

# LIFE & STYLE WEEKEND



## From Paris, with love

If you need a bit of a pick-me-up with the clocks going back, Nuxe has launched a limited edition bottle of its luxurious Huile Prodigieuse.

The richly-scented spray can be used on skin and hair to moisturise and add a subtle sheen.

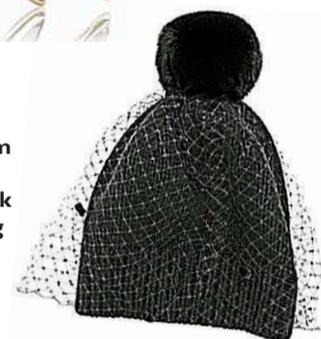
Ingredients include precious plant oils and it is preservative and silicone free. Find it in the beauty hall at Marks & Spencer, priced £28

Outhouse  
Outlaw ear  
cuffs, £180,  
from  
www.ilove  
designer.com



Ishtar Fang Ring, £195,  
from  
www.katie-rowland.com

Keep warm  
when  
you're trick  
or treating  
with this  
netted  
beanie,  
£95, from  
www.marc-cain.com



## Entrepreneur is a natural soap star

Giving up a high-flying career to make soap in a Cotswold barn was a bold choice which has paid off for Emma Heathcote-James, as **HELEN BLOW** discovers

**S**OAP made using ash from the eruption of Iceland's volcano Eyjafjallajokull is just one of a number of unusual concoctions coming out of the workshop of Emma Heathcote-James.

The Cotswold soap maker is helping people from all over the world create unique soaps from natural ingredients found near their homes.

From avocado from Tanzania and coffee from Portugal to coconut oil from Nigeria, nothing is considered too unusual to be used by clients of the Little Soap Company's soap-making classes.

"I set it up at first just as a way to raise some more money to develop the company but I loved it so much I have kept it going," said Emma, who operates out of her home in the idyllic Cotswold village of Ebrington.

"When I moved house, there was a tiny old wash house in the new garden and we restored it into the Little Soap School."

It is there she runs one-on-one and small group day courses where people are let loose to experiment with all manner of ingredients to make their own bespoke soaps.

"We've had bee keepers wanting to develop honey soaps, breweries dabbling with their beers and gardeners learning how to infuse oils and use botanicals in their soaps," she said.

The soap making classes are merely a side line to Emma's main business – making eco-friendly soaps for farm shops, boutiques and for major supermarkets,



Founder of Little Soap Company, Emma Heathcote-James, at Cotswold Lavender

including Waitrose, Tesco and Budgens.

The basic ingredients are simply olive oil, coconut palm oil and water, with added essential oils from lavender, geranium, peppermint and poppy seed. She even makes a range for washing grubby pets called Little Beast.

Emma still makes a handmade range from her own home but now has the organic range made at Britain's oldest soap making factory so she is able to meet the high demand for her products that she couldn't making them herself.

"I couldn't have imagined when I first started making my soaps that the company could have grown so much," said Emma, 36, who originally had a career in PR and as a best-selling author.

Emma first started making soaps after growing tired of the big city lights and craving peace and quiet in the countryside.



She continued with her media career from her new base but thanks to her hard work and natural energy, Emma made her new enterprise a huge success and now devotes all her time to it.

Through her soap, she has won many accolades and awards, including the University of Gloucestershire's Enterprise Legacy and the CSR's Environment Award. She also fostered guide dog puppy Umber and shares her home with three other dogs and a cat, not to mention many chickens.

"Although it's a lot of hard work, we manage to do it all in a workshop that is utterly stress-free where WiFi is non-existent, and mobile phones and laptops are also banned," said Emma.

"We believe in a holistic approach which positively fills us and our soap with loveliness and goodness.

"Some people say bringing people in to make their own soaps brings competition for me, but I don't see it like that," said Emma. "I think spreading the word about the fact that we don't need chemical stuff to make these things is a good thing and anyway my clients are all doing different things from me.

"I have certainly fallen on my feet when I started this business but I also love what I'm doing. For me it's the ideal life and I can't believe how fortunate I am."

www.littlesoapcompany.co.uk

More fashion,  
health and beauty in  
**WEEKEND**  
on Saturdays, only in the  
Gloucestershire Echo  
and The Citizen

## Fancy dress for Halloween

If you've got a spooky children's party on Thursday or a glamorous grown-up affair, give your outfit some edge



Above: Flock  
velvet tunic,  
£40, from  
BHS

Below: Red dress,  
£250, from  
www.ribkoff.com



## Get into the spirit

EVEN if you haven't got a party to go to, you can still get into the Halloween spirit with White Stuff.

Until Friday, stores in Cheltenham and Cirencester are inviting customers to take part in an array of fun Halloween activities.

There will be spooky food and drinks to enjoy, and for kids in tow, Halloween fancy dress, a scary spider hunt, face painting and colouring in.