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WELCOME

SUMMER 2023



Top photo; wayfair.co.uk

Competition winner from our spring issue:

Paula Thomas, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells.

WELCOME to the sunny summer edition of Conservation News. After a bit of a bleak start to the year, we're finally starting to see the good weather, and we here at CN are using this as an excuse to get out and about in Kent and sample the very best the county has to offer.

We're also making the most of the sunshine to get on with some much needed upkeep around the house, from tending the garden to sprucing up the indoor space.

We've got articles and tips on both these and more, plus a fantastic article on adding indoor space to the outdoors by building garden rooms, sheds, conservatories and all sorts of wonderful things.

As well as our usual features, editorials and highlights on some of Kent's amazing local businesses, we've got a very special article on why you should shop bespoke, and just how far the concept extends.

So grab your sun lounger and a glass of your favourite ice cold drink and settle in with Conservation News for a very sunny read!

Nadene & Dawn



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conservationnews.co.uk

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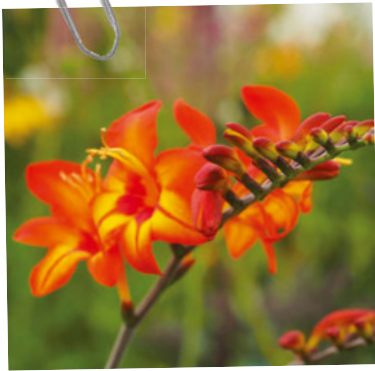
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Adding more sparkle





Hot stuff!

Summer is when hot coloured flowers come into their own. The freshness of spring is past and summer days are finally here. The Crocosmia 'Scorchio' grows from corms, making it very easy to propagate. Just dig up the clump and divide in spring. Do this every couple of years. It has healthy, mid-green, blade-like leaves and strong, arching flower stems that bear large, orange-yellow flowers with red stripes in the centres of the petals, from mid-summer to autumn.



SWEET PEAS

To keep sweet peas flowering as long as possible you must keep picking them. They quickly go to seed as the weather warms up, so they must be kept watered too. To keep them at their best, pick every bloom every 8-10 days.

Garden notes

With colourful blooms to enjoy, fruit to pick and wildlife to watch, the summer months can be very rewarding. Plants put on plenty of leafy growth and then burst into flower to be pollinated by bees and other insects. Weeds can be a problem, but you can keep them under control with a 'little and often' approach. Although there's still plenty to be getting on with, it's important to take the time to relax and enjoy the fruits of your labour.



Bee positive!

To bring the buzz back to your garden and enjoy the brilliance of returning bees and butterflies there are a few simple steps to take. Firstly, learn to live without insecticides and to tolerate a few more weedy corners in the garden. Secondly, provide good shelter through the winter months. Leaves piled along the back of borders, evergreens trained over fences and walls, and maybe a patch of long grass at the far end of the lawn will ensure that nesting bees and hoverflies, moth chrysalises and hibernating butterflies have somewhere safe to shelter. Thirdly you can make an enormous difference by growing pollinator-friendly flowers. Choose simple, single flowers instead of complicated double cultivars.



TAKE SEMI-RIPE CUTTINGS

By July the new growth of shrubby herbs such as salvias, rosemary and lavender is starting to ripen, which means that you can begin to take semi-ripe cuttings. Choose straight new growth and cut back to some ripier wood (usually three or four inches down the stem). Put the cuttings into a polythene bag. Strip off all the leaves and insert each cutting around the edge of a pot filled with compost. Water and place in a warm spot. The cuttings should root in a couple of weeks and when you see new growth they can be potted on individually.

Six essential herbs to grow

ROSEMARY

GROW from cuttings taken in summer

PICK leaves and flowering shoots

BASIL

GROW from seed indoors in spring

PICK the tips of shoots to keep plants bushy

THYME

GROW from divisions or from seed

PICK sprigs throughout growing season

CHIVES

GROW from seed in spring or divide in autumn

PICK leaves and flowering stems at base

SAGE

GROW from cuttings or spring-sown seeds

PICK the tips of shoots before flowering

OREGANO

GROW from softwood cuttings or divisions

PICK leaves throughout growing season.



What to do in the garden now

- Water is the key word in summer.
- Prune soft fruit to get bumper crops.
- Keep deadheading. This may be a tedious task but is very essential to help plants produce more flowers.
- Feed hungry shrubs and roses.
- Divide bamboo and water lilies.
- Stay on top of the weeds.
- Clear the grass from around trees.
- Sow biennials such as foxgloves, sweet william, wallflowers and forget-me-nots.
- Sow late summer and winter crops such as cabbages, carrots, cauliflowers and lettuces.

Know your onions

It's time to harvest your onions when the tops turn brown and flop over. On a sunny morning, gently lift the bulbs, ensuring the stems stay intact. Lay them out in the sun to dry out, then move them to a garage or shed to cure. When the skin turns papery and the roots become brittle, they are ready.



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HEDGING YOUR BETS

Have you ever thought about planting a wildlife hedge in your garden? There are many reasons why a hedge would be a great asset. Not only would it provide essential forage for wildlife, but it can also bring beauty and abundant harvest your way. Intrigued? Read on...

Words: Sarah at The Garden Creative



Many of us choose fences as boundaries to our gardens: they are generally cost-effective and keep our pets from roaming. We think of hedgerows as taking a long time to reach maturity, often being too large for the spaces we have, and more like something we see in the countryside bordering fields.

Maybe it's time to rethink hedges and see if you can make space for one of these important habitats.

Hedgerows provide everything wildlife needs to thrive, from a safe nesting place to a diverse

food source for mammals and insects.

Healthy hedges also mean healthy people, as they protect us against pollution and improve the look and feel of our outdoor spaces, creating shelter from the wind and reducing noise levels.

It doesn't matter if you already have fences in place, as a hedge can be planted in front of them. If space is minimal, it can be kept trimmed so it doesn't extend too far and it doesn't have to be long: just a metre or two of mixed native hedge is going to have a huge impact on the wildlife visiting your garden.

WHAT IS A WILDLIFE HEDGE?

A hedge is simply a row of shrubs and small trees planted closely to form a boundary or screen. By keeping it trimmed (avoid nesting times) the framework of the plants becomes dense, creating the perfect safe place for small birds to roost and nest, especially sparrows, wrens and robins.

Choosing native deciduous shrubs like hawthorn, blackthorn and wild rose provides nectar for insects, and berries for birds and mammals. The hedge can provide shelter and nesting space for hedgehogs, shrews, mice and voles.

Grasses, weeds and wildflowers which grow at the base will also provide space for frogs, toads, newts and lizards, and much-needed nectar early in the year for bees and other pollinators. Primroses, for example, will grow at the base of hedges as will dog violets, snowdrops, red campion, garlic mustard and knapweed.

The insects the hedge attracts provides food for many mammals including the pipistrelle bat.

WHAT'S MY HEDGE FOR?

To attract the most wildlife it's better to have a diverse hedge, so rather than have a hedge made from just one plant, use five or six different plants.

There are options depending on what you want to get from your hedge. If you love making your own jams or flavoured gin, then include blackthorn (for sloes), damson, crab apple and blackberry.

If you want to create a screen that is more evergreen to hide something unsightly or to create privacy all year round, then think about mixing holly, ivy, yew and wild privet.

If nuts are your thing, include cobnuts and hazel and, if you fancy foraging, why not choose elder and dog rose for your very own elderflowers and rosehips?

For a flowering hedge, try a combination of 'Paul's Scarlet' hawthorn, blackthorn, cherry plum, elder 'Black Lace', and *rosa rugosa*.

After two or three years, add climbers to sprawl about like wild honeysuckle or clematis (these will reduce the vigour of the hedge if planted when the hedge is just establishing).

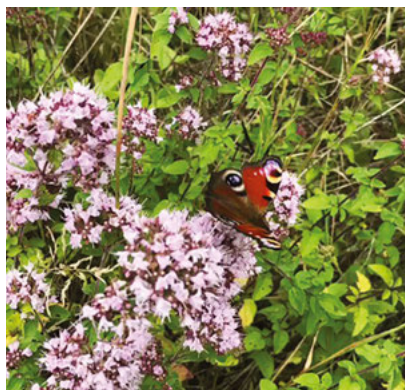
If you have a very windy garden or a busy road outside, consider planting a hedge as a shelter belt or to reduce traffic noise. Dense evergreen plants like holly and yew are good for this.

PLANTING A HEDGE

Planting your hedge is very easy. When you have identified the area you'd like to use, clear weeds, grass or existing plants and dig down about the depth of a spade to loosen the soil. If the soil is very dense or hard, mix in some fresh compost or topsoil so that you can backfill the holes easily.

Hedging plants can be purchased at any time of year. During the winter they are available as bare roots. This means that when you buy your plants, they won't have any soil around the roots or be in a pot. They are dormant at this stage. This is the cheapest way to buy deciduous hedging. You can choose the height that you'd like your bare root plants to be. The taller they get, the bushier they get too, and cost more so consider your budget and how quickly you want to wait for the hedge to grow. Most plants will grow about 30cm a year, some much more than this, like elder.

You will need three to five individual plants per metre length of hedge you are planting. This



can be in a straight line or a staggered row, which ultimately creates a deeper hedge, so three plants behind and two in front in the gaps. Mix up the different species you are using and continue with your mix like this, repeating your plants for the length you desire.

You can use canes and protective tubes if the plants are tall and need support or if you know you have rabbits, or pets that might try and chew the new plants.

Water along the row thoroughly and if you can, mulch around the new plants with some compost, straw, cardboard or rotted woodchip to help suppress weeds and retain moisture around the roots.

Keep your hedge watered several times a week (not so necessary in winter as the plants are dormant but keep an eye on them and increase watering in spring) and clear weeds from underneath for the first two years to allow the plants their best shot at establishing without competition. After this, plant under the hedge and add climbers if desired.

If you are planting at any other time of year, the plants will be potted and the advice is the same except watering will be more essential as the plants are actively growing. This also applies to an evergreen hedge.

WHERE TO PLANT MY HEDGE?

A hedge can be used in many ways in the garden. It doesn't have to go at the end or around the edges. It can be a beautiful green or flowering screen to divide different sections of the garden. It can create privacy for dining or sunbathing, edge boundaries between lawns and vegetable gardens, or create a centrepiece by circling a birdbath, sculpture or large urn. A hedge can hide an unsightly fence or wall and, if you have space, you could even use a hedge to create a maze!

CUTTING A HEDGE

Some considerations have to be given when cutting. As we know, the hedge has to be pruned in order to keep the framework dense and provide a safe space for birds and mammals and to stop it from becoming too large. But there will be times when cutting will be detrimental to wildlife, for example during nesting times, so the best time to prune your hedge is in winter. If it is necessary at another time, check for nests and think about using hand shears rather than noisy machinery.

If you want to get the most out of the flowers in the hedge, and indeed the fruit, then don't prune too often, maybe every two years, and always in winter to allow the flowers to turn to fruit.

Allow the hedge at least 5cm of new growth each year rather than cutting back to the same place. You can allow some plants to grow into small trees that extend above the height of the rest of the hedge. This can look very attractive and provide taller perches and cover for birds and squirrels.

Leave leaf litter at the bottom of the hedge to provide shelter for insects and spiders. When foraging from the hedge for yourself, remember to take only what you need and leave plenty for birds and squirrels.

WHERE TO BUY YOUR MIXED NATIVE HEDGE:

habitataid.co.uk

woodlandtrust.org.uk

Locally: Edible Culture, Faversham

As a garden designer, I often design hedges into gardens as they are a very easy way to create a beautiful screen and provide essential habitats for our wildlife that is so under threat right now from habitat destruction and negative human intervention. By giving nature a safe home in our gardens, we can be part of nature conservation.

If you would like to talk to me about a wildlife garden or creating a beautiful outdoor space, call 07725 055701 or email sarah@thegardencreative.com



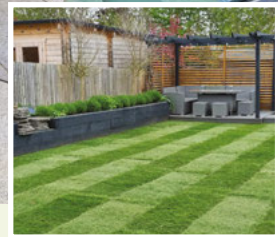
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While we have made significant strides in integrating sustainable practices into our operations, we recognise that there is still a long path ahead for us as a small independent company. As we prepare for expansion into new territories, our primary focus lies in minimising our environmental impact.

To be candid, transitioning as a small company while utilising our own resources presents numerous challenges. Balancing the various facets of our organisation and allocating budgets to fuel growth in different departments, all while maintaining financial stability, requires meticulous management.

As a 31-year-old with two young boys, my personal dedication moving forward is to spearhead a greener mindset. Prior to having my own children and working at our family business, sustainability was not at the forefront of my thoughts. However, I have since become incredibly passionate about it. Collaborating with a diverse array of creative individuals and embracing a belief in leading a healthier lifestyle, I firmly assert that our planet deserves to thrive in an organic state.

From the ecosystems teeming within our soil to the food we cultivate and the materials employed in the construction industry, change is imperative before it becomes too late. Witnessing



Photo: Karen McClure Garden Design & Beetlestone

the immense talent and dedication of the professionals we collaborate with has inspired me profoundly. Once I become engaged with a cause, an all-consuming passion takes hold, and I give my utmost to it.

In the coming years, as our show garden concept and business continue to evolve, we are actively seeking partners who share our enthusiasm and values.

Together, we can transform and inspire an industry that stands on the brink of championing a healthier, greener lifestyle for all. If you have an interest in gardens, I invite you to visit our stunning display in Paddock Wood, featuring 15 awe-inspiring show gardens. Furthermore, if you would like to learn more about our expansion plans and investment

opportunities within our business, please feel free to contact me directly at oliver@corker.co.uk. Alternatively, you can pay us a visit off the A228 near Paddock Wood.

Join us in our mission to create a sustainable future, where nature and human ingenuity harmoniously coexist. Together, we can make a lasting difference.



Photo: Paul Woods Landscaping

CONTAINER GARDENING

CONTAINER GARDENING IS POPULAR BECAUSE IT IS A GREAT WAY TO BEAUTIFY YOUR LIVING SPACE AND GROW FRESH FRUITS, VEGGIES AND HERBS FOR YOUR KITCHEN.



Dobbies.com





Unlike a large, stationary garden, container gardening is mobile and versatile. You can move your containers from place to place to brighten any setting. You can set your containers on ledges or pedestals and make good use of hanging baskets. Tomatoes and strawberries are examples of edible, beautiful plants that do very well in trailing hanging baskets.

If you are planning on creating a serious garden, it is better to go with larger containers. They take a bit more work to set up, but they take much less work in terms of care. If you have multiple, small containers you will find yourself watering almost constantly in hot weather because they dry out far too quickly.

With large containers, you can plant densely and create natural ground cover (filler plants) to help prevent evaporation of precious water. Additionally, your chores such as fertilising and harvesting will be easier with one large container (or a few) than with multiple small

CONTAINER GARDENING TIPS

There are a few things to be aware of if you're growing in containers.

- Choose pots that have drainage at the bottom to prevent roots from becoming waterlogged.
- Water will evaporate out of pots more quickly than in soil, so be prepared to water your plants more often.
- Consider the weight of your container and where you intend to put it; heavier pots will need a strong, solid surface to support them.
- Avoid using garden soil in containers. It won't drain well enough. Use a peat free multi-purpose compost.
- Raise the pot off the ground on bricks or pot feet to ensure water drains out easily.
- Water containers thoroughly morning or evening. Twice daily watering may be needed in the height of summer.
- Give all plants a dilute liquid feed every week from June to September.

containers. Plants are also more likely to grow successfully in large containers than in small ones.

Remember that plants in containers will need more water than plants in the ground. The relatively small amount of planting mix means water is limited to begin with and will evaporate more quickly. Pay close attention to the weather, and keep the size of the pot and the needs of the plant in mind. Never let your containers become completely dry as your plants will suffer, and it is difficult to rehydrate them once this happens.

Adding a layer of mulch to your containers will help the soil retain moisture. It also gives your container garden a nice, uniform appearance. When you mulch, don't allow the mulch to pile up around plant stems. This contributes to root rot.

Redwoodstone.com



WHAT PLANTS TO CHOOSE

Almost any plants are good for container gardening ideas. The secret is to choose the right size pots for your plant. For example, trees and shrubs need more room for their root growth and larger planters are ideal. It's a great chance to grow plants that might not enjoy your garden soil conditions because you can alter the compost that you use in each planter.

There is no set recipe of what you can include in your containers. The world of plants is at your disposal, so indulge your inner flower power and plant for drama, scent and vibrancy.

If you prefer the softer look, then the tapestry effect is a good aim. Or if you want to boost your summer menus, then plant herbs, salads and even tumbling tomatoes, strawberries and chilli peppers for vegetable garden container ideas.



WHAT CONTAINER TO CHOOSE

Terracotta – These heavy plant pots are great if you plan on leaving them outdoors during the colder months. The thickness of the material keeps the contents well insulated, protecting the roots from most of the negative effects of frost.

Glazed ceramic – These durable containers are one of the best choices for adding a bit of flair, colour, and style to your container garden and have insulating properties similar to terracotta pots.

Plastic – The most affordable option, plastic plant pots come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colours to suit all tastes. Lightweight containers, such as these, are easy to move and some are frost-resistant, meaning that they can be left outdoors during the winter. Just keep in mind that, even though they are frost-resistant, they can still crack if they face a particularly cold winter.

Wooden containers – Usually made from a cut-in-half barrel. The downside is that the difficulty of moving them around increases as they age.

Concrete – The heaviest and most durable type of containers, these are only suitable if they are kept in the same place all year round.

Stone troughs – Brilliant for alpine plants and ferns. Raise them up on bricks to give them the most impact. They will last forever, but just remember they are extremely heavy.

Wicker baskets – These look great filled with all manner of plants, but to make them last longer it's best to use them as 'cache pots' (outer covers) otherwise they will rot.

Polystone – A relatively new and long-lasting material, made from a mix of ground-up stone and recycled plastic. Available in many styles and shapes and good value too.



Above: Coxandcox.co.uk Below: Getty Images





Choose a material that suits your style and the place where you are going to place your containers. Although it might be boring to stick to one style, avoid the temptation to mix too many different styles as it can produce a scrappy, mis-matched effect.

Lastly, the shape of the container is also important. Some containers are prone to tipping over as plants grow and become top-heavy, especially in windy areas (think balconies and roof gardens). Generally, the wider the base, the more stable a container will be. Square, rectangular, and cylindrical containers are the most stable options, while the traditional inverted cone-shaped containers are the least stable.

POSITIONING CONTAINERS

Take care when choosing a spot for your containers. Most plants like good light, but if your spot is shady then choose plants that will

thrive in low light levels, such as hostas and ferns. Sites exposed to wind will dry out quickly and will be prone to damage.

All in all, container gardening is probably the best way of refreshing your garden without the need for major upheavals.



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How to get the most from your Rose beds
Roses like a feed and do not like too much root competition. Leave a minimum of 50cm from the base of your roses and your companion plant to make sure they do not take all the goodness away from your roses.

ROSE CARE

We recommend mulching your roses and feeding them early in the season March too early April. Feed with Rootgrow rose feed and water in well around the base of the rose. By deadheading you will ensure your roses will bloom all summer long. To deadhead snip the rose stem close to the main stem ensuring you do not cut the main stem as you snip.

PERFECT PARTNERS

Companion planting can be used to extend the rose season so that there is texture and



colour for months on end. Use summer plants that flower at the same time such as Phlox, Geranium, Delphinium, Nepeta and Penstemon.

ROSE RANGE

Our Rose range includes Harkness and Chelsea award winning David Austin roses, all with beautiful colours and scents, as ramblers, climber's, shrubs, and patio roses.

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GORGEOUS garden buildings

How about a gorgeous garden building to give you extra space without the fuss?



Summer house, B&Q

Sometimes, as our family grows or our circumstances change, we find ourselves needing more space. However when we've found a property we love, we're loath to move and, when that property is a period home, an extension is generally out of the question. So what's the solution?

SHEDS

To most people, an 'outdoor building' means a shed, but this word conjures up images of tiny wooden structures full of rusty garden tools and empty flowerpots! However, rather than just a flat pack wooden affair with a leaky roof, sheds can be a practical and attractive way of expanding the space available to you. Wooden

sheds are still the most popular option, but these days you can get a bespoke, high-quality one that looks simply amazing, with rustic aesthetics or even bright colours. Far from being a 'dumping ground' for garden rubbish, sheds can, if properly insulated, be great for storing all manner of things for which you may not have room in your cupboards or attic.

Alternatively, a shed can make an excellent playhouse, especially if you opt for one that mimics a Swiss chalet or Tudor house. If your shed is of sturdy construction then you can ask your electrician to run power to it, giving you the option to add light and heating, thus making it a year-round play area for the kids. Make it as fun as possible by adding homely touches such as bean bag chairs and brightly coloured accessories. You can even paint one wall with chalkboard paint or set up an oversized easel to

give your little ones the chance to get creative without risking your own furnishings!

SUMMERHOUSES

If you're looking for something a little more grown-up, then how about building a summerhouse? This is often reminiscent of a detached conservatory, utilising large windows and skylights to flood the building with sunshine during daylight hours. Again, with the addition of light and heat, you can turn it into a summer and winter house, giving you extra space for entertaining or simply a change of scene when home life gets a little hectic. Sadly, for some people summerhouses do become little more than storage areas, so make a point of keeping yours clutter-free and relaxing, utilising storage solutions such as under-seat cupboards, wall cabinets and ottomans if you need extra room.



Even if you don't intend to use your summerhouse in the colder months, it's still important to make sure it's of sufficient quality to resist weather damage and mould. Make sure you check on its condition periodically when it's not in use and make the most of it by storing your garden furniture and furnishings inside.

OUTDOOR OFFICES

A building of more solid construction, such as brick, concrete or good quality hardwood, can have a multitude of uses outside the traditional confines of the garden building. With many more people opting to work from home since lockdown, the outdoor office is becoming increasingly popular. Allowing small businesses to create an area away from the demands of family life, yet still on 'familiar ground', outdoor offices are the perfect solution for those at-home workers who require a little peace and quiet.

However, just because it's an 'office' that doesn't mean it needs to look unappealing. Wouldn't you love to set up your craft venture or computer hub in a beautiful log cabin? The design options are positively endless, and a good design company will be able to create an



Above: johnsonsgardenbuildings.co.uk

Below: greenretreats.co.uk

outdoor building that functions as an office, but looks like a fairytale!

One particularly important thing to note if building an outdoor office is that you will almost certainly be storing computer



equipment and other supplies inside. This means that security is a priority, and you should speak to a reputable alarm specialist and insurer prior to moving your business outside.

GYMS

Another excellent way to utilise your garden space is to build your own personal gym. For many people the thought of travelling to a gym, finding someone to look after the kids and having to work out alongside people they don't know can be intimidating or prohibitive. A home gym can be the answer. A few carefully-chosen pieces of equipment can allow you to get fit in comfort without having to build a gym the same size as your house! Add to this the fact that close proximity to your home is likely to increase your motivation, and you may be on to a workout winner.

Again, there are several points to remember before embarking on a project like this: like home offices, home gyms will need to be adequately secured and insured. They will also need to be very well built to cope with the

demands of heavy gym equipment and fairly high-power electricity consumption. Also, it's important that you have some sessions at a professional gym or hire a personal trainer, to ensure that your workouts are both safe and appropriate for your fitness levels and goals.

EVERYTHING ELSE

If you think that an outdoor addition would benefit you, then speak to a professional architect and/or builder about your requirements, options, and any limitations you might face with regards to space or legislation on your period home. Make sure that the size or type of your build, as well as its intended purpose, don't contravene any local regulations or require planning permission (a professional company will be able to advise on this). From recording studios to games rooms, and traditional garages to woodworking shops, garden buildings offer an endless range of options for people wanting to add space or facilities to their homes without impinging on the existing architecture.



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Graham Clarke

GRAHAM IS KNOWN FOR HIS WONDERFULLY DETAILED,
OFTEN HUMOROUS ARCH-TOPPED LIMITED-EDITION ETCHINGS,
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Graham's pictures depict his love of the Kent countryside, boats and the sea, Cornwall, travel to Europe and beyond, comic misinterpretations of history, Shakespeare and much more besides. He sold his first work to a neighbour at the age of eight and at this point his career as an artist began. He set about celebrating the beauty of rural life and went on to learn the process of copperplate etching. His work won him recognition from the foremost art patron of the day, Sir Kenneth Clark. In 1973 he came to public attention when 'Dance by the Light of the Moon' featured in the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition. His work is now held in many collections and museums but what pleases him most is that it is enjoyed on the walls of homes all over the world. The most frequent comment being, 'We've had this on our wall for years and we still keep finding something new to enjoy'.

There's a vast collection to be found in his studio gallery in Boughton Monchelsea, alongside lots of the paraphernalia used to produce copperplate etchings. It's an entertaining glimpse into the world of Graham and his work of several decades and has to be seen to be believed. The studio is open by appointment and frequent open days are held, dates below.

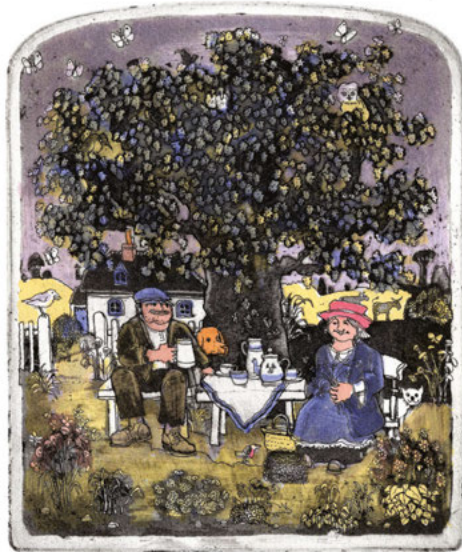
Graham is sometimes around to have a chat, though he's slowed up a little these days. His family will welcome you and are happy to talk you through the intricate process of copperplate printing and the many entertaining tales behind the vast collection of etchings. You'll also find watercolours, books, posters, greetings cards and plenty to make you smile.

Up the Garden Studio
Meadow View Road, Boughton Monchelsea,
Nr Maidstone, ME17 4LF 07801 922081
hello@grahamclarke.co.uk





Open day dates: June 16th, 17th and 18th; July 21st, 22nd and 23rd;
August 25th, 26th and 27th September 15th, 16th and 17th.



Graham Clarke



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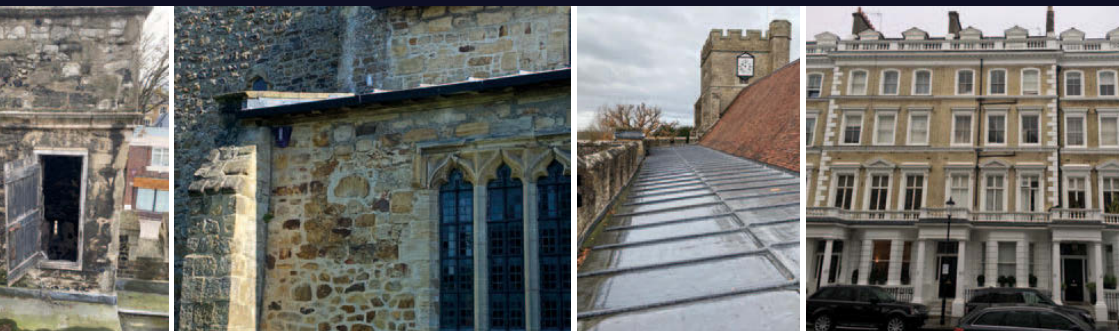
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A minimalist dining room scene featuring a light-colored wooden table and chairs. A large, rustic ceramic vase filled with dried yellow flowers sits on the table. Two clear glasses are also on the table. A wooden bench with a woven seat is visible on the left. The background is a plain wall with a large black square artwork.

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YOUR UNIQUE HOME

They say an Englishman's home is his castle, and we certainly do take great pride in our properties. A period home is a big investment, and when you're proud of where you live you undoubtedly want it to look its best.



It can be difficult to create a home that is exactly to your tastes when there is comparatively little choice with regards to décor. The trend for low cost, mass produced products is such that it can be hard work making your home stand out from the crowd and capturing your unique personality.

Luckily, thanks to a booming artisan trade in the UK, it's becoming easier and easier to access beautiful, well made, bespoke goods.

Furniture

Tailor made furniture is high on the list for any period home owner, as wonky walls and unusual

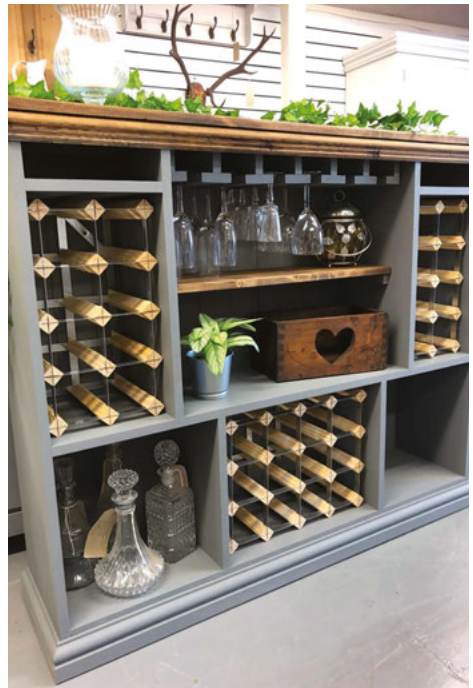
design quirks mean that 'flat pack' furniture is often entirely inappropriate for the space.

A quick search of your local business directory or social media groups will turn up a plethora of craftspeople who specialise in creating tailor made furniture that not only fits the dimensions of your home, but also the aesthetic. It's heart-breaking to put so much love into your Tudor home only to find that you're having to force in ultra-modern, factory made furniture below those beautiful wooden beams. Imagine instead that you can engage the services of a local craftsman with the specialist knowledge required to make a piece of furniture that functions like a modern piece, but is authentically reproduced to suit the period.

This is similarly the case with specialist carpenters, welders and more. These incredible men and women can provide you with fixtures that blend seamlessly into the original features, and cupboards that fit your space down to the centimetre so that you get the absolute most from the space available.



Bespoke cushion: Coach House Interiors



Bespoke furniture: Chic Unique



Debbie Fairbrass

Interior design

Perhaps your period home is in need of a spruce up? With specialist paints, wallpapers and soft furnishings, your home can look better than it did when it was built, whether you're after a Gorgeous Georgian feel, a Riotously Regency look or a Veritably Victorian aesthetic! With some companies you can even design your own wallpaper, curtains and more, to incorporate your own style without losing that period appeal.

Functional pieces

The bespoke ideal extends beyond the 'big' additions, to smaller functional pieces. Think mirrors made using reverse carved mouldings to create scrolls crests and swags reminiscent of 18th century décor, or ceramic vases made with mid-century techniques for a Clarice Cliff feel that is still uniquely you.

Pottery in particular is a wonderful thing for those admirers of all things bespoke. Using authentic throwing techniques and glazes, an



Oliver Manning

experienced potter could make a dinner set that's period in feel, but exactly matches your chosen colour scheme. The ceramicist's realm is far reaching: lamps, water features, even door knobs can be made to your exact instructions, making every inch of your home a tribute to your own personal style.

Art

Of course one thing that many people automatically associate with craftsmanship is non-functional art and decorative pieces, and here the possibilities really are endless. A painting, drawing or sculpture of your loved one, pet or the home itself makes the ideal gift (or simple a 'present from me to me!'), while a piece of wall art that has special significance will ensure a unique air in any home.

Perhaps a tribute to your childhood or the place you met your spouse? Art made from wood or other materials discarded during home improvement so that you never lose those original features? Or even a collage of favourite



Oliver Manning

photos, rather than sticking to individual frames? If you can imagine it, the chances are a local artist can create it, so don't hold back!

Wearables

And what about clothes or jewellery? With clothing in particular, 'off the peg' can be a bind. We're all different shapes and sizes, and finding clothing that's comfortable isn't as easy as it's cracked up to be. However, a good tailor will make you an outfit that will fit you perfectly and you can guarantee that no one else will be wearing it!

Jewellery is something that can be extremely significant: from wedding rings to christening bracelets, your jewellery should be worth treasuring.

We all know that engraving names and dates on jewellery is an option but did you realise that the entire piece can be made from scratch? Artists will be able to melt down old jewellery that you don't wear and make something unique for you. Thanks to materials such as the wonderfully versatile 'silver clay' you can even replicate fingerprints, signatures and drawings on tiny, delicate items.

Why bespoke?

We've already discussed the benefits of bespoke from a personal point of view: tailor made items can fit your home, your body and your style to perfection.

However, one very important aspect of purchasing bespoke products is the effect it has on the economy. The artists and craftspeople who create these incredible pieces are generally

smaller, local businesses. These could be your neighbours or your local high street shops.

These are real people who have a real impact on your local economy so supporting them is a 'win-win'

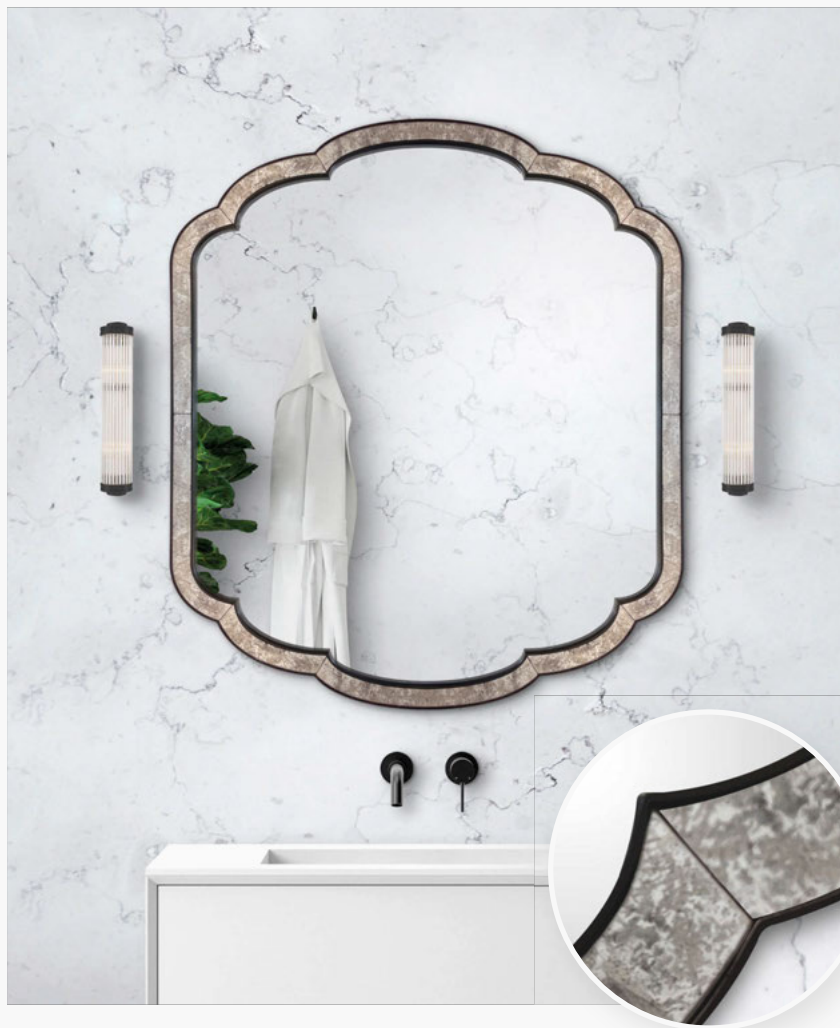
For all these reasons and more, it really does make sense to buy bespoke.



Joel Tarr

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TIMELESS TEXTILES

Marina Mill is a Kent-based, family business that specialises in designing and producing exclusive furnishing fabrics.

Following a Fine Art education and several years working with Zika Ascher, Keith Rawkins and his wife, Stephanie, set up their business in 1967 to design textiles for the fashion boutiques of Swinging London. They began by hand-printing fabrics from a basement flat in Fulham and were soon supplying many famed fashion couturiers of the day. A few specially designed commissions for private residences and boutique hotels in the mid-1970s gradually changed the focus from fashion to interiors.

Keith and Steph were joined by their son, Guy, and their daughter, Tandine, in the late 1980s, by which time they were developing their own ranges of exclusive hand-printed furnishing fabrics.

Marina Mill relocated to the current premises in the early 1990s; an old Victorian mill on the banks of the River Medway in Kent. This move coincided with lucrative projects to design and produce fine interior fabrics for production

motoryachts and thereafter to the most prestigious superyachts.

DESIGN ARCHIVE

Marina Mill have been creating bespoke textiles for nearly 50 years and have a vast archive of print designs available. Hundreds of designs exist on screen, stored in their onsite Victorian sheds, along with thousands of sketches, drawings and finished ideas on the shelves of our extensive library.

Using all these sources, they regularly collaborate with clients on projects, to produce precisely the right fabric for their collection or scheme.

All the fabrics are conceived, designed and hand drawn by them in their studio at the Mill. They produce every stage of the design process from the sketch to the draft film to the final colouration.

The studio cupboards are full of printed samples on various fine basecloths, offered





as inspiration and examples of their finely executed design work and highest quality hand-printing. Good design is of paramount importance to Marina Mill and all their fabrics are conceived, designed and hand-drawn by them in our studio at the mill.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

All the artwork is done by hand. A skilled hand-drawing has a unique quality, unmatched by computer generated or digitally produced work.

The design process begins with freehand sketches and hand-painted ideas on paper, which are then developed into repeating patterns. Reference books are often utilised if a specific style is required or we may refer to antique documents for historical replication projects.

The colour balance is a crucial part of the creative process at this stage. Multi-coloured patterns require careful calculation and visual consideration.

COLOUR SEPARATIONS

Once pattern repeats are worked out, colour separations are traced off by hand from the original design onto draft film, using pen and ink. When the full-width films are completed, they are used to engrave the design onto the 'silk' screen, via a basic photographic process.

COLOURING UP

Now the fun starts! Once the screens are made, the sampling process can begin. Print colours can be selected from the extensive standard range, along with basecloths from the natural, pure finish collection of linens, silks and cottons. Samples are then printed for customers' approval.

CUSTOM COLOURS

If a specific print colour is required to coordinate with a client's scheme, Marina Mill's expert colour mixers can create one. They can match to anything, from a cashmere sweater to a carpet tuft!



any given sample by eye, thus enabling infinite colour combinations. Only harmless water-based pigments are used in the print colours, to protect the local environment.

HAND-PRINT PROCESS

Marina Mill's printed fabrics make up the core of the business and are all printed entirely by hand in their old Victorian mill on the banks of the River Medway in Kent. Here, they have four 25 metre long tables and print using the traditional silk screen method; no machinery or automation is involved in the print process whatsoever. They have a highly skilled team that has been extensively trained in all aspects of hand-printing, colour mixing and screen-making to become experts in their field.

COLOUR MIXING BY EYE

The company's expert colour mixers blend various pure pigments with binders to match

CALIBRATING

The selected basecloth is pulled taut and pinned down by hand onto one or more of the padded print tables. Then the screen repeat of the chosen design is measured out and secured along the length of the steel edge rail using metal peg markers.

APPLYING THE COLOUR

The first screen is placed in position on top of the basecloth at one end of the table then the pre-mixed colour is poured into the screen by the lead printer. The application is made by this printer using a squeegee to push the colour across the screen (through the image engraved in the mesh) to the printer opposite.



The screen is then lifted and relocated in its next position along the table and the squeegee passed across again. This process is repeated until the whole length of fabric is printed with this first colour.

WASHING THE SCREEN

After each screen has been printed, the remaining colour is collected for re-use and that screen is carefully washed with water in a hosing bay. The pigments used are water-based and therefore environmentally friendly so can be safely washed away.

DRYING TIME

After each colour is laid down, the fabric is dried by highly efficient, overhead, infra-red heaters.

COMPLETION

When the printing is finished and dried, the fabric is unpinned by hand, cut to the desired length, rolled up and removed from the table for the final process.

CURING

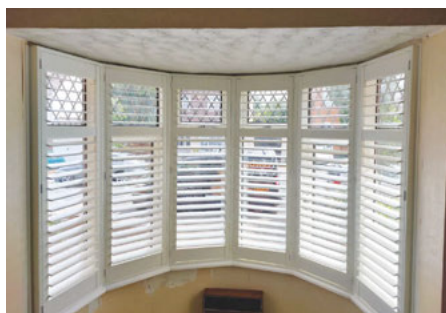
The printed fabric is then slowly fed through a baking tunnel on a conveyor belt. This is set at a specific high temperature, which heat-fixes the print to the basecloth.

READY FOR DESPATCH

The roll of fabric is then passed through a final inspection and packaged for despatch.

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Trend alert

HERITAGE INSPIRED WALLPAPERS



Wallsauce.com has a wide range of beautiful wallpapers for every room and style. Their stunning array of collections are ideal to complement a vast range of interiors. Not only are these wallpaper murals made to your wall dimensions so that waste is minimal, but the peel-and-stick material is also recyclable.

ADD A CLASSIC TWIST WITH PANEL-INSPIRED WALLPAPER

The modern take on the classic heritage style sees traditional elements such as panelling paired with contemporary accents to create a wonderful blend of 'old meets new'.

To create a classic heritage dining room, adorn your walls with this stunning Beige

Wood Panels wall mural and accessorise with a chunky wood dining table and white and muted gold accents. If you're looking to add a touch of old-world charm and splendour to your space, you can explore the full range of panel inspired wallpaper Wallsauce.com has to offer.

TAKE ON TARTAN FOR YOUR HERITAGE STYLE ROOM

Born out of the combination of classic designs mixed with traditional elements, heritage inspired décor is easy to replicate with the right

mix of rich colours, contemporary furniture and soft tones. A wonderful way to incorporate this style into your home is with a tartan inspired wallpaper mural.

Wallsauce.com boast a vast range of beautiful heritage style wallpapers, one we particularly love is this beautiful Grey Tartan design. This wallpaper pairs perfectly with rich, wooden furniture and an exposed wooden floor. Add in your contemporary elements through a modern style chair and a rattan rug for a beautiful contrast of modern and classic.





DON'T SHY AWAY FROM PATTERNED WALLPAPERS

Rich colour palettes and patterned wallpapers are essential when it comes to creating heritage style décor. This stunning tile-inspired wallpaper is perfect for those who are not fans of plain beige and cream walls and prefer to inject personality into their rooms.

The muted blue and orange tones are designed perfectly to match beautiful natural wood furniture, such as a set of drawers,

flooring and other accessories such as storage baskets. Natural wood furniture is the first step when it comes to creating a gorgeous heritage style due to its exposed material and warm hue.

OVERSIZED FLORALS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

The Heritage style uses muted, understated tones to create a warm atmosphere. A vintage inspired design, such as this Tulip Pattern wallpaper mural from Wallsauce.com, is the



perfect choice when it comes to choosing a patterned wallpaper for your room.

Combine the muted floral greens with an exposed wooden floor and dark wooden, contemporary furniture – such as a bench, coffee table or chest of drawers, depending on your chosen room. Lay down a cream or beige rug to add a hint of cosiness to your space, now

you have a beautiful heritage style room.

All of these stunning heritage style wallpaper murals from Wallsauce.com are made-to-measure and printed using environmentally friendly inks. Choose from three materials including peel and stick, paste the wall or classic premium. To discover more beautiful designs, head over to [wallsauce.com](https://www.wallsauce.com).

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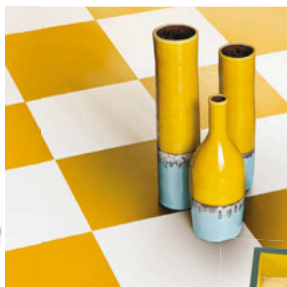
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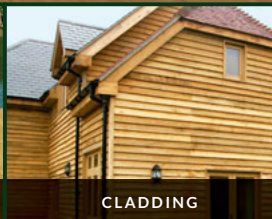
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FANLIGHTS

A FANLIGHT IS A DECORATIVE WINDOW FEATURE THAT CAN BE FOUND ABOVE DOORS, WINDOWS AND OTHER ARCHITECTURAL OPENINGS.

The fanlight is closely associated with the style of the Adam Brothers who translated the Venetian or Palladian window most precisely into the door form by emphasising the arch over the door and taking away any pediments. In addition they included lintel-to-floor-side-lights, which allowed the fanlight to be far larger, and become the principal feature of the doorway.

Fanlights can be quite intricately designed, with muntins made of lead or wood, separating the panes into sunburst or other patterns that appear to spread like a fan outwards.

What is a fanlight in interior design?

It usually consists of a semi-circular window frame with radiating glass sections that make it look like an open fan. Fanlights add a unique visual appeal to any interior design space by allowing light to enter the room while also providing a sculptural element.

What is a fanlight used for?

In historic homes, fanlights were often used to draw in light and air

circulation while still keeping the home secure. This made them an important practical feature as well as a decorative one. Today, fanlights are primarily used for aesthetic purposes and can be found in many different styles, sizes and materials to match any interior design style.

Fanlights can be used to create a unique focal point in any interior space, or they can serve as part of a larger window installation. They are also often used to create symmetry between two rooms, such as opening up each side of an entryway with identical fanlights. In modern homes, fanlights may be combined with other windows to create an airy, open feel.

Fanlights are a great way to add style and charm to any interior design space. They



allow natural light to enter the room while creating a beautiful sculptural element that adds texture and character.

Why is it called a fanlight?

The name fanlight comes from the radiating glass sections that make it look like an open fan. This design element has been part of interior design for centuries and is a great way to add character and style to any space.



What is fanlight in construction?

A fanlight is a window that is set above a door or other architectural opening. It usually consists of a semi-circular frame with radiating glass sections to create an open fan shape. These windows are used for both decorative and practical purposes, as they allow natural light in while also providing security from intruders.

Fanlights are often found in old homes. They were used to provide fresh air and light without making the home less secure. Today, fanlights come in many different styles and materials. They can be a great way to add character to any room's design.

Fanlight window designs

They can range from simple and traditional to more modern and intricate. They can also be used in combination

with other windows or as a stand-alone feature. Whether used as an accent piece or part of a larger window installation, fanlights offer a beautiful way to bring natural light into any interior space.





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PASSION FOR THE PAST



London Road, Canterbury

The world of heritage conservation and historic buildings is a fascinating landscape that is peopled with characters that appear to have something in common, a passion for the past. They seem to share a love of social history and how the people who previously inhabited the structures they are involved with leave traces and clues that tell us something of the lives they have lived, allowing intriguing

glimpses that tell us stories of times gone by.

One such individual who has been captivated by these alluring snapshots into bygone eras is structural engineer, Simon Goddard. We're taking a brief look at his role as a structural engineer in the historic buildings and restorations industry, how key events have inspired and influenced him in his choice of career, and by identifying some of his notable projects over the last couple of decades. Simon



Oasts Heart's Delight

has had long lasting relationships with many period properties and their owners in the south-east over many years, he is now the MD of BSF Consulting Engineers in Canterbury, with a hefty thirty years plus experience in the construction industry. He now heads up the company's heritage conservation sector leading the team on Civil and Structural projects for both commercial and private clients, whilst

working in partnership with James Clague Architects in Canterbury. He believes it is vital that our valuable heritage and historic buildings environment should be protected, by delivering sympathetic restoration outcomes that combine modern and ancient techniques, along with paying attention to reducing BSF's carbon footprint and promoting 'greener' work ethics.

Prior to qualifying as an engineer, he owned his own restoration and project management business, where he was heavily involved with restoring some of Kent's most historic buildings. But what was it that led him to follow this career path? It's an interesting tale in itself and takes us back to events that happened in 1975 when Simon was a boy growing up in Kent.

His family was living in the Yews in Denton, a 16th Century cottage that was previously



Perry Farm rear view with restored tile patterns



Perry Farm room with reclaimed timbers

an inn. Whilst carrying out renovations they pulled up the old 'lino' that was covering the kitchen floor and discovered a cellar door. The cellar housed two stables, in the corner of the cellar they also found a door behind which was a chalk tunnel that on further investigation led to nearby Denton Court. It was believed that the purpose of the tunnel was to secretly bring contraband goods through to the inn. The stable was to keep the smugglers' ponies in during the illegal operations, if there was a risk of discovery, the perpetrators could exit by the cellar, take their ponies out via the tunnel and come out at Denton Court, to make their getaway.

Exciting stuff indeed and just the sort of evidence of their house's colourful past and the history of the area they lived in that can fire the imagination of an inquisitive young chap. Further explorations of a small fireplace

in the house revealed a previously hidden huge inglenook fireplace, with a secret door in one side, behind which was a priest hole. Left behind by one occupant were the remnants of a shoe and leather bag.

From that point on Simon was fascinated by old buildings and the tales they tell, it's no surprise that as he grew up this interest led him into working on the fabric of those historic buildings, as his interest spread to learning about how they were built, the materials and methods that were used to construct them so many years ago, and how to help preserve them sympathetically, by the using authentic methods. In 1992 he was asked to help renovate the Grade II Listed Rectory at Denton, whilst stripping the roof they found an area of loft that was concealed by plaster, hidden in this space was a strange collection of objects: a bone toothbrush, a tube of fishbone



Restored barn at Heart's Delight

toothpaste, candles, matches, packets of Woodbine cigarettes and a faded envelope, inside was a letter from a soldier in Germany who had previously been billeted at the Rectory during the war. The letter was to the vicar's teenaged daughter. It was thought that, they were having a clandestine love affair and she had been secretly smoking whilst reading the letter from her soldier by candlelight, then using the toothpaste to clean her teeth. Another interesting insight into the lives of

people previously living in the Rectory, and further fuel to fire Simon's imagination and fascination with social history.

Shortly after this Simon and his wife formed their own building company with a small team that eventually morphed into a full-blown restoration company driven by the amount of period property owners who asked for solutions to problems with their buildings. It was interesting

and challenging work, he went to great lengths to match authentic materials from reclamation yards, using his love of history and his keen eye for details meant his team were very much in demand with some clients happily waiting 2 years for works to be carried out.

One of the properties that Simon has had a lasting relationship with is Tappington Hall, an Elizabethan mansion, which incidentally was where Thomas Ingoldsby supposedly lived, this was a pen name of a clergyman, Richard Harris



Tappington Hall



Tappington Hall showing many roof sections

Barham who wrote the 'Ingoldsby Legends'. This is a famous collection of myths, legends, ghost stories and poems, first published around 1840 that captured the public's imagination and has continued to be popular to this day. On and off over the last 30 years, Simon has been involved with the ongoing renovation, including a systematic painstaking removal and replacement of tiles and laths in different sections of the whole roof. A glance at the photo of the manor house with its numerous angled roof sections shows what a mammoth task the sympathetic restoration has been, wherever possible reusing the existing Kent peg tiles.

Another project Simon has been involved with is the beautiful, 17th century Perry Farmhouse. Previously owned by nuns from a convent in Brighton, who used it as a country

retreat in the mid 20th century. Unfortunately they had made a botched attempt to maintain the interior of the roof by using expanding foam, which resulted in the destruction of the oak timbers. Simon sourced authentic period timbers, which dated back to the 17th century from a reclamation yard. The photo shows the stunning results of the restoration of one of the rooms after renovation, half of the timbers are reclaimed. Work was carried out on the exterior of Perry Farmhouse too. The dark tiles on the rear roof were originally in patterns, but over many years they had been moved around and replaced. They were removed and set aside and then reinstated with the pattern just as it would have been when the house was built.

The distinguished Victorian double fronted property in London Road, Canterbury was



Denton Court

another project Simon was instrumental in renovating. Built in 1869, the house boasts many fine decorative features typical of houses of this period. Sadly many of the beautiful scalloped tiles were broken along with some of the ridge tiles. Efforts to find suitable replacements meant searching every salvage and reclamation yard in Kent, with exact replicas having to be made of some of them to achieve the results you can see in the photo.

There are many more examples of Simon's dedication to his work and the lengths he and his team have gone to, to help period property owners achieve the most authentic and sympathetic restorations, too numerous to mention, but let's salute him and recognise the debt we owe to him and all the people who strive for this level of excellence in the

work they do to safeguard our heritage. We'll finish with a brief mention of this project at Heart's Delight in Kent. The oast house and farm were owned by a retired farmer, whose request was to have them restored but wanted them to still look old. One particular long, low barn's walls had splayed apart, when they were pulled upright it made its quaint old tiled roof look much straighter and removed the charming undulations that time had created. By cutting the rafters to different lengths the old appearance was recreated, the result was a happy owner and a demonstration of Simon Goddard's commitment and enduring passion for the past.

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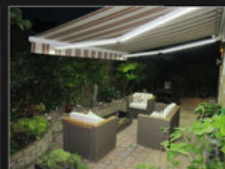
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Errol House, Canterbury

Errol House is an exceptional Grade II Listed property. This important house has been the subject of a major restoration by the current owners who have brought it back to life. Much historical research has been undertaken to “understand” the house and its origins, and the results of this research have informed and enabled the restoration. Great care and consideration have been taken in allowing the house to reflect its many different ages. A detailed history of the property has been made by Canterbury Archaeological Trust, a copy of which is available from the agents on request. Unlike many modern day restoration

projects, the owners have painstakingly sourced paints, wallpapers and fittings that enhance and reflect the original features creating a home of historical integrity, elegance and charm.

The impressive reception hall, with flagstone flooring and turned staircase, leads to the ground floor reception rooms. There is a comfortable panelled parlour with a wood-burning stove, a formal high ceilinged dining room with French doors opening to the garden and a glorious drawing room, with ornate ceiling plasterwork and full-height sash windows. The panelled walls depict various hand painted native flowers. Whilst some of the paintings are Victorian,





believed to be by Sidney Cooper, the vendors have commissioned further matching paintings by a local artist to replace those lost in the last century.

To the rear is the kitchen/breakfast room, which is very much the heart of the house and was created by incorporating a former 17th century laundry into the space. The kitchen is stylishly presented and includes an Aga. Secondary “servant” stairs lead to the first floor.

An elegant and easy rising Georgian staircase with the stairwell dominated by a large round headed window, flooding the area with light, leads to the first floor. A short set of steps leads to the beautiful, tall-ceilinged library. Two double bedrooms sit at the front of the house, both individually styled. The principal bedroom is at the rear and adjoins the unique family bathroom, which is home to a wonderful Victorian shower bath – splendid in its originality and style from the 1851 Great Exhibition.

On the second floor there are two double bedrooms, a dressing room and a further bathroom. A large attic bedroom with an en suite shower room is reached by a further short flight of stairs. With exposed beams and woodwork, this is an ideal teenage space.

The garden wraps around the house on two sides. Principally laid to Yorkstone paving there is an area of lawn adjacent to the drawing room. With high brick walls on all sides, it is beautifully secluded and offers high levels of privacy.

With the wall adding protection, the garden has somewhat of a micro climate. Old fashioned climbing roses festoon the walls and clever planting gives the outside space a feeling of tranquillity and calm. Rising flagstone steps reach a large oak door providing access to Adelaide Place. A door from the garden leads into the coach house.



The details

Reception hall | Drawing room | Parlour
| Dining room | Kitchen/breakfast room
| Scullery (comprising laundry and
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(1 with en suite shower room) | Dressing
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CHERRIES

WITH ITS GENTLE CLIMATE, RICH SOILS AND BOUNTIFUL COASTAL WATERS, KENT IS A LAND OF PLENTY WHEN IT COMES TO FOOD AND DRINK. *APPLES, CHERRIES, HOPS, KENT'S FOOD AND DRINK* BY LOCAL AUTHOR NAOMI DICKINS WILL APPEAL TO ALL THOSE WITH AN INTEREST IN THE COUNTY'S HISTORY AND ITS CULINARY HERITAGE.

Prunus avium (the name translates as 'bird cherry') is also known by the names 'Wild Cherry', 'Sweet cherry', 'Gean' and 'Mazzard'. Confusingly, there is another species that we actually call the 'Bird Cherry' (*Prunus padus*), which has bitter-tasting fruits that are just too astringent for human consumption, but the birds aren't quite as fussy as we are.

Cyrre in Anglo-Saxon and cerasum in Latin, Kerasous, Turkey, is where it was believed cherries first found their way into Europe. In fact, the fruit is indigenous to most of the continent and it has been a common food source since prehistory. The popularity of cherries as a culinary delight is easily traced through documented history.

We know that Kent cherries were prized by the Archbishop of Canterbury from at least the 1300s and there is evidence that they commanded good prices at market during the medieval period, but it seems that, in addition, they have long held value for their health-giving qualities. Culpeper writes about the differing properties of the diverse varieties of cherry commonly found in the British Isles but is most impressed by the usefulness of cherry tree sap, which he recommends for almost any

ailment from a sore throat to kidney stones! Perhaps Culpeper was rather fulsome in his praise of this pretty little fruit but it appears that his hyperbole might have been founded in fact: researchers are only just beginning to record its potent health benefits and have found that the anthocyanins it contains (like other red and purple coloured fruits such as dark-skinned grapes, red apples and blueberries) have powerful anti-inflammatory properties; these compounds also work to reduce levels of uric acid in the blood stream, thereby lessening symptoms of gout, and it is possible that they might even relieve pain and stiffness associated with osteoarthritis. No wonder the people of Kent are such a hale and hearty folk!

Whether you like your cherries blush, black or red, fresh, cooked or juiced, there are hundreds of written recipes for cherry dishes and the cherry has long been enormously popular as a culinary ingredient. Some recipes, like one given in the fourteenth-century *Forme of Cury*, compiled by the 'master cooks of King Richard II', are surprising and might not appeal to the modern palate; this dish of almonds and cherries, cooked and served with 'good bread', and 'flourished' with anise, includes the ground cherry stones among its ingredients (they





Photos above and below: Michael Dallaway (rentacherrytree.co.uk)

impart an intense almond-like flavour). Others are expensive: in his 1596 *The Good Huswife's Jewell*, Thomas Dawson offers us a 'close tarte of cherries' that features exotic cinnamon, ginger, rosewater and muscadine syrup in its list of ingredients. But it was a very simple bowl of fresh Kent cherries, ripe and flavoursome, that prompted Henry VIII to dub this county the 'Garden of England'.

When William Lambarde made his perambulation of the county in 1570, he was struck by its fecundity and wrote: 'In fertile and fruitfull woodes and trees, this country is most floryshing ... as for orchards of aples, and gardeins of cherries, and those of the most delicious and exquisite kindes that can be, no part of the realme (that I know) hath them, either in such quantitie and number, or with such arte and industrie, set and planted.'

By this time, Richard Harris' mother orchards at Teynham, planted for Henry VIII some thirty

years before, were well established and would have presented Lambarde with a stunning spectacle. Today, the descendants of those first, bountiful saplings are a staple feature of the Kent countryside, dappling the landscape with their April blossoms and dazzling with their July fruits. The cherry has become so much a part of the identity of the area around those original plantings that, in 1949, the

emblem of a fruiting cherry tree and the motto 'known by their fruits' were incorporated into the Sittingbourne and Milton coat of arms; the same motto and the symbol of five red cherries were incorporated into the Swale crest in 1977. Harris' arboricultural adventure was a runaway success but the level of skill and care necessary for his achievement should not be underestimated as 'the cherry is a notoriously difficult crop to grow.

A simple bowl of fresh Kent cherries was what prompted Henry VIII to dub the county the 'Garden of England'. (Photograph Pippa





Every litre of Michael Dallaway's pure cherry juice is produced from approximately 3kg of fresh fruit.

Photo: Michael Dallaway (rentacherrytree.co.uk)

Palmar) the cherry varieties grown commercially today were cultivated at Kent's East Malling Research Station, which was originally established in 1913 for the purposes of studying fruit production. The unique combination of Kent's soils and munificent microclimate might favour the cherry's prosperity, but care must be taken to plant compatible varieties which are likely to cross pollinate efficiently, and a sensible cherry grower will plant varieties that come into season in succession so as to avoid the waste of a cherry glut.

'Loveliest of trees, the cherry now Is hung with bloom along the bough, And stands about the woodland ride Wearing white for Eastertide.'

One person who knows better than most the joys and hazards of cherry farming is Michael Dallaway. At his three Kent orchards in Sandhurst (and the one just across the county border in Northiam), Michael produces a

unique, completely pure, fresh cherry juice, made with approximately 3 kg of cherries per litre... and nothing else.

His orchards are stocked with six different, good-flavoured varieties, ensuring a good spread of cropping across the season, and the farm's produce is sold at farmers' markets and farm shops across Kent, London and the south-east. When Michael's late father introduced the cherries to the family business in the 1980s, he was seen to be taking a risky gamble but, luckily, it was a gamble that paid off and twenty years later, when the time came to make a decision about renewing the farm's ageing apple orchard, Michael took the plunge and replaced those trees with cherries as well. As he says, 'we could always sell what we grew ten times again each year, so it seemed to make sense!'

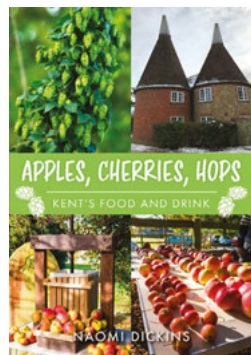
As well as selling fresh fruit and the farm's unique cherry juice, the Dallaways have introduced two 'Kentish Tipples': a cherry brandy and a cherry vodka, both of which are flavoured with the smooth, rich warmth of their summer orchard fruits. Another diversification project was the launch of their innovative 'Rent-a-Cherry-Tree' sponsorship scheme whereby individuals can 'lease' a tree on an annual basis; members of the scheme receive regular updates about their tree's development throughout the year and are invited to enjoy the orchards across the seasons, from a walk among the spring blossoms to the gathering of their tree's crop in high summer. The scheme has been popular with people looking to enjoy local, seasonal fruit at its best and Michael says that many of their members bring along both older and younger family members to learn about and enjoy the cherries at picking time.

As Kent has been at the very heart of cherry

production for centuries, it is little wonder that so many varieties have been named for places or people of the county; the Bradbourne Black and Kentish Reds, the Wye Morello and Rodmersham Seedling all boast proudly of their provenance but perhaps the 'true' Kentish cherry could be considered to be Napoleon (or Naps), a blush, Bigarreau type cherry which, to our forebears, would have been a familiar feature of the landscape. Alongside the cherry trees would have been the equally familiar cherry pickers' ladders, hugely elongated versions of their domestic cousins, wide-splayed at the bottom for stability and built to reach into the canopies of trees that grew to well over 70 feet. Movement of these essential pieces of any cherry grower's equipment took careful planning and considerable manpower, and the risk to pickers of falling was the stuff of today's health and safety officers' nightmares! Modern cherry varieties are grown on dwarfing root

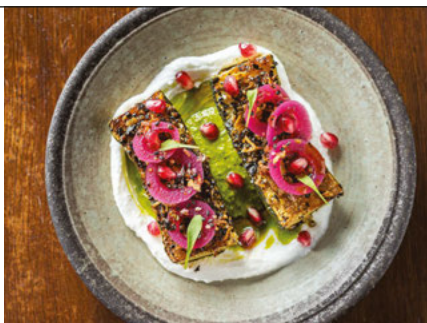
stocks, such as Gisela 5 or Colt, and their height is further limited to ensure maximum fruit production and ease of harvesting, sometimes by pruning out the growing shoot or by tying branches down to encourage strong lateral growth (where the fruits will form). This sort of orchard management is labour intensive, and it can take five years to create a well-shaped and productive tree, but trees managed in this way are far more economical of space and nutrition and, ultimately, they produce more usable fruit.

*Excerpt from
Apples, Cherries,
Hops: Kent's Food
and Drink by
Naomi Dickins
(Amberley
Publishing)*



Modern cherries are grown on dwarfing stock, which makes routine maintenance and harvesting far more manageable. Photo: Michael Dallaway (rentacherrytree.co.uk)

The Stile Bridge



Ancestral flavours forged in fire

Fiery Latino flavours light up the Kentish countryside at the Stile Bridge. South American chef Oscar Fonesca takes British produce on holiday, from Colombia to India to Japan, cooking on an open fire and seasoning with charcoal.

Story-telling is at the heart of what we do. People, cultures and culinary traditions unite in our kitchen, bringing new layers to seasonal British produce - with fire as the binding force we create dishes that embody culinary excellence!

Food served: Mon & Tue: Closed
Wed - Sat 12.00-14.30 / 18.00 - 21.00
Sun 12.00 - 16.00

Staplehurst Rd, Tonbridge TN12 9BH
01622 831236 | www.thestilebridge.com

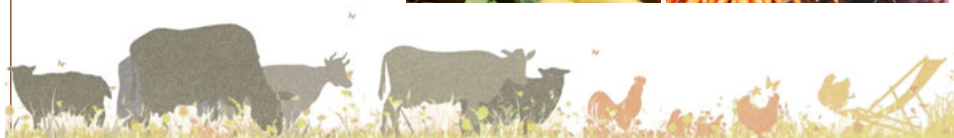
Bull green farm

QUALITY FARM PRODUCE

Bull Green,
Bethersden TN26 3LB
Tel: 01233 822463
Email: Shop@BullGreenFarm.co.uk

We are a family-run farm rearing Dexter cows, sheep and chickens. We believe animals should be able to roam free in the fields and enjoy fresh air and green grass.

We have a nicely stocked shop with fresh eggs daily, home grown veg, and a variety of local products such as Kentish honey, jams, and occasionally freshly baked cakes. We also have a freezer packed with locally made pies and tasty treats.



THE PEPPERBOX INN

Country pub and restaurant, in the heart of Kent



Windmill Hill, Harrietsham, Kent ME17 1LP
www.thepepperboxinn.co.uk | Tel: 01622 842558





The Royal Oak in Hawkhurst is a cosy and inviting space that showcases the best of British cuisine made with love and care. We are located in a peaceful and scenic area, perfect for those who want to escape the hustle and bustle of city life.

The menu features classic dishes made with locally sourced ingredients, highlighting the flavours and freshness of the region. The restaurant's commitment to supporting local businesses is evident in every dish, from the tender meat sourced from nearby farms to the seasonal vegetables grown in the surrounding countryside.

The decor is warm and rustic, with wooden tables and chairs, exposed brick walls, and soft lighting that creates a welcoming ambiance. Whether you're visiting for business or pleasure, our hotel is the perfect choice for those who want to experience the beauty and charm of the countryside while enjoying all the comforts of home. Plus we're dog friendly.

Our private dining and events space is perfect for that special occasion or celebration. We even hold a series of our own events from comedy night (July 7th), a weekly quiz on Sundays and our famous Smugglers Day this year on August 4th.

Royal Oak Rye Road, Hawkhurst, Cranbrook TN18 4EP
01580 755782 www.royaloakhawkhurst.com



This dish has many variations and can be served like a sandwich with creamy fresh spinach or cheese in the middle, or with roasted peppers or meats on the side for antipasti.

SUNSHINE DAYS



Discover a region in Southern Italy which offers the most tantalizing food, through 75 authentic recipes, cooked with care and attention and using the best ingredients.

Ursula Ferrigno's own family comes from the south of Italy, and just south of Naples is the Amalfi Coast. It is widely considered to be one of Italy's most magical locations: breathtaking (literally) winding cliff-top roads, pastel-coloured houses tumbling down towards the sea, flower-framed terraces, and trees heavy with the world's most coveted lemons at every turn.

SERVES
4

YOU WILL NEED

2 large old potatoes
75g freshly grated
Parmesan cheese
1 egg
25g plain flour
a little milk for mixing
4 tablespoons olive oil
sea salt and freshly
ground black pepper
fresh flat-leaf parsley,
chopped

MINI PARMESAN PANCAKES

METHOD

Peel, then grate the potatoes into a bowl.

Add the cheese, egg, flour, salt and pepper and enough milk to form a thick batter that is of dropping consistency. Leave to stand for 15 minutes.

In a large frying pan, heat the oil then drop in tablespoons of the mixture (you will need to cook the pancakes in batches).

Fry for 7 minutes until golden brown on one side, turn and fry the second side until golden.

Lower the heat and cook for a further 1-2 minutes. Drain on paper towels.

Serve hot, garnished with parsley

SERVES
6

CAPRI CAKE

YOU WILL NEED

200g unsalted butter,
plus extra for greasing

250g golden caster
sugar

5 large eggs, separated

250g dark chocolate,
70% cocoa solids,
melted

250g almonds, toasted
until golden brown
and finely chopped

grated zest of 1 large
unwaxed lemon

sifted icing sugar, for
dusting

23cm round cake tin

METHOD

Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6. Grease and line the cake tin with baking paper.

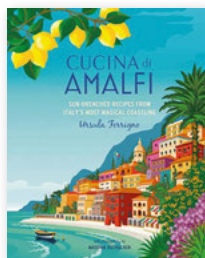
Place the butter in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water. Add the sugar and mix to a creamy consistency. Add the egg yolks, mix together, then add the melted chocolate and almonds.

Whisk the egg whites in a separate bowl until they form soft peaks. Add the grated lemon zest and egg whites to the chocolate mixture and carefully fold in a clockwise direction until completely combined.

Turn the mixture into the prepared cake tin and bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes. The cake will still have a little wobble when it comes out of the oven.

Cool on a wire rack and dust with icing sugar when cold.

Note: I like to serve this cake with either lemon or almond gelato, or just mascarpone, to which a little vanilla and lemon juice have been added.

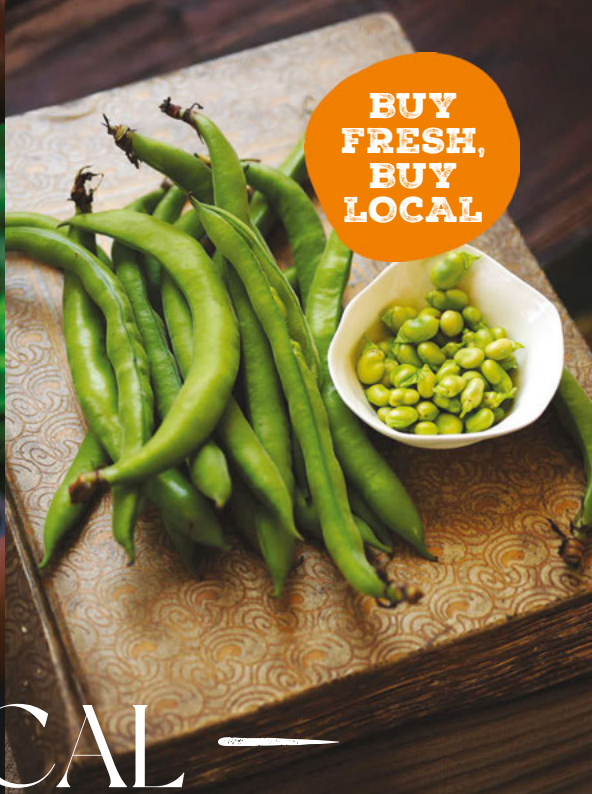


*Recipes take from Cucina Amalfi
by Ursula Ferrigno, published by
Ryland Peters & Small.*

*Photographs by
Nassima Rothacker.*



This recipe originates from the beautiful island of Capri. It was originally a mistake by the chef who left out the flour and has subsequently become tremendously famous. As with everything please use the freshest of ingredients. This cake is always extremely well received on my cooking classes. I truly hope you will enjoy it too.



— LOCAL — Farmers' markets



Support your local farmers' market

For more information and to find out what's in season visit www.kfma.org.uk.

JUNE

THURSDAY: 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th Hastings; Rolvenden; Shipbourne

FRIDAY: 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th Tenterden

SATURDAY: 3rd Chatham; Deal; Gravesend; Groombridge; Penshurst; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Westerham Valley; Wye

SUNDAY: 4th Bearsted; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Tunbridge Wells; Whitstable Castle

TUESDAY: 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th Capel-le-Ferne; Hildenborough

WEDNESDAY: 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th Rye

SATURDAY: 10th Bridge; Deal; Gravesend; Hythe; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Westerham; Whitstable

SUNDAY: 11th Elham; Herne Bay; Lenham; Tonbridge; Tunbridge Wells

SATURDAY: 17th Deal; Dover; Gravesend; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Wadhurst; Westerham; Wye

SUNDAY: 18th Aylesford; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Rochester; Staplehurst; Tunbridge Wells; Watlingtonbury

SATURDAY: 24th Bridge; Deal; Gravesend; Hythe; Knockholt; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Westerham; Whitstable; Whitstable Artisan

SUNDAY: 25th Cliftonville; Tunbridge Wells

JULY

SATURDAY: 1st Chatham; Deal; Gravesend; Groombridge; Penshurst; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Westerham; Wye

SUNDAY: 2nd Bearsted; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Tunbridge Wells; Whitstable Castle

TUESDAY 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th Capel-le-Ferne; Hildenborough

WEDNESDAY: 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th Rye

THURSDAY: 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th Hastings; Rolvenden; Shipbourne

FRIDAY: 7th, 14th & 28th Tenterden

SATURDAY: 8th Bridge; Deal; Gravesend; Hythe; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Westerham; Whitstable

SUNDAY: 9th Herne Bay; Lenham; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Tonbridge; Tunbridge Wells

SATURDAY: 15th Deal; Dover; Gravesend; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Wadhurst; Westerham; Wye

SUNDAY: 16th Aylesford; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Rochester; Staplehurst; Tunbridge Wells; Watlingtonbury

SATURDAY: 22nd Bridge; Deal; Gravesend; Hythe; Knockholt; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Westerham; Whitstable

SUNDAY: 23rd Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Tunbridge Wells

SATURDAY: 29th Deal; Gravesend; Sevenoaks; Westerham

AUGUST

TUESDAY: 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th Capel-le-Ferne; Hildenborough

WEDNESDAY: 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th Rye

THURSDAY: 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th Hastings; Rolvenden; Shipbourne

FRIDAY: 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th Tenterden

SATURDAY: 5th Chatham; Deal; Gravesend; Groombridge; Penshurst; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Westerham Valley; Wye

SUNDAY: 6th Bearsted; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Tunbridge Wells; Whitstable Castle

SATURDAY: 12th Bridge; Deal; Gravesend; Hythe; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Westerham; Whitstable

SUNDAY: 13th Herne Bay; Lenham; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Tonbridge; Tunbridge Wells

SATURDAY: 19th Deal; Dover; Gravesend; Sevenoaks; Tunbridge Wells; Wadhurst; Westerham; Wye

SUNDAY: 20th Aylesford; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Rochester; Staplehurst; Tunbridge Wells; Watlingtonbury

SATURDAY: 26th Bridge; Deal; Gravesend; Hythe; Knockholt; Reuthe's (Sevenoaks); Tunbridge Wells; Westerham; Whitstable; Whitstable Artisan

SUNDAY: 27th Cliftonville; Tunbridge Wells

Dine with us at **The Queen's Inn** this summer!

www.thequeensinnhawkhurst.co.uk

01580 754233



With a choice of fine dining dishes or homemade pizzas to share, our beautiful unique menu incorporates excellent local produce showcased perfectly by our AA award-winning chefs.

Enjoy an intimate dinner in our restaurant or enjoy a drink in the ambience of our cosy bar!

On the first floor, our hotel boasts 8 luxurious bedrooms with a choice of standard, family and deluxe rooms available.

Whether it is a special night away for two or a family getaway for four, we have rooms for all occasions...

...and don't forget our generous continental and cooked breakfast to look forward to in the morning!



Our outside area is perfect for a glass of wine or cold pint of local beer or why not try one of our hand crafted cocktails!

Our restaurant is open 7 days a week, offering both inside and al fresco dining during the warmer months. Call us now to make your booking or stop in and say hello!

We can't wait to see you!

The Queen's Inn, Rye Road, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4EY

ADDING MORE SPARKLE

The English wine industry is growing in popularity, with new vineyards, tastings and tours springing up almost every few months. It's no longer just a regional curiosity but a world-renowned product, especially when it comes to our sparkling wine.

Over the last 20 years or so, English sparkling wines have gained an international reputation with many winning prestigious international awards, including Gusbourne, Chapel Down, Simpsons and Ridgeview, to name just a few, with some sparkling wines being rated more highly than Champagne in blind tastings.

There are more than 400 wineries in England, mostly located in the south-east, including Nyetimber, Bolney, Denbies and Greysfriars. Even the French are getting in on the act, with Taittinger buying a plot of land near the Kent village of Chilham, the first Grand Marque Champagne house to do so in the UK with the first bottles due to be released later this year. Exciting times indeed!

*Differences between English
sparkling wine and Champagne*



Rowena Hawtin (DipWSET)
www.discoverthevine.co.uk

GRAPE VARIETIES

While many of the top English wine producers use the same three grape varieties as in Champagne for their top cuvees – Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Meunier – there are no specific rules to say they must use those or all three. Some use just Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

On the other hand, Champagne can only be made from these three varieties for it to be called Champagne (unless it's a Blanc de Noirs made from only the black grapes of Pinot Noir and/or Meunier, or a Blanc de Blancs made from Chardonnay).

Many English wineries make sparkling wine from other varieties: for example, Biddenden make theirs from a number of German grapes such as Reichensteiner, Scheurebe and Ortega, which are particularly suited to our cooler climate. These are all labelled sparkling wines regardless of the grape varieties, where the grapes are planted, or where the wine is produced.

In France, Champagne must come from the Champagne region to have that name whereas English sparkling wine can be made (in theory) anywhere in the country and be labelled as the producer requires.

SOIL AND CLIMATE

The French term 'terroir' means the environment in which the vines grow and mature – that is, the soil, climate, aspect of the vines and the height at which they are planted above sea level. All these factors have a bearing on how the grapes ripen and develop their flavour.





There are many similarities in the soil around the south-east of England and the Champagne area, as both regions consist mainly of chalk which not only absorbs rain but also provides good drainage. Although both areas have a cool climate (Champagne is slightly warmer) this is ideal for sparkling wine production because the grapes need to be high in acidity when picked, as they need to go through two fermentations in the winemaking process.

It is also worth noting that The Weald, the area between the North and South Downs, is slightly protected from the worst of the British cool winds and these south-east facing vineyards are in prime position to absorb the sun's rays. This is where many of our top English vineyards are located and one of the reasons why the sparkling wine that we make is so good!

METHOD OF PRODUCTION

Often called the Champagne method or the traditional method, English sparkling wine is made in exactly this way, with the second fermentation in the bottle as opposed to a tank.

After the grapes are harvested (usually by hand) they are pressed and the base wine is made. Grape varieties are usually fermented separately and then the all-important blending takes place. This is a highly skilled process, and the winemaker will carefully choose the proportion of each base wine for the final style desired. In Champagne, reserve wines from other vintages are often blended to achieve a house style, and this is an increasing practice in a number of English wineries, too.

The key difference between traditional method and the tank method, which is used for Prosecco production, is that the second fermentation takes place in the bottle. As a



bottle is smaller than a tank, the concentration of flavour is increased and when the second fermentation is finished the wine will lay on the 'lees' (dead yeast cells) for anything between nine months and five years or longer (known as autolysis). Lees ageing adds not only complexity but that characteristic bready, yeasty, brioche aroma which is present in most Champagne and in many of the top English sparkling wines as well.

The bottles then need to be inverted – a process known as 'riddling' which is done by a machine called a 'Gyropalette'. The dead yeast cells are frozen and expelled ('disgorgement').

The wine is then topped up to fill the space left by the dead cells and to adjust sugar levels ('dosage') and the wine is ready for sale.

CAN ENGLISH SPARKLING WINE COMPETE WITH THE PRESTIGE OF CHAMPAGNE?

For the Royal coronation many English wineries produced celebration bottles, with Camel Valley in Cornwall having been the first to receive a royal warrant in 2018 meaning they are an official supplier to the Royal family – prestige indeed!

Club World passengers on BA now have a selection of four new English wines to choose from: Digby Fine English Brut, Balfour Rose de Noirs, Simpsons Chalklands Cuvee Brut NV, and Wiston Estate Brut NV, as well as the established Hattingley Brut NV. This puts English sparkling wine on a par with Champagne in terms of choice and exposes it to many more people outside the UK who fly BA.

CONCLUSION

The most significant differences between the two are the fact that Champagne production has a longer history, beginning hundreds of years before English sparkling wine and although they taste similar, English wines are known for a fresh, apple-like crunchiness and slightly higher acidity than Champagne.

Ultimately it really depends on your personal preference, but either beverage works just fine for making a celebratory toast such as for the Royal coronation, ushering in a new year, or as a bubbly refreshment at your next social event.



THE POET

The Poet offers an informal yet refined dining experience in the heart of the Kent countryside.

Set in a charismatic 16th century building, diners can expect food of the highest standards, made using the finest local and seasonal produce and lovingly prepared by a small team of chefs led by Head Chef Lee Adams.

Opening times:

We are closed on Mondays

Lunch 12-14.00, dinner 1800 until 20.30

Tuesday through Saturday

Sundays open 12.00-16.00

Maidstone Road, Kent TN12 7JH

01892 722416

www.thepoetatmatfield.co.uk



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