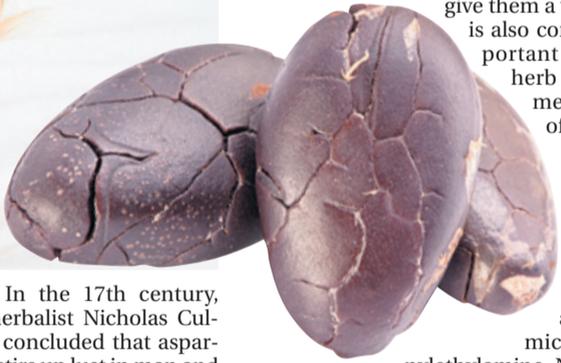




aste for love

ODUCE SHELVES TO BOOST PASSION



Avocado: A fruit that has had a lustful quality since the ancient Aztec times is high in Vitamin E, which is useful for keeping any sparks alive and increasing energy levels. Some ancient scholars thought the fruit's resemblance to certain parts of the body made them erotic. In fact during the Aztec times avocado tree was known as the testicle tree and later the Spanish found it so sexy that Catholic priests prohibited their consumption.

Asparagus: In the 17th century, English herbalist Nicholas Culpeper concluded that asparagus 'stirs up lust in man and woman'. In 19th-century France, bridegrooms were served three courses for their pre-nuptial dinner. The reason why asparagus is considered an aphrodisiac could have something to do with the fact that it is a great source of potassium, fibre, vitamins B6, A and C,

thiamin and folic acid, which helps boost histamine production necessary for the ability to reach orgasm in both sexes. The vegetable is also said to increase circulation in the genitourinary system, which leads to increased sexual desire.

Celery: The crunchy vegetable is thought to be a good source of vitamin C, beta-carotene, manganese and phytonutrients, as well as the chemicals androsterone and adrostenol, which help sexual attraction. Some cultures believed eating celery made you more attractive to the opposite sex.

Maca: A powder commonly used in biscuits, breads and health products has sterol, which is a steroid-like chemical that helps produce sexual hormones. It has been described as a natural form of Viagra and scientific studies have shown it increased sexual behaviour in male rats.

Chilli peppers: Curries aren't the only things this very hot vegetable spices up because many cultures have used it as a bedroom booster down the ages. The heat generated by chillis increases the heart rate and heats up the body, which subsequently triggers the brain to release pleasure-inducing endorphins and increased blood flow. This could finally explain the population explosion in the subcontinent.

Garlic: A pungent vegetable often associated with bad breath, garlic has a number of bedroom-boosting qualities. It is rich in the amino acid arginine and allicin, which helps to dilate blood vessels and promotes greater blood flow.

Ashwagandha: The Indian herb has reportedly been used for over 1,000 years as a sexual stimulator for both men and women with a low libido. In Sanskrit, Ashwagandha means 'the smell of a horse,' indicating that the herb imparts the vigor and strength of a stallion. It is frequently referred to as 'Indian ginseng' because of its rejuvenating properties, and is said to, erm, invigorate individuals and give them a youthful glow. It is also considered an important rejuvenating herb in the Indian medicinal system of Ayurveda.

Cacao: A base for chocolate, the cacao bean contains theobromine, caffeine and an aphrodisiac chemical called phenylethylamine. Not surprisingly, it has been used as a sexual stimulant for centuries in central America. According to legend, some prostitutes in the Aztec times were paid in cacao beans.

Coffee: One scientific study suggested that coffee can put women in the mood for sex. It might have something to do with the caffeine component of the drink acting as a stimulant that ups the heart rate and makes the blood flow. Civet coffee, which is considered to be the most expensive and exotic bean in the world, is said to have a similar effect.



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Normality doesn't suit me

I SOMETIMES think back to when I was a kid and realise I have never done anything like I was supposed to.

As a teenager, I never had a boyfriend as all the guys would fancy the other girls I hung out with. When my family members were getting As, I was more of a C, D and E student (I have a degree and write a column for a newspaper now, so who cares).

Now when friends and cousins my age are getting married and having kids, I'm enjoying life, hanging out at parties with celebrities, being creative and exploring the world. And you know what, I am the happiest I have probably been for a long time.

Ok, so I may be single, but I would rather be single, not have to answer to anyone and be creative rather than answer to someone who may not approve of my life choices.

Actually, I have been questioning a lot of things in life recently in terms of what I want.

Truth be told, I realised the other day while I was driving up from London to my hometown of Nottingham that I don't think I could be one of those people who works 9-5, goes home, cooks dinner, chills for a bit and then goes to bed. That's fine for some people, but not for me and once I had realised and accepted it, well, it actually made me a whole lot happier.

Recently I attended a number of premieres at the London Indian Film Festival. I am lucky to be in a position where I get invited to such events. One of the things that made me realise I could never go back to my 'old' life was when I was speaking to an old school friend who had also moved to London, who said that when he went back to Nottingham it was like a time warp. I think that London is such a wonderful and culturally open place that I don't ever want to live anywhere else (well, unless it is San Francisco or Valencia).

So this is a message to anyone who feels that they don't fit in; well, it is ok, you don't have to, no one will ever make you. Being unique and individual is such a wonderful thing. I often feel like a misfit in so many areas in my life and sometimes it can be upsetting when people don't understand where you are coming from.

My priorities in life are not to get married and have kids. Like I said earlier, it is ok for some people, but not for me. On that note, I want to leave you with this quote by Matt Groening: "Living creatively is really important to maintain throughout your life. And living creatively doesn't mean only artistic creativity, although that's part of it. It means being yourself, not just complying with the wishes of other people."

Strange aphrodisiacs for the more adventurous...



Cobras: In many parts of Asia, including India, the killer snake's blood is often mixed into alcoholic drinks to give a sexual boost.

Fugu: When cooked correctly, the blowfish can produce a tingling sensation that increases sexual arousal. Bear in mind, though, that this is one of the world's most poisonous fish and could kill you if not prepared by a qualified chef.

Balut: While the idea of eating a fertilised duck egg makes some people's stomachs churn, this

Asian delicacy is thought to be an all-natural Viagra.

Rhino horns: This illegal aphrodisiac is coveted by men in Africa suffering from impotency looking for a much-needed, erm, boost.

Ambergris: A waxy substance that comes from the digestive tract of a sperm whale has been popular in some Middle Eastern countries as a bedroom booster.

Giant leaf-cutter ants: Roasted with their legs and wings re-

moved, these giant ants have been given to South American couples for centuries to make their wedding night one to remember.

Baboon urine: In Zimbabwe, many have found the answer to sexual enlightenment in mixing monkey urine with beer.

Sea cucumbers: The not-so-tasty-looking, slug-like sea creatures have been used as libido enhancers because of the high concentration of vitamins and minerals they contain.