

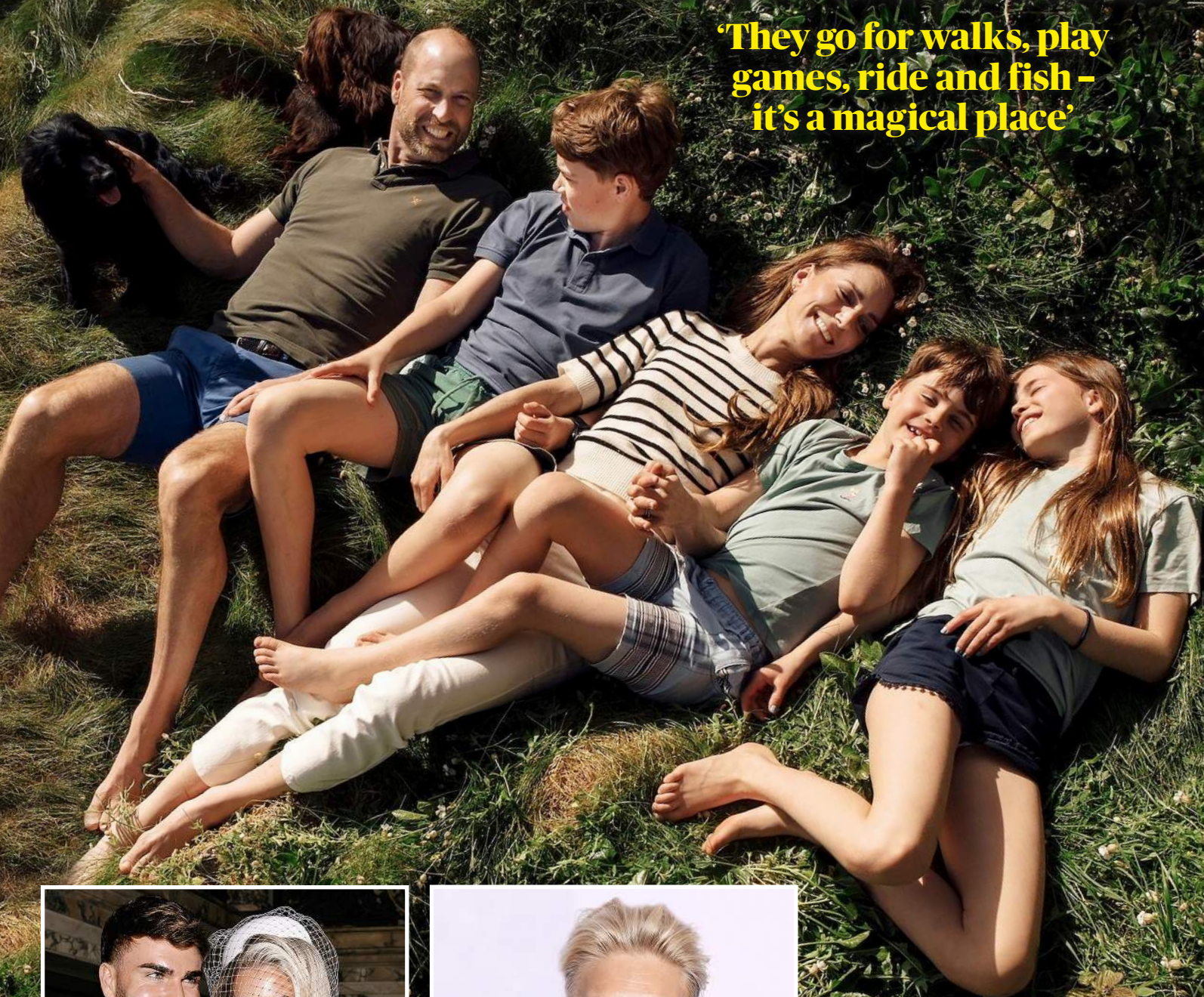
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Contents

Issue 1556, 10 August 2026

NEWS & INTERVIEWS

- 4 The Prince and Princess of Wales
- 14 Molly Smith and Tom Clare
- 20 Hannah Waddingham
- 24 *Strictly Come Dancing* professionals
- 28 Gemma Bird
- 38 Martin and Roman Kemp
- 40 Ferne McCann
- 44 Gianluigi Donnarumma and Alessia Elefante
- 48 Jamie Oliver
- 52 Anya Taylor-Joy

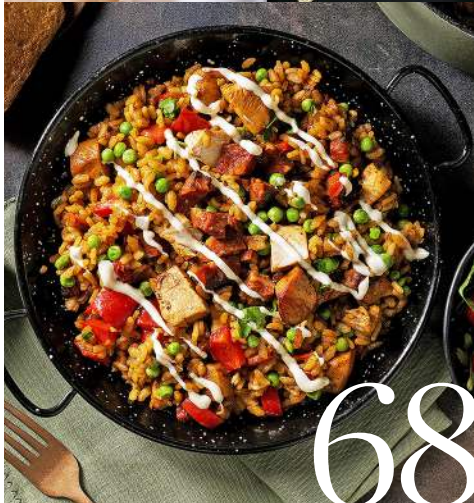
LIFE & STYLE

- 57 Fashion
- 65 OK! Loves
- 66 Beauty
- 68 Recipes
- 70 Travel
- 74 Horoscopes

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RIGHT:

William having
fun with his
children on
the beach in
Norfolk in 2024





ROYALS ENJOY A MAGICAL SUMMER ESCAPE

Before the new school year begins, the *Prince and Princess of Wales* and their children are reportedly heading to the Highlands for a family break

For generations, royals have spent their summer holidays at Balmoral – an estate that has been dubbed the “most beautiful place on Earth”. This year looks to be no different for the Prince and Princess of Wales, who are expected to head to the peaceful sanctuary for their annual trip later this month.

Like his mother Elizabeth II before him, King Charles spends part of August and September on the 50,000-acre Scottish Highlands estate. While in residence, he welcomes various relatives, including William, Kate and their children, for a short stay far from the glare of the public spotlight.

This year’s trip north of the border will come just days before 13-year-old Prince George starts the new school year in secondary education at Eton College.

Former BBC royal correspondent Jennie Bond exclusively tells *OK!* that the estate’s dramatic landscape, rolling green hills and quiet remoteness provide the perfect backdrop for the Wales family to recharge before a busy September full of change. ►

THIS PAGE: William and Kate during The Royal Charity Polo Cup at Windsor in July
OPPOSITE: William and Kate with their children and the family dog on their Easter break in Cornwall, in a photograph released to mark the couple's 15th wedding anniversary





'BALMORAL IS THE SORT OF PLACE WHERE YOU HAVE TO MAKE YOUR OWN FUN'

"The summer stay up there has always been a time primarily for William, Catherine and the rest of the family to gather in the peace of the Scottish countryside after the busyness and noise of their working lives in London and elsewhere," she tells us.

"It's a 'breathe, relax and be still' kind of place, and that's what they all love about it. Its beauty is undeniable, but the castle really is quite remote, and it's the sort of place where you have to make your own fun. That, however, is something that generations of the royal family seem very well equipped to do. They walk and romp, play games and ride, and fish and shoot (when in season) – it's all part of Balmoral life.

"During this break, I'm sure Catherine will want to make an extra fuss of George as he prepares for the big change in his life, setting off to Eton where he will become a full-time boarder in September.

"The great outdoor life they all lead at Balmoral – no matter what the weather – suits the Wales family down

to the ground. We know that Catherine, in particular, not only likes but feels a vital need to be outside and in nature as much as possible. William and Catherine's love of Balmoral also dates back to their university days when they would allegedly escape for secret romantic weekends. They are said to have told friends that some of their happiest moments were those they spent on the Balmoral estate."

That love of Balmoral was also shared by William's late grandmother, Elizabeth II, who peacefully died at her beloved holiday home nearly four years ago.

Trips back to the estate will undoubtedly evoke poignant memories of the late monarch, who loved welcoming George, Charlotte, Louis, and her other young relatives there each summer.

In 2023, just months after her death, William and Kate shared a beautiful family photograph of Elizabeth sitting on a sofa surrounded by some of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren at the retreat. ►



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE: Elizabeth II with her family in 1960; the castle and maze; Queen Camilla in the Birkhall Wendy house



The picture, taken by Kate and released to mark what would have been Elizabeth II's 97th birthday, showed her with her great-grandchildren, including George, Charlotte and Louis, alongside Mike and Zara Tindall's children Mia, Lena and Lucas, Peter Phillips' daughters Savannah and Isla, and her youngest grandchildren Lady Louise Windsor and James, Earl of Wessex.

It echoed another snap taken by Kate years earlier featuring many of the same children with Elizabeth II and the late Prince Philip on a sofa in Balmoral Castle.

Meanwhile, after Elizabeth II's death in 2022, Kate gave another insight into the annual trip, telling Australia's former Governor General David Hurley about the games the children played there.

Mr Hurley revealed Kate said, "The younger one is now asking questions like, 'Do you think we can still play these games when we go to Balmoral and things like that because she's not going to be there?'"

Jennie explains that the vastness of Balmoral means it's perfect for hosting others at the same time as the Wales family. "They don't have to live on top of one another, as it were – the castle is vast but there are also various houses and cottages dotted around where many of them prefer to stay. This includes the King and Queen, who spend most of their time at Birkhall – the ►







**CLOCKWISE,
FROM ABOVE:**

Kate enjoying the outdoors with George in a family video she released in 2024; helping out at a charity baby bank; George in the video for his 13th birthday; Kate last month in Windsor



‘THE BALMORAL HOLIDAY IS AN IMPORTANT TRADITION FOR THE FAMILY’

home that was once the late Queen Mother’s, which they have truly made their own.

“The Balmoral holiday is an important tradition for the family, who can spend time together away from work, away from the cameras and very seriously off-duty. Generation after generation seem to have fallen under the spell of the castle and its grounds.

“Prince Harry called it paradise; others have described it as magical. It will always be a very special place because of the memories it holds of the late Queen who adored her fairy-tale castle and, in the end, died peacefully there.

“It’s also a magical place for the children – especially the Wendy house at the bottom of the garden at Birkhall. It’s incredibly cute with a thatched roof made of heather, and bark covered walls. It looks as if a garden gnome or fairy might live there.”

However, the Balmoral holiday will only be a short trip in what is a long summer break for the family

before school and royal duties resume in September.

The school holidays are nearly always ring-fenced for William and Kate, meaning they can spend as much time as possible with their children, whether it’s at their country retreat, Anmer Hall in Norfolk, their new family home, Forest Lodge, or even abroad.

Wherever they are, outdoor activities are very much the order of the day. This was recently highlighted by a behind-the-scenes video released to mark George’s 13th birthday last month, which echoes similar clips shared for his siblings’ birthdays.

The short 18-second clip, filmed during the family’s Easter trip to Cornwall, shows George clambering over the rocks barefoot with his younger brother Louis, playing cricket on the beach, and smiling at the camera while sporting the sunglasses he wore to Wimbledon. The young prince is also seen enjoying a boat ride and stroking one of the family dogs as it lies in the sand. ▶



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE: Kate with George and Louis in her video released in 2024; William with his children; Kate and Charlotte



One activity that is unlikely to be on the cards for the children is excessive screen time. Both William and Kate have spoken about the importance of limiting time on phones and other devices, with the Prince of Wales even admitting they have decided not to allow the youngsters to have smartphones.

Jennie adds, “Like many of us, William and Catherine are probably thinking the summer is turning out to be so lovely here in the UK that there’s no point in going abroad. But they’re never short of invitations and options.

“Wherever they are the emphasis will be on family, friends, fun and outdoor activities. I expect there’ll be frequent get-togethers with Catherine’s family so that all the young cousins can play together. And the Tindalls will probably be popping in too. Barbecues, picnics, cricket, tennis and swimming will all be high on the agenda.

“As this will be the family’s first summer at Forest Lodge, their new home in Windsor Great Park, they might stay in the London area a bit more than usual. There’s a lake they can swim in there, but I’m sure the draw of beaches and swimming in the ocean will entice them away a good deal.” **OK!**

WORDS: JENNIFER NEWTON PHOTOS: MATT PORTEOUS, GETTY IMAGES, SWNS, WILL WARR, PA, PRINCESS OF WALES/KENSINGTON PALACE

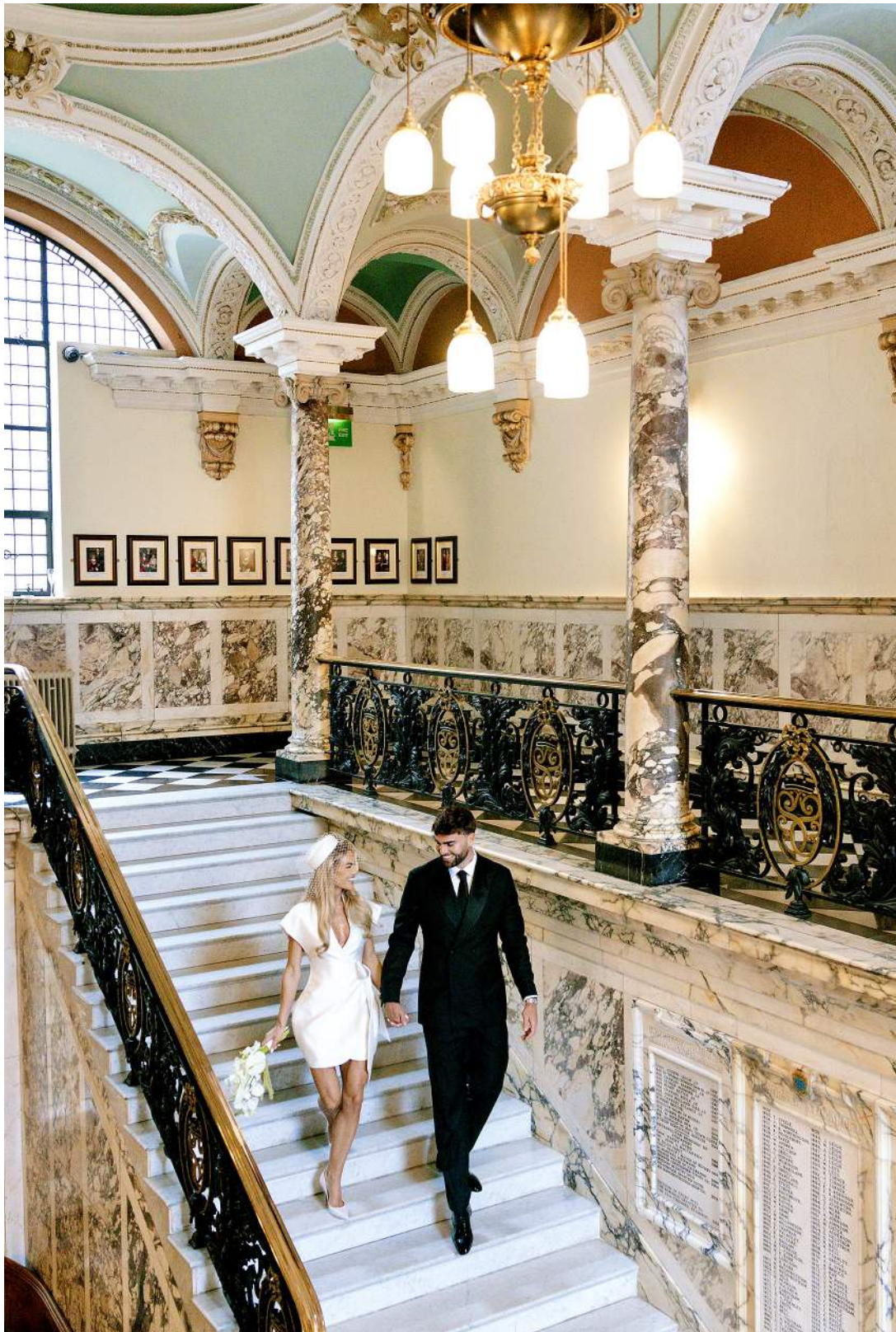
*'THE EMPHASIS
WILL BE ON FAMILY,
FRIENDS, FUN AND
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES'*





MOLLY AND TOM MAKE IT OFFICIAL

Love Island: All Stars winners Molly Smith and Tom Clare tie the knot at Stockport Town Hall ahead of their lavish Majorca ceremony



There were tears of joy all round as *Love Island: All Stars* winners Molly Smith and Tom Clare officially tied the knot.

The couple, who won the spin-off series in 2024, said “I do” during an intimate civil ceremony at Stockport Town Hall on 23 July, with just a handful of friends and family present.

Wearing a white minidress and heels, Molly, 32, finished her look with a vintage-style pillbox hat with a short veil and carried a beautiful white bouquet. Tom, 26, looked dapper in a smart suit, and even their adorable Pomeranian Nelly was dressed in white for the big day.

As an elated Molly and Tom kissed outside the town hall, they were ►



surrounded by a swirl of white petals. In other photos, they posed by an ornate staircase in the lobby, which Molly's father walked her down before giving her away.

As Molly got dressed on her wedding morning, she wore a white robe embroidered with 'Mrs C', with her hair in rollers. Unusually, she and Tom got ready together, and they also ditched another long-held tradition by spending the night before their wedding together.

"I just wanted it to feel more intimate, more special, just us," Molly explained.

They are now planning a second, bigger celebration in Majorca – where they met on *Love Island* – and on that occasion will spend the eve of the wedding apart.

After the ceremony, Molly posted an Instagram Story revealing a close-up of their wedding rings. The newlyweds also shared a joint post saying, "Just married", and posted a video of the ceremony with the words, "The beginning of forever". In the clip, set to Justin Bieber's *Anyone*, Tom was seen wiping away tears as they prepared to exchange their vows. ▶



A full-page photograph of a smiling wedding couple. The groom, on the left, has a beard and is wearing a black double-breasted tuxedo with a white shirt and black tie. He is wearing a watch on his left wrist and has his hands clasped in front of him. The bride, on the right, has long blonde hair and is wearing a white sleeveless wedding dress with a large bow at the waist and a white veil. She is wearing white high-heeled shoes and has her hands resting on the groom's shoulders. They are standing in a grand hall with marble floors and walls, and a large staircase with an ornate black metal railing is visible in the background. The lighting is warm and focused on the couple.

*'I JUST WANTED IT TO
FEEL MORE INTIMATE,
MORE SPECIAL, JUST US'*



Fellow *Love Island* stars were among those to celebrate with the couple, including former winner Casey O’Gorman, who won with Gabby Allen. Casey was Tom’s best man and described the wedding as the “best day”.

Molly and Tom announced their engagement in September last year after he proposed in Dubai in front of the Jumeirah Burj Al Arab hotel. He got down on one knee in front of a huge white heart made of roses and an array of candles.

“SHE SAID YES!” Tom later revealed to his followers.

Storming to victory in the first season of *Love Island: All Stars*, the pair beat Molly’s former boyfriend Callum Jones and his partner at the time, Jessica Gale, who finished in the runners-up spot.

During his stint on the regular series in 2023, semi-professional footballer Tom finished third alongside Samie Elishi, while model and fitness fanatic Molly dated Callum for three years after they left the 2020 series together.

Earlier this year, Tom and Molly began hosting the *NearlyWeds* podcast, taking over from Jamie Laing and Sophie Habboo. Speaking on the first episode after their wedding day, Molly said, “I feel like I’m older. I’m a wife, I’m married.” And Tom added, “It was perfect, I had the best day.”

A massive congratulations to the beautiful couple. **OK!**

WORDS: ANNA POINTER

PHOTOS: ANNA FOWLER

‘I don’t apologise for who I am’

Actress *Hannah Waddingham* on confidence and career highs as hit comedy-drama *Ted Lasso* returns

For Hannah Waddingham, there is clearly no greater reward than finally getting the recognition she deserves. She recently described her overnight fame after 25 years in showbusiness as “delicious”.

The London-born actress is currently riding a wave of success thanks to her breakout role as fearsome AFC Richmond boss Rebecca Welton in *Ted Lasso*, the Apple TV+ show that catapulted her to global stardom and earned her an Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series.

The football-based comedy-drama might have introduced Hannah to a whole new audience, but it wasn’t her first significant role. Long before the feel-good series became a hit, Hannah was building up a pretty impressive CV on both stage and screen.

The 5ft 11in acting powerhouse made guest appearances in TV staples such as *Doctors*, *Hollyoaks* and *Benidorm*, followed by memorable turns in global hits *Sex Education* and *Game Of Thrones*.

Hannah is also a highly respected West End star and was well known to musical theatre fans thanks to her Olivier-nominated roles in shows such as *Spamalot*, *A Little Night*

Music and *Kiss Me, Kate*. But it was *Ted Lasso* – which returns to our screens on 5 August for its fourth series – that really put Hannah, 51, on the map.

The versatile star is loving every second of her mid-life fame. “It really does feel more special,” she has said. “I’m glad that it didn’t happen when I was 20, 25, 30, because I know who I am. I don’t apologise for who I am.”

That confidence and self-belief is one of the reasons Hannah is so popular with fans. Much like *Ted Lasso*’s tough-talking Rebecca, the actress doesn’t suffer fools and isn’t afraid to stand up for herself – as was the case when, ahead of hosting the Olivier Awards in 2024, she called out a photographer who asked her to “show leg” as she arrived on the red carpet.

Berating the paparazzo in question, she said,

“Oh my God, you’d never say that to a man, my friend. Don’t be a d**k, otherwise I’ll move off.”

The incident quickly went viral and while Hannah revealed the photographer later emailed her to apologise, she said the furore cast a shadow over what should have been one of the proudest moments of her career.

“I was going off to ►



Hannah as
Whiptail in
action comedy
Ride Or Die





**CLOCKWISE,
FROM LEFT:**

Hannah at a *Ride Or Die* screening with her partner Nick; posing with the *Mission Impossible* cast; as Rebecca in *Ted Lasso*; she won an Emmy for the comedy-drama; on stage in *Kiss Me Kate*; in a scene from *Ride Or Die* with Octavia Spencer, who plays her best friend Debbie



‘THE MUMMY GUILT DESCENDS BUT I HAVE TO TRY AND COMBAT IT’

host an entire evening live and my sadness at the time was that [the evening] had been reduced to that, instead of my live performance directly after that, which is one of the greatest achievements of my life,” she said.

Hannah has spoken of the importance of “calling out moments that need to be shut down” and that determination to stand up for herself – and others – is directly connected to the other big role in her life, that of being a mother.

The star, who has 11-year-old daughter Kitty with her former partner, Italian hotelier Gianluca Cugnetto, said recently, “We, as the females in society, us older ones, we need to encourage the younger ones, to make sure that we are respected, because it’s too easy for us to just take it on the chin.”

For years, motherhood came first for the actress, but although Hannah put her theatre work on the backburner after Kitty was born, she says that she feels torn “all the time” when it comes to juggling acting with parenting.

“I’m about to go away to do press for the next season of *Ted Lasso* and the mummy guilt descends,” she said last month. “But I have to try and combat it.”

Unsurprisingly, work and family commitments haven’t left Hannah much time for romance, but while she swore off relationships when her daughter was younger, she recently dipped her toes back into the world of dating.

“It’s taken me eight years [to date again],” she said recently. “I didn’t really have the space mentally or emotionally for that. I’ve hunkered down and focused



on my girl and me. [But] now I'm ready to stick my head above the parapet a bit more."

That decision has paid off and Hannah is now dating spine surgeon Nick Beresford-Cleary, who joined her at the London screening of her new Prime Video action comedy, *Ride Or Die*, in June.

Touching on her new romance, Hannah has described the relationship as "really, really lovely", adding, "But the best thing about it is, firstly, being happy and strong in myself."

As well as her love life looking up, Hannah is in the midst of a career purple patch. Last year she starred in Netflix's psychological drama *The Woman In Cabin 10*, Hollywood blockbuster *Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning* and the live-action version of Disney's *Lilo & Stitch*, which grossed \$1 billion worldwide.

And she's showing no signs of slowing down. Last month she headed to New York for the premiere of *Ride Or Die*, in which she plays an international assassin opposite Oscar winner Octavia Spencer. Next year, she will be heard voicing a character in hotly anticipated 3D animation *High In The Clouds*, starring

alongside some of the biggest names from the worlds of film, TV and music, including Paul McCartney, Celine Dion, Idris Elba and Lionel Richie.

But back to the show that brought Hannah global fame, the upbeat series starring Jason Sudeikis as unlikely football coach Ted Lasso. This time the show focuses on the challenges of coaching a second division women's team and it sounds like Hannah couldn't have been more thrilled to be stepping back into Rebecca's spiky heels once again.

Talking about the three-year gap between seasons three and four, she says, "We're all so close that I never really missed anyone, but it made me realise the only person I didn't get to be with any more was Rebecca. There's something very strange about missing a character that only exists when you're embodying them!" **OK!**

***Ted Lasso* series 4 is available on Apple TV+ from 5 August. *Ride Or Die* is out now on Prime Video**

WORDS: LEO ROBERTS PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



A full-page photograph of three new dancers from Strictly Come Dancing standing on a rooftop in London. On the left is Cristian Priori, a man with dark curly hair and a beard, wearing a blue and white striped shirt over a grey tank top and blue jeans. In the center is Aleksandra Isaeva, a woman with long dark hair and a headband, wearing a black jacket. On the right is Mark Karmalita, a man with blonde hair, wearing a white short-sleeved button-down shirt and white trousers. They are all smiling at the camera. In the background, the London skyline is visible, including the London Eye and the Shard.

New dancers Maddie, Aleksandra, Cristian, Lethabo and Mark

Strictly's new dancers get ready to rumba

Preparations for the next series of *Strictly Come Dancing* get underway with a warm welcome for the new arrivals

Strictly *Come Dancing*'s new professional dancers were unveiled last week as they hot-footed it to their first day of rehearsals ahead of the launch of the 2026 series.

The twinkle-toed newbies – Maddie Ingoldsby, Aleksandra Isaeva, Cristian Priori, Lethabo Monametsi and Mark Karmalita – will be joining the hit BBC One dance show when it returns to our screens this September. And what a talented bunch they are.

Hailing from the UK, Ukraine, Italy, South Africa and Canada respectively, *Strictly*'s new fab five have all waltzed, tangoed and cha-cha-cha'd their way to ►



international acclaim, making them perfect contenders to one day lift the famous Glitterball.

Ukrainian National Latin Champion Aleksandra, who is ranked in the world's top 21 Latin dancers, says joining the show is "a true honour".

"The thought of learning from and sharing this experience with such extraordinary dancers, choreographers and the whole *Strictly* family still gives me goosebumps," she says. "I can't wait to pour my whole heart into every performance, inspire others and be inspired along the way."

Aleksandra will be making her debut alongside her hunky off-screen dance partner Cristian, a four-times Latin Champion from Rome.

"Saying yes to *Strictly* was an easy decision," he says. "I'm ready to give my all, enjoy every moment of this amazing journey and embrace everything it has to offer. *Strictly* is where passion, hard work and entertainment come together, so being part of it is a real privilege."

It sounds like fellow Italian and show favourite Vito Coppola may have some competition!

Fellow newcomer Lethabo, who has performed on *The Masked Singer South Africa* and first fell in love with dance after watching her country's version of *Strictly*, describes being asked to join the line-up as "far more" than a career milestone.

"It is an honour beyond words," she says. "I cannot wait to embrace every extraordinary

moment of this journey." Including Craig's withering put-downs, Lethabo?

Meanwhile, UK national ballroom champion Maddie has several strings to her bow, having starred as Annie in the West End and in Emma Thompson's hit festive flick, *Last Christmas*. Maddie says joining *Strictly* is "a dream come true", while Canadian Mark – a two-time National Latin Champion – promises to bring his "own style" to the show.

The five new pros, who replace departing dancers Gorka Márquez, Michelle Tsiakkas, Karen Hauer, Nadiya Bychkova and Luba Mushtuk, were pictured arriving at Cecil Sharp House, a dance education centre in north-west London, last Monday. And judging by our snap of the new-look *Strictly* gang all together for the first time, they've already bonded with returning show favourites Alexis Warr, Aljaž Škorjanec, Amy Dowden, Carlos Gu, Dianne Buswell, Jowita Przysła, Julian Caillon, Kai Widdrington, Katya Jones, Lauren Oakley, Nancy Xu, Neil Jones, Nikita Kuzmin and Vito.

We can't wait to see which celebrities they'll be paired with when the show – hosted by its brand new presenting line-up of Emma Willis, Johannes Radebe and Josh Widdicombe – returns in September. **OK!**

WORDS: LEO ROBERTS PHOTOS: BEN MCELLIGOTT/BBC/PA WIRE, HUMPHREY NEMAR/DAILY MIRROR





‘I’ve got a lovely life, but I worry every day’

Finance influencer *Gemma Bird*, AKA Money Mum, reflects on her journey from underwear seller to Instagram sensation and admits she suffers from anxiety despite her success

Instagram star Gemma Bird, AKA Money Mum, is now a bestselling author and finance influencer living in a stunning four-bedroom family home, but there was a time when she was struggling to make ends meet.

“My life before Money Mum was very different,” the 45-year-old mum-of-two tells us during an exclusive photo shoot at her palatial Essex pad.

Gemma, who shares son Brody, 13, and daughter Brontë, seven, with husband Adam, 51, explains, “Before Money Mum took off, I had a business online selling underwear on Amazon. I lived with Adam, but he had lost his job and was working for me. I earned roughly £15,000 a year and we lived on this for quite a few years because we wanted to build up the business. Unfortunately, it never really grew. That was tough.”

Growing up, the first home Gemma lived in was a two-bedroom ex-council house with her parents, before the family moved into a three-bedroom terrace. She says, “Mum and Dad didn’t have much money.

Dad was a milkman, then a bus driver and then a manager of the buses, but it wasn’t mega money. Mum did cleaning jobs just to survive.”

At 17, Gemma started getting pocket money, but she says, “Once it ran out, it ran out. We were always told to go and get a job, from a young age.”

Her upbringing shaped her thrifty attitude and, though she didn’t know it then, would go on to spark a whole new career, with thousands of people following her money-saving hacks.

“My first proper job was a paper round, then I’d clean neighbours’ cars to earn extra cash,” she says. “It was instilled into me that you have to work for your money.”

She also worked as a mushroom picker, estate agent and barmaid – and even cut colostomy bags in a medical centre.

Gemma moved out of the family home at 23 and bought a two-bedroom ex-council house, but after breaking up with her ex and meeting Adam, she ▶



*'I SAVED EVERY
PENNY I HAD.
I DIDN'T GO
CLUBBING. I'D
DRINK SODA
AND LIME'*



FROM TOP: Gemma at 10 Downing Street; with Myleene Klass on *Loose Women*

moved into his four-bedroom house. It came with a hefty £225,000 mortgage attached, but Gemma and Adam famously paid off that mortgage when she was just 37.

"I owned two buy-to-lets that I'd bought with Dad. We went halves on buying them and on the profit we made. So it was possible, due to a mixture of buying something that was smart, money from my previous divorce settlement and saving up all my life. Literally every penny I had, I saved. I didn't go clubbing when I was younger. When I did go out, I'd drink soda and lime."

The family moved into their new four-bedroom detached house near Chelmsford in October 2024. Showing us around her gorgeous Georgian-style home, Gemma admits she still pinches herself at how far she's come.

"I'd always wanted a house with high ceilings, full of light," she says. "So when this came up, Adam and I just fell in love with it. I'd always wanted a walk-in wardrobe too. It was everything I'd dreamed of as a little girl. And though it's a big property with a big garden, it's still snug and cosy."

Hilariously honest, Gemma admits that she's no fashionista, despite the walk-in wardrobe.

"I just like the idea of one," she says, laughing. "The OK! team added clothes to mine. It was ▶

GEMMA WEARS: TOP RESERVED £25.99, TROUSERS KAREN MILLEN £79.99, NECKTIE SORU £170. BRODY WEARS: TOP M&S £10, TROUSERS RIVER ISLAND £40. BRONITE WEARS: DRESS M&S £22.



literally just full of supermarket-bought T-shirts.”

Her favourite room is the lounge, which has rich, dark green walls adorned with brightly coloured paintings. “It feels like I’m in a stately home, it’s so peaceful,” she says.

Gemma could only have dreamed of living in such a property without her famously thrifty lifestyle, which led to her new career as Money Mum. The lightbulb moment for Gemma – who has gone on to appear on *Loose Women* and visited Downing Street

to advocate for financial education and discuss finance issues affecting UK families – came when she met a friend for coffee in 2020.

“I was building up the lingerie business and on terrible money. I went to Costa Coffee and was picking up all these receipts and my friend was like, ‘Why?’ I explained that if there are points on them to collect, I take them to the till, and say, ‘Oh, sorry, I forgot to add this to my card’ and get free coffee. She was like, ‘Wow, you’re a money influencer.’” ▶



FROM TOP:
The house is
flooded with
natural light and
has a cosy
home office





The house has neutral decor and (far left) a walk-in wardrobe

Gemma laughed it off, but came home that day and decided to start a vlog. “I wanted to make saving cool again and empower young people. So I went online and started sharing my ‘no spend days’.”

A no spend day, one of her best-loved hacks, is exactly what it sounds like – one day a week where you spend absolutely nothing. She explains, “You use everything in your cupboards, get creative with the kids. It’s a challenge, but it gets you in the right mindset.”

Gemma also has a hard and fast rule of not buying anything unless she can afford it.

“Say something’s a thousand pounds and I’ve got a thousand in my bank account. Technically I can afford it, but if I spend that, I’ve got nothing left. I need five times the amount of that item in my account if it’s a small amount. If it’s a large amount, three times that.”

Gemma soon realised she could not only bag the odd free day out for her kids but create a bona fide

business helping others. And that business is now a runaway success.

But although she’s chatty and confident on screen, away from social media Gemma admits she struggles with anxiety.

“I worry every single day,” she says quietly. “I always think people don’t like me. I think it’s all going to end. I wake up every once in a while crying or shaking. I’m on anti-anxiety medication. It’s horrific and I wish I could wave a magic wand and it all goes away.

“Sometimes, I want to punch myself in the face. I’ve got a lovely life, so why do I worry? But mental health doesn’t work like that.”

But ambitious Gemma tries not to let this stop her and admits she’d love to do more TV work.

“I’d love to do a show where I live with people for a week, show them what they’re wasting money on and just sort their lives out.” ▶



ABOVE: GEMMA WEARS: TOP NEW LOOK £25.99, TROUSERS NEW LOOK £34.99, HEELS KURT GEIGER £169. BRODY WEARS: TOP M&S £12, TROUSERS M&S £12, SHOES, HIS OWN. BRONTË WEARS: TOP M&S £10, TROUSERS M&S £12. ADAM WEARS: TOP GAP £60, TROUSERS ALL SAINTS £159, SHOES BURTON £95

LEFT: GEMMA WEARS: TOP NEW LOOK £23.99, TROUSERS NEW LOOK £29.99. BRONTË WEARS: TOP NEXT £10, TROUSERS NEXT £12

LEFT: Brontë has a pink-themed bedroom



Though comfortably off today, Gemma says she will never stop hunting for a bargain. She says, “It doesn’t leave my brain. I was out with my husband yesterday and my favourite hair dye was on offer – so I bought five boxes.”

Thankfully her obsession with saving doesn’t cause any friction with her other half.

“On our first ever date, at a pub, I remember saying to Adam, “What’s the loan-to-value on your house? I was nearly 30 and thinking, ‘I don’t want someone that’s not switched on with their money.’ But Adam was just the same. When I asked him that, he said he knew I was the girl for him. It’s so funny.”

Family life with their brood, Gemma says, is a “madhouse”, but she loves it. She tries to pass on her financial know-how to the kids without ramming it down their throats and admits her two will sometimes turn to her during a conversation and go, “Well done, that’s a money tip, Mum!”

Meanwhile, Britain has just welcomed a new Prime Minister, and with the focus on what Andy Burnham

will do to tackle the cost-of-living crisis, Gemma has some advice for him.

“People on benefits get help, the super wealthy aren’t really affected but the middle class always gets overlooked,” she says. “There needs to be help for those people in that middle ground. How can they get on the mortgage ladder, for instance, when house prices and rates are going up? It feels impossible.

“My advice to the new PM would be to tackle affordable housing, find ways to stop food costs rising astronomically and please, help get people working hard on the property ladder.” **OK!**

Follow Gemma Bird, AKA Money Mum, on Instagram: @moneymumofficial

WORDS: SHELLEY SPADONI PHOTOGRAPHER: DAVID CUMMINGS

PHOTOGRAPHER’S ASSISTANT: NATHALIE SIAMOU

HAIR: KIRSTY O’BRIEN MAKE-UP: JADE EWEN

STYLIST: KATE BARBOUR STYLIST’S ASSISTANT: GRACE BELLAMY

VIDEO PRODUCER: IMADE OSAGIEDE

A full-page photograph of Martin and Roman Kemp. Martin, on the left, is an older man with white hair, wearing a blue button-down shirt. Roman, on the right, is a younger man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a blue blazer over a white t-shirt. They are both smiling and standing in front of lush green foliage. A pair of sunglasses is tucked into Roman's blazer pocket.

‘We can be honest and open with each other’

Martin and Roman Kemp tells us why nothing is off-limits in their new TV travelogue across Ireland

Dad-and-son duo Martin and Roman Kemp are firm fan favourites on *Celebrity Gogglebox*, but despite sharing a sofa on the show, there’s one rumour they need to clear up. “It’s the weirdest thing,” Roman tells us. “Everyone asks me, ‘So do you still live with your mum and dad?’ And I don’t understand why. I’m 33 years old – my mum and dad wanted to kick me out when I was 18!”

Former *EastEnders* star Martin, 64, quickly insists that was far from the truth, but the ex-Spandau Ballet musician is equally baffled by the misconception when we meet. “So many people, including TV producers, say to me, ‘Oh, we want to do a show on you guys at home.’ I say, ‘We don’t live at home. We split up a long time ago!’”

Jokes aside, Roman is glad that *Celebrity*

Gogglebox gives him an excuse to return home so many years after flying the nest. “It’s nice because it means I can have dedicated time with my mum and dad,” he says.

It’s just as well they are so close, as the pair are starring in a new Channel 4 show in which they take a road trip across Ireland.

As you might expect, their relationship forms the backbone of the three-part series, with nothing off-limits. “You would call it oversharing; I call it family lunch,” laughs Roman as the pair chat to *OK!* about their adventures. “I guess it’s a different dynamic from the one some people have, but it’s something we’re super-proud of. We can be honest and open with each other – my mum and my sister included.”

Martin, who has been married to Roman’s mum Shirlie Holliman for nearly four decades, insists that mutual respect is



FROM LEFT: Martin and Roman explore Ireland in their show; Roman, Martin, Shirlie and Harleymoon

‘ROMAN WAS SHOCKED ABOUT HOW MUCH I CALLED HIS MUM’

equally important. “If you have that as a bedrock, you can overshare and take the mickey out of each other, but you know the respect is still there.”

As a long-term men’s mental health advocate, Roman has spoken candidly about his own experiences of depression and anxiety, including the 2023 documentary *The Fight For Young Lives*. And though he once reserved such conversations for mum Shirlie, one half of 80s pop duo Pepsi & Shirlie, he is now just as comfortable confiding in his father. “Over the past five or six years, it’s been really nice to open up with my dad, whether through the documentaries or moments we’ve shared,” says Roman. “My dad understands my mental state far more than he did previously – and I suppose I understand it better now too. It’s an amazing advantage that there are no taboos around certain subjects.”

Martin is full of admiration for his son. “I can’t begin to tell you how proud I am of Ro and what he’s done,” he smiles. “He put his hand up and said, ‘Look at me – I’ve been through this.’ So many people, particularly parents, stop me when I’m out and say, ‘I just want to thank your boy.’ Nothing makes me happier than hearing people say good things about my kids.”

While there are no secrets between them, Roman was still surprised by how often his dad checked in with Shirlie during their Irish journey. “He was shocked about how much I called his mum,” admits Martin. “But I can’t see any reason why I shouldn’t!” Explaining his reaction, Roman tells us, “I swear to God, every half hour he’s calling again, and he’s like, ‘What are you doing now?’”

The frequent calls apparently make it into the show, but Martin says its real focus is their bond. “We get to know each other in the car,

and I show him stuff around Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It’s just a beautiful father and son trip.” Never one to miss a beat, quick-witted Roman jumps in. “I like that you said, ‘We get to know each other.’ We do know each other very well!”

While Martin is clearly wowed by some of the fantastical tales they learn about Ireland’s past, it seems Roman is less convinced. “Ro and I are really different,” Martin explains. “He likes the kind of history he can touch, and I like the stuff you have to imagine – the ghost stories and the legends. We went to one place where they told us there was a vampire buried upside down underneath a rock. I completely took it in and thought, ‘This is amazing, he’s down there.’ But Ro didn’t believe it at all.”

Still, Roman was keen to learn more about his dad’s time in Ireland in the 80s, including in Dublin where he lived and worked with Spandau Ballet. “He would always talk to me about how great the people are and how they’ve got all this mythology and history,” says Roman. “And it’s breathtaking visually, aesthetically and geographically.”

Of course we need to ask how the trip compared to Roman’s experience last year on *Celebrity Race Across The World* with his older sister Harleymoon. “It’s incomparable,” he says. “One was the worst scenario, like the toughest moments you’re ever going to face, where you feel like giving up all the time.” He takes a cheeky pause. “Then the other is going on a trip with your sister...” **OK!**

Martin And Roman’s Irish Road Trip starts on Monday 10 August at 8pm on Channel 4

WORDS: LAURA HARMAN

PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK, LORNA ROACH



‘I love motherhood, but I also love working on my career’

Reality TV star *Ferne McCann* on her next venture, waiting until 40 to add to her brood and moving house

Ferne McCann may have got engaged to property developer Lorri Haines in Paris four years ago, but planning a wedding has taken a back seat.

The mum-of-two, who shares three-year-old Finty with Lorri and is also mum to eight-year-old Sunday, tells us that they are “just doing life at the moment”.

Ferne, 35, who has partnered with Lakeside Shopping Centre on their summer campaign, says, “I know people get engaged with the view to get married and we’re just not. Things always take priority.”

One of the reasons wedding planning has been put on the back burner is a recent big house move for the family. Ferne, Lorri and the girls have moved back into a property she previously lived in with Sunday.

“I was pregnant with Finty at this house,” she tells us. “It was my first house I’ve always kept.”

Having rented for a few years, she and Lorri found an idyllic countryside cottage she describes as her “dream house” but

unfortunately the sale fell through twice. She turned to her faith and saw that all roads were leading back to this Essex property. “I was praying, ‘If it isn’t the village cottage, then give me the next sign,’” Ferne recalls.

After her tenants finally moved out of the house she rented out, she realised that settling in the Brentwood property was the right decision for her family. “As soon as I stepped in I had this element of peace. And now I’m back and I don’t want to leave. It feels so right.

“Sometimes we have to trust that our idea and our plan isn’t always what’s right. I believe this was God’s plan. This is a wonderful chapter and it’s gorgeous Finty is experiencing living in this house.”

Ferne is enjoying summer at home with her daughters and is keeping them busy over the holidays with activities, such as bracelet making, cooking and gardening. It’s an emotional time for Ferne as this is the last summer before Finty starts preschool. ►



CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE: The family enjoyed boating at Lakeside; Ferne found fame on *TOWIE* in 2013; Lakeside now hosts a fun fair at Destination at Lakeside; the mum-of-two is keeping Sunday and Finty busy during the summer holidays



"It doesn't feel real, she still feels tiny," she says. "I feel like I'm such a different mum to the first time round. The other day we said, 'You're starting school in September,' and she went, 'I'm scared.' We're making the most of this summer."

With both of the girls out of the house, she is plotting her next career move. Ferne has previously acted - she appeared in a production of *Gatsby* in 2016 - and is keen to tread the boards once more.

"I want to do a play that would challenge me," she explains. "If I'm honest, I've had some opportunities to do various auditions, but I haven't gone for them because of parenting the kids. It would be impossible to do a tour at the moment. I'd love to do film, to do TV, but I also need to earn my stripes first. I feel like now is the time, because Finty is going to preschool. A lot of

mums will be able to relate to that, because your life has to go on hold sometimes."

Planning her acting comeback means that more children aren't in the pipeline any time soon. Ferne, who previously said she wanted 10 kids, explains, "I don't want any more children at the moment. I've been really in two minds."

She continues, "If I have another baby it won't be until I'm 40. We're settled into our life, I've got two beautiful healthy girls. I love motherhood, but I also love working on my career. I feel like my next baby will be nurturing my next career move."

Ferne's career started off on *The Only Way Is Essex* in 2013 - a chapter she confirms is fully in her past. But she does miss her fly-on-the-wall spin-off show *My Family & Me*, which finished in 2024 after 13 series.



**CLOCKWISE,
FROM
ABOVE:**

Ferne is mum to Sunday, and Finty – whom she shares with fiancé Lorri; the reality star says she’s keen to start a new career in acting; the pair got engaged in 2022, but are not yet ready to plan the wedding



“Being back in the house, I really miss it [the show]. I miss sharing my life. I don’t miss the stress of having the cameras around all the time. But it was a massive chapter of my life and I do miss it. I knew that it was the right decision at the time to stop. If I did anything like that again, it would have to be different.”

But until then she’s enjoying spending as much time as possible with her girls. The family recently visited Lakeside Shopping Centre for a day out.

“I was blown away. There’s so much to do. Filling the long summer holiday days can be exhausting for parents, and you run out of things to do. This is the perfect day out for families.

“It’s known for being a retail shopping centre, but then you’ve got the 20-acre lake. There’s now an inflatable water park

and we did a bit of rowing and paddle boarding. There’s the Destination at Lakeside where there’s a fun fair, bouncy castles, rides and a beach there.

“For families who are not going abroad this year, it’s just perfect. We had so much fun.” **OK!**

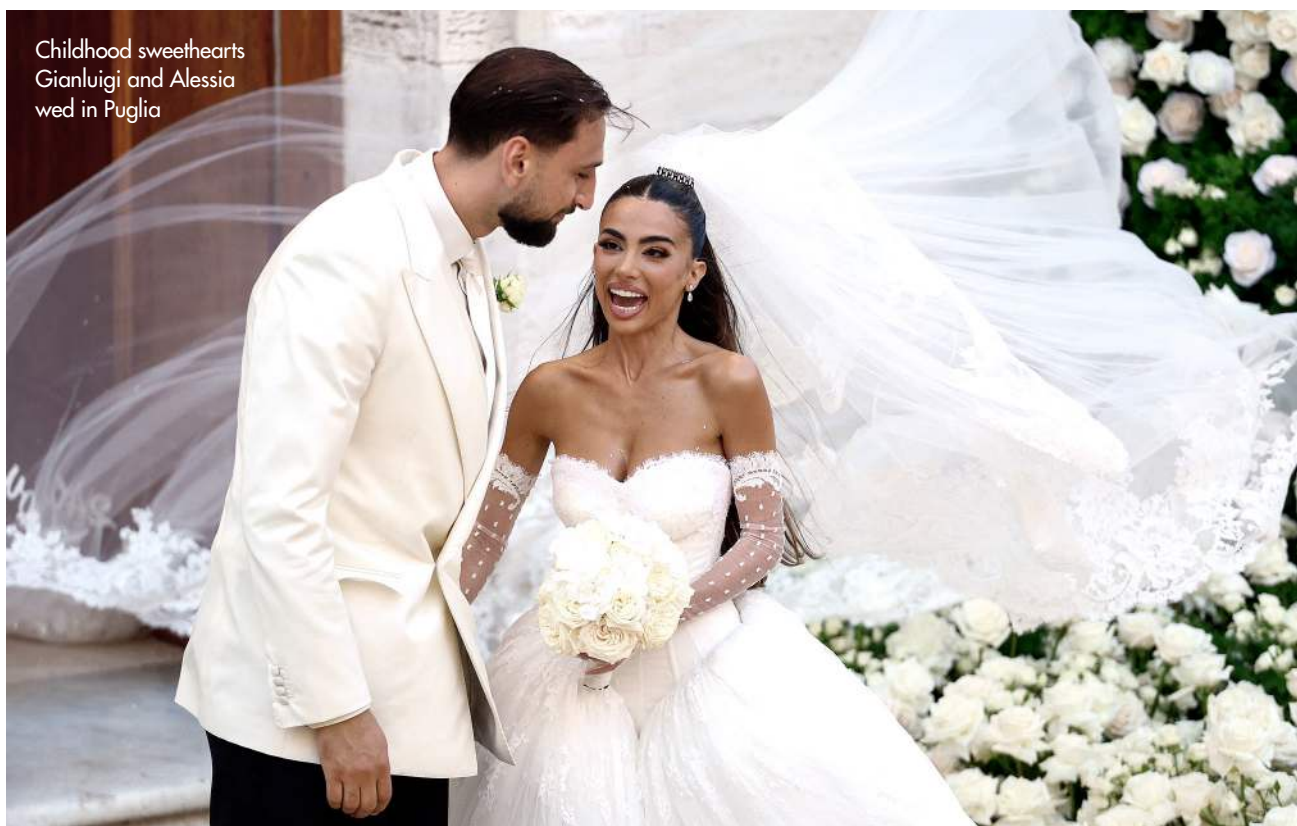
Ferne visited Lakeside Shopping Centre recently as part of its A Proper Day Out summer campaign, which brings together watersports, family entertainment, dining and more than 250 shops in one destination. Families can enjoy activities including paddleboarding, kayaking, water zorbing, live music and beach experiences throughout the school holidays, all by its 20-acre lake

WORDS: GEMMA MCCARTNEY

PHOTOS: GETTY, SHUTTERSTOCK



Childhood sweethearts
Gianluigi and Alessia
wed in Puglia



GIANLUIGI AND ALESSIA'S ITALIAN NUPTIALS

Goalkeeper *Gianluigi Donnarumma* and *Alessia Elefante* used their wedding celebrations to support a great cause

Manchester City goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma celebrated his wedding to childhood sweetheart Alessia Elefante in Puglia, Italy, with a guestlist that read like a roll call of today's biggest football stars.

The glamorous couple were joined by Norwegian star Erling Haaland, England's

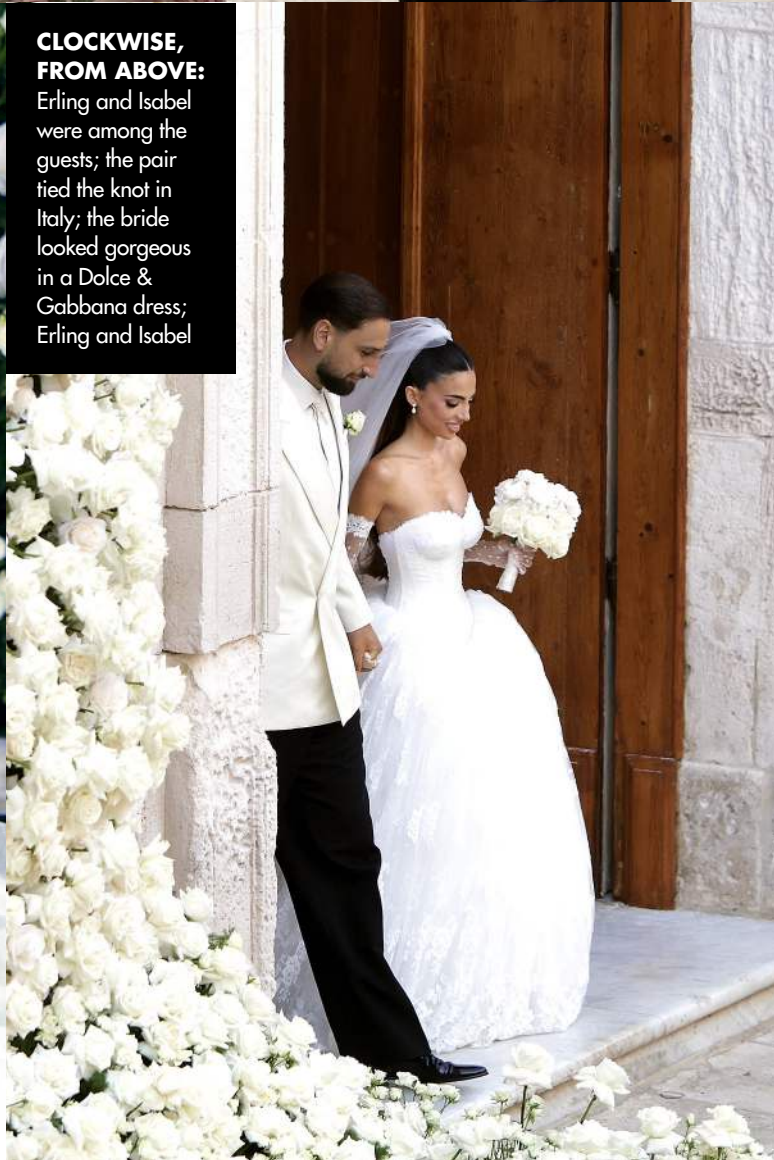
John Stones and French footballing icon Kylian Mbappé at the picture-perfect ceremony, which was attended by around 250 guests and took place at the historic Chiesa Madre di San Giorgio Martire in Locorotondo.

"It felt like a movie village, with that authentic southern Italian atmosphere," Gianluigi said of the venue, an early 19th-century church built in a neoclassical ►



**CLOCKWISE,
FROM ABOVE:**

Erling and Isabel
were among the
guests; the pair
tied the knot in
Italy; the bride
looked gorgeous
in a Dolce &
Gabbana dress;
Erling and Isabel





and late-Renaissance style featuring stunning marble artwork.

The newlyweds, who share two-year-old son Leo, couldn't have looked more in love as they shared a tender kiss against a backdrop of white roses, which perfectly complemented the bride's bouquet and Dolce & Gabbana couture gown.

Gianluigi, who has an estimated net worth of around £83 million, looked very much in tune with his interior designer wife, sporting a simple-but-stylish single-breasted cream jacket - also by Dolce & Gabbana - and black trousers.

With the religious part of the wedding day out of the way, Gianluigi and Alessia, both 27, joined their loved ones for a banquet at Masseria Pettoleccchia - a stunning country estate set on the coast and nestled among olive groves.

Masseria Pettoleccchia's origins date back to the 15th century, when it began life as a farm specialising in olive oil production. Boasting traditional stone buildings and large open spaces, the estate is one of the region's most desirable events venues, complete with its own private beach.

The couple, who first met in their hometown of Castellammare di Stabia, near Naples, hired chefs from renowned three Michelin-starred restaurant Da

Vittorio to ensure guests were treated to the finest Italian cuisine.

Despite the elegant surroundings, the festivities were a raucous, laughter-filled affair, thanks to the presence of Gianluigi's team mate, Erling Haaland.

The striker, who attended alongside his partner, Isabel Haugseng Johansen, stole the show after coaxing guests to perform the legendary 'Viking row' - the celebration chant made famous by Norwegian football fans during the World Cup.

Haaland, 26, went viral after taking to the stage and banging a drum as dozens of attendees sat on the floor in their wedding finery and rowed in time to the beat.

In a touching gesture, the bride and groom, who have been an item since 2016, used their celebration to shine a light on a good cause - the Santobono Hospital in Naples, which is a leading institution for children's care in Italy. In place of wedding gifts, the couple encouraged guests to make donations to the hospital and support vital paediatric healthcare.

Laughter, love and a life-changing act of generosity - what a fantastic start to married life. **OK!**

WORDS: LEO ROBERTS PHOTOS: REUTERS/ALESSANDRO GAROFALO, GETTY IMAGES





‘I’m not a cool dad – my kids destroy me with one look’

TV chef and dad-of-five *Jamie Oliver* on reaching out to the new PM about prioritising children’s health and his ‘busy’ family life at home

It’s more than two decades since Jamie Oliver declared war on Turkey Twizzlers and started to transform school dinners by working with then-Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Now the celebrity chef, 51, is back with a message for new PM Andy Burnham – it’s time to revolutionise children’s health and education.

Jamie, who is determined to help kids and families eat well now for a healthier future, tells us, “It’s going to be an interesting six months.

“For a long time, my teams have been reaching out to his teams – we have very good dialogue. He has always been quite contemporary, quite open-minded.”

He adds, “No government has put child health as a priority in the election – ever. So, let’s see. And, by the way, when you’re talking about children’s health and education, it’s a blink of an eye. We’re talking 10 years. It’s a country’s entire future. It is an opportunity for Burnham to reframe what Labour looks like.”

Before he entered 10 Downing Street, Andy Burnham helped prepare breakfast during a visit to The Passage Homeless Charity in London. Last month, following a *Mirror* campaign, the government announced a ban on energy drinks for under-16s from April 2027, one of Keir Starmer’s final acts as PM. Jamie backed the move, but says, “It should’ve happened a decade ago.”

And in June, a social media ban for under-16s was announced too, due to come into effect next spring.

Jamie believes it is a step in the right direction, saying, “Obviously, young people are going to work around it. But, ultimately, it’s about rebalancing the etiquette of digital – what is fair, what is legal, what is appropriate?”

“My nine-year-old does crafting with friends on screen. It’s outrageously wholesome. Hopefully, it’s the start of more of this.”

Looking back on his working relationship with Tony Blair, Jamie says, “Blair probably did a very good job of it [addressing children’s health]. I’ve always been apolitical, and I talk to everyone.”

A public outcry erupted over the standard of school meals following the star’s Channel 4 series *Jamie’s School Dinners* in 2005.

But Blair pledged to support school kitchens being equipped to cook meals from scratch and for staff to be given the right culinary skills. Jamie says, “Blair’s been quoted as saying that he would have done more on school dinners when he worked with me... He was quite gracious.”

Jamie has five children ranging in age from nine to 24 with wife Jools, 51. His two eldest have flown the nest, but he still says home life can be chaotic.

He says, “My goodness, it is really busy. It is hard. But Jools is like the doyenne. She’s the one that allows me to be a good dad, she holds the whole thing down. The family is so close, I’m definitely lucky in that sense.

“Like any family, there are trials and tribulations, ▶





CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE: Jamie and Jools are parents to five children; Jamie says his wife of 26 years Jools is 'the doyenne' at home; he first found fame in 1999 on *The Naked Chef* at the age of 23

'I'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET KIDS TO EAT HEALTHILY FOR A LONG, LONG TIME'

and anxiety. The only difference is, I don't think growing up as Jamie Oliver's kid is that easy – it's troublesome."

He adds, "I'm not a cool dad – they might say that in their twenties, but right now they destroy me with one look."

Jamie was just 23 when he shot to fame in TV show *The Naked Chef* in 1999. But the Essex-born star says this decade is shaping up to be his best yet. He says, "I've had the best 50th year. I've tried to focus on my health, sleep, work and be a bit more selfish, spending time with family."

This phase of life presents some challenging thoughts, too. He says, "It's that funny thing where you used to spend your time going to weddings and now you go to lots of funerals."

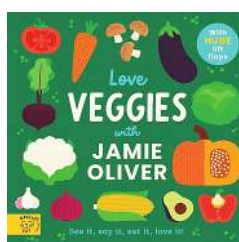
As well as a new series of *Jamie's 15 Minute Meals*, he's released an interactive pre-schoolers' book called *Love Veggies*.

He says, "I've been trying to get kids to eat healthily for a long, long time.

"As someone that struggled growing up, I wanted the opportunity to write for a very specific age. This introduces colours, textures and when you open the flaps up, you can see seeds inside. There's also a fun recipe at the back, which everyone can make together."

The work he does is important, as he was shocked that the majority of primary school kids could not name most common vegetables.

He says, "They know junk food – it's being marketed to them from the minute they're born. So this is my attempt to reach a younger audience, and help parents. If you can get healthy eating across to your kids, by 13 all the good work should be done." **OK!**



Love Veggies With Jamie Oliver (£9.99, Magic Cat Publishing) is out now, part of the Jamie's Little Food Library series.

WORDS: SHELLEY SPADONI

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



Anya plays headstrong protagonist Lucky

‘The harder I work, the luckier I get’

Actress and producer *Anya Taylor-Joy* on her new hit show *Lucky* and her fascination with con artists

In new Apple TV thriller *Lucky*, actress Anya Taylor-Joy is seen running for almost the entirety of seven episodes. “This is somebody who can’t sit still,” says the 30-year-old actress of her character Lucky Armstrong. But despite upping her gym regime ahead of filming, she found the relentless on-set sprinting a struggle. “I’m not fit. But I’m stubborn,” she jokes.

In *Lucky*, Anya – who played chess genius Beth Harmon in Netflix hit *The Queen’s Gambit* – plays a glamorous con-woman who spends her time lying, stealing and staying one step ahead of everyone around her.

After pulling off a multimillion-dollar heist with her boyfriend Cary, played by Drew Starkey, Lucky wakes to find that both he and the money have disappeared. What follows is a drama packed with

violence, car crashes and chase scenes, with Lucky forced to rely on her quick reactions rather than any super-powers. “I’ve done a lot of projects where I’m supposed to be the best in the world at whatever physical activity I’m doing,” Anya says. “That’s been so much fun because it scratches the perfectionist side of my brain. But Lucky isn’t a superhero.”

Speaking to *The Arts Hour* on BBC World Service, Anya says she was drawn to the role because of Lucky’s ability to deceive. “I read the book and I was fascinated by the idea of somebody in a genre that we’ve all seen and love – cons. It’s sexy. It’s George Clooney,” she says, referring to criminal mastermind Danny Ocean in the *Ocean’s 11* franchise.

She was equally intrigued by the idea of constantly changing identities and the issue ▶





CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT:
As Anya in *The Queen's Gambit*; with husband Malcolm McRae; as Furiosa in *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*; as Gina in *Peaky Blinders* alongside Finn Cole as Michael



of trust. "What is it like when you can't stand still?" she says. "When nobody knows your real name? When you're constantly having to lie in order to be able to get to the next day?"

Anya became fascinated by the trickery too. "I was really interested in how willing people are to believe in what you tell them – and in the way that you convey that message," she admits. "We all just call them con people, but it's confidence artists."

Based on Marissa Stapley's bestselling novel, *Lucky* was released in mid-July and has since become one of Apple TV's top-ranked shows. Fittingly, the project marked Anya's first experience as executive producer, after Reese Witherspoon's production company Hello Sunshine approached her. For Reese, there was never any doubt about who should be in the starring role. "Anya was always Lucky," she says. "She's a born producer. She cares deeply and connects viscerally to the character."

Getting behind the camera allowed Anya to shape everything from the look of the series to Lucky's costumes. "I was so much a part of every single conversation about creating this world," she says. "That meant that I felt like

I had a real understanding of not only Lucky, but also exactly how to slot myself into this thing that we had meticulously put together. I knew what it was going to sound like, I knew what it was going to look like, I knew what I was going to wear. So you're very much in control, very involved."

Anya is keen for us to imagine how we might cope in the precarious situations Lucky finds herself in. "I wanted there to be a form of audience wish fulfilment where you place yourself in her shoes and you think, 'Gosh, I hope I'd be able to think of something like that,' or, 'I hope I'd be that quick-witted.'"

Her role in *Lucky* is the latest in a long line of TV and cinematic triumphs. As well as appearing in *Peaky Blinders*, *Dune: Part Two* and 2024 action film *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*, she won a Best Actress Golden Globe and a Screen Actors Guild Award for her performance in *The Queen's Gambit*.

Beyond acting, lucrative contracts as the face of Dior and Tiffany & Co mean Anya has an estimated fortune of £10 million. But her path to stardom was far from conventional, and she felt like something of an outsider while growing up. Born in Miami as one of six, she was raised in Buenos Aires in

Argentina and grew up speaking Spanish. Her family moved to London when she was six, where she taught herself English by reading *Harry Potter*.

"I didn't really feel like I fit in anywhere," she has said.

But her life changed aged 16 when she was spotted by Sarah Doukas, the founder of Storm Model Management who discovered Kate Moss. "I have no interest in modelling," she told Sarah. "Other than I hear that sometimes models become actors. And that's what I want to do with my life."

After marrying musician and actor Malcolm McRae, 32, Anya now divides her time between LA and London. And like her newest namesake, she feels extremely lucky about all that has come her way. "I feel so, so fortunate with the people that I get to love and that love me back, and the things that I get to do that also tend to love me back," she says. "That feels so, so wonderful. But as my dad always said, 'The harder I work, the luckier I get.' I do believe you have a hand in making your own life." **OK!**

The Arts Hour is available on BBC Sounds

WORDS: FRAN BOWDEN PHOTOS: GETTY



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Life & Style

FASHION, BEAUTY, FOOD & TRAVEL

Body beautiful

Influencers Grace Victory, Laura Adlington, Mollie Pearce and Danielle Plowman share the powerful stories behind their confidence, and the lessons they hope every woman takes away

Danielle (left) wears:
swimsuit, £75,
Bravissimo, earrings,
£69, Abbott Lyon,
necklace, £8.99,
New Look

Laura (second from
left) wears: swimsuit,
£36, Next, necklace,
£165, Carrie
Elizabeth, bracelet,
£7.99, New Look

Mollie (second from
right) wears: bikini
top, £29, briefs,
£22, River Island,
bangle, £65, Orelia

Grace (right)
wears: swimsuit,
£62, Curvy
Kate, bangles,
£22.50, M&S

GRACE VICTORY

Grace, 35, is a content creator (@gracevictory), body positivity activist, and writer whose honest conversations about motherhood, mental health and body acceptance have inspired millions.

In 2021, she survived a COVID-induced coma while seven months pregnant with her first child. After years of recovery, she now uses her platform to celebrate resilience, self-acceptance and gratitude for what the body can endure.

On regaining confidence after her illness...

"When you survive big-T trauma and critical illness, you have a different reference point for life and for your body. I'm grateful to be alive. I'm grateful that my body kept me going through cardiac arrest, learning to walk again, learning to talk again and having two babies. I'm droopier, I'm saggier, but I've never felt better."

Swimsuit, £60, Curvy Kate
Sunglasses, £78, Le Specs
Towel, £10, Habitat
Jewellery, stylist's own

*'I FOUGHT FOR
THE LIFE I'VE
GOT NOW AND
I'M REALLY
PROUD OF
WHO I AM'*



Grace wears:
Swimsuit, £52,
Magisculpt Simply Be
Sarong, £42, Next
Scarf, £7.99, New Look
Bangles, £22.50, M&S

Laura wears:
Swimsuit, £35,
Yours Clothing
Shirt (worn as
sarong), £28, Next



Danielle wears:
Bikini top, £36, Pour Moi
Sunglasses, £3, Primark
Earrings, £30, Orelia

Mollie wears:
Bikini top, £38, Boux Avenue
Briefs, £24, Boux Avenue
Sunglasses, £9.99, New Look
Jewellery, stylist's own

LAURA ADLINGTON

Laura, 37, is an author and content creator (@laura.adlington) who uses her platform to champion size inclusivity and encourage women to embrace fashion without limitations.

Following her appearance on *The Great British Bake Off* in 2020, she has become one of the UK's leading voices on body confidence, proving that style has no size limit.

On why she wrote her book, *Diet Starts Monday...*

"It's part memoir and part how-to guide – it's like the ultimate guide to body confidence. I wanted people to feel less alone. I want to encourage women to live a full and happy life just as they are."

Swimsuit, £38, Next
Kimono, £39, Pour Moi
Necklace, £165,
Carrie Elizabeth
Bracelet, £7.99, New Look

*'THIS IS MY
BODY AND IT'S
THE LEAST
INTERESTING
THING ABOUT ME'*



DANIELLE PLOWMAN

Danielle, 42, is the creator behind The Petite Lady (@the.petite.lady), which helps women under 5ft 3in dress for their proportions rather than trying to look taller.

Her practical styling advice encourages women to stop changing their bodies to fit fashion and instead find clothes that truly fit them.

On why she believes fashion should fit your body, not the other way around...

"The rules they have for petites are outrageous. Everything's based around looking taller or slimmer, and there's nothing to be fixed with our bodies. It's just about what fits you really well and what you feel most comfortable in."

Swimsuit, £14, Primark
Shirt, £10, Primark
Necklace, £8.99, New Look
Umbrella, £15,
Onlinehomeshop.com
Towel, £28, John Lewis

'WHEN CLOTHES
DON'T FIT, IT'S
NOT YOU, IT'S
THE CLOTHES.
YOUR BODY ISN'T
TO BE BLAMED'

WORDS: ZOE CRIPPS PHOTOGRAPHER: DAVID VENNII STYLIST: LAUREN GOODWIN-GRAFTON ASSISTED BY KITTY BOWES
MAKE-UP ARTIST: ANNA GIBSON ASSISTED BY RACHEL CAREY PROPS: INFLATABLE POOL FLOATS: AMAZON



*'IF SOMEONE
SEES ONE OF MY
POSTS WITH MY
STOMA BAG ON
SHOW AND FEELS
A BIT STRONGER,
THAT'S WHAT
MATTERS TO ME'*

MOLLIE PEARCE

Mollie, 24, was in *The Traitors* in 2024 and is a disability advocate and content creator (@mollie_pearcee) who shares her experiences of living with a limb difference and a stoma.

Through her refreshingly honest content, she encourages others to embrace their differences and challenge outdated perceptions of disability.

On learning to celebrate her body after surgery...

"The first time I felt like I was dressing to celebrate my body was the first time I put a bikini on after surgery [colostomy]. It was something I never thought I'd wear again. Walking around the pool with a bikini on and my stoma bag out was a lot less scary than I thought it would be. It felt a bit euphoric, to be honest."

Bikini top, £38, Boux Avenue
Briefs, £20, Boux Avenue
Scarf, £14, Accessorize
Sunglasses, £9.99, New Look
Earrings, £25, Orelia

Notes



**When festival
glam meets
surprise sun**

**Be ready for the beauty
of British summer**

Selected stores. Subject to availability



Cotton Embroidered Shirred Bandeau Top, £39, River Island



Anais Gold Blue Droplet Necklace, £50.50, Bijoux De Mimi



So Silk Bandana, £40, Free People



Cotton Embroidered Hem Trousers, £46, River Island



Daise Vanilla & Caramel Fragrance Body Mist, £5.99, Superdrug



OK! LOVES

Here are the best festival buys topping our wishlist this week



Studded Cross-Body Bag, £28, Friends Like These at Next



Bubble Skincare SUN RISE Mineral Sunscreen Stick Broad Spectrum SPF 30, £14, Boots



Humantra Electrolytes Powder (Apricot), £28, Amazon



Gaiter Biker Boots, £369, Kurt Geiger



Rosé Spritz Can, £1.29, Aldi

Beauty buzz

Octavia Lillywhite shares this week's must-haves, trends & tips

All the feels

A beauty brand whose purpose is joy? That's the aim of Patchology's Good Day collection at SpaceNK. Each product contains the brand's exclusive ingredient complex it's calling 'molecular sunshine' because it mimics the benefits of the sun (minus harmful rays). It combines ectoin for skin barrier health with French indigo extract, to help boost happiness. I love the Juice Cleanse Double Cleansing Jelly, £22, and the Eye Pillow Brightening Eye Cream, £30.





IN FOR A POUND(LAND)

New products have dropped in the Make Up Gallery range at Poundland, with some outstanding value. Don't expect it all to be £1 (sadly those days are done), but for £3 you can bag the Throw Some Shade Eyeshadow Quad, with nine shimmery, pigmented shades, great for trying out new make-up looks. And I'm impressed with the on-trend cheek formulations Lip & Cheek Tint and the Stick It To 'Em Stick, available as a bronzer, blush and highlighter. Both are just £2.



GO GO GADGET

Medicube's Age-R LED Booster Pro is a phenomenon, yet the new version, Booster Pro X2, is twice as powerful. It has the same four settings as the original (product boosting, firming, collagen stimulating and exfoliating) plus a new dual mode where you can combine two of the above – halving treatment time. There's also a mask mode to boost the instant glow from sheet masks, and an AI mode, which learns about your own skin. Impressive stuff. It's £210 at Amazon but look out for discounts.



COMPLEXION PERFECTION

Laura Mercier has always said the purpose of her brand was perfecting skin without masking it – think coverage only where you need it, so your own skin shines through. Thirty years on from the original, this is her new Secret Camouflage Complexion Perfector, £29. Each one now has three blendable shades for even more versatility in a handbag-friendly compact.

THE MANE EVENT

It's been a tough summer for haircare, right? Very high UV indexes, hefty humidity and temperatures so hot that turning on a hair dryer feels like a crime. My

heroes are products that make a difference without heat styling, and Olaplex [°]7 Shine Serum Oil Mist, £36, is up there.

A treatment serum shine spray (it does also heat protect if that's your thing in a heatwave) that does a lion-tamer job on unruly hair. Shake, spritz and, "Oh my, doesn't my hair look nice?"





Med of the table

Recreate the delicious flavours of a sunny Mediterranean holiday with these vibrant vegetable-packed recipes

Ultimate chicken and chorizo paella

SERVES 2

Ingredients

2 garlic cloves, unpeeled
50g chorizo slices
240g diced chicken breast
1 pepper, deseeded and chopped
1 tsp smoked paprika
175g risotto rice
1 tsp honey
1 chicken stock cube
2 tbsp mayonnaise
120g peas
1 lemon, zest and juice
20g wild rocket

1. Preheat your oven to 220°C/ 200°C fan/gas mark 7.
2. Pop 2 unpeeled garlic cloves into a small piece of foil with a drizzle of oil and scrunch to enclose. Roast until soft for 10-12 minutes.
3. Heat a drizzle of oil and fry the chorizo until crispy, then transfer to a plate covered in kitchen paper.
4. Add the chicken and pepper to the pan, season with salt and pepper and fry for 8-10 minutes, until the chicken is golden and cooked through. Add the paprika and fry for another minute.
5. Add the risotto rice. Stir and cook for 1-2 minutes until the edges of the rice are translucent. Stir in 600ml boiled water, the honey and chicken stock cube. Bring to the boil, add a lid and bake in the oven until the rice is cooked and the liquid is absorbed, for 25-30 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, once the garlic has cooled, cut the end with

scissors, squeeze it out of the skin and combine in a small bowl with the mayonnaise.

7. Once the paella is cooked, stir through the peas. Grate over the zest from the lemon and add the juice of one half. Season the rice and add more lemon juice if needed.
8. Divide between 2 bowls, topped with the garlic mayo and chorizo. Scatter over the rocket leaves, drizzle with a little olive oil and serve with lemon wedges on the side.

Romesco roasted cauliflower salad

SERVES 2

Ingredients

1 cauliflower, cut into florets
1 sweet potato, cut into chunks
Olive oil
1 tsp white cumin seeds
2 garlic cloves, unpeeled
1 pepper, deseeded and cut into strips
1 ciabatta loaf
1 tbsp sun-dried tomato paste
1 tsp smoked paprika
2 tsp sugar
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
25g toasted flaked almonds
40g wild rocket



1. Preheat your oven to 220°C/ 200°C fan/gas mark 7.
2. Pop the cauliflower and sweet potato onto a large baking tray. Drizzle with oil, add the cumin seeds and season with salt and pepper, then toss to coat. Spread in a single layer and roast until golden and tender for 18-20 minutes, turning halfway.
3. Meanwhile, pop the unpeeled

garlic cloves into a small piece of foil with 1 tsp oil. Scrunch to enclose it and roast for 10-12 minutes.

4. Heat a little oil in a frying pan and fry the pepper until charred for 5-6 minutes, stirring just twice – you want the pepper to pick up some colour.
5. Tear the ciabatta into 2cm chunks. Arrange on a baking

tray and drizzle with oil, season and toss to coat. Bake until golden for 8-10 minutes, then set aside.

6. Once the garlic has cooled, cut the end with scissors, squeeze it out of the skin. In a blender, combine the garlic, peppers, sun-dried tomato paste, paprika, 1 tsp sugar and 3 tbsp olive oil with half the red wine vinegar and

two-thirds of the almonds. Blend to a smooth paste.

7. In a large bowl, combine the remaining sugar, vinegar and 1 tbsp olive oil. Toss in the roasted cauliflower, sweet potato, ciabatta croutons and rocket. Season with salt and pepper.
8. Serve the salad with the romesco sauce and remaining almonds.



Glazed halloumi loaded patatas bravas

SERVES 2

Ingredients

1 red onion, cut into wedges
700g potatoes, chopped into chunks
Olive oil
1 tsp dried oregano
4 garlic cloves, unpeeled
225g halloumi, sliced
1 tsp smoked paprika
400g tomato passata
1 red wine stock cube
1 tsp sugar
1 tbsp red pepper chilli jelly
100g mayonnaise
20g wild rocket

1. Preheat your oven to 220°C/ 200°C fan/gas mark 7.
2. Pop the onion and potato onto a large baking tray. Toss to coat in oil and dried oregano, and season with salt and pepper. Roast until golden for 25-35 minutes, turning halfway.
3. Meanwhile, pop 2 garlic

small piece of foil with 1 tsp oil. Scrunch to enclose it and roast for 10-12 minutes.

4. Soak the halloumi slices in cold water.
5. Peel and grate the remaining garlic, then fry for 1 minute with the paprika. Stir in the passata, red wine stock cube, sugar and 50ml water. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 4-5 minutes until thickened.
6. Dry the halloumi, then fry until golden for 2-3 minutes each side. Remove from the heat and coat in the red pepper chilli jelly.
7. Once the roasted garlic has cooled, cut the end with scissors, squeeze it out of the skin and mash with a fork. Mix in a small bowl with the mayonnaise and season.
8. Divide your roasted veg between 2 bowls and top with the bravas sauce. Drizzle over the garlic mayo. Arrange the halloumi on top and garnish with rocket.

GREEK CHIC

OK!'s Zoe Cripps checks into KOIA's swanky adults-only Kos hotel, 15 years after she first visited the island as a teen



Like many Brits, my first introduction to Kos came courtesy of an 18-30 holiday. I remember cheap cocktails, sticky dance floors and a hotel where they flat-out refused to give out more than one deflated pillow to guests. It was fun in the way only your late teens can be, but I'd mentally filed Kos alongside the other party islands I'd ticked off and moved on from. So when I was invited back this summer, I'll admit I wasn't expecting

much. I certainly wasn't expecting to find one of the most peaceful hotels I've ever stayed in.

Perched high above the Aegean Sea, KOIA All-Suite Wellbeing Resort feels like it belongs on a completely different island. There's no booming music by the pool, no inflatable flamingoes drifting across the water and certainly no wristbands. Instead, it delivered ultimate luxury in the form of quiet infinity pools, first-class dining and wellness experiences - all at a reasonable price. ►





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: the island has many white sand beaches; Kos Town; the hotel's Thyme restaurant



STAY IN STYLE

Opened in 2023, the five-star adults-only retreat has just 51 suites, so it never feels crowded, even when the hotel is full. Built into the hillside above Agios Fokas, around a 12-minute drive from Kos Town, the resort is inspired by the ancient teachings of Hippocrates, who was born on the island, with wellbeing woven into every detail.

Suites range from minimalist Cave Suites to spacious Sea View Suites with private infinity pools or outdoor whirlpools, all dressed in calming neutral tones, natural stone and wood.

The beauty of the hotel is that all suites offer full or partial views overlooking the Aegean, so there really is no dud room. Nice touches like a pillow menu, rainfall showers, smart-controlled blinds and room-service dining options really help cement the feel of 'private luxury'. As for amenities, you'll find two pools – an indoor one within the spa and a main pool – and a gym.

THE FOOD

Though there's only one restaurant, Thyme, I didn't find myself wishing for more dining options, which is a real testament to how amazing the food was there. For breakfast, a generous buffet of local fruit, pastries and cooked-to-order dishes can be enjoyed with uninterrupted sea views.

In the evening, Thyme transforms into an elegant à la carte restaurant celebrating Mediterranean cuisine with seasonal produce, fresh seafood and local wines. I'm not joking when I say I ordered the shrimp linguine four times.

Lunch is also served there, but there's an entirely different menu from the evening



FROM TOP: loungers in the spa; one of the light and airy junior suites



Breakfast includes local fruit



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
the resort overlooks the Aegean sea;
fresh seasonal produce is used in
the restaurant; the floating breakfast



one, so there's plenty of variety in the form of fancy sandwiches and grilled foods.

During the day, me and my book camped out by the pool bar for iced coffees between swims, before moving to the sophisticated Elixir Bar at sunset, where cocktails are served against a backdrop of one of the best views on the island.

WHAT'S ON

If you need more than a pool and a book to pass the time, the curated selection of activities on offer are well worth booking. There's the al fresco morning yoga overlooking the sparkling sea or a traditional baking class with Thyme's head chef, to name a couple.

I headed to the hotel's Ydor Spa (on the one cloudy day we got) and loved being able to privately book out the Himalayan salt room and sauna cabin before indulging in a massage.

I also recommend treating yourself to the floating breakfast experience. I've never eaten so much food in one morning, and there really is nothing more thrilling than swimming after your strawberries as they float away across your private pool.

FURTHER AFIELD

Reception can point you towards hiking trails leading to the medieval ruins of Palio Pyli castle or the summit of Mount Dikaioi. The sunset views from the island's highest peak are well worth the climb. Kos Town offers a completely different pace, with Roman landmarks like the beautifully preserved Odeon of Kos and Casa Romana, alongside some excellent tavernas.

If you have a rental car, you can visit some of the island's white sand beaches and the thermal springs at Therma Beach, where the sea bubbles.

WHY I'LL RETURN

It's rare to feel magic from a hotel, but I felt it here. It's a calming haven, perfect for anyone looking to escape noise. The biggest surprise was that I found it on an island I'd written off as a party place. The fact that it's small means the service feels really personal. After a few days the staff knew my morning coffee order and favourite sunbed. From August 2026, you'll be able to check out a new Greek restaurant, a second pool and new suites.



The hotel's
indoor pool

HOW TO BOOK

A Junior Suite with Sea View and Hot Tub starts from £220 per night, and a Sea View Suite with Private Pool starts from £256 with breakfast included. Book via koiaresort.com to make the most of offers like complimentary airport transfers. Half board and full board dining also available. Flights to Kos from major UK airports operate daily May-October; return pricing from around £60.

HOROSCOPES

All you need to know about your week ahead



ARIES

MARCH 21 – APRIL 20

Harmony in relationships needs effort now, especially if lasting love is what you long for. Helping someone leads to an invitation, and weekend plans could shape important events.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4001**



TAURUS

APRIL 21 – MAY 21

Messages from an old friend stir uncertainty. Meeting again sounds pleasant, yet past romance could complicate matters. Family responsibilities also require attention this week.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4002**



GEMINI

MAY 22 – JUNE 21

Teamwork sets something important in motion, and shared efforts could lead to a real achievement. Social experiences brighten your mood and improve romantic prospects if single.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4003**



CANCER

JUNE 22 – JULY 23

You can no longer ignore unsettling issues, whether in love or at work. Family responsibilities become a priority, and by the weekend others appreciate your steady attitude.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4004**



LEO

JULY 24 – AUGUST 23

You're ready to pursue goals with more resolve. Better organisation helps life run more smoothly. Family gatherings or a gift from afar remind you what matters most.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4005**



VIRGO

AUGUST 24 – SEPTEMBER 23

Solitude appeals as the month begins, and your need for space grows stronger. A possessive friend makes you uneasy. Growing frustration leads you to draw firm lines.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4006**



LIBRA

SEPTEMBER 24 – OCTOBER 23

Shared projects bring happiness, especially where a forgotten skill can be used again. Relationships feel meaningful. A developing romance begins to deepen naturally.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4007**



SCORPIO

OCTOBER 24 – NOVEMBER 22

Work and social life are both improving, and professional advancement looks promising. Promote your abilities and others will notice what you can do.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4008**



SAGITTARIUS

NOVEMBER 23 – DECEMBER 21

Trying something new lifts your mood. Reaching out to friends helps rebuild confidence. You will create a better balance between personal life and work.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4009**



CAPRICORN

DECEMBER 22 – JANUARY 20

Responsibilities are pressing too hard on family life, and the lack of fun shows. Loved ones feel it, as do you. It's the time to reassess priorities and ease your schedule.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4010**



AQUARIUS

JANUARY 21 – FEBRUARY 19

People open up to you now, and even strangers seem ready to trust you with their thoughts. Heightened intuition and flashes of déjà vu help strengthen your spiritual awareness.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4011**



PISCES

FEBRUARY 20 – MARCH 20

A manipulative friend or colleague is easier to recognise now. Strong differences of opinion may lead to discussions with someone close. You'll defend a pal facing unfair treatment.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4012**



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ADVERTISING OK! PUBLISHER & HEAD OF MAGAZINE BRANDS georgina.parrott@reachplc.com **MAGAZINES LEAD** sarah.green@reachplc.com **CIRCULATION** andrew.crosthwaite@reachplc.com **SYNDICATION** antony.schipani@reachplc.com **SUBSCRIPTIONS** 0333 202 8000 or support@newspapersubs.co.uk Order online at newspapersubs.co.uk or at ok.co.uk. If you find OK! has sold out, please email andrew.crosthwaite@reachplc.com

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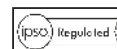


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