

DESTINATION DISHES

Ready for your next epicurean adventure? From cheese toasties in a barn to Michelin-starred dim sum, these are the foods worth travelling around the UK for

Fitzbillies in Cambridge
– home of superbly soft
and sticky Chelsea buns



CHELSEA BUNS at Fitzbillies, Cambridge

Chelsea buns were the statement bake of the 18th century: legend has it that the day they first went on sale in west London, thousands of people queued. For more than 100 years, bakery Fitzbillies (whose fans include Stephen Fry) has rolled dough with spices and currants before slicing it into scrolls, baking and brushing with syrup. The laws of physics say the buns should fall apart in your hand, but they never do. Fitzbillies sells more than 4,000 a week from three sites, and we think they're best enjoyed sitting on the wall on King's Parade, listening to the tinkling of bicycle bells.

£3.90 each, or four for £12.

51-53 Trumpington Street,
Cambridge CB2 1RG; fitzbillies.com

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MUSHROOM PARFAIT at Fallow, London

Keen to put farmers' excess produce to good use, Will Murray and Jack Croft work with mushrooms that are blemished but otherwise perfect. Adding copious amounts of butter, shiitake and a reduction of shallots, port, Madeira, mirin and soy sauce, they finish their parfait with fresh lion's mane mushrooms grown in a tiny basement room in their central London restaurant. The result? A decadent and meaty – yet vegetarian – version of the dish that inspired it: the legendary chicken liver 'Meat Fruit' served at their former employer, Dinner by Heston Blumenthal. Bag a counter seat to watch the chefs pipe it onto the plate, ready to spread onto thick, grilled sourdough. Taste and be amazed.

£18. 52 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4RP; fallowrestaurant.com



SLIP SOLE IN SEAWEED BUTTER at The Sportsman, Seasalter

Long before it was fashionable, chef Stephen Harris was making his own butter from the fine Kentish cream produced in the fields inland from his seaside gastropub. Inspired by trips to Japan and Brittany, he set about creating his version of seaweed butter using local sea lettuce and gutweed (also known as mermaid's hair), each dried and then crumbled into his hand-churned butter. When he combined the results with the small Dover sole that's abundant in Kent, magic happened: he created a dish so good it drew visitors from all over the world, helping his unassuming pub win a Michelin star.

Unchanged since its creation more than 15 years ago, it's a permanent highlight of The Sportsman's five-course tasting menu.

Tasting menu, £80 per head. Faversham Road, Seasalter, Kent CT5 4BP; thesportsmanseasalter.co.uk »

WORDS LAURA PRICE

**'STEPHEN HARRIS MADE HIS OWN BUTTER
LONG BEFORE IT WAS FASHIONABLE'**





WORDS FAYE HARDY

FALAFEL POCKET at Pockets, London

There's only one thing on the menu at this east London food-truck-turned-railway-arch-restaurant – the signature (and vegan) falafel-filled pitta. The pillow-like pitta is stone-baked on site and hugs a kaleidoscope of fillings: herby falafel, silky houmous, cabbage slaw, sumac onions, a trio of sauces (pickled mango, parsley pesto and tahini), a whole roasted chilli and a crispy battered slice of potato. If there's a queue, join it – when you're in the mood to feast on a riot of flavours and textures with abandon, this is about as good as it gets. *£9 each. 367 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3RT; @pockets_UK*

CHEESE TOASTIE at Nettlebed Creamery, Henley-on-Thames

Rose Grimond uses organic milk from her family farm to make the cheeses that go into her famous toasties at The Cheese Shed, a covered outdoor space in a converted barn. There are no fancy flavour combinations – just grated Witheridge, a semi-hard cheese, and slices of washed-rind Highmoor. Head to The Shed Shop to buy cheese to take home, or try the No.1 Highmoor (£5.60/150g) – a semi-soft cheese with malt notes made by Nettlebed Creamery for Waitrose. *£6.50. High Street, Nettlebed, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire RG9 5DA; nettlebedcreamery.com*

WORDS LAURA PRICE



WORDS FAYE HARDY PHOTOGRAPH ALAMY

MILK ICE CREAM at Mary's Milk Bar, Edinburgh

Edinburgh may not scream ice cream, but it really ought to – and Mary's Milk Bar is the reason why. Nestled in the historic Grassmarket neighbourhood (home to so many Italian immigrants by the 20th century that it became known as Little Italy), this cool and colourful gelateria has Mary Hillard at the helm. A graduate of Bologna's prestigious Carpigiani Gelato University, she opened the doors back in 2013. The ever-changing flavours – think rose choc-chip or goat's cheese swirled with sweet fig jam – are all seasonally driven except for one innocently joyful flavour that is always there ready to be scooped up: the simple yet now iconic milk. Despite being made with just fresh milk, cream and sugar, it is a thing of rare beauty. For the cherry on top of the whole experience, perch on the patch of greenery opposite and gaze at achingly beautiful Edinburgh Castle. *£3.50 per scoop. 19 Grassmarket, Edinburgh EH1 2HS; marysmilkbar.com »*

'EDINBURGH MAY NOT SCREAM ICE CREAM, BUT IT REALLY OUGHT TO'



HONEY & BACON CRULLER at Pinch, Saxmundham

Down a hedge-lined country lane off the A12 in rural Suffolk, you'll find Maple Tree Farm, where there's a low-key café selling very good coffee and crispy, sugary, deep-fried treats that will have you in raptures. Crullers are essentially a choux pastry doughnut: a crunchy-edged, soft-middled showcase for the eggs and flour that are produced in the surrounding fields. The flavours change seasonally, but one unmissable stalwart will always be on the counter: the honey and bacon cruller. It's coated in a mellow unrefined-sugar glaze that's laced with fragrant honey (also from the farm) and very small, very crispy flecks of bacon. Every mouthful is a salt-and-sweet symphony.

£3.50 each. East Green, Kelsale, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 2PJ; eatpinch.com

FISH & CHIPS at The Magpie Café, Whitby

The blustery Yorkshire seaside town of Whitby is as famous for fish and chips as it is for its clifftop Gothic abbey, and there's no finer fryer than The Magpie Café. The Magpie's cod and haddock comes fresh from a local fisherman, so the impossibly crisp and bubbly batter – made using their own secret recipe and fried in beef fat – contains perfectly delicate flakes of piping-hot fish every time. The chips deliver the ideal ratio of crunchy edge bits and generous, squishy middles, while the house-made tartare sauce – all dill pickles, capers, lime and Henderson's Relish – is a zingy revelation.

Whitby has long been known for its associations with the supernatural, and the handsome, imposing building that houses the café is said to be haunted by a ghost named Albert. But if you're not keen to meet him, you could always get takeaway and eat it on the harbourside, where you'll be bothered by seagulls instead.

Regular fish and chips with tartare sauce, £15.95 (eat in). 14 Pier Road, Whitby, North Yorkshire YO21 3PU; magpiecafe.co.uk

WORDS ASHLEIGH ARNOTT



WORDS ANGELA HUI

MOO KROB at Singburi, London

Leytonstone in east London has three principal claims to fame: Alfred Hitchcock, David Beckham and Singburi. The cash-only, BYOB, family-run Thai restaurant has quietly built a mighty reputation for itself over the past two decades with its punchy and powerful small plates – it's been glowingly reviewed in the national press and is often booked solid months in advance. Those in the know stick to the weekly changing specials on the blackboard, of which the one permanent fixture is moo krob. Tender cubes of slow-cooked pork belly are thrice-fried until crispy, then generously garnished with Thai basil and chunks of chillies. It's the kind of special dish people have been known to order once, and then immediately order again to take away – it's that addictive.

£10. 593 High Rd, Leytonstone, London E11 4PA; @singburi_e11 »

**'THE SMALL
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WORDS HUGH THOMAS PHOTOGRAPH ED SCHOFIELD

SAUSAGE SANDWICHES at Owen's Sausages & Hams, Frome

In a past life, Owen Barratt was one half of Monty's Deli, the London street-food outfit famous for its smoked meats. Today, after moving to Frome in Somerset, he's the chef-proprietor of Owen's Sausages & Hams: one of a handful of Scandi-style sausage bars this side of the North Sea, which at the time of going to press was open only on Saturdays. Made entirely on the premises, the frankfurter-like sausages are the backbone of an ever-changing menu – one week, there might be a hot-smoked pork and beef sausage in a bun with mustard and pickles; on another, a hotdog topped with sausage ragù, pickled fennel and Parmesan. The sandwiches are a testament to the area's bounty: ingredients include Gothelney pork butchered by Owen, Meadowsweet Farm beef and Rye Bakery bread from Rye Bakery next door.

From £8.50. Station Approach, Frome, Somerset BA11 1RE; sausagesandhams.com

999-LAYER SCALLOP PUFF at A Wong, London

At its best, says Andrew Wong, dim sum is a testament to thousands of years of repetition and refinement. After taking over the family restaurant in Pimlico, he has overseen its meteoric rise; it's now the only two-Michelin-starred Chinese restaurant outside Asia. His signature 999-layer scallop puff (a nod to the dimensions of the Forbidden City) is a feat of precision engineering: a scallop filling cocooned in laminated pastry folded 36 times, each layer distinct without being brittle. Many dim-sum chefs let commercial lamination machines take the strain, but at A Wong, the scallop puffs are made by hand, with Andrew continuously tweaking the recipe to edge it ever closer to perfection. £6.50 each. 70 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1DE; awong.co.uk



WORDS EMMA HUGHES PHOTOGRAPH JAMES GILLIES