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# ARE WE NEARLY THERE YET?

With bestselling author **Adele Parks**



have a bucket list. It's relatively reasonable. I am unlikely to ever climb Mount Kilimanjaro, I've no desire to run a marathon and I don't fancy cross country skiing in Lapland.

Although these things are amazing, and I massively admire anyone who attempts any of them, I know my strengths (some might say limits); I place quite some store on personal comfort and safety.

My bucket list includes things such as a desire to milk a cow, I'd like to be in extra in a blockbuster movie and I've always really wanted to throw a pot. I am delighted to report that the latter is now well and truly ticked. I didn't have to travel to a different country, just along the A3 to Milford, staying well within our lovely county.

**"I am unlikely to ever climb Mount Kilimanjaro, I've no desire to run a marathon and I don't fancy cross country skiing in Lapland"**

Claire Waterhouse founded The Portable Pottery Company in 2011, after a long and successful career teaching ceramic design. She specialises in throwing on the potter's wheel, and much to my joy, offers flexible teaching by appointment. I booked said appointment and persuaded my friend, Louise, to accompany me once again because day trips are more fun shared.

Claire works from her garden studio. I expected a purposefully-designed and fully equipped pottery classroom but I don't think I was expecting such an utterly charming wooden cabin where I instantly felt at once buoyant yet relaxed. The studio is bright, clean and inviting. A veritable Aladdin's cave, as there are jewel coloured pots, slips and glazes dotted about.

While Claire measured, cut and wedged the clay to prepare it for throwing, Louise and I enjoyed a cup of Earl Grey tea and a WI cake and listened carefully to the lesson. This, my friends, is my idea of heaven.



## Potty about pottery

This month Adele Parks ticks off an activity from her bucket list and learns to throw a pot

Claire clearly relishes the time that she spends in her studio developing her own work. She makes a huge variety of pots: bowls, vases, pitches, lidded vessels, all with her signature style of simple forms and crisp shapes. Her enthusiasm for her art is generous and unpretentious, it's obvious that she enjoys sharing her skills and space with others. She's a patient and precise teacher whose experience means she's unflappable.

Claire carefully demonstrated throwing a bowl on the wheel and then we were invited to have a go. Claire had made the process look ridiculously easy, indeed watching her was mesmerising almost therapeutic. Not unsurprisingly

it turned out to be a little trickier than her demonstration suggested but (under careful guidance) totally achievable!

I finished up with a small but perfectly-formed bowl. My bowl was a bit diddy as I'd lost half my clay by being a little forceful when stretching the clay on the wheel - half of it broke clean away! Still, the joy of the process is that art is personal, I love tiny pots!

I'm hooked. I'll be going back for night classes. I might have a whole tea service by Christmas (a doll's one perhaps!). ♦

**For more information visit [theportablepottery.com](http://theportablepottery.com)**

**[adeleparks.com](http://adeleparks.com) @adeleparks  
Instagram: @adele\_parks**

**TOP:** Claire helping Adele have her 'Ghost' moment