

# If you only do eight things this month...

Lovely ideas, dates for the diary and new shiny things to get your social life buzzing and heart aflutter

## BUY

### NEW KICKS

Lovers of iconic footwear rejoice. Or cheer even if you just love shoe shopping. The signature Stan Smith leather tennis shoe is back, with something of a makeover to the 1970s style. Great with skinny jeans and a Breton top or going full on 80s with an adidas tracksuit, they're a classic.

From Dhs225, available from adidas stores. middle-east.adidas.com



## SOLVE

### A MYSTERY

Whodunnit? It's your mission to find out at a one-off dinner at Certo. Director Roger Talty and his team will weave a story of murder and mafia (perfect for an Italian restaurant) around your three-course dinner, and they need your help to find a killer. There are prizes to be won, too.

April 25, Certo, Radisson Blu Media City, Media City, Dubai, Dhs250 for dinner and welcome drink. Tel: (04) 3669111. radissonblu.com



## BOOK

### TICKETS TO SEE MUSICAL LEGENDS

We're spoilt for choice here on the concert front, with the kings and queens of the radio waves making regular trips to the UAE. But what if your tastes are more Jazz FM than Virgin? The announcement of two-day mini-festival Blended is music to our ears (pun fully intended), with a line-up including Elvis Costello, Diana Krall and Joss Stone, plus 'picnic' style tickets for maximum lounging. This one is sure to be sold out.

May 1 and 2, Dubai Media City Amphitheatre, Media City, Dubai, from Dhs350. blended.ae



## FIND

### CLEVER PRODUCTS FOR PARENTING

Irish company Clevamama (clevamama.com) has arrived in the UAE, with a range of innovative products designed by mums, for mums. From essentials for baby proofing to timesaving devices like an instant formula mixer, you might just find something that makes you wonder how you ever lived without it. And forget those adorable dungarees, if your pal has a newborn, these are gifts she'll really thank you for.

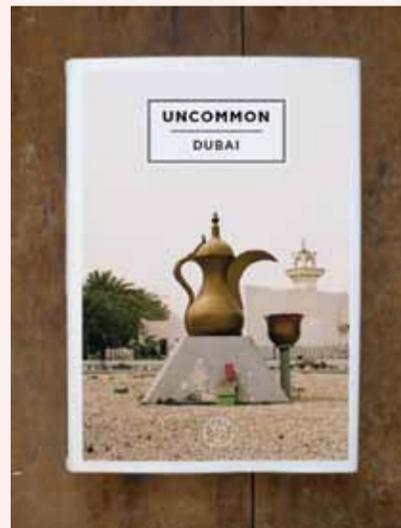
Available from Toys R Us and mumzworld.com.

## TRY

### AN ANTI-OFFICE YOGA CLASS

Whether you spend all day aldesko or lifting heavy items (eg toddlers), chances are those shoulders are suffering. While any yoga class can help, targeting troublesome areas with Sri Sri Office Yoga is a much better use of your precious time. Suitable for all levels, the sessions include a sequence of postures to tackle tension and stiffness in your neck, shoulder and back muscles. There are even lunchtime sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Ashram Yoga, 1504, Jumeirah Bay X3, JLT, Dubai, Dhs60 per class. Tel: (04) 3609028. yogaashram.com



## READ

### ABOUT AN ALTERNATIVE SIDE TO DUBAI

Step away from the guidebook – there is so much more to Dubai than you'll find there. Brand new book *Uncommon Dubai* is written by 30 contributors, who each take the reader on their own little tour, from strolling around DIFC with a poet to uncovering the best Filipino cover bands, via haggling for carpets and swimming in wadis. Great for long-time UAE residents in need of shaking up their routine (and view on the city), or visitors wanting insider info, this tome is a little slice of authenticity and cool.

uncommonguidebooks.com/dubai

## ADD

### A STATEMENT CHAIR

When living in a transient region it can be tough to justify buying gorgeous furniture – will you leave it here, sell it cheap or ship it back? It's a no-brainer when you see the furniture by Adore Indoors – ship it! There's a range of rocking chairs, French-style linen and oak pieces, quirky upholstery and screens, plus cool statement chairs like this one (Dhs2,500), cushions and chalkboards, all for sale at their boutique inside Objects & Elements.

Adore Indoors, Objects & Elements, opposite Al Serkal Avenue, Al Quoz, Dubai. Tel: (04) 43236182. adoreindoors.com



## VISIT

### THE MARKET OF EVERYTHING

This eclectic market is back, with The Archive in Safa Park playing host to a range of vendors buying, selling, lending, swapping and donating everything from vinyl to vintage jewellery in the sunshine. For a lovely afternoon of meeting people and small businesses that are doing something that little bit different, while enjoying live music and a barbecue, this is a must-visit.

April 5, The Archive, Safa Park, Dubai. facebook.com/TheArchiveDubai

## What a good idea

A trio of oh-so brilliant brainwaves to make your life a little bit better



### THE EASY KID'S PARTY

Cast your mind back to your childhood days and you'll remember just how important birthday parties were when it came to impressing your chums. That being said, a well organised birthday party can be time consuming, which is why busy UAE mums and dads will appreciate Sweet Life, a party planning company that will take care of every little detail from the colour of the balloons to the perfect cake and a wow-worthy candy buffet. Sweet Life have loads of ideas for party themes and will come armed with everything you could possibly need, together with a cheery team that will set up and clear up, leaving parents to enjoy the day as much as their little ones. [sweetlifeparties.com](http://sweetlifeparties.com)



### FOLDABLE FLIP-FLOPS

Closed toes + fresh polish = smudge city. Foldable flip-flops might save your sanity – keep them in your desk drawer or glove compartment and you'll never have to cancel that much-needed pedi appointment. Or have to wear those weird foam things to drive home in. Check out Butterfly Twists (from Dhs65), for sale at select outlets of Shoe Studio and K Corner. [butterflytwists.com](http://butterflytwists.com)



### GROW PLANTS THE SMART WAY

We're all guilty of enthusiastically buying or planting, only to neglect our new leafy friends. It might be time to throw some NASA at your gardening gripes, with a new technology inspired by the space superstars. Click & Grow uses 'smart soil' and sensors to automatically water your seeds – all you need to do is add batteries, fill the water tank, pop it in some light and watch them bloom. Foolproof. Dhs300, available from [clickandgrow.com](http://clickandgrow.com)

# New to town

Three lip-smacking places to try this month



## CAFÉ BELGE

To us, the sign of a great UAE restaurant is the feeling that it has always been there – the décor looks established (rather than a few weeks old), staff know the menu inside out, and dishes have been refined. Of course, a beer sommelier doesn't hurt. Café Belge ticks all these boxes and more, serving up sophisticated Belgian cuisine – don't miss the seafood platter and mussels with champagne cream – in art deco surrounds. With soaring ceilings, Gatsby-esque gold accents and cosy booths, it harks back to Grand Cafes of the 1920s – quite the feat in 2014 Dubai. Of course, it is in the Ritz-Carlton, so we wouldn't expect anything less. And yes, waffles are on the menu. And Belgian frites with mayonnaise. Panic not.

Ritz-Carlton DIFC, DIFC, Dubai. Tel: (04) 3722323. ritzcarlton.com



## THE COUNTER

Yes, apparently celebs DO eat junk food. The LA outpost of this 'custom built burger joint' boasts regulars including Leo Di Caprio and Hilary Swank (presumably not in her *Million Dollar Baby* training days), and the Dubai branch has just landed at The Beach, serving up naturally raised, hormone and antibiotic-free beef. The concept allows you to build the burger of your dreams, choosing a pattie (beef, chicken, turkey or veg), a cheese, sauce, topping, bun – or in LA-style have it on a salad instead – then a side. There are literally thousands of potential combos. Maybe this place is Sharon Stone's anti-ageing secret? Well, that's our justification and we're sticking to it.

The Beach, JBR, Dubai Marina, Dubai.  
thecounterburger.com



## SOCIAL BY HEINZ BECK

Just when you thought celebrity chefs had forgotten about the UAE, a delicious glut of restaurants arrive with big names above the door (and Jason Atherton hasn't even opened his yet). Heinz Beck's, at the new Waldorf Astoria, is the very definition of modern fine dining; an elegant space, chefs expertly dancing around each other in the kitchen, shielded by sliding glass doors, and a precise menu of fine fare. The 3-star Michelin chef is known for his contemporary take on Italian and European gastronomies, and his Dubai restaurant offers up robust flavours, from bites of beef with coffee sauce, to a spectacular dessert of raspberries done ten ways. Guaranteed to impress that out of town boss, or a dedicated food fan.

Waldorf Astoria Dubai Palm Jumeirah, The Palm Jumeirah, East Crescent, Dubai. Tel: (04) 8182222.waldorfastoria3.hilton.com

# The good life

## HELP INK

You buy a cool print, and a charity benefits. Nice. Help Ink is working with some of seriously talented artists to create limited edition prints, T-shirts and notecards, with \$1 of every \$5 spent donated to a charity of your choosing, from Books For Africa to tree planting. Based out of California, you'll have to pay postage, but from around Dhs110 including shipping for a lovely bit of wall candy, plus some very good karma, this is a beautiful bargain. [helpink.org](http://helpink.org)



## SOCIETY 6

We love a good tote bag, for everything from groceries to beach gear, but some can be less than inspiring. Society 6 is well known for its vast range of prints, but there are hundred of hand-sewn bags on the site too, scrawled with cheeky messages, cool graphics and, umm, lots of otters. They cost Dhs80 plus postage, but there are often deals on free worldwide shipping. We say buy in bulk and you'll have birthday presents sorted all year long. [society6.com](http://society6.com)



# Click it, buy it, do it, live it

What's happening on the www?

## App of the month

### HEADSPACE

A useful intro to meditation, no-nonsense app Headspace offers 10 days of free 10-minute guided sessions for you to try. Aimed squarely at those who have never given it a go before, the cool animations and sweet graphics make it all feel very accessible, and if you get hooked there's the option to upgrade to annual membership. Wildly popular in the UK, the British guys behind on-the-go meditations don't take themselves too seriously, and understand how difficult it can be to get rid of the dreaded 'monkey mind'. [getsomeheadspace.com](http://getsomeheadspace.com)

## Reader recommended FOR THE MAN I LOVE

Reader Claire Townsend says, "From the end of April our online store for buying presents for those men in your life will be live! We've searched far and wide and found amazing handmade items and small companies producing the unusual and speciality items, rather than socks, aftershave and gadgets. Expect beautiful leather wallets, unusual items for their man cave, grooming products, clothing and so much more, from vendors from all over the world." [forthemanilove.com](http://forthemanilove.com)



## PRESENT INDICATIVE

Describing itself as 'the intelligent gifts company' this website is the go-to store for all things geeky, from vases shaped like measuring beakers to cufflinks made from tiny energy saving light bulbs. How did we live without a soft toy of Einstein for so long? [presentindicative.com](http://presentindicative.com)

## LACE IN THE DESERT

UAE-based wedding website, Lace In The Desert, is packed full of inspiration for brides to be, featuring regional suppliers, photos of real weddings and great advice, but its latest addition is a truly wonderful idea. If you want to sell your wedding dress (or have an unworn dress you bought but never took down the aisle), just upload information and images, then the website will put you in touch with interested buyers. Of course, you can also pick up a bargain if you're in the market to buy. Lace In The Desert doesn't charge a fee or get involved in the sale, simply offering a platform to help you buy or sell a wedding or bridesmaid dress. [laceinthedesert.com](http://laceinthedesert.com)

## ZAHR ART

UAE website Zahr Art is a great stop-off for accessories and homewares from both regional and international designers, with an emphasis on social conscience. Many of the pieces are influenced by the Middle East, making for stunning design motifs (and a great souvenir from your time here). Delivery is free for orders over Dhs150, and they also accept cash on delivery. [zahrart.coma](http://zahrart.coma)



## Blogger of the month

### HOUSE OF HAWKES

A haven for lovers of beautiful homes and gorgeous graphic design, House of Hawkes is the brainchild of Dubai design lover Kathryn Hawkes, where she posts photos of her own work, DIY projects and inspirational homes from around the world, as well as interviews with creatives she admires. She says, "I'm a wife, mom of two smalls, freelance designer, marketing specialist, incessant organiser and incurable decorator. I love a good DIY/makeover project and the challenge of making a room look fabulous without having to spend a small fortune – a handy skill I've acquired after many years of living in rented accommodation. Friends and family frequently ask for my help and advice with décor so I finally decided to start a blog where I can share ideas, resources and inspiration. I also showcase some of my design work and share some free printables. House of Hawkes is essentially a creative space for sharing my love of design and décor." [houseofhawkes.net](http://houseofhawkes.net)

DO SOME GOOD

# Feed a child by photographing your food



We love a great idea and particularly one for a good cause, which is why we were thrilled to hear about the Media One hotel's latest initiative to turn Dubai foodies into philanthropists. The hotel is the first venue in the UAE to partner with the app Feedie to encourage diners to snap pictures of their meals and then share for absolutely no extra cost to the meal.

Then comes the clever bit. For every meal picture shared, Media One will contribute to The Lunchbox fund, which will then feed starving and vulnerable schoolchildren in Africa. So while you are enjoying a meal at one of the outlets at the hotel, a child will also enjoy the satisfaction of a full stomach.

General manager Mark Lee speculates that he sees hundreds of social media photos of food and now they can be put to good use without the customer spending any extra money, just their time to share a photo. Social media with a heart? What's not to like.

To get involved and download the app simply click on to [WeTheFeedies.com](http://WeTheFeedies.com)





## Home-grown hero

Stuart Rees Jones, founder of Camps International, is urging you to break out of your comfort zone and experience the trip of a lifetime, while helping the communities who live in poverty-stricken areas

### **Tell us about Camps International**

We're a social enterprise that balances profits with philanthropy, operating permanent network of international volunteer camps with rural communities and wildlife conservation areas through in Latin America, East Africa and South East Asia. Our camps are located where poverty levels are high and there are significant environmental and wildlife conservation challenges. Most camps are established on community land and we employ local people to build, staff and supply our operation. We run a wide range of sustainable volunteer projects and adventure activities for young people from around the globe.

### **You have a military background.**

#### **What prompted you to leave?**

I spent almost 8 years as a British Army Officer and loved every minute, but I always wanted to build my own business. After a tour in Bosnia I decided to make the leap and spent the next 3 years leading expeditions to Tanzania and Kilimanjaro. I felt frustrated that I was unable to make a significant and lasting impact on the host environments and felt a permanent camp could be a solution.

#### **How does your work help?**

Our camps create a source of local industry and act as the accommodation hub from which we deliver on our

project pledges. We have over 100 projects, varying from constructing classrooms and supplying drinking water to wildlife conservation and micro finance initiatives. We guarantee that 100 percent of donations are spent on projects; there are no hand-outs and everything is done in partnership with local people.

### **Why launch in the Middle East?**

With the exception of families and gap year students, we deal exclusively with schools, providing expeditions to develop their life skills by providing a challenging and inspiring learning environment. We have had over 1,500 young people travel on our trips in the past 18 months, so there is clearly a mind-set amongst people here that they want to engage in responsible travel.

### **What is your favourite destination?**

It's a tough call and I travel to each camp throughout the year. We have over 170 locally employed people, and I'm not sure I can choose one without getting served the 'eyeball soup' next time I visit. Let's just say that Africa is very close to my heart as it's where I started the business, met my wife and spent early years with my two daughters, surrounded by wildlife.

### **How can the public get involved?**

We are dealing with many of the international schools in the region and our first port of call is with teachers who are interested in running a trip with us. School leavers can book through the website and come for 1 to 3 months on a gap year, and we have a Family Volunteering Programme called 'Life' that fills by word of mouth year on year.

### **What has been your proudest moment so far?**

Easy. The post-election problems in Kenya in 2008 left us without clients for 6 months. We managed to keep the projects and the business going but at the end of the year I was forced to make 35 good people redundant. We got through it with integrity, won a Responsible Travel Award and managed to quickly re-employ the guys we lost. The business started to thrive after that. [campsinternational.ae](http://campsinternational.ae)