



#596

July/August 2012



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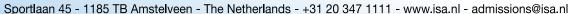
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Chairman's Corner



Such a lot has happened during the last month. Thanks to Tracey and Rebecca for organizing the Blind Date. As usual the men applied late and we had far more women than men. I am not convinced there are more women in the city, I just think they are braver.

This brings me on to a serious point. I was recently speaking to someone, who has developed a personal kit to check if a drink has been spiked, about the date rape drug GHB. I said I thought it was not such a big problem in this country. His response was that the police preferred not to make a big fuss as they thought that would make the matter worse. By coincidence my secretary spoke about the same thing and said she no longer left her drink unattended whilst dancing or visiting the toilet for fear her drink would be spiked. So it seems the problem is bigger than the authorities are willing to admit. Therefore my advice is to be aware and make sure if you have children that they are informed about the dangers as well!

Turning to more pleasant thoughts, on behalf of the British Society, I attended the Queen's Birthday garden party held in the beautiful grounds of the British Ambassador's residence. I know it's a difficult job but someone has to do it! It was a great occasion and a real celebration of British culture including fish and chips, served by Jamie Oliver's 'Fifteen' restaurant in Amsterdam. We also had John Smiths beer and Strongbow cider. I am not sure if you know it but both are owned by Heineken via Scotland and Newcastle. Like Jaguar, they may no longer be British owned, but they are still made in the UK!

June has been a month of Diamond jubilee celebrations and it also marks for us a very special moment. After 595 continuous editions stretching back over 56 years, we have decided that we are going to stop with the printed version of the bulletin. Huge thanks have to go to Martin from Drukkerij Confiance for his superb layout and eye catching front page designs. He and Jan van den Berg have worked very hard with us since September 2010 to produce the high quality bulletin we have all enjoyed.

The move to a digital bulletin has been a hard decision to make and I know for some members without internet access, it may come as a disappointment, but it's the reality of the world we live in. The bulletin costs over €3 an issue and the costs are not covered by the advertising revenue. Thus it is currently being subsidised from the members' subscriptions. It also takes longer to produce, is more labour intensive and, because we need to keep within so many pages, we often cannot fit in all the articles we would like.

Finally, I am afraid people do not have the time any longer, so this is a practical response. I am of the opinion that this change, like the last when we changed the format from A4 to A5, actually represents an opportunity. Critical however is that your email address is up to date. Thus the issue for July/August will be sent by post and the new style bulletin via an email link. If you do not get both then our database may be incorrect. If this is the case, please will you get in touch with our membership secretary Gillian Brooks gillianbrooks55@yahoo.co.uk.

Finally, I will avoid mentioning the football for fear of upsetting someone. I will say however if you are going to London for the Olympics I am very envious, I had no joy with tickets. If you are staying at home like me then let's hope the weather improves and we can enjoy a feast of sporting success.

Regards,

Stephen

email: chair@britsoc.nl



THIS IS NOW

Introducing the ZINE

ear Member,

Following many requests and to keep up with the digital age, we have decided to deliver the BritSoc bulletin by web link in an email from the July/August 2012 issue onwards.

This means that in future each member will receive an email with a web link which will bring you to a page with an easy to read on screen magazine in a brand new format.

This new digital format means we will be less limited for space than we have been with a printed version. It means we can expand the issues with more photos of events and more useful information for our members.

The name of the new "magazine" is ZINE ("seen") and will be a far more BritSoc community-based, interactive magazine packed full of colour photos, information and inspiration.

Your new magazine will be easier to access with all information to hand on your computer or mobile device. In addition, we feel it is a more eco-friendly and efficient way of getting our latest news to our membership.

As a final souvenir, the July/ August issue will be also sent in a printed form, but from September we will be stopping with this printed format.

An online version of the bulletin opens up many opportunities for our members to contribute news, articles and ideas, share opinions, give tips and advice about living in Holland and send in photos.

Why not share details of fun activities coming up or of fun had and worth telling the society about. Contributions can be large or small as we are no longer limited for space, even a quote or a joke would do.

We hope you will be inspired to send your ideas, one-liners, pictures and colourful contributions to editor@britsoc.nl.

Should you wish to receive the email link version of the magazine but have a preferred email ad dress, please email this preference to editor@britsoc.nl quoting "Bulletin email address" your full name and home address and the email address preferred.

We hope we can keep everyone informed in a way which best suits their lifestyle. With best wishes,

Stephen Huyton

Chairman

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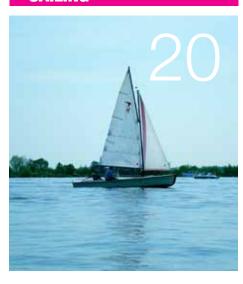
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CHAMPAGNE TASTING



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Member of The British Society of Amsterdam

FAMILY



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Britsocmagazine

ISSUE N. 596

EDITORIAL

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Date: Friday 6th July

This hotel bar is truly unique and a little chique. An intimate, elegant, design hotel, lying by the border of Amsterdam's Museum Quarter. This 4-star hotel is actually run by students, under the supervision of world-class professionals, offering a charming experience in a stunning, listed, original 19th century school building. The bar in the hotel is warm and vibrant offering a great terrace outside.

Watch out for us near the standing tables in the corner, otherwise inside the bar area if the weather does not allow us to be outside. Tracey will be wearing the famous pink scarf.

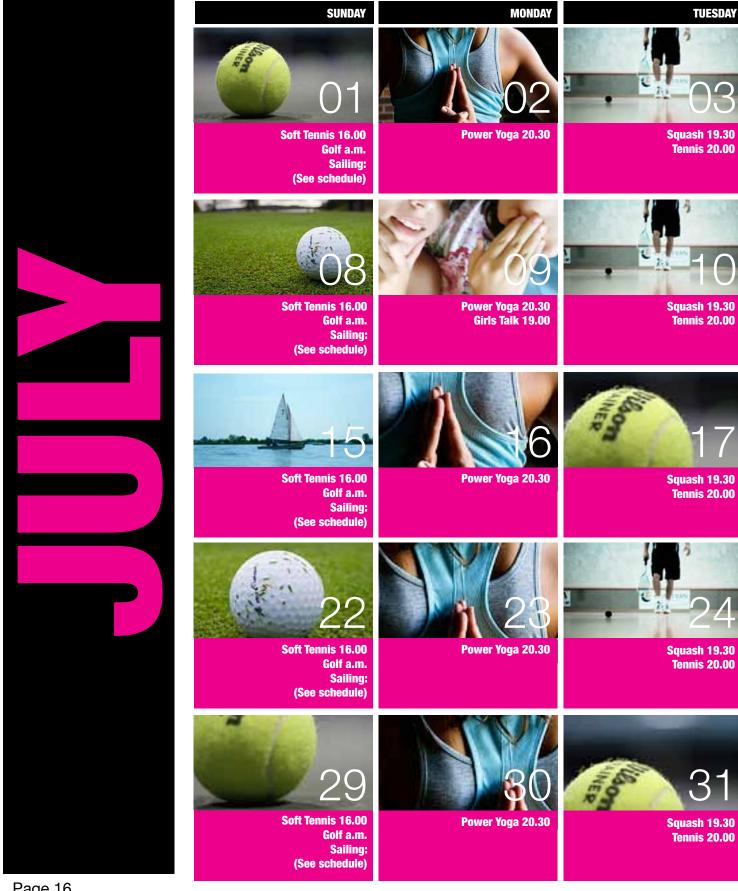
Social Fridays is a place to meet new people and catch up with friends – all welcome. Non-members are welcome too. No attendance list. Just show up!







EVENTS

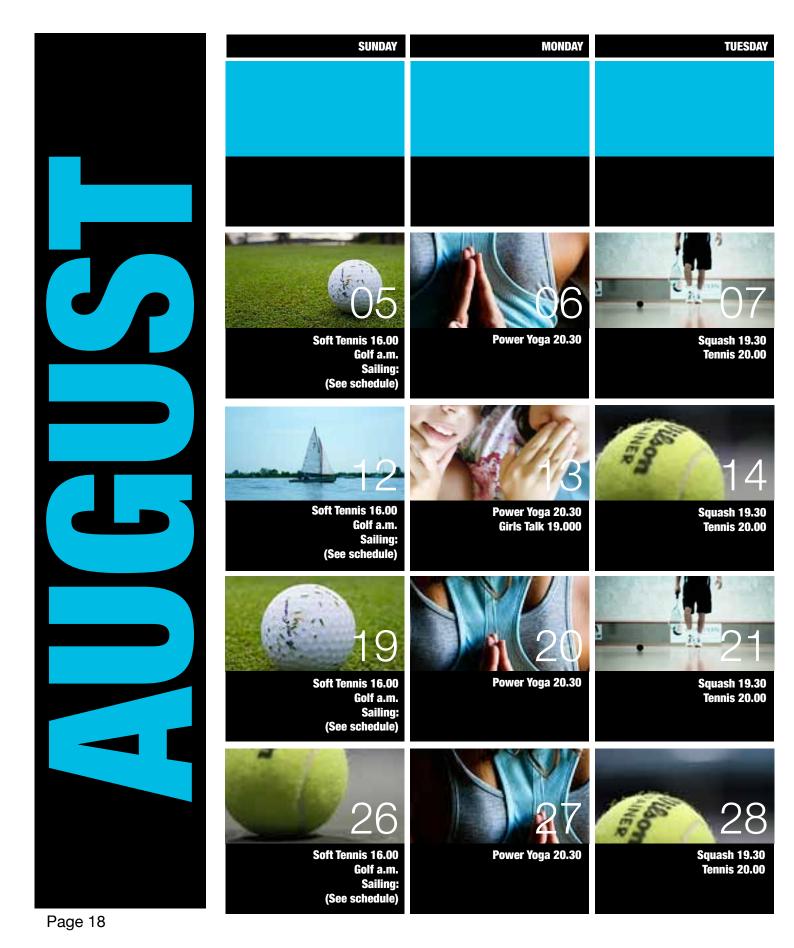


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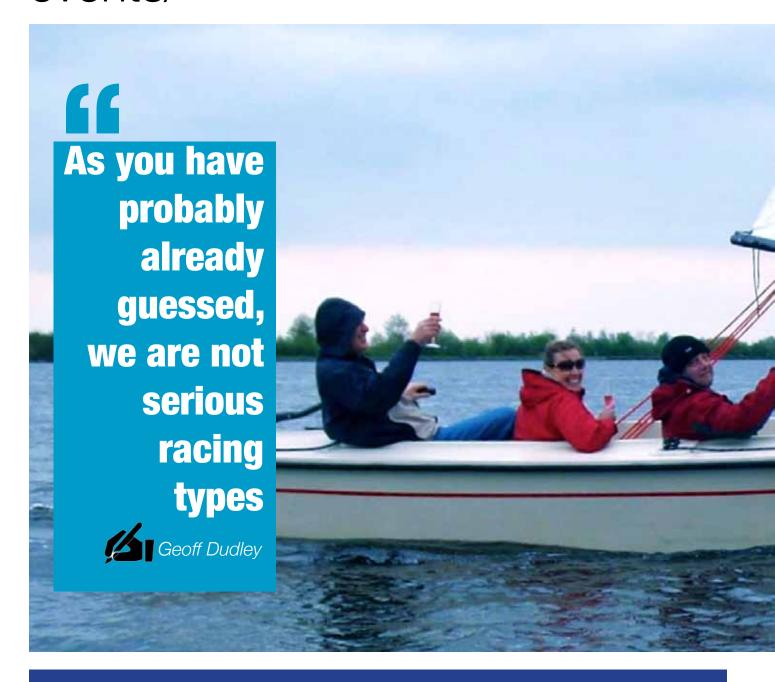
EVENTS



CALENDAR



events/



SAILING—SEASON 2012

Hi Sailors,

The dates for the second half of the year (all Saturdays) will be:

July 21st (Kaag) August 11 (Kaag) September 1st (Loosdrecht) September 15th (Kaag)





I would particularly like to hear from any skippers out there willing to lend their services from time to time. ____

Kaag events will be afternoon sailing + BBQ. Loosdrecht events will be full day sailing with picnic lunch on an island. You can see from the BritSoc website under Sailing who has signed up.

Skippers....

Since the number of participants is limited by the number of skippers (and I really feel happier with one more skipper than the minimum), please see if you can come on July 21st or any of the new dates.

As you have probably already guessed, we are not serious racing types (though friendly races are encouraged) but rather focus on the social side of the sport. Beginners are most welcome - we just need to ensure that we have enough skippers for the number of boats we need.

I would particularly like to hear from any skippers out there willing to lend their services from time to time.

We can usually find lifts for those without transport. I prefer to arrange everything as far as possible by e-mail and there is a link from the BritSoc website to pages that give you more details including who has signed up for the next sailing day.

The boats we hire for € 70/day are generally Valks, stable gaff-rigged fixed-keel boats with space for 2-5.

Cheers

Geoff Dudley <geoff.dudley@planet.nl>

events/



CHAMPAGNE TASTING 2012

British Society - Taste & Tintle

It's here again for a third year running, back by popular demand, our yearly Champagne Tasting Grand Summer Event (after the Olympics that is..)



Champagne Tasting includes a welcome bubbly Frizzante Rosato Scavi & Ray.

Followed by Prosecco Spumante DOCG, Cava Rosado Gíro Ríbot, Cremant de Luxembourg,

And finally Franciacorta Brut Villa.

Singel 80 Amsterdam 4 Aug 2012 16:00-18:00

€57.50





Taste and discover exciting, high quality Sparkling Wines & Champagne from different regions of the world.

After the welcome bubbly you will taste 4 different Sparkling wines accompanied by a large selection of delicious Anti Pasti and Fingerfood: cherry tomatoes with mozzarella and pesto, vitello tonnato bruschetta, mushrooms and pastrami toast, smoked salmon and capers, stuffed vine leaves, And cheese truffles with herbs

...hmmmmmm.



We will cater for a minimum of 10 persons, maximum 22 – prepayment is a requirement.

This Event always proves very popular with members and non-members alike due to the excellent and professional presentation by our Hosts, Taste & Tintle.

I would advise you to book early avoid disappointment.

Contact:

For details on how to book your place and also for any questions you may have, please contact Elizabeth Kelly.

Email: e.kellij1@kpnplanet.nl.

Happy Tasting.

"So, you think you have a brain, you think you are a smartie, you think you can be a member of Mensa? Well..."



events/ review

BRITSOC PUB QUIZ

Molly Malone's Irish Bar

Tuesday 8th May 2012

By Gillian Brooks, membership secretary

What is the capital of Macedonia? How many Muppets do you know? How well do you know your cocktails? 1990's music??? What is ascorbic acid? Who the ... are U2?

What a dunce I am — and if I had one, I would wear my dunce's hat at the next Britsoc pub quiz.

I teamed up with Elizabeth Kelly — a much more knowledgeable dunce than me – and a huge supporter of BRITSOC and its activities.

Our team mates, who we desperately needed to keep our reputations intact, were a lovely couple — a darling American lady from Chicago with her Irish hubbie — Nicole and Stuart Ryan — who have been members for about 18 months and join in many of BRITSOC's activities. They have a young daughter and hopefully will be persuaded to become more active members — maybe volunteers!!

It was held at Molly Malone's Irish Bar, a stone's throw from Central Station, exactly behind the Nicolaaskerk, bottom of the Zeedijk, but even with all this map information, it took me ages to find the bar, and even now I know where it is, I will probably never find it again without Tom-Tom!!

The first set of questions were about the contents of cocktails and we were lucky that Nicole had worked as a bar waitress and had specific knowledge about "cocktail contents".

The last set of questions were all about The Muppets characters and again we were lucky that Nicole and Ryan had watched a

Muppets movie the previous evening.

What did surprise us — and there were many surprises of our ignorance — was that none of us had any idea what the London Olympics mascots were.

I watch the BBC News every day and Sky News most days but have never heard any information about the mascots!

So, for those Britsoccers who are also in the dark regarding this important information — the names are — Wenlock and Mandeville — yes, yes, I know, it was on the tip of your tongue — but what bright spark came up with these names ??

Many thanks, as always, to Mikaela and Wouter, who have made a huge contribution in event-organising, for making this lovely event such fun and I hope they will arrange another Pub Quiz soon.

Our team came away with a bottle of wine and €20 — (I took home the wine) but Elizabeth and I must give the credit to our hubbie and wife team members, Stuart and Nicole Ryan — we couldn't have done it without them!!! (Book them in for your next Pub Quiz night!!)

Till next time

Gillian Brooks,

Membership Secretary

events/ review

Just giving by cycling through Holland



A very dear friend of mine, Alex Smith, is coming to Holland with a team of cyclists for a 5 day charity cycling trip. They have all trained hard and will do quite a distance in those 5 days. It is to create an awareness for the disease MS (Multiple Sclerosis). MS is not directly inherited - unlike some conditions, like cystic fibrosis for example, there is no single gene that causes it. It's likely that a combination of genes make some people more susceptible to developing MS, but not everyone with this gene combination will develop MS. Genes are only part of the story.

It is not clear why people further away from the equator are more likely to get MS, but it is possible that something in the environment, perhaps bacteria or a virus, plays a role. No single virus has been identified as definitely contributing to MS, but there is growing evidence that a common childhood virus, may act as a trigger. There is also a growing amount of research that suggests that a lack of vitamin D could be a factor in causing MS.

MS is complex, and has many symptoms. Symptoms might include fatigue, vision problems and difficulties with walking, but MS is different for everyone. There is still so much to discover about MS and it is therefore so important that more support is given. My support is definitely going out to my good friend Alex who is supporting this charity so well. Hoping everyone can help out and support him too by going to www.justgiving.com/Alex-Smith83

Hereby his own story and the route he will be taking. Thanks! Mikaela Lodder

Let me tell you about the Dutch ride, give you some dates and tell you how you will be able to follow me and show your support, which would be really appreciated.

The dates for the ride through Holland is from Sunday 8th to Saturday 14th July 2012 so not long left, more training to do and very much looking forward to exploring this country by bike.

There is the occasional pit stop on the way. We are given a map at the beginning of each day, showing the final route so map reading as well as trying to keep a 75 rpm on the bike and about a steady 18mph will make it interesting.

Please support me in supporting my chosen charity. Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is something that I am very close to and believe it is a very important charity.

Thanks for taking the time to visit my
JustGiving page (see below). Donating through
JustGiving is totally secure and your money goes
directly to my charity. Please make sure Gift Aid is
reclaimed if you are a UK taxpayer.

So please dig deep, donate and support MS.

Thank you,

Alex Smith



interview of the month/



An interview with Liesl Olivier, owner of The English Bookshop, Amsterdam.



One of the oldest English bookshops in town.

Liesl Olivier is the owner and proprietor of The English Bookshop, Lauriergracht 71 in Amsterdam. Having been in this spot for 38 years, it's one of the oldest English bookshops in town.

The art of conversation lives on.

Always ready for a good chat, BritSoc members know Liesl for her upbeat and smart conversation, which has obviously contributed to the shop's success.

IT'S CALLED THE ENGLISH BOOKSHOP

THERE'S SO MUCH MORE THAN A BOOK AND A SHOP



A full
High Tea, by
appointment,
of course.

"

Hard work has its rewards.

Liesl arrive here 11 years ago from London where she worked in Asset Management, having left Cape Town, where she was born and grew up. She took over the English Bookshop in 2005 and has worked hard since to grow and diversify the business.

So much more than a bookshop.

The shop has 6000 titles in stock, which is quite small by Amsterdam standards, but relies on a good choice and fast turn around. The nice selection, easy on the eye display

and the personal touch make for a welcoming visit....and it's much more than a bookshop!

Tea and scones anyone?

The homely atmosphere is complete with English tea and scones with jam and cream and catering extends to a full High Tea – by appointment, of course.

Drop by for a chat.

Sitting in the shop on a Saturday afternoon, it's hard not to get involved in the networking and conversation as people pop in and out.>>

So many things to do.

Organising events is a large part of Liesl's plan, keeping her clients in the mix with a large choice of literary things to do. There are story telling and book clubs, a writing school, critiquing classes in fiction, non-fiction and poetry and Scrabble afternoons. In fact, there's an event for every category in the shop and for every visitor.

City Walks.

There are even organised city walks, excellent for the new guests and tourists.

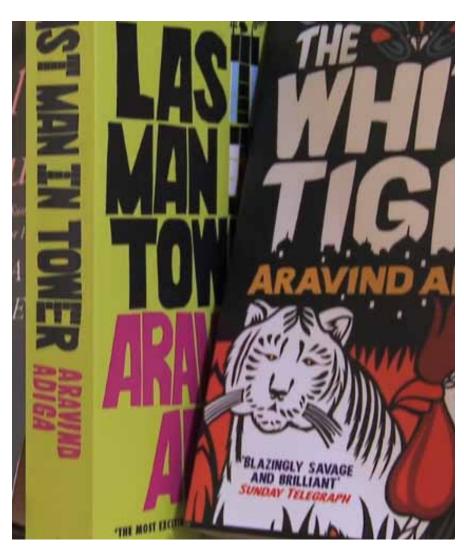
Special City Walks discount.

As a special offer, Liesl is offering BritSoc members 10% discount on City Walks departing from The English Bookshop.

A full listing of all events can be found on

www.englishbookshop.nl







This Mo Lies has kindly donated this month's personant for the first personant

Cool reads for hot days

Liesl's choices for summer reading are:

Hillary Mantel, "Bring out the bodies" € 15.95. Caitlin Moran, "How to be a woman" € 11.90. Damon Galgut, "In a strange room" € 11.90



As all children know, you can fly if you read the right book.

Downstairs in the children's section, soft sofas and cuddly toys are just as prominent as the books - most kids would not want to leave!

The British School.

The shop supplies and supports The British School, The International School and several local Dutch schools.

eBooks or Real Books?

The eBook station in the store allows customers to browse virtual and/or "real" books. make a choice in either medium and then pay in good old-fashioned cash.

Bookshops of some sort will always be around.

Liesl is obviously passionate about books and her business. In an ever-changing world of publication she finds it very important to be up to date and prepared for change. She believes that bookshops of some sort will always be around, but may become more "vehicles" for other things. She is already moving on this belief; taking on more projects to bring the shop to the community and broadening the horizons beyond books.

As a special offer, Liesl is offering BritSoc members 10% discount on City Walks departing from The English Bookshop.





Ian Cherington

onth's Photo Competition Prize.

photo quiz prize. A €20 book token to be redeemed at The English Bookshop n to identify the locations in the photos – see page (XX)

photo/summer quiz

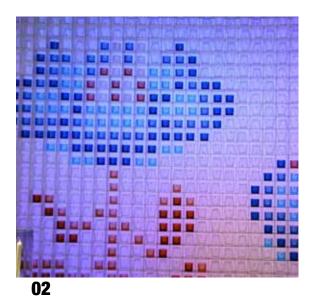


HOW TO ENTER: Alright you beady-eyed BritSoccers, where in Amsterdam do you think these photos were taken? The first person with the most correct answers (drawn out of Alison's floppy summer hat after the August deadline) will win a €20 book voucher—to be spent at the English Bookshop in Amsterdam. You have all summer to wander around Amsterdam to find the correct answers. Deadline August 30, 2012: Please email your answers before August 30, 2012 to: editor@britsoc.nl.

Photo Competition **Amsterdam**



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03



04











Win a €20 Book Voucher

to be spent at The English Bookshop

family/

"Standing at a quayside and looking over a sea of grass is definitely uncanny."

Schokland

is about an hour's drive from Amsterdam up the A6.

It is the first UNESCO World Heritage site in the Netherlands.

Why? Because it vividly portrays the Dutch struggle with water.

UNTIL

the creation of the Noordoostpolder in the early 1940's, Schokland was a small Island in the former Zuiderzee. Now it is part of the mainland, but thanks to a clever bit of water engineering and tree planting, the outline of the island has clearly been preserved. It is just 4 km long and between 100 and 500 m wide.

Luc, Nienke and I cycled up to Schokland

(we live nearby in Kampen) and spent a day touring the island. You can park at the visitor's centre and either walk around or hire a bike (at the visitor centre 7.50 euros for the day with a 25 euros deposit per bike).

Schokland is a place where you walk through history. We started at the visitor's centre located in one of the former villages. There you get a good rundown of the island's history (a gripping story so I won't spill the beans). There is a good range of exhibits and several informative videos.

One you've familiarised yourself with the island's history it's time to set off and walk or cycle its outline.

Standing at a quayside and looking over a sea of grass is definitely uncanny. Dotted around the island are a series of colourful information boards for children with stories of the island's history (in Dutch and English).

And if you like wildlife you can enjoy a walk through the wetlands on the east side of the island near the visitor's centre.



e spent a good 4 hours going around the island and taking it all in. Its extensive website www.schokland.nl is in Dutch and English and gives a thorough and honest impression of what you can see and do.

This is an ideal place for a summer day out. After visiting the Island you may want to pop down to the nearby Schokkerhaven like we did.

Besides the marina, there is a simple beach where the children can play with a good restaurant overlooking it www.restaurantschokkerhaven.nl.

Alternatively you may want to visit the nearby historic fishing village of Urk with its picturesque harbour and several good fish restaurants (at and around the harbour).

The official tourist information site is unfortunately in Dutch only but it does give a good photo impression of the village.





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Come and see for yourselves what we have to offer. If you would like to make an appointment to visit the school or would like more information please contact us.

> The British School of Amsterdam Anthonie van Dijckstraat 1, 1077 ME Amsterdam Telephone + 31 (0) 20 6797840 www. britams.nl

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travel/tibet

When Siri Weirum, a Norwegian lady, took early retirement from her job as manager at Oslo's Red Cross, who would have thought she would travel half way across the world to help people less fortunate than herself.





The British School of Amsterdam recently had the pleasure to meet Siri at the School when she accompanied Tibetan Lama – Geshe Pema Dorjee - to give talks to the pupils.

It all began when Siri came across an article in a Norwegian newspaper looking for European 'Senior' citizens to go to developing countries to work as volunteers.

Without hesitation Siri got in touch and 2 months later found herself on a plane to Delhi. First she stayed with a host family in Jaipur (Rajasthan) before travelling further north to help out in a nursery/primary school for a duration of 3 months.

During her free time, Siri together with other European volunteers, would visit places of interest in the area. Due to cold winter weather, the camp where she stayed closed earlier than planned, leaving Siri with some free time before heading back to Europe to spend Christmas with her family.

iri decided to visit Dharamsala for a second time. This is the seat of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile. On her last day before flying back home she visited a local shop to buy some gifts for her family. Struggling to communicate with the shopkeeper, a warm, friendly gentleman dressed in Bhuddist attire offered a helping hand. The distinctly dressed man was Tibetan Lama, Pema Dorjee. Siri and Pema la started talking and when Pema la learnt of Siri's Norwegian roots, he offered to give her a book written in Swedish about his childhood in Tibet and gave her his contact details, but, to Siri's dismay, she misplaced them.

In a crowd of thousands of people she ran into Pema la again

After the Christmas break Siri returned to Dharamasala to visit the residence, monastery, and temple of H.H the Dalai Lama to attend talks. In a crowd of thousands of people she ran into Pema la again. Delighted to see each other they decided to meet up for tea.

It was during this meeting that Siri learnt of the many humanitarian projects that Pema la was involved with in both Nepal and the North of India.

Intrigued and inspired Siri asked how she could help. At the time Pema la was trying to raise funds to rebuild a broken down bridge connecting two parts of a remote village. After hearing how much money was needed, Siri offered to pay for the project. However, Pema la persuaded Siri that instead of just donating the money, to accompany him on a planned trip to Nepal so she could see the situation first hand. Siri agreed and it wasn't before long that she was involved in a project to build a Community Hall for the villagers of Rathankot.

The time spent in India and Nepal has been life changing. Siri loves being in India and decided to give up her 'Western comforts' and rent a flat in Dharamsala where she is most of the year. Siri spends her time giving English conversation classes to young Tibetan Buddhist monks or travels to the remote project areas in the Himalayan regions of India and Nepal.

Siri's life is motivating and rewarding to be able to help others and see that her

efforts actually make a difference to the lives of the individual people. At present Siri is working with Pema Ia on a project to build a nunnery/girls' school in Lumla, Arunachal Pradesh, in the north-east of India. The aim of the nunnery/school is to provide poor and orphaned young girls with a safe home and modern education based on their Buddhist cultural background.

Many of the villages on the Himalayan mountainsides can only be reached by foot, some of them taking several days of walking to reach from Lumla. Few people from the outside world visit these remote villages and, when Pema la and Siri arrived after days of trekking, they came to places where Siri was the first Western woman the villagers had ever seen. Not only did this cause excitement amongst the locals but also fear in some of the children who had never seen blond hair and blue eyes before.

Siri often says 'I learn a lot from the people I meet. They may be materially poor, but spiritually they are very rich. We in the West have a lot to learn from the East'.

Tara Bodong foundation

Stichting Tara Bodong (the Netherlands) is a charitable foundation that supports humanitarian projects in the north of India and Nepal. The projects are initiated locally and overseen by Geshe Pema Dorjee.

The BSA continues to support the charity by bringing awareness of the projects to the public and creating various fund raising initiatives within the school.

If you would like to support the Bodong Nunnery Project, here are the details:-

Email: stichting.tarabodong@gmail.com

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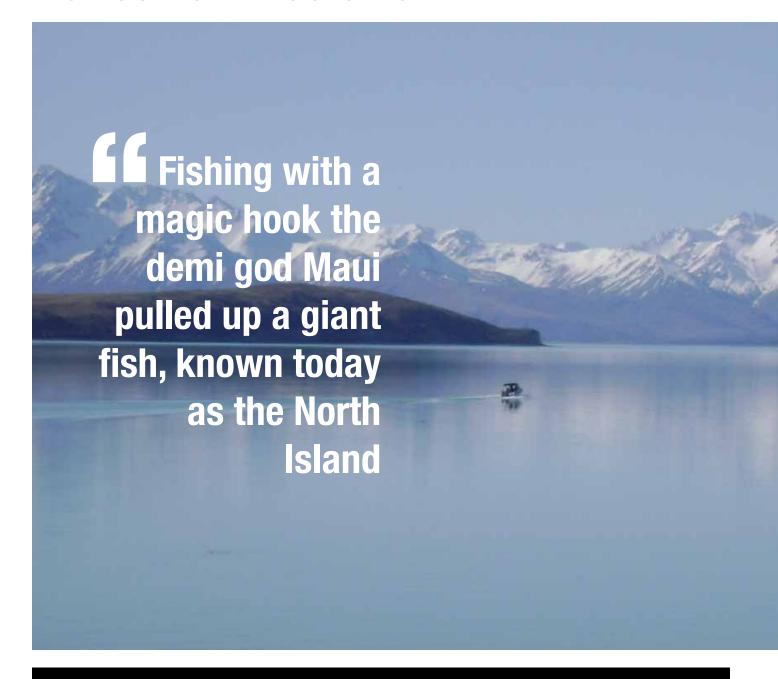


The time spent in India and Nepal has been life changing





travel/new zealand



NEW ZEALAND

STUNNING BEAUTY, SPECTACULAR WILDLIFE AND FRIENDLY PEOPLE



Thinking of going on holiday? Even though it might seem worlds away, New Zealand, located in the Pacific Ocean, is definitely worth the journey. New Zealand or Aotearoa, as it's known in Maori, is a country of stunning beauty, spectacular wildlife, pristine coastline and friendly people. Split into three islands: North, South and Stewart Island, it will keep you busy exploring the fascinating extremes the country has to offer.



Whale watching in Kaikoura, wine tasting and tiny blue penguins in Oamaru

According to Maori legend, Maui, a demi god and his brothers went out fishing in their waka, or canoe, dropped a magic fish hook and pulled up a giant fish, known today as the North Island. The South Island is believed to be the waka of Maui and Stewart Island the anchor. Even though Maoris are a minority, they are the largest one and so play a strong role in New Zealand life. Their woodcarving skills and work with jade is unique and an opportunity of seeing one of the Maori cultural performances is not to be missed.

The South Island, with its more relaxed

atmosphere, is home to some of the country's tourism highlights, including helicopter flights over the glaciers, whale watching in Kaikoura, wine tasting and seeing tiny blue penguins in Oamaru, to name but a few.

The fact that the country sits on a fault line draws a lot of visitors to geothermal areas and visits to the hot pools in Rotorua in the North Island are highly recommended. Art Deco Napier and Wellington are worth a visit and if the quieter, more remote areas are your thing, then the Coromandel Peninsula should be added to your list.>>

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For all the culture fanatics, the World of Wearable Art Show, in Wellington is well worth seeing.

www.worldofwearableart.com

Even if your passion isn't fashion, it's such a professional, theatrical show, you won't want to miss it.

The WOW Art competition is a platform for costume makers and designers to design pieces of art for the various categories of the competition but the art all has to be wearable, as models have to wear it in the show.

This year the show is being held between

27 September and 7 October.









New Zealand's location comes with a price however; as the city of Christchurch was damaged badly during its last earthquake. It is slowly but surely recovering and is once again becoming a popular destination with visitors from the world over.

If you're interested in reading more about New Zealand, have a look at my blog: www.blog.travelpod.com/travel-blog/flyingbat/1/tpod.html





food glorious/

aren Vivers, originally from Scotland, has lived here in Amsterdam for more than 12 years, and has set up the Cooking Coach to help inspire people to get back into the kitchen. The basis of the cooking lessons are easy, tasty, healthy recipes. Each course starts with a free introduction session, to make sure that you only cook what you like to eat.

As well as cooking lessons, Karen offers Culinary Tours in Amsterdam, is a passionate Food Blogger and works freelance as a Culinary Consultant.

Greek Kebabs with Tzatzki

Summer is here! Time to get the barbeque out! Although, just in case, I have written this kebab recipe so that it is suitable to be prepared indoors – you never know!

Greek food is often overlooked, but there are some real gems, great fresh herb combinations and lots of versatile uses for lamb and veggies. I've chosen a couple of classics for you to try.

Ingredients for 4 portions

For the Kebabs

250gr beef mince

250gr lamb mince

1 x large red onion, peeled and grated

2 x tsp dried oregano

Handful of flat parsley leaves chopped finely

1 x tsp salt

About a tbsp of olive oil in a non-stick pan to fry off the kebabs.

To Serve

8 x Arabic flat bread (or pita breads)

8 x medium tomatoes, each chopped into 3 thick slices.

1 large red onion chopped into thin rings

Handful of flat parsley leaves chopped roughly

1 x lemon, quartered

Tzatziki (see separate recipe)

Baking parchment to hold the kebabs whilst you eat!

Method

Mix the kebab ingredients together in a bowl – best with your hands.

Roll the mix into 8 x rough sausage shapes, flatten them a little (just makes it easier to cook evenly) and place them in the fridge for about 20 minutes. This just helps them stay together when cooking.

Heat the oil in your pan. Note this method is for indoor cooking, you can of course wrap the meat around metal skewers for the barbeque or for a grill pan. I have just simplified it a little.

Place the kebabs and the tomatoes in your pan to cook. You may need to do this in a couple of batches depending on the size of your pan. The kebabs and the tomatoes will probably take about 4 minutes each side.

Spread out your pita on a plate on top of an oblong of baking parchment that is about half the diameter of your bread (or enough to wrap around and make it easier to eat).

Once cooked, place a kebab in the middle of your bread, and one of the cooked tomatoes (3 slices), sprinkle over parsley and red onion, and about 2 x tbsp of tzatziki.

Fold up the bottom end of the bread, and then the sides, wrap the baking parchment around and serve with a piece of lemon to squeeze over should you wish.

Tips

If you use pita breads, you can slice them open and fill with the kebabs and dressings.

This is delicious, but a little messy to eat, you may want to have plenty of napkins to hand!

As I mentioned, this recipe is designed to cook indoors in a pan but is really great on the barbeque.

Try serving with some rice or couscous instead of bread.

For the Tzatziki

2 x large cloves of garlic, crushed Large handful of mint leaves, chopped Salt to taste

1 x tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2 x small Turkish cucumbers sliced very thinly (or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a medium, normal cucumber)

250gr Greek Yogurt, with the liquid strained off.

Method

Place all the ingredients in a bowl and mix through. Leave for about 20 minutes before serving, just gives time for the flavours to mix, mingle and marinade the cucumber.

Tips

You can also use plain natural yogurt, but it may become a little bit watery.

Try with low fat Greek Yogurt.

Try swapping the mint for dill.

This is a simplified version of tzatziki. The more traditional way involves removing the seeds and the skin of the cucumber, then grating the flesh, allowing it to drain in a sieve or you can put it in a clean tea-towel and squeeze out the excess liquid.

For a dip, use half yogurt and half crème fraiche – serve with lots of pitta bread to dip.

This is a great accompaniment to kebabs or barbecued meats – great with lamb!





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