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THE GOOD PUB GUIDE 2012

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In 2012 *The Good Pub Guide* (Ebury Press, £15.99) celebrates its **30th anniversary**. In today's fast moving pub world, the guide's constant reader reports and comprehensive annual updates ensure that only the very best make the grade.

When the guide started 30 years ago people worried that the genuinely unspoilt pub was rapidly disappearing and would soon die out. The truly unspoilt pub, particularly in the hands of a caring landlord or landlady, has been remarkably resilient. The 30th edition of the guide has plenty of fine examples.

Pub Goers Favourite Main Course

Any guesses? Forget **lasagne** – this scored a zero in our list of the current top choices. **Curry** or **balti**? Hardly – not even 1%. Even those old staples, **sausage and mash** or **ham and egg**, have slipped in the popularity stakes, with just 2% of pubs now finding each of these their favourite. Today's **number 1** choice is **steak in ale pie**, in all its glorious variations, including quite a few steak and kidney puddings. This topped the list in 18% of pubs.

Fish and chips, often 'beer-battered' is a close runner-up, at 15%. All sorts of non-beef pies – most often fish, also chicken and ham, venison, rabbit, even wild boar, goose or duck – were the star offering in 8% of pubs. **Lamb** was the favourite in 7% of pubs, most often slow-cooked with redcurrant featuring in some way. The fashionable **pork belly** was close on its heels, at 6%. Many pubs are coming up with really rewarding ways of cooking this cheap meat. We found it chilli-glazed, with white bean cassoulet, with bramley boulangère, with plum and star anise, or with haggis or black pudding mash. **Steaks** are decidedly the thing in 5% of pubs – it's more of a favourite in the South East.



Pub of the Year - Potting Shed at Crudwell, Wiltshire

In addition to announcing *The Good Pub Guide 2012* 'Pub of the Year' there are **11** further national awards including 'Beer Pub of the Year' and 'Landlord of the Year', **9** 'Regional Pub of the Year' winners and **37** County Dining Pubs of the Year.

(continued overleaf...)

Pint Prices - Price gap grows between North and South

It is no secret that pub drinks are lowest in the North of England - the North West, North East and Yorkshire. What may come as a surprise is how big the price gap between North and South has grown. In the North, beer on average now costs nearly **30p a pint less** than in the most expensive area, which is the South East (including London). In this year's Good Pub Guide survey, prices of a pint of bitter in the regions averaged as follows:

Scotland - £3.11 * North East and Yorks - £2.87 * North West - £2.87 * East Midlands - £2.99 * Wales - £2.90 * South West - £2.95 * East of England - £3.04 * Heart of England - £2.88 * South East and London - £3.15 *

Pint Prices - Pubs brewing their own score brilliantly

Against the national average price of beer in good pubs, now **£3.00** a pint, pubs brewing their own score brilliantly. They are keeping their price down to an average of just under **£2.50 a pint** - scarcely any increase since last year, while in other pubs beer prices have jumped by a little over **7%**.

THE GOOD PUB GUIDE - 30th ANNIVERSARY EDITION



The Good Pub Guide is a fund of honest, entertaining and indispensable information, telling you exactly what you want to know about Britain's top pubs; how to get there, what to eat, whether children are welcome as well as wine and beer recommendations and even ideas for local walks. There are classic country pubs, town-centre inns, riverside retreats, historic gems and exciting newcomers, plus pubs specialising in food, wine, malt whisky, or own-brew beer.

"One in six pubs in the 2012 edition qualified for the Value Pub of the Year"

"Good British pubs are likely to have nicer wine by the glass, and a wider choice, than a typical French bar. Britain's top 10 wine pubs are more than a match for France's most serious bars."

NOTES FOR EDITORS

The Good Pub Guide 2012 iPhone App will be available from the iTunes App Store by the end of October.

The guide's dedicated website **www.thegoodpubguide.co.uk** supplies information on all the pubs in the new guide from publication plus 40,000 other pubs across the country. The site has 1 million unique users every year.

All publicans have been informed of their success and are available for interview.

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