

FIFTH EDITION 2023



EAT EXMOOR



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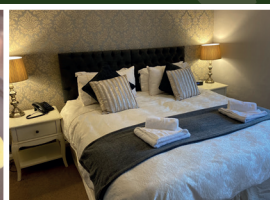
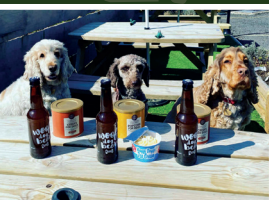
A MasterChef judge invites you to his table



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WELCOME TO EAT EXMOOR



Welcome to Eat Exmoor, your invitation to sit with a cuppa, curl up with the dog and enjoy some true life stories from the people who call this vibrant landscape their home. Sharing moments with some of Exmoor's business owners and residents for this 2023 issue has been an absolute privilege

for me and I am delighted to celebrate them amongst these pages for you.

Exmoor may be one of the smallest National Parks in the country, but what it lacks for in size, it more than makes up for in talent. In fact, this magazine is packed with award-winners; those who are recognised for producing exceptional food and drink from the land; as well as those who are more celebrated for their connection to the water. Eat Exmoor celebrates the young as well as the established, the local and the international, but what links them all at the heart of it, is their intrinsic connection to Exmoor.

Not only do these local people open their doors to you, they also invite you to share in their own exclusive stories; and in doing so, you too can indulge in the enchantment that is uniquely, Exmoor.

Rachel Mead
Editor, Eat Exmoor



As the CEO of Visit Exmoor, I'm so excited to introduce the fifth edition of Eat Exmoor. Over the years, this publication embodies Exmoor's rich culinary tapestry, a treasure trove of gastronomic delights and Greater Exmoor's unparalleled commitment to food and drink.

This edition, is testament to the bustling hospitality, vibrant restaurants, ambient bars, cosy cafes, and passionate producers and retailers that grace our wonderful area. Exmoor isn't just a destination It offers a culinary experience. From field to fork, every plate tells a story of dedication, of a community that champions local produce. In these pages, you'll celebrate that, along with the diversity, culture, and brilliance of our area.

While we indulge in Exmoor's foodie delights, it's important to pause and acknowledge the resilience of our hospitality industry and our local producers. The past few years have been turbulent, presenting challenges and evoking changes. Yet, amidst these waves of uncertainty and sad loss of some businesses, the Exmoor spirit has not only endured. New establishments, be it pubs, cafes or restaurants, are opening, signalling a brighter future.

Join us, and let's embark on this year's culinary journey through Exmoor - let the tastes of our fabulous area fill your senses and hearts.

Emma Thomasson
CEO, Visit Exmoor



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EXMOOR HELPED ME TO FIND MY BALANCE

ALEX GREGORY MBE



We're such an outdoorsy family, in fact it's all we know what to do really. I don't think I'd know what to do in the city, but I do in the countryside.'

I'm chatting with Alex Gregory, double Olympic gold medallist. Although the sun is out, we're up high on the moor and so we're sheltering from the keen wind on the lee side of a grassy knoll. Alex and his partner Emily, and three children moved to the West Country four years ago, 'Life in Somerset really suits who we are. Four years may only be a blink in the eye for locals, but we really feel at home here. In fact, being both in Somerset, and on Exmoor, helps me to find my balance. As adults we forget to see stuff; stress, life and pressures take over, but being in Somerset helps me, and I try and instil this in the kids too. It's about looking out the window and enjoying the changing views of the sky and the fields; and enjoying those little moments. There's always a pivotal moment in our lives where something happens for a change in perspective, and then you regain your balance. I've found my balance now.'

Alex first began rowing in his late teens, initially cajoled along by a friend, and then after a few sessions, he accepted that he was a bit of a natural. His rowing career has spanned twenty years with incredible highs, including the winning of two Olympic gold medals alongside his team in the Coxless four on home waters at London 2012,

and again in Rio 2016. 'I will forever be grateful to rowing; I've seen the good parts and the bad but I've come through to accept that rowing is all about balance. There have been times where rowing completely took over, I trained 350 days a year and I had become institutionalised, that level of dedication may have been good for my rowing performance, but it wasn't good for moving on in life. Fifteen years of training culminating in a 6-minute race? I knew that when we crossed that line in Rio, it was time to stop. I left on a high, and finally it was time to have a normal life, meet friends at the pub and enjoy my family.'



But, after a six-month break, Alex woke up in a cold sweat, 'I suddenly had an identity crisis. I was 32 years old and I didn't know where I was going. Then an email appeared in my inbox, it was an invitation to an Arctic rowing expedition. I replied, and within ten minutes I was all aboard, I was off, as part of a team, to row further north than anyone else has ever been. As a team of 6, we were rowing through the Greenland Sea, and through the most incredible ice flows but, after being at sea for 15 days, we realised our boat was breaking, if we capsized, we would die. No one knew where we were, we had lost power, the water filter had stopped working and we were 200 miles north of Iceland. Cutting a long story very short, we were rescued by the Norwegian Military. It was a horrendous experience, but wonderful at the same time. Looking back however, I recognise that it was a selfish thing to do to my family; I left on the trip not knowing who I was, but thankfully, I returned realising what is important, and that will always be moments with my family.'

Following his return home, Alex threw himself into family life, authored a book, Dadventures, which shares fun tips of things to do with your kids outside; before setting up his own business as a motivational speaker and rowing coach. Through his coaching business, Alex also helps his clients think about the types of food they eat, 'Sports nutrition can be a little too scientific and

often as a sportsperson food can just be seen as fuel. What I've learnt is that eating well means sourcing local produce and keeping it simple, that way cooking food becomes a joy, not just a necessity. For example, as a family we have signed up to receive a local meat box, I don't worry about weighing out specifics to enhance my sports performance, I just aim to make the food look, smell and taste great which is easily achieved with produce from around here!'

As a motivational speaker Alex likes to share the story of his rowing journey, 'it's filled with downs, and so much failure, but it has turned to success because you have to accept that you can't do anything alone, nothing should be selfish to build an excellent team.'

Alex coaches rowing remotely through his company, MindBodyRow. Members can receive one to one coaching, or you can access the video workouts at a time that suits you, through a monthly subscription. 'Rowing is so balanced. It's a non-weight bearing and efficient form of exercise. It's both physical and mindful. It's good for everyone, even my 98-year-old Granny used my machine the other day! You can be meditative and mindful and completely zone out from your worries and troubles. It is, after all, all about balance.'

You can contact Alex via mindrowbody.com or alexgregorygb.com or follow him on Instagram.

 [@alexgregorygb](https://www.instagram.com/alexgregorygb)

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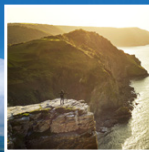
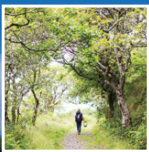
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THE PROUD CULINARY LANDSCAPE OF EXMOOR

By William Sitwell

That moment when I feel it's all worth it. Standing at the head of the table - one very long, continuous table - and seeing 70 folk chatting, laughing, that beautiful clatter of knives and forks, of glasses chinking, the team on service hurrying back and forth and behind me a team of chefs, grilling, plating up and managing this unusual ship.

I take in the scene for a few seconds then notice that someone has approached the bar. Another bottle of wine is needed and it's back to work.

My Sitwell Supper Club, one that pops up in our former cow shed about once a month, at our home - Rooks Nest Farm, on the edge of Exmoor - makes for a long and grinding day. I'm up early to clean down the kitchen, sweep the floors and dust the tables and bar. Between events everything is covered in sheets of cotton and tarpaulin, but the place is very much open to the elements so one must forgive the birds who may have visited and the winds blowing in leaves, twigs and dust.

Once the floors are swept, the kitchen steels and various cooking appliances are cleaned, the tablecloths go down along the long table and we build what becomes, in my mind, a rather beautiful sight. Once finally laid, and some final flourishes of whatever flowers I can find around the garden, I approach the trickiest jigsaw puzzle I know; setting individual place cards out for each guest. Some might be part of a party of 16, others of four or five, some come - joyously - solo.

By around 5pm the place card conundrum should be nailed and I breathe again. I then pinch myself at how lucky I am to have a certain calibre of chef in my kitchen. It's now a long list but in the past couple of years we've had Adam Handling, Atul Kochhar, Anna Haugh, Cyrus Todiwala, Shelina Permalloo, Tommy Heaney, Will Murray and Rowley Leigh. I'm never quite sure how I persuade them, and they - having doubtless travelled for sometimes up to six hours to get here - aren't quite sure why they're here either.



***'WHEN I LOOK DOWN THAT TABLE,
ESPECIALLY WHEN I SEE THAT LONG
SECTION OF COUPLES, NONE OF WHOM
HAVE EVER MET, EATING, DRINKING
AND LAUGHING TOGETHER I THINK,
OK, LET'S DO ANOTHER!'***

But we all seem reassured by that extraordinary buzz, mid-service. It's addictive and, as a restaurant critic whose supper club sees a poacher turned gamekeeper (or is it the other way around?), I find it fascinating to experience myself, to understand quite why so many people go into the tough and relentless world of hospitality. The answer being that few other businesses offer such creative satisfaction and, if lucky, see wholesome reward from extremely hard work.

So I love what we have created, for that buzz and for how it has brought people together and forged new friendships. Trust me when I say my margins are tight and my capital outlay something that makes me, on difficult days, wonder if I've gone mad.

But from one dinner on some makeshift grills in July 2020 to today - when I like to think we are part of the proud culinary landscape of Exmoor - the Sitwell Supper Club has grown organically, we've made it up as we've gone along. And when I look down that table, especially when I see that long



Images by © Daffodil PR

section of couples, none of whom have ever met, eating, drinking and laughing together I think, OK, let's do another!

With grateful thanks to Kate Hunt who heads up service and the Sitwell Supper Club collaborators: Acqua Panna, San Pellegrino, Fortnum & Mason (champagne), Fishers Gin, Double Dutch tonic, Moth (cocktails), Richard Brendon (glassware), Traeger grills.

williamsitwell.com





The Porlock Weir Hotel

Porlock Weir, Exmoor National Park, Somerset, TA24 8PB - www.theporlockweirhotel.co.uk - 01643 800400



Whether you are looking for a light bite or something more substantial, our food is locally sourced, lovingly prepared and seasonal. In summer months you can enjoy alfresco dining on the terrace overlooking the water and drink in the view.

The Luttrell Arms Hotel

Dunster, Exmoor National Park, Somerset, TA24 6SG - www.luttrellarms.co.uk - 01643 821555



Our hand picked products, carefully constructed menus and locally sourced food are central to our values and promise seasonal variations and a unique Exmoor experience. Come and join us in our atmospheric bar areas or our award winning restaurant.



WE CAN EAT OUR OYSTERS STRAIGHT OFF THE BEACH



If you were to take a stroll along the shingle and pebble barrier beach of Porlock Bay, and you timed your visit with the outgoing tide, you'd be fortunate enough to see the oysters you were anticipating to eat, being farmed ready for your plate. There are no hidden secrets

in the production of Porlock Bay Oysters, for they are collected in front of your very eyes and then transported just a few hundred metres to their village HQ. People talk about their love for fresh fish and you certainly won't find Pacific oysters fresher than these which are hand-farmed in Porlock Bay.

It turns out that this particular part of the Exmoor coast provides the ideal growing conditions for oysters. Ian Kershaw, the Porlock Bay Oyster Farm Manager says, 'With the second largest tidal range in the world, the water quality here, in the heart of the Exmoor National Park, is second to none. We have category A waters so our oysters thrive on the fresh supplies of Atlantic plankton that are carried in on the tide, and that's what makes our Porlock Bay oysters so flavoursome, we can eat them straight off the beach!'

The oyster trade in Porlock has seen some ups and downs over the past few hundred years and it is believed that the oyster beds in Porlock Bay were first charted on paper in the 1700s. There is then a small gap in the historical data until 1836 where local man, William Pollard told a tale

about his uncle who used to dredge oysters off the Welsh coast. As he returned home to Porlock one evening, he dropped his dredger in his home waters only to haul it in filled with oysters! Life was rosy in Porlock Bay for about 30 years or so until a new threat emerged. The oyster beds in Colchester and Whitstable were not doing well in the 1890s, so without any laws in place to prevent them from doing so, the oyster farmers from the east of the country sent a fleet of dredgers to the Bristol Channel and stripped Porlock's beds completely clean, killing the oyster trade on Exmoor overnight.

For the next century, any talk about Porlock Bay oysters was in the past tense until 2013 when Porlock Parish Council helped to establish a community venture in oyster farming. The plans have been ambitious and there have been set backs along the way, but now ten years down the line, Porlock Bay Oysters is selling an incredible 200,000 oysters a year nationwide.

Ian says, 'The business was bought by the Pendarves family about 4 years ago and they've invested a considerable amount of time and effort to get it where we are today. I'm also delighted to say that my 18-year-old son, Oliver has joined me this year so we are now a second generational business. We've recently built a new kitchen and with an eatery on the way we'll also be able to serve cooked oysters and seafood; alongside our offering of oysters fresh from the sea. We have some delicious homemade dressings to accompany our oysters so come and visit us and let us shuck an oyster or two for you.'

HOW TO ORDER

You can order your fresh oysters for home delivery at porlockbayoysters.co.uk, or by visiting Porlock Bay Oysters.

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COOK WITH PERRAN CLARK

Exmoor's Young Chef of the Year



@chefperranclark

Butternut squash and Roquefort tortelloni, roasted walnut and sage beurre noisette



Pasta dough

4 whole eggs
4 egg yolk
400g "00" flour
200g semolina
1 tsp olive oil

Beurre noisette

200g unsalted butter
Handful sage, finely chopped
1 handful walnuts, finely
chopped

Filling

600g butternut squash,
peeled and macedoine cut
(or pumpkin as both have
similar flavour profiles)
100g roquefort cheese
Juice and zest of 1.5 lemons
1 tsp chilli flakes
1 tbsp cumin
1 tbsp cinnamon
1 tbsp paprika
Salt to taste
2 eggs (beaten) to seal the
parcels
1 tbsp cumin, paprika and salt
to coat the seeds for garnish

Method

First, wash, peel and dice the butternut squash (1cm dice). Reserve the seeds and rub on a wire mesh to remove them from the pith of the squash. Wash the seeds and coat in cumin, salt and paprika mix. Transfer diced squash to a roasting tray, drizzle with cooking oil and a pinch of salt. Roast the squash at 180C for 30mins, or until tender. Simultaneously roast the seeds at **180C for 10 mins** - these will be used for garnishing later.

Whilst the squash roasts, make the pasta dough by combining the "00" flour and semolina in a bowl. Make a well in the centre and add the eggs and yolks. Mix the eggs in the centre with a fork, and slowly combine into a shaggy dough. Add the olive oil and transfer on to a workbench. **Knead for 10 mins**. After kneading the dough should be smooth, and spring back when you poke it. Wrap tightly in cling film and leave to rest

in the fridge for at least 20 mins, however the longer you rest it, the easier it will be to work with.

Remove the squash from the oven, and place in a blender along with half of the roquefort cheese, lemon juice and zest, spices and season to taste. Blend until fully combined. Taste the mixture and add more roquefort if you enjoy the punchy taste of the cheese (it's very strong, so be careful to not overpower the flavour or the squash). Pass the mixture through a chinois to **remove the bitty texture** from the squash. Put into a piping bag and set aside.

Get the pasta dough and lightly dust with flour. Roll out to 1cm thick by hand, and then pass through the pasta machine until you reach thickness '7.5'. At this point the dough should be roughly **1.5mm thick** and you should be able to see through it slightly. Get a **9cm ring cutter** and cut circles of pasta dough from the sheet of dough. **Evenly pipe the filling** onto the circles. Brush a small amount of

beaten egg on ½ of the circle, then pick up the circle and fold into a semi-circle around the filling. Pinch around the seam and push out any air. Now turn the semi-circle so that the curve is facing you. Brush the left corner with egg and bring the right corner to sit on top of the left. Pinch and seal. **Make 28 cappelletti**.

Bring a pan of salted water to the boil. In a frying pan melt the butter and let it begin to foam up and turn nut brown, or "**beurre noisette**". In a separate pan, toast off the chopped walnuts and then add them, along with the finely chopped sage, to the hot brown butter. Add salt and a squeeze of lemon.

Add the pasta to the salted water, **cooking until they float to the surface** (approx 3-4 minutes). Remove from water, then add to the beurre noisette, facing upwards. Allow the pasta to gain a slight crust on the underside, then serve. Garnish with the toasted seeds and grated parmesan.



Tarr Farm Inn

Tarr Steps, Dulverton, Exmoor, TA22 9PY

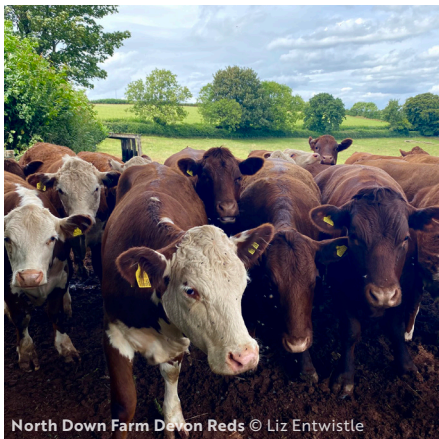
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THE GATEWAY TO EX-MORE

in Wiveliscombe



North Down Farm Devon Reds © Liz Entwistle

I didn't think I could beat that feeling of drinking a really good coffee in the morning, but my stay at North Down Farm managed to trump it by gifting me with an incredible Somerset sunrise view as I supped my locally roasted brew. Liz and Lloyd Entwistle took over the ownership of the 190 acre farm in Wiveliscombe three years ago and in that time have created a countryside retreat business by offering luxury stays at their cabin and shepherds hut. The farm is very much a working farm too with the Entwistle's finishing pedigree Red Devon and Hereford cattle along with cross-bred lambs as part of their diversification plans.

Lloyd says, 'We are very much learning as we go and we're open to trying new ideas but our main

aim is to farm in a sustainable way. In the current climate, it is clear to us that we have to keep costs down and farm in almost an old-fashioned style plus we are big believers in eating local and seasonal food.' North Down Farm sell their meat boxes locally but are also happy to deliver further afield for those looking for a true taste of Exmoor. Their meat is 100% grass-fed and with their farm being on the edge of Exmoor, the mild wet climate lends itself to perfect grass-growing conditions for both the cattle and sheep. 'The final step to us producing good quality food comes by stripping out the need of using fertiliser so by introducing chickens on the very same fields as the cattle are grazing, we are rejuvenating the soil naturally and as such creating great tasting meat.'



***YOU CAN EXPECT GIFTS OF MILES TEA,
LOCAL CIDER, FRESHLY BAKED BREAD
AND EGGS FROM THE FARM.***

When you book a stay at North Down Farm you are greeted with a basket of locally-sourced produce so you can expect gifts of Miles Tea, local cider, freshly baked bread and eggs from the farm. Liz and Lloyd also sell BBQ boxes of their meat so you can enjoy a very local supper whilst making the most of that incredible unspoilt view. Once the sun goes down, you can keep toasty by warming your toes by the log burner whilst reclining on the green velvet sofa with a book, or perhaps enjoying one of the complimentary boardgames. 'The cabin has a feel of rustic luxury' says Liz, 'the interior design has been inspired by the natural colours of our stunning landscape, we wanted to bring the outside in so we incorporated the deep greens and earthy reds of West Somerset to the furnishings making the bespoke cabin an ideal spot for an escape to the country.'

Future plans also include the hosting of weddings for those couples looking for their own bespoke celebration with panoramic views, but in the meantime Liz and Lloyd are keen to welcome couples and families to North Down Farm for mini-breaks. Liz says, 'We are hoping that all these extra diversification projects will all add to the security of farming on Exmoor. We love being able to share our incredible views, and we welcome all guests to come and enjoy our farm with us.'

You can book a stay and order local meat from **northdown-farm.co.uk**



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EXMOOR FOOD MAP

CAFÉS & TEAROOMS

1	Buttery, Lorna Doone Tea Room	Malmsmead	www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lorna-doone-valley
2	Caffyns Farm Café	Lynton	www.exmoorcoastholidays.co.uk
3	Cliff Top Café Café	Lynton	www.cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk
4	The Tantivy Café/Shop	Dulverton	www.tantivyexmoor.co.uk
5	Watersmeet Tea Room	Lynmouth	www.nationaltrust.org.uk/watersmeet
6	Watermill Tea Room (NT) Café	Dunster	www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunster-castle-and-watermill
7	Withypool Tea Room Tea Room	Withypool	www.withypoolexmoor.co.uk

RESTAURANTS & PUBLIC HOUSES

8	Ancient Mariner Restaurant	Lynmouth	www.ancientmarinerlynmouth.co.uk
9	Exmoor White Horse Inn & Country Hotel Restaurant/Public House	Exford	www.exmoor-whitehorse.co.uk
10	Foxes Hotel Restaurant	Minehead	www.foxeshotel.co.uk
11	Kentisbury Grange & The Coach House Restaurant	Kentisbury	www.kentisburygrange.com
12	Lion Hotel Restaurant/Public House	Dulverton	www.lionhotelexmoor.co.uk
13	Locanda on the Weir Restaurant	Porlock Weir	www.locandaontheweir.co.uk
14	Rest and be Thankful Restaurant/Public House	Wheddon Cross	www.restandbethankful.co.uk
15	Riverside Caravan and Camping Park Restaurant	South Molton	www.exmoorriverside.co.uk
16	Royal Oak Inn Luxborough Restaurant/Public House	Luxborough	www.royaloakinnluxborough.co.uk
17	Royal Oak Withypool Restaurant/Public House	Withypool	www.royaloakwithypool.co.uk
18	Sitwell Supper Club Restaurant	Wiveliscombe	www.williamsitwell.com
19	Staghunters Inn Restaurant/Public House	Brendon	www.staghunters.com
20	Tarr Farm Inn Restaurant/Public House	Tarr Steps	www.tarrfarm.co.uk
21	The Beach Hotel Restaurant	Minehead	www.thebeachhotel.org

-  CAFÉS & TEAROOMS
-  RESTAURANTS & PUBLIC HOUSES
-  LOCAL SHOPS
-  PRODUCERS



Please note the map featuring our brilliant Visit Exmoor businesses is intended as a guide only. For more details see www.visit-exmoor.co.uk



PORLOCK
WEIR

MINEHEAD

BOSSINGTON

PORLOCK

A39

BLUE
ANCHOR

WATCHET

WILLITON

A358

Exmoor
National Park

DUNSTER

WASHFORD

LUXBOROUGH

WHEDDON
CROSS

EXFORD

WITHYPOOL

A396

BROMPTON
REGIS

Wimbleball
Lake

Clatworthy
Reservoir

TARR
STEPS

DULVERTON

WIVELISCOMBE

BAMPTON

A396

BOLHAM

TIVERTON

M5

19

22	The Bridge Inn Restaurant/Public House	Dulverton	www.thebridgeinndulverton.com
23	The Luttrell Arms Hotel Restaurant/Public House	Dunster	www.luttrellarms.co.uk
24	The Porlock Weir Hotel Restaurant	Porlock Weir	www.porlockweirhotel.co.uk
25	Woods Bar and Restaurant Restaurant	Dulverton	www.woodsduverton.co.uk
26	Yarn Market Hotel Restaurant	Dunster	www.yarnmarkethotel.co.uk
27	East Quay Kitchen Restaurant	Watchet	www.eastquaywatchet.co.uk/eat

LOCAL SHOPS

28	Brompton Regis Shop Shop	Brompton Regis	www.bromptonregis.com
29	Stuart Lowen Butchers Shop	Minehead	www.stuartlowen.co.uk
30	West Somerset Garden Centre Shop	Minehead	www.westsomersetgardencentre.co.uk
31	Withypool Village Shop Shop	Withypool	www.withypoolexmoor.co.uk

PRODUCERS

32	Exmoor Ales Producer/Shop	Wiveliscombe	www.exmoorales.co.uk
33	Exmoor Distillery Producer/Shop	Dulverton	www.exmoordistillery.co.uk
34	Exmoor Feasting Company Producer/Shop	Withypool	www.exmoorfeasting.co.uk
35	Grown Up Marshmallows Producer/Shop	Minehead	www.grownupmarshmallows.co.uk
36	Miles Tea & Coffee Producer/Shop	Minehead	www.milesteaandcoffee.com
37	Porlock Bay Oysters Producer/Shop	Porlock Weir	www.porlockbayoysters.co.uk
38	Quince Honey Farm Producer/Tours/Café	South Molton	www.quincehoneyfarm.co.uk
39	Wellhayes Vineyard Producer/Tours	Tiverton	www.wellhayesvineyard.co.uk
40	Horner Farm Producer/Shop	Horner	www.horner-farm.co.uk
-	Croft & Cottage Producer	Dulverton	www.croftandcottage.co.uk
-	Exmoor Tea Company Producer	Dulverton	www.exmoortea.co.uk
-	Higher Hall Farm Producer	Brayford	www.higherhallfarm.co.uk
-	Little Oak Farm Producer	Timberscombe	www.littleoakfarm.co.uk
-	North Down Farm Producer	Wiveliscombe	www.northdown-farm.co.uk
-	Wicked Wolf Gin Producer	Lynton	www.wickedwolfgin.com

The Barn Café and Bar at Caffyns Farm



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ON THE RIGHT PATH

'As the very first brewery ever to create a golden ale, the provenance of Exmoor Ales has been set since the 80's. But, the beer industry is always changing and as a result we are constantly reacting to the demands of the market and making some really diverse beers.' Head Brewer at Exmoor Ales, Tom Davis has such enthusiasm for Exmoor, the brewery, and the beers that they are producing in Wiveliscombe, that you can't help but be inspired by his knowledge and passion, 'We have to think about our local customers as so many of them feel as though they are part of the brewery and we are so thankful for their continued commitment to our brand, but we're also selling beers nationwide and the drinking market is asking for new things so we're constantly recalibrating. Many pubs are destination pubs nowadays which invariably means that someone has to drive there, so we also take this into consideration and ensure that our range of ales includes a lower ABV% option too.'

'We have two clear ranges at present. We have our traditional ales such as Gold, Stag, and Beast, these are well-known and well-loved beers which have won numerous awards over the years, and then we have our Pathfinder range which gives us, the brewers, a chance to get creative with the flavours.' Tom and his team marry up the taste of the ales to reflect the current requirements of the customer, 'These Pathfinder beers are inspired by the ramblers out on Exmoor, but we also consider ourselves as brewers to be navigating the shifting markets so our Pathfinder range reflects this too. We need to be nimble so that we can continue to offer new flavours which react to both the weather, or the current beer, climate.' The team have come up with some fun and quirky names within this range, including Cheeseburger Chaser, Seshy Beast and Rye'd On Time, all of which have caused a stir



Tom Davis, Exmoor Ales Head Brewer © Joanie Gorman

'REDSTONE PROVIDES A BALANCE OF GENTLE CARAMEL MALTINGS, IS SLIGHTLY ROASTED AND HAS HINTS OF FLORAL, CITRUSY FRESH HOP FRUITINESS.'

as they regularly feature as guest taps in pubs across the country, or are ordered online for home delivery.

'Then, we have our seasonal beers which, if we look at our autumn ale for example, is 'Redstone'. Known locally as one of the boundary markers of the ancient forest of Exmoor, the Redstone was a meeting place for the iconic annual perambulation where the landowner met with farmers as they circumnavigated this vast area of the forest. 'Our

Redstone ale is a classic example of a beer which has been blended to suit the season, Redstone provides a balance of gentle caramel maltiness, is slightly roasted and has hints of floral, citrusy fresh hop fruitiness. It's really nicely balanced with moderate toffee-like malt sweetness which is then countered by a measured dose of hop bitterness which builds a bit and then dries out in the finish with a crisp, earthy and spicy note for autumn.'

Exmoor Ales can be ordered in the majority of pubs and hotels across the national park, but can also be ordered online at exmoorales.co.uk

'PEOPLE EAT & DRINK WITH THEIR EYES'



In times of trouble us Brits turn to a cup of tea, which is exactly what Rachel and Kenny McDonald did during the outbreak of Covid. Having both worked in hospitality for years and completing on the sale of their Exmoor pub, they set out to fill the gap in the hospitality tea business. Rachel says, 'We always served great coffee in our pub but we were lacking in our tea offering, there just didn't seem to be anything of any quality out there so, in the midst of Covid in 2020, we set about raising the game for premium teas.'

Kenny and Rachel knew their direction was to be one which offered a sustainable product. It was important to them they were plastic free, had organic credentials and that their packaging was environmentally friendly. 'For us, it's all about thoughtful living and being connected to nature. We've always been inspired by the beauty of Exmoor and so it's about giving back in a circular economy.'

'MY FIRST TIP IS TO ALWAYS WARM THE POT BEFOREHAND, THE TEAS WON'T BREW CORRECTLY IF YOU DON'T.'

As a nation of tea drinkers, it turns out that Rachel and Kenny's plans to make Exmoor Tea the go-to product in the hospitality industry soon had to diversify as the demand from the tea drinkers at home ramped up. 'The effect of the pandemic was huge, suddenly we had farm shops desperate to sell our teas to everyone stuck at home through lockdown. We had to react quickly to this surprise shift in our business plan.' The success of the retail sales was complimented by winning the Champion prize for their Gorgeous Grey tea at the Taste of the West awards in their first year, followed by two gold awards for Chillin Chamomile and Moreish Mint in 2022 and then two more golden prizes in 2023. 'We're at the end of our third year now and we are so proud of what we have achieved, we know we are doing the right thing. We may only have a small range of teas, but we have a key tea in every blend, and it's all about producing amazing teas. Our blends are the best that are out there, people eat and drink with their eyes and our teas look amazing'



Rachel & Kenny McDonald © Exmoor Tea

So, is there a science behind making the perfect brew? 'Absolutely! My first tip is to always warm the pot beforehand, the teas won't brew correctly if you don't. Freshly drawn water is needed and you need to get the water temperature right. For example, green teas don't need boiling water, the leaves are delicate and boiling water will burn them so just add a drop of cold water first. But when it comes to black tea, you must let it brew! I always recommend that you let a good tea brew for 4 minutes for the maximum flavour – avoid that quick dunk and squeeze!'

Receive tea direct to your home, or business via exmoortea.co.uk



Chillin Chamomile pyramid © Exmoor Tea

ENJOY A MOMENT WITH MILES

I love our Exmoor countryside, it's great for cycling, running and walking the dog and we have the most incredible views. With our huge rolling hills and little streams joining up with the river below, there are countless spots to settle down with a Thermos and enjoy Exmoor with an expertly blended cup of Miles tea.'

John Halls has been in the tea-trade for 45 years and celebrated his 40th anniversary with Miles last year. Miles have been established on Exmoor since 1962 and to this day have a shop and coffee roasters in Porlock, and their HQ and factory in Minehead.

The name of Miles goes back a long way in the tea industry, with the first teas being sold under the name in 1888. With 135 years of tea blending heritage and half a million tea bags being sold every week, it's fair to say that Miles know a thing or two about making a good cuppa. 'Our best seller has to be our West Country Original Blend. It has a high Assam content which is rare these days as it is so expensive, but we insist upon it as we want that good strength and colour to our tea. We combine it with Kenyan for brightness and flavour which ensures that our loyal customers will always get their perfect cup of tea.'

Despite their longevity in the tea industry, Miles are not resting on their laurels and are constantly evolving as the consumer markets change in response to a more sustainable way of living. 'We have great hopes for the future. We're in the process of creating a completely plastic-free tea bag but we want to ensure that we can offer an environmentally conscious product whilst still maintaining the highest quality of tea.'

In addition to their wide range of teas, Miles are also well established in the coffee market too. Wander through the streets of Porlock and you'll be greeted by a wonderful aroma of roasted coffee beans being carried on the air, 'We've recently upgraded our coffee roaster and we pack over 1500kg of coffee every week. We have classic



John Halls © Miles Tea

blends, espressos and dark roasts, whether you drink Rich & Reviving or Bright & Breezy, there's a flavour or strength for the most discerning of coffee drinker.'

The Miles brand and following has spread nationwide with packages of both tea and coffee being transported to supermarkets, farm shops and cafes, including their joint-venture with Colin Barrell who opened the Mr Miles Tea Room in Taunton in 2010. John says, 'We'd like to think that Miles can accompany you throughout your day. We'd like our products to be there with you whether you're having a fireside chat, a catch up with friends in a cafe, or simply as the way to start your day. Enjoy our teas and coffee, and enjoy a moment with Miles.'

You can order tea and coffee for home delivery too, visit milesteaandcoffee.com

IN IT TO GIN IT

It's been quite the year for the family behind Exmoor Distillery, not only have they launched their limited release aged rum, Exmoor Rum, to an eager waiting list of fans, they have also had three of their products celebrated by the Great Taste Awards.

Nicola and John Smith established their Dulverton-based business six years ago, and they haven't had a year go by when their unique products haven't been recognised with acclaim across the industry, or caused a stir amongst the bigger players. John says, 'We know we're doing a good job and to get industry recognition is a real boost, it justifies what we're doing and it reinforces that the products we're creating are of quality.'

The latest addition to the distillery's offering is Exmoor Rum which has been ageing in a combination of madeira, sherry and bourbon casks for the past 3 years and at 60% ABV is proved to be a complete one of a kind. Bottled in what initially appears to be a relatively plain bottle, the Smith family have, by working in conjunction with local artist Maurice Bishop, created a mirage of the iconic Exmoor Stag which is excitingly revealed when a light is shone from underneath. It's very on brand, and very special.

Then just a month after the launch, another cause for celebration was announced when Exmoor Distillery's Northmoor Navy Reserve Gin was awarded the top accolade of 3 stars from the Great Taste Awards. John says, 'I'm always really selective about the competitions that we enter and I will only enter them if they are judged by blind taste-testers and professionals in their field. Winning this award means a great deal.' Nicola says, 'And we also received stars for our Silver Rum and Northmoor Classic Gin too so we're really proud of ourselves. It's an exciting time and we love sharing it with our visitors, everyone is welcome on a distillery tour!'



Open seven days a week, Exmoor Distillery are fully transparent in their processes and are happy to answer questions about the whole set up. Nicola says, 'Every tour is different and the talks will vary a little depending on who gives you the tour. Some visitors are really clued up and ask really scientific questions which John loves, whereas other groups are happy to learn how we make our spirits and then get straight to the bar for tasting.' Being located in Dulverton, Exmoor Distillery tours are a unique way of experiencing how a local business is intrinsically linked to the landscape in which it was established. John says, 'Exmoor is really important to us and we strive to give back; with our water coming directly from the Exmoor Aquifer we insist that a percentage of the proceeds from every tour goes towards CareMoor for vital conservation work within the National Park. As an engineer by trade, I have designed the distillery to be as efficient as it can possibly be and we have ensured that our processes are efficient and clean even down to our biodegradable packaging.'

Nicola says, 'We love giving tours, whether you're a hen or stag party, a couple on a romantic break, or a larger group, we can tailor the tours to suit your group size. We'd love to share our spirits with you, and invite you to share in our little corner of Exmoor.'

You can buy spirits for home delivery, or book on to a tour, via exmoordistillery.co.uk



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THE EXMOOR YOUNG CHEF

Heading For The Olympics

As the Head Judge begins his countdown, 3,2,1, the shortlisted group for this year's Exmoor Young Chef competition will be given just 2 hours to complete a 3-course menu, cooked from scratch. It's a nerve-racking time and despite these young chefs (aged 12-16 years old) practising their menus before the big day anything can of course happen. It's a huge learning curve, and yet, these remarkable teenage foodies rise to the challenge each year in the hope of becoming recognised for their creativity and skill in the kitchen.

Perran Clark won the competition last year and still looks back fondly on being in the competition kitchen, 'The day went so well. I practised my whole menu a few times beforehand so I felt really prepared. Obviously, you're really time dependent but I set up well, got off to a solid start and then before long I was flying ahead. The whole experience really boosted my confidence.'

The young chef competition is part of the Exmoor and Coast Centre of Excellence for Hospitality initiative. Visit Exmoor and the brilliant partners involved run the competition competition, now in its second year, to encourage young people to consider a career in hospitality. At the same time the competition highlights that Exmoor is a fantastic place to work when you're able to cook with an abundance of locally sourced ingredients. The competition takes place at Minehead's West Somerset College and is judged by Werner Hartholt, the Group Development Chef at Butlin's and Chef Mollie Foster of Minehead Rotary Club.

'HE HAD INCREDIBLE TALENT, I COULDN'T HELP BUT THINK, WHO IS THIS KID?'

On the lead up to the competition day, the finalists are mentored by professional Exmoor chefs who are on hand to help the young chefs devise a menu which focuses on using the best of



Exmoor's produce whilst also teaching a few nifty tricks of the trade. Carla Jones was partnered with Perran, 'I could see that he was eager to learn and straightaway, he completely blew me away! He has so much style over substance and I could just see that he has incredible talent, I couldn't help but think, who is this kid?!' Perran talks equally fondly of Carla, 'I learnt so much from her in such a short space of time, she is amazing. Carla is always changing her menus and creating new dishes which is so inspiring, she further sparked my interest in becoming a top chef by teaching me skills from the basics upwards.'

Taking part in Chef competitions is no strange thing for Carla either who has herself appeared on MasterChef, and is this year representing our national England team of professional chefs in the IKA/Culinary Olympics. With 67 nations all vying for the gold medal, Carla has also invited Perran to join her as an apprentice where he will act as Commis Chef alongside the other team chefs to help create an incredible menu and hopefully get England on the podium. Carla says, 'Competing in the Exmoor Young Chef competition is a really good opportunity to broaden your skillset whilst



Judges' table © Emma Thomasson

meeting new people from the industry. From the sea to the pastures of Exmoor there's an abundance of incredible produce to be used, you can make fantastic dishes which showcase your talent and in turn lead on to life changing experiences.'

Since winning the Exmoor Young Chef of the Year, Perran was a finalist in the South West Chef of the Year competition and is now working full time as a chef at the New Coast Kitchen in Croyde, he says, 'Winning Exmoor's Young Chef competition helped to build my career. I had interviews on the radio and it really opened me up to lots of opportunities. My advice to the chefs for this year's competition is to use as much local produce as you can. I wouldn't worry too much about technique, just make sure you get the flavours bang on, and most importantly, don't overthink it! If you get under a mentor who makes the time to teach you, they'll inspire you and you'll never look back.'

The Exmoor Young Chef 2023 competition took place on the 7th October 2023. To find out more about Exmoor and Coast Centre of Excellence for Hospitality: visit-exmoor.co.uk/business-hub/centre-of-excellence



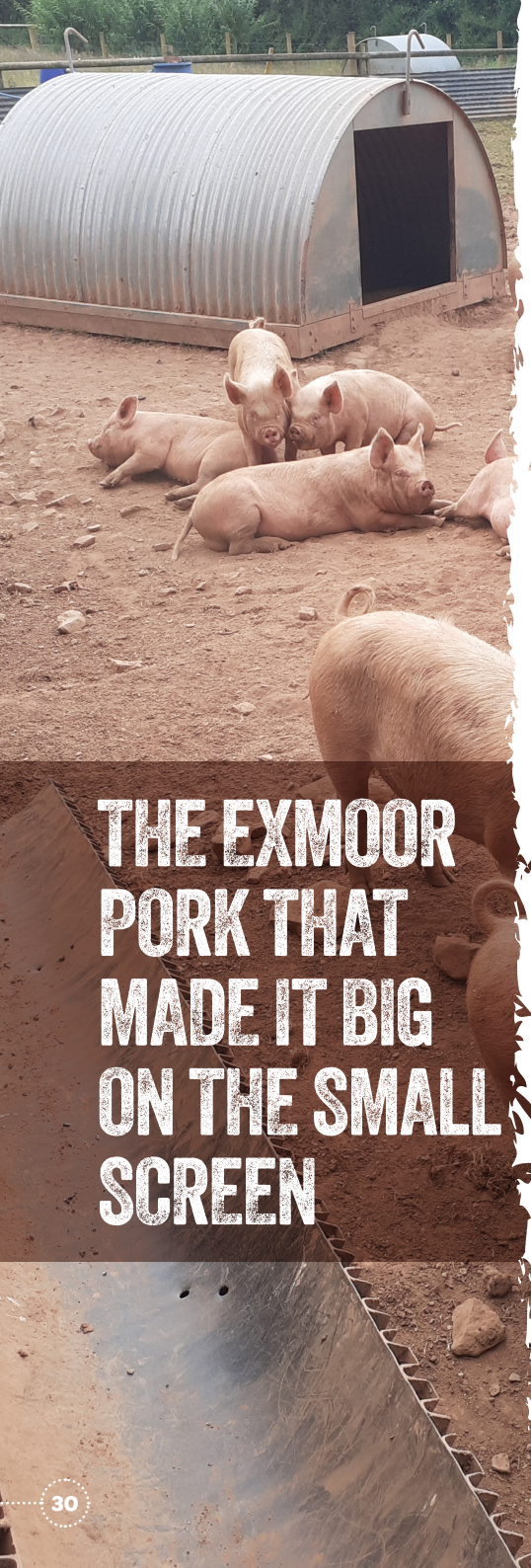
Being briefed © Emma Thomasson

Last year's Judges: Max Lawrence and Miguel Tenreiro.

Partners 2023 along with Visit Exmoor, Minehead Rotary Club, Exmoor National Park, Brend Hotels, West Somerset Community College, Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust, Petrock College of Higher & Further Education and Butlin's.



Camera ready © Emma Thomasson



THE EXMOOR PORK THAT MADE IT BIG ON THE SMALL SCREEN

'Our sows love a good scratch on the back of their necks, and then in return they'll rub their heads against your knees before they fall over with happiness!' I'm chatting with Pamela and Andy Barr who, together with their 120 Middle White pigs, live at Little Oak Farm in Timberscombe. Classed as an endangered breed by the Rare Breed's Survival Trust, the couple have made it their mission to keep the bloodline alive, and in doing so they have created quite the following for their outdoor bred and outdoor reared pork, sausages, pancetta and cured bacon.

Back in 2007, the couple initially started rearing pigs for their own use but after tasting the exceptional quality of this particular rare breed pork, and subsequently sharing it with friends and family too, they realised that they were on to something. 'A local chef then asked us if he could try some of our pork loin for Sunday Lunch on his hotel's menu; his feedback was so good that it confirmed what everybody else was saying too. Before long we were supplying Middle White pork to Exmoor-based restaurants and hotels whilst doing our bit towards saving the pedigree bloodlines of this unique pig.'

THIS COMMITMENT TO QUALITY HAS TO DATE WON THE PAIR TWO GOLDS AT THE TASTE OF THE WEST AWARDS FOR BOTH THEIR SAUSAGE AND SHOULDER OF PORK.

Andy and Pamela start their day bright and early; the pigs are eager to be fed and the van is waiting to be loaded with orders for the morning's deliveries. Some days will also see Pamela heading into the farm butchery where she makes her own signature sausages; hand twisting and tying them, whereas Andy will set to curing the bacon and pancetta, 'A lot of pancetta is only cured once but I do ours twice. It was a tip that I picked up in Italy and ever since then I cure it with chilli and salt before then adding nutmeg, juniper berries, garlic powder and extra chilli, I also cure it that little bit longer for an increased depth of flavour.'

By rearing and butchering the pork on site, Little Oak Farm offers 100% traceability on their pork which assures every client that the meat they are eating is guaranteed to be a true taste of Exmoor. This commitment to quality has to date won the pair two Golds at the Taste of The West Awards for both their sausage and shoulder of pork. With a regular pitch at the monthly Dulverton Farmer's Market, Pamela and Andy are well known on



Little Oak Farm pork in James Martin's kitchen
© Sam Head

Exmoor but they also have a nationwide following too after Middle White pork was endorsed by celebrity chef, James Martin, Andy says, 'One day we were in the garden when my phone pinged to say that we had a sale on our online shop. Then it pinged again. And again. We had 12 new orders within half an hour so I was convinced we had a technology glitch with our website!' After checking the orders were legitimate, they set to some intensive research, 'We had to work out where these new orders were coming from so we binge-watched all the cooking programmes on catch-up TV and that's when we came across James Martin. James Martin was telling everyone how Middle White pork gives the best results in the kitchen and the rest is down to Google!' Andy thanked James for raising awareness of the Middle White via Twitter and before long Little Oak Farm would be supplying James with all his pork cuts for his TV shows, as well as becoming the recommended supplier of pork via James Martin's website. 'It's been really great for us, we're very thankful to James for celebrating our pork. He even eats our Middle White pork on Christmas Day so that's very special to us.'

As each day draws to a close, Andy and Pamela will walk around the farm checking that all the pigs are settled for the evening before they head off across their fields for a quiet cup of tea or a glass of wine. Andy says, 'We moved to Exmoor primarily for the scenery and the weather (in the summer!) but also because it's such a chilled place to both live and work. It was a massive change of lifestyle for us but it is an absolute joy.' Pamela nods in agreement, 'After we've been chased around the field by the cheeky boars, we love to retreat to the forest where we can go and enjoy the peacefulness of Exmoor; a place for us to simply watch the birds, relax and enjoy.'

To buy Middle White pork head to
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IT'S THE HUNDRED LITTLE THINGS



'The minute you pull off the main road and turn down the tree-lined driveway of Kentisbury Grange Hotel, you just relax, and that is what a stay with us is all about.' Wayne Moore has been managing the North Devon countryside hotel for the past three years and is pleased to say that business is doing extremely well. 'It's never going to be one thing that makes a business a success, it's the hundred little things, and at Kentisbury Grange, we do those little things brilliantly.' Recognised as one of the leading hotels in the greater Exmoor area, it sits in an enviable position, overlooking Exmoor National Park and just a quarter of an hour away from the coast. 'Depending on what you want from a break, we can offer it. For those guests that love feature fireplaces in their bedroom for example, we have stays available in the main Victorian house, for those wanting ultra-modern facilities, we have a variety of cottage and lodge stays with hot tubs and garden views. We are proud to say that we offer understated luxury.'

During the cooler months, the log fire in the morning room is lit every day at 7am until the last guest goes to bed. Head into the drawing room and you'll be welcomed with plush velvet sofas and a chess set waiting for its two challengers to take their seats, or perhaps you'll relax in the lounge area where boardgames, books and a vinyl collection await your exploration. With nothing ever too much trouble, the team at Kentisbury Grange are on hand 365 days a year, and the restaurant and bar areas are also open to non-guests too. 'With six acres of landscaped gardens and four lakes, our outdoor space is completely tranquil, but in addition to this, we also offer an events calendar for those guests who are looking for a little extra activity during their stay.'

Wayne is pleased to highlight that the hotel works well with local partners, offering art workshops, foraging courses, distillery tours and even a 'dog zoo pharmacy weekend'. 'I wouldn't have believed it myself until my wife tried the essential oils treatment with her horse. Whenever we tried to lead him into the horse box he would get really agitated, but now after using these oils he is so much more relaxed. When I saw the difference in his behaviour, I had to offer this unique treatment to our guests' dogs." Kentisbury Grange is already renowned for the special treatment that they show to guests' dogs; welcoming them into the restaurant, offering them a complimentary dog bed in the bedroom, and giving them branded dog treats, 'After all, it's all about creature comforts at Kentisbury Grange!' laughs Wayne.

In addition to their celebrated annual summer music festival, with some big named acts making guest appearances, Kentisbury Grange is also a great meeting place for gatherings with friends. The weekly menu line-up in the restaurant is an event in itself with Bottomless Brunches, Endless Sunday Lunches (extra Yorkshire puddings, yes please) and then the novel Throwback Thursdays serving culinary classics such as Steak Diane and Black Forest Gateau. If you're looking for a relaxed weekend with locally sourced food, you've certainly got it here, likewise if you want to learn a new skill by attending one of the many workshops, you have the opportunity to do so. It's clear to see that you can tailor-make a stay here cherry picking the bits that suit you best, and after all, as Wayne says, 'It's not just one thing that makes Kentisbury Grange.'

Book your stay direct via **[kentisburygrange.com](https://www.kentisburygrange.com)**





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