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Notions & Necessities

NOTION

Family hideaway

The K Club in Co Kildare is hosting Shrek's Haunted Hideaway, an adventure for Halloween, from October 24 to November 2, featuring a real-life donkey in the walled gardens, archery demo from Robin Hood and his Merry Men, a dragon's egg hunt, and Donkey's Disco of Doom, and for those who really wish to treat themselves (an extra option), the Princess Fiona & Shrek afternoon tea. **LH** *Shrek's Haunted Hideway package includes 2/3 nights accommodation, see kclub.ie*

NOTION

Off piste

Lucy Nagle's latest ski collection has something for everyone, whether or not you are actually taking to the slopes. The Ski roll-neck sweater (it also comes with the word piste) in merino wool is available in three colours – cream, black and pink, a new shade for this season. The collection also includes cashmere trousers, tops and accessories. **LH** *Pink Ski sweater, €140, black snood, €60, see lucynagle.com*

NECESSITY

Cafe culture

For any foodie in pursuit of comfort as winter draws in, the *Foxford Café Cookbook* by Kathleen Flavin is a treasure trove of dishes that have been tried, tested and thoroughly enjoyed in the Co Mayo eatery. Easy to achieve at home, recipes include soups, salads, sweet treats and cafe classics such as sausage rolls, fishcakes and quiche. **SC**
'Foxford Café Cookbook', €24.99, O'Brien Press

NOTION

Science is skin deep

If winter greyness has taken hold of your complexion, Nivea has skincare innovation that promises to brighten your day. Their Cellular Epigenetics Serum is as science-led as it sounds, with an ingredient pioneered by Eucerin – who specialise in treating the most sensitive skin – and focused on reactivating "youth genes" that have been damaged by lifestyle and environmental aggressors. It also has three types of hyaluronic acid for maximum rehydration. **SC**
RRP €39.99, available nationwide

NOTION

A tipple of kombucha

Benefits for your gut health are a given, but now you can get your kombucha with a bit of an alcohol kick, too. Kombeara, brewed in West Cork, has all the usual kombucha healthy bacteria but is doubly fermented to give it a 4.2pc alcohol by volume. It comes in three fruity flavours, all with a soft tartness and a sparkling fizz. **SC** *€4 per can, selected SuperValu and Fresh supermarkets, selected off-licences nationwide*

NECESSITY

Subtle season

As we gear up to be inundated with the annual wave of sparkly party dresses, give a moment to Irish designer Helen McAlinden's A/W 2025 collection, which alongside beautiful timeless tailored pieces, contains some gorgeous subtle, comfortable, sequin-free dresses. **LH** *Carmin navy dress, €375, see helenmcalinden.com*

NECESSITY

Wreaths all year round

Now that we're a nation with a door wreath for every occasion, Phenology Décor has a good idea for making a single wreath work all year long, simply by swapping out seasonal inserts. The brainwave of Co Wexford twins Aimée and Conor Farrell, the autumnal insert features burnished leaves and foliage, while Christmassy inserts have berries, bells and bows. **SC**
Wreaths from €149.95, phenologydecor.com

NECESSITY

Music and manuscripts

The Leaves Festival of Writing and Music is taking place from November 4 to 8 in Laois. A conversation between musicians Keith Donald and Don Baker will take place, with a focus on Donald's memoir *Music and Mayhem*. The art of the short story will be examined by writers Mike McCormack and Mary O'Donnell and this year's One County One Book novelist Roisín O'Donnell, pictured, will host several events, including writing workshops and book club discussions. **LH** *For information and tickets, see leavesfestival.ie*

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