

THE really useful DIRECTORY

BATHROOMS

BEDROOMS

BUILDING

CHRISTMAS

DESIGN

FLOORING

FURNISHINGS

GARDENS

KITCHENS

HOME

HOMEWARE

HOME OFFICE

TECHNOLOGY...

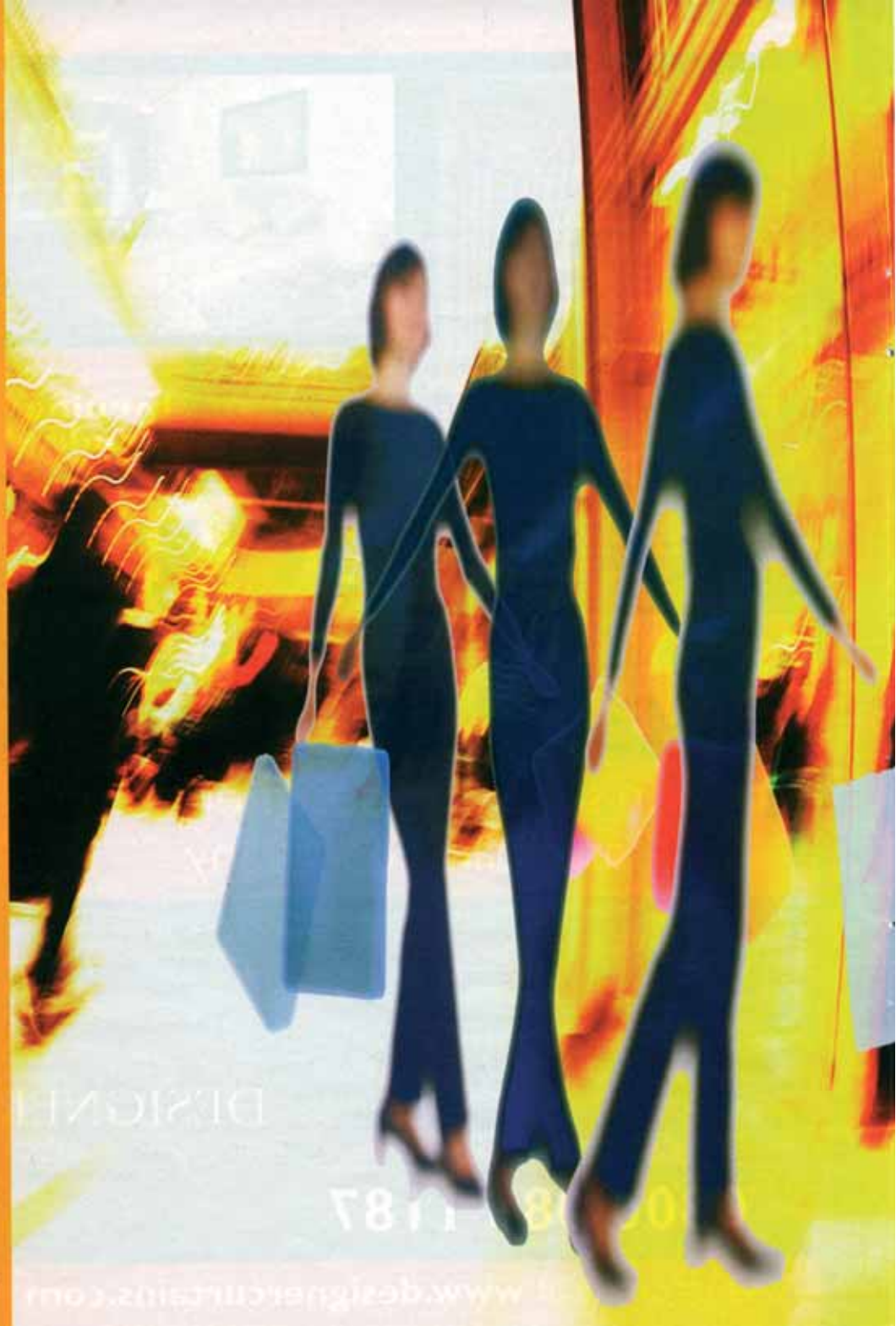
AND MUCH MORE

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Evening Standard
**Homes
& Property**



The essential guide to goods & services for home owners



DESIGN

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Safe hands

We work the longest hours in Europe – Londoners put in nearly eight hours unpaid overtime a week, so any extra help around the house is well deserved

Linda Evangelista famously said that she wouldn't get out of bed for less than \$10,000 a day and now, thanks to the burgeoning number of dial-up and internet home-delivery services around the capital, Londoners don't have to get out of bed at all if they don't feel like it.

Cleaning services, in particular, have undergone a boom, with agencies taking over in an area that used to be mostly private arrangements between cleaner and employer. Many people prefer to work with agencies because they will handle the vetting and can arrange cover if your cleaner is ill, on holiday

MANAGE YOUR LIFE

One of the biggest growth areas has been in lifestyle management companies, who will act as your right-hand man or woman for as long as you need them. Specialists include Buy-time, Cushion The Impact, Ten UK and Life Support and whether you need them to help with your house move or even buy your mother-in-law a birthday present.

or leaves the job. Companies specializing in this service include Homeclean and Happy Hands (who also offer handyman services). Others, such as Greycoat Placements and Mrs Hunt's Agency offer a wider range of help including waiters, butlers and cooks.

If you're managing pretty well with the cleaning but just can't face that most hated of household chores – cleaning the oven – call in a specialist. Oven Angels will land in your kitchen and, using only eco-friendly products, banish all the evil burnt-on grime from your cooker.

We've all become a little blasé about getting restaurant food delivered to our door and most of us can take our pick from any number of local Indian, Chinese, pizza and fish-and-chip options. If you're lucky enough to live fairly centrally, Room Service will deliver food from a vast range of well-known London restaurants including Zinc, Chez Victor,

Sketch, Planet Hollywood, Blooms, Benihana and Blue Elephant, to name a few.

If you don't mind cooking it yourself, nearly all the major supermarket chains now offer a home delivery service, including Waitrose – whose is run by www.ocado.com – Tesco, Sainsbury and Asda.

Now that the big guns are so well set up on the web, increasing numbers of smaller specialist suppliers are offering home delivery to maintain their edge. These include the Organic Delivery Company, who supply a huge range of organic goods including Japanese food, beer and vitamins and an Italian specialist www.nifeislife.com, who can provide you with anything from a whole 7kg Parma ham to fresh gnocchi and white truffle butter. Francophiles, meanwhile, will prefer www.natoora.co.uk, which delivers an enormous range of fresh French specialities to most parts of London.

Lisa Hitchin