

ASK LEWIS

Tracking the Borrowing Habits of the Nation

LEWIS (Library Enquiry Web Information Service), PLR's new enhanced database provides us with fascinating information, across hundreds of subject categories on exactly which books are being read where.

Here is just a taster from LEWIS, relating to borrowings for 2003-4:

- ***What is the most borrowed cookery book nationally?***
The favourite cookery book with most UK borrowers is "Happy Days With the Naked Chef". However, borrowers in London and Wales prefer Delia Smith's "How to Cook".
- ***What is the most borrowed holiday guide?***
"The Rough Guide to Spain" by Mark Ellingham and John Fisher is top of the travel guide list nationally. Top for borrowers in the north however is "The Rough Guide to the Lake District", whilst those in London and Wales prefer "Lonely Planet: France"
- ***And according to LEWIS, where are people going when they move abroad permanently?***
Books on buying property abroad are very popular with borrowers nationally, with the top three destinations being Spain, Australia and France. There are some interesting regional variations however. Orcadians borrow more books about Tuscany; France is most popular in Pembrokeshire and Devon; Canada in Fife and Australia in Northumberland.
- ***What are their favourite hobbies?***
The most borrowed book in the handicrafts category in the south-east was "Design and Make Soft Furnishings"; in London it was "Making Curtains and Blinds". Scottish borrowers favoured "The Doll's House Decorator", whilst in the south-west, the most borrowed book was "Patchwork".
- ***And which aspects of their health do they need advice with?***
Across the UK, the most borrowed book in the complementary medicine category was "Self Help for Backs". However, in the north, borrowers favoured "Eat to Beat High Blood Pressure", and in Wales, the most borrowed book was "The Vitamins and Minerals Handbook".

If you would like to ask LEWIS a question, please contact the Press Team (contact details below):

Ends/11/02/05

