

ISSUE 150 | DECEMBER 2023 | DHS15

# Mother Baby & Child

**BUILDING FAMILY  
TRADITIONS**

**RESETTING YOUR  
CHILD'S SLEEP**

**SIGNS OF A  
HEALTHY BABY**

**DIY CRAFTS  
FOR KIDS**

**EDITOR'S  
FESTIVE GUIDE**

 **'TIS THE  
SEASON!** 



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Dominic De Sousa  
(1959 - 2015)

## PRINTED BY

Al Salam Printing Press LLC

## FOR OTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE VISIT:

motherbabychild.com



MBCMagazine

## PUBLISHED BY



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Production City, DCCA

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# EDITOR'S LETTER

## *Hello Mum!*

Can you believe it's almost the end of this year already?! The first thing I want to do is to thank you very much for registering and attending our events this year! Your attendance at our events means we can better support you with practical demonstrations, opportunities to sit face-to-face with a whole host of incredible parenting and wellbeing experts and, most importantly, for us to meet each other and deepen our relationship together! The more you attend, the more we can support you, and I really love that we're in this together - so, thank you again!



In this month's Parenting Section, we discuss the power of building family traditions (page 30), which the holiday season is perfect for, and is also a wonderful element to family time year-round. We also consider the benefits of postnatal retreats for new mothers on page 23, a concept that has lots of historical context but is only arriving now to the region.

You'll find a helpful guide to making some homemade festive crafts with little ones on page 26, to bring an extra special charm to your décor this year, alongside a helpful piece that examines the tricky task of resetting your child's sleep habits. This is a challenge that plagues many parents and can be a real concern. You'll find the article on page 13.

We dive into the best ways to prepare your living space for the next twelve months, welcoming in a sense of renewal and positive change that will refresh your home. I hope it will help you to say goodbye to 2023 and set yourself up for clarity and progress as you move forward. Read all about it on page 43.

This month we travel to the shopping haven of Paris, the tropical peace of the Maldives, the cultural hub of Amsterdam and much more, seeking out some gorgeous destinations for a festive family break now and into the new year. Check it out on page 39.

There's so much to unwrap in this issue, and I'll leave you to discover the festive articles for yourself, including my Editor's Festive Guide (page 47), which covers everything from prepping your hair, skin and makeup for the party season, all the way to a delicious turkey takeaway with all the trimmings, sophisticated alcohol-free drinks and a sweet treat to finish your family feast.

I'll sign off by wishing you and your family a joyful, healthy and fun-filled holiday season and I'll see you in the new year!

Happy reading!

*Ella*

Editor

Mother, Baby & Child Magazine

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## Editor's PICK

### SINK INTO SERENITY AT LUSH SPA

I'm delighted to invite you into a world of much-needed rejuvenation at the brand new LUSH Spa in Mirdif City Centre. The spa promises to nurture your body and mind, with restoring massage treatments, reviving facials, holistic sound baths, grounding treatments for your feet and scalp and indulgent bathing experiences. Whether you need a quick pick-me-up, a deep unwind, or want to share a treatment with a loved one, the LUSH therapists will transport you to a realm of pure relaxation.

Interestingly, music is an integral element of the LUSH Spa experience and each of the unique offerings has a bespoke soundtrack, designed to enhance each experience.

A treatment I would love to draw your attention to is The Good Hour (AED 450), which I feel makes the perfect end-of-year treat to yourself! The 70-minute full-body massage will work all your major muscles and help clear your mind.

Using firm pressure and a range of effective massage techniques, including trigger pointing, your therapist will work on areas of tension, leaving you feeling restored and uplifted for the new year ahead. The soundtrack, made by Lush Fresh Handmade Sound, will whisk you off to sea with a chorus of sea shanties, before bringing you back to shore feeling brand new.

Moreover, you can also give the gift of a LUSH Spa treatment, with a wide range of spa vouchers available in-store or online - perfect for this time of year!

*To book a treatment at the new LUSH Spa, call 04 560 850, or to learn more, visit [www.lush.com/mena/en\\_ae](http://www.lush.com/mena/en_ae).*





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## LIFT YOUR OUTDOOR SPACE WITH SUNCOAST

I was happy to discover that Suncoast has a new winter décor line, helping us add a touch of seasonal fun to our gardens this holiday season. From classic and modern Christmas trees, to twinkling lights, jolly Santa figures, gnomes and beautiful winter wreaths, their collection has something for every household, no matter your style. This doesn't simply have to be about putting out some decorations - it's an opportunity to infuse some cosy magic into your space that genuinely brings you joy, by sprucing up your outdoor space into a cheery area for your family to indulge in this season. I'm also pleased to add that all products are covered by an exclusive two-year warranty, for your peace of mind. The collection offers a whole array of pieces to choose from, so your patio, garden, or balcony can be transformed into a beautiful winter wonderland!

*Shop Suncoast's products at their stores in Al Barsha 2, Dubai Hills Mall and Reem Mall or online at <https://suncoast.ae/>.*

# Crave the Freshness!

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**Cherries** from Romania & Greece – **Blueberries** from Romania



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# THINGS TO DO



Yoga on the beach; a  
festive market for the  
family; winter camps for  
kids and more!







# SEASONAL FUN AT TIME OUT MARKET!

As the festive season approaches, Time Out Market Dubai is set to transform into a culinary and entertainment haven, offering a unique experience for you and your family. From Christmas celebrations to spectacular New Year's Eve festivities, the market is gearing up to be the ultimate destination for festive joy and gastronomic delights. Adding to the December excitement are the usual favourites like Jazz Mondays, Latin Tuesdays and other live musical performances, ensuring a month filled with diverse entertainment and culinary experiences for all the family to enjoy.

## Unwrap the magic of Christmas

Until January 4th, Time Out Market will become a wonderful destination for festive food, fun and merriment. The market will host specially crafted festive dishes, immersing you and your loved ones in the joyful spirit of the holidays. Here, you can indulge in the delectable flavours of Pick's 'Ahhh Bistro Bird', a mouthwatering cheeseburger, featuring smoked roasted turkey and cranberry jam. For a unique twist, savour BB Social's 'The Xmas Sando', a delightful creation of roasted turkey katsu, wasabi-cranberry jam and creamy camembert. Onda by Alici adds a touch of elegance with their 'Gnocchi Ai Gamberi', an elevated dish of gnocchi paired with prawns. Delicious!

The winter wonderland ambience, adorned with seasonal decorations, seamlessly blends the joy of Christmas with New Year's Eve anticipation. On December 23rd, guests can enjoy live music by Ryan Gibb. Christmas Eve features heartwarming Christmas carols with Santa and the elves, while Christmas Day unfolds with a live performance by The Youngers, spectacular dancers and a skilled juggler. This is sure to bring the holiday spirit to you and your little ones!

## Countdown to 2024

Step into the excitement of the market's New Year's Eve celebration and welcome in 2024 in style. Kicking off at 6:30pm for Gold ticket holders and 7:00pm for others, you will be handed an event card unlocking an exclusive dining experience, with over 250 dishes by the market's renowned chefs, pre-loaded with 50% of the ticket value to spend. From Pitfire's 'Triple Truffle Pizza' and Masti's 'Kashmiri Tandoori Lambchops', to Odeon's premium foie gras, cheese and cold cuts platter and Little Jun's 'Miso Sea Bass', your loved ones can sample the tastes of the world before the clock strikes midnight. As the night unfolds, enjoy captivating performances from The Reda Mafia band and DJ Akmaral, complemented by roaming acts and a photo booth, all ensuring an electric atmosphere. This promises to be an amazing way to ring in the new year with your friends and family.

**Price:** From AED 1,000 per person

Visit <https://dubai.platinumlist.net/event-tickets/88691/tom-nye-24> to learn more.

## WINTER CAMPS FOR ADVENTUROUS KIDS

Aventura Parks, UAE's largest nature playground, is launching two new winter camps for children between 5-12 years of age. Both the Olympics-themed camp and the Jurassic-themed camp are places where learning goes outdoors and the magic of nature takes centre stage. These are sure to be thoroughly enjoyable (and educational!) camps for your little ones. Upon completion each child also gets a certificate of participation to proudly take home!

### Olympics-themed week

From December 11th-15th, the camp combines the excitement of competition with learning and thrills. You little one can navigate different activities throughout the week, culminating in a final ceremony and competition where one team will get bragging rights, and all will enjoy the fresh air of nature and plenty of physical activities.

### Jurassic-themed week

From December 18th-22nd, the camp centres around the Jurassic period where your child can learn all about the planet's timeline of life and how dinosaurs survived, including facts about the food chain, environment and volcanic activity. How interesting! Activities will revolve around five modules: science, the arts, team building, nature works and adventure.



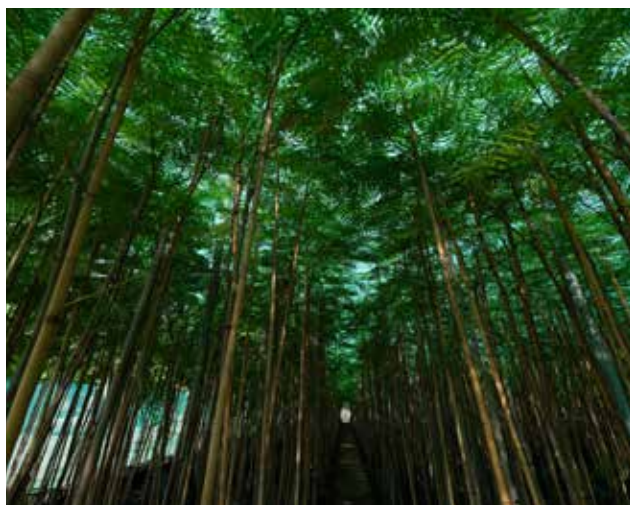
The winter camps at Aventura Parks are the ideal way to get children away from screens, spending time in nature and learning valuable skills - all while taking on physical activity and creating lasting memories!

**Price:** AED 265 per day or AED 995 per week

**Time:** 9am to 5pm daily

**For more information or to make a booking, visit [www.aventuraparks.com](http://www.aventuraparks.com).**

## A UNIQUE TRIP TO SHAJAR



For a truly different experience, check out Shajar by Arada - a newly-opened nursery and visitor attraction with 130,000 trees. Spread over a 1.6 million square foot area, Shajar, which means 'trees' in Arabic, is one of the largest nurseries in the UAE. A family-friendly and educational attraction that's designed to promote the welfare of trees and boost environmental awareness, Shajar also incorporates a tour experience and upmarket café, surrounded by a huge variety of trees and shrubs.

The first stop at the Shajar experience is the welcome centre, which informs visitors about the benefits of trees, the effects of deforestation and biodiversity issues, while encouraging everyone to take action against climate change. You and your family can then enjoy a guided tour of the full Aljada nursery, where you can learn about some of the fifty different species being grown and the life-stages of each tree at Arada communities. Each visitor will also get an opportunity to plant their very own tree at the on-site workshop!

The Shajar experience also includes The Hut, a beautifully designed and atmospheric café surrounded by a leafy canopy of trees. Open daily from 8am, The Hut offers specialty coffee, as well as snacks, meals and a wide range of delicious drinks. So if you're looking for an interesting and educational weekend activity for the whole family, be sure to visit Shajar!



## STRETCH OUT WITH YOGA WEDNESDAYS

Nestled against the breathtaking backdrop of the Jumeirah Al Naseem beachfront, Summersalt Beach Club invites you to embark on a transformative journey with the launch of Yoga Wednesdays. Sink into the serene rhythm of the rolling waves as you practise sun salutations and achieve inner zen.



Every Wednesday, you can engage in a stimulating journey for the mind, body and soul at their blissful morning session. Led by an experienced instructor, this rejuvenating one-hour yoga session on the beach caters to enthusiasts of all levels. Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned yogi, Summersalt provides an oasis for wellness enthusiasts to escape daily stresses and cultivate balance.

Following the invigorating yoga session, treat yourself to a healthy breakfast - don't worry, all dishes are carefully crafted to nourish both your body and soul. Choose from classics such as avocado toast, poached eggs with salmon, a mushroom frittata or the nutrient dense açai bowl. Post-breakfast, feel free to relax by the pool or beach side with the Summersalt Beach Club day pass included in the package price. So whether it's to set you up for a busy day ahead or as the beginning of a relaxing day off, treat yourself to a session with Summersalt.

**Price:** AED 500 per person

**Time:** Starting at 9:30am

**Location:** Jumeirah Al Naseem, Madinat Jumeirah

**For bookings, visit [www.sevenrooms.com/events/summersaltbeachclub](http://www.sevenrooms.com/events/summersaltbeachclub).**

## UNMISSABLE ATTRACTIONS AT LIWA VILLAGE

Perhaps the perfect destination for an unforgettable road trip and a unique celebration of Emirati culture, art, music and adventure, Liwa Village is set to be the epicentre of excitement this December, inviting you and your loved ones to discover fantastic events and connect with each other.

Liwa Village will span seven main zones: Souk, Oasis, Valley, Pavilion, Carnival, Digital Station by PUBG, and Main Stage, all perfectly designed to deliver an unforgettable family-friendly experience. Each of the unique zones will offer a wide range of culinary delights, retail experiences, music, art and entertainment.

Taking place between December 8th and 31st, the return of Liwa Village will bring all of last year's thrills and add more, offering 24 days of non-stop celebrations in a family-friendly ambience. Mark your calendar for December and get ready to rediscover the wonders of Emirati heritage and culture beyond the dunes, in this unique melting pot of experiences, that makes for a winter must.

**For bookings and more information, visit [www.liwavillage.ae](http://www.liwavillage.ae).**



# WELLBEING



Exercising while  
pregnant; the truth about  
menopause and more!







# RESETTING YOUR CHILD'S CIRCADIAN RHYTHM

*Some children struggle to fall asleep, whereas others rise at dawn, seemingly no matter what. We discuss the factors that imbalance your little one's internal clock and what you can do to reset it.*

Between work constraints, the sunlight and length of darkness available in your region, seasonal shifts, caffeine intake, screen exposure, stress levels and long standing habits, it can take time to really figure out what naturally suits you best when it comes to sleep. Many of us are well into adulthood before we feel we have reached a consistent grasp of good quality, restful sleep.

## CHRONOTYPES

Science now tells us that we all have an inherent 'chronotype', a natural time that our particular body is more prone to sleep and wake at. Some of us are 'night owls', preferring to stay up later into the night and sleep in a little longer the next day, whereas others are 'larks', those that can happily snooze away from 9pm and get up with the birds, before everyone else.

Studies suggest that only about 10 percent of people are true 'larks', those who feel most normal when sleeping from 9pm to 5am. On the other hand, less than 15 percent are real 'owls', for whom sleeping from 2am to 10am feels fully natural. The majority of us fall somewhere in between the two.

## CHILDREN AND SLEEP

It adds a whole other dynamic to the situation to not only have to deal with your own sleeping habits and chronotype, but also grapple with your child's



sleep habits, particularly if it's at odds with yours or your family's. Some parents struggle to get their little one to sleep before 10pm while others have such early birds at home that the sun is barely up when they spring out of bed and nothing appears to keep them asleep any longer. However, there are some great ways to help shift their schedule towards something a little more workable for your household.

### How much sleep does my child need?

No matter when your child goes to sleep or rises, all kids need an adequate amount of sleep for their physical and mental health, as well as their brain development. Here is a short guide to help you see how much sleep your child needs per night at different ages:

- ✓ Babies under a year typically need 12-16 hours of sleep in total
- ✓ Toddlers between 1 and 2 years old require 11-14 hours
- ✓ Between 2 and 5 years, most children need 10-13 hours
- ✓ By the age of 12, this drops to somewhere between 9 and 12 hours
- ✓ Most teenagers need 8 to 10 hours

### Larks, owls or habits?

Happily for most parents, the average child is likely to naturally fall somewhere in the middle of the spectrum, aligning nicely with the

way society has set up our school and work days. However, if you consistently notice your little one has the most energy and alertness in the evening or very early in the morning, no matter what time they went to bed or how much activity they did that day, you may have an owl or a lark under your roof. This usually becomes clearer around the age of 4, once your little one has dropped their daytime naps. There are many factors that influence and shift these sleep habits - it's only partially based on genes and natural chronotype. Some of these include age, level and amount of exercise, how much sunlight they receive each day and their diet. The research is not in agreement about how exactly our emotional state, nutrition and activity affect our chronotype, but one thing is very clear - the biggest factor is definitely light.

### THE ROLE OF LIGHT

Bright light, especially sunlight, has the most powerful influence over regulating your internal clock or circadian rhythm. How exactly it achieves this is complex, but boils down to the concept that exposure to bright light causes the body to suppress its production of melatonin, a hormone that creates sleepiness. When this happens, we feel sharp, awake and alert. The brighter the sunlight or light, the longer and better your body subdues melatonin, meaning we don't really feel tired.

In the modern era, this mechanism presents a problem, as other light sources besides sunlight can send your internal clock out of





balance. Studies indicate that the blue light emanating from screens, smartphones, tablets, laptops and even e-readers can suppress melatonin, delaying and interfering with our ability to sleep. Many people advocate for a 'digital sunset', or a time in the early evening where you put away all screens and focus only on non-digital activities, like reading, art, chatting, card games or board games. Whatever you choose, know that once you control your child's exposure to artificial and natural light sources, you will be able to nudge their body to reset its internal sleep schedule.

## MOVING BEDTIME BACK

Children who are natural owls are very sensitive to the effects of light exposure in the evening. This delays their ability to fall asleep, something they already struggle to do. Owls need less light exposure at night and plenty of exposure in the morning. If you have a night owl on your hands, try stopping all screen use at least an hour before their bedtime routine starts. The second part of resetting your little owl involves exposing them to lots of sunlight or at least bright light early in the day. This will help their bodies to suppress melatonin better so they naturally begin waking up earlier, with more alertness in the first half of the day. In turn, this makes it easier to fall asleep at an earlier hour. With consistency, bright light in the morning and dim light in the evening will reset their clock to earlier times. This could look like eating breakfast in a sunny spot, opening the curtains in the bedroom, walking to school in the sunshine, or simply going outside before school.

## MOVING WAKE UP TIME FORWARD

Other parents will have the opposite problem on their hands - a child who wakes up too early, seemingly no matter what. These kids need to sleep longer in the morning, so again light can be used to help achieve this. Try blocking out morning light by using blackout curtains or a sleep mask if your child is comfortable. The second step is to consider ways you may be accidentally setting your little one up for an early start. Is your child allowed extra screen time if they rise early? Are they treated to a snooze in their parents bed? The advice is to remove the

benefits so they can no longer serve as motivation - i.e. not allowing screens in the morning or only allowing cuddles in your bed after a certain hour. Thirdly, try using a visual signal to train your child to only get out of bed at a specific time. These signals can be a nightlight on a timer that turns on when it's 'wake up time'. You can also buy special children's clocks that use fun features such as smiley faces, animals, lights, suns and moons to tell children when they should be in bed and when it's okay to get up. Traditional alarm clocks are not so advisable before your child is fluent at telling the time as figuring this out can be quite difficult for most kids, and concentrating that much can actually leave little ones more awake than before.

## LIFESTYLE CONSIDERATIONS

Always keep other lifestyle factors in mind when it comes to your child's sleep health. Watch out for caffeine in unexpected sources such as chocolate, cola drinks and even chocolate milk. Intaking these in the late afternoon or evening can set kids back when it comes to bedtime. For some, physical activity produces a burst of energy, whereas for others it can simply help them to fall asleep well. It's good to pay attention to when your child exercises and how this appears to affect them. Kids also tend to be highly stimulated by films, social media, video games and sometimes even exciting non-digital activities like listening to loud music, playing a competitive game or simply reading a very exciting story. Try to match the evening's activities in a decreasingly stimulating order towards the slope of bedtime. Activities like yoga, baths and classical music can help little ones really unwind and feel sleepy. Be consistent with bedtime routines and sleep schedules, even on the weekend. Going to bed and rising at the same time every day is one of the most habitually positive things you can do to train your child's internal clock. A word of warning - make sure to schedule fun time into the afternoon so your child feels satisfied with the balance of their day and things don't end up piling up at the end of the day.

Using your understanding of chronotypes, you should be able to identify your little one's sleep category. Armed with this knowledge, you can employ the reset techniques for larks or owls to balance out your child's circadian rhythm, so they sleep better than ever - and you also get the rest you deserve!



# EXERCISING WHILE PREGNANT: THE TOP TIPS YOU SHOULD KNOW

*Nora Hameidani, founder Barre Effect studio, shares her top tips when exercising for a healthier and more comfortable pregnancy experience.*

Exercise as a daily routine can help to diminish stress, improve mood, keep your body strong, prevent injury or illness, maintain a healthy weight, assist in adequate sleep - the list goes on. All of these become even more important when you're expecting. Studies have shown that exercising during pregnancy is enormously beneficial to the mother's physical abilities, comfort and energy.

## WHAT EXERCISE IS BEST?

Barre is a low impact strength training class that can easily be modified during all stages of pregnancy - whether pre-

pregnancy, during, or postpartum. So, it is no surprise that many women are advised by their doctor to choose this type of movement during pregnancy. Other common options include walking, swimming and stationary cycling. Prenatal yoga and pilates, or even aqua aerobics, can also be great forms of exercise for your changing body.

## COMPARISON IS THE THIEF OF JOY

It is important to always consult with your doctor regarding your exercise routine while pregnant and make sure it's the smart choice for your body and your capacity. Try not to compare yourself to anyone else because every woman has their own journey. What might be appropriate for a friend may not work well for you. After all, we all have different pregnancies and deliveries, so it's best to simply focus on figuring out what feels right for you without comparing your progress to anyone else's but your own.

## FAMILIARITY IS KEY

It is usually advised to practise a technique or class that you are familiar with, so you know what to expect, how to pace yourself and how to modify the movements if you need to. Unless it is specified as "prenatal" or for pregnant women, I do not suggest trying something brand new. However, if you have never exercised before and have clearance to start while pregnant, a specified prenatal class or walking would be your best option.



## LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

This is simple but powerful advice. Listen to your body! If a movement doesn't feel right, it's probably not. Allow yourself to take breaks when you need to and know that movement will take time - it's always better to start slowly and gently.

## BE PATIENT

Be patient with yourself. You and your body are changing each day. Things might feel different than they used to and you might not enjoy the same exercise. On the other hand, you may also find some things that surprise you, such as a newfound love for a particular kind of movement. Take it day by day and appreciate what your body is going through.







## HYDRATION AND NUTRITION

Hydration and nourishment are more essential than ever when you're pregnant. It's important to stay hydrated before your workout, during your exercise, as well as afterwards as your body cools down. Eating healthily will also help you to feel strong and comfortable while working out and ensure you have the proper fuel to exercise properly and effectively. It is advised to not skip meals, so even consuming something small and light before working out is better than not eating.

## MINDFUL MOVEMENT

Start with a slower tempo than gradually build up the speed if necessary to make sure you

maintain proper technique as you exercise. There is a higher chance of becoming dizzy when you are pregnant, so take care especially when moving upwards from or down towards the ground. Your balance and stability can be off while pregnant so keep it in mind to move with as much control as you can to prevent falling or tripping. There are so many hormone changes that take place during this special time. Some of these can make it more likely for your blood pressure to drop, which can cause you to become dizzy, so remember to check-in with your body and monitor how you feel as you exercise.

## KEEP YOUR COOL

You are more likely to overheat while pregnant, so again, listening to yourself,

taking breaks, and having adequate hydration are key in making sure you stay at a comfortable temperature that doesn't put extra strain on your body.

## WARM UP AND RECOVERY

Take the time for a proper warmup and a short recovery routine post workout. This will lessen the possibility of injury by making sure your muscles are well prepared for work and are properly cooled down and relaxed after exercise.

## OVERSTRETCHING

Relaxin is a hormone that loosens and relaxes your muscles, joints and ligaments during pregnancy, to help your body stretch. Relaxin also helps your body prepare for delivery by loosening the muscles and ligaments in your pelvis. It is important to be mindful of this while stretching, as you may feel a little more open or flexible, but this can cause you to stretch too far or too deeply, increasing the chance of injury. As always, be cautious and ask for medical advice if you feel uncertain.

## PRENATAL SPECIALISTS

Participating in a session with an instructor that has experience with pregnant women is important. Take the time to speak with your instructor or trainer ahead of the session so that they can advise you on how best to properly modify movements, especially where you're not participating in a prenatal specified class. Many modifications are available for pregnancy, paving the way for you to be more comfortable and get more out of your session. Abdominal work in particular will be heavily adjusted, allowing your abdominal muscles to shift but still stay strong during pregnancy.

## BREATHWORK

Moving with your breath is key while exercising and becomes even more important when carrying a baby. While pregnant, your body requires more oxygen than usual to function at its best. Having conscious, slow, controlled breathing allows you to properly expand and strengthen your abdominals during pregnancy, which will be beneficial for recovery after delivery. This breathwork also promotes relaxation, while reducing your stress and anxiety throughout your pregnancy.



# DISPELLING MYTHS ABOUT MENOPAUSE

*We caught up with Ann Marie McQueen, founder of Hot Flash, to discuss the most common myths about perimenopause and menopause, as well as the best way for women to navigate this transitional time.*

## WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO LAUNCH HOT FLASH?

In my early 40s I hit a wall. I started having nightmares and a heavy sense of doom would wash over me seconds after I opened my eyes. I was having intrusive thoughts and physical issues, like headaches, heart palpitations, body pain and sharp chest pains. I'd feel tingling all over my body and I developed really bad health anxiety.

I must have seen a dozen doctors and no one mentioned perimenopause. When I skipped my first period aged 47, I finally realised what was going on. I tried to find information, but nothing resonated with me - it was either extremely basic or too polarised. I thought I could bring my passion for content, my experience as a journalist in health and wellness coverage and what I'd been through on my journey, to help other women do the most empowering thing of all - be fully informed about their bodies, so they can find the right experts and make great decisions about their own care.

## WHAT IS THE DENIAL STAGE?

In my mind, menopause was something that would happen when I was in my 60s. The average age is actually around 51 and perimenopause can start a decade or more before that. No 41 year old woman wants to even think about this, which is understandable!



Many women in their late 30s or early 40s are still thinking of having children and they don't understand that perimenopause is possible at this point. I see it with my younger friends now, who will argue that their sleep problems have nothing to do with their hormones, or that their anxiety really is just because of work. Maybe it is - all I'm saying is what if it isn't? Once I wrapped my head around the fact that I was in perimenopause, and it didn't happen all at once, everything got easier. I'm 53 now and I can absolutely say it will all be okay - but you need to be honest with yourself first.

## HOW DO YOU HELP WOMEN NAVIGATE THIS?

I help women take control of their own health. I remind them that perimenopause is not the time to put full faith in their doctor, many of whom know very little about this transition, nor in online gurus or people who relay information with a clear conflict of interest. When it comes to research, the number of studies undertaken on menopause is less than 10 percent than those done on pregnancy - and menopause happens to every woman.

This transition is the time in our lives to take radical responsibility for everything about our health. To start to understand what is happening, why, and how to best deal with it. Menopause is a very individual thing. Some women have no symptoms, others suffer terribly. There are tribes that have been studied, the Hazda in Tanzania, for example, who experience almost nothing at all and don't even have a word for menopause. That, and the small amount of research that has been done so far, tell us that a lot of what we experience has to do with what's going on around us and within us. Stress, undiagnosed chronic conditions, poor gut health, poor lifestyle habits, no experience processing difficult emotions, trauma and grief, chronic dieting, overwork or over-exercising - the list is long. Combined with the hormonal fluctuations of perimenopause, we can be quite vulnerable to a host of new health problems: pre-diabetes, fatty liver and high blood pressure to name but a few. Women need help in keeping on top of this and addressing the root causes, so they can transition through menopause in good health. I actually think women need to start tracking their own blood work at this time, in the same way we might track our finances.

## WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON MYTHS ABOUT MENOPAUSE?

Some of the common myths I want to debunk are:

### Hormone therapy

I want to debunk the idea that hormone therapy is dangerous, or perfectly safe either. We have a pretty good body of evidence that bioidentical or biosimilar hormones are safe within a 10-year window of the onset of menopause. The major guiding bodies around the world recommend menopause hormone therapy for the treatment of symptoms and this was most recently backed up by 'The 2023 Practitioner's Toolkit for Managing Menopause', a systematic search for guidelines, position and consensus

statements published in the journal *Climacteric* and endorsed by the International Menopause Society.

However, now that menopause awareness has grown, an entire medical space has quickly become a business opportunity, so we now have a number of social media stars or 'gurus' who are prone to 'HrT hype', recommending it for all sorts of unproven things and ignoring that it comes risks and side effects which every woman needs to weigh individually.

## Menopause is new

I hear people saying that menopause is only 100 years old and that we all used to die at 50, which is nonsense. There are references to menopause throughout history and, while our life expectancy used to be much shorter, many women lived to old age. It's true that people are still working out exactly why we live long past our reproductive years, in terms of a biological perspective, but what we know for sure is that we do, and we always have.

## Only women and whales go through menopause

This myth is repeated so often! In recent years we have research indicating giraffes, elephants and chimps do too. In October 2023, two researchers in Germany looked at the research and determined that about 4 out of 5 creatures make this transition. That's a mind-blowing reversal of what was previously thought.





### Bioidentical hormones and compounding pharmacies

I think one of the most confusing points for women is an ongoing argument over bioidentical, or biosimilar, hormones produced in compounding pharmacies, versus those that are mass-produced and approved by regulatory agencies.

Very broadly speaking, these days if you are getting estradiol in a patch, gel or spray, then it is in the form closest to that which your body produces, and is generally considered safer. If you have a uterus, then you need to take progesterone or a progestogen with it. Oral micronized progesterone is also in a form closest to that which your body naturally makes, while 'progestogens' are synthetic, and are becoming increasingly associated with many of the risks linked with hormone therapy.

If you are getting bioidentical hormones from a compounded pharmacy, then it's also estradiol and progesterone. It's common to hear 'bioidentical' referred to as a marketing term, to suggest that compounding pharmacies are unregulated and unsafe. However, compounding pharmacists are highly trained and their pharmacies are regulated - although their individualised preparations are not. Millions of women use them to great effect and they often work for women who have had adverse reactions to some of the additives in commercially produced products.

It's worth noting that mass-produced hormones are more likely to be covered by insurance, and as best as I can determine, most of this boils down to two industries in competition with each other.

### Menopause happens because you're old

No one is ever ready for menopause. However, when you pass through menopause, if you are lucky, you have a third or more of your life ahead of you. We are now in the 'millenopause era', meaning that the upper and middle members of this 27 to 42 age bracket are either on the cusp of or are already experiencing perimenopause. It's a myth that perimenopause and menopause means that you are old - you are moving through life phases, but you are not old.

### IN WHAT WAYS HAS MENOPAUSE EVOLVED?

Women in their 40s and 50s currently have blown this space wide open compared to other generations, bringing this conversation to the fore. We just aren't okay with the shame and stigma anymore. Menopause is simply the end of our fertility and a transition into a new phase of life. It can be a little turbulent and women of this generation just don't understand why we don't have better care and more options for dealing with it, not to mention some accommodations made for us at work, and the ability to speak openly. We aren't going anywhere, and our refusal to be silent about menopause is part of a larger trend. We recognise ageism when it comes to menopause and we want to be the last generation who has to deal with it. Women are so wise, experienced and valuable by the time they hit their 40s and 50s. Many of us are just recognising, reconnecting and discovering our individual worth by this age, and realising that it can be our time to shine.





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# PARENTING



Making seasonal crafts;  
signs of a healthy baby; the  
power of family traditions  
and more!





# BLISSFUL BEGINNINGS: A POSTNATAL RETREAT

*As Blissful Beginnings opens its doors to families across the GCC, we take a deep dive into how postnatal retreats can benefit and support mothers as they begin this beautiful new chapter.*

Blissful Beginnings has launched its postpartum care retreats, the first of its kind in the region. Located at two luxury hotels, the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Jumeirah and the Park Hyatt Hotel in Dubai Creek, Blissful Beginnings offers groundbreaking, tailored programmes for new families and their babies to support mothers navigating the delicate postpartum phase.

## A HISTORY OF CARE

Existing offerings predominantly revolve around childcare, with occasional parental support, and so Blissful Beginnings has been founded to bridge a large gap in postpartum care. Used by millions of women around the world, postnatal retreats are particularly popular and deeply ingrained in cultures throughout Asia and the Americas. In these regions, the emphasis of postnatal retreats stems from the traditional beliefs that postpartum care and recovery significantly impact a woman's long-term health, marriage wellbeing and connection with their newborn.

## THE FIRST OF ITS KIND

Inspired by the positive impact postnatal retreats have had on millions of women every day, Blissful Beginnings is the first to bring this concept to the UAE and provides a fully integrated care that focuses on maternal self-recovery and healing, coupled with attentive baby care, all within the ambiance of a soothing retreat.



Sandrine Chaker, Founder and CEO of Blissful Beginnings tells us "Blissful Beginnings has been created to fill a void in postnatal care, recognising that the current focus primarily revolves around childcare. Upon leaving the hospital, new mothers often return home to the care of nurses or nannies. However, we believe that true motherhood encompasses more than just child care. Our mission is to redefine the postpartum experience, encouraging women to embrace motherhood and embark on this incredible journey with confidence and vitality."

## WHO DOES THIS HELP?

The journey into motherhood often unfolds with unforeseen challenges, leaving new mothers grappling with the shock of the postpartum period. Despite the



## PARENTING

anticipation and joy surrounding the birth of a child, many find themselves unprepared for the realities that follow. A recent survey conducted by BabyCenter, which involved 2,000 mothers, highlighted a significant deficiency in postpartum support for maternal health and wellbeing. The findings revealed that a mere 41% of mothers feel adequately supported during the postpartum phase. Notably, the assistance they do receive tends to revolve predominantly around the care of their new-borns. Despite 65% of mums expressing confidence in their ability to care for their new-borns upon leaving the hospital, only 47% feel equally prepared to tend to their own needs.

Sandrine says “Our approach is holistic, tackling the physical, emotional and mental aspects of the postpartum period. We understand that getting the foundations right from the very beginning is crucial to setting parents on the right path for life. Blissful Beginnings is not just a retreat; it’s a sanctuary where mothers and fathers can

find the support they need, to navigate this transformative time with grace.”

### A DISTINCT OFFERING

Responding to the need for holistic support for both mother and baby, Blissful Beginnings is distinct from traditional in-home baby care services, offering a unique getaway, seamlessly replicating the luxury and security of a healthcare setting to create a safe and trusted haven for new mothers to unwind and relax. A dedicated team of certified experts in the field of emotional support, holistic wellness therapies, lactation support and nutrition counselling accompany every new parent and baby every step of the way to transition in their new adventure as a family.

### BLISSFUL BEGINNINGS: AN INTERVIEW

We spoke with Sandrine, Founder and CEO, in greater depth, to fully understand the ethos

behind Blissful Beginnings and how exactly the experience unfolds for new mothers.

### What inspired blissful beginnings?

I founded Blissful Beginnings to fill a crucial gap in postpartum care in the GCC. While traditional postpartum care in the region primarily focuses on childcare, I believe it’s essential to strike a balance between baby care and mother care. Our retreat aims to provide a holistic approach, emphasising self-recovery and healing for new parents. Many women feel pressure on their mental health by staying at home, so we offer a soothing retreat environment with a team of experts to ensure their wellbeing. Our mission at Blissful Beginnings is to redefine postpartum care and provide a transformative experience for new mothers. This goes beyond being just a service; it’s a heartfelt journey into the next era of postpartum care. We’ve created a sanctuary, a haven away from home, where new





mothers not only find support but undergo a significant transformation after the beautiful chaos of childbirth.

### **This is a traditional concept - can you tell us more?**

The concept of postnatal retreats, rooted in Asian cultures, is gaining popularity globally, especially within the US. These retreats recognise the profound impact of postpartum care on a woman's long-term health, marriage, and overall well-being. Millions of women around the world experience these retreats as empowering and serene, focusing on the delicacy and intense relaxation needed during this transformative period.

### **How does this benefit new mothers and their families?**

A postnatal retreat addresses common postpartum challenges comprehensively - from physical transformation and emotional roller coasters, to sleep deprivation and breastfeeding difficulties. Our retreat offers a range of services delivered by certified experts with extensive experience,

combining Eastern and Western practices to ensure optimal care for both mothers and families.

### **Can you walk us through the experience of a retreat?**

The Blissful Beginnings experience is designed to be a seamless and relaxed process. Recognising that every mother has her unique challenges, I begin by having a one-on-one session with the parents to understand and define their needs and challenges. From there, I craft a bespoke program around five pillars: emotional support, holistic wellness therapies, nutrition counselling, lactation support and childcare and bonding activities. Each woman selects two electives from these pillars, focusing on their specific needs. Throughout their stay, these five pillars are delivered, with an additional focus on the chosen electives. Activities are conducted one-on-one in the comfort of the client's room, with a balance between mum's recovery and family bonding. Flexibility is key, and we offer 24/7 support and care within the retreat. Our connection with parents doesn't end when they leave. Through the Blissful Beginnings Anywhere

program, parents can stay connected with us, ensuring ongoing support even after they've returned home.

### **How long is the retreat?**

Clients can stay at Blissful Beginnings for a minimum of three nights, up to a month, depending on their preferences. Our programs are tailor-made, providing age-specific options categorised into premium, deluxe and exclusive. These programs address the specific needs of both mothers and babies at various stages, ensuring a personalised approach to each family's journey. We customise every program to fit the unique needs of the parents, creating a truly individualised experience.

### **What is the cost and how can women book in?**

Our pricing structure encompasses the selected room, featuring a program that includes up to 12 signature therapies, along with amenities for both mothers and babies within the room. All sessions are private and take place in the comfort of the guest's own room. Pricing starts at AED 3,500 plus tax and varies based on the chosen location, whether it is Park Hyatt or Mandarin Oriental, and the specific room package selected. This ensures a seamless and personalised postpartum retreat experience. Bookings can be conveniently arranged online through our website and social media channels.

### **What does blissful beginnings aim to bring mothers in the region?**

Our mission at Blissful Beginnings is to empower mothers as they embrace the journey into motherhood, facilitating a smooth transition into the beautiful adventure of building a family. We are equally committed to ensuring that dads are not only included, but also empowered to care for their wives and families. What we aspire to offer is a harmonious blend of serenity, empowerment and profound relaxation, aiming to make the transition into motherhood as seamless as possible. Our goal is to alleviate the current challenges of anxiety and stress that often accompany the journey into motherhood, providing a supportive and tranquil environment for mothers in the region.

*For more information or to discuss your needs, visit <https://digitalsaad.com/blissful/> or call 052 1888835.*





# FESTIVE DIY CRAFTS FOR KIDS

*With Christmas around the corner, let's look at some seasonal craft ideas that your children will love!*

The holiday season is a truly wonderful time of year, perfect for spending intentional time with your little ones. Whether you celebrate, or simply engage with some of the holiday rituals, there are countless ways to get the whole family involved in decorating your home that will create a real sense of joy and festive spirit. With so much to do, it can also be useful to find some activities that will keep your children occupied and satisfied. What better way to introduce some seasonal cheer than homemade, holiday-themed crafts?

## SIX SIMPLE CRAFT IDEAS

These festive DIY crafts are suitable for children of all ages and, with a little supervision, will keep your little ones occupied for hours!



## Paper decorations

To complement the lights and baubles on your tree, add a traditional touch with paper ornaments. Your children can trace out the shapes they want on colourful pieces of card and (carefully!) cut them out. Glitter, stickers or even a touch of paint can be added for an extra personalised touch. Simply punch a hole near the top of your little one's paper creation, thread a piece of ribbon through and help them to hang it on the tree.

## Mini paintings

Pick up a miniature canvas for each family member, grab any paints or colouring pencils you have and get ready for an engaging, creative activity for everyone. You can pick a theme or let each person create whatever they choose. Once completed, you can glue a piece of ribbon to the back, transforming the tiny artwork into an adorable hanging decoration. Your children will love making a mini painting that will be hung on the tree for all to see!

## DIY snow globe

Anyone who has ever played with a snow globe will know how enchanting they can be. The way the 'snow' swirls around the scene is so realistic! Making one at home is easier than you might think, although little ones may need some help with aspects of this DIY craft. To start, find a clean jar and a small toy figurine that your child wants to be at the centre of the

snowglobe. Glue this figurine to the inside of the jar's lid, right in the centre, and set it aside to dry. If there's room, feel free to add some other elements, such as little plastic trees. Next, add a couple of teaspoons of glitter to the jar and fill it up with water. When it's almost full, add a few drops of glycerin and stir the mixture. This will help the glitter to float a little better. Finally, place the lid on the jar (you can glue this on if you're concerned your child will try to open it), turn it upside down and watch as the glittery snow swishes around the magical scene.

## Marbled ornaments

This simple craft idea produces stunning tree decorations that look easily as good as those bought from a store. All you need is a few shades of nail polish, a cup of water and a few baubles to work with. To begin, let your child pick three or four shades of nail polish for their mixture. Pour a small amount of each of these into the cup of water and then slowly dip your bauble in. Submerge it fully and then remove it slowly before holding it over a paper towel to drip dry. The results will speak for themselves - uniquely beautiful homemade ornaments!

## Filled transparent baubles

Transparent baubles that come in two pieces are easily available online and provide the chance for your children to get really creative. These can be filled with just about anything,



from multi-coloured Lego bricks, to layers of coloured sand and glitter - the only limit here is imagination. Once your child has filled up the bauble, help them to hang it from the tree!

## Toy drum tree decorations

If you have some more time on your hands, helping your little drummer boy or girl to make a toy drum for the tree is a joy-filled way to spend an afternoon together. For each drum, cut a toilet paper roll until it's about two inches long. This will form the body of the drum. Encourage your child to paint it in a colour of their choice and set it aside to dry. Cut two circles out of card for the top and bottom of the drum and glue these to the body once it's dry. Now it's time to decorate! Use washi tape or ribbon to add a design around the side of the drum, and cover the seam between the body and each end. Once your little one is finished, attach a ribbon and hang it up!

## TRY IT OUT

These six festive craft ideas are sure to help your children feel involved in decorating your home this holiday season. You can set up a space for them to work, perhaps by laying down some old newspaper or cardboard, so they won't have to worry about making a mess. Don't be afraid to try your hand at these crafts alongside your children - you may find it more enjoyable than you think!



A close-up photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair smiling warmly at a baby. The baby, who also has curly hair, is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and is reaching up to touch the woman's face. The woman is wearing a white knit top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white fabric.

# TEN SIGNS OF A HEALTHY BABY

*Trying to figure out if your new baby is in their best health can be stressful. Here are ten great signs that will let you know they're heading in the right direction.*





Once your baby arrives, it's completely natural to worry about their health. The slightest cough can strike fear into new parents. Given that your bundle of joy can't yet speak, it can feel like a mystery. Don't worry though, there are plenty of telltale signs that will give you a genuine insight into the wellbeing of your little one.

## TEN HEALTH INDICATORS

Here are ten indicators that will let you know that your baby is in good health.

### Sitting in silence

A certain amount of crying from your baby is not only normal, but healthy. In parallel with this is the fact that healthy babies will spend some time sitting quietly and paying attention each day. This whole world is new to them and they're trying to take everything in and understand. Give your baby a chance to look around themselves each day and they'll continue to develop well and be interested in what's happening around them.

### A good appetite

One of the biggest signs of a healthy baby is if they are regularly looking to be fed. On average, this will be every few hours. If your baby is regularly hungry, it points to a good appetite and digestion. Whether you're breastfeeding or nursing from a bottle, pay close attention to your child's sucking reflex. A strong reflex is a great sign of your baby's health and development.

### Diaper changes

If you feel like you're constantly running out of diapers for your newborn, it can be a good sign! Around four to six changes per day is normal and indicates that your little one is feeding well and is properly hydrated. Note the colour of your baby's urine in the diaper - if it's slightly dark, this can point to dehydration. All in all, frequent diaper changes are a welcome, positive sign!

### Steady growth

Weight and height are both very clear indicators of your baby's

overall health. By tracking these two measurements, you can make sure that your little one is on track for healthy development. Rates of growth can vary, but are around five to seven ounces of weight per week in the first three months after which their increase slows down somewhat, but they should generally continue to get heavier. In terms of growth, your little one will gain about one inch each month - although there is some natural variation in the population. Expect your baby to be around twice their birth weight by the six month mark, and roughly three times their birth weight on their first birthday.

### A keen ear

The sense of sound is a fascinating part of your baby's development. They may have little interest in some sounds, whereas others might totally capture their attention. Try to show your little one a variety of different sounds, including music, and notice how they react to different sounds out in the world. Being able to hear different things and showing an interest in the source of the sound are both signs of a healthy baby.

### Eye contact

Watching your baby learn to socialise is so heartwarming. Usually, around a month old they'll make eye contact with you - a genuinely huge moment! By the time the second month has passed, they will probably have smiled their little heart-melting smile for the first time. These early indications of social development are a great sign and should be encouraged.

### Seeing the world

Next time you catch your baby looking off into space, try to figure out what it is they've noticed. This is a great way to track their development. After their first month, your baby will be able to see objects around eighteen inches from them. Beyond two months, they'll begin looking at bright colours and moving objects. In these very early days, they haven't yet developed their depth perception or colour vision

fully. If your little one is busy taking in the world around them, this is another good way to gauge their health.

### Big and strong

A one month old baby may briefly try to hold their head up to look around. At three months old, it's a very healthy sign if they're doing this much more often. As they age, they should be attempting more and more physical movement. Regular playtime is key for your baby's physical development, so try to get involved whenever your little one is looking to play.

### Recognising your voice

During the nine months that a baby spends in the womb, they actually get to know their mother's voice. After birth, notice if your little one can still recognise your calming words and see if they're comforted by this. When they pay close attention to your voice and respond in their own way, it's a wonderful sign of your precious one's emotional development.

### Plenty of sleep

Sleep is one of the most important ingredients to the healthy growth and development of your baby. Naturally, young babies tend to sleep in short bursts throughout the day and night. As the weeks pass, they'll sleep for longer at a time, until they can finally sleep through the night. Once your little one is old enough, try to get them into a regular sleeping routine where they go to bed and wake up at roughly the same time. Of course, there will be days when this doesn't work out - that's completely normal. Just try to get them back on schedule the next evening. A baby that sleeps well is a healthy and happy baby!

### IF IN DOUBT

The first year of your child's life can be an uncertain and sometimes frightening time. It's common for parents to worry about whether or not their little one is healthy. These signs offer ways to see if your child is on track and developing as expected. If you have any concerns at all, don't hesitate to consult with your child's doctor.



# BUILDING FAMILY TRADITIONS

*Family traditions can form an important part of your little one's childhood. Here we look at how to pass on traditions, new and old.*

With the holiday season upon us, lots of people will turn to family traditions that feel like they've been around forever. These traditions are often brimming with nostalgia and centre around spending quality time with your loved ones. Whether they've been passed down for generations or they're newly created by you and your partner, family traditions are a wonderful way to make long-lasting memories and show children that they're part of something special.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

There are some things that you should take into consideration when looking to start a new family tradition. Doing so will ensure that this new tradition sticks and truly becomes part of your rich family tapestry. One of the main reasons that family traditions stop is that they no longer resonate with the next generation.

## Do it your way

Lots of us live our lives in quite a different way to how our parents did and hold different values close to heart. These values are at the core of any tradition and, naturally, a different set of values calls for a different set of traditions. You don't necessarily have to ignore past traditions if you can adapt them to fit with how you and your family do things, but it is important to uphold traditions that are reflective of your own family's value system.

## Keep it simple

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that family traditions need to be extravagant or spectacular events. While some pomp and ceremony is always lovely to get involved in, the real love, cherished memories and genuine connection with your family come in the simpler moments.





### Don't force it

It's okay if some of your new traditions don't stick - that's to be expected. What's important here is to not force it. If it's not working, don't insist on carrying the tradition on just because it's a tradition. Instead, feel free to stop doing it and try something new!

If your family doesn't have any traditions and would like to get involved, then look no further. Here are some fantastic ideas that could form your next family tradition.

### MEAL TRADITIONS

Despite how busy life gets, mealtimes remain a non-negotiable time in many households for the whole family to sit together and catch up. There is something special about gathering with your loved ones to eat a meal together, so they present a perfect opportunity to build a family tradition.

#### Family cooking night

Family cooking night is a wholesome opportunity to get each member of the family involved in cooking a delicious meal. Whether you choose to do this once a month, more frequently, or less often - it's up to you! Make sure everyone has a few tasks to keep them involved. These can be as simple as setting the table, getting the lighting right or washing the dishes. Every job is important and be sure to remind your little ones of that. After all the hard work, your family will be delighted to sit down and enjoy the tasty meal you've made together.

#### Family restaurant trip

A regular trip to a restaurant with your family can be a very manageable tradition. Choose how frequently you can do this, taking into account your finances, as well as your other time commitments. If you have a local restaurant that your family adores, you may fast become favoured regulars there! Also, feel free to mix it up and try different restaurants to expand your children's palates. A family trip out to a restaurant is a well-earned chance to relax and spend quality time with your family while someone else takes care of the hard work!





### Family recipes

Perhaps you have a long-standing family recipe that has been passed down from generation to generation. If so, now is the time to pass it down to your little ones! Introduce it to them in a way that they can understand and explain how it's been passed through your family for years. You can share what makes this particular recipe special and any fond childhood memories that you have of it. If you don't have a recipe such as this but there is a meal that you have your own twist on and simply love to make, then why not be the first link in the chain of passing a recipe down? Show your children how you came up with the idea and show them how to make it. You can share in the fruits of your labour and talk about how your family can pass it on to future generations.

### Restaurant at home

It may sound like a lot of work but, trust me, this one is a real hit with the kids. If you and your partner can share the cooking duties, it certainly lightens the load. The idea is that, just as in a restaurant, everyone gets to place an order of exactly what they'd like for dinner. There are a few ways that this can be simplified so that it's a little

more manageable. Make sure that everyone gets their orders in early, ideally before the groceries have been bought for the week. You can also choose to have an Italian night, for example, in order to limit the variety of dinners you'll have to make. It's not as much work as it may seem and it's a tradition that will live long in your memory!

### Picnics

For children especially, picnics can create genuine core memories. It can feel like something out of a story or a movie, and to do it in real life is so exciting! Keep it as simple as you like - sandwiches and a blanket laid out on the ground are all you really need. Even if going outdoors isn't an option, you can set up an indoor picnic in your living room. You can introduce candles and music for a nice ambience and simply just sit and catch up with your family.

### Special occasions

There's nothing like a fancy meal to mark a special occasion. This occasion can be the end of a school term or exams, a birthday, graduation or anything that feels special to your family. If you



choose to dine out, pick a special restaurant that you love but don't go to that often. Next, make sure everyone is dressed up and looking their best for this celebration! These slightly more sophisticated outings can become something that your whole family looks forward to.

### Mealtime gratitude

Dinner time is a great chance to take turns as a family to express gratitude. Perhaps once a week, take a moment to do this. The theme of gratitude can differ from week to week. Options include simply expressing gratitude about the meal in front of you and the roof over your head. You can also speak about how you're grateful for each one of your family members and their good health. Whatever you settle on, make sure to go around the table so that everyone gets to say something and express their gratitude. This can be very bonding and give your children heartwarming times to look back on.

## FAMILY TIME TRADITIONS

While having traditions based around meals is really enjoyable, there are plenty of other options. Here are a few easy ways to build traditions with your loved ones.

### Board game night

Board game night is a real staple tradition among many families, and for good reason. Sitting down to play board games with your family is a great way to intentionally spend time together, while trying to achieve a goal. Classics include Monopoly, Cluedo, as well as a nearly endless list of card games. While there can be disputes among more competitive families, it's important to prioritise everyone's enjoyment over winning and losing. Board games present a novel way of unplugging from the busy world and hanging out with each other. Doing this even once a month can be enough to forge it as a much-loved tradition in your household.

### Movie night

Particularly if you're tired after a long week of work, a family movie night is a very manageable, yet thoroughly enjoyable tradition that brings the whole family together. Make sure to pick movies that are suitable for everyone and perhaps even consider rotating who gets to choose the movie each time. If your child is likely to pick their favourite film over and over again, feel free to offer them some options to choose from. So sit back, lower the lights and don't forget the snacks!

### Video game tournaments

If there are avid gamers in your family, it might be a good idea to introduce a family tournament! There are countless games to choose from and you can either work together or compete with each other. Another really fun way to do this is to play one 'round' or 'match' in one game and then move to another game. Depending on how long it takes and how much time you have, you can play several games in a row for a real mix. Then just add up the scores and announce the victor!

### Family outings

Regular family outings can blossom into some of the most enjoyable family traditions. Choose a regular slot for your big family day out and start making a list of suitable activities. These can be anything from going to the cinema or a museum, to playing a round of mini golf or going for a family cycle. To further establish the tradition, you can take a family photo on each outing and create a scrapbook that's absolutely bursting with memories. This can become a cherished family heirloom that your children will fondly look back on for years to come.

## FOR THE FUTURE

Family traditions are a beautiful way to spend quality time with your nearest and dearest. Whatever becomes your family's tradition comes down to what works for you. These memorable experiences can become a core piece of your family's history and may even live on for generations!



# EDUCATION



This month, we dive into the many ways board games can help children learn!





# USING BOARD GAMES TO LEARN

*Boosting your child's brain development and life skills while having fun sounds too good to be true. Here we look at how board games can do just that!*

Board games have been around in one form or another for thousands of years. While they offer an entertaining way to disconnect from the stresses of daily life, they also bring a whole host of educational benefits for kids. Next time you feel like you're taking the easy way out by playing a board game with your child instead of something more obviously educational, don't worry. Playing board games will help your little one's brain development in lots of different ways. So pull out the family favourite game for one of the best combinations of fun and learning there is!

## 6 WAYS BOARD GAMES CAN BOOST YOUR CHILD'S MIND

Let's run through the variety of ways that playing board games can help your child's development.

### Attention span

Poor attention span and the lack of an ability to focus is one of the biggest issues affecting young people today. So much of what children interact with on a daily basis is short and rapid bursts of entertainment. TikTok and YouTube shorts are the two primary examples. Board games are almost the exact opposite of these forms of entertainment.

Board games demand focus to succeed and they tend to move quite slowly. At first, this can be a struggle for children (and adults!) but it's important to persevere and leave digital distractions, such as phones or TV, off or in another room. The slow, analogue



nature of board games will train your little one to focus for longer periods of time and this will stand to them in virtually every part of their education and life.

### Learning

Board games have something for all children. They are a fantastic way to help your little early learner figure out how to count and to identify different colours and shapes. It also trains aspects of their mind-body connection, such as dexterity and hand-eye coordination.

Studies have shown that board games encourage the development of the frontal lobe in the brains of children and teenagers. As your little ones grow and become more capable, they'll be able to play more complex and demanding board games. These might require things such as strategy, teamwork and deduction to win. Research suggests that this kind of board game can help your teen with their ability to make decisions and organise themselves.

### Teamwork

While some board games operate in an arena where everyone is out for themselves, there are lots that require teamwork. Promoting the necessity to work together is a key part of why board games are so beneficial for children. It teaches them that you can't move through this world alone and that you can often achieve much greater things if you cooperate with those around you. In different games, your little one will learn to team up with different players depending on their strengths and weaknesses and what the objective is. They can also learn the vital skill of holding your head high when you've given your best but it hasn't quite worked out. You don't get far in this world without teamwork and board games are an excellent way to learn this lesson.

### Language

Some kids who find it harder to read are intimidated when a book is placed in front of them. For children who are hesitant readers, board games offer a great way to challenge your little one's literacy skills without them even realising it. They will have to read and understand the general



rules of play, read out any cards that may be part of the game and hold various facts and pieces of information in their head at once. Board games can really improve your little one's vocabulary without the usual pressure they may experience.

### Winning and losing

One of the least tangible benefits of introducing board games to your little one, might actually have the greatest impact. Board games teach the difficult lessons of winning and losing. Everyone loves to win but few people appreciate when the winner overly celebrates the victory by rubbing it in. Winning with humility is a real challenge for lots of people but doing so is a much more gentle and loving way to interact with those around you. Similarly, not getting too upset when you lose is a tough skill to develop. Through playing board games, you can teach your little one to avoid being a 'sore loser' by seeing that

everyone wins and loses from time to time. It's just as important to be gracious in defeat as in victory.

### Patience

Finally, board games teach one of the biggest life lessons of all - patience. Patience truly is a virtue. Through waiting for their turn to come around, or even trying to tolerate sitting in Monopoly jail, you can show your child the benefits of patience. This will set them apart from those who lack patience in the world. So many people lack patience and it causes a huge amount of unnecessary stress and anxiety. Through playing board games, your little one can develop their mind in plenty of different ways, while acquiring some crucial life skills. So next time you find yourself reaching for Netflix, consider pulling out a few board games!

## SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD FAIR 2023

# ELEVATING CULINARY EXCELLENCE AND GOURMET INNOVATION

The Speciality & Fine Food Fair, the UK's most anticipated event in the culinary and gourmet food industry, is thrilled to announce its return in 2023. This year's fair promised to be a culinary extravaganza like no other, bringing together a diverse array of artisanal producers, innovative brands and passionate food enthusiasts.

The EU Financed campaign, EU Fresh Fruit Gift, participated in the Speciality & Fine Food Fair expo where the visitors were able to meet representatives of the participant organisations at Booth No 1946, at the Olympia National Hall. At the booth the visitors were able to get informed about the superior quality European products, the strict superior quality and food safety production standards, and discuss the possibility of further business collaboration.

The EU financed campaign EU Fresh Fruit Gift aims to promote European fresh cherries and blueberries from Greece and Romania to consumers in India, UAE and UK. The participant organisations are Agricultural Cooperative of Rachi Pieria "Agios Loukas" (AC Rachi) from Greece - coordinator, and The Association of South Fruit Producers - FRUCTPROD from Romania.

**Crave the Freshness!**  
Savor the Juicy Delights  
of the European Nature

**Cherries** from Romania & Greece – **Blueberries** from Romania



**EU FRESH FRUIT GIFT**

[www.eufreshfruitgift.eu](http://www.eufreshfruitgift.eu)

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# SCHOOL & FAMILY BREAKS



This month, we  
have a selection of  
wonderfully festive  
holiday destinations  
around the world!





A tropical resort scene featuring several tall palm trees and lush greenery. In the foreground, a swimming pool reflects the sky and the surrounding landscape. The background shows a clear sky with some clouds, suggesting a sunny day.

# SIX SEASONAL FAMILY BREAKS

*From the sunny shores of the Maldives, to the cultural havens of Paris and New York, here are six enchanting destinations to visit with your loved ones this festive season.*

Whether you prefer to embrace a winter wonderland, soak up city culture, or bask in the sun on a distant beach, your family is bound to discover a touch of unique holiday magic at these beautiful destinations.

## **TROPICAL TRADITION IN THE MALDIVES**

A tropical winter break in the Maldives is ideal for those looking for a taste of tradition with a side of sunshine. The alluring Waldorf Astoria Maldives, Ithaafushi resort beckons, set against a backdrop of pristine white sands, shimmering crystal blue waters and lush palm trees - gorgeous!

Countdown to the new year in style with your loved ones, indulging in seasonal feasts and an awe-inspiring full moon party under a starlit sky. Mark New Year's Eve with a glittering Gala dinner at Nava Beach, a night of glamour, featuring live music, a buffet of delicious treats and fun games for younger guests. The fun can continue into the new year, where your family can enjoy interesting activities such as a nail art workshop or partake in an island treasure hunt.

## **Wellness for all**

Kickstart your immersive wellness journey with the resort's pioneering 'wellness concierge', the first of its kind in the Maldives. The resort offers a range of seasonal workshops, including a transcendental meditation journey and a natural coffee-based scrub creation workshop, wherein you will be able to avail of the Aqua Wellness Centre's steam sauna with your custom scrub creation.

*Experience Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi by booking at [www.waldorfastoria.com](http://www.waldorfastoria.com) or through [www.ithaafushiprivateisland.com](http://www.ithaafushiprivateisland.com).*

## SCHOOL & FAMILY BREAKS

### A RENAISSANCE FAIRYTALE IN FLORENCE

Embrace the allure of the holiday season in Florence, where the charming renaissance backdrop, festive lights and decor transform the city into a captivating fairytale, and Hotel Savoy awaits to welcome your family.



#### Christmas

Your loved ones can immerse themselves in a classic Italian feast at the Irene Restaurant, filled with traditional holiday delicacies. The celebratory dinner promises you an unforgettable Christmas Eve experience with a spectacular festive ambience, alongside a very special Christmas lunch, curated by Chef Fulvio Pierangelini, who handpicks local ingredients to craft an exceptional seasonal menu.

#### New Year's fun

Mark the most awaited night of the year with a glamorous Gala dinner showcasing regional delicacies, before a magical midnight countdown and a fabulous toast to 2024. Then commence the year with a New Year's Day brunch, featuring live music, children's entertainment and a delectable menu that puts the spotlight on traditional Tuscan flavours - with an emphasis on a healthy lifestyle of course!

#### Romance awaits

As the Piazza della Repubblica transforms into a winter wonderland outside, within Hotel Savoy a dreamy cascade of lights creates an extra sense of intimacy for special romantic evenings. Rekindling the hotel's popular candle-lit dinners this year, the Irene Restaurant will be illuminated by candlelight every Monday until the 5th of February 2024, offering you and your partner the perfect opportunity to dine in this radiant twilight setting, in one of Europe's most romantic cities - how lovely!

Visit [www.rockfortehotels.com/hotels-and-resorts/hotel-savoy/festive/](http://www.rockfortehotels.com/hotels-and-resorts/hotel-savoy/festive/) to find out more.

### HALLMARK HOLIDAYS IN NEW YORK

Located in Midtown, The Peninsula New York sits in the heart of the city's festivities. Between the decked-out department stores, the Rockefeller Christmas tree and all the twinkling lights, a winter trip to New York is ideal for families looking to create wonderful holiday memories. With a splendid line-up of treats, the luxury hotel has announced its exclusive collaboration with the iconic toy store, FAO Schwarz, as it rolls out the holiday red carpet for its guests around the world.



#### Special packages

You may like the 'Night Before Christmas Package' package, which offers a magical experience for the entire family. Children on the 'nice' list will be rewarded with an in-room candy cane scavenger hunt, gingerbread cookie decorating kit, FAO Schwarz holiday gifts, exclusive access to The Peninsula Sweet Shoppe and more.

#### Party time

Soar into the new year above the lights of Fifth Avenue, at Peninsula New York's rooftop party. The glitzy event will see Salon de Ning transformed into a winter wonderland, with dance floors and live music galore. Your family will be treated to a selection of delights, including a raw bar, a tasty selection of hors d'oeuvres and a specialty beverage bar, whilst dancing the night away above the city.

#### Glow up

In honour of the season, the award-winning Peninsula Spa and Wellness Centre offers a lovely retreat where families can treat themselves to blissful bespoke festive packages. The 'Holiday Glow' package is especially nice, offering you the opportunity to reinvigorate your winter skin, leaving it refreshed just in time to party.

Visit [www.peninsula.com/en/new-york/festive](http://www.peninsula.com/en/new-york/festive) for bookings and information.

### FOLLOW THE STARS TO AMSTERDAM

Adjacent to the cultural epicentre of Amsterdam, the regal Conservatorium hotel resembles a classic townhouse where you can unwind in urban luxury. Embracing diversity, the hotel offers menus brimming with the timeless flavours of the season, alongside festive feasts infused with delightful Asian influences.

#### December celebrations

The ultimate festive package by the Conservatorium hotel offers your family the chance to make this holiday one to remember. Revel in a hearty winter breakfast at the Brasserie, before taking advantage of full access to their wonderful spa and fitness area for some much-needed pampering, before retreating to one of the luxury guest rooms or suites for a heavenly night's sleep.





### Soak up culture

In December, the city of Amsterdam's famed canals takes on an extra shimmer, making for an unforgettable experience for visitors. One of the loveliest things to do is a canal boat tour where you can take in some of the world's most unique and magnificent light displays at the Amsterdam Light Festival. Your family might also like to explore the famous museums on offer, go ice skating on the Museum Square underneath a replica of the Magere Brug, or buy gifts from the in-house Van Baerle Shopping Gallery, where a selection of specially curated treats and hand-selected beauty products from Akasha await you.

*Learn more at [www.conservatoriumhotel.com/festive-season](http://www.conservatoriumhotel.com/festive-season).*

### FESTIVE GLAMOUR IN PARIS



The City of Light is extra bright during the holiday season, from the lights lining the Saint-Germain-des-Prés, to the store window displays that rival museum art installations. An icon of the neighbourhood, the festive celebrations at the Lutetia, one of the prestigious Parisian grand hotels, make for a trip to remember. From gourmet seasonal menus, to exquisite shopping experiences, this family break allows you to celebrate the year-end in your own unique way.

### What's on?

Throughout December, Le Saint-Germain is offering afternoon tea under their spectacularly coloured glass ceiling, where your family can savour the cosiness of winter together. For a more Christmas-inspired affair, you might like to sample the seasonal delicacies and take in the festive musical atmosphere of Christmas Eve and Day at Brasserie Lutetia and Le Saint-Germain. To further celebrate the season of giving, the Lutetia and Le Bon Marché Rive Gauche have created an exclusive shopping experience befitting their grandeur. Available until January 3rd, the classic Parisian luxury shopping experience allows you several privileges, including a personalised welcome, a gift card worth 800 AED to spend in-store, the advice of expert fashion consultants and more.

*For more information, visit [www.hotellutetia.com/festive-season/](http://www.hotellutetia.com/festive-season/)*

### ARABIAN NIGHTS AND FESTIVE DELIGHTS

Surrounded by Dubai's breath-taking desert landscape, the charming Bab Al Shams offers an ideal sanctuary for those seeking a burst of winter sunshine infused with a touch of festive spirit, all without the jet lag. This one-of-a-kind resort undergoes an elegant transformation, with a distinct variety of curated experiences, inviting you and your loved ones to embark on a seasonal adventure full of good food, entertainment and holiday cheer.

### Festivities

Families can indulge in The Christmas Eve dinner and Christmas Day lunch at Zala, boasting all the holiday specials, including a whole roast turkey, Beef Wellington and the quintessential



trimmings. Featuring live music and a range of recreational activities for kids, including pony and camel rides, the festivities at Zala guarantee an unforgettable holiday experience for families. For a more intimate setting, you can also savour a starlit private christmas roast, with the serene desert as a backdrop.

### Welcome 2024

Countdown to 2024 under the desert stars with a '1001-nights' themed dinner at Al Hadheerah, or dance through the night at Anwā, with a glamorous Studio 54 inspired New Year's Eve after-party, complete with an extravagant fireworks display. Regardless of which you choose, you are sure to have a fabulous evening filled with exquisite cuisine, Arabian flair, vibrant festivities and live entertainment.

### Excursions

Witness an oasis of natural wonder at Al Marmoom Desert Conservation Reserve with an exhilarating luxury, private 4x4 adventure. Discover graceful gazelles, the majestic Arabian oryx and beautiful birds, as well as captivating celestial views, before ending the evening with a scenic sunset picnic - an ideal finale to a truly memorable family break.

*Visit [www.babalshams.com/festive](http://www.babalshams.com/festive) to learn more.*



# HOME & GARDEN



This month, we focus on the many ways you can prepare your living spaces for an abundant year ahead!





# PREPARING YOUR HOME FOR THE NEW YEAR

As the calendar turns its pages, signalling the arrival of a new year, many of us find ourselves motivated to make positive changes across our lives. While resolutions often focus on personal growth and wellbeing, it's equally essential to extend this enthusiasm to your living spaces. Your home is a reflection of your inner world and preparing it for the new year can set the tone for a fresh start and a rejuvenated outlook. Below, we delve into practical and effective ways to transform your home, creating an environment that supports your goals and aspirations for the year ahead.

## DECLUTTER

The new year is a chance for a fresh start and a great time to declutter both our physical spaces and our lives. As part of that, give yourself the gift of a clean slate by getting rid of any possessions that no longer bring you happiness or a purpose. Begin by tackling one room at a time, sorting through belongings and deciding what to keep and what to get rid of. If something no longer brings joy or serves a purpose, it's time to bid it farewell.

This applies to the old, ill-fitting or rarely-used clothes in your wardrobe and to the variety of things that end up in that one cluttered, multipurpose drawer we all have in our homes. It also applies to throwing out anything broken and checking the expiration dates of your products in the kitchen, utility room and bathroom.

The principle of minimalism can guide this process - keep only what adds value to your life. Donate or discard items that clutter your living spaces. This process will not only streamline your home but also contributes to a sense of mental clarity and your first 'win' of the new year, setting the stage for a more focused and intentional twelve months ahead.

## DEEP CLEAN

A clean home is a canvas for new beginnings. As such, a thorough cleaning session is more than just a routine chore; it's a symbolic act of letting go of the old and welcoming the new. Scrub, dust, and polish away the remnants of the past year from every nook and cranny in your home. Pay special attention to often-neglected areas, such as baseboards, light fixtures and behind furniture. You may even want to consider scheduling professional carpet cleaning to ensure a fresh, healthy living environment. A deep-cleaned home is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also fosters a sense of renewal and positivity.

## Citrus scents

It can be nice to pick lemon-scented or citrus fragranced cleaning products, or even lemons themselves to work with. The reason is that the smell of lemons and other citrus fruits is considered a natural stress-buster and is known to have a purifying effect. What could be better for the year to come?





## REARRANGE YOUR FURNITURE

Why not mix things up by rearranging your furniture. This simple, yet effective step can breathe new life into your living spaces. It can be fun to experiment with different layouts, injecting a touch of something new into your environment that shakes up any stale habits you may have fallen into with your environment. Consider the flow of energy within each room and aim for a balanced, appealing setup that works well for how you like to use each room. Rearranging furniture not only transforms the look of your home, but also creates a dynamic environment that aligns with the changes you wish to manifest in the coming year.

## ATTRACT ABUNDANCE

Infuse your home with positivity and abundance with some strategic home décor choices. Choose colours, textures, and objects that resonate with prosperity and wellbeing. Some ideas for incorporating symbols of abundance include mirrors, to reflect positive energy, or a bowl of citrus fruits, known for their association with wealth. Cultivating a Chinese

money tree is considered to invite prosperity into your life too. Some people like to buy new candles in a colour linked to their goals for the year ahead - red for love, white for harmony and peace, gold for luck etc. By intentionally curating your living spaces, you invite abundance into your life, simply by surrounding yourself with positive subconscious messaging, creating an environment that aligns with your aspirations for the new year.

## CLEANSE YOUR AIR

This is one that is easy to overlook, but clean air is becoming more and more of a rarity these days, and it can have a real impact on your health. If it applies to you, perhaps book in for some air duct maintenance or look into investing in HEPA filters for your appliances if they do not already have one. Allergy experts particularly recommend using a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter so this could be a good purchase for those that get irritated by dust particles in the home.

Some people like to turn to nature to refresh their air, by burning certain woods known for their purifying properties. Palo Santo is one that has



been used for centuries in various cultures and it's easy to use. All you have to do is light a Palo Santo stick and let the fragrant smoke waft through each room, focusing on corners and areas that feel stagnant. It's a harmless routine that makes for a fresh and positive start in the new year.

## INVITE NATURE INSIDE

Bringing nature indoors has been proven to reduce stress and enhance our overall wellbeing. Indoor plants or flowers add a welcome touch of natural beauty, vitality and serenity through the cooler season. You may like to choose plants known for their air-purifying qualities, such as snake plants or peace lilies, while fresh flowers in vibrant hues can add a burst of colour and joy to your living spaces. If you have the inclination, consider creating a small indoor garden or herb garden to connect with the natural world within the confines of your home. Another great idea is to bring suitable houseplants into your bathroom, as many varieties thrive in the steam and damp environment with little care needed.

Whatever you choose, embracing the beauty of nature within your living spaces will forge a connection with the cycles of growth and renewal that the new year represents.

## ESTABLISH WELLNESS ZONES

Common new year's resolutions include fitness goals, stress management practices, reading more often - general improvement of our health and wellness. However, these goals don't just happen in a vacuum - so why

not set your environment up to help you achieve them? Prioritise your physical and mental wellbeing by creating dedicated wellness zones within your home in line with your resolutions. Maybe you might benefit from designating a space for meditation or yoga, equipped with comfortable mats and calming décor. Or perhaps your goal is to get back to reading? If so, set up a cosy reading nook for yourself, complete with plush cushions and good lighting, to encourage you to keep at it. Having dedicated spaces for self-care activities reinforces the importance of wellbeing in your daily routine, regardless of your resolutions, contributing to a healthier and more balanced lifestyle as you go forward.

## BEYOND THE HOME

While decluttering your physical space is crucial, don't overlook the importance of decluttering other areas of your life. Evaluating your commitments, relationships and digital spaces can be really freeing - so, unsubscribe from any unnecessary emails, take a few hours this month to organise your digital files and streamline your schedule in the new year, by focusing on your priorities. Decluttering extends beyond the home - it's also about creating mental and emotional space for new experiences and opportunities.

Preparing your home (and yourself!) for the new year involves a holistic approach that goes beyond mere cleaning and rearranging, but looks to set you up for a transformative and abundant year. As you embark on this journey, let the energy of renewal and positivity guide you towards a home and a life that truly reflects your best self.



# GOOD LIVING



From hydrated skin and dramatic eye makeup, to delicious turkey and trimmings, cakes and alcohol-free fizz, here are my picks for the festive season!



## THE GIFT OF SOFT SKIN, NAILS AND LIPS THIS WINTER!

SA multi-award-winning, 100% natural and vegan multi-purpose balm, this wonder product can be used to hydrate your lips, nourish those dry cuticles, alleviate patches of dry skin, shape your brows for extra sharpness and tame any stray flyaways. Suitable for all skin types, including sensitive skin, the nourishing multi-purpose formula leaves your hair, skin and lips feeling soft and soothed, so you're always looking your best this party season!

Priced at AED 36.75, it's formulated with some amazing natural ingredients. There's pawpaw fruit which rejuvenates, nourishes and hydrates your skin, aloe vera which is full of antioxidants and boasts soothing antibacterial properties, olive oil which gently hydrates your winter skin without feeling greasy, and lastly castor oil which is great for maintaining moisture and protecting your skin from the elements.

*Dr. PAWPAW's products are available at Life Pharmacy and Watsons stores across the UAE.*

## PERFECT CURLS FOR CHRISTMAS!

This is one for my 'curly girlies'! It's no secret that curly hair can sometimes have a mind of its own, which can be a challenge when you want a sleek look. Curls should always be handled with care, and the first step to looking your best this season is using the right products to keep your locks hydrated, defined and frizz-free. HASK's Curl Care Collection is especially crafted to quench your curls and provide the ultimate hydration and definition your curls crave during the party season and beyond!

HASK's Curl Care Collection has quickly become a go-to choice, trusted even by Hollywood hairstylists for its ability to style, nourish, and transform curly hair. This comprehensive range of wash-day essentials is all you need to maintain perfectly hydrated and gorgeous curls throughout all your upcoming events. Infused with a magical blend of coconut oil, argan oil and vitamin E, HASK's Curl Care Collection guarantees your curls receive the moisture and care they truly deserve. No matter your curl pattern, from loose waves to tight coils, this range delivers hydration and definition, ensuring your curls shine all month long.

**HASK products are in all major supermarkets and online at [www.glambeaute.com](http://www.glambeaute.com).**



## CREATE EYE-CATCHING FESTIVE LOOKS



I wanted to highlight Watsons Revolution Maxi Eyeshadow Palette (AED 109) to you ahead of any upcoming dinners and occasions. Embrace the colours of the season with this beautifully pigmented palette, now available at Watsons. It's perfect for exploring and experimenting with a spectrum of stunning shades, that are all designed to blend seamlessly together, for an endless variety of eye-catching looks at all of your social gatherings in the coming weeks! This must-have palette combines rich colours, smooth texture and long-lasting formulas, ensuring you achieve the perfect eye makeup masterpiece every time - ideal!

**The palette is available to purchase in-store and online at [www.watsons.ae](http://www.watsons.ae).**



## A DELICIOUS TURKEY TAKEAWAY FROM CAFÉ SOCIETY



It's the most wonderful time of the year, so why not make things a little easier for yourself with an unmissable Turkey Takeaway offer. Instead of worrying about cooking, sit back, sip on a cool drink and enjoy festive carols in the cosiness of your own home, while the chefs at Café Society provide you with an extravagant festive menu, featuring a beautifully tender turkey, paired with mouth-watering accompaniments and a sweet treat, for a truly elevated family feast.

Their delicious, perfectly cooked turkey is infused with flavour and comes in a choice of three handy sizes, so you can align with the number you're hosting for dinner. Prices are:

- 6 KG for AED 499
- 8 KG for AED 599
- 10 KG for AED 699.

You also get to select any three delectable sides to enhance your meal and, to end things on a sweet note, Café Society is gifting you a complimentary Sourdough Bread to go with your meal, as well as a rich and crumbly Cherry Tart, that guarantees a tasty finish to a memorable night.

Orders for Turkey Takeaway must be made 48 hours in advance and delivery (AED 100) depends on your location.

*For more information, please call +971 4 318 3755, email [info@cafesociety.ae](mailto:info@cafesociety.ae) or visit [www.cafesociety.ae](http://www.cafesociety.ae).*

## SOPHISTICATED ALCOHOL-FREE DRINKS FOR THE PARTY SEASON



It's the busiest time of year for social gatherings and occasions to attend, with plenty of opportunities to lean into 'the season of cheer'. Wild Idol has a wonderfully high-quality, naturally alcohol free alternative to wine and champagne for mums who want to enjoy the fun of festive parties and dinners, but don't require alcohol to have it. Not everyone wants the usual offerings of fruit juice or sugary fizzy drinks, and so it's fantastic that Wild Idol has such an adaptable, luxurious,

option. Unlike most alcohol-free alternatives, Wild Idol's drinks have never contained alcohol and have never been fermented. Priced at AED 175, the drinks are vegan, gluten-free, halal-certified and enriched with delicate bubbles for an elegant touch. Vivacious red fruits with jolts of bright gooseberry and fresh rhubarb make up the sparkling "rosé", while the sparkling "white" has notes of grapefruit zest, crisp green apple and white flowers - delicious!

**Purchase Wild Idol at MMI stores or online at <https://mmihomedelivery.ae>.**

## THE SWEETEST END TO YOUR FAMILY FEAST



FNP.ae, the much-loved destination for gourmet gifting and confectionery, presents an enticing new collection of handcrafted cheesecakes, offering an array of tasty

flavours and fresh ingredients - the perfect way to finish your festive feast. Whether it's the creamy richness of the New York cheesecake, the sweetness of mango or strawberry, the tang of blueberry or lemon or the nuttiness of almond or coconut that you prefer, there's a flavour for every palate available.

**To explore the full FNP cheesecake range on offer and place an order, visit <https://www.fnp.ae/cheesecakes>**

# COMPETITIONS

motherbabychild.com/competitions

## WIN! A VOUCHER FROM THE COTERIE, WORTH AED 800



With an atmosphere full of anticipation, The Coterie at IBN Battuta Mall, above Precision Football, offers a delightful experience with its quintessentially British roasts and an electric gastropub feel. Combining UK-inspired food and tasty beverages, it is a unique dining experience. Filled with screens for watching

sports, it makes an ideal spot for sports enthusiasts who want to enjoy a delicious meal while catching up on their favourite games.

## WIN! A VOUCHER FROM TING IRIE, WORTH AED 500



Craving a taste of the Caribbean? Ting Irie, UAE's first Jamaican restaurant in Souk Al Manzil, Downtown Dubai, has got you covered! Since 2016, they've been dishing out authentic Jamaican food with a modern twist. Immerse yourself in a vibrant fusion of spirited ambience and buzzing beats. Savour the vibrancy

of flavours imported straight from Jamaica and indulge in popular native dishes elevated with traditional island ingredients, promising an extraordinary journey of food, music and infectious energy.

## WIN! A HAMPER FROM KIBSONS, WORTH AED 500



Indulge in some delicious delights from your favourite online grocery, Kibsons! The go-to destination for quality, freshness and sustainability, this Kibsons hamper will help you start the new year the right way, offering some inspirational healthy habits and tasty treats! Your ultimate culinary companion,

Kibsons believes in delivering the freshest produce straight to your doorstep. From artisanal cheeses to delectable confectionery, fresh and organic meats, seafood, fruits and vegetables, there is something to suit all tastes and dietary requirements. Kibsons also offers a range of gifting options, including fresh flowers, hampers, cakes, cards, gift sets and party supplies, all one convenient and hassle-free click away.

## WIN! A VOUCHER FROM KIDD'S NEW COLLECTION, WORTH AED 500



Thrilling news for fashion-forward parents and their little trendsetters! Imagine winning a competition and adorning your little ones in the chic

minimalism of KIDD's sophisticated kids' collection. As the lucky winner, you'll receive beautiful clothes for your child, worth AED 500. Get ready to celebrate as your child becomes the epitome of KIDD's stylish charm! From aesthetic sweatshirts to trendy minimal ensembles, KIDD offers a range of high-quality clothing designed to inspire and empower the next generation of fashion enthusiasts. The brand's launch in the UAE marks a significant milestone, bringing forth a collection that celebrates the joy and individuality of every child using a minimalistic approach.

## WIN! A LUXURY JONES THE GROCER FESTIVE HAMPER, WORTH AED 520



Nothing says happy holidays like a premium gift basket packed with festive treats! Jones the Grocer has meticulously curated an exquisite range of hampers to cater to every budget and palate, making it a breeze to spread holiday joy. Win your very own Jones the Grocer hamper

worth over AED 500, including handcrafted mince pies, festive fruit cake, gingerbread cookies, classic panettone, chocolate chip shortbread and more! The regionally and internationally beloved brand, known for its delicious culinary offering and eclectic artisan retail selection, is the ultimate destination for all your festive needs this season.

**TO ENTER:** You'll need to have an Instagram account to enter, so make sure you follow us on IG to be eligible to enter this prize draw competition! Just fill in the details on your entry form - and don't forget to include your IG handle!

## WIN! 5 REFORMER PILATES CLASSES AT PAD, WORTH AED 750



PAD: Pilates and Dance Studio in Dubai is a fitness destination where Pilates and dance come together to empower and transform. With a cosy boutique setup in The Greens, it offers outstanding service and

exceptional instructors, who are passionate about promoting wellbeing and community. Strengthen your core, improve flexibility and heighten body awareness through tailored Pilates classes. Embrace creativity and move without restraint with their dynamic dance programs. The studio brings Yasmin Karachiwala's Pilates expertise to the UAE, along with Shaaazia Qureishi, the only certified Fletcher Pilates instructor in the region, alongside Abbas Ali Kanchwala, a Bollywood dance guru. They prioritise individual attention with small class sizes, welcoming both fitness enthusiasts and beginners.

## WIN! A MINI LINK 2 SMARTPHONE PRINTER & 3 PACKS OF FILM FROM INSTAX, WORTH AED 500



'Tis the season of joy and Instax has the perfect giveaway to make your celebrations even more memorable! Enter for your chance to win the ultimate festive companion - the Instax Mini Link 2 Smartphone Printer, along with three packs of film.

Don't miss a moment this festive season - print your favourite memories right from your smartphone in seconds. The Instax Mini Link 2 ensures that the magic of the moment is captured instantly. You can unleash your creativity with a host of innovative features, from customisable prints, fabulous filters and collage creations that guarantee your holiday snapshots will stand the test of time! Compact and chic, it's your perfect accessory for the festive season and beyond. Simply slip it into your bag or pocket and capture the joy wherever you go. Make it a festive season to remember and turn your holiday memories into tangible treasures!

## WIN! A LINGERIE SET FROM FEMIQUE, WORTH AED 500



Elevate your elegance this festive season with the perfect gift for all mums and mums-to-be! Enter today for your chance to win a voucher, worth AED 500, to spend on Femique.com, the newly launched

nursing lingerie brand, now available in the UAE. Offering the ultimate in sophistication and style, with the added benefit of comfort and ease when nursing, Femique understands the importance of a perfect fit, so each piece is designed to embrace your curves and ensure you feel your most fabulous self. The epitome of timeless elegance, each piece is carefully designed with meticulous attention to detail and promises a touch of glamour to empower every woman who wears it. Make this holiday season memorable for yourself or another mother in your life, and enjoy lingerie that feels as good as it looks.

## WIN! A VOUCHER FROM CHAMPION CLEANERS, WORTH AED 500




With the holiday period firmly upon us, step into the festive season with freshness, courtesy of Champion Cleaners. Prepare to dazzle this month and beyond with clothing that sparkles as bright as your

celebrations. Offering full dry cleaning and laundry services, Champion Cleaners has you covered when it comes to designer handbag and shoe cleaning and servicing, wedding gown preservation, soft toy cleaning, stroller and car seat cleaning and sanitisation, and more! The best in ensuring your wardrobe is immaculate in time for the festivities, Champion Cleaners is renowned for going the extra mile, delivering spotless results that go beyond the surface. You can also enjoy the convenience of doorstep pick-up and delivery, so you can focus on what truly matters during the festive season!

**TO ENTER:** You'll need to have an Instagram account to enter, so make sure you follow us on IG to be eligible to enter this prize draw competition! Just fill in the details on your entry form - and don't forget to include your IG handle!





Celebrate December in style at our Festive Garden. Enjoy a vibrant variety of booths, live entertainment, appearance of Santa Clause and delectable food & beverages kiosks throughout the month.

Everyone is invited to Celebrate in the joyous spirit of the season from December 1st 2023 to January 7th, 2024

**Open Daily**

Weekdays Mon - Fri: 5:00pm - 10:00pm

Weekends Sat & Sun: 10:00am - 10:00pm

Santa's appearance: Every Saturday | 6:30pm - 7:30pm



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