



Louise loves to wrap up and enjoy days out in the crisp, chilly air along the Sussex coast.



Spending more time at home with family is one of the benefits of the season.

easier to be mindful too. I'm more aware of my breath as I can see it, and I enjoy feeling the freshness in my lungs and the cold air on my face. I also love the cosiness of the evenings as the nights draw in. For me, winter is all about togetherness and cuddling up under blankets with my children – Jackson, four, and eight-month-old Bronte – or spending time with friends. It's the best time of year.

EXPERT TIPS

Claire Thompson, author of *Mindfulness and the Natural World* (mindfulness-of-nature.com).



- Going for a walk is a good way to get your 'daylight fix' during the shorter days. Set yourself the intention of noticing everything around you including how your feet feel against the ground.
- Take a mental note of what you can see; colours, shapes, movement, textures and light. Notice what you can hear; quality of sounds, pitch and tunes. Consider what you can smell and feel.
- Notice how you feel before and after the walk. Try walking at various times of the day and notice the differences.

'The house is full of delicious aromas.'

Josefina Smith, 56, from Hertfordshire, loves the season's food.

For me, winter is all about nourishing and nurturing. I love to cook hearty, comforting soups, stews and roasts, and spend time at home with my husband George and 15-year-old daughter Kim.

During summer, everyone is busy being outdoors and rushing around, and I don't tend to spend as much time cooking. Everything is very fresh but quick then, whereas in the colder months we are at home a lot more and our kitchen really becomes the heart of the house where we spend time together.

George is gluten intolerant, I'm lactose intolerant and Kim is vegetarian, so finding something we can all eat can be a bit of a challenge at times.

When it's winter I spend more time food shopping, and I enjoy using fresh, seasonal produce, such as spinach, butternut squash and pumpkins. I love putting something in

the oven and enjoying the delicious aroma as it spreads throughout the house. One of our favourites is pistachio soup, which I make with vegetable stock, pistachio paste, onions, garlic and lots of warming spices such as turmeric and chilli. It's hearty and filling, and perfect to have on a cold day.

EXPERT TIPS

Tara Lee is a yoga and wellbeing expert (taraleeyoga.com).



- According to both Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine, eating foods with the correct energetic properties in the right season will help your body. Cold or raw food such as cucumbers, yogurts and salads are known to have cooling effects so it's best to steer clear of these and any



'There's something magical about exercising as the sun rises.'

Manisha Pankhania, 32, from St Albans, loves the peace of exercising in the park when it's not so busy.

I enjoy exercising in winter more than any other time of the year. Three times a week I get up and go to a 6am boot camp in my local park. During winter it's pitch black when I get there and I love the peace of it. During the rest of the year the park is busy with dog walkers and runners but now we have the place to ourselves. There's something magical about exercising as the sun rises, and I get home just as it's getting light and everyone else is waking up.

I don't enjoy working out when it's warmer as I have asthma and allergies, so after a few minutes I get very wheezy and start sneezing. However, in winter I can breathe more easily and don't get too hot. I wrap up so the ice and rain don't put me off – I find it invigorating working out in the cold!

EXPERT TIPS

Personal trainer Mary Huckle (breakthroughfitness.co.uk).



- It can be hard to get going on winter mornings, so whether it's gym gear or a yoga mat, get your things ready the night before. Seeing them first thing will help motivate you to exercise.
- Try a sunrise alarm clock. These wake you up over 30 minutes by gradually getting brighter and mimicking a natural sunrise.
- Buddy up or join a club. Arranging to work out with a friend or a group keeps you accountable and makes you more likely to do it.



Manisha finds exercising in winter more comfortable than summer as she can breathe more easily.

- cold food or iced drinks during winter.
- Adding cayenne pepper, cumin, garlic and ginger to warm dishes such as soups and stews will spice up your food and ensure you feel warm from the inside out.
- Try to eat seasonally. Nature is an expert at providing us with the foods we need at particular times of the year.