY: 5th Egerton; Sevenoaks;
Tenterden

SATURDAY: 6th Deal; Penshurst;
Tunbridge Wells; Whitstable
Castle; Wye

SUNDAY: 7th
Tunbridge Wells

FRIDAY: 12th
Egerton; Tenterden

SATURDAY: 13th
Bridge; Deal; Hythe; Tunbridge
Wells; Wye

SUNDAY: 14th
Herne Bay; Lenham; Tonbridge;
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SATURDAY: 20th
Deal; Tunbridge Wells; Wye

SUNDAY: 21st
Aylesford; Rochester; Tunbridge
Wells; Watlington

SATURDAY: 27th
Bridge; Cranbrook; Deal;
Hythe; Whitstable

SUNDAY: 28th Cliftonville





In one of the many affectionate letters Austen wrote to her sister Cassandra, Austen describes how a dinner at an inn of ‘asparagus and a lobster... made me wish for you’. This is the recipe to have up your sleeve when you want to impress: lobster tails with a creamy, cheesy filling alongside buttery asparagus is a combination that all your guests will be sure to love.

Jane Austen's Table

Jane Austen's Table brings readers a sumptuous array of recipes that capture all the spirit and verve of the food of Jane Austen's world and the Regency era, adapted and reimagined for the modern day. Including recipes such as Netherfield White Soup, Box Hill Picnic Pies, General Tilney's Hot Chocolate, and Summer Berry Delice, this beautiful collection of over 70 recipes provides an irresistibly charming experience of Austen's novels like no other.

**SERVES
FOUR**

CASSANDRA'S LOBSTER & ASPARAGUS

YOU WILL NEED

55g butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 shallot, finely chopped
3 tablespoons dry sherry
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
110ml soured cream
2 small ready-cooked lobsters, about 600g each
45g shredded Gruyère cheese
450g asparagus spears, trimmed
salt and black pepper

METHOD

1. Heat half the butter and oil in a small saucepan. Add the shallot and cook for 5 minutes until softened. Pour over the sherry and cook for 2 minutes until nearly boiled away. Stir in the mustard and soured cream, heat through and season with salt.
2. Meanwhile, using a large knife, cut the lobsters in half lengthways. Remove the meat from the tail and claws, reserving the main shell halves. Cut the lobster meat into large chunks.
3. Add the lobster meat to the sauce and warm through. Carefully spoon into the tail cavities of the reserved lobster shell halves and sprinkle with the Gruyère. Cook under a preheated hot grill for 3–5 minutes until golden and bubbling.
4. Meanwhile, place the asparagus in a frying pan over a medium heat and add just enough water to cover the base of the pan. Put the lid on and let the asparagus steam for 3–5 minutes until tender. Add the remaining butter and toss the asparagus in the butter as it melts.
5. Season with salt and pepper and serve with the lobster.



Given the importance of rosewater in the Georgian household, the cutting and drying of roses was one of the important tasks of the summer garden. In *Mansfield Park*, the put-upon heroine Fanny Price is given the Cinderella-like job of cutting roses in the full heat of the day, then taking them across the park to be dried in her Aunt Norris's home.

This recipe uses the rosewater of which the Georgians were so passionately fond.

Serve sprinkled with chopped rose petals for an extra touch of Regency romance

MAKES EIGHTEEN

YOU WILL NEED

175g unsalted butter,
melted and cooled, plus
extra for greasing

3 large egg whites

pinch of salt

150g almond flour

100g plain flour, sifted

150g caster sugar

1 teaspoon rosewater

5–7 pieces (85g) rose-
flavoured Turkish
delight, chopped

edible rose petals, to
decorate

For the rosewater cream

275ml double cream

1 teaspoon rosewater

½ teaspoon vanilla bean
paste or extract

30g icing sugar, sifted

FANNY PRICE'S ROSE GARDEN DELIGHTS

METHOD

1. Lightly brush 18 holes of two 12-hole madeleine tins or mini muffin tins with melted butter.
2. Whisk the egg whites and salt in a large, clean bowl with a handheld electric whisk until they form soft peaks, then gently fold in the almond flour, plain flour and sugar. Fold in the melted butter, rosewater and Turkish delight.
3. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tins and bake at 220°C for 8–10 minutes until risen and golden.
4. Meanwhile, make the rosewater cream. Whip all the ingredients in a bowl with a handheld electric whisk until soft peaks form, then place in a serving bowl.
5. Remove the cakes from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool slightly. Serve with dollops of the rosewater cream and decorated with edible rose petals.

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Jane Austen's Table by Robert Tiesley Anderson
is published by Pyramid on 7th October (£16.99)



These rosewater-infused cakes are studded with chunks of Turkish delight and have a delicate floral flavour. If you can't find edible rose petals to decorate, chopped pistachios are a lovely topping too.

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A winery with a passion

Bluebell Vineyard Estates has been established since 2005 and is a family run winery producing world class still and sparkling wine.



The vineyards boast around 100 acres stretching across both East and West Sussex in the heart of the Ashdown Forest. A variety of grapes are grown including Chardonnay, Seyval Blanc, Bacchus and Ortega for white wine and Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Merlot for red. Their single estate still white is, in fact, the only vineyard in England that produces a varietal from Chasselas as it mainly grown in Switzerland. Very dry with a crisp acidity, citrus notes of lime and lemon.

In the 'Hindleap' range, they produce five different sparkling wines all made by the traditional Champagne method. As well as their classic cuvee made from the Champagne grapes of Pinot Noir, Meunier and Chardonnay, they produce two different styles of Blanc de Blancs. The 2016 has aromas of tropical fruit such as lychees and pineapple with notes of white melon, kiwi fruit and mandarin on the palate. Their barrel aged Blanc de Blancs 2016 has aromas of honey and vanilla from the barrel ageing which adds richness to the tropical notes of pineapple and lychees and gives a very long length. Although richer in style, it still has a crisp, refreshing acidity and would pair perfectly with light snacks of avocado, crab or even lobster.

They also produce a range of still wines under the Ashdown range. As well as the Estate white they make an excellent Bacchus – gooseberry,

elderflower, honeysuckle and apricot. Their rosé, contains about 15% Merlot which adds weight and colour – the rest being made from Pinot Noir. Light and fruity, with flavours of strawberry, cherry and white peach.

Tours and tastings

They are open Monday to Saturday from 10am – 4pm and Sundays 11am – 4pm and offer a variety of different tastings. A 30 minute tasting costs just £8 and you can taste a flight of both Hindleap and Ashdown wines.

If you prefer a more immersive experience book a 90 minute tour where you can go on a guided tour around the vineyard. On return to the tasting room you will sample five different wines from across the range all for just £20.

If you are a cheese fan – why not book a cheese and wine tour where you take a leisurely tour around the vineyard and end up back in the tasting room where each wine is paired perfectly with an English cheese; this tour takes around 2 hours and is the perfect way to spend a relaxing weekend afternoon. Cost is £30 per person.

For more information and latest information regarding tours and tastings please visit their website www.bluebellvineyard.org
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