

We Love...

From hot chocolate to a night cream that does what it says on the tin, here at Journal Towers we thought we'd share a few of our favourite things with you...



The fashion world is still loving it, but now the lures of vintage need not be reserved to your wardrobe. Welcome to the world of Vintage Actually, created and run by Rachel Jones. This online shop, specialising in vintage, retro, refurbished and recycled furniture and homeware, aims to move home furnishings away from the mass-produced instead offering well-made, individual pieces to those who can't get enough of authentic extras. Visit her website at vintageactually.co.uk for more refund and restored products.



A hotspot for a hot drink, Grayz Tea Rooms in the Bailgate has introduced a brand new luxury hot chocolate range so you can indulge in a truly chocolaty experience. Unlike other hot chocolates made from powdered cocoa, the Marimba Hot Chocolate Melts (from £2.95) are made from flakes of real chocolate and are available in white, milk and dark chocolate. Blended with steamed milk, each mug contains the equivalent of a whole chocolate bar. Ditch the diet and we'll see you there.



Let's face it, when the alarm clock goes off we usually wake up wishing we had five more minutes. But it doesn't have to be this way. Sleep Cycle uses the accelerometer in your iPhone to monitor movements and determine which phase of sleep you are in. You open the app at bedtime, set the alarm time and place the phone face down in the corner of your mattress. By monitoring your sleep cycles, the app wakes you when you're sleeping lightly, with a progressive alarm so you're not fighting to find the snooze button. And what's more, it really works. Writer Grace Hutchinson has been trying it out: "Every morning I've been woken up gently, which has allowed me to get out of bed pretty much straight away, rather than snoozing the alarm two or three times."
▶ Sleep Cycle App is available from iTunes and is priced at 69p.

Here comes the rain

As the April Showers begin to fall, Jo Oughtred goes on the hunt for the most beautiful brollies, rain macs and Wellington boots to keep you dry and ready for puddles...

Grab your brolley
Teal polka dot brolly from Topshop £15



Wellies
Hunter Original Tall Gloss Wellington Boot in Green, available from Next – £80
Birdy Tall Wellies in mulberry from Fatface – £30
Joules navy and white striped wellies, available from Office – £38



Macs
Edict belted raincoat in mustard, by Marella at House of Fraser – £265 (credit: Marella at House of Fraser)
Splash of colour: Marlene Classic Mac in coral, from Monsoon – £75

Tried and tested

Designed for mature skin (Lancôme targets this product at the over 50s, spring chickens in my book, writes Sam Curtis, 42) Absolué Precious Cells might be one of the beauty counter's best kept secrets.

What the blurb says: 'Offering an intensive skincare range enriched with Vigna seed extract and Pro-Xylane® to stimulate the skin's surface and help to regenerate skin's radiance, signs of age are visibly reduced.'

My findings: Given the price tag of £132 per 50ml you would hope to see visible results, so in the name of research I gave the night cream a two-week trial. I'd love to say it doesn't work but I am sure the deep-set wrinkles on my forehead are diminishing and the less obvious frown lines I have are fading. I am ten years younger than the company's target demographic but I may have to invest in this wonder cream when the tester pot is empty. Great news for my skin, hell for my bank account.

▶ Absolué Precious Cells, £132 for 50ml, available from Debenhams.

