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In town for the sales and looking for someplace new and different to eat, shop or visit? Let the TDN help!

MICHAEL DICKINSON, Tapeta™ Footings:
THE OLD PLOUGH, 26 High Street, Ashley,
Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 9DX,
+ 44 (0) 1638 730110

The Old Plough is an old English pub housed in a building from the 1700s that is very popular with the racing crowd. The food, including an ample selection of meat and vegetable dishes, is delicious and there is an extensive wine list. Reservations are recommended during the races and sales and, because of the racing crowd, it is always an interesting place to catch up on the latest news. While The Old Plough offers my favorite public dining spot in the area, for breakfast lunch or dinner my truly favorite food is to be found at Lady Pat Stoute's **Beech Hurst** on the Bury Road. As well as excellent food, Pat's knowledge of racing and her photographic memory always make for an enjoyable and educational experience while in a very relaxed atmosphere.

MARTIN MITCHELL, Tattersalls Director:
THE CROWN AND PUNCHBOWL, High Street,
Horningsea, Cambridge, CB5 9JG,
+ 44 (0) 1223 860643

The Crown and Punchbowl offers English and European meals in a 400-year old pub that is full of charm. It is only four miles from Cambridge centre and it attracts an eclectic crowd. The fresh fish is a must-have and there is a large variety of puddings. An a la carte menu is available along with a set lunch menu of one or two courses. The prices are moderate and the dress is casual, a great place that offers quality food in enjoyable surroundings.

THE MIDSUMMER HOUSE, Midsummer Common,
Cambridge, CB4 1HA (www.midsummerhouse.co.uk)

This place is in a league of its own and is one of the most comfortable restaurants that I have ever visited. Offered dishes are described as original and high quality French Mediterranean and the wine list is world-class; the prices do reflect the quality. The dining atmosphere is elegant and the suggested dress reflects that-- definitely a step above casual. For a special night out, this is the place to go.

THE PEKING CHINESE RESTAURANT, 21 Burleigh Street, Cambridge, CB1 1DG,
+ 44 (0) 1223 354755

The Peking Chinese Restaurant looks like a cafe inside and out, and it offers fantastic Chinese food that is more genuine than most. Recommended dishes include the Peking duck and the steamed fish. Portion sizes are large and perfect for family-style dining. The prices reflect the high quality and the dress is casual. It is regarded by many as the best Chinese in Cambridge. You must go!

JAMES MCHALE, Darley Flying Start:
THE HOLE IN THE WALL, Little Wilbraham,
Cambridgeshire, UK
(www.the-holeinthewall.com)

Whenever I am in town to go to the racing or the sales in Newmarket, I try to stop off at The Hole in the Wall. It is a traditional English Pub halfway between Newmarket and Cambridge with loads of history. The building has stood there since the 15th Century and there is always a great selection of local produce to accompany good beer and wine. The prices are reasonable and the pub offers warm inside dining with log fires during the winter and open terrace dining during the summer.

LIAM O'ROURKE, Darley - Stud Director, Dalham Hall Stud:
THE FIRE ENGINE, 25 St. Mary's Street, Ely,
Cambridgeshire, CB7 4ER
(www.theoldfireenginehouse.co.uk)

The Fire Engine also serves traditional English fare in a traditional old-world setting. The roast dishes are phenomenal and particularly unique because second helpings are openly offered! They, too, provide an extensive wine list and require a casual dress code. The setting is very relaxing. Beware! With the offers for second helpings on the roast dishes, extra belt holes may be needed!

THE MERRY MONK, 30 West Street, Isleham, CB7 5SB, + 44 (0) 1638 280015

For traditional English fare, The Merry Monk in Isleham ticks all of the boxes. The roast meat dishes are wonderful, along with any of the fresh vegetables (locally sourced by the nearby East Anglia fens) that are offered, and there is an extensive wine list. The setting is traditional old-world and the dress code is "smart" casual, ideal for weekend dining.

BEST BETS cont.



**THE PHOENIX, 20 The Green, Histon, CB4 4JA, UK,
+ 44 (0) 1223 233766**

This is the place to go if you are a Chinese enthusiast! The Phoenix is in Histon, near Cambridge, and it offers delicious food and a lively and ultra-friendly atmosphere. The satay chicken and sauce, along with the crispy duck, make great starters, but the best bet is to ask for a mixed selection. For a main course, try any of the fish dishes--the satay king prawns are especially good. You are always guaranteed prompt and smiling service from Pauline, Tommy and the A-team.

**SEAN CRONIN, *Thoroughbred Daily News (Europe):*
THE DABBLING DUCK, 11 Abbey Road, Great
Massingham, Norfolk, PE32 2HN,
+ 44 (0) 1485 520827 (www.thedabblingduck.co.uk)**

Set in the heart of a picturesque Norfolk village, The Dabbling Duck is situated less than an hour from Newmarket and within a stone's throw of The Royal Studs. The pub and restaurant, refurbished and re-opened in 2006, takes its name from a line in *The Wind in the Willows*--"ducks go a dabbling-up tails all!"--and is located in the shadows of the 12th century St Mary's church where Britain's first Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, was educated in his early years. The hand-crafted bar, which features a mural of Norfolk detailing the sources of local ingredients, is stocked with an exciting array of real ales and ciders, and also offers a good selection of wines. It is manned by a team of friendly and helpful staff. The menu reflects the seasons and, wherever possible, is sourced locally. If you don't try the locally reared steak from the Holkham Estate, the locally harvested Brancaster Mussels in garlic and thyme are a must, either as a starter or main course. The delicious Norfolk asparagus wrapped in Parma ham is an alternative starter. The Cley Smokehouse, situated on the nearby North Norfolk coast, supplies a range of produce to the restaurant and is renowned for its freshly smoked kippers and smoked prawns, which are also highlights on an extensive menu.

The Dabbling Duck, which hosts its own beer festival in July, is a traditional rural hostelry with large open log fires and three restaurant areas, including one dubbed 'the library.' It also offers accommodation for those wishing to get away from the crowd. As well as occasional live music and poetry readings, local attractions include Houghton Hall, which hosts the internationally renowned Horse Trials every May. Alternatively, just sit and watch the world--and the ducks!--go by as you enjoy your meal. The website is a useful source for menus, wine lists and much more. Check out the positioning at

www.multimap.com/maps/?&hloc=GB|PE322HN.