

## DEVON dining

Nature blessed Devon with the greatest growing conditions to produce a whole range of delicious foodstuffs, and the county has a well-established – and deserved - reputation for good eating.

The feast of famous foods to enjoy includes succulent fish and seafood, locally farmed lamb and pork, juicy jams and preserves, creamy cheese and dairy goods, tasty pies and pasties, fruit and juices, fresh vegetables galore and mouth-watering cakes and cookies.

There are also some surprises on the menu, too: the large number of vineyards producing excellent British wine, for example, and the fact that chillies grown in the county's rich soil, and ostriches are successfully farmed.

Walk down any village or town high street and you'll find independent, family-run shops, many of which have sold their local home-made foods in the same spot for many generations, surely a great testament to their excellence and popularity.

Dip into markets and farm shops and you'll find many more food producers, often offering tastings, special events, the opportunity to watch foods being made, or even have a go at making them yourself. Devon also stages food festivals celebrating the county's bounty, much of which is naturally organic or free range.

Or, better still, there's a vast choice of cafes, pubs and restaurants ready to serve up Devon's best to you on a plate, whether you want a snack, a quick bite at lunchtime, or elegant fine dining.

### TASTES OF DEVON

**Beef** - South Devon's famous Ruby Red cattle are farmed at the organic **Ocombe Farm**, Paignton, and meat and other organic produce are on sale in the farm shop ([www.countryside-trust.org.uk/Ocombe](http://www.countryside-trust.org.uk/Ocombe)).

**Beer** – **Quercus Brewery & Beer House**, Churchstow, Kingsbridge, is an independent, family-run brewery and beer shop selling their own beers brewed on the premises, and around 300 other beers, ales, lagers and ciders from around the UK and the World ([www.quercusbrewery.com](http://www.quercusbrewery.com)).

**Bread** – **Frogmore Bakery**, Frogmore, Kingsbridge, bakes home-made traditional bread of many types, as well as tarts and cakes, pasties and quiches (01548 531236).

**Cakes –The Cottage Kitchen**, Churchstow, Kingsbridge, supplies The National Trust, and its carrot cake was voted best by Taste of the West (01548 857565). Check out the WI Cake stall at **Tavistock Market**, too.

**Cheese - Quickest Traditional**, Newton St Cyres, near Exeter, is a family business producing award-winning traditional cheeses using milk from its own dairy herd ([www.quickest.co.uk](http://www.quickest.co.uk)). And **Country Cheeses** in Topsham and Tavistock ([www.countrycheeses.co.uk](http://www.countrycheeses.co.uk)) has made beautiful cheeses for 17 years.

**Cider – Multi-award-winning Ashridge Cider**, Totnes, is billed as Devon’s apple answer to champagne. Products include Devon Blush, cider with blackberry liqueur ([www.ashridgecider.co.uk](http://www.ashridgecider.co.uk)).

**Chillies – South Devon Chilli Farm**, Loddiswell, Kingsbridge, supplies farm and food shops throughout Devon, and you can visit the growing tunnels and buy sauces, chutneys and even chilli chocolate ([www.southdevonchillifarm.co.uk](http://www.southdevonchillifarm.co.uk)).

**Cream Teas –** Most visitors to Devon want to try the county’s famous creation. Head for **Angels Tea Rooms** on Babbacombe Downs (01803 324477) for stunning views across Lyme Bay, **Rose Cottage** in Cockington village (01803 606607), or the tea rooms at **Cockington Court**, a 17<sup>th</sup>-century manor house in estate grounds ([www.cockingtoncourt.info](http://www.cockingtoncourt.info)).

**Fish –** Brixham’s daily catch is transported to top restaurants around the country. The fishing port is also famous for its shellfish, and Brixham crab features on many menus across Britain.

Family-run **Browse Seafoods** sells its produce from a van on Torquay harbourside during the summer (01803 852942). **Kingfisher (Brixham) Ltd** is another supplier of fresh fish from Brixham ([www.kingfisherbrixham.co.uk](http://www.kingfisherbrixham.co.uk)).

**Fudge – Bon Gout Delicatessen**, Exeter, stocks many locally sourced foods, including Mary Anne’s fudge, Heron Valley and Luscombe Organic juices, Vivian’s honey, Brownes chocolates, Devon Chilli Farm, Ottervale preserves, Waterhouse preserves, Denhay, Dartmouth Smokehouse, Devon Quail, Heel Farm, an abundance of local cheeses, Sharpham Vineyard, Down St Mary,

Pebblebed, Devon Meat Company, Kenniford Farm, Teonis Biscuits, Lantage Farm... and more ([www.bongoutdeli.co.uk](http://www.bongoutdeli.co.uk)).

**Gin - Plymouth Gin** has been distilled in the Black Friars Distillery since 1793. This building housed the Pilgrim Fathers before their voyage to America on the Mayflower ship ([www.plymouthgin.com](http://www.plymouthgin.com)).

**Honey – Quince Honey Farm**, South Molton, offers local honey, of course, but also other honey products including honey marmalade and skin care, as well as Devon Honey Ice Cream. Fascinatingly, you can also watch the colonies of honeybees working through the unique glass booths ([www.quincehoney.co.uk](http://www.quincehoney.co.uk)).

**Lavender - Cheristow Lavender Farm**, Hartland, grows lavender for cooking and also for its products, including lavender cordial, preserves, chutneys, lemon and lavender curd, pickled onions, lavender vinegar ([www.cheristow.co.uk](http://www.cheristow.co.uk)).

**Ice cream – Dartmouth Ice Cream Company** has made ice cream since 1928, and serve 22 flavours at The Good Intent, Dartmouth. Home-made fudge, hand-made chocolates and clotted cream are also on offer ([www.dartmouthicecream.com](http://www.dartmouthicecream.com)).

**Meat** – Dartmoor beef and lamb is renowned for its taste, and **Dartmoor Farmers**, a cooperative of 30-plus farmers, is supported by HRH Prince of Wales ([www.dartmoorfarmers.co.uk](http://www.dartmoorfarmers.co.uk)). Meanwhile, C.M. McCabe, Butchers Ltd, Totnes, source its beef and lamb from the South Hams whenever possible, and sausages are home made by its butchers. The company also cures its own bacon (01803 865846).

**Mussels** - Some of the best mussels in the area are farmed by **Brixham Sea Farm**, Galmpton (01803 843080).

**Ostrich – MNS Ostriches Ltd**, Pyworthy, Holsworthy, sells its produce at farmers markets, by mail order and at its farm by arrangement ([www.mnsostriches.co.uk](http://www.mnsostriches.co.uk)).

**Plums** - Dittisham's famous plum, unique to the village, makes a great liqueur from **Bramley & Gage** ([www.bramleyandgage.com](http://www.bramleyandgage.com)).

**Sausages – Wilkinson Butchers** of Modbury offers more 30 kinds of fresh home-made sausages, as well as top-class local meat and game (01548 830240).

**Smoked meats - Dartmouth Smokehouse**, Dartmouth, offers traditionally cured and smoked foods, including smoked salmon, bacon, duck, kippers and haddock. New items include smoked cherry tomatoes, vegetable medley and shiitake mushrooms ([www.dartmouthsmokehouse.co.uk](http://www.dartmouthsmokehouse.co.uk)).

**Water - Browns, Tavistock**, bottle still and sparkling water drawn from the hotel's well, positioned under a glass panel in the restaurant ([www.brownsdevon.co.uk](http://www.brownsdevon.co.uk)).

**Wine – Buckfast Tonic Wine** continues to be made at Buckfast Abbey according to the same basic recipe handed down for decades ([www.buckfast.org.uk](http://www.buckfast.org.uk)).

*See Vineyards*

## **MARKETS, FARM SHOPS AND DELICATESSANS**

**Barnstaple Pannier Market** offers fresh local produce all year round on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Tavistock also has a Pannier Market.

**Blacks Delicatessen**, Chagford, offers home-cooked soups, quiches and puddings ([www.blacks-deli.co.uk](http://www.blacks-deli.co.uk)).

**Brixham Deli** – stocks local produce, organic and free range where possible ([www.thebrixhamdeli.co.uk](http://www.thebrixhamdeli.co.uk)).

**Crediton Farmers Market** recently won Devon Life magazine's Best Market of the Year award for the 2nd time in three years.

**Darts Farm Shopping Village**, Topsham, near Exeter, offers home-grown vegetables, artisan cheeses, organic bread, local wines, sauces, preserves, cakes, cordials, biscuits etc, and there's an on-site master butcher, fishmonger and cider maker ([www.dartsfarm.co.uk](http://www.dartsfarm.co.uk)).

**Exeter Farmers Market** is held every Thursday morning and there regular farmers markets in the surrounding towns of Budleigh Salterton, Crediton, Cullompton, Eggesford, Exmouth, Honiton, Ottery St Mary and Seaton.

Quality grocer **NH Creber of Tavistock** has been trading for more than 125 years, selling fine local foods including own-brand products ([www.crebers.co.uk](http://www.crebers.co.uk)).

**Lynton Farmers Market** offers local sheep's cheese, home-baked lemon drizzle cake, fresh fruit and veg on the first Saturday of every month.

**Countryman's Choice Farm Shop**, Ivybridge, also stocks a wide range of local foods, including meats, breads, cakes and pasties, jams, preserves and dairy products ([www.countrymanschoice.co.uk](http://www.countrymanschoice.co.uk)).

**Churston Farm Shop**, on the road between Paignton and Brixham, offers a full range of local produce, from seafood to cheeses and pates ([www.churstontraditionalfarmshop.org.uk](http://www.churstontraditionalfarmshop.org.uk)).

**Occombe Farm Shop** has an on-site bakery, butchery, delicatessen and café, and offers organic and fair trade produce. The farm itself also has a nature reserve ([www.countryside-trust.org.uk/occombe](http://www.countryside-trust.org.uk/occombe)).

**Ullacombe Farm Shop**, Bovey Tracey, offers free range eggs and farm kitchen savouries and cakes (01364 661341).

### ***Something different***

***Occombe Farm holds regular food workshops at Occombe Education Centre, including Baking for Beginners - prepare and bake your own bread to take home ([www.countryside-trust.org.uk/Occombe](http://www.countryside-trust.org.uk/Occombe)).***

### **VINEYARDS**

**Yearlstone Vineyard**, Bickleigh, near Tiverton, is Devon's oldest vineyard. Its wines won 8 out of 52 medals in the English Wine of the Year Awards 2008, and it is now one of the top five English vineyards ([www.yearlstone.co.uk](http://www.yearlstone.co.uk)).

**Sharpham Vineyard & Cheese Dairy**, Ashprington, Totnes, is set above the River Dart and produces award-winning reds and whites. You can also watch cheese being made ([www.sharpham.com](http://www.sharpham.com)).

**Old Walls Vineyard and Teashop**, Bishopsteignton, is a family-run vineyard producing award-winning wines, with guided tours and tastings ([www.oldwallsvineyard.co.uk](http://www.oldwallsvineyard.co.uk)).

## RESTAURANTS

**Riverford Field Kitchen**, Buckfastleigh, offers lunch, supper, cookery demonstrations and event days, serving freshly prepared dishes using their own organic produce that visitors can see growing in the fields ([www.riverford.co.uk](http://www.riverford.co.uk)).

**The Salty Monk** restaurant with rooms, Sidford, uses top-class produce from local suppliers for their imaginative dinner menu - the confit of duck, pork and spiced cous cous dish is particularly popular. Lunch and cream teas are also available ([www.saltymonk.co.uk](http://www.saltymonk.co.uk)).

**Michael Caines** restaurant at the **Gidleigh Park Hotel**, Chagford, has two Michelin stars. The chef is renowned for his innovative, modern European cuisine ([www.gidleigh.com](http://www.gidleigh.com)).

**11 The Quay**, Ilfracombe, is owned by artist Damien Hirst, and is renowned for its local seafood dishes ([www.11thequays.co.uk](http://www.11thequays.co.uk)).

**Willow Vegetarian Restaurant**, Totnes, offers a constantly changing selection of tasty vegetarian and vegan dishes all hand prepared (01803 862 605).

**ODE Restaurant**, Shaldon, Teignmouth, was South West Restaurant of the Year 2007, serving the finest regional and seasonal cuisine ([www.odetruefood.co.uk](http://www.odetruefood.co.uk)).

## GASTROPUBS

**The Mason's Arms, Branscombe**, serves local lobster, crab and roasts in a picturesque 14 th century inn a ten-minute stroll from Branscombe Beach ([www.masonsarms.co.uk](http://www.masonsarms.co.uk)) Other renowned gastropubs and eateries includes: **Drew Arms, Broadhembury; Otterton Mill, Budleigh** ([www.ottertonmill.com](http://www.ottertonmill.com)); the **Rose & Crown**, Yealmpton ([www.theroseandcrown.co.uk](http://www.theroseandcrown.co.uk)), and the **Golden Lion, Tipton St John**

([www.goldenlioniption.co.uk](http://www.goldenlioniption.co.uk)); the Dartmoor Inn, Lydford ([www.dartmoorinn.com](http://www.dartmoorinn.com)).

### TAKEAWAYS

**Hanbury's** serves award-winning fish and chips in Babbacombe, Torquay ([www.hanburys.net](http://www.hanburys.net)).

**Hound of the Basket Meals** is a mobile snack bar not far from Hound tor selling more than dozen types of tea and popular Brixham crab sandwiches,

### FOOD FESTIVALS

Exeter Festival of South West Food & Drink is held every year in Northernhay Gardens and Exeter Castle. It features celebrity chefs, tastings of the finest regional produce and a beer festival ([www.visitsouthwest.co.uk/exeterfoodfestival](http://www.visitsouthwest.co.uk/exeterfoodfestival)).

Dartmouth Food Festival is another annual event, with parties, food markets, tasting shacks, demonstrations and special events across town ([www.dartmouthfoodfestival.co.uk](http://www.dartmouthfoodfestival.co.uk))

### *Something different*

*No idea how to fillet a fish or dress a crab? The Quayside Hotel, Brixham, offers Seafood Cookery Weekends when head chef and angler Andy Sewell will show you exactly how ([www.quaysidehotel.co.uk](http://www.quaysidehotel.co.uk)).*