

Rural Retreats: From Field to Fork (in less than 5 minutes)

An enterprising couple have turned their rural retreat into a model of sustainably sourced local produce where the food miles can be measured in feet.

Nestling under the rugged ridges and outcrops of Bowland Knotts, Dale House Barn is quite a long way off the beaten track. Passing trade is almost non-existent and the nearest pub is six miles away – yet for the growing numbers of repeat visitors to this rural idyll – this is academic.

Everything they need is within easy walking (or cycling distance) of the Barn. A short walk up the lane offers amazing walks and fabulous views over both the Bowland Fells and the Yorkshire Dales. Miles of rugged single-track and more walks are just a short ride away in Gisburn Forest and a whole supporting cast of Bowland wildlife can be watched through the windows.

But increasingly it's the locally-sourced dishes on the ever-changing menu that draw outdoor enthusiasts and foodies alike to this out-of-the-way location in the uplands above Slaidburn.

Proprietor Dominique Ashford and partner Andrew make a great team. Both keen cyclists and nature-lovers, they can advise guests on all the local outdoor activities, but come the evening, this engaging double act really come into their own.





“When we mentioned that most of the ingredients for each dish came from within a mile – or in some cases – just a few yards of the Barn, they were absolutely fascinated and wanted to know more. It’s just snowballed from there”

An accomplished marksman, Andrew is uniquely well qualified to source pheasants, rabbits and deer from the game-rich countryside surrounding the barn. Meanwhile, trained chef Dominique knows exactly how to make the most of the natural larder on their doorstep.

"It started out as an optional extra that we offered for guests who didn't want to go out in the evenings after a hard day on the tracks or walking the fells," explained Dominique. "But we quickly found that people were rebooking and asking for the evening menu options."

"The deer, rabbits and pheasants from the surrounding area, eggs from the hens, vegetables from the garden and – depending on the season – herbs, mushrooms, nuts and berries from the hedgerows. The bread is always home-made and if I can't find something on the land, I'm very careful about sourcing quality beef and lamb from local markets or independent suppliers in Bowland, the Dales or the Ribble Valley."

The interest in her zero food miles approach has prompted Dominique to add foraging and cookery courses to the menu of activities available at Dale House.

"From spring, we will be offering foraging breaks which we can team up with bread-

making or cookery courses for enthusiastic foodies who want to immerse themselves in the local food ethos," said Dominique.

"Guests could go for a wildlife walk, gather some wild garlic, fruit, berries or mushrooms and then come back to the kitchen and learn how to cook it before enjoying the fruits of their labours in a locally sourced and home-cooked meal."

On booking guests receive a sample menu and can select a choice of starter, main and dessert – all for a set price of around half what you'd expect to pay in a city centre restaurant.

"The menus change throughout the seasons according to what's available," explained Dominique. "In spring,

the focus is on light fragrant cooking using fresh wild herbs like garlic and wood sorrel in soufflés and flans. Home-made pesto with fresh fish or pasta and Bowland goat's cheese is always popular."

“In autumn, the accent is on game dishes – because we are spoiled for choice around here. Most dishes will also feature locally picked berries like sloes and blackberries and – of course – mushrooms”



Dale House Barn *and* Bed & Breakfast

Situated in the heart of the stunning surroundings of Gisburn forest and the beautiful Ribble Valley, with easy access to the Yorkshire Dales.



The B&B

Our beautiful 400-year-old farm house offers luxury bed and breakfast and delicious evening meals in a very rural setting, perfect for exploring Bowland in the day and for star gazing at night.

Our Barn

Our sympathetically converted camping barn offers comfortable and practical self-catering group accommodation for up to 14. Hearty breakfasts and evening meals available.

SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR DETAILS TO ARRANGE YOUR PRIVATE STAR GAZING EVENING

For enquiries and booking please call **01200 411095** or visit our website **www.dalehousebarn.co.uk**