## OURPLACETIEWS

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

OCTOBER 2021

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PLUS

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Food & Drink Arts, Crafts & Hobbies Home & Garden

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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## Coronavirus (COVID-19): what you need to do Stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (where this absolutely cannot be done from home)
- Stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

#### Anyone can spread the virus

### Full guidance on staying at home and away from others

The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives.

#### **Details**

When we reduce our day-to-day contact with other people, we will reduce the spread of the infection. That is why the government is now (23rd March 2020) introducing three new measures.

- Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes
- 2. Closing non-essential shops and community spaces
- 3. Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public

Every citizen must comply with these new measures. The relevant authorities, including the police, will be given the powers to enforce them - including through fines and dispersing gatherings.

These measures are effective immediately. The Government will look again at these measures in three weeks, and relax them if the evidence shows this is possible.

#### Symptoms and what to do

Do not leave your home if you have coronavirus symptoms

#### Do not leave your home if you have either:

- a high temperature this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

To protect others, do not go to places like a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. Stay at home.

Use the 111 online coronavirus service to find out what to do.

#### Advice for people at high risk

#### Who's at high risk from coronavirus

Coronavirus can make anyone seriously ill, but there are some people who are at a higher risk.

For example, you may be at high risk from coronavirus if you:

- have had an organ transplant
- · are having certain types of cancer treatment
- have blood or bone marrow cancer, such as leukaemia
- have a severe lung condition, such as cystic fibrosis or severe
   asthma
- have a condition that makes you much more likely to get infections
- are taking medicine that weakens your immune system
- · are pregnant and have a serious heart condition

#### Who's at high risk from coronavirus

If you're at high risk of getting seriously ill from coronavirus, there are extra things you should do to avoid catching it.
These include:

- not leaving your home you should not go out to do shopping, pick up medicine or exercise
- stay at least 2 metres (3 steps) away from other people in your home as much as possible

Ask friends, family or neighbours to pick up shopping and medicines for you. They should leave them outside your door.

## Self-isolation helps stop coronavirus spreading

Do not leave your home if you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) or live with someone who does. This is called self-isolation.

If you are self-isolating, you must:

- not leave your home for any reason, other than to exercise once a day - but stay at least 2 metres (3 steps) away from other people
- not go out to buy food or collect medicine order them by phone or online, or ask someone else to drop them off at your home.
- not have visitors, such as friends and family, in your home

You can use your garden, if you have one.

#### STAY AT HOME!



## OCD: It's not just about being clean and tidy. What OCD really means and how to seek support

There's a lot of misunderstanding around OCD but it's important people know what it really means.

We all experience things like worrying we've left an appliance on, or avoiding walking under scaffolding, but for most people, these random stresses and superstitions are short-loved.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (also known as OCD), however, is a serious anxiety disorder, where worries and urges can have a debilitating effect on a person's day-to-day, impacting both their mental health and relationships with others.

Based on current estimates for the UK, around three-quarters of a million people are living with OCD at any one time - around 1.2% of the population. Misunderstanding and stigma about OCD can make it difficult to reach out - but support is available, and it can make a significant difference for those affected.

#### What is OCD?

"Obsessive-compulsive disorder is an anxiety disorder that causes people to experience a variety of symptoms that typically fall into one of two categories: 'obsessions' and 'compulsions'," explains Priory consultant psychiatrist, Dr Paul McLaren (priorygroup.com). "Obsessions are characterised by persistent and irrational thoughts or urges, and compulsions refer to physical or mental acts that people feel compelled to perform."

McLaren explains that some people with OCD only experience one type of symptom, whilst others experience both. "These irrational thoughts and behaviours can become extremely time-consuming," adds McLaren, and the defining factor is that they feel impossible to stop or control.



#### **Health & Lifestyle Feature**

OCD is ranked by the World Health Organisation as one of the top 10 causes of mental illness-related disability, but misconceptions around the term mean people often don't treat it with the seriousness it deserves.

It's often commonly implied that OCD simply means that you like to wash your hands a lot, and it's not uncommon to hear someone describe themselves as a 'little bit OCD' if they like to be very tidy or organised.

Handwashing is a common compulsion if someone has an intrusive thought of being contaminated by germs, but as McLaren explains: "This is not the only form of OCD. Common presentations not only include contamination worries but also double-checking and hoarding behaviour, as well as ruminations and intrusive thoughts and images.

"These obsessions and compulsions can be overwhelming to someone living with OCD, despite their best efforts to avoid thinking and acting in a certain way."

#### Why does it happen?

No one's sure yet what causes OCD - but there are lots of different theories, and it's likely that a number of factors are involved in its development.

"OCD can run in families," says Glenys Jackson, clinical lead for mental health at Bupa Insurance (bupa.co.uk). "If one of your parents or a brother or sister has OCD, it's possible you may develop it too. Traumatic life events, social isolation or bullying could trigger OCD or make it worse, and it can also develop during pregnancy.

"The pandemic has put a huge strain on everyone's mental wellbeing. Factors such as reduced social contact, feelings of isolation and fear associated with contracting or spreading Covid-19 all have strong links to poor wellbeing. These stressors are making OCD symptoms worse in some cases."

#### How is OCD diagnosed?

If you think you may have OCD and it's affecting your life, see your GP. Jackson says: "They'll ask you a series of questions related to OCD to help make a diagnosis. These include how your OCD affects you personally and how it affects your life.

"You may feel embarrassed about your symptoms and it can be hard to talk about them. However, it's important to be open and honest with your GP or therapist about any obsessions and compulsions you have.

"This will help them make the right diagnosis and recommend the best type of treatment for you." Your GP may then refer you to a healthcare professional who specialises in mental health for further assessment or treatment.

#### What kinds of treatment can help?

According to Jackson, most people with OCD "spend years struggling with their symptoms" before they seek help.

This is often because of stigma around having a diagnosed mental health condition, they are embarrassed to seek support, or they leave the symptoms to manifest in the hope that they will go away. But as Jackson stresses: "It's so important to speak up and find a way to treat and manage your OCD."

When you're facing obsessive thoughts or compulsions, it can be hard to see them for what they are. "With practice and help, it can become easier to identify when your thinking is affected by the symptoms within OCD and you can build techniques to reduce the impact and bring the symptoms under control," assures Jackson.

"This might include actively exploring and confronting your compulsions or thoughts, maybe through exposure and response prevention where a therapist works with you to challenge the OCD. "It might sound difficult, but it can help you to acknowledge that thoughts and compulsions don't have power over you. It is important to talk to a professional to determine what pathway is most appropriate for your presenting symptoms."



Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) can also help manage symptoms. This form of talking therapy helps you examine in detail how you think about certain situations in your life, how you behave in response to those thoughts, and how your thoughts and behaviours make you feel.

"CBT aims to give you the understanding and tools to carry on working towards recovery by yourself," Jackson says. Your doctor may also prescribe medication if you have severe OCD, or if your symptoms don't improve with therapy.

Self-care interventions are really important too, and it's always good to remember that you're not alone. "OCD is a common anxiety disorder. In fact, a large part of the population may have had some OCD traits at some point in their lives," says McClaren.

"Don't let it prevent you from talking to people and getting the help you will need. There are online forums and support groups that take place regularly. "There is a lot of information available online regarding OCD, including testimonies from people with OCD and how they have dealt with it. This can help you put your difficulties into perspective, offer context, and give you more understanding in what may be helpful for you."

(Article source: Silver Surfers)



#### **Health & Lifestyle News**

### Should we be more worried about flu this year?

Flu might affect more people than usual this winter.



Silver Surfers reports that it seems we might be in for a rough winter for viruses.

Health Secretary Sajid Javid has told the Commons that flu is a "really significant risk - not least because for reasons that we are all familiar with, there wasn't much flu last year".

He said: "There is a lot less natural immunity around in our communities and the flu vaccine itself, the flu vaccine not just in the UK but being deployed across Europe, has less efficacy than normal but it is still effective. It is still a very worthwhile vaccine and that's why we will be trying to maximise uptake."

So exactly how worried should we be about flu?

Pharmacist Duncan Reid, from Pharmacy2U says this year's 'flu peak' is likely to be more severe than usual.

"More people are likely to get flu this winter as fewer people will have built up natural immunity to it during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Lockdowns and social distancing measures, coupled with increased hygiene awareness to reduce the spread of Covid also helped to stop the spread of the flu [last winter]. Due to this, the immunity to flu throughout the general population has decreased.

"This lower immunity in the community combined with other factors, including workers returning to offices as well as more people catching public transport, could lead to flu cases rising. It's likely that this season's flu peak will be more severe than expected due to this, although this is hard to predict."

Rising flu and Covid cases, will place "increased pressure on health services". he adds.

In today's climate though, understanding the symptoms and getting a diagnosis might feel more difficult.

"Currently, it can be hard to know what to do if you're unwell or have a concern about your health, as people are unsure whether their health concern requires a GP or hospital visit," says Reid.

"However, it's vital that people get medical help if they think you need it, keep any appointments or procedures that are booked, and go to hospital if advised to. It's also important to remember that doctors' surgeries and hospitals have made significant changes to ensure it's as safe as possible for people to be seen during the pandemic. A pharmacist can give treatment advice and recommend flu remedies." You can also call 111 for advice.

"If you get flu and Covid-19 at the same time, research shows you're more likely to be seriously ill," says Reid. "Yet it's recently been announced that people can have their Covid vaccine only one week after having their flu jab. This will undoubtedly keep flu cases as low as possible. There is also continuing research to see whether the Covid vaccines and flu vaccine can be administered alongside each

Reid says the flu vaccine is "hugely important" for the public. especially because misinformation and myths about flu remain a

"Getting a flu vaccination, especially if you are in one of the highrisk categories, can help to protect you and those around you and also help to reduce the pressure on the NHS," he says.

"If you've had Covid-19, it's safe to have the flu vaccine. It will still be effective at helping to prevent flu."

(Story source: Silver Surfers)

### Fit in my 50s: a game of petty and enjoyable malice? Step forward, pétanque

It's extremely meditative. By the end of the week, my capacity for Zen-like calm was epic.

**The Guardian** reports that Boules sports fall into many categories, all of which look pretty much the same until you get to know them,

Obviously my preference was for crown green bowls, because it sounds so fancy. Instead, I did a full week of pétanque, because I was with a bunch of French people. We played for two hours a day, and it was only on day three that I had a clue what the rules were. This was only partly because of the language barrier.

There is a beautiful simplicity to the field of play: you've got a sandy strip marked out by the town council, and the first player toes a little line in the sand, to indicate where to stand. Then she (there were men in the team, but a woman named Eva always seemed to go first) tosses a small wooden ball - the jack. Right. Now you just need to get your boules as close as possible to the jack.





The order - this is what foxed me for hours - goes like this: whoever has their boule closest to the jack cedes to the other team. So the person who threw first automatically gives way, as her boule is by definition the closest. This means the worse you are at it, the longer it'll be your turn. And that might give you the strong impression that you're winning, but you're not; because as soon as your six boules are thrown, the other team will have five left, and they can rack up a lot of points.

If one of your boules is closest to the jack when all have been thrown, but the second closest is your opponent's, the score is one nil (or nul, if you prefer). If all three closest boules are yours, you have three points and the opponent still has none. There may be a way for the losing team to score more than zero points, but I don't know it, and nor does Wikipedia.

A classic underarm throw works fine, but the real Marseillaise pros use a kind of over-hand toss, with the ball under their fingers. That looks guite cool but makes it much harder to control where it

I'm not saying it's a low energy game, but put it this way: whenever the distance between two boules and the jack was close enough to need measuring, we used Pierre's crutch to do it (he'd broken his foot). It is, however, extremely meditative, unfolding like a game of chess; in the first two moves, every round looks the same, and then develops into a completely different, utterly novel puzzle. There is huge potential for petty and enjoyable malice, because if you hit the other team's boule, yours is likely to end up closer to the jack, so long as you didn't do it by accident. I almost always did it by accident and ended up farther away.

The bit that takes the longest is learning how softly to throw. Any kind of zeal is unlikely to pay off; subtlety is all, and I did best when I imagined myself creeping up on the jack rather than aiming at it. It wasn't an improvement anyone would write home about, but by the end of the week, my capacity for Zen-like calm was absolutely

#### What I learned

When the jack is knocked out of play, it is then considered "dead" and the round ends.

(Story source: The Guardian)

### **Healthy ageing - staying** in your prime after fifty

The Prime Fifty science-backed range of supplements is dedicated to the nutritional and wellbeing needs of the over 50s.



Silver Surfers reports that ageing brings new and different nutritional challenges, so these products have been created to meet those unique needs, to help keep you active and feeling younger for

Dr Max Gowland PhD, founder of the Prime Fifty range of nutritional health supplements and Chief Scientific Officer at FutureYou Cambridge says: "I've made it my mission in life to make it easier for consumers, by doing all the work, researching the science and nutritional data so that all the key micronutrients are included in our supplements specifically targeting those reaching middle age and onwards."

Growing older is inevitable. But feeling older is a completely different issue altogether.Dr Max Gowland continues: "As we get older, we lose muscle and staying active is the most important thing that we can do. However, it's a vicious cycle; if you feel tired, you want to do less, the less you do, the more you begin to lose important muscle strength and become more frail. "Our supplements include the all important B vitamins or 'fatigue vitamins', as well as many other vital vitamins and minerals such as vitamins C and D. magnesium, iron, copper and zinc. These micronutrients support our health in many ways. To stay energised, provide essential support for our immune system, bone, brain and eye health plus much more."

There are many benefits of micronutrients. B vitamins play a vital role in energy, whereas Vitamins A, D and K as well as selenium help to support our immune and bone health. Vitamin C not only supports our immune system but also helps keep our skin and teeth healthy and even helps our bodies absorb iron more effectively from both our food or from supplements. Dr Max concludes: "Ageing brings new and different nutritional challenges to all of us. The Prime Fifty range is tailored to meet those unique needs, to help keep you active and feeling younger for longer. It gives me great pleasure to hear how the supplements I created have helped so many people lead a more fulfilled and active life."

(Story source: Silver Surfers)





# PTSD left me living in a forest, reliant on alcohol - a support dog changed my life

When I left the Armed Forces after 22 years, I didn't expect to be seeking shelter in the woodland just a couple of years later.

I arrived home in Perth, Scotland, in June 2012. I was 42 and was adjusting to civilian life. I got a job as a law enforcement officer and was enjoying being with my wife.

But when I was in a car accident in October, everything changed. I wasn't badly injured in the crash, but the trauma of that impact triggered my PTSD - a common affliction with soldiers.

That one accident unlocked decades of memories I'd buried; the horrors of war, of seeing friends blown up into the pink mist, of being held at gunpoint. I was having vivid nightmares, and flashbacks throughout the day - I was constantly on the edge of being triggered.

It was exhausting, and felt impossible to cope with - so, I turned to the bottle. I was constantly in and out of pubs, staying late, all in an attempt to drown my sorrows and dull my mind.

My wife wouldn't stand for it - she gave me warnings to leave the drink alone and get help, but I didn't - or couldn't - listen. So, she ended things.

At the time, I didn't know what was going on in my head, but I knew I wasn't myself.

My marriage was over, I couldn't work, and I didn't have anywhere to live. I didn't want to be in people's way, so my solution was to move into a forest and live alone with my demons. I didn't want to be a burden to anyone, so with the clothes on my back, my motorbike, and a tarpaulin, I retreated into the woodland.

It wasn't until seven to eight months later, in October 2013, that a guy from SSAFA, a charity for veterans and people still serving in the Forces, came to see me and told me they'd help me with a cottage in Guildtown, a village in Perth.



#### **Special Feature - Pet to the rescue**

It was completely empty when I moved in, but having a literal roof over my head felt like the first step in a positive direction. With their help, I got officially diagnosed with PTSD and started to receive treatment and therapy for it from the NHS.

This was also something that led me to Irma, my beautiful springer spaniel. A charity, Bravehound, got in touch and suggested I get a support dog - for company, as well as help with the difficult nights. Irma wakes me up when I'm reliving the trauma in my sleep. She'll realise when I'm having a nightmare - so instead of having a full episode that lasts several minutes, within 30 seconds, she'll wake me up by standing on my chest and licking my face.

Although I still struggle, I have an advantage over other people who have PTSD but not a dog like Irma - my nightmares are nowhere near as rough and stressful as they were without her.

However, having PTSD isn't only a matter of my mental health - it's affected me quite badly physically, as well. After the forest, I had painful fistulas in my bottom, as well as excruciating stomach aches

When I went to hospital to have the fistulas removed, I was told I had Crohn's disease, as well as type 2 diabetes. I was shocked, especially at the diabetes diagnosis - as an ex-soldier, I'd been physically fit for years.

My doctors suggested that Crohn's disease was a result of the stress that PTSD had had on my body. I thought, 'Oh, great - another thing.'

From then, it was a series of surgeries and health scares that nearly took my life

I was in Perth Royal Infirmary from April 2016 until Christmas Eve 2018, most of it with Irma by my side. I had over 20 operations to fix and remove various parts of my body, including taking out my large bowel. I had sepsis twice; the first time, I ended up in a coma and they only gave me 36 hours to live. My lungs were only working at 25%, and if they didn't improve, they were going to turn off my machines.

Obviously, I came out of it, but because I wasn't getting enough oxygen I woke up with brain damage - I have bad memory loss now, meaning I often don't remember details of new people I meet, as well as people I knew years ago.

While in hospital, I had nothing but time to think about what my life looked like, and what I could do with it now that I was no longer serving, and wouldn't be able to work a 9-5 because of my health.

I wanted to help others who were in my position. I posted a message to Twitter, under my old username 'superj007' telling people that I was ex-Forces and while I wasn't qualified in PTSD training, I have experience and was there if anyone wanted to talk.

Nearly immediately, people started getting in touch - ex-squaddies, and police officers too. Sometimes, people would message me and say they were 'going crazy', or thinking of killing themselves.

I'd write back to them, or we'd get on the phone and I'd talk them through what they were feeling. I'll say, 'Look at me, mate - look what's happened to me. I got through last week, I got through this week, so I'll get through next week.' That's how to do it - one step at a time

When the pandemic started, Scone Community Council asked for volunteer delivery people to get medicine to those who were vulnerable, elderly or living in rural areas. I was shielding with Irma, because of my health issues - but the squaddie in me thought 'bugger that'! I knew I had to do something to help.

I'd just go to the chemist and pick up their medication - some of them were really important medications, for cancer, for example. I'd pack up my motorbike, strap Irma in, and off we'd go to drop it off.

For extra safety, I'd step back five metres and keep my crash helmet on. But even with that physical distance, it was so clear to see how much people were grateful for me and Irma stopping by. Some people lived alone, or far out in the country, so hadn't seen people for weeks.

They loved me and Irma coming round, taking time to chat with them. I had a rapport with everyone I delivered to and made some genuine friends - I gave them my phone number and they'd start to call on me when they needed a trip to the bank, or to the train station when things opened up a bit more.

Before long, the operators at the council told me that people were asking for me to be their delivery man more than anyone else - I'm not sure if it was down to me, or because everyone loved Irma!

Then, out of the blue, I got a call from StoryTerrace, a memoir-writing organisation. They were putting together a special book on Unsung Heroes in the community, and one of the people I'd delivered to had put my name and number forward.

To this day, I have no idea who volunteered me but I'm so incredibly touched. I never expected to be in a book, telling my story, just for helping people - I did it because it seemed like the obvious thing to do

Nowadays, I don't do medicine deliveries but I'll always be willing to hop on my bike or get in the car to do a favour for someone - I'm not up to much else after all. Though it seems small, I know a visit from me and Irma can make all the difference to someone's day.

All the people who have helped me get through these years of PTSD mean so much to me - so I know that if I can do my bit to help someone else, it makes me happy.

I often think about this quote: 'Helping one person might not change the world, but helping one person might change their world.'

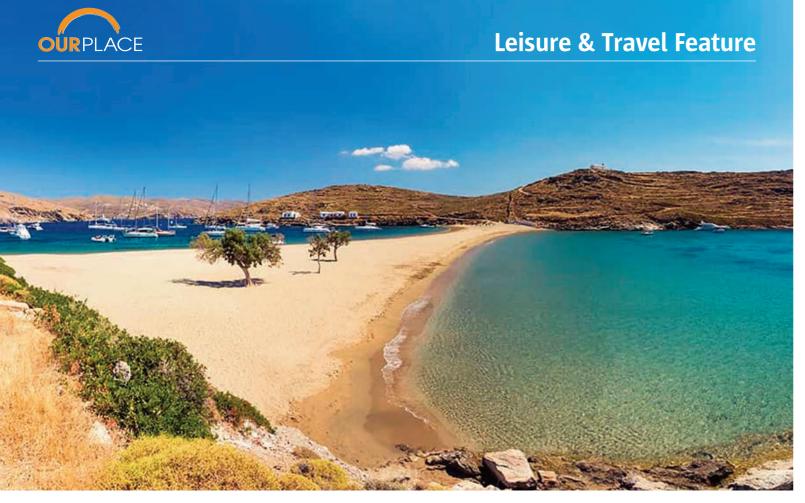
That's what I go by, and it's something I think the world could do more of.

(Article source: Metro)

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## It's all Greek to me! 10 of the best Greek islands to visit (that you might not have heard of)

From Santorini's breathtaking sunsets to Crete's beautiful beaches, the Greek islands have long drawn tourists from across the world.

With spectacular scenery, gorgeous weather and fascinating history, the allure of these islands isn't exactly a secret - and around 30 million visitors flock to Greece each year. But what if you're looking to escape the crowds and discover a hidden gem? The good news is that Greece has hundreds of gorgeous islands you might not have heard of - so if you want to beat the crowds and find some peace, here are 10 islands you might want to visit.

#### Ikaria (also known as Icaria)

If you're interested in Greek mythology, you might want to visit Ikaria; named after Icarus, who supposedly crashed here after his wax wings melted when he flew too close to the sun. This island is also said to be the birthplace of Dionysus, the god of wine. Ikaria is a Greek island like no other, and it's celebrated for its independent, quirky spirit, as well as its wild and diverse terrain.



Here you can walk through forested gorges, explore alien-like rock formations, swim in beaches with sparkling cobalt waters, and even bathe in radioactive hot springs - the latter of which is said to be a reason why the locals here live so long. You might also want to try some of the special herbs and teas the locals swear by while you're here, too! Though Ikaria isn't a busy or crowded island, it's known for its high-spirited village festivals. So if you're looking for a more obscure destination that's still fun and lively, this might be the island for you!

#### Halki

Just a quick ferry ride from Rhodes, Halki couldn't be more different than its big, bustling neighbour - and with no cars or motorbikes allowed, this sleepy island is a true oasis of calm. UNESCO refers to Halki as "the island of peace and friendship", and as you arrive in the elegant 19th-century port town of Emborio, with its grand mansions and shady courtyards, it's a safe bet that you'll fall in love with Halki at first sight. Head to the interior of the island to climb up to the fascinating ruins of Horio, the former capital, and admire the medieval castle, the Knights of St. John, where you can enjoy stunning views across the island.



The beaches around Emborio are all pretty decent, but head to the North Coast if you want to kick back on more secret, spectacular beaches - or take a boat out to the uninhabited island Alimnia, where you can really get away from it all.

#### Kythnos (pictured top left)

Due to its close proximity to Athens, the island of Kythnos is often filled with Greek tourists in August. But throughout the rest of the year, it's a quiet and low-key destination that remains pretty undiscovered. With only one bank on the island and two ATMs, this is a place where you can get a sense of how Greece used to be back in the day - and if you're looking to enjoy some rest and relaxation away from the crowds, you'll certainly find that here.

There are several wonderful beaches on the island, and there's also a truly stunning sandbar that joins Kythnos to the islet of Agios Loukas. There are Venetian castle ruins to admire in Kastro Tis Grias, as well as hot springs you can soak in at Loutra: a lovely fishing harbour that makes a great base. Villages like Hora and Dryopida are also pretty and laidback bases. If you're looking to explore the great outdoors, be sure to visit the enormous caves here; the entire island used to hide in here from raiders!

#### Chios

If you think Greek villages all look a bit samey with whitewashed, sugar-cube houses and bright blue church domes - then head to the island of Chios which is sure to change your mind! This is a Greek island that's one of a kind, and the distinctive, fortress-like architecture of its villages, as well as their bright painted geomatics and colourful motifs, will give you an architectural experience that's truly unique. To the North of Chios are dramatic, lonely mountains you can ramble over, and in the South of the island, the famous painted villages beckon. In the centre, the buzzing port capital provides plenty to see and do.



There are also sea caves to swim in, oak and pine-lined canyons to explore, and lots of lovely beaches - be sure to visit pretty Vrontados, where you can sit upon Homer's Seat - which is said to be where the famous poet (a Chios local!) wrote his poems.

#### Astypalea



Beautiful, butterfly-shaped Astypalea is quite simply a haven of peace, and this little-known island makes the perfect out-of-the-way retreat. Though it's the westernmost island of the Dodecanese islands, Astypalea has typically Cycladic architecture - and the small and unspoilt hillside capital of Chora is packed with white cubic houses, gently spinning windmills and grand Venetian castles. Astypalea's beaches are beautiful and diverse, ranging from the lively Livadia, with its beachside tavernas, to the wilder, more isolated coves of Vatses and Kaminakia. The island has an interesting history, and its rocky Vathy peninsula is known to be the home of the world's oldest homoerotic graffiti! There's also a 2,750-year-old infant cemetery at Kylindra, and ancient mosaics of zodiac symbols in the baths of Talara. So if you're fascinated by Greek history, there's lots to see and do here.

Continued on pages 12-13...



#### Milos

If you're looking to visit an island that's breathtakingly beautiful, Santorini might be the island that first comes to mind. But if you're looking for peace and quiet, and space away from the crowds, you won't find that there. Instead, why not head to another nearby Cyclades island, and visit Milos instead?

Famous for being the home of the Venus de Milo, this volcanic horseshoe-shaped island boasts truly awe-inspiring landscapes - from multicoloured rock formations to dazzlingly blue crystalline waters.

This is an island of beaches, and whether you prefer bare, wild beaches or those lined with plenty of bars and tavernas, you'll be spoilt for choice. The fishing harbours are a joy to explore, particularly Klíma and Mandrákia, with their photogenic, bright coloured boathouses.

There's also a network of Paleo-Christian catacombs carved into the vertical rock, as well as the remains of a Roman theatre, so if you're all beached out, there's plenty of history and culture to



#### Lefkada (pictured top left)

Lefkada is the windsurfing capital of Europe, so if you're looking to try your hand at watersports during your break, this is the place to come - though the island's sandy beaches are perfect for relaxing on too. The most beautiful beaches, like Porto Katsiki , Egremni, Gialos and Kathisma, are all located on the West

The main resort town of Nydri has a lively marina and plenty of busy bars and restaurants, though Vassiliki is another popular town. Or, for an adventure you won't forget, hike to the Dimosari ravine - and then cool off by diving under the waterfall into the refreshing pool!

keep you busy here, too.



Tucked between the Greek mainland and the popular island of Kefalonia, the little-known island of Lefkada boasts some of the most breathtaking natural landscapes in the Ionian region including many of the best beaches. Though it's connected to the mainland by a bridge. Lefkada remains a discreet island, and its shockingly blue waters are far quieter than those of its neighbouring islands. Though it's only 35km long and 15km wide, it never feels crowded, even in summer.

#### Sifnos

Another island that's popular with Greeks yet pretty unknown to Brits is Sifnos. Though it can get a bit crowded during the summer months, this is an island that's as authentic as it is cool, attracting foodies, history buffs and trendy Athenians alike.

Most visitors flock to the Southern half of the island, but the best beaches - especially if you want to enjoy a sense of tranquillity are in the North. Once a hub for gold and silver mining, these days Sifnos is known for fine food, pottery, and basket weaving.



The capital town Apollonia is hip and happening, and on the main street (the Steno) there are plenty of top-quality tavernas that'll help you understand why Sifnos has such a reputation as a culinary hotspot. If you eat too much during your holiday, there'll be plenty of chances to walk it off, as the island is known for its excellent hiking trails - and the olive groves in the central mountains are perfect for exploring on foot.

#### Final thoughts...

Greece is one of the most diverse holiday destinations in the world, and if you think you've already explored all of the Greek islands, we hope this article has inspired you!

As the home of western civilisation, Greece is packed with history and culture, and its islands are home to fascinating ruins and enthralling myths and legends. But if you're just in the mood for sun, sea and sand, the turquoise blue waters and pristine beaches of the Mediterranean are all around you.

Whether you want to hike and swim on your break, visit museums or archaeological sites, or just relax in a laidback taverna enjoying fresh food and listening to local music, these Greek islands have it all. Just with fewer crowds, and more peace.

(Article source: Rest Less)

Have you been to any of these Greek Islands? If so, tell us all about it! Send us an email by visiting: www.ourplace.co

#### **Kythira**

Known as the legendary birthplace of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, Kythira is a magical destination that can make you feel as though you've fallen into a dream. With wild and overgrown gorges, flower-adorned cliffs, and shimmering, fjordlike inlets, Kythira is technically an Ioanian island. Though its Cycladic architecture and geographical position - sandwiched between the Aegean and Ionian Seas, just a few miles from the Peloponnese Peninsula - make this island truly unique. As you walk through Kythira's wooded ravines, you'll be surrounded by the overwhelming scent of wild oregano, which is one of the island's main exports - and makes a great souvenir to take home. too.



There are also sea caves to explore, spectacular frescoed churches to admire, and plenty of vineyards where you can sample local wines and learn about the island's wine-producing history. The neighbouring island of Elafonisos, which is just a short water taxi ride away, also has some of the best beaches in the Med.

#### **Patmos**

Patmos is another Aegean island with an otherworldly feel about it, and its history is certainly spiritual. Legend says that Patmos was once a secret underwater island until Selene, the Greek goddess of the moon, lifted it above the surface and illuminated it - and if you know your Bible, you might also know that St John wrote the Book of Revelation on Patmos.

eisure & Travel Feature



While some tourists visit Patmos for religious reasons, few stay more than a day, and even fewer visit more than the island's main monasteries before leaving. But Patmos has so much more to offer... This seahorse-shaped island is lined with beaches and hidden coves, but its interior is equally beautiful, and the dramatic volcanic landscape boasts mysterious caves, dramatic peaks and lush green valleys that are perfect for exploring by foot.

The fortress Monastery of St. John the Theologian in the capital of Chora is a must-visit, and the old town is home to many excellent tavernas and bars where you can soak up the authentic atmosphere.

### US travel ban: Borders to open to UK tourists from November as Covid restrictions are lifted after 18 months

Fully vaccinated visitors from the UK and other European countries will be able to travel to America without having to quarantine.



**Inews** reports that British holidaymakers can travel to the US from November after Joe Biden announced he would revoke a ban on visitors from the UK and Europe after more than 18 months.

From early November, it will be possible for non-US citizens to travel from Britain to America without having to stop off in a third country and without quarantining, as long as they are fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

The move blindsided the UK Government, with Boris Johnson - who is currently visiting New York and Washington - originally warning that he did not expect progress on lifting the travel ban during his trip to the US. He had promised to press Mr Biden on the policy, saying there was an "overwhelming" case against it, but expressed pessimism about his chances of success.

The White House has yet to announce the details of the policy, including whether all children will be exempt from the vaccination requirement and whether the Oxford/AstraZeneca jab - which is not yet approved in the US - will be accepted. Unvaccinated Britons will still be banned from entering America.

The ban was imposed by Donald Trump in March last year and applied to anyone coming to the US from the UK, EU or China unless they were a citizen or permanent resident of the US. The list of countries affected has not changed in response to changing infection and vaccination rates over the past 18 months.

The exact date that the change will take effect has not been confirmed. Jeff Zients, the White House's Covid-19 co-ordinator, said: "Foreign nationals flying to the US will be required to be fully vaccinated."

A spokesman for the UK Government said they were "confident" that the AstraZeneca jab will be recognised by the US for travel purposes, as well as those who have enrolled in a vaccine trial rather than getting a jab through the NHS.

In July, Britain sought to increase pressure on Washington by announcing that it would recognise vaccinations administered abroad, allowing Americans to dodge quarantine restrictions when travelling to Britain.

While travelling to New York, Mr Johnson said he would raise the issue with the President but added: "I don't think we're necessarily going to crack it this week. I've got to warn you I don't think this is going to be necessarily fixed this week."

After the US announcement, he said: "I thank the President for the progress that we've been able to make. Yes we have done it faster than we expected, but that's thanks to the hard work of our teams."

The share prices of major airlines surged after the ban was revoked and their bosses hailed the change of policy. Tim Alderslade, chief executive of Airlines UK, said: "This is a major breakthrough which coupled with the removal of travel restrictions announced last week represents a substantial reopening of UK aviation.

"Obviously, there is more to be done - including the relaxation in due course of restrictions for unvaccinated passengers - but for now there is light at the end of the tunnel following 18 months of unprecedented uncertainty."

(Story source: Inews)

# When will travel PCR tests end? How rules of UK traffic light system could change for fully vaccinated

It is speculated that PCR tests required for arrivals into the UK could be dropped for fully vaccinated passengers at a major shake up of the travel rules in October.

**Inews** reports that Sajid Javid has said he wants to scrap PCR tests for travellers "as soon as I possibly can" amid reports that it could happen before the school half-term holiday in October.

Ministers are working to drop the PCR requirement for green and amber list countries ahead of a major shake up of the travel rules for Britons expected by October 1, the Mail on Sunday reports.





At the same time as an announcement on PCR tests, it is predicted that the three-tier traffic light system for travel may be scrapped and replaced to make it easier for fully vaccinated people to travel.

Reports suggest that PCR tests currently required on the second day of arrival at an average cost of around £70 will be dropped in favour of lateral flow tests which are currently free.

This move would be welcomed by holidaymakers and industry leaders who have criticised the prohibitively high cost of PCR tests. Health Secretary Sajid Javid told Sky News he was aware of the high cost of travel for families due to PCR testing and said the rule should not be in place "for a second longer than is absolutely necessary". He said: "I'm not going to make that decision right now, but I've already asked the officials that the moment we can, let's get rid of these kinds of intrusions."

The UK has one of the highest Covid infection rates among European nations as well as the most stringent travel rules. Some European countries, including Germany and France, already do not require a PCR test on arrival though may ask for proof of vaccination or a negative test result.

#### What is expected to change?

Croatia, Israel and Jerusalem and Barbados are among the countries at risk of moving from green to amber. Turkey, the Seychelles and Thailand - currently on the red list - could go amber. In addition, the traffic light system will be reviewed before the 1 October checkpoint date when the government will assess the system.

Reports suggest the three-tier system will be replaced with two travel lists, with amber and green categories merging into one "safe to travel" list. Arrivals from red destinations must still quarantine in hotels but the red list - currently 62 countries - will be significantly reduced.

The changes could also stop PCR testing companies from exploiting travellers with high prices and delayed tests and results. It is as yet unclear how the changes would impact those who are not double-iabbed.

#### What are the current rules?

Currently, fully vaccinated passengers arriving to the UK from green and amber list countries must take a Covid test before flying to the UK and within two days of entering the country. If the results are negative, there is no need to isolate.

Those not fully vaccinated must take one test when arriving from a green country, two from amber destinations along with spending up to ten days in isolation.

The red category requires all arrivals to self-isolate at a Government-approved quarantine hotel for 10 days.

(Story source: Inews)

## The safest cities in the world have been revealed

Every year, the Economist Intelligence Unit scrutinises different factors affecting city life and ranks which locations are the most secure.

**Metro** reports that in total, 60 different cities are analysed on five categories of security: digital, health, infrastructure, personal and environmental. And the results for this year are in.

Copenhagen has been named the safest city in the world - scoring 84.2 out of 100. The Danish capital beat Toronto, which scored 82.2, as well as Singapore in third place at 80.7. Sydney was close behind in fourth position at 80.1, followed by Tokyo at 80.

In terms of a breakdown across the categories, Copenhagen excelled the most at personal security - which looked at crime and the justice system, alongside corruption and potential terrorism. Sydney scored the best for digital, covering internet access, privacy and cyber security. Whereas Tokyo came out on top for healthcare security, which examines access to healthcare, mental health systems and pandemic response.

Infrastructure security, on the other hand, refers to all kinds of things - from transport safety and pedestrian-friendliness to disaster management and water supplies. Hong Kong scored the highest for this area. Wellington was the winner for environmental security, a new category for this year - which focuses on air quality, renewable energy, waste management and more.

#### Safest cities, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit:

Copenhagen
Toronto
Singapore
Sydney
Tokyo
Amsterdam
Wellington
Hong Kong
Melbourne
Stockholm

The Economist Intelligence Unit has been going since 2015 - and this is the first time Copenhagen has taken the crown. Usually the likes of Osaka, Amsterdam and Melbourne feature high on the list - but these cities are further down this time around.

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(Story source: Metro)





## Taste of the town: 11 destinations that every foodie should visit in the UK and Ireland

If there's two things we tend to be pretty good at, it's eating and drinking. And luckily, we've become spoiled for choice as different regions have worked hard to make their mark on the foodie map.

To celebrate all of the great cooking talent that our nation has to offer, we've put together a list of 11 towns in the UK and Ireland we think every foodie should visit. From Michelin star restaurants and artisan chocolate makers, through to food festivals and seafood shacks on the beach, there's something to suit every taste.

#### Malton, North Yorkshire

Malton has been making a name for itself as a must-visit food destination over recent years. So much so in fact, that it's widely regarded as the Food Capital of Yorkshire.



Malton is built around locally sourced produce, award-winning monthly food markets, and an annual food festival. It's also home to some of the most popular food shops in Yorkshire. From fresh bakeries and macaroon stores, to gin distilleries, Yorkshire cream gelato stalls, and espresso bars, it really is foodie heaven.

Aside from enjoying the food, there's also plenty of ways to meet people and get involved with the food creation process too. The Malton Food Tour, for example, is a guided gastronomic walking tour where you can go behind the scenes of new food creations, chat with local food producers, and see how their products are made. There's also a gin school and a cookery school, if you fancy brushing up on your existing skills or learning some new ones.

#### North Berwick, Scotland

Just half an hour away from Edinburgh by train, North Berwick has been dubbed Scotland's 'new foodie hotspot'. In a trend that's been widely documented, North Berwick has undergone something of a food revolution in previous years.

As more and more people have become priced out of nearby Edinburgh, their eating habits have followed them to the surrounding suburbs - including North Berwick. In response to the boom, increasingly some of the best places to eat and drink on the East coast are now outside, rather than inside, of Edinburgh.



Some of North Berwick's foodie highlights include Bostock Bakery, where the croissants are said to be so good that Danish Chef Rene Redzepi sent his pastry chef all the way from Copenhagen to learn Bostock's secrets.

The seasonal Lobster Shack can also be found on the harbour, where seafood is cooked fresh and can be enjoyed alongside a refreshing glass of white wine. Alternatively, cliff-edge coffee shop DRIFT is a great place to enjoy a spot of homemade lunch and a quality cup of coffee while taking in the gorgeous backdrop of Canty Bay.

#### Chinatown, London

If you're a fan of Chinese food, then unsurprisingly, Chinatown is a great place to visit. Within just over an acre of space, you can taste noodle dishes from Wuhan and Henan, skewers from Xi'an and Sichuan, dumplings from Beijing and Shanghai, and fried chicken from Taiwan.



Among the various stalls and restaurants are a few customer favourites. Cafe TPT, for example, is a standout out Hong Konginspired cafe with everything from tender brisket curry and Macau-style pork chops, to Singapore noodles fresh from the Wok. If you love pasta, then consider taking a trip to Joy Luck Restaurant, where the speciality is Wuhan dry noodles. These alkaline (lighter) noodles are mixed perfectly with sesame paste, chopped chillies, chilli oil, pickles, and garlic.

Or, if you're on the trail for the perfect bao buns, take a trip to Baozilnn, where the buns are said to be perfectly soft and fluffy on the outside, while wonderfully warm, sweet, and sticky on the inside. Equally, if you're a bit of a night-owl and enjoy the occasional midnight snack, various restaurants like Old Town '97 serve into the early hours of the morning. You can read more about the best places to eat in Chinatown on the TimeOut website.

Chinatown cuisine has been a topic for debate previously, with some people arguing that the area is 'inauthentic' Anglo-Chinese. However, while snippets of popular British spin-offs like crispy aromatic duck and sweet and sour pork are readily available amongst the authentic Hong Kong cafes, many will argue that there is plenty of room for both.

#### Tisbury, Wiltshire (pictured top left)

Full of history, art, and beauty, Tisbury is set against the attractive backdrop of Wiltshire's Nadder Valley. And although more of a village than a town, Tisbury still has plenty to offer when it comes to food and drink. Found in a Grade 1 listed, thatched Tithe Barn (that has been converted into a contemporary Messum's fine art gallery) is the Mess Restaurant. This popular restaurant has an air of sophistication about it, and on Friday evenings, you can catch an exhibition before sitting down to an elegant dinner.

Other highlights include top-rated restaurant Pythouse Kitchen Garden, fresh Cornish mackerel and homemade meals available from The Fishmongers, and Tisbury Deli - which is full of various treats such as fresh croissants and pork pies. There's also The Beckford Bottle Bistro and Shop (a contemporary wine merchant) where visitors can try-before-they-buy, get expert advice, and enjoy artisan cheese and charcuterie boards alongside their drinks.

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#### Deal, Kent

Closer in distance to France than London, Deal is home to various creative culinary flavours that have made their way across the channel. Situated on the Kent coast with a perfect little pebble beach, it makes sense that Deal is popular for seafood. For super fresh seafood with a great view of the seafront, consider stopping by 81 Beach Street. Here, you'll find all your seafood favourites, from salt and pepper chilli squid, to crab on fresh sourdough bread.

Alternatively, if you're after something a little more casual, like a traditional fish and chips takeaway, you'll have plenty to choose from. Judging by the frequently long queues, Middle Street Fish Bar is by far one of Deal's most popular. However, Deal's not all about the fish - there are also plenty of non-seafood options to enjoy.

#### Abergavenny, Wales

Abergavenny is well known for its annual food festival every September. The festival is one of the longest-running, most inventive and dynamic in the UK.

Visitors come from all over to enjoy dinner party master classes, vegan barbequing tips, and talks by British food writers like Diana Henry - as well as sustainable farming debates, outdoor feasts, and a children's cookery school. With so much to see, do, and eat, the Abergavenny Food Festival is definitely one to tick off of your list.

Aside from the festival, Abergavenny is also a quiet market town packed with great foodie opportunities. The Angel Bakery sells fresh fruit pastries and homemade baguettes, and at The Marches Deli, you'll find a range of Welsh cheeses, ale, and locally-sourced chutney. In terms of places to eat in, The Kitchen at The Chapel is a local favourite - where freshly baked soda bread is produced every morning.

#### **Birmingham, West Midlands**

Whether it's spicy or mild, a korma or vindaloo; most people love a curry from time to time. A combination of Indian cuisine washed down with a few beers is a long-time British favourite and few places in the UK have embraced Indian cuisine as much as Birmingham. So, for any foodies on the search for a great curry, Birmingham should be top of your list.

There are various curry restaurants to choose from in Birmingham, however, a few are particularly noteworthy. Known for its excellent customer service and modern methods of creating Indian cuisine, at Raja Monkey, you'll find plenty of delicious street food options served on traditional Asian thalis' (round metal plates). And for an original balti house experience, head to Shababs where, despite having a makeover in recent years, the taste has passed the test of time.

If you fancy something a bit more luxurious, contemporary, and modern, then why not head for a meal at Lasan, which was dubbed one of the best restaurants in Birmingham by Gordon Ramsey? Pushkar - winner of the best restaurant in the Midlands at the National Curry Awards - is also well known for being formal, classy, and a great place to pick up a refreshing predinner cocktail.

#### Orford, Suffolk

The beginnings of Orford's reputation as a foodie hotspot can be traced back to its pink-walled Pump Street Bakery, which started as the place to go for breakfast pastries and freshly baked bread. However, in recent years, it has also developed into an artisan chocolate-making site. The chocolate is made from beans that are imported directly from family farms and cooperatives around the world. So if you're heading down there for some chocolate, be sure to leave plenty of stomach space.

Not far from the East coast, Orford is also home to many great seafood spots. Butley Oysterage is a formal restaurant that serves fresh oysters and prawns, while its sister shop Pinney's is the place to buy everything from smoked fish, potted shellfish, and savoury oysters to enjoy as a takeaway.

If you're visiting Orford in September, it's also worth exploring the Aldeburgh Food Festival. As a celebration of Suffolk's thriving food and drink industry, the festival features cooking demonstrations, as well as talks and debates on a range of topics like technology, farming, and health and wellbeing.

#### **Dingle, County Kerry**

Not only is Dingle appreciated as a pretty picturesque seaside fishing town, it's also a highly-regarded food and drink destination. If you fancy trying some seafood while you're by the sea, restaurants like The Boat Yard and Out of the Blue - both of which overlook the Dingle harbour - are common favourites.



Or, if you fancy a bit of surf-and-turf, then family-run restaurant Fentons specialises in mixing meat and seafood dishes. Alternatively, if you follow a plant-based diet, you can browse vegan and vegetarian restaurants in Dingle on the Happy Cow website. There's also plenty of opportunity to keep it more casual and enjoy a classic takeaway in front of the sea view from Reel or The Fish Box.

Another highlight is the Dingle Food and Wine Festival, which takes place on the first weekend of October every year. It's known to locals as the best weekend of the year. The town comes alive with locals and tourists who flock to enjoy cookery demonstrations, workshops, wine tastings, food trails, and over 50 market stalls. By far the most popular part of the festival is The Taste Trail where visitors are led to over 70 venues around the town offering different tastings of the best food and drink in the area.

#### **Brixton**, London

Brixton has staked its claim as one of London's go-to gastro postcodes in recent years. It's full of great food from almost every cuisine in the world, so you won't be stuck for choice.

Brixton was one of the first areas where people from the Caribbean settled after the Second World War, and today it remains one of the top areas in London to enjoy Caribbean food. Negril (named after one of the most beautiful parts of Jamaica) has a great menu founded on bold Caribbean flavours, and it claims to have the 'best jerk in South London'. From salted fish fritters and jerk ribs, to mixed bean and chicken curries, you'll find all your favourite dishes here. Plus, known to have one of the friendliest restaurant atmospheres in Brixton, it's a nice place to enjoy a sit-down meal too.



Alternatively, if you fancy a few cocktails with your meal, then why not head to Three Little Birds to enjoy some Jamaican-inspired Tapas? Or, if you have a sweet tooth, then Kata Kata (a vegan and vegetarian restaurant said to be so good that even meat-eaters make the trip) specialises in fresh juices, crepes, and galettes – so it's definitely worth a visit. You'll also find a number of independent cafes and restaurants over at Pop Brixton. Alongside live music and bustling shops, these characterful foodie spots bring Brixton to life. It also remains one of the few places in London that you can enjoy a plate of world-class food without breaking the bank.

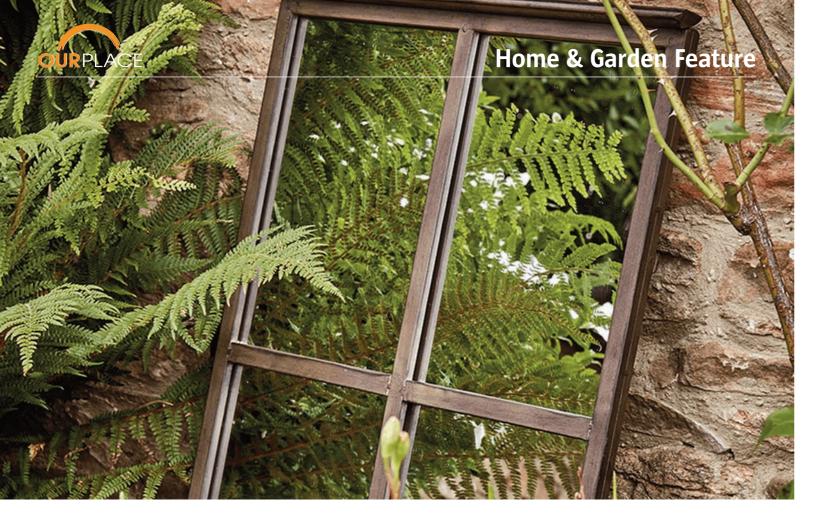
#### Clitheroe, Lancashire

Surrounded by the Forest of Bowland in Lancashire's Ribble Valley is the market town of Clitheroe. In the heart of town is Holmes Mill, where alongside a hotel you'll find a beer and food hall brimming with delicious fresh produce sourced from local farmers and growers. With everything from a gelateria, a fresh deli, and a tasting parlour, to a wine bar and restaurant, this really is a unique celebration of Lancashire food and drink.

Plus, regularly hosting family events, live music, and barbeques, Holmes Mill is the perfect place to combine fine food with great entertainment. You can browse upcoming events on the Holmes Mill website. Other highlights include Cowman's Famous Sausage Shop, where you can buy over 70 different varieties. Plus, you'll never struggle to find something new to eat and drink at the Assheton Arms, where the menu changes every day!

(Article source: Rest Less)





## Mirror mirror in the garden... Flood gardens with light to create an illusion of space

A well-place garden mirror can do wonders to enhance any outdoor space. And mirrors are a great addition for any garden, with the power to totally transform the space.

Garden mirror ideas are especially useful in small courtyard gardens, on roof terraces and limited balconies to add an extra dimension.

A well-placed mirror can be transformative garden idea, adding a new dimension to gardens by increasing a sense of space and reflecting light into more shady spots. As the trend for taking interior style outdoors continues to grow, garden mirrors are becoming more and more popular.

Along with outdoor rugs and cushions, garden mirrors are one of the easiest ways to add character to an outdoor living area - a brilliant budget garden idea. It's important to think about where you place your mirror and what you want to achieve.

#### Why hang a mirror in your garden?

A garden mirror will reflect sunlight and if positioned cleverly, can help to make your a small garden look bigger. Traditional outdoor mirrors can be heavy and must be secured to the wall with the correct fixings. Modern acrylic mirrors are lighter and come in a variety of styles. An illusion mirror can create dramatic effects such as appearing to be a garden gate in a wall or hedge, or even a window. Whichever design you choose, an outdoor mirror is a transformative accessories.

Best of all this simple garden transformation needn't be at great expense. You might have an existing mirror indoors that you can upcycle and give a new home outdoors.

If doing this make sure you use the right paint or sealant to ensure your garden mirror looks the part and is weatherproof. It's easy to see why garden mirrors are gaining popularity. Here are a few more garden mirror ideas to get your creative juices flowing...

#### Garden mirror ideas...

#### Paint the frame to match the fence

Make your garden mirror feel like part of the decor by painting the frame in the same shade as the fence. Matching the colours allows the mirror itself to be the focal point, rather than the frame. This idea is perfect for creating a cohesive, well-styled garden scheme. On-trend colours such as the black stain, seen above, is a striking colour choice for garden fences and mirrors to enhance the surrounding greenery. Add pops of contrasting colour by painting flower pots bright and using vibrant accent cushions.



#### Hang at the right height

A strategically placed mirror gives the garden an added sense of depth. To take this outdoor interiors trend one step further you could hang an overmantel mirror halfway up the wall to recreate the illusion of a mantelpiece. A familiar interior layout used in the garden helps create an outdoor living room idea.

#### Go large to maximise the impact

Of course the bigger you go the bolder the impact, as this large window pane mirror proves in this small courtyard garden. The generous sizes helps to reflect back more light and greenery to inject vibrancy into the small space. Another top tip, to make the space feel bigger, is painting the walls white as the colour will reflect better and create a sense of airiness.



#### Add ambiance to a dining area

Add interest and atmosphere to a area of the garden where entertaining takes place, beside a dining area or quirky garden bar idea. The reflection adds another dimension to proceedings, while of course reflecting back any lighting and elements of decoration used to dress the space.

In this stylish garden an arched shaped mirror is placed perfectly within the arch of a climbing plant to accentuate the curved lines to soften the look.



Continued on pages 22-23...





#### Place to enhance plants

Making an impression with vertical planting, then elevate the look even further by placing mirrors behind to make more of a feature of your pots and plants. In this city garden a white walls is enhanced with the addition of a gothic-style window mirror which sits behind an evergreen plant - shining a light onto the greenery.



#### **Upcycle a window frame**

Create your own outdoor mirror out of an old window frame using mirrors that you can pick up in craft stores.

This old discoloured window frame has been transformed into a stunning statement mirror that matches the outdoor seating area perfectly.

This garden is an all-round fine example of upcycling ideas for the garden - from the budget mirror to the DIY pallet garden furniture.



#### **Create the illusion of extra space** (pictured top)

Have you ever thought a small room was twice the size?

Only to realise upon closer inspection that it is in fact an illusion, created by a well-placed mirror. When you can't see the edges or a defined shape of a mirror it blends in seamlessly to a space.

In a garden space this works brilliantly to give depth to a flower bed and soften corners. It also helps to reflect light, ideal in a small shady corner of the garden.

#### Choose complimentary colours to blend in

Here, a French-style mirror with shutters adds a certain charm to an outdoor patio area. The chalky green shade is the perfect colour for the mirror to blend in to the surrounding foliage.



#### Double the planting by positioning mirrors low

A mirror placed against a wall at a low level can beautifully accentuate flowers perfectly. When you'd put the hard work in to get the plants looking their best, you'll want to show them off to their full potential. A mirror can cleverly cover all angles, giving you more of an overall effect.

This is a clever way to make your planting efforts go a little further too. Perhaps you don't have enough budget to go for extra plants? A strategically placed mirror can double the amount of plants - without having to double the garden budget.

#### **Extend your interiors style to an outdoor space**

Replicate a living room idea by including traditional-style furniture in the garden. Add some wow factor to your garden walls with an outsized mirror. A generous garden mirror creates a very convincing illusion to a garden beyond.

If you have flora and fauna that is worth showing off, then double-up the effect with an oversized mirror.

#### Add colour to a stone wall

A well-placed mirror can add a splash of colour and interest to a boring old stone wall. This mirror acts as a constantly changing work of art reflects a oak tree in the distance, it will change from green to shades of amber as the seasons progress.



#### Use alternative shapes to add interest

Use quirky shaped mirrors to add decorative interest. A charmingly shaped mirror creates a window-like portal into another world. Proving mirrors don't have to be large to work wonders, this petite distressed mirror adds character to an otherwise plain brick wall.

#### Garden mirror dos and don't

- Do consider what will be reflecting. Don't place your mirror opposite a wall with drain pipes or air ducts.
- Do try to reflect the leafy interest in your garden
- Do use full length mirrors to create the illusion of a garden beyond
- Do consider using a hardy framed indoor mirror outdoors.
   Often especially designed garden mirrors are made of plastic or polished metal and won't achieve the right look (you don't want your garden to look like a child's soft play area!)
- Don't place mirrors too high up or anywhere they are likely to impact bird flight
- Don't use mirrors in the path of direct sunlight, where they are likely to become a fire hazard

Will you be adding a garden mirror to your outdoor space this summer? We think it's a winner!

(Article source: Ideal Home)





## 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 <u>HALVED</u> 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 <u>HALVED</u> 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-Wve HR9 5NB

