Seasonal Special

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Health & Science Stocking Fillers

Reindeer during the Upper Palaeolithic in Poland: Aspects of variability and paleoecology

Quaternary International | doi:10.1016/j.quaint.2014.08.027

Reindeers don’t like the cold and it used to be the females that wore the antlers!

In a paper published in Quaternary International, researchers have considered the shape and form of ancient reindeer remains from Upper Palaeolithic cave deposits in Poland. Whereas antlers are commonly associated with males for the purpose of attracting females and fighting other males, antlers of the ancient reindeer remains were found to belong to females. In addition, dental analysis showed that the death of all studied specimens occurred during cold periods – let’s hope Santa puts a coat on Rudolph and the gang!
Cardioprotective effects of moderate red wine consumption: Polyphenols vs. ethanol

Journal of Applied Biomedicine | doi:10.1016/j.jab.2014.09.003
Red wine reduces cardiovascular risk? I’ll raise a glass to that this festive period!
For decades it has been suggested that regular, moderate consumption of red wine may be a key ingredient of the Mediterranean diet, which is often associated with good health. Researchers analysed moderate red wine intake in humans, focusing on the reduction of cardiovascular risk. Their study, published in Journal of Applied Biomedicine, shows that the beneficial polyphenols found in red wine counteract the detrimental effects of alcohol.

Skiing and snowboarding sport injuries

Polish Annals of Medicine | doi:10.1016/j.poamed.2014.01.003
Watch out below! 45% of skiers suffer knee joint injuries
Skiing and snowboarding are popular winter sports, but are not necessarily the healthiest sports to practice. Journal Polish Annals of Medicine has published an analysis of 100 people taking part in winter sports, and highlights that 45% of those questioned sustained an injury during skiing or snowboarding. In skiers, knee joint injuries dominated (45%), while in snowboarders the shoulder joint was most frequently affected (25%). Tissue damage predominately occurred in snowboarders (63%), and in skiers, sprains were most frequent (47%). A fall was the main cause of injuries in both groups. Although age, ability, and one’s fitness and physical activity level had an effect on the risk of injury, an individual’s sex and weather conditions did not impact on injury occurrence.

Moderate alcohol consumption – Blessing or curse?

Kontakt | doi:10.1016/j.kontakt.2014.06.002
Tis’ the season to be tipsy – healthily!
Many of us will find ourselves guilty of exceeding recommended levels of alcohol intake over the end of year holiday period. With the many conflicting messages around alcohol intake, it is often difficult to establish exactly how bad alcohol is for our health. A paper published in Kontakt examined both the adverse and positive effects of moderate alcohol consumption. Results showed benefits for both heart and blood circulation at a tolerable daily consumption baseline of 2.5 units for men and 1.25 units for women.

On the complementarity of prosocial norms: The case of restaurant tipping during the holidays

Merry Christmas and a nice big tip!
Known as ‘the season of good will’, the festive spirit can make us feel more generous, which is good news for waiters, waitresses and bartenders. Research published in Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, analysed two years of sales data from a busy restaurant, seeking to find out whether generosity during the holiday season crowds out or complements tipping behaviour. The results showed that people tip more, not less, during the holiday season. The increase in tipping is driven by those who are already the best tippers.

Gifts, sustainable consumption and giving up green anxieties at Christmas

Geoforum | doi:10.1016/j.geoforum.2013.08.004
Environmentalists forego green gift giving at Christmas
Giving and receiving gifts is often one of the most enjoyable parts of the festive season. Research published in Geoforum studied Christmas gifting practices within a group of environmentally engaged households to explore if and how environmental concerns are expressed in the gift economy. It was found that ‘green consumers’ are not necessarily ‘green givers’ as many believe that environmental considerations can detract from the main, valued social relation associated with Christmas gifting.
‘With Love from Band Aid’: Sentimental exchange, affective economies, and popular globalism

*Emotion, Space and Society* | doi:10.1016/j.emospa.2013.02.009

**With Love from Band Aid**

With the 30th anniversary of the first ‘Band Aid’ charity single celebrated this year, the power and influence of celebrity-backed charity events is still deeply rooted in society today. A study published in *Emotion, Space and Society* has presented a new approach to understanding the nature of Band Aid’s success at involving society in humanitarianism and development causes. It is suggested that the use of the slogan "With Love from Band Aid" positioned the charity within the realm of sentimental gift exchange, therefore emotionally connecting it to the wider world and creating an imagined global community.