

# PRESS RELEASE

Monday 29 February

## A Taste of the Chilterns!

The Chilterns AONB is a living, working area of beautiful countryside whose character has been shaped by agriculture, industry and the people who have lived and worked here over the centuries. Once the larder of London, the historic market towns, tucked-away villages, pubs, farmland, chalk-fed streams and ancient woods all hint at the growing, trading and of course, enjoyment of good local food and drink.

Yet what is truly 'of the Chilterns' isn't immediately obvious; traditional stoneground flour ground in restored watermills, local winemakers who are bringing Chilterns terroir into the glass...a Chilterns larder wouldn't be complete without artisan products that go straight from field to bottle or jar. Here are just some of our local Chilterns food heroes to celebrate;

### **1. Make mine a local brew**

The Tring Brewery Company was founded in 1992, reviving the traditional art of brewing in the picturesque market town of Tring. This was a town that, although steeped in brewing history, had been without a brewery for over 50 years. The locals were thirsty, so founder, Richard Shardlow, an experienced brewer got the show on the road and was joined in 2000 by Andrew Jackson from Whitbread, a man armed with both a brewing and retail background....and a scruffy dog. Tring Brewery really has made it's mark on the landscape, literally as you can smell the yeast over the town on some days, or watch as the locals queue up to ensure their supplies of seasonal ales are topped up. Brewery tours, a busy event schedule and shop await: [www.tringbrewery.co.uk](http://www.tringbrewery.co.uk)

### **2. Chilterns-chocolat**

Inspired by the film 'Chocolat', master chocolatier Nigel Rumsey and his wife Mary, opened their first shop in Wendover on Valentine's day in 2004, much to the delight of the locals. Nigel is the Head Chef and Master Chocolatier, along with Chef Pawel and his production team, who prepare their feast of delicious cakes, pastries, ice-creams, tarts and handmade chocolates for their two Chocolateries. Always creative and experimenting with new ideas, Nigel or Pawel can often be seen producing wonderful chocolates in the coffee shop 'theatres'. Tasting and courses are available throughout the year. [www.rumseys.co.uk](http://www.rumseys.co.uk)

### **3. Chilterns-cured**

Chiltern Charcuterie was born in the summer of 2014, by two amateur cooks; Ross and Catherine, who both have a passion for good food. They wanted to make delicious hand made produce and settled on Bresaola, a traditional air-dried beef. They use, what they consider to be the best animals they can find including; rare breed pork (by the way the pigs can be seen on Downtown Abbey!), Dexter beef and rare breed lamb all of which have been reared in South Buckinghamshire

- Catherine jokes that we even know which field they run around in. Available at local markets and a growing number of farm shops. [www.chiltern-charcuterie.co.uk](http://www.chiltern-charcuterie.co.uk)

#### **4. I heard it on the Chilterns-vine**

Since Roman times, vines have been grown on the chalky slopes of the Chilterns and Thames Valley. Along with a surge of interest in English wine today, local winemakers are producing both classic styles and unique blends - bringing Chilterns terroir into the glass. Planting their first vines in 1982, Old Luxters is home to the famous Chiltern Valley Winery & Brewery in the beautiful Hambleden Valley, now one of the most established winemakers producing a range of white, rose, red and sparkling wines. [www.chilternvalley.co.uk](http://www.chilternvalley.co.uk)

#### **5. The Chilterns larder**

The Meads have been farming in the Chiltern Hills since before 1860; it is thought that the family came out from London to produce hay and straw for the working horses of London. Simon and Chris Mead are now the sixth generation to farm on this site. In fields of yellow, apple orchards and buzzing bees...a Chilterns larder wouldn't be complete without their artisan products that go straight from field to bottle or jar. Mead & Sons Farm near Tring produce the versatile and award-winning Chiltern Cold-Pressed Rapeseed Oil (buy it from their farm shop, where you can also enjoy home-made cakes and light lunches). Their crops are pollinated by local bees who produce delicious golden honey. [www.pemeadandsons.co.uk](http://www.pemeadandsons.co.uk)

#### **6. Immersed in gin!**

Since early 2014, Kate and Ben Marston have immersed themselves in the world of gin, visiting and learning from distillers and suppliers from across the globe and tasted a lot of gin along the way to perfect their own product! Puddingstone Distillery takes its name from the local pudding stones of Hertfordshire which is a 55 million year old sedimentary rock. Their two mini stills have been worked very hard as they've refined and developed a unique recipe; layered with flavour of juniper and citrus, leading to nuttiness and ending with a floral, sweet marmalade end - can't wait for the doors to open this year. [www.puddingstonedistillery.com](http://www.puddingstonedistillery.com)

#### **7. Udderly local**

The truth is that the Chilterns landscape doesn't lend itself to a lot of dairy production. The good news is that there are a few gems that shouldn't be missed. At Laceys' Family Farm they can trace their lineage all the way back to 1805! In recent years it has been brothers Dan and Gideon running the farm and twins, Ed and Will, increasingly taking charge. With a fiercely loyal following who frequent their busy farm shop, they are also famous for their pedigree herd of Guernsey cows that produce award-winning milk that is pasteurised and bottled on site for delivery direct to their customers or for processing - remember when milk had a layer of cream on top? [www.laceysfamilyfarm.co.uk](http://www.laceysfamilyfarm.co.uk)

## **8. Crooked swap shop**

Paul Clerehugh has run The Crooked Billet, Stoke Row since 1989 and lives on his smallholding nearby, rearing beef and sheep and growing produce for the menu. A self-taught chef, Paul chose the Crooked Billet because not only was it pretty and rustic, but it was going to be a challenge to renovate! Today, the Crooked Billet retains the unspoilt country charm that has made it famous. A large and varied daily changing menu, specialising in local and British produce – buffalo milk and honey ice-cream (there's a Buffalo farm next door and Paul keeps bees), beef, lamb, hogget and mutton from Paul's farm. A blackboard on the front door encourages guests to swap their home grown delicacies for lunch. [www.thecrookedbillet.co.uk](http://www.thecrookedbillet.co.uk)

## **9. Ten Mile Menu**

Steve Sidhu hung up his suit and tore up his season ticket in September 2012, launching Ten Mile Menu in January 2013. The idea was simple: to make buying great local produce easy. Steve and his wife Corinna, are now connecting their local food heroes with customers - all within a 10-mile radius of their base in Princes Risborough, as their fruit and veg boxes find their way to even more Chilterns' homes. [www.tenmilemenu.co.uk](http://www.tenmilemenu.co.uk)

## **10. Into the woods we go!**

Take a cue from some of the best chefs who are working in local Chilterns' pubs who forage for seasonal ingredients right in their backyard. Whilst many think of autumn berries and mushrooms, try some springtime foraging instead. The Chilterns' shaded ancient woodlands provide the perfect conditions for fragrant wild garlic. You might also find young beech leaves, sorrel, chervil and definitely the versatile nettle! Look out for seasonal soups, salads, venison and all manner of sausages, reared locally and smothered in something good grown in a pub garden in nearby woods.

More information available, including contact details here: <http://www.visitchilterns.co.uk/food-and-drink/food-and-drink-destinations.html>

Look out for more ideas and Chilterns inspiration in 2016.

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Notes to Editors

- This release has been distributed by the Chilterns Tourism Network, a not-for-profit company representing over 220 local Chilterns tourism businesses who work together to promote this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as a desirable place to visit.
- Membership of the CTN is free for qualifying tourism businesses.
- The Chilterns stretches from the Thames in Oxfordshire through Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire to Hitchin in Hertfordshire, north-west of London
- Accessible on Chiltern Railways, London Midland and the Metropolitan Line on the Underground.
- For Chilterns events @VisitChilterns and <http://pinterest.com/visitchilterns/>

- High-res images are available on the website. [visitchilterns.co.uk/gallery](http://visitchilterns.co.uk/gallery)
- A Chilterns press pack is available on request, and for further information or to discuss press trip opportunities, please contact Mary Tebje 07941 841058 or contact [mary@visitchilterns.co.uk](mailto:mary@visitchilterns.co.uk)
- With thanks to the Chilterns Conservation Board and the following Food and Drink ambassadors for sponsoring this campaign: No2 Pound Street, Tring Brewery, The Crown at Radnage, Alford Arms and the Royal Oak in Marlow.