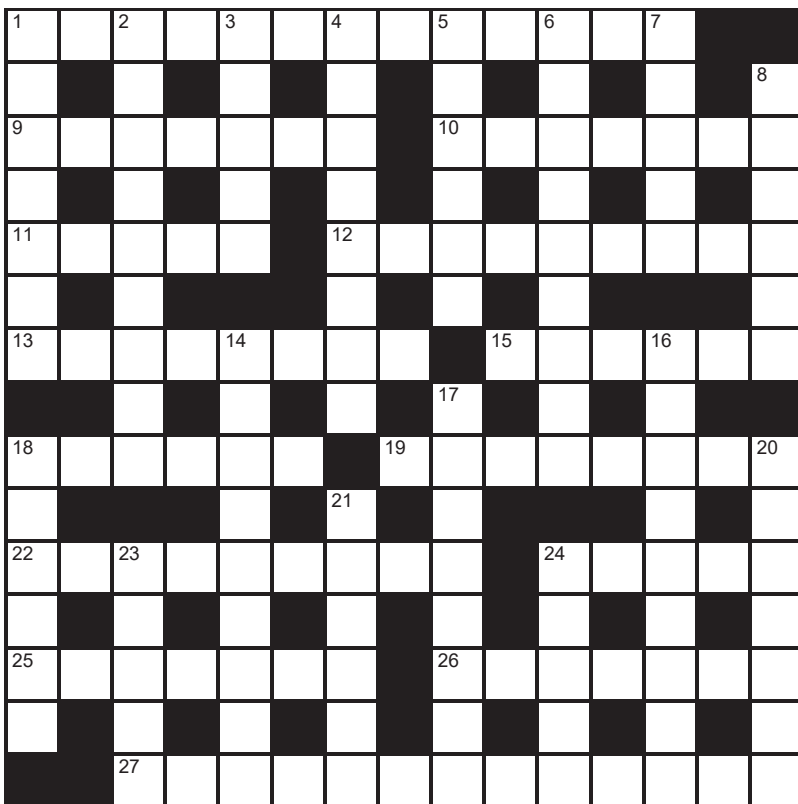
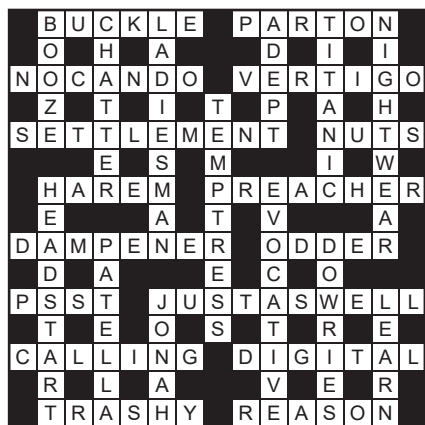


CROSSWORD No 17,621 by JULIUS



Solution 17,620



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 'I must go in here, dear' — 'Then close the curtains!' (7,6)
- 9 Adult gathering welcomes discontented women (5-2)
- 10 Very cold, hosting the old Queen and old Governor in her place (7)
- 11 Aristocracy spurning grand portal (5)
- 12 Foreign lunatic claiming British oil? (9)
- 13 Offering former pupil nothing in classical language (8)
- 15 Churning out plates of everyday food (6)
- 18 October commercials reduced to groups of eight (6)
- 19 Clingy individual that might be attracted by Hull? (8)
- 22 Forged Riyad papers mum kept as a farmgirl (9)
- 24 Julius is drunk, going over the maximum (5)
- 25 Clergyman's income? Mine's been sent back at last (7)
- 26 Portend live cryptocurrency? (7)
- 27 Hotel croupier, funny chap with a moustache (7,6)

DOWN

- 1 Greengrocer gleefully set up frame for artist (2,5)
- 2 Strangely, 24D with more space available (4,2,3)
- 3 Useful boundaries at Headingley (5)
- 4 French leader to sleep over? Revolving Coward! (8)
- 5 Slave labor completely disrobed to wash here (6)
- 6 Church officer weeps, drained of energy in the grip of the devil (9)
- 7 Their dream? Every now and again to leave Earth (5)
- 8 Elm fallen over outside? Try climbing shrub (6)
- 14 Sleeping partner's one-piece with nothing on (she says) underneath! (5,4)
- 16 Head of UN for one ignoring European race regulator (9)
- 17 LibDem, suffering fracture, fitted with a new jawbone (8)
- 18 Most senior people jiggle modestly when undressed (6)
- 20 Former alchemist's elixir gone forever? (7)
- 21 Secure American upper-class carriage (6)
- 23 The nationality of Murdoch, according to Connery? (5)
- 24 When squiffy, bishop avoided game with long odds (5)