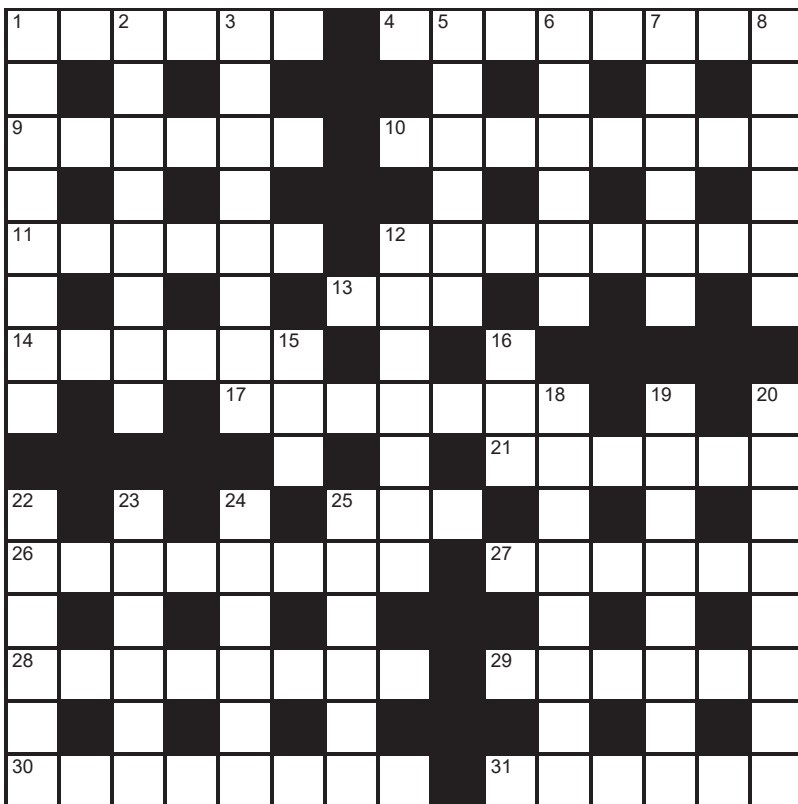
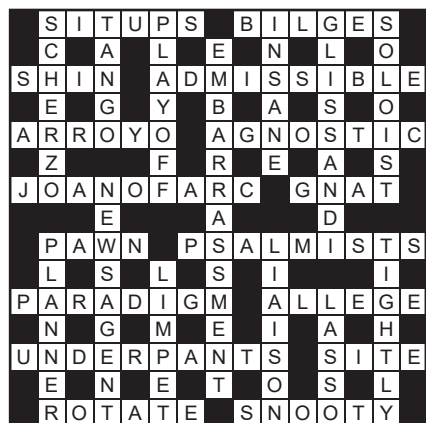


CROSSWORD No 17,619 by GUY



Solution 17,618



For all the FT's festive puzzles, including the news puzzle of the year, scan the QR code or go to ft.com/crosswordapp, where you can also access FT crosswords over the last 30 days — cryptic, Polymath, Weekend and Sunday puzzles

JOTTER PAD

ACROSS

- 1 Good attendant who's excessively effusive (6)
- 4 I chip away at vanishing plutocrats in difficulty (8)
- 9 Sugar's inside not outside this sweet (6)
- 10 Black cat mostly subject to temple (8)
- 11 Aviator, say, is French soul returning to trouble (6)
- 12 A rep's upset, scoffed, and cut off (8)
- 13 Conclusive difficulty (3)
- 14 Style from chap dismissing last point of irritating fool (6)
- 17 Right about don (7)
- 21 And the rest His Eminence had eaten into (6)
- 25 Guy drops a pen (3)
- 26 English and US spies in equal decay (8)
- 27 New cinema is certainly not ruddy short of spirit in US (6)
- 28 A pound abandoned by elite soldiers, for example (8)
- 29 Mourn unconvincing collection of books (6)
- 30 Happily one rates boom (8)
- 31 One's screwed in credit cut (6)

DOWN

- 1 Info on woman embracing Romeo cop in Rouen (8)
- 2 This wine if repackaged could be sure neat (8)
- 3 Who tests whirling chopper and digger (8)
- 5 County central to gutsy drink (6)
- 6 Suffer little Henry being destructive (6)
- 7 Eg, Sweeney Todd's unbridled wealth (3,3)
- 8 Warden found in right huff (6)
- 12 Screen release (7)
- 15 King's Cross in support of sappers (3)
- 16 Custom trick with no hint of roguery (3)
- 18 Individual in theatre is prehistoric (5-3)
- 19 Cold actor on a last drop of his drink (8)
- 20 Orator interrupting rising discourteous teacher (8)
- 22 What could stun you about eastern riddle? (6)
- 23 Cold spuds (6)
- 24 Dream is one playing under Victor (6)
- 25 Saint covering, eg, elder's passage (6)