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WELCOME

Christmas comes but once a year – so make the most of this very special season, whatever else your year has brought, and ensure everyone feels valued on this favourite day.

Be inspired to make your home look gorgeous with the new season's beautiful looks – from on-trend Shining Metallics, full of graphic shapes and interesting textures in soft gold and other metal shades (p56), through nostalgic Christmas Past, with deep reds, classic Victorian-style trinkets, gingerbread houses and hand-stitched stockings (p44), to the enchanting Magic Kingdom, featuring fairy-tale creatures and baubles and candles in shimmering and frosted whites and the palest of pinks (p38).

You can feel perfectly prepared on the food front with our star-studded recipe section (p112). We share the secrets of top chefs Jamie Oliver, Nigella Lawson and Gordon Ramsay and the nation's favourites, *The Great British Bake Off*'s Mary Berry and Paul Hollywood, for a feast to remember. And if you want some last-minute food shortcuts that are just as delicious, turn to *Fast and Fabulous* on p140.

Our December checklist of ideas is both fun and practical (p6), so that preparing for the big day becomes part of the pleasure. And be inspired by our gift suggestions for all the family (p63), stunning handmade table decorations (p86) and gooey, mouthwatering sweet treats that make such original and personalised gifts (p132).

Last but not least, add a final finishing touch with Kirstie Allsopp's step-by-step guide to creating a beautiful hand-crafted door wreath that says welcome to everyone who calls (p22).

Whatever you choose, you'll be making memories that will be treasured for years to come – and we'll be with you all the way. Have a wonderful celebration.

Julia

Julia Goodwin
Editor

If you love Christmas as much as we do, don't miss *House Beautiful*'s Dec/Jan issue, on sale on 5 November. You'll find more stunning ways to make your home look gorgeous and fabulous reader homes packed with stylish ideas that you can use too.



It's beginning to taste a lot like Christmas



Create a magical table centrepiece this Christmas with our new & exclusive Santa's Sleigh Mould, only £11.99.

Simply fill the two silicone moulds with melted chocolate and join the pieces together to create an impressive sleigh and pair of Santa's most valuable helpers. For the perfect finishing touch, fill your sleigh with cake pops made using our new Christmas Cake Pop and Swirly Cake Pop Moulds. **Share your creations on** f



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LAKELAND



6
Find Christmas inspiration in our December countdown

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For cover credits see p144

SAFETY FIRST: NEVER LEAVE A LIT CANDLE OR FIRE UNATTENDED

CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN

Feel inspired by our mix of suggestions for things to make and do in this special time



1 DECEMBER
ADVENT

Christmas starts here with putting up the advent calendar. Children will love Great Little Trading Company's jolly embroidered Father Christmas, £38, and Merry Christmas bunting, £18 (left). You'll find a good selection at Sainsbury's, including this wooden Advent House, £15 (below), ready to fill with gifts. For something bespoke, Nuvonova has sets of 24 cotton Advent Calendar Pouches, from £39.59 at Etsy (bottom), which can be made in your choice of font and ribbon colour. You can use advent calendars year after year – just change the contents.





2 DECEMBER

IT'S A WRAP

There's nothing more exciting than seeing piles of parcels just waiting to go under the tree. Ikea is big on metallics this year and its Snomys range of shiny wrappings comes in every colour you can think of, including gold and silver (left) from £1.75 a roll. You can use different paper to help you remember which present is for which member of the family. Cath Kidston has a lovely retro Santa design, £9 for three rolls, while Sarah Moore Vintage has packs of tissue paper complete with bias binding and five luggage labels, £5.50. Caroline Zoob's tags made from vintage documents and music manuscripts, £6 for three, are almost too gorgeous to give away.

3 DECEMBER

SEND CARDS, NEAR AND FAR

Even in these paperless days, it's nice to send proper Christmas cards to friends and family. Muji has cute cut-out and pop-up cards, from £2.95 each (right). If you want to give charity cards, Paperchase offers a good selection, from £3.50 for eight. Short of time? Save the postage and send e-cards instead. Katie's Cards charges £5 for an unlimited three month subscription. Just import your mailing list and set the date you want the cards to go. Choose from wacky, kitsch or traditional themes; each e-card tells a lovely little animated story to music.



CONTINUED OVER PAGE

4 DECEMBER

FAKING IT

Make a big design statement this year with one of the new generation of cool, pre-lit fake trees. There are no needles to shed and all you have to do is plug them in. Habitat's small lit trees and wreaths, from £8 to £40 (below), are perfect for creating a modern look or if space is in short supply. Tesco's budget range of traditional faux firs starts at £15, while John Lewis has no fewer than 29 types of artificial tree.









5 DECEMBER

DECK THE TREE

You know Christmas is fast approaching when it's time to put up the tree. Mix and match your favourite decorations with a few new ones. Scandi red and white remains popular and Lakeland's Winter Woollies range includes this jumper, £3.99. The glass camel is £7, and the owl £5, both from Paperchase, and the Christmas pud, £4.75, is from Debenhams.



StoreMags.com



6 DECEMBER

INSTANT CHRISTMAS

Timesaving tricks are especially welcome in the countdown to the big day. Talking Tables specialises in pop-up partyware and wall decorations. If you're expecting lots of visitors and can't face all the washing up, stock up on its festive paper plates and this Jolly Holly cake platter, £4.80; while you're at it, there's a fabulous flaming fountain, £2.75, in case you forget the brandy for the Christmas pud (all left). Also handy are these clip-on holly sprigs, £2 each (**below**), from Marks & Spencer.



CONTINUED OVER PAGE



7 DECEMBER

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

Gorgeous Christmas baubles don't have to be saved just for the tree. Use them imaginatively to add colour and sparkle around the house – piled onto glass cakestands, into vases and on platters or scattered across shelves. If you're feeling inspired, you could even create a wall decoration from baubles, using Blu-Tack to hold them in place.

Looking for something out of the ordinary? At notonthehighstreet.com you can order personalised baubles filled with everything from Dymo tape to snowflake confetti and origami stars, from £10.95 each (above). John Lewis sells vintage-style, mercuried glass birds, from £2.50, and beautiful hand-blown baubles made by Shakspeare Glass in Somerset, from £4.



8 DECEMBER

TWINKLE TWINKLE

Don't hold back when it comes to the fairylights. For disco glam, try Cargo's multi-coloured mirrored ball lights, £12 (right), or for a more subtle look, Habitat has a range of garlands that are perfect for twirling around the banisters, from £15 (above); the coordinating Sacha wreath on the wall is £40. Get the rest of the family to help you think up different ideas – you could transform a stepladder into an unconventional tree or turn a bike parked in the hallway into a sparkling attraction.



storemags.com





9 DECEMBER
CREATE A MAGICAL WOODLAND

Instead of a Nativity scene, why not transform your mantelpiece into an enchanted forest? Embellish with fairylights and add some fresh pine cones for fragrance. House of Fraser sells these bark votives, £5 each; 3D wooden tree, £20; owl candle, £5; pine cone tealights, £10 for six; felt reindeer, £7; Harry hedgehog tree decoration, £8; and wooden snowflake fairylight garland, £30 (all below). If you want one standout ornament, Laura Ashley has this pretty silver stag globe, £25 (left).



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10 DECEMBER

DECORATE THE FRONT DOOR

Create a stunning focal point with a homemade wreath that will welcome callers-by. You'll find a range at The Essentials Company from just 80p for a simple wire frame. You have to weave in fresh foliage, fake flowers, pine cones, dried fruit and other festive finds. CadeauDeLaNature at Etsy offers natural wreaths using moss, lichen and pine cones, from £27.50. If you want a traditional wreath that's ready to hang, Tesco has this pretty 18-inch wreath, £25 (left), and Paperchase sells a large one made from tartan ribbon, £25 (below).

11 DECEMBER
KEEP IT COSY

New season soft greys have been given a festive touch in this dazzling sequinned Stag head cushion, £22 from Debenhams, and softly sparkling Arionne cushion, £37.50 from Voyage (both right). Make a statement with one carefully placed cushion or scatter several over sofas and chairs. Pile them on dining chairs, too, making them more comfy.

To really cosy it up, Next Home has a range of faux fur cushions and throws (below), in shades from polar bear white to Heartland, a warm chocolate brown, from £14.





12 DECEMBER
CANDLELIT CHRISTMAS

Flickering candles and tealights create a magical atmosphere, whether you're putting them on the dining table, mantelpiece or side tables or in the bedrooms and bathrooms. You can afford a generous display if you stock up from John Lewis or Ikea, which both sell bags of 100 tealights for £5. Spread a sophisticated glow with Tesco's Baroque tealights in gold or silver, £6 for a set of three on a stand (left). For a modern, minimalist look, go for this row of silver metal cut-out houses, £18 from Debenhams (below).





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13 DECEMBER

CREATE A RELAXING BEDROOM RETREAT

Get the spare room ready by clearing out any clutter. Then make guests feel extra-special by investing in some gorgeous bedlinen and luxe finishing touches. Marks & Spencer has delightful reindeer bedsets, from £59, and stylish wool-rich knit throws, £69 (both above). For those finishing touches, Toast sells scented candles, from £12, Kantha hottie covers, £29, wonderfully soft cashmere bed socks, £39, and assorted soaps (all left). Designers Guild also has pretty packaged guest soaps, £15 for three. Your visitors may never want to leave!

14 DECEMBER

A FEAST FOR THE SENSES

Fill your home with the aroma of pine, cinnamon, orange and other wintry smells. John Lewis has just opened its first scented candle department with more than 300 different types to choose from, including Diptyque's new Christmas candles – Ecorce de Pin (below), Orange Chaya and Encens des Indes, which come in exquisite coloured glass embellished with gold, £25 for small £45 for large.



15 DECEMBER

ARRANGE THE FLOWERS

While traditional flower displays are always lovely, why not indulge your inner artist and dream up an eyecatching display of foliage, flowers and festive ornaments? Invest in a stunning glass vase to spark your creativity and try out different combinations with fresh branches or spray-painted twigs. The green glass vase below is from £160; glass ball decorations, from £8; house decorations, £37 for three; all Designers Guild.







16 DECEMBER

DON'T FORGET THE DOG!

Four-legged friends will enjoy being spoilt on Christmas Day just like everyone else. This year, Next Home has a range of presents for dogs (top) and cats. Large fleece dog bed, £50; pheasant toy, £7; dog treats, £6 for two packs; Dinner bowl, £14; Treats jar, £14; dog scarf, £6. Your dog will also approve of this Scotty doormat, £20 from Laura Ashley.

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StarWags





17 DECEMBER

TECHY TEENAGERS AND FITNESS FANATICS

Shopping for teenagers isn't always plain sailing but one solution is to buy lots of stocking gifts. The Bhs stocking fillers range for girls includes this bright OMG cushion, flask, passport cover, candle, purse and journal, all £6 each (above). Boys will love notonthehighstreet.com's edit, from an oak phone charging/docking station, from £25, to a London Skyline bamboo USB stick, from £30. The fittie in the family will covet one of the new generation fitness/lifestyle bands to monitor their fitness goals – the Nike+ Fuelband is £129 and Jawbone's UP Wristband is £99 (left). We may all be needing one for the new year. For more great gift ideas, see *Gifts Galore* on p63.

18 DECEMBER

DOWNLOAD CHRISTMAS APPS

There's a whole new bunch of exciting apps from Apple to help make the festivities go smoothly – covering cocktail recipes and planning menus to gift buying and setting budgets to track your spending. Many of the apps are free and if not they're usually around £1.99. The free one below allows you to download a selection of songs, TV shows, apps, games and books for free from 26 December to 6 January.





19 DECEMBER

DIY CHOCOLATES

It's messy and fun but children and adults alike love making chocolate treats so set aside a day for some sticky and delicious baking. You'll find lots of recipes to inspire you starting on p132. Chocolates are lovely to have on hand for the celebrations but they're also a superb gift too. For a pièce de résistance, have a go at creating a chocolate fairy-tale cottage using Lakeland's silicone mould, £12.99. Lakeland also sells all the equipment you need including the Magic Non-Stick Liner, from £5.99 for 25cm x 50cm (above), a bain-marie, £15.99, thermospatula, £14.99, and gift packaging. For a personal touch, get the children to make their own gift labels.

20 DECEMBER

CRAFTY WAYS

Going back to the skills of past generations, lots of us are rediscovering the joys of knitting and sewing. A craft set makes a thoughtful and original gift. Buttonbag's Christmas kits with felt, thread and buttons are a great introduction for ages six-plus. It has a cute Nativity Peg Doll Kit, £14.95 (right); and Christmas Trees and Penguins sewing kits, both £10.95. The Learn How to Knit Kit, £19.95, is ideal for novice knitters, while Cath Kidston's Chalet sewing basket, £60, would be a treat for an expert (see p74).



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21 DECEMBER

GET IN THE FESTIVE SPIRIT

Cocktails are back on the menu and there's nothing quite as glamorous as sipping your favourite tipple from a beautiful metallic-rimmed glass. For a sleek contemporary look, go for Brissi's handmade Venezia Martini glass, £10 (left); its silver-plated double-size ice bucket, £165, is pure Gatsby extravagance. John Lewis has these champagne and Soirée cocktail glasses, both £35 for four; the hammered steel barware is from £25, and the gold holly wreath £20 (all below).







22 DECEMBER

WRITE TO SANTA

There's still time for children to write their special letters, so make sure you have everything you need to help them. Talking Tables has these letters in felt envelopes, £5.50 (above), as well as Santa doors signs, £2.75. Tesco's Scandi heart glasses, £1 (top), are just the thing for Santa's milk.

23 DECEMBER

HANG OUT THE STOCKINGS

Making your children's stockings is a lovely touch, but you can always buy some basic designs and embroider their names. Cargo's patchwork stockings, £12 each (below), look authentically homemade; complete the homespun look with Reindeer and Merry Christmas cushions, £10 each, and a berry wreath, £14. You'll find smart tartan stockings at Dobbies Garden Centres, from £3.99, and wool herringbone ones at Muji, £19.95, which are almost good enough to wear.



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24 DECEMBER
CREATIVE TABLE LAYING

It's Christmas Eve and time to lay the festive table. If you want to keep it simple, start with a plain white tablecloth or placemats, then add soft colour and sparkle with accessories, such as napkin rings and votive holders. Arrange single flower stems or foliage in bottles, tuck a sprig of greenery under napkin rings and put a bauble or pine cone at each place setting. Be generous with small votives, which don't take up much space.

House of Fraser has gorgeously understated opal dinnerware, from £6; snowflake cake plate, £12, and platter, £35; pearl napkin ring, £4; napkin, £6; Richmond 16-piece cutlery set, £44; Echo placemat, £10 for two; bark votives, £5 each; white speckled wine glass, £10, and tumbler, £8; frosted mercury votive, £12; acorn tree decoration, £8; snowflake cracker, £25 for 10 (all right).





25 DECEMBER
FAMILY FUN AND GAMES

Last but by no means least, add the finishing touches: crackers and games for all the family to enjoy during or after the meal. Liberty print fans will love these assorted Liberty print crackers, £49.95 for six. Notonthehighstreet.com sells a variety of crackers including personalised and 'fill your own' designs. Or make your own following the instructions on p96.

Don't forget to capture your favourite Christmas moments and share them with us. Post your pictures on our wall at facebook.com/housebeautifulUK and tweet us @HB.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

WORDS JULIA EVANS

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE





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KIRSTIE'S CHRISTMAS WREATH

Create a personal touch with Kirstie Allsopp's sensational design



'Christmas wreaths look sensational on any door, but you can save money making your own. Don't scrimp on the sack moss, as it's the basis for a sumptuous design. Buy it from your local florist or garden centre, and make sure it's damp, as that will help your evergreens to stay fresh and lush for longer. If you want to get straight onto decorating the wreath, skip the first two steps below and buy a ready-made base instead,' says Kirstie

1 To make the moss base, unravel a bit of the reel wire and attach it with a twist to the frame. Now begin placing generous handfuls of sack moss round the frame, packing it tightly together and winding the reel wire round it tightly as you go. Whatever you do, don't scrimp – the moss should feel thick and dense. Do a second layer of moss to really thicken it out, and continue binding it with the wire. Don't worry about it not being neat: the moss won't be seen when it's dressed.

2 When it's full, turn the wreath over and cut the wire, leaving a 20cm end. Push it from back to front through the centre of the moss, then back again. Do this a few times, until the wire is hidden by the moss, then twist the last bit round the inner ring on the back of the frame.

3 Cut the pine and eucalyptus into pieces about 10–15cm long and begin grouping them into fan-like clusters. They should look luscious and full with no gaps. Snip off any naked, pointy bits.

4 Lay the wreath right side up, then put the first fan-cluster of greenery on top of the moss and wrap reel wire round the stems. Continue covering the moss with small fan-clusters, securing them tightly with wire, until the front of the wreath is completely covered.

5 To cover the inside of the wreath, add smaller, finger-sized pieces of greenery and secure them with wire. While doing so, take a good look at the shape of your wreath and lightly tie down any stray foliage. You want it to look even all round. When finished, tie off the wire as in step 2.

MATERIALS

- Reel wire
- 2cm raised wire wreath frame
- Sack moss – moist
- 6-7 big pine branches
- Eucalyptus
- Scissors
- Extra foliage, such as myrtle berries, mimosa, holly and ivy
- 5-7 stems hypericum berries
- 7 stems dried English hydrangeas
- Reindeer moss
- Glitter (optional)
- Gauge wire (see method)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Decorations, such as white wax flowers, pine cones, dried orange slices, cinnamon sticks and glittered-up berries, black peppercorns, dried roses and crab apples

PHOTOGRAPH OF KIRSTIE ANTHONY UPTON

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'Pine is great for wreaths because of its bulky and lasting nature. It's also easy to find. Get the children foraging in the garden for branches, twigs, winter berries, holly and ivy,' says Kirstie



6 Now to the fun bit – decorating. It's essential to have a theme – ours was hypericum berries, dried hydrangeas and reindeer moss – but dried roses are exquisite, and glittery crab apples look very Christmassy too. Before you start, think about where you're going to place things. Odd numbers work best, and you must always aim for balance.

7 Cut the stems of your flowers and berries on a slant so they have pointy ends. Pierce the first berry stem deep into the moss, then continue adding the other berry stems at regular intervals round the wreath.

8 Now add the hydrangeas in the same way. If you're struggling to get things well into the moss, attach them using the gauge wire (it's thicker than reel wire and comes in pre-cut lengths).

9 To add the reindeer moss, bend a length of wire in half, pierce it through the side of a clump and push the ends through to the back of the wreath. Bend it into a loop and twist the ends to fasten. The loop shouldn't be visible with this method. Continue adding reindeer moss to the wreath in this way, filling in the gaps between the hydrangeas and berries.

10 To make a hook, take two long pieces of gauge wire and bend them into shape. Decide on the top of your wreath and pierce the gauge wire through from the back and round the outer ring of the frame. Bring the hooked ends up at the back and secure them with a twist.

★ *Taken from* Kirstie's Christmas Crafts *by Kirstie Allsopp (£20, Hodder & Stoughton). Project by Kitten Grayson; photographs by Fiona Murray. To order your copy at the special price of £15.99 with free p&p to UK mainland, call allaboutyoubooks on 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*

*CALLS COST NO MORE THAN 7P A MINUTE FROM BT LANDLINES. CALLS FROM MOBILES AND OTHER NETWORKS USUALLY COST MORE

HANDMADE
WREATH

FESTIVE AND FABULOUS

From Nordic whites to glistening metallics, our six looks offer stylish inspiration for every room

NORTHERN LIGHTS

Use icy white and lots of wildlife to recreate a frosty Nordic landscape

DELIVER AN INSTANT CHRISTMAS HIT in your hallway with a festive parade of forest animals – a wonderful welcome for your guests. *Willow wreaths, £25 each; pine cone garland, £20; tree wrapping paper, £5 a roll; twiggy bird tree decoration, £7; large grey wooden lantern, £35; white glitter bedgehogs, £15 for two; white glitter reindeers, £15 each; small cream metal stag lantern, £10; acorn fairylight garland, £40; all House of Fraser*

storemags









THREE OF THE BEST

ANTLER ACCENTS



From top: sequinned stag **cushion,** £28, Debenhams. White wall-mounted **stag head,** small (H36cm x W30cm) £40, large (H42cm x W40cm) £60, The French Bedroom Company. White **antler decoration,** £3.95, Idyll Home

1 EVEN IN THE SMALLEST OF SPACES there's always room for a tabletop tree. *Rustic wood tree, £9.99, Homesense*

2 SET THE SCENE with a few understated accessories grouped into a Nordic tablescape – it's the new way to dress up a plain table. You could use a round mirror plate underneath to amplify the effect. A generous sprinkling of artificial snow completes the look. *Ceramic tealight houses, £35 for three, Cox & Cox*

3 SOFT CANDLELIGHT instantly imparts a magical glow. Team a simple metal chandelier with smart candles and suspend over your dining table from a sturdy hook fixed into a joist. *Quinby candle chandelier, £38 (not including candles), Rowen & Wren*

4 COUNT DOWN TO THE BIG DAY with these advent boxes arranged on winter twigs. *Rural Advent Boxes, £12 for the set of 25; star lights, £20; recycled bottle, £70; all John Lewis*

CONTINUED OVER PAGE





THREE OF THE BEST TABLE TREATS



From top: white speckled **tumbler,** £8; **wine glass,** £10; both House of Fraser. Wood and glass **tealight lantern,** £4, Asda. Silver and white snowflake **crackers,** £1 for eight, Poundland





1 MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY BAUBLE by displaying any spares in elegant dishes and bowls. *Mini baubles, £5 for 49, Next Home*

2 BRING THE OUTSIDE IN with a frosty fake tree. If yours doesn't have an attractive base, all you need is a piece of hessian tied in place with a rustic ribbon. *Potted frost-covered artificial tree, £8, Dobbies Garden Centres*

3 A SCATTERING OF SNOWFLAKE DECORATIONS is a quick way to give your home the look of icy climes. *Snowflake tree topper, snowflake decoration and sleigh tealight holder, £1 each; silver and white baubles, £1 for 10; all Poundland*

4 HAVE LOTS OF CANDLES AT THE READY for the big day, then dim the lights and turn up the atmosphere. Miniature candles make a dramatic impression en masse, while large scented Christmas candles will fill your home with festive fragrance. *Mini candles, £8 for 20, Rowen & Wren*

CREATE AN EYECATCHING ARRANGEMENT above your dining table with a hanging willow wreath teamed with beautiful baubles. *Wreath, £45; cream baubles, £10.50 for six; copper and white baubles, £34 for 12; bead-encrusted baubles, £8.50 for six; porcelain birds, £12.50 for four; frosted pine cones, £5.50 for 12; wine glasses, from £45 for six; all Cox & Cox*

CONTINUED OVER PAGE

ADD A QUIRKY TOUCH by packing away the coffee table and replacing it with a gorgeous wooden sledge piled high with beautifully wrapped parcels. *Flocked Lapland pre-lit tree, £230; tree decorations, from £3; tree wrapping paper, £5 a roll; Kempton large sofa, £1,749; Stag photographic cushion, £25; chunky knit throw, £65; on mantelpiece: 3D wooden trees, £20 each; bark votives, £5 each; Harry hedgehog tree decoration, £8; pine cone tealights, £10 for six; wooden snowflake fairylight garland, £30; Henry wooden mirror, £120; pine cone wreath, £20; on floor: large grey wooden lantern, £35; small cream metal stag lantern, £10; all House of Fraser. Similar wooden sledge, £79.99, Toast*


1


2


3



4

1 GO FOR THE ULTIMATE LOG CABIN STYLE STATEMENT with a fashionable stag head trophy. You'll find them in all sorts of sizes and materials, from wood and metal to resin. *Stag head, £30; hanging pine cone heart, £1.99; pine cone tree decorations, £3.99 for three; candles, from £4; star garland, £5; wooden star, £50 for three; all Dobbies Garden Centres*

2 NOTHING CONJURES UP A NORDIC LANDSCAPE quite like a large frosty tree. *Flocked Lapland pre-lit tree, £230; silver stag head tree decoration, £5; wooden star tree decoration, £3; all House of Fraser*

3 BE LAVISH WITH NATURAL WREATHS – hang them from hooks indoors as well as on outside doors. *Wooden star wreath, £12, Paperchase*

4 EVERLASTING ACORNS add a touch of woodland wonder all year round. *Decorative metal acorns in Silver and Distressed Copper (H8.5cm x 5.5cm diameter), £25 for two, Cox & Cox* HB

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

THREE OF THE BEST

FURRY FRIENDS



From top: polyfoam **Husky decoration,** £4, Marks & Spencer. White **polar bear decoration,** £2.99, Homesense. White rabbit **snow dome,** £12.50, Dee Puddy Garden & Interiors

COMPILED BY DIANA CIVIL

StoreMags com

SIMPLY SCANDI

Decorate in cheerful Scandi style with classic red and white – it's a firm family favourite

OPT FOR HOMESPUN DECORATIONS in fabric and painted wood. *Hanging from pegs (l-r): long heart and star decorations, £2.99 each; small wooden hanging star, £4.99; fabric hanging Christmas sock, £2.49; metal hearts with bells, £2.99; heart birch and berries wreath, £5.99; cut-out heart tealight holder, £6.99; tree decorations, from £1.99; Christmas cards, from £1.49; fabric and wood Xmas tree (on peg rail), £3.99; Skandi upholstered chair, £149.99; all Dunelm Mill*



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1 **ADD A LOVING TOUCH** with a wooden heart gift tag. *Gisela Graham red and white wooden gift tags, £4 each; ribbon, from £4 for 3m; both The Contemporary Home. Brown postal paper giftwrap, from a selection at Hobbycraft*

2 **CHOCOLATE BAUBLES** make tempting tree ornaments. *Belgian chocolate baubles, £2 each, Asda*

3 **BAG A BARGAIN** with these smart gift bags – just the thing for fast, fuss-free wrapping. *Nordic gift bags, £1 for three, Poundland*

4 **UPDATE YOUR FESTIVE LIVING ROOM** with traditional Scandi red and white, which works wonderfully with oak furniture. *Skandi oak coffee table with drawer, £279.99; Skandi oak nest of tables, £119.99; on sofa: sheepskin rug, £34.99; reindeer draught excluder, £4.99; chunky knit cushion, £14.99; reindeer cushion, £5.99; Nordic knit storage jar, £9.99; cut-out tree and heart tealight holders (on table), £6.99 each; hanging decorations (in frames), £2.99 each; all Dunelm Mill. For similar oak sofa, try Ercol*

THREE OF THE BEST

COSY KNITTED DECORATIONS

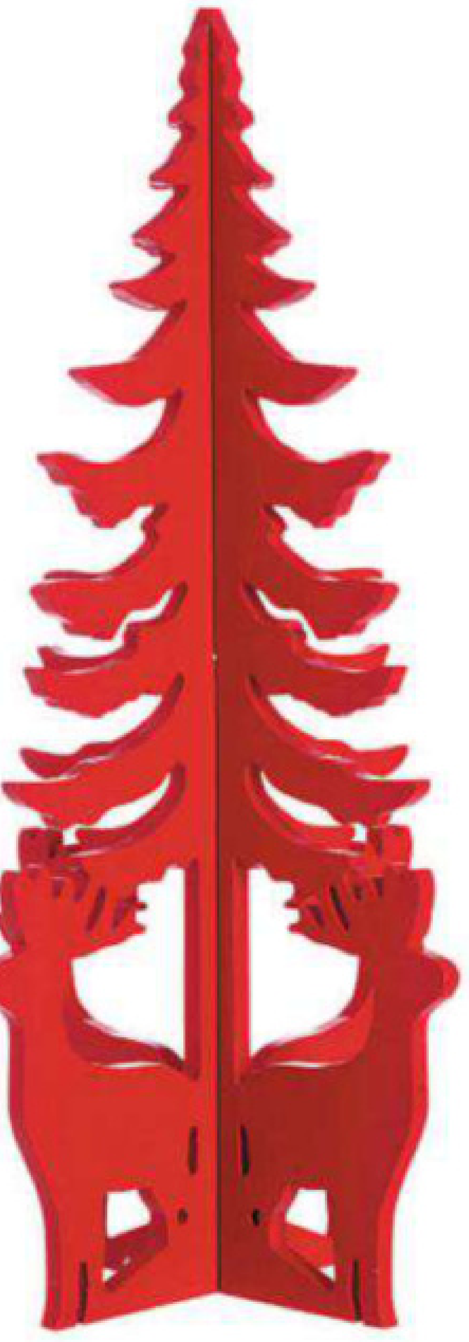




From top: knitted doll **tree decorations,** £4 for four, Asda. Knitted **gingerbread man,** £4.75, Berry Red. Knitted Christmas **stocking,** £15, House of Fraser

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THREE OF THE BEST

TABLE TOPPERS



From top: cutlery stocking, £6 (not including cutlery), House of Fraser. Gisela Graham red tin **tealight holder** with heart, £3, The Contemporary Home. Christmas heart felt **placemat,** £1.95, Dotcomgiftshop





1 CLEAR SPACE on a sideboard or dresser for a jolly display of seasonal accessories. *Glass bottle vase with knit wrap, £3.99; Ruby Collection small wooden pig, £5.99; birdhouse, £4.99; fabric and wood Xmas tree, £3.99; plate, from a selection; cut-out tree tealight holder, £6.99; wicker heart table lamp, £12.99; felt star garland, £2.99; all Dunelm Mill*

2 STYLE YOUR TABLE with a statement centrepiece. *Red Nordic tree, £12, Debenhams*

3 FILL A PAIL WITH SAND to make a simple but effective candleholder. Trim with a red and white ribbon for a festive flourish. *Pencil candles, £7.75 for 12; vintage mini bucket, from a selection; both Dee Puddy Garden & Interiors*

4 EVERLASTING CRACKERS are a perfect gift – or buy some to bring out year after year. These ones come with a durable plastic tube to fill with treats and your own special message. *Scandi Cross Stitch reusable Christmas crackers in six designs, from £12.50 each, Kate Sproston Design*

GET CRAFTING and dress up a plain white table setting with pretty finishing touches made from felt, ribbon and card. *Felt, £9.99 a metre; Styrofoam cone, £1.49; ribbons, from a selection; candles, from £2.79 each; glass votives, 79p each; festive papers, from £4.99 for a pack of 30 sheets; berry wreath made from twig wreath, £1.79, and berry garland, £2.29; tree decorations, from £1.99; all Hobbycraft*

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CREATE A HEARTY WELCOME with a collection of festive china in classic Scandi red and white.
Tesco Scandi tree, heart and reindeer mugs, £2 each; Scandi gravy boat, £4; Scandi three-dip dish, £10; Scandi rectangular platter, £6.50; all Tesco


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THREE OF THE BEST

PAPER DECORATIONS



From top: honeycomb ball decorations, £6.99 for three (one red 30cm diameter ball and one red and one white 25cm diameter ball), Ginger Ray. Red **paper star decoration,** £1, Asda. **Paper chain kit,** £1, Poundland

1 HOUSE-SHAPED LANTERNS LEND A CHILDLIKE MAGIC to the celebrations. *Red metal house lantern, £5, Tesco*

2 DISPLAY YOUR CARDS using wooden clothes pegs and a length of chunky wool – it's quick and easy and looks great too. *Cards, from £5 for a set of 16; single wrap, from £4; giftwrap packs, from £10; all Bhs*

3 SAY 'NO' TO WASHING UP this holiday season with recyclable festive paper place settings. *Large red-and-white paper dinner napkins, £4 for 20; small paper napkins, £3.50 for 40; paper plates, £4 for eight; festive ribbon, £4 for four designs, 1.5m each; all Talking Tables*

4 CHILDREN WILL LOVE a delightful advent tree like this. You can have fun sourcing small gifts for the compartments and the calendar can be used over and over again. *Advent tree, £12, Asda.* For more advent calendar ideas, see our *Christmas Countdown* on p6. HB

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

COMPILED BY DIANA CIVIL

Storemags.com

MAGIC KINGDOM

Set vintage-style decorations against sparkling crystal for a fairy-tale feel

CONJURE UP A MAGICAL TABLESCAPE by dressing a white tablecloth and china with lustrous decorations and gleaming glassware. *Cakestand, £25; decorations, from £2.50 each; vintage-style glass tabletop tree, from £15; champagne flutes, £25 for four; mistletoe and holly 'Fill Your Own' crackers, £5 for six; LSA Serve Trifle glasses, £45 for four; candelabra, £50; tealight holder, from a selection; all John Lewis*



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THREE OF THE BEST

SHINING EXAMPLES



From top: Home Collection Platinum Band 12-piece **dinner set,** £40, Sainsbury's. Silver Lustre **wine goblet,** £7 for two, Tesco. Silver and white **crackers,** £10 for eight, Asda

1 ADD A THEATRICAL NOTE TO THE TABLE with glittering mask ornaments for your guests. *Glitter mask decoration, £2, Asda*

2 PERSONALISE PLACE SETTINGS by scribing each guest's name in metallic pen on a bauble. *Similar gold pearl bauble, £6.59 for 20, Xmas Direct. Similar plate, Wedgwood Pashmina, £35, House of Fraser*

3 SUSPEND A CORNUCOPIA of decorations from a pendant fitting using invisible thread or ribbon. *Matilda chandelier, £180; glitter bird tree decoration, £5 for three; hanging ornaments (clockwise from top): pink baubles, £12 for 16; onion swirl bauble, £7; silver beaded bauble, £7; mercury finial tree decoration, £8; glass silver glitter bauble, £5; sequin butterfly tree decoration, £5; mercury heart tree decoration (centre), £6; all House of Fraser*

4 RAISE A TOAST to celebrate the season with some elegant glasses. *Gold Glimmer Saucers, £24, for four, Next Home*

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THREE OF THE BEST

FAIRY-TALE DECORATIONS



From top: Party Globe **dog decoration,** £10, Berry Red. **Frog decoration,** £14.95, Liberty. Glitter **unicorn decoration,** £5, House of Fraser



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1 **INCORPORATE A TOUCH OF NOSTALGIA** with cute vintage-look cherub decorations and candles. *Cherub candles, from £4.95; Vintage Rose tealight holder, £5.95; all Nordic House*

2 **TOP THE TREE** with a charming fairy. *Gisela Graham iridescent tree-top fairy, £13.50, The Contemporary Home*

3 **TOO GOOD TO SAVE JUST FOR CHRISTMAS** – once Twelfth Night has passed, you could keep out one or two of these beautiful accessories on a shelf or mantelpiece for year-round sparkle. *Bell jar, £25; pearl baubles, £12 for 16; bird mercury tealight holder, £8; birdcage tealight holder, £20; glitter berry wreath, £30; mistletoe garland, £6; all House of Fraser*

4 **GET CREATIVE** with this year's gorgeous baubles and hang them from shimmering ribbon. *Gold glitter birdcage decoration, £2 each or £4 for three; pink-and-gold bauble, 50p for three; other baubles, £3 for 40; all Tesco*

storemags

SET A BEWITCHING MOOD with a frothy white tree and a mountain of parcels wrapped in shimmering silver and pastel pink. *White iridescent crystal tree, £150; tree decorations, from £3 each; bell jar, £25; lace wrapping paper, £5 a roll; Sussex armchair, £999; silver berry wreath, £30; birdcage tealight holder, £20; bird mercury tealight holder, £8; all House of Fraser*

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EXTEND THE FAIRY WONDERLAND LOOK into the guest bedroom with twinkling white fairylights, mercuried glass decorations and a scattering of tealights. *Pre-lit gold glitter deer, £20; decorations, from £2.50 each; vintage-style bead garland, £8 (excluding lights); jam jar tealight holders, £2.50 each; Neom candles, from £15; filigree tealight holder, £10; laser-cut metal tree (on shelf), £12; similar bed, Alice High End double bedstead, £375; Ivory Trail bedspread, £120; white bedlinen, from a selection; all John Lewis*

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1 SWEETLY SCENTED hyacinths bring a special, spring-like touch to a room and also make a wonderful gift. *Hyacinth arrangement with baubles and fairylights in glass vase, £30, Marks & Spencer*

2 IF THE FAMILY'S COMING TO YOU pile the presents high and decorate in frosted silver and white. *Winter Romance wrapping paper, £5 for three rolls; glitter pick, £1; roses, £2 for six; all Asda*

3 GO TO TOWN and decorate every nook and cranny of your home with frosted pastel decorations for an enchanted feel. *7ft Vintage blue pine tree, £180; decorations, from £2.50 each; glass mirrors, from £10 each; cabinet with rose fabric, £60; glitter reindeer, £5; jam jar tealight holders, £2.50 each; Neom candles, from £15 each; laser-cut metal tree, £12; vintage-style glass tabletop trees, from £15 each; gift bag, from £3; all John Lewis*

4 SHOW OFF YOUR CHRISTMAS CARDS pegged close together onto snowy white or metallic ribbon. *Charity cards, £2.50 for 12, Tesco* HB

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

THREE OF THE BEST

CANDLEHOLDERS

From top: large silver-footed glass **hurricane lamp** (H30cm), £37.50, Velvet Brown. Filled **bird candle,** £7.50, Marks & Spencer. Christmas Past **tealight holder,** £5.95, Nordic House

COMPILED BY DIANA CIVIL. PHOTOGRAPH LIVING4MEDIA

CHRISTMAS PAST

Get a nostalgic look with fruit and foliage, charming decorations and tasty homemade treats

MAKE AN ENTRANCE
with this large everlasting festive wreath, which will look good year after year. *24-inch wreath with fruit, £20, Tesco*



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THREE OF THE BEST

SPECIAL TOUCHES





From top: Pollock's Victorian Theatre **Christmas card,** £7.95, Liberty. Traditional giftwrap **tags,** £2 for three, Hobbycraft. Bell and button **small tree,** £5.50, mygifttree.com

1 PICK AN OLD-FASHIONED FAVOURITE – beautifully illustrated robins often appeared on Victorian Christmas cards. *Robin bauble, £2, The Contemporary Home*

2 TARTAN MAKES A CLASSIC ADDITION to the festive table. These jolly crackers with song and carol titles come in two contrasting designs. *Crackers, £12 for 12, Next Home*

3 SANTA CLAUS WILL DEFINITELY want to pay a visit to fill these gorgeous stockings. Pick one for each member of the family and hang them in a row. *Tartan stockings with decorative trim, £3.99 (small); £10 (large); Dobbies Garden Centres*

4 NO ROOM FOR A TREE? This Christmas tree wall sticker takes up no space at all. Adhesive free and printed on clear plastic, it's quick and easy to fix in place and won't leave any sticky residue once removed. *Scene Setter Spruce Tree, £6, Talking Tables*

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THREE OF THE BEST

CHINA COLLECTIBLES







From top: Christmas Tree **jug,** £30, Spode. Holly-print **mug,** £8, Laura Ashley. Hutschenreuther large Christmas **serving platter,** £67, Lux Deco



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1 **EMBOSSED PLACEMATS** look smart and protect the tabletop too. They also go perfectly with tartan. *Set of four embossed placemats and coasters, £18; tartan runner, £12; Cameron 12-piece dinner set, £32; all Next Home*

2 **IT'S NICE TO HAVE SPECIAL TINS** for Christmas. This cheerful set is ideal for your home bakes. *Carnival tins, £12.95 for three, Dotcomgiftshop*

3 **MAKE IT A HOMESPUN CHRISTMAS** with hand-crafted treats to give to family and friends. See our recipes for baked goodies on p126 and homemade chocolates on p132. *Kilner jar, from £1.79; cinnamon sticks, £1.29 for eight; cookie cutter, £1; mini pegs, £1.29 for 50; ribbon and card, from a selection; all Hobbycraft*

4 **FOR A SEASONAL SPECTACLE** place table sparklers in the top of the Christmas pud or fruit such as pomegranates. Set aglow to get the celebrations off to a dazzling start. *Gold star sparklers, £5 for five, Talking Tables*

stockingsdirect.com

KEEP UP TRADITIONS with mulled wine and mince pies to welcome your guests over the holiday season. *Mixed pine garland, £30; decorations, from £2.50 each; Spode Rural Delamere for John Lewis hare mug, £10.50; Doris feast cheese platter, £29.95; LSA punch bowl and ladle, £70; Le Creuset casserole dish, from £92; all John Lewis*

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GO TO TOWN decorating your children's rooms using good old-fashioned paper chains and concertina garlands. *Paper garlands, £5 each; paper chains (on bedhead), £4.25; 8ft Fireside tree, £150; decorations, from £1.75 each; Lewis bear, £15; Santa sleigh sack, £30; felt snowman stocking, £7; Logan duvet cover, £30; pillowcases, £10 for two; Christmas charity panda, £15; Fairisle cushion, £20; Fairisle throw, £150; all John Lewis*

StoreMags.com



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THREE OF THE BEST TRADITIONAL TRINKETS





From top: Christmas **musical soldier,** £19.99, Homesense. Wooden **rocking horse decoration,** £11.99, mygifttree.com. Heaven Sends gingerbread **advent house**, £29.99, Mollie & Fred

1 GIVE SANTA PLENTY OF SPACE FOR PRESENTS with this generously proportioned sack – great for larger stocking fillers such as books and magazines. *East of India Do Not Open hessian sack, £4.99, Mollie & Fred*

2 TRADITIONAL DECORATIONS add a nostalgic touch to your tree. *Gisela Graham tin robins, £5.25 each, The Contemporary Home*

3 WHO CAN RESIST THE MAGIC of a snowglobe? This one features a character from the well-loved Christmas ballet, *The Nutcracker*. It's sure to be a talking point and might even inspire your festive decorating scheme. *Nutcracker snowglobe, £3, Tesco*

4 A MINIMALIST MINI TREE in fresh green and red adds a splash of seasonal colour to a tabletop or sideboard. You could even hang a few tiny decorations to dress it up. *Metal robin Christmas tree, £15; red hammered glass bauble, £1.99; both Dobbies Garden Centres* HB

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

COMPILED BY DIANA CIVIL

FRUITS OF THE FOREST

Be inspired by the natural world and its rustic charm

TWINKLING LIGHTS ON BARE BRANCHES create a homespun welcome. Brown paper parcels fit well with this look (see *A Perfect Wrap* on p78 for more wrapping ideas). *7ft twig tree, £60, Tesco*



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THREE OF THE BEST

WOODLAND WONDERS



From top: Hedgerow **pine cone candle,** £7, John Lewis. Forest Friends green felt **leaf decoration,** 50p, Wilko. Felt **mushroom decoration,** £7, House of Fraser

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1 FOR A COSY AMBIENCE place a row of wooden tealight lanterns on a tabletop in your hallway. *Gisela Graham Woodland tealight holders, £5 each, The Contemporary Home*

2 STRING APPLES onto sturdy wire then twist into a circle to make a simple wreath. Hang a gingerbread biscuit in the centre to continue the edible theme. *Wire, from a selection at Hobbycraft*

3 RUSTLE UP A WOODLAND SCENE with a fun group of birds and animals. *Decorative wooden tree, £4.99; toadstool candle, £12.99 for three; stag, £19.99; ceramic Crackle decorative birds and ceramic owl, £3.99 each; hanging hearts, £4.99; all Dunelm Mill*

4 SCENTED CANDLES ARE A MUST at Christmas for their fragrance and gentle glow. Place pillar candles on candle plates and decorate the base with pine cones and berries twisted onto wire. *Similar candles, Tindra scented block, £3.25 each, Ikea. Fir cones, 49p each; berries, from a selection; both Hobbycraft*



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THREE OF THE BEST PINE CONE WREATHS







From top: acorn and pine cone **heart wreath,** £14, Velvet Brown. Gisela Graham **Snowy Cone wreath,** £30, The Contemporary Home. **Pine cone wreath,** £50, House of Fraser



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1 **DRESS UP** your dining chairs with decorations attached to pretty ribbon tied in a bow. With fabric chairs use a small safety pin to fix in place. *Pair of Venice dining chairs, £79.99; wicker hearts, £1.99 each; fabric hearts, £2.99 each; ribbon, from a selection; all Dunelm Mill*

2 **GET AN INSTANT FOLKSY FOREST FEEL** with a ready-decorated miniature woodland tree. *45cm pre-lit potted artificial tree with berries, £22, Debenhams*

3 **FOR A NO-FRILLS LOOK** do away with the tablecloth and team white china with plain napkins, adding festive colour with berries. *For similar china and cutlery, try Zara Home. Similar washed linen napkins, £28 for four, The Linen Works*

4 **CUSTOMISE PLAIN CRACKERS** to go with your scheme. *Gold cracker kit, £3.99 for six; wooden star, £2.79 for 20; Christmas papers, £8 for 12; ribbon, from £1.05 a metre; pine cone, 49p; brown Kraft card, £3 for 20 sheets; all Hobbycraft*

FRAME YOUR WINDOWS with bountiful berry garlands held in place with screws for net-curtain wire. Team with an arrangement of bauble-festooned twigs for a wonderful view from both inside and out. *Similar garlands, 6ft Red Berry, £14.39 each, Elite Florist Supplies. Similar baubles, Festive Fete shatterproof mixed, £4 for 24, Asda. For similar wooden and ceramic bowls, try David Mellor*

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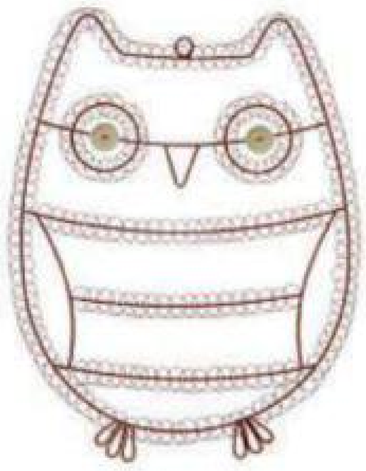


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THREE OF THE BEST FOREST CREATURES







From top: Brush **hedgehog** decoration, £3, Willko. Gisela Graham natural feather **clip-on partridge,** £4, The Contemporary Home. Wire **owl card holder,** £18, Next Home



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1 MAKE YOUR OWN AROMATIC Christmas pot-pourri with clove-studded oranges, dried orange slices, cinnamon sticks, nuts and pine cones gathered from the woods – it creates an interesting centrepiece for any room in your home.

2 LOOK OUT FOR BEAUTIFUL, BOLD TREE PRINTS to bring a woodland flavour to your living room or bedrooms. This cushion has a lovely natural texture as well. *Winter Tree cushion, £12, Cargo*

3 FOR AN INEXPENSIVE, EYECATCHING alternative to glittery giftwrap buy a large roll of brown parcel paper. Tie the presents with string then finish with forest-inspired embellishments such as paper leaves. *Brown parcel paper, £2.10 a roll; leaves made from assorted Kraft card, £3 for 20 sheets; Papermania brown string, £2 for 5m; all Hobbycraft*

4 GIVE THIS CUTE OWL a starring role on top of your tree. *Owl decoration, £2, Tesco*

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

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storemags.com

Motion

Fine Porcelain



This stylish **Motion** tableware from Maxwell & Williams offers a flowing modern look, perfect for any table. The curved edges set off the smooth white glazed finish to create a simple and contemporary collection that is perfect for home entertaining.



Fine Porcelain

Fridge, oven, microwave & dishwasher safe.

To find your local stockist or to view the full collection call **020 8200 5100** or visit **www.maxwellandwilliams.co.uk**

MAXWELL & WILLIAMS™

DESIGNER HOMEWARES

StoreMags.com

TOP
TRENDS

SHINING METALLICS

Go for glamour with gorgeous decorations in burnished tones

GROUP TOGETHER an assortment of accessories in different shapes and sizes but stick to one colour for maximum impact. *Stem tealight holders, £17 (small); £18 (tall); tealight holders, £5 each; tall candleholder, £25; large glitter starburst decoration, £18; bronze glitter cone-shaped trees, £18 each; all House of Fraser*



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THREE OF THE BEST

GOING FOR GOLD



From top: gold lustre beaded **placemat,** £8, Sainsbury's. Gold glass **pear decoration,** £8, Laura Ashley. Luxury gold **cracker,** £20 for 12, Debenhams

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1 FOR ULTIMATE DOOR OPULENCE this gold and purple wreath fits the bill – at an unbeatable price. *Wreath, £1, Poundland*

2 GOLD CAN BE UNDERSTATED TOO, especially against deep-coloured walls. Pick out key pieces in gold and team with simple place settings. *Bailey dining table, £549; round lacquer placemats, £15 for four; Manhattan dinner plates, £8 each; filled bird candle, £7.50; gold leaf champagne flutes, £7.50 each; rim candleholder, £19.50; dinner candle, £4 for 10; gold hammered vase, £45; hammered votive, £12; metal hammered bowl, £45; baubles, £4 each; gold Connoisseur cracker, £25 for six; all Marks & Spencer*

3 METALLIC GIFTWRAP IS A MUST to finish the look. *Metallic copper wrapping paper, £12.50 for a 10m x 70cm roll; ribbon from Box of Gorgeous Ribbons, £34; both Cox & Cox*

4 SHIMMERING GOLD CANDLES inject sparkle even when they're not lit. *Similar gold taper candles, £4.50 for four; floristrywarehouse.com*





THREE OF THE BEST

PRECIOUS METALS



From top: Black and gold hammered brass **bowl,** £19.99, Oscar & Eve. Gold **heart dishes,** £6 for two, Sainsbury's. Frosted **vase,** £29.50, Marks & Spencer





1 A MIXTURE OF METALLIC TONES AND TEXTURES will give your tree a luxe look. *Newfoundland luxury tree, £120; clockwise from top: brown glitter baubles, £4 each; gold tubular diamond tree decoration, £4; gold cube tree decoration, £7; large gilded baubles, £8 for two; gold textured bauble, £3; bronze and gold diamond bauble, £7; all House of Fraser*

2 MERCURIED GLASS has an enchanted, time-worn feel. *Mercurised star tree topper, £12, John Lewis*

3 TRANSFORM A METAL CHANDELIER into a spectacular centrepiece by threading with glittering decorations. *Snomys decorations, £7.50 for two; baubles, £7.50 for four; both Ikea. Similar chandelier, Lerdal, £30, Ikea*

4 MAKE A GRAND IMPRESSION in your hallway or living room with these illuminated parcels. They introduce a theatrical touch and a beautiful amber glow. *Giant light-up parcels, £34.99 for three, Homebase*

BANG ON TREND, these brass lanterns will look good in your home all year round. *Mini brass circular candle houses (H18.5cm), £32 each; Mini brass square candle houses (H15.5cm), £28 each; all Rowen & Wren*

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THREE OF THE BEST SPARKLING GLASSES



From top: Savoy **champagne flutes** by LSA, £25 for two, Zinc & Co. Handpainted Bulle **champagne glass,** £11.25, Boutique Provençale. Etched crystal Botanic Garden **wine glass,** £27 for four, Portmeirion



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1 **ADD BLACK ACCENTS INTO THE MIX** for a dramatic scheme with a sophisticated edge. *Gold stripe Casa Couture vase, £30; Biba Black Orchid and Plum candle, £20; votives, £22 for four; leopard-print wrapping paper, £5 a roll; Biba Graphic tree decorations, £8 each; gold and black glitter bauble, £6; gold and black orb, £12; bronze textured bauble (just seen), £6; all House of Fraser*

2 **UPDATE YOUR SOFA** with gleaming gold cushions. *Gold Ombre Geo silk cushion, £50, Lux Deco*

3 **TABLE FAVOURS** are easy to put together and a delightful gift at each table setting. Wrap a handful of gold dragées in a small circle of voile and tie with a pretty ribbon. *Similar gold sugared almonds, £15.99 for 500g, UK Wedding Favours*

4 **FANCY PAPER TABLEWARE** is great for impromptu gatherings. *Party Porcelain paper plates, £4.10 for 12 (small); £4.50 for 12 (large); paper table cover (140cm x 140cm), £4; gold mini crackers in two designs, £49.50 for 20; all Talking Tables* HB

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

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storemags

SLEEP IN STYLE

with the new House Beautiful sofa bed. . .



At night, the practical and stylish sofa converts into a spacious double bed

Toulon Dove Grey double **duvet cover,** £160; Cassis Rose **pillowcases,** £34.75 each; both The Linen Works. **Throw,** £45; **floral cushion,** £5; dimpled **mug,** £5.50; all Rigby & Mac. Wibbley **striped cushion,** £50; Wally **rug,** £395; both Loaf. Blu Dot Free Range Marble **side table,** £299; Twitter floor **lamp,** £250; both Heal's. Penguin Classics **book,** £9.99; Illume Boulangerie Jar **candle,** £14; both Anthropologie. **Dip Dye cushion** (below), £35, Rockett St George. **Pink cushion** (below), from £30, Tine K Home



. . . and sit in comfort too!

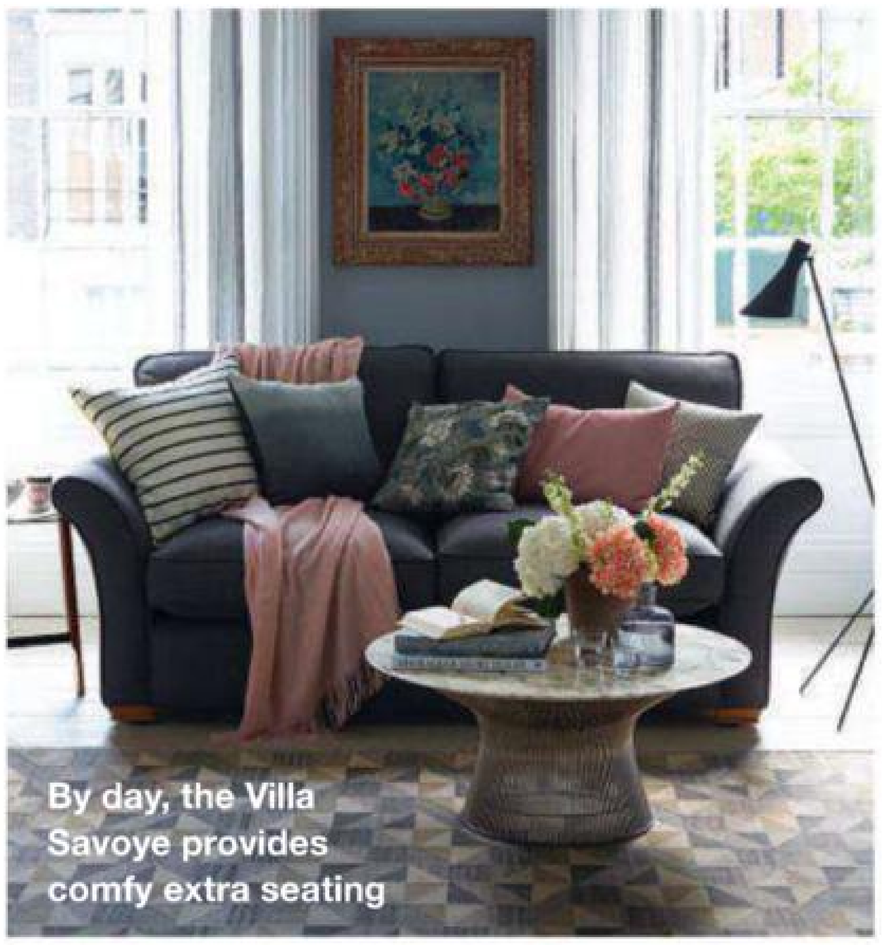
Expecting extra visitors over the Christmas period? We've launched the Villa Savoye sofa bed just in time for the busiest period of the year.

Hand built to order by expert craftsmen at DFS, the UK's number one sofa retailer, the new House Beautiful sofa bed, which folds out into a comfy double bed, is available in a range of stylish colours (see right).

Available in medium and large sizes, the bed converts back into a spacious sofa, giving you extra seating just when you most need it, too.

And there's a 10-year guarantee, so you can sit – or lie – back and relax. The Villa Savoye sofa bed costs £1,549 for the two-seater deluxe (H91cm x W191cm x D107/231cm) and £1,599 for the three-seater deluxe version (H91cm x W212cm x D107/231cm).

● The House Beautiful collection is available exclusively at DFS. Call 0800 110 5000 to find your nearest store or visit dfs.co.uk/housebeautiful to view the complete range.



By day, the Villa Savoye provides comfy extra seating

The Villa Savoye sofa bed comes in a range of gorgeous colours, including Teal and Grey, in a linen mix:
1 Oatmeal
2 Green
3 Oyster
4 Chocolate
5 Biscuit
6 Slate
7 Teal
8 Grey

PHOTOGRAPHS DAN DUCHARS

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

JUST FOR YOU

FREE*

SCENTED HYACINTHS

for every reader (*just pay £5.65 postage)

Enjoy these gorgeous plants presented in a beautiful gift bag, worth £14.99



'Pink Pearl' hyacinths in a gift bag



Jasmine on a hoop in a red pot



Narcissus 'Tête-à-tête' in a holly basket



Rose tricolour basket (miniature bouquet roses)



Christmas cactus in a Fantasia pot

Add a lovely natural touch to your home this Christmas with the fresh beauty and scent of indoor hyacinths. They'll look stunning in any room and make wonderful gifts for family and friends too. You'll receive three 'Pink Pearl' bulbs, planted in a pot top-dressed with moss and presented in a decorative hessian bag. Delivered when they're just sprouting, the hyacinths will bloom about three to four weeks after receipt and can be planted outdoors once they've finished flowering.

You can also take advantage of these special offers on other plants that are perfect for the festive season:

Offer 1 Christmas cactus This provides a blaze of blooms that reignites year after year. The iridescent flowers flare from tiny bauble-like buds at the tip of each stem – just in time to celebrate Advent. *Only £14.99*

Offer 2 Jasmine on a hoop Artfully coaxed into a circle, this fresh green wreath is spangled with pure white scented flowers that explode from delicate pink buds. *Only £17.99 or buy two for £32.98 – saving £3*

Offer 3 Narcissus 'Tête-à-tête' basket Bring a vibrant hint of springtime magic indoors with a festive display of cheerful narcissi. The basket is packed with bulbs that are just sprouting to ensure maximum enjoyment of the flowers by you or your recipient. Afterwards they can be planted in the garden for many more years of pleasure. *Only £16.99 or buy two for £29.98 – saving £4*

Offer 4 Rose tricolour basket These miniature bouquet rose bushes look charming in a weave-effect basket. The arrangement is narrow enough to dress up a mantelpiece or windowsill and will offer weeks of vibrant colour. Planted outdoors after the frosts, the roses will live on long after Christmas. *Only £24.99*

BY POST To claim your free hyacinths, tick the box on the order form below, fill in your name and address, then send the form including £5.65 for postage. (Do not send stamps, cash or postal orders.) To order any of the special offer collections, write the quantity required on the order form. Send your order form and payment to: House Beautiful Free Hyacinths Offer, Dept THB9, PO Box 162, Ipswich, Suffolk IP8 3BX. **BY PHONE** Call 0844 573 1686** and quote reference THB9 (£10 minimum telephone order). Lines open daily 8am-9pm.

Title _____ Initial _____ Surname _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Email address _____

			Price	Qty	Total
Offer 1	TCM24272	Christmas cactus	£14.99		
Offer 2	TCM24262	Jasmine on a hoop – one plant	£17.99		
	TCM15236	Jasmine on a hoop – two plants	£32.98		
Offer 3	TCM24271	Narcissus 'Tête-à-tête' basket – one plant	£16.99		
	TCM16667	Narcissus 'Tête-à-tête' basket – two plants	£29.98		
Offer 4	TCM24285	Rose tricolour basket	£24.99		
FREE	TCM10944	FREE* scented hyacinths in a gift bag. One application per reader	FREE*	1 { } tick	*£5.65 postage
THB9				TOTAL	£

I enclose a cheque made payable to T&M for £_____
(please write your name and address on the back; payment accepted in £ sterling only)

Or charge my Visa/Mastercard/Switch/Maestro card £ _____

Card number _____

Start date __ __ / __ __ Expiry date __ __ / __ __

Switch/Maestro issue no. __ __ Signature_____ Date _____

TERMS AND CONDITIONS Your FREE* hyacinths will be dispatched in time for Christmas for orders received before 18 December. Special offer collections will be sent out separately. Offer closes 2 January 2014. Only one application per reader; UK only. All offers are subject to availability. Please note that your contract for supply of goods is with Thompson & Morgan. Full terms and conditions apply and are available on request. ** Calls cost 10p a minute from BT landlines; calls from mobiles and other networks may cost more.

GIFTS GALORE

Make Christmas morning extra special for the ones you love with our fabulous selection

A display of unopened presents sets the festive scene. *Holographic white star (H50cm), £20; red and green bows and selected ribbons, from Woodland Gift Wrap Kit, £8; medium Woodland Star Bag, £2.75; large Badges Takeaway Box, £4; homemade gingham teddy bear, made from craft fabric; all John Lewis*

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GIFTS FOR HOME LOVERS



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1 Great for retro fans, this ceramic vase is in the season's favourite shade.
Madison vase, £40, Habitat

2 This festive doormat is machine washable, so you can freshen it up before putting it away for next year.
Robin & Snowflakes doormat, £39.95, Beyond the Fridge

3 A classic British-made design, this will steal the show.
London table light in London Red, £399, Original BTC

4 Add some designer sparkle with this gold coloured Christmas candle.
Star by Julien Macdonald candle, £8, Debenhams

5 Botanical prints have timeless appeal.
Apple canvas (H70cm x W50cm), £70, Laura Ashley

6 Motivate someone to get organised with this smart set of boxes, ideal for storing everything from documents to magazines.
Storage boxes, £35 for three, Bhs

7 Who doesn't love a reindeer?
Appliqué stag cushion, £35, Marks & Spencer

8 Just the thing for stylish pooches – and their owners too!
Hand-crafted Hoxton Harris Tweed dog bed, from £210 for 63.5cm diameter, Love My Dog

9 A snuggly plaid blanket is a cosy winter warmer.
Woolen plaid blanket, £79, Toast

10 The only dilemma will be which jewel shade to choose – Petrol, Smoke, Purple, Olive Green, Magenta, Peach or Clear.
Glass candlesticks, £9.95 each, Nordic House

11 Go Fairtrade with beautiful hand-woven baskets made by women in Swaziland.
Gone Rural red block weave baskets, small, £40; medium, £60; large, £100; all Shake the Dust

12 Brightly coloured frames are perfect for displaying black and white photos.
Square Button frame, £7.50, Marks & Spencer

13 Want a classy stocking filler? This fits the bill.
Hammered metal tealight holder, £10, Laura Ashley

14 Not your ordinary doggy doorstop – this one's made from a lambswool check fabric and filled with lavender.
Sausage dog doorstop, £58, Catherine Tough

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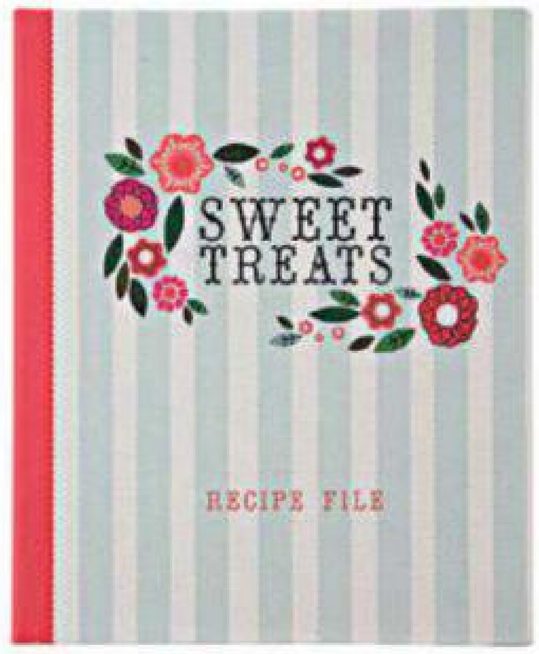
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GIFTS FOR COOKS



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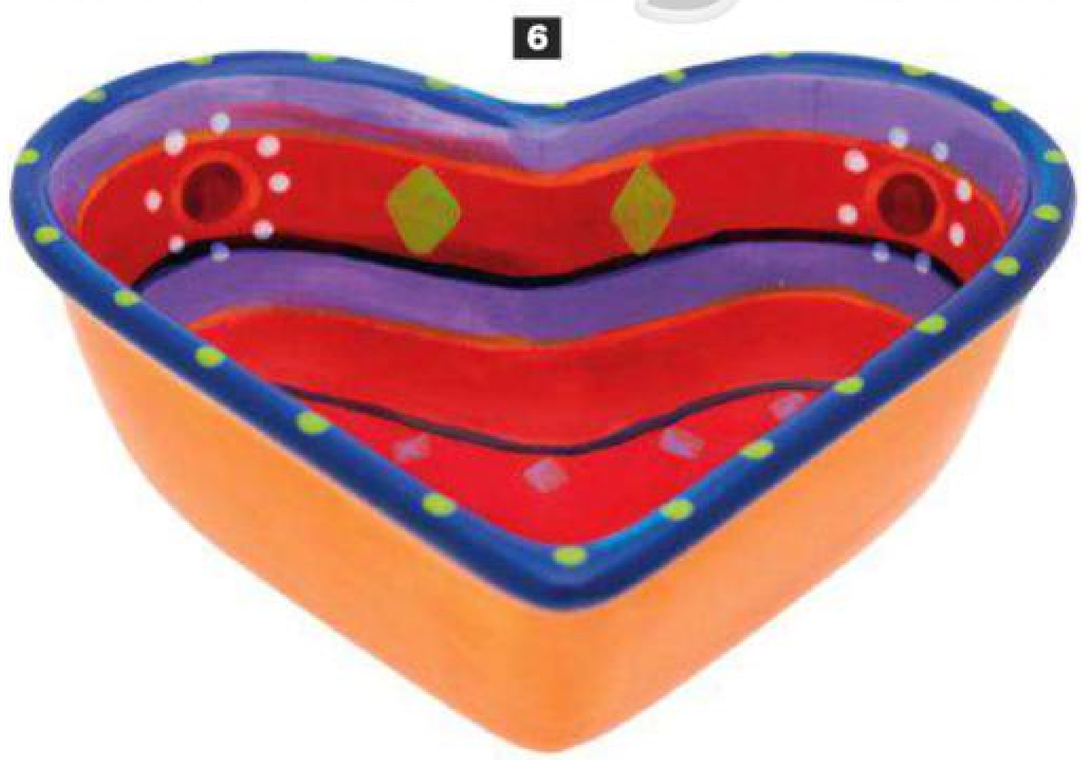
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1 Add a splash of Mediterranean colour with these fun salt and pepper mills.
Pepper mills, £8 each, Bhs

2 Deck the festive kitchen in British-made, pure cotton textiles.
Christmas apron, £25; Christmas Stag, Christmas Robin and Noël tea towels, £7 each; all Jan Constantine

3 Cakes, cupcakes, pies and pastries, cookies and candy, desserts, bread and seasonal treats... this pretty file has seven illustrated dividers with pockets for keeping recipe cards and magazine clippings.
Sweet Treats recipe file, £15, Berry Red

4 Aga owners will love a sweet, machine washable cover like this one for keeping the hob clean and free of scratches.
Stag hob cover, £11, Sophie Allport

5 This jazzy mixer comes with a five-litre bowl, beater, dough hook, whisk and flexible beater.
Kenwood kMix KMX99, £400, Debenhams

6 A joyful handpainted pottery dish is perfect for festive nibbles. This one's microwave and dishwasher safe too.
Claudine heart dish, £14.75, Boutique Provençale

7 Quirky and very practical, these measuring spoons range in size from a quarter of a teaspoon up to a tablespoon.
Bliss In The Woods Peacock measuring spoons, £15, Unique and Unity

8 Make a baker happy with a Christmas shortbread mould.
Vintage-style stoneware shortbread baker, £30, Roullier White

9 This colourful baking set includes a rolling pin, timer, spatula and glazing brush.
Baking gift set, £40, Joseph Joseph

10 Beating eggs and cream is a doddle with this automatic whisk. Simply press and release the handle and the whisk rotates.
Automatic whisk, £7.95, Divertimenti

11 Let it snow with flour thanks to this retro-inspired sifter!
Flour sifter, £9.50, Marks & Spencer

12 Store tempting treats in these adorable tins with images by illustrator Tom Frost.
Wildlife cake tins, £26 for three, Magpie

13 Lovers of fine design will appreciate this citrus press, which gets the maximum juice from your lemons, limes, oranges and grapefruits.
The Citrus Press, Sage by Heston Blumenthal, £199.95, John Lewis

14 Show off Christmas bakes on this decorated stand.
Cake stand, £25, Debenhams

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GIFTS FOR FOODIES

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StoreMags.com



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1 One for *Doctor Who* aficionados: espresso cups with the iconic Tardis, a Dalek and a Cyberman.
Dr Who Home espresso cups and saucers, £35 for four, Hintons Home

2 Foodies will drool at the sight of these fine sweet and savoury goodies.
Gourmet gift hamper, £40, Dobbies Garden Centres

3 This silver-plated shaker and matching stirrer have a sophisticated vintage feel.
Cocktail shaker, £79; stirrer, £12; both Brissi

4 Useful to have on hand: an attractive pot for baking brie in the oven.
Brie baker, £18, Debenhams

5 There's nothing like an espresso and cappuccino machine to bring an Italian flavour to the kitchen.
Francis Francis X1 in Deep Blue, £399, Illy

6 A couple of hand-thrown earthenware ceramic pieces would make a great gift duo.
Mug, £27; jug, £39; both Toast

7 In bright holiday red, this is a jolly alternative to the traditional teapot.
Essentials teapot, £15, Bbs

8 Preserving jars are ultra versatile. You can even transform them into aromatic lanterns with a few floating candles and sprigs of herbs.
Clip jars, small, £2; large, £4; both Tesco

9 Stocking fillers don't come much tastier than this. Delicious poured over ice cream.
Liquid Sea Salted Caramel Sauce, £7.99, Lakeland

10 Gin gets in the festive spirit with a hint of spiced orange.
Spiced Orange Edinburgh Gin, £18, John Lewis

11 Chocolate lovers will thank you for this stocking-shaped gift box of delicious truffles.
Praline Truffles Christmas stocking, £6.50, Prestat

12 A selection of 14 hand-baked, hand-iced Christmas cookies presented in a tin.
Merry Christmas Biscuit Tin, £34.99, Biscuit Village

13 This trio of delights offers fudge and shortbread, complete with tea to wash them down.
Gift box set of tea, fudge and biscuits, £20, Laura Ashley

14 Mince pies always go down well. These are made to Betty's own recipe, with vine fruits, golden cherries, almonds, stem ginger and seasonal spices.
Mince pies, £8.40 for 12, Bettys (see p130 if you plan to make your own)

15 Younger members of the family will fall for this lovable milk chocolate fawn with white and dark chocolate details.
Chocolate fawn, £4.95, Bettys

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GIFTS FOR TECH GEEKS

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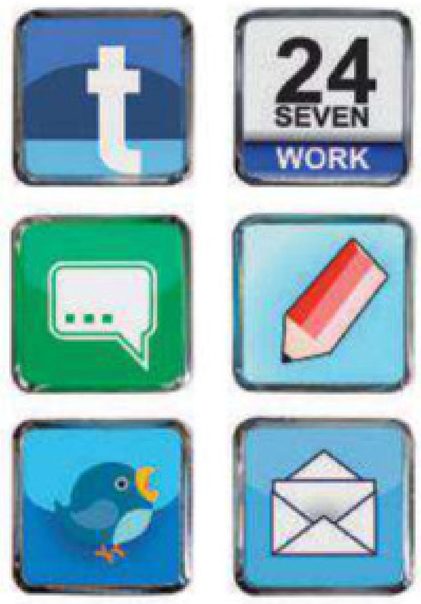




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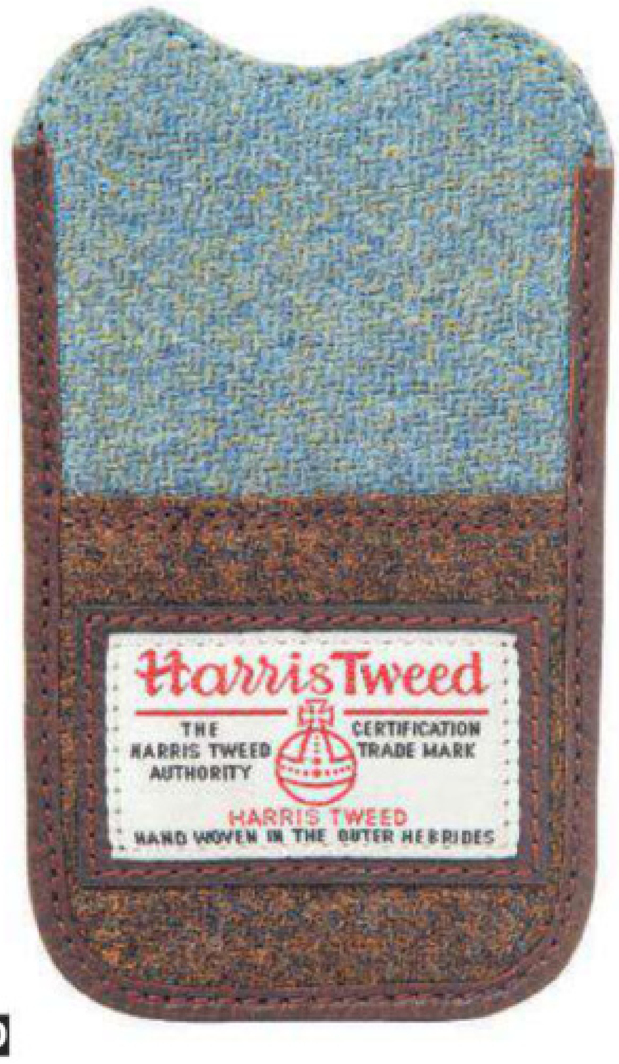
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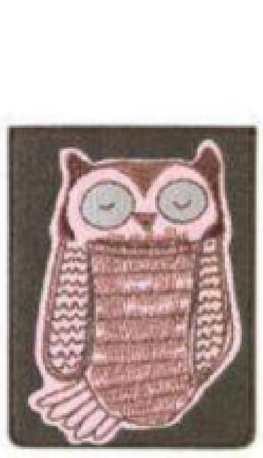


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1 An old-fashioned-style phone gets a modern makeover with push button dialing, a redial button, ringer volume on/off switch, tone/pulse switch and earpiece volume control.
Wild & Wolf Trim Phone in red, £29, Red Candy

2 High quality performance and a classic design come together in these funky headphones. They have a 120cm tangle-resistant fabric cord and are compatible with any music players using 3.5mm standard.
Urbanears Plattan headphones in Grape, £50, The Conran Shop

3 This portable DAB+/FM radio with leather surround has up to 15 hours' battery life. It also plays and charges iPhones and iPods and has auxiliary input for use with other music sources.
Polka Dot Radio iPhone, £130, Emma Bridgewater

4 Keep hands toasty when using touch screen devices outside with these special gloves with conductive fingertips. Choose from pink or black.
Touch screen gloves, £4.99, Town & Country

5 Small and lightweight, with a 21mm objective lens and 8x magnification, these binoculars are ideal for everything from watching birds and wildlife to sport. Also available in blue.
Nikon Aculon T01 binoculars, £59.95, John Lewis

6 App addicts can mix and match their cufflinks with this boxed set of six designs.
App cufflinks, £16 for six, The Great Gift Company

7 Splash away in the bathroom to your heart's content with waterproof speakers.
Jam Wireless Speaker, £39.99, Lakeland

8 This compact wall charger comes with a 1.5m orange cable and handy storage bag. Works for Apple, Blackberry, Samsung and HTC devices.
Juice Multi Juice Home Charger, £14.95, John Lewis

9 One for the adventurous photographer: a retro camera that lets you take square and half-frame shots on 35mm film. It also has multiple and long exposure features.
Diana Mini and Flash, £89, Science Museum Shop

10 Get in on the trend for Harris Tweed with this handsome phone cover.
Mobile Phone Slip, £19.50, Marks & Spencer

11 Perfect for the kitchen or home office, this retro radio has all the benefits of DAB technology. Two 10W speakers offer excellent sound and 10 presets mean you can quickly tune in to favourite stations.
Grange DAB radio, £79.95, John Lewis

12 Children and animal lovers will warm to these cute covers.
Woodland Owl Kindle case, £14; Fox iPad case, £16; both Paperchase

13 With interchangeable lenses, a diagonal mirror, tripod, 40mm wide field and 25/50 magnification, this telescope is suitable for beginners and enthusiasts alike.
Telescope, £28, The Great Gift Company

14 This attractive laptop case is made from faux leather and felt and embossed on the back with 'All Work and No Play'.
Gentlemen's Hardware 13" Laptop Case, £39.95, Wild & Wolf

15 Go patriotic with a Union Jack smart phone docking station. A tactile rubberised finish makes it nice to hold and you can answer calls on the traditional handset.
Ice Phone Union Jack, £34.95, Red5

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GIFTS FOR ORGANISERS







1 Make someone smile with these storage tins featuring artist Carola Van Dyke's eccentric appliqué textile animals – fun for a home office. *Beasties tins, £16 for three, Magpie*

2 It'll be easy to lay your hands on back issues of House Beautiful if they're lined up in these handmade magazine files. Available in Pigeon and Jelly (shown) or Rabbit and Cabbage. *A4 magazine file, £22, Thornback & Peel*

3 Choose from a selection of illustrations and font styles to create a personalised set of stationery. Includes 15 sheets of premium quality A5 paper, 15 envelopes and 15 stickers. *Christmas writing paper and sticker set, £22, Honey Tree Bespoke Stationers*

4 Keep bedroom floors tidy with this drawstring laundry bag in unbleached cotton. *Teenage Dirtbag laundry bag, £12.75, Hunkydory Home*

5 A great stocking filler for anyone with a liking for lists. *Woodlanders Trio list pad, £6, Paperchase*

6 This padded monogrammed washbag has two open pockets for organising your toiletries. It's 100% cotton and can be sponge-wiped clean. *Alphabet washbag, £19.50, Oliver Bonas*

7 Two-toned accessories are a must-have this season. *Bloomingville wicker storage baskets, £140 for three, House Envy*

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I'VE BEEN BAKING

BBBB

FREE LIMITED EDITION CAKE TIN

When you buy two promotional packs*

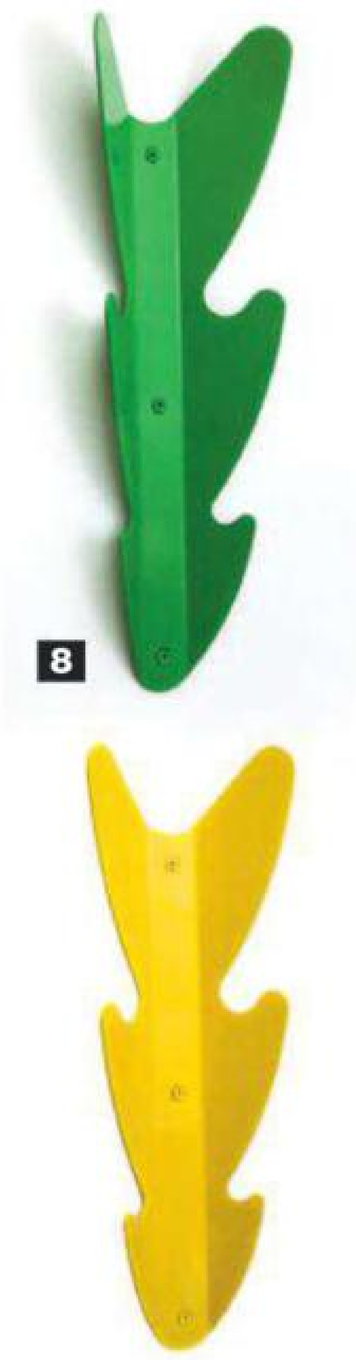
SOMEONE'S BEEN BAKING WITH BILLINGTON'S

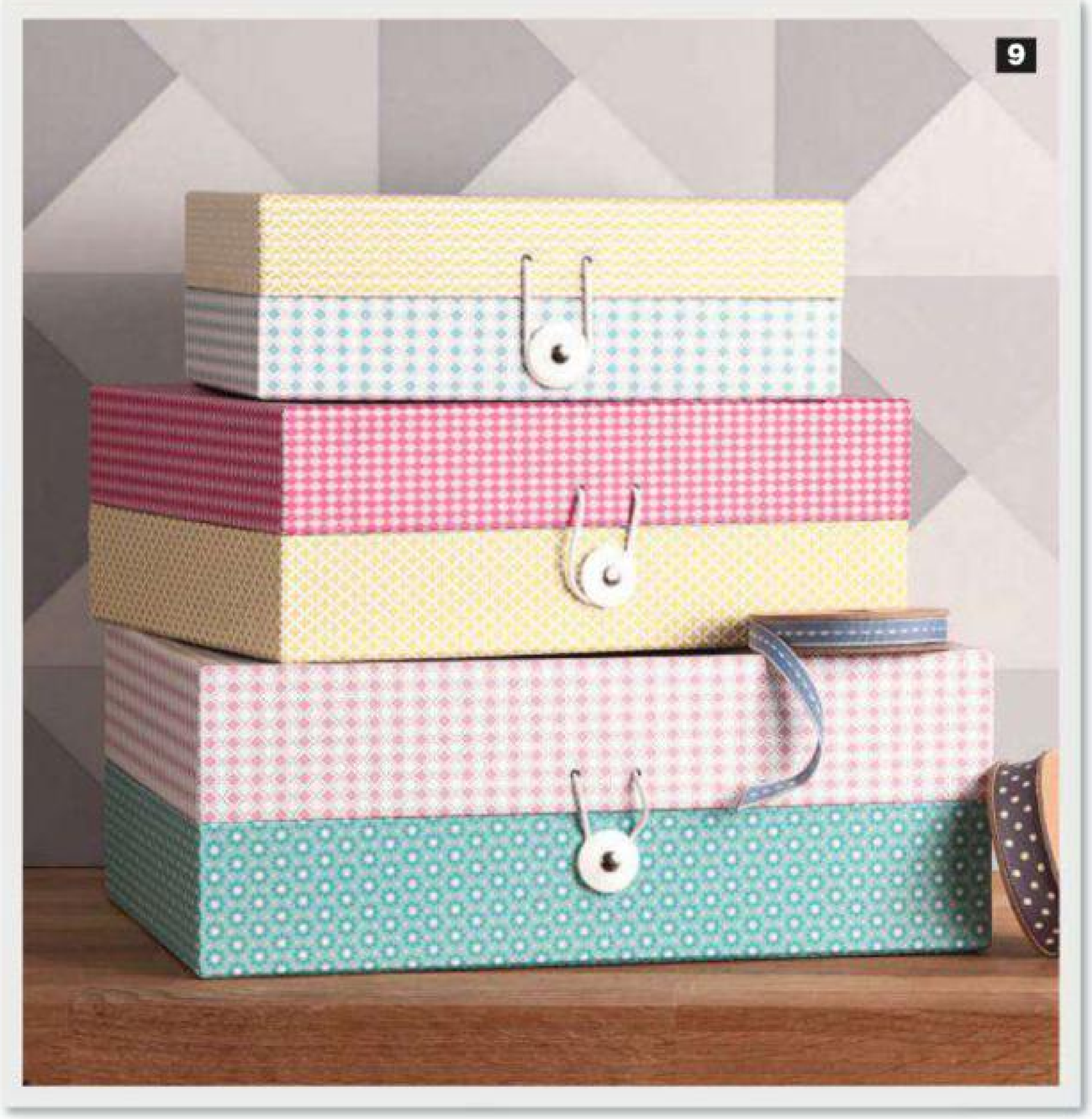


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ORGANISERS continued

8 These powder-coated steel coat hooks can be used to hang everything from bracelets and bags to bathrobes and coats.
Leaf coat racks, £35 each, Matteo Gerbi

9 Practical for storing odds and ends and pretty enough to be left out on display.
Storage boxes (largest H12cm x W32cm x D24cm), £29.99 for three, The Contemporary Home

10 This cute vintage-style peg bag will brighten up wash day. Available in a range of dotty and floral fabrics.
Polkadot peg bag, £7.95, Love From Kent

11 See what time it is in the middle of the night with a retro alarm clock that has glow-in-the-dark hands.
Alarm clock, £10, Imperial War Museum Shop

12 The Filofax gets a fashionable fluorescent pink makeover.
A5 organiser, £80, Filofax

13 A special gift for sewing fans – and one they're likely to put on display.
Chalet sewing basket, £60, Cath Kidston

14 This set of wipe-clean woven polypropylene storage baskets will help get bathroom clutter under control.
Woven baskets (largest H23cm x W27cm x D38cm), £28 for three, House of Fraser


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CONTINUED OVER NEXT PAGE

StoreMags

Christmas collection

Gifts for you and your home this season



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British manufacturer SofaSofa's latest range contains more than sixty different sofa styles, with something to suit every taste and budget. They have a wide selection of fabrics from which to choose, including the latest linens, wools, velvets and leathers. SofaSofa have been producing sofas by hand in the UK for over 30 years and all products come with a no-quibble 21 day money-back guarantee. What's more, SofaSofa deliver anywhere on the UK mainland, usually in around four weeks.

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AN UNEXPECTED GIFT

These delightful solid bronze 'Playing Elephants' (4.5cm high, limited edition of 250) by Jonathan Sanders are hand cast in Britain by Nelson and Forbes, presented in an elegant gift box with certificate and make an enchanting gift. For a 15% discount across the range quote "HB257" before 13 December, reducing Playing Elephants from £195 to £165.75 per pair.

Call 01442 256290 or visit **nelsonandforbes.co.uk** to claim your discount or request a brochure.

PERFECT PRESENTS

GIFTS FOR GARDEN LOVERS















1 Made from wood with a zinc roof, the Insect Hotel has four sections specially designed for green lacewings, red mason bees, earwigs and ladybirds. *Wooden Insect Hotel, £22, Willow & Stone*

2 Year-round inspiration for veg growers. *Vegetable weekly calendar, £13, Hen & Hammock*

3 This retro-inspired coated canvas gardening apron has three handy pockets. *Orla Kiely gardening apron, £29.95, Wild & Wolf*

4 In a pretty aqua shade, these secateurs are practical too, with rubber coated handles for a good grip. *The Thoughtful Gardener secateurs, £15, Zinc & Co*

5 Garden in style with a kneeler in a gorgeous bird design and coordinating polkadot gloves. *Mini Dot & Garden Bird Garden Kneeler & Gloves Set, £25, Cath Kidston*

6 These fine bone-china mugs come in a lettuce, beetroot, carrot or cauliflower design. *Vegetable mugs, £9.50 each, Divertimenti*

7 Gardeners will be grateful to have string on tap. *Watering can twine dispenser, £13.49, The Chelsea Gardener* HB

★ *For more great gift ideas see our Dec/Jan issue out 5 Nov*

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FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

WORDS SARA EMSLIE

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A PERFECT WRAP

A hand-crafted finish makes your gifts extra gorgeous

MIX AND MATCH

Stacks of presents tied together with wide ribbon and pretty patterned gift bags look stunning and are easy to carry. Gift bags and boxes are also a great solution for odd-shaped gifts. *Gold Foil printed flatwraps, £2.25 a sheet; gift bags, from £3.75 each; Kraft gift boxes, from £2.50 each; all Paperchase*


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1 FESTIVE HOME

Pile presents under the tree as soon as you wrap them to add an air of magic. Go for a few types of plain paper and pretty ribbons to match the style and colours of your tree decorations. *Ribbon and decorations available from Dobbies at Tesco*

2 SACK OF PRESENTS

As a stylish alternative to a traditional pillowcase, load up this Santa sack with numerous treats for any age. *Handprinted Santa Sack, £35, The Original Pop Up Shop*

3 PICKED FOR YOU

Sprigs of eucalyptus or rosemary make fragrant embellishments on simple brown paper. *Wildflower floral paper, £9.50 for three sheets; hand-stamped gift tags, £4.75 for eight; both The Original Pop Up Shop*

4 SIMPLY SWEET

Dress up small presents with ease using this set, consisting of a 10m roll of brown stitched grosgrain ribbon, a 10m roll of burnt orange and brown striped ribbon, 20 luggage tags and 10 dried orange slices. *Autumn ribbon and tag set, £15, Jane Means*

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OPEN DAY

Will this quirky warning deter people from taking a sneaky peek? *Red Merry Christmas paper tape, £3; Christmas sack, £7.50; Do Not Open pillow-box, £2.50; Let It Snow wrapping paper, £7.95 for five sheets; Christmas tags, £3.60 for six; all Rockett St George*









1 HIGH STREET HELPER

Wrapping paper sets are ideal when you have big presents, as the paper usually comes in rolls. *Stag wrapping paper from a set of four rolls, ribbons, tags and bows, £6; Heart paper from a set of two rolls and gift tags, £4; Snowflake wrapping paper from a set of two rolls, £4; all Next Home*

2 CARD CRAFT

Personalise luggage tags by sticking buttons on them in a creative pattern. *Brown paper, £3.99 for an 8m roll; red gift tags, £1 for a pack of 10; vintage buttons, from a selection; red twine, 50p a metre; red and white polka-dot ribbon, £2.99 for 3m; With Love rubber stamp, £2.50; all The Oak Room*

3 NOSTALGIC PRINT

The little ones will be excited to tear open this cute retro paper to see what toys are hiding inside. *Snomys wrapping paper, £2.25 a roll, Ikea*

4 PERFECT PATTERN

Create cards, gift tags and wrapping paper using festive stamps. *Mistletoe sprig stamp, Caribou stamp and Santa's tree stamp, all from £3.95 for a 1in stamp; ink pads, from £5; all The English Stamp Company*

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CHRISTMAS PARCELS
StoreMags



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1 NEW LEAF
This beautiful boxed tag and twine set comes with 21 leaf-shaped, ice-white tags and 3m of natural twine. *Leaves set, £12, Rowen & Wren*

2 SPECIAL DELIVERY
Decorate gifts with fun stickers. *Christmas stickers, £9.50, The Original Pop Up Shop*

3 WINTER WHITES
For a luxe finish, use more than one ribbon and metallic paper. *Chevron wrapping paper, £8 for three sheets; Geometric and Velvet ribbon, £10 for a set of two rolls; both The White Company*

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BRILLIANT BAGS AND BOXES Put a little tissue paper inside with the gift and you're done!



Small Red Joy gift bag, £3; Red Joy bottle bag (not shown), £4; both John Lewis



Small House gift box, £3.50, The Contemporary Home



Christmas Pudding bottle bag, £4.95, Selfridges

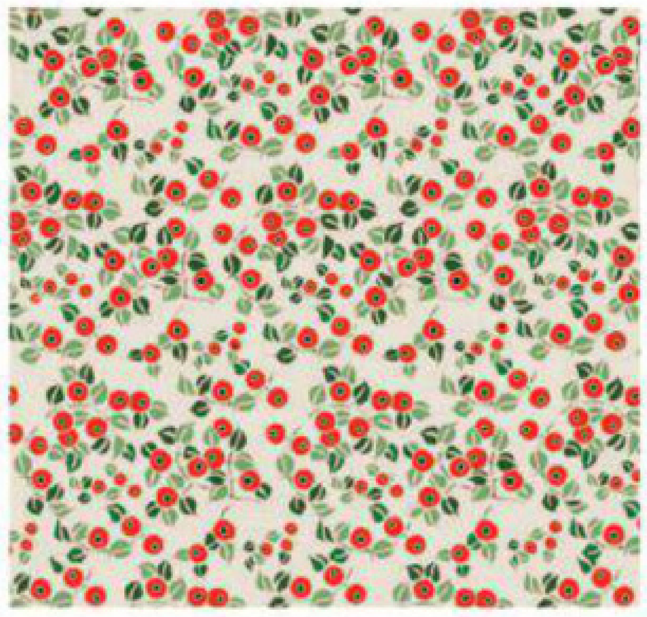
PERFECT PAPERS Stylish festive patterns to get you started



Dove Christmas wrapping paper, £2.20 a sheet, Caroline Gardner



Merry Christmas paper, £10 for four mixed rolls, Rockett St George



Berries wrapping paper, £1.50 a sheet, Emily Burningham

GORGEOUS TRIMS Festive ribbons and sticky tapes instantly uplift plain papers



Do Not Open ribbon, £2.99 for a 5m roll, The Oak Room



Roll of twine with wooden shapes, £5 for a 5m roll, The Contemporary Home



Merry Christmas paper tape, £4.50, Selfridges

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

WORDS ALAINA BINKS



Store towels for guests in these soft Round Jute baskets, from £15 each



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HANDMADE
DECORATIONS

SILVER LIGHT

Enchant family and friends with a fairy-tale Christmas table decorated with silver and white pieces

Words **CATHERINE WORAM** Photography **CAROLINE ARBER**

WORDS NAME SURNAME PHOTOGRAPHS NAME SURNAME

Create homemade sparkle with beautifully crafted decorations and crackers

WORDS NAME SURNAME. PHOTOGRAPHS NAME SURNAME

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PAPER POMPOMS

These large paper flowers are made using sheets of folded tissue paper. Simple but effective, they look stunning hung in groups above the dining table

MATERIALS

6 sheets of white tissue paper per pompom

Approximately 20cm strong ribbon per pompom

Piece of sheer ribbon (for hanging up each pompom)

Pencil

Sharp scissors



1 Lay six sheets of tissue paper flat on a table and begin folding the paper along the shorter edge in a concertina style, making each fold about 2.5cm wide. Continue folding until the sheet is pleated and you have a long narrow length of folded tissue paper. Repeat for the other pompoms.



2 Carefully fold the paper in half lengthwise and make a fold to indicate the centre. Tie the strong length of ribbon around this point and secure tightly with several knots. You can tie the ends of the sheer ribbon on at this stage as well, which will make it easier to hang the pompom flower.



3 Using the pencil draw a triangle at both ends of the folded tissue paper. Using scissors, cut out the pointed shape at one end of the tissue paper and repeat at the other end. You will probably need very sharp scissors to cut through all of the layers.



4 Fan out the paper folds at one end, doing this as carefully as possible to avoid tearing the delicate tissue paper.



5 Unfold the pleats of tissue paper and coax them into a flower shape. This needs to be done very gently as it's easy to tear the paper. Push your hand carefully inside the layers of tissue paper to separate them out and create the fluffy shape. Repeat for the other side of the flower. Hang your pompoms in clusters above the dining table using the sheer ribbon.

TOP TIPS

Cut the ends of the pompoms into other shapes like soft semi-circles to make each one slightly different.

Be candle aware – keep your pompom flowers a safe distance from any lit candles.

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Hang these beautiful easy-to-make pompoms in a cluster of three to make a dramatic statement

CONTINUED OVER PAGE

These delicate decorations add a special finishing touch to the festive table

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PRETTY BEADED HEARTS

Tiny glass beads are threaded onto wire to make these delicate hearts. Use them to decorate linen table napkins, beautifully wrapped gifts or the Christmas tree

MATERIALS

- 20cm silver wire, 0.8mm in diameter, per heart
- Glass rocaille beads
- Pliers (optional)
- Silver ribbon
- Scissors



1 Take a 20cm length of silver wire. Fold the wire in half and then carefully bend it into a V-shape to form the bottom of the heart.



2 Thread the beads onto both ends of the wire and continue threading until all of the wire is covered, leaving about 5cm bare at each end to form the hanging loop. Hold the wire ends and bend them inward to create the curved top of the heart. Twist the ends together to prevent the beads falling off the wire.





3 Twist the wire ends around the top of the heart and then twist the top ends of the wire together so they form a loop for hanging. You may find it easier to use pliers to do this if the wire is very strong. If you're making the hearts to decorate napkins, tie the ribbon around the napkin and thread the beaded heart onto one length of the ribbon. Finish tying the bow to fix the heart in position. Use scissors to trim the ribbon ends diagonally to prevent fraying.

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TOP TIP

Use beads in different sizes and colours to create different effects. For instance, brightly coloured red and green beads would give a more traditional Christmas look.

CHANDELIER DROP DECORATIONS

Suspended from sheer silver ribbon, these sparkling glass decorations look like ice crystals. They are stunning on the Christmas tree or tied to a special gift

MATERIALS

- Selection of chandelier drops
- Chandelier beads (with a hole at the top and bottom)
- Silver ring hooks, 1cm in diameter, for threading
- Pliers (optional)
- 13cm sheer ribbon, 10mm wide, per decoration
- Scissors



1 You can find exquisite chandelier drops and beads in different shapes and sizes on the internet from auction websites or chandelier specialists. Many sell a selection of both new and vintage designs. Bear in mind that larger chandelier drops will be quite heavy when hanging from your Christmas tree.



2 Open out the first silver ring hook and push the end through the hole at the top of a chandelier drop. You may find it easier to use pliers to do this, as the ends of the wire can be quite sharp and tend to spring back into shape.



3 Thread the ring hook attached to the drop onto one end of a chandelier bead and then continue threading together ring hooks and chandelier beads to get the look and length you want. Thread a final ring hook to the top bead so that you can thread through a ribbon.



4 Thread the ribbon through the top ring hook and tie a knot to form a hanging loop. Using scissors, cut the ends of the ribbon diagonally to stop the ends fraying.

Chandelier drops catch the light and make a beautiful alternative to plain fairylights

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For a special touch place personalised table gifts at the Christmas table

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SILVER BOX NAME PLACE HOLDERS

Ready-made gift boxes can be used to create a place setting and seasonal gift in one. Personalise with a wooden label inscribed with each guest's initial or name

MATERIALS

- Wooden labels
- Silver acrylic paint
- Paintbrush
- Small silver gift boxes with handles (flat-packed for assembly at home)
- Tissue paper
- Scissors
- Chocolates (or other tiny gifts)
- Fine black pen
- Narrow sheer ribbon, 5mm wide, for attaching the label
- 1 white artificial hydrangea flowerhead
- Hot glue gun or all-purpose glue (optional)



1 Paint the wooden labels on both sides with silver paint and allow them to dry completely. (If you're making a lot of boxes you could use silver spray paint to save time.)



2 Assemble the gift boxes and line them with a couple of sheets of tissue paper cut to fit. Add the chocolates or a special gift of your choice (see p132 if you want to make your own sweet treats). Fold the boxes closed. Use the fine black pen to write the initial or name of each of your guests on the labels, thread the ribbon onto the labels and tie them to the handles of the boxes.



3 Tuck a couple of artificial flowers pulled from the hydrangea flowerhead under the handle of each box or glue them in place on top of the box.



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SILVER CRACKERS

It's easy to make your own using cardboard rolls and wrapping paper – this way you can decorate them to match your festive theme

MATERIALS

- Sheet of wrapping paper, 35cm x 18cm, for each cracker
- Ruler and pencil
- Scissors
- 2 cardboard rolls, 8.5cm in length and 5cm in diameter
- 1 cardboard roll, 10cm in length and 5cm in diameter
- Hot glue gun (or all-purpose glue)
- Piece of 27cm cracker snap for each cracker (available at amazon.co.uk)
- Gifts or sweets (to fill the crackers)
- Length of ribbon, 18cm long and 35mm wide
- Approximately 1m ribbon, 15mm wide, for the band and ribbon bows
- 2 wire beaded picks (crystal beads on wire)
- 1 small wooden glitter decoration (for the front of each cracker)

TOP TIP

If you don't have time to make these Christmas crackers use wrapping paper and ribbons to cover ready-made crackers and pop some extra gifts inside for your guests!

Have fun embellishing the outside of the crackers and choosing novel gifts to go inside



1 Lay the sheet of wrapping paper flat on a table and fold one of the short edges over by 11cm toward the centre of the paper. Repeat for the other short side.



2 Using the ruler and pencil, mark out a series of lines, approximately 15mm apart, along the folded edges of the paper. Then use the scissors to cut into each mark by approximately 2cm.



3 Flatten the paper, then lay the larger roll in the centre and the two shorter rolls at each end so they are in line and parallel with the long sides of the paper. Roll the paper around the rolls and stick in place. Insert the cracker snap and the gift or sweet. Wrap the wider ribbon around the centre, with the raw ends at the back where the paper edges have been stuck down. Glue the ribbon and allow to dry.



4 Tie a length of narrow ribbon around the cracker where you cut the slits – do this carefully to avoid tearing the paper. Repeat at the other end of the cracker. Use the scissors to trim the ends of the ribbons diagonally to prevent them fraying.



5 Wind a wire beaded pick around the cracker on top of the narrower ribbon and twist the ends together to keep them in place. Trim the ends of the wire with the scissors if required. Repeat at the other end of the cracker.



6 Neatly glue another length of narrow ribbon over the wide ribbon in the centre of the cracker and allow to dry. Stick a wooden glitter decoration on top of the ribbon to finish.

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SILVER WREATH CENTREPIECE

Create a striking focal point by decorating a wreath with silver-sprayed pine cones, faux hydrangea flowers and pillar candles



Bring a woodland feel to the table with a glistening pine cone wreath

MATERIALS

- Small and medium natural pine cones (approximately 10 medium cones and enough small cones to fit around the base of the wreath)
- Silver spray paint
- Shallow box
- Scissors
- 1 white artificial hydrangea flowerhead
- Ready-made silver or white door wreath
- Hot glue gun (or strong all-purpose glue
- 3 pillar candles



1 Spray the pine cones with spray paint. It's advisable to do this outside, wearing a mask. Turn the pine cones over so they're covered with paint all round. You'll need to apply a few coats, so put the cones in a shallow box to dry between coats.



2 Use scissors to cut some smaller hydrangea flowers from the bloom. You will need to cut four or five of these for the wreath.



3 Glue the small pine cones to the base, close together. A glue gun will speed this up. Glue four or five hydrangea flowers to the top of the wreath, spaced evenly, then glue the larger pine cones in between. Put the candles inside the wreath.

★ *All makes are from* Christmas Crafts *by Catherine Woram (£14.99, CICO Books). Call 01256 302699* quoting GLR8UE to buy a copy at the special price of £10.99 including free UK mainland p&p. For more details visit cicobooks.co.uk.*



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La Cuisine 20cm and 24cm casserole set

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This family-sized multipurpose pan is ideal for casseroles, roasting and one-pot suppers. Made from high-quality cast iron with a 4L (7 pint) capacity, it comes with a matching lid and can be used in the oven or on the hob (including induction hobs). Available in rich colours – red, black, olive green or blue. *HB price £69.99 (RRP £89.99, saving £20)*



Sauté pan

New to the range, this 28cm nonstick sauté pan from La Cuisine can also be used for frying, searing or in the oven. Made from high-quality cast iron with a 4L (7 pint) capacity, it can be used in the oven or on the hob (including induction hobs). Choose from red, black, olive green or ultramarine blue. *HB price £64.99 (RRP £125, saving £60.01)*



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Measuring a spacious 29cm x 26cm, the Élysée rectangular grill features handy pouring lips and large handles. With every grill you'll receive a free pair of cast-iron mini cocottes (not shown; RRP £39.99). All available in either black or red. *HB price £69.99 (RRP £109.98, saving £39.99) + FREE GIFT*

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Rows of spruces, firs and pines provide an enticing choice for customers

HEART OF THE CELEBRATION

Growing beautiful trees is truly a family affair at Christmas Tree Farm

Words **SIAN WILLIAMS** Photography **POLLY ELTES**

On a crisp morning last November, tree grower Martin Hurley took a call from one of his regular customers anxious not to miss the annual trip to the farm. 'The family were taking a winter holiday and were due to return home just a few days before 25 December. Concerned they'd be unable to select their perfect tree in time for the big day they asked if anything could be done to help,' explains Martin. 'Even though the farm doesn't normally open to the public until the end of November, I made an exception in this case. The whole family came dressed in their Christmas outfits, along with their dog, and reserved their favourite tree. Later they sent a wonderful letter thanking us for our part in continuing the family tradition of three generations. It's this kind of relationship that makes the business so rewarding and fun.'

Run by Martin, 46, and his brother David, 49, Christmas Tree Farm lies in the village of Hawkwell in Essex. Both brothers work in the

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Above and top right: **Martin cuts down a large tree for one of the town centres in Essex**

Centre right: **The wood Martin is carrying will end up as kindling, which is sold at the front of the farm**

Right: **A freshly cut Nordmann Fir on its way to be netted, ready for a customer to take home**

City – Martin is an adviser to a number of start-up companies and David works in a Japanese bank – but they take annual leave over the busy festive period and find working on the farm a welcome respite from the demands of their careers. 'Our jobs can be quite stressful, so it's good to come back to the farm and do manual work for a change,' says Martin.

It's a real family affair. During the December rush David's children Danielle, 22, and Christopher, 21, are joined by Martin and David's parents Roger and Jackie Hurley who come out of retirement to help. Martin's partner Trinny, and David's partner Alison also join in. As Martin explains: 'Our father started the business 35 years ago, growing the first Christmas trees on the family farm, which was originally an orchard and then, in our grandfather's time, used for tomatoes, cucumbers and flowers. It was turned over to tree production in the early 1980s.

'When we took over the business from our father, we filled the farm with Norway Spruces, the most traditional variety of Christmas tree in the UK, but we soon began experimenting with other species. Norway Spruce is not the best tree for needle retention, so we now grow more than 10 different varieties, ranging from the popular Nordmann Fir to the American

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Martin with his father Roger, who founded Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell 35 years ago, mother Jackie and nephew Christopher. Everyone helps out in the run-up to Christmas

WORDS NAME SURNAME. PHOTOGRAPHS NAME SURNAME

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A misty morning just before opening time. The trees range in size from these small potted ones up to 20-footers

‘Our jobs in the City can be quite stressful, so it’s good to come back to the farm and do manual work for a change,’ SAYS MARTIN

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Martin puts a Blue spruce through the netter so it keeps its shape in transit



Some of the 10 varieties of Christmas tree on offer

favourite, Fraser Fir, and the pretty Noble Fir and Blue Spruce,' says Martin.

With a five-foot specimen taking between five and 10 years to grow and a lofty 20-footer taking up to 20 years to mature, tree farming is a lengthy process. Martin and David's work certainly doesn't end when the gates close to customers on Christmas Eve. 'We immediately start planning for the spring planting season. Throughout the year we pop in to check on the progress of the young trees. Before we know it the Christmas madness starts all over again,' he smiles.

'Our big step this year has been launching a new company to sell the trees online and we've just set up another farm in Battlesbridge, Essex,' says Martin. 'I'm sure we'll soon have even more tales to tell about the unusual tree transportation our customers use. So far we've seen Christmas trees carried away on horseback, another on a golf trolley, and we've also dropped bagged trees into the back seats of two very compact sports cars and watched both owners drive off home extremely happy. It's all part of the fun of Christmas.'

★ *For more information on Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell, call 01702 200926 or visit christmasfarm.co.uk. Prices start at £12 for a 5ft spruce and £18 for a 5ft fir*

Our Christmas traditions

'We finally get to choose our perfect tree on Christmas morning,' says Martin. 'Last year, the five family members who'd been working on the farm each cut a different variety as we couldn't agree on what to select! All five trees came with us to David's home nearby and were decorated in various themes before lunch.

'Over the Christmas period, we try to visit some of the big trees we've supplied to town centres across the county.'



For more wintry foliage displays, see over the page

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CHOOSE THE PERFECT TREE

Follow Martin and David's expert advice to select the best variety for your home



NORWAY SPRUCE

Picea abies

The most traditional Christmas tree, this spruce is wonderfully fragrant and very bushy. It must be bought fresh from the grower and watered regularly, so it's not such a good choice if you're unable to keep up with the maintenance, and it does shed its needles. It's suitable for medium and large houses as its full shape needs some space.



BALSAM FIR *Abies balsamea*

This slim variety is highly scented, which is great if you like your house to smell lovely and Christmassy. It's easy to maintain by watering once a day and doesn't shed its needles. The Balsam Fir is perfect for small homes and narrow rooms.



SCOTS PINE *Pinus sylvestris*

A gorgeous, bushy tree, this pine has a striking colour, shape and fragrance. You'll need to top it up with water every day to keep it fresh. It needs space so works better in medium to large houses that can give it room to breathe. Needle drop is minimal.



CORSICAN AND AUSTRIAN PINES *Pinus nigra*

Wonderfully fragrant and beautifully shaped, this tree is easy to care for by topping up with water once a day and needle drop is low. It looks good in medium and large homes, whether modern or classic in style.



BLUE SPRUCE *Picea pungens glauca*

This is a beautiful tree with a blue tint but the needles can be spiky, so it's not ideal if you have young children or pets. The needle drop is minimal and the tree is suitable for small and large homes, both modern and traditional.



NORDMANN FIR *Abies nordmanniana*

A popular tree, this has good needle retention, so is a low-maintenance fir perfect for busy families and will continue to look great over the festive season. Keep it in water if you can. It's appropriate for any size of home.



NOBLE FIR *Abies procera*

One of our favourites and a bestseller, this handsome tree is the top needle retaining variety, making it an excellent option in hectic households. It's suitable for all house sizes, both classic and modern in style.



SERBIAN SPRUCE *Picea omorika*

You'll get nice cones and colour on this tree, but as with all spruces it needs to be watered regularly as it dries out very quickly and drops its needles. It's traditional looking and suits a home with space to show off the shape.



FRASER FIR *Abies fraseri*

This narrow, bushy, fragrant tree retains its needles well. We've grown this variety for more than 20 years and it has become increasingly popular. It works well in flats, as well as small and medium-sized homes.



DOUGLAS FIR *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

Highly scented but not so tightly shaped, this stunning tree is easy to maintain by watering once a day and retains its needles well. It looks good in a variety of houses, from modern through to country styles.

How to look after your tree

It's really important that a cut tree is as fresh as possible when you buy it. Make sure the needles aren't dull or dry and the branches aren't brittle. The outer needles shouldn't fall off when the tree is gently shaken. After you've bought your tree keep it outside in a cool shaded place, preferably standing in water, until it's time to bring it indoors. Before you bring it inside it helps to cut half an inch off the base to open up the pores. Mount the tree in a water-holding stand and place it away from direct heat. Keep the container topped up with water every day – you'll be surprised how much it needs.

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NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL

Create gorgeous decorations using fresh and fragrant foliage

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SNOWY LANTERNS

Put together a magical frosty display of glowing jam jar lanterns. Clean old jars with soapy water then make a handle for each one using a selection of twines for variety. Form the twine into a loop and tie securely around the neck of the jar. Fill them with fake snow and place a tealight on top of the snow. To finish the arrangement, scatter sprigs of foliage, pine cones, gold buttons and crystal beads around the jars for extra sparkle.

Similar jam jars, from £7.49 for 12, Lakeland. Jar handles made from seagrass twine, £5.97 for 484g; hemp cord, £4.70 for 120m; both Fred Aldous. Fake Display Snow, £4.10 for 5L, Snow Business. Unscented tealights, £5 for 10, Wax Lyrical. Spruce sprigs, £5 for a large bunch, Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell. Pine cones, from £5.50 for 20, Norpar. Similar antique brass buttons, £1 each, Bedecked Haberdashery. Acrylic Jewels (6mm dia), £2.35 for approx 80, Fred Aldous. Round cardboard box, £2.75 for three, Creativity Direct

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LET IT SNOW

Have fun assembling an animal snow scene on a mantelpiece, tabletop or windowsill. Tuck sprigs of foliage around animal figurines or use florist's wire to hold in place. Include moose, polar bears or whatever takes your fancy. You might even find you have a few mini animals lying around the house. If not, head to the toy store. Stand the animals on a deep bed of fake snow and add some pine cones to represent woodland trees. Finish with a light all-over covering of fake snow.

Spruce sprigs, £5 for a large bunch, Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell. Toy animals, from a selection at Hamleys. Florist's wire, fake snow and pine cones, as before

A NATURAL TWIST WITH BAUBLES

Get creative with natural twine and raffia and turn a handful of plain glass baubles into eyecatching rustic decorations. Tie small clippings of spruce or fir to green garden twine and attach to the top of the baubles. To make a mini natural raffia wreath, twist four or five strands into a circle and finish with a bow. Thread twine through a couple of baubles, then tie on the wreath with a generous looped bow. Finish with a light sprinkling of fake snow.

Spruce sprigs, £5 for a large bunch, Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell. Nutscene Green Twist garden twine, £3.37 for 110m; raffia in Natural, £1.70 for 50g; both Fred Aldous. Fairtrade Dew Drop glass baubles, £8.95 for six, Pipii. Fake snow, as before

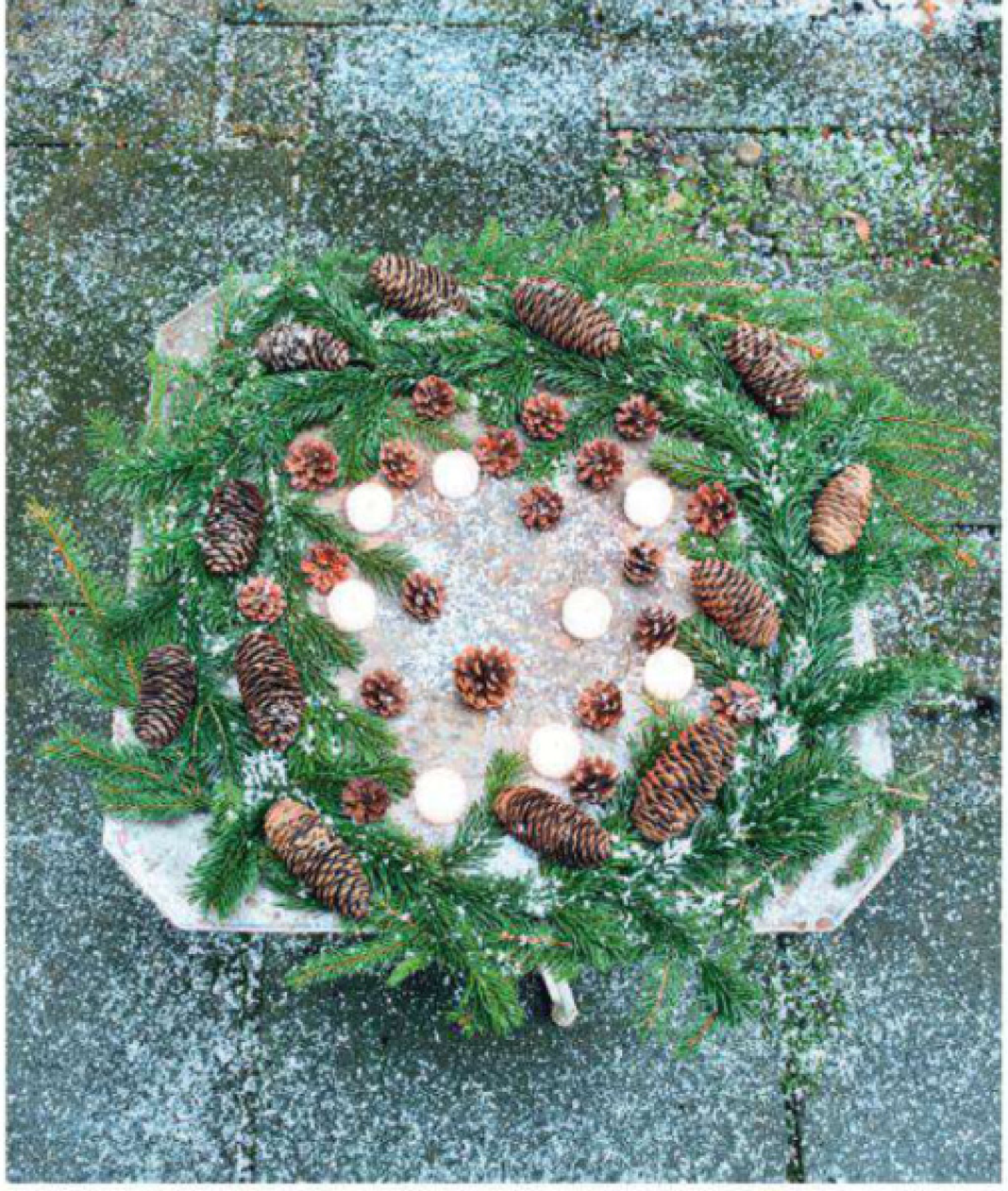
NEW TAKE ON WREATHS

If you want a garland that's ready to hang on a door handle, take one old wire coat hanger and cover it with fresh foliage. Cut small sprigs of spruce or fir then wind fine florist's wire around the bottom of each sprig. Taking one wired sprig at a time, attach them to the hanger, starting at the top and overlapping them slightly so the wire is hidden. To finish, tie three small pine cones together with florist's wire and attach to the neck of the hanger, followed by natural ribbon and twine bows. Dust with fake snow.

Spruce sprigs, £5 for a large bunch, Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell. Florist's wire, £1.51 for 10m, Fred Aldous. Silver Plain Wire coat hangers, £4.95 for 10, eBay. Fawn Herringbone Weave ribbon, £1, Jane Means. Hemp cord, pine cones and fake snow, as before



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FREE-FORM WREATH

A circular table display made with a variety of fresh spruce and fir, pine cones and candles makes a lovely Christmas centrepiece both for outside and in. Simply arrange cut foliage on a table in a wreath shape and place pine cones on top of the greenery. Add smaller pine cones and tealights in the centre then dust lightly with fake snow to finish.
Spruce and fir sprigs, both £5 for a large bunch, Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell. Pine cones, tealights and fake snow, as before





DECORATIVE LAMPS

Two simple glass hurricane lamps can be transformed into Christmas decorations in an instant. Fill each lamp about halfway with a bed of damp moss bought from a local florist, then add pine cones and sprigs of foliage around the inner edge. Place a tealight in the centre of the moss pile – obviously you'll have to keep an eye on the lamps while they're burning – and then tie some wool or ribbon around the top of each lamp. To finish, sprinkle your tabletop with snow, extra greenery and candles.
Table, see right. Similar storm lanterns, from £27, John Lewis. Preserved reindeer moss, £10.32 for 500g, Rainbow Florist Supplies. Spruce sprigs, £5 for a large bunch, Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell. Natural carded wool, £2.50 for three 25g rolls, Creativity Direct. Pine cones, tealights and fake snow, as before

CHRISTMAS POTS

Give terracotta pots a quick festive makeover by wrapping them in spruce foliage. To attach the sprigs, lay a length of strong twine on a table with the first sprig on top. Lay the pot on its side on top then add two more sprigs on each side. Tie the twine tightly around the pot. Once the sprigs are quite secure fan them out so they're nice and even. Place a chunky candle in each pot, first wrapping the base with foil so you don't burn the inside of the pot. Fill in around the candle with moss. Arrange on a table and finish with a scattering of fake snow and a dried pine cone or twiggy branch.
For a similar table try homestuff withhistory.com. Seagrass twine, £5.97 for 484g, Fred Aldous. Spruce sprigs, £5 for a large bunch, Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell. Rose Long Tom terracotta pots (including saucers), £10.75 each, Grand Illusions. Church candles, £1.90 each, Wax Lyrical. For similar dried branches with cones, try Norpar. Moss and fake snow, as before

WOODLAND CANDLESTICKS

Tubes of silver birch bark filled with moss make gorgeous Christmas candleholders. Take a piece of bark – you can buy it in sheets – and cut to the desired size with a strong pair of florist's scissors or a craft knife. Roll the bark into a cylinder and secure with florist's wire and natural ribbon tied in a double knot. Fill with moss and add a church candle in the centre, wrapped at the bottom with foil to stop the moss from burning. If you have a few beads, thread one onto each spruce sprig, then tuck the foliage under the ribbon to finish.

Rustic Silver Birch bark sheets, from around £10 for 10, Porters Foliage. Church candles, from a selection at Wax Lyrical. Spruce sprigs, £5 for a large bunch, Christmas Tree Farm Hawkwell. Florist's wire, ribbon and moss, as before HB

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

CHRISTMAS
LUNCH

HAVE A STAR-STUDDED FEAST

Ensure lunch is a showstopping success with these mouthwatering and fail-safe recipes from Nigella, Jamie, Gordon and Rose…



MENU

STARTER
Gordon Ramsay's
Grilled Polenta with Roasted Vine Tomatoes and Goat's Curd

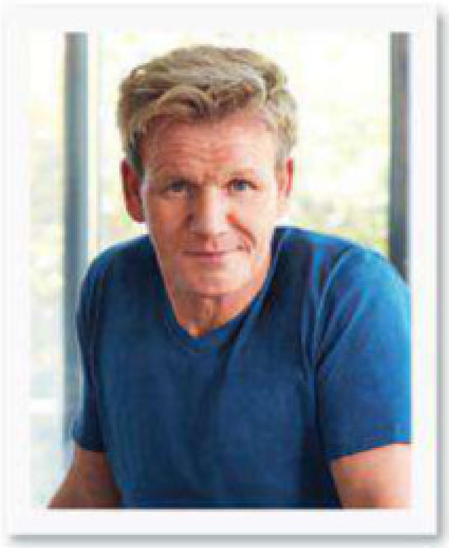
MAIN
Nigella Lawson's
Spiced and Superjuicy Roast Turkey with Allspice Gravy

VEGETABLES
Rose Elliot's
Roast Potatoes in Sea Salt and Balsamic Vinegar; Braised Carrots with Cumin; Purple Sprouting Broccoli; Crunchy Roast Parsnips

VEGETARIAN OPTION
Rose Elliot's
Moroccan Flavoured Aubergine Wellington

DESSERTS
Jamie Oliver's
My Nan's Christmas Pud

Gordon Ramsay's
Eton Mess Bombe



Gordon Ramsay's

GRILLED POLENTA WITH ROASTED VINE TOMATOES AND GOAT'S CURD

'A lovely salty goat's curd sets the polenta off beautifully but you could just as easily use cream cheese or crème fraîche.'

Serves 4

200g instant polenta
Large knob of butter
75g parmesan cheese, grated
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
400g tomatoes on the vine
Olive oil
2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
Pinch of sugar
2 thyme sprigs, leaves only, roughly chopped
Balsamic vinegar
250g creamy goat's cheese or goat's curd
4 basil sprigs, leaves torn, to serve

1 Preheat the oven to its highest setting. Grease a 2cm-deep baking dish or tray.
2 Cook the polenta according to the packet instructions. Once cooked, beat in the butter and parmesan. Taste and adjust the seasoning as necessary, then pour into the prepared dish. Cover and chill until set, about 20-30min.
3 Meanwhile snip the tomatoes into small clusters still attached to the vine. Place them on a baking tray and prick each tomato with the point of a knife. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle over the garlic, sugar and thyme, and season with salt and pepper. Drizzle with a little balsamic vinegar, then roast for 10-12min or until the tomatoes are blistered and tender.
4 Once the polenta is chilled, turn it out of the dish and slice it into wedges. Place a griddle pan over a medium heat. Brush the polenta wedges on either side with olive oil, season and griddle until charred and warmed through. You'll find it easiest to turn the wedges using a fish slice or palette knife.
5 To serve, place a wedge of polenta on a serving plate, sit a cluster of tomatoes on top and spoon over some juices from the roasting tin. Top with a dollop of goat's cheese or curd. Drizzle with a little more balsamic vinegar and garnish with the torn basil leaves.

★ *Taken from* Gordon Ramsay's Ultimate Home Cooking *with photography by Con Poulos (£25, Hodder & Stoughton). To order your copy at the special price of £18.99 with free UK mainland p&p, call 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*

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Nigella Lawson's

SPICED AND SUPERJUICY ROAST TURKEY WITH ALLSPICE GRAVY

Serves 8-10

6L water
1 large or 2 small oranges, quartered
1 x 250g packet Maldon salt or 125g table salt
3 x 15ml tbsp black peppercorns
1 bouquet garni
1 cinnamon stick
1 x 15ml tbsp caraway seeds
4 cloves
2 x 15ml tbsp allspice berries
4 star anise
2 x 15ml tbsp white mustard seeds
200g caster sugar
2 onions (unpeeled), quartered
1 x 6cm piece ginger (unpeeled), cut into 6 slices
4 x 15ml tbsp maple syrup
4 x 15ml tbsp runny honey
Stalks from medium bunch of parsley (optional)
1 x 5.5kg/12lb turkey

FOR THE BASTING GLAZE
75g goose fat or butter
3 x 15ml tbsp maple syrup

My Christmas turkey is brined, for not only does it tenderize and add subtle spiciness, but it makes carving the turkey easier.

And I mean to say: how hard is it to fill a pan or large plastic bin or bucket with water and spices and lower a turkey into it? At this time of year, it's fine just to leave it in a cold place. I sit mine by an open window in the kitchen. It means everyone freezes, but who am I going to put first – my turkey or my family? Out in the garden would also be fine, though the pan must be securely covered: if I've got a bucket or bin out in the open, I cover it twice with foil and then put my son's skateboard on top to prevent foxy foraging.

Though you might find it hard to believe, a raw turkey covered in brine – with its oranges, cinnamon sticks, and scattering of spices – looks so beautiful as it steeps that I can never help lifting the lid for quick, blissfully reassuring peeks.

I cook a turkey this size, without stuffing, for 2½hr. You've read correctly: as long as it goes into the oven at room temperature, that's enough time, along with 20-40min standing time, tented in foil, once it's out of the oven. (See p116 for a slightly more structured guide.) But remember that ovens vary enormously, so check by piercing the flesh between leg and body with a knife: when the juices run clear, the turkey's cooked. Or, if you want to be really scientific, put a meat thermometer in, and when it reads 65-71°C, you know it's cooked.

1 Put the water into your largest cooking pot or a bucket or plastic bin. Squeeze the juice from the orange quarters into the water before you chuck the peels in, then add all the other ingredients, stirring to combine the salt, sugar, syrup and honey.
2 Remove any string or trussing from the turkey, shake it free, remove the giblets, if not already done, and put them in the fridge (or set about making the stock for the gravy), then add the bird to the liquid, topping up with more water if it is not completely submerged. Keep covered in a cold place, even outside overnight or for up to a day or two before you cook it, remembering to take it out of its liquid (and wipe it dry with kitchen paper) a good hour before it has to go into the oven. Preheat said oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas mark 6).
3 Melt the goose fat (or butter) and maple syrup together slowly over a low heat. Paint the turkey with the glaze before roasting in the oven, and baste periodically throughout the cooking time. Roast for 2½hr.
4 When you think it's ready, pierce the turkey with the point of a sharp knife where the body meets the leg, and if the juices run clear, it's cooked; if still pink, cook it for longer until they run clear, or use a meat thermometer. Then take the turkey out of the oven, and let it sit, tented with foil, for 20-40min or even longer if you like, as I do.

MAKE AHEAD TIP
Leave the turkey submerged in the brine, securely covered, in a very cold place, for up to 2 days.

CONTINUED OVER NEXT PAGE

PHOTOGRAPH OF NIGELLA HUGO BURNAND

CHRISTMAS
LUNCH

For the main event, try this succulent turkey recipe and serve it with bacon-wrapped chipolatas



NIGELLA'S COOKING TIMES TIPS

The cooking times here always seem short to other people, but the truth is we've all been overcooking turkeys for years and then complaining about how dull and sawdusty they are. If your turkey starts at room temperature and is untrussed and without stuffing, and your oven thermostat is working correctly, these cooking times hold.

If you want to ignore me and give your poor old bird longer, so long as you use my brining method you can rest assured that it is not going to taste dry, even if it is overcooked. I beg you, though, for the sake of succulence, to have the courage of my convictions.

A turkey is generally held to be cooked through when a meat thermometer, inserted into its thickest part, reaches 71°C, though some cooks recommend 75°C. However, Paul Kelly of KellyBronze Turkeys says his birds are cooked through at 65°C. Any such free-range turkey also cooks faster than a very lean, more mass-produced bird, as they have more marbling and this conducts heat faster. The timings here are for free-range birds. If you've stuffed the bird, add the weight of the stuffing to the bird to calculate the total weight and cooking time; if you choose to stuff the cavity, do so loosely and add a further 30min.

TURKEY COOKING TIMES

Weight	Cooking time
2.25kg/5lb	1½ hours
3.5kg/8lb	1¾ hours
4.5kg/10lb	2 hours
5.5kg/12lb	2½ hours
6.75kg/15lb	2¾ hours
7.5kg/17lb	3 hours
9kg/20lb	3½ hours
11.5kg/25lb	4½ hours

ALLSPICE GRAVY

Giblets from turkey (not including liver)
1L water
1 x 15ml tbsp allspice berries
½tsp black peppercorns
3 bay leaves
1 x 4cm stick cinnamon
1 stick celery, halved
2 carrots, peeled and halved
1 onion (unpeeled), halved
1 x 15ml tbsp Maldon salt or ½tbsp table salt
Juice of 1 clementine or satsuma (about 60ml), plus pulp from fruit
2 x 15ml tbsp plain flour
2 x 15ml tbsp honey

Generally speaking, the best gravies are made by deglazing a joint's cooking juices in the roasting tin but, with a brined bird, the liquid it gives off is just too salty; you can't use more than 2-3tbsp. You could, of course, simply drain off the excess but, given the stress of Christmas Day, making the gravy in a saucepan is a better route: you avoid the smoking you can get from a roasting tin on the hob; and you can make it all ahead – the stovetop will be quite busy enough as it is.

1 Put all the ingredients, except the flour and honey, into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Cover with a lid and simmer gently for 2hr.
2 Strain the gravy stock through a sieve (or just pour, holding back the bits) into a large measuring jug: this should give you approximately 1L. All this can be done well ahead (and see tips, right).
3 On the day itself, whisk the flour in a saucepan with 2tbsp of the salty juices from the turkey roasting tin, then put the saucepan on the heat and slowly whisk in the rest of the stock and the honey.
4 Let the gravy bubble away, stirring every now and again with a wooden spoon, until it thickens a little and the floury taste disappears.
5 If you are preparing the gravy stock ahead, make sure when you add the flour and juices and reheat it that it gets piping hot; preferably fill the gravy jug with hot water for 10min before draining, drying and filling it with hot, invitingly aromatic allspice gravy to serve.

MAKE AHEAD TIP
Simmer the gravy stock for 2hr as directed in Step 1 and stir in the honey. Cool, cover and keep in the fridge for up to 2 days. Finish the gravy with flour and turkey juices as directed.

FREEZE AHEAD TIP
Make the stock as directed, cool and freeze for up to 1 week. Thaw overnight in the fridge, and finish as above.

★ *Recipes extracted from* Nigella Christmas *by Nigella Lawson (£25, Chatto & Windus). Copyright © Nigella Lawson 2008. Photographs © Lis Parsons 2008. Also available as an eBook. To order your copy at the special price of £18.99 with free p&p to UK mainland, call allaboutyoubooks on 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*



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For crispy roast potatoes, make sure to roughen them up before roasting in hot oil



Rose Elliot's

ROAST POTATOES IN SEA SALT AND BALSAMIC VINEGAR

'Having tried various different oils for roasting potatoes, I've found that rapeseed or groundnut oil gives the crispiest results.'

Serves 4

1kg potatoes, peeled and cut into small chunks
Rapeseed or groundnut oil, for roasting
Salt and pepper
Balsamic vinegar

1 Put the potatoes into a saucepan, cover with water and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 7min.
2 Pour 5mm of oil into a roasting tin large enough to hold the potatoes in a single layer, then put into an oven preheated to 200°C (180°C fan, gas mark 6) until smoking hot.
3 Drain the potatoes, put them back into the saucepan, then put the lid on and shake to roughen the outsides to make them cook more crisply.
4 Tip the potatoes into the hot oil and turn them with a large spoon so that the oil covers them all over. Roast for about 35min or until golden and crisp, turning them over when the undersides are done.
5 Using a slotted spoon, transfer the potatoes to a warm serving dish. Sprinkle generously with salt and pepper, drizzle with balsamic vinegar and serve.

★ *Taken from* The Best of Rose Elliot: The Ultimate Vegetarian Collection *(£20, Octopus). To order your copy at the special price of £15.99 with free p&p to UK mainland, call allaboutyoubooks on 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*

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Rose Elliot's

BRAISED CARROTS WITH CUMIN

'When it comes to braised carrots, I prefer them tender, soft as butter and sweet as candy – just like these.'

Serves 4

750g carrots or baby carrots, just scrubbed with the leaves cut but some stem still attached
4tbsp olive oil
4 garlic cloves, sliced
1tsp ground cumin
1tsp whole cumin seeds
Juice of ½ lemon
150ml water
Salt and black pepper
1-2tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley, to serve

1 Put the carrots into a saucepan with the olive oil, garlic, ground and whole cumin seeds, lemon juice, water and some salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, then cover and cook gently for about 30min, checking occasionally to make sure they're not sticking.
2 You'll know the carrots are done when they feel very tender to the point of a knife, and the water has reduced to a syrupy golden glaze. Serve the carrots scattered with chopped fresh parsley.

★ *Vegetable recipes taken from* 30-Minute Vegetarian *by Rose Elliot (£20, Collins). To order your copy at the special price of £15.99 with free p&p to UK mainland, call allaboutyoubooks on 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*

PURPLE SPROUTING BROCCOLI

'If the broccoli is perfect it needs little adornment: a squeeze of lemon or lime juice, a sprinkling of ume seasoning and to top it all a sprinkling of delicious nutty-tasting gomasio sesame salt.'

Serves 4

400g purple sprouting (or Tenderstem-type) broccoli
1tbsp freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice
1tbsp toasted sesame or olive oil
1-2tsp ume seasoning
1-2tsp gomasio

1 Put the broccoli into a saucepan with 6tbsp water. Bring to the boil, cover and cook gently for 5-15min depending on the heat and the thickness of the stems, until you can pierce the stems with the point of a knife. Keep an eye on the water and top it up with a little boiling water if necessary. When the broccoli is cooked, all the water may have gone; if not, drain off any that remains.
2 Toss the broccoli with the lemon or lime juice, drizzle with the oil and ume seasoning and sprinkle with gomasio, then serve.



Cook's note

To get the most out of the broccoli, run a swivel-blade potato peeler down the stems all round to remove any tough woodiness and to thin the stems so they cook in the same amount of time as the tender heads.

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Cook's note

This is lovely made with baby carrots, but also works perfectly with older carrots. Scrub them first or, if they aren't organic, peel them, and cut into batons the size of your little finger.

A bit of seasoning is all it takes to make vegetables a satisfying side dish



Cook's note

Smallish, tender parsnips are best for this dish and I find that if you cut off the root end before it becomes thick, and then quarter the remaining parsnip, you end up with 'chips' that are reasonably uniform in size.

CRUNCHY ROAST PARSNIPS

'Sweet and crunchy roasted parsnips are irresistible.'

Serves 4

500g parsnips, scrubbed, trimmed and cut into chunky chips
8tbsp olive or rapeseed oil
50g semolina

1 Preheat the oven to 230°C (210°C fan, gas mark 8).
2 Cook the parsnips in a saucepan filled with 1cm boiling water for 8min until tender.
3 Just before they're done, pour the oil into a roasting tin and put into the oven to heat.
4 Drain the parsnips well and scatter with the semolina, turning to coat them.
5 Put the parsnips into the oil and cook until golden brown and crisp, turning them after about 10min.
6 Remove from the oven, blot on kitchen paper and serve.

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Treat vegetarian guests to this deliciously spiced dish that's so easy to make. It would also be great as a light lunch on Boxing Day

storemags



Rose Elliot's

MOROCCAN FLAVOURED AUBERGINE WELLINGTON

Serves 6

125g couscous
2tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 aubergine, cut into 1cm cubes
1 red pepper, cored, deseeded and cut into 1cm pieces
25g ready-to-eat dried apricots, chopped
25g raisins
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1tbsp ground cinnamon
1tbsp ground cumin
1tbsp chopped mint
1tbsp chopped parsley
100g toasted flaked almonds
125g pitted black olives, sliced
Salt and pepper
2 x 350g sheets of ready-rolled puff pastry
Soya milk, for brushing
Sesame seeds, for sprinkling

1 Put the couscous into a bowl, cover with boiling water and leave to soak.
2 Meanwhile heat the olive oil in a large saucepan, add the onion and fry for 5min, then add the aubergine and red pepper, cover and cook gently for 10-15min or until the vegetables are tender. Add the apricots, raisins, garlic, cinnamon and cumin and stir over the heat for a minute or two until the spices smell aromatic. Remove the pan from the heat.
3 Drain the couscous thoroughly in a sieve and add it to the pan, along with the mint, parsley, almonds and olives. Season with salt and pepper to taste and leave the mixture to cool.
4 Spread one pastry sheet out on a baking sheet and brush with the soya milk.
5 Pour out the aubergine mixture in a line down the centre of the pastry. Place the second sheet of pastry over the top and press the edges together. Trim the edges, leaving a 2.5cm border. Pinch the edges with your fingers and thumbs. Brush all over with soya milk and sprinkle with the sesame seeds.
6 Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas mark 6) and bake the Wellington for 40min or until the pastry has puffed up and is golden brown. Transfer to a warmed serving platter and serve at once.

★ *Taken from* The Best of Rose Elliot: The Ultimate Vegetarian Collection *(£20, Octopus). To order your copy at the special price of £15.99 with free p&p to UK mainland, call allaboutyoubooks on 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*

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Jamie's light, fruity Christmas pud is served with a drizzle of golden syrup



Jamie Oliver's

MY NAN'S CHRISTMAS PUD

'Before you even think about buying a Christmas pudding, you've got to try this. It's so easy, it won't let you down and it's so much lighter than those heavy old puddings.'

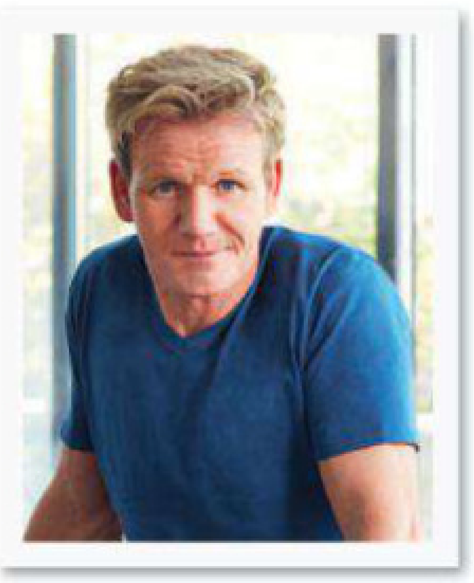
Serves 8

500g mixed dried fruit (use whatever you like, depending on what you can find – I like to use a mix of cranberries, cherries, apricots, sultanas and raisins)
100g dates, chopped up
3tbsp chopped crystallized ginger
125g suet
Zest of 1 orange
125g plain flour
125g caster sugar
150g fresh white breadcrumbs
2tbsp vin santo or brandy
A handful of chopped nuts, such as pecans, Brazils or hazelnuts
1 medium free-range egg
150ml milk
Golden syrup, to serve

1 Grease a 1.5L pudding bowl. Mix all the ingredients together, except the golden syrup. Put the mixture into the greased bowl and cover with a double layer of good quality tin foil. Tie a piece of string round the side of the bowl to secure. Place in a large saucepan with water halfway up the sides of the bowl. Bring the water to the boil, put on a tight-fitting lid, and simmer for around 3hr, or until cooked through – don't forget to check the water regularly, making sure that it never boils dry, because if it does, it will burn and the bowl will crack.
2 When it's ready, remove the foil, turn out onto a plate, drizzle with golden syrup and decorate it as you like. You can also light it with brandy if you want to be really fancy.

★ © *Jamie Oliver Enterprises Limited 1999, photography: David Loftus. For more of Jamie's recipes visit jamieoliver.com*

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Gordon Ramsay's

ETON MESS BOMBE

'Everyone loves Eton mess, but as the name suggests, it's not the most elegant-looking dessert. So my twist is to freeze it in a pudding basin and then turn it out before serving.'

Serves 8-10

800g strawberries, hulled
Icing sugar, for dusting
800ml double cream
4-6 best-quality individual meringues or 1 large meringue
50g white or dark chocolate to serve (you could also use dark chocolate flavoured with mint)

1 Cut the strawberries into quarters. Dust half of them in icing sugar and place in a small pan over a medium heat for 3-4min until the fruit begins to break down.
2 Blitz the hot strawberries in a blender, then push them through a sieve placed over a bowl to remove the seeds and create a smooth coulis. Set aside to cool.
3 Meanwhile, whip the cream until it begins to thicken, but before it reaches soft peaks. Break the meringue(s) into bite-sized pieces, add to the cream and fold in gently.
4 Lightly stir half the coulis and all the reserved strawberries into the cream to create a ripple effect (this will look good when serving). Transfer the mixture to a 2L pudding basin lightly oiled and lined with three layers of clingfilm, cover with more clingfilm and freeze overnight or for at least 2½hr.
5 To serve, carefully run hot tap water around the outside of the frozen basin until the pudding can be released. Remove the clingfilm and invert the pudding onto a serving plate. Drizzle with the remaining coulis, finely grate the chocolate over it and serve. HB

★ *Taken from* Gordon Ramsay's Ultimate Home Cooking *with photography by Con Poulos (£25, Hodder & Stoughton). To order your copy at the special price of £18.99 with free UK mainland p&p, call 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*



Frozen in a dome shape and topped with strawberry coulis and grated chocolate, Eton Mess Bombe is a dinner party showstopper

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CHRISTMAS
LUNCH

CHRISTMAS SHOWPIECE

MARY BERRY'S

HAZELNUT DACQUOISE



'This truly impressive, gluten-free cake is fit for the most glamorous celebration.'

Serves 12

FOR THE DACQUOISE
250g blanched (skinned) whole hazelnuts
300g caster sugar
25g cornflour
6 large egg whites, at room temperature
Pinch of salt

FOR THE CHOCOLATE GANACHE
150g dark chocolate (about 36% cocoa solids)
110ml double cream

FOR THE COFFEE FILLING
600ml full-fat milk
3 large egg yolks, at room temperature
125g caster sugar
2tbsp chicory and coffee essence
50g cornflour
300ml whipping cream, chilled

FOR THE PRALINE
50g caster sugar
36 blanched (skinned) whole hazelnuts
½tsp lemon juice

TO FINISH
100g toasted hazelnuts, chopped

1 Arrange your oven racks in the upper, middle and lower thirds of the oven (you can use the grill tray on the bottom of the oven if you don't have a third rack). Heat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan, gas mark 4). Line three baking sheets with baking paper. Using a 21cm dinner plate or cake tin as a guide, draw a circle on each sheet of baking paper. Set aside.
2 To make the dacquoise, put the hazelnuts into the bowl of a food processor and pulse just until coarsely ground. Spread the nuts in an even layer in a roasting tin and toast in the oven for 10-12min until golden, stirring every 3min. Remove the tin from the oven. Tip the nuts into a large heatproof bowl and leave to cool. Reduce the oven temperature to 150°C (130°C fan, gas mark 2).
3 When the nuts are cold, stir in 100g of the caster sugar and the cornflour. Pour the egg whites into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment. Add the salt. Whisk at medium speed for about 2min until the whites are frothy. Increase the speed and continue to whisk while adding the remaining 200g sugar, a tablespoon at a time, to make a stiff glossy meringue that stands in peaks when the whisk is lifted out. Gently fold the toasted hazelnut mixture through the meringue using a large metal spoon or plastic spatula.
4 Transfer the meringue to a piping bag fitted with a 1.5cm plain tube. Starting in the centre of each drawn circle, pipe a spiral of meringue onto each prepared baking sheet. Place in the heated oven and bake for 1hr, swapping the top and bottom baking sheets halfway through so the meringue discs cook evenly. Turn off the oven and open the oven door so it is just ajar, then leave the discs inside until completely cold.
5 Meanwhile, make the chocolate ganache. Break up the chocolate into even-sized pieces and put into a heatproof bowl. Pour the cream into a pan

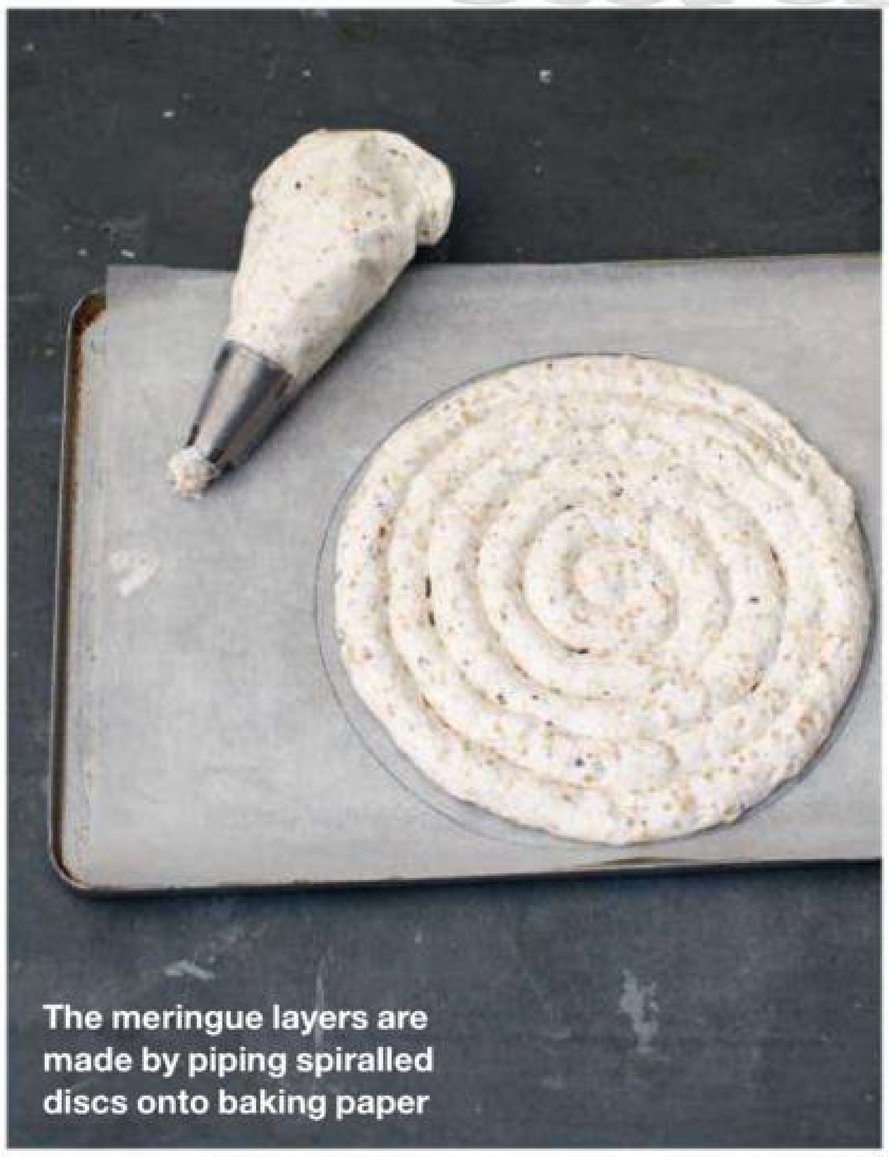
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Cook's note

You can make the dacquoise in advance – it will still be delicious served the next day.

Nutty meringue layers are sandwiched with a rich and creamy coffee filling

storemags



The meringue layers are made by piping spiralled discs onto baking paper



Paul's tea loaf is rolled into shape, which gives it an interesting structure

and heat until simmering. Pour the hot cream over the chocolate and stir gently until smooth. Leave to cool, then cover the bowl and chill until really thick and with a piping consistency (like whipped cream). Once the ganache is thick, spoon it into the clean and dry piping bag fitted with a star tube. Set aside at room temperature until needed.

6 For the coffee filling, pour the milk into a heavy-based pan and slowly bring to the boil over low heat. Meanwhile, put the yolks, sugar and chicory and coffee essence into a medium-sized heatproof bowl and whisk to combine. Whisk in the cornflour a tablespoon at a time to make a smooth, thick paste. Pour on the hot milk in a thin steady stream, whisking constantly. Pour the mixture into the pan and whisk until it comes to the boil, then lower the heat so the mixture just simmers. Whisk for 2-3min until thickened and very smooth. Remove the pan from the heat and leave to cool for at least 1hr.

7 Whip the cream until it will stand in soft peaks. Whisk half of the whipped cream into the cold coffee mixture, then gently fold in the rest. Cover and chill.

8 To make the praline, put the caster sugar into a small frying pan and melt it, without stirring. Continue cooking until it turns to a golden caramel or it reaches 300°C on a sugar thermometer. Add the whole hazelnuts and lemon juice and stir well with a wooden spoon, then tip onto a baking sheet lined with baking paper or silicone paper. Working quickly before the caramel sets, use two teaspoons (don't touch the caramel as it will be very hot!) to form 12 equal clusters of hazelnut praline for the decoration. Leave to cool and set.

9 To assemble the dacquoise, set one of the meringue layers on a large flat serving plate and spread with a third of the coffee cream. Place another meringue layer on this and spread with half the remaining coffee cream. Top with the last meringue layer. Spread the remaining coffee cream over the sides of the cake, leaving the top bare. Press the chopped toasted nuts onto the sides of the dacquoise. Pipe 12 swirls of chocolate ganache on the top of the cake and decorate with the praline clusters.

*CALLS COST 7P A MINUTE FROM BT LANDLINES. CALLS FROM MOBILES AND OTHER NETWORKS USUALLY COST MORE



PAUL HOLLYWOOD'S

FRUITY TEA LOAF



'This colourful fruity loaf is flavoured with seasonal orange and cinnamon and would make a delicious addition to the festive tea table.'

Makes 1 medium loaf

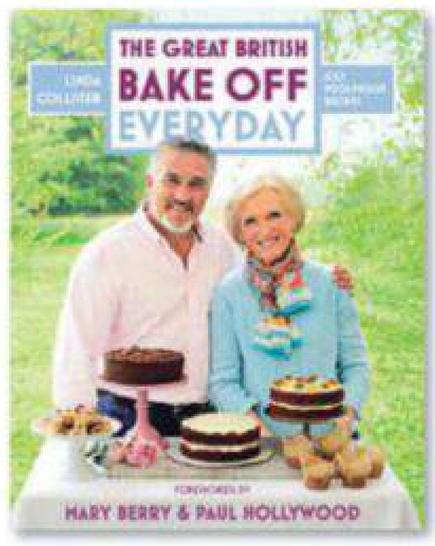
400g strong white bread flour
1½tsp salt
40g caster sugar
40g unsalted butter, softened
10g fast-action dried yeast
120ml milk, at room temperature
120ml water, at room temperature
50g sultanas
60g glacé cherries, cut into quarters
1tsp ground cinnamon
Finely grated zest of 3 oranges

TO FINISH
75g icing sugar

1 Grease a baking sheet. Put the flour, salt, sugar, butter, yeast, milk and water into a large bowl and mix everything together with your hands to make a dough. Tip out onto a lightly floured worktop and knead for about 10min until smooth and pliable. Return the dough to the bowl, cover with clingfilm and leave to rest for about an hour until doubled in size.
2 Add the sultanas, cherries, cinnamon and orange zest to the dough and work in well with your hands (or the dough hook of your electric mixer). When the fruit is evenly distributed, turn the dough out onto the lightly floured worktop. Flatten with your hands to a rectangle about 15cm x 30cm.
3 Roll up the dough from one long side to make a sausage shape. Set it seam side down on the baking sheet. Slide the sheet into a large plastic bag, to protect the loaf from draughts, and leave to rise for about an hour until doubled in size.
4 Towards the end of the rising time heat your oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas mark 6). Uncover the loaf and place in the heated oven. Bake for 20min until the loaf is a good golden brown and sounds hollow when tapped on the base. Cool on a wire rack.
5 To finish the loaf, sift the icing sugar into a small bowl and gradually stir in enough cold water to make a runny icing that coats the back of the spoon. Drizzle the icing over the loaf. Leave to set before cutting into thick slices to serve.

Cook's note

This loaf is baked on a sheet rather than in a loaf tin. Eat it at teatime with lashings of butter.



★ *Recipes taken from* The Great British Bake Off: Everyday *by Linda Collister, with technical challenge and signature bake recipes by Mary Berry and Paul Hollywood (£20, BBC Books). Text and recipes © Love Productions, 2013. Photography © Woodlands Books, 2013. To order your copy at the special price of £15.99 with free p&p to UK mainland, call allaboutyoubooks on 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*

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APRIL CARTER'S

MINI MINCE PIES

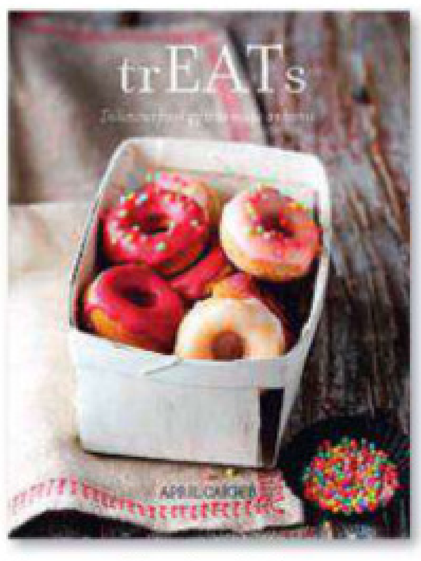


'I make a big batch of these every year and split them between tins to make sure I have enough for the different festive visits to family and friends.'

Makes 24

250g plain flour
125g unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
Pinch of salt
3-4tbsp ice-cold water
1 x 410g jar of mincemeat
1 large egg, beaten
Icing sugar, for dusting

1 To make the pastry, place the flour, butter and salt in the bowl of a food processor and mix for 20 seconds or until the mixture looks like breadcrumbs. Add the cold water and mix again, just enough until it forms a ball. Turn the dough out of the bowl, wrap in clingfilm and chill in the fridge for 30min.
2 Preheat the oven to 200°C (180°C fan, gas mark 6). Roll the chilled pastry out onto a floured surface until it's as thin as possible and cut out 24 circles using a 7cm pastry cutter. Line a 24-hole mini-muffin tin with your pastry circles and chill for 10min.
3 Roll out the remaining pastry and use a 4.5cm round or star-shaped cutter for the lids.
4 Remove your pastry-lined mini-muffin tin from the fridge and divide the mincemeat between the cases, filling each to three-quarters full. Brush the edges of the pastry cases with the beaten egg and press the pastry lids on top. Seal each pie by pressing the edges with a fork. Brush the tops of the pies with the egg and bake for 20min or until golden brown.
5 Cool the pies on a wire rack then dust with icing sugar. If you're giving your pies as gifts, use snowflake-like paper doilies to line your tins, and dust the finished pies with icing sugar. HB



★ *Recipe taken from* Treats *by April Carter with photography by Danielle Wood (£12.99, Hardie Grant). To order your copy at the special price of £10.99 with free UK mainland p&p, call 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.*



*CALLS COST 7P A MINUTE FROM BT LANDLINES. CALLS FROM MOBILES AND OTHER NETWORKS USUALLY COST MORE

Top some of your mince pies with star-shaped lids to make them even more enticing

CHRISTMAS
FAVOURITE



SWEET ON YOU

Show your appreciation with a box of these indulgent chocolates, handmade by you

Words **ANNIE RIGG** Photography **TARA FISHER**

'There's no denying it – I have a sweet tooth,' says Annie Rigg, creator of the following gorgeous recipes and author of *Sweet Things* (see p139). 'I am drawn like a moth to a flame when it comes to eating or cooking sweet things and I feel an almost gravitational pull towards chocolatiers with their trays of cocoa-dusted truffles.

'This passion for all things sweet has translated into my kitchen and cooking. Sweet making is not dissimilar to baking in that it requires a little quiet kitchen time and results in the kind of food that gives joy both to the lucky folk who share your endeavours and to you.

'Preparation is key to success – have your ingredients weighed out and prepared and tins lined before you even consider starting to melt any chocolate or boil any syrup.'

CONTINUED OVER PAGE

Cook's note

Ganache is usually a mixture of melted chocolate and cream. When chilled it can be formed into truffles, as in the recipes here. This rose ganache is made with syrup rather than cream, which gives a smooth taste that allows the rose flavour to shine through.

StoreMags.com



ROSE TRUFFLES

Makes about 20

1tbsp edible dried rose petals, available from ethnic grocers, good delis or online
70g caster sugar
350g dark chocolate (64% cocoa solids), finely chopped
2-3 drops rose oil, organic and food safe (optional)
Crystallized rose petals

1 Place the rose petals in a small saucepan with the sugar and 125ml water and heat gently to dissolve the sugar. Bring to the boil, simmer for 1min and then pour into a bowl. Cover and leave overnight so the petals impart as much flavour into the syrup as possible.
2 Line an 18cm square baking tin with clingfilm or nonstick baking parchment. Place 200g of the chocolate in a mixing bowl. Strain the syrup into a small saucepan and add the rose oil, if using. Gently heat until just boiling, then pour over the chocolate. Leave for a couple of minutes, then stir until silky smooth. Pour the ganache mixture into the prepared tin, level with an offset palette knife and leave until cool before covering and chilling until firm.
3 Temper the chocolate (a process of heating and cooling it): Tip 100g of the remaining chocolate into a heatproof bowl and place over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Pop a tempering thermometer into the chocolate. Melt, stirring until smooth and the chocolate reaches 49°C. Remove the bowl from the pan, add the remaining 50g chocolate and stir to combine. Leave to cool to 27°C, stirring frequently to speed up the cooling process. Return the bowl to the pan of hot water and reheat to 31°C. (Please note these temperatures are for dark chocolate only.)
4 Turn out the ganache onto a parchment-covered board. Using a 2cm round cutter, stamp out truffles from the ganache.
5 Taking one truffle at a time, place it on the tines of a fork and submerge in the tempered chocolate. Lift the truffle out, tapping the tines of the fork on the side of the bowl to allow the excess chocolate to drip back in. Carefully slide the truffle onto a clean sheet of baking parchment. Top with a crystallized rose petals and repeat with the remaining truffles. Leave the truffles to set firm before packaging.
Store in a cool place for up to 1 week between sheets of baking parchment in an airtight box.

PRALINE HEARTS

Makes 20–25

100g blanched hazelnuts
75g caster sugar
75g dark chocolate (64% cocoa solids), chopped
150g milk chocolate, chopped
125ml double cream
½tsp vanilla bean paste
Pinch of salt
To coat
150g milk chocolate, chopped
150g dark chocolate, chopped
1tbsp sugar sprinkles or metallic sugar balls

1 Preheat the oven to 170°C (150°C fan, gas mark 3) and line a 20cm x 30cm baking tin with nonstick baking parchment. Toast the hazelnuts in the oven for 4min until pale golden. Set aside.
2 Place the sugar in a small solid-bottomed saucepan with 1tbsp water. Melt the sugar over a low heat without stirring and use a pastry brush dipped in hot water to dissolve any sugar crystals on the sides of the pan. Once the sugar has dissolved bring the syrup to the boil and cook steadily until it becomes an amber-coloured caramel. Tip the hazelnuts into the pan, stir to combine and then turn out onto nonstick baking parchment. Leave to cool completely.
3 Break the praline into chunks, whiz in a food processor until finely ground, and then continue to blend until you have a slightly granular paste, almost like peanut butter. Set aside while you prepare the ganache.
4 Place the dark and milk chocolate in a heatproof bowl with the cream, vanilla and salt and set over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir frequently until the chocolate has melted into the cream and the ganache is silky smooth. Remove from the pan and cool for a few minutes before folding in the hazelnut paste. Spoon the ganache into the prepared tin and level with an offset palette knife. Leave to cool and then cover and chill until firm.
5 Turn the ganache out of the tin and peel off the lining paper. Using heart-shaped cutters in assorted sizes, stamp out truffles and arrange on a clean sheet of baking parchment. Chill again while you prepare the chocolate for the coating.
6 Follow the instructions for tempering chocolate, left, but for the milk chocolate reduce all temperatures by 2°C. Reserve 1tbsp of the milk or dark chocolate for piping, then on the tines of a fork, dip the hearts one at a time into either chocolate and allow any excess to drip back into the bowl. Carefully place the chocolate-coated hearts on clean baking parchment. Spoon the reserved chocolate into a disposable piping bag and pipe lines, swirls or dots over the hearts. Scatter with decorations, then leave in a cool place to set.
Store in the fridge for up to 1 week in an airtight box between baking parchment.

Cook's note

I like heart shapes, so for these truffles I set the ganache into a shallow tray and stamped out assorted heart shapes before coating in milk or dark chocolate. If you prefer, simply chill the ganache and roll into balls.

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AZTEC TRUFFLES

Makes 25-30
200g double cream
25g light muscovado sugar
1 large cinnamon stick
½ vanilla pod, split
½tsp crushed dried chilli flakes
2 strips of orange peel
Pinch of salt
350g dark chocolate
To coat
75g dark chocolate, grated

1 Place the cream in a small saucepan and add the muscovado sugar, cinnamon stick, vanilla pod, chilli flakes and orange peel. Add the salt and heat gently until the cream is hot but not boiling. Remove from the heat and leave to infuse for at least 1hr.

Cook's note

This basic ganache has a few added extras. If you'd rather keep things classic and simple, leave out the spices and add a tablespoon or two of brandy, rum or Marc de Champagne to the cream instead.

2 Finely chop 200g of the chocolate and tip into a bowl. Reheat the cream over a low heat until boiling and strain through a fine sieve onto the chocolate. Leave for 1min, then stir to make a smooth ganache mixture. Leave to cool and then cover and chill until firm.
3 Using a teaspoon, scoop the ganache into cherry-sized balls and roll in your hands until smooth. Arrange on a parchment-covered tray and chill again for 15min while you melt the remaining 150g chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir until smooth and remove the bowl from the pan.
4 Tip the grated chocolate onto a large dinner plate. Spoon 1tsp of the melted chocolate into the palm of one hand, drop a truffle into the chocolate and roll it to coat all over. Drop the truffle into the grated chocolate and roll to cover. Repeat with the remaining truffles and leave to set.
Store in an airtight box in the fridge for up to 1 week. Bring to room temperature to serve.

SEA-SALTED CARAMEL TRUFFLES

Makes about 30-40
125g milk chocolate, finely chopped
125g dark chocolate, finely chopped
50g caster sugar
125ml double cream
50g light muscovado sugar
25g unsalted butter
1tsp vanilla extract or ½tsp vanilla bean paste
Large pinch of sea salt flakes
To coat
200g dark chocolate, chopped
100g cocoa

1 Line an 18cm square baking tin with clingfilm or nonstick baking parchment. Tip the milk and dark chocolate into a medium-sized mixing bowl and set aside.
2 Place the caster sugar in a small solid-bottomed saucepan and add 2-3tsp water. Set over a low to medium heat to dissolve the sugar without stirring. Bring to the boil and continue to cook the syrup until it becomes an amber-coloured caramel. This will take no time at all due to the small quantity.
3 Slide the pan off the heat, add the cream, muscovado sugar, butter and vanilla extract or paste. Return to a low heat to re-melt the caramel should it have hardened. Stir until smooth and bring to the boil. Pour the hot caramel cream onto the chopped chocolate, add the salt, stir briefly, then leave to melt for 2-3min. Beat the ganache until smooth, pour into the prepared tin and spread level with an offset palette knife. Leave to cool, then cover and chill for at least 3hr until firm.
4 For the coating, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir until smooth,

Cook's note

Sea-salted caramel truffles are probably my favourites. I love the contrast between the subtle caramel, rich (but not too rich) ganache and crisp dark-chocolate coating. When using cocoa for dusting, please make sure it's one of superior quality.

Chocolate dreams (l-r): Aztec Truffles, Sea-salted Caramel Truffles, Earl Grey Tea Truffles and Peanut and Raspberry Truffle Pops

remove from the heat and cool slightly. Tip the cocoa into a small roasting tin or onto a large dinner plate. Remove the ganache from the tin, peel off the clingfilm or parchment and, using a hot kitchen knife, cut the ganache into bite-sized rectangular truffles. Drop two or three at a time into the melted chocolate and turn to cover on all sides. Using a fork, lift the truffles from the melted chocolate, tapping the fork on the side of the bowl to allow any excess to drip back in. Immediately drop the truffles into the cocoa, turn to coat on all sides and leave to set for 4-5min. Shake any excess cocoa off the truffles before serving.

Store for up to 1 week in the fridge in an airtight container between layers of baking parchment. Bring to room temperature to serve.

EARL GREY TEA TRUFFLES

Makes 25-30

1 rounded tbsp Earl Grey or jasmine tea leaves
1½tbsp caster sugar
2 strips of orange peel
200g dark chocolate
A few drops of bergamot oil (optional)
2tbsp double cream
Small pinch of salt
To coat
150g dark chocolate, chopped
2-3tbsp icing sugar or cocoa

1 To make the ganache measure 150ml water into a small saucepan, add the tea leaves, sugar and orange peel and slowly bring to the boil to dissolve the sugar. Remove the pan from the heat and leave to cool for at least 1hr to allow the tea to infuse the syrup.

2 Finely chop the chocolate and place in a bowl with the bergamot oil, if using. Add the cream and salt to the tea syrup and bring slowly back to the boil over a medium heat. Simmer for 20 seconds and then strain over the chopped chocolate. Leave for 1min for the chocolate to melt in the residual heat of the syrup and then stir until smooth. Leave to cool and then cover and chill until firm.

3 Using a teaspoon, scoop the ganache into cherry-sized balls and roll in your hands until smooth. Arrange on a parchment-covered tray and chill again for 15min.

4 For the coating, melt the remaining chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir until smooth and remove from the heat. Tip the icing sugar or cocoa onto a large dinner plate. Take 1tsp of the melted chocolate and spoon it into the palm of one hand and roll one truffle in the chocolate to coat. Drop the truffle into the icing sugar or cocoa and roll it around so that it's completely covered.

5 Repeat with the remaining truffles, lightly shaking off the excess icing sugar or cocoa, and leave in a cool place to harden before serving.

Store for up to 1 week in an airtight box in the fridge. Bring to room temperature to serve.

CONTINUED OVER PAGE

Cook's note

These truffles are delicately scented with hints of bergamot and orange and hand-rolled in chocolate to coat. If you prefer, you can go down the neater route and simply dip the truffles into the chocolate using a dipping or dinner fork.

Cook's note

Serve these rich, bite-sized truffles after dinner with coffee. If you want to take them to another level and blood oranges are in season, I urge you to use them. Bitter caramel with blood orange juice is a marriage made in heaven.



PEANUT AND RASPBERRY TRUFFLE POPS

Makes about 25
60g caster sugar plus 1tbsp
100g salted roasted peanuts
150g fresh raspberries
175g dark chocolate, chopped
75g milk chocolate, chopped
200g double cream
1tsp vanilla extract or ½tsp vanilla bean paste
1tbsp unsweetened peanut butter
To coat
200g dark chocolate, chopped

1 Tip the 60g sugar into a small solid-bottomed saucepan, add 2-3tsp water and set over a low heat to dissolve the sugar without stirring. Bring the syrup to the boil and cook over a medium heat until it turns into a honey-coloured caramel. This will take no time at all. Add the peanuts and stir to coat. Tip the peanut praline onto nonstick baking parchment and set aside to cool completely.
2 Finely chop the praline in a processor or by hand using a kitchen knife.
3 Combine the raspberries and remaining 1tbsp sugar in a small saucepan and cook over a low to medium heat until the berries are very soft and juicy. Continue to cook gently for 10min or so until the purée has reduced by half. Pass through a fine mesh sieve, discarding the seeds. You should have roughly 2tbsp of thick, seedless raspberry purée.
4 Tip the dark and milk chocolate into a medium-sized bowl. Heat the cream and vanilla extract or paste in a small pan until boiling and simmer gently for 30 seconds. Pour the hot cream over the chocolate, add the peanut butter and raspberry purée and stir gently until combined and smooth. Leave to cool slightly, add half of the peanut praline and stir gently to combine. Leave the ganache to cool, then cover and chill for at least 2hr until firm.
5 Using a teaspoon, scoop the ganache into large cherry-sized balls and roll in your hands until smooth. Push a lollipop stick into the middle of each truffle. Place on nonstick baking parchment and chill again for 30min.
6 Meanwhile, tip the dark chocolate into a heatproof bowl and melt over a pan of barely simmering water, making sure the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Stir until smooth. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. Dip one truffle pop at a time in the melted chocolate to coat and allow the excess chocolate to drip back into the bowl. Press the top of the truffle into the remaining peanut praline and leave to set on baking parchment.
Store in an airtight box in the fridge for up to 1 week. Bring to room temperature to serve.

Cook's note

I love the combination of peanut butter and raspberry purée; add chocolate to the mix and it's a winning formula. If you don't have lollipop sticks, these truffles can simply be sprinkled with raspberry dust or the finely chopped peanut praline.

BITTER ORANGE CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

Makes about 30
50g caster sugar
Juice of 3 oranges (to yield 200ml)
250g dark chocolate, finely chopped
100ml double cream
2tsp light muscovado sugar
Small pinch of salt
25g finely chopped candied orange peel
To coat
Cocoa powder for dusting

1 Line a 17cm square baking tin with nonstick baking parchment.
2 Tip the caster sugar into a small solid-bottomed saucepan and add 2-3tsp water. Set the pan over a low to medium heat to dissolve the sugar. Bring to the boil and cook steadily until the syrup turns into an amber-coloured caramel, swirling the pan to ensure the caramel cooks evenly. This will take a couple of minutes at best. Slide the pan off the heat and add the orange juice, taking care as it will splutter and hiss. Return the pan to the heat and stir to re-melt the caramel into the juice. Continue to cook over a medium heat to reduce the mixture by half, until you have 100ml syrup remaining. Remove from the heat.
3 Meanwhile, place the chocolate in a bowl. Heat the cream and muscovado sugar in a small saucepan until just boiling and the sugar has melted. Pour the hot cream over the chocolate, add the salt and stir gently until the chocolate has melted into the cream. Add the warm caramel orange syrup and stir gently to combine. Add the orange peel and stir gently. Pour the mixture into the prepared tin, spreading level with an offset palette knife. Leave to cool and then cover and chill for at least 2hr or until firm.
4 To serve, lightly dust the top of the ganache mixture with cocoa and cut into small squares using a warm kitchen knife. Dip the knife into hot water and dry on kitchen paper in between each slice to make slicing easier and neater. These truffles are rich and so should be served in elegant cubes rather than great hulking slabs.
Store for up to 1 week between baking parchment in an airtight box in the fridge. Bring to room temperature to serve. HB

Edible present ideas

All recipes are taken from *Sweet Things* by Annie Rigg with photography by Tara Fisher (£16.99, Kyle Books). To order your copy at the special price of £12.99 with free UK mainland p&p, please call 0871 803 6764* or visit allaboutyoubookshop.co.uk.

*CALLS COST 7P A MINUTE FROM BT LANDLINES. CALLS FROM MOBILES AND OTHER NETWORKS USUALLY COST MORE

FAST AND FABULOUS

Take the heat out of the kitchen with these delicious ready-prepared food buys

START IN STYLE

With a ready-made hors d'oeuvre you'll have more time to focus on the main dish. Seafood works well before turkey so try these delicate filled mini coquilles from Tesco (above) or a spectacular ready-to-serve dressed lobster from Sainsbury's, garnished with a lemon mayonnaise, fresh asparagus and juicy prawns (from around £20 each). **Finest Frozen 8 Mini Coquille St Jacques Selection (includes four Scallop and Chardonnay and four Salmon and Champagne), £3.50, Tesco**







THREE OF THE BEST

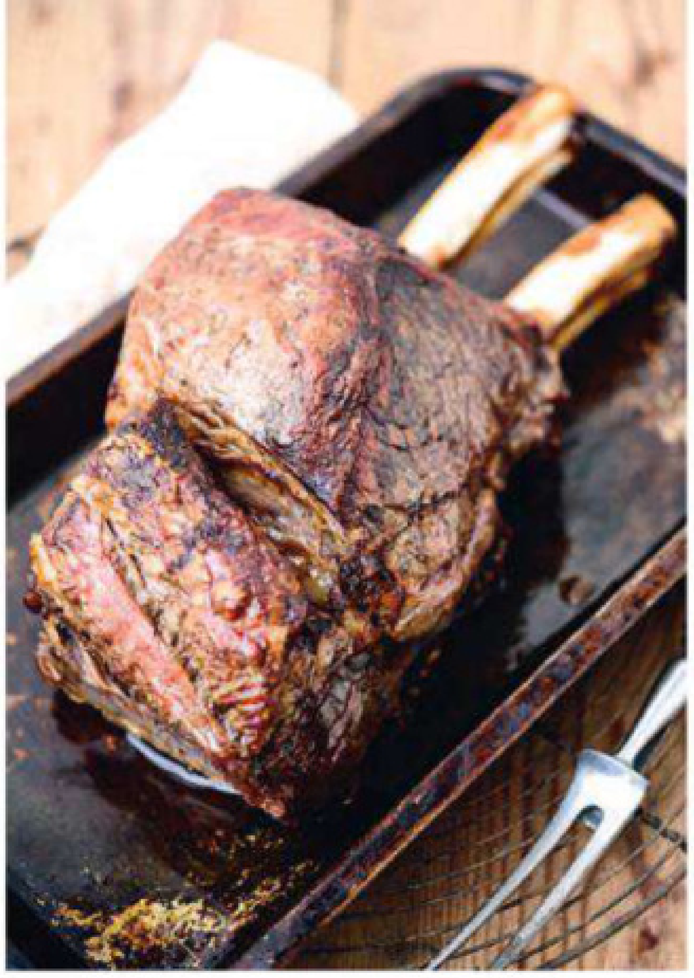
CHRISTMAS CAKES

Clockwise from above: Pecan and glacé cherry topped **Luxury Christmas Fruit Cake** (serves 10), £13.50, Thomas the Baker. Finest Fully Iced Christmas **Bauble Fruit Cake** (1.2kg), £12.50, Tesco. Christmas **Parcel Cake** with a choice of filling, £49.95 for 8in (serves 20), The Brilliant Bakers

SEASONAL SHIMMER

Add sparkle to your cocktails, mulled wine and baking with this pretty syrup, which combines mulling spices with edible glitter. Sparkling Christmas Mulling Syrup, £12.95, Fortnum & Mason





MEAT COUNTER

If you'd like a change from the traditional turkey, many supermarkets and butchers are stocking ready-prepared meat. Morrisons' succulent rib-eye beef (left) is worth checking out, as is the Finest Dry Cured Orange & Rosemary Marmalade Roasting Ham from Tesco, £50 for 3-4kg. Waitrose has a yummy range that includes Oak-smoked Stout and Molasses Matured Gammon, £14.99 a kg; Highland Forerib of Beef, £16.99 a kg; and Part-boned Leg of Lamb studded with Garlic and Rosemary, £14.99 a kg. *Bone In Rib Eye Beef Joint, approximately £18 a kg, Morrisons*



CHEESE FINALE

Blur bassist turned cheesemaker Alex James's Farleigh Wallop comes in an easy-to-slice shape and is rolled in thyme to balance the sharp bite of goat's cheese. Serve on its own or with fruit. **Farleigh Wallop Goat Cheese by Alex James, £8.50 for 210g, The Handpicked Foodstore**

BIG BANG

Surprise your guests with a giant cracker packed with 12 party hats, jokes and 40 chocolates. It'll take all your guests to pull it at once and has a proper snap inside, so watch out!
Rather Large Cracker, £38, Hotel Chocolat





LAST-MINUTE VEGETABLES

This selection of seasonal vegetables from Waitrose comes ready prepared in a choice of delicious combinations. They can be cooked in the microwave so are quick and save space on the hob too.
Clockwise from top left: Baby Sprouts with Bacon and Silverskin Onions, £2.69 for 300g; Green Winter Vegetable Selection, £1.49 for 250g; Red Cabbage with Mulled Wine and Clementines, £2.49 for 300g; Red and Green Sprouts with Chestnuts, £2.79 for 275g; Ready to Roast Goose Fat Potatoes, £2.39 for 650g; Salted Caramel Parsnips, £2.49 for 350g; all Waitrose HB

FOR STORE DETAILS SEE 'WHERE TO BUY' PAGE AT BACK OF ISSUE

COMPILED BY LIZ MURPHY

THREE OF THE BEST

MINCE PIES







From top: Speciality Mince Pie Selection (four each of Classic, Frangipane and Jewel Topped), £10 for 12, Bettys. **Specially Selected Mince Pies,** £1.69 for six, Aldi. **Spiced Shortcrust Mince Pies** with tangerine sugar, £3.50 for six, Heston from Waitrose

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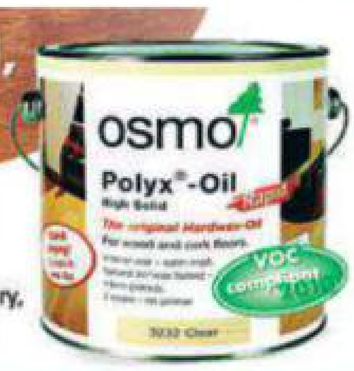
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