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Issue 17 Spring 2016

London Mums

The Talent Issue



Kimberly Wyatt



Gennaro Contaldo



Ben Fogle

**Star
mum**

EXCLUSIVE!
Amanda Holden

**'If I were Queen of Britain
I would have a high heel day!'**
**The glamorous TV judge talks
about her kids, toys, dogs
and Britain's Got Talent**

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Editor's letter



Hello...

Last December, I had the pleasure of spending some time with Amanda Holden and Kimberly Wyatt to discuss their work commitments and I realised I was at the presence of two very talented female artists. So this is why I called this Spring magazine the Talent issue.

Amanda is truly hilarious and incredibly familiar. Talking to her about her kids, toys, dogs and Britain's Got Talent, feels like having a chat with your best mate. As I was chatting to her, I was instantly taken with her warm, funny and sometimes self-deprecating sense of humour that I find attractive in people.

In tune with our Talent Special, former Pussycat Doll Kimberly Wyatt talks about how she helps girls get active and a few other gossips. She is a super star and yet very humble.

There's no better place than Disney to talk about talent in action and I went behind the scenes of smashing animal talking comedy adventure Zootropolis with film directors Byron Howard and Rich Moore.

Talent is abundant in Star Chef Gennaro Contaldo's cooking. As a fellow Italian and food lover, I can fully appreciate Gennaro's unconditional love for Italy and London. In this interview, he reveals his top pasta tips and his favourite dishes.

Dog loving talent, TV Star and London Dad Ben Fogle opens his heart on his love for Labradors and his children.

The London Mums shopping pages are filled with lots of inspiration if you want to upgrade your Spring wardrobe and if you are looking for affordable items to entertain kids over Easter. I hope you will love reading our Talent issue as much as we have enjoyed making it!

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'Forums such as London Mums are invaluable for forging new relationships, sparking ideas and providing advice in an easy, accessible way.'
Mayor of London, Boris Johnson

Editorial

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AMANDA HOLDEN

**IF I WERE QUEEN OF BRITAIN I
WOULD HAVE A HIGH HEEL DAY!**

The glamorous TV judge talks exclusively to London Mums about her kids, toys, dogs and Britain's Got Talent

By Editor Monica Costa

Interviewing Amanda Holden feels like having a chat with your best friend or sister. Her voice and face are so familiar that as an interviewer you are extremely at ease. Soon she will appear once again as a long-standing judge on Britain's Got Talent. With the knowledge from this interview you will hopefully enjoy the show even more this Spring.

I had the pleasure to talk to Amanda while she was officially launching Pebli Town (toysalive), a connected pre-school toy featuring a physical play board that directly interacts with a tablet to bring the toy to life.

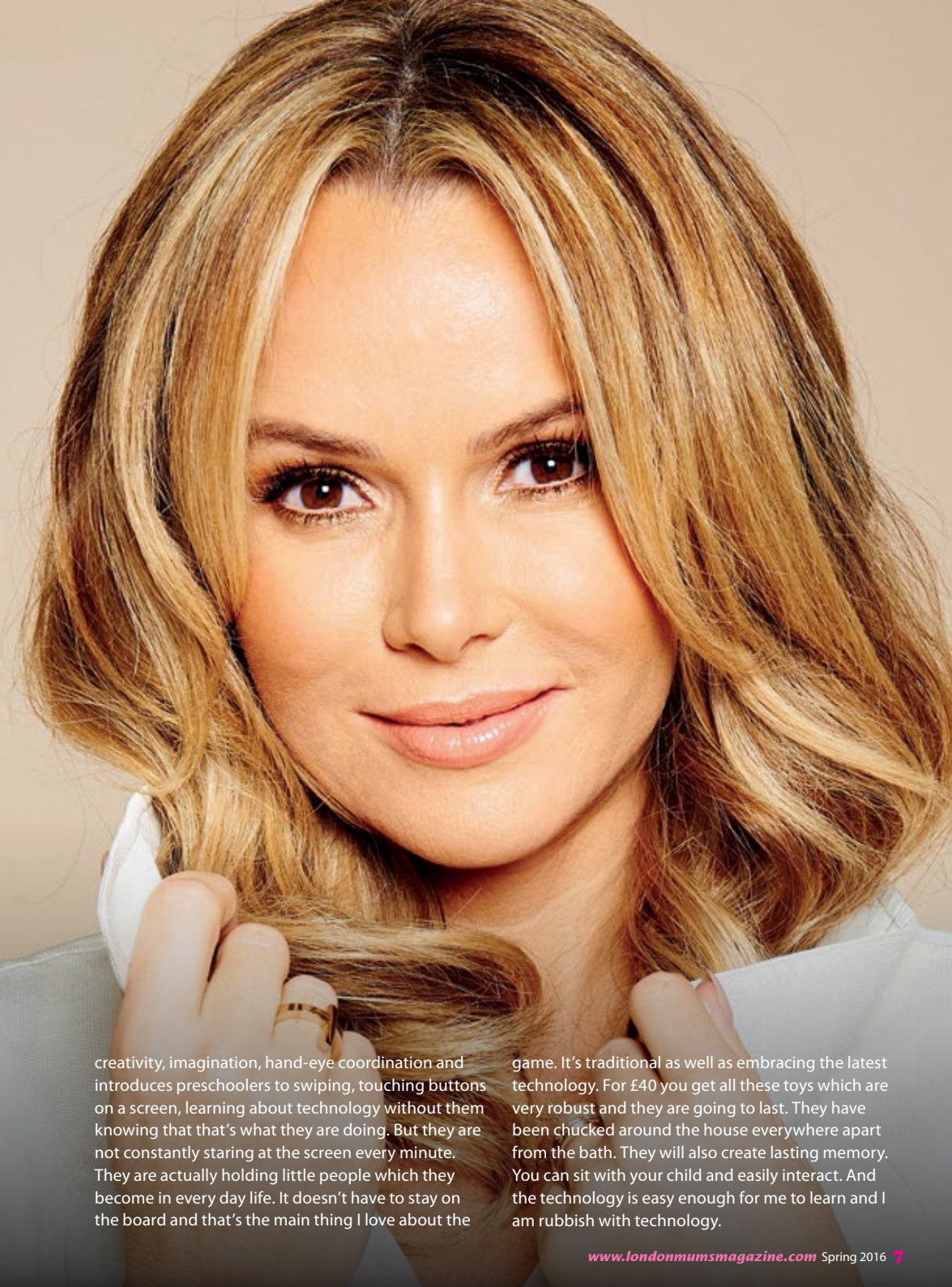
Q: On the Pebli shoot you get to work with wannabe filmmakers. What should parents do to encourage their children to be creative without using video games?

AH: I wanted to get involved with the Pebli games because as parents now we need to embrace technology. But for me traditional play is still just as important and the great thing about Pebli Town

is that it combines the two. Your children will think that they are cool because they are downloading an app and they get to use a tablet or a phone but it is in conjunction with a board game and four central characters which you can touch, feel, hold, take off the board, take around the house. You can interact with them and make movies, which is my favourite aspect of the game. It teaches your children

creativity, imagination, hand-eye coordination and introduces preschoolers to swiping, touching buttons on a screen, learning about technology without them knowing that that's what they are doing. But they are not constantly staring at the screen every minute. They are actually holding little people which they become in every day life. It doesn't have to stay on the board and that's the main thing I love about the

game. It's traditional as well as embracing the latest technology. For £40 you get all these toys which are very robust and they are going to last. They have been chucked around the house everywhere apart from the bath. They will also create lasting memory. You can sit with your child and easily interact. And the technology is easy enough for me to learn and I am rubbish with technology.



Q: What is your favourite game from your childhood and why?

AH: Probably Operation, Twister and Backaroo games where adults end up screaming or falling over. They are games that create great memories. You can play with somebody else and something funny inevitably is going to happen. They get played in our house with all various ages, half drunk adults and children with us all spinning the wheel to the point we want it to land on or it could land on and creating the most difficult positions possible really.

Q: How big a role does technology play in your own children's lives?

AH: It's still relatively new. My eldest child has an iPad which she uses for a few games. It has a child-friendly internet surface called Mobicip (a free parental control for phones, tablets and computers) which is brilliant so she cannot Google anything that's going to upset her when she's not with us which is important. We let her play at weekends only. That's it really. It's a great tool for confiscation because if she misbehaves and you tell her you are taking her iPad she will be good. It's the thing she loves the most as it makes her feel a grown up having one.

Q: On Britain's Got Talent you get to see a lot of young talents and you often get emotional. What ticks the box for you to be a successful act?

AH: When something is real. So many people are used to performing and doing their act. Mostly it's children who make me emotional. When I see them putting their heart and soul in their performance and singing I turn into a mother and I feel the parent's anxiety or pride and I put myself in their position. Too often we see singers (successful or otherwise) who have lost the fire they once had. Singers that people really relate to are those who put their life and heart into their song, real emotions. And you can feel it as a human being because it's truthful.

Q: You trained as a professional dancer but you were refused at Moulin Rouge. Would you have chosen a career as a dancer instead of acting / presenting?

AH: No because I definitely don't think I was good enough to compete. I trained in musical theatre so I trained in singing and dancing rather than specialising in dancing. I would say that I act first, sing second and dance third. You'd have to have a lot of patience to teach me a dance routine.

Q: Having experienced rejection first hand, what would you say to young people and hopefuls who are rejected from BGT but still have lots of talent?

AH: Never give up! I tell people on Twitter or parents to never give up. I am knackered for never giving up. I just don't give up!



Q: You are well known for being outspoken. How difficult is it for yourself and your family to be always in the public light and having to constantly watch what you do and say?

AH: It's tricky. I am opinionated but I try not to be too critical or to say anything too controversial. A lot of the time headlines are made out of things I say that aren't even what I said. Nine times out of 10 I would stand by to what I have said because I would have thought it through but there's the odd occasion, twisted. But mostly the press are very supportive with me and with my family.

Q: Have you always been confident with your body image as a school girl and teenager?

AH: I don't have massive boobs, but growing up I was one of the first girls in my class to wear a bra. I don't think they grew beyond much when I was 12 though. Going through that weird stage stays with you forever. I did gymnastics as a girl so my body shape has always been lean and fit whether or not I do exercise or not or whether I eat healthily. I think it is genetic. I am probably the most confident in my forties I have ever been because I have a great partner and a great life behind me.

Q: You are an Ambassador for Battersea Dogs and Cats Home charity. How many pets do you have?

AH: We have a dog called Rudy, a cat called Muffy and some fish with various names.

Q: Dog therapy – what is the best type of dog for a family? Can dogs be therapeutic for difficult children and why?

AH: Having pets teaches your children all kind of lessons especially grief and loss and caring nurturing.

We make Lexy feed both the cat and dog every morning and every night. Even the 3 year old likes to give him treats and hold his lead. Having responsibility is really important. We have a terrier which on paper is not the best dog around children. But he's incredible with our kids. He's been with them since he was a puppy. I have always been told that Labradors are amazing with children. I grew up with a Labrador. I think it's how you train them and how they respond but obviously it's always important to

remember that they are animals and should never be left on their own however confident you are with your pet. I never leave my kids alone with them.

Q: You are local in Richmond. What do you like the most about living in this area of London?

AH: You have amazing shops and countryside on your doorstep you don't have to go anywhere really.

Q: Who is cooking at home, you or your husband? What's your favourite home made meal?

AH: I am the cook. My husband can barely make toast. I like making a Sunday Roast. I am a vegetarian but I tend to cook meat for my husband so I like cooking a roast dinner.

Q: What's your biggest beauty secret?

AH: Making sure that you drink lots of wine but lots of water as well. (She laughs)

Q: On Britain's Got Talent you wear amazing gowns. Who is your favourite fashion designer and why?

AH: We use lots of different designers. But we found our own one a couple of years ago and we launched him on BGT. He is Samuel Dougal and one of my favourite designers. Since the he has established himself on a lot of different shows. Sam knows my body shape and has made lots of lovely gowns for me. The Made in Britain is always the best for me.

Q: If you were Queen of Britain what would you do first?

AH: I'd have a high heel day. Everyone would have to wear high heels for a day including men. I know so many men who would die to get into a pair of high heels.

Q: How would you like to be remembered?

AH: As a good mother. I just want my children to be able to think that I did a good job bringing them up and they had a good time.

Q: What is your parenting style?

AH: I am mostly quite reasonable. My children are really good at the moment so I don't have many squabbles. The other

day I asked my daughter who was stricter between my husband and myself and she said it was me. I can be strict when it needs be. My husband is more fun.

Q: Who is the person who has inspired you the most throughout your life and why?

AH: I am lucky as I come from a strong family of women and My mum was a working mother. I'd say I take a lot of her work ethic. I know now the guilt and pain she must have felt having to work every day and leave the kids behind. It has to be my mum.

Q: Where do you like to go on holiday with your family?

AH: When both girls are old enough I would love to take them to Australia. I love the Maldives.

Q: What is the London attraction that you love the most and why?

AH: We love Richmond Park as well as the walks on the River.

Q: What's your favourite London restaurant?

AH: Al Boccon di vino Italian Restaurant in Richmond and Tangawizi Indian Dining, the Michelin acclaimed North Indian Restaurant also in Richmond.

Q: What is your guilty pleasure?

AH: I am a full fat person and don't believe in diet products or half fat cheese. I eat everything I can and then take my dog for a walk.

Q: What's your favourite film of all times?

AH: Pretty woman. I know it's not the most intellectual film ever but it's one of my favourite ones.

Q: Who is a showbiz personality you have worked with who have made you laugh the most?

AH: Michael Macyntyre is like a fun factory.

Q: What are you up to next?

AH: Britain's Got Talent and then a news show with another network this Spring.



Top Tips On Finding The Perfect Tutor For Your Child

by Max Blanshard founder of TutorMapper.

We all want to do the best for our children, but it would seem that us Londoners are a little more pro-active than the rest of the country when it comes to our children's education. Almost 44% of parents in London – that's twice as many as elsewhere in the UK – are choosing to supplement their child's schooling with additional tuition, and they are reaping the benefits.

London's tutoring industry is clearly booming, but it is also, as private tutor Max Blanshard discovered to his astonishment, a totally unregulated industry. It was the alarming discovery that anyone could advertise their services as a tutor, with no prior checks necessary, that stimulated Max to launch **TutorMapper**.



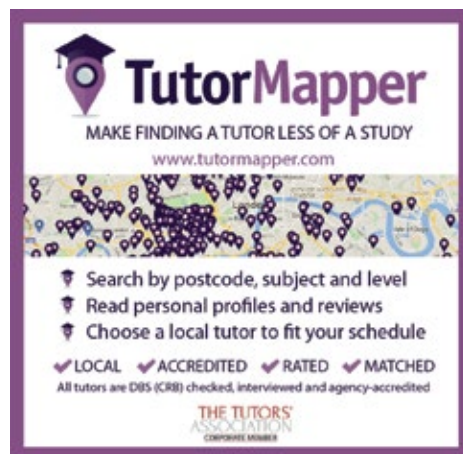
"I WANTED TO CREATE A PLACE PARENTS COULD TRUST – WHERE QUALITY AND CONVENIENCE WERE GUARANTEED."

But what should you look for when choosing a tutor for your child? Well, we've picked Max's brains and he shares his top tips with us here.

1. Safety first. If you're going to place your child in the care of, let's face it, a stranger for an hour or more each week, the very least you need to do is to make sure that they have an up-to-date **DBS check** (previously CRB). Don't feel embarrassed to ask, a good tutor will be expecting it.
2. Speak with any prospective tutor before committing yourself. Don't be swayed by a CV that boasts a string of A* grades and a glittering few years at Oxbridge – qualifications are important, but they're no guarantee they can teach.
3. Location, location, location. Our research suggests that the main reason a tutor drops a client is due to a long commute. You'll want to hang onto a tutor that your child is blossoming with, so if you can find a tutor that isn't going to have to cancel because of strikes, delays and the vagaries of the British weather, then you're already halfway to success. Having a tutor on your doorstep also means that you can easily sort out last minute sessions or reschedule around hastily arranged sports fixtures.

4. Don't rely on your children to let you know how they're doing – we all know how that'll end – instead, arrange feedback directly with the tutor. Establish this early on, and a good tutor will keep you in the loop.

At **TutorMapper**, we understand what an important decision choosing a tutor is, and that is why we take the process as seriously as you do. Every single one of our tutors has been DBS checked, interviewed by professional agencies and vetted for their suitability.



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FORMER PUSSYCAT DOLL KIMBERLY WYATT TELLS LONDON MUMS HOW SHE HELPS GIRLS GET ACTIVE AND A FEW OTHER GOSSIPS

2015 has certainly been former Pussycat Doll Kimberly Wyatt year: she had a baby daughter (Willow), she became Masterchef Champion. Now former Pussycat Doll has joined the Youth Sport Trust as a school sport ambassador. So young but so passionate about dancing and helping the selfie generation find a healthy balance in their life.

Kimberly Wyatt is best known for being a part of one of the biggest girl groups of all time The Pussycat Dolls, selling over 50 million records across the globe.

With her roots firmly planted in dance, Kimberly took on the role of lead judge on Sky1's UK show 'Got to Dance' for five seasons and recently enjoyed massive success when she was crowned winner of Celebrity Masterchef 2015. Kimberly is currently filming popular dance show 'Taking the next step' for CBBC.

Now a mum to 10 month old Willow, Kimberly lives in London with her husband Max and continues to enjoy cooking healthy family food. She is passionate about inspiring others to be fit and healthy and particularly devotes her time to inspiring the younger generation to follow their dreams and lead a healthy, happy lifestyle.

Q: Kimberly you have joined the Youth Sport Trust as a school sport ambassador. Why do you feel particularly connected with this organisation?

KW: I have joined the Youth Sport Trust as a school sport ambassador to support this independent charity's promotion of physical activity, particularly within primary schools, and encourage more young people to get active. I am really passionate about supporting young people to have the confidence to take part in physical activity. Be that traditional sports, dance or alternative sports.

I'm working with the Youth Sport Trust because I believe it's a platform that's making a real difference, for example by finding ways to connect Olympic medal-winners to those at school who are striving for greatness, wellness and true happiness.

Q: Have you always been confident with your body image as a school girl and teenager?

KW: I didn't have lots of confidence, but dance taught me how to express myself emotionally and have a bigger purpose, which gave me a voice. That's why I'm so inspired to be working with the Youth Sport Trust, talking to young people who lack that confidence to get active and teaching how to dance has helped me getting my confidence.

Q: You are still best known for being one of The Pussycat Dolls. What do you miss about being in a band?

KW: I look back at my Pussycat dolls time with nostalgic feelings.

I spent those days with my best girlfriends sharing lots of laughs and hugs. That actually continues even now in my day to day life as we are all still great friends.

It was such an amazing time and we took dance to such a great level.

Q: You are very versatile and talented with a career covering now judging on 'Got to Dance', Celebrity Masterchef and dancing still very much the core focus. How do manage our work/life balance now that you have a 10 month old baby?

KW: Work – life balance is crucial and I am aware where I am in that balance. I work really hard and now that I have a child my decisions are even more important as I need to provide a future to my little daughter.

Q: What do you like the most about living in London?

KW: London is an amazing city and what I like about Londoners is that they don't take the sun for granted so they enjoy it even more when it shines.

Q: Who is cooking at home, you or your husband? Do you have Masterchef competitions at home? What's your favourite home made meal?

KW: We cook together. Sunday roast with pork and apple sauce is my hubby's favourite but I love it too.

Last Thanksgiving day we cooked all together and we had our meal laughing and thanking for our wonderful life.

Our Weekend favorite treat is Strawberries with Honey topped with vanilla infused cream with our 'red wine' substitute of full bodies grape juice. Yummy!

Q: Young people are obsessed with their body image but also with sharing 'selfies' all the time. This is a dangerous combination. What would you recommend to both teenagers and mums in terms of dealing with this?

KW: I am passionate about fight what the selfie generation has created. The Selfie generation is atrocious but they also have YouTube and can create their own opportunities so I would recommend to see the positive. Mums need to lead by example and be with kids as much as possible.

Q: Generation 'selfie' thinks that fame comes overnight. How did it happen for you?

KW: Now that I am a mum I have a real concern about the 'selfie' generation. I call it that because I think the world of TV has taught our young generation that fame comes overnight. While fame may be ►



something you can aspire to, the message I want to send is that it doesn't happen at once. Like other high profile athletes and performers, I trained hard and I think it's my duty to clear that up for youngsters. It's always about being able to do what you love. Fame is only a by-product.

Q: What's your biggest beauty secret?

KW: I take a hot bubble bath at least once a week. I give a treat to my hard working body.

Q: If you were Queen of Britain what would you do first?

KW: I would ride a horse through Hyde Park!

Q: Is your daughter musical?

KW: Willow has already a great sense of rhythm.

Q: What should parents do to encourage your children to take on a musical instrument? Do you play any instrument yourself?

KW: I play a bit of piano, but would love to keep practising. Piano is excellent.

Q: What is your parenting style?

KW: I tend to use mother's intuition rather than manuals.

Q: Being a parent it's hard enough, but being a parent under the spotlight must be even harder. What are the coping mechanisms that you use since being in the public eye?

KW: I keep it simple. Simplicity is the best coping mechanism.

Q: Have you ever considered a West End Show role? Alexandra Burke has performed in the Bodyguard and she was wonderful although it is probably easier if you don't have a young family to take care of.

KW: In the past I was in Revolution in Haymarket. I would consider it again if it is the right one.

Q: What is the London attraction that you love the most and why?

KW: I love Regents street. It's the heart of London.

Q: What's your favourite London restaurant?

KW: My favourite restaurants are The dairy and Jaime's Fifteen.

Q: What is your guilty pleasure?

KW: Chocolate and the programme Come dine with me.

Q: What's your favourite film of all times?

KW: Elf

Q: Your favourite actress? Actor?

KW: Benedict Cumberbatch, Jennifer Lawrence and Meryl Streep.

Q: Musician?

KW: George Ezra and The cinematic orchestra.

Q: Your favourite fashion designer? And Why?

KW: Milly, an American fashion company specializing in women's clothing that was founded by fashion designer Michelle Smith. www.milly.com/

Q: Where do you like to go on holiday with your family?

KW: I love the English countryside, like the New Forest and Cotswold.

Q: Who is the person who has inspired you the most throughout your life and why?

KW: Bridget Bardot and my grandmother.

Q: Who is a showbiz personality you have worked with who have made you laugh the most?

KW: Adam Garcia.

Q: What are you up to next?

KW: My husband is a filmmaker so I often get to film dance routines for the camera and that's fun.

I will be on cooking at Saturday kitchen. I've also launched the #mumonamission workout programme with InstructorLive.com, the website that lets you stream all the workouts at a time and place that suits you best. It's the easiest and most convenient way to get fit and healthy.

I am also working on my Cookbook, a CBBC series called Taking the Next Step but my most important job at the moment is being a good mum to Willow.

Q: How would you like to be remembered?

KW: As someone that inspired people to become the best they possibly can be. I would like people to think that I have taught them that they have to give their best in everything they do."



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Spring Treats AT THE CINEMA

By Freda Cooper



1. Eddie The Eagle (PG). 2. The Jungle Book (PG). 3. Demolition (15). 4. Whiskey, Tango, Foxtrot (12A)

With the winter glut of new movies behind us, it would be natural to expect something of a lull over the spring. But not this year! The big studios have some lip-smacking treats on their menu – for families and adults as well.

London Mums' resident film critic, Freda Cooper, picks the best.

For The Family

As April gets underway, Easter's blockbusters – Disney's **Zootropolis** (PG) and **Batman v Superman: Dawn Of Justice** (12A) – will still be around. But they'll be joined by one of the feel good films of the year. **Eddie The Eagle** (PG) launches himself into cinemas on 1 April – I'm not joking! The story of one of our most famous sporting figures – and failures – it stars Taron Egerton as Eddie "The Eagle" Edwards. He was the ski-jumper at the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics who came last – and loved every moment of it. Hugh Jackman, Christopher Walken and Tim MacInnery co-star in the ultimate underdog story.

A fortnight later comes another offering from Disney, its new version of the classic **The Jungle Book** (PG), released on 15 April. Described as live action, it does indeed have a human boy at the centre of it. But all the animals have been created using motion capture visual effects (VFX) and the settings are computer generated VFX. Much closer to the original Kipling story than the 1967 animation, it's also full of famous voices, including Idris Elba, Ben Kingsley, Scarlett Johansson and Bill Murray as Baloo the bear. And, yes, he sings!

Superheroes are back during the following month when **X-Men:Apocalypse** (12A, tbc) arrives on 19 May. Most of the gang are here – Magneto (Michael Fassbender), Mystique (Jennifer Lawrence) and Xavier (James McAvoy) – to face a new enemy in the shape of Apocalypse (Oscar Isaac), who is both immortal and invincible. It promises to be an action-packed ride.

For The Grown-Ups

Prepare to be gripped by **Demolition** (15) when it arrives on 29 April. Director Jean-Marc Vallée has assembled a heavyweight cast – Jake Gyllenhaal, Naomi Watts, Chris Cooper – for this story of a man whose life falls apart. And then he literally breaks down as well. Powerful and with top-notch acting, it's unlikely to be an easy watch.

Tina Fey brings her sharp comedy style to the big screen earlier in the month in a film to test your phonetic alphabet. **Whiskey, Tango, Foxtrot** (12A) opens on 22 April. Fey plays journalist relating her experiences covering the news in Afghanistan and Pakistan, so expect something with a satirical slant. Billy Bob Thornton, Alfred Molina and Martin Freeman co-star.

Finally, Jodie Foster is back after directing stints on *House Of Cards* and *Orange Is The New Black*, and she's in the director's chair again for **Money Monster** (12A), released on 27 May. A tense thriller about a TV financial expert taken hostage on air by an investor who followed his advice, its star studded cast includes George Clooney, Julia Roberts, Dominic West and rising British actor Jack O'Connell.

Animation, superheroes, comedies, thrillers – the next few months at the cinema have got the lot!



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Film Focus



EXCLUSIVE: behind the scenes of **Zootropolis**, Disney's animal talking comedy adventure with film directors Byron Howard and Rich Moore.
By Monica Costa



I was recently star-struck when I met two of the most successful animation directors of this decade, Byron Howard (Tangled, Bolt) and Rich Moore (Wreck-It Ralph, The Simpsons), who came to London to promote their latest film Zootropolis, which is one of the best comedy adventures Disney has ever produced. In this exclusive interview they reveal lots of behind the scenes anecdotes.

The story is set in the unique modern mammal metropolis of Zootropolis. Comprised of habitat neighbourhoods like ritzy Sahara Square and frigid Tundratown, it's a melting pot where animals from every environment live together — a place where no matter what you are, from the biggest elephant to the smallest shrew, you can be anything. But when optimistic Officer Judy Hopps arrives, she discovers that being the first bunny on a police force of big, tough animals isn't so easy. Determined to prove herself, she jumps at the opportunity to crack a case, even if it means partnering with a fast-talking, scam-artist fox, Nick Wilde, to solve the mystery.

Q: The idea is very original. Who had the initial sparkle? How did it start?

Rich: It's Byron's idea but we all worked very hard on this film.

Byron: I pitched the idea to John Lasseter five years ago right after filming Tangled. I always loved

Disney's great animal films, such as Lion King and The Jungle Book. I grew up on Robin Hood. It's not the most popular Disney film but it made a huge impression on me as a kid. There's a lot of Robin Hood DNA in this movie. You really feel it. I told John Lasseter that we hadn't done a talking animal movie for a long time and it would be great to do one set in the contemporary world (with iPhones / iCarrot or the iPad / iPaw). I could tell from his facial expression that he loved it. John would be a very bad Poker player (giggles). He got really excited but he said that if we were going to do it, we had to do it very differently from other talking animal films. We needed to figure out how the city was going to work. Zootropolis is engineered to actually work with multiple skill doors that you see on the train, a huge air conditioning heating wall that would actually work if you had enough money and time to build it, the juice bar for giraffes, etc. There is layer upon layer of things that would actually work in the real world.

Rich: All details make the world feel authentic and well thought out like you're going to some place real. We wanted to make something that people haven't seen before.

Q: Tell us something about the research for the movie.

Byron: Our boss John Lasseter wants us to become experts in a specific field before starting any new Disney film. So we needed to figure out how animals behave and spent almost a year studying animals at Animal Kingdom at Walt Disney World. Once we had seen the animals in a man made facility, John wanted us to see them in the wild as well so he put us on a plane to Kenya (in Africa) to study animals on a Savannah. We spent two weeks among hordes of 70,000 world beasts. I saw one zebra before in my life and I sat there in Africa 10 meters away from hordes of 300 zebras and gazelles drinking peacefully from a watering hole next to lions. Nobody was eating anyone. Everyone was behaving well. That's a very interesting parallel to humans living in cities: different groups living in different ways but co-existing. That's when the various social layers of the movie started to develop.

Q: A technology called "keep alive" was created for Zootropolis so that the world always has some level of movement. How does that work?

Byron: We knew that we could create modern cities with various layers and we looked at the air constantly moving leaves and trees. That affects the fur on the animals. Nothing stays completely still in real life so we needed to recreate the constant motion to make the film very believable. Other movies look like frozen and uncomfortably still.

There are 50 different species in the film and every animal has a different fur groom and skin texture. It was important for us to make our characters look and feel believable, so we researched fur at a microscopic level. As a result, Nick the fox has 100,000 to 200,000 hair on his fur. Did you know that fox fur is dark at the root and it gets lighter as it goes to the tip? Or that a Polar bear's fur is not actually white but its individual strands of fur are clear and it's the light reflection that makes it look white?

Rich: Two years ago we couldn't do it. For example, we created a wind simulation that allowed us to have the individual leaves and branches move and that impacted the fur on our characters. We go more for the believability than realism.

Q: The humour in Zootropolis is not so childish but more juvenile and even for adults. Was it intentional?

Byron: It started that way. Because we were doing a movie about a contemporary world, a lot of the humour that we find as adults making the film comes from these parallels with our own society. The sloth thing is a good example: It's not necessarily something a kid would get because he probably hadn't been at the Department of Motor Vehicles but every adult on the planet apparently gets it. No matter what country you go to, the inefficiency of bureaucracy is universal. This is an example of something that a child can enjoy without getting the irony, but it's there more for adults.

Rich: Children can see that Judy is in a hurry and she is at the mercy of the sloth.

Byron: We experienced this at one of the first screenings in Belgium and saw a little boy having so much joy watching his dad laughing at the sloth scene.

Q: There are a lot of references to movies in Zootropolis. The Godfather and Breaking Bad are quite obvious. What are the other ones you referenced?

Rich: We love the buddy cop movies like Lethal Weapon, Billy Crystal / Gregory Hines' Running Scared, Midnight Run.

The Thin Man with the Nick and Nora characters who have chemistry together like Nick and Judy. It's not a romance film. It's an interesting genre where solving the crime makes the couple getting closer like in a romance.

Zootropolis would probably be the first detective story that a lot of children will ever see in their life so we owe it to them to give them a good one.

Byron: Even our composer Michael Giacchino grew up on these police serials from the Seventies with over-the-top soundtrack. There's a cue at the end of the movie called Hell Street Zoos over the credits when Nick and Judy chase after the sloth in the Ferrari. It's Michael doing his take on Seventies' police series such as The Street of San Francisco produced by Quinn Martin with distinctive themes and over-the-top drums.

ZOOTROPOLIS OPENS IN UK CINEMAS ON 25 MARCH 2016.



Visit our website londonmumsmagazine.com to read my full review of Zootropolis and find out why it gets full marks from London Mums, kids and even Dads. There are lots of funny clips and trailers from the movie you can watch.

Toy Trends 2016 – The Future of Play

Thousands of novelties in children's toys have been recently presented at Toy Fair 2016 in London. Editor Monica Costa highlights the hottest toys' trends for 2016.



LEGO DC Superheroes
Wonderwoman Key Light
www.recreationltd.co.uk



Star Wars POP Vinyl
£11
from Underground Toys

Movie merchandising

Movies are dominating the toy world market in 2016. New superhero films will be particularly popular with licensed products including Captain America – Civil War, Batman vs Superman, Ghostbusters and above all Star Wars. Everyone dreams of being a hero at some point in their lives. When children can see themselves as heroes, imagine the possibilities!

Products from the Star Wars franchise are in high demand. Disney Stores and toy shops across the globe are selling lots of buildable space ships and collectable figures featuring Princess Leia, Luke Skywalker, Chewbacca, Han Solo, R2-D2, Jabba the Hutt, Boba Fett, Darth Vader, Yoda, C-3PO and Stormtrooper as well as the new characters from The Force Awakens.



Available from Revell



Star Wars Episode VII figures
Available from the
Disney Store

3D puzzles

In 2016 puzzles make a come back with a twist. Puzzle fun is now in the third dimension and children can build 3D objects that can be used afterwards or keep as decorations. Most of my favourite 3D Puzzles are from Ravensburger because they are made with the Easy Click Technology that allows the plastic puzzle pieces to fit together precisely – no glue required. I particularly love Ravensburger Big Ben and Eiffel Tower in nocturnal lit versions.

3D Dinosaur puzzles by Jumbo also impressed me for their detailed features and robustness.



Disability in toys

It seems incredible that with over 150 million children with disabilities worldwide, representation of disabled people in toys is almost non-existent. No wonder a new Lego mini figure in wheelchair and a puzzle by Orchard Toys have caused such delight in the industry.

These toys encourage social interactions, teach children social & emotional intelligence skills, and provide ways to identify and name their emotions and interpret their feelings – all key steps to building empathy and self-esteem.



Space-themed toys

Big dreams often start in childhood, and can inspire people throughout their lives. Now, more toy and game companies are creating products that encourage children to explore their dreams, reach for their goals, role-play career choices, and provide ways that kids can actively make a positive impact on society.

The current British-led European Space Agency Mission has inspired several toy brands to create suitable products for girls and boys. My favourite space-themed toys include Stargazer Lottie Doll by Arklu and the Space Rocket with Launch Site by Playmobil, which are certain to inspire little astronauts to blast into space.



Playmobil Space Rocket with Launch Site
£44.99

www.playmobil.co.uk



Interactive toys

Once again LEGO has won Toy of the Show with the new interactive new line of Nexo Knights, an expansion on the ideas explored in the LEGO Ultra Agents range – which combines character based LEGO kits with a tie-in game that can be played on a Smartphone or tablet on Android or iOS. Nexo Knights was selected as this year's Editor's Choice by a panel of journalists from across broadcast, national, consumer and trade titles who were asked to name their top three products of London Toy Fair 2016 including myself. Hurrah!



TOYS WISH LIST

Here are some of the toys that will be on our kids' holiday wish list



Playmobil Porsche 911 Carrera S
RRP £29.99
www.playmobil.co.uk



Revell Junior Kit
From £12.99
Available from Amazon and all good toy stores.
For details visit www.revell.de/en

Speedy Scooter from Ozbozz
(H.Grossman)
RRP £24.99
www.ozbozz.com



i-loom from Wooky Entertainment
RRP £29.99
All major toy retailers from late Summer 2016
www.wookyentertainment.com



Star Wars Alien Blaster
RRP WAS £24.97 NOW £19
Available from Asda



Easter Fun Stuff for Kids

Keeping children entertained over Easter Holidays could be challenging without these products...



Little Chicken's Egg-cellent Adventure and Beyond Beyond are both out on DVD in March



Disney Zootropolis movie merchandising by TOMY
www.tomy.com

Go and see the hotly anticipated new comedy adventure Zootropolis over Easter but be prepared to spend on merchandising. One of my fave Zootropolis gadgets is Judy's Carrot Recorder and Zootropolis Police Department Badge. Mummy 'suspects' will need to be careful what they say... the carrot never forgets! This carrot may look like the bunny's lunchtime snack, but it's a convincing disguise. The carrot can record sound and play it back!



Shaun the Sheep:
The Farmer's Llamas DVD
RRP: £12.99
Available from Amazon

Venturer BravoWin 10KT
RRP: £149.99
Available from Amazon
www.amazon.co.uk

Affordable, easy to use and incredibly durable 2 in 1 Mini Windows Notebook, Venturer BravoWin 10KT is the perfect first laptop / tablet for students heading to secondary school, college, university or even home use. With its sleek, light weight design, and long battery life, the BravoWin 10KT is ideal for work or entertainment on the go with up to 8 hours usage whilst travelling. The 2MP dual cameras allow you to take photos or videos and Skype. It comes with all the key software from Office Mobile.



The Queen and Mr Brown: A Night in the Natural History Museum
RRP £12
www.nhmshop.co.uk

Star Chef Gennaro Contaldo

Reveals his top pasta tips, his favourite dishes and his unconditional love for Italy and London

By Editor Monica Costa

It was a pleasure to interview fellow Italian Chef Gennaro Contaldo who has become a popular TV personality in the UK. As part of his work with Italian olive oil company Bertolli, Gennaro is offering cooking tips to parents to make their lives easier.

Q: You have lived in London since 1969. What are the biggest changes in the food culture and restaurants in London in the past four decades?

GC: It has changed a lot and all for the better! London is now one of the foodie capitals of the world and rightly so – you can find any type of cuisine and there is so much choice. Italian food has come a long way from the days of spaghetti and scaloppine served on the same plate!! Good ingredients are easier to obtain these days and people travel more therefore have a better understanding and knowledge of what authentic Italian or other cuisines should be like.

Q: What are the top five most typical dishes / recipes from the Amalfi coast, your birth region?

GC: Good fresh fish dishes are popular like "antipasto di mare" (seafood salad), scialatielli con vongole (pasta with clams). Dishes with our famous Amalfi lemons are delicious like Mozzarella wrapped in lemon leaves. My home village or Minori is famous for Ndundari, gnocchi made with ricotta and served in tomato sauce. A simple Caprese Salad is also delicious with local tomatoes and buffalo mozzarella.



Q: I loved your programmes *Two greedy Italians* with Carluccio. But actually Italian cuisine is not about being greedy. It's more about enjoying every mouthful and tasting each ingredient in the dishes. How have the Brits changed their eating habits over the years with such strong gastronomical influence from Italy and generally Southern European cookery?

GC: The Mediterranean diet is known to be healthy as well as being simple to cook. Pasta is one such dish which is easy, versatile, nutritious and enjoyed by most. Add some grilled vegetables and lovely salads and the need for the traditional British meat & 2 veg is being slowly replaced for lighter, less complicated meals. Don't get me wrong though, I love a traditional English Roast with all the trimmings!

Q: You recently entered the Guinness book of record for making most ravioli in two minutes. What's the secret for making good ravioli and what is your favourite ravioli recipe?

GC: Getting the pasta really thin and this is where a pasta machine comes in handy. Use small pieces of dough to roll out and keep the remaining dough wrapped in cling film to avoid the dough from drying out. My favourite ravioli recipe is with ricotta, lemon and fresh mint – a recipe from my home village – and served with a simple sauce of melted Bertolli with Butter, a few mint leaves and grated parmesan. Delizioso! To learn more about my mid-week meal inspiration and top tips or to try the perfect pasta for yourself, visit www.bertolli.co.uk.

Q: You have a busy career now and are not just a chef but also a successful TV presenter, author and entrepreneur (restaurateur). What job do you enjoy the most and why?

GC: I love passing on my skills to the younger generation of chefs but I also like to learn from them.

Q: Is there a film featuring some delicious food that you particularly love? And Why?

GC: Big Night for good Italian food and temperament and my friend Stanley Tucci

Q: What is the food-related childhood memory that you will always treasure and why?

GC: The smell of freshly baked bread on the day my mum made bread. Its dreamy smell used to wake me up and I would be in

the kitchen in no time waiting for the first loaf to come out of the oven so I could enjoy it warm.

Q: Are your children as passionate about food as you are? Have they expressed an interest in becoming chefs following in your footsteps?

GC: They love making cakes and biscuits and Olivia often makes her own pasta which she loves! As for becoming chefs, I don't know, but who knows!

Q: If you could pick a favourite recipe from another region in Italy except for Campania which one would you choose and why?

GC: That's a difficult one! Because all of Italy has such delicious food and amazing regional recipes. It just depends where I am in Italy and what's on the menu that day.

Q: Olive oil versus butter debate. For decades there has been a controversy in Italy between Olive oil's benefits versus butter. It is renowned that people in Northern Italy / Europe tend to use butter and people in Southern Italy Olive oil. Could you tell us which recipe is best to enhance the flavour of extra Virgin olive oil and which dish makes better use of fresh butter?

GC: Good extra virgin olive oil is best when used to drizzle over vegetables and salads. Risotto is traditionally made with butter in Northern Italy, however, I have always combined both butter and eva and that's why Bertolli with Butter is ideal for this dish as it's a blend of olive oil and butter.

Q: Slow cooking food seems to be back on British menus but in Italy it has always been in vogue. What is your favourite slow cooked dish and why?

GC: Slow-cooked meat ragu' which is traditionally eaten for Sunday lunch in Southern Italy. You can use less noble cuts of meat and produce a meal fit for a king!

Q: What is your favourite restaurant in London and why?

GC: I love Jamie's Italian – although there are lots of them, each one is individual and does not feel like a chain. You can enjoy good-quality Italian food without paying a fortune!

Q: Where is your favourite restaurant in Italy?

GC: Giardiniello in my home village of Minori. They have been there since I was a young child, it is still family-run and just as good as it was all those years ago.

Q: What are you up to next?

GC: Working on my new book on Bread and Baking.



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There are yoga, Zumba and a variety of fitness classes for adults which mums can enjoy knowing that your children are being entertained and looked after by qualified babysitters. There are afternoon cooking lessons where children can join in and learn how to make homemade pasta and pizza which will be cooked in the outside bread oven.

All delicious, locally sourced food prepared by your chef and meals with wine are enjoyed under the pergola.

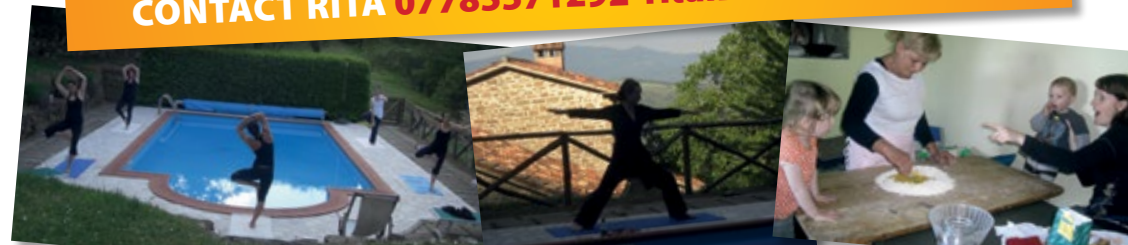
Accommodation is in a beautifully restored Tuscan farmhouse overlooking the Tiber valley and Lake Montedoglio. There is a fenced pool,

mountain bikes, high-chairs, cots, plenty of toys and baby equipment. Airport transfers (with car seats), excursion to the medieval town of Anghiari and a massage are included.

Holidays are suitable for babies aged 3 months to children up to 8. Children go free. Dads and grandparents very welcome too. Closest airport is Perugia (Ryan Air)



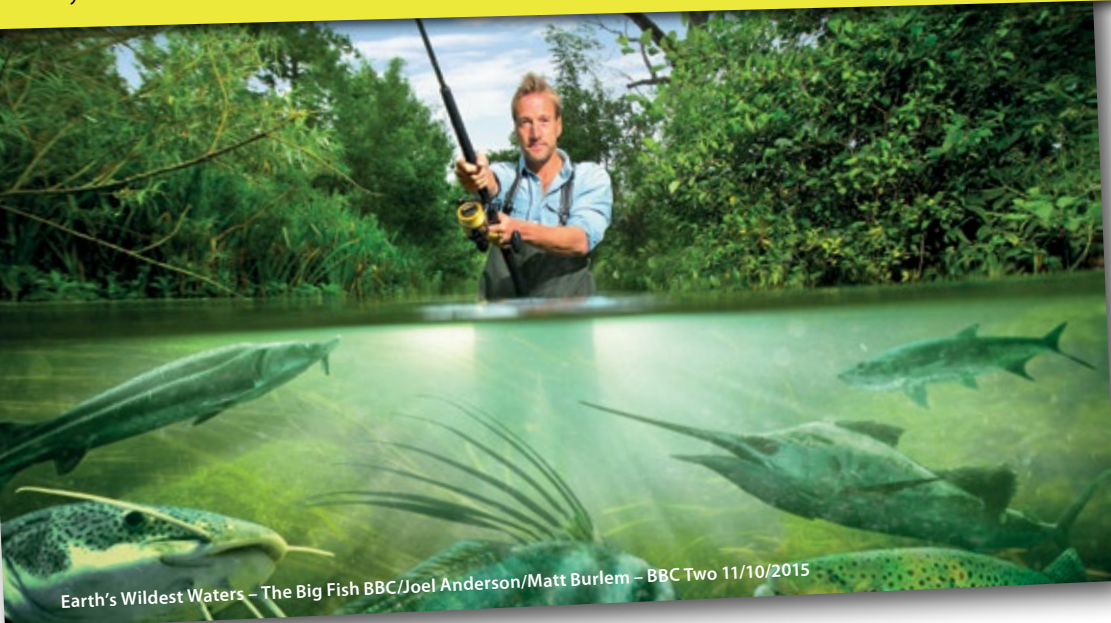
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LONDON DAD BEN FOGLE OPENS HIS HEART ON HIS LOVE FOR LABRADORS AND HIS CHILDREN

By Monica Costa

TV
STAR



Earth's Wildest Waters – The Big Fish BBC/Joel Anderson/Matt Burlem – BBC Two 11/10/2015

Q: Your new book *Labrador* is a social history of Labradors, and how they have become the world's most beloved dogs. You have probably shared lots adventures with your Lab. Could you tell us an exclusive anecdote or story about you two?

BF: Inca, my first Labrador went everywhere with me. She met Sophia Loren, flew in helicopters and appeared in Conde Nast fashion shoots. She was as happy in a TV studio as she was running in a field. She has a tree in her memory in Hyde Park. Each year I hang a bonio from its branches for her. She loved food as much as she loved me.

Q: You are passionate about Labradors. I believe you met Marina while walking your Labrador in Hyde Park... Why are Labs such good companions?

BF: They are loyal, biddable, kind, loving, happy, enthusiastic and trustworthy. All the traits you could want from a dog. As a parent they are also traits I want to instill on my kids. Labs are outgoing and friendly. How I would like my children to be.

Q: Apart from the Labrador, what is the best dog breed for a family?

BF: My father (Dr Fogle, the vet) recommends Staffordshire Bull Terriers. Golden Retrievers are good. Puggles, cockerpoos and labradoodles are some of the best new mixed breed dogs.

Q: Can dogs be therapeutic for difficult children and why?

BF: Of course. Dogs and children are made for each other. Dogs have great empathy. They can sense when a child is not happy. There have been plenty of trials with autistic children in which dogs have been therapeutic.

Q: What are your best tips to other dads to keep a good balance between work and family life?

BF: Enjoy family life. Embrace it. Don't wish it or waste it away. It's difficult to strike the balance

Q: What is your parenting style?

BF: Hands on. I love mucking in. Bath time. Dinner. Cycling. Walking. School runs. Homework. Wiping bottoms. I love it all.

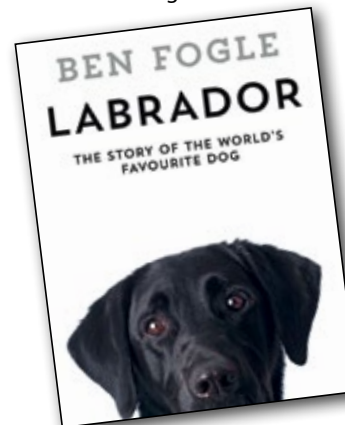
Q: What is the biggest challenge of being a parent?

BF: Leaving my family when I travel is hard. I miss them all terribly. Work takes me away for more than 6 months of each year. We have a way of coping. When I'm home I'm theirs.

Q: Are Labs or children more challenging when it comes to education and why?

BF: Labs can be a handful. Their insatiable appetite can get them into trouble. But you always forgive them. Labs are very eager to learn. They are relatively and comparatively easy to train. Offer them a slice of bread and they'll do anything. Handstands. Wash the car.

Kids become more wily. They can bargain and barter which dogs can't.



Q: You are an adventurer, presenter, writer. What is your favourite activity and why?

BF: Being a dad is my primary role. My children are the most precious things in my life.

Q: What's your earliest London memory (maybe back in your childhood)?

BF: I grew up in central London. I can remember walking our golden retrievers in Hyde Park and feeding the ducks in the serpentine.

Q: What's your favourite activity in London to do with your children?

BF: Walking the dogs. They usually cycle or scoot while I amble behind with our 15 yr old.

Q: What are you up to next?

BF: My new series *The Great migration* in which I followed the migration of the wildebeest across Africa is on in the new year.

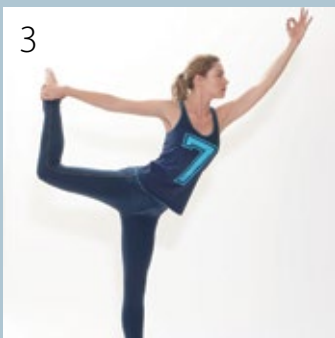
FASHION HOT LIST SS16

Brighten up your Spring Look with trendy fashion items and accessories handpicked by London Mums

2



3



4



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7



1 Waterproof Cityscape Blue Mac by Protected Species RRP £179.00

www.protected-species.com

London Mums love this Mac's silky feel on the skin. Its Fluid Intelligence fabric, used to create the waterproof and windproof features, is also completely breathable and incorporates four-way stretch for ultimate freedom of movement.

2 Smooth You T £52 and Flow With It Leggings £52 www.asquithlondon.com

London Mums love the softness of the bamboo fabric in the Smooth You T inspired by the Olympics in Rio that has back dart detailing and a wide waistband to wear at hip length. The orange colour is so joyful and springy.

3 & 4 Be Grace Batwing in Azure and Navy £52 with Yoga Denim £79 by Asquith www.asquithlondon.com

London Mums love the batwing sleeves T in super soft drapey bamboo fabric. It is an easy to wear piece and particularly great if you want to cover up your tummy. Yoga pants are the new jeans, so what could be better than combining them both!

5 'India' GEO Teething / Nursing necklace in Rose gold by Mama Jewels RRP £18.95 www.mamajewels.co.uk

6 Loved Up Folk Woven Short Sleeve Geo Print Pyjamas by Cyberjammies RRP £43.50 www.cyberjammies.co.uk

London Mums love the light and soft fabric of this classy PJ that makes you look elegant and feminine even at bedtime.

7 Made of Carpet ESCULAP Trellage Navy Handbag. Large Classic framed "Doctor" Gladstone bag As seen on TV - Ripper Street (Season 2, Episode 3 "Become Man") RRP £199.95 www.madeofcarpet.com

Pretty Things FOR KIDS

London Mums' handpicked Spring fashion items for little angels



Coral Tutu or Jade Green Tutu by Angel's face RRP From: £35.00

www.angels-face.co.uk

London Mums love Angel's face colourful tutus – our faves are Jade Green and Coral – are must-haves for girls who dream of pirouetting and twirling! Team a tutu with a matching or fru fru top for a classic party look or give it a funky edge with one of the script tees! Mixing and matching is fun too!



Pale Blue Stripe Dungarees RRP: £38.50 www.dottydungarees.com



Sand Blazer by Little Linens RRP £60.00

www.littlelinens.co.uk www.angels-face.co.uk

Dapper linen waistcoats and jackets for boys of all ages. You can create a casual outfit with a jacket and shirt, or dress it up with a slick waistcoat and bow tie. How will you look back on the tender moments of your sons captured in such smart clothes?



Splash About's Dinosaur Print Raincoat RRP £35 www.splashabout.com



Top/ Muscle in Panda £23 and Bottoms / Extra Skinny Mix Up in Star Wars £28 Tale of Boy www.taleofboy.com



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