

SYMONDS YAT ROCK LODGE

Self-catering Apartments Newsletter – Spring 2019

Hello, the time of bluebells, wild garlic, budding beech trees and lambs, fawns and boar piglets is here. One of our favourite Forest seasons for walks and collecting fresh free-range woodland eggs from Mailscott Lodge for tea.



Symonds Yat Rock Lodge News:

We have decent WiFi at last! We finally found an IT consultant who could get us a good enough 4G signal to use; so now we have around 9Mbps in every apartment. Unlimited data, all free to you (and no thanks to BT or the Government).

We were awarded Superhost status by Airbnb. It seems to mean that we are all round excellent, communicate well and don't let guests down – and we get a little badge on our profile!

Events:

- Wild Daffodils – Visit the Golden Triangle at Kempley or nr Newent. 15-31 March
- Lunch with the Spirits. Join the local Paranormal Investigation Team at Dean Heritage Centre. 23 March
- Forest of Dean Half-Marathon. UK Trail-running Championships. 24 March
- Get Eggstra Creative – potting, gallery, chocolate and spring food at Hot Pot Pottery. 18-21 April
- Beer, Bubbles and Big Breakfast at Hillside Brewery. 20 April
- Coleford Carnival of Transport. Vintage cars, custom and street 'rods, stalls, live music. 22 April
- Fevertree Gin and Tonic Tasting Masterclass at Hillside Brewery. 25 April
- Hereford Steam Punk Festival at Waterways Museum, Broomy Hill. 27-28 April
- Whitebrook Wind-up – 10K and half-marathon through the bluebells. 28 April
- Humbug Chase and Wild Boar Chase – the mountain biking challenge, with a special race for 8-12 year olds. 12 May
- Visit Bee Friendly Gardens and Bee Festival, Monmouth area. Organised by Bees for Development. 18-19 May
- Live on the Wye. Music festival at Redbrook (we went last year – brilliant small festival). 31 May – 1 June
- Father's Day Bushcraft at Borderland Outdoors. 16 June

Nature:

The pine marten release is still on track for this year, hopefully up to 60 will be relocated to the Forest of Dean in September. They are a major predator and will hunt wood pigeons, grey squirrels and other common species leaving gaps for less common creatures like goldcrests and maybe reintroduction of red squirrels.

Activities News:

Dean Heritage Centre has a new art gallery and café, with successful Creates Gallery of Monmouth opening up a new venture there. As well as showcasing local artists it will have exhibitions, workshops and demos.



The listed Victorian footbridge over the historic railway at Lydney has been fully restored and returned. Luckily one of the best bridge companies – Mabey – is based at Lydney so the work was done very locally.

Congratulations to Hillside Brewery, who won the national Best Rural Drinks Producer.

One of our favourite pubs, The Red Hart at Blaisdon (always worth a visit to Gloucester for the excuse to stop there on the way back!) is CAMRA’s best Forest of Dean pub 2019.

Filming News:

Sex Education, with Gillian Anderson playing a sex therapist, has filmed around us a lot. And you will all have recognised her house as the one on the path down to The Saracen’s Head. Netflix are filming another series.

Huntsham Court Farm (where Darren works part-time) was on James Martin’s *Great British Adventure*. James raved over the rare breeds and how well they were kept, then went on to cook up in Clearwell Caves. It was their suckling pig that Chris Harrod from The Whitebrook cooked on The Great British Menu finals – and it is now one of his most demanded dishes.

A Day Out (tested by us):

Westons Cider Mill, Much Marcle

Just 20 minutes away, through some beautiful countryside, Westons was established in 1880 and is still family owned. Henry Weston was originally a cattle man, and made cider for his own use. He was so good at it that friends and neighbours brought him their apples to make them cider, and it grew from there. They still keep Hereford cattle, but the lovely original stone cattle sheds are now the café and the Scrumpy Restaurant. Well worth lunching there, and making the most of their ciders on tap. Westons also make the famous Herefordshire perry, using local pears. It is now so popular that there are not enough pears, so a big planting scheme is underway. But, as you all know, you “plant pears for your heirs”. Don’t forget to say hello to the shires (Reg and Prince) and the shop is really good value.



Please post any photos or experiences on our [facebook](#) site, and do put us on [Tripadvisor](#) if you enjoyed your stay with us.