

AWARD-WINNING FOOD AT THE BRICKLAYERS ARMS IN HERTFORDSHIRE

“This popular 18th century gastro pub certainly knows how to impress” says Brian Claridge

Situated in the leafy village of Flaunden in Hertfordshire, The Bricklayers Arms is an award-winning country pub and restaurant. Originally a pair of cottages built in 1722 from local flint and brick, with a third property added in the early 18th century, The Bricklayers Arms is highly regarded for its English and French fusion dishes, fine wines and local ales. They have won numerous accolades including Hertfordshire's 'Dining Pub of the Year' in the Good Pub Guide for the second year in a row.

Since taking over The Bricklayers Arms in 2003, owners, Alvin and Sally Michaels (who also own the Nags Head in Great Missenden, with their son, Adam) have won much praise from customers, as well as from leading food critics. The pub was named regional winner for 'Freehouse of the Year 2009' at the Publican Awards and awarded the AA's 'Pick of The Pubs' in the AA Pub Guide 2010. They also received a recommendation in the much coveted Michelin Guide, and voted one of the top 360 British food pubs in the UK's "Best of British Food Pubs." They are also listed in many leading restaurant and pub guides.

All the original 18th century features of the Grade 11 listed building have been retained, including low oak beamed ceiling, exposed brickwork and open log fires. The beautiful ivy-clad Bricklayers Arms has featured in a number of television series and feature films and is situated in an idyllic setting in the picturesque Hertfordshire countryside with its narrow country lanes, bluebells and hedgerows.

Renowned for its outstanding food and award-winning chefs - including Michelin trained Head Chef, Claude Paillet - the menu is extensive with starters and salads, main dishes, desserts and daily specials, with a lunchtime menu of traditional pub classics. All the food is freshly prepared and the restaurant smoke their own meat and fish. All produce used is organic and comes from local suppliers and the herbs and vegetables are home grown.

The lunch menu is available until 2.30pm, Monday to Saturday, with a variety of hot dishes, including Fresh Haddock Fillet in Ale Batter; and 21 day aged Fillet of Bedfordshire Beef served with green peppercorn flavoured brandy cream sauce or mushroom and port jus. The evening menu (available 7 nights a week from 6.30pm) gives you an opportunity to try one of



Paillet's award-winning creations, with a choice of Traditional English and French Fusion dishes. Sunday lunch is served from 12 - 3.15pm and includes traditional Sunday Roast, with roast potatoes and seasonal vegetables. As well as good food, wine connoisseurs can enjoy an extensive wine list, including rare boutique wines from S.E Australia (Mollydooker), South Africa (Ernie Els) and New Zealand, with a fine selection of local ales.

I went along for lunch with my wife Denise. For starters, Denise had seafood (mussels, shrimps, scallops) served in a béchamel profiterole with green lipped mussels cooked with a purple garlic butter (£7.95). I had Mushroom Feuilleté (puff pastry top with mushrooms in calvados cream and juliennes of vegetables (£6.95). Our main course selection included Lamb Shank for Denise, which was slow cooked and served on a bed of sautéed lettuce, peas and glazed onions in a dry sherry jus (£15.95). I had Steak, Kidney and Ale Pie served with chive mash and seasonal vegetables (£12.95). Each course was imaginatively presented, the food was outstanding and the service excellent. This popular 18th century gastro pub certainly knows how to impress.

During the summer you can dine 'al fresco' in the lawned garden and terrace and enjoy the Hertfordshire countryside. Situated only a few minutes from the M25 and A41 between the villages of Chipperfield and Latimer, it's the perfect haven for lunch or dinner.

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