

JAN 2022

ScandAsia



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Nordic Missions condemn Myanmar army massacres

Joint Danish-Finnish Christmas Service in Bangkok



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“A Minimally Invasive Procedure To Treat Aortic Valve Stenosis: Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI).”

Warning signs and symptoms of heart disease

Signs and symptoms that might indicate the abnormalities of heart valve including valve regurgitation and valve stenosis are:

- Fatigue, especially during times of increased activity
- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Chest pain (angina) or chest tightness with frequency at least 2-3 times per week.

Treatment degenerative aortic valve disease

Degenerative aortic valve disease cannot be treated with oral medications since cause of this valve condition is derived from valve stenosis (narrowed valve). The ultimate treatment goal is to replace a narrowed aortic valve that fails to open properly. Open-heart surgery, which involves a cut (incision) in the chest, is conventional technique to replace old heart valve with artificial valves, either tissue (biological) valve or mechanical valve. Both types of artificial valves possess their pros and cons. Modern mechanical valves can last extremely long but lifelong treatment with anticoagulants is required, whereas tissue valve does not require the administration of anticoagulants but lifespan is fairly short, compared to the mechanical ones. In the past, to treat aortic valve disease regardless of types of artificial valves, open surgery was essentially needed. Due to the advancements in surgical technology, minimally invasive procedure to treat aortic valve disease without open-heart surgery has emerged. This procedure may be an effective option if the patients are considered to have intermediate or high risk of complications from surgical aortic valve replacement. Conditions that may increase the risk of surgical aortic valve replacement include being the elderly with advanced age and having some underlying diseases such as lung disease or kidney disease.

TAVI: Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation

In 1985, Professor Alain Cribier, the Interventional Cardiologist at the Charles Nicolle University Hospital in Rouen, France, performed the first transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) procedure in the world. He used a PVT percutaneous heart valve without open-heart surgery. TAVI is suitable for patients with aortic valve disease such as aortic valve stenosis. Since it is a minimally invasive procedure, in comparison to open-heart surgery, the advantages of TAVI involve smaller incisions, less blood loss, reduced risk of anesthetic-related side effects, no need the connection of patient with a heart-lung bypass machine during performing surgery, a shorter hospital stay and quicker recovery time which normally requires 2-3 days for hospitalization while it takes up to 7-10 days with open-heart surgery.



How to perform TAVI

This minimally invasive technique is usually performed through a small cut in the groin and occasionally through a small cut in the side or front of the chest. Tissue (biological) valve is attached to expandable balloon which is further inserted into a 8-10 mm catheter (a thin and flexible tube). Guided by a catheter, this inflatable balloon is first inserted into aorta through a small cut in the groin. With navigation system, after reaching the location of left ventricle and aortic valve, the artificial valve is then placed in position. The inflatable balloon is used to deploy and lock the valve in place. The catheter is further removed and the new valve works in place of the original valve. By performing this procedure, patients have small incisions in the groins, left chest or upper part of right chest, depending on the location of balloon and valve replacement. Currently, TAVI is predominantly considered as an effective treatment option for patients with aortic valve stenosis, not only limited to patients with moderate and high risks.

The most common sites for arterial access are the groin of the leg, shoulder, arm and wrist. The majority of cases has been performed through femoral artery in the groin due to its larger diameter, thus a catheter can be inserted quite easily. However, there are some limitations for artery access through the groin such as circulatory problems in which narrowed arteries reduce blood flow to the legs. In such a case, other sites to reach artery is considerably preferred. Time consumption for TAVI is approximately 2 hours.

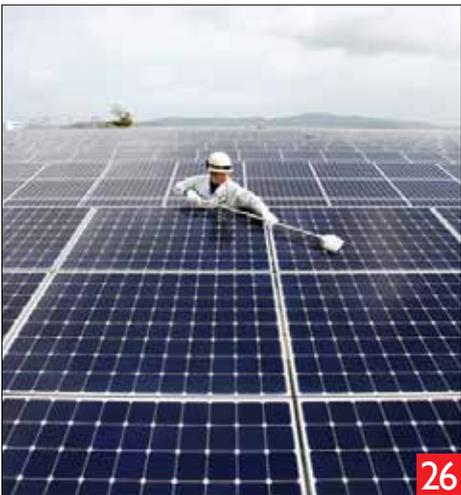
Special precautions for TAVI include patients with bacterial infections, patients with acute myocardial infarction, cardiac embolism or blood clot, irregular heartbeat such as tachycardia (rapid heart beat), patients who just recovered from stroke with the administration of anticoagulants and patients with coronary artery disease. After TAVI procedure, patients might need a 3-month anticoagulant therapy. Heavy exercise and physical activities that need extreme exertion must be avoided. Full recovery period normally takes only up to 3 months with an ability to return to daily activities with improved quality of life.

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A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

"The interactions I had with the various teachers and coaches at Bangkok Patana gave me a good foundation on how I approach learning. I benefitted the most from the various activities I could participate in, which translated to 'real world' skills."

Kyle Harrison, Grad '13, Aerodynamicist



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More hospital beds, please

Two years into the pandemic, new restrictions are now being implemented around the world to “flatten the curve to fit the capacity of our health care system”. This is so yesterday.

Yesterdays restrictions were only successful in destroying the livelihood of millions of people. A return to those measures will be more devastating than what we have seen so far. People are running out of savings faster than our governments can build up higher national debts.

It is about time our governments start expanding the dimension of our healthcare system to fit our demand. We lost a lot of time. Let us re-focus our energy on balancing the capacity of our intensive care units to fit the higher level of demand which it is clear to all that we will face for a number of years.

Reject the restrictions. We need more hospital beds. Adjust to reality.

Happy New Year!



Gregers Moller
Editor in Chief

ScandAsia

ScandAsia is a printed magazine and online media covering the people and businesses of Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland living and working in China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

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Former Norwegian Minister of Justice and Public Security Knut Storberget will be leading the new defense commission – Photo: KAI RUNE KVITSTEIN / NRK

New Norwegian defense commission prepares for Chinese cyber-attacks

Norway has established a new defense commission which job will be to assess the contemporary national threat situation. One of the main threats that the commission will try to work out a strategy against is the cyber-attack threat from, especially China and Russia, NRK writes.

The commission's leader will be the former Norwegian Minister of Justice and Public Security Knut Storberget.

"We see that the current threat situation is very comprehensive, complex and for many also very complicated," Knut Storberget tells NRK.

Storberget explains that the new forms of threats call for new methods and warns about measur-

ing the success of the commission's work merely based on the amount of money which have been allocated for it. The defense commission will assess which possibilities and priorities in security and defense policy that Norway will do best in focusing on to secure safety for Norway in the coming 10-20 years.

Besides the conventional security threats, one of the new concerns will be cyber-attacks. Especially China and Russia are seen as risks in this respect. "Several states, but especially Russia and China, are using several instruments against Norway and Norwegian interests in ways that directly or indirectly challenge our national security interests," the mandate for the commission reads.

The former Norwegian Min-

ister of Foreign Affairs, Ine Eriksen Søreide, this summer informed about a successful cyberattack on the Stortingets mail system. An attack which was orchestrated from China.

The Norwegian Minister of Defense, Odd Roger Enoksen, also stresses the severe risk concerning cyber-attacks with regards to the Chinese hacking episode.

"We see how the superpowers' power play and new technology makes it possible to attack a modern society in a way that can shut down its infrastructure and economy and, in many ways, cause devastating effects," Odd Roger Enoksen says.

Nordic missions sign joint statement condemning Myanmar army massacres



Smoke and flames billow from vehicles in Hpruso in Myanmar's Kayah state [Karen Nationalities Defence Force via AP]

The Nordic countries of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland are amongst several countries condemning Myanmar Armed Forces latest attacks on civilians in Myanmar's Karen State and other states in the country.

"We reiterate our condemnation of the serious human rights violations committed by the military regime across the country," the statement says. It was released on Christmas Eve of 24 December 2021.

"The recent attacks on civilians in Karen State, including the shelling of villages, are a violation of International Humanitarian Law and must stop. The attacks have resulted in thousands of people being displaced, who are now in need of urgent humanitarian assistance."

"We call on the regime to immediately cease its indiscriminate attacks in Karen State and throughout the country and to ensure the safety of all civilians in line with international law."

"We echo the UN Security Council's Press Statement from 10 November, calling for full, safe and unhindered humanitarian access to all people in need, and for the full protection, safety and security of humanitarian and medical personnel."

Apart from the Nordic countries, the statement is signed also by the Ambassadors, Chargés d'Affaires, and Heads of Mission from Australia, Canada, the Delegation of the EU and European Union, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, New Zealand, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military overthrew the elected government of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi nearly 11 months ago, claiming fraud in an election her party won. More than 1,300 people have been killed in a crackdown by security forces, according to a local monitoring group.

"People's Defence Forces" (PDF) have sprung up across the

country to fight the military, and have drawn the government troops into a bloody stalemate of clashes and reprisals. Many horrifying tales of massacres have been recorded, the latest on the same day as the joint statement was released.

A member of a local PDF in Mo So told AFP news agency that its fighters found the vehicles on Saturday morning after hearing the military had stopped several vehicles in Hpruso after clashes with its fighters nearby on Friday 24 December.

"When we went to check in the area this morning, we found dead bodies burnt in two trucks. We found 27 dead bodies," he told the AFP news agency on condition of anonymity.

"We found 27 skulls," said another witness who did not want to be named. "But there were other dead bodies on the truck, which had been burned to pieces so we couldn't count them."

Save the Children later said in a statement two of its Myanmar staff had been "caught up" in the incident and were missing, feared dead.

Myanmar's military admitted its troops had been attacked in Hpruso after its troops attempted to stop seven cars driving in a "suspicious way".

Troops had killed a number of people in the following clash, spokesman Zaw Min Tun told AFP, without giving details.

The Myanmar Witness monitor said it had confirmed local media reports and witness accounts from local fighters "that 35 people including children and women were burnt and killed by the military on 24th December Hpruso township".



Christa Lund Herum and Jyrki Markkanen during a prayer.

Christmas service at Christ Church in Bangkok

The Christmas service at the Christ Church of Bangkok was, for the first time, only a Danish and Finnish sermon. The service was led by the pastor at the Danish church in Thailand, Christa Lund Herum, and the Finnish pastor at The Finnish Seamen's Mission Jyrki Markkanen. The service was orchestrated so that the pastors in shifts would read from the bible in English, Danish and Finnish. The psalms were in addition song in English and in a Finish/Danish hybrid. A format that worked quite well.

The sermon, which naturally was about the birth of baby Jesus, were put in perspective with women's rights worldwide as well as the Covid-crisis influence on our social life.

After the service the congregation were invited for "Gløgg" and "æbleskiver" sponsored by the



Scandinavian Society Siam. This was a very nice and cozy opportunity for old and new members of the Scandinavian society in Thailand to meet and wish each other a merry Christmas.

The blod and body of Christ was replaced with gløgg and æbleskiver.

Swedish Christmas at Karlsson's



*Irene and Hasse Franzén, Kent and Eva Tell and almost 200 other Swedes had Christmas dinner at Karlsson's restaurant in Patong, Phuket.
Photo: Leo Pettersson*

Some might wonder if it's possible to get the Nordic Christmas atmosphere on a tropical island in Thailand? The answer is, according to about 200 Swedes, yes!

True to tradition, the Swedish restaurant, Karlsson's restaurant in Phuket hosted their annual Swedish Christmas on 24 December and despite the pandemic, the place was full, Expressen writes.

Kent Holmgren who runs the restaurant was very happy with the outcome.

"It's absolutely incredible. We have a full house. Something we didn't expect just a few months ago when there were no tourists in Thailand," he said to Expressen.

According to Kent, the event had about 200 participants with the vast majority being Swedes and some of them had traveled all the way to Thailand to meet up.

Good friends, Irene and Frasse Franzén and Kent and Eva Tell, were part of the participants and they have known each other for years al-

though they always meet in Thailand and not back home in Sweden.

"It may be a bit silly to go to Thailand to have a Swedish Christmas dinner, but it is actually very charming to be here. You meet so many people over the years here. We have known each other for many years but we always meet here and not in Sweden," Irene Franzén said.

To her, it is not difficult to get into the Christmas spirit and there are also great benefits of celebrating Christmas in Phuket, she added. "It is not cold here but warm and nice. We can sunbathe and swim as much as we want."

For Mikael Björklund, who has traveled to Thailand for the past 15 years, it's a little harder to get into the true Swedish Christmas spirit.

"It's a little too hot for a true Swedish Christmas," he said. But the tropical climate is actually what he enjoys most about Thailand.

Although the pandemic has brought much fewer tourists to Phuket over the past two years,

some things never change. According to Kent Tell, the pandemic has brought a great change in Phuket but the people are just as happy and friendly.

"And they need every penny we can contribute. We have also joined programs to support Thailand from home. Among other things, it is possible to donate food to people who do not have a job," Frasse Fransén added. Moreover, Frasse Fransén feels safer in Thailand than in Sweden regarding the spread of covid-19.

"People really keep their distance, in almost every place you go you have to take the temperature, people wear masks and you know that most of those who are here are vaccinated," he said.



Jörn Andersen is Hong Kong's new coach, with his first task next year's AFC Asian Cup qualifiers. Photo: HKFA

Norwegian manager to lead Hong Kong's football team

The Norwegian football manager and former player Jörn Andersen was recently named as the new manager of Hong Kong's national football team in a statement by Hong Kong Football Association.

Jörn Andersen is taking over the position from Finnish Mixu Paatelainen and his first task will be to prepare the team for June's qualifiers for the 2023 AFC Asian Cup in China.

Other teams, apart from Hong Kong, looking to qualify are Philippines, Jordan, Bahrain, Palestine, India, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Turkmenistan, Maldives, Nepal, Singapore, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Cambodia and Indonesia.

Jörn Andersen has played professional football in Norway and Switzerland and as a striker for Bundesliga teams Eintracht Frankfurt and Hamburg. He has extensive experience as a coach as well and before coming to Hong Kong he led the North Korean national team.

Hong Kong Football Association is happy to welcome the 58-year-old Norwegian.

"We extend a warm welcome to Jörn," HKFA chief executive Joaquin Tam said.

"With his football background in Europe and practical experience in Asia, we are confident that he would be able to inject new elements, help our players fully achieve their potentials, as well as improve our quality and performance.

"His experience in scouting and grooming young players also aligns with our vision to train up young talents for the future development of Hong Kong football," Joaquin Tam added.

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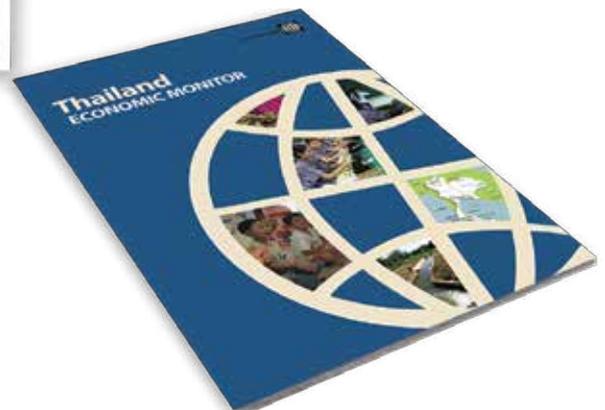
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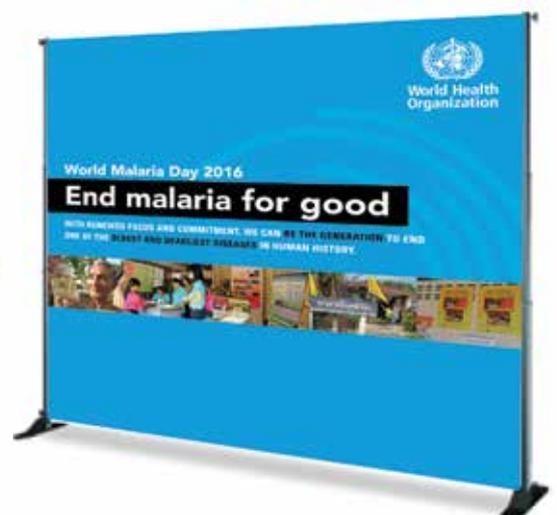
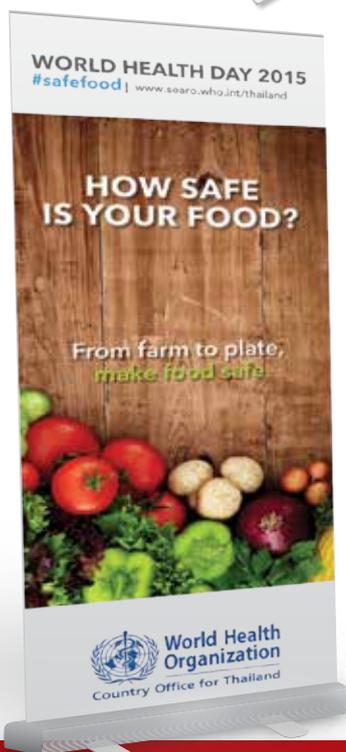
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Sweden supports peacekeeping in Bangsamoro



Swedish Ambassador to the Philippines Annika Thunborg.

Sweden is a big funder of the peacekeeping process in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Swedish Ambassador to the Philippines Annika Thunborg said in a virtual roundtable with The Manila Times that Sweden is actively involved in promoting women's empowerment and the strengthening of communities in the region.

"We want the women to take part in the peacekeeping. All actors have to be involved in peacebuilding and women are usually victims more than combatants," the Ambassador said.

The establishment of the BARMM in 2019 was the culmination of several years of peace talks between the Philippine government and several autonomist groups. Later that year the Bangsamoro Women Commission (BWC) was inaugurated by the Government of Sweden together with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Developed with the support

of UNDP and other UN agencies, the BWC launched the Bangsamoro Regional Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (RAP-WPS) 2020-2022 in October 2020, which seeks to enhance the role of Bangsamoro women in the implementation of the peace agreement and the protection of their human rights in conflict and post-conflict transformation.

"We are to a large extent a part of the European assistance committed to assisting in peace-building in BARMM. Making sure the government can function as a government and the rule of law," Ambassador Annika Thunborg said. Women play major roles during natural disasters, conflicts, and pandemics, the Ambassador added.

"Capacity building and the actual transfer of knowledge is important in making sure that people can take charge of their future development through assistance, security, and humanitarian assistance," she said.

EU calls for the release of Vietnamese journalist

The European Union calls for the release of Vietnamese journalist and blogger Ms. Pham Doan Trang, who has been sentenced to nine years of prison at the Hanoi's People Court on 14 December on the vague charge of alleged "anti-state propaganda".

The actions taken against Ms. Pham Doan Trang on the basis of her extensive and peaceful journalis-

tic work defending civil and political rights are in violation of Vietnam's international human rights obligations, notably the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Vietnam has been a party since 1982, the EU statement says.

Danish Embassy in Singapore welcomes new Head of Public Diplomacy & Partnerships

The Embassy of Denmark in Singapore welcomes the new Head of Public Diplomacy & Partnerships, Annette Oestergaard Joergensen who recently joined the Embassy in the city-state.

In her role, Annette Oestergaard Joergensen is responsible for public diplomacy activities and communication, as well as existing and future partnerships between government entities, research institutions, and other organizations in Singapore and Denmark, the Embassy says.

Before joining the Embassy in Singapore, Annette Oestergaard Jo-

ergensen worked as Chief Advisor and Team Leader in the Danish Business Authority, Ministry of Business Affairs in Denmark. From her prior roles, Annette knows all the ins and outs of the Danish business policy system and she has extensive experience within International Trade, EU affairs, Digital and Business Policy.

Moreover, the Embassy shares that Annette Oestergaard Joergensen holds a degree in Political Science from the University of Copenhagen and has lived and studied in the US, Australia, Bangladesh, and the Netherlands.



EU accepts Thai and Taiwanese vaccine certificates

Vaccine certificates from five new countries including Thailand and Taiwan will be recognized and accepted throughout the European Union from January 2022.

Deputy Chief of Mission of the 27 member bloc in Thailand, Mr. Giuseppe Busini, confirms that EU has approved the equivalency of vaccine certificates issued by Thailand and Taiwan together with Montenegro,

Tunisia, and Uruguay.

For Thailand, this means that from January 2022, Thai vaccines and COVID-19 certification on the Mor Prom app will be valid and accepted across the European Union which includes Denmark, Sweden, and Finland.

In addition, Thailand will also recognize the EU's Digital Covid Certificate for citizens of any of the 27 European Union member states when they arrive in the country.





The students from Aabenraa Friskole have collected 52 kg of can tabs
Photo: Private photo

Danish children collected can tabs for prostheses in Thailand

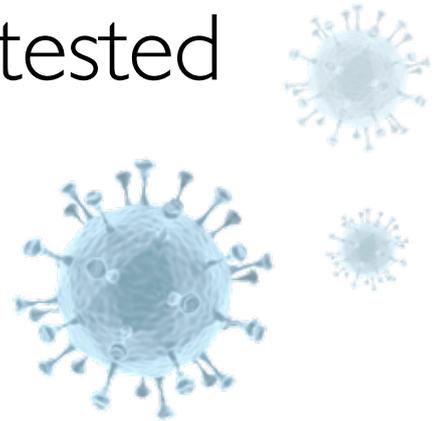
Danish students from grade three to five at "Aabenraa Friskole" in Aabenraa have together with members from the Innerwheel NGO collected 52 kg. beer and soft drink can tabs that they have handed over to Pastor Emeritus in Kollund, Niels Refskov, who will see to that the aluminum tabs gets sent to Thailand, JyskeVestkysten writes.

In Thailand the aluminum from the tabs will be remolded into bolts and screws used in leg prostheses for Thai citizens who have lost the leg often to snake bite infections or from stepping on mines, Aabenraa Innerwheel explains in a press release.

Anette Hørup Jensen who is responsible for the Aabenraa Innerwheel's international charity work visited the Aabenraa Friskole to thank the students for their effort.

"They said that they had help from neighbors, family members, and their parents' workplaces. They had collected tabs at confirmation parties and wedding anniversaries, so they have been busy," the press release reads.

Danish family placed in isolation in Thailand after daughter tested positive for covid-19



Joy and Nicolaj Ahlström.



Emili has been isolated in solitary confinement at the hospital after she tested positive for covid-19.

A Danish family was placed in isolation over Christmas in Thailand after their 18-year-old daughter tested positive for covid-19 upon arrival in the country.

The news became heavily debated on ScandAsia.com with a German Austrian couple telling a similar story of their situation after testing Covid positive.

<https://scandasia.com/danish-family-placed-in-isolation-in-thailand-after-daughter-test-positive-for-covid-19/>

The family traveled to Thailand on 20 December for what was supposed to be a Christmas and New Year holiday. According to Danish newspaper BT, they feel they took all precautions before departure and

all tested negative before getting on the plane. Upon arrival at Phuket Airport, they were tested again before they were taken to their hotel on Koh Lanta in the province of Krabi five hours away.

"When we sat at the hotel, the test results came back. Nicolaj and I tested negative, while Emili tested positive. And then things began to happen," the mother Joy Ahlström explained to BT.

The entire family was transferred to a local hospital in an ambulance. At the hospital, they were greeted by staff in protective gear. Joy and Nicolaj were allowed to be in the same room but Emili was isolated in a room by herself.

"Our daughter is 18 years old and thankfully very independent, so we haven't been worried. But it is

not nice to think that your child is alone in a hospital abroad," Joy Ahlström says.

Joy and Nicolaj were after another negative test on Christmas Eve transferred to an ALQ hotel, where they must stay in isolation until 28 December if they continue to test negative.

Emili will be in the hospital alone until 31 December at the earliest where after 11 days in isolation she will be allowed to leave. This means that the family's Christmas holiday together is reduced to four days before they travel home again on 4 January 2022.

During the isolation, the family tried to get help from Tui, but until BT published the story there was little help from the travel agency.

IKEA Philippines partners with Mober for e-vehicle delivery service



IKEA Philippines has teamed up with the Filipino technology-logistics company Mober for its last-mile electric vehicle delivery to reduce carbon emissions, PhilStar reports.

The Swedish furniture giant is selling more and more online and Mober will support IKEA's goal of delivering all orders by electric vehicle by 2030.

The first IKEA store in the Phil-

ippines opened at the end of November and it is also IKEA's largest store to date.

According to IKEA Philippines store manager Georg Platzer, IKEA is working with its transport partners to support the goal and as their "small collaborative start to tackle climate change and clean transport."

According to the CEO and founder of Mober Dennis Ng, their goal for their new electric van fleet is to reduce carbon emissions.

"We are delighted to be collaborating with retail giants like IKEA that are as committed to the reduction of carbon emissions as we are," he said.

Maersk to acquire Hong Kong-based LF Logistics

Maersk has reached an agreement to acquire LF Logistics, a Hong Kong-based contract logistics company, with premium capabilities within omnichannel fulfillment services, e-commerce, and inland transport in the Asia-Pacific region, the shipping giant has announced.

"The acquisition of LF Logistics is an important and truly strategic milestone on our journey," says CEO of Maersk Soren Skou

"Maersk wants to be a global logistics company that provides digitally-enabled end-to-end logistics solutions based on control of critical assets. With the acquisition of LF Logistics, we add critical capabilities in the Asia Pacific to support our customer's long term growth in the Asia Pacific as well as capabilities



and technology we can scale in our contract logistics business globally," he adds.

CEO of Li & Fung and CEO of LF Logistics Joseph Phi says:

"Maersk provides the ideal fit for our people and our customers. It has a substantial presence around

the world and will utilize LF Logistics' talent base and operational platform across Asia to build out its logistics and fulfillment offering globally. This is a testament to the strength of our team, our unique operations-centric culture, and our superb growth potential."



Media JyskeVestkysten has in their Christmas calendar this year asked several people to choose one thing that has a special meaning or a special story for their Christmas Box. Jens Dao has chosen a wrench as it's an indispensable tool for him, but it also symbolizes that he can build something completely from scratch with his own hands – which is what he has done his whole life. Photo: Søren Gylling.

Vietnamese Jens Dao in Denmark: I have taken the best of two cultures

Jens Dao's mother was pregnant with him when his family came to Denmark as boat refugees from Vietnam over 30 years ago. Today he is a hardworking individual, both as a clinical dental technician in his own clinic as well as the co-owner of two Vietnamese restaurants. Although there are major cultural differences between Denmark and Vietnam, Jens Dao believes he has taken the best of the two cultures with him through life.

"For me, it is of great value to be independent of others and be able to create something myself," he says and adds "It's probably something I learned at home."

Although Jens Dao's parents did not know the Danish language when they arrived from Vietnam, it only took them two years before they opened their first grocery store. "They would handle things themselves and not wait for someone to come and help them," Jens Dao explains.

"Maybe I have taken the best of two cultures with me. In Vietnam, people are diligent and work hard, and I have done that myself. For a period, I worked in the clinic from eight to 4 pm every day and then went straight down to my restaurant and worked on until 11 pm," Jens Dao says.

"In Denmark, I have learned to be honest and helpful to others. Those traits are seen less frequently in Vietnam, where only the strongest survive. Here you learn to manage yourself because there is no social safety net if things go wrong. That's why I grew up learning that nothing will come by itself – and the wrench symbolizes that very well," he says.

Jens Dao feels he has come pretty far in life so far but would like to expand even more.

"If it fails, then I can look back and know I tried. I would rather fail than not have tried at all," Jens Dao says.

Tetra Pak supports EPR in Thailand

The Swedish-Swiss processing and packaging solutions company Tetra Pak has signed an MOU to further drive the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) initiative in Thailand. The initiative is organized by the Thailand Institute of Packaging and Recycling Management for Sustainable Environment or TIPMSE under the Federation of Thai Industries.

The ERP initiative involves the collaboration between the public and private sectors, including manufacturers, distributors, waste collectors and recyclers, education institutions, and overseas organizations. The implementation of this model will include further development of processes related to packaging sorting, collection, and transportation, establishing sorting points, as well as increasing public awareness and responsible attitudes towards recycling.

Ambassador for a day in Thailand – video contest is now open

Eleven female Ambassadors together with 13 women leaders from the United Nations in Thailand have launched the 2022 edition of the #AmbassadorForADay competition to advance gender equality in Thailand ahead of the upcoming International Women's Day 8 March.

The video competition is open to all Thai nationals (residing in Thailand) aged between 18 and 25.

More about the competition:

What are the values we share, and how are you taking action to make society a better place, in particular on gender equality and social issues affecting women and girls in your community, including climate change? Tell us and win a chance to be Ambassador for a Day!

Submit your video by 17 January 2022. Find more information here

Ambassador Homme met with Frank Næsheim



Photo courtesy: Norwegian Embassy in Singapore

Norwegian Ambassador Eivind S. Homme recently met CEO of Snorre Food Company Mr. Frank Næsheim in Singapore, the Norwegian Embassy in Singapore shared.

Frank Næsheim arrived in Singapore 34 years ago to work as a Chef at a Norwegian seafood restaurant and later established Snorre Food as a mark of quality and has since been promoting and selling Norwegian seafood to the whole region.

As the author of a cookbook titled Norwegian Salmon in Asia and having produced salmon recipes and organized the Salmon Buffet of the Century in Singapore, he is aptly regarded as the Salmon King in Asia.

During the meeting, Ambassador Homme got a special look into the cold storage of Snorre Food which has much in store for the Christmas season, including many Norwegian Christmas specialties.



Indonesia adds Norway and Denmark to travel ban list

Indonesia added on 20 December the two Nordic countries of Norway and Denmark to the list of countries banned from entering Indonesia. Citizens from these countries are only allowed to enter if they have not been in their home countries for the past minimum 14 days. Together with Norway and

Denmark, the United Kingdom was also added to the list. The countries were added to stop Covid-19 from entering the country. Hong Kong on the other hand was removed from the list.

Following the announcement, the Embassy of Denmark in Indonesia shared in an update that the

Embassy is aware of the entry ban but that there is still uncertainty associated with the precise implementation of the rules.

“The Embassy is following developments closely and is working to gain greater clarity about the situation and will update on an ongoing basis,” the Embassy added.

Course towards China for Finnish companies

The great upheaval in China with the green transition and the rise of the middle class opens up new opportunities for Finnish companies in the country. Conquering China however is not easy, according to a recent article in *Kauppapolitikka* magazine about the great China breakthrough.

With a population of about 1.4 billion, China is the world's largest

market and Shanghai is the world's largest port for cargo and container traffic.

The Chinese economy is expected to grow by about 8 percent again this year, despite the pandemic, global supply difficulties for raw materials and semiconductors, and China's recent real estate problems.

Large Finnish export companies such as Kone, Wärtsilä, and for-

estry companies have long been present in the country's market. But China may also have a lot of opportunities for Finnish SMEs.

Finnish language readers can get more ideas here:

<https://kauppapolitikka.fi/kurssi-kohti-kiina/>

Danish man missing since 2015 found alive and well

Carl Drewsen disappeared six years ago on the same day that he was told his work at Restaurant Rundetaarn” in Phuket was terminated. Speculations were many what happened and where he was hiding. Now, the Nordic police says, he is found.

Danish citizen Carl Drewsen who went missing in Phuket in December 2015 is now no longer missing. The joint office of the Nordic police in Bangkok informs ScandAsia that Carl Drewsen has been located and is alive and well.

After contacting the Nordic Police Liaison Office in Bangkok, it was confirmed that Carl has been located in safe condition. The Liaison office can also inform that Carl was located in Thailand, but they cannot comment on what further action the discovery of him would entail. It is not known, if he has been overstaying ever since his disappearance.

It also remains unclear exactly what motive Carl had to disappear, where he has been all these years and what he has been doing. It seems however apparent that he wished to remain cut off from his former life.

The story began when Carl Drewsen moved to Thailand from Denmark in 2014. Carl is a butcher of trade and used to work in Denmark on “Grøntorvet” (The green square), a wet market in central Copenhagen. He would often visit Thailand with a close friend and coworker. The two would usually stay in Phuket at the now closed “Big A Resort” in Rawai, Phuket. Carl and his friend enjoyed their time in Thailand very much and wanted to move there permanently. When the owner of the Big A Resort, Thomas Flindt, offered them a job at his



Carl Drewsen who went missing in December 2015 is now found according to the Nordic Liaison Office in Bangkok.

restaurant “Rundetaarn” in Patong, they both accepted the offer, pulled up stakes and moved to Phuket in 2014.

In Phuket, Carl was working in the kitchen of the Rundetaarn restaurant a popular hangout place for the Danish community in Phuket. In the beginning, all was going well but the temptations of the close by Bangla Road party street started affecting the work. According to Thomas, Carl began partying too much which eventually made him neglect his work at the restaurant. At the same time, Carl met a Thai woman, Sirikanya, that he entered into a relationship with. Together with her, Carl also started gambling. Ultimately, Carl’s lack of attention to his work forced his employer to terminate the employment.

On the 30 December 2015, Thomas went to Carl’s home to tell him that their cooperation was over and asked him to hand over the keys for the restaurant. A few hours after this meeting, Carl had disappeared.

The speculations what might had happened to Carl were many. Thomas Flindt believed that a leading factor behind his disappearance could be money problems. Carl was rumored to be in debt to different people, and this could have prompted him to go into hiding. Thomas, who still has a copy of Carl’s passport, checked with the immigration office and there was at that time no record of Carl leaving Thailand. This led Thomas to suspect that Carl was most likely living illegally on an overstay somewhere in Thailand. He had on multiple occasions been contacted

by Sirikanya who was asking for money claiming that she was together with Carl, and that they were in dire need of them. The last of these messages from Sirikanya came no later than a month ago. Thomas however never got to speak with Carl himself. He tried to use his network around Thailand to enquire if anyone had spotted Carl in another part of Thailand, but nobody had seen anything of him.

Carl’s close friend from Phuket who is now living in Denmark, also believes that Carl is living illegally on overstay.

Another more sinister theory was that Carl could have been hurt or killed. It was suggested that Carl could have owed money to people engaged in criminal activities and that he, being unable to pay the money back, could have been victim of a crime. It was also speculated that these criminal people could still be looking for Carl and that this could be the reason for his hiding.

The ongoing uncertainty about Carl’s fate prompted a family member of him in Denmark to report him missing in a Danish-Thai Facebook group on the 27. September this year. Likewise, she reported the disappearance to the Danish police. This was the first time that Carl’s disappearance had been reported. It was ultimately also this police report that led to the finding of Carl.

Japanese man wanted for the murder of Norwegian arrested in Laos



Hiroyuki “Hiro” Ogu who is wanted for the murder of Norwegian Nerid Høiness in Laos in January 2020 arrested in Laos, according to Laotian police.



The Japanese man who is accused of killing Norwegian Nerid Høiness in Laos last year has, according to a press release from the police in Laos, been found and arrested in Laos on 20 November, Dagbladet reports.

Nerid Høiness was 30 years old when she went missing in Laos early January 2020. She was found killed in the jungle on 22 January 2020. Her boyfriend Hiroyuki “Hiro” Ogu was accused of the murder and wanted internationally via Interpol. He has now been found and arrested, the police in Laos writes.

Nerid Høiness went missing after she went on a motorcycle trip from the holiday island of Koh Phangan in Thailand to Vang Vieng in Laos with her 38-year-old boyfriend. Here she was reportedly abused, beaten to death, and dumped in the jungle.

Several witnesses have explained to the police in Laos that they had heard screams for several days from the room at Freedom Hostel in Vang Vieng where the couple stayed. On January 9, 2020, they saw Hiroyuki Ogu carrying Nerid’s lifeless body out of the hotel, where he then strapped her body onto the motorcycle. Witnesses also explained that a few hours earlier he had arrived at the guesthouse carrying several bamboo sticks.

The victim's mother told a Norwegian newspaper that she believes Ogu Hiroyuki stiffened up the body of her strangled daughter with bamboo rods before he put her on the motorcycle and drove into the jungle to dump her as trash.

Two weeks later, the body of Nerid Høiness was found in the jungle in Laos. Laos police started their investigation and her boyfriend Hiroyuki Ogu was accused of the murder but police could not find him. Until now.

Section leader Knut Erik Ågrav at Sørøst police district says to Dagbladet that it has been the police in Laos' job to investigate and find the murderer who has been wanted through Interpol. The Norwegian police have also helped carry out some investigative steps in Norway while her relatives have been working hard on helping the case as well by providing information on where Hiroyuki 'Hiro' Ogu could be.

Earlier this year, former Minister of Justice and current member of the Storting's Justice Committee Per-Willy Amundsen called for a Norwegian travel warning against visiting Thailand since the authorities had done nothing to arrest the Japanese even though they had been told several times of his whereabouts.

"It is a complete scandal that the man who abused and killed Nerid Høiness has not been arrested and brought to justice," Per-Willy Amundsen said.

"If he is not arrested, the Norwegian government should warn Norwegian citizens to travel to Thailand. In Norway's official travel council, there should be a warning against traveling to a country like Thailand, where the man who killed Nerid Høiness still goes free," Per-Willy Amundsen said to Dagbladet.

Lawyer Sidsel Katralen, who is an assistant lawyer for Nerid's family, confirmed at the time that little had indeed happened.

"Japanese Hiroyuki Ogu is internationally wanted via Interpol for the murder of Nerid. Beyond that, neither the police nor other authorities in Laos, Thailand, or Norway have done much to get him arrested," Sidsel Katralen said.

Although Hiroyuki 'Hiro' Ogu was arrested over one month ago, the Norwegian police have only been notified now and Knut Erik Ågrav says that he does not know why it did not happen sooner.

He emphasises that the police in Tønsberg has not been in direct contact with the police in Laos and only know about the arrest through international partners such as Interpol.

Retired police officer Øyvind Olsen has played an important role in the murder case of Norwegian Nerid Høiness. He was contacted early on by Assistance lawyer Sidsel Katralen to assist in the search for Japanese Ogu 'Hiro' Hiroyuki

Øyvind Olsen has been a liaison for the Nordic police in both Pakistan and London and led UN investigations in Rwanda, East Timor, and Afghanistan. Throughout his career, Øyvind Olsen, who is now retired, has built up a network of police officers abroad. He used these to get information about where Hiroyuki was.



According to Olsen, he perceived the Nordic liaison officer in Bangkok as uncooperative while he also believes that the international police organization Interpol is too slow and describes the organization as a "mailbox". He points out that Interpol's search for Hiroyuki only reached the Thai police in Bangkok, where Interpol has its offices in Thailand and not the island of Koh Samui and Koh Phangan where Hiroyuki was reported seen several times.

When asked if he believes Hiroyuki would have been arrested if he had not assisted in the case he answers that although it might be a bit hypothetical, he does not believe much would have happened so "I do not think so," he answers.

According to Assistance lawyer Sidsel Katralen, Olsen's work was important in finding Hiroyuki.

"When you get such a serious case in a country that is so foreign to us, you can not just sit back. You have to use all your imagination and all the detective work you have at your disposal to get to the finish line," she says to NRK.

Now the authorities in Laos will handle the further legal process, according to the laws of the country.

A detailed description of the victim and the circumstances leading up to her murder can be found at

<https://www.world-today-news.com/we-know-this-about-her-last-days-alive/>



New project in Cambodia offers solar solutions to garment manufacturer H&M

A new project between TotalEnergies and Vanco Industries to install 750kWp of rooftop solar in the province of Kandal in Cambodia will help garment manufacturers such as the Swedish retailer H&M become climate positive.

Vanco is part of Dakota Group of Companies which supplies garments to H&M and according to H&M Group, rooftop solar is a key step towards the retailer's pledge to cut emissions by 56 percent by 2030 and become climate positive ten years later.

To Khmer Times, Country Manager Cambodia & Vietnam at H&M Group, Christer Horn Af Aminne said:

"Dakota's decision to work with TotalEnergies will have a significant impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Cambodia, and signal to others in the garment sector that the time to embrace renewable electricity is now. We truly encourage continuous collabora-

tions between our partners and solar companies."

"As more factories in Cambodia take action towards using 100 percent renewable electricity, it will further increase the attractiveness of the Kingdom as a sustainable sourcing destination," he added.

Established in 2006, Vanco Industries operates a 350,000 square foot factory in Kandal province near Phnom Penh with more than 4000 garment workers.

Speaking on the matter, Jacky Tsang, Director of Dakota Group and Companies said:

"We hope taking an initiative to drive a fundamental change is a critical step to fight climate change. As a manufacturer rooted in Cambodia for more than decades, we see every step of improvement as better ourselves than yesterday."

The Swedish retailer H&M sources garments from around 30 factories around Phnom Penh and plans to open its first store in Cambodia at the beginning of 2022.

Covid crisis

In 2020, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, some 800,000 were directly employed in the garments and shoe sector. Nearly one in five employed women in Cambodia worked in the garment sector as of 2020. A wide range of service sector jobs also depend on factory workers in and around the industrial zones, including food vendors, clothes sellers, transport operators, and many others.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a huge negative impact in Cambodia, with by some estimates between 80,000 to 150,000 workers out of work or with reduced working hours.

While there are more than 500 garment factories in Cambodia, the industry is heavily dependent on imported fabric and was hit hard when the Coronavirus pandemic cut shipments from China, its main supplier.

According to Soun Vichea of Cambodia's Ministry of Commerce, the challenge in Cambodia is that the country has no capacity by our own to produce the raw material."

"Mostly we import the raw material from other countries and we add value by cutting and sewing and then export. We depend 50 percent on imported raw material," Vichea said.

Even with home-produced fabric, the latest technology and a skilled workforce that can maximise its potential, Cambodia needs to protect the fashions it produces and exports to avoid being copied and undercut by international competitors.

Vichea urged manufacturers to register and trade mark their designs with government ministries and even consider copyrighting their management processes, a technique successfully adopted by Spanish fashion brand Zara.

He said the Ministry of Commerce is currently drafting a law on trade secrets to protect information, methodology, strategy, management systems and marketing techniques.

The garment and footwear sectors account for almost 80% of Cambodia's total exports.

Cut-make-trim model

Cambodia's garment factories are generally based on the principle of cut-make-trim (CMT) model.

Under this method of production, the raw material, machinery and the design of the garments are imported from abroad, while the assembly of the product is outsourced to the labor-intensive factories in Cambodia.

The CMT implies cutting and sewing of material according to the clothing brands' specifications.

The garment industry is essentially dominated by foreign owned firms, mainly from the neighboring countries such as China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Republic of Korea. The association with foreign-owned garments firms or brand names provide Cambodia's garments industry an important channel into the garments global value chain.

Over 60 percent of Cambodia's garment factories are located within or in close proximity to the capital city – Phnom Penh. The finished products are transported from the factories in Phnom Penh by train to the seaport of Sihanoukville where the garments are shipped to other countries.

Other key locations of garment factories are Kompong Som, Kompong Speu, Kompong Cham, Kompong Chhnang, Svay Rieng, Takeav and Kandal provinces.





Choosing wine without the know-how

Unless you know your Cabernet-Sauvignon from your Beaujolais, a wine shop and even the wine shelves at the supermarket can seem like a confusing place. So many countries, so many regions, so many grapes and so many prices. It isn't easy to get the best for your money and taste buds without a little know-how.

The first step to making a good choice when buying wine is to approach the purchase in the same way as any other purchase - you need to know what you like and what you don't like. Even if the wine shop owner finds you the best Pinot Noir in your budget, you are not going to like it if your preference is for a sweet, fruity white.

If you have trouble knowing what you like - for example, if you only usually order a medium house red or white at a restaurant - try experimenting with a few wine varieties instead of ordering house wine with your meals. Also look out for wine shops that offer tasting sessions. This is a great way to find your likes and dislikes.

By experimenting, you will quickly begin to develop a nose for wine. It would be wise to remember that wine tasting has little to do with the perfect wine, but everything to do with what pleases your palate.

You might discover that you have a taste for Merlot in a restaurant but when you walk into a wine shop you become baffled by the choice. The real difficulty is finding out which ones are good within your budget and which are scraping the barrel, or cask.

Go into your local wine shop and have a look over their Merlot selection. Your budget will narrow down your choice considerably, so decide how much you want to spend and then see what you can get for your money.

As a rule, good, aged reds deserve a little extra spend, but you can get away with spending slightly less for a good young white. This is useful to remember if you have not too much to spend on a bottle.

Check out the blurbs on the wine racks. You can usually discard the winery notes supplied by the winemaker as these are, of course, marketing material written with the sole purpose of getting you to buy their bottle. Your best guideline is the handwritten notes put there by the wine retailer. These are obviously still designed as a marketing tool, but the wine shop has its reputation to think about, so any recommendations are likely to be honest.

If there is a wine shop assistant available, ask their advice. Explain what kinds of wines you have tried and liked in the past. Tell them one wine that you love and one that you hate and ask them what type Merlot they think you might enjoy. If you are planning an Italian meal with robust flavours, this should also influence their recommendations for you, so tell them as much as you can. By describing your preferences, they should get a good idea of what type of Merlot would be best suited for you and the occasion.

Most importantly, remember that what you enjoy is your personal preference. No wine reviewer or shop owner is going to have your exact taste in wine. Learn what types of wines you enjoy and keep a note of them. It is also useful to get to know your local wine shop so they can get to know what recommendations will be suited to you.



What food to have with the wine

There are certain wines and foods that delight the taste buds when mixed. Wine seeks relationships with the finer ingredients in life, yet many have a tough time making a sound partnership with cheese. In fact, some cheeses can make a good red wine dull and lifeless.

If you love to end a special meal with a cheese platter, balance the flavours of your wines and cheeses carefully. The stronger the cheese, the more intense its partner should be. But remember that balance isn't about matching like with like, it can be as different as chalk and cheese.

Soft touch

Soft, creamy cheeses such as brie and camembert coat the palate with a layer of soluble fat, masking tastes. Even if you are drinking an excellent red, you will lose some of its flavour. Team soft, creamy cheeses with extra-dry champagne and the effervescence will clean the fats from the palate.

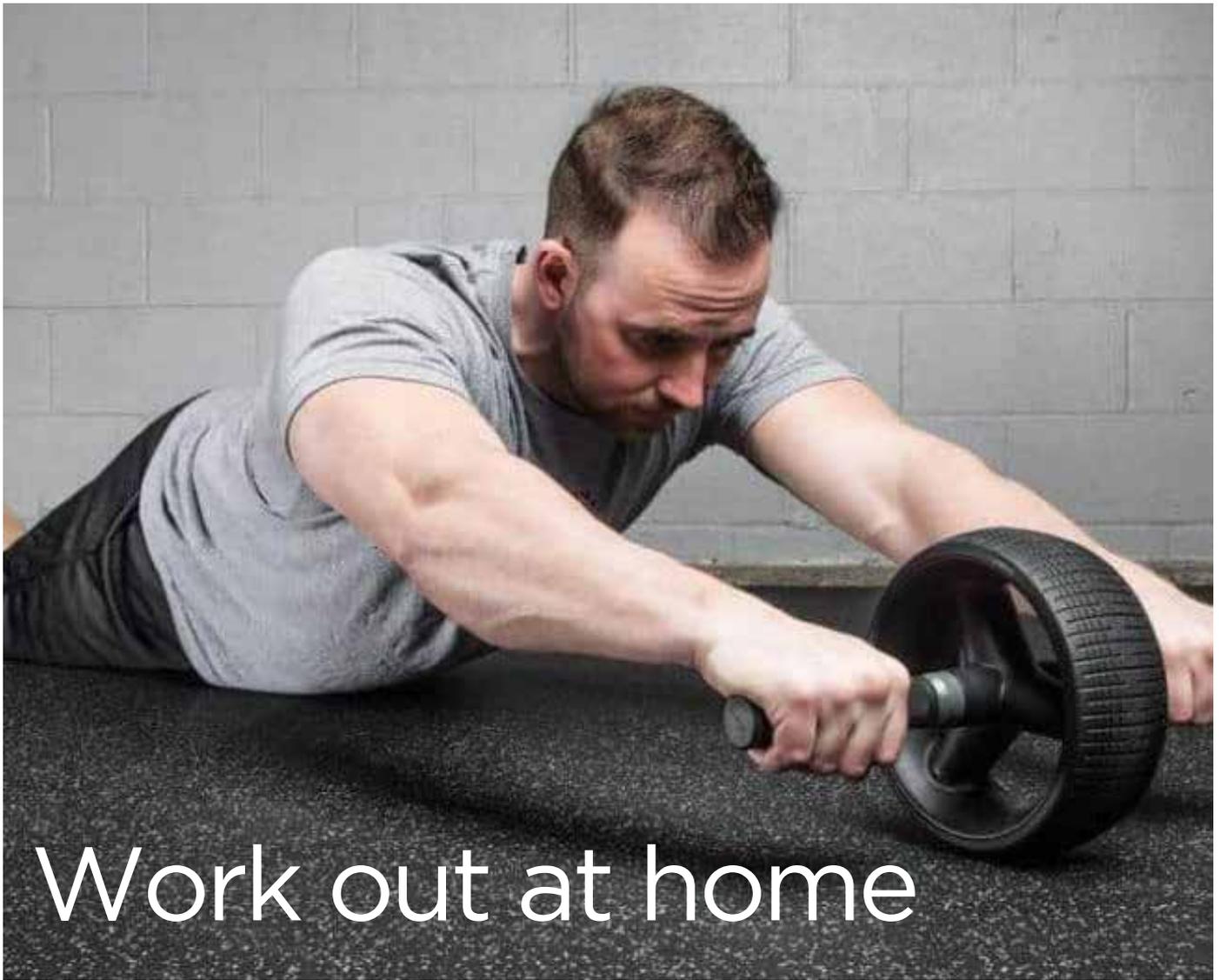
Pungent cheeses and reds If you must be awkward and insist on red with your cheese platter, choose a concentrated, rich red such as Amarone della Valpolicella. This Italian dry red is made from air-dried grapes and can stand up to the most pungent cheeses including Parmigiano-Reggiano and Pecorino. A cheaper alternative is Ripasso di Valpolicella made in the same region.

Port and cheese

A perfect partner after dinner, whether at a restaurant or at home, is port and creamy blue cheese. A non-vintage port is a perfect partner for creamy stilton, while vintage port pairs beautifully with feisty cheeses such as gorgonzola. Epcurious.com wine expert Anthony Dias Blue says, "(Port has) an element known as rancio - a desirable, rich, oxidised quality, which meshes reliably with the luxurious flavours of such mould-laced cheeses."

Sweet whites for cheese

When serving a sumptuous cheese platter at a dinner party, remove the reds and opt for a fruity, vibrant white to complement your range of cheese. Sweet, spicy, and fruity German wines such as Gewurztraminers and Rieslings are good all-rounders. For blue-veined cheeses, choose a sweet dessert wine. These will also work well if you are also serving desserts at the table.



Work out at home

Having to isolate in a small apartment doesn't mean you need to skip out on exercise, check out these easy home gym equipment ideas.

By Marko Rakic

With the reigning pandemic and lockdowns looming around every corner many of us have taken it on ourselves to start exercising from home. Some by choice, others not so much in the same regard.

When you're a fitness fanatic and don't know which corner to turn because you can't go to the gym you're probably looking for ways that you can exercise at home, for those of us that are doing forms of bodybuilding we probably want some type of resistance training as well that can only come from lifting weights.

Regardless of who you are or what your choice is, there are options for us to train at home, even if you have limited space such as a studio apartment. Below is a list of equipment that you could use at home, even if you have limited space and best of all, they don't cost a fortune.

Adjustable Dumbbells

Dumbbells are usually an essential part of strength training and if you've ever gone to a proper gym they usually have a whole section entirely dedicated to dumbbells ranging from a few pounds to a few hundred pounds. It's really a gym staple.

Adjustable dumbbells are great because you don't need to have 20 different dumbbells sitting in your home which takes up a lot of space, they are basically like your ordinary dumbbells except that the weight is not fixed. They tend to have a locking system and come with different plates of weights that you can fix to the dumbbell and then lock it.

This makes it easy to start with a low number and then work your way up as you build upon your strength training, pretty neat right?

Adjustable Kettlebells

Much like the adjustable dumbbells, adjustable kettlebells are similar in nature where you can increase the weight range of them and lock them into place. Some of them have a simple system where you just push a button to release the weights and then clip in further sizes, usually in 6-pound increments.

Kettlebells are a lot more versatile than dumbbells because you can use them to do things such as goblet squats, as well as bicep curls and various other kettlebell exercises. They're a great space saver as well as they can just sit in your wardrobe or in a corner.

Ab Wheel Rollers

You've probably seen these around at gyms, people usually look like they're flattening out the pastry of a pizza base on the floor moving up and down. Those are called ab rollers, they can be used to train your core, hips, arms and back muscles and don't require much room other than your body size.

Skipping rope

If you're opting for a cardio option instead of weights, then a skipping rope is always going to be a staple for any fitness enthusiast. You don't need much room other than where you're standing and if your place has a common area like a backyard or courtyard then you can simply take it out with you as it's very mobile and light without much hassles.



Conclusion

As you can see, you can still get an intense workout even if you have limited space with these options. And if you can't afford any of them yet, then you can focus on the good old basics of callisthenics such as pushups, situps, jumping jacks and so on. Stay hard!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marko Rakic is a trail runner and fitness enthusiast from Sydney, Australia. He is the lead writer for The Ultimate Primate and believes the best way to live a happy life is to take a holistic approach to fitness and health.





Can you see yourself opening your laptop and start working from home on this beautiful writing desk?

Growing an interest in buying antiques

Often, an interest in antiques is something that quietly creeps up on you.

But buying antiques requires some know-how if you're not going to waste your money.

Few people wake up one morning and think, I know, I'll start collecting antiques. Often, an interest in antiques is something that quietly creeps up on you.

The interest in a particular field of antiques is one that should grow along with your knowledge. Buying antiques does require certain know-how if you're not going to waste your money. An antique can be any collectable item that is approximately 100 years old or more and has an aesthetic value.

The value and collectability of certain items fluctuate along with current tastes. For example, initially, the rise in popularity of computers led to a marked devaluation of traditional writing desks. But then the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of remote working resulted in increased interest in quality desks. However, most collectables enjoy a steady market value.

What you first need to consider when looking to add to your collection is the piece's history and originality. You will find many rare antiques come at a high price. The most common mistake is being fooled by what appear to be great buys when they are in fact replicas.

Certainly, if you're a beginner in the world of antiques and you haven't carried out research correctly, you may have difficulties in telling the difference between a reproduction and an original antique. All antique pieces should show some wear-and-tear and such small details are something that you should look out for when considering a purchase. If you find the item looks flawless then it is more likely not to be a genuine antique.

Occasionally, you will also find that some antique dealers will put up retouched items for sale. With any antique, they really do look their best and hold the highest value when they haven't been refurbished. The age and originality of the antique are what makes them so valuable. A little wear-and-tear is to be expected with something that's over a century old. The only possible exceptions are items like chairs, where they may be dangerous in their original state, but even then, those that have been professionally refurbished are never going to hold their value as well.

The best thing to do before you purchase any antique item is to carry out some research. The internet has become an invaluable resource for amateur antique collectors. It will provide you with information relating to the price of antiques around the world as well as providing a good history of the item. Although the internet is a good source for information relating to antiques, you

should purchase antiques online with great caution. It's not possible for you to have a close inspection of the item being sold and irrefutable sellers will be keen to hide any defects. The rule is unless the item is being sold through a reputable dealer, buy elsewhere.

One of the best places you should go to when deciding to purchase an antique is an auction being held by a reputable auction house. These will ensure that the item you are likely to purchase is genuine and should also come with a certificate of authenticity or originality. Keen collectors visit antique auctions regularly in the search for coveted items.

The most important thing for beginners is to do their research first and find out what the current market value of an item is before getting carried away on a bid. Good auction houses will issue guides prior to the day of the auction to give you a head start.

You may also find that car boot sales are a good place to find antiques, if you know what to look for. You may even be lucky to find a rare item at a very good price, although regular boot sellers probably have more knowledge about antiques than you would hope. Treasures are more often found amongst everyday house sales when the boot seller doesn't quite know what they are selling.



Sometimes, things don't have to be antique to be worth buying.



Living in Asia offers a unique opportunity to build a collection of antique home furniture that will make your home interesting for the rest of your life.



Photo: UNICEF

How to teach your child to love reading

What you need to know about raising a reader.

By Mandy Rich, Digital Content Writer, UNICEF

A love of reading opens the door to adventures, learning new things and a whole host of key language skills such as speech development and vocabulary building. Spending time with books also creates special moments for you to bond with your child and enjoy each other's company.

Just 10 to 15 minutes a day with a book is enough to spark your curious little one's interest. Read on for our top tips on fostering a love of literature.

Start right away

Reading to your newborn helps to give them the best start in life. Babies learn language from adults who repeat and read words to them. When you read to your little one, talk about the characters and objects in the book or the sounds the animals make. Hearing your voice helps give meaning to the letters and pictures they are seeing. As you read, vary the pitch and tone of your voice and try different accents or voices for different characters. It helps to keep your child engaged and makes the story jump off the page!

Remember, children learn to love books long before they learn to read. Spending time with books together now will help children grow to enjoy them even more as they get older.

Model what a good reader looks like

It is important for children to see reading as something fun and pleasurable to do rather than a difficult task. What better way to teach this than to show them the ropes yourself! If your children see you reading often, it is more likely to encourage them. This will also help to promote time away from screens.

If you have been away from reading for a while, local bookshop owners and librarians can be wonderful guides in choosing the best books for you and your child. Family and friends are great resources too! Ask about their children's favourite books and their experience reading together. You can even bring your little one with you and make it a special trip for picking out books together.

Take turns

As your child grows older, take turns reading out loud to each other. If you have an early reader, this can be as much as asking your child to point out letters and words he recognizes. Next, take turns reading sentences. As his abilities grow, you can take turns reading pages and eventually chapters. As you read together, ask questions about what you are reading: "What do you think will happen next?" "Why do you think the elephant did that?"

The time you spend reading out loud to each other will help build confidence in speaking aloud and will reinforce what your child has learned.

Listen to your child

As your little one grows, pay attention to her interests. If she is particularly drawn to a particular topic, like dinosaurs, try to find children's books about that subject. This will help to reinforce that books are tools for learning more about the things we care about and she will be more likely to read if the subject matter is her favourite dino!

Don't worry if your children aren't reading Achebe or Dostoevsky just yet – the main thing is that they are reading. If they are only reading comics right now, that's okay. Comics and graphic novels are still opportunities for reading! You can encourage them with other reading materials, but there is no need to push if they are not receptive to it right now.

Make it a routine

Making reading an enjoyable part of your child's life starts with incorporating books into your daily routine. Create a special reading time before bed or while taking public transportation. While you are together, make sure to limit distractions like mobile phones and television. Your time should be all about each other!

Part of learning to enjoy reading is being around books at home. If possible, try starting a book collection for your children. It does not have to be extensive; a small one can work perfectly well.

If available near you, check with your local library for information on story time programmes. These meet ups can be a great way for a child to enjoy books while being social with other children. You could also see about starting a mini book club with friends and their children.

Reading milestones

While every child is different, here are some of the milestones you may observe as your child's reading skills develop:

Birth – 18 months

- Understands some simple phrases
- Looks at books and tries to turn pages
- Imitates speech
- At around 1 year can say one or more words

18 months – 3 years

- Can say 250 – 350 words at around 2 years and 800 – 1,000 words at around 3 years
- Enjoys listening to familiar books
- Says a repeated phrase from a favourite book
- Imitates the sounds of adults speaking
- Asks to be read to

3 – 5 years

- Recognizes familiar letters and tries to write them
- Holds a book correctly and turns the pages
- Identifies rhyming words
- Uses sentences comfortably
- Learns from books that are read aloud



Photo: UNICEF



Travelling with your family during COVID-19

Tips and advice for protecting your family when you're away from home.

By UNICEF

Travelling is a part of life for families across the globe – be it for necessity or recreation. But the COVID-19 pandemic is not over, and travel continues to be risky and complicated in many parts of the world. If you and your loved ones need to travel, here are some tips to consider to help you do so more safely.

All travel comes with some risk of getting or spreading COVID-19. Before you travel, check if COVID-19 is spreading in your local area and in any of the places you are going. Do not travel if you or your family are sick, have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been around someone with COVID-19 in the past 14 days. Unvaccinated family members who are at higher risk for severe illness (older family members, those with underlying medical conditions) should consider postponing all travel until they are fully vaccinated. Also consider postponing for the time being any visits to unvaccinated family members or friends who are more likely to get very ill from COVID-19.

Vaccinate to travel

Travel, like any activity that involves coming into contact with other people from different households, is not risk-free even after full vaccination against COVID-19. The good news is that having the required number of doses and giving time for the vaccines to take effect significantly reduces your risk of becoming seriously ill and spreading the virus to others.

For two-dose COVID-19 vaccines, the protection provided is only partial after the first dose, and time is needed – typically 2 weeks – after the second dose before you are considered to be fully protected. For a one-dose vaccine, maximum protection against COVID-19 begins a few weeks after receiving your shot.

It is important to remember that no vaccine provides 100 per cent protection against COVID-19, so check local guidance at your destination and the COVID-19 transmission and vaccination rates to inform the level of precautions you should take.

It is recommended that people who have previously been infected by COVID-19 are still vaccinated, whether travelling or not. The majority of people who are infected produce some antibodies and immune cells that can fight off infection, but the immune response varies significantly and it is unclear how long this protection lasts. In people who were only mildly ill, the immune protection that can prevent a second infection may decline within a few months.

Remember, getting vaccinated isn't just about protecting yourself – you're protecting those around you, too.

How should we prepare to travel together as a family?

If you do choose to travel, check for any travel restrictions, stay-at-home orders, quarantining and testing requirements in your local area, and all places you're planning to visit (check websites of Ministries of Health, Ministries of Foreign Affairs and local health authorities). Keep in mind, these policies may change with little advance notice and your travel plans may be disrupted. Also carefully check the travel requirements of your airline carrier.

If you or your family are exposed to a person infected with COVID-19 during your trip, you may be isolated or quarantined and your return may be delayed. Some healthcare systems are overwhelmed and there may be limited access to adequate medical care in affected areas if you or your family become ill or are injured during the trip. It's worth reviewing your health or travel insurance to check COVID-19 related coverage and any limitations.

Check ahead what options are available at your destination for transport, food and accommodation. Remember that some businesses and services may be fully or partially disrupted in affected areas, including public transport, shops and restaurants, as well as popular tourist attractions – so check for the latest information on changes to services and procedures.

Additional considerations include:

- Before travelling, make sure you and your family are up to date with your routine vaccinations as recommended by your local health authorities, such as the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, the seasonal flu vaccine, but also any other vaccines required at your destination such as the yellow fever vaccine.
- Make sure any family members taking medications bring enough to last for the entire trip.
- Try to avoid travel where physical distancing may be difficult for prolonged periods. Plan to avoid travelling at peak times and take routes that are less congested wherever possible.
- If using public transport, follow any local recommended precautions (here are some key ones). Try to limit your contact with frequently touched surfaces and wash or sanitize your hands frequently. Keep a row of seats between yourself and other travellers where possible.
- If travelling in a private vehicle, try to keep stops to a

minimum by bringing sufficient food and drinks.

- During your trip, plan to avoid visiting crowded spaces, poorly ventilated enclosed spaces, as well as any social or mass gatherings such as concerts, events and parties.
- Plan to bring your own food and drinks where possible.

Are hotels and resorts safe?

If you plan to stay at a hotel or other accommodation, check in advance what prevention measures they have in place:

- Are staff wearing masks at work and practicing physical distancing?
- Are extra precautions in place, such as plexiglass barriers at check-in, modified layouts or barriers to allow for physical distancing between all staff, guests and visitors in the lobby, elevators and common areas?
- Is there an appropriate ventilation system in place?
- Is the hotel implementing updated policies for cleaning and disinfection?

When you arrive, disinfect any high touch surfaces in your room, including keys, doorknobs, remote controls, etc. If possible, open windows to help ventilate the room on your arrival. Consider requesting no cleaning or other room services to minimize the number of people outside your family in the room during your stay.

Simple safety precautions while travelling

While travelling, all parents and caregivers should take standard precautions for themselves and their children:

- Avoid crowded places, confined and enclosed spaces with poor ventilation
- Try to keep a physical distance of at least 1 metre from people in public
- Wear masks when in public places where COVID-19 is widespread and physical distancing is not possible. Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose, mouth)
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces like phones, keys, doorknobs, light switches etc
- If you decide to eat outside, consider the safest dining options. Eating outdoors or ordering take-out has less risk than eating indoors. Don't forget to wash or sanitize your hands before eating.
- Seek medical care early if you or your child has a fever, cough, difficulty breathing or other symptoms of COVID-19

What should we do when we return home?

After you return home, follow recommendations or requirements from your national or local authorities, and continue to follow all the key precautions – including watching for any symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking medical advice if they develop.



Founder of
Ecooking Tina
Sogaard.
Photo:
Daniel Bank /
Ecooking

It is not a decision she regrets because she sees the divestment of the company as the opportunity for an international breakthrough.

According to her, the divestment was necessary if she was to be true to her vision for Ecooking – namely to become Denmark's largest in cosmetics and skincare and at the same time become a brand that breaks through on the major markets in Asia and the US.

Partnering with Bluegem Capital Partners has given Ecooking so much international experience in under a year and now an expansion is more realistic than it was at the beginning of 2021.

"We did not have a single employee with international experience at the office or warehouse in Denmark which we need if Ecooking is to really go beyond Denmark's borders and have an opportunity to grow big in Asia and the USA. I still believe that the decision to sell to the private equity fund was the right one, and both internally and externally we have already come out of it strengthened. Although of course, it was a very difficult decision for me to make because in a way I had to give up a part of me," Tina Sogaard says.

Danish cosmetic company Ecooking ready for Asia expansion

The Danish company Ecooking, which makes a wide range of cosmetics and skincare products, is ready for expansion into markets in Asia as well as the USA, *JyskeVestkysten* writes.

Founded in 2015, Ecooking has grown an incredible 719.2 percent over the last four years. But despite the massive growth, founder Tina Sogaard sold in March this year 70 percent of the company to the British private equity fund, Bluegem Capital Partners.

"I have said from the beginning that the brand beats everything else. I am constantly setting new goals for the company, and the new goal is to take all our knowledge and of course our products to the international market. The last half of 2021 has been spent equipping us for just that journey," Tina Sogaard says.



Try online dance lessons for couples

You never thought of this, but why not enroll you and your partner for dance lessons online? Dance lessons will be fun and strengthen your relationship as a couple. So, how do you pick the best online dance lessons for couples?

Apart from adding a new level of excitement to your daily routine, online dance lessons pave the way to nurture your relationship. As you spend more time at home with your loved one, you can conveniently hone your dancing skills. The only obstacle is, that with so many experts offering online dance lessons, finding the best among them can be a tad confusing.

Learning from the best

While you begin searching for the best online dance lessons for couples, pick one with years of experience teaching different dancing styles. Check their websites for reviews and recommendations, which will give you an insight into their skill level. You can go ahead with choices that synchronize with your requirements. If you are a beginner, you need to pick dance classes for learners to make it an enjoyable experience. Remember- you learn better, when you learn from the best.

Diverse styles

It is a good idea to choose studios that offer different styles of dance, which will enhance your dancing skills. In addition to nurturing your relationship, it will build your confidence when you dance. Couples who learn the art of dancing together often learn at a quicker pace. In ad-

dition to learning diverse dancing styles, partners begin to enjoy their time together. Some dance studios give lessons on ballet, ballroom, and even salsa. Online dance classes allow partners to practice better and improve their dancing skills at a steady pace.

Good reviews

When you zero in on any dance studios that offer online lessons, make sure to check their reviews. Read testimonials of previous clients about their experiences. Ask these questions to former clients if you can talk to them. Was the online dance lesson great and, did it enhance their dancing skills? Was it worth the money and experience? Find a dance studio that makes you feel confident and comfortable when you take up dancing lessons. They must be patient and supportive in your endeavor.

Online dance studios offer lessons at varying prices depending largely on different dance styles, the expertise of teachers, and many more. Therefore, compare the prices and other features while you make a decision. Remember, the cost is not the only deciding factor when you choose online dance classes for couples. And never settle for a lesser price as cheap is not always the best. You want to share an exhilarating experience with your partner when you take up dance lessons online.



Why you should listen to nature sounds

Nature sounds can be a great way to help your body relax and feel calmer. Listening to these natural sounds will also boost your concentration and focus while working, or studying

Water flowing over pebbles in a stream, birds calling to each other in a forest, the wind blowing across a pasture, waves lapping at the beach, a waterfall thundering down... When feeling tired, stressed or distracted, you've probably used nature sounds to soothe your nerves or help you focus. It's a growing trend, especially among school-going children. The soothing sounds help relieve the stress of exams, and since they're listening to these sounds they don't notice external disturbances and can, therefore, focus better. It's like meditation, except easier to perform, and you already got the tools to get started

But how does listening to natural sounds help you relax? Researchers at Brighton and Sussex Medical School tested 17 people to find out. The process was simple, participants listened to five-minute clips of natural sounds while their brain activity was measured with an MRI scanner. In addition, their breathing, heart rate, attention span and reaction time were measured as well. Their findings were interesting, and shed light on how these sounds help reduce anxiety. Participants listening to nature sounds had outward-directed attention, whereas

those listening to artificial sounds had inward-directed attention. What does this mean? In a nutshell, when you're worrying about yourself, your appearance, your abilities, your attention is directed inwards, at yourself. When you're thinking about others or the world in general, your attention is outward-directed. Inward-directed attention often leads to rumination and over-thinking, so it's usually a cause of stress and worrying

The researchers also found changes in the heart rate and autonomic nervous system response. In general, the changes were bigger in people who started out with high stress levels. These findings state hard facts, and cement what people have believed for years. Now that we know nature-based sounds do in fact help, let's go over some ways in which they do. They aren't just for stress relief, they have many other benefits as well

1. They help you focus

Whether it's work, studies or particularly boring paperwork, if you need to block out external distractions and improve your focus, natural sounds are a great solution. They're more-or-less like white noise in this regard, café sounds or the noise of a fan, for example, except they're a little more pleasant. Distractions can be hard to overcome. We've all had those days when we simply can't stop looking at our phone. Even if you turn it to silent, you can see the screen light up with notifications. Don't try to resist, just play these sounds instead, and you'll forget about checking your phone in no time

2. They help you relax

The sounds of nature make you feel like you're out in the middle of a forest, or near a river. You can close your eyes

and imagine you're on a camping trip. The effect is amazingly relaxing. You know how you feel nice and sleepy when it rains? It's a little like that. These sounds are very soothing, and you'll feel better within 10-15 minutes of listening to sounds of nature. This is great for when you're feeling tired or anxious, but also works when you're upset. All you need is some time to let your brain rest, and these help you do exactly that

3. They help you fix your sleep cycle

Sleeplessness is sadly common in today's world, with one in four Americans developing insomnia each year. Nature sounds are a great solution. The soothing sounds block out external noises, and the repetition slowly lulls you to sleep and gives you a deeper sleep. Whether your problem is distractions (thoughts), stress or disturbance, these sounds will help you overcome them. Of course, nature-based sounds can't replace actual medication – so if your problem is severe, you should most definitely consult a doctor

4. They have zero side effects

As long as you follow common sense, listening to natural sounds has absolutely no side effects on either your brain or your body. In other words, there's just about no way listening to sounds from nature can negatively impact your health. There are a couple of minor things, listening to water sounds might make you have to go to the bathroom more often, for instance, and playing at a very loud volume might cause problems. As I said before, use your common sense. However, there are no actual risks associated with it





5. They are not addictive

Say you listened to ocean sounds for a couple of years and upped your productivity levels. If you need to stop for some reason (e.g., if you don't have internet), you won't have any trouble. Unlike other focus aids that slowly make you dependent on them, natural sounds are not addictive. Of course, if you have noisy co-workers or neighbors that like to play drums at midnight you'll hear those. You won't avail the benefits of these sounds, in short. But will you experience any withdrawal symptoms? Never. So these were some of the benefits of listening to nature sound clips. However, there are many, many more!

A personal experience

Natural sounds help you relax and focus, have no side-effects, and are very easy to both find, and listen to. Part of its appeal is because of this, there is no downside and

it costs nothing to try, so people think why not give it a shot. I felt similarly. My issue was focusing at work and blocking out distractions. I'd disabled notifications and put both my phone and computer on silent, but I still found myself spending hours every week browsing and just checking my email, over and over. I tried classical music after reading about it somewhere, found it too distracting, and finally stumbled across rain sounds. I played them for a couple of hours while working, and the results were great, my concentration improved a lot

I now rarely feel the urge to check my email or messages, because I can focus so much better on what I'm doing. The only difficult part, in my experience, is finding a track you like. If you end up listening to a clip you don't like for a couple of hours, you might get annoyed and start to think nature sounds aren't for you. So I suggest you take your time to look around, try a bunch of clips on the weekend while doing some reading, and get an idea of what works for you. There are many categories of nature sounds to choose from

Now, let's quickly go over the process. It's really rather simple – just pick a soundtrack you like, adjust the volume till you're comfortable, get comfortable in your bed, or chair, and then lie back and listen to the sounds. Try to imagine the sounds as coming from around you. In other words, move yourself from your home or office to a forest, or beach, or riverside. In 10-15 minutes you should start to feel better. Nowadays you can listen to these natural sounds wherever you are, with the help of your phone and an internet connection. You can also find sounds of just about anything on YouTube, which you probably already have installed on your phone

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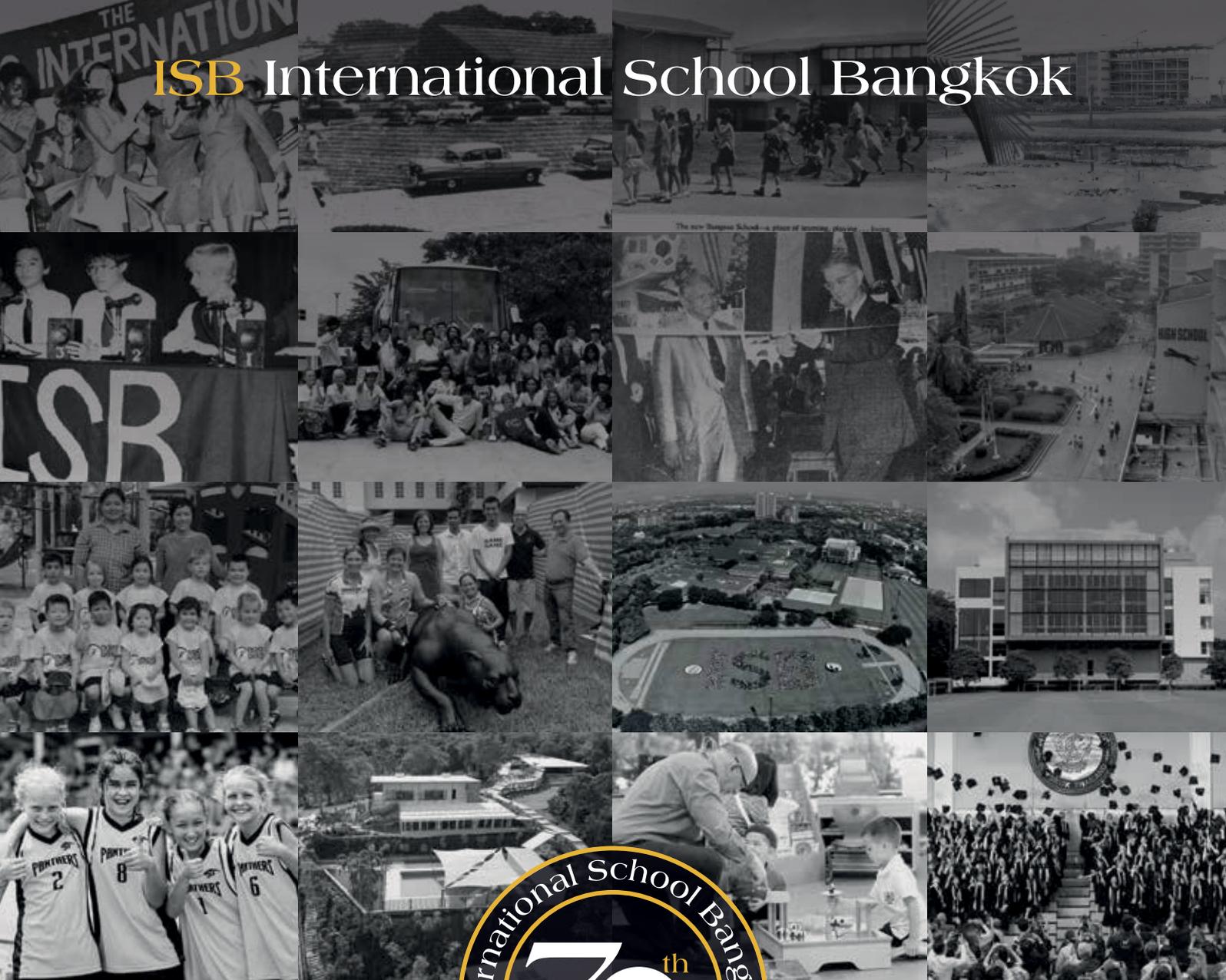
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