

DEVON FOOD HEROES

Peter Gorton & Adrian Oakes

THE IMPORTANCE OF locally produced food extends far beyond the quality of the produce we like to eat and drink. While there's no denying the attraction of cheap food, we are becoming increasingly aware of the damage to the environment that comes with industrial agricultural methods and the over-use of fertilisers and pesticides.

Flying in produce thousands of miles to stock our supermarket shelves may provide inexpensive out-of-season fruit and vegetables, but what about the real cost of this in terms of the effect it has on our fragile world?

In *Devon Food Heroes* the authors, a world-class chef and one of our most highly regarded photographers, set out to introduce the reader to some of the county's best producers who are committed to providing food of the highest quality using environmentally sound methods of production. While many of these look back to traditional practices in growing food, they are also embracing new technology and up-to-the-minute science in ensuring their product is healthy both to those who eat it and to the world in which we all live.

From bakers and beekeepers to ice cream makers and shellfish farmers, each offers an insight into how a better food future can be achieved through innovation, determination and an overwhelming desire to produce delicious food of the highest quality. And to help prove the point the book contains delicious recipes using ingredients from our *Devon Food Heroes* created specially for this book.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

PETER is an award winning Masterchef of Great Britain and one of Devon's finest chefs. He began his career in 1980 at the age of 16 and trained at some of the best restaurants in Great Britain and around the world. He then became the chef/proprietor of the Carved Angel restaurants and cafés in Exeter, Taunton and Dartmouth and The Horn of Plenty in Devon. Peter lives in Devon with his wife and two children, and has become one of the best known and well regarded chefs with years of Michelin star experience. Peter now runs his own restaurant in Tavistock, Gorton's. www.gortons-tavistock.co.uk

ADRIAN is a landscape and contemporary photographer based in Exmouth, Devon where he lives with his family. His clients include The Dartmoor National Park Authority, National Trust and many businesses and tourist attractions throughout Devon. Adrian also supplies galleries and retailers throughout the South West who sell prints, canvases and cards of his work. This collaboration with Peter is Adrian's sixth hardback book (his others include *Panoramic Dartmoor* and *Portrait of the English Riviera*) and has taken him in a new direction with his photography with its focus on people and food. www.adrianoakes.com

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DEVON FOOD HEROES



Left: South Devon Chilli Farm

Right: Picking goes on whatever the weather, Pebblebed Wines



Left: Dave and Marilyn Johnson, Norsworthy Farm Dairy Goats

Right: Victoria, Cranfield's Foods



SMARTS TALK

Tartlet case of Darts Farm vegetables on a tomato, ginger and lemongrass-flavoured sauce
Peter Gorton

Tomato, ginger and lemon grass sauce – serves 4

Ingredients
40 x olive oil
100 g garlic, finely chopped
400 x red onion, finely chopped
50 x finely chopped ginger
50 x finely chopped lemon grass
8 x large plum tomatoes, sliced and dried
100 ml x fish sauce
Salt & lime juice
A pinch of salt and pepper

Method for the sauce
Heat the oil and sauté the garlic, onion, ginger and lemon grass until soft. Add the tomatoes, fish sauce, lime juice and sugar. Simmer for ten minutes, season to taste. Add the chopped coriander leaves just before serving.

Method
Pre-heat the oven – 200° C/fan oven 180° C/gas 6/400° F
Place the squash and sweetcorn on to a baking tray with the oil and toss to coat. Bake in the oven until beginning to colour.

Divide the pastry into six equal portions and roll out to 14cm rounds, press into lightly oiled 12cm round individual tartlet tins, prick the bases with a fork and bake for eight to ten minutes until just beginning to colour.

Wick together the soft cream cheese, milk, egg and herbs. Season to taste. Place all the vegetables evenly in the tartlet cases, add the filling and bake for fifteen minutes until the filling is set.

Assembly
Place a good spoonful of the tomato and ginger lemongrass flavoured sauce on the centre of a dinner plate then place the tart on top and serve.

Chef's Tip
I like to serve coriander and basil oils with this dish, it adds a good flavour and makes the dish look attractive.

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Ingredients – serves 4
Homemade or 2 packet shortcrust pastry
A selection of Darts Farm seasonal vegetables
500g x butternut squash, peeled and cut into small dice
200g baby beetroot washed and halved and root removed plus a little oil
Basil oil
Basil oil
Basil oil
Cauliflower florets
Fresh garden peas
100g x soft cream cheese
2 x eggs
1 x olive garlic, crushed
Salt and pepper to taste
1 x tablespoon of mixed fresh herbs, chives, basil etc.

Method
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BASTERFIELD'S HONEY

History
IT WAS WHEN KEN BASTERFIELD was six years old that he was introduced to bees of school, and yet it was some twenty years later that the scar of a bee sting brought back those memories.

Overhearing a chance farm radio discussion of how to hive a swarm led to a re-awakening of that latent interest in beekeeping. A quick call got an invitation to join in the safety. Later that summer, and having attended meetings of the Plymouth Beekeepers Association, a barter of radio equipment for a colony of bees led to Ken becoming a beekeeper.

The fascinating world of bees and beekeeping drew Ken in. With a thirst for knowledge, and a realization steadily dawning of just how much there was to learn, and disassociated with the usual folklore and myth, he sought out expert tutoring and mentoring. Close by the renowned Harston Ashforth (County) Beekeeping Instructor when such points would come first and he began to put some sound science and skills behind the art. Later, being taken under the wing of another great beekeeper, Ken's skills and knowledge grew rapidly.

Bees never do things invisibly, the more colonies one sees the more one realizes that bees have many ways of coping with life, predators, weather, and problems. The observant beekeeper develops an understanding of, and strategies to cope with, this variability.

Never doing things by halves, a rapid expansion of colony numbers followed, resulting a hundred colonies within eight years.

Life revolved around beekeeping, with wife Maureen and son Daniel involved in all aspects. Curious as of course a kitchen alcidy with honey doesn't lead to a quiet life! Converting the basement into a honey extracting and bottling room spared mother greatly. Harmony retained, with Maureen looking after practice whilst Daniel, even from a young age, concentrated on managing the bees with his father.

Chef's Tip

Examples of double-page spreads