

Celebrating sausages the New Forest Marque way

Raisins, blackberry wine and crab apple jelly were just some of the ingredients used in a 'blind' New Forest Marque sausage taste-test at The Pig in Brockenhurst to celebrate 'British Sausage Week.'

From the 31 October to 6 November the humble sausage is being celebrated throughout the UK and nowhere more than in the New Forest.

In farm shops, hotels, restaurants and cafes sausages are on the menu and with a name like 'The Pig', chef James Golding was keen to get involved.

All the sausages in the taste-test were supplied by New Forest Marque butcher Chris Oakes from Oakwood Butchers, who won the New Forest Marque sausage of the year 2010 for his beef, plum and raisin sausage.

Alison Barnes, Chief Executive of the New Forest National Park Authority where the New Forest Marque scheme is based with support of the district council, said: 'The New Forest is full of fantastic local producers like Chris who use local ingredients to make fantastic foods.'

'The Marque is the only scheme like it in the country; producers are audited to ensure a proportion of their food is from the Forest and that the animals are reared to the highest welfare standards.'

James Golding, Head Chef at The Pig, said: 'It's our ethos is to use local producers wherever possible. We make a commitment that at least 80% of our fresh ingredients are sources from the local area.'

'Today was about tasting and sampling great local food, we have a wealth of ingredients on our doorstep which we should be celebrating. Our menus continually change depending on the seasons and what's available.'

Local butcher Chris Oakes who supplied the five mystery sausages added: 'It's a privilege to have access to such great produce. We work hard to make sure our sausages are tasty and affordable.'

'The panel did really well today at guessing the mystery ingredients; however, no one could identify the flavour of the overall winner.'

'I'd like to thank Jennifer Williams from Naked Jam who supplied me with crab apple jelly; it was the overall winner by a mile. Everyone enjoyed its sweet taste and kept going back for more!'