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Stay Safe

Welcome to the August edition...

Life keeps changing at the moment with local lockdowns, quarantine rules, and contradictory safety advice but one thing's for sure – we all need to support our local community.

Keep an eye out for local vulnerable people who need help, whether it's food or just some company. And support local businesses too as most have suffered over these last few months.

For those of you that are having some time off over the Summer, have a look at what's going on nearby on page 6 and I hope you enjoy the lovely weather - while it's here!

Until next month,

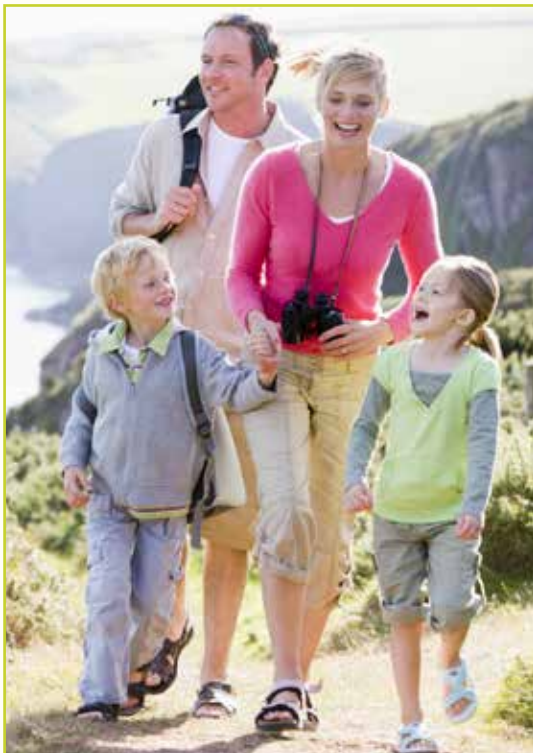
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local events

There's still a wide range of interesting events taking place this Summer - you might just need to travel a bit further afield to find them.



Harry Potter & The Philosopher's Stone Outdoor Cinema Experience

27 August

Warwick Racecourse

Can you imagine watching a film outdoors on a hot summers evening with your snacks and blankets? Don't imagine it, come and experience it! Gates open 7pm. For tickets visit www.eventbrite.co.uk

National Metro & Mini Show

6 September

British Motor Museum, Gaydon



A one-day show dedicated to these two iconic British marques and celebrating 40 years of the Metro. Advance tickets available until noon Friday 4 September 2020 at www.eventbrite.co.uk

Coombe Abbey Woodturner's Festival of Crafts

12-13 September

Coombe Abbey, Coventry

Coombe Abbey Woodturners Club are pleased to be bringing back the hugely successful Festival of Crafts event which was set up to promote traditional crafts which all the family and friends can enjoy. For more info, please contact coombeabbeywoodturners@gmail.com

The Great Travelling Psychic & Holistic Fair

12 September

Alcester War Memorial Town Hall, Alcester

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Where can you find the best Christmas Markets.

What could be more festive than a stroll around a Christmas market in a beautiful city? It's the perfect way to get you in the yuletide spirit! From Bath to Budapest and everywhere in-between, if you are looking for some serious Christmas inspo, then sit down, grab a glass of glühwein and take a look at our round up of the best Christmas markets to visit this winter.



Strasbourg, France

Nestled in front of the awe-inspiring Strasbourg Cathedral, this bustling market is one of the oldest in Europe and was voted the number one Christmas market in 2015. Visitors can expect to be transported into a winter wonderland as they browse the myriad of stalls selling Christmas ornaments, toys, food and mulled wine.

Bath, UK

The award-winning Christmas market is spread out across the picturesque Georgian streets of Bath. From personalised



presents and hand-crafted Christmas decorations to festive treats and pretty interiors, you can't fail to find that all-important gift for your loved ones. Artsy types can even try their hand at Christmas crafts which includes wreath making. Weary shoppers can take a dip and rejuvenate at the Thermae Bath Spa and admire the glorious views from the rooftop pool.

Prague, Czech Republic

You won't go hungry when visiting the Christmas markets of Prague. From traditional treats to modern artisan cuisine, there is something tasty for everyone. Both markets at the Old Town Square and Wenceslas Square are bursting with colourful stalls where you can buy traditional crafted goods such as embroidered lace, dolls and wooden toys.

Copenhagen, Denmark

If you are looking for hygge, a pre-Christmas break to Copenhagen's delightful Christmas markets ticks all the right boxes and then some. Shop until you drop in the cosiest of settings which



includes cute little wooden houses, snow-covered trees and sparkling lights. If you are in town on 13th December, you can witness the intriguing Santa Lucia parade which sees kayaks sail through the canals decorated in festive lights and decorations.

It may not be an obvious time to be thinking about Christmas markets but as many of you will not have had a holiday yet this year, this could be a welcome break and get some Christmas shopping done too. There are Christmas river cruises where you can take in several markets and enjoy the journey in between. There are some good deals out there right now and you can pay a deposit and pay by direct debit monthly until just before you go.

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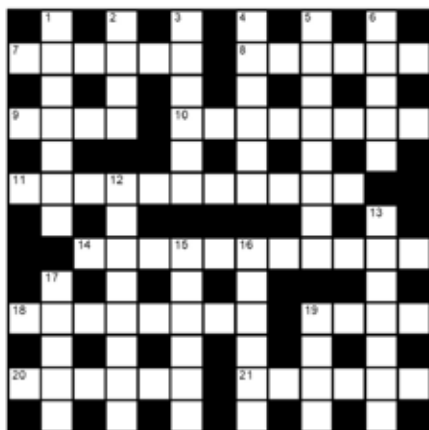
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crossword



Down

- 1 Port (7)
2 Ascend (4)
3 Medic (6)
4 In addition (2,4)

Across

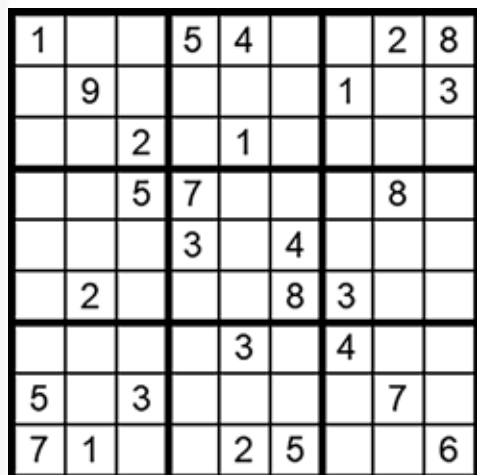
- 5 Engagements, gigs (8)
6 Chilling, creepy (5)
12 Pub seat (3,5)
13 King of Beasts' baby (4,3)

Across

- 7 Place for gambling (6)
8 Char, sear (6)
9 Reed instrument (4)
10 Hikers (8)
11 Ficus Elastica! (6,5)
14 Alternative to skirt and jacket. (7,4)
18 Without punishment or injury (4-4)
19 Animal prized for its fur (4)
20 Chopping these will make you cry (6)
21 False, incorrect (6)

Across

- 15 Civil disorder (6)
16 Good look (informal) (6)
17 Perfume, fragrance (5)
19 Insect attracted to light (4)



how to play sudoku

It's simple!

Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box, contains the numbers 1 through to 9 with no repetition. You don't need to be a genius. These puzzles use logic alone. Watch out! Sudoku is highly addictive.

answers on page 29

Frying pan Pizza - Yes really – it's so good!

Ingredients

Base

500g Strong white bread flour (But if you have any Italian 00 flour, it's even better).

1½ tsp dried active yeast. I did not have this throughout lockdown and used rapid dried yeast instead. I found that the rise time was quicker (2 days vs 4 days) so this might actually be a bonus.

1 tsp table salt

1 tsp sugar

Topping

1 400g tin chopped plum tomatoes

1 pack buffalo mozzarella

1 bunch basil

Extra-virgin olive oil, to drizzle

Plain is great but you can add any toppings you like. We made Pepperoni, ham and sweetcorn, and ham and pineapple.

Method

ix the flour, yeast, salt, and sugar then stir in 325ml water to a smooth dough. Cover and put in the fridge for two to four days. Remember rapid yeast will activate faster and may only require two days, or even one if you're in more of a hurry. Tip on to a lightly floured surface. Divide into four roughly equal portions, shape into balls, cover and leave for two hours. While the dough is rising take the cheese and toppings out of the fridge so that they come to room temperature. Empty the tomatoes into a saucepan over a medium heat and simmer for about 30 minutes, until they form a thick sauce. Season this to taste with salt and a pinch of sugar. Once the dough has proved, flatten it into pizza bases to fit your pan. For

Preparation time: Rise 2-5 days (yes this takes a little forward preparation but it's so worth it.)

Cooking time: 5 minutes + 35 mins

Makes 4 pan-sized pizzas



reference my pan has a 26cm base. Heat the cast iron frying pan or skillet over a moderate-high heat. It's ready when you drop a little water into the base and it instantly hisses and bounces. Preheat the grill to between moderate and high. Lightly flour your hands then stretch the dough into a rough round, keeping the edges a bit thicker. Cook in the pan until the top starts to dry out then add some tomato sauce and mozzarella. Wait a minute before adding any other toppings. Leave in the pan until base begins to char. The first time I chickened out but as I got into the groove the subsequent pizzas were much better. When you're happy with the bottom switch the pan to under the grill until the cheese bubbles and the edges brown. Finish with a few basil leaves. These really are the next best thing to a pizza from a pizza oven or a proper pizzeria.

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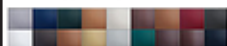
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| 1 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| 4 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| 6 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 4 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 1 |
| 8 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 2 |
| 9 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| 2 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| 5 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| 7 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 6 |

Sudoku Solution
from page 22

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| O | | | | O | L | I | Y | |
| R | | | | | | | | |
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| S | S | N | Y | | | O | | |
| S | C | O | T | F | R | E | | M |
| E | O | E | F | O | C | | | |
| O | N | I | O | N | S | | U | N |
| T | L | T | L | H | B | | | |

crossword Solution
from page 22**Solution to Mind benders**

1. Home stretch
2. Mother-in-law
3. Count me out

mindbenders
from page 16

Badminton Benefits

At the time of writing gyms, leisure centres and swimming pools are still closed. But that doesn't mean that we can't participate in sport. From 1st June we've been able to play badminton outside, in the garden or on a marked court. If you've never played before now might be the perfect time to give it a try. It's a great sport for people of all ages and fitness levels. Those who play regularly are more mentally alert, with better fitness and agility levels. It's also a very social game and what we need right now are low-risk ways to socialise, because socialising is good for our mental health.

Played at a high level it can burn up to 450 calories an hour but even a gentle to-and-fro with the grandkids in the local park will burn 150-200 calories.

Badminton, like tennis requires total engagement. Players need to predict how an opponent will play a shot and then plan a counterattack, which improves mental agility. There is research to suggest that sports which involve a combination of both mental and physical activity offer a protective effect against dementia.

Badminton requires a lot of movement, in multiple directions. It requires short sprints, jumps, stretches, and lunges as players strive to reach the shuttlecock, which means that legs, arms, and core muscles are all being worked. This builds strength and flexibility.

Badminton is a great 'build-up' sport. You can start as slow as you like, tapping the shuttlecock over the net, trying to keep a rally

going for as long as possible. As you improve and become quicker on your feet your shots will naturally increase in speed and strength too, and you will almost certainly want to introduce element of competitiveness. Played at higher levels the shuttlecock travels at impressive speeds. Badminton is actually the fastest racquet sport in the world. Professional players can smash the shuttle at speeds of over 200mph! This speed encourages players to improve co-ordination and core stability. Again, studies have shown that people with good core strength and co-ordination are less likely to suffer falls as they age.

The best way to get started is to find a friend of similar fitness level and get out and give it a go. Having a practice partner will make you both more likely to commit to playing regularly. It's near impossible to play properly competitively



outside as you are at the mercy of any breeze and a shuttlecock is 12 times lighter than a tennis ball. But if the aim is to improve agility and fitness while socialising and having fun, don't let that stop you. By the time sports facilities open back up your confidence will have grown, and you may be ready for the next step of joining a badminton club or regular session. And the beauty of badminton is that it can be played indoors all winter, so rain never has to stop play. If you're a more accomplished badminton player who is missing their fix you could try crossminton, which is designed for outdoor play, doesn't need a court, and combines elements of badminton, tennis, and squash.

Smishing!

Meet the new kid on the fraud squad's block.

A few years ago, 'phishing' was big news. There can't be a person in the UK who hasn't received their email from an imaginary Nigerian prince or a shady London Investment Office. Most of us are wise to phishing emails. But now there's 'smishing'. This is shorthand for SMS phishing. SMS stands for 'short messaging service' and is basically 'texting'. So smishing is the text equivalent of phishing!

Smishing texts are sent for the sole purpose of committing opportunistic fraud. The texts look like they're from a reputable company and they all have one thing in common – they encourage you to take action, often calling a premium rate number or sharing your confidential information.

It can be easy to mistake smishing texts for genuine messages but there are give-aways:

- They are often peppered with spelling mistakes

- They may tell you your account is in danger and you need to act immediately, the threat being that if you don't your account will be suspended or reported or blocked. This is a scare tactic, to prompt you to follow their instructions.

- They may tell you that you have won a prize, or that you will miss out on an exclusive offer unless you call a number immediately.

STOP

If the text is badly written and full of spelling mistakes, it's unlikely to be genuine.

If your account is in danger then no phone company, bank, credit card company or HMRC will expect you to contact them directly from the text. **GO TO THE ORIGINAL SOURCE OF THE COMPANY THE TEXT CLAIMS TO BE FROM.** Phone them from the number on official documentation, such as a bill, or a bank statement, or use the contact details from the company's official website. **DO NOT** call any numbers given in the message. They

will tell you whether the text came from them. If it didn't, they may refer you to their fraud department.

If a prize or an offer seems too good to be true it almost certainly is.

Simply receiving a suspicious message won't breach your phone or bank security. Scams won't work unless you follow the instructions in the text.

DON'T RESPOND

in any form to the message as that indicates the number is active and you may be repeatedly targeted.

If you accidentally fall for one:

- Change your passwords immediately to bank accounts, phone accounts and email account.

- Contact your bank and your phone company for advice. Don't feel embarrassed; smishing messages are designed to look convincing.



C the Benefits

Vitamin C – beauty miracle or myth?

I had been many weeks since I ventured into a shop. I was looking for moisturiser as I'd burned through all the half-finished pots and tubes I'd been using throughout lockdown.

I was curious to see the number of vitamin C-related products which I'd not noticed previously. Vitamin C seems to be all the rage right now. I wondered what the science said.

Vitamin C is actually a powerful antioxidant. This means that it's great for repairing damage done by free radicals. In reality this equates to sun-damage, for example uneven skin pigmentation, sunspots, and fine lines, but also the inflammatory pigmentation which can be left behind by acne.

Pure vitamin C is actually an acid (ascorbic acid). There are many scientific peer-reviewed studies which conclude that it is extremely effective. Unfortunately, it also has some substantial drawbacks. In order for it to be absorbed into the skin its pH has to be around 3, which is really quite acidic! This can cause skin irritation in some people. Vitamin C is very unstable in its pure form and breaks down quickly to erythrulose (an ingredient in fake tan) so long-term use can stain your fingers and face. It also develops an unpleasant smell as it degrades, and products often smell 'off' before they are used up.

Because of these issues cosmetic manufacturers tend to favour vitamin C derivatives in their products. To make a derivative the ascorbic acid molecule is altered by adding other chemicals. The resulting compound is more stable but the pay-off is that it's now less effective.

Any of the following listed on a product label are vitamin C derivatives.

- Ascorbyl palmitate
- Ascorbyl glucosine
- Magnesium ascorbyl palmitate

- Magnesium ascorbyl phosphate
- Calcium ascorbate
- Sodium ascorbate
- Sodium ascorbyl phosphate
- L ascorbic acid

Studies have found that the most stable derivatives are fat soluble rather than water soluble so look for preparations that contain:

- L-ascorbic acid
- Magnesium ascorbyl phosphate
- Sodium ascorbyl phosphate
- Ascorbyl glucoside

These derivatives will be more effective because they remain stable at a more neutral pH (5-6) so are less likely to irritate your skin, and they will have sufficient contact time with your skin because they won't decompose quickly causing the characteristic staining and odour. Instead they slowly convert back into ascorbic acid, giving a gradual release effect.

There is some debate about the effectiveness of vitamin C products. They have been shown to protect skin against UV in a clinical study on humans, and vitamin C has been found to stimulate collagen synthesis and reduce pigment production in in vitro cell studies, though bear in mind that performance in a test tube does not necessarily equate to performance in real life. Studies also seem to suggest that Vitamin C is also more stable and more effective when combined in a product with vitamin E. The two antioxidants seem to work synergistically, a wonderful word which means they interact in such a way that each helps the action of the other.

With the summer sun bright in the sky at the time of writing, now might be the perfect time to try out the benefits and C for yourself. C what I did there?

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Is it safe to...

Eat out?

Coronavirus doesn't appear to spread through food. COVID-19 travels in respiratory droplets, which means you could get sick if an infected person coughs or sneezes near you. Even being in close proximity to someone speaking increases your risk of contracting the virus if they are infected. Restaurants are understandably keen to encourage customers to return.

Lowest risk: Take-away - Food is delivered or picked up and carried off site.

Moderate risk: On-site dining outdoor seating, reduced seating capacity and tables placed at least 2m apart.

Moderate-high risk: On-site dining indoor seating, reduced seating capacity, and tables placed at least 2m apart. Check ahead. Satisfy yourself that safe practice is being adhered to. Ask if waiters and staff

will wear face coverings while on duty, and if seating follows social distancing requirements. Ask if you can pre-order so that your meal is ready when you arrive. This reduces time spent in the proximity of other people. Check the current level of COVID-19 in your community. If the level of community transmission is low it's safer to eat out, but it's sensible not to eat indoors if you or anyone you live with is aged over 65 or at risk of severe illness. If you go out with friends from other households don't share food or drink. Contactless payment is the safest option. The best way to prevent the spread of the coronavirus or any germs is to wash your hands properly and regularly. When you're done with your meal, and when you get home, wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

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