

# COUNTRY LIVING

DECORATING • CRAFTS • HOUSES • GARDENS • FOOD • TRAVEL • HEALTH

## Easy summer days

Create a garden room or conservatory  
 Forage for wild bilberries and smoke your own food  
 Make and display homespun crafts

**HEAVENLY HOLIDAY**  
 STAY IN A TUSCAN FARMHOUSE  
**TASTE FOR BUSINESS?**  
 START YOUR OWN PATISSERIE

**STYLISH GARDENS**  
 UNUSUAL PLANTS FOR EVERY SETTING

**HOW YOU CAN HELP SAVE BRITAIN'S BUTTERFLIES**



**ON THE ROAD SIX OF THE MOST DRAMATIC DRIVES**

### Listen to nature

Whether it's the rustle of wind through trees or the babble of a stream, listening to natural sounds can help us feel calm and even boost our ability to concentrate. Researchers at Brighton and Sussex Medical School found that playing these to people increased activity in the body associated with relaxation. Brain scans revealed an 'outward-focus' to attention, as opposed to listening to man-made sounds, which resulted in an 'inward focus', similar to states seen in conditions such as stress, anxiety and depression. Hearing such noises also meant participants performed better in tasks requiring concentration skills. People feeling the most wound-up have the most to gain from a country walk – researchers found that those with the highest stress levels experienced the greatest bodily relaxation.



### BEAUTY BUZZ SUMMER SCENTS

Add to your fragrance collection with one of the latest seasonal scents. Fresh florals and invigorating coastal notes are perfect for sunny days, and the latest products mean you can layer them subtly with hair and body formulations, too. Spritz on Jo Malone London Star Magnolia Limited Edition Hair Mist (£35, jomalone.com) to add shine as well as the smell of magnolia, orange blossom and lemon. Wild herbs and salty beaches inspire the fragrance of Tom Ford Costa Azzurra All Over Body Spray (£44, houseoffraser.co.uk). The light mist is refreshing and cooling. With the mineral notes of sea spray and warmth of patchouli, Hermès Eau des Merveilles Bleue (£72, uk.hermes.com) is ideal for balmy evenings. Shay & Blue Dandelion Fig (£55, shayandblue.com) blends the fresh, green aroma of dandelion leaf with summery tomato vine and earthy fig tones.

## health notes



### NEW FAVOURITE

A new summer staple, Aurelia Botanical Cream Deodorant (£18, aurelia.skincare.com) contains antimicrobial arrowroot, moisture-absorbing kaolin and nourishing Shea butter. The result is a natural aluminium-free deodorant that leaves underarms feeling soft and smelling fresh.

Boost your wellbeing the natural way with our round-up from the world of health and beauty

**ENJOY SUMMER EVENINGS OUTSIDE** without worrying about biting bugs by spraying on Incognito Insect Repellent (£7.99, hollandandbarrett.com) – a DEET-free natural formula with essential oils. Boost protection further by showering with Incognito Second Skin Hair & Body Wash (£9). **FOR A DELICIOUS AND SOOTHING TEA,** try Pukka Womankind (£2.49, waitrose.com). The herbal blend contains shatavari root, traditionally used in Ayurvedic medicine to help support hormones and the menstrual cycle, as well as cranberry extract for urinary health. **THE COMBINATION OF A** Vogel Pollinosan Hayfever Tablets (£6.95, avogel.co.uk) and Pollinosan Luffa Nasal Spray (£7.99) helps keep runny noses and itching eyes at bay without causing drowsiness. *For more tips and products, visit netdoctor.co.uk.*

### NATURE'S MEDICINE CABINET

**Fennel** The feathery leaves, flowers, seeds and even the roots of different cultivars of fennel have been used for centuries for medicinal purposes. A tea made with the leaves or seeds was a traditional remedy for digestive discomfort, such as bloating and trapped wind, and one study found that infants given fennel seed oil (an ingredient in many 'grape waters') suffered less from symptoms of colic. It's also a rich source of fibre and phytonutrients thought to help stimulate digestion and ease constipation.\*



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