

How to have a cool yule

'Tis the season to be jolly, but this time of year is stressful, too, even for the stars! Our experts offer them - and us - advice on fret-free festivities

If LIKE AMY WINEHOUSE, YOUR PARENTS DISLIKE YOUR PARTNER...

Christmas dinner with the family set to be a bit fraught? Life coach Gladeana McMahon recommends Amy meets her parents without her partner prior to Christmas for some straight talking. Tell them: 'You think I could do better, but this is my choice. I don't want to expose my partner to your disapproval, so I'm asking if you can be polite for just this one day. If not, let's each do our own thing.'

let her look after their money. If she usually has control of their finances, she might find he uses Christmas as an opportunity to rebel. Simonne Gnessen of www.financial-coaching.co.uk says, 'Discuss how much you'll spend on each person, then go shopping together. The talk will have prepared you for potential trouble spots, and picking out the presents with him means you'll both have to compromise.'

If LIKE ANGELINA JOLIE, YOUR PARTNER ISN'T GOOD WITH MONEY...

Angelina famously told a friend that Brad should 'just look pretty' and

If LIKE SIENNA MILLER, YOU STRUGGLE TO KEEP UP WITH HIS PARTYING... Since Rhys Ifans started 'sleeping on her sofa', Sienna's been photographed reeling drunk on a regular basis and it's not a dignified



Amy: make a deal with your parents

Angelina: do your gift shopping together

Sienna: alternate hard and soft drinks

look. Women don't metabolise alcohol as quickly as men but, as Lisa Miles of the British Nutrition Foundation points out, it's even harder for us to stay sober these days because 'wine is more potent and glasses are bigger. Sienna should experiment with having a soft drink every other round.'

GOING UP

Facial yoga
Forget Botox - devotees claim it tones the 57 facial muscles and takes years off your face. www.yogafacialtoning.com

Acupuncture
Research shows that a few skilfully applied needles can provide 74% more sustained relief from lower back pain than physiotherapy, medication or exercise.

Milk chocolate
It's less likely to cause dental decay than other sweets because it's high in protein, calcium and phosphate, all of which help protect tooth enamel.



Low-carb diets
Carbohydrates are good for you! They help you think faster, and a carb-friendly diet is just as good for losing weight as a high-protein diet, according to new research.

Posh's popularity
No one wants to be papped near her in case they look huge next to her tiny frame. Dr James Fowler, who claims obesity is 'catching', says the desire for thinness can be 'caught', too.

Vitamin C
As a supplement, it does little to ward off colds or flu, it seems. Only extreme-sports people need to pop extra pills.



GOING DOWN



59% of us soldier on when a cold strikes. Research by Lemsip discovered that only 32% of us follow expert advice to go to bed, rest and not spread our germs around.

5 ways to...

A FLAT TUM

Top tips to beat a bloated belly

- 1 Drink camomile tea**
The 'mother of the gut', as it's known in herbalism circles, soothes gut tension, promotes digestion and settles stomach upsets.
- 2 Pick up a panini**
Bread is easier to digest after it has been toasted as the starch is broken down by the heat.
- 3 Sip cider vinegar**
Add one teaspoon to a glass of water and drink with meals to increase the

- hydrochloric acid in the gut and aid digestion.
- 4 Hold off on the ham-and-cheese sarnies**
Double protein combinations increase bloating, as do double carbs such as mixing fruit with cereal.
- 5 Slow down and chill out**
Eating on the run slows down digestion and can lead to excess gas production.

Adapted from *The Healthy Gut Guide* by Jill Thomas (Penguin, £8.99)

Be an angel

Our brains get a thrill from being good. Apparently, giving money to good causes fires off the same mental sparks as enjoying delicious food or having sex. Researchers have discovered that we don't mind parting with our money if it's going to charity, and this might be the reason - humans are hardwired to look after each other by getting a natural high from being selfless.