

ROAD HOG - The Times, Life & Style, April 29th 2007

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The Highwayman, Nether Burrow, Lancashire

Most pubs write a menu, laminate it, and then work out how to get the ingredients. The Highwayman has a more sensible plan.

Each week the chefs contact local suppliers and come up with a menu based on what's available. The pub is now part-owned by Nigel Haworth, long-time chef at the Michelin-starred Northcote Manor restaurant in nearby Langho. Haworth specialises in reviving and adding twists to traditional regional specialities and making the supplier, rather than the chef, king.

His latest venture is situated not far from the M6 near the market town of Kirkby Lonsdale, just outside Lancashire and bordering Cumbria and Yorkshire, giving Haworth plenty of regional variety to choose from. There are 35 suppliers on the menu.

A starter of chicken liver pate uses organic chicken livers from Lowther near Penrith. The livers are marinated in Kilner jars, sealed with butter and cooked in the jars, which are served at the table with slow cooked onions, Cumberland sauce and toast. Or there are warm Flookburgh shrimps from Morecambe Bay or Shorrock's Lancashire cheese on toast with Cumbrian sweet-cured bacon.

In the week of my visit, the main dishes included Kittridding Farm Cumbrian Sausages and mash or Farmer Sharp's Herdwick mutton pudding. Forager's mash and black peas. Round it off with homemade ice cream using milk from local cows or an elderflower syllabub and jelly with crushed gingerbread.

The wine list, for those who aren't driving, could rival a top London restaurant's - but it all comes without the London price tag.

SAMPLE MENU

Cod fishcakes with curly leaf parsley sauce, £5.50; Kittridding Farm Cumbrian sausages with mash and onion gravy, £8.75; homemade ice cream, two scoops for £3; tri-countries cheeseboard, £12.50.

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