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dinner at Woking's
foodie festival



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DOORSTEP:**
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BARNETT HILL HOUSE



CELEBRITY:
PHIL TUFNELL
on his cricket
hall of fame

SURREY LIFE

surreylife.co.uk | August 2017

Splash Special

**A guide to the
best places to keep
cool this SUMMER**

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of Surrey**

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Behind the scenes with
our AWARDS hosts

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NATURE
RESERVES**

Reasons to love
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FROM THE ARCHIVES:

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Farm in Nutfield**

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Editor's letter

I WAS HONOURED just recently to have been invited to Grange Park Opera's new Theatre in the Woods at West Horsley Place as it approached the end of its first summer festival.

Considering the project - the first permanent purpose-built opera house to be built in the UK for decades - is not entirely finished yet (opera director Wasfi Kani says she still needs £2 to £3 million to complete her vision), it's been a pretty groundbreaking first season. In less than five weeks, more than 14,000 people have travelled to this spectacular woodland theatre and experienced the newest - and arguably most immersive - classical musical experience in the country.

As an opera virgin, it's difficult to make comparisons but with its whimsical setting within the grounds of West Horsley Place, which was inherited by Bamber Gascoigne in 1914 and couldn't be much further away from the hustle and bustle of the city, I can completely understand why aficionados would flock here.

Richard Wagner's *Die Walküre* is said to be one of the trickier operas to contend with so it perhaps wasn't the best choice for one's first trip to the opera but then I'm always up for a challenge and the light box fixed above the stage translating every word certainly helped!

What is so fantastic about this project is that it has not only created a new reason for people to visit our wonderful county, experience its beauty and support our local businesses while they are here but it has also enabled public access to an otherwise restricted historical home and is changing the face of traditional opera, opening it up to a wider, less conversant, audience.

A quote by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa featured in the festival programme sums it up quite nicely, "To stay the same, we need to change".

My day at the opera happened to be on one of the hottest days of the year and we enjoyed a picnic on the lawn under the shelter of the groves in-between acts, which was the perfect breather from the dramatic scenes being performed within the confines of the theatre.



RICHARD LEWISOHN

The stunning gardens in which the Theatre in the Woods can be found...

For those of you who have found the heat this summer a little too intense, there are plenty more ideas of where to escape to cool down in our splash special on page 49 so don't let the heat stop you from getting out and about and enjoying Surrey life. ♦



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MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS



ADELE PARKS

A bestselling author, Adele lives in Guildford with her husband and teenage son, and loves exploring Surrey's many attractions. This month she visited the Sculpture Park in Churt for the first time - read how she got on in her column on page 47.



BEN SHORT

Our Life Coach is an exercise physiologist and health advisor at Spire Gatwick Park Hospital in Horley, a personal trainer, and chairman of Horley Harriers Running Club. He's got a few tips on exercising with your kids this summer on page 113.



JANET DONIN

Interior design has always been Janet's passion and she loves nothing more than meeting and writing about people who share her enthusiasm, such as Jo Downs whose Ripley showroom features in this month's Designer Style on page 136.



I'VE always fancied going to Henry Moore's sculpture Park in Yorkshire. We drive past the brown sign every time I visit my parents (that is a really long journey, we take it in turns to ask, 'Are we nearly there yet?'). The point is, we never have time to divert. So, it was suggested to me that I go and have a look at the Sculpture Park in Churt, an area of outstanding natural beauty nestled in the Surrey Hills, on my doorstep.

The Sculpture Park boasts over 800 sculptures made by 150 artists. Why limit yourself to one artist when you can have a whole eclectic array?

I loved the place immediately because there was a sign at the entrance that requested only, "well behaved, quiet children" enter. It was an astonishingly honest and sensible request in times that seem increasingly anarchic. Of course, I had to immediately ditch the six-year-old Twins that Frazzled Friend had brought along, I sent them to the pub across the road. No, just kidding. They, like most kids, rose to the occasion and loved the idea that they were only allowed access because they were somehow especially good and proved to be so.

On arrival, we were given a map detailing the trail to follow. The trail is split into four parts: yellow, red, blue and green, each with helpful real-life, on the ground coloured arrows to guide visitors through the meanderings paths, enabling viewing of the full collection. A map, a choice of paths and two small boys, what could go wrong? Nothing actually.

What a brilliant outdoor gallery The Sculpture Park is; the best I've ever seen. It really is the perfect art gallery for any one of any age. There's so much to see and think about. There were endless pieces to look at and all of them provide great talking points.

A couple of fun games we played were 'Guess the Name of the Sculpture' (hilarious with children who are a little blunt,



On the sculpture trail

Having missed the opportunity to view Henry Moore's sculpture park in the north numerous times, bestselling author Adele Parks visits one a little closer to home

basic and even brutal and adults who are endearingly competitive) and we played 'Guess the Price'.

Yes, almost all the art in The Sculpture Park is available to purchase and, as well as a map, on arrival visitors are given a guidebook that helpfully lists the artist's name, title, medium, edition and price of all the sculptures. Experts are on-hand to advise on choosing the best sculpture for your garden or home. There's a huge variety of pieces for sale to suit most budgets and tastes.

It turns out I have expensive taste. I adored the power of James Doran-Webb's life-size Rutting

Above: Adele enjoying a rest along the sculpture trail

Right: One of the many sculptures that caught Adele's eye



Stags, made from driftwood. The piece beautifully captures every sinew and nerve. Absolutely stunning. A little out of my price bracket at £75,000 (also it's big, where would I put it?) but if Hollywood ever call and make me into a gazillionaire, by turning one of my books into a movie, then I'll be right back to buy that beauty. ♦

"I loved the place immediately because there was a sign at the entrance that requested only 'well behaved, quiet children' enter..."