

OUR PLACE *News*

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

NOVEMBER 2019

Inside this issue...

Abbey Road

Celebrating 50 years of
the iconic Beatles' album

Beat the winter blues

10 simple tips for boosting your mood

Spice up your winter!

Why adding a little spice to your food
might be the key to winter wellness

Why organic gardening?

It's better for you and your environment

Whoow... whoosh... bang!

The best Bonfire Night celebrations in the UK

PLUS...

What's on • Health & Beauty • Money & Work • Leisure & Travel
Food & Drink • Arts, Crafts & Hobbies • Home & Garden

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

CONTENTS

What's On	3
Health & Beauty News	4-5
Health & Beauty Feature 10 simple tips for boosting your mood	6-7
Money & Work News	8-9
Money & Work Feature 5 ways to beat constant energy price rises	10-11
Leisure & Travel Feature The best Bonfire Night celebrations in the UK	12-13
Arts, Crafts & Hobbies Feature Abbey Road: Celebrating 50 years	14-17
Food & Drink Feature Add a little spice to your food for winter wellness	18-19
Home & Garden Feature Why organic gardening?	20-21
Our Charity of the Month	22

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EFG London Jazz Festival 2019
Friday 15th to Sunday 24th November 2019
Various venues across London

Experience a dazzling extravaganza of concerts, events and performances across the city during the EFG London Jazz Festival. Bringing together new talent and world-renowned figures from the electrifying world of jazz, the festival plays host to 10 days of diverse performances, from headline concerts to intimate recitals.

Find gigs at venues throughout London, from Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Wigmore Hall, to smaller spaces such as King's Place, the Purcell Room and the Omnibus Theatre.

Since its inception in 1992, the EFG London Jazz Festival has seen the likes of Jools Holland Rhythm and Blues Orchestra, the Gipsy Kings, Wayne Shorter, Joe Pass and Robert Glasper on its billing; while composers such as George Russell, Carla Bley, Gerald Wilson and Randy Weston have composed pieces specifically for the festival.

EFG London Jazz Festival 2019 highlights

- Turn up the heat right from the get-go with the official Jazz Voice opening gala featuring top performers including Cécile McLorin Salvant, Cherise Adams-Burnett, Corinne Bailey Rae and more.
- Introduce the little ones to the world of jazz at one of the interactive Jazz For Toddlers workshops.
- Drift away as you listen to melodic jazz infused with pop during Charlie Pyne Quartet's performance at the Spice of Life jazz bar in London.
- Burst with endorphins at the soothing Steve Williamson Experience, as the legendary saxophonist fills your ears with classic tunes at the PizzaExpress Jazz Club.

- Celebrate the womxn (self-identifying as female and non-binary people) in jazz, with free performances during She is Jazz from Cassie Kinoshi, Chelsea Carmichael and Emily Dankworth at the Southbank Centre.

- Hear Cécile McLorin Salvant's Grammy Award-winning vocals paired with melodies from pianist Sullivan Fortner, in an unpredictable-love-inspired repertoire featuring Cécile's new song The Window, at the Barbican.

- Begin the Christmas celebrations with a warming performance from The Legend of the Jazz Penguin at Live At Zédel.

Check out the full EFG London Jazz Festival line up for more ideas on how to spend a jazz-filled night in London.

Regent Street Motor Show
Saturday 2nd November 2019
Regent Street, London.



Get up close to Victorian and Edwardian classics alongside futuristic electric vehicles at the traffic-free Regent Street Motor Show, as the largest free motor show in the UK celebrates the street's 200 anniversary.

Showcasing 125 years of motoring history, hundreds of vehicles go on display in the famous shopping street. Check out the latest sports cars and motorbikes, see classic automobiles dating back to the early 20th century and find out about the latest low-emission technologies.

This year's theme revolves around electric vehicles and motoring of the future with one-of-a-kind experiences including driving cutting-edge electric cars and expert advice on switching to a more sustainable form of transport brought by Go Ultra Low.

This interactive celebration of motoring is perfect for car enthusiasts and families, as well as West End shoppers looking for a fun distraction.

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

The British Heart Foundation funds research to beat the world's biggest killers.

Gifts in Wills make up half of the BHF income, it's thanks to them we're able to have the long term investment to keep research going to beat heart and circulatory diseases and their risk factors.



The development in BHF research

Since we were founded in 1961, the British Heart Foundation has achieved important breakthroughs to help beat heartbreak forever. Conditions like heart diseases, stroke, vascular dementia and their risk factors - like diabetes and high blood pressure - are all connected by your circulatory system, and are the biggest killers in the world.

Thanks to research, the way heart diseases are diagnosed and treated more people than ever survive heart attacks and cardiac arrests. But these conditions still cause heartbreak for millions of families - killing more than 1 in 4 people in this country. More than 7 million people in the UK are living with heart and circulatory diseases.

The BHF funds around £100 million of new research each year into all heart and circulatory diseases and the things that can cause them. Its thanks, in parts, to treatments based on BHF-funded research. Now more than seven out of ten people who suffer a heart attack survive.

The power of a gift in your Will

This life saving work simply wouldn't have been possible without the generosity of the thousands of supporters who have kindly remembered us in their Will. Gifts in Wills left to the BHF fund around a quarter of the UK's independent heart and circulatory disease research. These special donations have incredible power.

More and more people have supported us in this special way, helping us raise over £1 billion through gifts in Wills alone. Thanks to these amazing individuals, we have been able to help transform the lives of millions of people in the UK and around the world.

As we look to the future though it is clear there is so much more work still ahead of us. That's where a gift in your Will could have a truly powerful and enduring impact.

Our research starts with your heart. But it doesn't stop there. By leaving a gift in your Will to the BHF, after providing for your loved ones, you can help us discover new ways to prevent, treat and cure the world's biggest killers.

A gift in your Will has the power to save lives. We call it Will Power.

(Story source: 50 Connect)

10 tips on how to keep in top condition during the winter months

The colder months are fast approaching. Bad weather, dark mornings, sniffles, sneezes and that duvet day feeling - winter must be on its way.



Silver Surfers reports that it doesn't have to be all doom and gloom; winter can be a great season to get to grips with our immune system, toughen our resilience and give a boost to our general wellbeing.

So how do we go about making ourselves feel the best we can during the winter months?

Here are 10 practical tips we can follow to aid our resistance to those winter viruses along with helping to battle those winter blues:

- Eating lots of fresh fruit, vegetables and wholegrains will support our immunity and encourage good digestion
- We should reduce our intake of salt, sugar and fat and try to avoid processed foods as they are generally high in all three

- Endeavour to eat as much fresh food wherever possible as foods full of preservatives and so called 'junk' food will deplete the body's natural protection system
- Skin and hair should not be neglected during the colder months so both men and women should include quality conditioners and creams in their washing regime
- Keeping to a regular routine will make us feel better in so many ways as continued late nights and long work hours can have detrimental effects on our general health
- Including some form of exercise into our daily lives will give our immune systems a boost and produce those 'feel good' endorphins
- Stay hydrated with plenty of fresh water and avoid consuming too much alcohol or caffeine as they have a detrimental effect on our body's ability to absorb minerals and vitamins
- A multi vitamin tablet may aid those who suffer from minor infections or it may help to investigate homeopathic or alternative remedies
- Yoga, swimming, massage, walking in daylight hours or practicing mindfulness are just some forms of healthy relaxation which may help us to feel good about ourselves during those long winter days

It has been said that winter sunshine can improve our general health and help to lift those winter blues so getting outside as much as we can or even taking a holiday abroad may be the ultimate way to survive the winter months!

(Story source: Silver Surfers)

Watching too much television causes over-50s to be forgetful

Too much television watching for those aged over 50 can lead to memory loss, research suggests.

The Express now reports that scientists wonder if staring too long at the box could play a part in the development of dementia and Alzheimer's.

The findings come after experts in Britain analysed data from 3,662 adults aged 50 and over.

They found staring at a screen for long periods was associated with a decline in memory of words and language over the following six years. The association was independent of other factors, including time spent sitting down.

Dr Daisy Fancourt, of the Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care at University College London, said there had been a lot of interest in the effects on children, but less so in adults.

This, she added, was "despite it being hypothesised for over 25 years that watching excessive television could contribute to the development of dementia. "While watching TV may also have benefits overall this suggests adults over the age of 50 should try and ensure television viewing is balanced with other contrasting activities."



Participants were quizzed on their watching habits and underwent verbal memory and fluency tests in 2008 and then 2014.

Scientists found those who watched television for more than three-and-a-half hours experienced on average 8-10 per cent decrease in verbal memory, while those who watched less experienced on average a decrease of 4-5 per cent.

The study suggests watching TV could reduce the amount of time people spend on activities that could help preserve mental function, like reading. Interactive screen-based activities, like video gaming and surfing the internet, could provide cognitive benefits, it added.

(Story source: The Express)

HEDGEHOG WARNING

At this time of year please check for these prickly creatures before lighting your bonfire.



Bonfires are perfect sleeping areas for hedgehogs and every year many get burnt alive. If you are having a bonfire, just make sure you check inside before lighting it. If you do find a hedgehog, move it to a safe place. This year second litters have been born later than usual. This means that there may still be young and underweight hedgehogs around. Remember if they are under 600gr they will not survive hibernation and need to be taken to a local animal rescue centre.





Beat the winter blues: 10 simple tips for boosting your mood

As the season changes and the sun goes down early, it's easy to let your mood sink with it. Whether you find you're affected by the lack of daylight or simply find yourself feeling less than your best when life's stresses get in the way, the good news is there's plenty of easy steps you can take to help give you a lift.

Check out our favourite simple and natural ways to help battle those winter blues...

1. Go for a walk

It may sound overly simple, but exercise is a huge mood booster. It's been proven that with light exercise every day, your body releases more endorphins (happy hormones) that keep you feeling balanced.

2. Eat healthily

Watching what you eat is hard during the winter, especially with the big festivals of Christmas and New Year's being right in the middle of the season.



But foods that are high in processed fat and sugar will leave you feeling sluggish and tired. Balancing out your diet with some good fats; nuts, which reduce anxiety, and wild salmon, which is a natural antidepressant can go a long way. Also, try to include some complex carbohydrates, like whole grain bread and pasta - they will keep your metabolism even and your mood up.

3. Indulge in some dark chocolate

Amazingly, this little treat can boost your mood. Chocolate contains an amino acid called tryptophan, which boosts serotonin levels in the brain.

4. Play with a pet

Studies have shown that petting a dog or a cat can release all the hormones associated with good feelings, such as serotonin and oxytocin. If you don't have a pet of your own, consider offering a friend or neighbour to take their dog for a walk.

5. Watch what you drink

It's common during the festive periods to have a bit of a tippie, and that's fine in moderation, but alcohol is a depressant and a few nights of drinking can leave a lasting depressive effect a few days later.

6. Get some sleep - but not too much

Everyone has different needs when it comes to sleeping, but getting a good night's sleep will leave you feeling recharged. Try to stay away from your TV or computer screen just before bed as this can make it more difficult to fully unwind.



7. Take a bath

An interesting study carried out at Yale University showed that taking a bath was an effective substitute for social interaction when people were feeling a bit lonely. On top of that, if you're feeling stressed it is a great way to relax and spend some time concentrating on yourself.



8. Let plenty of light in

It's short on supply in the winter, but daylight is a great mood booster. Sunlight is vital to our mental health, and making the most of the little we get in the colder months is essential. Keep your curtains open during the day, your house will feel airier and you will feel less enclosed.

9. Get creative

Writing down your feelings in a journal, or painting how you feel has proven effective therapy for people wanting to relieve stress. A study at Boston College showed that people became happier when they expressed their feelings through artwork.

10. Meet up with friends

Social contact is very important for human beings, we're social by nature, and it's shown that when we are with other people, we laugh more, smile more and touch more, all things that will work to improving your mood.



(Article source: Silver Surfers)

Your pension. 77% or 514%?

In a world of never-ending 'austerity', making each pound stretch the best it can is everything.



50 Connect reports that it truly baffles me how far we have come with efficiencies of computers, cars, trains and manufacturing, yet prices just seem to keep rising.

It's almost by design.

So, as we save into pensions, or our ISA's, are there any quick-fire tips to make our money work the most efficiently?

Bear with me on this, a subject as exciting as a cardboard licking competition, because the importance of starting your pension contribution early is quite critical.

The first time I saw the following calculation was over 30 years ago when a financial adviser was boring me senseless with why I should be taking out a pension. He was my manager!

Back then, the first 4 years of your pension contributions evaporated on paying commissions and fees, but those days are thankfully long gone.

I'll use an example of a 20-year-old starting a simple pension of £50 per month all the way through their life to age 65. The final pension fund adjusted for inflation comes to £48,046 which is a 77.9% return on each pound invested. Seems a good deal?

However, if I look at the impact the first five years has, it's quite astonishing. The actual return on the first 5 years investments is 196%, quite simply because of compound growth. The first year has the longest time to compound, and that returns 215%, so you can therefore see how important an early start is.

Albert Einstein - a bright chap in his day - cited this principle of compounding as the most powerful force in the universe.

With that in mind, many grandparents might be inclined to contribute into a stakeholder pension as early as is possible after a child is born, as this adds an extra twenty years onto the above calculations. The return hits a staggering 514% for that one-year contribution.

Moreover, the grandparent/parent attracts tax relief on their contribution, so the maximum permitted to a stakeholder scheme of £2880 becomes £3600, an immediate guaranteed increase of 25%.

Parents and grandparents wishing to make a contribution of such amounts would also be helping their own Inheritance Tax (IHT) situation, as the above would be classes as gifts out of normal expenditure.

As long as they are regular and out of normal income, and leave the transferor with enough income to live on, the money transferred into the child's pension are a valuable exemption from IHT.

Another method of making the most of your contributions is to avoid trying to time markets.

Pound cost averaging is the strategy of making regular monthly investments to take advantage of volatile markets.

At the moment, money is typically invested across some variant of an investment fund.

That fund (as a simple example) has money spread across a wide range of companies. What you are effectively doing is buying a 'share', or unit in those shares.

If the share price is £1 and you invest £100 per month, you are buying 100 units/shares. If the value of those companies falls by 10%, the price is 90p and you are now buying 111 units/shares.

The following month, the market recovers to normal and your 111 units are now worth £111.

This pound cost averaging strategy is counter intuitive to many. As markets fall, it is seen as 'bad' and as they rise, it is seen as 'good'. Neither of those measures are true.

As the variation of the saying goes, there is no such thing as good or bad, it's your thinking that does that.

The reality is that when markets fall, unit prices fall, and that is the time to increase contributions or even push in the lump sum and acquire units at the cheapest price possible.

You could say that pension investing is about acquiring as many of the cheapest units as is possible.

'IF' you can keep your head whilst all around you are losing theirs...

(Story source: 50 Connect)

Do you have an interesting story about Money & Work?
Tell us all about it by visiting: www.ourplace.co

Dust down the cv and unretire yourself: a quarter of over-65s say they gave up their careers too soon

A quarter of over-65s say they feel they gave up their careers too soon according to a nationwide survey of retirees by leading home care provider Home Instead Senior Care.



Mature Times reports that the average retirement age of those polled was found to be 62, yet the average respondent said they would have happily continued working for another seven years.

Retired to disappointment

In fact, a fifth of those surveyed revealed that they felt deeply disappointed by their retirement. Some of the reasons for this were highlighted in the survey data, with 25 percent admitting to having no real routine in their day-to-day lives and a third saying they felt they have lost their purpose in life as a result of retiring.

And 26 percent of retired Brits are plagued by loneliness, whilst some 23 percent say they are suffering from depression.

The study also found that some of the reasons for disappointment are because dreams of retirement are often not realised. This is certainly quite a widespread issue, with a sizeable one in three (33 percent) of British retirees admitting to having had grand dreams for their retirement that haven't worked out.

Big retirement dreams

Some of these dreams that have gone unfulfilled include a quarter (24 percent) of retired Brits who thought they would have travelled more, 13 percent who anticipated spending more time with their extended family but haven't done, and 11 percent who had hoped to catch up with friends more but haven't.

Interestingly, nearly one in 10 (9 percent) had planned on going on a round-the-world cruise that then never transpired, and seven percent wanted to learn a new language, but have never ended up doing it.

Missing the work place

When asked what they missed most about the world of work, almost half (45 percent) said it was spending time with their colleagues, for 39 percent it was the monthly salary and 32 percent yearned to have an active mind again. Nearly a third indicated that they missed workplace banter the most (31 percent).

Five percent of over 65s say they simply miss having somewhere to get away from their other half, and a thirsty four percent wish they could still go for after work drinks.

And more than one in ten (13 percent) admit to feeling like they have lost a part of themselves after leaving their careers.

The desire to still have a form of work to take part in was also highlighted with more than a third (37 percent) of retired Brits indicating that they believe it's important to have something like part-time work or a hobby after retiring.

In fact over half of the retirees polled (52 percent) said that they found working fun and that they missed it and 52 percent also agreed that one of the problems with not working is that they miss being around people. A huge 60 percent also agreed with the statement that work is good for mental health.

Martin Jones, the CEO of Home Instead Senior Care said of the research: 'This is an extremely interesting piece of research that lifts the lid on retirement and how over 65s feel about life as a retiree. It is significant that a large portion of those who were surveyed felt that they could have carried on working beyond the age at which they retired. It is interesting too that so many people said they missed the "fun" of work and the companionship aspect of it. At Home Instead, we have a large number of caregivers in their 60s, 70s and 80s who particularly enjoy the companionship the role offers, as well as a sense of purpose and fulfilment it brings looking after people who may be lonely and need some extra support at home.'

Lack of support for retirees

Retirement also seems to be a problem area for some companies with four in 10 (41 percent) over-65s believing they did not get enough support when transitioning into their retirement, with only 16 percent saying their employer helped them during this time, and a third claiming their boss gave them no support at all.

The data also uncovered a list of challenges that prevent retired people from re-entering the work place. For 34 percent their health failing is the number one reason why going back to work would be a struggle, while 30 percent think it would be hard to fit in. Almost a quarter (24 percent) say they would find it hard to keep up with the pace of the work, and 22 percent simply believe no one would hire them.

(Story source: Mature Times)



Energy bills near £1,300 - 5 ways to beat constant price rises

Why not save your hard earned money for something better spent on you? In the last few years you'd be forgiven for thinking you were under siege from energy suppliers with constant price hikes meaning average bills have steadily crept up to £105 a month.

This culminated last year with a record number of rises, and the consistency of them shows no sign of relenting. To add insult to injury, the service from many of these suppliers has been nothing to shout about... apart from in frustration that is.

With energy being our third biggest bill after the mortgage and the cumulative weekly shop, 50connect have put together a countdown of the quickest and easiest fixes to prevent yours reaching the highs that the energy providers would love, and save your hard earned money for something better spent on you.

Off not standby

Did you know that appliances left on standby could add up to £85 a year to your bills?



Choosing the Off button instead of the Standby on your TVs, music systems and other devices where possible, can mean keeping hold of a healthy and welcome little sum for your bank balance's bottom line.

Check for draughts

You may not feel a draught but its worth checking the doors, windows, floors, skirting boards and if you have one, the chimney in your home for them. You may well be surprised.

Wasted energy through draughts could represent a full £35 on your annual bills and can be spotted simply by dangling a tissue on the area in question - if it moves it looks like you're letting heat out, allowing cold air in and have a problem.

However this can easily be resolved with a trip to your local DIY store who likely stock a wide range of inexpensive draught exclusion products.

Look at your insulation

We all know hot air rises and unfortunately if your loft is inadequately insulated or not insulated at all this could result in a significant amount of wasted energy and money through your roof. Ideally, at least 270mm of insulation should be present in your loft - having it could be worth up to £150 on your bills.

Another place heat could be escaping is through the walls and as such cavity insulation could be well worth considering. The insulation is placed in the gaps between the home's two outer layers of brick to prevent air flow and could again prevent up to £150 in added annual expenditure.

There are often government initiatives that really reduce the cost of insulation so it may be an idea to do a web search to see what's available.

Take control of your heating

As you may be aware an old, inefficient boiler might also rack up your energy outgoings. While they're certainly not cheap, it may be worth taking a look at replacing an outdated one as a long-term investment.

Once again, as for insulation, government incentives that could help are often available and deals from energy suppliers are also often there to be had.

If the boiler's fine, making sure that your timer is set up correctly to turn your heating and hot water on only when you need it would also be a good idea.

One thing you might not be aware of is that reducing the temperature of your home by a single degree could also save you up to £75 a year.

Thermostatic valves on radiators allow you to control the heat in each room so if you feel it won't make much of a difference, it could be a point to turn them down a notch.



Switch standard to fixed tariff

If you're like the majority of the population you're likely on your supplier's Standard or default tariff and if so the UK's energy regulator Ofgem, says you're paying an average of £300 over the cheapest tariffs on the market.

Remaining on one will mean you'll continue being hit with heavy price rises every time a supplier chooses - which is often at least twice a year.

It may not have even been on your radar but by far the quickest and easiest way to put the power of your bills in your hands and make the best savings is to use a price comparison site and switch to a much better value one or two year fixed-term tariff on monthly direct debit.

For example in an entirely FREE service, the leading specialists in energy switching - energyhelpline, allow you to compare all the best deals from the biggest brands along with service ratings via the guidance of friendly expert phone advisors or online and you can actually switch and lock in savings of up to £439 a year in minutes.

In fact as everything from A-Z of your switch is handled for you, it's all more simple and hassle-free than you would have ever thought.

You won't need to fill out any paperwork or contact your supplier as this will be done for you and contrary to popular belief there's no interruption to supply, no one will need to visit your home and there's no need to change any meters, wires or pipes.

Mark Todd, Co-founder of energyhelpline says "Suppliers often prey on consumers' lack of awareness of the ease and speed with which it's possible to escape their supplier's expensive Standard tariffs and save hundreds of pounds a year by switching to a fixed term one." However this is changing fast. Last year saw a 5% rise to a record 5.8m smart switchers transferring to a better deal... why not join them.

(Article source: 50 Connect)



Whoow... whoosh... bang! The best Bonfire Night celebrations in UK

As the nights draw in, the countdown is on for 5 November - Bonfire Night. Thousands of Brits will wrap up warm and head out into the cold to marvel at burning effigies and see fireworks illuminate the chilly night in memory of a centuries-old scheme to blow up the Houses of Parliament.

Swot up on the history and find out where best to experience this very British tradition in England.

'Remember, remember the fifth of November' is how the rhyme about the failed Gunpowder Plot begins, and the story behind Guy Fawkes Night (as the event is also known) is as captivating as the fireworks displays commemorating it today.

The history of 5th November: gunpowder, treason and plot.

In the early 17th century, some English Catholics had hoped that their new monarch, James I, would relax the hardline Protestantism favoured by his predecessors.



One band of Catholics was so frustrated when this situation failed to materialise that they devised a plan to blow up the Houses of Parliament, while the king, his eldest sons and most MPs (Members of Parliament) were inside.

The plot progressed seamlessly until an anonymous tip-off led to Guy Fawkes being rumbled on 5 November 1605, as he guarded 36 barrels of gunpowder in the vaults beneath the House of Lords. He was tortured for days before confessing and revealing the names of his co-conspirators, and they were later sentenced to be hung, drawn and quartered. Fawkes was not the instigator of the scheme - he was an explosives expert enlisted by ringleader Robert Catesby - but, as the one who was caught, he has become synonymous with the dastardly plot ever since.

The celebrations

Bonfires have been lit to celebrate the plot being foiled every year since the traitors' grisly executions and, over time, effigies of treasonous schemer Fawkes began to be burnt on the pyres. Children would build scarecrow-like 'Guys' out of old clothes stuffed with flammable materials, and display their efforts in the streets, asking for a 'penny for the Guy'.

Guys still go up in flames at displays across the country while adults consume mulled wine, children wave sparklers, and everyone battles the cold as fireworks fill the sky.

Where to enjoy the fireworks in England

Here are some of the best places to see parades, bonfires and fireworks displays in England.

Toast Fawkes with a Bloody Mary in Lewes, East Sussex (pictured bottom left)

Lewes puts on one of the UK's best Bonfire Night celebrations, and with historical precedent. In 1555, Catholic Queen Mary I lived up to her nickname, Bloody Mary, when she had 17 Protestant rebels burned at the stake here.

Up to 60,000 visitors flock to see effigies of the Pope - alongside caricatures of divisive modern-day figures - get incinerated in memory of the martyrs. Six different Bonfire Societies, some dating back to the mid-19th century, parade the streets in medieval garb with flaming crosses, sending banger-filled barrels cracking and fizzling into the river.

Have a history lesson at the Royal Gunpowder Mills, Essex

If you're keen to hear more about the history of the plot and the science behind the explosive black powder, the Guy Fawkes Festival at the Royal Gunpowder Mills in Waltham Abbey, Essex, is sure to light your fire.

The annual, family-friendly event at this former gunpowder factory brings the story to life with a historical reenactment, plus the chance to learn about how gunpowder is made and its uses throughout history. While this wasn't where Fawkes procured his deadly stash, come nightfall when the bonfire is lit and the fireworks are screaming through the air, it sure is fun to imagine.

Get a bird's eye view at Alexandra Palace, London

As the place where it all began, London hosts displays both big and small, free and ticketed. But the top prize surely goes to the Fireworks Festival at Alexandra Palace.

The grounds of the imposing Grade II listed building are the site of a two-day extravaganza, with a funfair, performers and live music in addition to a traditional bonfire and more fireworks than you have 'oohs' and 'ahhs' for. Best of all, Ally Pally (as it's known to Londoners) sits on top of a hill, so you'll get a panoramic view of other displays across the city.



Enjoy a barrelful of excitement in Ottery St Mary, Devon (main picture left)

Thought to have originated some time after the foiled plot of 1605, the tradition of Tar Barrels in the little town of Ottery St Mary in East Devon is truly a dangerous endeavour. What began as a torchlight procession of rolling flaming barrels through the town has escalated to an adrenaline-pumping event today.

Each of the pubs in town puts forth a barrel, which is soaked in tar for a week before it's set alight. Then people, who have seemingly taken leave of their senses, hoist them on their shoulders and run through the town for the entertainment of the thousands who come to watch.

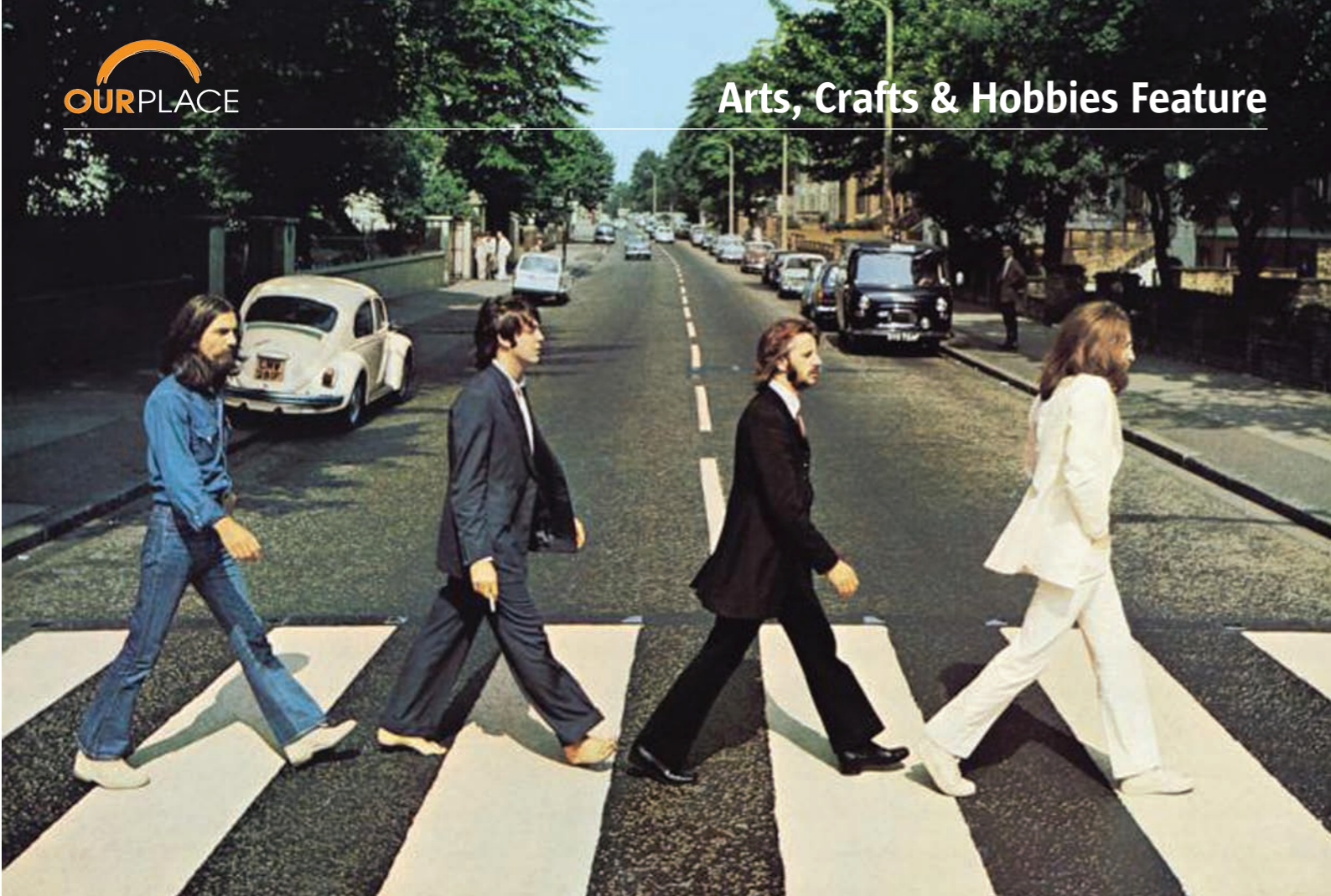
Admire the display at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire

For an altogether more refined Guy Fawkes Night experience, the bonfire and fireworks at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire won't disappoint. The backdrop for the evening's pyrotechnic display is the 'Palace of the Peak', a huge stately home once used as the setting for Pemberley, Mr Darcy's residence, in the 2005 film adaptation of *Pride & Prejudice*.

Take a tour of the lavish house and vast grounds then warm up with mulled wine and a traditional hog roast before the evening goes out with a bang.

(Article source: Lonely Planet)

Where is your favourite firework display?
Tell us all about it by visiting: www.ourplace.co



Abbey Road: Celebrating 50 years of the iconic Beatles' album

First issued on 26th September, 1969 Abbey Road was the final Beatles album to be recorded but not their last to be released. Let It Be, though mainly recorded in January, 1969 was finally released in May, 1970 alongside the film of the same name.

Following the 'live' nature of the "Let It Be" recordings, for Abbey Road, The Beatles returned to the North London studios to create carefully crafted recordings & ambitious musical arrangements. Interestingly, 12 of the songs that appeared on the finished album were played during the filmed rehearsals and sessions for "Let It Be" back in January.

For the first time on a Beatles album, the front cover contained neither the group's name nor the album title just that iconic photograph taken on the zebra crossing near the entrance to the studios in London NW8 in August 1969.

Abbey Road entered the British album chart at no.1 in October and stayed there for a total of seventeen of its 81 weeks in the chart. In the US, it spent eleven weeks at #1 during its initial chart stay of 83 weeks.



10 things you didn't know about The Beatles' Abbey Road album cover

The final Beatles album to be recorded by the Fab Four was released 50 years ago, on 26 September 1969. Here's the story behind the LP's iconic cover.

Abbey Road was the final album The Beatles recorded and it was issued on Friday 26 September 1969 with a genuinely iconic cover photo. It pictures the four men - George Harrison, Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr and John Lennon - striding along a zebra crossing situated on Abbey Road, outside EMI studios in London, where the band had spent the majority of their ground-breaking recording career.

The LP and its memorable cover put the location on the map - previously known as plain old EMI studios, the building became known as Abbey Road Studios in light of this landmark album.

Millions of people have made the pilgrimage to the crossing to have their photo taken and to pay their respects to the genius of the Fab Four and dozens of artists have parodied the sleeve, from The Simpsons to the Red Hot Chili Peppers to Doctor Who.



And it was all shot in a few hurried minutes on Friday 8 August 1969...

On that day John, George and Ringo were working on I Want You (She's So Heavy) and The End inside the studio, while Macca worked on Oh! Darling, but before they set to business, they stepped outside of Number 3 Abbey Road to be photographed for the cover. Here are a few facts about that summer day in 1969 that you may not have heard before...

Where is the Abbey Road crossing exactly?

Before The Beatles came along, Abbey Road's main claim to fame was being a stone's throw from the location of Lord's cricket ground. The crossing is situated at the southern-most point of Abbey Road, at the junction with Grove End Road, in the St John's Wood area of North West London.

The postcode for Abbey Road studios is NW8 9AY - if you go looking for the crossing near the Abbey Road station on the London Underground map, you'd be way off. That's actually a Docklands Light Railway station in East London, miles away!



The album wasn't going to be called Abbey Road at all

As the sessions for the album came to an end, the four Beatles discussed a title for the record. One idea was to call it "Everest" after the cigarettes that engineer Geoff Emerick smoked during the sessions.

When a plan was floated to take a cover photo in the foothills of the Himalayas to illustrate the title, the band went off the idea and instead went with the easiest plan possible - have the picture taken outside the studio and call it Abbey Road!

For the only time in their career, The Beatles presented the world with an album cover that didn't feature their name, or the title of the LP at all. Designer John Kosh claimed that EMI bosses were furious, but argued: "The biggest band in the world, you don't have to say who they are - everyone knows who they are."

The four Beatles are pictured walking AWAY from the studio

The Beatles' Let It Be album was released in May 1970, but the material had been recorded over a year earlier, meaning that Abbey Road was the last set of material to be produced by all four Beatles. In fact, the last session to see John, Paul, George and Ringo in the studio together was on 20 August 1969.

It's significant, then, that the photo chosen for the cover shows the four walking across the road with Abbey Road studios behind them - it's the white building on the left of the picture. Lennon leads the group - which is also significant as he was the first member to permanently quit The Beatles.

Continued on pages 16-17...



Only six photos were taken by photographer Iain Macmillan

Road traffic wasn't the same 50 years ago, but Abbey Road was still a busy thoroughfare, which meant that photographer Iain Macmillan only had a short time to get his shot on his Hasselblad camera.

A policeman halted the traffic as Macmillan climbed up a stepladder in the middle of the road. The Fab Four crossed the road back and forth three times as Macmillan fired off a shot each time.

Paul McCartney looked at the contact sheet and it was decided that frame five was the best, with all four musicians marching boldly across the road.

The back cover photo is taken at the other end of Abbey Road

Anyone looking for the street sign that's pictured on the back cover of Abbey Road will have a tough job. First of all, Beatles scholars Piet Schreuders, Mark Lewisohn and Adam Smith worked out that the location of the sign was at the OTHER end of the road, at the junction of Abbey Road and Alexandra Road, near to South Hampstead station.

Secondly, the area was redeveloped in 1972 to make way for the Alexandra and Ainsworth housing estate, which opened in 1978.

Who are the other people pictured on the cover of Abbey Road?

On the left hand side of the photo can be seen three men stood just by the gate outside the Abbey Road studios itself. They are three decorators who happened to be outside on a break around 11.30am on 8 August and were caught by Iain Macmillan's camera: their names are Derek Seagrove, Steve Milwood and Alan Flanagan.



On the other side of the road, just by the police van, is an American tourist named Paul Cole. "I just happened to look up, and I saw those guys walking across the street like a line of ducks," Cole later told the Mirror.

"A bunch of kooks, I called them. You didn't walk around in London barefoot." There appears to be another person stood behind the blue car, or is it just an illusion?

Why is Paul McCartney barefoot on the cover of Abbey Road by The Beatles?

According to designer John Kosh, "The reason is he kicked his shoes off because they were too tight". 8 August 1969 was a particularly sunny day and Macca lived around the corner in St John's Wood, so he strolled around to the studios wearing sandals. For a classic McCartney prank, he crossed the road a couple of times without the footwear - it had nothing to do with being a "clue" that Paul McCartney had died.



Three of the Beatles are wearing designer suits

John Lennon, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr are all wearing suits by the Welsh designer Tommy Nutter. George, however, was always his own man and rocked up that day in double denim. Nutter went on to design Jack Nicholson's suit when he played The Joker in the 1989 Tim Burton version of Batman.

It wasn't The Beatles' final photo shoot

Despite Abbey Road being the last time The Beatles were in the studio together, the album cover shoot wasn't the last piece of pictorial Beatle business.



The four got together two weeks later, on Friday 22 August 1969 at John's house at Tittenhurst Park in Ascot, Berkshire for one last photo shoot. Joining them on the day were Yoko Ono and Linda McCartney. One of the pictures was later used on the cover of the Hey Jude compilation LP.

What are the "Paul Is Dead" clues on the cover of Abbey Road?

In late 1969 a crazy conspiracy theory started doing the rounds that Paul McCartney had in actual fact been killed in a car accident in 1966, and had been replaced by a lookalike. Apart from Paul being out of step with his bandmates and walking barefoot, there were other "clues" on the sleeve that the Beatles had "planted" to get the message across to their fans.

The white Volkswagen Beetles that bears a number plate saying "28IF" - Paul would have been 28 IF he'd had survived (he'd actually just turned 27); the police van on the cover is usually seen at traffic fatalities; and the four Beatles represent a funeral procession: George is the gravedigger, Paul is the corpse, Ringo is the congregation and John is the priest. McCartney parodied the whole affair in the title and album artwork for his 1993 concert album Paul Is Live.



Abbey Road tracklist

1. Come Together
2. Something
3. Maxwell's Silver Hammer
4. Oh! Darling
5. Octopus's Garden
6. I Want You (She's So Heavy)
7. Here Comes the Sun
8. Because
9. You Never Give Me Your Money
10. Sun King
11. Mean Mr. Mustard
12. Polythene Pam
13. She Came in Through the Bathroom Window
14. Golden Slumbers
15. Carry That Weight
16. The End
17. Her Majesty

(Article source: Various)



Spice up your winter! Why adding a little spice to your food might be the key to winter wellness

If your kitchen spice rack is shamefully gathering dust, or only gets utilised when you're whipping up a homemade curry, it's definitely time to step up your seasoning game beyond plain old salt and pepper.

Besides adding some warmth to your winter cooking, fresh spices pack some pretty impressive health benefits - from reducing inflammation to helping the immune system fight back against pesky seasonal bugs.

"Spices, by definition, are the aromatic part of a plant - whether that's a root, bark, flower or seed," explains Rob Hobson, head of nutrition at Healthspan.

"As we're approaching the time of year when we're exposed to annoying bugs that can leave us feeling run down, having a few key staple (spices on hand) could help you to keep well this winter," says Hobson.



What's more, they're relatively cheap, last for ages and you probably have most of them stashed in your cupboard already. Here are a five to begin slotting into your diet now...

1. Curry powder

This blend of spices tends to contain a mixture of ground cumin, ground coriander, ground ginger, chilli powder, fenugreek, turmeric and black pepper, and has a deep, earthy flavour.

"Incorporating curry powder into your meals means you'll be harnessing a multitude of benefits at once," says Hobson. "Many of these spices act as anti-inflammatories," he explains, which is important considering chronic inflammation has been linked to several diseases and conditions, including some cancers and rheumatoid arthritis.

"A lot of research has been conducted around fenugreek in particular," Hobson adds. Studies have linked this healing herb to increased testosterone levels in men, noted its potential to aid weight loss and provide pain relief.

How to eat more: Why not combine leftover roast chicken with yogurt and curry powder and use as a sandwich filling or salad ingredient? Curry powder is also a key ingredient in kedgeree - the British breakfast dish made using curried rice, smoked fish, boiled eggs, parsley and lemon juice.

2. Ginger

Most people don't realise ginger is a flowering plant with pretty red blooms, as we're familiar with buying its knobby root, which is harvested from the base of the leafy plant.

"Ginger is very pungent and has aromatic citrus notes, with a peppery flavour, which is also reflected in its powdered spice form too," says Hobson. "This root has been shown to have strong anti-inflammatory properties, which are a result of the active compounds called 'gingerols'." Studies have found this compound can help reduce pain in patients with osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis, as it can inhibit the formation of free radicals in the body.

As an added bonus? "Traditionally ginger is commonly used to treat nausea, so it could be a good option during the festive season to settle delicate 'morning after' tummies," says Hobson.

How to eat more: Try combining ground ginger and fresh lemon with boiling water as a naturally sweet alternative to breakfast tea with refined sugar. It also works well in homemade baked goods and you can add it to post-workout smoothies for a fiery kick too.

3. Turmeric

Turmeric has well and truly hit a note with millennials - scroll through any Instagram feed and you'll likely spot a few riffs on the trend, from turmeric lattes to golden soup.

This potent plant hails from the ginger family and grows in Southeast Asia, and while you can sometimes find the whole roots, it's most commonly bought as a colourful ground spice.

"Turmeric has been shown to contain a compound called curcumin that acts as a powerful anti-inflammatory in the body, and research has pointed out its pain relieving properties," notes Hobson. In fact, studies have found that curcumin may be just as effective as the likes of ibuprofen in treating sports-related injuries.

How to eat more: You can add turmeric to many foods including stews, curries, pasta sauces and soups. It's also a super easy way to add an extra kick to scrambled eggs, but don't add too much, the earthy taste can be overpowering in large doses.

4. Fennel seeds

If you often struggle with bloating after eating a large meal, a sprinkle of crunchy fennel seeds could be the gentle remedy you've been looking for.

"These sweet liquorice-flavoured seeds are popular in cuisines such as those found in the Mediterranean," says Hobson. He explains that the seed is traditionally used to help relieve bloating and flatulence, and that in traditional eastern medicine, it's also used as a way to aid digestion, thanks to its flavonoid antioxidants.

How to add more: Fennel seeds work well in tomato-based dishes and can also be sprinkled on roasted vegetables. This spice is also great when combined with fresh mint to make a tea to help reduce excess gas after eating.

5. Cinnamon

Cinnamon is total autumn favourite. Whether you get into the spirit of the season by creating homemade pumpkin spice lattes, or you simply love getting a noseful of it baking in your oven, this sweet spice has plenty of great benefits.

"Cinnamon is a tree bark and the most common variety is called 'cassia'," explains Hobson. "The compound in cinnamon responsible for its powerful health benefits is called 'cinnamaldehyde', which studies have found can help fight bacterial infections in the body."

Like many of the spices on this list, studies have isolated multiple flavonoid compounds in cinnamon that have helpful anti-inflammatory properties.

How to eat more: Whether you're a fan of cocoa or coffee, cinnamon is a great spice to add to hot drinks. It also works well in snack bars or sprinkled over fruit or yogurt.

It doesn't take too much effort to add more spices to your diet and harness their health benefits - the trick is finding your favourites. Whether you like a spicy kick or an earthy sweetener, make your preferred spices store cupboard essentials. Both body and mind will thank you.

(Article source: Silver Surfers)



Why organic gardening? It's better for you and your environment

If you're thinking of adopting an organic gardening method, now is the time of year to be doing your prep. Here, we make a case for why you should dig in.

The short answer is it's better. Better for the vegetables and fruit you're growing. Better for the soil. And most importantly it's better for you.

It's only since the Industrial Revolution that society turned to harsh chemicals and poisons to boost yields. Non organic methods seem to work for a while, but in the long term more and more people believe it's fraught with disaster.

So what exactly is organic growing?

It's all about growing vegetables, fruit and other plants in natural ways. This also means protecting them naturally from disease and pests.



Organic growing uses the tried and tested methods. The Chinese have successfully done this for thousands of years. It's only now that scientists (and fortunately more and more farmers) are getting a better understanding about why it works so well. Now let's look at the ways organic growing is better.

Think about the last lot of fruit and vegetables you bought from the store. They probably looked perfect to the eye and tasted average. But what about the chemical and poison residues left on them? Sure enough they can be cleaned (by you and before they get to you), but wouldn't it be better to eat fruit and vegetables that you were 100% certain were totally safe for you and your family?

Wouldn't it also be good to know that the fruit and vegetables you ate were packed with healthy nutrients and vitamins?

Chances are the fruit and vegetables you buy from the shop came from hundreds, if not thousands of miles (or kilometres) away. Scientists and geneticists develop varieties which can be transported these vast distances without being blemished.

Think about it. When you buy some tomatoes from a shop don't you always look for the best looking ones? How can you guarantee that vitamins and nutrients won't be traded off with cosmetic perfection?

And while the fruit and vegetables you buy at the shop look perfect, how do they taste? Once again, an essential quality of fruit and vegetables, taste, is traded off for cosmetic perfection and transportation. When was the last time you bought corn whose taste really knocked your socks off?

Organic fruit and vegetables are not sprayed with harsh chemicals or poisons

Organic gardeners use natural, biological ways of protecting and growing their crops. To achieve this you just need to think a little bit ahead. You should plan where you place your vegetable patch, what you dig into the soil, what beds you plant your vegetables in, what vegetables and herbs you grow together and what preventative and proactive measures you take. Organic gardening is more about preventing disease and insects than reacting to disease and insects. And for organic growers any sprays used are natural sprays, without harsh chemicals. By growing your own fruit and vegetables organically you are guaranteed not to consume chemical and poison residues.

Growing your own also means growing healthy fruit and vegetables

The seeds you sow will grow into fresh fruit and vegetable varieties which have been grown in some cases for hundreds of years. They have not been genetically engineered or had their genes spliced to look perfect and only need to travel from your vegetable patch to your kitchen. In short, the vitamins and nutrients haven't been tampered with. They're natural.

Once you've tasted your own organically grown produce you won't go back

The taste and satisfaction you get from organic fruit and vegetables is astounding. I hate it when I've harvested all my lettuces and tomatoes, or run out of potatoes and have to begrudgingly buy their tasteless poor cousins from the store. I really mean this, your own home grown organic vegetables taste the best.

Your plants will also be better off with organic gardening

Insects and diseases are fighting back against chemical sprays. Chemicals and poisons might work in the short term but as insects and diseases mutate and become resistant to particular sprays, chemicals and poisons become increasingly ineffective. Poisons also kill indiscriminately.

They kill just as many beneficial insects as pests, upsetting the natural balance of life. By following organic principles your plants will be healthier. Don't expect your fruit and vegetables to look 100% perfect. You will occasionally get some slight problems, and you might lose the odd one or two veggies or fruit, but you need to be pragmatic about these things. In the long run your plants will thank you for it.

Unlike chemical growers, organic growers don't feed their plants, they feed the soil.

Healthy soil creates healthy plants and healthy people. The American organic pioneer J.I. Rodale coined this phrase 50 years ago. And it means just as much today as it did back then. Healthy soil should be seen as a living, balanced whole, rich in humus and micro-organisms including fungi, moulds, yeasts, bacteria and larger creatures like earthworms.

When chemicals and poisons are used they upset the soil's natural balance. You can't have healthy soil if it's indiscriminately or carelessly treated with unnatural chemical fertilizers. Many of the living things maintaining the balance are destroyed. Over time the soil will lose its life and structure.

The sensible method of maintaining the soil's balance is by organic gardening. By digging in aged manures, green manure, compost and other natural items and following the principles of crop rotation you can help build up the quality of your soil. And with healthy soil you'll have healthy fruit and vegetables.

I hope this introduction to why you should organically grow your own vegetables and fruit excites you enough to make the change. It's a positive change, not just for you and your family, but also for the environment.

(Article source: 50 Connect)

*Do you grow organic fruit and vegetables?
Tell us all about it by visiting: www.ourplace.co*

Cat Hospice - Giving palliative care to sick cats

Cat Hospice is a small charity dedicated to cats living with FIV and is named after one of its first residents, 'Strompus' - a pretty little long-haired feral cat, who sadly died on Christmas Eve in 2011.



Cat Hospice needs help to care for all these other cats:

'Kiska'. This little FIV positive girl came from the same feral colony as Strompus.

'Wilton'. This rather handsome young chap came from a factory site in the North East, thanks to the Cat Orphanage. As he is FIV positive, we were happy to care for him at our Cat Hospice.

'Gillan'. Long haired tabby female Gillan is a feral cat living with FIV.

'Secret'. Secret is about 3 years old and is one of our domestic FIV boys.

'Whiskers'. Whiskers is a friendly boy who is living with FIV.

As you can see, all of these beautiful cats have their own unique character. They all need looking after so Cat Hospice can give them the best possible care through their final years of life.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) is similar to HIV / Aids in humans, in that it effects the immune system. With careful healthcare, these cats can live happy and healthy lives, so we feel that it should not automatically result in a death sentence. Most of our FIV cats are feral but some, like Tom, pictured above, are friendly pets who have just got into a bit of bother. Domestic cats with FIV can be rehomed in some circumstances. Tom (who came from Watford) went to live as a companion to another FIV positive cat in the North East. All our FIV cats are neutered, microchipped, wormed and vaccinated.

There are many cats in our care who live in our Cat Hospice who are very sick. Cats just like these...

'Tiger'



Tiger was abandoned on the street of a busy market town when his owners moved house. Frightened and hungry, he found his way to the home of a lady who fed him until we were able to take him in. Tiger was terribly matted and extremely thin, and he had to be fully shaved because of how matted his coat was.

After some time and a lot of love, we got him well and happy and a lovely coat. His health wasn't to last however, as some time later he developed lymph cancer, and needed a course of Chemotherapy. It was a difficult time for him, as the chemotherapy did take it out of him and make him sleep a lot. After two weeks of treatment, when he stopped taking them, his condition improved drastically, and he was in remission. This was 3 years ago now. Tiger's health will always be a problem, as he is a fragile boy, but he fought cancer and won. He has to remain at the rescue in a flat on site because of his sensitive nature and possible future vet costs. He loves relaxing on a comfy bed and still plays with toys even at his advanced age.



Kiska

Wilton

Gillan

Secret

Whiskers

To donate to Cat Hospice, please write to: Raisemore, Unit 1, Alton Road Industrial Estate, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5NB

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Just call McClure Solicitors on Freephone 0800 852 1999 and mention Farplace Animal Rescue.

