



THE GOOD FOOD GUIDE

GLOUCESTERSHIRE & BRISTOL

2010

The best restaurants in the UK reviewed by

which?

About The Good Food Guide

The Good Food Guide is Britain's longest-running restaurant guide. Since 1951, it has cast a critical eye over cafés, pubs, bistros and restaurants throughout the UK.

Each year the Guide is completely rewritten and compiled from scratch. Our research list is based on the huge volume of feedback that we receive from readers (the list of contributors at the back of the book is testimony to this). This feedback, together with anonymous inspections, ensures that every entry is assessed afresh. We believe that the restaurants included in this Guide are the very best in the UK.

Although much has changed since Raymond Postgate founded *The Good Food Guide*, the ethos of the original book remains: we do not accept any sponsorship, advertising or free meals. It is because of this, and because the Guide will always be the voice of the consumer, not the catering industry, that *The Good Food Guide* remains the UK's most trusted, best-selling and best-loved restaurant bible.

Please send us your recommendations and feedback by visiting
www.which.co.uk/gfgfeedback

You can order a copy of The Good Food Guide 2010 by visiting
www.which.co.uk/gfgbook and find out more about The Good Food Guide iPhone application at **www.thegoodfoodguide.com**

Scoring

We should begin by saying that a score of 1 is actually a significant achievement. We reject many restaurants during the compilation of the Guide. Obviously, there are always subjective aspects to rating systems, but our inspectors are equipped with extensive scoring guidelines, so that restaurant bench-marking around the UK is accurate. We also take into account the reader feedback that we receive for each restaurant, so that any given review is based on several meals.

- 1/10 Capable cooking, with simple food combinations and clear flavours, but some inconsistencies.
- 2/10 Decent cooking, displaying good basic technical skills and interesting combinations and flavours. Occasional inconsistencies.
- 3/10 Good cooking, showing sound technical skills and using quality ingredients.
- 4/10 Dedicated, focused approach to cooking; good classical skills and high-quality ingredients.
- 5/10 Exact cooking techniques and a degree of ambition; showing balance and depth of flavour in dishes, while using quality ingredients.
- 6/10 Exemplary cooking skills, innovative ideas, impeccable ingredients and an element of excitement.
- 7/10 High level of ambition and individuality, attention to the smallest detail, accurate and vibrant dishes.
- 8/10 A kitchen cooking close to or at the top of its game – highly individual, showing faultless technique and impressive artistry in dishes that are perfectly balanced for flavour, combination and texture. There is little room for disappointment here.
- 9/10 This mark is for cooking that has reached a pinnacle of achievement, making it a hugely memorable experience for the diner.
- 10/10 It is extremely rare that a restaurant can achieve perfect dishes on a consistent basis. We have awarded this mark for the second time in two years.

Symbols

Restaurants that may be given main entry status are contacted ahead of publication and asked to provide key information about their opening hours and facilities. They are also invited to participate in the £5 voucher scheme. The symbols on these entries are therefore based on this feedback from restaurants, and are intended for quick, at-a-glance identification.

This year we have changed the criteria for the vegetarian symbol so that the symbol now indicates where more than three vegetarian main courses are available. The wine bottle symbol is an accolade assigned by the Guide's team, based on their judgement of the wine list available.



Accommodation is available.



It is possible to have three courses at the restaurant for less than £30.



There are more than three vegetarian main courses on the menu.



The restaurant is participating in The Good Food Guide 2010 £5 voucher scheme. Vouchers are available in printed editions of the Guide - to buy a copy go to www.which.co.uk/gfgbook



The restaurant has a wine list that our inspector and wine expert have deemed to be exceptional.



The price indicated on each review represents the average price of a three-course dinner, excluding wine.



Arlingham

The Old Passage Inn

Idyllic seafood dining by the river

Passage Road, Arlingham, GL2 7JR

Tel no: (01452) 740547

www.theoldpassage.com

Seafood | £35

Cooking score: 3

£5 OFF

The setting is remote and nothing less than beautiful, on the banks of the River Severn with lovely views. A bright colour scheme sets a contemporary tone in the interior. Raoul Moore has now departed, to be replaced by Mark Redwood. He seems content to continue with the mix of familiar and gently inventive cooking of seafood set by his predecessor, much to the delight of readers, who have pronounced him 'well up to standard'. Tea-smoked mackerel and salmon terrine with poached egg sauce makes a good start, followed by roast halibut with braised Little Gem lettuce, baby onions, wild

mushrooms and oxtail jus. Desserts run to rhubarb pannacotta with poached rhubarb, hazelnut crisp, stem ginger and rose petal ice cream. House wine is £17.50.

Chef/s: Mark Redwood. **Open:** Tue to Sun L 12 to 2, Tue to Sat D 7 to 9. **Closed:** Mon, 25 to 30 Dec.

Meals: alc (main courses £17 to £40). **Service:** not inc. **Details:** Cards accepted. 40 seats. 30 seats outside. Air-con. No mobile phones. Wheelchair access. Music. Children allowed. Car parking.

Bourton on the Hill

Horse and Groom

Proper pub virtues and lively food

Bourton on the Hill, GL56 9AQ

Tel no: (01386) 700413

www.horseandgroom.info

Modern British | £25

Cooking score: 2

£30

Panoramic vistas across the Cotswolds are just one of the assets at this honey-coloured stone inn. Locally sourced food (some of it home-

BOURTON ON THE HILL

grown), friendly staff and well-kept beer also contribute to an 'extremely pleasant experience', according to one reporter. It helps that brothers Will and Tom Greenstock are seasoned innkeepers, because their know-how has helped to preserve the pub's proper virtues. In contrast, daily blackboard menus take a more open-minded view of things – witness fennel and goats' cheese risotto, tandoori-spiced halibut and rack of lamb with mustard greens and chilli jam. Ginger pannacotta with spiced rhubarb makes a zesty finale. House wine is £12.95.

Chef/s: Will Greenstock. **Open:** all week L 12 to 2 (2.30 Sun), Mon to Sat D 7 to 9 (9.30 Fri and Sat). **Meals:** alc (main courses £10 to £18). **Service:** not inc. **Details:** Cards accepted. 70 seats. 54 seats outside. Separate bar. Music. Children allowed. Car parking.

Bristol

The Albion

Punchy pub food with a big heart

Boyces Avenue, Clifton Village, Bristol, BS8 4AA

Tel no: (0117) 9733522

www.thealbionclifton.co.uk

Gastropub | £28

Cooking score: 3

£30
OFF

This listed seventeenth-century inn was transformed from grotty student boozier to foodie-friendly 'public house and dining rooms' in a trademark gastropub reclamation – and it has never looked back. Exposed wood floors, heritage colours and a brick fireplace set just the right tone for punchy food with a big heart. You can eat in the bar or in the more formal upstairs dining room from a menu that avoids purple prose in favour of terse, no-nonsense descriptions: pig's head, white dandelion and capers, then lamb's offal and polenta or lemon sole and brown shrimps, with custard tart and rhubarb or blood orange sorbet and vodka to finish. The results on the plate are suitably emphatic, and the wine list backs things up with a lively global selection from £15 (£3.90 a glass).

Chef/s: Jake Platt. **Open:** Tue to Sun L 12 to 3, Tue to Sat D 7 to 10. **Closed:** Mon, 25 and 26 Dec, 1 Jan.

Meals: alc (main courses £11 to £19). Set D £24 (2 courses) to £30. **Service:** 10% (optional).

Details: Cards accepted. 60 seats. 40 seats outside. Wheelchair access. Music. Children allowed.

Bell's Diner

Inventive, ambitious cooking

1-3 York Road, Montpelier, Bristol, BS6 5QB

Tel no: (0117) 9240357

www.bellsdiner.com

Modern European | £29

Cooking score: 4

£5
OFF

Sitting on a corner opposite a row of pastel-coloured Georgian houses, Bell's Diner occupies a former grocer's shop in a bohemian quarter of Bristol. The polished wood floor and shelves are a reminder of its past, and the front room has a parlour feel with its duck-egg blue tongue-and-grooving, old jugs, grinders and baskets. The rear dining room is more contemporary, but both areas match the seamless fusion of modern cooking and traditional techniques. Some have found the wannabe Fat Duck-style food amusing rather than enjoyable or value for money, but others are beguiled by the eclectic flavour combinations conjured from top-notch produce, as in a starter of Cornish crab, which arrives with mango, avocado ice cream and hot shellfish bisque. A more conventional chicken breast with summer truffles, peas and morels could follow, while desserts include a traditional crème brûlée served with apple compote and Granny Smith sorbet. An interesting and intelligent wine list starts at £15.

Chef/s: Christopher Wicks. **Open:** Tue to Fri L 12 to 2.30, Mon to Sat D 7 to 10. **Closed:** Sun, 24 to 30 Dec. **Meals:** alc (main courses £15 to £19). Tasting menu £45. **Service:** 10% (optional). **Details:** Cards accepted. 50 seats. Music. Children allowed.

INDEPENDENT, EXPERT OPINION YOU CAN TRUST

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All entries are based on reader feedback and inspections are carried out anonymously. Unlike other guides, we do not accept sponsorship, advertising or freebies and we pay for every meal we review.

In this special Gloucestershire and Bristol edition, you will find reviews of all the leading restaurants, pubs and cafés plus some new and hidden gems that we think are 'ones to watch'.

Whether you're looking for a great value pub for Sunday lunch with friends or a once-in-a-lifetime blow-out meal, *The Good Food Guide* is bound to have the perfect venue.