

# Rhubarb

Winter 2014

LOCAL TO LUDLOW  
MARKET QUARTERLY

02

## Appetiser

Meet the Producer:  
Sarah Hampton from  
Brock Hall Farm

03

## Season-in'

Quince

## Main Course

Recipe from l'Ortolan

04

## Extras

10 Good Questions &  
A Focus on D.W. Walls  
Butchers and Sons

Plus

## Calendar

Our Essential Dates for  
your Winter food and  
drink diary.

## Welcome

We're so pleased to be back – partly due to lots of positive comments about our first edition of Rhubarb. This is our winter newsletter which captures another snapshot of Ludlow's local food scene with the Ludlow Local Produce Market as its cornerstone. We want people to get that bit closer to our local producers, come and visit the market and chat to the stallholders - they love any opportunity to share their story with others and you'll soon become aware how incredibly important these people are to the local food scene.



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# Brock Hall Farm: Joie de Vivre

**Chatting with Sarah Hampton at Brock Hall Farm's stall at the market is a joy, her zeal for her cheeses is infectious and tasting the full range with their differing qualities is a heavenly journey.**

As she moves on to talking about her very special herd of goats, the reason for how she has ended up in Shropshire making award winning cheese becomes apparent. With great peals of laughter (with which Sarah punctuates most of her sentences) she comes across as being totally at one with being a local producer of fine cheeses. A day at the market is her respite from the long solitary days working in her dairy, she adds 'Coming here and hearing such positive comments from people when they taste my cheese makes everything so worthwhile.'

When Tish Dockerty visited the farm and dairy, Sarah's love of Saanen goats shone through. Speaking with clear affection and her usual broad smile, she

told of her recognition of the bleats of each and every one of her eighty-strong herd and recalled that she found this unusual interest at an early age, 'When I worked in London I'd go on a detour on my way home from work to go and admire the goats at a local farm - I always wanted my own herd.'

The milking parlour is designed for a dozen animals at a time and her goats require either her or a member of staff to be up at 5am to kick start the daily jobs. They need milking twice a day, every day, so there's no day off and no opportunity for a lie in. The demand for her cheese and therefore the milk has meant that Brock Hall needed to breed their own Saanens and they have gradually built up the herd from the early days when they started in 2011. This breed is renowned for their high productivity and easy going temperament, but they are also pretty with short white hair that shows off their lean physique and handsome features. Then there's the cheese making, which really came second to the animal

husbandry but clearly has been so successful that Sarah now has a string of awards associated with her whole range. The rise and rise of Brock Hall's cheeses in this highly specialist artisan trade is remarkable and can be put down to Sarah's determination and drive to really make the best possible tasting and looking cheeses. They are, as their packaging suggests with names like Joie de Chevre, Pablo Cabrito and Fresco Angelico, like pieces of art, carefully crafted with an eye for detail and beauty that makes them stand out on the shelf. Sarah confesses that her favourite is Capra Nouveau, a rindwashed cheese with a lingering, unique flavour. This cheese requires lots of love and attention, with a daily wash of the rind to preserve its blemish free appearance. Her desire to constantly develop and improve her products even after winning awards says so much about her being a total perfectionist.

Sarah sells her cheese in many "purveyors of fine food" around the

country including London, and she also supplies many top chefs including Glyn Purnell, Steve Love and Alan Murchison. So how come she still attends Ludlow Local Produce Market every fourth Thursday? 'I just love the atmosphere and the contact with real folk, it's my day out to catch up with fellow stallholders and chat with regulars and most importantly get feedback. I always listen to the customers and enjoy how people have their own favourites.'

Sarah has shared with me that being at Ludlow is a bit like coming home, she feels very comfortable behind her stalls at the Local Produce Market and the Food Festival. This is where she has cut her teeth and experienced a monumental rise in both her reputation and sales. I personally felt very flattered when Sarah on my visit, whilst rejoicing in the fact that Neal's Yard had just put in their first order, also confided that her "Baby Capras" will only be available at Ludlow market. Now that's loyalty.



## Festive Cheese

Make a note in your diary - 18 December is the last Local to Ludlow Market before Christmas and Sarah will be there with her cheeses. So now is the time to think about your festive cheeseboard. Demand will be high, so don't leave it till the last moment to buy your Brock Hall Farm goats cheese. As well as individual pieces, there will be the chance to buy whole cheeses. If you want to make sure you don't miss out on a whole cheese for your Christmas celebrations, you can call 01746 862533 or email [orders@brockhallfarm.com](mailto:orders@brockhallfarm.com) to secure your Christmas cheese. 'No purchase necessary.' says Sarah 'It's just a way of making sure we bring enough cheeses on the day. One year we ran out and we had a lot of unhappy, cheeseless customers!'

## Recipe: L'Ortolan's Hot Dutch Mistress Soufflés

A great starter for a hearty festive dinner that can be prepared and cooked in advance and then just quickly reheated to be served warm..

### Ingredients

25g butter  
25g flour  
25g grated parmesan  
125ml milk  
100g Dutch Mistress  
25g gruyere or cheddar  
1tbsp Dijon mustard  
3 egg whites



### Method

1. Grease six ramekins with soft butter, refrigerate and line again so you have a double layer of butter.
2. Lightly dust with grated parmesan cheese and set aside. Preheat oven to 180°C (fan 170°C)
3. In a pan, melt the butter and add the flour, cook for a few minutes. Slowly add the milk and cook out for a further 10mins.
4. While the mix is still hot, stir in the cheese and beat until smooth, keeping the mix warm so it melts, then add the mustard. Cool the mix to room temperature.
5. Quarter fill a roasting tray (big enough to fit your ramekins) with boiling water.
6. Whisk the egg whites until they form stiff peaks.
7. Take a quarter of the whisked whites and beat into the mix, then gently fold half the remaining whites in so the mix becomes lighter, followed by the rest.
8. Spoon the mix into the lined moulds, just 3/4 of the way to the top, place in the roasting tray and in the oven for 15 minutes.
9. When cooked they should almost double in size. Remove from the oven and allow to cool in the moulds.
10. De-mould the soufflés when they have cooled. When you are ready to serve, reheat them by placing them back in the oven (sat on greaseproof paper so they don't stick to the tray ) for six minutes or until hot all the way through.

## Season-in'

The strange, rock-hard Quince is often claimed to be the original fruit from the Garden of Eden. And whether you are an Adam or an Eve, if you manage to get your hands on one of these Picasso-esque pears, then you must experiment with their hidden depths of flavour. However resist the temptation to chomp straight into your quince after harvesting in October – let them first sit in your fruit bowl for a while and they will fill your room with their floral aroma. One large quince will feed at least four people, so it's an excuse to have friends round and time to wield your largest, sharpest knife to crack it open. Yes quinces resist human intervention but once quartered and cored you are half way to a delicious, quirky dessert. A favourite recipe of ours requires baking your forbidden fruit for 40 minutes after adding brown sugar, drizzling with honey and adding star anise, cinnamon stick, cardamoms and cloves with some orange juice in the base of the pan so they slowly poach in their exotic spices. Serve with a gluttonous blob of Neals Yard Creamery's totally addictive Crème Fraiche.



# 10 Good Questions

Amanda Woof from Auntie Mo's Scotch Eggs answers our questions this issue....

**So what do you produce to sell at farmers markets?** Handmade scotch eggs using both free range sausage meat and eggs, coated in fresh breadcrumbs – in around 28 different flavours including Christmas specials.

**What gets you out of bed in the morning?** My beautiful daughter and gorgeous grandson. And my dogs, cats and ponies who consider me in bed later than 7am as having a lie in.

**How many markets do you do in an average month?** 12 - 16 per month - depends on the season

**Average number of hours in the day?** 15 hours.

**On those very cold market days how do you keep warm?** Layers, layers and more layers and if very cold there's my infamous hairy snow boots.

**What one message would you like all your customers to take home with them?** That they are about to enjoy a product that's been made with love by someone who is passionate.

**What one thing would improve your business?** For me to realise that I do have a good product and to push myself just that bit more.

**Work wise what's been your proudest moment?** When a customer says "That was the best scotch egg I have ever eaten" I consider myself lucky to have had quite a few of those moments.

**Who would be your dream customer?** Anybody who enjoys Auntie Mo's scotch eggs.

**And lastly which is your favourite market?** It has to be Ludlow, the people are lovely and knowledgeable about food.

# Calendar: Our Essential Dates

**Ludlow Local Produce Market Every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month.**

Nov 13th & 27th, Dec 11th & 18th – a week early in time for Christmas, Jan 8th & 22nd Feb 12th and 26th

**Ludlow Slow Food Christmas Meal Dec 16th**

A specially chosen menu by head chef Andy Link at the Riverside Inn, Aymestrey. Booking essential see [www.slowfoodludlow.org.uk](http://www.slowfoodludlow.org.uk) for details and booking.

**Terra Madre Day Dec 10th**

Terra Madre translated means 'Mother Earth' and is a day celebrated by Slow Food groups all around the world. It's all about linking the very food we eat with local producers. There will be special evening meal at the Green Café. Phone 01584 879872 for details.

**Ludlow Slow Food Breakfast Jan 25th**

Ludlow Slow Food Group's annual Breakfast feast – celebrating the great local food produce of Ludlow – Booking essential see [www.slowfoodludlow.org.uk](http://www.slowfoodludlow.org.uk) for details and booking closer the time

# D.W. Walls and Sons

D.W. Walls butchers, one of three butchers in Ludlow, is brightly lit on these cold winter days and offers an enthusiastic welcome to all. Proprietor, Ian Ray, has been a butcher since the age of twelve, accompanied by his hardworking team they always have a smile, song and jolly jape as they go about their daily business. Proud of their heritage of trading in Ludlow for over 50 years they are able to offer full traceability of their meats' origin. Like all good butchers they have their house specialities which include 28 day hung local traditional breeds, beef ready for roasting, game in season, locally smoked bacon from The Ludlow Smokehouse and the famous homemade Ludlow Sausage inherited from Carter's butchers of old. It's always best to get your pre-order for Christmas treats in early so you can relax and raise a glass of wine and eat a mince pie in the knowledge that everything is in order for your Christmas day feast.

**D. W. Walls and Sons, 14 High Street, Ludlow SY8 1BS. 01584 872060**



Rhubarb words by Tish Dockerty Market Manager 07985218727. For more details concerning Ludlow Local Produce Market [www.localtoludlow.org.uk](http://www.localtoludlow.org.uk) and Ludlow Slow Food Group [www.slowfoodludlow.org.uk](http://www.slowfoodludlow.org.uk)