

AL FRESCO DINING - Great Places to Eat Outdoors This Summer

Hopefully, by the time you read this, the sun will be shining and you will be thinking that it really is too nice to be eating indoors so, this month we haven't reviewed a restaurant; instead we're going to give you our guide to some of the best places in the area for outdoor dining.

A room with a view

There is no substitute for a lovely view while you enjoy your leisurely lunch outdoors. Try out Café Piano in Southwell, its beautiful Georgian courtyard looks out over Southwell Minster – inspiring! The Italian Cuisine is pretty inspiring too. Alternatively, for a quintessentially English picture, make your way down to the Reindeer in Hoveringham. A cluster of tables line a perfect cricket pitch and when it's time for another round there's a hatch into the bar – lovely! Expect some high end cuisine as you listen to the crack of willow against leather.

Brilliant beer gardens

The beer garden is one of the world's great inventions; room for the kids to run around while the parents enjoy the sunshine and a refreshing drink or two. What makes the perfect beer garden? – plenty of space, a nice lawn, some colourful planting and a decent view. Try the Reindeer in East Bridgford, acres of room and a gorgeous vista down over the Trent Valley. The food is first rate too, whether you're lunching or making the perfect start to the evening. The beer garden at the Hearty Goodfellow in Southwell is a true gem, shaded by trees with a babbling brook at its foot. They only serve lunch and you can expect straightforward, top quality food which is excellent value.

A river runs through it

The River Trent is one of the great treasures of our region. What could be finer than tucking in to lunch while it flows majestically by? The most excellent



Farndon Boathouse has a nicely designed dining area looking out over the river and offers top notch food that is surprisingly good value. If you really want the water lapping at your side check out the Bromley Arms in Fiskerton where the dining terrace is literally on the riverbank. The food is good honest pub grub and there's nothing wrong with that.

Outdoor dining room

Some restaurants really go to town to create an outdoor dining area that is a design masterpiece in its own right. Don't just expect to find them in urban settings either, I've managed to find a village example too. The Courtyard at Ann et Vin in Newark is lovely, an enclosed Georgian courtyard with stylish furniture and a glass awning for when it rains. The food is mainly light meals and Tapas but the wine is a big deal – Ann et Vin is, after all, a wine merchant. For something special in a village setting you could try the Coach and Horses in Thurgarton. Masses of flowers, nice furniture and you can even recline on a leather sofa. The food is to die for, just see my restaurant review from last month.

Howard Clemmow