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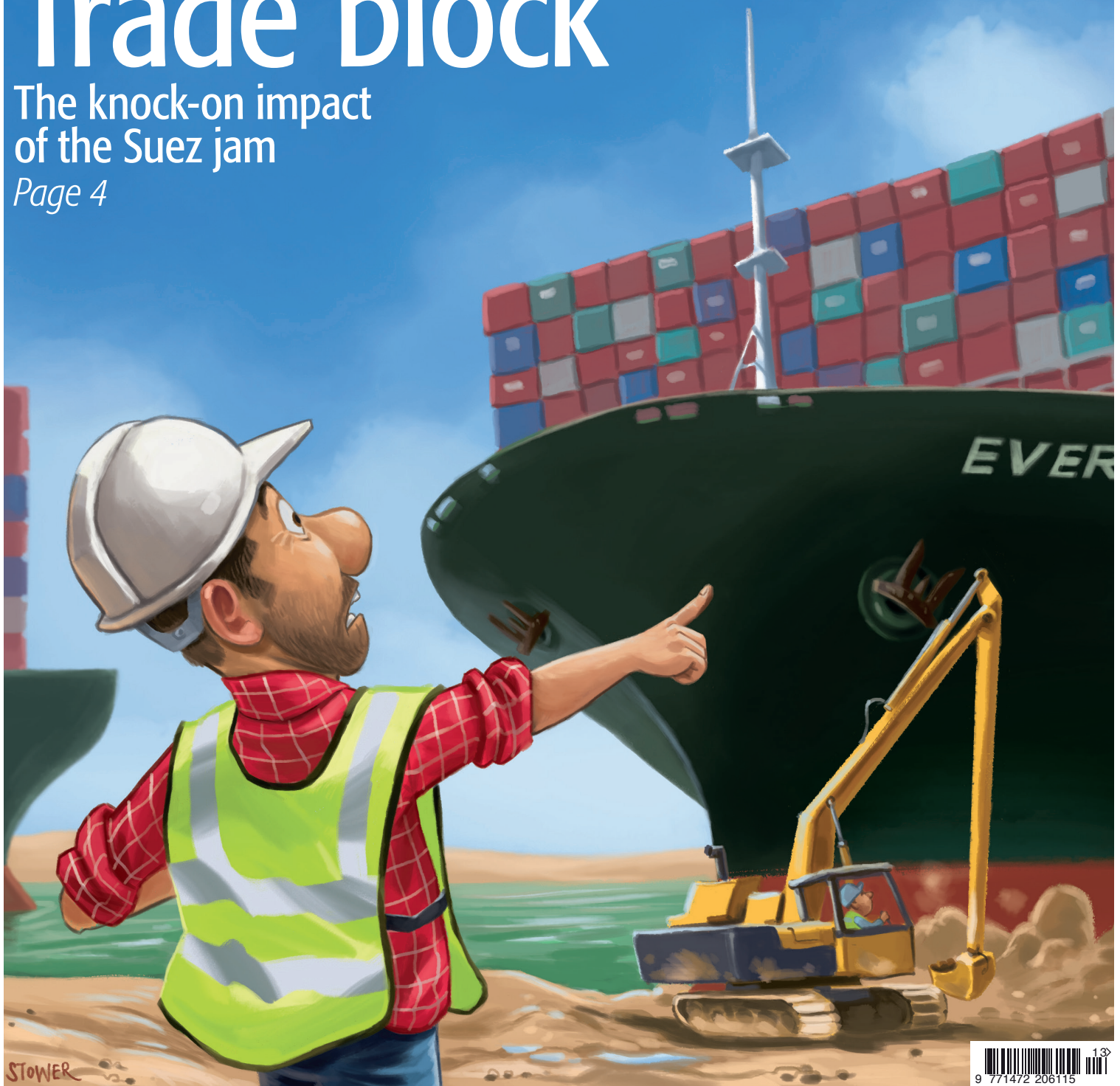
# MONEYWEEK

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## Trade block

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STOWER



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# Take to the seas in your own submarine

Sales of personal submersibles have been booming under lockdown, says Nicole Garcia Merida

British mathematician William Bourne made some of the earliest known plans for a submarine around 1578. He saw it as an enclosed wooden vessel that could be submerged and rowed below the surface, sheathed in leather. Dutch polymath Cornelis Drebbel made a version sometime around 1620 – he used it to dive 15 feet under the Thames in a demonstration for King James.

Submarines have come a long way from these humble origins and it might seem outlandish to think of them as something one could own and use in a personal capacity. Yet 2020 was the year the super-rich decided to invest in their own personal submersibles en masse. Before coronavirus, it was easy for millionaires to set off in their private jets to trendy destinations. Lockdown drove them away from airports and towards the ocean. Sales of personal submarines have doubled over the past two years as millionaires stuck at home looked for more eccentric forms of entertainment, says Elena Gorgan on Autoevolution. Demand has been on the up since the mid-1990s, but personal submarine maker Triton Submarines estimates sales rose 30% in 2020 alone.

## Platforms for adventure

One of the first personal submarines was owned by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, says Stewart Campbell in *The Times*. It lived on his yacht, Octopus, which at 126 metres is one of the largest in the world. But personal submersibles are no longer restricted to those with mammoth vessels: Dutch shipyard Feadship is building a 55 metre yacht for an owner “whose demands were not a huge saloon or sweeping ocean views from his bed, but the ability to carry a three-person submarine”.

“Yachts have become platforms for adventure,” Triton’s Craig Barnett told *The Times*. He compared the situation today to when helicopters first appeared in the superyacht world. Landing pads were once an extravagance; now, no superyacht worth its salt would be seen without one. Submarines are no mere toy either, they’re “seriously capable”. This reflects “a shift in attitude of the superyacht owner, from wanting to be seen to wanting to see”.



## What to buy now

Triton’s 660/9 submersible can go up to 200 metres beneath the surface and has room for up to 11 adults. At the other end of the spectrum, the Triton 13000/2 Titanic Explorer (pictured) can go to as low as 4,000 metres – and the futuristic submersible can fit into a “small” superyacht garage. A similarly compact Triton, the 3300/3, was used to record footage for David Attenborough’s *Blue Planet II*.

Other personal submarine makers include U-Boat Worx, who produce the NEMO (from €975,000), a single-occupancy, compact vessel for 100-metre diving that can be deployed from land, a boat ramp, or a yacht. Their C-Researcher vessels offer everyone from scientists to amateur explorers the ability to dive up to 1,640 feet. Seamagine’s Ocean Pearl model allows two occupants to dive up to 1,000 metres; its Aurora-6S model allows up to nine people to go 1,000 metres under the surface.

*Price on application for all the vessels mentioned (apart from the Nemo), but we’d have a million or three to spare to avoid disappointment.*

*“Personal submarine maker Triton estimates sales rose 30% in 2020 alone”*

## Wine of the week: ancient wisdom makes for better wines

**2017 Reyneke Organic, Cornerstone, Polkadraai Hills, Stellenbosch, South Africa**  
 £19.99, [waitrosecellar.com](http://waitrosecellar.com);  
 £22.50, [theatreofwine.com](http://theatreofwine.com);  
 £24, [biltongstmarcus.co.uk](http://biltongstmarcus.co.uk);  
 £24.95, [winedirect.co.uk](http://winedirect.co.uk).



**Matthew Jukes**  
Wine columnist

The first time I met Johan Reyneke, nearly 20 years ago, his beaming smile, firm handshake and scintillating wines marked him as someone at peace with his confident, ethical and holistic stance on both farming his land and making his beautiful wines. Johan embodies the spirit of biodynamic farming like no one else I have met. As he wisely noted, “Some people dismiss it as old-fashioned nostalgia, but we like to think of it as ancient wisdom. And we embrace it as much as we can. Not just because it’s better for the

earth, but because it makes for better wine.”

Johan’s entire portfolio is a joy to behold and somewhere in the middle of the pack sits this extraordinary Cornerstone, which is not only a stunning “claret-shaped” red, but also a wine the proceeds of which help farmworkers and their families with education, housing and retirement annuities. Made from 54% cabernet sauvignon, 32% cabernet franc



and 14% merlot, and maturing for 18 months in French oak barrels, of which 30% are new and 70% are second and third-fill barriques, this is a stunning creation. What makes it so attractive is that it is reaching its peak of maturity and the complexity of the fruit, underpinned by the precise location of these extremely content vines, makes for magnificent honesty and integrity on the palate. It is as accurate as any wine I have tasted.

*Matthew Jukes is a winner of the International Wine & Spirit Competition’s Communicator of the Year ([matthewjukes.com](http://matthewjukes.com))*