

OUR PLACE *News*

The monthly magazine dedicated to help everyone over 50 get the best out of life!

FEBRUARY 2023

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2023's top industry culinary predictions

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How staring at candles for 10 minutes can snuff out stress

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to Our Place - The monthly magazine dedicated to help everyone over 50 get the best out of life!

Every month, we bring you news and features on; Health & Beauty, Money & Work, Leisure & Travel, Food & Drink, Arts, Crafts & Hobbies, Home & Garden, plus... our Charity of the Month!

Our Place was founded with a mission to connect the mature online community to a world of news, features, offers and life changing products they may have missed out on. Bring them all into one place, Our Place.

What makes us special is that we are a vibrant team of all ages, from 21 to 65 who are all passionate about living life to the fullest irrespective of age. We have built strong relationships with some of the best UK age related businesses with the aim of brokering discounted rates for our Over-50s community.

Become a Friend of Our Place and receive our exclusive newsletters. They are a great way of keeping updated with the latest news and promotions. We aim to bring a smile to your face every time you open your inbox by selecting exclusive vouchers and discounts just for you.

We welcome you and hope you enjoy Our Place.

The Editor - Our Place

PS. Do you have an interesting story or article? If so, send us an email by visiting: www.ourplace.co

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Responsible Pet Owners Month

February 2023

February is Responsible Pet Owners Month and we are sharing 8 tips to help you be a responsible pet owner! Pets are an important part of our lives and even a part of our families, so it is important to make sure they are treated how they should be.

Make your pet part of the family

Pets, especially dogs, need companionship. Nothing beats the love and warmth you can give your pet.

Make sure your house is pet proof

Most people might not know all of the hidden dangers around the house. Make sure you research what household products and foods are harmful for your pet. Put these harmful things in a place your pet cannot reach.

Take care of your pet

This includes regular visits to the vet and groomer, insuring your pet may also be important to your pet's health. Make sure you know where your local vet is in case of an emergency.

Spay and neuter your pet

When your pet is spayed and neutered they can live healthier, longer lives.

Always keep an ID tag on your pet

Keeping a tag on your pets collar will ensure they will always find their way back to you. You may also consider getting your pet microchipped as well to help identify them if they are lost or stolen.

Train your pet to understand

Making sure your dog is trained and well behaved is important. Dogs should at least understand basic direction like "sit" and "stay." In an emergency situation these cues could save your pet's life. Consider taking your pet to an obedience training class.

Give them regular exercise

Pets need exercise just like us! Your pet needs regular exercise to stay fit, healthy and to release their energy. If your pet has a lack of exercise, they will begin to act out. Young pets that do not get enough exercise are more likely to develop negative behavioural issues that lead many to give up their pet.

Love your pet

Your pet is your favourite thing, and you are theirs! They wait for you to come home and desire your attention. Be sure to give them all the love they deserve!

National Pet Dental Health Month

February 2023

Don't turn your nose to Fido's or Fluffy's bad breath! That odor might signify a serious health risk, with the potential to damage not only your pet's teeth and gums but its internal organs as well.

Share - Show us your pets' pearly whites! Snap some photos of your pets' beautiful teeth - and we mean any kind of pets: dogs, cats, horses, bunnies, ferrets, goats, cows... fuzzy, furred or finned, you name it. After all, pets need dental care, too. Watch our Facebook page, where we'll be asking you to share those pictures with us and each other. You also can tweet or Instagram your photos with the hashtag #PetDental. **Read** - Learn more about pet dental health, including how to take care of your pet's teeth year-round, and why anesthesia is important. **Remember** - While February is National Pet Dental Health Month, dental health should be a daily ritual for pet owners all year long.

National Love Your Pet Day

Monday 20th February 2023

On February 20th, pet lovers everywhere observe National Love Your Pet Day. This holiday is a day set aside to give extra attention to and pamper your pets. This is a good day to focus on the special relationship that you have with your pets.

How to observe - Bring your pet a special treat, take an extra long walk or give them more attention on National Love Your Pet Day. Whatever you decide to do, spoil and appreciate your pets! Use #NationalLoveYourPetDay to post on social media.

WINTER CAT WARNING

At this time of year please check under your car and wheel arches for cats trying to keep warm, before you set off on your journey!



During the cold winter months cats will often seek out any warm space they can find. One particularly irresistible lure seems to be the cosy confines of a warm car engine. Unfortunately, cats that seek shelter under the bonnets of cars can then be injured or killed when that car is started. Help keep your own and your neighbourhood cats safe this winter by tapping the bonnet of your car before you start the engine.



Calming candles: How staring at candles for 10 minutes can snuff out stress

An award-winning immunologist's easy-to-follow tips which could lengthen your life.

Whether you're driving the children to after-school clubs, trying to become a partner at a major law firm or both, it's hard to find people who don't consider themselves super-busy. Even retirees complain of having too much to do. But the dark side to our increasingly frenetic pace of life is the amount of stress we are putting ourselves under.

A work crisis hits, the wi-fi goes down, the plane gets delayed and we are left feeling mad - and producing more of the stress hormone cortisol than our body needs. To be healthy, you've got to calm down.

Today, in the second part of my series giving you tips on how to live a longer and healthier life, I will explain why stress is so bad for us. You might have wondered why it is that when you finally take a break, you catch a cold or the flu? Well, that's because every stomach-churning, stressful moment we put ourselves through is damaging our defences.

Our immune system is constantly under attack and most of the time we stay healthy because the trillions of cells inside the body are always at work to keep us safe. But when our bodies encounter too many chemicals - and that includes the hormones released during periods of excess stress - our defence system, which is quite strong, can falter if put under too much pressure, and this malfunction results in prolonged inflammation. Any kind of threat - bacteria, toxins, trauma, even extremes of temperature - injures our tissues, they become 'inflamed' as part of the immune response.

This is usually only temporary and the inflammation is crucial in triggering the process by which the body protects and heals itself. But in some situations, the inflammation lasts too long and can result in DNA damage because too many defence cells (white blood cells) heed the body's call and join the fight. Sometimes these cells attack our own organs or otherwise healthy tissues and cells.

Those attacks age our tissues, eroding our overall health and can, in some cases, lead to autoimmune conditions such as coeliac disease or multiple sclerosis. Researchers call this reaction 'inflammaging' (inflammation plus ageing).

How stress accelerates the ageing process

When stressed, your body produces the stress hormone cortisol. In short spurts, cortisol limits inflammation. However, if you are continually stressed and develop high levels of cortisol, your body adjusts to the high level of this hormone and it ultimately leads to an increase in inflammation - and so, inflammaging. This lowers your ability to fight infections. In as little as 30 minutes, anxious thoughts can weaken your immune response.

The raised cortisol involved in chronic stress also correlates with increased appetite and weight gain. It can lead to binge-eating unhealthy snacks or excessive alcohol consumption, both of which can cause nutritional deficiencies and a further weakened immune system. That's why maintaining cortisol balance is essential for health.

Cortisol is your body's emergency department, there for momentary crises but not a substitute for daily good habits. Managing stress by reducing its triggers - toxic thoughts, places, people - can help unlock the secrets to better immune health and lowered inflammation. Everyone experiences stress differently, so you can decrease it in a variety of ways, including breathing exercises and meditation. Try these proven techniques to help deal with it.

Extinguish the fires inflaming you

Meditation turns off what psychologists call the 'monkey mind', that constant loop of anxiety and worries that creates mental chaos. When you meditate, you sweep that disorder away. The goal is to become unseen, unreachable - even if only for ten minutes a day. Your body already has the tools to meditate and uses them. The reticular activating system (RAS) - a network of neurons located in the brain - determines how you perceive and react to the external world. In broad terms, it controls your consciousness, gatekeeping all the data you collect through your senses. For example, in a loud restaurant, with a friend or partner, you can tune out all the extraneous noise to concentrate on your conversation. That's your RAS in action. It allows your mind to work in the background, keeping your systems active without bombarding them with constant sensory input. Your RAS creates an intentional filter for your focus of choice. It sorts through the sensory input and displays only what's relevant. You can harness the power of your RAS to concentrate on the moment.

Try staring at a flickering candle

Candle meditation is great for beginners. Light a candle and dim the lights so the flame becomes the focal point of the room. Place the candle at eye level on a table, and sit in front of it, 2ft away. Keep your back straight to allow your diaphragm a full range of motion. Set a timer for ten or 15 minutes. Take a couple of deep, slow breaths. Relax and release any tension in your body.

Focus solely on the flame. Observe as it flickers, changes shape, emits a halo and flashes a variety of colours. If your mind wanders, don't worry. Just lead it back to the flame. You may have to corral your mind several times. The more you practise it, the easier it becomes.

Master the art of deep breathing

When you breathe in, blood cells receive oxygen and release carbon dioxide, the waste product you exhale. When you take a deep breath, air fills your lungs and your lower belly rises. But many of us don't breathe deeply enough and this limits the diaphragm's range of motion, resulting in the bottom part of the lungs not receiving enough oxygenated air. You may feel out of breath or anxious as a result. Breathing problems can also cause fatigue, panic attacks and other physical and emotional problems because they disrupt the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide.

Deep breathing, on the other hand, can lower or stabilise your blood pressure while also slowing your heartbeat. To do this, you need to breathe deeply and slowly.

Make sure you get a good night's kip

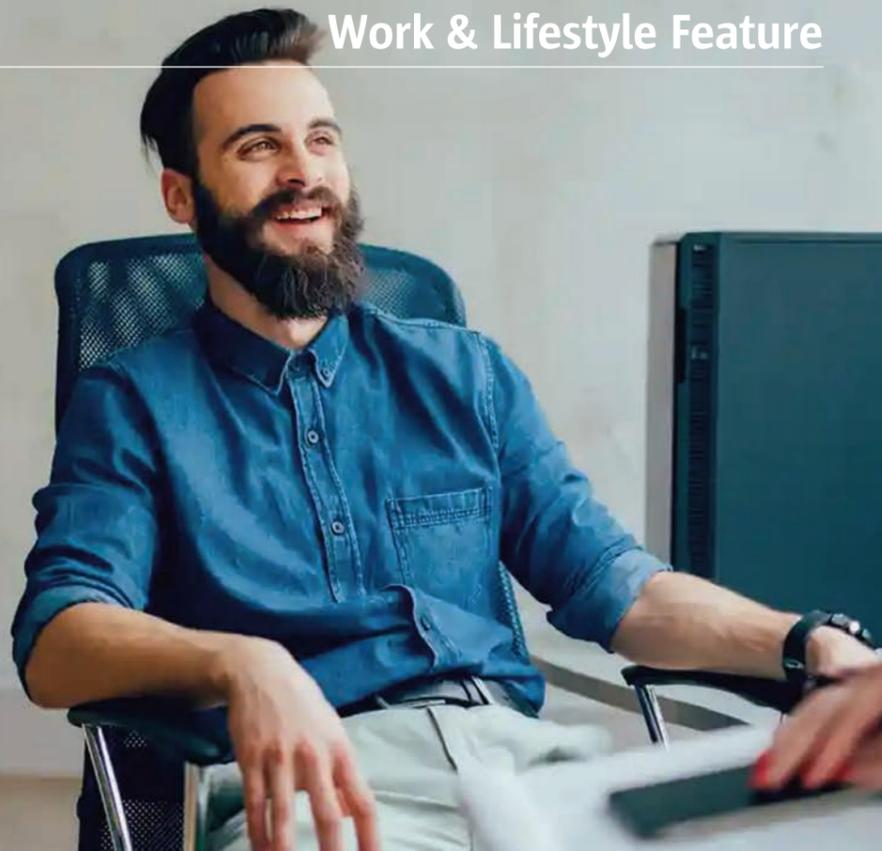
Sleep might not feel like a priority sometimes, but a lot of critical activity takes place in your body when you rest, including the production of molecules that fight infections. Sleep is just as important as food and water for the best physical and mental health. Fewer than seven hours risks all the negative outcomes you can imagine: while more than seven hours gives your body enough time to reset.

The threefold increase in sleep deficits in recent decades has contributed to the obesity epidemic, partly due to the disruption of hormones - including those that govern hunger - that occurs when our sleep is interrupted. Unfortunately, obesity impairs the immune system, which in turn opens the door to infections and disease. A few nights of bad sleep won't destroy your overall health but a chronic pattern of poor sleep can lead to increased calorie intake, weight gain, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and other problems.

Think of a road with ruts carved over centuries by countless wheels. If one vehicle goes slightly east, it won't change the ruts. If several thousand cars drive east, they'll form a new rut that will take future drivers to a different destination. When it's time for you to sleep, your circadian clock sets the process in motion. At various points in your sleep-wake cycle, your brain also releases a variety of hormones, including adrenaline, cortisol, histamine and norepinephrine, which counter sleep to help you wake up, but if you are under chronic stress, your body produces too much of these hormones, especially cortisol.

Studies show that sleep deprivation harms memory, motor skills and the brain. But you have the power to change all that. The following daily habits will lead to better rest at night:

(Article source: Daily Mail)



Personality splash: Five ways to be more 'you' at work

From personalising your space to dressing to express, five experts in business culture and office design share their tips on how and why employees should bring more of themselves into the workplace.

Depending on your line of work, expressing your personality at the office can feel awkward - or even unthinkable. But when employees are allowed to more fully express themselves in their workspace, it can make a big difference to their wellbeing, and to their work.

"The average person will spend a third of their life at work, and if you're made to leave your personality at the door, that's going to have a huge impact on your mental health, your identity and your self-confidence," says Jessica Andrews, founder of branding consultancy Rabbit & Other Stories. "In turn, your motivation, your productivity, and your results will suffer; and for a company, that's not good news."

So what else do the experts have to say about adding a degree of personalisation in the workplace?



Home away from home

Bringing personal items into the office is sometimes frowned upon, but there is research that suggests that employees who can personalise their workspace are up to 25% more productive.

"Even before Covid, workspaces were becoming more open-plan, in the hope of encouraging collaboration and innovation," says leadership development consultant and coach Zoe Poulton, founder of Glass Ripple Consulting. "However, this has meant levels of privacy and ownership of space have reduced, causing higher levels of emotional exhaustion.

"By bringing in personal items such as photos, ornaments, or a favourite mug, workers are provided with a greater sense of ownership and control over their space, which contributes to enhanced wellbeing." And if you're working from home, ditching the virtual Zoom background can also help you flex your personality. "These glimpses open up new conversations - and, often, new opportunities," says Poulton.

Dressed to skill

With a majority of prospective job-hunters saying that a dress code negatively impacts how they see a business, it's worth relaxing the rules.

"Every time we pick an outfit to wear, we're non-verbally communicating our personality to the world," says Poulton. "These clothes reflect our moods and how we want to express ourselves."

"A number of studies show that greater authenticity is linked to higher levels of happiness," adds Chris Preston, director of The Culture Builders.

"Any company worth its salt should want to snap up confident, connected and contented people, because they bring with them a huge competitive and cultural advantage."

Highlight your uniqueness

Share your ideas and perspectives, too - even when it feels daunting. "So often, we hold ourselves back from sharing our thoughts, in case we're somehow 'wrong'," says Grace Temporal Sorabji, CEO and founder of Cultural Calculator.

"For some, sharing what we believe can feel like a scary cliff to jump off, as though there will be some major consequences that follow, when in reality we give it too much weight - it's simply a perspective being shared.

Research has proven that the more psychological safety there is in an organisation to speak up, the higher the business performance is. This can't happen without each of us being willing to share our knowledge, intuition, and unique perspective."

Rock around the clock

Even though many of us are moving away from an "always-on" culture, work inevitably leaks into our day beyond office hours. "We talk a lot about the need for people to be their authentic selves at work, but it's not just about the nine-to-five - it's the getting dressed and thinking about your morning, the trip in, the trip home, and the unwinding," says Preston.

Crossover items such as the laptop or car employees use both in and out of office hours can also help them express themselves, he says. "If we feel like our company car is aligned to our personality, for example, we feel more aligned to the organisation. Driving to work in a vehicle you love is a big thing, and sees you stepping into work in a positive mood."



Space to be

Specialised areas where furniture, tech and tools can be adapted to suit users' needs and personalities give employees a chance to express themselves, as well as supporting diversity and inclusivity. And according to workplace wellbeing consultant Kirsty Hayward, these "hack spaces" can also give employers an insight into how their people want to work.

"If you're an employer, you want to be able to promote diversity of choice and employee independence," says Hayward. "Give your staff the opportunity to decide how to work with the tools, spaces and environment you can provide them with, and the result will be productive and engaged employees - and there's a strong correlation between empowerment and performance."

(Article source: The Guardian)

The 99% sober movement: Should we keep dry January going all year?

There is no such thing as a safe level of alcohol consumption, according to new guidelines from Canada. What does this mean for moderate drinkers?



The Guardian reports that if you are halfway through dry January, and counting the days until you can drink again, the latest news from Canada might make you rethink. Its new alcohol guidelines suggest people drink no more than two alcoholic drinks a week. Two small glasses of wine or a pint and a half of beer a week is what is considered by Canadian health experts as low-risk - a sharp drop from the previous guidelines of no more than 10 drinks a week for women and 15 for men - while no alcohol at all is the only safe limit.

In the UK, our limits are more generous, though the direction they are going in is towards Canada's. When they were last updated in 2016, the upper limit for both men and women was set at 14 units: the equivalent of seven pints of lower-strength beer or nine small (125ml) glasses of wine. Previously, men had been advised to stay below 21 units a week. The UK's chief medical officers also made it clear that "there is no level of regular drinking that can be considered as completely safe".

Should we, then, be following Canada's lead and cutting the upper limit drastically? A spokesperson for the Department of Health and Social Care says there are "no current plans to update the alcohol limit guidelines".

However, Richard Piper, the chief executive of Alcohol Change, a charity that campaigns to reduce alcohol harm, says: "There are some elements of the Canadian guidelines we should definitely copy. The first is the clear statement that the less you drink the better, from a health point of view. The second thing that I think is incredibly helpful is they've presented a scale." It shows, he says, "increasing risk as you drink more, in a stepped approach".

In the UK, with the focus on 14 units, there can be a tendency to think "over 14, bad; under 14, good", he continues. "But actually under 14 can be bad if all those units are on one night. I understand the chief medical officers in the UK are trying to present something really simple, but I think that simplicity is too crude. I think the Canadian guidelines are simple, but more helpful." They allow people to decide, says Piper. "To say, 'I really enjoy alcohol, I'm going to embrace moderate risk.' They tell you what the risk levels are at different levels, and leave it to you to make that choice."

It's the reason he would like to see better and clearer alcohol labelling - not necessarily the scary images that cigarette manufacturers were forced to adopt, but a health warning and a clear indication of the number of units. "I think guidelines and labels are part of the same story," says Piper.

With alcohol such a central part of British culture, could we ever get to the point where two drinks a week is considered normal? It is already, among large parts of the population, Piper points out. "Twenty percent of the population don't drink at all; 60% drink under 14 units a week and often way under. So you probably find that the majority of the population is drinking close to two drinks a week, or less. If you go into most British homes, most adults won't be having a drink most evenings."

At least 130,000 people take part in dry January every year, and younger people are drinking less. There have been low-drinking trends, such as "mindful drinking", the "sober curious" movement and people going "99% sober" - those who rarely drink, but make occasional exceptions. It can make sense for people who don't want to put pressure on themselves to give up completely. So there might not be quite the uproar politicians fear if our upper limits were drastically cut. Anyway, says Piper, "This is where they should be delegating this to the chief medical officer, exactly like they did in the pandemic: let science lead the way."

It is "absolutely reasonable" to conclude, says Gautam Mehta, an associate professor in hepatology at University College London, "the safest amounts of alcohol to drink is zero. There's no absolute safe level of consumption - the data is good on that. There's a very small benefit in ischemic heart disease, with a very small volume of alcohol, but that's completely offset by cancer and other risks."

The problem is, how well is this known by the public? "Probably not very widely," says Mehta. "Guidelines definitely have an impact. I don't think we should shy away from the fact that there is no safe limit - that message does need to get out there. We have an issue with alcohol in this country. After the pandemic, the number of alcohol-related deaths in the UK has gone up by 20%." Is the upper limit of 14 units too high? "My view is that education, rather than top-down guidance, is the best way to keep people engaged," says Mehta.

We know, in ways we didn't even 10 or 20 years ago, how harmful alcohol can be. "Alcohol increases blood pressure, (which can lead) to stroke and heart disease," says Mehta. Alcohol is linked to cancer, especially "to digestive tract cancers; breast cancers are a significant [alcohol-related] harm. Overall, there are more than 200 diseases that alcohol is associated with, but those are the top ones: cancer, heart disease, stroke. Liver disease occurs at higher levels, so if you were drinking within the current guidance, liver disease wouldn't be a major concern if you had no other risk factors."

Binge drinking is worse for you than spreading the units over the week (those "99% sober" drinkers should be wary of this if they intend to consume large quantities, even occasionally). "Pattern of drinking does matter," says Mehta. "It has an impact on the gut. We think the gut is very important in many chronic diseases and underlies inflammation. You induce what we call 'gut leakiness', which essentially means there's more inflammation from proteins that should stay within the gut, but don't. When you get beyond the threshold, on a relatively regular basis, we think you'll have long-term consequences." The definition of a "binge" is probably lower than you think. "It's about six units for women - that's only two large glasses of wine - and eight units for men."

Mehta was involved in a study comparing drinkers doing dry January, who had previously been drinking about 20 units a week, with a control group who didn't give it up. "The changes were quite marked," he says, describing how people's blood pressure reduced by approximately the same amount as you would expect had they taken blood pressure medication. Their risk of diabetes went down by about a quarter, and they lost weight. "We also saw changes in growth factors that are connected with cancer. You can't reduce your cancer risk hugely in a month, but the proteins that are linked to cancer fell by about 70%, a huge reduction. That was the most numerically striking finding." There were many potential benefits, and although Mehta acknowledges it was a short-term study (and small in terms of participants), "you'd expect, if you carried that on, that that would translate to real health benefits".

It's a wonder that anyone drinks anything at all. But many of us do, including Mehta (and me). "I still have a drink," he says. "It's about knowing those risks." If you drink alcohol, and enjoy it - perhaps while socialising with friends, which comes with its own significant health benefits - it's something to think about over your weekly pint-and-a-half.

(Story source: The Guardian)

Are booze-free tipples really as healthy as you think?

As we hit the end of the month, you may be one of millions who jumped on the Dry January bandwagon and are congratulating yourself on a decent stretch of abstinence after the excesses of Christmas and the New Year.

The Daily Mail reports that you might not have even found it that hard. After all, with more of us looking for lower and zero-alcohol options throughout the year, the market for what are called No/Lo drinks is bigger than ever.

Some of the biggest brands offer alcohol-free versions of their bestsellers, meaning whether your usual order is a G&T, a bourbon on the rocks, a glass of Chardonnay or a lager, there's a zero-alcohol version for you.

But if you're tempted to continue with your No/Lo drinking, assuming it's super-healthy, read on. Because you might find some of these so-called virtuous replacements actually contain more sugar than many originals. 'Alcohol is a highly effective carrier of flavour so when it is removed, manufacturers look to alternative methods to "lift" the flavour,' explains Lisa Godfrey, food scientist and founder of NonToxicated! (nontoxicated.co.uk), an app listing more than 1,000 alcohol-free drinks. 'Increasing the sugar content is one way of doing this. Sugar can give a dopamine surge in the brain, so manufacturers include it to give the same pleasure rush that alcohol does.' What's confusing is your alcohol-free versions invariably look like the healthy option. 'That's because alcohol has seven calories per gram whereas sugar has four,' says Lisa. 'So even with more sugar, the alcohol-free drinks can still be lower in calories.' Although consuming fewer calories sounds good, if those calories are higher in sugar, it can be an issue. Sugar causes a spike in insulin which can encourage the body to hold on to the energy consumed as fat - not what you want on a health kick. We've done some digging and what we found could make you think twice before indulging in that non-alcoholic tipple... All figures are per 100ml

BEER - Heineken Original: Energy: 42kcal • Carbohydrates: 3.2g • Of which sugars: 0g **Heineken Zero:** Energy: 21kcal • Carbohydrates: 4.8g • Of which sugars: 1.3g. Not surprisingly, the nonalcoholic beer doesn't taste as bitter and lacks depth of flavour, but it's not a bad imitation. Although the alcohol-free version has half as many calories, you're getting more carbs and 1.3g of sugar.

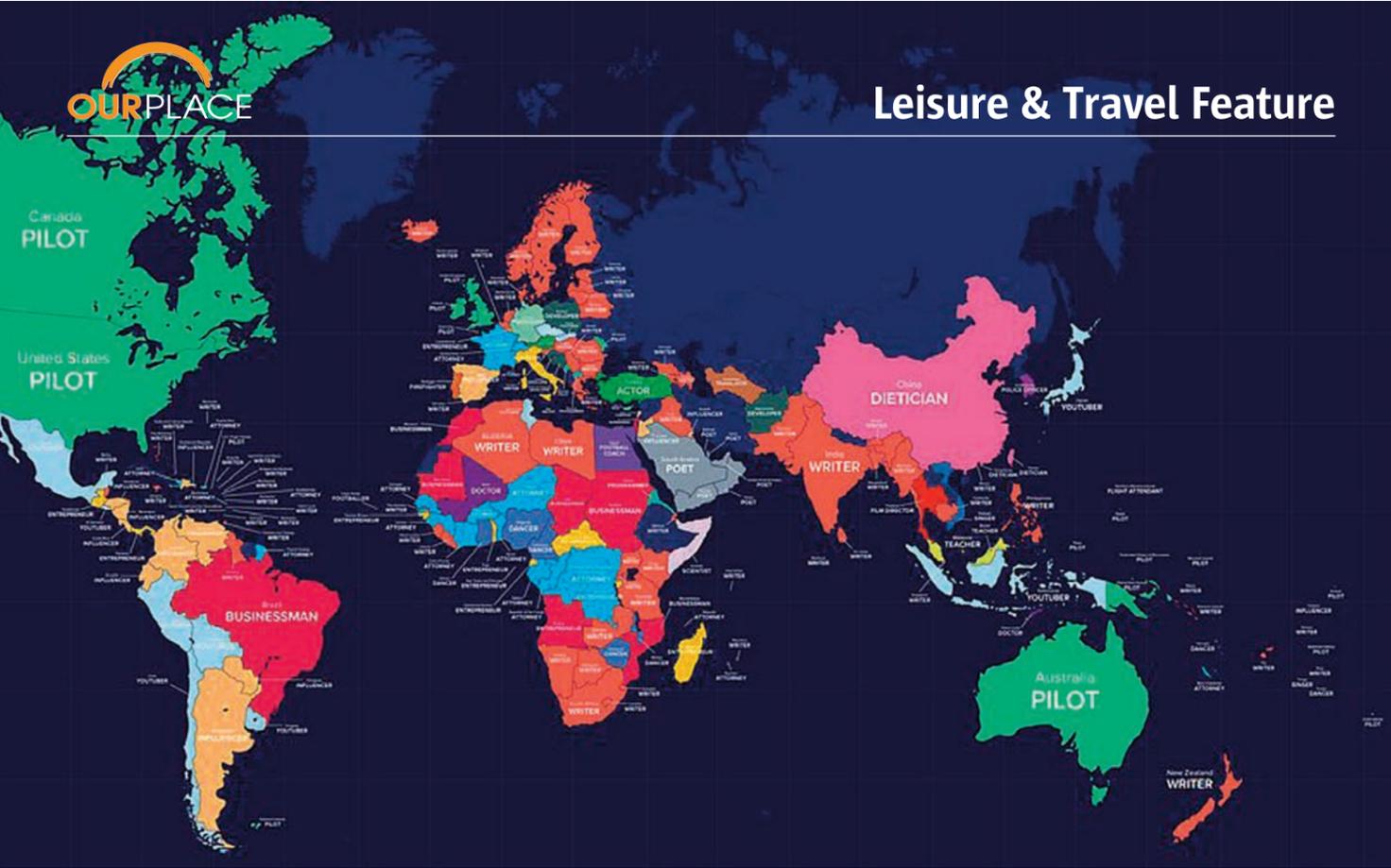
BUBBLES - Freixenet Cordon Negro Brut: Energy: 82kcal • Carbohydrates: 2.6g • Of which sugars: 1g **Freixenet 0.0% Alcohol-Free Sparkling:** Energy: 19kcal • Carbohydrates: 4.3g • Of which sugars: 3.8g. A zero -alcohol cava might sound like it's worth celebrating, but although it cuts your calories by about threequarters, you're getting almost four times as much sugar - about a teaspoon per glass. It also lacks the dryness of a Brut cava, tasting like fizzy grape juice.

SPIRITS - Gordon's Gin: Energy: 213kcal • Carbohydrates: 0g • Of which sugars: 0g **Gordon's Alcohol-Free Spirit:** Energy: 12kcal • Carbohydrates: 0g • Of which sugars: 0g. Most pure spirits are an excellent choice if you're trying to cut carbs. Ditching the alcohol cuts calories by nearly 94 per cent and there's no additional sugar. But on the mixer front, be careful you don't ruin all your good work as plenty of 'diet' mixers contain sugar.

WHITE WINE - Chardonnay: Energy: 82kcal • Carbohydrates: 2.1g • Of which sugars: 0.9g **Eisberg Alcohol-Free Chardonnay:** Energy: 22 kcal • Carbohydrates: 5.2g • Of which sugars: 4.5g. Going alcohol-free with white wine cuts calories by threequarters - but increases your sugar intake by a factor of five. And you can taste it. This smells like a dessert wine and tastes weirdly synthetic. A poor substitute for the real thing.

RED WINE - Shiraz: Energy: 85kcal • Carbohydrate: 2.6g • Of which sugars: 0.9g **McGuigan Zero Shiraz:** Energy: 29kcal • Carbohydrate: 7g • Of which sugars: 3.9g. As with white, the zero-alcohol red wine has significantly fewer calories, but almost four times as much sugar. It doesn't taste overwhelmingly sweet, though. It's not bad but it lacks the tannic dryness of real red wine.

(Story source: Daily Mail)



What the world wants to do for a living: Fascinating map reveals the most popular jobs around the world

A PILOT is the globe's number one dream job in 2023, from the USA to the UK and Australia.

On the map - generated using 12 months of Google search data - country names have been supplemented by the jobs their residents most want information about with a view to a career change.

Searches for 'how to become a pilot' and similar are top in 25 countries, including the UK, the U.S, and Australia, with 930,630 searches overall. 'Writer' is second with 801,200 searches, but coming top in 75 countries, including India, New Zealand and South Africa.

'Dancer' is third, with the study revealing that it garnered 278,720 searches worldwide and is the most-searched-for profession in countries including Nigeria and Ghana.



The map has been composed by Remitly, a financial services provider for immigrants, which looked at almost 200 job types and analysed the search volume for phrases commonly associated with researching a new career, thus establishing the most-searched-for job on Google in each country over the past year.

It says that being a pilot is an occupation that's 'known for its excellent pay, great job prospects and travel opportunities'. It adds: "When I grow up I want to be a pilot" has long been a childhood dream of many around the world and, according to our search data analysis, the profession has lost none of its fascination.'

However, the study generally found that careers in the arts and culture sector proved the most popular overall.

Being a 'YouTuber' (195,070 searches) ranks in fourth place, coming top in countries including Mexico and Japan, while fifth is being an 'entrepreneur' (178,380 searches), a profession that has proven to be the most popular in countries including Luxembourg and Guatemala.

Becoming an actor (176,180 searches) is sixth and top in countries including Turkey and Austria while being an 'influencer' is seventh (159,180 searches) and the most-searched-for job in countries including Spain, Venezuela and Argentina.

Eighth is being a 'programmer' (125,310 searches), a role that has taken the lead in countries such as Macedonia. Ninth place is bagged by 'becoming a singer' (121,430 searches) - top in countries including Vietnam - and tenth is being a teacher (114,950 searches), which reigns supreme in Malaysia, among other countries.

As well as a world map, Remitly has also drawn up maps with regional breakdowns for the search data.

In Europe, being a writer is top across Scandinavia as well as in countries such as Greece, while the French most commonly search for information on how to become an attorney. In Portugal, being a firefighter is number one, and in Germany, being a professor is the dream job.

Crossing the Atlantic to North and Central America, Canadians most commonly search for advice on how to be a pilot, while being an attorney is the most popular occupation in Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe and Martinique. Meanwhile, being an influencer is top in countries such as Honduras, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic.

As for South America, it's being a businessman that's number one in Brazil, while being a YouTuber takes the top spot in Uruguay and being an attorney is top in French Guiana.

In Africa, being a football coach is Egypt's most-searched-for job, while being a doctor takes the top spot in Mali. Somalians' most frequently searched-for profession is being a scientist.

Taking a look at the Oceania region, being a flight attendant is number one in the Northern Mariana Islands and being a singer is top in Tonga, while Papua New Guineans tend to search the most for tips on how to be a pilot.



Travelling over to Asia and the Middle East, being a poet is top in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman. In Turkmenistan, the most searched-for job title is 'translator', while in Lebanon, it's being a comedian. Elsewhere, in China, being a dietician is number one, while in Thailand, it's being a film director. South Koreans, meanwhile, most commonly search for advice on how to be a police officer.



The study also honed in on the world's top sporting professions and found that being a footballer is number one, with almost 60,000 searches each year logged worldwide. Becoming a wrestler is also one of the most popular dream sports professions, the study reveals, ranking above other athletic pursuits such as basketball, boxing and golf.

The world's top 20 most searched-for jobs

1. Pilot - 930,630 searches
2. Writer - 801,200 searches
3. Dancer - 278,720 searches
4. YouTuber - 195,070 searches
5. Entrepreneur - 178,380 searches
6. Actor - 176,180 searches
7. Influencer - 159,180 searches
8. Programmer - 125,310 searches
9. Singer - 121,430 searches
10. Teacher - 114,950 searches
11. DJ - 112,360 searches
12. Blogger - 104,600 searches
13. Doctor - 104,080 searches
14. Professor - 91,400 searches
15. Flight attendant - 88,240 searches
16. Firefighter - 84,300 searches
17. Judge - 83,800 searches
18. Lawyer - 79,470 searches
19. Attorney - 74,030 searches
20. Psychologist - 66,750 searches

(Article source: Daily Mail)



Cuisine trends: 2023's top industry culinary predictions

If the last couple of years have been remembered as ‘the year of the pivot’ or ‘the year of challenge’ for the foodservice and hospitality sector, which factors will define 2023? KTCHNrebel makes its predictions for the major industry and cuisine trends set to shape next year.

A new year brings development, challenges and changes in all sectors, with the foodservice industry as no exception.

Heading into 2023, restaurant operators are seeing the light at the end of a long pandemic-driven tunnel, though inflation, rising costs and labor challenges remain. The good news is, consumers are once again dining out with abandon, even during inflationary times.

That's because, according to the National Restaurant Association's 2023 What's Hot Culinary Forecast, they're seeking the experience of it all, not just sustenance. And, when it comes to that sustenance, consumers are still seeking excitement from restaurants, chiefly in the form of global flavors and new twists on the classics. Here's a look at the top industry and cuisine trends dominating the charts.



Top five industry trends

Experiences, local culture and community

Despite the booming popularity of off-premises restaurant meals and snacks in recent years, pent-up demand for in-restaurant experiences, which includes socialisation, celebration, and culinary exploration, is strong, with 70 % of respondents noting customer desire to gather on-premises, according to the National Restaurant Association's forecast, which was created based on a survey of more than 500 professional chefs in conjunction with research firm Technomic.

Menu streamlining

With inflation on the rise, ingredient costs are expected to remain high into next year, according to the National Restaurant Association, so restaurant operators are looking to streamline menus and create dishes with new ingredients to preserve value for guests. Additionally, value meals, particularly in the breakfast category, are expected to be a draw for customers.

Blurring dayparts

Remote work has fundamentally changed the way consumers use restaurants and other foodservice operations, especially fast-casual ones and those offering takeout. As such, operators are experimenting with new and exciting “carriers” beyond sliced bread - from Indian parantha and roti to pastry buns and crepes - as well as flatbread sandwiches and healthier wraps for exciting eating on-the-go. Fried chicken sandwiches and chicken sandwiches 3.0 (those with spicy and sweet-heat fusion flavours) are also on the rise (listed as the 2 hot trend overall by the National Restaurant Association's 2023 forecast). At breakfast, the report shows the growth of unique handhelds like French toast sticks and chicken and waffle sandwiches. There's also a “cooling” of breakfast salad bowls from last year and a heating up of other types of breakfast bowls, such as those with pasta or rice as the base as well as those with veggies and tofu as the star.

Zero waste/sustainability/upcycled foods

The pandemic and proliferation of takeout food to new extremes exposed one major flaw - these takeout containers have to go somewhere. Whereas pre-pandemic operators had begun to make major in-roads on selecting biodegradable and compostable packaging, post-pandemic is showing a return to those waste management goals and decisions.

Automation technology

Listed as an emerging trend in the National Restaurant Association's report, this category includes existing and emerging technologies in the equipment space, namely in the form of higher-level cooking and hot-holding pieces that can monitor volume, temperature, and time. And then, of course, there is the proliferation of robotic “arms” and other self- or more automated cooking equipment.

Top 5 cuisine trends

Southeast Asian

This is the National Restaurant Association's pick for the top hot cuisine trend for 2023, and one that encompasses Vietnamese, Singaporean, Filipino cuisines. In fact, Andrew Freeman & Co., a hospitality consulting firm, pointed to Filipino as the cuisine of the year for 2023 in its annual report.

Caribbean

A top 3 global trend for 2023 as listed on the National Restaurant Association's forecast, look to Puerto Rican, Cuban and Dominican favourites as growing in popularity on menus around the country. Think: Cuban sandwiches and plantains.



South American

Also in the National Restaurant Association's top 3 global trends on the 2023 forecast and one that includes dishes and flavours from Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru. Listed as an emerging food was huacatay, a Peruvian black mint sauce often served with chicken or barbecue dishes.

Balkan

Listed as the top 5 emerging trend on the report, this includes Croatian, Bulgarian and Turkish cuisines and flavours. Another emerging trend was raki, a Turkish alcohol made of twice-distilled grapes and anise.

Global condiments

Not falling into any specific cuisine, a multitude of condiments, spices, seasonings, and sauces from around the globe are on the rise, according to the National Restaurant Association. This includes variations of Sriracha, Ganjang (Korean soy sauce), smoky Mexican guajillo chili sauce and Tajin, a chile pepper, sea salt and lime seasoning that's another Mexican staple.

(Article source: KTCHN Rebel)



Woodpeckers and wagtails: How readers enjoyed the big birdwatch

People tell us about their sightings as part of RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch, with many species flourishing.

The Big Garden Birdwatch, a citizen survey organised by the RSPB, has returned for its 44th year. The survey took place between 27-29 January 2023 and the deadline for submitting results is on 19 February.

Hundreds of readers got in touch to share their experiences of taking part in this year's survey. Here, five people tell us about their sightings.

'We had a greater variety this year'

I carried out the Birdwatch survey with my wife between 08.30 and 09.30 on Saturday 28 January 2023. We saw a greater spotted woodpecker, four longtailed tits, two robins, two great tits, one dunnock, three blue tits, two blackbirds, one thrush, two starlings and one chaffinch. This was more birds than last year, and a greater variety. They came to our feeders and in our small trees and on the lawn. There were two redwings in next door's bushes close to our garden.

We only have a small garden with a lot of evergreen bushes. We seem to have more bird activity in the mornings. We are on the edge of the countryside which seems to help with the woodland birds visiting us. We keep feeders up and filled all year round. We very rarely have sparrows, despite having put up a sparrow terrace nesting box. But we have seen a sparrowhawk in the area at times, and found evidence of kills on our lawn.

Michael Bedwell, 65, Chelmsford, Essex

'The robins are so tame'

I live near the seafront in Brighton, and the murmurings of starlings over Brighton pier used to be a wonderful sight. The numbers have been getting lower and lower over the years. During the cold spell, they all disappeared from their roost under the pier. This is my first year completing the survey in my garden, but robins seem to be as frequent as usual; there's a pair of them that are so tame that I have to make sure I don't tread on them.

My garden is very bird-friendly, with lots of trees and large hedges. I saw quite a lot of wood pigeons. But in general there's seems to be a lack of wildlife. I used to see wrens, woodpeckers and so many more. The numbers seem to have decreased over the years; although gulls, wagtails and robins seem much the same. **Anne Williams, 68, Brighton**

'The bitter cold may have affected numbers'

We have a good-sized garden with trees and shrubs, and put out bird feeders to attract birds. My husband and I watched for an hour on Saturday around 11am, possibly a little later than planned, from inside the house. We saw several robins, blackbirds, both collared doves and wood pigeons, one starling, and a couple of coal tits. They came mainly for the feeders up near the house but the collared doves appear to be nesting in a large holly tree on our boundary.

A lot of the activity of the blackbirds was pecking about on the ground under the feeders and the shrubs by the garden fence. Sadly, I think there were fewer birds than last year. Maybe something to do with our long boundary hedge having to be replaced with a fence. We are planting along it now and it should be somewhere for birds again soon. There has been a lot of building work and other human activity in the area, so maybe the birds were scared away. The cold in the last few weeks was also very bitter after a warm start to the year, which may have affected numbers. **Maureen Austin, West Norfolk**

'A song thrush was an unusual but welcome sighting'

My back garden backs on to some woods, so all the birds come from there to the feeders. There is never a lack of birds where I live and I feed them every day - I do believe that feeding them is a good thing. They all seem to be healthy. There seem to be more pigeons, though, which makes things difficult for the smaller birds.



We have a lot of finches, robins and a woodpecker. I have been doing the RSPB survey for three years but I couldn't do it properly this year because every time the little birds would come down to feed, the pigeons scared them off. I have to shoo them away or they eat everything in minutes. This is the first year that I've used a bird table, which attracted blackbirds. I have been seeing a song thrush there, too, which is an unusual but welcome sighting. **Katie Chapman, 46, Garelochhead, Scotland**

'A total lack of finches'

I have a bird-feeding station down by the river at the bottom of my garden. I spent an hour observing on 28 January, from 14.15 to 15.15. We had 14 blue tits, two great tits, one coal tit, three long-tailed tits, a robin, a wren, a pheasant, a blackbird, a dunnock, a treecreeper, a starling and a chaffinch. With the exception of one hen chaffinch, I noticed a lack of finches, especially siskins, which used to be regulars but have been absent for about 18 months. I've also noticed a decline in the number of dippers along this stretch of the Tanat over the same period.



However, I have had two visits each from little and great white egrets - birds I last saw only in central Africa in the 1960s. I can also report a thriving colony of 12-15 house sparrows at the other end of my garden. I have been doing the RSPB survey since just before the millennium. During that time I've seen a sand martin colony disappear as the sandbanks of the river eroded, but last year they found a new sandbank and a small colony started up again. **Bob Perkins, 80, retired teacher, Penybontfawr, Tanat valley, Wales**

'The numbers were much improved on last year'

We removed our bird feeders a while ago as we had a problem with rats. This week, I reintroduced our nut feeder and added a seed mix to the bird table. We had an almost instant response. The regular robin continued to visit along with two nuthatches various blue tits, great tits and coal tits. Only one or two chaffinches have returned. A woodpecker, two magpies and a family of pigeons are also trying their luck. Sparrows, blackbirds and thrushes also come into the more sheltered part of the garden.

The numbers during this survey are much improved on last year, which was the worst ever watch since I started in 2016 - although chaffinch numbers are down quite considerably. Hawks seem to have increased in number and we now have no swallows in the summer. The jays are still around, and we have random visits from a flock of fieldfares. **Ann Skelton, Cornwall**

(Article source: *The Guardian*)

Please help us rescue and care for vulnerable hedgehogs - **Britain's favourite mammal**

A shocking study has revealed that hedgehogs are rapidly vanishing from our countryside, with numbers HALVED in the last 20 years.

I am delighted to tell you that Britain's hedgehog has won favourite mammal in a UK poll.

The UK's only spiny mammal won with 35.9% of the 5,000 votes, more than double that of the Red Fox, who came in second place with 15.4%. The Red Squirrel came third with 11.4%, out of a shortlist of 10 charismatic UK mammals.

Unfortunately, hedgehogs are rapidly vanishing from our countryside as numbers have HALVED in the last 20 years, a shocking study has revealed.

Henry Johnson, hedgehog officer, People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) said:

"We Brits seem to love hedgehogs for a whole range of reasons, including their cute appearance, their role as slug controllers and the way they have colonised our gardens with such aplomb. This is why it is so sad to see them decline, with one in three lost since the millennium."

Threats to hedgehogs come mostly from us. In rural areas, our farmland increasingly lacks the diversity of habitats hedgehogs need and the invertebrates they feed on. In towns and cities green spaces are lost to development, paved over or increasingly fragmented. Hedgehogs are also very prone to road traffic accidents.

This is why we have launched this special Annual Appeal to protect Britain's favourite mammal.

At Hedgehog Rescue Rehabilitation and Care Centre we respond immediately to rescue injured hedgehogs. A vet is called in straight away and the hedgehogs are monitored and cared for. Once fit and well they are released back into the wild.

Hedgehog Rescue is now conducting its Annual Appeal. Only by continuing our huge effort and long-life commitment can we give these wonderful animals a safe, happy and contented life.



We care for many hedgehogs here at our rehabilitation centre. Hedgehogs just like these:

'Julie'



'Julie' (pictured left) came in last Autumn, quite small, out in daylight and had ticks. She stayed a few weeks, put on enough weight, and made a full recovery. She was released back to her own territory by the finder.

Baby Hedgehogs

These 2 hedgehogs came in as very small babies and had stayed with us a few weeks, gaining weight and giving us a chance to sort out their health issues. They had several ticks and needed worming. When they were 100% ready, we released them close to where they were found.



These hedgehogs are some of the lucky ones. Others are less fortunate.

As a friend who knows what a wonder animals can be, I hope you will support our Annual Appeal. Your kind gift will help us rescue and care for many more vulnerable hedgehogs - Britain's favourite mammal.

To donate to Hedgehog Rescue, go to:
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/hedgehogrescue>
 or write to: **Raisemore, Unit 1, Alton Road Industrial Estate, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5NB**



HEDGEHOG RESCUE
 REHABILITATION AND CARE CENTRE

Registered Charity No: 1126812 (England & Wales)
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