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THE GOOD PUB GUIDE 2012 AWARD WINNERS

THE GOOD PUB GUIDE 2012 edited by Alistair Aird and Fiona Stapley
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Quotes from Fiona Stapley, joint editor of The Good Pub Guide 2012:

PUB OF THE YEAR - Potting Shed, Crudwell, Wiltshire

"Rather than just another pub/restaurant this highly enjoyable place with appealing rustic decor is a proper country pub where people and dogs are genuinely welcomed by the cheerful young staff. They have a fantastic range of drinks - several real ales and up to 30 wines and champagnes by the glass - and enjoyable, exciting food as well."

Licensees: Jonathan Barry and Julian Muggridge Tel: 01666 577833

DINING PUB OF THE YEAR – Stagg, Titley, Herefordshire

"Obviously, the excellent food remains the main draw here (this is one of Britain's top dining pubs after all) but it's still very much a pub rather than a pure restaurant and the staff are genuinely welcoming and courteous. The excellent and inventive food includes some pubby dishes such as open sandwiches, home-made pork sausage and mash and smoked haddock risotto but the more elaborate menu might have local snails with home-made chorizo and parmentier potatoes or seared scallops on parsnip purée."

Licensees: Steve and Nicola Reynolds Tel: 01544 230221

BEER PUB OF THE YEAR - Nags Head, Malvern, Worcestershire

"Should you feel daunted by the astonishing range of 14 beers at this enjoyable little pub, the cheery staff will happily help you choose by offering you a taster. House beers include Banks's, Bathams, St Georges Charger and Friar Tuck and they have changing guests (last year they got through over 1,000) from far flung brewers such as Battledown, Cottage, Kinver and Three Tuns. The superb range of well kept beers, tasty bar food, splendid individuality and easy-going chatty mood attract a good mix of jolly visitors and locals."

Licensee: Clare Keane and Alex Whistance Tel: 01684 574373

WINE PUB OF THE YEAR – Woods, Dulverton, Somerset

"Comfortably relaxed and mildly upmarket in a country way, this bustling place always has a good mix of both locals and visitors and a good balance between drinkers and diners. It's run by a particularly charming landlord and his genuinely helpful and friendly staff who will open any of their 400 wines for just a glass from a quite extraordinary list."

Licensee: Patrick Groves Tel: 01398 324007

OWN BREW PUB OF THE YEAR – Church Inn, Upper Mill, Lancashire

"This is a good value community pub with a large range of own brew beers at unbeatable bargain prices. This enjoyably quirky pub, high up on the moors, and with fine views down the valley is host to a burgeoning menagerie of animals including dogs, alpacas and peacocks, while also boasting a lively and friendly atmosphere."

Licensee: Christine Taylor Tel: 01457 820902

LANDLORD OF THE YEAR – New Inn, Cerne Abbas, Dorset

"Since Mr and Mrs Lee took over this charming 16th-c former coaching inn, we've had nothing but praise from our readers for the warm welcome and enjoyable, imaginative food. The Lees are hands-on licensees whose hard work and devotion to this pub have created a welcoming and friendly atmosphere."

Licensee: Jeremy Lee Tel: 01300 341274

(Continued overleaf...)

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR – Tobie Norris, Stamford, Lincolnshire

"This pub makes you grin with delight at its sheer character the moment you step inside - then goes on to reveal more and more pleasures. It is many centuries old and has been beautifully restored - worn flagstones, meticulously stripped stonework and a huge hearth for one room's woodburning stove. Add to this careful attention by friendly staff, a fine changing range of wines, well kept Adnams and Ufford White Hart on handpump, as well as three guest beers and you get a most enjoyable, relaxed and easy-going atmosphere."

Licensee: William Fry Tel: 01780 753800

INN OF THE YEAR – Royal Oak, Luxborough, Somerset

"In the heart of Exmoor, this is an exceptionally enjoyable place to stay for a few days and there are memorable nearby walks in the wonderful surrounding countryside. There's always a really good mix of chatty locals (often with their dogs) and visitors and you can be sure of a genuinely warm welcome from the landlord and his helpful staff."

Licensees: James and Sian Waller Tel: 01984 640319

TOWN PUB OF THE YEAR – Olde Mitre, Central London

"You need to be in the know to find this hidden gem that's secreted away down a tiny alley. These days, it's all too rare in London to find proper hands-on licensees who genuinely care for their pub and their customers – but Mr and Mrs Scott do just that. It provides great period atmosphere in a warren of ancient rooms, a splendid drinks choice, and good pub food."

Licensees: Eamon and Kathy Scott Tel: 020 7405 4751

VALUE PUB OF THE YEAR – Bell Inn, Middleton, Suffolk

"Using carefully sourced local produce, the well liked and fairly-priced food includes lunchtime sandwiches, chicken and duck liver paté with home-made relish, and sausage and wholegrain mustard mash. Daily specials include pork fillet wrapped in smoked bacon with home-made black pudding and dover sole with a caper, lemon and red onion salsa. The landlord's warmth and courtesy make for a really relaxed and contented atmosphere."

Licensee: Nicholas Musgrove Tel: 01728 648286

WHISKY PUB OF THE YEAR – Bow Bar, Edinburgh, Scotland

"This cheerfully traditional alehouse remains unchanging and full of character. The neatly kept rectangular bar has an impressive carved mahogany gantry where knowledgeable staff dispense some 200 malts, including five 'malts of the moment'. They also offer a good choice of rums, 25 international bottled beers and quite a few gins."

Licensee: Mike Smith Tel: 0131 226 7667

UNSPOILT PUB OF THE YEAR - Square & Compass, Worth Matravers, Dorset

"The Newman family first took on this fine old pub over a hundred years ago and to this day, there's no bar counter. Palmers Copper and guests such as Bays Gold and Penpont Cornish Arvor and up to 13 ciders are tapped from a row of casks and passed to you in a drinking corridor through two serving hatches. From benches (made from local stone) out in front there's a fantastic view down over the village rooftops to the sea around St Aldhelm's Head."

Licensee: Charlie Newman Tel: 01929 439229

BREWERY OF THE YEAR – Nethergate Brewery, Pentlow, Sudbury, Suffolk

"...a splendid range of interesting beers, many available in bottles as well as on draught. Nethergate avoided any price increase in our pubs this year."

Contact: 01787 283220

SCOTLAND PUB OF THE YEAR – Applecross Inn, Applecross, Scotland

"The pub itself is splendidly remote and tables in the nice shoreside garden enjoy magnificent views across to the Cuillin Hills on Skye. The no-nonsense, welcoming bar (extremely busy in high season with a good mix of both locals and visitors) has a woodburning stove, exposed stone walls and upholstered pine furnishings on the stone floor. Isle of Skye Red Cuillin and Young Pretender are on handpump and it houses over 50 malt whiskies."

Licensee: Judith Fish Tel: 01520 744262

NORTH EAST AND YORKSHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR - Crown, Roecliffe, Yorkshire

"Going from strength to strength under the hard-working and friendly Mainey family, this well-run place is extremely popular. Although much emphasis is placed on the top class food, they do keep Black Sheep Ale, Ilkley Mary Jane, Theakstons Best and Timothy Taylors Landlord on handpump, 20 wines by the glass and home-made lemonade."

Licensee: Karl Mainey Tel: 01423 322300

NORTH WEST PUB OF THE YEAR – Masons Arms, Cartmel Fell, Cumbria

"It really is an idyllic spot; there are rustic benches and tables on a heated terrace so people can take in the stunning views down over the Winster Valley to the woods below Whitbarrow Scar. The main bar has plenty of character, with low black beams and polished flagstones. The service is friendly and prompt, the food is good and it serves both real ales and many foreign bottled beers."

Licensees: John and Diane Taylor Tel: 01539 568486

EAST MIDLANDS PUB OF THE YEAR – Bear, Alderwasley, Derbyshire

"Readers can't heap enough praise on this terrific all-rounder. Justifiably popular, this happy characterful tavern has lovely dark low-beamed rooms with warming open fires and a cheerful miscellany of antique furniture. This unspoilt country inn houses an excellent range of real ales as well as a peaceful garden and beautiful country views."

Licensee: Pete Buller Tel: 01629 822585

HEART OF ENGLAND PUB OF THE YEAR - Bell & Cross, Holy Cross, Worcestershire

"This charmingly well-kept place is clearly run with loving care and attention to detail. Service is friendly and attentive, with everything geared to ensure that you have a most enjoyable visit. Successful as a dining pub yet still extremely welcoming if you're just popping in for a drink, it's in an unspoilt early 19th-c layout."

Licensees: Roger and Jo Narbett Tel: 01562 730319

EAST OF ENGLAND PUB OF THE YEAR – Rose & Crown, Snettisham, Norfolk

"The neatly dressed, courteous staff in this well-run and pretty cottage, offer a genuinely warm welcome to all – children and dogs too. This traditional pub has three bars, a garden room and a residents' lounge with log fires, stylish seating and ancient furnishings."

Licensee: Anthony Goodrich Tel: 01485 541382

SOUTH EAST AND LONDON PUB OF THE YEAR – Cat, West Hoathly, Sussex

"With hands-on licensees, a genuinely warm welcome for all and highly thought of food, it's not surprising that so many people like to come back again and again to this bustling 16th-c tile-hung inn. There's a lovely old bar with beams, proper pubby tables and chairs on the old wooden floor and a fine log fire in the inglenook fireplace."

Licensees: Ian Huxley and Andrew Russell Tel: 01342 810369

SOUTH WEST PUB OF THE YEAR - Potting Shed, Crudwell, Wiltshire

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Licensees: Jonathan Barry, Julian Muggridge and Laura Sheffield Tel: 01666 577833

WALES PUB OF THE YEAR - Olde Bulls, Beaumaris, Wales

"The various areas at this relaxed inn cover quite a range of styles – there's a simple but cosy bar, a popular brasserie and a smart upstairs restaurant. Kindly staff serve Bass, Hancocks and a guest such as Conwy Welsh Pride on handpump. Quite a contrast, the busy brasserie behind is lively and stylishly modern, with a wine list that includes around 20 by the glass; the exceptionally good restaurant list runs to 120 bottles."

Licensee: David Robertson Tel: 01248 810329

**All publicans have been informed of their success and are available for interview
Press enquiries to: Claire Bowles Publicity on 01858 565800 or claire@clairebowlespr.co.uk
From publication date the full guide description for each winning entry will be available at**

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