THE GOOD FOOD GUIDE

NORTHUMBERLAND

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.

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

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

£5 OFF 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.

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

Barrasford

The Barrasford Arms

Barrasford, NE48 4AA
Tel no: (01434) 681237
www.barrasfordarms.co.uk
Gastropub | £25
Cooking score: 2

£30

The bar may be traditional and its atmosphere lively, but by contrast the dining room is calmly decorated and complements chef/patron Tony Binks' robust cooking, with its generous portions, clear flavours and sound-quality ingredients. Farmhouse classics are prepared with care and presented with modern style, and there is a palpable level of achievement in a meal that opens with Northumbrian ham terrine with homemade piccalilli, goes on to local rack of lamb, and finishes with soft pistachio meringue. The short wine list is reasonably priced and offers nine by the glass (from £2.95) and house vino from £12.50.

Chef/s: Tony Binks and Simon Walsh. **Open:** Tue to Sun L 12 to 2 (3 Sun), Mon to Sat D 6.30 to 9. **Closed:** bank hol Mon. **Meals:** alc (main courses £9 to £16). Set L £11.50 (2 courses) to £14.50. Sun L £12.50 (2 courses) to £15. **Service:** not inc. **Details:** Cards accepted. 60 seats. 20 seats outside. Separate bar. Wheelchair access. Music. Children allowed. Car parking.

Hedley on the Hill

The Feathers Inn

Hedley on the Hill, NE43 7SW
Tel no: (01661) 843607
www.thefeathers.net
Gastropub | £21
Cooking score: 2

£5 OFF £30

There's a genuine family feel to this former drovers' inn, and it is the beating heart of the rural community too. Daily changing menus support local produce and the kitchen bristles with honest endeavour. Chef Rhian Cradock's cook book collection is shared with

guests and sets the scene for such delights as homemade black pudding of 'savoury richness' or grilled North Sea lobster with chunky chips, while homemade yoghurt with gooseberries and oats makes a splendid finale. Over 20 wines come by the glass with house bottles from £12.50, or try one of several north-east ales.
Chef/s: Rhian Cradock. **Open:** Tue to Sun L 12 to 2 (2.30 Sun), Tue to Sat D 6 to 8.30. **Closed:** 2 weeks Jan. **Meals:** alc (main courses £8 to £17). **Service:** not inc. **Details:** Cards accepted. 40 seats. 20 seats outside. No music. Children allowed. Car parking.

Hexham

Bouchon Bistrot

French flair at reasonable prices
4-6 Gilesgate, Hexham, NE46 3NJ
Tel no: (01434) 609943
www.bouchonbistrot.co.uk
French | £23
Cooking score: 4

£5 OFF £30

Gregory Bureau's restaurant occupies three floors of a stark, stone-clad Grade II-listed building. While not blazing a revolutionary trail, the menu offers classic regional French dishes at reasonable prices and shows genuine flair along the way. Salade paysanne with boudin noir and smoked duck magret makes a promising start, or there could be oxtail terrine with sauce ravigote. Simple main courses might include roasted farmhouse chicken breast with wild mushrooms and gratin dauphinoise, and seared mullet with roasted fennel, tomato and ratte potatoes and dill sauce. Desserts end things on a high with a dark chocolate terrine with nut milk sauce. The international wine list won't break the bank either; there are a dozen choices by the glass with house French £12.75 a bottle.
Chef/s: Nicolas Duhill. **Open:** Tue to Sat L 12 to 2, D 6 to 9.30. **Closed:** Sun, Mon, 10 days Feb, bank hols. **Meals:** alc (main courses £12 to £17). Set L £9.95 (2 courses) to £12.95. Set D (6 to 7) £12.95 (2 courses) to £14.95. **Service:** not inc. **Details:** Cards accepted. 130 seats. Air-con. Wheelchair access. Music. Children allowed. Car parking.

READERS RECOMMEND

Dipton Mill Inn

Gastropub
Dipton Mill Road, Hexham, NE46 1YA
Tel no: (01434) 606577
www.diptonmill.co.uk
'Unpretentious, good quality and good value'

Low Newton-by-the-Sea

ALSO RECOMMENDED

▲ The Ship Inn

Newton Square, Low Newton-by-the-Sea, NE66 3EL
Tel no: (01665) 576262
www.shipinnnewton.co.uk
Gastropub

Tucked into a little square a few yards from the beach, this whitewashed inn was once a fisherman's cottage. It's still got all its rustic Georgian character, and a good part of its modern charm is accounted for by the food, ordered at the bar from daily changing menus. Start with grilled goats' cheese with tomato and basil (£4.25), and proceed to lamb cutlets from a local butcher, served with mint sauce and cabbage (£11.50). Chocolate espresso cake is a must-have dessert (£4.50). House wine is £13.25. Open all week. Cash only.

Symbols

- Accommodation is available
- £30 Three courses for less than £30
- V More than three vegetarian main courses
- £5 OFF £5-off voucher scheme
- Notable wine list

INDEPENDENT, EXPERT OPINION YOU CAN TRUST

The Good Food Guide is Britain's best-selling restaurant guide. First published in 1951 and written and compiled from scratch every year, it reviews the best establishments in the UK.

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 Northumberland 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.