



Your favourite places to eat

This year, readers of our *Good Food Guide* (GFG) helped put the 2008 edition together by nominating their favourite local eatery.

You were asked to consider restaurants that are independently owned, good value and committed to local produce.

Your votes, together with nominations from the public, resulted in ten regional award winners and an overall champion, which you'll find featured in this year's guide.

Visit www.which.co.uk/gfgfeedback to tell us your experiences of restaurants around the UK. It will be used to select and compile next year's reviews in the *Good Food Guide*.

GET THE GUIDE

GFG 2008

Britain's leading independent restaurant review covers 1,200 establishments. This revamped full-colour edition has 300 new entries, now contains reader recommendations and can be navigated by county.

You can buy a copy for £14.49 (£2.50 discount), with free p&p. To order, call **01903 828557** or email mailorders@lbtstd.co.uk and quote GFGW1007 and ISBN 978184490 036 7.

Price of an average three-course meal for one, without wine

NORTHEAST & NATIONAL WINNER

YORKE ARMS, RAMSGILL

Proud demonstration of Yorkshire roots

It's hard to miss the Yorke Arms as you pass through this tiny village. The creeper-covered 18th-century shooting lodge overlooks a small green,



and the atmospheric interior combines the best of both old and modern worlds. Head chef Frances Atkins' cooking, although based on simple and established combinations, introduces new twists. Raw materials are first class, as you'll see with the roast fillet of Yorkshire beef served with wild mushrooms, foie gras and truffle jus, while presentation shows imagination and finesse throughout. Despite suffering extensive damage during this summer's floods, we're pleased to say that the restaurant is now making a triumphant return to form.

Ramsgill, North Yorkshire HG3 5RL
 01423 755243

www.yorke-arms.co.uk
 £41

EAST

THE SWAN INN, MONKS ELEIGH

Well-executed modern classics



There's a great deal to praise about this village pub, not least long-standing owners Nigel and Carol Ramsbottom, who are likeable and modest people with much to be proud of. The

thatched, timber-framed local is what most of us hope to find in a Suffolk village, and the kitchen is equally at home with its surroundings – the meat, game, fish, fruit and vegetables are all sourced meticulously. The formula is simple: Nigel's blackboard menus feature fresh and flavourful dishes that are well put together. Real ales are on draught and the accessible wine list offers many options by the glass from £3 and by the bottle from £12.

The Street, Monks Eleigh, Suffolk IP7 7AU
 01449 741391
 £25

LONDON

CANTEEN, SPITALFIELDS

Market setting for modern British classics

In the heart of Spitalfields market, Canteen is one of those places that has redefined what we expect of eating out: it's open all day and offers a flexible menu of modern British classics at great prices – no wonder there are queues at weekends. Eggs Benedict with 'perfect, rich hollandaise' from the all-day breakfast menu vies for attention against potted duck with piccalilli. Gammon with plain-boiled potatoes and parsley sauce is a well-praised main, or you could opt for the fish of the day. This summer, a second branch opened at the Royal Festival Hall on London's South Bank, offering a similar menu.



2 Crispin Place, Spitalfields, London E1 6DW
 0845 686 1122
 £25

MIDLANDS

PERKINS, PLUMTREE

A classy country restaurant



Located in a Victorian railway station, this restaurant is a safe bet for a good meal in a welcoming environment. The

Perkins family has chalked up 25 years of bonhomie, offering a straightforward menu to an appreciative crowd from across Nottinghamshire. The kitchen makes the most of its roots, typically featuring smoked fish from its own smokehouse, alongside local ingredients including asparagus, black pudding from George Stafford and rump of lamb from the village of Stathern. The helpful, varied and good-value wine list includes plenty of bottles under £20, with house French from £12.95.

Station House, Station Rd, Plumtree NG12 5NA
 0115 937 3695
 £30

NORTHERN IRELAND

JAMES STREET SOUTH, BELFAST

Precise food in minimalist surroundings

Head chef Niall McKenna's cooking receives praise for its well-honed techniques and attention to detail. He delivers a raft of exquisitely light dishes, which are classically European – and you'd expect nothing

less from someone who learned his craft from Marco Pierre White and Nico Ladenis. Fish arrives

daily from one of Belfast's top merchants and is given expert treatment; Dover sole with brown shrimp and Champagne beurre blanc is luxuriously classic, while wild sea bass is equally at home with a fricassée of shellfish and artichokes. The short but smart global wine list has bottles starting at £15.



21 James Street South,
Belfast BT2 7GA

www.jamesstreet
south.co.uk

028 9043 4310

£47

NORTHWEST

RAMSONS, RAMSBOTTOM

An Anglo-Italian treasure

Chris Johnson, the proprietor of Ramsons, is an evangelist: he's committed to preaching about sourcing traceable and seasonal ingredients. You can see this throughout his Anglo-Italian menu, which offers a choice of between two and five courses or the chef's special nine-course affair. Dishes are confident but uncluttered, enabling complex flavours to show through. The 'informal friendly atmosphere, but dedicated approach to good food and service' impresses many readers, while the exclusively Italian and fully annotated wine



list is a real treat, with Chris on hand for advice. Prices start at about £15, with some by the glass at £3.50.

18 Market Place,
Ramsbottom, Greater
Manchester BL0 9HT
01706 825070

www.ramsons.
org.uk

£35

SCOTLAND

LINEN ROOM, DUMFRIES

Daring innovation and bold gestures

Russell Robertson opened his thoroughly modern restaurant in 2004 and the guide has been overwhelmed by reader endorsements and plaudits from all quarters ever since. Sleek, monochrome décor provides a fitting backdrop to cooking that 'would take a big city by storm'.

However, gastronomic sorcery is tempered with respect for native raw materials.

Robertson's talent with Scottish ingredients shows in Fred Ballard's local lamb with Weetabix purée, veal sweetbreads, parsnip silk and

the much neglected wild plant, Good King Henry. The great wine list covers

most French regions and others, with bottles from £17, and glasses from £5.



53 St Michael Street,
Dumfries DG1 2QB

www.linen
room.com

01387 255689

£39

SOUTHEAST

THE PLOUGH, BOLNHURST

Impeccable ingredients and cooking

The Plough is a beautiful old building, which has been superbly restored inside and out. Chef-proprietor Martin Lee has an impressive track record, though his style is not flashy; he makes his mark with attention to detail, sourcing of raw and often local materials and sound culinary knowledge. Seared scallops with cauliflower purée and a caper and sultana dressing is a typical starter, as is grilled homemade black pudding with Montgomery Cheddar hash and smoked bacon. The wine list lives up to the standards set by the cooking, with a broad global selection including house varieties starting at £12.95.



Kimbolton Road, Bolnhurst,
Bedfordshire MK44 2EX

www.boln
hurst.com

01234 376274

£28

SOUTHWEST

CULINARIA, BRISTOL

Unpretentious and consistently excellent

Established owners Stephen and Judy Markwick serve up classic dishes – inspired by Mediterranean-food writer Elizabeth David – which make the most of seasonal, top-quality ingredients in an informal and friendly setting. At



Culinaria it's possible to browse the shelves of cookery books at your table or buy pastries, fresh soups, precooked meals

and signature ice creams and sorbets from the deli. Underpinning the food is the relaxed patter of a neighbourhood bistro with service that's attentive but discreet. House wines start at £14.

1 Chandos Road,
Bristol BS6 6PG

www.culinaria
bristol.co.uk

0117 973 7999

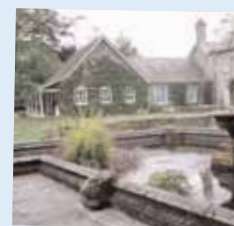
£29

WALES

TYDDYN LLAN, LLANDRILLO

Personal charm and simple modern food

A rustic Georgian house built of slate and stone in the shadow of the Berwyn Mountains is the setting for Bryan and Susan



Webb's endearing restaurant and hotel. It's run with dedication and, according to one contented regular, it's a place that 'never fails to please'. Bryan is a Welsh chef who understands the regional larder around him and knows instinctively how to get the best from seasonal and local supplies. There's also praise for Susan's charm out front and applause for the 'stunning' wine list that is helpfully divided up into drinker-friendly categories such as 'big-scale, fruity reds'.

Llandrillo, Denbighshire
LL21 0ST

www.tyddn
llan.co.uk

01490 440264

£56