



Eat fresh and local

Shirlee of Eat Surrey seeks and finds the best small food producers, restaurants, cafés, pubs and shops, publishing a weekly review on their website.

Milford, a small outpost of better-known Godalming, is home to a couple of Surrey's culinary superstars. Suke and Tom Wibaut had been making a healthy living as outside caterers in the heyday of the corporate lunch. A seismic shift in the last twenty years from booze-filled lunches to gym sessions put paid to that business model.

Undeterred, they watched the emerging cupcake phenomenon and set up 'Butter and Cream Cakes'. Suke carefully researched cupcake entrepreneurs in the capital and with her combination of competitor knowledge plus years of experience, she launched the new business. Having been stung by high street rents in a past life, Suke and Tom began with a pitch in Guildford's North Street Market and have not looked back.

Cupcakes in a startling range of flavours and designs started the business, and they are delicious. Interesting flavour combinations, with cream cheese frosting, prevents them from being oversweet and gives a wonderful melt in the mouth finish. Blackberry Shiraz, chocolate and chilli, red velvet and salted caramel are just a small sample. But it's the decorations that really sell these cakes. Stepping behind the counter in the shop is sprinkle heaven. These decorations are used in a stunning range of combinations to make the cakes irresistible. With Suke and Tom's talents it's no surprise their brownie sales have started to rocket – choose from salted peanut, apricot and brandy, raspberry and white chocolate or ginger. New flavours are being added all the time.

A vacant shop in Milford became Butter and Cream Cakes' new home in 2012. Primarily a production unit as the volume of business outgrew the home kitchen, it's in here a glittering spectrum of cakes are dreamed up and created for weddings, birthdays and celebrations.

Just down the road from the new shop is a Surrey institution, Secretts. Part pick-your-own farm, growers of celebrated salad leaves and vegetables, farm shop and cornucopia of quirky food products, it was home to Eliza's – a quaint old tea-room. Eliza's had lost its sparkle and it was welcome news when I heard that Suke and Tom were going to take it over. Just over a year later they have done a wonderful job of keeping doors open to existing customers whilst updating the space and menu gradually and gracefully. Gone are the huge commercial scones that made your mouth stick together and in their place are lovely cakes and freshly baked scones from their shop.

In its previous life, the tea-room's menu was populated with ready-made dishes that staff simply reheated. Now it's back to real cooking with a more contemporary menu focusing on fresh seasonal food. Delicious homemade soups and salads are on the menu. Roasted butternut squash and goat's cheese with delicate dressing are options. So are freshly baked tarts filled with taleggio, garlic mushrooms and spinach or roasted tomato or gratin of sweet potato and beetroot. All deliciously comforting, healthy and made fresh each day. Good quality coffee and tea complements the menu.

It's such a relief the tea-room within Secretts has been a success as it could so easily have been infiltrated by a faceless high street chain. I am really glad it hasn't and more so as it's put this venue back on the map for me.

Why not combine a visit with grocery shopping – it will not disappoint. Black Barn butchers on site sell free-range, locally sourced pork and feature rare breed beef. The butcher has its own range of sausages, award winning faggots and helpful, knowledgeable staff too. The farm shop is packed to the ceiling with a stunning array of food products along with a huge cheese and deli counter. But for my money it's Secretts' home-grown seasonal fruit and veggies that hit the spot. Recently I went for a whirlwind tour with Greg Secrett who is in charge of growing. With his team of 12 he grows vegetables on Secretts' 150 acre farm for top London restaurants and the farm shop.

The combination of the tea-room, shop and zero food miles for local produce makes Secretts a perfect destination and proves that good old fashioned retailing is still a possibility in a world of fierce supermarket food competition. ●

essence info

Butter and Cream Cakes

22 Church Road, Milford, Godalming, Surrey GU8 5JD

Guildford North Street Market (top end) on Fridays and Saturdays.

Secretts Farm Shop and

Eliza's Tea-Room at Secretts

Hurst Farm, Chapel Lane, Milford, Surrey GU8 5HU

Websites: www.eatsurrey.com,
www.butterandcream.co.uk,
www.secretts.co.uk



Jerusalem Artichoke Dauphinoise with blue cheese and a pistachio crust

Eliza's Tea-Room at Secretts always has a layered vegetable style dish on its specials' board. Past lunches include beetroot and potato with cheese and a hint of cream: a winning format and perfect for a light meal to serve with some green leaves. Having picked some Jerusalem Artichokes with Greg Secrett, I decided to create my own Eliza's-inspired layered dish. The artichokes will be in season for the next few weeks, so now is the time to enjoy them before they disappear. Slice them thinly for this dish, so cooking the artichokes first makes them a lot easier to handle. I used Quark, a fat free soft cheese as I had been sent some by a dairy to try, but use cream in place if preferred. As the artichokes are coming to the end of their season, they may retain a nutty bite, which I think, adds character.

Ingredients

- 10g butter to grease an ovenproof dish
- One kilogram of Jerusalem Artichokes. Peel then boil for ten minutes, drain, cool, and thinly slice
- Two x 250g tubs of Quark or 400ml single cream
- Four tablespoons milk
- 150g blue cheese (I used Brinkworth Blue, but any soft style, milder blue will work)
- One tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- One large slice brown bread made into breadcrumbs
- One tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- One tablespoon chopped pistachio nuts
- One tablespoon pine kernels

Pre-heat the oven to 220°C/ fan 200°C/gas mark 5.

Method

- Put half the artichokes in the bottom of the greased ovenproof dish.
- Mix together the Quark and milk and spread half the mixture over the top of the artichokes.
- Season the layer and top evenly with blue cheese by just crumbling. Finish with the fresh herbs.
- Top with the remaining artichokes and Quark.
- Mix the breadcrumbs and oil together and sprinkle evenly over the top of the dish.
- Place in a medium oven for one hour. After 30 minutes remove the dish, add the nuts and return to the oven.

Serve with some lightly dressed green leaves. Half the artichokes can be replaced with potatoes for a less feisty dish.

Shirlee Posner

LIGHTING TO INSPIRE

PRIVATE LIGHTING CONSULTANT

JOHN HODGSON LIGHTING
SHOWROOM AND IN-HOME LIGHTING CONSULTANTS

Designer: Liz Hodgson MSc Lighting Design
Mobile: 07946502170
www.johnhodgsonlighting.co.uk