

WARM UP

1 Read the blog titles and match each one with the topic it discusses.

- 1 Declaring an end to the travel ban
 - 2 The Detox
 - 3 Salvation Jane
 - 4 My dining Hell
- a a book
 b the launch of a café/bar
 c going on a diet
 d whisky

FAMOUS BRITISH FOOD BLOGS

DECLARING AN END TO THE TRAVEL BAN

Just as I was ready to travel again, Talisker organised a trip to their distillery in Scotland and invited me on it. I jumped. I love whisky anyway, neat, in a cocktail and I even cook with it. Why not? If you use the best tasting ingredients you get the best tasting end results. Whisky is a complex drink with often quite savoury flavours. We tasted many; the stand out for me was the Talisker 30 year old which screamed porcini mushrooms to me, in the best way possible!

I always find food in everything I taste. Talisker is based on the Isle of Skye, which is really very remote and difficult to get to. So we went by helicopter. We started the first day with a trip to Cardhu, a new whisky for me. What struck me was the passion and commitment to their product. I love the detail behind making aged single malt: the combination of European oak sherry barrels and American oak bourbon barrels. I also like the patient wait; the analysis; the combination of different barrels; the bottling and then tasting the aged whisky at home by the fire.

2...

THE DETOX

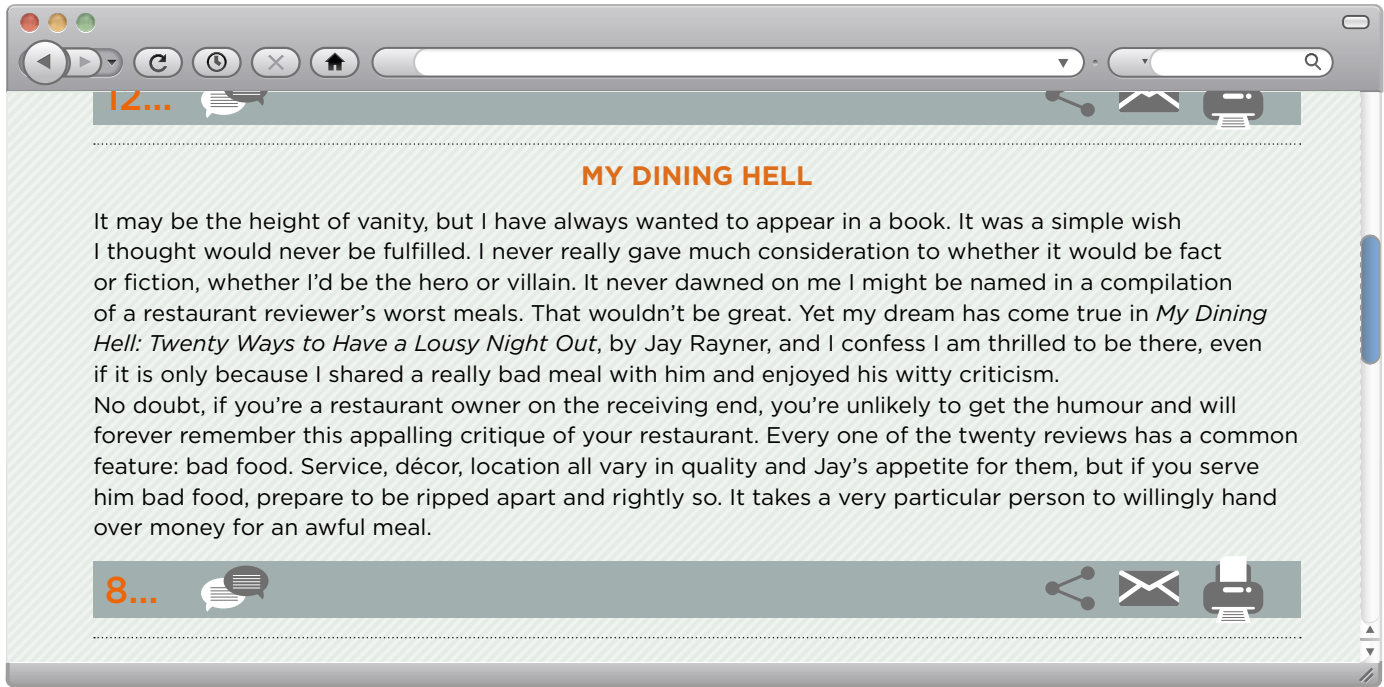
So, the exercise continues and taking a step back every week with these posts makes me realise how much fitter I am now than at this point last year. Yet the fact of the belly remains and it is frankly rather annoying. Yes, I get to eat out a lot and that doesn't help, but I never eat ready-meals and takeaways. My table is covered with lots of vegetables; good homemade soups; fruit and fibre. So what am I doing wrong? I'm currently psyching myself up for a proper detox, a month or so of seriously healthy eating. The problem with this is I have to build up a supply of restaurant reviews to cover my period of abstinence. It sort of undermines the whole thing really, doesn't it? The positive side is of course that it gives me lots of time to do some research, fill the cupboard with lentils or carrots and ask you lot: when you've overindulged and need to pull things back, what's your preferred solution? I'll be having a word with the professionals over the next few weeks, but all suggestions will be gratefully received... So we shall see.

7...

SALVATION JANE

In case you missed my speech at the six-week late launch of Salvation Jane here is what I said... Tonight is a thank you, because in the 3 ½ years I've been running a café, I've rarely taken the time to stop and enjoy a drink with: staff, suppliers, customers and industry people. Before I left my life in Melbourne, Australia, to fly to London on my one way ticket, I attended a seminar about the 'Tips for Success in Running a Restaurant'. I was expecting to feel inspired and reassured about the huge career change I was about to make. Instead, it was a therapy session for a room full of chefs and restaurant owners, all talking about the hardships they'd faced in running their businesses: difficulties of location, finding and retaining good staff, the power of reviewers to make or break your restaurant, trying to be passionate when you are physically exhausted... etc. I sat there feeling the panic rise. Then I went up to the speakers and asked them, 'Knowing what you now know would you still choose the career you have?' Without any hesitation they all said, 'Absolutely, yes.'

12...



READING COMPREHENSION

2 Read the four British food blog extracts and answer these questions writing the correct number 1-4 from exercise 1.

Which blogger...

- a asks for readers' solutions to overindulgence? _____
- b eats out often? _____
- c has always wanted to be in a book? _____
- d heard people talking about the difficulties of running a restaurant? _____
- e loves the detail in the whisky-making process? _____
- f moved to the UK from Australia? _____
- g talks about bad restaurants all having bad food? _____
- h visits the Isle of Skye in a helicopter? _____

SPEAKING

3 Work in pairs and discuss the four food blogs. Decide what you like/dislike about each one and which one you like best and why.

- A *I really like the blog about whisky because I learnt something new.*
- B *Yes, I agree, but I don't think the experience is very accessible to ordinary people because she travels by helicopter...*

WRITING

4 Write a short online food blog extract about a drink, a diet, a launch or a book. You should make your blog, interesting, informative, accurate, interactive and fun.