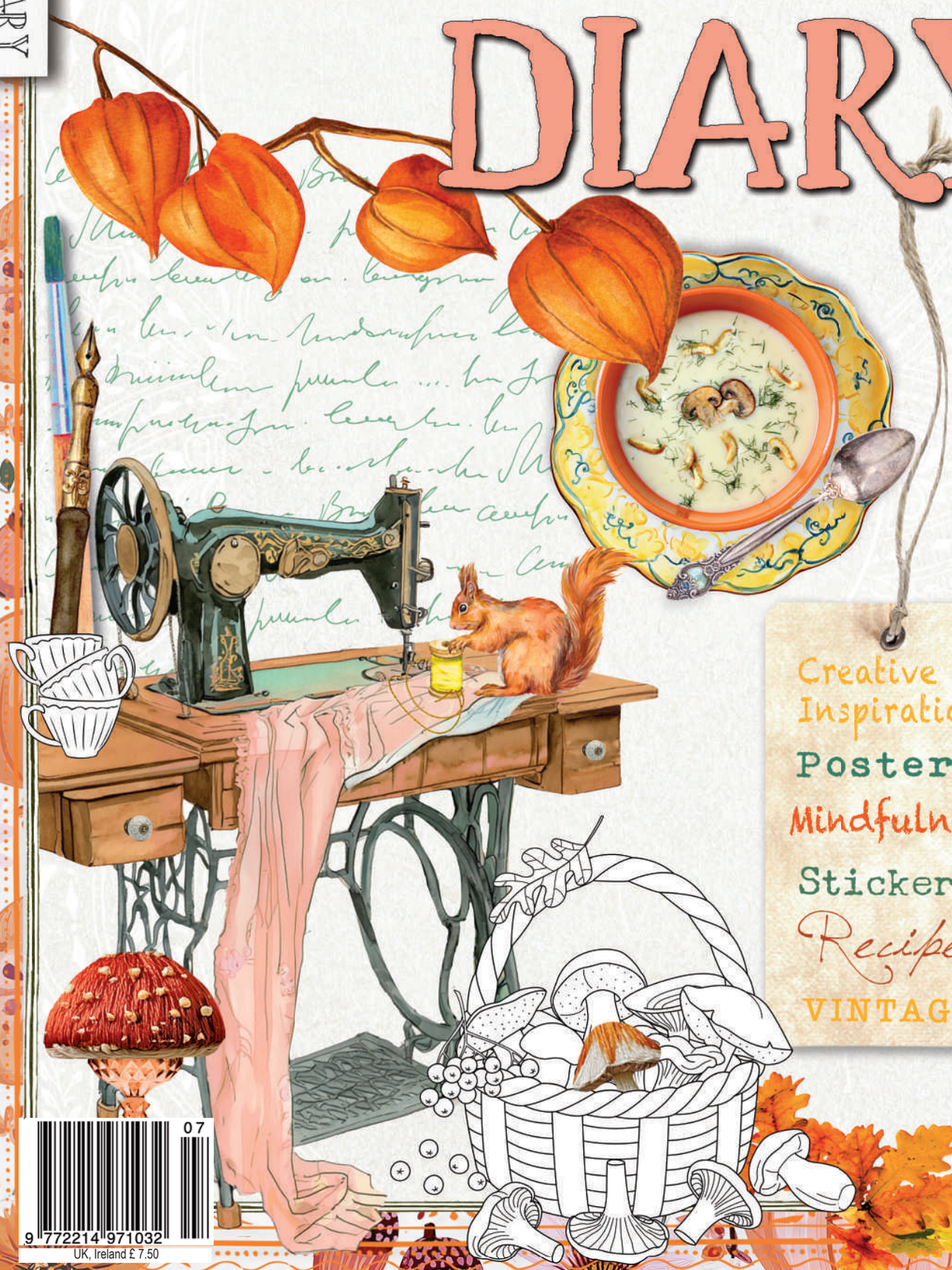
number 7 - 2026

DAPHNE'S DIARY

DAPHNE'S DIARY



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THIS DAPHNE'S DIARY
BELONGS TO:

. . . . . .





NICE AND COSY

I hear it everywhere I go: people complaining about the fact it's already getting dark so early. The fact it's really chilly in the mornings. Or the fact that they have to put thick socks on again. It's like a kind of annual ritual. I just keep quiet, because I actually don't mind it getting a bit darker and colder. In fact, I quite like it!

I love the summer too, of course. But autumn brings a lovely, homely feeling that always lifts my spirits. Life moves back indoors. I like making sure our house is warm and inviting. With beautiful branches from the woods, dried autumn leaves, conkers and, of course, candles! It doesn't have to be anything fancy, just nice and cosy.

In the autumn, everything starts to slow down a little bit. The picnic rugs are put away, and the woolly blankets come back out. In the summer I drink gallons of water, but now I'm taking time to make tea and sit down to drink it. I don't know exactly how to explain it, it's just a different kind of energy. Autumn is a time for curling up on the sofa with a book. For playing boardgames at the table with Anne and Barney after dinner. I love all that cosy fun.

Luckily the end of the long, warm days brings something just as wonderful with it. Autumn invites us all to take it easy, look for simple pleasures and enjoy the little moments that make every day feel special.

So, make a pot of tea, light a couple of candles, snuggle up in your favourite spot and enjoy all the magic that autumn brings.

Love, Daphne

118 MARVELLOUS MUSHROOMS

"HELLO, I'M DAPHNE,,

For anyone who doesn't know me yet, I'm Daphne. I'm married to Rob and we have two children together - Anne and Barney. We also have a chocolate Labrador called Mr Bear and a stubborn cat called Aunty Cat. I like crafts, photography, shopping and chatting with friends, gardening, cooking and travel. And I'm always busy working on my interior.

Every evening, I write about my experiences that day in my diary. About fifteen years ago, I came up with the idea of creating a kind of magazine full of wonderful things and this was the result.

I hope the magazine will inspire you. That you will get some good ideas whilst flipping through and that you might recognise yourself in some of the stories from my diary. Happy reading!

Love, Daphne

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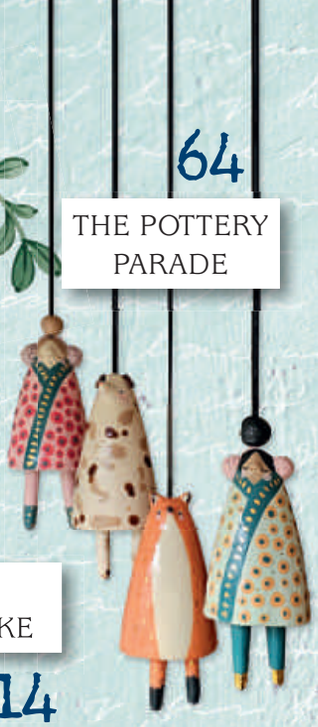
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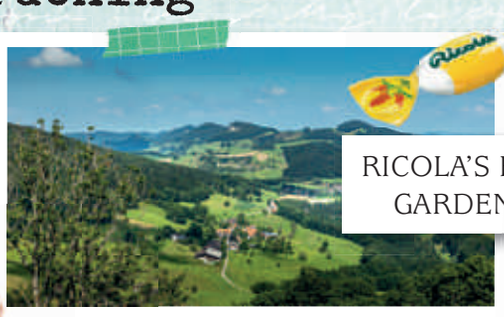


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AUTUMN
BINGO CARD

Dapper's Farm

A house built out of memories



An impulsive purchase that changed everything

This is a picture of Dapper De Wet. He has renovated a 160-year-old farmhouse in the town of Philadelphia, near Cape Town in South Africa, and turned it into a unique country retreat. "You could call it a renovation," Dapper says laughing, "But it was more like a resurrection." He bought the house, which served for many years as a village shop, five years ago on a bit of a whim.



His work as a travel photographer takes Dapper all over the world. It was important to him both to restore the historical features of the house and to take inspiration from the objects he has collected on his travels for the interior design.

Dapper worked creatively with whatever materials he could get his hands on. He used a set of metal posts left over from the repair of a pedestrian bridge as balustrades. The industrial character they add contrasts beautifully with the unfinished lime walls and brick fireplace.





Dapper turned the outhouse into the main living space. "I didn't buy anything new for the house," he says. "Everything in the outhouse comes from the farm I grew up on, or from my trips abroad."

A collector's miniature museums

You can find miniature exhibitions of Dapper's finds all around the house. A collection of old suitcases on top of an oriental cabinet, a set of old toys in the bedroom and this wonderful selection of antique pots and buckets on top of a wooden cupboard. The oriental furniture works perfectly with all his mementos.



The chickens wandering around the house add so much charm.

Dapper left part of the original door visible in the lime wall, as a reminder of how the house used to look. The letterbox makes it such a fun, playful detail.





In this beautiful cabinet with glass doors, Dapper has displayed his collection of vintage china. It gives the room a bit of a nostalgic feel.







Dapper found the dining table at a monastery in Sri Lanka; he's given it a position right in the middle of the house. "When I was travelling in Sri Lanka, I was amazed by the way people there live. They're so connected to the outdoors. I tried to recreate that feeling in the living room, using furniture from Indonesia and other Asian countries."

Are walls for hanging pictures on? Dapper had other ideas. He put up a couple of old chairs!



I put my soul into this house

Dapper actually grew up on a farm not too far from the house. There were all kinds of reminders of his childhood stored away, waiting for the perfect new home. “It felt like a kind of reunion with old friends,” says Dapper. “I wanted to furnish the house with respect for all those beautiful heirlooms.” Although the farmhouse dates back to 1860, Dapper is only the sixth owner. “That comes with a certain responsibility to preserve the character of the house.”



Dapper: "In our disposable culture, we're always looking for new, fashionable designer items. I didn't want to be influenced by trends and novelties."





This sloping wall makes the bedroom so cosy.



Chickens in the living room and chairs on the wall.

Leaves
AND IMAGINATION



When I'm out on a walk, I can never resist stopping to pick up some beautiful leaves. I take them home and, after a couple of days drying under a heavy book, I can use them to make something new. With a bit of imagination, they can become butterflies, faces or little works of art.



1. Leaf butterflies

Turn a few different leaves into a decorative butterfly.

How to make it:
Choose four leaves for the wings.
Trim them a little bit if necessary, to create a nice shape. Glue them to a piece of paper. Make a body and antennae out of stems or twigs. Leave natural or decorate the wings with paint.

Draw on simple faces and give each leaf its own personality, or make all the different members of your family!





I think they're so cheerful!



2. A natural hairstyle

Turn any leaf into a fun character by adding a simple face.

How to make it:
Cut a simple face out of thick paper. Glue this to the bottom of a nice leaf. Use the shape of the leaf to form a hairstyle. Use a fine liner to draw features onto the face and add some colour to the cheeks too if desired.

DIY
DAPHNE INSPIRES YOU







3. Paint gingko leaves

Fan-shaped gingko leaves are perfect for painting to make butterflies.

How to make it:
Use dried gingko leaves. Stick two leaves together at a slight angle, so the stems look like antennae. Cut a little triangle out of the bottom. Paint the two halves with a symmetrical design. Leave the paint to dry fully.



A paintbrush, some paint and a pretty leaf are all you need.

Baked with love in

Hungary

Behind every delicious Kürtöskalács lies centuries of tradition. In Hungary, dough has been wrapped around a wooden rolling pin and baked slowly to create a crunchy, golden-brown delicacy for hundreds of years.

Kürtőskalács:

The sweet, crunchy chimney cake





The cake is still a popular treat at markets and festivals today.





A tasty treat with history

Kürtöskalács were originally only baked for weddings, harvest festivals and other special occasions. Today, you can find them being sold at all kinds of different markets and celebrations, as well as at stalls on cute little streets throughout Hungary. The dough is wrapped around a wooden cylinder, brushed with butter and sprinkled generously with sugar, then turned over hot coals or baked in a special oven until golden brown. The sugar caramelises to create a delicious, crunchy coating.

You will need:
(To make 4)

For the dough:
- 500 g flour
- 7 g dry yeast
- 250 ml lukewarm milk
- 50 g sugar
- 100 g melted butter
- 1 egg
- pinch of salt

For the coating:
- 75 g melted butter
- 150 g caster sugar
- 2 tsp cinnamon

- large mixing bowl
- baking sheet
- baking paper
- aluminium foil
- four ovenproof rolling pins
- brush
- mixer



You can also fill the kürtőskalács with vanilla ice cream, chocolate spread, crème pâtissière or whipped cream, like the ones in the picture.



They turn out best if the dough is all the same thickness.

How to make kürtoskalács

1. Make the dough

Mix the flour with the yeast, sugar and salt. Add the lukewarm milk, 100 g of melted butter and the egg and knead everything with a mixer for about ten minutes, to form a supple dough. Roll it into a ball. Cover the bowl with a tea towel and leave the dough to rise for around an hour, until doubled in size.

2. Make the rolls

Preheat the oven to 180 °C. Cover some ovenproof rolling pins with aluminium foil, then grease them lightly. Divide the dough into four equal pieces and roll each out into a long strip around 1.5 cm thick. Wrap the strip in a spiral around the rolling pin and carefully press down the end.

3. Bake

Melt 75 g of butter and brush it generously onto the dough. Roll the dough through the sugar. Lay the rolling pins on a baking sheet. Bake for around 20 to 25 minutes. Turn the rolls regularly, so they end up a nice, even golden brown.

4. The finishing touch

Take the warm kürtöskalács out of the oven, leave them to cool and roll them in a mixture of sugar and cinnamon or another topping, like finely chopped pistachios or walnuts.

Fill the kürtőskalács with melted chocolate and spin them round. Pour out the excess chocolate and repeat the process with the finely chopped nuts. This is a great way to make an extra luxurious kürtőskalács.

My Mother makes Fermented carrot

Fermenting vegetables isn't too tricky. All you need to get started is a glass jar, a bit of salt, fresh vegetables and some patience.

You will need:

- 400 g carrots
- 2 to 3 cm fresh ginger
- 1 tbsp sea salt
- 500 ml water
- A clean preserving jar, to hold around 750 ml

How to make it:

- Dissolve the salt in the water.
- Cut the carrots in strips or circles and cut the ginger in thin slices.
- Fill the jar with plenty of carrot and ginger, then cover everything with the brine. Use a weight if necessary.
- Put the lid on loosely and leave to stand at room temperature and away from direct sunlight for 3 to 5 days.
- Taste daily. Once the flavour is refreshingly tangy, move the jar to the fridge. The fermented vegetables will keep for another few weeks there.

Fermentation is a centuries-old technique for preserving vegetables. Long before the invention of the refrigerator, people used the power of salt and time to make food last. Cabbages, carrots and other seasonal vegetables were packed tightly into earthenware pots and nature did the rest. This natural process not only resulted in a fresh, slightly tangy flavour, but also ensured the vegetables could be stored safely for months. Fermentation evolved from a practical solution to a tradition that's still popular today.



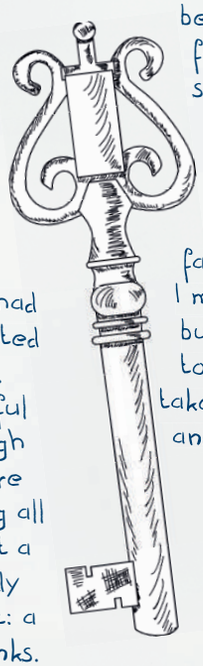
LET IT BE - PART I

Dear Diary,

It was back in February that we found our piano at a charity shop. It was a beautiful, old instrument, made from reddish brown walnut wood with a lid you could lock using a little copper key. Anne in particular was very excited, and she's been taking piano lessons with Mrs Warner every Wednesday afternoon since we brought it home. She really enjoys them and she can already play some simple, classic tunes. She's even learnt a couple of Taylor Swift songs by heart.

It was early June when Rob told us that he had decided to start learning the piano too. I've noticed that, as some men reach middle age, their younger days start to seem more and more distant: their bodies are changing, responsibilities are piling up, their kids are getting bigger and work can feel a bit boring and predictable. They go through a kind of mid-life crisis and suddenly want a motorbike, a fast sports car, roller skates, a whole new wardrobe or a tattoo. I expect that's what's behind Rob's interest in piano lessons. Anyway, he recently started going to Mrs Warner's on a Saturday morning. Whenever he's practising his scales at home, the expression on Anne's face suggests it's not going all that well. "Should I show you the fingering again, Dad?" she asks, but Rob always insists he doesn't need any help.

One evening in early August, we were talking about the plans for our garden party over dinner. We had decided to go big this year, and invited all our neighbours' neighbours too. Anne had made some really cheerful invitations and posted them through everyone's door with Barney. There would be about 50 guests, including all the kids. We had decided to make it a kind of potluck party, with everybody bringing something delicious to eat: a salad, snacks, a dessert or some drinks.



Then, a couple of weeks ago, Rob announced that he would be performing at the garden party. "Performing?" I asked in surprise. "Yes, that's right. I'm going to be giving a garden concert. We'll wheel the piano out onto the terrace," Rob replied. I'm learning Let it Be by The Beatles. The kids were just as taken aback as I was and Anne said, "But, Dad, you'll have to practise really hard!" "Yeah, really, really hard," Barney added with a little less tact. I wasn't sure exactly what to say and, with my mouth full of food, I mumbled, "Oh, well, that's great Rob." That was as much enthusiasm as I could muster. "What does Mrs Warner think?" Anne asked. Rob smiled and said, "She recommended that I concentrate on scales to start with but, if you're going to give a concert, you've got to entertain the crowd! I want everyone standing up and singing along. That's never going to happen with a rendition of Charles-Louis Hanon's piano exercises, is it? It will be a night the whole neighbourhood talks about for years to come."

In the weeks leading up to the garden party, Rob was rehearsing fanatically, but I still couldn't make out a discernible tune. There must have been a reason he'd chosen that song, so I decided to stick with the theme of the evening and let it be. Until, last week, I looked up to find Rob standing in front of me in a pair of very tight jeans, a leather belt, new trainers and a white shirt with a few too many buttons undone. "And?" he said, striking a kind of Elvis-inspired pose. "What do you think of my outfit for the concert?" The words 'midlife crisis' flashed through my mind but I said, "Oh um, lovely, darling. I think you'll find a lot of fans among our neighbours with that outfit. I might consider doing up a couple more buttons though." I wondered if I should try to save him from himself, or continue to take my lead from the setlist for the evening and let it be.

Read more on page 37.

DIY
DAPHNE INSPIRES YOU

MAKE YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS STREET

In this issue, you'll find two little paper houses to cut out, fold and glue together. More houses will follow in the next issue, so you can make a pretty Christmas street.

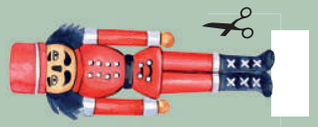




Cut the houses out, fold them and glue the tabs on the inside. Then cut out the figures and give them a little folded foot, so you can stand them in front of the houses. Keep the houses from this issue and add them to the houses in Issue 8 to make a festive Christmas street. Some fairy lights, sprigs of pine or artificial snow will complete your winter scene.



Daphne's christmas house nr.1









glue tab - Kleberand
lijmrand - bord à encoller

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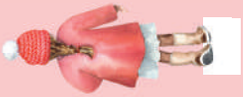
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Daphne's christmas house nr.2





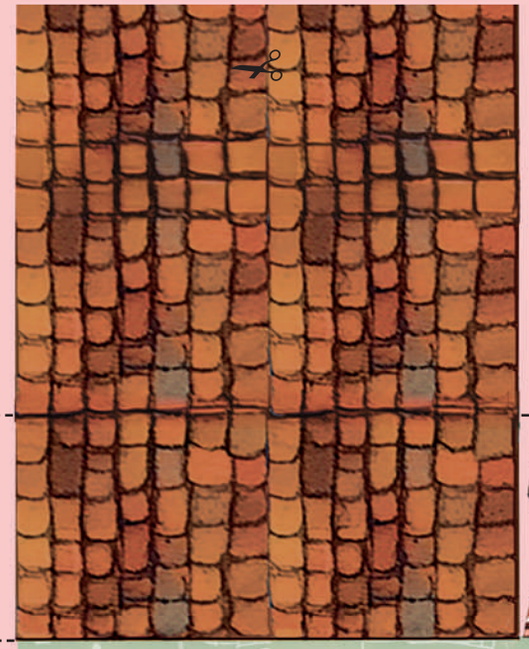




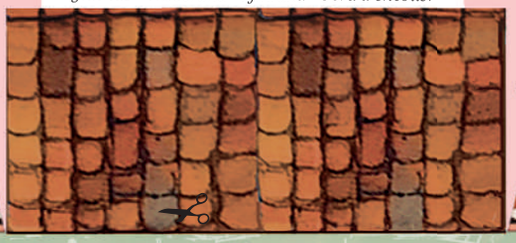
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glue tab - Kleberand
lijmrand - bord à encoller











glue tab - Kleberand - lijmrand - bord à encoller



A PAGE *from a reader's diary*

Dear Diary,



On Wednesday, I suddenly realised that I had a totally free weekend coming up. For a mum of two active boys, that's quite rare. I was really looking forward to it, but at the same time I couldn't think what to do.

Deep inside my heart I knew that what I really wanted was to go on a trip, somewhere by the sea. The sea is a long way from where we live though, I didn't have much money and it was a bit of a crazy plan anyway. It was already Wednesday. How would I organise a weekend away with so little time? Then I remembered my colleague. She'd told me how, last summer, she travelled to Venice by train. I was so disappointed when I discovered that the connection no longer existed! I couldn't seem to stop searching though. The fear of spending the weekend at home, cleaning and tidying the house again, was too strong.

And then all at once I saw it: a direct bus link from my city to Venice. Seven-hundred kilometres. I could be there in one night, spend the day by the sea and then travel back the next night. I couldn't resist the temptation and I booked straight away. On Wednesday. For a bus leaving on Friday night. I could hardly believe it!

I got on the bus on Friday evening, spent the night onboard and woke up the next morning in Venice. When I got off the bus, I could smell the sea in the air. It all felt a bit mad, but it made me so happy too.

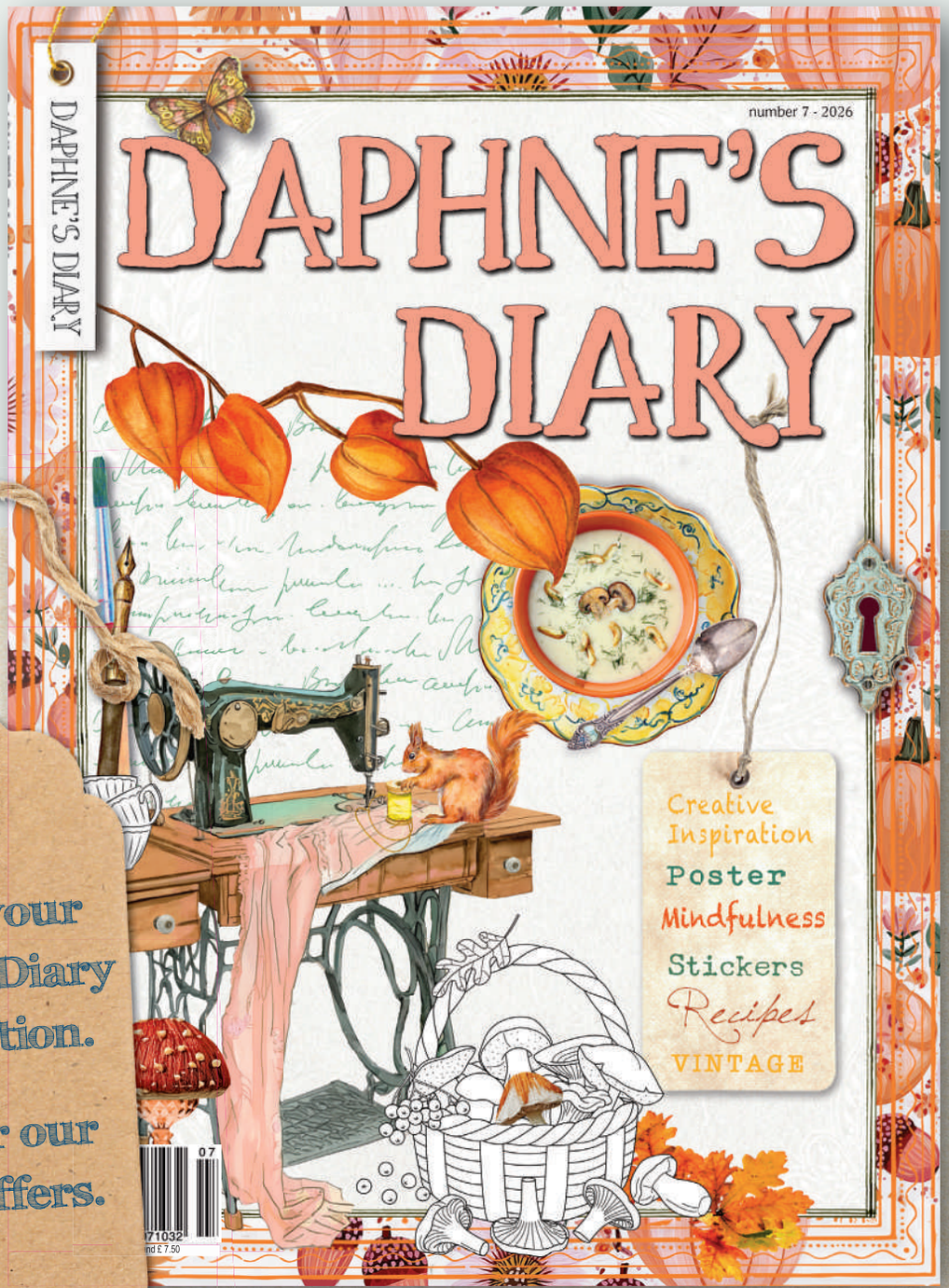
I wandered through the narrow streets all day, taking in the sparkling water of the canals and soaking up every moment. I could hardly believe that I had actually gone ahead and done it. I kept thinking about my sons and I couldn't wait to tell them what I'd been up to. I wanted them to know they had a mother who was brave enough to do what she really wanted. And they were really happy for me, of course. Now we're making new plans. Next time we'll all go to Venice. Just for one day. To experience it together.

Warm wishes,
Anna

In this feature, 'A page from a reader's diary', we will be sharing some of the stories that we receive by email. So if you have a great story, email it to info@daphnesdiary.com. One important thing is that we'd like it to be a positive story. We'll choose one story out of all the entries we've received to share in each issue.

DAPHNE'S DIARY Magazine

8 ISSUES A YEAR



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LA BIZOTTERIE

a place where creativity comes to life





A love of vintage china and characterful tables evolved into a unique concept that's brought a little bit more creativity to the Dutch city of Apeldoorn. Loes, Anita and her husband Matthieu joined forces to open La Bizotterie: an inspiring market hall combining vintage, homewares, products from local makers and a pottery café. It's a place where creativity comes to life.



Martine and I had booked a ceramics workshop at the pottery café but, before we sat down, we had time to look at all the amazing vintage. We were welcomed very warmly by Matthieu. "Things used to be made to last a lifetime," he said. "We're benefitting from that mindset here, and I feel so grateful that we get to send these special objects to their new homes."



The French often celebrate good news with oysters and champagne. That tradition really ignited Anita and Matthieu's love of oyster platters and champagne glasses. You can find a fascinating selection at La Bizotterie.



This oyster platter is so unique - a real work of art!





La Bizotterie is a shop-in-shop concept, housing another two stores and the pottery café too.

Treasure hunts

For Loes, Anita and Matthieu, vintage is a passion, as well as a way to give beautiful things a second life. Inspired by French dining and a love of characterful tables, they are always on the lookout for special finds with a story. From elegant glasses to unique oyster, snail and asparagus plates: each and every item is chosen with care. "We combine visiting family in the South of France with our favourite hobby: hunting for treasure at brocantes and markets." They have a set route visiting various favourite locations where they discover the most amazing vintage finds. Those treasure hunts form the foundation for their range.

There was so much to take in, but our seats in the pottery café were waiting. Martine and I took our places and the owner, Katrien, made us a delicious cup of coffee.

Ceramics, coffee and COLOURFUL CREATIONS

In the centre of the market hall is G'lazy Café. This creative spot is the perfect place to spend a peaceful couple of hours painting your own ceramics, while enjoying a drink and a bite to eat. Katrien's passion for pottery led her to open this café. "The best bit is that people are able to really unwind here. Phones disappear into the background as friends chat and laugh together. And, at the end of their session, they've produced the most beautiful creations too." As a ceramicist, she always dreamed of sharing her love for pottery with others. And today she combines helping guests with glazing, firing and looking for new collections. She takes her inspiration from nature, travel and, most importantly, the creativity of her customers, who always manage to surprise her.



Before you get started, you have to choose an item to paint. There's so much choice: mugs, bowls, dishes, plates and vases.



You can choose from 42 different glaze colours. Aren't they beautiful? I went for some warm shades along with a light blue.



What do you think of our creations? Martine loves oranges, as you can see!



Please note: Starting October 1, 2026, the Glazy Café will be located on Asselsestraat in Apeldoorn.



You can find more information on page 126.

Where a house becomes a home

Nina Watson



This is Nina

Nina Watson lives in North London with her husband, her 16-year-old son, her 14-year-old daughter and their two Bengal cats, Snoop and Missy. Her mother, who is now in her eighties, lives nearby too. They live in an Edwardian house that was built in 1910 – a place where they all feel completely at home.

Passion for interiors

Nina has been interested in interiors and furnishing ever since she was a little girl. It was a given that she would be going to art school when she was older but, instead of interior design, she initially chose to study illustration. Nina worked as an illustrator for many years, but she continued to feel drawn to interior design. That turned out to be her greatest passion, so she later returned to her studies to complete an Interior Design course too.



What a beautiful hall! The house is full of the atmosphere of the past.

Nina was always busy making changes to her own interior. "Just for myself, because it was something I enjoyed. At a certain point, a friend of mine was so enthusiastic about my interior that she asked me to help design her house too. She became my first client."



"The way you live determines how you feel."



Missy the cat fits perfectly with Nina's interior.



It's great to see how you can create a peaceful feel by mixing old and new.

A friendship turned into the start of her career

Working for her friend was a great experience that gave Nina confidence to do the same for other people. “It hadn’t occurred to me before that I could turn this into my work.” She started an Instagram account and soon had followers from all over the world. Various brands approached her for collaborations and her success continued to grow. “I was pleasantly surprised!”







Nina believes lamps give a space character. That’s why she now designs and makes her own lampshades, with the company Tinker and Tallulah, for example. She also creates brass items and stair runners for other businesses. Standing still just isn’t in her nature. “I want to design lots more interior products and continue to develop my own collection. The cherry on top would be writing my own book!”

“I want to create spaces that really move you.”

“A warm welcome begins with the interior.”



‘Vintage eclectic’ is what Nina calls her style. It’s definitely a style with a lot of spirit!



It feeds my soul

Nina feels so lucky to be able to do the work she does. “This work feeds my soul. I love designing spaces for people that make them really catch their breath. That’s my favourite thing about my work, the fact that I can design things that improve my clients’ daily lives. People underestimate how important your interior is for your mental health. Just a little bit of decluttering, a new colour and a beautiful vintage item in your house can make a big difference.”

“Colours that embrace you”



Thanks to Nina, I’m once again full of inspiration for my own home.





Nina never has to look far for ideas. "Anything can give me inspiration. Nature, architecture, people, colour combinations. Later this year I'm going to an antiques fair in Lisbon, and I'm sure you'll be able to see the influence on my designs."

You can find more information on page 126.

Crochet an autumn pumpkin

I can never have enough pumpkins in my house. This crocheted variety might be my favourite though: soft, stylish and perfect to take out again next autumn.

You will need:

- 1 ball of Scheepjes Stonewashed XL 856 (Coral)
- 1 ball of Scheepjes Stonewashed XL 849 (Yellow Jasper)
- Leftover yarn in a dark-brown colour
- 5 mm crochet hook
- filling
- scissors
- embroidery needle



Never tried crochet? No problem! You can see what all the abbreviations mean below. Happy crocheting!

Crochet stitch abbreviations:

ch – chain
dc – double crochet
sl st – slip stitch
tr – treble
htr – half treble

Instructions:

Use the Coral yarn
Crochet 20 ch for the chain
Row 1: Skip 2 ch, 18 htr
Rows 2 to 25: 2 ch, 18 htr

Crochet a total of 25 dc along both sides (25 dc along one side and 25 dc along the other side). Use sl st to join the short sides together. Thread your yarn through the front loop of the dcs and pull the yarn tight until you have a small round opening. Stuff the pumpkin, then do the same on the other side.

Thread 6 lengths of yarn (using the leftover yarn in dark brown) through the sides of the pumpkin and pull them tight to achieve the desired shape. This will create the characteristic segments.

Pumpkin stalk
Use the Yellow Jasper yarn

Row 1: Make a magic ring with 6 dc.
Rows 2 to 6: 6 dc
*Row 7: *Ch 3, 2 tr together in the next st, ch 3, 1 dc in the next st; repeat from * twice more.*
Fasten off and sew the flat side to the top of the pumpkin.

Tuesday

LET IT BE - PART II

Dear Diary,

The days went by and, despite Rob practising at the piano night after night, his playing didn't seem to be improving. "Aren't you worried about getting noise complaints, Dad?" asked Barney, who wasn't entirely convinced the concert was going to be a success. "No, no," Rob replied, "any neighbours who might have complained will be in the audience!" The next day, Anne said, "Um, Dad, I was talking to Mrs Warner and she said moving the piano outside might not be the best idea. It could end up out of tune." Rob had an answer for her too. "It's just as warm outside as inside," he said. "And, if something does sound a little bit off, at least it won't be anything to do with me! You'll see. It will be a night the whole neighbourhood talks about for years to come."

The big day finally arrived. Rob and Barney had decorated the whole garden with fairy lights, and Anne and I had been busy making snacks and drinks, collecting crockery and cutlery, folding napkins and preparing other bits and pieces. As the day went on, Rob did start to seem a little bit nervous. "Er, you know what, Daphne?" he said, "I'm not sure we're going to get that heavy piano over the step." "Why don't you ask one of the neighbours to give you a hand?" I replied. It didn't take Rob and the guy next door long to carry the piano out onto the patio. "Just you wait," said Rob, who seemed to have found his courage again. "It will be a night you all talk about for years to come."



It was about six o'clock when the first guests began to arrive, laden with all kinds of delicious things. "Oh, how exciting!" said the lady from across the street, looking over at the piano. "I was chatting to Rob this week, and he told me he was going to be performing. We're all so curious!" By seven o'clock, the garden was full of guests, and everyone seemed to be talking about Rob's performance. At exactly eight, Rob appeared on the terrace in his new outfit. The guests broke into enthusiastic applause and started chanting his name. Rob bowed deeply, like a real popstar. "Good evening, neighbours!" he shouted. At last, he sat down at the piano and bent to lift the lid. It wouldn't open. Because it was locked. Rob stood up and explained that the piano seemed to be locked and that there would be a short delay while he went inside to look for the key. I hurried after him and the two of us turned the place upside down. "Who could have locked the piano though?" I asked. We couldn't imagine. One of the guests? Anne or Barney, trying to save their dad from embarrassment? It was a mystery. We searched the house from top to bottom and after half an hour Rob went back to the patio, where everyone was still gathered expectantly. "Ahem. Erm, I am sorry to announce that the key has disappeared. It could be somewhere on the lawn or the drive. Might anyone be able to help us look?" All our guests spent the whole evening hunting for that tiny little copper key. I just couldn't understand it. Why on earth was the piano lid, which was always left open, suddenly locked tonight of all nights. And who could have done it? Rob told me he suspected the neighbour who had helped him move the piano, but I wondered if Anne or Barney might be a more likely culprit.

It was one in the morning by the time everyone left, and Rob and I both sat down on the edge of the bed. Rob started to pull off his tight jeans and I heard a sudden clang. From Rob's trouser pocket, a little copper key had fallen to the ground. Rob jumped, then gathered all his skills as an actor to arrange his face into a very over-the-top look of surprise. I was shocked too, but at first I said nothing. There was silence for a moment. Then I turned to Rob and said, "Sleep well, darling! It really was a night the whole neighbourhood will talk about for years to come."

Love, Daphne

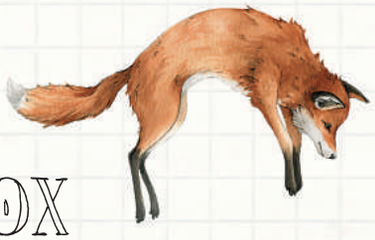


Can you spot the 10 differences?



You can find the solution on page 126.

DO YOU RECOGNISE THESE PAWPRINTS?



FOX



5–6 cm

A fox's pawprint is long and looks a bit like a small dog's. You can see four toes with clear claw marks and the middle two toes are a little bit ahead of the others. Foxes often move purposefully, so their tracks usually form almost straight lines.

WILD BOAR



6–8 cm

The track of a wild boar consists of two wide hoofprints that are bigger and rounder than a deer's. In soft mud, you often see two little marks behind the hoofs – the dew claws. These are a clear feature that can help you recognise a wild boar's trail.





DEER



3–5 cm

A deer's track is made up of two narrow hoofs that together form a heart-shaped print. The hoofprint is around 3 to 5 cm long and can often be found along the forest edge, where deer love to shelter and graze.

HEDGEHOG



2–3 cm

A hedgehog's pawprint is small but easy to recognise by the five toes and fine claw marks. Because hedgehogs are often snuffling about looking for food, their tracks don't usually form a straight line. Instead, their winding trails show they've been rustling peacefully through the woods or your garden at night.



BADGER



6–7 cm

A badger track can be recognised by the five toes and long claw marks, which extend in front of the toes. The front paw stands out in particular, because it looks surprisingly like a small bear's pawprint. With their strong claws, badgers are great at digging for worms and insects in the soil of the forest floor.



SQUIRREL



2–3 cm



3–4 cm



Squirrel tracks are usually made up of groups of four prints. The two larger back paws land before the smaller front paws, making a playful pattern. You often find these trails under oak and beech trees, where squirrels hunt for acorns, beechnuts and other treats.

From pocket to storage





Rob always leaves his things lying around: keys, cards, sunglasses, you name it. So I made these frames from some old jeans and put them up on the wall: a handy place to keep all the bits and pieces you need to grab when you're heading out the door.

You will need:

- old jeans
- 2 wooden picture frames
- scissors
- double-sided tape or strong craft glue
- cardboard or the backing board from the frame







How to make it:

Step 1: Remove the glass from the photo frame. Use the backing board as a base.

Step 2: Place the backing board on top of the denim and cut out the shape, leaving some extra material around the outside.

Step 3: Cover the backing board with double-sided tape or glue and press it onto the fabric. Trim off any excess denim and place the board back in the frame.

Now all that's left to do is hang it up on the wall!

DIY DAPHNE INSPIRES YOU

Choose the best bits of the jeans, like a back pocket, coin pocket or belt loop. Those little details will make the frame even more fun.

I'm never parting with THIS

Dear Daphne,

Looking at my sketchbook, you might think: What's so special about that? The cover is a bit faded, some of the pages are crumpled and there are a few splodges of paint here and there. But, for me, it's a book full of memories.

A good friend gave it to me many years ago as a gift. On the first page she had written: Fill this book not with perfect pictures but with special moments. And that stuck with me.

Since then I've taken it almost everywhere I go. On holiday, on walks in the woods, on afternoons in the city or just out into my own garden. I make little sketches of flowers, interesting housefronts, a cup of tea on a sunny terrace or a blackbird that's stopped moving just long enough for me to sketch it.

They're not works of art. The flowers sometimes look more like clouds, and the houses are often a little bit wonky. But that doesn't matter at all. Every time I turn a page, it takes me straight back to the day I drew the picture. I remember the smell of lavender in a French garden, the sound of waves lapping at the shore or the first spring day when I could finally sketch outside again.

Among all the drawings, I sometimes slip in a ticket, a pressed flower or a letter. So the sketchbook has gradually become a collection of precious moments. It tells my story in a way that photographs never could.

The best part is that it's not full yet. There are lots of empty pages waiting for new discoveries. It's so wonderful to think that there are always more happy times to be captured.

That's why I'm never parting with this. It's not just a sketchbook, it's a little archive full of wonder, inspiration and joy.

Love, Charlotte



In 'I'm never parting with this', I show you some unique objects that have been sent in by my friends. It can be anything. Sometimes it's a creative item and sometimes it's a cherished souvenir. Just as long as you couldn't imagine being without it. Do you have something you never want to part with? Email it to info@daphnesdiary.com.

MARGARET'S WORLD OF MINIATURES

where nature and fantasy come together



What I really love about Margaret's work is the way she looks at nature through different eyes. Where somebody else might see a walnut shell or a twig, she sees a house or a little door. That's the power of creativity: spotting the possibility in the most ordinary things. I'm sure her story will inspire us all to think creatively next time we're out on a walk.

From a seedcase to a little house

Margaret is 84 and lives in the Australian city of Armidale. She makes the most enchanting miniatures, with lots of imagination and incredible patience too. Walnut shells, seedcases, twigs and acorns are transformed into tiny little houses where any fairytale creature would feel at home right away. Her work reminds me of something I already knew, that the most amazing creations often start with something very simple.

I could spend hours gazing at these works of art! I think the way Margaret can turn a simple pecan shell into a tiny little wardrobe, complete with piles of folded cloth, hangers and all those other miniscule details is pure magic!





Here's Margaret in her garden.

"I hope to show that anyone can be creative. All you have to do is open your eyes and look around you."
Margaret

It's all in the detail

As Margaret works, a walnut shell might become a miniature home. She brings her little interiors to life with a pair of tweezers in each hand, a magnifying lamp and endless patience. She finds inspiration everywhere: in nature, children's books and of course Daphne's Diary!



I've put this little miniature next to a match to really give a sense of how unbelievably small it is. I'm amazed by the precision that Margaret puts into each tiny detail.



If you look carefully, you can see that these figures are made from dried poppy seed pods.



Nature as inspiration

Long walks are an important part of Margaret's creative process. Because that's where she finds everything she needs to make her creations. She loves visiting charity shops too, and the old fans, handkerchiefs and other scraps of fabric she finds there all appear in her miniatures.

I wish you many more inspiring walks and magical finds, Margaret! Have fun making your next enchanting miniature creations.

You can find more information on page 126.



Creamy mushroom and chestnut soup

Ingredients (to serve 4):

- 300 g chestnut mushrooms
- 200 g sweet chestnuts
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 medium potato, peeled and diced
- 750 ml vegetable stock
- 200 ml cooking cream
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp fresh thyme (or ½ tsp dried thyme)
- salt and freshly ground black pepper

Sometimes you don't need much to make something delicious. With some mushrooms, chestnuts and a dash of cream, you can whip up a rich, creamy soup that tastes even better on a cold day.

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat the butter and olive oil in a soup pan. Fry the onion for 3 minutes until translucent and add the garlic.

Add the mushrooms and fry them for 5 to 6 minutes until golden brown. Keep a couple of slices to one side for the garnish.

Add the sweet chestnuts, potato and thyme, then pour in the stock. Bring to the boil and allow the soup to simmer gently for 20 minutes.

Puree the soup with a hand blender, until smooth and creamy.

Stir in the cooking cream and heat the soup for a few more minutes, without allowing it to come to the boil. Season with salt and pepper.

Pour the soup into the bowls and garnish with the extra mushrooms, fried chestnut slices, fresh herbs and maybe a swirl of cream.







Light, fragrance and joy

I've always loved candles. On a dark day, during a long afternoon of work or just while I'm reading a good book. Making your own candle feels a little bit like a gift to yourself. Choose a fragrance that brings you joy and enjoy the creative process - that might just be the best bit!

Make your own scented candle

There are little rituals that can make your home feel cosy and warm in an instant. And lighting a candle is one of them. It works even better when it's a candle you've made yourself. With a fragrance that fits you perfectly. Melting the wax, choosing some flowers or herbs and waiting for the candle to set…it's an exercise in patience and taking things slowly too.

Difficulty level: Easy

Time:
- About one day

You will need:
- old candles
- a grater
- a small pan
- a metal bowl
- essential oils of your choice
- a wooden stirring stick
- cotton string
- a small stick or skewer
- a glass jar or another heat-resistant container

How to make it:



1. Grate the old candles finely. Smaller flakes will melt more smoothly when heated.



2. Melt the wax in a bain-marie. Add a couple of drops of essential oil and stir slowly.



3. Tie a length of cotton string to the middle of a stick or skewer. This will form the wick.



4. Balance the stick on the rim of the jar so that the wick hangs down in the centre. Now pour in the melted wax.

If the candle has sunk a little bit in the centre once it's cooled, simply fill the dip with some extra melted wax and leave it to set again. Allow the candle to cool completely before cutting the wick down to the desired length and lighting it for the first time.

Please note: The items in this article are homemade products. If you would like to make and use them yourself, this will be at your own risk.

Recharge
in the Voer region

A bunch of flowers from the farm's own garden and curious sheep coming to watch as you pick them. That's what awaits at 'Onder de Wol', in Belgium's Voer region, where Sven and Christine welcome guests the way they'd like to be welcomed themselves. It's a place to recharge, escape all the pressures of daily life and get back to what really matters, surrounded by beautiful nature.





This is Christine



B&B Onder de Wol

Two years ago, Sven and Christine swapped their busy lives in the town of Bonheiden for the peace of the Belgian Voer region, squeezed between the borders with the Netherlands and Germany. Among the meadows, orchards and forests, they found the perfect half-timbered house – a place where they could make all their dreams come true. Christine closed her speech-therapy business and they started B&B Onder de Wol, a place for guests to get away from it all. Running the bed and breakfast is now her fulltime job, though it doesn't really feel like work at all. "Work and private life are all one here," she says. "And that's my favourite part."









The half-timbered house where Sven and Christine live and welcome guests is full of warmth and character. The old wooden beams and wattle and daub walls tell the house's story and, everywhere you look, there's a playful detail to put a smile on your face. A curious chicken peeking out of the cubby hole above a bed, for example, or a double shower in the shape of a cloverleaf or a heart. It's these personal touches that make a stay at Onder de Wol so special.

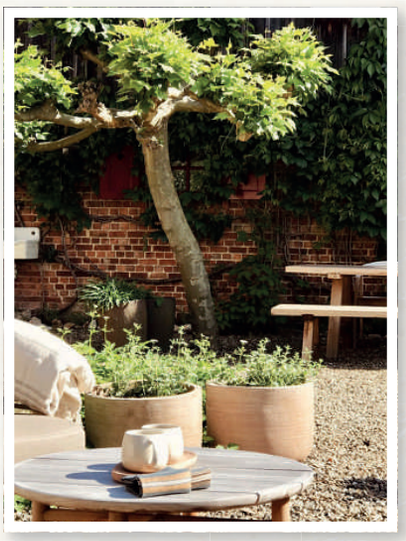


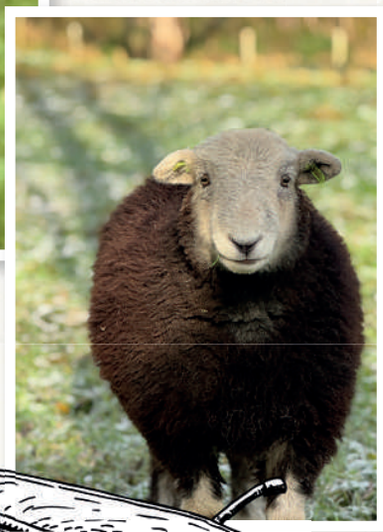
Christine with her sheep

There's so much to discover outside too. It's lovely and cool under the big plane trees in the summer, the firepit in the meadow is the perfect place to enjoy a hot drink in the winter, and there's a fully stocked breakfast basket waiting on the terrace every morning. "We're always trying to think about what brings us joy when we stay somewhere," says Christine. "We keep that in mind in everything we do."

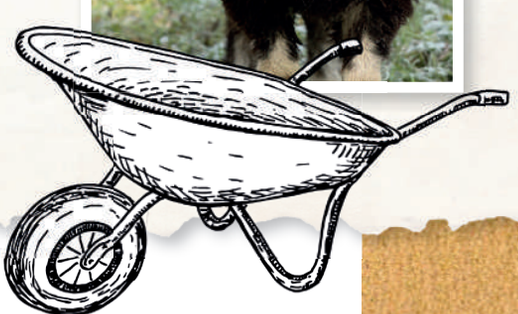








Anyone wandering around Onder de Wol will notice straight away that the animals are part of one big family, made up of Christine, Sven, their three sons, their dog Ecco, their cat Trixie, a flock of chickens and seven – soon to be eleven – sheep. The sheep in particular love to follow Christine around as she picks flowers. She uses the flowers to make little bouquets for all the guest rooms in the spring and summer months.



There's a gentle rhythm to Christine's working days. The morning begins with making up the breakfast baskets, then she prepares the rooms for new guests with lots of love and care: fresh flowers, neatly made beds and a lovely warm welcome. In between, she spends time gardening, painting with watercolours or filming content for Instagram. "I want guests to feel at home here from the moment they arrive."









Christine and Sven have exciting plans for the future. They want to organise yoga retreats, create a flower, fruit and vegetable garden and start making juice from their own apples and pears.

Thank you, Christine and Sven. We'll come and stay sometime soon!

You can find more information on page 126.

Readers' Journal Pages

I'd love to share some of the most beautiful submissions with you.





Anna



Emilia



Alice, Utrecht Netherlands



Shannon Hoogstrate



Amy Dokter and Jasmijn



Manuela Hagen



Ilse Bironf



Flynn



Andrea Ziemer



Friederike Wulff

It was such a joy to receive all your photos of your journal pages! Unfortunately, I can't show them all. Thank you so much for sharing your creativity with us.





Gitta, Bremen Germany

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What joy something handmade can bring,
Whether woven, crocheted or knit.
The secret behind each beautiful thing
Is the love that's been poured into it.

Momijigari

Searching for autumn colours

I love to go for an extra-long walk just as the leaves are beginning to turn. I enjoy all the warm colours but, for a long time, I didn't know the science behind this annual spectacle. Since I found out, I've been looking around me with even more wonder every autumn.

I think the autumn is just like a painting. The woods transform slowly into a sea of gold, copper, orange and deep red. In Japan, the colours are so special that they've given rise to a centuries-old tradition: momijigari, or admiring the changing leaves. Behind the beautiful colours is an amazing story written by nature.

A centuries-old tradition

In Japan, enjoying the autumn leaves means more than just a walk in the woods. There's even a special word for it: momijigari. The literal translation is 'hunting for red leaves'. Just as many Japanese people enjoy the blooming cherry blossom during hanami in the spring, heading out to admire the autumn leaves is a popular pastime in the autumn. Starting in the north and moving gradually south, Japan is covered in a carpet of red, orange and gold. There are even autumn forecasts that help people guess exactly where the leaves will be most beautiful. Temples, parks and mountain landscapes attract thousands of visitors every year.

The secret behind the colour

Depending on the type of tree, the leaves turn golden yellow, orange or deep red in the autumn. The red tints in particular are due to anthocyanins, the same natural dyes that give cherries, red apples and raspberries their colour. The yellow tones have actually been present all summer, but they're covered by chlorophyll. As soon as that green colour begins to break down, the warm autumn shades emerge.

Some autumns are more colourful than others. The most impressive colours are seen after plenty of sunny days and fresh, cold nights. That results in more sugars being left behind in the leaves, which means the red pigments develop better.

Ready for the winter

Before a tree drops its leaves, it first removes as many nutrients as possible, to be stored in the trunk and roots ready for spring. Only then will it let the leaves begin to fall. A tree won't allow anything to go to waste.

Transient beauty

The tradition of momijigari goes back more than a thousand years. Noblemen have been setting out on excursions to see autumn leaves since the time of the imperial court. Today, the tradition is still a reminder of the value of transient beauty. Maybe that's autumn's greatest secret: mother nature shows her most beautiful colours just as she's preparing for a new beginning.

A house that always keeps the door open

This soft doorstop will keep your door open to welcome family, friends and unexpected guests inside.

DIY
DAPHNE INSPIRES YOU





You will need:

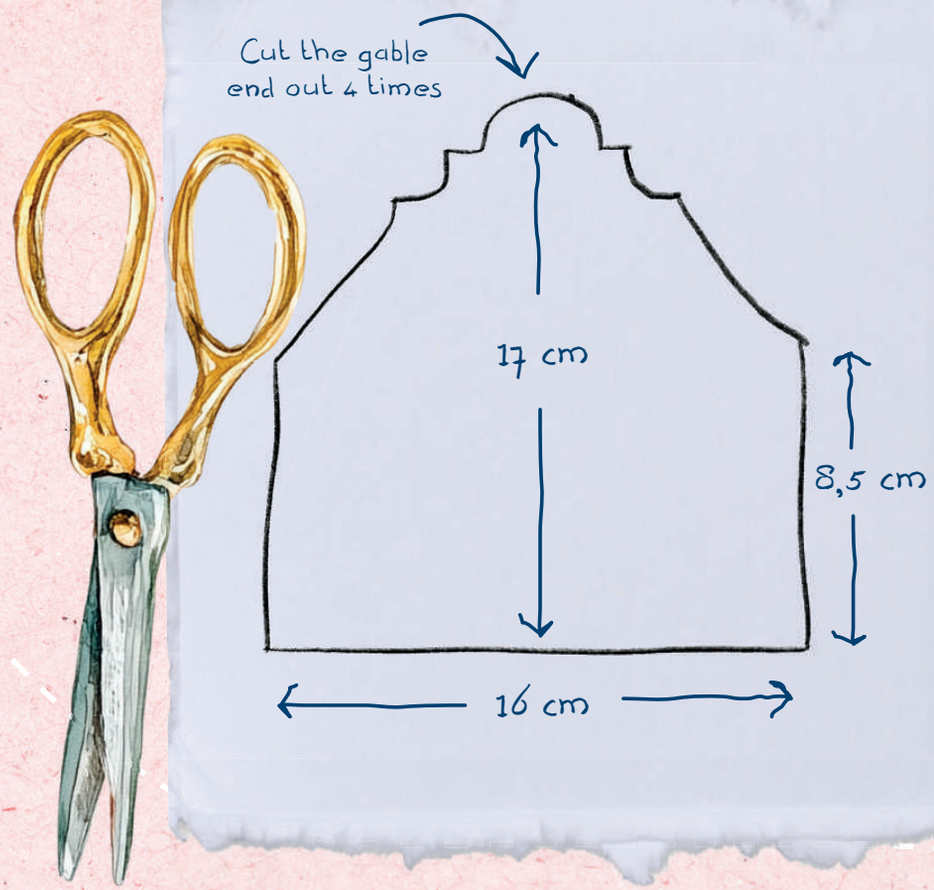
- thick fabric for the house (around 21 x 53 cm)
- a piece of soft teddy fabric
- stuffing
- a bag of sand
- embroidery thread
- a length of ribbon or cord
- scissors, pins, needles and a washable fabric pen or tailor's chalk

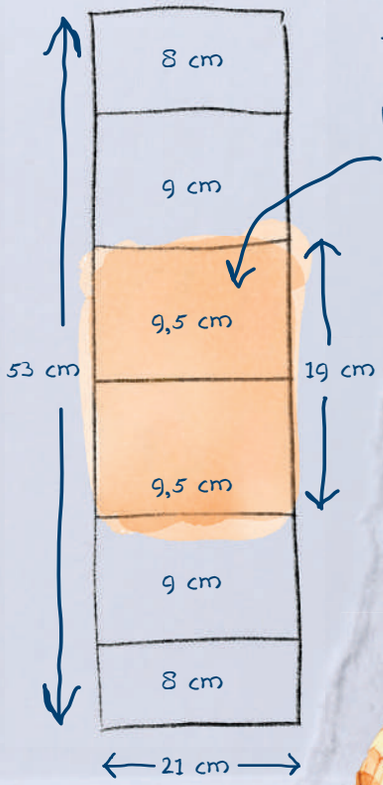




By embroidering on a flowerpot, curtains, a cat or your own door number, you can make your house doorstopper really personal.







Draw and embroider the windows, door and other details on the fabric before sewing all the separate parts together. That will make the embroidery much easier. You can use this drawing as an example.



How to make the house:

- First, draw the pattern onto the fabric (see the diagram above for the dimensions). Cut all the different parts out. Sew two matching parts together with the good sides facing in to make one of the gable ends. Leave the bottom open, turn the fabric inside out and iron it flat. Repeat the process to make the other gable end of the house.

- Pin the gable ends to the long piece of fabric and sew them in place. Fill the house with the stuffing, place the bag of sand in the middle and then continue to fill it. Sew the bottom closed and finish the seams with a decorative stitch.

- Finally, cut the roof out of the teddy fabric. Attach the ribbon or cord in the middle and sew the roof securely onto the house.

Buk en Pluk

a pick-your-own paradise

On the edge of the Hageland region, just a short walk from a car park, is a wonderful pick-your-own garden called Buk en Pluk. 'Buk en pluk' means 'bend and pick'! This garden is part of a farm called De Speelberg, in the Belgian village of Holsbeek. A family spot, cherished by generation after generation. Where fruit trees once grew, today there are flowers, berries and pumpkins to pick. But most of all, Buk en Pluk is the story of three women who came together to turn this piece of land into a place where nature and people meet.





Three women

Helena and Tine started the pick-your-own garden four years ago now. Not long after, they were joined by Eva. Since then, they've been working together every week, come rain or shine. "It's actually a relationship between the three of us and this piece of land," says Helena. "The more love and attention we pour into it, the more the garden seems to give back."



You can really feel that love and care here. Among the blooms, there is space to pause while visitors pick their own flowers, berries and pumpkins, before paying themselves, through an honesty box. The harvest is also used to make small products for the farm shop, like tea, dried flowers, candles and apple juice from the old fruit trees.









More than a bunch of flowers

For Helena, Buk en Pluk isn't just about growing flowers. The garden has taught her patience, cooperation and trust. "There are few things that bring as much joy as watching a flower bloom from a seed," she says. That might just be this place's greatest charm. Nothing has to be perfect here, so it's okay to experiment and make mistakes. Visitors to Buk en Pluk often take home more than just a bunch of flowers. The peace, the smell of herbs and the joy of harvesting your own plants are part of the experience too. Sometimes those simple things are enough to create a mindful moment and enjoy everything blooming and growing all around you.



Photographer: Steven De Winter



Working with the seasons

Buk en Pluk is a place where nature sets the pace. Everything is grown ecologically, taking the seasons into account and with plenty of room for surprises. Helena tries to live according to that rhythm too. Alongside her work as a night carer, the summer is all about the pick-your-own, while the winter is a time for quiet and rest. Every season has something different to offer.

Thank you, Helena, for sharing your incredible story. I wish the three of you many more fruitful seasons together.

LEFTOVER DAY

Leftover vegetables and grated cheese

aren't thrown away but

turned into a mixed vegetable frittata



Ingredients:

- 6 eggs
- leftover vegetables (peppers, broccoli, spinach, courgettes, onion, mushrooms)
- leftover grated cheese
- some cooked potatoes or pasta if desired
- salt and pepper
- Italian herbs





Heat a small amount of oil in an ovenproof frying pan and fry the leftover vegetables for a couple of minutes, until soft. In the meantime, beat the eggs with the salt, pepper and maybe some Italian herbs. Stir the fried vegetables and grated cheese into the egg mixture. Pour the mixture back into the pan and allow it to cook for a couple of minutes over a low heat. Now move the pan to an oven preheated to 180 °C to cook for a further 10 to 15 minutes, until set and golden brown. If you don't have an oven or an ovenproof pan, you can put a lid on the frying pan and leave the frittata to continue cooking slowly until the top is also firm.

Tip: Also delicious cold as a lunch at school or work.



Overripe bananas

aren't thrown away but

used to make banana bread



Ingredients:

- 3 ripe bananas
- 2 eggs
- 200 g flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- pinch of salt
- a handful of leftover nuts, chocolate pieces or raisins if available

Preheat the oven to 175 °C. Mash the ripe banana and combine it with the eggs to make a smooth mixture. Now add the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and a pinch of salt, then stir well. If you have any leftover nuts, chocolate or raisins in the cupboard, mix these into the batter for extra flavour. Pour the mixture into a greased cake tin and bake the banana bread for 50 to 60 minutes until golden brown. If a skewer inserted into the banana bread comes out clean, it's baked through.

Banana bread is such a wonderful treat in the autumn. The ripe bananas and the warming scent of cinnamon make for a delicious, soft bake that's perfect with a cup of tea or coffee on a chilly day.

Do you know which teacup is my grandma's favourite?

Read the clues below to find my grandma's favourite teacup.

1. Grandma doesn't have milk or sugar in her tea, so there's no spoon in her cup.
2. She doesn't think a saucer is necessary.
3. Her favourite cup isn't yellow or green.
4. Grandma does like to have a handle on her cup.
5. She doesn't really like spots.
6. She says that cups with flowers and leaves are for old people.
7. Her teacup isn't on top of the dresser.
8. Blue isn't grandma's favourite colour.
9. She prefers a cup without any writing on.
10. She finds the big cup with bright rainbow stripes a bit too busy.





You can find the solution on page 126.

The Pottery Parade

Ceramics to put a smile on your face

I came across these vases online. They brought me so much joy and I wanted to find out more about the person who made them straight away.



Sandra Apperloo makes these cheerful, playful vases under the name The Pottery Parade. She's been a fulltime ceramicist for nine years now. From her studio in Utrecht, she gives clay, colour and gold lustre leading roles in her imaginative world.

From cultural studies to ceramics

Sandra lives in Utrecht, where she also has her own studio. It's a happy household, made up of Sandra, her partner, Govert, and their old cat, Molly. Although she studied Language and Culture at the University of Utrecht, life ended up taking her in a different direction.

"My degree doesn't really relate to what I'm doing now," she says. "It was only after I graduated that I decided I wanted to do something in the art world." What exactly she wasn't quite sure yet.









Love at first sight

Before Sandra began working with ceramics, she was still searching for a creative outlet. She wrote a blog about illustrators and other artists, while experimenting herself with mediums including embroidery, drawing and lino cutting. Until a pottery workshop changed everything. "It was love at first sight. I brought some clay home, kept playing around and my new hobby soon evolved into a business. In the winter of 2017, The Pottery Parade was born."





"My work is mostly clay. I use simple shapes, but the colours, patterns and gold highlights make every piece unique. Humour, playfulness and lots of imagination are the thread running through my collection."







It starts with a ball of clay

Each creation starts with a ball of clay. “I work very intuitively,” Sandra says. “Sometimes I just start sculpting a figure, sometimes I build a larger object out of sheets of clay. I often come up with new ideas while I work.”

Once a piece is finished, a very careful process begins. First, the pottery is air-dried. Then it’s biscuit fired. After that, Sandra paints each object with handmade glaze, followed by a transparent glaze for extra gloss.



After a second firing, the work is almost complete. About eighty percent of her pieces are then finished with gold lustre. The gold accents are applied by hand and, during a third and final firing, transform into a glittering layer of gold that gives her work that recognisable, sparkling feel.







Here you can see the process, from a ball of clay to a cute little penguin.





This is Sandra in her studio on the edge of Utrecht city centre. A lovely, light space. Thank you, Sandra, I’m so pleased I was able to share your work with my readers.

Illustration forms an important source of inspiration for Sandra. She also takes inspiration from colour, lightness and playfulness. "I find it hard to point to one specific source of inspiration – it's often in an atmosphere, or the little things that speak to me. That open gaze means my work is always evolving."



You can find more information on page 126.

The world's first book town

Hay-on-Wye



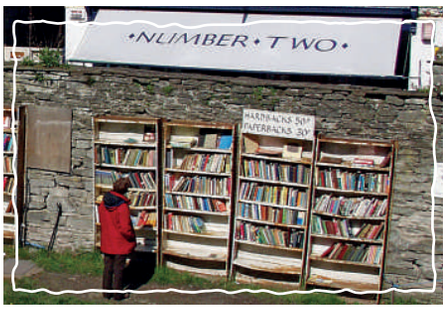


Did you know that Hay-on-Wye has more than twenty bookshops?



If you love books, you need to visit Hay-on-Wye! This little market town on the border between Wales and England is known as the world's first book town. There are dozens of bookshops lining the old, historic streets and you'll find bookshelves everywhere you look outside too. On squares, in alleyways and along old walls, thousands of books wait for their new owners. It's the kind of place where you think, "Okay, one more shop." And a couple of hours later you're still browsing.

Hay-on-Wye owes its history as a book town to Richard Booth, who started filling empty buildings with second-hand bookshops back in the sixties. His idea attracted booklovers from all around the world. The town is also famous for its honesty bookshops: outdoor bookshelves where you can choose a book and pay by posting money into a box.







Richard Booth's bookshop is still standing today, and it's one of the best-known in Hay-on-Wye. The characteristic dark-brown wooden bookshelves fill multiple floors and give the shop its unique atmosphere. It's worth a visit just for that!





As well as the many bookshops, there are lots of lovely antique and vintage shops in Hay-on-Wye, as well as cosy tearooms.



Every spring, from late May to early June, the famous Hay Festival takes place. For eleven days, writers, poets, illustrators, and other creative minds from around the world gather for readings, interviews, and inspiring conversations. The festival attracts tens of thousands of visitors each year and has grown to become the largest book festival in Wales.



Hay-on-Wye looks like an amazing place to explore. I've put it on my list!



A soap packed with the power of nature

I love the fragrance of a beautiful bar of soap. Not just in the bathroom, but in the linen closet or a drawer of scarves too. And making your own soap is actually easier than you might think. The process simply can't be rushed, and that's what makes it such a perfect activity for a peaceful afternoon.

DIY
DAPHNE INSPIRES YOU

A little bit of softness

Some of the most worthwhile things in life take time. And homemade scented soap is one of them. As the soap melts slowly and the scent of essential oils spreads through your house, time seems to slow down. And then? You have a beautiful piece of soap, waiting to make every trip to the bathroom that little bit more special.

For the essential oils, we chose a combination of eucalyptus and lemon. Wonderfully fresh and perfect for a deliciously fragrant soap.

Difficulty level: Easy

Time:
Around half a day

You will need:
- pure glycerine soap
- a grater
- a metal bowl
- a small pan
- a wooden stirring stick or ice lolly stick
- baking paper
- a cake tin
- essential oils of your choice
- dried herbs, rooibos tea, chamomile flowers, rosemary or other natural ingredients

How to make it:



1. Grate three pieces of pure glycerine soap. Tip: Only use pure glycerine soap. Other kinds of soap often include ingredients that don't melt well.



2. Melt the grated soap in a bain-marie. Stir gently every now and then.

The herbs will naturally sink down into the soap. If you'd like to keep them on the top, wait until the soap is beginning to set before adding them. As the soap hardens, the natural ingredients will add subtle colour and fragrance to the soap.



3. In the meantime, line a cake tin with baking paper.



4. Add your essential oils, pour soap into the tin, garnish with herbs or flowers and leave to set.



Please note: The items in this article are homemade products. If you would like to make and use them yourself, this will be at your own risk.

Pumpkin muffins

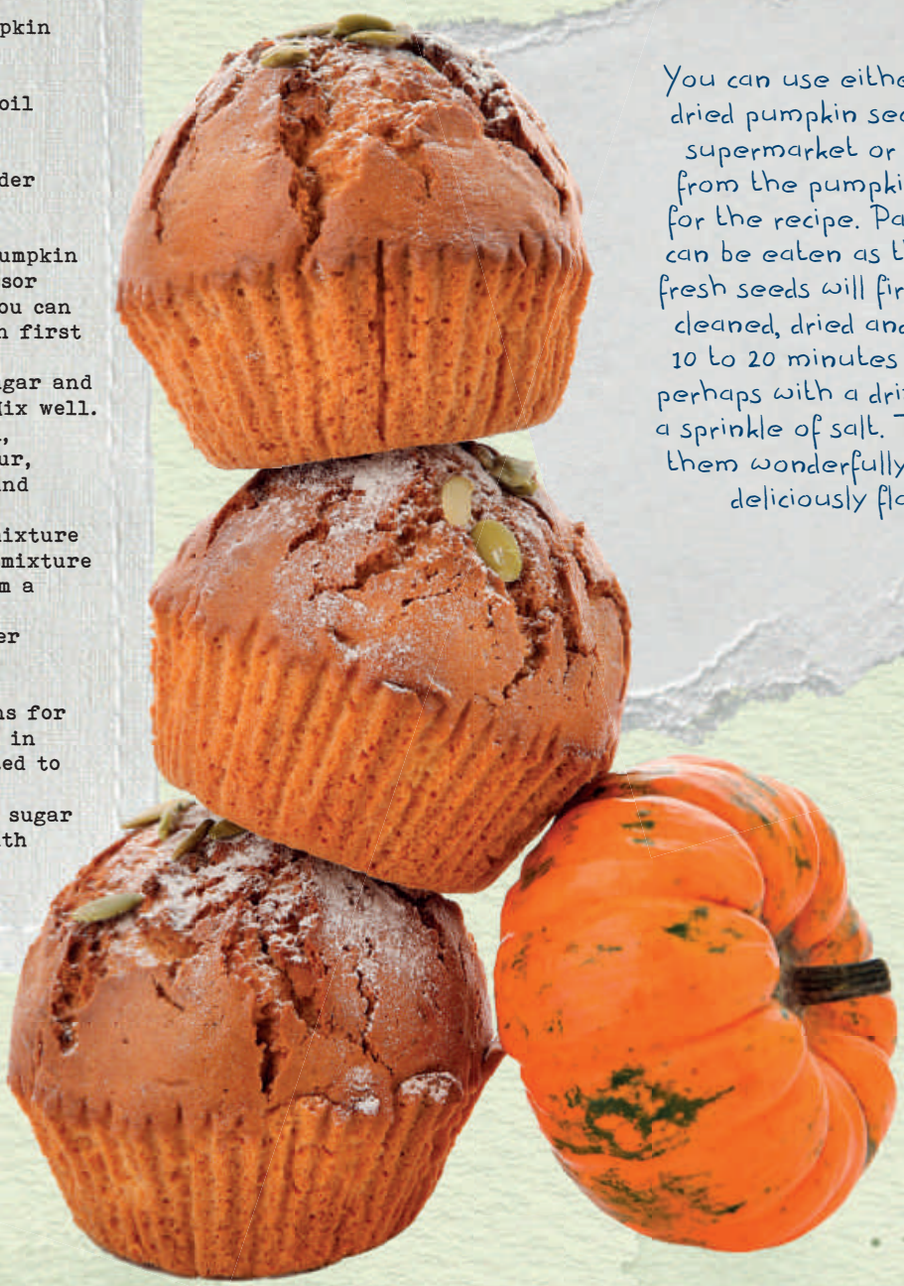
I picked a pumpkin from our garden and used it to make these delicious muffins. A simple recipe that's perfect for autumn.

Ingredients:

- 200 g edible pumpkin
- 2 eggs
- 200 g sugar
- 90 ml vegetable oil
- 150 g flour
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp baking powder

Instructions:

1. Blend the raw pumpkin in a food processor until smooth. (You can peel the pumpkin first if desired.)
2. Add the eggs, sugar and vegetable oil. Mix well.
3. In another bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and cinnamon.
4. Add the flour mixture to the pumpkin mixture and stir to form a smooth batter.
5. Divide the batter between the muffin cases.
6. Bake the muffins for 15 to 20 minutes in an oven preheated to 200 °C.
7. Dust with icing sugar and sprinkle with pumpkin seeds.



You can use either peeled and dried pumpkin seeds from the supermarket or fresh seeds from the pumpkin you chose for the recipe. Packaged seeds can be eaten as they are. The fresh seeds will first need to be cleaned, dried and roasted for 10 to 20 minutes in the oven, perhaps with a drizzle of oil and a sprinkle of salt. This will make them wonderfully crunchy and deliciously flavourful.

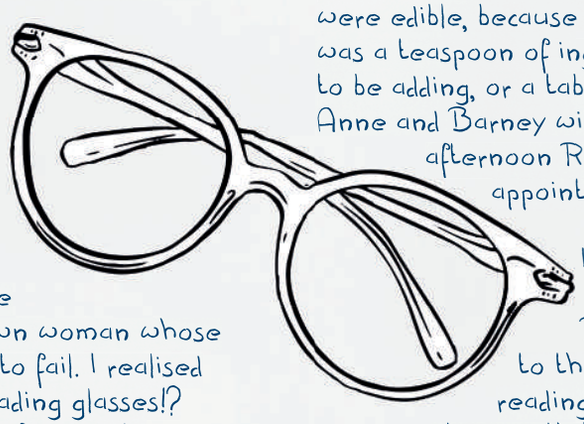
Use an edible pumpkin variety like Hokkaido or a butternut squash. Ornamental and carving pumpkins aren't suitable for consumption.

TEASPOON OR TABLESPOON

Dear Diary,

"Rob!" I announced a couple of weeks ago, "I think we're going to have to cancel the newspaper." Rob turned to look at me in surprise. "We need to cancel the paper," I repeated. "The quality of the printing is really going downhill." "What do you mean?" Rob asked, still confused why I had suddenly decided to cancel our subscription. "At the start of the year the text was still quite readable," I explained, "but, the last few months, the letters have been getting more and more blurry." Rob shrugged and said, "Hmm, I have to say I haven't noticed anything." I went back to the article I was reading and neither of us said any more about it.

I was sitting on the sofa reading a book a couple of days later, and I had to stand up to move the lamp a little closer. The book was just as bad as the newspaper. I asked Rob again if he thought there was anything funny going on with the print in books and newspapers recently. "No," he replied, "I haven't noticed any difference. Maybe you need reading glasses?" I was taken aback. The book fell from my hands as I watched my whole life flash before me. From a young girl learning to read all the way through to a grown woman whose eyesight was starting to fail. I realised I was suddenly old. Reading glasses!? Surely not! They were for people much older than I was, weren't they? I stood up in a panic, hurried to the kitchen and took an old cookbook down off the shelf. I fumbled in my haste to open it. It was from 2003, a year when I knew for sure that books were still being printed the proper, old-fashioned way. I was dismayed to find that the writing in this book wasn't entirely clear either. Without really thinking about it, I stretched out my arm and held the book a little further away. Ah, that was better. Everything was a bit clearer now.



Just to make sure, I started reading one of the recipes aloud. "Add 1 tbsp of chilli powder." Or was that 1 tsp? I held the book even further from my eyes, which brought the text back into focus. It must be a teaspoon, surely. It wasn't easy to make out though. That was when Rob strolled into the kitchen to pour himself another cup of coffee. "What are you doing, Daphne?" he asked. I was embarrassed, but there was no point trying to hide it, I had to admit that I needed reading glasses. "I can't believe it," I said, tears pricking my eyes. "Reading glasses? That's how it starts! Before you know it, you're getting a second pair of glasses for distance!" Rob put his arm round me and tried to console me. "Come on, sweetheart, it's okay. It's normal for your eyesight to start deteriorating when you reach a certain age. Just be glad somebody invented reading glasses!"

I realised I was going to have to accept it, but I didn't sleep at all well that night. My head was spinning. I dreamt that I wasn't allowed to come in and help with reading in Barney's class anymore. And that none of my meals were edible, because I couldn't see whether it was a teaspoon of ingredients I was supposed to be adding, or a tablespoon. I couldn't help Anne and Barney with their homework. This afternoon Rob suggested booking an appointment with the optician.

In the evening, during dinner, I told Anne and Barney that I was going to the opticians to get some reading glasses. Barney looked at me with his mouth full of food and said, "Hmbrowa rdomhnm." I couldn't understand him. "What was that, Barney?" I asked. You'd think I'd never taught them any table manners at all! Mouth still full, he repeated, "Hmbrowa rdomhnm." "I honestly can't hear you, Barney," I told him. "Can you understand him, Anne?" "Oh yes, loud and clear, Mum," Anne said. "Do you know what?" "What?" "I think you might need a hearing aid."

Love, Daphne

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Colourful wool art
by Natasha Smart Textiles



England's rugged south coast, where the sea is constantly creating new shapes and textures, is Natasha's biggest source of inspiration. With nothing more than wool, water and plenty of creativity, she transforms simple fibres into unique two and three-dimensional artworks. She puts so much passion into giving a craft that has existed for centuries a new, contemporary twist. I love it!

Natasha is a fulltime textile artist. She told me that she's been completely addicted to wet felting since 2015. "What I really love is making products that are both beautiful and useful – things that you can reach out and touch. Bags, lampshades, cushions and scarves. To make my baskets and bowls, I use a special felting technique, in which you felt the wool around a spherical base.

I teach this technique at regular workshops in my studio, which is located in the seaside town of Exmouth, Devon, in the southwest of England. We're often joined there by my three cats.

















This is one of Natasha's three cats: Obi. He's completely at home among all that lovely, soft wool.

For Natasha, there's something so wonderful about working with felt. "Wet felting is a very calming and mindful activity: you arrange tufts of wool in your desired shape, then bond all those loose tufts together with water, soap and a lot of elbow grease. The result is always a surprise, and that's the magic of wet felting for me!"

You can find more information on page 126.

POST from friends

Do you have something nice you'd like to share? Email your message and a photo to info@daphnesdiary.com and it might just appear in the next issue.

Hello Daphne,

I start work on my Christmas cards nice and early every year, and this time I've been inspired by the lovely stars and birds in your magazine. There were 48, and that was the exact number I needed for my cards! I love your magazine so much.

All the best,
Debbie



Dear Debbie,

You'll be busy with 48 cards to make! They look lovely.

Love, Daphne

Hi Daphne,

I make felt ladybirds too. I make other animals, houses and gingerbread items as well. The 15-year anniversary magazine was brilliant again!

Best wishes, Irene Hoogerhelde



Dear Irene,

These ladybirds are so cute!

Love, Daphne

Hi Daphne,

Every new issue of Daphne's Diary surprises me again, and you never seem to run out of all those fun crafting ideas. The really recognisable forewords and stories make the magazine feel like a friend. I decorated this cabinet with flowers cut out of a napkin, some gold leaf and a bit of Mod Podge. I painted the branches onto the cabinet first.

Lots of love,
Wilma



Dear Wilma,

What a compliment! I think of all my readers as friends too.

Love, Daphne

Hi Daphne,

A little while ago I started restyling old chairs. This one was inspired by cats, because I love them! So much fun to do.

Warm wishes,
Monique



Dear Monique,

Great! What an eye-catcher!

Love, Daphne

Hello Daphne,

Inspired by the houses that I receive with every order, I now embroider houses out of felt. It's so much fun.

From,
Chien



Dear Chien,

What a lovely collection of houses!

Love, Daphne

Dear Daphne,

I like to decorate envelopes. The pictures in your beautiful magazine are perfect for it.

Warm wishes,
Debbie



Dear Debbie,

Wow, it must be so exciting to find an envelope like that on your doormat!

Love, Daphne

Hi Daphne,

My name is Wendy and I live in beautiful North Devon, England. I love art and making things. I make my own paper roses out of old music books. The musical notes shine through the thin coat of acrylic paint. I'm proud of them. I've battled with my health for years now but, whenever I can, I make a couple of roses.

Thank you,
Wendy Phillips

Dear Wendy,

The roses are beautiful, what a talent!

Love, Daphne



Dear Daphne,

I've been working on the flower card from Issue 4 over the last few days. I put it in a frame, and I think it looks lovely. Thank you for the great creative idea. I've just taken out a subscription and I can't wait for the next issue.

Lots of love, Evy



Dear Evy,
It turned out great, didn't it? And the frame matches perfectly.

Love, Daphne



Dear Daphne,

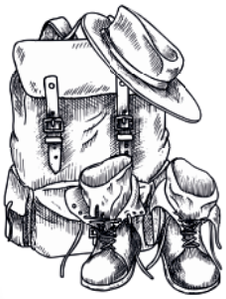
I made this garland from your magazine. So simple, but it really brightened up my house straight away.

Warmest wishes,
Marielle

Dear Marielle,

Yes, sometimes you don't need much to make something beautiful. What a pretty garland!
Love, Daphne

THE FIVE GARDENS OF Ricola IN SWITZERLAND





There are certain flavours that bring you straight back to a place. The fresh, herbal taste of Ricola sweets makes me think of walks in the mountains, fresh air and blooming Alpine meadows. But did you know that there's a fascinating journey behind this little sweet?

Spread around Switzerland are five Ricola herb gardens, along with the Ricola Herb Centre. Together, they form a green route all the way from the rolling landscape of the Jura Mountains to the imposing Alps. Along the way you'll discover where each of Ricola's famous thirteen mountain herbs is grown. Every garden has its own character and allows you to discover a different side to Switzerland.





Nenzlingen

The journey begins in Nenzlingen, a little village nestled among Switzerland's Jura Mountains, around half an hour from Basel. From the village centre, it's about a quarter of an hour's walk along a quiet track to the Ricola herb garden. The route takes you along the popular Blauenberg ridge. The herb garden in Nenzlingen is known for its impressive mint collection.

More than thirty different varieties are grown here, including chocolate mint, apple mint, Thai mint and fig mint. Rub a leaf carefully between your fingers and you'll notice straight away that each mint has its own unique fragrance. Some are fresh and strong while others are mild, fruity or even slightly sweet.

mint







Mint is happy in a rich, moist soil and likes to grow in locations with plenty of water. That's why it really thrives here. There's a reason that peppermint is one of the most important ingredients in the famous Ricola blend, responsible for that recognisable fresh flavour.



The landscape around the Jura Mountains is so beautiful! And there's an amazing view from the slopes of the Belchenflue.



Plantain

Trogberg

The next Ricola herb garden we visited was the Trogberg, located at around 1,200 metres above sea level, surrounded by the peaceful Jura Mountains. The walk there is an experience in itself. From the village of Beinwil, you stroll for about an hour through green mountain meadows to reach the garden, and the view is more incredible every time you look down. A colourful garden full of fragrant mountain herbs awaits at the top.



Lady's mantel



All kinds of herbs that love the fresh mountain air grow in the mountain meadows around Trogberg. Yarrow, lady's mantle, plantain and cowslip all feel right at home here in the chalky, nutrient-poor soil. The cool nights and warm summer days cause the plants grow slowly. And that's the secret to their strong fragrance and aroma.



Lake Oeschinen, near the garden.

Kandersteg

Kandersteg lies in the heart of the Berner Oberland region, surrounded by impressive mountain peaks. The Ricola herb garden is next to the historic Landgasthof Ruedihus country inn, built in 1973, about twenty minutes from the station on foot.

This is where herbs that thrive in Alpine meadows, like lady's mantle, yarrow and cowslip, grow. Lady's mantle can be recognised by its fan shaped leaves, which often collect drops of dew. Yarrow attracts lots of bees and butterflies with its little white flowers, while cowslip is one of the first flowers to bring colour to the mountain meadows in the spring. Together these herbs demonstrate the richness of Switzerland's flora.

Cowslip

Yarrow





Sage

Zermatt

As if the fragrance of the mountain herbs wasn't already special enough, the fourth Ricola herb garden at Zermatt is also in a dream location. About half an hour's walk from the centre of Zermatt, you reach the picturesque village of Blatten, where the garden is located beside a centuries-old chapel and traditional wooden huts.

Thyme and sage are at home on the sunny mountain slopes around Zermatt. They like dry air, warm sun and stony soils. That's how the plants produce plenty of the fragrant essential oils that deliver their strong aroma.

Thyme blooms with tiny purplish pink flowers that attract bees and butterflies. Sage has recognisable silvery green leaves that protect the plant from the bright sun and help it to retain water.





The village of Blatten is a lovely place to explore.



Thyme

Pontresina

In the middle of the beautiful Engadin region is Ricola's Pontresina herb garden. From the centre of the village, you can reach the entrance to Val Roseg in just a couple of minutes. The garden can be found here, next to the walking trail at around 1,750 metres above sea level.



Mallow and lady's mantle grow well in the fresh mountain air, enjoying the cool nights. The big difference in temperature between the days and nights gives the herbs their strong scent and flavour.

Mallow blooms with purplish pink flowers loved by bees and butterflies. Marshmallow, meanwhile, has soft, velvety leaves and lady's mantle can be recognised by its fan-shaped leaves often holding dew drops.

Mallow

Finally, there is the Herb Centre in Zermatt, which you can visit to find out more about all the gardens and herbs.





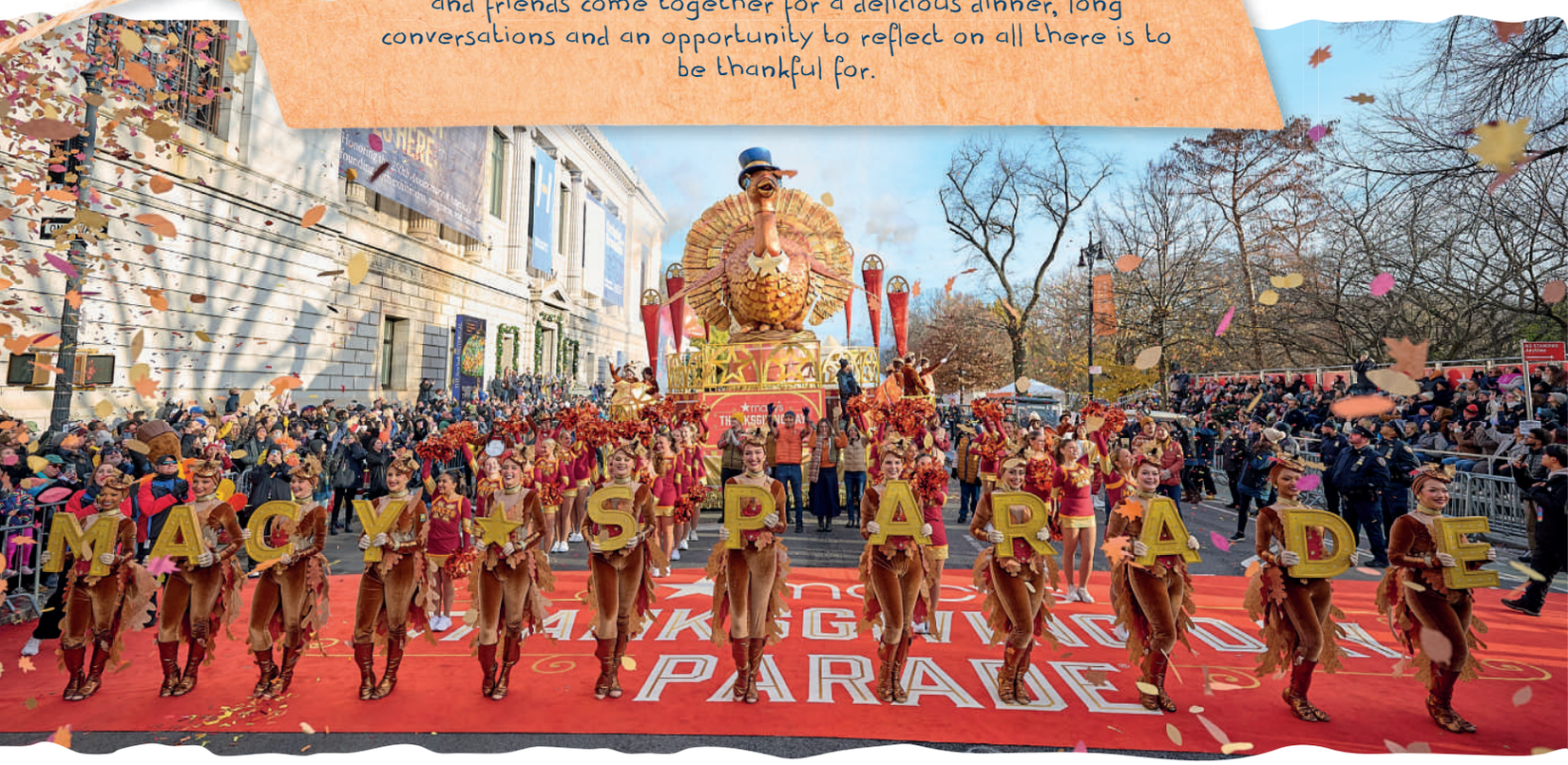
The Roseg Valley is a beautiful place to walk.

Photos: Ricola

Thanksgiving

a day full of gratitude and traditions

Just as the autumn colours are at their most beautiful and the days are getting shorter, millions of Americans are busy preparing for one of the biggest celebrations of the year: Thanksgiving. On the fourth Thursday of November, families and friends come together for a delicious dinner, long conversations and an opportunity to reflect on all there is to be thankful for.



Harvest festival to famous family dinner

Thanksgiving began back in 1621 as a simple harvest festival. After a difficult first winter, the English colonists in Plymouth celebrated their first successful harvest, together with members of the Wampanoag people. They had helped the colonists with their knowledge of farming, fishing and nature. What started as a joint harvest festival evolved over the centuries to become a beloved family tradition.

For many Americans, Thanksgiving begins with a parade, like the famous Macy's Parade in New York. Kitchens are full of cooking, baking and tasting, while guests help to set the table or prepare their favourite family recipe. At the end of the afternoon, it's time to sit down at the table. In lots of families, everyone takes turns to say what they're thankful for. That moment of togetherness and appreciation for each other is still at the heart of Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving dinner

The Thanksgiving dinner is all about enjoying food together. The table is full of dishes to share, made using recipes that have been passed down from generation to generation. Cranberries are an essential element. The fresh, slightly sour taste is the perfect contrast to some of the richer dishes. You'll find them not just in the famous sauce, but in muffins, cakes and scones too. Perfect for this cheerful autumn afternoon.

A tradition to cherish

We might not all celebrate Thanksgiving the way they do in America, but the idea behind it feel surprisingly familiar. A beautiful table, something tasty from the oven, a walk together and time spent with loved ones. It's those little moments that remind us how wonderful it is to be together and to think about all the best things in life.





Cranberry and orange scones

Ingredients:

- 500 g self-raising flour
- 5 tsp baking powder
- 75 g cold butter, in cubes
- 100 g caster sugar
- zest of 1 organic orange
- 100 g dried cranberries
- 175 ml buttermilk
- 3 eggs
- pinch of salt

For the glaze:

- 100 g icing sugar
- 2–3 tbsp fresh orange juice
- some extra orange zest for decoration if desired



How to make them:

1. Preheat the oven to 200 °C.
2. Combine the self-raising flour, baking powder, caster sugar and salt in a bowl. Rub in the cold butter with your fingertips to form a crumbly mixture.
3. Beat 3 eggs and keep 1 to one side to brush onto the scones. Combine the other eggs with the buttermilk and add this to the dough. Stir briefly until everything comes together. Don't knead the dough for too long.
4. Add the orange zest and cranberries.
5. Dust the worktop with some flour and press the dough out into a sheet about 2 cm thick. Use a round cutter to make 12 scones with a diameter of about 6 cm. Arrange the scones on a baking sheet lined with baking paper and brush the tops with the reserved egg.
6. Bake the scones for 15–18 minutes, until golden brown. Leave to cool on a rack.
7. Stir the icing sugar into the orange juice to make a smooth glaze. Drizzle over the cooled scones and sprinkle a little bit of fine orange zest over the top too if desired.



Thanksgiving isn't just about what's on the table, but the people that you share it with. I think it's such a lovely tradition that I'm going to celebrate it with Rob, the kids and the rest of my family as well this year.



When I wake up,
I hear the rain patter.
There'll be puddles to jump in
And mud to splatter.

So quick, out of bed,
Let's get out there!
Warm socks, wellies,
A raincoat to wear.

Out in the field,
They're waiting for me.
Muddy puddles,
There's no place I'd rather be.

BELGIAN
ENDIVE, PEAR AND
GORGONZOLA TART

CHICORÉE-
BIRNEN-TARTE
MIT GORGONZOLA

TARTE AUX
ENDIVES, POIRES
ET GORGONZOLA

WITLOFTAART
MET PEER EN
GORGONZOLA



The recipe cards are removable
Die Rezeptkarten sind herausnehmbar
Les fiches recettes sont détachables
De receptenkaarten zijn uitneembaar



CHOCOLATE-DIPPED
CANDIED ORANGE PEEL

SCHOKOLIERTE
ORANGENSCHALEN

ORANGETTES AU
CHOCOLAT

CHOCOLADE-
SINAASAPPELSCHILLEN

INGREDIENTS

- *1 sheet ready-rolled puff pastry or savoury pie crust*
- *5 heads of Belgian endive (chicory)*
- *2 ripe pears*
- *150 g Gorgonzola*
- *3 eggs*
- *200 ml cooking cream*
- *1 tsp thyme (fresh or dried)*
- *1 tbsp honey*
- *1 tbsp butter*
- *black pepper*
- *optional: a handful of walnuts*

ZUTATEN

- *1 Rolle frischer Blätterteig oder Quicheteig*
- *5 Chicorée*
- *2 reife Birnen*
- *150 g Gorgonzola*
- *3 Eier*
- *200 ml Kochsahne*
- *1 TL Thymian (frisch oder getrocknet)*
- *1 EL Honig*
- *1 EL Butter*
- *Pfeffer*
- *nach Belieben eine Handvoll Walnüsse*

INGRÉDIENTS

- *1 pâte feuilletée prête à l'emploi*
- *5 endives*
- *2 poires bien mûres*
- *150 g de gorgonzola*
- *3 œufs*
- *200 ml de crème liquide*
- *1 c. à café de thym (frais ou séché)*
- *1 c. à soupe de miel*
- *1 c. à soupe de beurre*
- *poivre*
- *facultatif : une poignée de noix*

INGREDIËNTEN

- *1 rol koelvers bladerdeeg of hartige taartbodem*
- *5 stronken witlof*
- *2 rijpe peren*
- *150 g gorgonzola*
- *3 eieren*
- *200 ml kookroom*
- *1 tl tijm (vers of gedroogd)*
- *1 el honing*
- *1 el boter*
- *peper*
- *eventueel een handje walnoten*

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat the oven to 190 °C (375 °F). Fry the halved Belgian endive in the butter for 6-8 minutes, then drizzle with the honey and allow it to caramelise lightly. Line a tart tin with the pastry and prick the base with a fork. Crumble the Gorgonzola over the pastry. Whisk together the eggs, cooking cream, thyme and black pepper, then pour over the cheese. Arrange the endive and pear slices on top and sprinkle with the walnuts, if using. Bake for 35-40 minutes, until the filling is set and the pastry is golden brown.

ZUBEREITUNG

Den Backofen auf 190 °C vorheizen. Den halbierten Chicorée 6-8 Minuten in der Butter anbraten und mit dem Honig leicht karamellisieren. Eine Tarteform mit dem Blätterteig auslegen und den Boden mehrmals mit einer Gabel einstechen. Den Gorgonzola zerbröseln und auf dem Teigboden verteilen. Eier mit der Kochsahne, dem Thymian und etwas Pfeffer verquirlen und über den Käse gießen. Chicorée und Birnenspalten darauf verteilen und nach Belieben mit Walnüssen bestreuen. Die Tarte 35-40 Minuten backen, bis die Füllung fest und der Rand goldbraun ist.

PRÉPARATION

Préchauffez le four à 190 °C. Faites revenir les endives coupées en deux dans le beurre pendant 6 à 8 minutes, puis ajoutez le miel et laissez-les légèrement caraméliser. Foncez un moule à tarte avec la pâte feuilletée et piquez le fond à l'aide d'une fourchette. Émiettez le gorgonzola sur le fond de tarte. Battez les œufs avec la crème, le thym et le poivre, puis versez le mélange sur le fromage. Disposez les endives et les quartiers de poire sur la tarte et parsemez éventuellement de noix. Faites cuire 35 à 40 minutes, jusqu'à ce que la garniture soit prise et la pâte bien dorée.

BEREIDING

Verwarm de oven voor op 190 °C. Bak de gehalveerde witlof 6-8 minuten in boter en laat deze met de honing licht karamelliseren. Bekleed een taartvorm met het bladerdeeg en prik gaatjes in de bodem. Verkruimel de gorgonzola en verdeel deze over de bodem. Klop de eieren los met de kookroom, tijm en peper en schenk het mengsel over de gorgonzola. Verdeel de witlof en partjes peer over de taart en strooi er eventueel de walnoten over. Bak de taart 35-40 minuten tot de vulling stevig is en de rand goudbruin kleurt.

INGREDIENTS

- *2 organic oranges*
- *250 g granulated sugar*
- *250 ml water*
- *200 g dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa)*

ZUTATEN

- *2 Bio-Orangen*
- *250 g Zucker*
- *250 ml Wasser*
- *200 g Zartbitterschokolade (mindestens 70 % Kakao)*

INGRÉDIENTS

- *2 oranges bio*
- *250 g de sucre en poudre*
- *250 ml d'eau*
- *200 g de chocolat noir (au moins 70 % de cacao)*

INGREDIËNTEN

- *2 biologische sinaasappels*
- *250 g kristalsuiker*
- *250 ml water*
- *200 g pure chocolade (minimaal 70%)*

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash the oranges well and cut the peel into thin strips. Bring a pan of water to the boil, add the peel and boil for 2 minutes. Drain and repeat twice more using fresh water each time. Bring the sugar and 250 ml water to the boil, add the peel and simmer gently for 45-60 minutes until translucent. Drain the peel and leave to dry completely on a wire rack or baking paper. Melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering water and dip about two-thirds of each strip into the chocolate. Leave to set on baking paper.

ZUBEREITUNG

Die Orangen gründlich waschen und die Schale in schmale Streifen schneiden. Einen Topf mit Wasser zum Kochen bringen, die Schalen hineingeben und 2 Minuten kochen. Abgießen und den Vorgang mit frischem Wasser noch zweimal wiederholen. Anschließend Zucker und 250 ml Wasser aufkochen und die Orangenschalen darin 45-60 Minuten bei schwacher Hitze kandieren, bis sie glasig sind. Die Schalen abtropfen und auf einem Gitter oder Backpapier vollständig trocknen lassen. Die Schokolade über einem Wasserbad schmelzen und die Orangenschalen zu etwa zwei Dritteln hineintauchen. Auf Backpapier fest werden lassen.

PRÉPARATION

Lavez soigneusement les oranges et coupez les écorces en fines lamelles. Portez une casserole d'eau à ébullition, ajoutez les écorces et faites-les cuire 2 minutes. Égouttez-les et recommencez cette opération deux fois avec de l'eau fraîche. Portez ensuite le sucre et 250 ml d'eau à ébullition, ajoutez les écorces et laissez-les confire à feu doux pendant 45 à 60 minutes, jusqu'à ce qu'elles deviennent translucides. Égouttez-les et laissez-les sécher complètement sur une grille ou du papier cuisson. Faites fondre le chocolat au bain-marie et trempez environ les deux tiers de chaque écorce dans le chocolat. Laissez durcir sur du papier cuisson.

BEREIDING

Boen de sinaasappels schoon en snijd de schil in smalle reepjes. Breng een pan met water aan de kook, voeg de schillen toe en kook ze 2 minuten. Giet af en herhaal dit nog twee keer. Breng vervolgens de suiker met 250 ml water aan de kook en laat de schillen hierin 45-60 minuten zachtjes konfijten, tot ze glazig zijn. Laat ze uitlekken en volledig drogen op een rooster of bakpapier. Smelt de chocolade au bain-marie en doop de schillen voor ongeveer twee derde in de chocolade. Laat uitharden op bakpapier.





My book page

Today I'm reading: .....

Written by:: .....

I started it on: .....

The book has: ..... pages

Make a cosy reading corner

- ☐ Lay a blanket within reach.
- ☐ Light your favourite scented candle.
- ☐ Put on some soft music.
- ☐ Look for a nice spot in your house.

Make a tasty snack

- ☐ Make a cup of tea or hot chocolate.
- ☐ Choose your best mug.k.
- ☐ Bake something delicious or grab a cookie.
- ☐ Put some fruit or nuts in a bowl.

While reading...

- ☐ I came across a great quote.
- ☐ I read for longer than I'd planned to.
- ☐ My book made me smile.
- ☐ I really related to a character.

Reading this book I...

- ☐ Lost myself in the story.
- ☐ Learnt something.
- ☐ Experienced a new adventure.
- ☐ Escaped everyday stresses.

My favourite character
and why they stayed with me:

A sentence I liked:
“

”



This book made me think of...

My favourite scene:

This book was recommended to me by:
.....

I turned the last page on:
.....

Rating

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

After finishing this book I felt...

This book taught me:

Galina Migiskina's
miniature world of wood



Some people find their creative direction early in life, while others keep discovering new passions along the way. Creativity has always been a thread running through the life of Galina Migiskina, from the Russian city of Dimitrovgrad. Many materials have passed through her hands over the years but, four years ago, she fell head over heels for wood.

My name is Galina, I'm 57 years old and I live in the beautiful city of Dimitrovgrad.

I studied art in Kazan and spent some time working at a school, but my desire to create was always stronger than any school timetable.



This is Galina's workspace, where all her creations come to life.



I've been creative my whole life: I have sewed, knitted, embroidered, drawn and crafted. All these techniques were part of my story but, in the end, wood became my most important material. I haven't completed any special training to become a carpenter; it all just happened naturally. No one taught me how to work with wood.



I developed my own technique step by step, through trial and error. My loyal husband was always by my side. He still supports me and helps me to choose the right tools today, so I can carry out my work more easily.


Sometimes the smallest details make the biggest difference. In Galina's miniature world, everything is just right. From tiny little windows to the most intricate decorations, I can't stop staring!

In love with wood

Four years ago, something unexpected happened: "I fell in love with wood," she says laughing. Now, she designs and makes her own miniature houses, decorative interiors, keyrings and other wooden creations. The really special part is that she's completely self-taught.





No one showed me how to saw, sculpt, drill or screw. I watched my husband working, he helped me to choose the right tools, and then I just started experimenting. I made mistakes, started again and learnt as I went. Now I make my pieces out of wood from the builder's merchants, but I sometimes use driftwood or other bits of wood I come across too. I turn these little treasures into miniature houses, paintings and other decorative bits and pieces for the house.







You can find more information on page 126.

Baked sweet potatoes are the perfect base for surprising fillings packed with vegetables, grains and fresh herbs. Easy to make, wonderfully nutritious and perfect for autumn.

3x DELICIOUS AUTUMN RECIPES

Stuffed sweet potatoes



Baked sweet potato

with a cream cheese filling and bean and bacon dressing

Ingredients to serve 4:

- 4 sweet potatoes, about the same size
- 3 spring onions, 2 finely chopped and 1 sliced in rings
- 4 sprigs of thyme, leaves only, finely chopped
- 100 g cream cheese
- salt and pepper
- aluminium foil

For the dressing:

- 50 g green beans
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 shallot, sliced in rings
- 4 slices of bacon
- 1 tsp mustard
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- salt and pepper
- 50 g tinned cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- almonds, roughly chopped, to garnish

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Wash the sweet potatoes and slice them lengthways. Mix the finely chopped spring onion and thyme into the cream cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Spoon the mixture onto four of the sweet potato halves and place the other halves on top. Wrap each stuffed sweet potato tightly with aluminium foil and lay the packages on a baking sheet. Bake the sweet potatoes in the oven for about an hour.

In the meantime, blanch the green beans for around 3 minutes in boiling water. Strain, rinse with cold water and leave to drain well. Heat 1 tbsp of olive oil in a pan and fry the shallot and bacon for around 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and leave to cool for about 10 minutes. Add the mustard and vinegar and stir well. Beat in the rest of the olive oil with a fork. Season with salt and pepper. Cut the green beans into small pieces. Mix the green beans and cannellini beans into the dressing.

Take the sweet potatoes out of the oven and carefully unwrap the foil. Place them on a plate and spoon the bean dressing over the top. Finish with some spring onion rings and chopped almonds.



Loaded sweet potato

with guacamole, edamame beans and pickled red onion

Ingredients to serve 4:

- 4 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 2 ripe avocados
- juice of 1 lime
- 1 small clove of garlic, crushed
- 200 g edamame beans (shelled and frozen)
- 1 red onion
- 100 ml vinegar
- 100 ml water
- 1 tbsp sugar
- ½ tsp salt
- handful of fresh coriander
- chilli flakes (optional)

Preheat the oven to 200 °C. Wash the sweet potatoes, prick them with a fork, rub them with olive oil and bake for 45-60 minutes (depending on the size) until soft.

In the meantime, make the pickled red onion. Slice the onion in thin rings. Bring the vinegar, water, sugar and salt to the boil, pour over the onion and allow to steep for at least 20 minutes.

Cook the edamame beans according to the instructions on the pack, strain and leave to drain.

Mash the avocados with the lime juice and garlic, then season with salt and pepper. Cut the baked sweet potatoes open, pull them apart a little and fill them with a spoonful of guacamole. Divide the edamame beans and pickled red onion over the top. Garnish with fresh coriander and maybe some chilli flakes for an extra kick.



Sweet potato filled

with quinoa, kale and avocado

Ingredients to serve 4:

- 4 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- salt and pepper
- 150 g quinoa
- 150 g kale (tough veins removed and finely chopped)
- 1 ripe avocado, diced
- 2 spring onions, in thin rings
- 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds (optional)
- 1 handful of vegetable sprouts or pea shoots
- 150 ml Greek yoghurt
- juice of ½ a lemon
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp honey

Preheat the oven to 200 °C. Wash the sweet potatoes, prick them all over with a fork, rub them with olive oil and bake them for 45-60 minutes until soft. In the meantime, cook the quinoa according to the instructions on the pack and briefly blanch the kale. Mix the Greek yoghurt with lemon juice, olive oil and honey, then season with salt and pepper.

Mix the quinoa with the kale, spring onion, avocado and pumpkin seeds, if using. Toss with a few spoons of the dressing. Cut the baked sweet potatoes open, fill them generously with the quinoa mixture and sprinkle with the rest of the dressing. Garnish with the sprouts and serve immediately.

BISCUITS AND PATS

Dear Diary,

At about three o'clock last night, I was woken by the sound of Mr Bear barking loudly. He sleeps downstairs, in his basket in the utility room. Rob was still asleep, but I woke him up and whispered. "Can you hear that, sweetheart?" Rob slowly opened one eye and muttered grumpily, "Yes. Goodnight, Daphne." He turned over and went back to sleep, but Mr Bear was still barking. The noise was echoing through the whole house. "Rob!!!" I said again, "Wake up, will you! I think there's somebody downstairs." I shook his shoulders and he slowly began to realise that I needed him. Now with both eyes open, he said, "What's up?" "I think somebody's broken in," I said quietly. Rob sat up straight, listened for a minute, then got out of bed and walked over to the window. Very carefully, he lifted a corner of the curtain and looked outside. "There's someone out there," he whispered. I was scared and pulled the covers right up to my chin. "I'll go and take a look downstairs," he said. "But what if there's an intruder in the house?" I asked. "Take a baseball bat down with you." Rob looked at me incredulously and said, "Since when have we kept a baseball bat in the bedroom?" I was getting more and more panicked. "Ssshhh, Rob. Take something from the bathroom then. You need to find something to use as a weapon." In the meantime, Mr Bear was still barking at full volume. Rob came out of the bathroom a minute later and there stood my knight in shining armour. In his Lego pyjamas, with a large back brush in his hand. I wondered for a moment if any intruder was going to give Rob a second glance, dressed for battle and armed to the teeth though he was. So I asked quietly, "Do you think it would be better to call the police?" Rob was already on his way downstairs though.



My heart was racing and I lay frozen still in bed. The minutes seemed like hours, and then suddenly Mr Bear went quiet. I waited nervously and a little while later, Rob came into the bedroom. He told me that all the doors and windows were tightly locked, and there was nobody in the house. "I think somebody might have been trying to get in through the back door though," he said. "I gave Mr Bear a pat and a couple of biscuits for being such a good guard dog."

The next morning I gave our brave four-footed friend a pat on the head too, and something nice to eat. But that wasn't the end of the excitement because, last night, I heard Mr Bear barking loudly. And the whole performance started again. Me lying in bed terrified, Rob going downstairs but not finding anything out of the ordinary. Mr Bear getting a pat and some biscuits. Last night, Mr Bear started barking for the third time this week. Rob didn't want to go down again, but I begged him to and said, "What if there really is someone down there this time?" Rob headed down again, and gave Mr Bear a pat and a couple more biscuits before coming back to bed.

This morning at breakfast, I asked the kids if they had heard Mr Bear barking in the middle of the night again. "And he won't stop until Dad comes downstairs and calms him down with a pat and some biscuits." I told them. Barney laughed and said, "Oh, he's a quick learner." I didn't understand. "What do you mean he's a quick learner?" I asked. "Well he is a quick learner, Mum," Barney explained, "You have to think like a dog. Mr Bear thinks that if he barks really loudly in the middle of the night, his dad will come downstairs. Then he'll get patted and be given biscuits." I thought for a moment and said, "I hadn't looked at it like that." Barney smiled and added, "The only thing Mr Bear hasn't worked out yet is why Dad always has a back brush with him."

Love, Daphne

A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

starts with a fresh cup of tea

After a busy day

Lemon balm and chamomile

If your head is still full of everything you had to do today, this gentle combination will help you to slow down and leave the day behind you.

When it's hard to unwind

Lavender and linden blossom

The floral fragrance of this tea invites you to relax. A great choice if your body is tired but your thoughts are still jumping all over the place.

After an active day

Ginger and turmeric

If you've done a lot of walking, sport or gardening, a warming herbal tea with ginger and turmeric is the perfect way to end your day.

On a cold night

Linden blossom and a spoonful of honey

Mild, warming and slightly sweet. The perfect tea to curl up with under a blanket.

Maybe it's not the herbs themselves that make the difference but just taking a moment to sit and do nothing. A warm mug, a soft blanket and a quarter of an hour away from your phone can work wonders.



When your mind is buzzing

Rooibos and vanilla

A mild, caffeine-free tea that's just right for a moment of calm. Pick up a book and leave your worries behind.

If you have a cold

Thyme and honey

Thyme has been used for generations to help with sore, tickly throats. A great tea to make as a little pick-me-up when you're not feeling your best

An acorn wreath



I often come home from an autumn walk with my coat pockets full of little treasures. Beautiful leaves, conkers...and of course acorns. I can never resist picking them up. Their bright green colour and different shapes make them perfect for turning into something special. This acorn wreath is one of my favourite autumn projects. It's easy to make and such a characterful eye-catcher for your front door.

You will need:

- a metal hoop
- lots of green acorns
- thin floristry wire or binding wire
- a pair of scissors or wire cutters
- maybe a few nice oak leaves



1

Collect lots of beautiful acorns. Go for a walk in the woods and keep an eye out for firm, green acorns in various sizes. The variety will make the wreath really vibrant. Clean them up if necessary and leave them to dry somewhere around the house.

2

Pick up a few acorns at a time and carefully tie them together with floristry wire. This will create little bunches of acorns that are easy to attach to the wreath.





3

Bind the first bundle securely to the metal hoop. Continue to tie on each little bundle, overlapping slightly with the one before. This will result in a lovely, full wreath.

Maria Larsson

Where the joy of thrifting meets rustic charm

The rolling landscape of Värmland, Sweden, is where Maria found a place to call home. She lives there with her partner, their eleven-year-old son and their loyal dog. She has two older children too, who have now flown the nest, but the house is still a welcoming place where family come together and memories are made.





Maria spent many years working in kitchens as a head chef. But she had another passion too. Decoration, photography and interior styling gradually began to take up more and more of her headspace. She immersed herself in that creative world, taking courses and discovering a whole new visual language. That passion really shines through on her Instagram account.



Maria's four-footed friend, Luna.


I've loved having a look around
Maria's home! It's given me a lot
of inspiration for my own interior.



Old houses, country decor, nature, the seasons and objects with history are the things Maria loves most. She likes to look around flea markets and charity shops, hunting for unexpected treasures. Sometimes one old item can be enough to create a whole new image or story.





I always find combining different colours a bit challenging. What feels warm and cosy, and what feels like a bit too much? Maria's photos have really helped! They show how the colours of nature seem to just blend together. It's really inspired me to have a go myself at home.
Thank you, Maria!







Maria doesn't have any big plans for the future. After being active on social media for a long time, nowadays she feels less and less pressure to satisfy the algorithm or be constantly visible. What she really wants is to keep creating in her own way. Maybe her Instagram account will end up back where it started: a kind of beautiful photo album, filled with years of inspiration, creativity and precious memories.

You can find more information on page 126.

DIY
DAPHNE INSPIRES YOU

Mushroom family





Cut the figures out carefully. Stand them up by folding back the white tabs at the bottom. You could try sticking them to a strip of leftover checked or spotted paper, to create a cute little autumn scene for your house in no time!

















Gutal

Traditional Mongolian boots



The mid-calf design offers support during horse riding and protection against the cold and dust.

They are often made from strong cattle, goat or sheep hide.

The traditionally lifted toes reduce damage to the grasslands.

The boots are always decorated with embroidered patterns and colourful details.

The story behind the boot

These traditional Mongolian boots, known as gutals, are much more than just footwear. They tell the story of a nomadic existence that people in Mongolia have been living for centuries; following the seasons, covering long distances and depending on horses for survival. Gutals have long been an integral part of daily life on the vast steppe.

Not just practical

The really unique thing about these boots is that they're not just practical, they have also evolved to carry a deeper significance. They reflect the Mongolian people's connection with nature, and the traditions passed down from generation to generation. The combination of convenience and symbolism makes gutals a recognisable element of Mongolian culture.

Living heritage

The boots were historically made by hand, with great craftsmanship, and formed an important part of the wearer's identity, along with traditional Mongolian clothing. They're still worn with pride today during weddings, celebrations and the Naadam Festival, so they remain a tangible symbol of a centuries-old tradition and the freedom of the nomadic lifestyle.







Gdansk

Rob and I felt right at home as soon as we arrived in Gdansk's colourful streets. There are historic buildings, a bustling atmosphere and you're never far from the water - everything you could ask for! We had high expectations, but this Polish port city was even more beautiful than we had imagined.





We started in the old town, and it was love at first sight! The brightly coloured houses along the Długi Targ are like something out of a fairytale. Everywhere you look there are inviting outdoor cafes, charming little shops and street musicians making everything even more atmospheric. Of course, Rob and I just couldn't resist taking a seat on one of the terraces for a cappuccino.





We had a coffee here - what a lovely café!





After our coffee break, we got back to exploring and came to Neptune's Fountain, the symbol of Gdańsk. It's one of those places that everyone has to stop for a photo. Right opposite the fountain, Rob and I took a look around the Artus Court. We couldn't believe our eyes when we got inside: the richly decorated rooms and opulent details were so grand.

Rob turned to me as we stood together at the bottom of the more than 400 steps of St Mary's Church, as if to say, "Are we really doing this?" Of course we were! And we were so glad we had because we were rewarded with an amazing view over the red roofs of Gdansk at the top.





I bought another cute magnet for our fridge. It's one of Gdansk's beautiful houses.



The old port crane, the Żuraw



The boulevard along the Motława River quickly became one of our favourite places. We walked along here quite a few times, because it was so cheerful. Historic ships bobbing on the water and terraces with views of the famous medieval port crane, the Żuraw. The atmosphere here is so lovely, especially in the evening, when the buildings are decorated with twinkling lights.

We had heard that you can eat well in Poland, but Gdańsk really exceeded our expectations!

Of course we couldn't miss the famous pierogi! We tried them at Pierogarnia Mandu, where there's a choice between dozens of different fillings. It was delicious!

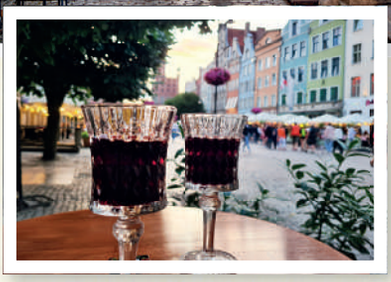


Here at Pierogarnia Mandu, we saw how they make their own pierogi!





During a walk through the city centre, you'll see lots of shops selling amber. Gdańsk is famous all around the world for this Baltic gold. Even if you're not planning on buying anything, it's really fun to take a look.





In the evening, Rob and I tried a tasty cherry liqueur called Wiśniówka, which is very popular in Poland.





The next day we took the train to Sopot. We walked along the famous wooden pier, enjoyed the view over the Baltic and had something to drink at a café on the beach. Definitely recommended!

Le Molina

La dolce vita in Tuscany

Barbara lives with her husband, Sergio, daughter, Alice, six cats and four chickens in Massa e Cozzile, Tuscany. When they bought a large house in 2016, they decided that they wanted to share it with other people. A year later, they opened Le Molina, a small bed and breakfast with two rooms, where guests feel at home as soon as they arrive.



This is Barbara





Berta, one of the cats you'll meet at the B&B

Le Molina's location is really special: it's surrounded by the hills of Tuscany, but just five minutes' drive from Montecatini Terme. Cities like Florence and Lucca are easy to reach too.

The region is ideal for anyone wanting to escape the hustle and bustle. Narrow roads wind through the rolling landscape, between olive trees, cypresses and fragrant herbs. It's a place where the days seem to pass a little bit more slowly and pleasure comes first.

Photography: Sara Stefanini

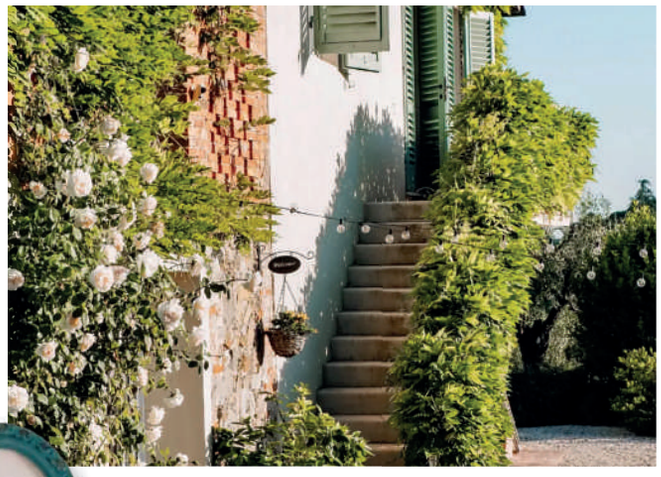
The day begins with the smell of freshly baked bread

Barbara studied at the hotel school in Montecantini Terme. She combines the knowledge that she gained there with her own warm, personal style. The B&B takes bookings from April to October, while the winter months are used to give the house and the rooms a bit of a refresh.

Even before the sun is up, Barbara is busy in the kitchen. She bakes bread and brioche, sets the breakfast table with care and serves local delicacies. Then she cleans the rooms, bakes cakes and takes care of the flowers in the garden. All with love and a great eye for detail.







Made with love

For Barbara, a warm welcome is in the little things: a beautifully set breakfast table, a freshly picked bouquet of flowers or the smell of bread warm from the oven. She gets so much satisfaction from guests noticing that attention to detail.

Her love of hospitality doesn't stop at Le Molina. She'd love to renovate another old house one day, and create a second small bed and breakfast. Maybe in Puglia, or in Provence. A place where guests feel as welcome as they do at Le Molina.





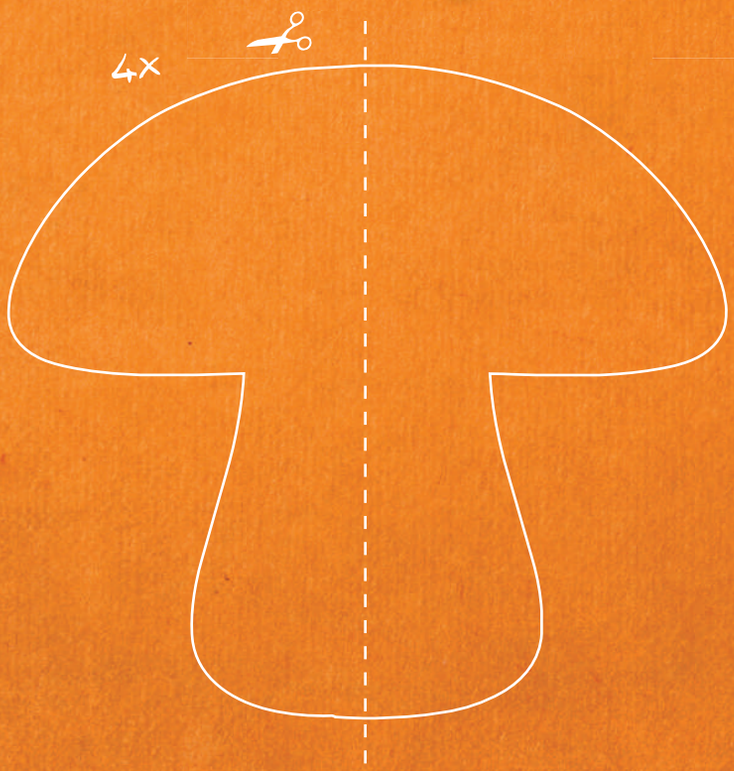
You can find more information on page 126.

DIY
DAPHNE INSPIRES YOU



Marvellous mushrooms

Copy the pattern and cut out four mushrooms. Fold them in half lengthways. Take two mushrooms and glue one half of one to one half of the other. Now stick one half of a third mushroom to the second half of one of the first two. Lay a length of string in the middle and secure it in place. Finish by sticking the two halves of the fourth mushroom to the last two available halves. The string should now be attached neatly in the centre of the mushroom so you can hang it up.

















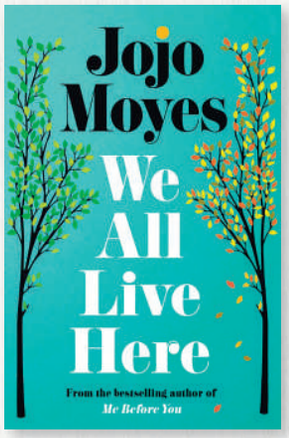
BOOK TIPS





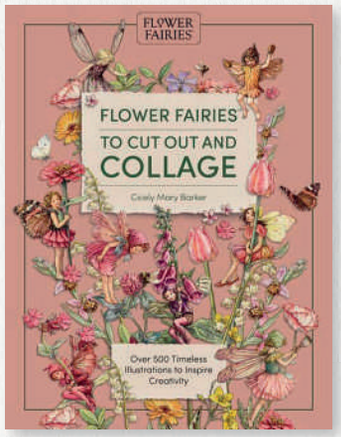
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Cicely Mary Barker
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Daphne's Diary Christmas edition

10 November



Extra thick

Daphne's address book

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SOON

Daphne



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Daphne's Diary
will appear on
10 November.

Packed with
creative
inspiration.


DIY
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