

## RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

RIGHT: Every inch the country house hotel . . . Burythorpe House, near Malton

You'll need to study the atlas to discover exactly where it is, but the effort is well worthwhile. ROY WOODCOCK visits Burythorpe House and names it The Journal Restaurant of the Month for August . . .



# The road to some very fine dining . . .

**M**y new sat-nav took me via Pocklington, Bishop Wilton and a myriad of twisty-turny roads. "I hope we don't meet someone coming the other way," my better half (and former sat-nav) muttered.

I could see what she meant and thought (to myself) it was no wonder we keep hearing all those horror stories about foreign lorry drivers clogging up country lanes.

I also thought the journey would have been even more entertaining if I had picked the Homer Simpson voice instead of the adenoidally-challenged female chosen as the standard "guide" for these gismos.

Presumably he goes "doh!" if you make a wrong turning.

But tortuous as it seemed, I still managed to "beat" the machine's estimated time of arrival at our destination – the wonderful Burythorpe House in the village of Burythorpe.

It's a close neighbour of the deserted medieval village of Wharram Percy; so about five miles from North Grimston and around



Head chef Daniel Farrall  
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20 from Driffild. She that was my old sat-nav suggested it would have been better to have gone via the main Wetwang-Malton road and I must say I agreed.

When Sir Ian Botham officially opened this boutique country house hotel last October he had none of these problems; he arrived by helicopter. But I'm sure he must have been as bowled over as I was at the first sight of this former Georgian gentleman's residence.

It's "boutique" as in there's only 12 bedrooms; all of them beautifully appointed with plasma televisions, power and rain showers, roll-top baths; four-poster beds and internet wi-fi access.

As I think our picture show, the house itself is absolutely gorgeous; downstairs there are two lounges full of fine prints and furniture where you can, literally, lounge in great comfort while you peruse the menus or enjoy a post-prandial coffee or tea. Out back are some gardens, a tennis court and covered swimming pool.

I want to live here . . .

Two adjoining dining rooms can cater for around 40 covers; we immediately commented how busy it was – always a good sign that the food is going to be well up to scratch.

The proof of the pudding (and the starter and the main course) was, of course, in the eating. And this was, without doubt, one of the best meals I've had this year.

In charge in the kitchens is head chef Daniel Farrall, who formerly looked after the village's renowned gastro pub, the Bay Horse, which is under the same ownership. A young man with a great future (I predict), he's not averse to taking advantage of using country walks in the area to "harvest" some ingredients. Elsewhere the menu is cognisant of the food miles issue by giving pride of place to local suppliers.

There's lamb from Burdass at Harpham; some cheese from Lowna, of Cottingham, fish is delivered fresh each day from Whitby, Scarborough and Hartlepool; game comes from local country estates; bakery items are from Malton; tea is from Harrogate; coffee is from York; ice cream is manufactured on the Yorkshire Wolds; jams and preserves are from Crambe; and biscuits are from Whitby.

The benchmark for our evening was set



One of two adjoining dining rooms at Burythorpe House

by the amuse-bouche; a luxuriantly-flavoured cup of pea and ham soup. Everything about it, colour, taste and consistency, was spot on.

"Can I have a bowl full please?" was my reaction when the attentive waiting staff arrived back; instead they brought me my ordered starter; pressed foie gras, gooseberry and rhubarb jelly and elderflower. I spread copious amounts on some warm home-made bread rolls and thought: Food doesn't come much better than this!

Chris was of the same opinion about her totellini of crayfish, pickled girrole mushrooms, York ham and a fat hen puree – the later usually classified as a weed! I've got plenty in my garden . . . now I know what to do with it.

Other choices included Whitby oak-smoked salmon, cucumber gazpacho and garden raddish salad; and a warm salad of asparagus, baby leeks, Perigord truffle vinaigrette and a deep fried duck egg.

For my main course it was some slow-braised belly pork (Old Spot), with butter-poached lobster, red wine pears and sea purslane; another "weed" – found on saltmarshes and often referred to as sea pickle. Chris chose lamb – a chop and a confit of shoulder – that was

melt-in-the-mouth good and full of flavour. This was accompanied by dauphinoise potato, minestrone vegetables and a veloute of garlic. Also on offer were a baked fillet of Scarborough wool (an ugly but particularly tasty fish) with carrot puree, squid ink potato and hand-dived scallop. Interestingly, there was also a nettle and hogweed risotto with new season garlic shoots.

To round off our meal I chose a perfectly executed hot chocolate fondant with raspberry and Drambuie ice cream and praline while Chris enjoyed caramelised banana bavaroi, rum banana, chocolate sauce and Baileys ice cream.

Other choices included a chilled rice pudding with cherry soup and baked English strawberries with shortcake, vanilla ice cream and a strawberry and black pepper tuile.

The regularly changing menu at Burythorpe presents two courses for £27.95 or three for £35.95. Our meal for two with wine, coffee and pre-dinner drinks came to £91.

My verdict on Burythorpe House? Worth going a country mile to enjoy . . .

■ The restaurant is open daily. Reservations on (01653) 658200.