

LUXURY family times

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Spring/Summer 2017

Animals and Magic

Our world moves on. One feature of our hotels, which is definitely on the increase, is animals! Every hotel now has a resident dog (and in some cases a resident cat, too) – often brought in as a young puppy, growing up in the hotel environment and feeling this world is quite natural. These hotel dogs are tolerant, relaxed and (occasionally) rather too well-fed! Their presence forms an element of the everyday rhythm of the hotel and they have worked out how best to mix in with the hotel routines. Our visiting families bump into these friendly creatures, and for any children unused to dogs at home this is a very useful confidence builder. But we don't just have dogs for our guests to meet – we also have: rabbits, cats, chickens (producing wonderful fresh eggs!), ducks, guinea pigs, gerbils and now a huge pig – Rosie. The arrival of Rosie at Woolley Grange marks a new landmark in the luxury family menagerie... I await the arrival of our first camel!

A few weeks ago we celebrated Neil Carter's 20 years as General Manager at Moonfleet Manor. Neil was lured to the hotel on a Sunday night, on the pretext of a 'fire alarm alert'. On arrival he was grabbed to prevent him fleeing and then sat down before a large gathering of staff and friends, old and new, and subjected to a 'This is your life' covering his 20 years at Moonfleet. I am so delighted that Neil has made Moonfleet his home all this time and I am also reminded that Clare Hammond has been the Châteline of Woolley Grange for nearly as long, while Faye Kelly (Ickworth) and Chris Williams

(Fowey Hall) have also been in our world for nearly 15 years now.

This loyal commitment has helped provide great continuity, and with a high proportion of our guests now returning regularly there is a real sense of comfort that 'all will be well' on the next visit. I should add that some of our guests have beaten the foregoing records by some margin, with one family having clocked up 28 years of annual 'service'.

Which brings me on to the 'magic'. There are some changes afoot. As you already know we have been making plans. These plans include expanding the range of what we offer, with more things to do at the hotels, more variety of accommodation and generally more choices. We are hugely loyal to the essential qualities of each of our hotels but we are also keen to enable each hotel to flourish in a more independent, and perhaps in some cases, a more idiosyncratic way. Our hotels are all located in interesting and attractive places and we think that we should also offer a similar variety of experiences within the hotels themselves. So watch this space!

Nigel Chapman
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If you have enjoyed browsing through this newsletter and would like a regular printed copy, please drop an email request to:
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anne@luxuryfamilyhotels.co.uk

ICKWORTH SUCCESS!

Chef Lee and Adam, our F&B Manager, recently entered a competition organised by Peroni to design and serve a lunch to be paired with their Czech Pilsner.

This national competition was tough but the Ickworth pair won, beating the likes of the Galvin Restaurants!

Lee and Adam's exciting 'Huntsman's Lunch' contained venison scotch egg, pigeon ghoulish, game tea, smoked teal, smoked venison, wild boar ham, Czech beer bread and potted rabbit.



Lee and Adam are now looking forward to a visit to the Czech Republic for a prize winners' jolly at the end of May. Well done boys!

Our new spring/summer menu is going down a treat, featuring dishes such as Caprese salad, new season lamb and cauliflower risotto.



Lee has also been moonlighting as a judge for 'A Passion to Inspire' (college-based cooking academy) – our Apprentice Chef Jamie has actually won the first round and will be mentored by Lee to get him to the June final.

Adam Swan has been promoted to Food and Beverage Manager. After his and Roxy's (Assistant Restaurant Manager) dedication over the past few months, the service in our hotel has grown to a level where our beloved guests are singing and shouting about it. Well done team F&B and congratulations to Adam for a well-deserved promotion!

MIDWEEK SPRING OFFER

Treat yourself to a midweek dinner-inclusive two or three-night break from only £309.

Rates from £309 for a two-night stay, including breakfast and a two-course candlelit dinner for two adults each evening. Rates from £409 for a three-night stay, including breakfast and a two-course candlelit dinner for two adults each evening.

For more details, please visit: luxuryfamilyhotels.co.uk or telephone 0844 482 2152.

Terms and conditions: This offer must be pre-paid in full at the time of booking and is non-refundable and non-transferable. Subject to availability until 30 June at selected hotels, excluding school holidays. The from rate is for Polurrian Bay Hotel. Other hotels start from £339 for a two-night stay.



IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

'We have a big surprise in store – all will be revealed in the next issue!'

our favourite wines



Grape expectations

I have often wondered why New World wine-growing regions end up with the grape varieties they do...

Really, the New World is such a patronising term, the likes of South Africa, the Antipodes and the Americas have been growing vines for well over 200 years but it is worth looking at why we have the offerings we do from these growing areas.

The vine was spread around the world by European settlers to provide wine in their new homes to maintain their drinking culture but it wouldn't have been a particularly scientific choice. As it is, a lot of varieties have ended up in the wrong place and many – especially the Italians – have been terribly overlooked.



Warmer growing regions, such as South Africa and south-east Australia, could really do with having the likes of Nero di Troia, Nero d'Avola and Primitivo from Southern Italy, grapes used to heat and a certain lack of water and that produce strong, characterful wines.

Likewise the grapes of the Douro in Portugal, Tinto Roriz and Nacional. Really, we should see much more Grenache and Mourvedre in these places, coming as they do from Mediterranean scrub.

In whites, Sauvignon really has become too popular for its own good, it's too easy to sell so has been planted in unsuitable places – Sauvignon does not like warm growing regions. Its home is the Loire, two hours south of Paris, and it needs a pretty cool climate to capture that authentic race and verve. Again, the warm Mediterranean has its own grapes – Picpoul, Vermentino, Grillo, Grecanico – that produce equally zippy wines but in much warmer places. Albariño from Spain is another great coastal grape variety. Dare I say it's to do with marketing rather than making the best wines?

There are of course exceptions, the Dry Rieslings of the Clare Valley are unique, bone dry and ageworthy with lime and mango notes. Two characters in California in the 80s (and still very active), Bob Lindquist and Randall Graham, were the original 'Rhône Rangers' – growing Rhône varieties (Syrah, Grenache, Cinsault etc.) instead of the ubiquitous Cabernet Sauvignon, and also founding the ABC club (Anything but Chardonnay).

Now Graham, ever the recalcitrant, encourages growers to plant Italian varieties like Nebbiolo and Barbera.

While we are in California, we should mention Zinfandel, widely considered to be derived from Primitivo in Southern Italy but unfortunately it has suffered from mass production and commercialisation. If you want to see Zin taken to the heady heights of greatness, get your hands on a Paul Draper wine from Ridge Vineyards. It can be said that California's rich, indulged, slightly heady red wine styles are well suited to the bitterness of the likes of Sangiovese, Barbera and Nebbiolo. Washington State and Oregon are becoming bold and experimental, some of the hotels have a Riesling, Lane Birch from

Washington, others a Viognier from the wonderful Illahe Estate in Oregon making very natural wines, even using horses in the vineyards

In New Zealand (NZ), there is a growing worry about 'what if people go off Sauvignon Blanc?' (remember it happened to Chardonnay from Australia in a big way a decade ago). There are some great Dry Rieslings from NZ and there are now Albariño vineyards and also Grüner Veltliner from Austria (think of the similar landscapes) but these are much harder to market than Sauv Blanc. NZ has to be careful they do not over-produce and over-dilute this grape, the equivalent of their Golden Egg. There are great Sauvignons but there is now also a sea of average, bulk-shipped wines as it becomes commodified... Hopefully the same will not happen to their Pinot Noirs.

In South Africa, the emergent star seems to be Shiraz but there are hardly any Italianate varieties when really there should be, and very little Grenache, Cinsault, Carignan and Mourvedre to blend with the Shiraz that would perhaps make better wine.

Don't get me started on pure varieties... the New World tends to market its wines on the grape variety which tends to discourage blending when blending itself is a great art and now very misunderstood by a lot of consumers. For example, historically, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec were never pure varieties but elements in the Bordelais blend and, really, Argentinian Malbec is mostly a very simplistic style (look for more interesting blends – some of the hotels have a Malbec Cabernet Amancaya from the Catena and Lafite Rothschild estates in Mendoza – a far more complex, elevated Argentinian wine than pure Malbec.

Always remember, grapes should never become brands and it is the adventurous wine drinker who is best rewarded. Sante!

Stan Parks

What's Buzzing at Fowey Hall?

Fowey Hall has branched out into beekeeping. With expert help from Alice Margetts and her mentor and father, CJ, from Tregothnan Estate, staff are keeping the bees busy and content!

The most important bee is the queen. A queen is the mother of all the laying bees in the colony. She can live for three to four years.

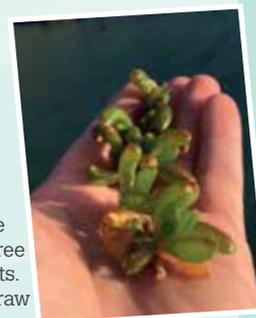
The Fowey Hall bees have had their last feed for the spring and will soon be self-sufficient for the summer months. Everyone is looking forward to sampling the honey later in the year.



FORAGING with Polurrian's Chef Joe

Joe's favourite foraging tip – Salty Fingers, also known as 'Jelly Beans' can be found around the coast in the South West.

They are a delicious treat with a slight saltiness being by the sea. They only grow in the South West, so this makes them really unique and ideal for making the most of authentic, free and local ingredients. They can be eaten raw in salads or cooked ever so slightly in a little boiling water and finished off with a dash of olive oil and a little pepper. They have a great texture which bursts in your mouth...



Bon Appetite!



Another delicious recipe from our chef at Fowey Hall. . .

The first of the UK's asparagus is in! The season starts down here in Cornwall and then moves across the country until the end of May/early June. I take a very Italian view with asparagus, so when the season starts I eat lots of it at home and it's on as many dishes at Fowey Hall as we can manage. It can be expensive, so using every bit of it is key.

Here are my tips for getting the most out of a bunch of fresh UK asparagus:

Prep the whole bunch by snapping off the harder ends and peeling the skins off halfway down the remaining stalk with a potato peeler (save the peeling and stalks for your soup).

Starter: Wrap six spears (three each) in Parma ham and chargrill. Serve with a drizzle of best-quality olive oil, balsamic reduction and shavings of Parmesan.



Main course: Use the remaining spears and blanch them with green beans in salted water. Serve with hollandaise sauce as an accompaniment with fish (poached salmon for example) and minted Jersey Royal potatoes which are also in season with asparagus.



Luxury Family Hotels and Bushbaby Travel are partnering up to offer you a free stay at any of the seven Luxury Family Hotels when you spend a minimum of £5k on accommodation with Bushbaby Travel to South Africa and Mauritius or Thailand.*

If you're considering your first long-haul adventure with little ones, you'll be in good hands with this family specialist tour operator that shares the Luxury Family Hotels ethos. Experts when it comes to creating fun-filled holidays to exotic, but child-friendly, destinations around the world, their knowledgeable and helpful team will hold your hand from start to finish.

As owner, and mum of three, Abi says, "This is precious time for both parents and children so getting it 'right' is key. It's important to use a family specialist like Bushbaby Travel, who understands what questions to ask, to create a personalised and unforgettable family adventure."

Designed by parents for parents and encompassing tots to teens, holidays with friends and family, and ideas for those 'just us' times for couples looking to indulge, explore or celebrate, whatever you have in mind, take a peek at their website [bushbabytravel](http://bushbabytravel.com) for some inspiration!

*T&Cs apply

bushbaby
INSPIRING TRAVEL FOR LIFE



OUT AND ABOUT

On 1 May Woolley Grange held a traditional country fayre. There was welly wanging, splat the rat, wheelbarrow racing, the best-dressed scarecrow competition and much much more! Not forgetting cheese and cider tasting (well they are in Wiltshire), a barbeque and delicious cream teas. Local craftspeople also came and guests could have a go at basketwork, woodcarving, candle making, and wool carding, spinning and weaving. Given Woolley Grange's history as a wool merchant's manor house, the spinning and weaving was very apt, as were the lambs that formed part of the 'mini farm'. The most popular attraction? Well, for the children, it was most definitely the tractors!



The spring adventure has begun at New Park Manor.

There is a host of activities to suit all ages and keep you busy throughout the day.

Head to the Den to find out what's afoot. If you are a competitive outdoor type of family why not try orienteering?

If glue, paint and colours sounds like fun, why not try making postcards with the Reception Team on Thursdays?

Need more action – the Den Team will let you loose on their obstacle course.

Go to www.newparkmanorhotel.co.uk to find out more.



obstacle course
vegetable flower painting
bingo!
postcards
dream catchers
seed planting
stained glass minibeasts
bake-off evening
and much more!

FOREST AND FRIENDS

Forest the Cavapoo at New Park Manor has been busy. He hosted a charity dog walk in aid of Hampshire Hounds attended by more than 20 dogs and owners.

He's also been on his travels and met Rex the King Charles Spaniel and Snoopy the Cocker Spaniel.

Earlier this year Forest spent the day at Lepe Country Park. The park is currently undergoing a facelift and will have new visitor attractions for the summer including a new play area and café.

BEACH CLEAN

Once-a-month beach cleans by the Friends of Polurrian run throughout the year and take about an hour. They are open to locals and to holidaymakers, and are a great way to put something back in to your seaside break.

There are also emergency winter cleans after a severe storm has brought in fishing industry debris and litter.

So far the coolest find has been by Abbie during the August 2016 beach clean... A BLACK LEGO DRAGON!



WOOLLEY GRANGE has a new resident!

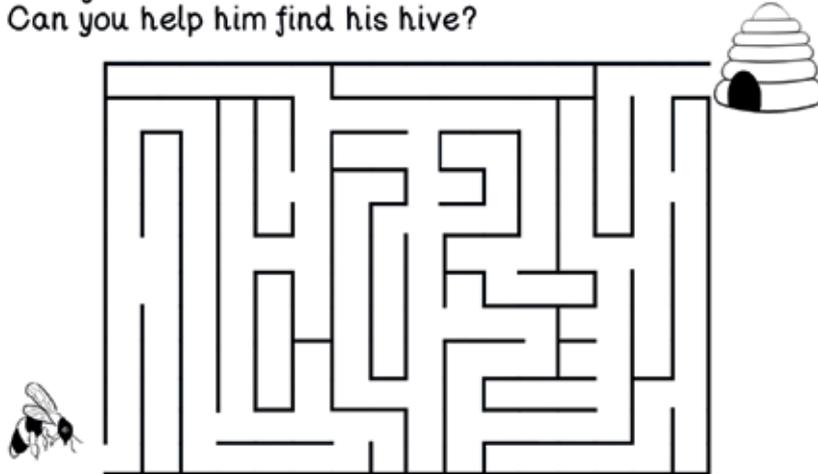
"She's a twelve-year-old Berkshire pig who came to live with us at the beginning of March and has settled in extremely well. She's quite a character and we're all finding her hilariously entertaining. Her favourite pastimes are eating, basking in the sun, and back-rubs (ideally all at the same time!). We're all smitten."

Here's Rosie enjoying the attention. . .



Can you help?

Buzzy the bee is lost.
Can you help him find his hive?



Can you find these words hidden in our wordsearch?

honey bee wing
hive fly



'It's only been there for 80 years...'

GUESS THIS PLACE

If you can correctly name this place you could be the lucky winner picked from all correct entries.

Please send entries to:
anne@luxuryfamilyhotels.co.uk
The prize – Sunday lunch for two at one of our hotels.



PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



Some people know just how to keep warm in winter! Thank you, **Yin Craigie** – you have captured the spirit of Luxury Family Hotels in this winning shot.

If you have a picture you would like to enter in our **Guest Snaps Competition**, send your entry (min size 500kb) to anne@luxuryfamilyhotels.co.uk

A case of wine from the LFH wine list goes to the winner!

Introducing Luxury Family people

Moving to Cornwall with his family has been the plan for **James Balfour** for many years as he and his wife wanted a less hectic and more outdoor life for their two boys, Timmy and Henry.

Having owned and run a small beach lodge on a remote stretch of the coast of Tanzania for 15 years it was time to make the move back to the UK and say goodbye to their life in East Africa. Wanting to stay in Cornwall to work, James was introduced to Luxury Family Hotels and applied for the GM role at Polurrian Bay Hotel when the previous GM, Yvonne Colgan moved on to pastures new in January 2017.

The similarities to James' lodge in Tanzania and Polurrian became apparent. They are both spectacularly situated, coastal properties with many loyal guests staying for a holiday, often with children. However what James does not have to deal with now are daily power cuts, removing pythons from the restaurant, light aircraft crash-landing on the lodge airstrip and a weekly supply run to the nearest shop two hours away along an unmade road!

James loves the lifestyle in Cornwall and enjoys days on the beach with his family and the many great little eateries scattered around the countryside.



Use your smart phone to scan the QR code and go straight to the Luxury Family Hotels website.

