



A taste for travel: (from left) south west cider tour, learn to butcher a pig, Scottish seafood and an English vineyard

If eating out and trying local specialities is the highlight of your holiday, why not take a gourmet break?

Holidays for foodies

GREAT BRITAIN

Cider trail, Somerset //

Build up an appetite on this walking and food weekend, which includes daily walks of between five and eight miles, with stop-offs at vintage apple orchards and a cider farm to sample ciders and apple brandies. The cost of £302 per person (based on two sharing) includes lunch, dinner and B&B at the Lord Poulett Arms, Gastropub of the Year 2008. **More details: Foot Trails, 01747 820626, www.foottrails.co.uk**

Cheesemaking, Exmoor //

Learn to make soft cheese, yoghurt and cream at Hagley Bridge Farm on the border of Devon and Somerset. The Quantocks, Blackdown Hills

and Exmoor are on the farm's doorstep. A weekend course costs £284, including two nights' B&B and evening meals. **More details: Hagley Bridge Farm, 01984 629026, www.hagleybridgefarm.co.uk**

Oyster festival, Anglesey //

The island of Anglesey is known as the 'Mother of Wales', a reference to its traditional role as food provider to the rest of the country. The Anglesey Oyster and Shellfish Festival takes place each October, when a host of food events are organised across the island. The Ingledene B&B at Trearddur Bay has double rooms from £55 per night. **More details: Anglesey Oyster Festival, 01248**

725700, www.angleseyoysterfestival.com; Ingledene B&B, 01407 861026, www.ingledene.co.uk

Butchery, Devon //

Spend a day at Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's River Cottage near Axminster learning to butcher a pig and make your own air-dried and brine-cured hams, brawn, bacon, sausages, chorizo and salami with expert Ray Smith. The Pig in a Day course costs from £150 per person. Apple Tree B&B at Sellerswood Farm is nearby. B&B prices start at £35 per person per night. **More details: River Cottage, 01297 630302, www.rivercottage.net; Apple Tree B&B, 01297 552944, www.sellerswood.co.uk**

Seafood trail, Scotland //

Seafood lovers should head for Argyll, on Scotland's dramatic west coast. The five-night break includes stays in three boutique hotels around the west coast, a seafood cookery demonstration and tasting and a chance to join a local fisherman on his fishing boat, and enjoy a lochside lunch of the day's catch. A five-night break costs £449 per person, or £149 per person for three nights. **More details: McKinlay Kidd, 08707 606027, www.seescotlanddifferently.co.uk**

Wine tasting, Gloucestershire //

English wines are no longer to be sniffed at. At the Three Choirs Vineyard in leafy Gloucestershire you get to

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try some of the best wines the country has to offer on a two-night wine-tasting break. Accommodation is in wooden lodges nestling between the vines, where a breakfast hamper is delivered to your doorstep each morning. Prices start at £225 per night per lodge, including dinner, bed and breakfast. **More details: Three Choirs, 01531 890223, www.threechoirs.com**

ABROAD

Slow food festival, Turin //

Turin's biennial Slow Food Festival takes place on 23-27 October, with stalls, seminars, demonstrations and tasting sessions. A one-day ticket costs €20 (about £16) or €10 (about £8) for Slow Food

members. The nearby town of Alba holds its annual *Fiera del Tartufo Bianco* – white truffle festival – from 4 October–9 November. Agriturismo La Margherita in Carmagnola is well positioned for exploring these and other gastronomic delights of the Piedmont region. Prices start at €55 (£44) per night for a single room and €70 (£56) for a double. **More details: Salone del Gusto, www.salonedelgusto.com; La Margherita, www.agriturismo.it/lamargherita**

French cookery, Lyon //

If you don't know your *cuillère* from your *couteau*,

take a cooking course with French language lessons at the Ecole de Trois Ponts near Lyon. You can choose from general French cookery, pastry/baking or chocolate making, alongside your French lessons. From €1,450 (£1,154) for a week, including accommodation in a chateau in picturesque countryside, French language and cookery lessons and all meals. **More details: Ecole des Trois Ponts, +33 (0) 4 77 71 53 00, www.3ponts.edu**

Gastronomic tour, Ireland //

For a taste of Ireland, its cuisine and hospitality, get

together with a group of friends and take an escorted day trail around Wicklow. You'll meet farmers, beekeepers and cheesemakers, and feast on a wonderful picnic of seasonal produce. Two- and three-day tours around Cork, Kilkenny, Galway and Connemara are also available. A one-day escorted tour of Wicklow costs from €250 (£198) per person. The company also runs a morning walk around Dublin's food markets with food tastings for €45 (£36) per person. **More details: Fabulous Food Trails, 00 353 1497 1245, www.fabfoodtrails.com**



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