

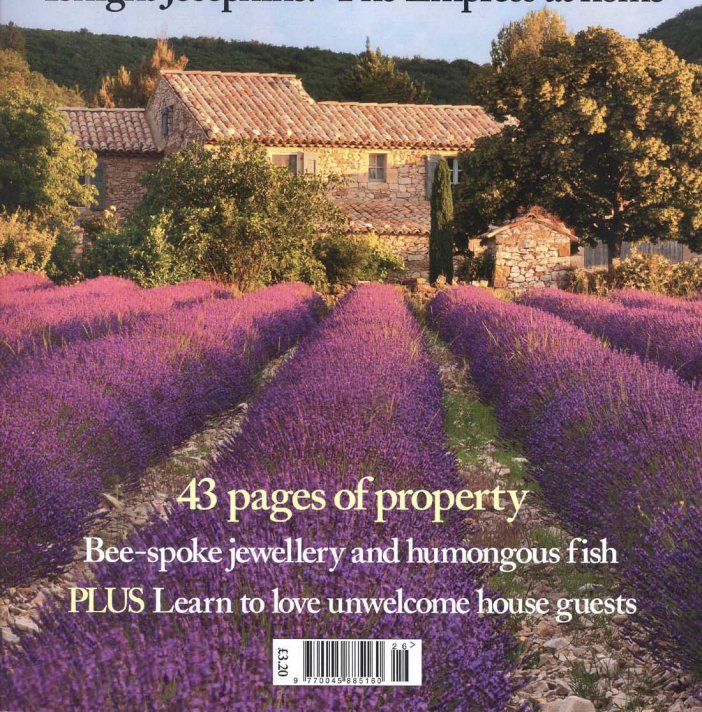
COUNTRY LIFE[®]

JUNE 24, 2015

EVERY WEEK

France: living the dream

Tonight Joséphine? The Empress at home



43 pages of property

Bee-spoke jewellery and humongous fish

PLUS Learn to love unwelcome house guests



Unmissable events

Exhibition

Until August 15
'Artists & Music',
 Bohun Gallery, 15,
 Reading Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.
 An exhibition of paintings and sculpture exploring the influence of music on leading artists of the 20th century (01491 576226; www.bohungallery.co.uk)

Until July 10

Hubert de Watrigant,
 The Osborne Studio Gallery, 2, Mitcomb Street, London SW11. Displaying works from this renowned racing and sporting artist (right, 020-7235 9667; www.osg.uk.com)

Open artist studios

Every weekend in July, North Wessex Downs. Open Studios returns, offering the public the opportunity to meet professional artists and visit their studios, workshops and galleries (www.marlboroughopenstudios.co.uk)

Creative writing July 4 Open Ground writers' workshop, All-y-Bela, Usk, Wales. Have you ever tried to capture the essence

of a beautiful place in writing? Bestselling author (and *COUNTRY LIFE* writer) Helena Attlee, author of *The Land Where Lemons Grow*, hosts a creative day in the inspiring landscape of garden designer Arne Maynard's home (contactpenguinroad@gmail.com; 01544 260592; 07722 170782)

Flower show

June 30–July 5
RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show, East Molesey, Surrey. Marking 25 years of the event this year, the annual flower show celebrates the best in gardening, including the beautiful Hampton Court rose displays. Open from 10am (0844 338 0338; www.rhs.org.uk)

Shooting

June 27
National Ladies' Shooting Day, The Shotgun & Chelsea Gun Club. Shooting grounds aim to raise the profile of the sport with full tuition, 30 cartridges and clays, ear and eye protection and insurance provided to each attendee. £35 per person and all levels of ability welcome (01989 769971; http://shotgunandchelseagunclub.co.uk)



Recital

June 30 A gala organ recital, Christ Church Spitalfields, London E1. Celebrating the recent restoration of the historic 1735 Richard Bridge organ, renowned organist and Director of Music

at Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, New York, John Scott, will give a recital for the benefit of the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields. 7pm (020-7247 4270; www.christchurchspitalfields.org)

ngs gardens open for charity

Ilmington Gardens, Ilmington, Warwickshire CV36 4LA

June 27–28, 2pm–6pm. Combined £6 (10 gardens), children free. Celebrate midsummer in a quintessentially English village filled with a mouth-watering array of gardens large and small, from the expansive Ilmington Manor to the tiny (and memorably named) Grump Cottage. The setting is picturesque and there is nothing more enjoyable than wandering from one garden to the next, stopping for lunch at the pub or homemade tea in the village hall (www.ngs.org.uk)



What to drink this week



When it comes to 'flinty minerality', background takes a backseat, says Harry Eyres

One of my favourite London wine merchants recently kicked off its summer tasting (after a palate-cleansing flight of Blanc de Blancs Champagne) with an intriguing category: 'flinty minerality for summer heat'. I found this interesting for various reasons: there was no mention of grape varieties or of countries. Here was a category that cut across both those usual dividers.

Why you should be drinking them 'Flinty' and 'minerally' are two terms that mean something quite precise to professional tasters, but might well baffle intelligent, scientifically minded outsiders. How do you know whether something tastes flinty? How often do you chew hunks of flint? These are fair questions, but the fact is that, with a good Macon, Chablis, Pouilly-Fumé or Sancerre, the grape variety is more like the prism through which you taste the terror than vice versa.

What to drink

Txakoli from the Spanish Basque country used to be more of a curiosity than a contender—painfully thin and tart—but the Txakoli Aguirrebekoa 2014 from Bodega Berroja (£11.95; www.leeandsandeman.co.uk) has ripe-apple fruit to go with the bracing flinty purity. I never thought I'd find a Muscadet with mineral intensity, but those are the words I used for La Noë Sur Lie Côtés de Grand Lieu Domaine de l'Aujardière (right, £11.95; www.leeandsandeman.co.uk). Chablis is the minerally white *par excellence*, Chablis Premier Cru Mont de Millieu Sainte Céline 2012 (£19; www.sainsburys.co.uk) is lemony and buttery on the nose and the firm, clear palate suggests pebbles seen through a cool stream.



THERE are those who claim that welsh cakes are a South Wales invention, but this could be down to the fact that there are various different names for the same thing—*pace ar y maen* in the south, *cacen gri* in the north—they are essentially a pan-Welsh delicacy with regional variations.

Not quite a scone and not quite a pancake, the welsh cake is about the size of a chubby cookie and is made from a simple dough, fat rubbed into flour, bound with eggs and scattered with plump currants. Like a pancake, it's cooked on a griddle.

Welsh cakes were once a popular addition

Buns (and cakes) of Britain

Welsh cake

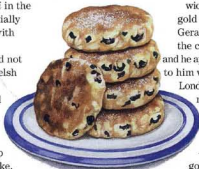


Illustration by Fiona Osbalstone

to miners' lunchboxes: their high fat and sugar content would have made them a great energy booster to help sustain the men throughout gruelling 12-hour shifts. Even today, the cake's fuelling benefits are widely recognised: the Olympic gold medal-winning cyclist Geraint Thomas's penchant for the currant treat is well known and he apparently has supplies sent to him wherever he races. After London 2012, where the Welshman was crowned Olympic champion, a Newport pastry chef even baked him a giant Welsh cake—complete with an edible gold medal—to honour his success. *Ellie Hughes*