CONSERVATION NEWS

Kent & The Weald

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If you're looking for inspiration for your period property, we have plenty to offer - from an update on Maison Dieu, to choosing the perfect lighting, and everything you need to know about curtilage.

Don't forget to enter our competition for your chance to win a copy of The Sportsman at Home - written by the owner of one of the most iconic restaurants in Kent!

Conservation News will be back in the spring. Until then, here's hoping this issue helps you make the most of all the delights winter has to offer!



CONSERVATION NEWS conservationnews.co.uk

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A winter wonderland

The Bedgebury Pinetum becomes adorned with colourful lights, turning into a magical wonderland by night. There are singing trees, colour changing lights, giant baubles and snowflakes. forestryengland.uk/bedgebury.



KEEP THE VEG PLOT GOING

Crops to harvest in winter include parsnips (which taste better after a frost), kale, Brussels sprouts, leeks, winter cabbages and winter salad. If you didn't get around to planting winter veg and salad earlier in the year, you can grow pulses indoors, as well as microgreens, ready in just a few days. You can also plant for future feast — garlic, fruit bushes, raspberries and rhubarb can all be planted in winter.

GARDEN NOTES

Just because winter is here, it doesn't mean there's nothing to do in the garden. This is the time to have a tidy-up, clean and to prepare for spring; and although winter can be tough for people and wildlife, it's not all bleak – the season has a beauty all of its own.



USE YOUR OUTSIDE SPACE

Outdoor kitchens:

One way to maximise your garden or outdoor space all year long is with a handy outdoor kitchen. Not only does it mean you can entertain outside in the colder months, but it can become and essential part of your garden scheme.

Visit northbarbeque.co.uk for info. Add heat and light:

Just because it's chilly outside doesn't mean your garden or patio has to sit unused in darkness. With a few clever styling ideas, you can creat a cosy outdoor space that's perfect for winter evenings. A fire pit, chiminea or outdoor heater will keep you toasty on crisp evenings. If you don't have room for a fire pit, a cluster of storm lanterns or solar fairy lights will add instant atmosphere.



Overwintering dahlias in pots

Once your dahlias have finished flowering and as their foliage starts to change colour, reduce the amount of water you give them and stop watering as soon as the weather starts to turn cold. Also remove the first 2.5cm layer of soil to get rid of any pests.

Move your pot to a sheltered location, but as a precaution always insulate the pot. Make sure you check the pots every few weeks to ensure they're dry, and they'll be ready to be brought outdoors in late spring.

Plants that shine in winter

1. Hazel catkins

Hazel catkins are exposed by leaf fall. Watch them from January as they transform into yellow lamb's tails. The tiny female hazel flowers are a speck of hot pink.

2. Hart's tongue fern

Ferns are ancient, flowerless plants that reproduce not with seeds, but with spores. They are more visible in winter, when many flowering plants die back.

3. Holly

Lustrous leaves and bright berries make Ilex (holly) the perfect evergreen shrub in winter. The holly season sees autumn and winter berries that are perfect for your Christmas wreath, and heights vary from 60cm to 25m. Most are easy to grow in sun or half-shade and on average garden soil.



What to do in the garden now

- Prune fruit trees remove dead wood.
- Take hardwood cuttings.
- Clear weeds and mulch all growing beds.
- Order your seeds now popular varieties can sell out quickly.
- Protect plants from the cold by adding cloches, bubble wrap or fleece.
- Clean your pots and seed trays.
- Pick up fallen leaves.
- Don't trim shrubs or fertilise during winter.
- Move planters closer to the house or or store in a garage or shed.
- Plan your garden for the year ahead.

Winter flowers

There are many flowers to enjoy in winter, including Cyclamen coum, hellebores, snowdrops, crocus, aconites and winter iris. The flowers of some



plants, such as viburnum, hammamelis (witch hazel) and daphne, are strongly scented. If your garden lacks colour, head to your local garden centre, where you'll find many seasonal delights.

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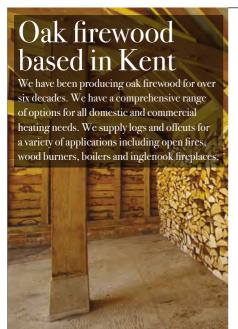
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WHAT ABOUT A GLASSHOUSE?

THERE IS SO MUCH JOY TO BE HAD FROM GROWING YOUR OWN HERBS, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES. PICKING A JUICY TOMATO OR CRUNCHY CUCUMBER STRAIGHT FROM THE PLANT IS A BEAUTIFUL THING AS WELL AS SAVING YOU MONEY AND HELPING TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS.

- by Sarah @ The Garden Creative -



his Summer was very sunny and many of us had fantastic tomato, chilli and fruit crops, but often we don't have a long enough season to grow the fresh salad and vegetables that we'd like, or we would like to start germinating seed earlier and not have to clutter up every windowsill in the house with seed trays!

WHAT ABOUT A GLASSHOUSE!

A warm, dry place to sow seeds and grow delicious food from around the world. A glasshouse extends the growing season, making the most of the sunshine and protecting plants from wind, heavy rain and many pests. As well as being a great place to overwinter tender plants, they are a beautiful addition to any garden.

Glasshouses date back to the Roman Empire when physicians ordered cucumbers to be grown all year round to sustain the health of Emperor Tiberius! They became important in the early 13th century in Italy in the first botanical gardens that grew plants from tropical countries to use as food and medicine. There are records of temperature controlled glasshouses used in Korea as early as the 1400s to grow mandarins, but it wasn't until the 17th century that glass houses began to be built in Britain in the form of Orangeries. Orange trees would be turned in their pots to make the most of the sun as it moved across the sky.

With improvements in glass and steel production glasshouses or greenhouses, as they are now more commonly named became a status symbol for aristocratic Elizabethans, increasing in popularity under Queen Victoria when many large country estates added them to grow exotic palms, stone fruits and pineapples.

Now there are many styles available that really enhance the whole garden, not just the



vegetable patch, from beautiful timber or brick and glass buildings, to more utilitarian structures made from aluminium. They can even double up as a garden building; with the addition of a log burner and some fairy lights they can be transformed into a cosy, magical space for entertaining!

As a garden designer I have included glasshouses in my designs for kitchen gardens and to enhance the ornamental garden. Having a glasshouse completely transforms the garden and is a fantastic place to garden in all weathers, a place to potter and organise, as well as grow. If you'd like to talk about a garden design that includes a glasshouse for your garden I would love to hear from you.

Email: sarah@thegardencreative.com thegardencreative.com

HAVING A GLASSHOUSE COMPLETELY TRANSFORMS THE GARDEN AND IS A FANTASTIC PLACE TO GARDEN IN ALL WEATHERS, A PLACE TO POTTER AND ORGANISE, AS WELL AS GROW.



WHAT TO GROW NOW:

These plants thrive in lower temperatures typical of winter months:

Lettuce varieties (butterhead, romaine), Spinach, Kale, Swiss chard, Broccoli, Peas, Radishes

Delicious edibles to grow in the greenhouse in spring:

Cucamelons, aubergine, chilli, kumquat, Pineapple, micro-greens, tomatoes, basil, cucumbers, strawberries.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A GLASSHOUSE

• Buy as big as you can fit and afford as you will always use the space. There are glasshouses available in many styles and sizes.

- Decide if you want to grow in the ground or in pots inside the greenhouse and if you want raised beds and storage built in.
- Make sure you have a water source nearby and use waterbutts to collect the rainwater from the greenhouse gutters.
- Consider lighting either solar or LED so that you can use the greenhouse in the evenings while extending daylight hours for plants.
- Many companies reduce the price of greenhouses in the winter so it's a great time to buy!
- Speak to a garden designer about where to site your new glasshouse and how to contextualise it within the space.

TOP TIPS FOR YOUR GREENHOUSE:

• Insulate

If you need to insulate your greenhouse in the winter when overwintering tender plants, use a biodegradable material like cardboard, hessian or sheep's wool as unheated greenhouses can still get very cold. Avoid using bubble wrap if you can.

• Mulch, mulch, mulch!

Mulching helps to conserve water so mulch around ground level plants with straw or dried leaves and top pots with gravel, grit or organic compost.

Set a tray of water with stones in inside the greenhouse in hot weather to increase humidity and lower the temperature.

• Grow companion plants

They help control pests. Herbs, nasturtiums, marigolds and alyssum are all beneficial.

• Protect and ventilate

Use hessian or natural material sun shades to prevent scorching in the height of the Summer. Regularly open windows and doors to keep air flow through the greenhouse to prevent fungal outbreaks.

• Grow organic

Don't ever use pesticides or synthetic fertilisers. Instead use liquid seaweed and organic plant teas to feed plants and neem oil spray to control pests and diseases. Healthy, strong plants are more equipped to survive attacks.











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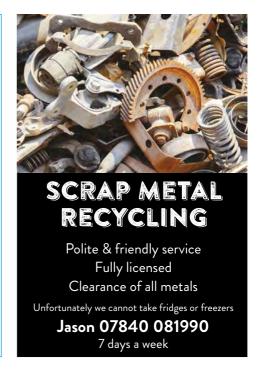
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he last thing anyone wants at this time of year is a burst pipe, blocked drain or failed heating system. It's also a good time to plan all those essential jobs for the new year, especially ways to cut energy bills and make your property more sustainable.

Check pipework

Frozen pipes can be a disaster. When they freeze, they can block the flow of water and, in severe cases, burst due to the pressure buildup. Pipes in unheated areas, such as lofts, garages, basements, and external walls, are most vulnerable to freezing. Proper insulation helps to maintain a stable temperature, reducing the likelihood of freezing.

Keep your home warm

Maintaining a warm indoor temperature can prevent internal pipes from freezing. Set your heating to at least 12-15°C, even when you're not at home.

Service the heating system
Ensure the boiler has been serviced and check
that all radiators and thermostats are working
efficiently. If your boiler has an external
condensate pipe, make sure it is well insulated.

Disconnect outdoor hoses

Water left inside outdoor taps and hoses can freeze and expand, causing damage to the pipes leading into the house. Taking simple precautions can prevent expensive plumbing repairs.

Seal drafts and gaps

Cold air entering through gaps around windows, doors, and pipe entry points can cause nearby plumbing to freeze. Sealing these gaps helps to maintain a stable indoor



temperature and improves overall energy efficiency.

Maintain drains

Few things will spoil your appetite than having to clear a blocked drain. Soda crystals help keep sinks and waste pipes running free, but have a drain plunger in cases of blockages. Regular maintenance of the external drainage system is vital. Lift inspection covers and run water and flush toilets to check drains are flowing properly. If you suspect a major problem, always call in an expert; they may carry out a drain survey using a camera.

Clear the gutters

There's only one thing the gutter is meant for, and that's getting rainwater off the roof and down the drain. You'll be able to tell if you have an issue if rainwater goes down the side of the house, or if there's any discolouration on your walls. These blockages are frequently the result of fallen leaves, moss or twigs from a bird's nest. Water can cause damp and mould, so it's essential to make sure rainfall can be effectively drained from your home. During winter, it's easy for the water in blocked gutters to freeze, too. This can distort and crack your gutters, leading to expensive repairs.



Make sure heat isn't escaping through the chimney

Around one in 10 UK homes have an open fireplace and, while this improves cosiness in the winter, it's also a big cause of lost heat.

If you have a chimney you don't use but you don't want to board it up, you can use a chimney balloon to stop draughts and minimise heat loss. One of these should cost under £30 – they're easy to inflate and will last for years.

If you do have an open fire, ensure the chimney is swept by a professional sweep. Install and test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and have a fire extinguisher or fire blanket on hand.

QUICK TIPS

- Buy an energy meter, or have a smart meter installed so that you can keep on an eye on your energy consumption.
- Draughtproof letterboxes using a proprietary draught excluder.
- Have windows overhauled by a specialist company. As well as making repairs, they can install draughtproofing strips.
- Fill gaps in floorboards. The gaps between the floorboard of an average-sized room can cause a draught equivalent to leaving a small window open.
- Insulate your loft space or top the existing insulation to a depth of 270mm.
- Fit draught excluders to the bottom of doors.



ICY WINTER WREATH

"When the cold January wind is whistling and the Christmas wreaths have been tidied away, it's nice to cheer yourself up with something light and crisp, such as a wreath in icy tones.

In this wreath I have mixed white and silver with a dash of blue and purple."

MATERIALS

Metal ring
Floral tape
Myrtle wire, green
Wire cutters

FLOWERS/FOLIAGE

Bougainvillea, dried
Dried butcher's broom
Har's tail grass
Reed or dried grass
Sea holly, blue
Silver dust
Spanish moss
Wavyleaf sea lavender

LEVEL: MEDIUM

Start by wrapping a metal ring with floral tape. Secure the tape and pull it lightly so that it gets tacky and sticks to the ring. Wrap around the whole ring to prevent the flowers from sliding around.

Attach myrtle wire to the ring by wrapping it around the ring and then twisting it.

Start with the silver dust: it is soft and a bit bushy, which makes it easier to build the rest of the wreath on top of it.

Secure the silver dust in place by wrapping the myrtle wire a couple of times around the stem.

Continue placing the other materials around the wreath, wrapping them with myrtle wire. Make sure the stems of the previous bunches are covered when you place the next bunch.

Repeat around the whole wreath, alternating the materials as you go. For the wreath in the picture, I have grouped different plants together in different parts of the wreath to give some visual variety. To make the wreath bushy, try to use materials of mixed lengths.

When you reach the end, lift the first layer of silver dust and tuck the stems under to hide them.

Turn the wreath over and cut the wire with wire cutters. Secure by 'sewing' a couple of stitches into the wrapped wire.



Taken from A Year of Flower Wreaths by Malin Björkholm Published by Batsford Photography by Malin Björkholm





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How to...

ORGANISE YOUR LARDER

A TIDY LARDER CAN GIVE US A TINY SENSE OF ORDER AND CALM.

efore you can organise your cupboards, you need to do a clear out. Remove any out-of-date foods and pull out any foods that you know you'll realistically not use. Rather like sorting out your wardrobe, be honest with yourself and question whether you will use the tinned fruit you bought for a recipe you now can't find.

CATEGORISE

Now you have the foodstuffs and equipment that you want to store, organise them into categories – dried pulses, jars, boxes of cereals, snacks and so on. Within the categories, organise the foods by sell-by dates with the longest at the back of the shelf, rather as a supermarket would do.

STORE FOR TASTE

Cool, dark larder cupboards can be useful for storing items that would otherwise need to go into a fridge. Meaghan suggests using a bottom shelf with a marble base for storing vegetables like onions, garlic and potatoes in wire baskets, as the marble will naturally keep the produce cool. 'Tomatoes for example, will taste infinitely better straight from the larder as opposed to the fridge,' she explains, 'as will avocados, apples and oranges.'

PACKAGING DECISIONS

Decant what you want into glass jars or Tupperware, but don't get carried away with swapping packaging in order to create a photogenic Insta-moment. 'This is about making life as logical as possible.' Meaghan adds, 'Glass jars work well for things that you want to keep air-tight (like coffees, teas and dried goods), whereas wire baskets work better for fruit or veg, where you don't restrict the airflow.' Disappointing as it might be for lovers of Kilner jars, square containers are more space efficient on a shelf. Vicky recommends Oxo Pop Cubes as they come in different sizes and depths and can be stacked. For fiddly items such as bags of crisps, Vicky recommends baskets.

EYE LEVEL

You need to be able to see foods to know what you are running low on and also to inspire you to use them. Vicky's golden rule is to always have healthy foods at eye level and keep naughty treats out of direct sight. 'It's a simple strategy but it's very effective when you're trying to eat well,' she says. 'Even in the fridge, I'll store berries in glass containers at eye level and move the cheese elsewhere.'

NAME IT

The easiest way to label the foods that you're decanting is to cut out the product label and sell-by information, slip it into the top of the jar and stick it on the underside of the lid.

Alternatively, Meaghan uses a white chalk pen on the jar: 'It works a treat – quick to do and easy to wipe off again.' For the seriously committed, Vicky suggests a Labelmaker. 'Ultimately, larders are working cupboards,' says Vicky. 'Organising them will make them look good but they need to make practical sense as well.'

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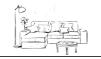








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Make a house A HOME

Rebecca is the founder of Little Interiors, an independent interior design studio based in Kent. She has always had a love for interiors and how a well-designed space can completely change the way you feel.

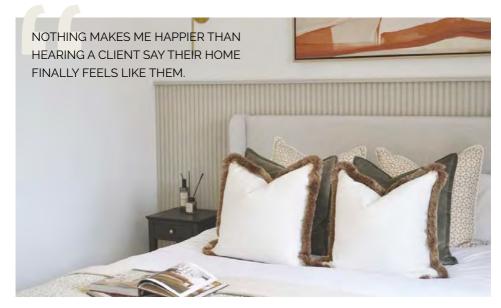
Her style is all about finding that perfect balance between modern and traditional – blending timeless pieces with fresh, contemporary touches to create homes that feel warm, inviting, and truly lived in.

Rebecca offers a range of services to suit different needs and budgets, from e-Design and Colour Consultations to Full Home Design and Project Management. Whether it's refreshing a single room or managing a full renovation, she loves guiding her clients through the process and seeing their spaces come to life.



She is incredibly passionate about what she does. For Rebecca, design isn't just about making things look beautiful – it's about creating environments that reflect your personality and support the way you live every day.

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CHOOSING LIGHTING FOR YOUR PERIOD HOME



wning a period property is a dream for many – but along with those original features come the usual suspects: low beams, high ceilings, wonky walls and awkward nooks.

The good news is that there are lots of things you can do with lighting to help brighten and balance things, while playing up the best of your home's historic features.

When it comes to lighting, old houses deserve special treatment. As any good interior designer knows, the best lighting schemes use a combination of different types of lighting. The trick is to aim for an even spread of light throughout the space, and to create different layers of light.

Grand period properties such as Georgian townhouses and barn conversions often feature large, open rooms with high or vaulted ceilings – which can pose a challenge when it comes to making things feel homely and inviting. In fact, sometimes it can be difficult to know quite what to do with all the space. An eyecatching chandelier or a striking oversized pendant will add instant wow, draw the eye upward and help balance all that vertical space.

LAYERS OF LIGHT

Lighting should be layered to add warmth and character to a room; table lamps, wall lights, overhead ceiling lights, floor lamps and a fire will each add a different layer to your lighting. Once you understand what the three basic types are, you'll be able to layer them to create a balance of light and shadow in the room.

GENERAL LIGHTING

Also known as ambient lighting, this is the overall illumination in a room and in most homes, this comes from the ceiling light. But it

doesn't have to – wall lights, spot lights, down lights, chandeliers, floor lamps or table lamps could all be used to achieve a good level of general light. General lighting acts as the base layer and once you have this planned, you can start adding other layers of light and this is where the magic happens. It will make a huge difference to the overall atmosphere in the room.

BIG UP LOW CEILINGS WITH WALL LIGHTS

Chocolate box country cottages are famous for their low ceilings and teeny, wonky windows – charming of course, but on the flip side they can also make the inside space feel rather dark. The trick is to skip ceiling lights that tend to hang too low and opt for wall lights and sconces instead.

ACCENT LIGHTING

This is the aesthetic touch that will add beauty and visual interest to your period home. Accent lighting is a concentrated light that creates focal points around the room and is used to accent or highlight a particular object like a picture, fireplace or architectural feature.

Exposed beams, grand fireplaces, arched alcoves, original stone – old houses have features worth celebrating. But they also come with less photogenic corners. Accent lighting can help you highlight the best bits, while gently drawing attention away from the awkward nooks and crannies.

Tuck floor lamps and table lamps into alcoves, pop one by the fireplace, or nestle one in a built-in bookcase. Rechargeable lights are perfect because you don't need to worry about wiring and socket access. And don't forget the shades – bold or patterned ones add a pop of colour and personality.





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War started right at the end of that decade in 1939, so these devastating times saw not just Britain, but Europe and the rest of the world in turmoil, until long after the end of hostilities in Europe in 1945. A building boom was necessary in the post war period to replace the hundreds of thousands of homes that were totally destroyed by enemy bombs. The majority of building carried out at this time was for public housing. The need to build quickly and the scarcity of supplies in these post war years, may have resulted in the use of lower grade materials and

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sometimes prefabricated elements. Interestingly some of the supposedly temporary single story 'Prefabs' constructed at this time are still standing proud these days.

With supply chains recovering, better quality building materials began to be available again, so more traditional types of houses were being built. These tended to be straightforward, rectangular shaped houses, built from cinder or breeze blocks with brick facing. Prefabricated sections were used for walls and floors, with gabled roofs clad with concrete tiles. External finishes were plain, mostly render or tile, with none of the decorative embellishments of the





previous eras. Even the luxury of bay windows, so prevalent in the 1930s and beloved of the Edwardians literally went out of the window. It all sounds rather dull and as if stylish design has gone out of the window too, but it was a sign of the post war 'make-do' times.

MID-CENTURY MODERN

Can we identify a definitive style, or trend for this period? It turns out that there is something that emerged, bang in the middle of the 20th century, appropriately called Mid-Century Modern, or MCM. It was the Modernist movement's response to the less decadent post war period. Let's not forget also, the first half of the 20th century saw major design influences with ground breaking movements in Western Europe like The International and Bauhaus, and famous names such as Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rhoe, all pioneering

utilitarian ideals and promoting the idea that form should follow function.

It evolved into a popular design style that made an artistic statement along the lines of 'Less is More'. The lack of embellishment became a 'thing', characterised by simplicity and clean lines. It quickly became popular in the USA, spread to Brazil, and Europe from the late 1940s onwards. There was obviously a bit more to it than just unfussy, simple design style. There was a desire for an honest use of materials, which included displaying, not hiding the materials used in construction.

The architectural aesthetic, that is now recognised as MCM was distilled down in buildings that were not just utilitarian, but practical and stylish. The more radical and exciting examples, which we have to be honest are not going to be found on every street in the UK, would be low, wide houses with flat roofs,





with lots of glass, full length windows. They'd typically be open plan in layout, with short staircases connecting different levels, and true to the use of honest materials, would celebrate this with exposed beams and open ceilings.

It's an aesthetic that was readily embraced by all the important design disciplines, interior design, furniture and product design, architecture, construction and even graphic design. It's important to mention also that Scandinavian design was hugely influential, especially in the design of furniture. There was an emphasis on simple, minimalism, which was both beautiful and superbly crafted. Quality over quantity was paramount. This had a massive influence on designers throughout Europe and is responsible for what we recognise as Mid Century Modernism today.

Instagram: mcmhouseuk

DESIGN ICONS

For those of us that grew up in the second half of the 20th century, the modern home and the design principles we are describing here, will be all too familiar. Think of the brands that were popular then, beautifully designed and made, light wooden furniture like Ercol, G-Plan, Teak, ash or oak tables, chairs and sofas with tapered legs. Don't forget the obligatory matching wooden coffee table in front of the sofa please! A design icon that was inspired by this era is Habitat, it was a statement brand that the hip and trendy house holders of the time flocked to buy. Simple sideboards that celebrated the material they were made from with no decoration. Touches, of rich and vivid colours, these were the days when orange was proudly given houseroom.



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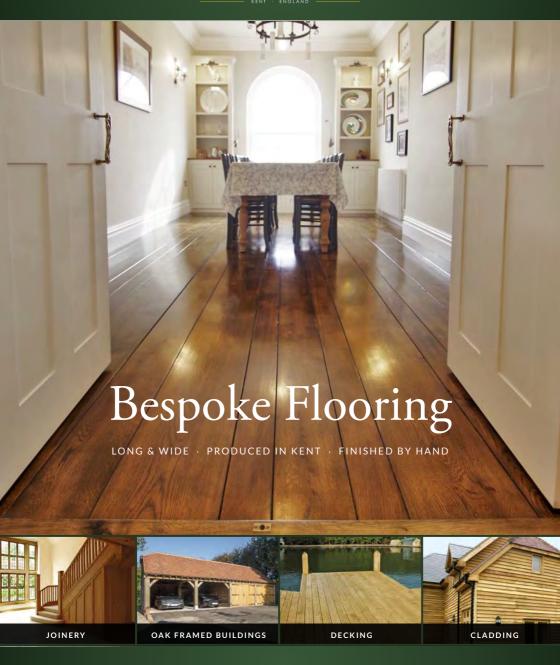


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IS YOUR OUTBUILDING CURTILAGE-LISTED?

HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION EXPERT ANSKE BAX EXPLAINS
HOW TO DETERMINE IF A STRUCTURE IS WITHIN A LISTED BUILDING'S
CURTILAGE AND WHAT WORKS YOU CAN CARRY OUT ON IT.



f your property is listed, the outbuildings within its curtilage might be listed, too. That's because the area around a listed building is often "listed by association." However, it's not easy to establish whether this is the case: UK law is complicated when it comes to listings.

WHAT IS THE CURTILAGE OF A LISTED BUILDING?

A listed building's curtilage is the area around it. As a rule of thumb, a curtilage extends between 50 and 100 metres of a heritage asset. A structure, such as a garage, within the curtilage might have special architectural or

historic interest or enhance the significance of the main building.

LISTED BUILDING CURTILAGE

According to UK law, any structures built before July 1948 within a listed building's curtilage are "listed by association". This means they need to be treated as if they were listed.

But not all listed buildings have a curtilage: a listed property in a town centre with no garden might not have one.

Establishing if a listed building has a curtilage and its size can be challenging, as boundaries are often unclear and can change over time.



WHAT'S WITHIN A LISTED BUILDING'S CURTILAGE?

Any attached and non-attached structures which were, at the date of the listing, in the same ownership of and ancillary to a listed building, belong to its curtilage.

Examples of elements typically included in a curtilage often include driveways, garages, gates, woodsheds, stables, fences, gardener's cottages, and more.

Non-ancillary buildings, such as agricultural barns in purely agricultural use or dwellings let to a third party, aren't usually covered.

However, any structure – ancillary or nonancillary – within a listed building's curtilage must be assessed before being altered.

Even if you're confident your outbuilding isn't curtilage listed, you will need to hire a specialised architect to create a cover letter or heritage assessment to confirm that the structure has been reviewed and has been deemed to bear no significance. Only then will you be able to carry out work freely.

HOW DO I FIND OUT IF MY OUTBUILDING IS CURTILAGE LISTED?

Establishing whether a structure falls within a listed building's curtilage is difficult. Most listings on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) only report one address; they don't specify which structures or objects the listing covers. Moreover, changes to the structure's physical layout, ownership, and use can influence the listing. Therefore, there's no clear-cut answer. For example, imagine that the land around a grade II listed barn, which includes a dwelling 100 metres away from the main building, is divided into two parts in 2010. A year later, the dwelling is sold separately. Because the dwelling isn't on the Land Registry, it looks as if it's standalone and not listed. However, because it existed when the barn was originally listed, it's listed by association.

As you can see, curtilage listing matters can be complicated. By analysing the structure's history and layout, an expert can make an accurate assessment.

IS MY RECENT OUTBUILDING PART OF MY LISTED PROPERTY'S CURTILAGE?

Probably not, because it wasn't built before July 1948. However, it might be classified as a non-designated heritage asset. And, as we've seen before, even if your outbuilding isn't included in the curtilage listing, you need to get it assessed before you carry out any work.

So, no matter how new the structure is, you should always seek the advice of a specialist architect before making any changes.

WHAT IF MY OUTBUILDING IS CURTILAGE LISTED?

If your outbuilding is curtilage listed, you will need to gain planning consent before doing any work that affects its character.

Not obtaining listed building consent before altering a listed building is a criminal offence; the Local Planning Authority might issue an enforcement notice to reverse the change.

If the work you want to do affects the exterior of the outbuilding, you will also need to apply for planning permission.

WHAT SORT OF WORK CAN BE DONE ON A CURTILAGE LISTED OUTBUILDING?

You won't need any permission to:

- Repaint the interior and exterior walls in the same colour
- Replace the furniture without affecting historic fittings.

You may need listed buildings consent to carry out the following works as they may affect the historic fabric and character:

- Maintenance works, such as repairing guttering
- Repair or replace windows with like-for-like
- Repair the front door
- Rewire the building or add new plugs

- Install new heating and plumbing
- Change the colour of the exterior walls. You will need listed building consent and planning permission to:
- Build an extension
- Demolish the outbuilding or structure
- Add a heat pump or AC unit.
- Any other works that affect the exterior of the building.

The rules for a curtilage-listed outbuilding are almost the same as those for a listed building. So, if you're looking for more information about specific works, read our guide to a listed building's renovation and refurbishment.

IS IT HARD TO GAIN CONSENT FOR WORKS ON CURTILAGE LISTED OUTBUILDINGS?

Gaining listed building consent and planning permission to carry out works on curtilagelisted structures isn't particularly difficult if you hire the right expert.

Make sure you seek the advice of an architect with heritage and conservation expertise and experience so they can create a plan and application in line with the Local Planning Authority's requirements.

Conservation officers require you to preserve the outbuilding's historic fabric – such as original walls, doors, floors, and ceilings - as much as possible. So, any alterations you propose need to be sympathetic to the original structure and the area around it.

Heritage consultant Anske Bax, works at the James Clague Architects offices in Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells, covering Kent, Sussex, Surrey, and the South East. To book a consultation call 01227 649073. www.jamesclague.co.uk



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The Story of William Blyth

PRESERVING THE CRAFT BEHIND BRITAIN'S HERITAGE ROOFS



cross Britain's historic towns and villages, roofs tell stories – of homes built to last, of craftsmanship that endures, and of materials shaped by the land itself. On the south bank of the River Humber, one company has been helping tell those stories for over 180 years.

Founded in 1840, William Blyth remains the UK's last manufacturer still producing handmade clay roof tiles using its own Humber clay and traditional coal-fired kilns that have burned for generations.

From medieval priories to Georgian townhouses, William Blyth tiles have long been trusted by conservation officers, architects and homeowners who value authenticity. Each tile carries the character of its maker, a tangible link between past and present, crafted from the same earth that has protected Britain's buildings for centuries.

CLAY, CRAFT AND COMMUNITY

The story of William Blyth begins long before the company's founding. By the 17th century, the people of Barton-upon-Humber were turning from thatch to clay as a more durable roofing material. With an abundance of alluvial clay and access to the Humber for transport, Barton became a natural hub for tile production.

By the early 1800s, the craft had become a cornerstone of the local economy. When the company opened its tileworks in 1840, it joined a thriving community of makers supplying estates, churches and growing towns across the region. What set William Blyth

apart was a commitment to quality. Every tile was shaped by hand, air-dried and fired in small batches to achieve strength and natural colour variation.

The abolition of the Brick Tax in 1850 spurred rapid growth, and Barton's riverside yards flourished. Yet even as mechanisation swept through the trade, William Blyth



continued to rely on human skill. This respect for craftsmanship became the business's defining hallmark and remains at its heart today.

ENDURING THROUGH CHANGE

The late 19th century brought expansion, with Hoe Hill tileworks joining the company's operations. Rich in clay and steeped in skill,

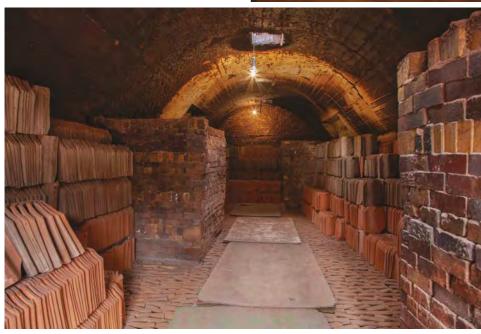




this site, along with the existing Far Ings site, became the foundation of a business that would outlast every one of its local contemporaries.

At the turn of the 20th century, William Blyth built the coal-fired down-draught kilns that remain at the centre of production today. Now heritage-listed, these imposing brick structures produce the deep reds, soft oranges, and weathered browns that have made William Blyth tiles synonymous with traditional British roofing.





Through two world wars, the rise of mass production, and shifts in architectural style, the company endured. Horse-drawn carts gave way to lorries, oil lamps to electricity, yet the method of making remained unchanged. While others mechanised, William Blyth continued to handcraft every tile using clay from the same deposits that had sustained Barton's industry for generations.

This constancy proved vital to Britain's conservation movement. When listed buildings and period homes required authentic materials, it was to Barton-upon-Humber that many turned. Architects and heritage bodies recognised that William Blyth tiles were not replicas of history – they were its continuation, made in the same way and from the same earth as the originals.

HANDMADE FOR HERITAGE

Each tile still begins its journey in the company's own clay pits beside the Humber. The clay is prepared without de-airing, preserving its natural density and texture, a subtle but significant detail that gives the finished tiles their strength and distinctive character.

Every piece is shaped and cut by hand before being air-dried and fired in traditional kilns. The result is a tile with gentle tonal variation and a natural finish, perfectly suited to heritage and conservation work where uniformity would appear out of place.

These qualities explain why William Blyth tiles can be found on historic buildings across the country. At St Osyth's Priory in Essex – Grade I listed and centuries old – handmade pantiles were chosen for their authenticity and depth of colour. In Norfolk, Castle Acre Priory features William Blyth tiles, prized for

THE COMPANY'S APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY REFLECTS THE SAME CARE AND CONTINUITY THAT DEFINE ITS CRAFT. EVERY TILE IS MADE FROM LOCAL CLAY, WITH MINIMAL WASTE AND NO CHEMICAL ADDITIVES.

their ability to blend seamlessly with original materials. Elsewhere, projects such as the National Horseracing Museum in Newmarket and The King's Meadow Baths in Reading have relied on the company's craftsmanship to restore landmark buildings to their former glory.

This quiet continuity, from the same kilns to the same hands, allows the roofs of these buildings to live on with their character preserved rather than replaced.

TRADITION AND RESPONSIBILITY

Although deeply rooted in history, William Blyth remains a living, working business. Today, its Old Tile Works site in Barton-upon-Humber operates as both a functioning tile yard and a celebration of British industry.

The company's approach to sustainability reflects the same care and continuity that define its craft. Every tile is made from local clay, with minimal waste and no chemical additives. Fired in small batches and built to last for over a century, they demonstrate that durability is the truest measure of environmental responsibility.

Alongside its roof tiles, William Blyth also produces bespoke fittings, chimney pots, and garden pottery, all made from the same Humber clay. Each carries the same hallmarks of authenticity and endurance, equally at home



in the garden of a Georgian rectory or on the roof of a medieval priory.

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wall. Together, the two businesses share one
mission: to keep craft alive by supporting
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environment.

A LIVING HERITAGE

Standing among the drying sheds or beside the kilns at Hoe Hill, it's easy to sense the continuity that defines William Blyth. The air is heavy with the same earthy scent that has lingered for generations. Tiles line the racks in quiet rows, each one bearing the subtle imprint of its maker's hand

For owners of listed and period properties, and for those who care deeply about Britain's

architectural legacy, this connection to craft is more than symbolic. Choosing a handmade clay roof tile from William Blyth means investing in authenticity: in materials that weather naturally, age gracefully, and carry the integrity of true British manufacture.

As Britain's only remaining traditional tileworks, William Blyth continues to prove that some crafts are worth protecting – not for nostalgia's sake, but because they still produce the finest results.

CONTINUING THE LEGACY

The work carried out at William Blyth continues to support conservation professionals, architects and homeowners across the UK. Their handmade clay roof tiles, shaped by heritage and crafted to last, remain an essential part of preserving Britain's built environment.

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Saltwood Castle



By Peter T J Rumley (Principal of Cornwallis Rumley, Heritage Consultants)

THE ENDURING APPEAL OF OWNERSHIP OF LISTED BUILDINGS LIES IN AN APPRECIATION FOR TANGIBLE HISTORY AND HISTORICAL MATERIAL INTEGRITY, WHICH STANDS IN CONTRAST TO THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNED OBSOLESCENCE OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH MODERN CHARACTERLESS HOUSING ESTATES.



or the discerning buyer, ownership is perceived not merely as an acquisition of real estate, but as the assumption of the privileged responsibility of being a "custodian of history". This emotional commitment to preserving a piece of national heritage provides a unique sense of identity and personal satisfaction that is often cited as outweighing the substantial associated financial and regulatory responsibility.

Period property character

Listed homes possess a distinctive character and a unique narrative that contemporary properties cannot replicate – the golden stain of time. Architectural details such as original timber beams, ornate stonework, open fireplaces, and sash windows are hallmarks of traditional craftsmanship that add significant aesthetic and historical value. For instance, certain architectural styles, such as Arts and Crafts, emphasise natural materials, quality construction, and simplicity. This strippeddown elegance uses clean lines and symmetrical forms to achieve an understated beauty, a design philosophy that prevents the buildings from quickly dating themselves to a particular era.

Guardians of history

The decision to acquire a listed property is fundamentally emotional and psychological. Owners gain a direct, tangible connection to the past, viewing themselves as temporary stewards entrusted with the care of a piece of







living history. Furthermore, listed properties are almost invariably situated in highly desirable, well-established locations, from idyllic countryside spots to grand urban terraces, which intrinsically enhance their prestige, lifestyle appeal, and investment longevity.

The appeal is often intensified by regional architectural significance. In Kent and Sussex, for example, prospective buyers are usually drawn to unique, locally significant building types such as Oast Houses and Wealden Hall Houses. Oast houses, traditionally constructed from timber, brick, and tile, are iconic examples of Kentish and Sussex architecture, symbolising the region's agricultural heritage in the hopgrowing industry. Separately, the Wealden Hall House, characterised by a central open hall and dating back to the 15th century, represents

exquisite medieval preservation and features surviving decorative elements and panelling. Owning such a structure is not simply owning a house, but preserving a distinct, localised piece of the nation's architectural identity. The materials themselves, often locally sourced, exude a warm glow, especially in the winter with open log fires, and a sense of security and timelessness.

Eyes on the prize

The financial appeal of listed property stems directly from its scarcity and protected status. The regulatory constraints, while demanding, act as a unique market stabiliser that underpins long-term capital retention.

The limited supply of listed buildings, particularly those in sought-after locations, drives high demand among sophisticated buyers, boosting valuation and appreciation potential. Properties that have been lovingly and sympathetically maintained or conserved tend to increase in value. The inherent history and unique locations of these buildings, which cannot be replicated by new construction, ensure they are highly prized and hold their value well.

In historic market towns and cities where space is at a premium and new development in conservation areas is restricted, Grade II listed buildings can appreciate faster than comparable non-listed properties. Areas known for heritage buildings, such as Tenterden in Kent or Rye in East Sussex, often sustain higher values due to their historic appeal and quality of life.

Maintaining a listed building is recognised as costly and time-consuming. Yet this is precisely why these historic buildings are so enduring, as all work is strictly monitored and

thus carried out correctly. The need to use traditional building materials and techniques means maintenance and repair services are generally priced higher than standard rates. Work requires specialist contractors and often necessitates custom-made replacement parts (e.g., bespoke timber joinery or matching masonry). Professional fees for heritage consultants, specialised architects, and planning consultants add significant expense to any project. These specialised costs can substantially exceed those of comparable work on a modern property. But owning a listed property instils a wonderful sense of pride and satisfaction in becoming an owner of part of England's enduring heritage.

Building insurance is another consideration. Many owners of listed buildings do not have the correct insurance, but more on that subject next time.



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The amazing Maison Dieu

We revisit to see the continuing story that's bringing history and heritage alive in Dover.

FEATURE: Louise Tomlin | PHOTOS: copyright: Andy Aitchison/Maison Dieu.



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arlier this year I was lucky enough to visit the splendid reawakening project that has taken place at the Maison Dieu, Dover Town Hall, which we covered in our summer edition, just as the building had its very successful community opening. It was fascinating to see first hand, after two and half years of meticulous conservation, creative upgrades and dedicated work by the restoration team, how this iconic building was being brought back to life as a meaningful cultural centre for engaging residents of Dover and visitors alike, and open daily to the public for the first time in its 800 year history.

There was so much to mention that it was impossible to cover everything in the original feature, so we promised to revisit the project with an update on what's happened since and also to focus in more depth on certain aspects only touched on previously. One of the most notable was the Mayor's Parlour, a suite of rooms designed by the incredibly talented Neogothic architect and designer William Burges, which along with the Connaught Hall assembly rooms was part of an important extension to the Town Hall in 1883. Burges, like so many other Victorian architects was enthralled by medieval design and drew on many features

from these times, including Gothic windows, stained-glass, decorative patterns, finials and carved grotesques, combining these with his love of colour and ornamentation, to create his own sometimes, eccentric style.

I was really excited to return to see what's been happening since I was last there and to catch up with Engagement Officer, Martin Crowther to find out what's planned next. As part of my update visit I was treated to a tour of the Mayor's Parlour, which last time was impressive enough, even though it was unfinished. Now, the works have been completed, it is a stunning and fitting homage to its creator Burges, whose original Neo-gothic stencilled designs on the walls and ceilings, which were discovered under layers of paint have been meticulously reinstated by wall paintings specialists Arte Conservation

of Faversham, bringing to life the beautiful stylised ornamentation, animals and flowers, particularly daisies, in a colourful tableau for visitors to enjoy today as it was back in 1883.

Talking of visitors these wonderful rooms are now managed by The Landmark Trust who let them out as holiday accommodation, which includes three en-suite bedrooms, a sitting room or snug, kitchen and dining room, and also the absolute jewel in crown the Mayor's Parlour itself, which is where the Mayor of Dover held meetings. The magnificent painted ceiling embodies Burges's extraordinary love



Copyright Andrew Aitchison/Maison Dieu

of decorative animal motifs, with parrots, butterflies and a particular favourite of his, wyverns, which, for the uninitiated, are two-legged dragons with a serpent's curly tail. In pride of place in the room is a huge circular table made from American walnut and a set of chairs with carved lions heads, which have been carefully re-upholstered for guests to use. This wonderful place to stay has been authentically and superbly furnished by The Landmark Trust, making it a very welcoming, historic holiday home-from-home. Which of course is what these unsung heroes of heritage and historic



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building conservation do so well. For those of you who may not be aware of the amazing work this charitable organisation does, this gives us an opportunity to mention it. Since they were founded in 1965, The Landmark Trust, now in their 60th anniversary year, has helped save historic buildings that have been at risk of being lost forever. They carry out in-depth research and sensitive restorations. and ultimately the rescued properties become available as self-catering

holiday accommodation. It's obviously a success, with over 70,000 guests staying in their accommodation each year. Revenue from the letting of some 200 properties helps to support their continued maintenance and upkeep. All this of course takes a lot of careful management and hard work from the colleagues of the Trust,



who help customers with bookings, manage finances, changeovers and maintain and clean properties. So if you decide to stay in a Landmark Trust property you are contributing to our heritage and supporting the invaluable work the charity do. Find out more at: landmarktrust.org.uk

Considering the original use of Maison Dieu back in circa 1200 when it was constructed by Hubert de Burgh, the Constable of Dover Castle for the purposes of offering hospitality to pilgrims on the way from the continent to visit the shrine of Thomas Becket in Canterbury, there's a certain symmetry that the building is once again offering accommodation, in the 21st century, albeit of a much higher standard today.

Staying with the theme of accommodation, this links us to another area of the building with an interesting history. This was the prison that was built on the ground floor in Victorian times. Unfortunate and unwilling guests would find themselves incarcerated in tiny cells, in dark and cramped conditions, for crimes that may have just been the result of poverty, maybe for stealing food because they or their families were starving. These were exceedingly tough times and punishments were harsh, including being

forcibly transported to Australia.

The hapless prisoners would have appeared for sentencing in the Courtroom above the gaol. It is well worth taking time to see this when visiting Maison Dieu, as it gives a fascinating glimpse into the judicial system of the time. Handy steps from the prison below lead up to the dock where prisoners waited to hear their fate. Evidence of this is visible in the shape of graffiti left by them. The Courtroom was built on the site of the former medieval chapel, after





the Corporation of Dover bought the building in the 19th century to use it as the Town Hall. Amazingly the Courtroom continued to serve as a Magistrates' Court until as recently as 1978.

A unique new bistro-café is planned to open next year, incorporating several of the Victorian gaol cells. I can't wait to see how this turns out having seen the creepy and claustrophobic cells before its transformation. In the meantime good use has been made of the dingy gaol, with exciting events, including 'spook-tacular' Halloween visits and also impressive light projections and photography installations



by sixth form students from the local Astor Secondary School.

It's been wonderful catching up with Martin and the team at Maison Dieu to see how this amazing building is evolving. In my earlier article I mentioned that engagement was of paramount importance to the project, bringing the history and heritage alive for the local community, making it available to a diverse range of local audiences and visitors from further afield as well. It's impressive to see this reflected in the host of activities that have been taking place in just in the last few months, with guided tours, Tea Dances, a Repair Café, Youth Festival, live music events, Divali celebrations, spooky Halloween tours of the cells, Christmas Lights and Party Nights...the list goes on. They're definitely doing something right with over 20,000 visitors since the opening in May.

Here's just a selection of events and activities planned for the coming year:

New Year, New Hobby - Discover a new hobby, develop new skills and knowledge.

Sense-ational! In partnership with Dover Disability Association, a creative day of multisensory activities.

Dover at Night, including animated light projections, with live music, dance and drama by local artists and community groups.

Maison Dieu Stone Masonry Festival

Stonemasons from home and abroad take part in a 3-day event inspired by the animals in Maison Dieu stained-glass and decorative stonework, with a chance to have a go at stone carving and take part in family-friendly activities

Many thanks to the whole team at Maison Dieu for their enthusiasm and hospitality. For info on forthcoming events visit www.maisondieudover.org.uk/events



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HOW TO... PAINT ON NEW PLASTER

ainting new plaster is not as simple as you might think. Before you even think about a mist coat, it's critical that the new plaster is completely dry.

But it's not just a dry plaster you need to think of. If you start painting straight onto new plaster you will get a poor, uneven finish. The paint will be absorbed almost immediately, drying out far too quickly.

Most plastering today is done in gypsum – often known as a pink finish. There is also however, a rapidly growing trend for using traditional lime plasters, once thought only necessary in period buildings but increasingly valued for it ability to accommodate movement in buildings without cracking. In both cases the surface of the plaster is highly absorbent when newly applied.

As the plaster dries, a 'sinter skin' forms as the binder migrates to the surface. In modern gypsum plasters these can be quite variable, especially if the plasterer has trowelled the plaster hard to get a very smooth finish. This calls for care preparing it for painting as it may result in areas of widely differing absorbency.

PREPARATION

The first step when starting to paint onto new plaster is always to work out what you are dealing with. Does the plaster look dry – pale pink if gypsum? Does it look shiny-polished to be silky smooth, but will be less permeable? If there's a sinter skin it should be removed by sanding down with standard-grade sandpaper.

PRIMING

All new plaster must be primed. There are two ways to give the plaster what it then needs – a primer, or a mist coat. Using a plaster primer: it is diluted 50:50 in order to draw the right amount of binder into the plaster surface.

Make sure that the plaster surface is clean, dry, firm and free from dust and oil before applying your primer. Observe how the plaster behaves – if it sucks the primer in evenly then you can be sure this is will also happen when paint is applied, you may find you need 2 or 3 coats for full obliteration with white paint over the pink finish. For the best results leave 4-6 hours between coats for drying.

PLASTER PRIMER

Plaster primer is a water-based product for absorbent or irregularly absorbent wall and ceiling surfaces, which is made exclusively from natural raw materials. It is breathable and perfect for use on lime plaster and gypsum plaster and it provides optimum absorbency for the subsequent application of paint.

CHECKLIST

- Make sure you have all the right equipment.
 Check you have the correct colour sounds silly but always good to double check! Stir thoroughly before use.
- Take your time with each coat of paint.
 Let it dry, sand if needed, and don't rush
- Apply plenty of paint in first coat (as if you are only going to need one coat).
- Always paint to a wet edge.
- Allow all previous coats to dry thoroughly before applying subsequent coat.

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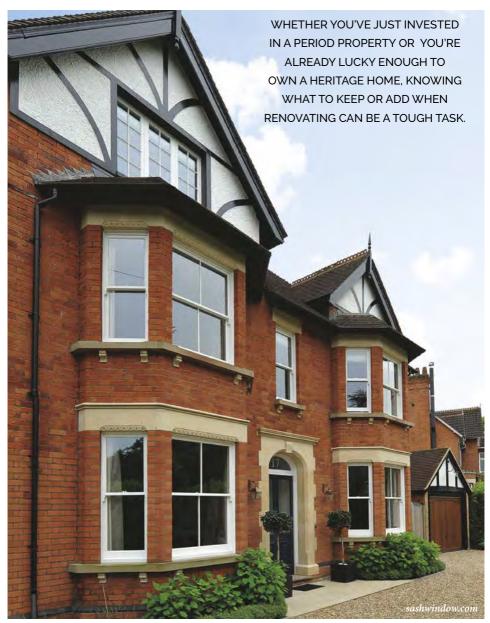




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RENOVATING A PERIOD PROPERTY





he idea of renovating a period property may seem daunting and can sometimes be complicated, but if done properly and with care, it can be extremely rewarding.

You'll no doubt want to preserve as many of the features as possible, but you'll also want to bring it up-to-date and make it fit seamlessly with your lifestyle. Try to work with your home, taking cues from its history to create your own unique look.

UNDERSTAND THE REQUIREMENTS

Before you begin planning any adaptations, you will need to make yourself aware of the regulations in place. Issuing a survey to ensure the structure can withhold any building or renovation work and checking with your local council for planning permission is vital before any project can start.

IS YOUR HOUSE LISTED?

If your house is marked as "listed" and it appears on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), that building falls under the consideration of the planning system and may not be altered in any way without permission from the relevant authorities. If you're planning any renovations, replacing windows or considering any work that involves altering, extending or demolishing your home where it affects its special architectural or historic interest, you will have to discuss the plans with your conservation officer and it might be necessary to apply for Listed Buildings Consent. Visit planningportal.co.uk for information.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

It is vital that you get to know your house. When was it built? Who was the builder/



IN PERIOD PROPERTIES, THE DESIGN OF THE SPACE SHOULD BE PLANNED AROUND THE FEATURES RATHER THAN THINKING OF THEM AS AN AFTER-THOUGHT.

architect? Have previous owners made alterations or changes in the past or is it relatively untouched? It is important to look at the different levels of historic importance before you can start thinking about your design. Live with your period home as it is for a while and take your time to find out as much as you can about it. Take a closer look at the existing architectural features and try to determine whether any of the original details are missing.

SPEAK TO PROFESSIONALS

If you are planning large renovations, it is worth asking your local planning department whether they can recommend a heritage specialist and/or structural engineer. A specialist will understand the property and its history and will be able to advise on architectural details that need replacing or removing. You could also search online for someone local to you, but make sure you look at their previous work.

PLAN A DETAILED BUDGET

Working out a budget can be incredibly tricky with a renovation. Keep a spreadsheet that covers every element of the build with anticipated costs and actual costs, so you can keep an eye on overspends and savings. Any house that has been derelict for two years or more (or converting from non-residential into a home) can benefit from a reduced VAT rate of 5% for building work and materials. Once



you've created a budget, it is important to stick to it. You don't want to get to the end of your renovation with no money left for decoration or furniture.

SPACE PLANNING

This is especially important for period homes. The layout of period homes often isn't suitable for how we live now. If you and your family spend a lot of time in the kitchen, where is your kitchen situated? Is it a dark space at the back of the house? If you entertain a lot, does the entrance hall lead into a large reception room? The key to successful space planning is to ask questions about how you intend to use the space.

CELEBRATE THE ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

In period properties, the design of the space should be planned around the features rather than thinking of them as an after-thought. This is the most important rule of all when designing for a period home – remember to always work *with* the building. Find joiners or tradespeople who have experience in working on period properties when you need to do any repairs.

MIX OLD AND NEW

Always balance the old with something new, it will help create an updated feel in an old house. Do not be tempted to buy all new furniture and accessories. If you've invested in a new sofa, find a pair of pre-loved armchairs at auction and have them recovered. Adding personal items or vintage finds will give the room a sense of having evolved over time.

Try to remember that renovating or designing your house is a journey. Don't rush things and don't try to finish everything all at once. It is important to enjoy each step of the way and always leave some space for accessories, paintings or other items you might fall in love with later.





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KNOW YOUR

PERIOD PROPERTY TRIMS

ORIGINALLY USED TO BREAK UP LARGE, BLANK EXPANSES OF PLASTER, DECORATIVE TRIMS ARE A KEY PART OF PERIOD PROPERTIES AND, AS WELL AS ADDING INTEREST, TEXTURE AND SUBTLE HISTORIC IMPACT, THEY ARE ALSO THERE TO PROVIDE USEFUL LINES OF ALIGNMENT WITH WHICH TO DESIGN YOUR SCHEME.



DADO RAILS

These were historically used to prevent walls being scuffed and knocked by the back of a chair, but decoratively speaking are a nice way to divide a wall in two. Dados should be set at hip height (regardless of the ceiling height), and either feature panel moulding below them or wallpaper if you're feeling adventurous.

PICTURE RAILS

Originally used for attaching hooks to hang pictures from, and to set a line above which pictures were a no-go zone.

If you have high enough ceilings to add a new rail, leave about 30cm space between the picture rail and the ceiling. If your ceilings are lower, try and avoid them in favour of a cornice or dado.

ARCHITRAVE

An architrave is the wooden trim used to frame doors, windows and built-in cupboards; designed to protect areas where plaster would crack with repeated opening and closing.

The corner joints are mitred – a joint achieved by having both slabs cut on a 45-degree angle and joined together at a 'point' – and the wood is usually painted.

PANEL MOULDINGS

These are decorative details that are fixed to the wall creating frames; usually under dado trims but can cover the wall and replace the dado altogether. Either paint the whole wall one colour and allow the moulding to create subtle interest, or for the ultimate luxe wow-factor infill the frames with a textured wallpaper.

SKIRTING BOARDS

The origins of the skirting board date back to Victorian times. They were originally designed to mask the join between the wall and the floor and block out gaps (and so draughts). The Victorians also looked upon them as a feature, using them to showcase a room with big bold skirting to complement those impressive high ceilings.

With the more sophisticated building techniques available now, they're less necessary in modern spaces, but are a great addition to a period space; whether you keep them white and traditional or go for a bold colour or match the paint to the wall colour.

CORNICES

Basically a skirting for the ceiling (though often more decorative), a cornice can be a wonderful feature in a period property that adds an unexpected detail, especially if you're lucky enough to have high ceilings. If you have lower ceilings, you'll need to allow enough distance between your cornice and picture rail, so you may need to choose between one or the other.

BONUS TIP

Try not to mix eras. When choosing mouldings (these include any type of raised plaster work, from skirting trims to ceiling roses) make sure they match. For example, a two-step Edwardian cornice might not go with a Victorian ceiling rose.

Do your research, or hire an expert who can help you source them correctly. Plus, if you're not sure where to start – you could always ask next-door if you can take a look at any remaining features in their home.



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WINTERTIME GETS A BAD RAP, BUT
THERE ARE SO MANY SEASONAL
STAPLES THAT STAND OUT AROUND THIS
TIME, AND THEY CAN MAKE THE COLDER
MONTHS NUTRITIOUS AND DELICIOUS
FOR US.

Enjoying more of these in-season picks helps us maintain good overall health, and they're also great for bolstering immunity.

KIWIS

You should definitely load up on this sweet, juicy, fuzzy-jacketed super-fruit. Kiwis are bursting with a wide variety of antioxidants, as well as potassium, vitamin E, folate, and fibre. Kiwi may be particularly beneficial to digestive health: It has a specific enzyme that's unique to this fruit, and it helps break down protein to facilitate the flow, studies suggest.

PUMPKIN

Pumpkins are packed with fibre and plenty of antioxidant power in the form of carotenoids, vitamin C and other phytonutrients. And a study in The BMJ found that having higher levels of vitamin C and carotenoids in the blood was associated with a lower chance of type 2 diabetes. Don't throw those seeds in the bin after scooping them out – you can roast them up for a crunchy, nourishing snack that's filled with immunity superstars zinc and selenium.





BLOOD ORANGE

Any variety of orange that you can get your hands on (Cara Cara, naval, clementines) will pump you full of antioxidants to help control inflammation, and promote good overall health, but vibrant blood oranges are high in anthocyanins, particularly powerful antioxidants that lend the fruit its colour and may be associated with lower risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease.

BEETROOT

You can't beat beetroot, especially during sniffle season – this winter staple is a serious superfood, especially when it comes to immunity. Beetroot of all shades are loaded with vitamin C, zinc and other nutrients known for bolstering the immune system, and they're particularly high in betalains, pigment-lending compounds with powerful antioxidant properties.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

This vegetable boasts all the same benefits as its cruciferous cousins' cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower. Brussels sprouts feature vitamins C and K, and these mini cabbages are also chockfull of potent compounds called glucosinolates, which the body converts into isothiocyanates, cancer-fighting superstars that may prevent DNA damage on the cellular level.







SWEET POTATOES

If you're a bit backed up, work this root veggie into your next meal: It boasts a constipation-kicking trifecta of fibre, magnesium and potassium. Potassium plays a role in muscle contraction, including your intestines, so not getting enough of it can slow how fast food is digested, leading to constipation and bloating. Sweet potatoes also contribute to eye health. These antioxidant-packed tubers provide an entire day's worth of vitamin A plus 25% of the recommended daily value for vitamin C, which can help protect eye tissue from damage.

KALE

Dark leafy greens like kale are heart health superstars: Having at least one portion of raw leafy greens a day may help decrease the risk of heart disease, studies suggest, likely due to the high nitrate content, which heals blood vessels and helps them relax for healthy blood pressure.

Kale and other leafy greens also deliver vitamins C and K, the latter of which collaborates with calcium and phosphorus to form hydroxyapatite crystals, a contributor to strong bone density.



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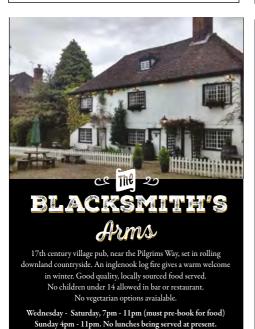
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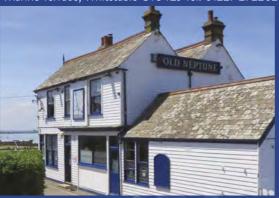
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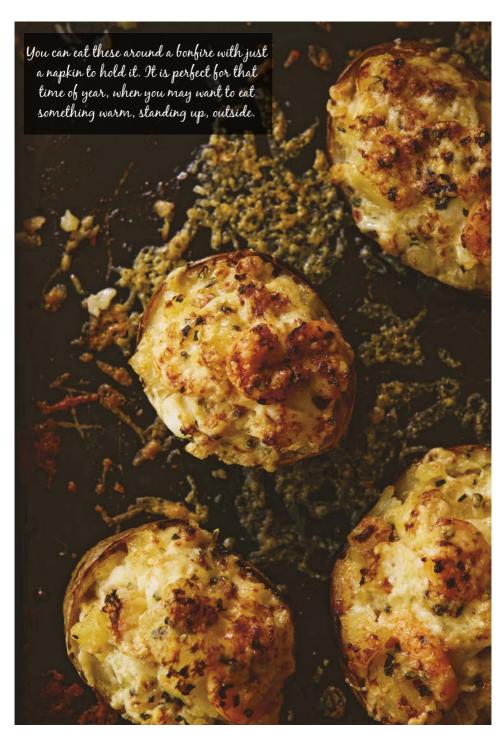
- Sat 6th December Back Street Bloozers
- Sun 7th December Blue Devils
- Sun 14th December Bill Clift
- Sun 11th January -Ozzie and The Uglies
- Sun 18th January Native Oysters
- Sun 25th January Barracuda
- Sun 1st February Squeeze Gut Alley
- Sun 8th February Bill Clift
- Sun 15th February Merlin and The Rockets
- Sun 22nd February Pirates

Please refer to the website as bands are subject to change.

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THE SPORTSMAN AT HOME

The Sportsman is nothing short of an institution. Now in its 25th year, chef Stephen Harris took over a rundown pub on the Kent coast in 1999 and turned something ordinary into something extraordinary with his pared-back style of cooking, earning (and retaining) a Michelin star. In The Sportsman at Home, Stephen Harris welcomes us into his kitchen in Whitstable to discover his favourite ingredients and shows us how so apply the simple ethos of his iconic restatuarant to home cooking.

SERVES

YOU WILL NEED

neutral oil for rubbing the potatoes

2 large baking potatoes, peeled

50g unsalted butter

1 onion, finely diced

1 celery stick

1/2 fennel bulb, finely diced

200ml Vermouth

200g creme fraiche

300g skinless cod fillet,

200g prawns

1 small bunch of chives, chopped

squeeze of lemon juice

50g Cheddar, grated

salt and freshly ground black pepper

Extracted from The Sportsman at Home by Stephen Harris (Quadrille, £30). Photography © Kim Lightbody 2025

BAKED POTATO FISH PIE

MFTHOD

Preheat the oven to 180°C fan (400°F). Rub the potatoes with oil and season well on the outside. Bake in the oven for 1 hour 15 minutes, or until a knife easily penetrates the flesh. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

Meanwhile, heat the butter in a large non-stick frying pan over a medium heat, then add the onion, celery and fennel. Sweat without colouring until soft, around 10 minutes.

Add a pinch of salt and the vermouth and boil until the vermouth has almost all evaporated. Now add the crème fraîche and let it melt into the pan. When it is simmering, add the cod fillet and prawns and stir them into the sauce. Cook for 1 minute, then remove from the heat.

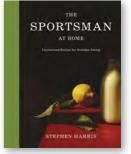
Cut the cooled potatoes in half lengthways and scoop out the flesh. Add the flesh to the fish mixture and stir to combine. Add the chives and a squeeze of lemon and check the seasoning.

Place the potato halves on a baking sheet and fill them with the fish mixture. Cover with the grated Cheddar, then place under a hot grill (broiler) until the cheese melts.

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Closing date: Friday 6th February 2026.



SERVES 8-10

YOU WILL NEED

For the sweet pastry
250g cold unsalted butter
400g pastry flour
1 vanilla pod, split open and
seeds scraped out
pinch of salt
150g icing sugar
175ml double cream

For the filling
250g unsalted butter
250g caster sugar
250g ground almonds
4 large eggs
1 vanilla pod, split open and
seeds scraped out
zest of 1 lemon
1 tbs Amaretto
250g blackcurrants
icing sugar for dusting

For the ice cream 600ml sugar syrup 500g cream cheese 250ml double cream 250ml milk 250g blackcurrants

BLACKCURRANT & ALMOND TART

METHOD

First, make the pastry. Put the butter and flour into a food processor and pulse until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the vanilla seeds, salt now and sugar and pulse. Add the cream and pulse until incorporated, then tip out the pastry and knead it until smooth. Wrap in cling film (plastic wrap) and refrigerator for 1 hour.

Once the pastry has rested, roll it out to about 3 mm (1/8 inch) thick and use it to line a 23 cm (9 inch) tart tin (pan). Prick the base with a fork and then place in the refrigerator while you prepare the filling.

To make the almond paste, combine the butter and sugar in a food processor and blitz together, then, with the motor running, add the eggs a little at a time they are fully incorporated. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and beat in the ground almonds, flour, vanilla seeds, lemon zest and amaretto.

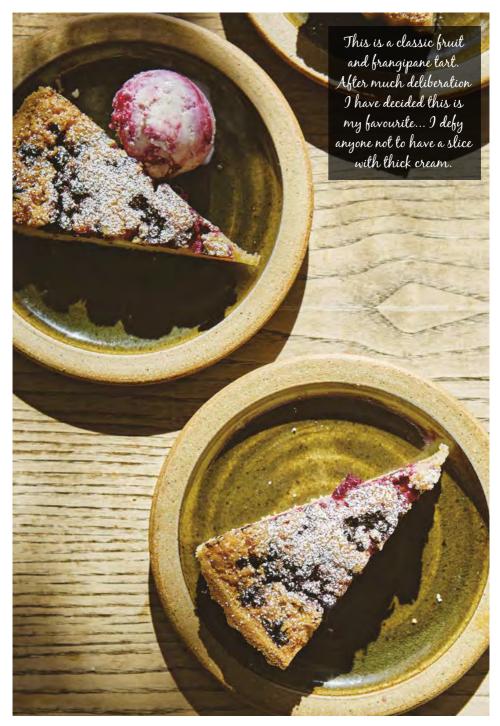
Preheat the oven to 180°C fan (400°F).

Remove the pastry case from the refrigerator and fill it with the almond paste, then top with the blackcurrants. Bake in the oven for about 40 minutes until the top is golden brown.

Meanwhile, make the ice cream. Put 400 ml (14 fl oz/generous 11/2 cups) of the sugar syrup into a food processor along with the cream cheese, cream and milk. Blend to combine, chill until completely cool then churn in an ice-cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions.

While the ice cream is churning, bring the remaining sugar syrup to the boil and add the blackcurrants. Boil for a few minutes, then strain the mixture through a sieve into a clean pan, pressing to extract the blackcurrant juices.

Boil the mixture again to reduce it to a thick syrup. Remove from the heat and leave to cool. Once cool, add the syrup to the ice cream and swirl it through to create a ripple.



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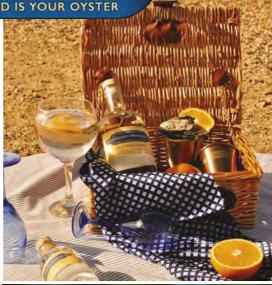
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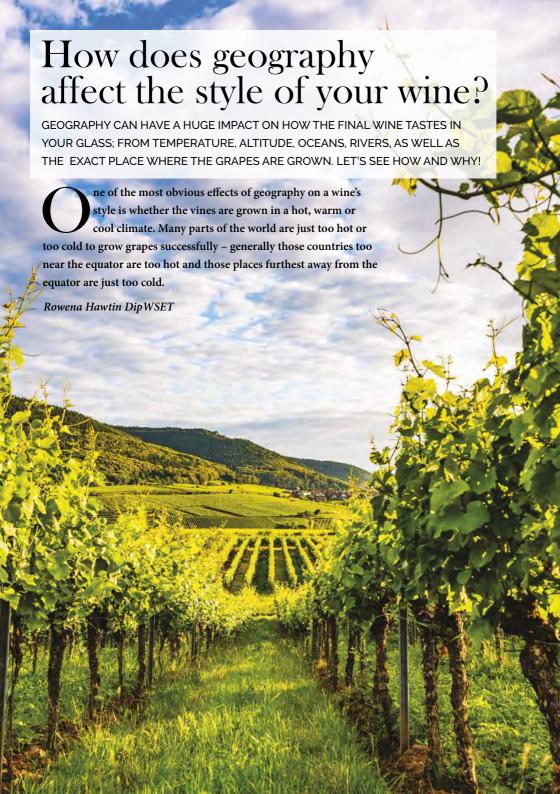




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Just like all plants, vines require the right amount of water, nutrients, sunlight and warmth to flourish; cooler areas tend to produce less ripe grapes with lower alcohol, more acidity and fresh fruit aromas. Furthermore, cooler regions are more likely to produce more white wines than red as most white grapes ripen in lower temperatures than red grapes. Some examples of cool climates include England, Canada, New Zealand, Loire valley in Northern France and Germany. Having said that, some of these countries do produce some excellent red wines such as Pinot Noir and Cabernet Franc which tend to prefer a cooler climate.

At the other end of the spectrum, most black grapes tend to ripen in warmer climates - some like very warm climates such as Grenache and Mourvèdre which thrive in Spain, whilst others such as Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon thrive in moderate to warm temperatures. Very ripe grapes will often have higher sugar levels, resulting in more alcoholic wines so picking the grapes at optimum times as well as careful management in the winery is needed so they are not overly alcoholic and lacking flavour. These warm/hot regions tend to be most of the New world (Australia, South Africa, USA and Chili) although trends are indicating a slight decrease in popularity of wines above 14.5ABV so grapes may be picked earlier when there is slightly less sugar and therefore lower potential alcohol.

SLOPES

Most vineyards are located on at least a gentle slope, but in some cases, these slopes can be extremely steep, such as those in the Moselle valley in Germany or parts of the Douro in Portugal. As Germany has such a cool climate, steep slopes maximise the amount of sunlight the vines receive which aids ripening and increases sugar levels. In the northern hemisphere these slopes are usually south facing; however, in very hot locations such as the Douro in Portugal the slopes are north facing to try to limit the amount of sunlight on the vines because the grapes would become over-ripe and contain an excess of sugar. In contrast, in the southern hemisphere vines face north - the direction of the equator to increase direct sunlight (for example in New Zealand), but sometimes they will face in the opposite direction for the same reasons stated above.

In cooler regions such as Burgundy in France, slopes can help with limiting damage from frosts; cool air tends to roll down the hill and collect at the bottom, meaning that vineyards on slopes are less affected by frost than those on the valley floor.

Therefore, in expensive wine regions such as the Cote d'Or in Burgundy, vines designated for the most expensive wines will be planted mid-slope. In places such as France this way of managing vineyards has been passed down through the generations as to how to optimise the conditions for the particular site, the grape variety being grown as well as the target market with the best sites being reserved for the most expensive wines.

ALTITUDE

Altitude has become a key talking point in wine over the past few years and Argentina has been leading the way in this discussion.

The phrase 'high-altitude vineyards' is increasingly being used on wine labels as a selling point and whilst some may regard this as a cynical marketing ploy by winemakers wanting to stand out from the crowd of wine bottles, we want the facts! If altitude can be used to differentiate and explain variations between wines, what effect does it have on wine and what difference does it make?

What is high?

To be called a wine from high altitude it has to be a minimum of 500 metres above sea level and in somewhere such as Argentina this is considered quite low as some vines are planted as high as 1,100 metres above sea level.

One advantage is that in warmer climates, altitude can provide some relief from the heat. Another advantage is that there is more solar radiation at altitude during daylight, but cooler night-time temperatures. This diurnal effect slows down ripening which creates more complexity in the grape compared to vines planted at sea level which would ripen more quicky. Malbec is the most widely planted grape in Argentina and where it is planted has a huge effect on the wine that ends up in your bottle; but also the price.

OCEANS AND RIVERS

Where beautiful wine is produced, it is often remarked that one will also find beautiful places. Rivers, lakes, oceans and seas feature almost synonymously amongst many of the worlds best wine regions; the river Moselle,



the Saône, the Rhône, the Douro, the Gironde, Margaret River, the Loire, Lake Garda and the North Pacific to name a few. These bodies of water are located at the very heart of the world's most illustrious wine regions. However, they offer much more to our favourite wines than just a picturesque backdrop, they play a fundamental, and oft-overlooked role. Have you ever stepped outside on a cold morning to find the ground beneath you frozen solid even though nearby large a body of water remains in a liquid state? Why? Bodies of water hold their temperature for longer periods than land mass which takes longer to warm up, but also longer to cool down too. Water in a cool region helps to radiate heat to the vines and aids ripening whilst in a warm climate, proximity to a cold ocean can provide some relief from the heat; the more exposed a vineyard is to the ocean, the cooler and windier it tends to be.

The air is often damp, so mists and fogs may build up in the morning, which can further cool the vineyard and provide protection from the strong sunshine. For example, the Central Coast AVA is a large, diverse wine-growing region in California, stretching from the San Francisco Bay Area to Santa Barbara County. It is known for its varied microclimates, producing a wide range of wines, including cool-climate Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, and warmerclimate Zinfandel and Cabernet Sauvignon. All these different factors combine to make every vineyard site unique, accounting for the immense variety of wine styles available for you to enjoy! If you want to experience the influence of geography for yourself, try comparing a Chardonnay from Northern France with one from a sunny spot in California - you will be sure to notice a significant difference in the style of the wine. Cheers!



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