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eat out

eat out
Best of the best
RESTAURANT

OUR SHINING STARS

AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS OF RESEARCH, TRAWLING THROUGH THE BURGEONING LIST OF GUIDES AND AWARDS FEATURING RESTAURANTS SEEN AS THE BEST ACROSS THE UK, EAT OUT HAS SELECTED ITS OWN ULTIMATE TOP 100.

EMMA PAGE CARRIED OUT THE RESEARCH

This is it – Eat Out has scored its own exclusive century. Our final selection of the country's best 100 restaurants is listed across the next 15 pages highlighting the sought-after venues and the finest food being served by the crème de la crème of chef brigades.

Up until the 1960s, eating out in Britain was never really regarded as a serious pastime and then, ironically, it was the two French Roux brothers who began the revolution over the next decade when dining establishments rightfully gained a name for their quality offerings.

This began in London, now competing with worldwide gastronomic centres such as Sydney in Australia and Chicago in the United States, but now all the UK's major cities have their own foodie following.

And our home-grown chefs now compete neck and neck with those coming to our shores from across the world, and the British Michelin star, once a rare commodity, has now been bestowed on dining outlets in the farthest reaches of our islands.

But it is not just Michelin that has been at the forefront of industry awards for many

years, as an ever widening range of organisations, publishers and associations have all created their own style of accolades, recognising the very best the country has to offer.

So these are the bodies that Eat Out has researched in a bid to find the venues that our readers consider worthy of recognition.

In our attempts to find the best, we have scoured the internet, thumbed through every restaurant guide, carried out our own canvassing, while also looking at regional and local newspapers, trade publications and any other body presenting awards to favourite restaurants.

These establishments were awarded one point for every accolade received in 2008/09 and we have taken into account any Michelin stars – seen as the peak achievement – whenever they were gained.

Heston Blumenthal's Fat Duck at Bray tops the list while last year's winner Restaurant Gordon Ramsay has dropped to seventh place with Tom Kitchin's The Kitchin in Edinburgh coming in at Number Two. Another rising star in the third place is Michael Wignall at the Latymer, Pennyhill Park Hotel & The Spa, Bagshot, Surrey.

2009 SOURCES SEARCHED

- Michelin Great Britain & Ireland
- Good Food Guide
- East Of England Tourism
- AA Restaurant Guide
- Zagat London Restaurants
- Square Meal
- Observer
- Decanter Magazine
- Leicestershire & Rutland Restaurant Awards
- Time Out London
- Remy Martin Awards
- Scottish Restaurant Awards
- The Independent
- Les Routiers
- Tastes of Anglia
- Taste of Kent
- Flavours of Herefordshire
- London Food & Drink Awards
- Taste of the West
- Craft Guild of Chefs Awards
- Caterer & Hotelkeeper Catey Awards
- Eat Sheffield
- Eat Out magazine
- Hardens Restaurant Guide
- Coventry/Warwickshire Food & Drink Awards
- Evening Standard Visit London Award



83 Brula Bistrot

43 Crown Road, St Margaret's, Twickenham, Middlesex TW1 3EJ

T: 0871 426 6022

Owner/operator/general manager:

Lawrence Hartley

Chef: Toby Williams

www.brula.co.uk

The regularly changing menu at Brula combines classic French dishes alongside lighter modern European influences. Sauté of lamb's tongue with French breakfast radishes, broad beans and salsa verde may be followed with Scotch onglet steak, chanterelles, persillade of snails, red wine sauce and pommes purée, rounded up with an apple and almond tart.

84 Alimentum

152-154 Hills Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB2 8PB

T: 0871 703 2686

Owner: John Huddell

Chef: David Williams

www.restaurantalimentum.co.uk

The team at Alimentum takes pride in its ethical practices. Local farms are visited to check animal welfare standards, as well as assessing the farms' policy on the use of antibiotics and their attitude to the use of GM-free wheat and soya in animal feed.



85 Bull Hotel

34 East Street, Bridport, Dorset DT6 3LF
T: 01308 422878

Owner/operator(s): Richard and Nikki Cooper

Chef: Marc Montgomery

www.thebullhotel.co.uk

This Scandinavian-styled bistro has a simple seafood-based menu serving moules frites, local Lyme-Bay scallops and Dorset lamb. Head chef Marc Montgomery runs a busy kitchen, baking all bread, cakes and scones in-house and crafting a daily menu that lets the quality of local produce shine.

86 The New Yard

Trelowarren, Mawgan, Cornwall TR12 6AF
T: 0871 223 9232

Chef: Greg Laskey

www.trelowarren.com

The New Yard's AA award of two rosettes recognises its locally focused approach to food.

Almost 90% of chef Greg Laskey's ingredients come from within a 10 mile radius such as clams from the Helford River; fish and shellfish caught by local day boats to ensure freshness; and game, herbs and fruit sourced from the Trelowarren Estate.

87 Café No 8

8 Gillygate, York YO31 7EQ

T: 01904 653074

Owner/operator(s): Chris Pragnell & Martin Gore

Chef: Chris Pragnell

General manager: Martin Gore

www.cafeno8.co.uk

A cheerful little café by day serving hearty breakfasts, sandwiches, soups and salads, Café No 8 transforms itself at night into an intimate neighbourhood bistro. Spicy meatballs, home-made fishcakes and succulent steaks vie for attention on an imaginative yet unpretentious menu, which endeavours to use quality fresh local ingredients wherever possible.

88 Yorke Arms

Ramsgill-in-Nidderdale, Pateley Bridge, North Yorkshire HG3 5RL

T: 0871 426 5926

Owner/operator(s): Bill and Frances Atkins

Chef: Frances Atkins

www.yorke-arms.co.uk

Frances Atkins' cooking is based on simple ideas and well-trying combinations, but still contrives to introduce new twists and original touches. Raw materials are typically first class, while presentation shows imagination and finesse. The venue grows its own ingredients while sourcing local fare. Signature dishes include Nidderdale lamb pie, beetroot sorbet and a beignet of Yorkshire blue cheese.

89 Equilibrium

Fawsley Hall, Fawsley, Daventry, Northamptonshire NN11 3BA

T: 0871 426 5005

Owner/operator: Simon Lowe

Chef: Nigel Godwin

www.fawsleyhall.com

Equilibrium has no external markings; it is discreet and intimate. New kitchen head Nigel Goodwin loves the high craft of

Spanish chefs Santi Santamaria and Andoni Luis. A typically elaborate signature dish is pigeon and it's tea and parfait apple.



90 The Hardwick

Old Raglan Road, Hardwick, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire NP7 9AA

T: 0871 426 6672

Owner/operator: Stephen Terry

Chefs: Stephen Terry & Leigh Allmond

www.thehardwick.co.uk

Stephen Terry has worked with Marco Pierre-White and Michel Roux junior, and developed a taste for the informality of gastro-pubs while working at the Walnut Tree. Terry's huge menu ranges from Welsh rarebit, through thinly sliced Middle White pork shoulder to roast boneless wing of skate.



91 Witchery by The Castle

Castlehill, The Royal Mile, Edinburgh EH1 2NF
T: 0871 426 4094

Owner/operator: James Thompson

Chef: Douglas Roberts

www.thewitchery.com

Located in an historic 16th-century building at the gates of Edinburgh Castle, James Thomson's Witchery is an atmospheric and spectacular dining destination. Thompson sources the best of Scotland's produce such as Angus beef, lamb, game and seafood, on a classic menu in a relaxed and unfluffy style. Local lobster and rock oysters regularly feature alongside Witchery classic dishes such as hot smoked salmon and Angus beef fillet.