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Welcome…

Who is looking forward to the warmer weather and longer days? But, just in case it does rain, sit down and have a peruse of this wonderful issue!

I would especially like to introduce travel writer, Fiona Trowbridge to the fold, who writes about her travels to Lisbon on page 10.

We also include the review by Melanie Archer, of local Island talent Sue Shepherds' "Doesn't Everyone Have a Secret?".

In the meantime, have a wonderful summer!

Claire

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I'd always been curious about chalk paints, having never used them before I visited Crocus Interiors in Ryde on the Isle of Wight for an introductory workshop. With the current trend of upcycling, repainting furniture in these pretty tones seems to be very popular.

Since March, 2014, over five hundred people have participated in these workshops at Crocus Interiors. Numerous items can be painted, including a car!

The particular appeal of this range, is surfaces need minimal preparation before painting.

There are currently two workshops, the second one is includes various finishing techniques including wax.

For more information, contact Crocus Interiors: www.facebook.com/crocus.seaviewstudioworkshop

01983 611144



Fear of crowds

by Maggie Currie, Maggie Currie Coaching

Fear of crowds is very common for a lot of people whether they are single, married, male, female, high flyers, students, teachers, old or young.

I know how it feels to be alone in a crowd. I often feel totally overwhelmed in a large crowd of people, especially if I don't know anyone in that crowd. It can feel like I am on the periphery and not allowed into the inner circle, and that, of course, makes the fear even worse. I wonder if the fear is actually of the crowds themselves or is it a fear of feeling lost or being unnoticed amongst a large number of people?

I know when I am in a large crowd of people entirely 'on my own' I feel nervous; I have an irrational fear that nobody will even notice that I am there. I look at the little groups of people who do know each other within that large crowd enjoying themselves and the company of each other and that somehow increases my nervousness and the fear. Of course they may feel just like I do but when I feel that fear, it certainly looks like they're having a great time and I'm not. When I am in a large crowd of people and I have my own 'group of people' with me I feel safe and secure and know that I am noticed and therefore I don't have those same feelings as when I am alone in a crowd.

Did you grow up in a house where "children were seen and not heard"? I know I did. That might be the root of these feelings of nervousness and insecurity as they are for me. I can ultimately relate feeling like this to my childhood when I was constantly told that I should be seen and not heard. So I would sit in the corner with my toys and only speak when I was spoken to.

Having worked hard on discovering my authentic self, discovering, acknowledging and accepting those unexpressed feelings and emotions of when I was told to be seen and not heard, I now think and act differently. I know there is a solution to this fear of crowds. Based on what I know to be true about fear. I know that FEAR is:

False

Expectations

Appearing

Real

I have found the solution that works for me and might work for you too:

- Don't worry about pleasing anyone else. Just be you.
- Here's what I do - I take three deep breaths and take the plunge.
- I walk amongst the strangers in the crowd and I expect to be noticed. I've decided not to expect to be or feel lost.
- I make eye contact with people and smile at them.
- I say hello to people I have never met before and strike up conversations. They aren't always long conversations, just long enough to introduce myself and be friendly and to listen to other people. Sometimes they are much longer, it depends on the person of course. Once the conversations start to happen, other people start to talk to me and to each other and before long I am part of the 'crowd' and not isolated on the periphery.

Even if being you just says it's ok to not talk to anyone - which is a good friend of mine's solution for her fear of crowds. She's decided to not push herself and just enjoys watching people. Funny thing is, she reports people come and talk to her.

I know that I am not alone in feeling alone. There are other people who are in the same position as me and I make a special effort to speak to them as well and include them in the conversations. The energy and dynamics of the crowd change visibly and it becomes much more enjoyable.

The most important thing is to find a way to feel comfortable being you whether you decide overcoming the fear by talking to people is your way, or overcoming the fear by giving yourself a break and just allowing others to talk to you is your way. Bottom line, stop pressuring yourself to be like everyone else and just be you.

Contact me to have a free chat on how my coaching can help you find solutions to your problems.

Maggie Currie

Please visit www.maggiecurrie.co.uk for more information



Need a Wash and Wear Hairstyle?

by Jane Mott

Is life making too many demands? Are you juggling lots of challenges?

Do you need a great looking low maintenance hair style that looks and feels great?

Many women believe wash and wear hairstyles are only possible for short cropped styles…FALSE!

There are many great hairstyles that can 'wash and wear' regardless of your hair length.

3 points to consider

To be truly satisfied with your choice, the selection of a hairstyle should be based on the following:

- hair type,
- life style
- facial characteristics

Work with your hair type and styling will become much easier.

One steadfast rule when it comes to wash and wear hairstyles…NEVER fight your natural hair texture.

Add the right layers

A simple and effective method is to get the right layers for your hair type and length.

But Beware the layering techniques do vary for different hair textures.

Fine Hair - avoid too much length, shorter hair does look thicker but keep the balance right.

Try a shaped angular bob style to create the impression of fullness, plus being slightly longer at the front gives appearance of length and frames your face. Create some extra texture by adding a few foils of colour they also create dimension.

Thick, straight hair - shaggy hairstyles can be one of the best options considering the fact that they tend to be extremely modern and easy to style at the same time. If you are going for longer length, keep the layers long to add movement and avoid short layers that create unnecessary volume at the crown.

Long wavy hairstyles, layers of varying length might be needed to be able to create the desired hairstyle and provide beautiful even curls throughout your entire style. Avoid razor cut layers as they will become fluffy and frizzy. Layered bob hairstyles can be a viable choice.

Naturally curly tends to be more problematic than other hair types, so common sense must prevail. Long layered hairstyles tend to work best when it comes to wash and wear hairstyles. Short layers can contribute to frizz and heaviness. If you like short styles try a pixie or elfin style as your natural curl will provide movement and texture.

There's no need to spend hours in front of the mirror.

Once you know how to make the right selection, based on your necessities as well as on your defining characteristics you will have a manageable wash and wear hairstyle that looks and feels great!

So call your hairdresser and ask for a style consultation to help you find your perfect wash and wear style. Why not add some colour…a few foils for added texture and warmth?

For a free consultation or for more professional advice please do contact me on 07773 149431 or subscribe to my articles and newsletters via my website www.janemottbeauty.com

3 Ways with the Star Ingredient of the season...

by Marie Clare Thompson at Isle Cook

Crab is at its best from now till the end of the Summer and the local fisherman tells me he's now shifting a quarter of a ton a day.

For many the lobster is the king of shellfish and whilst its flavouring and texture are sublime and indulgent, the crab is the very essence of the sea, it's sweet and savoury, good for you and is a lot less expensive than lobster.

Support your local fishermen and go and net yourself some crab this season.

This is heart warming and bolstering food, perfect for those lighter but parky late spring evenings.

Smoked haddock and prawns are good additions and you can up the luxury by adding a touch of white wine when frying off the leeks and a swirl of double cream.

Crab, leek and corn chowder

Serves 4



Ingredients:

300g Crab
1 clove of garlic
2 leeks, sliced
3 Medium potatoes, peeled & cubed
250ml Whole Milk
2 cups of Sweetcorn
250ml Fish stock
Zest of 1 lemon
Chopped parsley
Sea salt & freshly ground white pepper

Method:

1. Fry off the leek and garlic in the olive oil and a knob of butter until softened.
2. Add the potatoes and stock, bring to boil and simmer till soft.
3. Add the milk, half the sweetcorn and blitz with a hand blender, leaving a bit of texture.
4. Finally add the rest of the corn, the crab meat, parsley, lemon zest.

Season to taste and serve with crusty bread and some lemon wedges.

WHAT ELSE IS IN SEASON? April

AT their best: Cabbage, Cauliflower, Celeriac, Chives, Crab, Halibut, Kippers, Kiwi fruit, Spring Lamb, Onions, Pak Choi, Peppers, Plaice, Potatoes (Jersey Royals), Purple sprouting broccoli, Rhubarb, Salmon, Skate, Sorrel, Spinach, Spring Greens, Spring Onions, Watercress

On their way: Lettuce, Mint, Nectarines, Peas, Runner beans

Crab linguine with samphire

This is such a simple and quick recipe and there are so many variations and tweaks you can make to this dish.

Try giving it a kick of chilli or make a sweet tomato or cream sauce with a little white wine or vermouth.

Crab linguine with samphire

Serves 4

Ingredients:

200g crab
400g Linguine
1 clove of garlic, finely grated
Double cream or creme fraiche
Zest of 1 lemon
1 good handful of breadcrumbs toasted
Chopped parsley
Sea salt

Method:

1. Cook off the pasta and set aside
2. In a frying pan heat the olive oil and gently fry off the samphire.
3. When cooked add the garlic for a minute or so, then half the parsley, the crab and a little creme fraiche or cream.
4. Throw in the linguine, coating it in the crab mixture, season and plate up.
5. Mix the zest, rest of the parsley and the breadcrumbs and sprinkle on top.

WHAT ELSE IS IN SEASON? May

At their best: Apricots, Asparagus, Cod (Atlantic), Chervil, Crab, Dill, Elderflower, Haddock, Halibut, Kippers, Kiwi fruit, Lettuce, Mint, Nectarines, Onions, Peas, Potatoes (Jersey Royals) Plaice, Rhubarb, Salmon, Watercress.

On their way: Blackcurrants, Carrots, Gooseberries, Loganberries, Quail, Tomatoes.



Crab & Leek Pasty

Serves 4

Preheat Oven to 180 degrees

Ingredients:

1 tbs of olive oil
500g puff or shortcrust pastry
1 leek
400g crab meat - brown & white meat
1 tbs tarragon
1 tbs parsley
Zest of 1 lemon
1 cup of bread crumbs
2 tbs creme fraiche

Method:

1. Start by frying off the leeks with the herbs.
2. When softened, take off the heat and add the crab meat, crumbs, zest and creme fraiche.
3. Allow to cool, meanwhile lay the pastry on a board and cut out 4 rounds using a dinner plate.
4. When crab mix is cool enough, season to taste and place roughly quarter onto the centre of each disc.
5. Fold over and crimp the edges together using your fingers or a fork. Brush with 1 beaten egg and cook in the oven for about 25-30 mins until golden.
6. Best served with grilled asparagus, samphire and lemon mayonnaise.

WHAT ELSE IS IN SEASON? June

AT their best: Apricots, Asparagus, Aubergines, Beetroot, Blackcurrants, Carrots, Courgettes, Crab, Gooseberries, Halibut, Lamb's lettuce, Lettuce, Mackerel, Mint, Nectarines, New potatoes, Peas, Peppers, Radishes, Rhubarb, Runner beans, Salmon, Sorrel, Spinach, Spring greens, Strawberries, Tomatoes, Tuna, Watercress

On their way: Basil, Broad beans, Cherries, Garlic, Raspberries, Redcurrants



Brown Crab Benefits:

- Bags of protein, a low-fat content and very few calories are a perk Brown crab eaters can enjoy.

- Fatty acids, calcium, phosphorus, zinc, iron, magnesium and potassium are all found in significant quantities in Brown crab.

- Although many shellfish have high amounts of cholesterol, the Brown crab that is native to our shores is relatively low in cholesterol.

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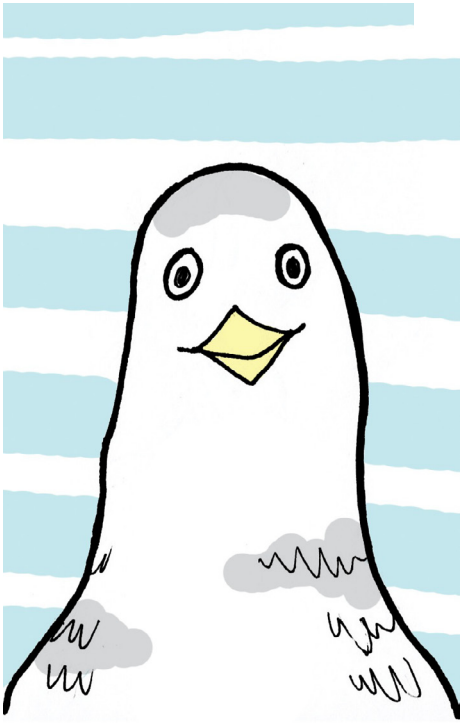

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Doesn't Everyone Have a Secret by Sue Shepherd

Review by Melanie Archer - The Reading Chestnut

I admit I am not one for e-books, personally I love the weight of, the smell and the ability to touch a paperback that is resting in my hands. However I am proud to say that 'Doesn't everyone have a secret?' Sue Shepherd's début novel has changed this for me. I read this book in roughly six hours and only put it down as I had to sleep! This is a well crafted page-turner of a book.

Have you ever wondered if that nagging voice in your head, the one reminding you of things you should and shouldn't be doing, is not your voice at all, that this small nagging almost inaudible voice that changes everything belongs to a guardian angel, your guardian angel? This is the basis for this book and is explored in beautiful, tantalizing, detail, which by the end made me look over my shoulder wondering if my angel was there with me then.

Sue Shepherd's romantic comedy has created believable, honest, true to life characters and tells their story with humour and gentleness caressing the edges of their world taking the reader along with them. Both during and at the end I had goosebumps and shivers running down my spine, this is how much I fed into the lives of a charming cast of characters.

Watching over Steph Stubbs, Mike Bannerman and Penny Littleton are a team of guardian angels who, without their knowledge, watch over their daily lives, the normal, the abnormal, offering support and guidance where it is required, making subtle suggestions to help move their lives forward but not always successfully.

Steph, wife, mother of two, living a normal day-to-day existence, meets Gareth Churchill, the new headmaster at her children's school. Handsome, sexy, funny and charming, Gareth soon has Steph considering an affair and reconsidering her marriage, but is he as charming as she thinks?

Mike is the local vicar, husband, father and a loving son, believes that he is doing the best thing by his family by keeping Maggie from them, but thanks to both circumstance and a blackmailer intervening Mike ends up questioning whether secrets should be kept at all.

And then there is Penny, quirky, funny and a little bit lost who has the biggest struggle of all, Penny struggles not only with daily life due to a crush on her boss and OCD but Penny is being held back by the biggest secret of all, one she must face if she is ever to progress further.

This beautiful cast of characters are woven into one another's lives in unexpected ways where they find strength and opportunity to share and confront their secrets.

With this page turner of a book the reader is taken on a roller-coaster ride of emotions; there are surprises hidden throughout and all are delivered with sensitivity, humour, depth and warmth. Doesn't everyone have a secret? will make you laugh out loud and it will make you cry. If you enjoy other chick-lit favourites such as Jill Mansell, Wendy Holden, Erica James, Sophie Kinsella then you will love Sue Shepherd, she writes from the heart and she has a quality that shines through the words and allows you to read what is written and equally what is not. Sue Shepherd packs a punch with her writing and this is a story that will stay with you long after its finished. This will certainly not be her last novel and I have made space on my e-reader for her next book.



Lisbon

by Fiona Trowbridge



Lisbon guidebooks wax lyrical about the elegant facades of the gothic cathedrals, Moorish castles and Manueline palaces but if I'm completely honest, I've never taken much interest in architecture. To me, a building is a practical structure and as long as it doesn't clash with its surroundings, I generally don't notice details in its construction. That was, until I visited Lisbon.

Lisbon is a cosmopolitan city divided into seven districts and built on a series of hills overlooking the River Tagus. It is a relaxed and likeable city and small enough to explore on foot, but if you find the hills tiresome, then the inexpensive, trendy and antiquated rattling trams will do the hard work for you.

Most of the buildings date from the late 18th and 19th centuries after a major earthquake destroyed much of the city in 1755. However, a few buildings remain, like the Torre de Belém, a fortified fortress on the river, the Jeronimos Monastery and Castelo de Sao Jorge, the Moorish castle overlooking the city.

Both the Torre de Belém and the monastery are outstanding examples of the late gothic Manueline style, named after King Manuel I who reigned during the Age of Discoveries, in the early 1500's when Lisbon was a sophisticated, thriving and wealthy city. The Manueline style lacks symmetry but is heavily influenced by the voyages of discoveries, a period of European global exploration when Portuguese navigators mapped the African coast and discovered a direct sea route to India. Symbols from these nautical adventures appear throughout the architectural designs. Carvings of rope and sea plants, corals, shells and ships steering wheels feature in this intricate maritime work.

In the Alfama district, the oldest area of Lisbon, I found, among a labyrinth of intriguing narrow streets, the Casa dos Bicos (House of Spikes). At first it looked like an uninspiring modern rectangular building sandwiched between traditional Lisboan houses. But as I got closer, I discovered that it was a 16th century palace with elaborate arched windows and

spiky brickwork; a curious mixture of Italian Renaissance and Manueline windows with over a thousand diamond-shaped blocks protruding from the building which is now used for exhibitions and literary events.

Buildings in Lisbon are colourful; terracotta tiled roofs and pastel coloured walls like flavoured ice cream topped with raspberry sauce. Blue Moorish tiles adorn apartments with tiny shuttered windows and rusty balconies in steep cobbled streets that maze through the Alfama district. Even the old ladies who walk these streets daily and their men playing dominos in the cafes looked like quaint rustic monuments.

Lisbon is a city designed to be lived outdoors. The climate makes alfresco dining a thoroughly pleasant experience with as many tables outside as inside the restaurants. Exploring the streets on foot was like walking through the pages of Architectural Digest; I could have spent my whole trip looking at the designs but there was so much more to do in this city full of character, old-world charm and delicious cream-filled pastries.



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