

Country House Harvest

1. Synopsis

Country House Harvest is a celebration of food and the role that it has played, and continues to play, in the long-term viability of some of Britain's privately-owned historic houses.

As well as including a number of recipes that are associated with the owners, house or region, the book will also include a brief history of the property and current family, and will explore how each property has worked with food (in its broadest sense) to subsidise its income or otherwise enhance the long-term viability of the property and estate. Some owners have opened tea rooms, farm shops, restaurants and hotels, and it is this aspect of each property and their relationship with food that will be explored.

Country House Harvest will also allow readers to plan days out, because all of the properties that will be featured will be open to the public, whether this is a walled garden, formal gardens or parts of the house; there will also be a food-related outlet for visitors to enjoy high quality food and beverages.

The recipes will provide a real link between the property and the readers, who will be able to recreate the dishes by following the recipes featured in the book.

2. Contents

The book will feature up to 30 properties around the UK, with one chapter per property, although the property would name the chapter as follows:

Page 3 Haddon Hall

Page 7 Sugnall Hall

Page 11 Tissington Hall

The properties could also be grouped by county and listed in alphabetic order, by county and then by property.

3. About the authors

RICHARD SHIPSTON

From a young age Richard has been passionate about food and cooking, and after leaving school he enrolled at catering college where he trained to be a chef.

As a young chef Richard developed and honed his skills working in some of the best restaurants in the UK and Europe; from the Michelin-starred Gleneagles Hotel to restaurants in the South of France, before moving to various restaurants in London.

For the last 20 years Richard has been working in the food development arena, which has involved regular visits to countries across south-east Asia to test, develop, source and launch new lines for all the major food retailers in the UK. Richard's passion, energy and relentless drive for developing great food has enabled him to create some fantastic dishes, which have been well received by his clients and their customers, alike.

Richard lives in the Peak District with his wife – a teacher of food technology – and two children, who all share his love of food and for cooking from scratch. At the weekends Richard relaxes by cooking for friends and family, and enjoys nothing more than looking through his collection of over 400 cookery books for ideas and inspiration.

SIMON TURTON

For most of his career Simon has been involved in writing, one way or another. After completing his degree in Economics and Politics he worked for management consultants and market research agencies, which involved the production and presentation of proposals and reports for a range of clients.

He then moved into business development and marketing, prior to setting up a marketing consultancy for architects and designers. Following the demand for PR from his clients he set up a public relations agency in 2001.

Over the last 14 years he has worked with a variety of clients including companies operating in the leisure and hospitality sector. His main focus is the writing and distribution of press and news releases, but he also writes content for websites, e-marketing campaigns and brochures. Simon also writes a regular business column for a regional consumer magazine, *Derbyshire Life*, for whom he has interviewed a wide range of people including James Martin and Julia Bradbury. He has also edited and proofread the history of a successful Derbyshire-based family business.

Simon is a keen photographer and cyclist, and also enjoys cooking and making his own bread. He is married with two children and lives in the Peak District.

4. Reasons why the book should be published

The book is aimed at two distinct groups: consumers who have a real interest in the UK's history and heritage – and visiting historic properties that are still lived in – and those who have an interest in good food and cooking.

With *Country House Harvest* there will be an insight into the lives of those that live in the various properties today, including the history of the property and there will be several recipes that are closely associated with that property.

Whilst there is a growing interest in the properties owned and managed by organisations such as English Heritage and the National Trust, the visitor experience at historic houses is significantly enhanced if the properties are lived in – especially if the family can be traced back for many generations. The unique appeal of these properties is that they are still family homes – often at the heart of their local community – and it is this interaction with living history that makes for a truly memorable visit.

This book provides a connection between the land, a locality, a family and an aspect of food, which directly relates to the property that is the focus of each chapter; it is this *mélange* that will help differentiate this book from the food titles published by celebrity chefs, cooks and bakers.

Country House Harvest will be written and presented in a very accessible style. It will be able to be used as an informative guide book to some of the country's finest houses and as a cookery book that will enable the readers to recreate the dishes associated with each property.

5. Sample chapter

A separate PDF has been produced that comprises a draft foreword and one chapter, which can be seen accessed and downloaded here:

<http://operapr.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/CountryHouseHarvest2.pdf>