# OURPLACEMENS

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

**NOVEMBER 2024** 

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How to create a dogfriendly garden

# Spooky days out:

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# It knocks your head off!

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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

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#### ta Privacy

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#### FIREWORK FEAR

# How to deal with your dog during Bonfire Night

Once again it is the time of year when many pets suffer from the effects of firework phobias. Phobias can be complex and it is important to tailor behaviour modification to each individual's circumstances, but there are some changes owners can make that will benefit most noise sensitive dogs.

The secret is to look round your home and watch how your dog is affected. See how you can use the principles to maximise the benefit for them. Here is the solution:

#### On the day of the fireworks:

- Take your dog out for a walk to empty before the fireworks start.
- Feed a stodgy meal of high carbohydrate, low protein, an hour before the fireworks (unless they suffer from stress related diarrhoea, when this is NOT a good idea).
- Put on some music with a heavy bass beat not too loud, but loud enough to mask the more distant bangs.
- Take your dog to their den and provide chews, stuffed Kongs and dog food. Water should always be available. Don't worry if the food goes untouched - some dogs are so stressed they are unable to eat.

#### When the fireworks start:

#### DON'T:

- Pet, praise or cuddle your dog if they are displaying anxiety they may see this as approval and continue with the anxious behaviour.
- Tell your dog off this will make them even more worried.

#### D0:

- Take your dog to their den.
- Ignore any anxious behaviour. They have to learn to cope on their own - dependence upon people will not help.
- Ignore the noise set a good example.
- Reward any relaxed behaviour with stroking, a massage, or food treats.
- Play games if your dog is able if there is another, more relaxed, dog, play games with them and hope that the stressed one joins in.

## WINTER CAT WARNING

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



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

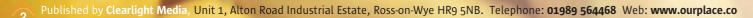
### HEDGEHOG WARNING

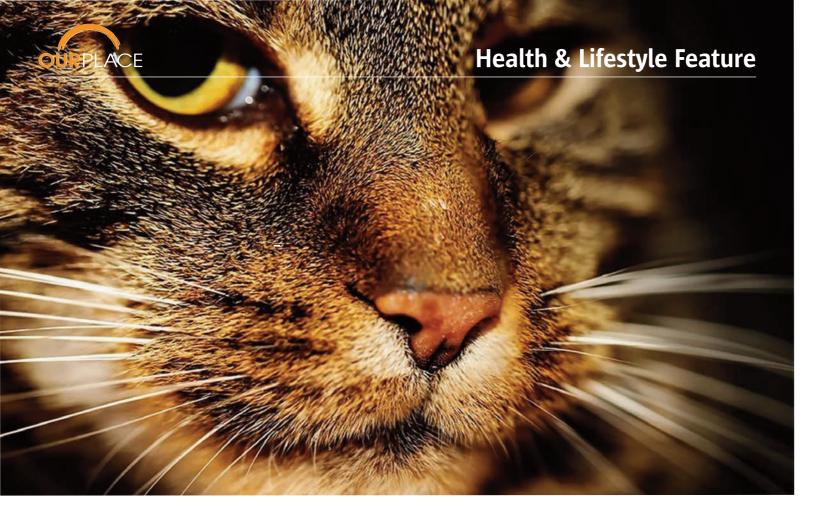
At this time of year please check for these prickly creatures before lighting your bonfire.



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.







# The Purr-fect Companion: The benefits of owning a cat in later life

As we age, companionship and comfort become increasingly important to our quality of life.

While dogs are often celebrated for their loyalty, cats offer a unique set of benefits that make them ideal companions, especially for older adults. From their calming presence to their easygoing routines, cats provide a gentle, loving presence that can make later life healthier, happier, and more fulfilling.

Here's a look at why owning a cat is particularly beneficial in later life

#### Low-maintenance companionship

Cats are famously independent creatures, and their lower-maintenance needs make them well-suited for older adults who may not have the energy for the demands of high-energy pets. Unlike dogs, cats don't need daily walks or constant stimulation.

They're content lounging by the window, curling up on your lap, or playing independently with a few toys. For seniors with mobility limitations or health concerns, this independence makes cats an ideal choice.

#### **Enhanced emotional well-being**

Studies consistently show that pets can alleviate loneliness, anxiety, and depression, especially in older adults. Cats, with their gentle nature and steady presence, provide comfort and companionship that help ease feelings of isolation. Many older adults report a sense of purpose and joy in caring for their cats. The simple act of petting a cat can release oxytocin, a hormone associated with happiness, relaxation, and bonding, which may help lower anxiety and foster a calm, positive atmosphere.



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

#### **Health benefits**

Believe it or not, cats can have a positive impact on physical health, too. Research has shown that cat ownership is associated with lower risks of heart disease and strokes. One study even found that cat owners have a 30% lower risk of dying from a heart attack than those who don't own pets.

The soothing sound of a cat's purr is not only calming but is also linked to lowering blood pressure and reducing stress. For those dealing with chronic health conditions, the presence of a cat can make daily life less stressful and more pleasant.

#### Improved routine and structure

Caring for a cat provides a simple yet meaningful routine, something that can be very helpful in later life. Feeding, grooming, and playing with a cat adds a gentle structure to the day, which can help keep seniors active and engaged.

A daily routine is known to have many positive effects on mental health, especially for those living alone. It helps create a sense of normalcy, encourages light physical activity, and provides a reliable focus that breaks up the day.

#### Sense of purpose and responsibility

Cats give their owners a reason to get up, move around, and engage in life. For many older people, particularly those who may be retired or have lost close friends or family members, this purpose can be incredibly meaningful.

Caring for a pet gives older adults someone to nurture, making them feel needed and valued. Even small interactions, like feeding, brushing, and talking to their cat, can offer a renewed sense of purpose and boost self-worth.

#### **Enhanced social connection**

Cat ownership can also open the door to social opportunities. Cat owners often enjoy sharing their experiences with other pet lovers, and this shared interest can help foster connections with others

From visiting pet-friendly cafes or parks to joining local pet owner groups, having a cat can bring new social possibilities, helping older adults expand their social circles and combat isolation.

#### Adaptable to downsized living

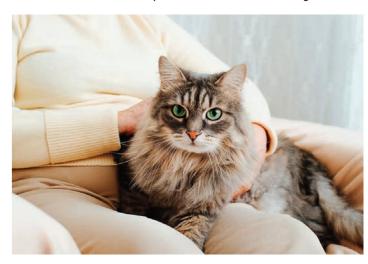
Cats are typically quite adaptable and can thrive in a range of living spaces, from larger homes to small apartments. As many people in later life opt for downsized homes or assisted living communities, cats make an ideal pet choice due to their flexibility and minimal space requirements.

This adaptability makes it easier to keep a beloved pet companion even if living arrangements change.

#### Stimulating the mind and body

Cats are known for their playful antics and curious personalities, which can be endlessly entertaining and mentally stimulating. Playing with a cat can lift the spirits and provide some physical activity, whether it's tossing a ball of yarn or teasing with a feather

For older adults, these interactions help with maintaining dexterity, coordination, and cognitive engagement, which can be beneficial for mental sharpness and overall well-being.



#### Tips for older adults considering a cat

#### Adopt an Older Cat:

Adult or senior cats are often calmer and less demanding than kittens, making them a better fit for older adults.

#### **Consider Low-Shedding Breeds:**

Some breeds shed less than others, which can be beneficial for anyone concerned about cleaning or allergies.

#### **Visit Your Local Shelter:**

Many shelters have adult cats who would love a quiet, loving home. Plus, rescuing a cat adds a meaningful layer of fulfillment to pet ownership.

A cat can be more than just a pet - it can be a confidant, a source of joy, and a reason to embrace each day with positivity. In later life, when companionship, peace, and routine are more important than ever, a cat can be an ideal addition.

Their quiet presence and gentle purr can fill a home with comfort, companionship, and love, transforming daily life into a series of small, joyful moments. For those in later life, welcoming a cat might just be the purr-fect decision.

(Article source: Silver Surfers)

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the world

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

# A new start after 60: I wanted to live cheaply so I bought a boat, moved in and began travelling

After his mother died, Stephen Payne was keen for a change. He now travels around Europe and considers this one of the best decisions he's ever made.



**The Guardian** reports that after his 92-year-old mother died in 2019, Stephen Payne decided it was time for a change. But having spent the previous six months at her home in Torquay, where he is from, and the 27 years before that living in Los Angeles, Payne, a 60-year-old photographer, wasn't sure where to go next.

"I was complaining too much about Trump while living in the US and it felt like it would be a struggle to get work in the UK with Brexit," he says. "I woke up one morning and had an idea to buy a boat.

I knew nothing at all about them but thought it would allow me to live cheaply and be free to move wherever I wanted. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made."

Payne bought his 11-metre, nine-tonne motorised boat in January 2020, and has lived on it full-time since, travelling solo across the Channel before making his way along the French coast and through the country's rivers to reach the Côte d'Azur, the Italian coast and finally Malta.

"No one ever says on their deathbed that they wish they hadn't travelled as much, since it's the best way to become a better person," he says. "I've experienced new cultures, become more accepting of the ways people live, and I've met fantastic people."

Payne's experience hasn't all been plain sailing. After buying the boat, called Jaywalking the World, he taught himself how to operate it and was ready to take his maiden voyage when Covid hit and the world went into lockdown.

"We weren't allowed to move, so I found myself trapped in a marina in Bray, Berkshire, completely alone," he says. "As soon as we could leave, I moved it along the Thames to Chatham in Kent."

Navigating the Hammersmith Bridge and commercial traffic on the Thames in central London was hair-raising, topped only by his Channel crossing in June 2021.

"My friend, who is experienced with boats, was going to come with me, but then had to stay as he had a baby on the way," he says.

"I found myself navigating one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world. At one point, I could count 17 boats around me and they were all a lot bigger than mine. It was like crossing the M5."

After almost three hours, Payne arrived in France and felt an enormous sense of achievement at making the trip without assistance.

"It's amazing to learn new things as it teaches you a lot about yourself in the process," he says. "I realised I can keep calm and stay the course no matter what is happening around me."

Despite his experience, Payne still encounters difficult moments on board, including going aground and getting his anchor caught in a chain at the bottom of a river. "You have to keep vigilant as situations can spiral when things start to go wrong."

It has also been challenging to find a sense of community while being on the move. "The boating world is transient and the average situation is a single man on a boat," he says.

"Friends come and go, so I've had to get used to that, as well as come up with different ways to meet new people." These have included printing a flag of two hands shaking and distributing it to other sailors to signal that people should feel free to come and chat, as well as documenting his boating experience on his YouTube channel.

Now 64, Payne has moored his boat in Malta for the past year. "It's a very interesting, cosmopolitan island and everyone is incredibly friendly," he says. "That's kept me longer than intended, but I don't have plans to stay here for ever."

In fact, the greatest appeal of Payne's boating adventure seems to be the ability to change his plans when he wants and not think of the future beyond where to drop his anchor for the night.

"It's nice to not have to always be making arrangements," he says. "Maybe I'll learn to sail, buy a sailing boat and go around the world.

All I can say is that right now, this feels like the best kind of life for me and one I'm very glad I embarked on."

(Article source: The Guardian)

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

### **Nurturing brain health**

As we journey through life, nurturing our brain health becomes a heartfelt endeavour, particularly as we enter our 50s and beyond.



**Silver Surfers** reports that our brain, the essence of our being, orchestrates our thoughts, memories, and overall vitality. Fortunately, alongside embracing a healthy lifestyle, certain nutrients can play a supportive role in brain health as we age.

#### The Power of Lifestyle Changes and Nourishing Nutrients

#### **Embrace an Active Lifestyle:**

Engaging in regular exercise not only strengthens our bodies but also nurtures our brains. Physical activity boosts blood flow to the brain, fostering the growth of new neurons and enhancing cognitive function. Make time for activities you enjoy, such as brisk walks, dancing, gardening, or yoga, to invigorate both mind and body.

#### **Cultivate Mental Stimulation:**

Our brains thrive on intellectual challenges and exploration. Engage in stimulating activities like puzzles, reading, learning a new language, painting, or playing musical instruments.

By embracing these pursuits, we foster neuroplasticity - the ability to form new neural connections, allowing our brains to adapt and learn.

#### **Embrace the Restorative Power of Sleep:**

Adequate sleep is a balm for our weary minds. It is during sleep that our brain consolidates memories, rejuvenates, and prepares for the adventures of each new day.

Prioritise quality sleep by establishing a relaxing bedtime routine, creating a peaceful sleep environment, and aiming for a consistent sleep schedule.

#### Focus On A Nutritious Diet:

The food we consume nourishes both our bodies and our brains. Include a colourful array of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats in your meals.

These provide essential nutrients, antioxidants, and omega 3 fatty acids that support brain health.

Additionally, certain nutrients have shown particular promise:

#### Turmeric

This golden spice contains curcumin, a compound celebrated for its antioxidant and health-supporting properties.

Add turmeric to your meals, smoothies, or try a comforting cup of turmeric tea.

#### Lutein and Zeaxanthin:

Found abundantly in leafy greens like spinach and kale, these carotenoids offer protective properties to both our eyes and our brains. Enjoy salads, smoothies, and sautéed greens to savour their goodness.

#### Vitamin B12:

Essential for healthy nerve cells and cognitive function, vitamin B12 can be found in fish, eggs, dairy products, and fortified cereals. Ensure your diet includes adequate sources of this vital nutrient.

#### Zinc:

Found in foods like oysters, beef, poultry, legumes, and nuts, zinc supports neurotransmission and memory formation.

Experiment with a variety of these nutrient-rich options to support your brain health.

#### Rosemary:

This fragrant herb not only adds a delightful flavour to meals but may also support your brain health, too. Rosemary has been associated with improved cognitive performance and reduced mental fatigue.

As we embrace the rich tapestry of life beyond 50, nurturing our brain health becomes an act of love and selfcare. Following a healthy lifestyle and diet is good advice.

For additional support, Nature's Best offers Curcumem, a premium turmeric extract that includes lutein, zeaxanthin, vitamin B12, zinc, and rosemary extract.

These ingredients are present at relevant levels in a convenient daily dose of 2 tablets.

(Article source: Silver Surfers)





# **Spooky days out: 10 of the most haunted houses in the UK**

Ghost-hunters will love the grisly tales that cling to these medieval manors, ancient burial grounds and chilling castles, chosen by a gothic horror novelist - and all are open to visitors.

#### Blickling Hall, Norfolk (pictured above)

Blickling Hall is a handsome house that boasts gothic architecture and plenty of atmosphere. However, the old Tudor house that once stood here is what truly made its ghostly name. It is said that Anne Boleyn continues to haunt her childhood home, carrying her own severed head as she walks the corridors. Sir John Fastolf, an English soldier and the owner of Blickling estate in the 15th century (believed to be the inspiration for Shakespeare's Falstaff) is also said to haunt Blickling. Today, visitors can roam numerous museums, stay in charming cottages or explore the 1,600 acres of woodland, parkland and farmland. nationaltrust.org.uk

#### Hinton Ampner, Hampshire

Hinton Ampner is an impressive neo-Georgian mansion that has been remodelled several times. Thought to be the inspiration for Henry James' Bly Manor, Hinton Ampner gained its ghoulish reputation in the 1700s when the owners complained of hearing doors slam and ghostly voices raised in anger, and seeing figures that disappeared before they could be confronted. Today Hinton Ampner is open to the public, who can explore its beautiful rooms and art and ceramics collections, and stroll the manicured gardens. The house also hosts family-friendly events for Halloween and beyond. **nationaltrust.org.uk** 



#### **Leisure & Travel Feature**

Other noteworthy owners include Henry VIII and Lord Darnley,

husband of Mary, Queen of Scots and father of King James I. Among gruesome occurrences in the house was the death of the

house nursemaid Phoebe Gray, who was suffocated by fellow

servant William Collinson after she spurned his advances during

a party in 1704. Staff claim they can still hear her screams today.

Another ghost said to inhabit the house is the restless spirit of

the Blue Lady, Mary Ingram, who died at the estate in a state of

delirium after a brutal highway robbery and whose haunting

portrait still hangs in the lavish gothic room. Join a tour to hear

about the mysteries of the house or special spooky tours even

#### **Woodchester Mansion, the Cotswolds**

Woodchester Mansion is a rambling, unfinished Victorian gothic masterpiece in a pretty Cotswolds valley near Nympsfield village, close to Stroud. Legend has it that in 1868 one of the workmen was mysteriously murdered, causing the others to flee, leaving parts of the house without floors and ceilings. Ghostly sightings include a tall man in the chapel, an old woman who attacks female visitors in the dark, and a floating head in the ladies bathroom. Gargoyles, grotesques and carvings from English folklore add to the spooky vibes. No longer abandoned, the house is open to visitors from Friday to Sundays, Easter to Halloween. woodchestermansion.org.uk

#### Osea Island, Essex

Any gothic fiction fan would be hard-pressed not to have come across Susan Hill's The Woman in Black, a dark and terrifying novel that has been adapted for stage and screen. The action takes place in Eel Marsh House, which is haunted by the violent and dangerous ghost of Alice Drablow and accessed only by the Nine Lives Causeway that cuts through the marshes. Osea Island in Essex was used as the location for the causeway in the 2012 film adaptation. Visitors can stay in one of the holiday cottages on the island - just be aware, as the causeway cuts you off from the mainland when the tide is high, there is no escape!

#### **Ballygally Castle, County Antrim**

Situated on the Antrim coast, overlooking the Irish Sea, Ballygally Castle is now a beautiful hotel that boasts its own "ghost room" in one of the turrets. The room is said to be haunted by Lady Isabella Shaw, who was separated from her young daughter and locked away when she fell out of favour with her husband, Lord Shaw. Driven to despair, Isabella tried to escape through a window and fell to her death. The room is said to be unnaturally cold and still, and Isabella is said to wander the castle's corridors at night, knocking on doors in search of her daughter. It's open to the public, and visitors can venture up the tower's spiral staircase to see the bedroom. ballygallycastlehotel.com

#### Craig-y-Nos Castle, Powys

Said to be one of the most haunted castles in Wales, Craig-y-Nos Castle north of Swansea is the former estate of 19th-century opera singer Adelina Patti, once one of the world's most famous sopranos. Ghostly activities are frequently reported and visitors say they have encountered Adelina's spirit staring longingly into a mirror. Overlooking the Craig-y-Nos country park, in the Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons) national park, the castle is open to the public throughout the year and paranormal weekends are held with ghost tours that take visitors into the castle's most chilling rooms - including cellars and basements.

#### Temple Newsam, West Yorkshire

Temple Newsam is a magnificent Tudor-Jacobean country house in Leeds, built by Thomas, Lord Darcy in the 1500s.

# venture into the cellars. museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk Littlecote House, Berkshire

A stunning 13th-century manor full of heritage, Littlecote is said to be one of the most haunted buildings in England, and is now a hotel. Among spine-tingling ghostly sightings is a shadowy figure sitting in the corner of a bedroom, rocking an infant in her arms. This phantom is believed to be the midwife Mother Barnes, who in 1575 witnessed the murder of a baby boy but was forced to withhold the truth. Tours of the house and grounds tell of its history. The site was once a Roman settlement and a Roman villa next to the hotel can be visited too. warnerleisurehotels.co.uk

#### **Pendle Hill, Lancashire**

Not a house but certainly a site of frightening events, Pendle Hill in east Lancashire is famous for the 1612 Pendle witch trials. What started as a feud between two impoverished rival families, the Chattoxes and the Demdikes, took an unnerving turn when the families moved beyond accusing each other to accusing members of their own households, and even confessing themselves, with many tried and executed for witchcraft. The spirits of the "witches" are believed to still linger, and Pendle is the site of many ghost hunts and tours. Otherwise, Pendle Hill's walking routes offer stunning views and family-friendly activities all year round. **visitpendle.com** 

#### Athelhampton, Dorset

Athelhampton in Puddletown, Dorset, is one of England's finest Tudor manor houses, with a Great Hall that remains largely unchanged since 1485. It actually dates back much further, with a mention of a house here in the Domesday Book of 1086, when it was owned by the Bishop of Salisbury. Many ghosts are said to have been spotted here, from an ape, once kept as a pet, to a grey lady seen wandering corridors and a hooded priest in the Great Hall. In the late 1990s, there were reports of disturbing activity in the north wing. Doors would slam and lock, lights would flicker on and off, drawers dropped from chests and bedding was hauled off beds while people were sound asleep. Professionals were called in and there hasn't been similar paranormal activity since. Athelhampton is open to visitors with an award-winning garden and busy schedules of events, including outdoor theatre, music and dance. athelhampton.com

(Article source: The Guardian)

**8** 



# 'It knocks your head off!' How limoncello became a sudden, surprising, soaring success

The liqueur has gone from being an occasional digestif, served in shot form, to a ubiquitous spritz popular in bars and restaurants from Adelaide to Athens. What's behind the overnight rise of a decades-old drink?

When I was in northern Italy this month, I spotted the same sunshine-yellow drink wherever I went. Limoncello spritz - sweet-sharp lemon-flavoured liqueur, mixed with prosecco and soda water and served over ice - was on every menu. The leaves were starting to turn and there was a chill in the air, but after a couple of these summery spritzes, I could imagine myself on the Amalfi coast in August.

Until this year, I had seen limoncello served only as a complimentary shot after dinner, usually at an Italian restaurant in the UK. I always necked it - who turns down free booze? - but it never seemed exactly aspirational.

Now, in the space of a few months, I have sampled it in spritz form not just in its homeland, but also in Greece, at a wedding; in Germany, on a work trip; and in London, at a party. Why is limoncello suddenly ubiquitous? And how has it swerved from dull digestif to alluring aperitif?

It is partly down to the unstoppable rise of the Aperol spritz, one of the marketing phenomena of the past decade. Bars worldwide are pushing a variety of spritzes to find the next big thing. "People love to order a limoncello spritz as a refreshing, less bitter alternative to an Aperol or Campari spritz," says Marica Tonucci, the operational beverage manager for the Big Mamma group of Italian restaurants in Europe.



#### **Food & Drink Feature**

And she isn't just talking about customers at Big Mamma's Milan branch. She says limoncello has become popular from London to Lille, Berlin to Brussels, but "our clients in Spain love it the most. At our restaurants in Madrid, the limoncello spritz made with a homemade mint syrup is very popular."

Travis Toyne, the commercial director of the Chilled Pubs group in the East Midlands, agrees that lemon is an "easy" flavour, unlike, say, Campari, which isn't everyone's cup of tea. "I don't think there are many people who don't like lemon," he says. Also, limoncello isn't too strong, he adds. Well, yes - compared with gin, which is at least 37.5% ABV; limoncello is usually between 26% and 28%. But when mixed with prosecco, it still packs a punch - and if you are used to drinking Aperol, which is just 11%, limoncello spritz can catch you unawares. "It absolutely knocks your head off after two or three," Toyne admits. You have been warned...

Thanks largely to the spritz, Italian limoncello producers are enjoying big increases in global sales. The Spirits Business reported that, a decade ago, more than two out of every three bottles of limoncello were drunk in Italy; last year, 50% were exported. According to European Food Agency News, Pallini limoncello, the bestselling brand, has grown by 66% in the past four years, while the sector as a whole grew 31% between 2019 and 2023. Germany and the UK are the fastest-growing markets.

In the UK, limoncello spritz was added to the menu at Wetherspoon's pubs last month, a sure sign that the drink has gone mainstream. Steven Roennfeldt, who is based in Adelaide and is the author of Steve the Bartender's Cocktail Guide, says it has been growing in popularity in Australia, too. "It matches so well with our hot summers and quenches your thirst," he says. "Aperol spritz was popular for so long and limoncello spritz is the next evolution."

The origins of limoncello are as hazy as the liqueur itself, but it is believed to have been first produced around 1900 in Naples, on the Amalfi coast (limoncello spritz is also known as an Amalfi spritz) and in Sicily. Sunshine and sweetness, lemons and la dolce vita - this association with southern Italy is surely another reason for limoncello's success.

Traditionally, it is made by steeping the zest of sorrento or sfusato lemons in a neutral spirit, then mixing it with sugar syrup. Limoncello made this way, in these regions, may have a PGI (protected geographical indication) stamp. One such brand, Villa Massa from Sorrento, this month announced a  $\in 2m$  (£1.7m) investment to double production. It is already the biggest-selling limoncello in Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands and plans to expand into the US and Latin America.

But limoncello is not a PDO (protected designation of origin), like champagne, which can be made only in the Champagne region of France. Producers anywhere in the world can make a lemony liqueur and call it limoncello - and increasing numbers do, especially in California, Australia and New Zealand. Roennfeldt co-owns an Adelaide gin distillery, Threefold, that has branched out into limoncello; it is now one of its top-selling products. "Lots of Australian gin distilleries are doing really well with limoncello," he says

"Ours incorporates native botanicals and uses limes as well as lemons." He suggests adding a squeeze of fresh lemon juice and a pinch of salt to your spritz. "Salt really subdues the bitterness and increases the fruitiness." he says.

Limoncello is being made by distilleries in the UK, too. Sam Evans, the head of sales at the Shakespeare Distillery in Stratford-upon-Avon, says the company first made a limited-edition batch of limoncello in 2021. It sold out almost immediately and the drink is now part of the distillery's core range. "We have been blown away by the response. It has become a feature on many local bars' and restaurants' menus," he says. Again, it is not simply a copy of Italian limoncello. "When people think about limoncello, they often think back to a holiday in Italy - having a sweet drink after dinner, sitting in the sun. Something about our British summers means that sweet style of limoncello doesn't go down the same. Our limoncello is not overly sweetened; we allow there to be a sharpness."

The spritz is not the only new way to serve limoncello. In Italy, I saw it being used to give a twist to classic cocktails. The Moscow mule (vodka, ginger beer and lime) became the Sorrento mule (gin, limoncello, ginger beer and lemon), while the negroni (Campari, sweet vermouth and gin) was turned into a negroni d'Amalfi by swapping the gin for limoncello. I swear by a classic negroni, but I had to admit this zingy version really worked.

Lakes Limoncello, which has made limoncello in Keswick, Cumbria, since 2021, has recently launched a limoncello sour that just needs egg whites or aquafaba to be added to make an instant cocktail. Last month, it had a licence approved for a bar that will serve cocktails and run tastings, talks and limoncellomaking workshops.

Chilled Pubs has also embraced limoncello as a cocktail ingredient. As well as the spritz, its seven pubs in Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Nottinghamshire serve cocktails such as the lemon meringue, the Como crush, the twister and the bathtub, all showcasing limoncello. This makes sound business sense. "Limoncello spritz is a summer drink, but in cocktails, limoncello works year-round," says Troyne. The pubs are releasing three limoncello-flavoured Christmas cocktails on 1 December.

Waitrose is also hoping to convince customers that limoncello is for life - and especially for Christmas. It is a central flavour in its new festive food range, which includes a limoncello fizz panettone, limoncello stollen bites and white stilton with limoncello. Lizzie Haywood, the supermarket's innovations manager, says searches on Waitrose.com for limoncello have risen by 125% in the last 90 days. "The sweet and tangy taste of limoncello offers another twist on the citrus flavours that are loved by customers at Christmas," she adds.

Once, that impulse-purchase bottle of limoncello would have gathered dust in the cupboard while the holiday memories faded. Now, it may be worth buying two.

(Article source: The Guardian)



# Green paws: How to create a dogfriendly garden

#### With help from dog lovers and broadcasters Monty Don and Jo Whiley.

The news that BBC Gardeners' World presenter Monty Don will be creating a dog-friendly garden as his debut show garden for next year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show will no doubt prompt fellow dog lovers to follow suit.

"This is something that I have no intention of repeating, it's a one-off and we hope and believe that it will be truly spectacular," says the BBC Gardeners' World presenter of the RHS and Radio 2 Dog Garden.

"It's not cluttered with messages, symbolisms or metaphors," Don explains. "There will be doggy chairs, a lawn, a screen and maybe a path, long grass, plenty of shade, good trees and dog-associated plants."

Radio 2 presenter Jo Whiley will be supporting the garden through her radio show and if Don needs any hands-on help, she'll be there. "I'm more than happy to be hands on. I've seen some of the elements of the planting already. If they want me to go and put it together then I'll be putting it together."

Whiley herself has Brodie, a Sproodle (springer poodle) and Django, a Golden Retriever, and says her own garden is really dog-friendly.

Don is anticipating that his golden retriever Ned, a regular on Gardeners' World, will be part of the celebrations on press day at the show, and Whiley is hopeful that her two dogs will also be treated to a preview before the show is officially open to visitors.

Don is being joined in his mission by plant expert and horticulturist Jamie Butterworth, founder of Form Plants, who explains:

"It's an authentic garden. It wears its doggy heart on its doggy sleeve. It's going to have armchairs for dogs to lounge in, a scruffy lawn for dogs to roll around in, a stream for dogs to wallow in." So, what can amateur gardeners do to keep their pooches happy?



#### **Home & Garden Feature**

#### Make sure there's shelter

"Every garden is personal, but for me, maybe because I have two very lazy dogs, they love shelter, especially on hot days, big trees that create dappled shade," says Butterworth.

Whiley adds: "We've got a big table outside where we entertain and the kids all sit and eat, and the dogs are just always under that table. So shade is very important. Trees are too. We have some lovely trees and a treehouse they always hide under."

#### **Give them somewhere to relax**

"My dogs use my garden as somewhere to stretch and lay. Some dogs will dig. Some dogs will use it for other things," says Butterworth.



#### Include a lawn if you have space

"We've got a big lawn and a stream at the bottom of the garden and they are constantly in that stream, coming back and forth," says Whiley. "We are very lucky because we live in the countryside, but a lawn is essential.

"Dogs love the lawn, they love playing and they rough around together all the time and that is probably the most important thing, just a space for them to play and tumble."

#### Think about water

Butterworth, who has a tiny garden in Windsor, says it's essential that his dogs have water they can drink from and wallow in.

#### Create a digging pit

Digging is a natural behaviour for dogs, so you may want to choose an area of your garden where you are happy for your dog to dig in, the dog welfare charity Dogs Trust advises.

You could find a sturdy deep container, dig a hole deep enough to house it, so that the top is in line with the surface of the soil, fill it with the earth you've dug up and scatter or bury dog treats in it for your dog to find. If the dog digs elsewhere in the garden, go to the digging pit and hide the dog's rewards in it to encourage the dog to use it.

#### **Plant sensory specimens**

Whiley says that the nepeta (catmint) she has planted attracts her dogs as well as cats. "They are constantly just going around sniffing, particularly the Sproodle. He just sniffs constantly. Our nepeta appeals to the dogs."

#### **Explore parks and wider open spaces**

If you don't have space in your garden for a lot of activity, go further afield to parks and more open spaces where dogs can explore, Butterworth suggests. "Part of this garden's message is that it's there to celebrate dogs but it's the start of the journey onwards into the countryside."

#### **Choose plants carefully**

Avoid plants which are toxic to dogs and other pets, including delphiniums, foxgloves and yew, and don't leave bulbs out such as daffodils and tulips which you haven't yet planted for spring, because many are toxic to dogs.

#### **Keep your garden space secure**

Make sure boundary fences, walls and hedges are secure so that your dog can't make an unexpected exit.



After the flower show, the garden will be transferred to Battersea Dogs and Cats Home.

(Article source: Silver Surfers)



# 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:

#### 'Iulie'



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

#### **Baby Hedgehogs**

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



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

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

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

