

# Countryside

CHAMPIONING FOOD, FARMING & RURAL LIFE

MARCH 2019

HOW TO...

Forage for  
your spring  
greens

**WIN**  
A TWO-NIGHT STAY  
AT A SHEPHERD'S  
HUT - WORTH  
£600

**WHAT YOUR DOG**  
is really saying to you...

*Miranda Gore Browne's*  
**3** favourite dairy  
recipes

## PRIDE & PROVENANCE

Why livestock farming is at the heart  
of the great British countryside

March 2019 £3.90

**NFU**



# Eat, walk, sleep... Buckinghamshire



**Words by:**  
**Lorna Maybery**  
Lorna is Countryside's deputy editor who loves being in the great outdoors

**Lorna Maybery** heads to the south of this beautiful shire in search of great foodie destinations

Scenic countryside, the rolling Chiltern hills, picturesque villages, what's not to like about south Buckinghamshire? Add to this a whole variety of pubs, hotels, farm shops, breweries and even a chocolatiere and it's surely a prime county for a food trail. You might be surprised to discover that wine is made here and that it seems to be a bit of a thing too for pubs and butchers to merge into one establishment. So let's hit the road and discover some of the unexpected food delights of this beautiful shire county.

## 1 The Butcher's Tap

Fancy a pint while ordering your weekly supply of mince and sausages? Well, this is exactly what you can do at the Butcher's Tap in Marlow, which brands itself as Master Butcher and Pub. Walk through the door and on your right is a traditional butcher's counter and on your left is seating for you to take the weight off your feet and enjoy a glass or two of ale.

The meat at the counter is locally-sourced and the pub is proud of its top-quality produce that offers heritage and traceability. Take a seat during the day for a snack and a drink while you decide what you want for your tea. The butcher's counter closes at 5.30pm and the pub reverts to a traditional drinking establishment with a good selection of ales, wines and spirits.

- The Butcher's Tap, 15 Spittal Street, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 3HJ
- [butcherstap.co.uk](http://butcherstap.co.uk)



## 5 Malt the Brewery

This gem of a place is a must for anyone who loves a good ale. Not only can you stand at the bar tasting the beer, thanks to a large window in bar/shop you can also look down into the brewery and watch as the magic happens.

The brewery is the combined effort of Nick and Jenny Watson.

"We found this site, which is part of a farm," says Jenny. "The owner has a beef herd but also Gloucester

Old Spot and Tamworth pigs. One of the big by-products of brewing is spent grains and the best way to get rid of this is to feed it to pigs, so one of our biggest waste products just goes out of the front door and up into the woods where the pigs are free ranging."

The brewery welcomes visitors during the day and they're encouraged to try the beers, while three evenings a week they stay open until 7pm. "Come 5.15pm on a Friday it's like someone rings a bell in Prestwood and they all come in for a quick pint. By accident we have become a bit of community hub, which is really nice," says Jenny.

Good beer is also what draws people in and this is down to Nick, who comes up with the recipes and oversees the brewing process. There are three core beers, Voyager, Starry Skies and Missenden Pale Ale and three seasonals at any one time. Voyager is their signature beer and one to definitely recommend.

"We sell a lot of our beer from here," says Jenny. "We also sell to pubs and venues, and to community groups and retail shops. We keep it quite tightly within a 30-mile radius, as, at the end of the day, it's a local product."

The brewery is open from Tuesday to Saturday and visitors are welcome to drop in for tastings, while tours are held on the fourth Saturday of each month.

- Malt the Brewery, Collings Hangar Farm, Wycombe Road, Prestwood HP16 0HW
- Visit: [maltthebrewery.co.uk](http://maltthebrewery.co.uk)



## 6 Rumsey's Chocolaterie

Who can resist the lure of chocolate?

I know I can't, so when I spotted Rumsey's Chocolaterie in Wendover, I couldn't get inside quickly enough. Master chocolatier Nigel Rumsey has been making handmade chocolate delights since 1991, having travelled to London and Paris to perfect his skills and learn the secrets of the gourmet chocolate makers of Europe.

The tea room and shop was busy - no surprise there - but what was a surprise was the window at one end of the room that opened into a chocolate-making area, meaning you could enjoy your tea and cake while watching the chocolatiers working their magic.

If you don't have time to sit, then go straight to the counter and feast your eyes on the exquisite handmade sweet offerings with fillings ranging from champagne and black cherry Cointreau to stem ginger, praline and salted caramel.

- Rumsey's Chocolaterie, The Old Bank, 26 High Street, Wendover, Buckinghamshire, HP22 6EA
- Visit: [rumseys.co.uk](http://rumseys.co.uk)

## 7 Hartwell House Hotel and Spa

Hartwell House Hotel and Spa has the comfort and welcome of an old friend and food worthy of its two AA rosettes. Set in 90 acres of tranquil

Buckinghamshire countryside Hartwell House is a stately home full of history - its most famous resident was Louis XVIII, exiled King of France who stayed there for five years from 1809. Now owned by the National Trust, it became a hotel in 1989, but its Jacobean and Georgian features have been preserved.

The result is a grand, spacious interior with sweeping staircase, exquisite furnishings, high ceilings and dramatic chandeliers. Bedrooms are beautifully styled, walls filled with historic art and mantelpieces adorned with period ornaments, but you don't have to forgo the mod cons as they come with TVs and ensuite bathrooms. Large windows with cushioned window seats offer views of the stunning Capability Brown landscaped gardens and there are plenty of walks to enjoy if you have the time. The add-on of a

spa is a welcome treat for guests. Try an aromatherapy massage to sooth away the stresses and strains and leave you relaxed and revived.

Dinner is a grand affair, with food cooked to perfection by head chef Daniel Richardson. He places great importance on sourcing local and home grown food and works closely with a network of local farmers to supply the finest and freshest ingredients.

The result is imaginative menus and flavoursome dishes - beef carpaccio with truffle ice cream, tender, mouthwatering fillet steak, venison loin accompanied by a mini venison cottage pie, all served by professional, friendly waiters making the whole experience a meal fit for an exiled king.

- Hartwell House Hotel and Spa, Oxford Road, Vale of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP17 8NR
- Visit: [hartwell-house.com](http://hartwell-house.com)

