

MY YORKSHIRE WEEKEND

Kia Abdullah

Kia is the best-selling author of three courtroom dramas. This summer, she teamed up with Castle Hill Bookshop in Richmond to raise funds for the Trussell Trust

How do I spend my days?

I spend most of my days writing, but I rarely have an entire day to focus on just that. Authors can no longer shut themselves away in a creaky old house to write in quiet solitude. They have to be out in the world, so on any given day I might be recording a podcast, writing a magazine article, speaking at a literary festival or recording a TV interview – all while trying to hit my word count! I do try to get out for a walk because it's all too easy to spend the entire day at my desk.

Friday nights out – cocktails or chill?

I moved to Richmond from London three years ago and currently split my time between them. In Richmond, Friday nights are usually chilled out. My partner, Peter, and I may watch a good movie (I love horror but he hates it) and order a cheeky takeaway. In London, I'm usually catching up with friends.

Saturday morning – parkrun or papers?

A lazy morning with the papers, trying not to get Hobnobs in the bed. I've always been very get-up-and-go, so Peter had to initiate me into the pleasures of a slow morning. Now, we do the crossword and catch up with *The Film Review*. If we're feeling extravagant, we'll head out for breakfast. Duncans Tearoom was a favourite until it closed down last year. The Little Drummer Boy has been a good alternative.

Feeding time

I have five sisters and every single one of them is an excellent cook, which makes it all the more tragic that I'm not. I grew up in a traditional household



Photo: INDIA HOBSON/HARRON

ABOVE:
Writer Kia Abdullah lives in Richmond

and refused to learn to cook as a way of asserting my feminist values. Thankfully, Peter likes to cook. Access to quality local produce helps: warm bread from The Angel's Share Bakery, fresh veggies from Neeps & Tatties and cheese from the Wensleydale Creamery. What a luxury.

Retail therapy?

For me, retail therapy equals books! My local bookshop, Castle Hill, is tiny but I've still managed to spend hundreds in there. In the Dales, I'll usually visit Westwood Books, which stocks 70,000 titles across two floors. As a child, I relied on my local library for books, so being able to buy my own still feels like a privilege.

Saturday night perfection?

A meal out with friends, preferably al fresco on a balmy day. The Black Bull in Moulton has a nice garden, perfect for

when the weather behaves. This past year, I've really missed my friends.

Sunday relaxation?

I'm often playing catch-up on all the things that fell by the wayside during the working week – the boring life admin that adults can't avoid. If the weather is good, Peter and I may head into the Dales. My favourite view is at the top of Malham Cove. The peaks of Pen-y-ghent and Ingleborough are impressive too.

Hopes for the year ahead

My third novel, *Next of Kin*, is out in September. All my profits will go to food bank charity the Trussell Trust when ordered via kiaabdullah.com or Castle Hill Bookshop (01748 824243). It's giving back after benefiting from free school meals as a child. I hope to finish my fourth novel and start to travel again. ♦