

FREE

Issue 22 Winter 2017/2018



# London Mums



**Lisa Kudrow**



**Dennis Quaid**

**Star  
mum**

**Lauren Child:**  
**The new Children's**  
**Laureate talks**  
**motherhood,**  
**Charlie & Lola and**  
**doggies**

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# HOLLYWOOD

## Editor's letter



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**Dear London Mums**

Christmas is close and to put a smile on your face I have interviewed some of the loveliest people in the world: Charlie & Lola's author Lauren Child and Wimpy Kid's writer Jeff Kinney, as well as Hollywood legends Dennis Quaid and Lisa Kudrow.

In an exclusive chat Lauren Child told me all about her favourite doggies and her daily challenges parenting her adopted daughter Tuesday.

I talked about dogs also with Hollywood legend Dennis Quaid who took five minutes off his busy schedule to tell me a few behind-the-scenes gossips from his emotional movie *A Dog's Purpose*.

To keep up the good spirit I could not find a better person than comedian Lisa Kudrow, star in sitcom *Friends* and more recently *The Boss Baby*. She spoke about voicing the boss baby's mum in this hilarious animation.

And because it's good to laugh out loud, I met Wimpy Kid's author Jeff Kinney when he was in town to promote the funniest family film of the year, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Long Haul*. You can watch this interview on our YouTube channel [youtube.com/londonmums](https://www.youtube.com/londonmums)

In conversation with London Mum & star author Alice Tait, who designed our logo for the past three issues, she revealed how the British Capital inspires her stories and illustrations.

In the lead up to Christmas, I love staying indoor except for when I join my ladies' football team for training to prepare for our Sunday League matches. And believe me, if I can do it, every mum can too. Read a letter from the lady behind the best Ladies Football League in London, Jo Farmer, for true inspiration.

Last but not least, you can find out why I had the time of my life during my week in Tuscany last Summer in my special travel feature.

The London Mums' Christmas shopping pages are crammed full of all things trendy, playful and fun from toys to gadgets. For additional gift ideas check out London Mums' dedicated site [londonmumsmagazine.entstix.com](http://londonmumsmagazine.entstix.com) where you can get up to 60% off tickets for West End shows and lots of London attractions.

I hope you will enjoy reading this Winter issue as much as we have loved making it!

**Spread the word – joining London Mums is totally and utterly FREE!**

Monica Costa

*Monica*

Editor in chief, Founder of London Mums & mum of 11-year-old Diego  
Let me know what you think of this issue at [monica@londonmums.org.uk](mailto:monica@londonmums.org.uk)  
or via Twitter at [@londonmums](https://twitter.com/londonmums)

# THE BIG INTERVIEW



**LAUREN CHILD**

## Editorial

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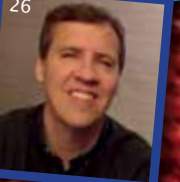
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# WHO IS THE REAL LAUREN CHILD?

The new Children's Laureate talks motherhood, Charlie & Lola and doggies

By Monica Costa

**Over the past 10 years I have interviewed hundreds of writers and film stars, but yet I still could not pin down one of my favourite artists. It was worth the wait as not only I have managed to have a long face-to-face chat with new Children's Laureate Lauren Child, but that happened at her home studio. I felt honoured to be invited to her North London house that is currently being completely refurbished.**

I really loved interviewing Lauren. She is genuine and truly inspirational. Lauren is a busy mumpreneur but took the time to talk to me a lot about everything including her latest Charlie & Lola book, *A DOG with NICE ears*.

Charlie and Lola books are hugely-loved by children, parents and grandparents the world over. This new Charlie and Lola picture book features dogs of all shapes and sizes, but while Charlie and Lola mull over, dream and imagine various options, it becomes clear that the qualities of Lola's ideal pooch seem oddly like those of a...rabbit!

*A Dog With Nice Ears* follows on from the huge worldwide sales (more than 3 million copies worldwide in 19 languages) and success of Lauren Child's original Charlie and Lola picture books. The first book, *I Will Not Ever Never Eat a Tomato* was published in 2000, and was listed as one of the top 10 Kate Greenaway Medal winners of all time.

She might have won numerous awards but she has remained grounded and lovely. Enjoy this heart-warming interview and discover who the real Lauren Child is.

**Q:** *A DOG with NICE ears* is a lovely book about every child's dream of having a dog. I still remember when I was asking a dog to my parents... And now it's my son's turn. Is this somehow autobiographical?

**LC:** I do remember wanting a dog, in fact I think it was the cat even more. But my father was allergic to animals. So we had guinea pigs, a rabbit and hamsters. My father loves animals but

he can't touch them without having a reaction. He actually loves dogs and my sister has a dog. It has changed her life. There was a time when, with her previous boyfriend, we used to go to pet shops and look at cats. 'Should we get one? Maybe we can get one.' And then we named a cat and we thought what cat we wanted but we always chickened out because we both travelled quite a lot and we felt we could not have one. Years later I thought now I draw a lot, I could have a dog now but there was always an excuse. It is such a commitment because if I travel...

I now have a daughter and she talks about wanting a dog all the time. It's become this thing between us where we both desperately want a dog. We have even figured out exactly what type of dog breed we want. I have done all the research so I know what's the best kind of dog for me. We have named the dog. We talk about the walks we go on but we still haven't got one. She keeps asking me all the time.

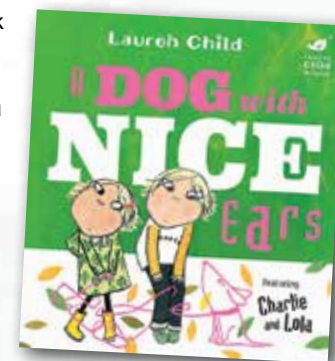
A year and half ago we borrowed a dog which was up for sale for a day and we fell in love with it but then we made our move to get it, it was already gone to another owner.

We have decided that the perfect dog for me would be a whippet because they sleep a lot, and are happy to just be with you. I draw and write a lot so I need a quite dog versus an action dog. Whippets are dogs of artists as they are happy for you to just be there.

Also my daughter doesn't like sleeping on her own and the whippet folds up quite small and could sleep on her bed.

**Q:** What's your experience with pets?

**LC:** I had lots of pets, two cats, hamsters, stick insects, tortoise, rabbits but I think a dog would be the perfect pet now because you get a lot back from. I would rather have someone who is pleased to see me. ▶





**Q: Is the publishing world tougher now than when you started? If yes, why? And how do you keep innovating?**

**LC:** I think it comes natural. I have a low boredom threshold. I was working hard as writer and associate producer on three 26-episode series of Charlie and Lola. If I had been really sensible I would have done a lot more Charlie & Lola on TV. But that was the last thing I wanted to do at the time. I needed a break as they were taking over my world. I felt claustrophobic. Now that I de-touched myself from Charlie & Lola I feel I can get back to them.

After Charlie & Lola I wrote *Ruby Redfort* (a spoof series on detective novels about a 13-year-old detective for pre-teenagers). She came out of my love for thrillers and films. I watch a lot of Hitchcock films, which is really what Ruby is based on. So I guess I am trying to write Hitchcock for kids. It took me 7 years to do.

I am now working on something which is very illustrated with lots of black and white drawings. I would love to talk about it but the publisher hasn't announced it yet.

It's a young picture novel with lots of images. I had so much fun working on it. I am now starting another project with different things. Watch this space!

**Q: You are very passionate about promoting reading for pleasure. How would you encourage this?**

**LC:** I remember Jaqueline Wilson talking a lot about reading out loud with children. It is one very small thing that most people can do. It only takes 10 minutes. If you can read aloud to your child, that's such a brilliant thing. Reading aloud with your child at any age is a wonderful way of connecting because you see what excites them and interests them, and it's also a way of understanding what's going inside their head. And it's letting them know by example that books are a good thing, creating a habit of reading and a special bond. It's also a lovely way of winding down at the end of a day for both parent and child.

If you hear an adult reading, it becomes part of your life. Even listening to audiobooks is a great habit. My father carried on reading with myself and my sister even when we were grown up. There's something really lovely about being read to you.

**Q: My 11 year old son Diego is a big fan of your books and TV series and would like to know what would be the first thing you would do if you were the British Queen...**

**LC:** If I could wave a wand, I would make people collect litter. It sounds trivial but it would make a massive difference. I remember walking in

Prague and appreciating the beauty, how clean the city was and how beautiful the landmarks were so tidy. Instead of focusing on little bit of trash you can focus on the big things. A kind act. Now I do try to collect trash to contribute towards it.

**Q: What is the book mentioned the most by kids who write to you?**

**LC:** It's two books. Firstly the *Ruby Redfort* series – I love getting lots of really interesting letters from children about Ruby. And secondly *Clarice Bean*. The *Clarice Bean* series is aimed at children who have just started to read books by themselves: they are about family and school, and friends, and social issues and ethical dilemmas, but they are funny too, and pleasingly odd. Clarice has three siblings, including an irritating little brother called Minal Cricket. She can't spell, she makes up words, and worries about infinity and spiders.

There's something about *Clarice Bean* as a character that is of interest to pre-teens. *Clarice Bean* books are about issues that all children relate to.

She represents a real child, whether you are boy or girl. Readers put themselves in Clarice's shoes. And think about their own lives.

**Q: Why did you want to become a children's author?**

**LC:** I didn't want to become a children's author. I did not know what I wanted to be. I loved illustrating but never thought I wanted to be an illustrator. It was not so simple to work as an illustrator so I started to write my own stories.

**Q: Where did you get the inspiration for your books particularly Charlie & Lola?**

**LC:** The inspiration comes mainly from my memories of growing up with my sister in the Seventies. I started thinking of the time we used to spend with other children. Then I started thinking of conversations children have. They talk to each other a lot but then as adults we forget how to do things so simply. Sometimes children can solve things so easily and in a very direct way. They can be sparking off with anger but then they are getting on again.

**Q: Five years ago, you adopted a two-year-old girl, Tuesday, after travelling to Mongolia as a Unesco "artist for peace". How has her arrival changed your life and your writing?**

**LC:** I always wanted to adopt but thought I'd have a biological child as well. It just didn't happen like that. I've always been very interested in the way that children see things, and I love Tuesday's perspective. But people are always asking me if I test my books out on children, and the point is that every child is different. We need to look on children's books as a gateway to learning, and to happiness as well.

I don't think it has changed my writing very much. She is another inspiration, possibly not more than any other child or person who is inspiring. She is part of my world of influence. I now often see other people through her eyes. And that is really interesting because she sees things in books that I did not see before. Tuesday is drawn to things in books or television programmes which are not necessarily what I expect. She loves anything with families in it. She likes things with babies in it. This is fascinating. Books that she likes have almost no words in it but lots of illustrations like *Earnest and Celestine* about losing a favourite toy. It is very moving particularly for a child who has experienced loss. ▶







by Christo Nicolle

**Q:** In a future story, will you introduce a character based on Tuesday? Why did you choose this name for her?

**LC:** I have been thinking about a whole new character for another book. When she was 4 she had this fascinating imaginary world.

**Q:** What is your parenting style?

**LC:** I feel guilty like many parents and find it hard to understand things I had not experienced before. It was such a massive shock to have a toddler straight in. I feel a deep regret that I have missed these years with her and I had to really work hard not to spend time regretting. We have lots of catch up to do now. I am learning how to get to know her every day, how she can

be stubborn and how much time she wants to spend time outdoor together. It is a big learning experience for me.

**Q:** When you received your MBE for services to literature in 2010 what did the Queen say to you?

**LC:** *(She giggles)* I was so nervous on that day. I had so many things to rehearse before meeting the Queen, remember precisely what to do and when to do the curtsy. Then eventually I did it all wrong. Now I cannot even remember what she said to me.

**A Dog With Nice Ears is published by Hachette Children's Group in Hardback (£12.99).**



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# LONDON MUM & STAR AUTHOR ALICE TAIT REVEALS HOW THE BRITISH CAPITAL INSPIRES HER WORK

By Monica Costa

**Q: Where does the inspiration for your work come from?**

**AT:** I've kept social media at arm's length for years, but since joining Instagram I'm hooked. After having my little boy, I've been working from home so that I can be a bit more flexible with my hours, but I truly miss being part of a creative workplace. Scrolling through Instagram feels a bit like being back in a buzzing, creative studio with everyone sharing their work and ideas, and the odd joke over a cup of coffee.

**Q: What inspired your London pop-up book, No, Nancy, No?**

**AT:** London was my first love – my Dad used to take us on car rides to Piccadilly Circus and I'll never forget the awe and excitement of those adventures out city with him. It's been a lot of fun to capture on paper that feeling of joy, vivacity and discovery that London can bring to a child – and even an adult! Also, my little sister Nancy was quite cheeky and I could not resist bringing her in on the act!

**Q: What advice would you give to anyone wanting to become an illustrator and a writer?**

**AT:** For every job I've had, there are ten rejection emails. I'd say that you have to develop a rhino-thick skin to survive in this industry, and the resilience to keep putting your work in front of the right people. I'm absolutely blessed to have a steady stream of work right now: in the last year I've worked for Walker Books, Penguin Books and Waitrose, and have an own branded product range, 'Alice Tait London', that sells in John Lewis. But to get to this level has taken a crazy amount of hours of work and sacrifices.

**Q: How tough is it to enter the crowded children's publishing world?**

**AT:** Children's publishing is famously tough to break into, so I'd really recommend getting an agent if you are serious about becoming a children's writer. My wonderful agent, Stuart Cooper at Metrostar, approached me to ask if I'd considered writing a children's book, and then once I'd produced a concept book for him, he

personally secured me a contract with Walker Books, who were my number one choice to work with. I could not dream of having got in without him.

**Q: You are a born-and-bred Londoner. What is your favourite part of the Capital? And your favourite attraction?**

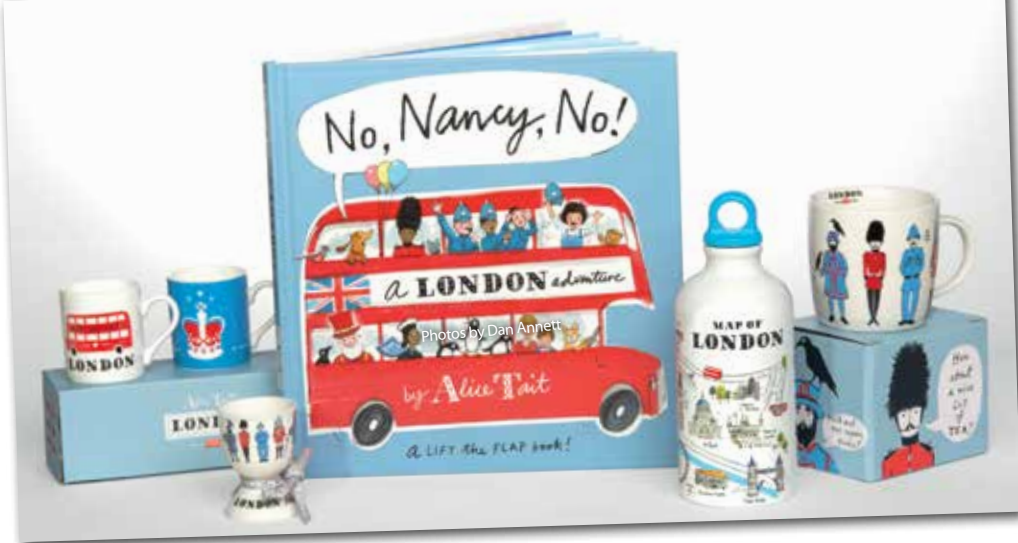
**AT:** It's the street names that mean the most to me: growing up on Clancarty Road in Fulham, my best-ever job working for Hamleys on Regent Street, meeting my husband near Portobello Road and being proposed to in Hyde Park. If I had a favourite attraction it would have to be standing on the mighty Tower Bridge, looking down the Thames with the whole of old and new London laid out before you.

**Q: If you were Mayor of London for the day what would you do first?**

**AT:** Imagine if you had a day where instead of taking photos on phones everyone had to do drawings if they wanted to capture buildings, people, funny moments! You see things in a whole new light when you have to draw them, so it would help people see London in a different way. And lots of people would come away with some inspired little sketches, too...

**Q: What are you up to next?**

**AT:** I am just about to add some exciting new lines to my 'Alice Tait London' range – I am most excited to be designing artwork for a sweet new umbrella!





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## Five Minute Chat with Hollywood star Dennis Quaid on *A Dog's Purpose*



**Dennis Quaid talks to London Mums magazine about his role in the emotional movie *A Dog's Purpose*, now available on DVD, Blu-Ray and Digital Download, courtesy of Entertainment One**

**Q:** What initially attracted you to getting involved in *A Dog's Purpose*?

**Dennis:** My agent contacted me about the film. I'd never read the book, but four sentences in and I started to well up. I told him I was going to do the movie. I read the script and it really makes you well up with emotion, but it also makes you laugh. It's like watching those dog videos on YouTube sometimes. These dogs are pretty funny.

**Q:** When you watch films that you star in the back, are you able to get emotionally caught up?

**Dennis:** I'm kind of immune to seeing myself on screen, but I get caught up in the story, especially this one. This story always gets me. It's even getting me right now just talking about it. I'm only in the last third of film, so I really get a chance to enjoy the film. I've always loved dogs. This story always reminds me of the classic boy and dog relationship between Ethan and Bailey. My dog, Gertrude, was my closest friend for a couple of years.

**Q:** How did you go about making a bond with the dog?

**Dennis:** Yeah, I spent time with him. Just like any other relationship. You don't just walk into it. Then of course you keep some bacon in your pocket.

**Q:** Do you have a sure hand with directors you've worked with?

**Dennis:** With Lasse Hallstrom you never know what you're going to get when you go to the set. He's very improvisational. He creates a situation around you and then he wants you to find your way through it. It's wonderful working with him.

**Q:** What do you think is a dog's purpose?

**Dennis:** Like in the film, a dog's purpose is to lick you as much as they can. It's actually about unconditional love. That's what dogs provide. Dogs open us up to love. They take care of us, and we take care of them.





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# LADIES FOOTBALL IN LONDON

By Jo Farmer



**LONDON MUMS MAGAZINE'S EDITOR MONICA COSTA, ONE OF OUR MOST PASSIONATE FOOTBALL TEAM MEMBERS, ASKED ME TO WRITE ABOUT HOW I STARTED THE LADIES FOOTBALL LEAGUE FOR MUMS IN LONDON.**

I set up a Ladies primary school football team in September 2014. I was asked to get a team together as we wanted to show the children, especially the girls, that us mums can play too! I created a Mums League later that same year and managed to get a number of local schools on board. We are entering our fourth season and it is great to see the improvement in the level of football being played and the passion that the ladies show towards wanting to improve and be better. We have also seen a marked increase in the number of girls playing football at our own Primary School, East Sheen Primary, where our Head of Sports, Scott Hunter is passionate about girl's football.

I have always been passionate about sport, not only for its physical benefits but for everything else it embodies; team work, commitment, determination, and fun. Most of the ladies in the league are over 35 and were not given the opportunity to play football in their childhood so for many it was about learning a new skill, getting fit/ter and playing in a social environment with likeminded people.

The league is very much about inclusivity, all ability levels are welcome and beginners join in with more experienced players. We try to ensure that the ethos of the league is maintained always, that we are a league created for all. We play once a month, 7 aside,

and have also been working with Surrey and Sussex FA who have linked us in to similar teams across the region and we have a number of Tournaments throughout the year aimed at women who play 'recreational' football.

We have approximately 60 ladies playing football in the league and we are always looking for new teams to join. We received funding from the FA in our first season and last season we were awarded a grant from 'Aviva's Community Fund' that we have put towards match fees and running a Tournament in December. It is important that we continue to promote ourselves and get local support as it all really helps.

My aim is to continue to develop the league, ensuring that I find football matches for any lady who wants to play. In my squad I have 18 committed ladies who turn up and train each week and I am determined to ensure that I keep their new found commitment to football going!

**If anyone would like more information about our League or the Tournaments set up for this 2017/18 season.**

Please do not hesitate to contact myself, Jo Farmer  
[joannafarmer@hotmail.com](mailto:joannafarmer@hotmail.com) or our website  
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To enter the competition enter via the London Mums website. Terms & conditions apply, please see details online at [www.londonmumsmagazine.com](http://www.londonmumsmagazine.com)



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# CHATTING WITH LISA KUDROW ABOUT HER ROLE IN THE BOSS BABY

By Monica Costa

**I am so honoured about this chat with Lisa Kudrow, star in sitcom *Friends* and more recently DreamWorks Animation's *The Boss Baby*, now available on Blu-ray and DVD from Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment. She is talking voicing the boss baby's mum in this movie.**



**Q: What parts of this movie resonate with you?**

**LK:** Well, yes I'm a mom and I have a son who didn't want any siblings at all. I've also met moms with similar kids who wanted to get the babies out of the house, so, it's completely universal. Every mom is going to relate to this.

**Q: How would you describe the tone of the movie?**

**LK:** This movie is funny and yet heartfelt, exactly that. I got choked up at the end.

**Q: Did you have any sibling rivalries growing up?**

**LK:** Well, I don't have the same story as Tim and *The Boss Baby*, because I grew up in reality. But aside from that, I'm the youngest of three by a lot of years, so they already had to deal with a lot of each other by the time I came along.

**Q: What about this movie is relatable to everyone?**

**LK:** Well, everyone who's experienced a baby at all, will relate to the panic when a baby cries and trying to make it stop and I'm not sure whether it's because, oh the poor baby, or my poor ears and I can't handle it.

**Q: How does this movie separate itself from other animated features?**

**LK:** Well this movie has a such a great story and it's also such a fantastic metaphor for what happens when a new baby comes into the world. I like it, I think it's crafted really well.

**Q: On Tim's relationship with his parents before *The Boss Baby*.**

**LK:** Well before *The Boss Baby* shows up in a cab, in a suit, with a briefcase. Tim had his parents all to himself and he'd get songs and five stories and a big long ritual for goodnight, but when *The Boss Baby* comes, they just don't have time for him. Not because they don't want to have time for him, they really just don't.



**Q: On the relationship between *The Boss Baby* and Tim.**

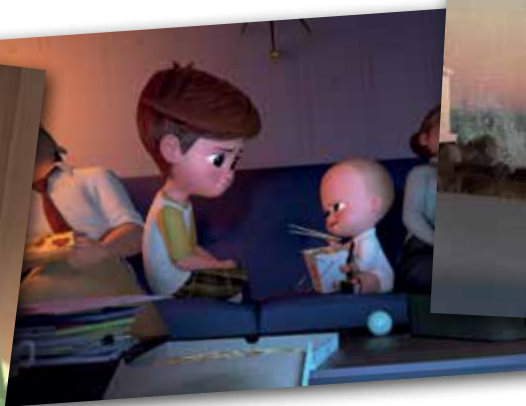
**LK:** Let's see, the relationship between *The Boss Baby* and Tim, it starts off, it's bad, it's really bad because *The Boss Baby*, it seems like he's trying to get rid of Tim, definitely trying to intimidate Tim and letting him know there's a finite amount of love in the world and I'm cuter than you are. Then it evolves into something very nice.

**Q: On the plot of the movie.**

**LK:** Well there's the metaphor part. Ok, so the story of this film is *The Boss Baby* shows up and it seems he has work to do, he's there on behalf of Baby Co. and Baby Co. is in competition with Puppy Co. meaning puppies are in competition with babies for the finite amount of love that exists in a family. So, puppies are in danger of taking all of the love away from babies.

**Q: On Boss Baby.**

**LK:** Boss Baby is voiced by Alec Baldwin, he's *The Boss Baby*.





# MY WEEK AT VILLA RADICATA IN TUSCANY

By Monica Costa



**Only one word springs to mind to describe my week at Villa Radicata in Tuscany. Heaven! On my way back to London, I reflected on how to keep the good mantra and the calmness acquired during my heavenly break.**

The stressful London lifestyle can sometime take you away from the simplest things in life and make you unhappy. But a holiday like that helps rebalance your mind and body. You are probably wondering what was so special about my week. It's simple: great healthy food made with organic produce sourced from the local area (never further than 10 Km), the most caring host – Rita Kobrak, the company of lovely London Mums, relaxing daily Indian yoga sessions on top of a hill with the stunning Tuscan scenery in front of us, catching fireflies in at night and karaoke at a pizza party. Add to this the entertaining company of other Italian guests, Vinfrido the pizza maker, Paolo the driver, Fernanda the cookery lesson's teacher, Laura the singing chef, Renate the yoga instructor, Maria the beautician and Francesca the household helper and you have the perfect holiday.

Italians are very generous and caring people and with her mum and baby breaks, Rita has certainly managed to showcase Italian hospitality and warmth. All mums who return from those Tuscan breaks feel refreshed and feel that they have learnt how to live and breathe the authentic Italian way of life, the so-called Dolce Vita.

The yoga sessions outdoor (near the swimming pool) also contributed to calm the mind, because the yoga teacher taught us how to feel in tune with nature through our breathing not just stretching. Once back in London I bought a Tibetan bowl similar to the one Renate used to remind me of my lovely Tuscan break. And finally while Rita took care of the children, Maria gave mums a relaxing one hour massage, pure bliss! I have heard that for 2018 breaks, older children will be treated to painting and sculpture lessons by professional Tuscan artist for mums and children.

Watch all my vlogs on the London Mums YouTube channel – travel and cookery sections – to get a real feel for the atmosphere at Villa Radicata and if you want to go, be quick in booking as Rita's breaks always sell out quickly. I am not surprised people come back every year as I know I'll do the same!

As well as yoga/cooking and fitness breaks next year Rita has an art/painting/sculpture week for older children (and Mums!) plus a life coaching and yoga week.



## Info on travelling to Villa Radicata

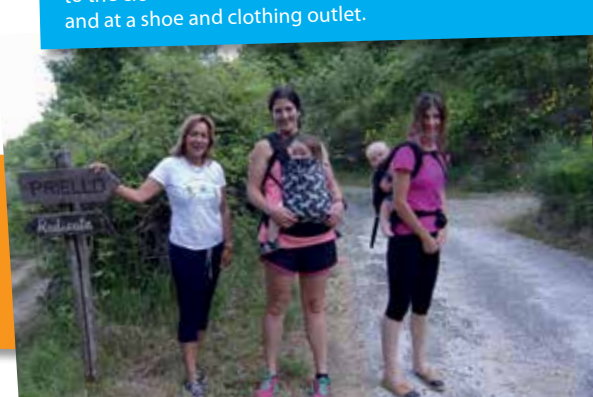
Flight with Ryanair to Perugia (Italy).  
A shuttle bus is organised by Rita for her guests.  
The ride from the airport to the Villa is about 1 hour drive.  
Rita provides all car seats for the babies and young children.

## The cookery classes

Fernanda and Rita showed us how to make fresh pasta as well as an easy tiramisu'. Then Chef Laura came along and prepared the most amazing pizza (whose dough was made with mother yeast) using the wooden oven outdoor. The pizza was so delicious, incredibly light and crispy that we had two each including a dessert pizza with just fresh figs melted on top. This is the best pizza I have ever eaten in my lifetime.

## The sightseeing: Anghiari

Villa Radicata is on top of a hill near the medieval village of Anghiari, famous for the battle between the French and the Tuscans that Leonardo Da Vinci tried to paint but without success. During our visit to Anghiari we walked on the cobblestones up to the clock tower and we did some shopping at the local market and at a shoe and clothing outlet.



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# London Mums meet Diary of a Wimpy Kid's author Jeff Kinney

**Jeff Kinney's superfan Diego from the London Mums' kids club recently met his favourite author in London. Jeff was in town to promote the film Diary of a Wimpy Kid – The Long Haul, one of the funniest family movies of 2017 based on his book of the same name. Here is what he had to say about the inspiration behind The Long Haul because he is very much involved in the movie business too.**

**Q: You said that your family inspired The Long Haul. Do you see yourself as Greg?**

**JK:** I do see myself as Greg. I was very flawed as a kid, I had lots of imperfections. I made lots of mistakes and I still do as an adult. I can definitely see myself in Greg Heffley.

**Q: I would like to know an exclusive anecdote from one of your family adventures that you haven't written about yet.**

**JK:** One time we were driving on a long roadtrip and I had my older son in the car – I am sure he will be thrilled to hear this story. His diaper got loose and he had a huge mess all over him. We had to stop at a MacDonalds and clean it up. It was really gross but I haven't told anyone.

**Q: A big part of the plot is the 'diaper hands' incident and how it affects Greg. Have you got any tips for kids on the challenges social media poses?**

**JK:** I think as a parent this is really the challenge of our times – to figure out how much is too much and when to get involved. Kids need to navigate this landscape. They need to navigate these challenges we never really had. I don't know if I have any great advice, honestly! I think it's a difficult road to walk.

**Q: How was it going back to working on a film version of your books as it's been five years since Dog Days?**

**JK:** It's been fun. It's a great challenge to restart the franchise and of course we had to recast all of the roles because the kids [actors] in the first

three films have grown up and now they're in college, so there was no question that we'd have to recast roles. But of course that's a challenge as well because you want to make sure that you get it right and that you're not being derivative of the first films, that you're not trying to cast lookalike actors. So I thought it was good. I think the casting is the best part of the Wimpy Kid movies. That's what's so great about the Wimpy Kid books – the characters in the books are cartoon characters. So with cartoon characters, we don't want them to grow or change. But of course in real life human beings grow up fast, especially at that age – that 'tween' age! So hopefully we will be recasting new Gregs and Rodricks for many years to come!

**Q: What's your routine when you write?**

**JK:** Right now, I'm in a joke writing phase, which is really very difficult for me and no routine really seems to work. So I'll try to spark and get my brain working the right way, by doing something really unpredictable. Like last year I went to Reykjavik in Iceland, at the very last second. I was driving to the airport, not knowing where I was going to go and I went to Iceland. And I got my best writing done there. So this year, tomorrow in fact, I'm heading home but I don't know where I'm going from there. In fact, I might not even [go home]. I keep hearing about Majorca... so maybe that's where I'll go? I don't know a thing about it. It might be just what the doctor ordered! I have to do something strange to get my brain going!

**Q: The tagline is a Wimp Will Rise! I have just started high school – have you got any advice for kids that may find themselves suddenly being a small fish in a big pond?**

**JK:** My advice is to find your people. To gravitate to the people that are like you or share an interest with you. And try out different types of friendships – you won't really know until you try. It's like going to college and taking lots of different classes. The longer I live, the more I realise how vital friendships are. And you can create life-long friendships in high-school. So I hope you are successful in doing that!

**Q: What do you hope old and new fans get from the film?**

**JK:** I hope kids will get a laugh out of the film. They're anachronistic in a way, they're old fashioned! We've got human beings playing these roles whereas in most family comedies, they're actually computer generated. So it's actually odd to have real people or real actors playing these types of roles. I hope kids can see themselves in the characters. I hope that the film gives them things to talk about with their parents.

**Q: On which book is your next film going to be based and why?**

**JK:** If we get to make another movie it is going to be either a Christmas movie or it will be based The getaway, my next book which is a very cinematic story.

**Q: Could you tell me anything exclusive about your next book?**

**JK:** There is going to be a giant spider that is in Greg's hotel. It is frightening. It will be great fun to write about.

You can watch this interview on the London Mums' YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/londonmums](http://www.youtube.com/londonmums)

**DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL IS AVAILABLE ON DIGITAL DOWNLOAD NOW AND BLU-RAY™ & DVD ON 23RD OCTOBER, FROM TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX HOME ENTERTAINMENT.**







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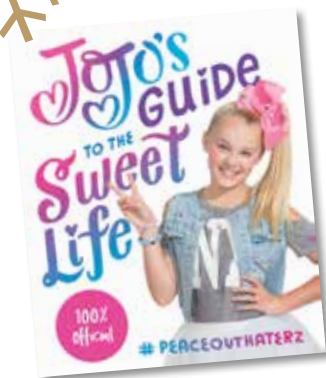
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# London Mums CHRISTMAS Gift Guide



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