



Flying start. New Year resolutions in Preseli, South Wales

## TOP MARQUES

Quintessentially British brands #1



### Barbour

**What is it?** An outdoor clothing and footwear manufacturer, particularly known for its famous olive-green, three-quarter-length waxed jacket.

**Since when?** 1894, when Scottish farmer John

Barbour decided to become a travelling draper.

**Where's it from?** South Shields, Tyne and Wear.

**Key words** Durability, quality, authenticity.

**What's so special?** Each waterproof jacket is made from over 200 components including 15,000 stitches, double-rolled seams, solid brass studs and sturdy metal-tooth zips.

**Good customer service?** Definitely, it guarantees a restoration/rewaxing service to anywhere in the world.

**Who buys?** Not just the shooting and fishing set.

Once synonymous with the royal family (pictured) and the 1980s Sloane Ranger, the ubiquitous Barbour is still just as likely to be sported on the streets of Knightsbridge as the fields of Kircudbrightshire.

**Don't leave without** This season's Cashmere Touch quilted jacket for women, with Jacquard lining and tailored trims in 'cafe au lait' or 'bluegrass.'

**Contact** Tel: +44 (0)191 455 4444 or visit [www.barbour.com](http://www.barbour.com) for stockists' information.

## TOXIC AVENGERS

Shed seasonal excesses with an alternative detox

Let's just take a wild guess here; you ate and drank a bit too much last month. Well, don't worry, January's just the time to start again, and these days 'detox' comes in all sorts of interesting shapes and sizes – only some of which involve things being put up your bottom. In fact, colonic irrigation (having your bowels cleaned out with water 'from below') is just the beginning of your body's spring clean at somewhere like Chelsea's **Balance Clinic** (tel: +44 (0)20 7565 0333). Detox destination of choice for such pro-purifiers as Sophie Dahl, it also offers everything from 'vacuflex' (a vacuum for your feet) to lymphatic drainage massage.

Those who need to detox their mind as well as their body – and too many Christmas Day games of charades can make anyone crazy – will want to head for **Gaia House** (tel: +44 (0)1626 333613), a mostly-Buddhist retreat centre in south Devon. All retreats (some lasting for up to a month) are held in strict silence, with group meditation sessions (also silent) sometimes your only human contact. "In this sanctuary of calm stillness," they assure us, you can "explore the heart of understanding." (Don't forget to switch off your mobile.)

If, however, you like your detox a bit more practical, there's nothing to jolt your body back to life like imminent death. Plunging 50ft into the freezing surf from the edge of a south Wales cliff will kickstart even the most moribund constitution – and that's exactly what's on offer from **Preseli Venture** (tel: +44 (0)1348 837709). It's called 'coasteering' (essentially scrambling along the coast's cliffs and caves at water level, and occasionally jumping in), and devotees insist it has much the same effect as colonic irrigation.

But if that all sounds just a little bit too much like hard work, what about cleansing the system through 'relaxation therapy' (ie, sitting around doing nothing)? Widely acclaimed as one of the best spas in Britain, Edinburgh's **One** (tel: +44 (0)131 221 7777) now has a Thermal Suite featuring eight different areas (from Hammam to Aroma Grotto, via Mud Room), as well as a sensational open-air rooftop hydro-pool. Treatments range from the usual to the frankly odd ('Essence of Earth?'), but should leave you thoroughly detoxed. And ready to hit the pub for another 11 months of retox. ■ **Ed Grenby**

## CURTAIN CALL

The pick of regional theatre

### ANARCHIC



Stand by for a night of joyous inventiveness from Cornwall's excellent Kneehigh Theatre. Its take on Euripides' classic, **The Bacchae**, explores the wicked ways of women let loose from their domestic shackles under a Dionysian sky. Bristol Old Vic. Tel: +44 (0)117 987 7877. 25 January-12 February

### CLASSIC



Edwardian playwright Githa Sowerby was a rare female voice in a time dominated by male writers. **Rutherford and Son** explores the power struggle between a tyrannical father and his family. Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester. Tel: +44 (0)161 833 9833. 19 January-19 February

### DANCE



A programme of dazzling quickfire choreography from **Richard Alston Dance Company**. *Shimmer* is set to Ravel, *Fever* to the madrigals of Monteverdi, while *Gypsy Mixture* is a special remix by Chilean DJs. Brighton Dome. Tel: +44 (0)1273 709709. 26 January