

LIVING

“Being a good neighbour could ensure the best start to the year for everyone.”
Andrew Williams



GLORIOUS REVIVAL
Roger St Pierre

High tea in the height of luxury

Swan Hotel, in Suffolk, is one of England's best preserved medieval villages. One of its finest half-timbered buildings, The Swan Hotel (theswanhotel.com or call 01787 247477) used to be part of the enormous Swan chain but returned to independent operation several years back. High tea at The Swan has blazing log fires, freshly prepared finger sandwiches, scones, cream and suckling lamb cakes followed by a stroll round the village's antique shops and boutiques. If, fully vested, you want to stay the night there are 43 enchanting en-suite rooms some with romantic four-posters, from £175 per room per night, including breakfast.

Jersey (jerseytourism.info) offers many beautiful hotels and, thanks to the demands of the weekday financial sector, standards are very high. With Valentine's Day just around the corner, why not share a romantic weekend with your loved one? Jersey's dramatic coastal scenery provides an idyllic setting for romantic walks and Michelin standard restaurants are perfect for that special dinner for two.

The grand hotel de France is offering wellness breaks at £170 per person, including two nights B&B, a three-course dinner and a one-hour treatment in the Ayuh Wellness Spa, voted one of the seven best spas in Europe.

If you fancy skiing as part of your fitness regime, take a look at the five-day ski and wellness package offered by Switzerland's Grand Resort Bad Ragaz (thorpaper.ch, or call 0081 303 30 30). Included are a generous daily buffet breakfast, open use of the spa, two luxury spa treatments, a four-day Passi ski pass, transfers from the hotel to the pistes, at prices from 1,222 euros per person. Groups of four from 4 to eight can even book lessons in advanced skiing from former professional Franco Cavigliani.

Go to Laura's website at laurawilliamsline.co.uk and email all of your diet and fitness questions to laura@laurawilliamsline.co.uk

GET THE LOOK

Kelly Brook

The shrilly star is a ray of hope for normal women everywhere as she's content with her peach hips. Likes to drink choc chip cookies in her tea and works out with a hula hoop.

How she does it: Kelly is sensible about what she eats and if she treats herself one day, she'll make up for it the next. She also exercises regularly and stays active by working out with a trainer.

You can too: Kelly Brook is reportedly a size 8 and looks good for it. The pressure to whittle your weight down to nothing can be immense if you're following the latest fashions. But if Kelly Brook can beat to Hollywood and retain her curves, anything's possible. Having a pragmatic approach to your

diet certainly helps. Compensating for that lunatic cheeseburger with sushi for supper is great common sense and will help to prevent unwanted weight gain. And if you're not a fan of regimented exercise routines, work on toning your muscles a slightly different way - Kelly dances with weights, uses a hula hoop and power-walks uphill on a treadmill. If you're conscientious about what you eat, these fun, slightly lower intensity activities will still be beneficial to your figure and muscle tone. And lastly, there's nothing wrong with dunking your mid-morning biscuit into your tea, but be warned: the average chocolate biscuit contains around 80 calories which would take around an hour to burn off on a steep uphill climb.



ACCESSORY OF THE WEEK

Breo Skin sports watch
This cool little watch favoured by many celebs is waterproof, lightweight and funky looking which makes it the ultimate fitness accessory. £13 from Amazon.co.uk

Q&A

Can I lose weight through swimming? A colleague suggested it wouldn't do much good.

Studies have shown that recreational swimming is less likely to help you lose weight compared to other forms of aerobic exercise. However, elite swimmers burn a vast number of calories when they work

out proving that intensity, as well as duration, is vital. If swimming is to be an effective method of weight loss, flooding up with your head out of the water is unlikely to get you fit and places excessive strain your neck and back. But 40 minutes of fast paced swimming including backstroke, front crawl and butterfly (if you can manage it) will do wonders for your fitness, waistline and all-over muscle tone. If you up the pace of your swimming workout and still don't see results, you should try mixing in some other activities such as running, spinning or circuit training.

Active results

Over the last two weeks I've been sharing ways of relieving tension in the upper back and neck, areas that are often caused by desk work, stress and poor posture. This week focuses on the jaw area. Many people hold tension around their jaw without realising it as they often grind their teeth during the night. Chattering teeth and clenching tension which can lead to headaches, for example. When you show, the movements are small and working the muscles through a little range of movement means they will become

tight if not stretched. Imagine doing a squat exercise where you hold yourself at the bottom of the move with your knees bent at right angles and you only straighten your legs a tiny bit before lowering back to the bottom of your squat again. The muscles in your legs would become tired quickly and you would probably feel some muscular pain the next day from working the muscles through a small range of movement without stretching them afterwards.

To avoid tension around your jaw, simply start by opening your mouth as wide as it will go and hold for a moment. Then to take the muscles through a full range of movement, contract them by closing your mouth and eyes making your face as small as you can. Repeat this 10 times, ideally in a place where you are comfortable so you don't feel silly. If you grind your teeth at night, perform this exercise before you go to bed to help the area relax.



with Gillian Reeves, group exercise co-ordinator at Virgin Active, Canary Riverside.

GREENliving

Time to turn and face the future

I wonder how many Wharf readers are breathing a sigh of relief this week. Many of you will have decided that January was going to be the start of a new chapter in your personal wellbeing, with regular trips to the gym, a macrobiotic vegan diet and washings of hot ginger tea. Sadly, these things rarely last, and you may now have decided that February is the time to get back off the wagon. I enjoy everything in moderation. But it's good to start the year with a head and many of us will also be thinking about how to face this a better year for business. I also hope that we'll be focusing on how our business success can be sustainable, in every sense of the word.

One resource which is going from strength to strength is East London Business Place. ELPB are based here in the Wharf and work to match local small businesses to larger organisations, with the aim of encouraging a flourishing economy in east London.

Several of the small businesses signed up to the ELPB have strong sustainable credentials. As well as Seventeen, these include Paperback, a paper merchant based in low-waste specialises in recycled stock, and Novaplex, which helps businesses cut down on their printing costs. As we slowly emerge from the recession the long term future remains shrouded in mystery. One message I hope all businesses hear loud and clear is that a focus on sustainability will help you to thrive.

This includes looking at your environmental impact, but also the effect you have on the community where you are based. Being a good neighbour could ensure the best start to the year for everyone.



Do you or your company have an environmentally friendly product or service you'd like featured in the column? Let us know by contacting Samantha, a sustainable entrepreneur for your green management needs, at s@thelivingjournal.co.uk.

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