VOLUME 14

WINTER

LODHA TIMES

THE

Festive Issue

A SEASON SHAPED *by Purpose*

Welcome to the festive edition of The Lodha Times, a celebration of the season shaped by purpose, pleasure and a quiet sense of refinement.

At Lodha, we believe that the holidays are as much about reflection as they are about indulgence: a chance to pause, savour moments with the people who matter most and make choices that feel thoughtful and deeply personal. This issue embraces that philosophy wholeheartedly, offering a considered guide to navigating the final weeks of the year with clarity and intention.

We begin with wisdom from Dr Paul Hokemeyer, whose work with global leaders offers a rare window into the emotional terrain of family life during the holidays. As he reminds us, even the most joyful rituals can stir old dynamics and new anxieties. His counsel, centred on clear boundaries, gentle curiosity and an emphasis on connection, provides a grounding framework for approaching the season with intention. In his view, the greatest gift we can offer ourselves is presence, the ability to step back, breathe and choose how we show up for the people we love.

“At Lodha, we believe that the holidays are as much about reflection as they are about indulgence: a chance to pause, savour moments with the people who matter most and make choices that feel thoughtful and deeply personal”

That same spirit of purpose runs through our in-depth conversation with Rebecca Priestley, whose career in the royal household has placed her at the centre of some of the most thoughtful giving in the UK today. Priestley’s reflections illuminate a rapidly evolving landscape where donors seek not only impact but meaning, a sense that their actions are aligned with their values and lived experience. Her four-part approach, centred on connection, clarity, curiosity and commitment, offers a template for giving that enriches both giver and recipient. It is a timely reminder that generosity, at its best, is transformative on both sides.

We are also delighted to spotlight Bonheur, the newly opened Mayfair restaurant from acclaimed chef Matt Abé. Located in the storied former home of La Gavroche, Bonheur bridges classical French technique with the ease and warmth of Abé’s Australian roots. Its craft-driven menus and beautifully considered interiors offer a festive dining experience that feels both celebratory and deeply welcoming.

As we reflect on a busy year across our London developments, from the opening of new show apartments at Holland Park Gate to the many moments shared with residents, our teams look forward to celebrating the season alongside you. From all of us at Lodha, we wish you a purposeful, joyful and beautifully memorable festive season.

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How to navigate complex family dynamics at Christmas

ACCORDING TO DR PAUL HOKEMEYER, AUTHOR OF *FRAGILE POWER: WHY HAVING EVERYTHING IS NEVER ENOUGH*

For more than a decade, Dr Paul Hokemeyer, a fellow of the Global Leaders in Healthcare programme at Harvard Medical School, has advised influential individuals, helping them navigate the complex emotional challenges that accompany their position. With a unique blend of legal, psychological and clinical expertise, he is uniquely placed to offer insight into how the holidays can become a minefield — as well as an opportunity for connection.

IN YOUR EXPERIENCE, WHAT ARE THE TYPICAL STRESS SPOTS THAT ARISE AT CHRISTMAS?

The pressure to have a flawless festive season often fuels heightened anxiety and low mood. Patients who have maintained sobriety may relapse, while those with eating or compulsive-spending disorders can slip back into destructive patterns. The holidays amplify emotion and old family dynamics tend to resurface.

WHAT WOULD YOU ADVISE CLIENTS TO DO BEFORE THE HOLIDAY BEGINS?

The best gift you can give yourself and those you love is to change the way you react and how much time you allow yourself to be exposed to family toxicity. I always advise my patients who know they are going into a firestorm to have a firm exit plan in place and to share it with supportive family and friends.

HOW DO YOU RECOMMEND SETTING BOUNDARIES IN WAYS THAT PRESERVE HARMONY BUT ALSO PROTECT INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING?

To work, boundaries must be clear, consistent and enforceable. For example: 'I'll come for Christmas, but I'm staying at a hotel nearby.' When challenged, there's no need to justify. Simply offer warmth — a hug, a kind word — and trust they value you enough to honour your choice.

DURING A GATHERING, TENSIONS MAY RISE UNEXPECTEDLY. WHAT IN-THE-MOMENT INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES HAVE YOU SEEN WORK WELL?

Counting from 1–20 before responding is surprisingly powerful. Because numbers draw on logic, they steady the nervous system and allow you to re-enter the conversation with dignity. Stepping outside also helps to alter the relational dynamics of the space by changing your physical and emotional perspective to it.

ARE THERE ANY RELATIONAL PRACTICES OR GAMES YOU RECOMMEND TO HELP FAMILIES CONNECT AT CHRISTMAS?

I'm a big fan of emphasising family values during the holiday season: gratitude, humility and generosity of spirit. One family I work with creates a gratitude tree. Each member writes down three things they're grateful for on paper tags and attaches them to the branches.

WHAT PRACTICES DO YOU ENCOURAGE TO ALLOW PEOPLE TO MEET THE NEW YEAR FROM A PLACE OF FULLNESS?

I ask all of my patients and clients come up with a one and five-year plan where they articulate in writing five goals in the personal, professional, spiritual, relational and physical areas of their lives. These can be straightforward plans or one word to describe each goal. The key is to think about what you want to manifest in the future and write it down so it becomes intentional.

Hands, Heart, Head

REBECCA PRIESTLEY ON PHILANTHROPY WITH PURPOSE

INTRODUCING LODHA PARTNERS; A NEW STYLE OF ADVISOR

Lodha Partners is a trusted advisor to private individuals and families, helping clients to achieve their goals beyond their core business. They support their clients' top priorities, finding solutions and delivering outcomes across a broad range of fields. They protect their clients' time, energy and focus while bringing their ambitions to life.

For the Festive edition of the Lodha Times, at a moment to reflect on giving back, Partner Rebecca Priestley explores how Lodha Partners helps clients plan and deliver lasting philanthropic impact.

PHILANTHROPY & LEGACY IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD

Like the world around it, philanthropy is in a period of rapid transformation. Younger donors are drawing on backgrounds in tech, finance and consulting to bring a more analytical, data-driven edge. Established families are turning their attention to legacy with fresh intent. Many are stepping away from simply writing cheques and towards work that feels personal, sustained and genuinely meaningful. At the centre of this shifting landscape sits Rebecca Priestley, a steady presence guiding influential individuals and families as they search for purpose. Rebecca's path has taken her from 10 years at Kensington Palace, where she was Chief of Staff to HRH The Princess of Wales, to involvement in the Heads Together mental-health campaign, helping to build a national mental health crisis service, working with business leaders on strategy and profile, and now to advising families and individuals through her work as a Lodha Partner. She serves on the board of the Forward Trust, an addiction charity, and also sits on the board of a private family foundation.

THE POWER OF CONNECTION

"Meaningful impact begins with genuine connection," says Priestley, who draws on her experience as an executive coach to help clients unpack what truly moves them. For some, that spark may come from lived experience — losing a loved one to cancer, for instance. For others, their focus may be driven by long-standing passions, from social justice to climate action. "My role is to create the conditions for people to think about their giving as unique human beings."

By asking clients to look inward before they look outward, Priestley believes they become more resilient to the inevitable bumps in the road, from a pilot programme that under-delivers to an initiative that struggles to gain broader support. "Convening, creating partnerships and providing platforms for issues are all ways to maximise your impact and help turn the dial for your causes. Asking the question, 'What am I in a position to do that others can't?' adds an extra layer to your philanthropy."

One client inherited a family foundation devoted to women's education in southern Africa. "It was part of her family's story, not her own," Priestley recalls. "She couldn't see how to add personal value." In conversation, they uncovered a far more personal pull: supporting vulnerable women and children in her own community. She focused her efforts locally and with it came renewed purpose. "Now," says Priestley, "she knows the change is happening because of her, not who she is."

"Foundations and endowments offer a way to codify values, steward capital and create continuity across generations"

CHALLENGES IN MEANINGFUL GIVING

This focus on personal motivation also helps counteract a growing paralysis among donors: too many choices and too little clarity about how impactful organisations actually are. A widely cited industry benchmark suggests that, to be considered efficient, charities should spend at least 70% of their total expenses on direct programme activity, yet many fall far short.

Priestley offers a practical balm. "At Lodha Partners, we support our clients in doing due diligence just as they would with investments or decisions about their children's education," she says. This includes investigating each organisation's governance structures, the rigour of its impact reporting and the strength of its leadership team. "The culture of an organisation is as important as its mission. I encourage clients to ask themselves: are these people I can — and want to — work with?"

Establishing a thorough understanding of an issue before committing is key to avoiding a common pitfall Priestley has observed: a gap developing between what a donor wishes to give and what a community actually needs. "Listening to those on the front line is critical to enable collaborative working to create meaningful goals and outcomes. It's about doing it *with* people rather than *for* them."

THE RETURN ON GIVING

Priestley observes that many of today's donors apply a private-sector mindset to their giving. A prime example is activist investor Chris Hohn, who founded The Children's Investment Fund in 2003 and donates a portion of the company's earnings to the Children's Investment Fund Foundation, which now has an endowment exceeding $6 billion. "There has been a major professionalisation of the philanthropy sector in recent years. Many now demand a significant social return on their investments," says Priestley.

The challenge with this approach is that not everything can be measured easily—and particularly not in the short term. For example, early intervention programmes for mothers and babies are chronically under-funded because outcomes take too long to materialise. It's a similar story in addiction recovery and the criminal justice system, where the baseline re-offending rate for custodial sentences under 12 months can reach 57%, yet specialist support programmes show much lower rates over time.

At the other end of the spectrum is trust-based giving, embodied by MacKenzie Scott. Since 2019, Scott — a novelist who was married to Jeff Bezos between 1993 and 2019 — has given more than $19 billion in unrestricted support to over 2,000 organisations. A three-year study by the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) found that these gifts have transformed recipient organisations and had long-term influence on many of the communities they serve. "Both methods are important, but it is exciting to see bolder approaches," says Priestley. "Scott trusts the partners she supports, and this gives them the freedom they need to do the work."

GIVING AS A CLOSED-LOOP SYSTEM

The definition of philanthropy may be "the desire to promote the welfare of others," but Priestley suggests many overlook its potential to transform the lives of donors, too. She argues that philanthropy offers individuals typically identified by their family's name or the wealth they have created the chance to take back control of their image, adding a more personal angle to their identity. "Your philanthropy and giving provides insights into what you really care about. There is a story to tell not just in what you give to but how you work and engage with causes you care about. It can feed your reputation and inform your profile." She points to Melinda French Gates, in women's health, and Ben Goldsmith, in conservation, whose philanthropy has shaped how they are perceived by their peers and the world at large, providing insights into what they really care about — and, ultimately, what they will leave behind.

For powerful families, this question of legacy is particularly weighty. Foundations and endowments offer a way to codify values, steward capital and create continuity across generations. "Structure gives longevity to intention," Priestley says. "It creates a platform and a narrative, something that can exist beyond the individual."

If there is a through-line in her counsel, it is that philanthropy calls for a balance of clarity and curiosity, as well as instinct and rigour. At a time of dizzying choice in terms of worthy causes, Priestley's approach feels refreshingly simple: start with what you love and prepare for a lifelong journey.

FOUR STEPS TO GIVING WITH PURPOSE

1 CONNECTION:
Choose something you truly care about

2 CLARITY:
Define what you want to achieve and your role

3 CURIOSITY:
Keep learning through listening

4 COMMITMENT:
Lasting change requires long-term work

Family holidays

GIVING THE GIFT OF TIME TOGETHER THIS CHRISTMAS

Whether helicoptering into the Pennine Alps for a night in an off-grid hideaway, wandering Luxor's temples by torchlight or discovering MOMA after hours, these immersive journeys offer families of all ages the opportunity to trade presents for presence. Take your pick from four extraordinary experiences.

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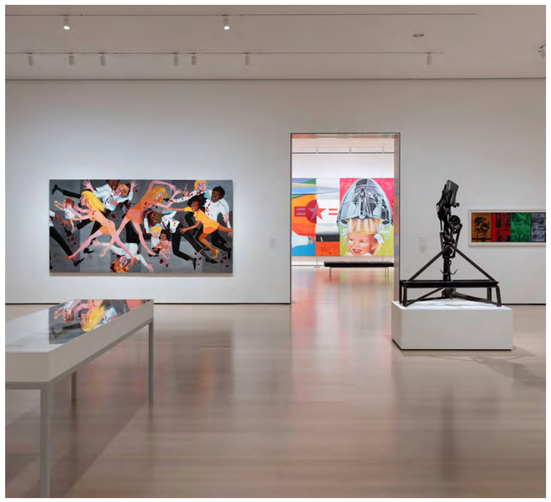
MAKE TRACKS TO VERBIER'S ULTIMATE PRIVATE CHALET, SWITZERLAND

New for this season and more like a Bond villain's lair than a traditional chalet, this fully staffed property offers minimalist comfort in an extreme environment: 3,000 metres above sea level, on a rocky outcrop above the Tortin glacier in Switzerland's Pennine Alps. Built on the site of a refuge that served as the hangout of the Nendaz ski club for decades, it is now an off-grid sanctuary for athletic families who value privacy. Inside, four sleek double bedrooms offer views resembling those from an eyrie, while a sauna and log-burning fire provide opportunities to recharge tired muscles. Outside, a world of pulse-raising adventure awaits. Whether heliskiing, tandem paragliding or dog-sledding appeal, the cabin's mountain guides are on hand to ensure your family's safety and enjoyment. *ccabanetortin.com*



TOUR NEW YORK'S MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AFTER HOURS, USA

If one were to turn the MoMA inside out and shake it, the pavement of West 53rd Street would be littered with the world's greatest modern-art treasures. From Claude Monet's *Water Lilies* to Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel*, this extraordinary museum houses one of the most influential collections in the world. Although a major refurbishment in 2019 added around 30% more gallery space, a visit here often involves queuing — which is why an hour's private tour before or after opening is a worthy investment. An art historian will curate an experience that reflects your family's interests, whether they wish to dive deep into a particular artist's *oeuvre*, such as Van Gogh, or explore a thematic thread or medium. *moma.org*

EXPERIENCE A NIGHT AT THE CURSED TEMPLE WITH HOWARD CARTER, EGYPT

The year is 1922; the setting, Egypt's Valley of the Kings. British archaeologist Howard Carter has just made a hole in the plaster that has sealed Pharaoh Tutankhamun's tomb for 3,000 years. No one could have imagined the extent of the treasures within nor the untimely deaths of key members of the expedition, which some attributed to a mythical curse said to befall anyone who disturbed the tomb. Part history lesson, part immersive theatre, Cookson Adventures' unique experience begins with a cruise on the Nile, followed by a night-time quest through one of Luxor's temples with a full cast of actors playing Carter and his team. The evening culminates in a fireside feast in the shadow of the temple, with a soundtrack provided by local musicians. *cooksonadventures.com*

LEARN TO COOK FORAGED INGREDIENTS IN THE HIGHLANDS WITH RAYMOND BLANC, SCOTLAND

Among the mist-cloaked peaks of the Scottish Highlands, nature-loving gourmands will find one of the UK's most ambitious rewilding projects. Alladale Wilderness Reserve spans more than 23,000 hectares of rolling hills and emerald forests haunted by endangered species such as red squirrels and Scottish wildcats. Over the course of Satopia's four-day trip, travellers will forage with the reserve's rangers before cooking their haul under the tutelage of master-chef Raymond Blanc, who has been a leading light in the UK's organic food movement since the 1980s. Other experiences, including whisky tasting, clay-pigeon shooting and bagpiping, make this one ideal for families with grown up children. *satopiatravel.com*

Welcome to Mayfair
BONHEUR BY MATT ABÉ

In the legendary dining room once ruled by the Roux family, Matt Abé's first solo venture bridges tradition, artistry and Antipodean ease — the perfect setting for a celebratory festive meal.

For those drawn to snowy linen and beurre noisette, 43 Upper Brook Street has been a Mayfair landmark for decades. Behind a discreet door, Albert and Michel Roux — and later Michel Roux Jr — created La Gavroche, an industry-defining address known for French classics including a soufflé Suissesse, which featured on the menu from the day the restaurant opened in 1967. As well as becoming the first in the UK to gain three Michelin stars, La Gavroche also launched the careers of some of the world's most prestigious culinary names including Marcus Wareing, Pierre Koffmann and Monica Galetti.

After the restaurant took its final bow in 2024, it left a chasm that only someone with unshakeable confidence in both their technical skill and contemporary relevance would dare to enter. Fortunately, after 18 years under the mentorship of Gordon Ramsay — including five as chef patron at the three Michelin-starred Restaurant Gordon Ramsay — Matt Abé is finally stepping into the limelight with his first solo venture (backed by Ramsay), Bonheur.

MATT ABÉ'S FAVOURITE CHRISTMAS CANAPÉS

Comté and black truffle gougère paired with Henri Giraud Champagne

Chicken liver parfait tartlet with marmalade and thyme, served with Seedlip Garden 108

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"Decadent hospitality is firmly back in fashion in London's fine dining scene"

The restaurant opened in early November, perfectly timed for the festive season. Festoons of Christmas lights may already adorn The Connaught, but inside, Russell Sage Studio has created a comfortable, cosseting space that whispers of the Sunshine Coast and the outback of Abé's native Australia. In the upstairs cocktail lounge, guests are welcomed with a glass of Magnum Cuvée Esprit Nature Champagne, the bar glowing like the setting sun. The subterranean dining room features a colour palette of burnt ochres, textural artworks by abstract artist Rajan Seth and tactile touches, including burgundy velvet and horsehair wallpaper.

Bonheur offers two tasting menus alongside à la carte. The 'Journey' menu features five courses that showcase top British ingredients, classical French techniques and Abé's commitment to craftsmanship. To kick things off are a succinct trio of canapés that demonstrate the chef's precision, including a crispy buckwheat tart cradling Bluefin tuna and wasabi.

Next is quiche Lorraine topped with smoked pork belly and aged Gruyère that embodies the English translation of the restaurant's name: happiness. Other highlights include venison from Oxfordshire's Aynhoe Park served extremely rare with an earthy beetroot compote, sharpened by the tartness of tiny blackberries, and nori-frosted fillet of turbot with hollandaise sauce so velvety, one could almost cut it. Each course can be paired by exceptional wines chosen by Alsace-born Master Sommelier Éric Zwiebel, who has curated a list of 565 labels, many available by the glass. Crown jewels such as Maison Trimbach's Clos Sainte Hune Grand Cru Riesling and Henri Giraud Champagne sit alongside lesser-known treasures including Tasmania's Tolpuddle and Chablis' Patrick Piuze.

A serving team led by Matthew Widdowson, formerly of Five Fields, pour sauces and spoon foams tableside in a ceremony that feels both discreet and theatrical. Their manner is matched by playful surprises including a broth laced with lip-coatingly unctuous beef fat and a jewel-box of petits fours that reveal a fruit jelly sour enough to raise hairs.

After years of minimalist interiors and small plates, decadent hospitality is firmly back in fashion in London's fine dining scene. Bonheur offers an interpretation that feels both classic and contemporary, with its feet firmly in classical France but its face turned toward both Asia and Australia. Lodha imagines the Rouxs both senior and junior would approve.

THE ART OF INTENTIONAL GIFTING

London's leading makers and maisons remind us that the most memorable Christmas gifts speak to personal connection. From bespoke scents to fine-bound books, here's how to select items that will be treasured for years to come.

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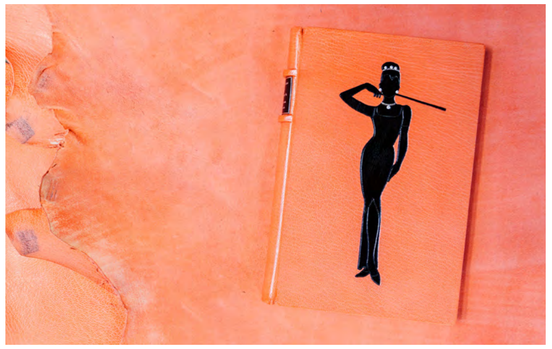
For romance:
AN IRANIAN SILK FROM LIBERTY ORIENTAL CARPETS

Tucked away on the fourth floor of Liberty of London, Liberty Oriental Carpets sells antique and hand-woven rugs personally chosen by Bruce Lepere, one of Europe's leading experts on oriental carpets. "An Iranian silk is a beautiful gift from a husband to a wife," he says, citing pieces sized for a bedside or walk-in wardrobe. Each takes three artisans 18 months to weave — not including preparing the loom, spinning the silk and dyeing it with natural pigments such as pomegranate skin. "They're so fine you can almost wear them as scarves," Lepere adds. Used as dowries for at least 5,000 years, they often feature symbols of fertility and prosperity. Highlights include a specially commissioned silk Qum rug with a William Morris design by an artist called Khani and a collectible work from contemporary weaver Mir Mehdi. "We work closely with clients to choose the perfect piece," Lepere says, asking about both recipient and home before presenting options and their stories. "Rugs like these are for people who know that living among art enriches life. Why shouldn't that include their floors?" *libertyorientalcarpets.com*

For expansion:
A LEATHER-BOUND FIRST EDITION FROM THE CHELSEA BINDERY

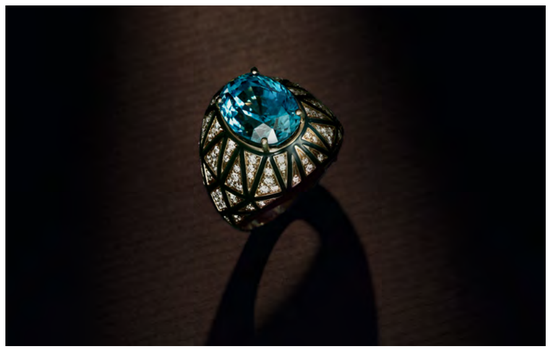


Owned by Mayfair- and Manhattan-based bookseller Peter Harrington, The Chelsea Bindery specialises in fine binding with particular expertise in 20th-century first editions. "We carry forward a proud tradition of craftsmanship while giving new life to treasured titles," says Emma Doyle, the bindery's manager. "Each binding transforms a story into a work of art that reflects the affection readers feel for the books that have shaped them." The process takes an average of three craftspeople working over 10 hours on each volume and must be spread over 8-20 weeks. If time is tight, the shop's 2025 Christmas catalogue includes around 150 finely bound first editions, including children's favourites *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*, alongside a highly collectible *Breakfast at Tiffany's* featuring the silhouette of Audrey Hepburn with diamonds set into the tiara and necklace. "For many, a fine binding is the perfect gift," Doyle adds. "It's deeply personal, beautifully made and an heirloom that can be treasured for years to come." *peterharrington.co.uk*

For atmosphere:
A BESPOKE SCENT FROM RACHEL VOSPER

"Of all our senses, smell is the most strongly tied to our emotions, which is why it makes such a thoughtful gift," says Rachel Vosper, founder of her eponymous fragrance studio in Belgravia, where she creates hand-poured beeswax candles using natural ingredients. The process of developing a bespoke fragrance takes several weeks. "I always start by asking clients to describe their favourite smells — a parent's cologne or a memorable holiday destination — and these memories often reveal a complex blend of nostalgia and emotion." Vosper then guides them through notes such as pine and amber to build a personal olfactory profile, before producing 2 kg of fragrance for use in candles, diffusers and room sprays. "The idea is that wherever your loved one lives, loves or hosts, the space will be infused with an aroma as unique and memorable as they are. What could be a better gift than that?" *rachelvosper.com*

For sparkle:
FINE JEWELLERY FROM DRIES CRIEL



For fine jeweller Dries Criel, an heirloom piece must balance artistry with wearability, contemporary spirit and timeless design. The finest also carry narrative weight — a bracelet built around a grandmother's stone or an engagement ring echoing the architecture of the city where a couple met can hold a legacy that endures for generations. The process begins with a personal conversation, often at 5 Hertford Street, Criel's preferred London address. "I listen closely to the client's story, their memories and the emotion they wish to capture," he says. Pieces are crafted by master artisans in his Antwerp studio, and clients are encouraged to visit to make the journey feel even more personal. "A bespoke jewel is a physical expression of intention," Criel adds. "It transforms a moment into something eternal, creating an emotional resonance that lasts long after the occasion." *driescriel.com*

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