



# Cwrw Ceredigion



Pub news ♦ Brewery bulletin ♦ Cider scene



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Real ale ramble around Cardigan  
Good Beer Guide 2019**

The free magazine of Bae Ceredigion CAMRA

**Autumn/Winter 2018**

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**Welcome to *Cwrw Ceredigion*, which is produced by the Bae Ceredigion branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) and is funded by advertising from local pubs and breweries. Our aim is to promote local breweries, cider makers and the best places to drink real ale and cider in the area.**

Congratulations to the Rhos yr Hafod in Cross Inn which won the 2018 CAMRA West Wales pub of the year award. This is the seventh consecutive year that a Ceredigion pub has been declared as the best in West Wales, an impressive track record for our area. Pictured right is landlady Elin Gapper receiving the award from Bae Ceredigion CAMRA Chairman Tristan Robinson.



Congratulations are also due to all the local pubs that feature in CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide* 2019. It gets harder every year to select pubs for the limited space allocated to our branch area due to the increasing number of excellent real ale pubs locally. Please do support this year's entries and, if you think we have missed a real ale gem, then let us know!

Finally, many thanks to the small band of volunteers who contribute articles to *Cwrw Ceredigion*, help sell advertising and distribute magazines to local pubs. Each issue's content can only reflect the news that we receive or find out, so please do update us or suggest an idea for a future feature.

Our next issue will be published in April but you can follow us on Twitter or Facebook to keep up to date with the local real ale scene.

Mary Galliers, Editor

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Am nad oes llawer o le gennym, cyhoeddiad cyfrwng Saesneg fydd hwn, ond mae croeso i chi gyfathrebu gyda ni yn y Gymraeg.

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#### Advertising

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#### Bae Ceredigion CAMRA branch

Bae Ceredigion CAMRA branch covers mid and north Ceredigion and a small part of Powys and Gwynedd. The main towns and villages in the branch area are New Quay, Aberaeron, Tregaron, Aberystwyth, Talybont and Machynlleth.

**Chairman:** Tristan Robinson

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Front cover: Rhos yr Hafod, Cross Inn (Llanon)



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## Rhos yr Hafod is best in the west

The Rhos yr Hafod in Cross Inn (Llanon) has won the Campaign for Real Ale West Wales pub of the year 2018 award, making it one of the top three real ale pubs in Wales.

Earlier this year, the pub was selected as the Bae Ceredigion CAMRA pub of the year. It then went forward for judging against the regional winners from Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire before being declared as the West Wales winner.

"We gave our local pub of the year award to the Rhos yr Hafod for the first time this year so it is a fantastic achievement for landlady Elin Gapper to go on to win the West Wales competition," said Chairman of Bae Ceredigion CAMRA Tristan Robinson.

The quality of the real ale is the most important single factor for a CAMRA award. The Rhos yr Hafod sells a constantly changing choice of real ales from Welsh breweries, some of which are rarely seen elsewhere locally. The beer is always in excellent condition and tasters are offered to customers. A beer blackboard and



regular posts on Facebook announce what is on the pumps or coming soon and the pub held its first beer festival in the summer.

This is the seventh consecutive year that a Ceredigion pub has been selected as CAMRA West Wales pub of the year. The competition was won by the Druid Inn, Goginan in 2017, 2014 and 2013; the Glengower Hotel, Aberystwyth in 2016; and Y Talbot, Tregaron in 2015 and 2012.

"The fact that four different local pubs have won the West Wales pub of the year award over a period of seven consecutive years demonstrates just how good the real ale pubs in Ceredigion are," added Tristan.

## Cider award presentation

The Druid Inn in Goginan has won more CAMRA awards than any other local pub including the prestigious title of Wales pub of the year in 2017. As reported in our last issue, it fought off competition from an increasing number of local pubs selling real cider to retain the title of Bae Ceredigion CAMRA cider pub of the year.

Pictured is landlord Lewis Johnston (left) receiving the award from Bae Ceredigion CAMRA chairman Tristan Robinson.



## Cider sales soar in hot summer

With day after day of hot and dry weather, summer 2018 was truly memorable. How did this weather affect pub trade? And what happened during the long, hot summer of 1976? Mick Taylor, owner of Y Talbot in Tregaron, shares a publican's view.

"Our trade was very good this summer and drinks sales from mid May to the end of July grew in double figures compared to last year. However the mix of wet sales was very different. Cider sales boomed with real ciders, bottled ciders and draught Strongbow all selling at two to three times their usual level.

"The weather was a mixed blessing for cask ales. Customers switched to lighter and colder drinks and our ale sales flagged. Rather than the usual three or four on hand pump, we went down to two to ensure rapid

throughput and focussed on lighter ales like Ludlow Gold, Glaslyn and Shropshire Lass.

"The high temperatures tested our refrigeration to the limit. Fortunately we had invested in a new cellar chiller last year, but keeping the cellar at a maximum of 14 degrees was a push some days.

"Summer 1976 showed a similar pattern; cider sales boomed and lager took off. This accelerated the gathering shift away from ales and stouts to lager and cider. In the mid seventies 75% of all on trade beer sales was ales and stout, and only 25% was lager.


"By 2010 the on trade share of lager had risen to 70%, and ales and stouts had declined to 30%. Total beer consumption has declined from 43 million barrels in 1978 to around 25 million barrels today. Together with the increase in off trade sales, implications for the pub trade have been profound. I wonder what will happen in the next 40 years?"

### The White Lion Machynlleth

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## Boost for Bow Street pub goers

The Rhyd y Pennau on the main road through Bow Street has recently reopened. The lease has been taken on by Lauren Murphy, daughter of local publican Alan Murphy who runs the *Good Beer Guide* listed White Lion in Machynlleth.

Dating from the mid 1800s, the pub started life as the Three Horse Shoe Inn. Its name changed several times until the then landlord settled on the Rhyd y Pennau Inn in 1931 (an old mirror in the bar commemorates the new name).

Refurbishment of this large building is now well underway. There is a traditional bar area, separate restaurant and cosy lounge with armchairs. Outside there's a small garden with children's play area. Up to two real ales will be on the hand pumps, subject to demand, and food includes a Sunday carvery. Families and dogs are welcome, and sports fans are well catered for with Sky Sports, BT Sport, a pool table and darts boards.

"We want to make this pub part of the community again, as it once was, and we look forward to welcoming local people and visitors," said Lauren.

## All change in Machynlleth

The lease of Y Llew Coch in Machynlleth has recently changed hands again; Gareth Vince is now the licensee and the pub is being run by Sam Hill and Aga Maraszek. Both Sam and Aga are professional chefs, and Sam has also worked in the music industry for over twenty years, running stages at major festivals.

The pub's interior was refurbished last year and it has a contemporary feel with a light open bar and separate cosy seating area. Outside there is a large courtyard garden with new furniture and a function room.

Three Marston's ales are on the hand pumps (normally Pedigree, a house beer and a rotating guest) and lunches and evening meals are served; the winter menu will feature some Polish classic dishes that are perfect for the colder months.

The pub is fast developing a reputation as a key player on the live music scene. Vintage Canadian heavy metal band Anvil played to a full house over the August bank holiday and a punk and ska festival is taking place over the late May bank holiday weekend; see the pub's Facebook page for full details and dates of future gigs.

## Tregaron pub reopens

After having been closed for many years, Y Llew Coch in Tregaron reopened in the summer. New owners Trevor and Lynne Higginbottom have spent a lot of time and effort renovating this historic old inn and making it a pleasant place to enjoy a drink. They have started off with Sharp's Atlantic on the handpull, which has been very popular with locals, and there is a bag in box cider from Marchermain. Families and dogs are welcome and the pub plans to offer food soon and B&B in the future. There is a neat and tidy suntrap garden at the rear and benches at the front.



Y Llew Coch, Tregaron

# TIPPLE TATTLE

## Beer in brief

After a brief break, real ale made a welcome return to the hand pump at the **Pier Hotel**, Aberystwyth earlier this year. The choice has changed weekly - it has included Evan Evans and Bluestone - and it has been in good condition on our visits.

The recently reopened **Halfway Inn**, Pysgah offers two real ales from Monty's Brewery. A guest ale is planned for the third hand pump at busier times.

The **Vale of Aeron**, Temple Bar has started to sell a real ale; beer from Gower Brewery has been particularly popular with locals.

Once a stronghold for Evan Evans core range, the **Sea Horse**, New Quay also now offers a beer from the brewery's sub brands including Artisan and Porter Street.

The **Cadwgan**, Aberaeron continues to offer two interesting guests from breweries all over Britain alongside regular fixture Hancock's HB. The range from Jersey's Liberation Brewery went down well.

The constantly changing three real ales at the **Slaters Arms**, Corris often includes a dark beer. Keep an eye on their Facebook page for the latest choice.

## Cider shorts

**Kane's Bar**, Aberystwyth continues to delight real cider fans with six on hand pull and many more in bottle. The focus is set to change from mainly Welsh producers to ciders from all over Britain, many of which are rarely seen locally, and there are plans for another cider festival in October.

**Y Talbot**, Tregaron has extended their cider offer; Marcherian and Brecon Beacons Cider have recently been added to the range.

Real cider has grown in popularity at the **Three Horseshoe**, Llangeitho with two or three to choose from, often from Gethin's and Marcherian.

The **Swan Inn**, Llanon has started to sell cider on hand pump, normally from Gwynt y Ddraig.

## Swift halves

It's been all change in the rural village of Penuwch. The **Penuwch Inn** has been turned into a camp site by its new owners but it still has a small bar and restaurant open to the public. Just down the road, the former village school has been transformed into the **Hungry Ram**, a stylish bar restaurant. Both currently only serve bottled or keg beer, but this may change if there is sufficient demand for real ale.

The **Teifi Inn**, Ffair Rhos has been taken on by new owners and has reopened.

Congratulations to the **Pentre Arms**, Llangrannog on winning the mid Wales Gastro Pub of the Year category in the Food Awards Wales 2018.

## Dates for your diary

10-21 October: autumn beer festival, Yr Hen Orsaf, Aberystwyth

19-21 October: Machtoberfest, various pubs, Machynlleth area

31 October-2 November: autumn beer festival, Ship and Castle, Aberystwyth

16 February: Lampeter Beer Festival, university campus



**Sea Horse, New Quay**

# GOOD BEER GUIDE 2019

**The *Good Beer Guide* is a must-have handbook for anyone seeking out good real ale in a new area. Many people even plan their holidays around which pubs appear in it!**

The *Good Beer Guide* lists the best cask ale outlets in the United Kingdom. Content is fully revised every year, and the 2019 edition has just been published by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) in print form and as an app.

Information about pubs in the guide is gathered by volunteer members. Each branch is allocated a number of entries in the guide and is given autonomy to decide which pubs to enter and which to leave out. Beer quality is the over-riding consideration and so members visit local pubs and score the quality of the beer all year round to help decide which ones to select.

"There are more and more excellent real ale pubs in our branch area," said Bae Ceredigion Pubs Officer Alex Vokes. "This makes competition really tough for our limited number of spaces in the guide and inevitably means that some pubs that serve a great pint aren't included."

"I'd like to thank all members who regularly score their beers – it really helps us get a picture of what's being served where and the condition of a pub's beers over the course of the year," added Alex. "We compile all the scores we receive and review them at branch meetings where we decide which pubs to include in the guide. The more scores we get, the better quality our information is when making our decision."

CAMRA's beer scoring scheme is a simple "marks out of 5" system and scores can be submitted on a smartphone while in the pub or at home on a computer. Find out how to score your beer on [www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com) – you will need to login with your membership number and normal password (you can reset this if you have forgotten it).

If you're not yet a CAMRA member but want to tell us what you think of your beer, find out how to join on page 23.



## **Congratulations to our local pubs that appear in the 2019 *Good Beer Guide***

- Cadwgan Inn, Aberaeron
- Dovey Valley Hotel, Cemmaes Road
- Druid Inn, Goginan
- Dyfi Forester, Machynlleth
- Glengower Hotel, Aberystwyth
- Yr Hen Orsaf, Aberystwyth
- Rhos yr Hafod Inn, Cross Inn (Llanon)
- Ship and Castle, Aberystwyth
- Three Horseshoe, Llangeitho
- White Lion, Machynlleth
- Y Talbot, Tregaron

***A long-list of pubs for members to survey as possible entries for the 2020 guide will be drawn up at the branch meeting at 1pm on Saturday 17 November in Y Talbot, Tregaron. The final selection of entries will be made at January's meeting.***

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Cemmaes Road Machynlleth SY20 8JZ  
Tel: 01650 511335



## Mantle Brewery five years on

Mantle Brewery celebrated its fifth anniversary this summer. In August 2013 Rock Steady (a 3.8% golden session ale) was the first beer they produced commercially, followed by Cwrw Teifi (a 4.5% best bitter) the next day. Since then, both beers have become firm favourites on the hand pumps of West Wales and it's hard to imagine the local real ale scene without them.

Alongside their core range of six beers, Mantle has continued to produce a limited number of seasonal ales this year. Hwyl Haf (a 4% pale ale) was brewed in the summer and is being followed once again this autumn by Seiclun (a 4% ale using the same hops but with a darker malt edge). Dark Heart (a 5.2% premium dark ale) is brewed all year round but you are more



*The Mantle Brewery team*

likely to spot it in a local pub during the cooler months.

Things continue to look good on the awards front for the Cardigan based brewery. MOHO made it to the final stages of the Champion Beer of Britain competition for the second year running and the bottled version of Cwrw Teifi gained a one star Great Taste award.

## Breweries in brief

2018 has been another busy year for **Penlon Cottage Brewery**. The brewery's new café bar, Penlon at the Beach, opened in May serving their ales on cask or in bottle, real cider, craft gin and stone-baked pizzas. Thanks to its first floor location (above a gift shop on the promenade in New Quay), the large balcony overlooking the beach and harbour has one of the best views around. The Granary, Penlon's bar and tasting room at the brewery, has been open regularly all season, too, offering Penlon ales on cask alongside the full range in bottles, real cider and wood-fired pizzas. See their Facebook page or [www.penlonbrewery.co.uk](http://www.penlonbrewery.co.uk) for future opening times.

Look out for new bottled beers and limited edition brews from Pembrokeshire's **Bluestone Brewing** now that their new bottling line is up and running. The new plant means they can bottle everything on

site instead of relying on another brewery to do it for them. This will save money, mileage and time and free up space in the brewery to brew as much beer as possible! The plant, which is capable of bottling up to 1,000 bottles an hour, was funded by a grant from the Welsh Government's Coastal Communities Fund.

We were sorry to learn in May of the closure of **Oast House Brewery** which was in the process of moving to premises in Clarach, near Aberystwyth. We wish brewers John and Steph all the best for their future endeavours.

### *Penlon at the Beach*



# REAL ALE RAMBLE

Tristan Robinson travelled just south of Bae Ceredigion CAMRA's branch area to visit the historic town of Cardigan, easily accessible by bus from Aberystwyth.

Cardigan sits at the mouth of the river Teifi at the base of Cardigan Bay. Whilst it can no longer boast of more than sixty ale houses (as it did in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century), it is home to one of the county's few breweries and a handful of pubs - excuse enough for me to pay a visit!

Arriving early in the afternoon I started my ramble with a visit to **Mantle Brewery**, situated at Unit 16, Pentood Industrial Estate, which is on the other side of the river to the town centre.



**Mantle Brewery**

The brewery was established five years ago by Ian and Domi Kimber and has won many national awards for its beers. The brewery shop is open to the public during normal working hours, where you can choose from Mantle's range of quality bottled ales. There is also a small bar that usually has a couple of their beers available to buy while you watch the brewing process. On the day of my visit I had a choice of three, so I opted for Hwyl Haf (summer seasonal 4.0% pale ale made using a single hop variety). It was zesty with a dry, bitter finish and was a good start to my day's adventure. Look out for its winter equivalent, Seiclön, in cooler months.



**Saddlers Arms**

After bidding farewell to the Mantle team I walked back into town, uphill past Cardigan's historic castle and along High Street until I reached the **Saddlers Arms** on the right, a stone and brick-fronted traditional pub owned by Marston's.

The pub has a single corner bar in the main front room with seating, and a small room at the back with seating and darts area. I received a friendly welcome and sampled the only real ale option, Saddle Tank (3.8% amber ale), which was very good value and bright and biscuity. The pub is popular with locals and visitors, and it's dog friendly and cat friendly, too - someone walked in with one in a shoulder bag and it made itself at home on a bar stool!

After I finished my pint I continued to the end of High Street, crossing the road by the Guildhall, then along Pendre until I reached the **Bell Hotel**.



**Bell Hotel**

Neatly presented, this building has been a licenced premises since 1850 and at one time had its own brew house to the rear.

The Bell caters well for visitors and locals and was bustling on my afternoon visit. Its layout is fairly open plan, with a central bar area, two seating areas in the front and one to the rear alongside the bar; there is also a games room and a beer garden to the rear. The interior is low-ceilinged with exposed beams and the walls have many framed photographs and pencil drawings of local scenes.

There was one hand pump on the bar, which was serving Mantle's Cwrw Teifi (4.5% best bitter) in excellent condition.

Leaving the Bell, I retraced my steps back to just past the Guildhall to take a left turn at the crossroads down Pwllhai. A five minute walk downhill took me to the **Red Lion Inn**, a tidy black and white pub with prominent red lion motifs suspended outside.

Inside there was a large open plan front room with single bar, plenty of seating and a games area to one side. The clean and neat interior was set off well by the stone fireplace and woodburner, which looked like it would give a warm welcome on colder days. Two real ales were available - Mantle's Cwrw Teifi or Hancock's HB (3.6% session bitter), the latter of which I enjoyed whilst watching the cricket on the bar's sports TV.



**The Red Lion Inn**

I still had time before my return journey so I headed back towards the castle, skirting between its lower side and the river, then across the road to **Pizzatipi**, a courtyard pizza restaurant with bar. I'd visited once before for live music, but hadn't realised what delights lay inside its Tafarn Smwglin bar.



**Pizzatipi**

Four craft beers were available on draught, plus a choice of nine ciders and perries dispensed from bag in box, a very welcome sight on a day that had offered very little for those of an "apple" persuasion. I decided to stick with beer and chose Crafty Devil's Basket Case (4.5% session IPA), served cool and unfiltered and with a flavour to wake up my taste buds. It was brilliant stuff and a great way to end my trip.

All in all, even though a number of pubs have closed since my last visit (the Eagle, Hope and Anchor, and Black Lion), I was glad to find that Cardigan still has a good handful of pubs that cater for real ale lovers.

*There is a regular bus service (T5) during the day between Cardigan and Aberystwyth, and a limited service during evenings and Sundays. See [www.traveline.cymru](http://www.traveline.cymru).*

*Check [www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com) and pub websites for opening times and other facilities when planning your own ramble.*

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT COUNTRY PUB

**Y Ffarmers was gutted by fire in early 2018. Cwrw Ceredigion found out how the sudden loss has affected local people and what the plans are to reopen this popular pub.**

Over the years Y Ffarmers in the rural village of Llanfihangel y Creuddyn near Aberystwyth has gained a reputation as a great village pub. Along with a good range of real ale and cider it offers top quality food made from local produce, character and atmosphere. It benefits from a picturesque setting in a pretty village, making it popular with visitors, and like all good village pubs it plays a huge role in the local community.

Landlady Caitlin Morse had been managing the pub for four years when she bought the premises in 2017 along with business partner Lewis Johnston. Then tragedy struck when, one morning in January 2018, a huge fire ripped through the building.

"You can imagine the shock and upset experienced by Caitlin and Lewis, their staff and the local community when news of the fire came through," said Hugh Jones, CAMRA member and pub regular. "Since then local people have rallied around to support Caitlin. Many have said how much they have felt the loss of the pub which demonstrates just how precious our country pubs are and what a key role they play in their community."

"Y Ffarmers was not just a place to have a tippie or two, it was also a place for a wide range of associations, clubs and groups to meet and a reason for people to visit the village," said Paul Davies of Trawsgoed Community Council. "Young and old would pop in for a chat, meet friends and catch up on the gossip. Without the pub the village has got quieter as if its heart has stopped beating."

Caitlin's roots are deeply embedded in the community and she is determined to keep the spirit of Y Ffarmers alive until the pub reopens. As well as overseeing the rebuild,

**Local people with Caitlin Morse (front) outside Y Ffarmers**



she has organised several events including a get together at a local farm. Together with Lewis she has also launched The Crafty Mare, a travelling bar specialising in craft beer, gin and cider in a horsebox or as a pop up bar at events or parties (see their Facebook page for details).

"Y Ffarmers is so much more than just a building," said Caitlin. "The loss suffered by local people and the love and support they have for the pub has shown the importance of getting it running again. There will have to be a few changes, as everything was destroyed, but I am sure that they will be appreciated and I can't wait to welcome people back to the pub."

"Thankfully Caitlin is one determined landlady," added Hugh. "Our village is so lucky to have Y Ffarmers and we look forward to seeing it opening its doors once again. We all wish Caitlin our full support in achieving this."

As we went to press, building work was underway and Y Ffarmers will reopen in late 2018.

**The Crafty Mare**



**Cwrw Ceredigion met Steve Day who runs the Skinners Arms in Machynlleth with his wife Jackie.**

**How long have you run the Skinners Arms?**

For 5 years now.

**What did you do before taking on this pub?**

Before moving to Machynlleth we were running a pub down in Swansea.

**What do you enjoy most about being a publican?**

I really enjoy meeting the different characters that come in and talking with them.

**Why do you think people enjoy a visit to the Skinners Arms?**

I think people enjoy coming here because it's a friendly local pub. On a Wednesday, especially, the bar is full of locals and people who come here from out of town for market day. Drinking on a Wednesday afternoon has always been a tradition in Machynlleth as some pubs had special licensing hours then before all day opening. People enjoy a friendly, lively atmosphere here and visitors are always made to feel welcome.

**Who are your locals?**

We have a very mixed bunch of customers here at different times of the day. We have our regular customers like Eddie Mills who's always asking sport and music questions. The trouble is he doesn't always know the answers!

**Which beers are the most popular?**

We sell the Marston's range of real ales and the Wainwright, a golden beer, is the best seller at the moment.

**Has there been a growth in demand for real ale?**

Yes, most definitely. Since we've been running the pub, the demand for real ale has



grown steadily. We now have a good turnover on our two hand pumps with both locals and visitors drinking it.

**What's your favourite tipple?**

My favourite beer on the hand pump is Banks's Amber.

**Do you hold any regular events at the pub?**

Yes, we have live music occasionally. Sometimes Dai Donkey's Sound Machine will do a disco for us. It's quite often a themed disco which always goes down well. We've also had karaoke here a few times. We hold a pub quiz from time to time, too, and have raised money for different charities such as the Air Ambulance.

**Do you have any plans for new events?**


Yes, the Machtoberfest is coming up in October. This exciting new project involves many local pubs. We have been working together to organise it and it will focus on Belgian beers and different foods. We also hope to have some celebrity artists perform at the pub in the future.

**Which famous person would you like to have as a regular?**

David Bowie, if he was still alive, as he's a god amongst artists to me. What a colourful life he led!

*If you're a local landlord who would like to appear in this feature please get in touch.*


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# FOUR OF THE BEST: SUNDAY LUNCHES

## Black Lion, Llanbadarn Fawr



The Black Lion's Sunday carvery is a well-cooked, traditional roast lunch served in the bar or dining room. There are two meats, Yorkshire pudding and plenty of vegetables, along with thick gravy. It's followed by a simple dessert and costs just £7.50. If you prefer a hot pudding, ask when you book. The vegetarian option must be ordered in advance, too. The three real ales from Marston's are under £3 per pint, and there's an inexpensive range of wine. Please note that the pub only takes cash.

## Black Lion, New Quay



The Sunday lunch menu at the Black Lion changes every week but offers a choice from three meats, a fish dish and a vegetarian option. Dishes are served with lots of vegetables and the cauliflower cheese is especially good. Everything is nicely presented and comes in generous portions. You can sit in the contemporary restaurant and admire the sea view or outside in the large garden with children's play area and covered seating. Mantle Brewery's MOHO pale ale and Sharp's Doom Bar are on draught and are joined by a third guest ale at busier times.

## Druid Inn, Goginan



Once chosen by the Guardian as one of the best pubs in Britain for Sunday lunch, the Druid Inn serves a fixed price menu. This offers a choice of four meats, each of which is served with tons of vegetables and gallons of gravy, or a vegetarian option for £10.95. If you have room for one of the homemade puddings, there is a two course option for £13.95. The Druid was CAMRA's Wales pub of the year in 2017 and the friendly bar staff serve an ever-changing array of real ale and draught cider.

## White Lion, Talybont



If you are looking for a Sunday lunch with hearty portions that's good value too, then this friendly pub a few miles north of Aberystwyth is the place to go. For £7.95 you get a monster roast of pork, turkey or beef along with lots of vegetables and all the trimmings including proper thick gravy. Vegetarians are catered for with a tasty nut roast served with vegetable gravy. You can wash it down with a choice of real ales from the Marston's range.

**Information and prices correct when going to press. Contact the pub to check details and to book.**

**From colour to taste, no two real ales are the same. Alex Vokes gives us a rundown on porter, a dark coloured beer that was once one of the most popular styles in Britain.**

There are several theories about how this dark beer got its name. One of them is that porter was a nickname as the beer style was enjoyed by the porters who delivered goods to London markets. Another historical account suggests that the name came from a beer called "poorter" that was brought into the country from the Netherlands.

A recipe for porter recorded in 1722 by London brewer Ralph Harwood was a blend of three different beers of varying strengths. Porter had to be aged in huge vats before being drunk because one of the ingredients was a stale older beer that took time to mellow. The result was a drink that was around 6-7% ABV. Recipes at the time used brown malt which means that porter would have originally been similar to a dark bitter in colour. It was not until the malt roaster was invented in 1817 that black patent malt was used instead (mainly due to grain taxes) and porter took on the colour and lower alcoholic strength we recognise today.

Modern porters have a stronger flavour and colour than brown ales but are not as dark as stouts. There are four main varieties which all have roasted and dark chocolate flavours and aromas. Brown porters are the most restrained version with a light toasty caramel flavour and are usually between 4-5.4% ABV. Robust porters are brown porter's bigger brother and are stronger at 4.8-6.5% ABV. The roasted flavours are much more pronounced and may have burnt or acrid notes with bready malt sweetness. Baltic porters are stronger still and can be up to 9.5% ABV. Baltics typically have dark fruit notes such as raisins and some sherry-like characteristics. Similar to the UK robust porter the American porter is drier and is brewed using American malt and yeast.

In the past few years porters and other darker beers have been shunned by some drinkers, mainly due to the popularity of pale coloured hoppy beers. Many landlords treat porter as a winter beer, if they stock it at all. Despite this, some breweries are bucking the trend and enjoying great success by adding coffee, chocolate and even marshmallows to their recipes.

So, if you spot a darker coloured beer on the bar or a porter pump clip, don't drink with your eyes. Ask for a taste and you may be pleasantly surprised!



## Bae Ceredigion pubs serving porter

Here are just a few of the porters that have been on offer in our local pubs during 2018.

- \* Bluestone Moonstone Porter (Three Horseshoe, Llangeitho)
- \* Cotleigh Chocca Mocca Porter (Yr Hen Orsaf, Aberystwyth)
- \* Evan Evans Beehive Porter (Slaters Arms, Corris; Three Horseshoe, Llangeitho)
- \* Purple Moose Dark Side of the Moose (Ship and Castle, Glengower Hotel and Yr Hen Orsaf, Aberystwyth; White Lion, Machynlleth)
- \* Tiny Rebel Stay Puff (Ship and Castle, Aberystwyth)

# CIDER SCENE

**Real cider is undergoing a revival and the number of producers in Wales is growing. Bae Ceredigion CAMRA cider representative Gail Robinson explains what makes cider real and introduces a local producer.**

## What is real cider?

Put simply, real cider is produced just from apple juice. Yeast ferments the juice and, several months later, you have real cider. Perry is the equivalent drink made from perry pears. Both products can be served directly from a plastic cask, from a "bag in box" (similar to wine), in a bottle or from a hand pump like real ale.

On the other hand, many of the well-known ciders sold in the UK are produced from a mixture of apple juice concentrate, water and sugar, and some have artificial flavouring. They are often carbonated and served cold and fizzy from a keg (like lager) or a bottle. They taste very different to the real thing!

## Where can you drink real cider in the Bae Ceredigion area?

A good place to start is the Druid Inn, Goginan which won our local cider pub of the year award thanks to the variety of draught and bottled ciders it sells. Runner-up Kane's Bar in Aberystwyth offers a constantly changing cider range and you can try a selection in a four pump cider platter.



The number of other local pubs selling real cider is growing. You can search for them on [www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com) which is CAMRA's free online pub directory. It's also worth asking

the bar staff when you visit a pub for the first time, as a pub may serve real cider but it may not always be clearly on display.

## Spotlight on Gethin's Cyder

Gethin ap Dafydd grew up in Lampeter and planted his first apple pip as a child. In 2002, he made cider for the first time under the name of "Sudd Cwmpo Drosto" (Welsh for falling over juice). That initial gallon eventually turned into 200 gallons in the following years and nowadays he's running a budding cider business in Pembrokeshire.

In 2007 Gethin took the reins of his friend's cider making project in St Dogmaels. He experimented with various methods, and changed the business name to Gethin's Cyder. It wasn't long until he started winning awards, including Champion Cider of Wales.

Now, with the help of family and friends, 28,000 litres of pure juice cider is made every autumn and sold locally. Gethin is planning for the future, too, having planted two orchards with over 550 cider apple and perry pear trees.

Gethin produces boxed and bottled ciders and perry. The range includes Sych (Welsh for dry), a 7% full bodied traditional dry cider; Hapus (happy) a 6% medium well balanced cider; Melys (sweet), a 5% crisp refreshing sweet cider; and Peren (perry) a 6% medium perry.

Local stockists of Gethin's Cyder include:

Three  
Horseshoe,  
Llangeitho

Y Talbot,  
Tregaron

Kane's Bar,  
Aberystwyth

Pizzatipi,  
Cardigan

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### New beer guide for Belgium

If you're planning a visit to Europe's beer capital, then the new edition of CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide Belgium* is an ideal travelling companion. It would also make a great Christmas present for an armchair Belgian beer fan.

The guide contains details of over 800 bars, cafés and beer shops together with city maps showing bar locations. As well as address details and examples of the beer on offer, each bar is described with interesting anecdotes and snippets of history. The brewery A-Z has beer lists plus handy information for a beer tourist, for example which breweries offer tours, have a tasting room or sell directly to the public.

The Belgian beer year chapter highlights the main beer festivals and the guide also includes travel advice along with some

interesting short features on beer cafés, Belgian history and what to eat to soak up the beer!

The guide is written by well-known beer writers Tim Webb and Jim Strange and costs £14.99 from [www.camra.org.uk/shop](http://www.camra.org.uk/shop).

No chance of a trip to the beer capital of Europe? Luckily you can enjoy Belgian beer locally with Blue Moon on keg at the Pier Hotel in Aberystwyth and Leffe at the Castle in Aberaeron.



### Branch in brief

At the last count there were **well over 60 pubs serving real ale in our area**. We try to keep information about our pubs on CAMRA's national website [www.whatpub.com](http://www.whatpub.com) as up to date as possible. We welcome updates so if you notice any errors please use the "submit update" function.

Some members were inadvertently transferred to neighbouring branches in 2018, so it may be **worth checking your membership details** the next time you log in to the CAMRA website to check you're still classed as a Bae Ceredigion member!

A big thank you to Kane's Bar for hosting our **quiz** as part of their cider festival. As well as raising money for branch funds, we made a donation to Blood Bikes Wales, the charity nominated by Kane's.

Thank you to the Cadwgan, Aberaeron and the Black Lion, Llanbadarn Fawr for hosting

recent **branch meetings**. See our website for dates and venues of meetings and socials - all members are most welcome to come along.

Fourteen members visited Monty's Brewery Visitor Centre and pubs in Montgomeryshire on our **annual minibus outing**. The bus was full and the day was a great success - we even stumbled across a new beer festival in Kerry. Many thanks to Chris Giles for planning the route and to Mike Galliers for driving.



# I LOVE MY LOCAL

**Bae Ceredigion member Chris Giles from Capel Bangor tells us why he loves the Druid Inn in Goginan.**

## **What's the pub's history?**

The "Druid Inn" name was mentioned in an old letter and so it is known that it was operating as a pub in 1719. The village used to be populated mostly by workers of the slate, lead and silver mines that operated in the area. When the roof was being replaced, a bricked-up room was discovered and some papers belonging to the mining captain were found inside. These became known as the Druid papers and are now in the National Library.

## **Tell us about the landlord and staff.**

Lewis Johnston has been the landlord for the past 11 years while the main face behind the bar is Seán. He gives a friendly welcome to anyone who walks in and is very keen for everyone to try new beers. These are supplied by the Ystwyth Ales wholesaler which is also run by Lewis and operates next door. The kitchen staff are also very friendly and are passionate about the food they make.

## **Who are the pub's regulars?**

The Druid attracts a lot of interesting people from all walks of life, locals and passers-by. The pub has won numerous CAMRA awards and is our local cider pub of the year. It was also the Wales CAMRA pub of the year in 2017. Winning a CAMRA award helps raise the profile of a pub and means that lots of real ale fans seek it out. The thing that I love about this pub is that it is inclusive of everyone who visits, always welcoming a new face. You are likely to meet someone that you won't forget here!

## **Which real ales have been on the bar recently?**

Mantle Brewery's MOHO and Wye Valley Bitter are regulars alongside a constantly changing offer from breweries from near and far plus an interesting range of keg



and bottled beer. I enjoy trying the different beers here but, if there's nothing else which takes my fancy, Mantle's MOHO always goes down a treat.

## **What's the food like?**

The Druid does excellent food! In fact, it was once voted as the best pub Sunday lunch by a national newspaper. All the food is homemade and sourced locally with specials such as fish and chip Fridays. My favourite dish has to be the curry, which is made with care and can even be tailored to your preference.

## **Does the pub hold any regular events?**

Every now and then the Druid holds events, such as live music by local artists, bingo nights and book nights. They also have some race nights planned. All the upcoming events are displayed on a board above the bar.

## **Where is your favourite place to enjoy a drink?**

I enjoy sitting at the corner of the bar so I can enjoy a chat with the staff and the local frequenters or perhaps share a conversation with a new face at the bar.

## **Sum up in one sentence why our readers should drink here.**

The Druid is a friendly pub where all-comers are welcomed by staff and fellow customers alike and where both conversation and great beer flow.

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