

# SILVESTER TRENDS

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- 1 About to appear in London: the **wrap**. Wraps: gourmet foods and salads, securely wrapped in soft flour tortillas, are debuting in fast food outlets across California. They have the essential fast food attributes of being non-messy to eat in a walking or driving situation, but lack the unhealthy aura of burgers, and the breadiness of sandwiches. Wraps are seen as a new force because they negate the **chick nix** whereby a group of men intent on a fast food fix are thwarted by presence of assertive, healthy eating/meat-is-murder girlfriends.
- 2 Also seen recently in the US: the **red meat backlash**. Hundreds of transfer passengers queuing at a Houston airport foodcourt for a fast food stall serving **huge hunks of beef, pork and lamb** dripping in gravy, with no vegetables in sight
- 3 Dead **tamagotchi** trauma as the cute, loveable but terribly mortal virtual pets confront thousands of young adults with the realisation that they are *unlikely to make good parents*. Problems too in researcherland, as qualitative researchers like Silvester now have to ask respondents to **leave their virtual pets at home**, as well as switch off their mobiles, before groups can commence.
- 4 The verb '**to 1471**' becomes a standard part of contemporary English, as BT's most popular service becomes a key relationship utility, and spells goodbye to the evasive post-date "*I did try to call you but you were out.*" line. "*To 1471*" joins the legendary "*I know you said you left a message, but my answerphone doesn't always work...*" in the fraught lexicon of dating politics. Meanwhile the 'press 5 for a ringback' service creates confusion across the country, as users struggle to remember **whom** they asked to ring them back and **why**.
- 5 **Lara Croft** joins Louise as the bedroom wall pin up of choice for teenage males. Lara, an upper class English gun toting version of Indiana Jones is the main character in the PlayStation's *Tomb Raider* and *Tomb Raider 2*. The appeal? Nineties attitude and digitally enhanced anatomy.
- 6 Excitement in the camera industry as sales of low resolution **digital cameras** exceed all expectations. What is their appeal? For some, it is the ability to transfer images directly on to computer for their world wide web homepage; but for many it is just the ability to check their picture the instant they have taken it - and then to **erase it and try again**.
- 7 **Segaworld** becomes the latest teeny date place, combining infinite numbers of aliens to waste for him, with dark, couply rides for her.
- 8 A new twist for cybercafés as they discover the power of **network gaming evenings**. Most Doom-style computer games now have network capabilities, allowing players to hunt down and kill sentient human adversaries sitting at the console next to them, rather than mere aliens. As one devotee put it: "It's a bit like paintball, but here, when you hit people, their limbs come off."
- 9 All is not well in **Bridget Jones land** as thirtysomething professional women cope with their inability to fancy any man who earns less than them. Known in the trade as the 'Millie tendency', after the *This Life* character who considers trading her unambitious boyfriend for her pecunious boss, it is a serious problem for the growing number of single corporate lawyer and banker girls on six figure salaries.
- 10 Cool in Singapore: an five storey **late night coffee emporium**, serving designer coffees to the post club crowd, in a choice of elegantly themed milieux.
- 11 Battle lines are drawn in souvenir shops, as the competition to offer the **tackiest Diana memento** goes into overdrive. Silvester's advice to marketers considering tie-ins: **never overestimate** the taste of the great British public.

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