

TRAVEL

A foodie guide to the Cotswolds

Andrew and Jess D'Ambrosi of D'Ambrosi Fine Foods in Stow-on-the-Wold put the culinary highlights of the Cotswolds on the map

21 January 2022

The Cotswolds is expansive (nearly 800 square miles to be exact), and not the easiest to navigate when it comes to food. Many villages cater, almost exclusively, to tourists that visit year-round. Here are a few places we depend on as Stow-on-the-Wold locals to eat and shop.



The Lamb Inn in Shipton-Under-Wychwood Jonathan West

The best pubs in the Cotswolds

Pubs reign supreme in this part of the world and we have two favourites. The first is the recently opened [Lamb Inn](#) in Shipton-Under-Wychwood. Peter Creed and Tom Noest are serving up simple dishes with a focus on game. As Peter is contracted to manage a local deer population, much of the meat that is culled ends up on the menu, often (but certainly not exclusively) in pie form. A visit on a Sunday is always recommended for their perfect Bloody Marys, which are especially good in tandem with a tasty bone marrow flatbread. You can stay here too; their rooms are bright and comfortable.

Our other favourite is [The Woolpack Inn](#), which is as picturesque as it gets. Grab a pint at the bar and enjoy the view over the Slad Valley, or even better, sit outside in the summer and soak it up. This bucolic, atmospheric pub, which has remained mostly unchanged for a few hundred years, serves up rustic, delicious dishes from a menu that changes often. The last time we visited, we enjoyed oysters, raw shrimp, several seasonal veggie starters, kidneys on toast and some roasted meats – the lamb was particularly appreciated.



The Ox Barn at Thyme The Rollinson

The best restaurants in the Cotswolds

When we want to treat ourselves, we head to [The Ox Barn at Thyme](#). We like the lofty barn conversion with its gorgeous open kitchen, from which Charlie Hibbert serves up refined but uncomplicated food. On our first visit we swooned over a braised beef dish with anchovies and outrageously crunchy, tender roasted potatoes. Most of the vegetables that are featured on the menu are grown organically on the property, which also boasts a beautiful hotel and spa.

If you find yourself antiquing in Tetbury (and you should!), head a few miles down the road to [The Rectory Hotel](#) in Malmesbury for lunch or dinner. The menu is familiar but thoughtfully prepared. We especially enjoyed the starters and favourites include the crispy pig's head, the beetroot salad and a burrata number. This is one of the rare places in the area with a proper bar mixing very proper cocktails. Make sure to select the “glasshouse” when reserving. We've also heard good things about their nearby pub, [The Potting Shed](#).

It may not be a restaurant like the two mentioned above, but during the warmer months, it's worth a drive to [The Straw Kitchen](#) at Whichford Pottery for coffee and breakfast or brunch in their scenic garden full of flowers.



D'Ambrosi Fine Foods Jonathan West

Food shops to visit in the Cotswolds

Our own! We are an American husband and wife team (chef and interior designer respectively) and we opened [D'Ambrosi](#) in Stow-on-the-Wold two years ago. Our shop serves up superbly delicious prepared foods exclusively to take away, beautiful flowers, a selection of gourmet Mediterranean and American products and our signature hand poured candles in marble. Andrew, who helmed the kitchens of several acclaimed restaurants in NYC, brings a myriad of influences to the menu – southern fried chicken and crispy Chinese pork belly are complemented by irresistible seafood and vegetable dishes. While we make a great picnic, easy entertaining is where we shine with our alternative approach to catering and we can provide a brilliant menu for dinner parties and the like in the area.

At the [Upton Smokery](#) farm shop you will be greeted by a stunning array of fruits and vegetables, from Italian chicories, to juicy plums, giant artichokes and every colour and form of heirloom tomato when in season.

They have everything you're missing from your larder, a concise but perfect selection of cheeses, wines & spirits, their own house-smoked meats and fish, and an array of gourmet gifts.

[Jolly Nice](#) lives up to its name. This former petrol station has been completely transformed into a haven for food in a series of converted buildings and yurts, with a butcher, fishmonger, a wonderful selection of organic produce, cheeses & wines, as well as a pretty selection of plants and flowers. They also have a fun little drive through. If you're feeling peckish grab a pulled brisket sandwich (and lots of serviettes!) – delish.

If it's meat you're after, look no further than our neighbours at [Lambournes Butchers](#). They are old school; the physical shop has been a butcher for over a century and has remained mostly unchanged. It's a small family business that's all about traceability and provenance in their meats, and they get their supply from the best local farms. For those on a mission for a sausage roll or a pie in our neck of the woods, this is your place.

[Burford Garden Company](#) is not your typical garden centre, but rather a beautifully merchandised department store. Their canteen, set in a giant greenhouse, is a perfectly lovely place to stop for a light lunch whilst you're shopping for homewares, plants, garden tools or picking up some children's gifts in their amazing toyshop. They also have a selection of gourmet goodies, which are particularly abundant and alluring over the holidays with chocolates, sweets and designer panettone piled high.

Andrew and Jess run D'Ambrosi Fine Foods in Stow-on-the-Wold, a refined culinary concept that provides restaurant-quality food-to-go, as well as a curated selection of wines, liquors, homemade candles, and flowers. They are committed to using local, responsibly sourced, sustainable food to develop their exceptional dishes.

D'Ambrosi Fine Foods: dambrosi.co.uk

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