

Lifestyle

Curiosity runs both ways for solo female traveler in India



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A Palestinian man with his donkey poses at the panoramic view from the Mount of Olives on the Old City of Jerusalem, with the Muslim Dome of the Rock in the background. — AFP

ERDOGAN-STYLE MUSTACHES TRENDING IN TURKISH RULING PARTY

The prime minister has one. So does the culture minister. Even the previously clean-shaven ministers of economy and foreign affairs recently began sporting theirs. Neatly-trimmed mustaches, similar to that worn by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, have become increasingly popular among government ministers from his Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party, or AKP, ahead of a crucial referendum Sunday on expanding the president's powers.

ing - like the crescent moon on the Turkish flag - while leftists tend to grow their bushy and Stalin-esque. Erdogan wears a bristly and tidily-trimmed mustache that is popular among conservative and religious Turks. Some religious men also grow beards. A year ago, more than half of the Cabinet members were clean-shaven. Now only three of Turkey's 27 ministers - including the only woman - don't have facial hair.

The trend appears to have begun with a Cabinet reshuffle last year, trig-

who used to be clean shaven, now sports a mustache, too. In Istanbul's Kasmipasa neighborhood, where Erdogan was born, barber Ahmet Guler said he believes AKP members are growing mustaches to resemble the president - the party's founder and long-time leader. "Because otherwise it draws attention: 'Look, he doesn't have one. A Muslim or a man should have a mustache,'" said Guler, 57.

The chief

Facial hair remains an important reference point in Turkish society and politics but that's starting to change, said Barin Kayaoglu, an expert on Turkish culture and history. He noted that many young Turks are growing "hipster" beards, which cut across all ideologies. "Turkish culture sees facial hair as an expression of masculinity but that association is no longer as powerful as it used to be," Kayaoglu said. According to Hurriyet newspaper, Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekci, who had shaved off his mustache, re-grew it recently after Erdogan remarked, half-jokingly, that some ministers didn't listen to him.

The paper also reported that during a February meeting between Erdogan and a group of AKP legislators, several participants had barely visible mustaches, suggesting that the mustaches were grown in haste before the president's arrival. Some Turks say the trend shows how much influence Erdogan, affectionately known as "the chief," wields over the government, his party and the bureaucracy despite the current constitutional requirement for the president to be neutral. On Sunday, Turks will vote "yes" or "no" to constitutional amendments that would abolish the office of the prime minister and transfer executive powers to the president, something Erdogan's critics fear would cement his powers and further mold Turkey according to his conservative and pro-Islamic views. Opinion polls suggest he could win by a whisker. — AP



A barber cuts the mustache of a customer in Ahmet Guler's barbershop in the Kasimpasa neighborhood in Istanbul. — AP

Some analysts say that's no fluke in a country where facial hair has a history of political significance, and where ministers' loyalty to Erdogan is being closely scrutinized following a failed coup attempt last year. "These days, when Turkey is fighting terror organizations - and in the aftermath of the coup - the mustaches provide a strong and stern image," said Mesut Sen, professor of Turkish studies at Istanbul's Marmara University.

Facial hair

Historically, men in Turkey have worn mustaches not only to assert their manhood but express their political leanings. Traditionally, nationalists wear their mustaches long and downward-point-

gering speculation that ministers were trying to please the powerful president by growing mustaches similar to his. Senior AKP officials continued to grow mustaches, sometimes coupled with beards, after the failed coup attempt in July. One government minister, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, said some ministers grew facial hair because Erdogan urged them to. He declined to give further details.

The trend is not limited to the Cabinet. The chief of Turkey's intelligence agency, who was the source of controversy over his alleged failure to warn Erdogan about the coup attempt, first grew a mustache and then a full beard. Erdogan's closest bodyguard,

Bizarre News

Battenbun cake slated as Holy Grail of tea treats

Anna Olson has created the Battenbun to celebrate Easter. The celebrity chef has invented a new tasty treat in time for the religious holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus, (PBUH) which is a combination of a classic hot cross bun and a Battenberg cake with the pink and yellow patterned centre, as part of her show 'Bake with Anna Olson'. The hybrid cake, which has been slated as the new sweet treat during English tea time, is a blend of almonds, cinnamon, apricots and marzipan and will be given to customers in East London bakery Lily Vanilli on Easter Sunday before the series' premiere on April 24. Speaking about her creation, Anna said: "The best part about the launch of the third series is that I can continue to share my incredible world of baking with the UK." And Anna is hopeful the Battenbun will encourage more people to get creative in the kitchen. She explained: "I hope both the Battenbun and upcoming season of 'Bake with Anna Olson' inspires the UK to get their rolling pins out and join me on another sweet adventure."



Chicken nugget request is set to break retweet record

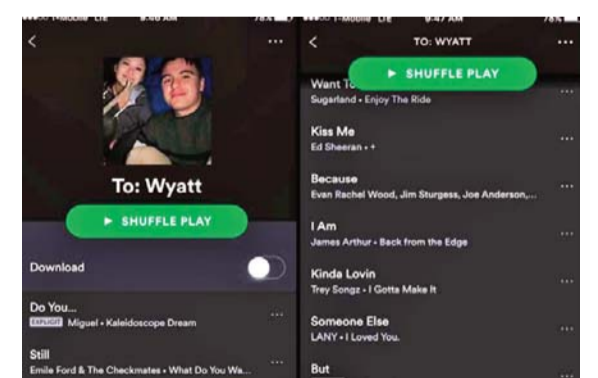
A chicken nugget fan has launched a campaign on social media to get a free lifetime supply of the breaded dish. Carter Wilkerson's took to Twitter to ask Wendy's how many re-tweets he would need to get in order to receive a year's supply of the feast from the food chain, and the ambitious teenager is on set to break the world record and make his dream come true. The 16 year old wrote: "Yo @Wendys how many re-tweets for a year of free chicken nuggets? (sic)." To which the company replied: "18 million (sic)." And the youngster is set to break the world record for the most amount of retweets with his ambitious plea on



the micro blogging site, which has been repeatedly shared almost three million times. However, Carter didn't think his post would be as successful. Speaking to USA Today, he said: "I sent out the tweet as a joke, but then they responded with the outrageous number. I thought 'Consider it done' would be funny among my friend group. Then I put the screen shot up and it started gaining momentum."

Girl breaks up with guy with whiny Spotify playlist

A girl broke up with her boyfriend through a Spotify playlist. The list was of entirely made up of whiny songs such as James Arthur's 'I Am' and Trey Songz 'Kinda Lovin'. 19-year-old student Kristen Titus from Brigham Young University in the city of Provo in Utah used his music to tell Wyatt Hall she was in to him after they went on a few dates. She told BuzzFeed: "I thought if I was going to end things with him I wanted to do it in a creative way." However, little did Kristen know that her young sister had found her playlist and played it out loud.



Consumer leaves bizarre note for lazy delivery men

A consumer has posted the definition of the word doorbell on his front door in response to lazy delivery men. Redditor MacronX became so sick and tired with the service he'd received from delivery companies, he decided to take matters into his own hands, taping the Wikipedia definition of the word to his door. Beneath the definition, MacronX wrote: "It seems people are having difficulty understanding its purpose. Above is an Encyclopedia article explaining what it is for and what it does. 'For those of knocking fruitlessly on the door, we cannot hear you at the back of the house or upstairs...' — Bang Showbiz

