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and Michelin-star meal
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INSIDE: Our 2017
Food & Drink Awards
winners revealed

SURREY LIFE

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Editor's letter



GIFT SUBSCRIPTION

With the shops now stocking festive goods, the count down to Christmas is seemingly already upon us (apologies for using the 'C' word prior to the December edition).

For those who might like to start a little forward planning of the stocking-filler variety, can I point you to a rather quick, easy and great value-for-money idea, namely a gift subscription to *Surrey Life* or one of our other fantastic county magazines?

Log on, pay and you have sorted your nearest and dearest for 12 months of quality reading.

Full details can be found on page 54.

OH what a night. I'm talking, of course, about the *Surrey Life* Food & Drink Awards, which took place a few weeks back in the stunning surroundings of Foxhills in Ottershaw.

Having only taken over editorship of the magazine a month or two after last year's awards, the 2017 awards were a first for me and, while my lovely assistant Matthew Williams was like a kid at Christmas clapping his hands together with glee as we prepared for the evening, I wasn't entirely sure what to expect. I also had my welcome speech (in front of an almost 400-strong crowd of hungry people) to tackle before I could really relax and enjoy the evening.

But what an evening it was. Not only was it an honour to have the cream of Surrey's food and drink scene all in one room (well, marquee) but the community spirit and enthusiasm of everyone on the night was astonishing.

Who knew that an event which started out five years ago as an intimate lunch of less than 100 people, would become such a prominent fixture in Surrey's food and drink calendar? It has been wonderful in the days and weeks following the event to receive emails from nominees, winners and guests about what a great night they had.

The awards couldn't have happened without a number of people and we've a special thank you to them – along with pictures from the event and of course our winners – on page 98 but, I also have a couple of personal thank yous. First, I must mention the team at dLo Hairdressing and Lydia Allen from Lydia Jane styling, in Guildford, who did my hair and make up for the evening (more on them on page 121) and secondly our wonderful events and marketing manager, Steph Drury, who works tirelessly with her team to ensure the awards go ahead each year.

Awards have continued to flow in recognition of our county's food heroes over



Surrey Life F&D Awards

the past few weeks with two more of our chefs being awarded Michelin stars, bringing the number of restaurants in Surrey with this prestigious mark of approval back up to three (read more in *Gourmet Life* on page 104).

It's also been an award-winning month for Surrey in a number of other sectors. If you watch *George Clarke's Amazing Spaces* then you may well have tuned into the final of the Shed of the Year competition and seen Ben Swanborough pick up the title. We visited his 'Mushroom House' in the garden of his home in Chiddingfold and were transported into a land of fairytales. Read more on page 168.

Talking of escaping from the real world, if you're planning on getting away from it all this winter don't forget to check out our seasonal Surrey escapes on page 134. Enjoy this month's *Surrey Life*.



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MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS



PETE GARDNER

Photographer and writer, Pete, is always on the lookout for the little secret gems that make our Surrey towns so special. This month we sent him to Esher to find out what's hot in the town. He also papped our Food & Drink Award winners on page 98



LEIGH CLAPP

Leigh greatly enjoys photographing and writing about Surrey's wonderful gardens. This month, she took a trip to Chiddingfold to find out more about the inspiration behind the 2017 Shed of the Year, the Mushroom House. Read on page 168



ADELE PARKS

Bestselling author, Adele lives in Guildford with her husband and teenage son, and loves exploring Surrey's many attractions. This month she learnt a thing or two on a visit to Hampton Court Palace – read how she got on in her column on page 39.



WE'RE lucky, there are countless National Heritage sites to be enjoyed in Surrey: stately homes, museums, memorials, ancient towers and even a castle. A plethora of opportunities to entertain, educate (and let's be honest – infuriate) the teen in your life.

Surrey is certainly rich in culture and history. Yet how many counties can boast palaces? Hampton Court is the jewel in our crown.

My mum and I like to consider ourselves quite the Tudor experts (we've both read all of Philippa Gregory's novels) but my knowledge on the monarchs of the 18th century is sketchy. There's nothing I like more than knowing a thing or two, and there's little my husband likes more than pointing out that I don't know everything, so Hampton Court – rich in the history of both periods – seemed an ideal choice for our family jaunt.

The palace is quite literally breathtaking. The scale and scope of the visionaries who designed it, and the wealth of those who lived in it, is hard to digest (nearly as hard to digest as I imagine peacock to be, which was apparently a regular on Henry VIII's table).

Historic Royal Palaces is dedicated to preserving our nation's ancient treasures but interesting interactive displays, cleverly curated exhibits and actors drifting through the grounds – recreating the intrigues and politicking of old – capture the imagination of even the most modern visitor.

It took a huge amount of self-control from Mum and I, not to shout spoilers when audiences were picking their bewildered way through the romantic life of Henry VIII. I mean, if they're going to ask the children the name of the wife who survived then they should expect...oh, yes, it was a question for the children, not adult show-offs. Sorry, just a little bit ebullient.

Kitchen feast

Henry VIII's kitchens are fabulous; room after room of industry and organisation.



Jewel in the crown

This month, bestselling author Adele Parks is taught a thing or two during a family visit to Hampton Court Palace

They were designed to cater for around 400 people twice a day. A vast operation, under any circumstances. We took 10 teenage boys on holiday last summer and so I've some experience with feeding the eternally famished.

One year the provision of meat for the Tudor court is recorded as 1,240 oxen, 8,200 sheep, 2,330 deer, 760 calves, 1,870 pigs and 53 wild boar; washed down with 600,000 gallons of beer. Without dishwashers! I can't boast producing similar quantities in France, although it sometimes felt like it.

"There's so much to see at Hampton Court, a day is not enough"

Above: Adele marvels at the awesome scale of the King's Staircase at HCP

There's so much to see at Hampton Court, a day is not enough. Visit the Great Hall, where Shakespeare's company performed for King James I or attend a service at the working Royal Chapel, the very place where a longed-for Prince was baptised, a beloved Queen was laid in state. That's the fascination of this palace, it's impossible not to imagine the pleasures, the plots, the pain.

The gardens are also lavish - 60 acres of spectacular formal gardens and 750 acres of parkland so lots of opportunities to hit the Fitbit goal. ♦