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RESIDENT

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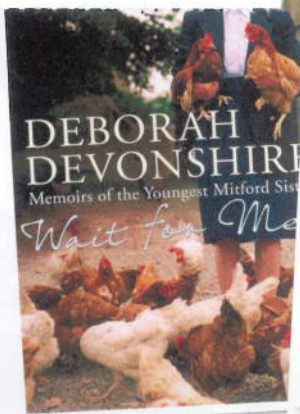
Readership ('000): 162

Display Rate (£/sqcm): £3.31

-- DEC 2010

Well read

with Gwyn Palmer on the best books of 2010

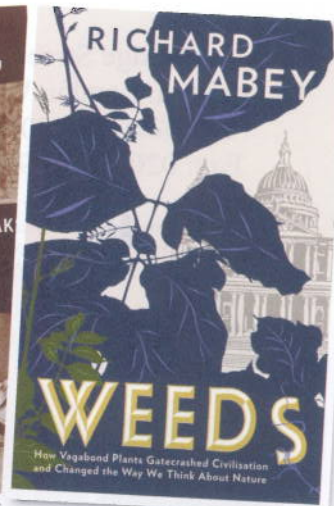
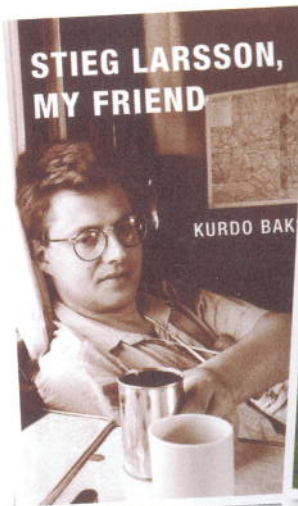


101

ways to save
money in a
recession



Tom Winnifrith



Christmas comes but once a year and can easily take a whole year to recover from. But if for one year only, at least, we could drag ourselves away from the needless disappointment of the unfulfilling present, the prospect of the returns queue at the shop we might just get there on the enjoyment and fulfilment front. Think how many hours a good book will afford in those longueurs between Christmas and New Year (even if you are holed up in your chalet in the Alps) and those wonderful bon mots and deceptively kind put-downs you'll be able to manage for the year ahead, all gleaned from inside the covers of this year's bumper crop of books.

Before you decide to further your intellect, however, let's start with your sense of physical *benessere* in the form of a decent dinner. One of this year's outstanding cookbook publications will undoubtedly prove to be the reissued and, for the first time, illustrated *Elizabeth David Cookbook* (Michael Joseph, £25). Still at the top of her game despite being dead for many years, she exerts her powerful will to crush all but the most perfect of adaptations of classic cuisines – there wouldn't be too many kiwi fruits hiding in 'foam' on her festive table. More cosy and splendidly indulgent on the Christmas front is *Lotte's Country Kitchen* (Absolute Press, £20), which brings new (but not too new) twists to all our old favourites whilst exhorting us to let go and stop worrying about la bella figura for a bit. Less seriously, but just as

welcome, is advice from the *Moomin Cookbook* (Self-Made Hero, £12.99) – how could we fail to be culinarily enhanced by these classic children's characters from Scandinavia who are celebrating their 75th Anniversary this year. But if cooking at home is all too much, you could always consult *Winner's Dinners* (JR Books, £16.99) and find lots to violently agree or violently disagree with from our least grey and PC restaurant commentator.

Debo Devonshire writes with great wit and acuity – no one could deny that she gives good duchess

Body replete, it might be time to turn to the mind with a look at the biography of *Stieg Larsson* by his friend Kurdo Baksi (Quercus, £14.99) to find out what lies behind the posthumous success of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (a complete set of all three of the novels might make a popular present, Quercus, £50). A very different sort of life has been lived by **Deborah Devonshire**, who writes with wit and acuity of her life as a Mitford and, for much the greater part, as chatelaine of Chatsworth – no one could deny that she gives good duchess.

A more straightforward and chronological view of history can be gained from a book aimed at children but equally invaluable to those who have forgotten their history less *Patrick Dillon's Story of Britain* (Walker Books, £18.99) tells it like it was from 106 onwards. Given the vast social changes around us, it's interesting to think of the very different life lived by our ancestors as represented by their shopping habits. *The High Street*, by Philip Wilkinson (Quercus Books, £20), charts the rise and fall of our traditional high streets over the last 100 years. And in a life less urban, there's much to be learned in *Richard Mabey's Weeds* (Profile Books, £15.99), an unlikely but engrossing and charming look at the horticulture's poor relation. Never again will you look at the buddleia growing out of the building site with the same eyes.

And finally, what would Christmas be without the five-minute wonders of funny stocking fillers? Goggle at the wonderful tonsures in *Footballers' Haircuts* (Orion, £7.99); see the capital anew with a **map of London** that will crumple in your hand and yet remain reusable (Palomar, £10); and last give everyone you know a copy of *101 Ways to Save Money in a Recession* by Tom Winnifrith (Beautiful Books, £6.99), which has good, straightforward but funny advice for all of us. And if that sounds a bit Scrooge-like for Christmas, remember that Scrooge only had his epiphany when he managed to look at the things that really mattered. Happy Christmas!