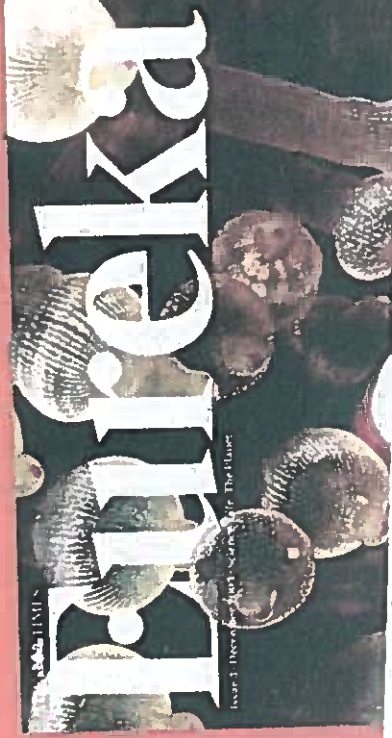


Inside today



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TIMES



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26M

Newspaper of the Year 2009

Home and dry: British sailors released by Iran



DAN STREED / GETTY IMAGES

IN THE NEWS

Schemes to cut police red tape have failed

Police are spending no more time on the beat than they did two years ago despite a series of initiatives, according to Jan Berry, the Government's adviser on red tape. Her blunt assessment undermines Home Office plans for the future of policing.

Sir Hugh Orde, the leader of the country's chief constables, said that if big spending cuts were required then politicians would have to tell the police which services they did not want forces to provide. News, pages 6, 7

War strategy attacked

Democrats questioned President Obama's \$30 billion troop surge in Afghanistan while Republicans attacked his 18-month deadline for withdrawal. News, pages 26, 27

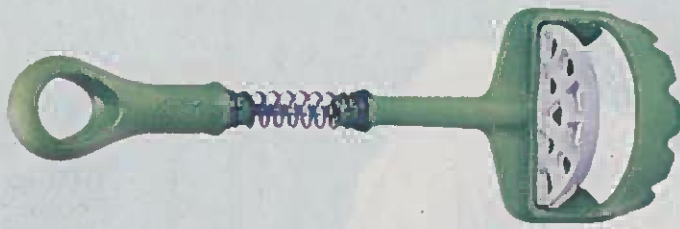
Titan Multifunctional Kitchen Magician

It's just a peeler, but nothing in our kitchen this year has induced such awe or reverence as this gadget. Not even the cotecchini sausages made from our own pig-garnished with deep-fried slivers of his ear. My wife goes all Jeremy Clarkson on the subject: "Look how it will go round this carrot. It corners like a dream!" A guest tried to steal it. I don't know why the Titan works so well, but the two serrated blades must be made from the same sort of ultra-thin steel as those microplane graters, which tend to blunt very quickly. Yet this has not blunted at all in four months of use — it works without effort on cheese, vegetables, fruit rinds, potatoes and of course the pig's ear. Looking at the packet, I realise you might use it to shred cabbage, or grate chocolate and so on. There's a plastic attachment to help you do that. If it had a temperature sensor and remote control, the Titan would be a contender for best kitchen gadget yet. Give it to the Army to take to Afghanistan. £10.99 from *Lakeland* (lakeland.co.uk)



Kids' Kitchen recipe cards

Children love recipe books: they let them take charge of the chemistry experiment that is part of a good kitchen adventure. I still treasure *The Usborne First Cookbook*, whose stained and crusty pages tell the story of my son's early attempts at pancakes, fudge and spaghetti bolognese. Fiona Bird's box set of 40 wipeable illustrated recipe cards are jolly and sensible: she chooses foods children actually want to eat (fruit jellies, home-made baked beans, chocolate brownies) and provides some interesting exotics that we will try: a dal (lentil stew) flavoured with orange, ginger and cinnamon; a simple vanilla ice cream that doesn't need an ice-cream machine. No meat, so for my attempt to get the children to make their own sausages we'll have to go back to Jane Grigson. £15 (£9.20 on Amazon), published by Barefoot Books



Joseph Joseph Smasher

Potato mashing is a pain — it's hard work with a fork, and if you use an electric wand or a blender you're likely to overmash the spuds, producing glue. Hand mashers are OK, but they are usually metal, which will ruin your non-stick. This one, from the groovy British kitchenware designers Joseph Joseph, is plastic and clever: springloaded so all you have to do is pump it. In fact it is so much fun you can get small children to mash your potatoes for you. But to get a perfect, restaurant-grade mash, there's nothing to beat the Potato Ricer (see opposite). £12 from *John Lewis, Lakeland and others*

