

# Music, mud and marvellous LOCAL FOOD

YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW THIS, BUT AS WELL AS THE HEADLINERS, GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL SHOWCASES SOME OF OUR GREAT WEST COUNTRY PRODUCERS. BENJAMIN PARKER INVESTIGATES.

Every year, thousands of people gather near Pilton in Somerset, for one of the world's most famous cultural events, Glastonbury Festival. But it's not just music that's on the menu; there is also a huge emphasis on West Country food and drink.

"Glastonbury has over 350 stalls serving the size of a small city. People are walking around and on their feet for long periods," said Jason Holmes, a Glastonbury spokesman. "The key emphasis has to be on great, nourishing and healthy fodder. Many of our stallholders and those working here are from the local area. We have good links with the region. This year we have William's Green, which for the first time contains a farmer's market. With the emphasis on food and drink we have dedicated a whole area to it."

Let's take a look at some of the West Country producers who showcased their wares at Glastonbury this year.

## PIEMINISTER

'Performing' at Glastonbury since 2004, this year Pieminister sustained festivalgoers with their new travelling pie shop. Pieminister are veterans of the festival food scene and have a wall of poems, stories and photos to back up this claim - I'm told that Pieminister-fuelled marriage proposals are not unusual at a festival like Glastonbury...

Served in eco-boxes with wooden cutlery, award-winning pies are available individually or with sides, including mash, minted peas and gravy. All the pies are made in-house in Bristol with good quality ingredients: 100% British beef, outdoor reared pork, free range chicken and venison, and MSC certified fish. The vegetarian pie range is approved by the Vegetarian Society

A meat, fish or vegetarian pie combined with such an iconic music and cultural event gives a truly British twist on a music festival experience.



## JON THORNER'S

Of the food suppliers at Glastonbury this year there aren't many more local than this Somerset butchers. It was over 20 years ago that Jon Thorne bought his house from Michael Eavis, the legendary founder of Glastonbury Festival. With reservations about whether living so close to the festival site would cause him issues, Michael Eavis attempted to sweeten the deal. He offered Jon a pitch at the next festival and the gourmet burger stall was born.

Despite many different meaty offerings from the stall over the years, the decision was made to concentrate on selling premium quality 6oz West Country steak burgers to the hungry masses.

Personifying the term 'local', Jon Thorne's farm shop and production factory is just two miles from the festival site. Since setting up their stall, Jon and his team have become one of the main meat suppliers to Glastonbury Festival. For over 15 years he has supplied meat to the festivalgoers as well as the catering teams who feed the numerous television and radio crews.

While admitting working at and supplying the festival can be a tough logistical operation, the passion still remains, with the



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company telling us that it is, "a great experience to be part of, as well as a brilliant way to get people tasting en masse the fantastic quality meat sourced from the West Country."

## SMOOTH CRIMINALS

Smooth Criminals, a family-run business from Somerton, was founded in 2007 with festivals in mind as the key market place. To this day, fresh, made-to-order smoothies remain at the forefront of their menu, made from frozen fruit, apple juice and natural yoghurt. The fruit is frozen at source so that all the nutrients remain and with each smoothie providing three of your five a day, they are the perfect cold drink for a hot day, especially when walking around hungover!

Aimee Dunevein started the company with her father after a trip around the world, during which she fell in love with smoothies. Aimee explained: "When we started seven years ago a lot of the festivals were littered with the old fashioned 'cream and green' chip and burger vans and there wasn't much choice for fresh wholesome food, with the exception of Glastonbury. Glastonbury set the standard of food traders that other festivals

had to match up to. "I feel very proud to now have my own smoothie bars adding

a little piece to the Glastonbury pie. My dad went to the very first Glastonbury and has never missed one since. He becomes 18 again over the weekend, dancing all night with a big excited smile on his face."

## BROTHERS CIDER

No summer festival would be quite right without a glass of cider in hand, especially when that festival is being held in the cider-fuelled West Country. The roots of Brothers Cider in Somerset go back over 350 years and although the present day company was founded in 1992 by the Showering brothers, their family has been making cider in the region since 1658.

In 1995 Michael Eavis offered the Brothers space for a bar at Glastonbury Festival near the Jazz World Stage, with one condition: their sales were restricted to perry-based drinks. When the offer of 'perry' was met with little consumer understanding, the oft-uttered description by the festival staff became "like cider but made from pears".

After repeating this tens of thousands of times the shorthand 'pear cider' was introduced and understood for the first time in the UK. Over the

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next 10 years, Glasto revellers wondered where they could buy Brothers cider when the festival was over and in 2005 it was launched into the on and off trade.

Based in Shepton Mallet, the rise of this cider is intrinsically linked to Glastonbury Festival, making their famous 'Festival Strength Pear' a UK festival staple.

## FROM DORSET WITH LOVE

A debutant at this year's Glastonbury festival, the offerings from Blandford Forum based From Dorset With Love is aimed at the other end of the festival experience.

After receiving an email from a fellow West Country producer with the offer of supplying the event, From Dorset With Love were more than happy to provide some of their food to the famed festival.

"Our products won't be in amongst the proper festival goes with all that goes on historically at Glastonbury," said Karl Regter, co-founder of the venture. "We're involved at the other end of the spectrum by having our jams and chutneys on the menu and breakfast tables of a VIP encampment called Camp Kerala."

