

ASIA Reader's digest

**MOST
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MOST
READ**

Why the Great Outdoors Is

NATURE'S BEST PRESCRIPTION

PAGE 30

**Etiquette
Questions
Answered**

PAGE 58

**Last Chance
to Save the
Siberian Tiger**

PAGE 70

BONUS READ

Contest with Cancer One Couple's Victory

PAGE 98

Holidaying in an Indian Palace

PAGE 90

Tips to De-Stress This Holiday Season16

Laughter, the Best Medicine48

Word Power127



DECEMBER 2017
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MALAYSIA RM 15
PHILIPPINES P 199**

Editor's Note

The Magic of Nature

MY GRANDPARENTS lived on a peach orchard in a valley. It was surrounded by grazing land and backed onto a river. The countryside was constantly changing and never dull. After lunch, we'd all head off for a walk - we never knew what we'd find, and it didn't matter. I remember my father, who was often worn down by work, was always happy, cheeky and playful when he was leading us on a walk through the paddocks and bushland. In 'The Nature Cure' on page 30, health journalist Florence Williams investigates the science behind why being outdoors makes us happier and healthier. For me, it makes perfect sense.

A week doesn't go by when I'm not asked to consider the fairies in our garden. My six year old leaves glitter paths under bushes to help lure the tiny winged people she believes live among us. While we encourage and feed her imagination with these whimsical ideas, it seems in faraway chilly Iceland, grown-ups are happily convinced that elves - close relatives of fairies - exist. In 'Don't Mess with Elves!' on page 42, travel writer William Ecenbarger visits the Icelandic countryside to learn about the lengths the local planning authorities will go to placate the elves. At this time of the year, perhaps we'd all be a little better off if we dropped the need for proof and just accepted that at certain times of the year, magic can - and indeed - does occur.

Merry Christmas from everyone at Reader's Digest.

Louise

LOUISE WATERSON
Editor



CONTRIBUTE



Anecdotes and jokes

\$50-\$100

Send in your real-life laugh for Life's Like That or All in a Day's Work. Got a joke? Send it in for Laughter is the Best Medicine!

Smart Animals

Up to \$100

Share antics of unique pets or wildlife in up to 300 words.

Kindness of Strangers/Reminisce

Up to \$150

Share your tales of generosity or about something from your past that made a huge impact in 100-500 words.

My Story \$250

Do you have an inspiring or life-changing tale to tell? Submissions must be true, unpublished, original and 800-1000 words - see website for more information.

Here's how to reach us:

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Letters

READERS' COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

Spectral Stories

Although I don't believe in ghosts myself, I thoroughly enjoyed the tales from readers in 'Ghostly Real Encounters' (October).

Regardless of where the encounter took place, it appears a common experience was the sensation that the ghost was applying pressure to the person's body.

In Singapore, every year we celebrate the Hungry Ghost Festival in which the Chinese believe that the gates of hell are opened and that ghosts are released to roam the mortal world for a month.

WONG WAI HON



Lost Hikers

Cathy Frye and her husband are lucky to be alive ('Lost in Big Bend', October). Even though they considered themselves to be 'experienced', they evidently didn't know about the essentials that are recommended that hikers carry with them on hikes.

MARILYN YOUNG

FROM THE EDITOR:
According to hiking and bushwalking societies, essential items include appropriate footwear, map and compass/GPS,

water, food, rain gear, safety items (matches, light, whistle), first-aid kit, multipurpose tool, sunscreen and sunglasses, plus a backpack to carry it.

Laugh Along

My introduction to Reader's Digest magazine occurred 50-odd years ago while I was standing in the aisle of a crowded train, when the unexpected action of a passenger who was reading a magazine caught my attention. He suddenly bent forward and his

shoulders shook as he tried to keep his obvious laughter to himself. Surreptitiously I managed to edge close enough to read the words 'Reader's Digest' on the cover.

I bought a copy and in the humour section found an item that I instantly realised must be the one I had been seeking – it had a wonderful build-up to a superb punch line and I found myself spontaneously laughing, too.

MARGARET MANDENO, FIELD EDITOR

Kids and Canines

Photographer Andy Seliverstov beautifully captures the mutual joy children and dogs bring to each other in 'Little Kids and Their Big Dogs' (October). There is an innocence and wonder in the way they interact and I wholeheartedly agree that love for dogs and children makes people kinder.

EMILY BENSON

WIN A PILOT CAPLESS BALLPOINT PEN

The best letter published each month will win a Pilot Capless ballpoint pen bearing the Reader's Digest logo and an animal-print inspired barrel. From the Pilot MR Metropolitan collection crafted in Japan, this timeless ballpoint pen features stylish silver and bronze accents and is a joy to write with. Congratulations to this month's winner, Emily Benson.



Meerkat Nap

We asked you to think up a funny caption for this photo.

My name is Sven. I like long walks in the desert and alfresco dining.

TAMMY MARKS

Excuse me! This is private property – no paparazzi.

BARBARA THOMPSON

All that sentry work sure takes it out of you.

COLIN BLANE

I am no 'mere' kat.

J.S. GUNASEKARA

It's my party and I will lie if I want to.

ALAN FOYLE

Congratulations to this month's winner, Tammy Marks.



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win \$100. To enter, email rdaeditor@readersdigest.com or see details on page 5.

WATER FOR LIFE

GIFTED BY NATURE & ENHANCED BY SCIENCE

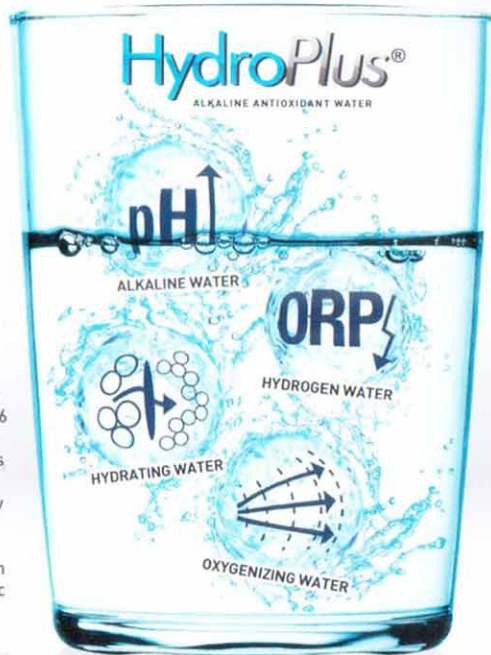
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THE 12 BENEFITS



ENRICH YOUR LIFESTYLE WITH MORE NOVITA WATER PURIFICATION PRODUCTS



Contents

DECEMBER 2017

24 Inspire
THEY CALL ME 'MUM'
Geraldine Cox went from an existence of listless luxury to founding a charity and changing the lives of thousands of Cambodian orphans. This is her story. AS TOLD TO HELEN SIGNY

30 Health
THE NATURE CURE
A miracle medicine that boosts mental health and creativity? Scientists believe they've found it: the great outdoors. FLORENCE WILLIAMS FROM NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

38 Everyday Heroes
ON ONE CONDITION
One man's generous gift to two newlyweds; and using tattoos to eradicate racial slurs. GREG BARTON AND ANDY SIMMONS

42 Culture
DON'T MESS WITH ELVES!
In many parts of Iceland, elf belief and 'fairy-faith' are alive and well, with town planners, developers and even home renovators going out of their way not to disturb the invisible mischief-makers. WILLIAM ECENBARGER

50 RD Classic, May 1999
TERROR ON THE ROAD
Shot during a roadside robbery in Honduras, one man's life is in the hands of his wife and three young children. JIM HUTCHISON

58 Modern Etiquette
OH, BEHAVE!
Splitting a bill properly, broaching awkward topics with friends, dealing with difficult children - here's how to navigate social minefields with confidence. LENORE SKENAZY



P. | 38 ▲



P. | 42 ▲

COVER: ISTOCK

Contents

DECEMBER 2017



P. | 70 ▲



P. | 90 ▼

- First Person**
- 66 THE ENGLISH LESSON**
A German reader recalls the first English words she ever learned – taught to her by an American P.O.W. at the close of World War II.
ELSA K. HUMMEL
- Animal Kingdom**
- 70 BACK TO THE WILD**
A fledgling programme in Russia could secure the future of the endangered Amur tiger.
MATTHEW SHAER FROM SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE
- Up Close**
- 82 FROM PUNK PRINCESS TO QUEEN OF STYLE**
Debbie Harry on her career. MARCEL ANDERS
- Heart**
- 86 DAUGHTER OF MINE**
If you could capture fatherhood in a bottle, it would be filled with moments like these.
JOE POSNANSKI
- Travel**
- 90 BEHIND THE PALACE DOORS**
In northwest India's Rajasthan region, the opulent homes of former royal families have been opened up to tourists for the first time.
LISA ABEND FROM AFAR
- Bonus Read**
- 98 CONTEST WITH CANCER**
A gruelling, inspiring, terrifying year in the life of a husband and wife facing the most serious form of skin cancer. CLAUDIA CORNWALL FROM BATTLING MELANOMA

THE DIGEST

- Health**
- 16** Silent signs of stress; how to deal with bruises; news you can use
- Travel**
- 20** Romantic Vietnam vacations
- Money**
- 22** Seasonal shopping dos and don'ts
- News Worth Sharing**
- 112** Positive stories that caught our eye
- RD Recommends**
- 116** All that's best in books, films, podcasts and DVDs

REGULARS

- 4** Letters
- 9** My Story
- 12** Kindness of Strangers
- 14** Smart Animals
- 78** Look Twice
- 85** Quotable Quotes
- 124** Puzzles, Trivia & Word Power

CONTESTS

- 5** Submit Your Jokes and Stories
- 6** Caption and Letter Competition

HUMOUR

- 36** Life's Like That
- 48** Laughter, the Best Medicine
- 64** All in a Day's Work



SEE
PAGE 5



P. | 20 ▲

P. | 64 ▼

