



A Christmas FEAST for all the family

We have decked the halls and set the table for our Yorkshire Life Christmas feast with Annie Stirk's selection of some of the best produce available in Yorkshire this holiday

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDY BULMER

It's time to raid the seasonal larder for good quality produce and it has never been easier to find inspiration for Christmas food and drink in Yorkshire. In fact we are spoilt for choice.

There is a good chance that smoked fish will appear somewhere on the Christmas table with a number of suppliers around the county. Our seafood hero is Matthew Asquith from Whitby Seafish, winner of our Local Producer of the Year award at the recent Yorkshire Life Food and Drink Awards. Matthew suggests wowing guests with a delicious salmon platter, including a moist side of salmon accompanied by oak smoked salmon slices, smoked salmon and juicy prawns plus a dressing. Add some thin slices of nutty brown bread and butter and a squeeze or two of fresh lemon juice. Garnish with fresh dill and just let everyone dive in and help themselves. Serve with well chilled champagne or a good prosecco, obligatory for festive feasting, but a crisp dry white will work really well too.

Provenance is of the utmost importance when it comes to



Seafood platter from
Whitby Seafish



Christmas pudding, Harrogate Cake Company



Cheese from Wensleydale Creamery
and pickles from Fruity Kitchen



Pork pie from
Voakes, and
below: Mince pies
from Thomas the
Baker



selecting a bird for Christmas. Look out for farm fresh turkey or goose which have ranged over grassy pastures. Bronze turkeys are delicious and although they may be more expensive, they are worth it for the flavour and great texture.

Farm fresh vegetables including winter staples are a must for the Christmas table. Parsnips are a classic seasonal root vegetable and have a natural sweetness intensified by frost; roast them until they caramelize or make a delicious parsnip puree. No Christmas lunch is complete without sprouts. Buy them on the stem from your local farm shop so they keep fresh

and crunchy. Prepare them with ginger, soy and chestnuts for a Christmas twist or shred finely and stir fry in butter and black pepper. A bowl of red cabbage adds a splash of glossy colour; sauté with apple and onion and that lovely Christmas spice cinnamon and a sprinkling of brown sugar – try adding a dash of raspberry vinegar and cook until soft and tender.

And then there is the traditional rib-sticking pudding as well as a lavishly iced cake full of boozy fruit. If you haven't made your own by now it's probably too late, but fortunately we are spoilt for choice, as there are a number of top quality producers in Yorkshire whose

cakes and puddings taste just as good.

At the Harrogate Cake Company Heather Cawthorne uses apples from her own orchard and eggs from her own chickens to create puddings you could probably pass off as your own. Or if Christmas pudding is not your thing, you can always choose a decadent chocolate Yule log for a lighter option. Lewis and Cooper of Northallerton have a great selection of luxury handmade Christmas cakes or why not buy a plain one and decorate it yourself. A glazed topping of jewel-like exotic dried fruits makes a change from the traditional marzipan and royal icing topping.

For Christmas tea and Boxing Day, no



Sloe Port,
Raisthorpe
Manor



Chocolates from
Little Pretty Things



Fruit cake from
Lewis and Cooper



Turkey from
Hostingley Farm

FOOD CONTACTS

Whitby Seafish Ltd

Matthew Asquith, 01947 841236
www.whitbyseafish.co.uk

Hostingley Farm Free Range

Tim & Lynne Lindley
Thornhill, Dewsbury, 01924 272570
www.hostingleyfarmfreerange.co.uk

The Harrogate Cake Company Ltd

Heather Cawthorne, 01765 641267
www.harrogatecakeco.com

Little Pretty Things

Sophie Jewett, York, 01904 898393
www.littleprettything.co.uk

Voakes of Whixley

Andrew Voakes, 01423 339988
www.voakespies.co.uk

Lewis & Cooper Ltd

Northallerton, Bettina Bell, 01609 772880
www.lewisandcooper.co.uk

The Fruity Kitchen

Sutton on the Forest, York, Julia Colebatch
01347 810300. www.thefruitykitchen.co.uk

Raisthorpe Manor

Raisthorpe, North Yorkshire
Julie Medforth, 01377 288295
www.raisthorpemanor.com

table is complete without a Yorkshire pork pie. Many of our butchers, farm shops and delicatessens produce and supply delicious pies, often to their own secret recipes. Voakes of Whixley supply their award-winning pork pies to many delicatessens in the area, and these are made with specially-seasoned pork from their own herd of pigs. Their exemplary record for animal husbandry makes their pies, and those of other such producers, taste far superior. Of course pork pie and all the other delicious festive cold cuts really call for fruity chutney to bring out the flavours. This year's bumper crops of fruits and vegetables have encouraged many home cooks to

whip up their own recipes and don't forget the cranberry sauce, essential for those late night sandwiches and Boxing Day buffets.

It's always useful to keep a few treats in store for those unexpected guests. Cheese straws are great for drinks parties and homemade or quality bought mince pies are just the job for afternoon tea.

Festive tipples to keep you warm are highly recommended. Julie Medforth from Raisthorpe Manor has created a range of festive fruit drinks with a kick, including award-winning fruit gins, whiskies and liqueurs. Sloe Gin is great of course, but damson is definitely different and Julie has used a traditional

family recipe to create a delightful liqueur. The distinctive bottles would make great Christmas presents, as do beautiful handmade chocolates from specialist chocolatiers at Sophie Jewett at Little Pretty Things in York. Sophie has developed a Yorkshire collection of freshly made truffles with Yorkshire cream and butter and featuring natural locally sourced flavours such as rose petal, Yorkshire Blue cheese, real ale and mulled wine. Truly decadent.

From the freshest meat to the finest puddings and everything in between, the best Christmas produce in the country is right here on your Yorkshire doorstep. Happy Christmas! 🍷