

# wylde **TIMES**

## FEAST!

Abundant. Ripe. Ready. Nature is peaking,  
yielding her treasure. Let us celebrate.  
Let us join with friends and strangers alike.  
Sit down at tables big and small. And together,  
put the Festival back into Harvest.

# ROLL OUT THE BARREL



Greg's journey from ecologist to beer revolutionary began in a carrot field and ended with one of Britain's only fully-organic breweries – rooted in soil, sustainability, and a fierce sense of community.

## Greg.



\*AND CANS

Greg didn't set out to be a brewer. He started life as an ecologist, did a stint in conservation with VSO in Nigeria, flirted with veg boxes, and found himself promoting Community Supported Agriculture long before it was cool. But somewhere in a carrot field in Stroud, beer happened.

That carrot field was part of a community farm that Greg had helped set up. It's what brought him to the area. He was weeding and chatting with a friend who liked beer as much as he did when the idea struck.

"Wouldn't it be great to set up a brewery?" he said. And so, in 2006 he did.

"It hit all my patterns," he said. "Food quality, supply chains, landscape connection, and community. It was a project that rooted me in this place."

### Doing it himself

Now nearly 20 years later the business employs many other people and is one of the UK's only fully-organic breweries. But it was born with a DIY ethos: Greg brewed, delivered, and marketed while holding down a day job. Greg, however, is less interested in the past than he is the present.

"The biggest impact we can have as a business is choosing the right barley," he says. "For us, that's always been organic."

Stroud sources its malted barley from small, traditional maltings like Warminster. The beer is made entirely in-house – even the canning is done on-site – with an emphasis on flavour and minimal environmental impact. And they are still using the same brewing kit they started off with back in 2006.

Cans, Greg points out, are not only lighter and easier to recycle than bottles but also shield the beer from light and oxygen. Beer-lovers should avoid clear bottles, he says.

"If you see beer in clear bottles steer clear of it. It's either made by somebody who doesn't know what they are doing, or someone who does know but doesn't care because they're doing it for aesthetics."

In the UK at least, cans do usually have one big downside: they are often lined with BPA-infused plastic. That's against the organic standard, so Greg's beautiful cans are BPA free.

His outstanding 4% lager, LOL, is a big hit with Wylde customers and the whole range spans classic British styles to bold new craft brews – many of them exclusive to their taproom and event space, which now makes up half the business and is an important community space in the town.

### Change through commerce

Greg sees it as his duty, both to the environment and to his customers, to know his suppliers and choose them not on the basis of certification alone, but on the good that he can see they are doing and the path they are taking.

This, he says, is something that he does as a business owner, but also something we can all do as consumers.

"Marketing generally has told us that the stuff we buy is our identity," he says.

"But that's just not true. Really, it's our relationships with friends and family that give us our identity. And by extension, our relationships with producers and suppliers. All these things matter and give us a sense of place and identity."

"The biggest change that we can make in a fairly disempowered world is to spend our money in the right places. Spend your money with the businesses that are doing the right thing. And it will help make a change."

We can all raise a glass to that.

## “““

**The biggest impact we can have as a business is choosing the right barley. For us that's always been organic.**

Greg Pilley



## HARVEST

Pregnant with produce,  
The season creaks and groans  
Under the weight of bounty,  
Seemingly endless.

Cropped and in from the fields,  
A sensory overload of  
Colour.  
Smell.  
Texture.  
And taste.

Harvest.  
A celebration not only of the end  
Of the back-breaking work of summer  
But also the beginning  
Of the journey towards winter.

It must therefore be our jubilant, sacred duty  
To carouse.  
To feast.  
To make merry in happy harmony with nature.

In doing so,  
We salute those who came before,  
And the ancient birthright that we share with them,  
Rejecting the anodyne, dreary facsimile of it  
That,  
Co-opted by organised religion,  
Was forced upon us as children:  
Beige, insipid and stale.

Because this is  
The Big One.  
The Natural One.  
The one that belongs to the whole of humankind.  
Right here,  
Right now.  
This is the ultimate

## FESTIVAL.

The modern food system is a joke and the punchline is your dinner. At Wylde, Nick Jefferson and Ella Cooper are torching the supermarket playbook, one brined chicken at a time.



# FEASTING WITH THE FOUNDERS

"I'm Martin Luther," says Wylde founder Nick Jefferson, with a mischievous smile. "And this is a full-on food revolution. I'm nailing the principles of Real Food to the supermarket doors... I'm joking, of course."

Is he, though?

It's 4pm on a sunny Saturday, and I'm sitting in his surprisingly spartan kitchen with co-founder Ella Cooper. We've been eating – and slowly drinking – since noon. Everything has come from Wylde Market or Nick's allotment. Everything has been delicious.

We started with an unreasonably strong vodka shrub. The shrub came from Wylde. For transparency's sake, the vodka was from the local off-licence.

"A stiff drink is the only way to start a proper lunch," says Nick.

Today's menu is a feast – simple, exuberant, and unpretentious. Not humble, not showy. Just a celebration of real food.

We begin with smoked Alaskan salmon and sourdough, slathered in salted butter. The main is

roast chicken, potatoes crisped in beef dripping, and buttered cavolo nero. Then Wensleydale and crackers, followed by apple crumble and homemade custard.

All of it is washed down with fabulous white, red, and then sparkling wine.

"Because we're not monks," jokes Ella. "Wylde is about joy," she says. "We're not here to weave our own muesli or make trousers out of hemp and tears."

**A kitchen-table manifesto**  
The menu is a joyous manifesto in edible form.

"Chicken used to be a luxury," says Nick. "Now it's just cheap protein – flavourless and pumped with antibiotics. A feast doesn't have to be a roast swan or something absurd like that, for goodness' sake. Real chicken more than does the job."

While both can cook, this isn't about flair. It's about sourcing. The chicken is brined and roasted – no lemon, no gravy. Its own juices are enough. The cavolo nero is gently sauteed in butter and garlic. The potatoes, that Nick grew, are sublime.

Crumble needs no pitch. And Ella's custard – "I just whipped some up," she shrugs – is thick, golden, and made with whole milk and eggs. It's pudding, but also a statement.

Before we tackle the upcoming revolution, we talk about Ella's recent conversion. Just days earlier, she'd emailed Wylde's community to share that, after more than a decade of vegetarianism, she was eating meat again. The response? Hundreds of replies.

**Ella's conversion**  
So, what tipped her back? A bacon sandwich?  
"No," says Ella. "A small piece of steak, barbecued over charcoal. I tried it, loved it, had some more. And that was it."

She gave up meat in her teens over animal welfare. She rejected cruelty, not food. But years of ultra-processed veganism wrecked her health. She reintroduced ethical fish and dairy. And through Wylde, the reconnection deepened.

"For the last few years, I've been going out to farms," she says. "I've seen how the animals live, what they eat, how they're treated. And I've been handling meat every week in the warehouse. I'm at peace with it. I'm not going to buy a supermarket steak or a packet of nuggets, but I'm very happy to eat Ross's organic chicken."

Ella hasn't compromised her values – what's changed is that, through Wylde, she now has access to a food system that she doesn't morally object to. Around the time she gave up meat, good producers of course existed, but they were significantly harder to access. Supermarkets dominated, completely. That steak in aisle four might be labelled "British" – but it could have been trucked in from Europe, finished on soya feed, or raised well but sold cheap because the farmer had no pricing power.

**Can you hear the people sing?**  
Now things are shifting. It's that quiet drumbeat of change that Nick picked up on when he and Ella launched Wylde.

"It's all about the zeitgeist. I see it in our producers, I see it in our customers, I see it on the streets," he says.

"So many folk are tired – tired of food full of chemicals, cruelty, and no taste. Real food shouldn't be a luxury. We're all entitled to it."

The root problem, as he sees it, isn't bad intent – it's the supermarket model. Since the post-war era, supermarkets have done what they were designed to do: maximise shareholder value. That means cutting costs and driving efficiency. Not evil in itself. But 75 years on, it's pushed farmers too far.

They feed more soya. They use routine antibiotics. They fatten animals faster. Not because they want to. It's because they have no say in the price.

"That's the crux of it," Nick says. "Producers, by working with supermarkets, gave up the ability to set their own prices. Wylde gives that back to them."

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The farmers’ market is the purest form of commerce. You make something. You offer it. You sell it. That’s it.

Nick Jefferson

**The revolution will not be pasteurised**  
One reason why there's a steady stream of producers rejecting the supermarket model is technology. The communications revolution means they can now reach consumers directly – and set prices that support ethical, high-quality production. Even so, that's easier said than done. And that's where Wylde comes in.

By creating an online farmers' market with nationwide reach, Wylde allows producers to focus on what they do best: producing food. They don't need to be marketers, delivery drivers or logistics experts.

"The farmers' market is the purest form of commerce. You make something. You offer it. You sell it. That's it," Nick says.

"That's what we do. We don't set prices. Producers list what they want at the price they think is fair. Wylde customers can choose to buy – or not – and producers adjust accordingly. That's how food was always bought and sold. Until relatively recently really." The only thing Wylde insists on is quality. All produce and producers are thoroughly vetted before joining the market.

Nick and Ella want to prove that other systems are available, and that producers and consumers alike have a clear choice: supermarkets or freedom.

"I know what I'd choose," Nick says.

**Papal bull**  
So where does Martin Luther come in?

"We're rejecting the orthodoxy and the priesthood of the supermarkets," says Nick, more seriously. "It's a model that prizes multitudes of middlemen, efficiency over flavour, shelf-life over nourishment, profit over welfare. It's not just broken – it's spiritually bankrupt."

That model went unchallenged for decades. But now, with the internet and modern logistics, Nick fervently believes that not only can the orthodoxy be challenged, it can be overturned.

"Wylde proves that" he says. "Our customers are from all walks of life. All income brackets. What they share is a belief that chemical-free, real food is not a luxury. It's a right."

"We're not the heretics. The chemical food industry is the heresy. Sermon over."

We pour the coffee. Wylde doesn't yet offer wafer-thin mints, so we settle for a handful of excellent almonds.

Should we all abandon supermarkets tomorrow, or even today?

Nick chooses his words carefully.

"Yes. We absolutely should. But I don't blame people for using supermarkets. It's the status quo. They're everywhere. We'll keep improving what we offer so there's less and less reason to rely on them."

And will he be nailing his manifesto to the door of a Tesco Metro anytime soon?

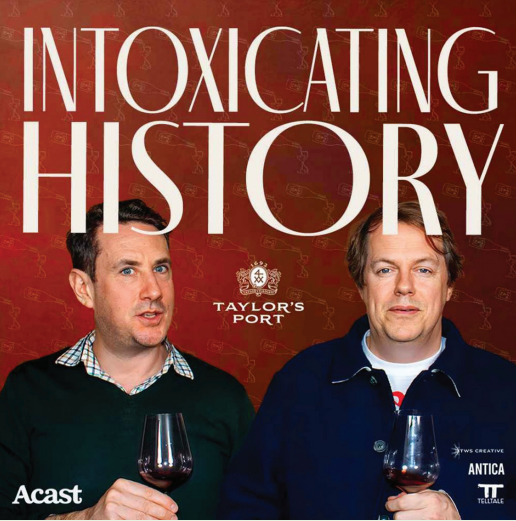
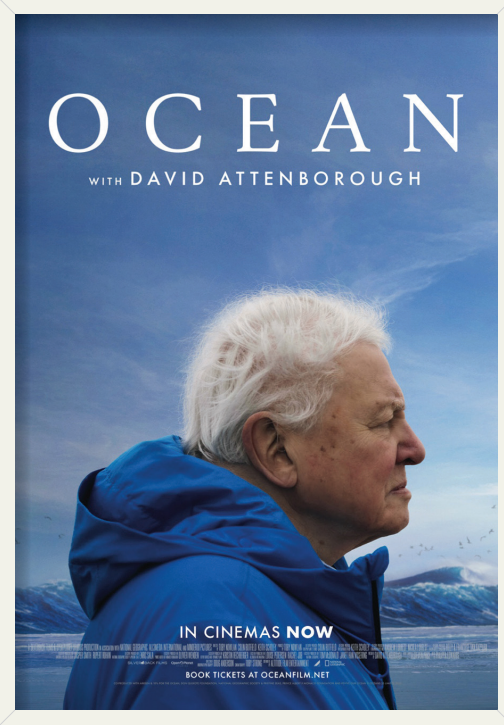
"No. I won't. That would be criminal damage. And silly," he says. "Reynard might, though...."

# Wylde Streams

WHAT WE'RE WATCHING | WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO

## Ocean with David Attenborough

Sir David brings the Ocean's wonders and warnings to life. A stirring call to protect our blue planet before it's too late.



## Intoxicating History

From gin to absinthe Henry Jeffreys' and Tom Parker Bowles' podcast explores the curious and often chaotic stories behind our favourite tipples. Deliciously boozy and proudly sponsored by Wylde.

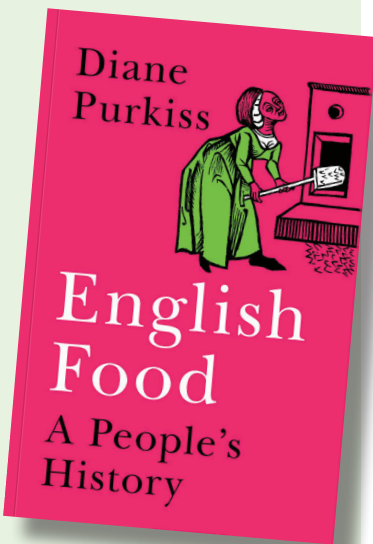
## English Food by Diane Purkiss

A rich, thoughtful dive into the real roots of English cuisine from forgotten feasts to field grown staples. An audiobook for slow listening and a good brew.



## The Biggest Little Farm

A beautiful reminder that messy, biodiverse farms can heal land and soul. Hopeful, muddy, and utterly inspiring.



# WyldeTunes

 Put the Festival back into Harvest with this brilliantly seasonal playlist.





# Harvesting it all

From his solar-powered patch in Cornwall's Tamar Valley, Sam is proving that small, regenerative farm ing isn't just possible, it's powerful. With Wylde's help, he's finding fair prices, feeding real families, and carving out a living (and the odd squash) on his own terms.



"I always planned to do this," says Sam, who supplies Wylde customers with salads, spinach and squash from his small farm in Cornwall's Tamar Valley.

"I've always been growing vegetables and I've always been interested in growing my own food," he says.

"When I was a boy in Ireland my grandfather had quite a large vegetable garden, so I took inspiration from him and grew a little plot. And then when we built our property in Ireland, the first thing I did was to make a vegetable garden."

Sam's been farming his 13-acre plot for the last five years but he started out as a bricklayer before training in architectural technology and management. The job brought him indoors which he didn't much like. Sitting in the office, he dreamt of farming, but it seemed unattainable.

"I looked at the farms around me, and all I could see were farmers with 300 or 400 acres and lots of heavy machinery." He didn't have family land or money, so the agricultural life seemed like a pipe dream.

## YouTube

Everything shifted in 2017 when he stumbled across a farmer called Richard Perkins on YouTube.

Perkins is a Cornishman who trained in permaculture and farm systems internationally before setting up Ridgedale Farm, a regenerative farm in the wilds of Sweden. He doesn't just farm, though. He vlogs, writes and teaches. Sam realised his farming dream might just be attainable.

He tried to buy land in Ireland using the equity in his family's self-built home. But that wasn't to be. It became too complicated and administrative.

Then a plot of land came up in Cornwall, near the Devon border. Sam had spent a few years in Cornwall as a boy and regularly holidayed there. He put in a bid, it was accepted. He sold up, moved, and became a farmer.

## The good life

Sam's plot is close enough to the main road to make transport practical. But apart from that, he's totally off grid.

They generate all their own electricity with solar panels, draw water from a private borehole, and harvest rainwater to irrigate crops via gravity-fed drip lines. There's no mains connection, no energy bills, and no reliance on the water network. That's a smart move in the South West, where water bills are among the UK's highest.

"We live extremely cheap," Sam says. "We've got food, water, electricity – all practically free."

Sam farms chickens for the local market and veg for Wylde customers. The fertiliser comes from the chickens. He avoids all chemicals and sprays and uses low tillage methods to preserve the soil.

"We don't want to break up the soil structure too much... it's about having a mindset of: What's going on in the soil? Am I destroying it?" he says.

In his first idealistic year of farming, he tried to do without any mechanisation at all, to eradicate a possible carbon footprint.

"We hand-shovelled 40 tonnes of compost that year," he said. "It took us days. It was madness."

He realised that using a tractor wasn't cheating. Now he has some, but not much, mechanical help.

He also has help from his wife and his growing tribe of five kids.

"Our oldest is nine, and our youngest is one, so yes, we've a little pack of helpers who keep us on our toes," he says.



## Team Wylde

Sam is also part of Team Wylde. Every Wednesday, he's a vital link in Wylde's logistics network, collecting produce from two other nearby growers and driving them to Kingsbridge in Devon where they get fed into Wylde's bigger logistics operation.

"It's great to have a chat and hear how the business is going," he says. "And that's where I get real satisfaction, seeing the produce boxed up and on its way to the customers."

He values Wylde, he says, as an ongoing project but also as model that solves one of his biggest problems: how do small suppliers access a wide customer base and get a fair price?

"We haven't done much marketing," he says. "If we did, I don't know what the demand would be and I don't know if we'd be able to cope with it."

Wylde, however, solves that problem. Wylde sets no targets, so Sam puts as much or as little on the market as he likes. And he sets the price that works for him: a fair price for top quality biodynamically-grown veg.

That means that he can do what he's best at: producing fantastic veg at an appropriate and manageable scale without having to waste time branding and marketing. Wylde's model provides both integrity and income.

And Sam, for what it's worth, has no ambitions to be a millionaire.

"It's going well economically," he says.

"Last year was the first year that I made above living wage. Getting to that stage within three years of starting up is brilliant, for me anyway."

"And when I say 'living wage,' you have to remember all the things we have that we don't pay for," he says.

"We're lucky and we live well," he says. "Life is good."

## Halloween

Halloween is just around the corner – why not carve a butternut squash?

Instead of Halloween pumpkins, this year Sam's been growing edible squash varieties that earn their keep and store beautifully through autumn: Butternut, Hungarian Blue and Winter Sweet. They're reliable, versatile – and eminently carvable.

"If someone wants to make a butternut lantern, they still can," he says. "And they'll also have a great soup afterwards."

It's a tidy metaphor for how Sam farms: practical, resourceful, and built around real value.

Wylde is now an App! Complete with accounts, payment info and everything else you'd expect.



SEARCH 'WYLDE MARKET' IN THE APP STORE AND ON GOOGLE PLAY



# FEASTING WITH THE ANIMALS

**On a hillside in South Devon, Pasture for Life farmer Andrew is raising animals the natural way – slow-grown, grass-fed and soya-free. The result? Healthier livestock, deeper flavour, and a quiet rebellion against industrial meat.**



Just a stone's throw from Kingsbridge in South Devon, Andrew is raising cows and sheep according to the standards of Pasture for Life and pigs according to organic norms. That means just grass, hay and silage for the ruminants, and carefully chosen UK-grown grains for pigs.

## **What it means to be Pasture for Life**

The Pasture for Life certification stipulates that ruminant animals – cows and sheep – are fed a 100% forage-based diet for life. That means grass in the growing season, and hay or silage when it slows. No cereals, no concentrates, no protein imports.

“Ruminants aren't designed to digest grain,” says Andrew. “So, we don't give them any. They thrive on forage. You can taste the difference.”

This kind of farming can take more than twice as long as conventional, less natural animal rearing. Cattle stuffed with corn and soya are often ready for slaughter in 18 months. Andrew's pasture-fed cows are often still in the fields aged four or more.

The result is more flavoursome meat, with natural fat development and a significantly improved nutritional profile. And there's a strong argument that pastured and mob grazed cattle might even be part of the answer to climate change, through a process known as 'carbon sequestration'.

## **This little piggy went to Wylde Market**

Pigs are different. As monogastric animals, they need more than forage alone – but farmers like Andrew still avoid soya and imported protein. His pigs eat organic wheat, barley and peas, all grown in the UK. They're also rotated through pasture, where they can graze and forage.

“We mix their feed ourselves,” he says, “It's slower and more expensive – but we're not willing to cut corners.”

## **Direct selling is key**

None of this works at scale without a different kind of economics. Like many certified farms, Andrew relies on direct selling through Wylde Market to make the system viable. He sets what he calculates to be a fair price and decides how much produce he wants to list. He can't be lowballed or pressured into overproduction.

In the end, it's about values. Andrew's way of farming means better meat, better soil, and a more honest connection between farmer and customer.

“You get what you pay for,” says Andrew. “You can buy something better, or you can go to the supermarket. That's your choice.”



## **'APPY MEALS**



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## **HAIKU**

To feast is to live  
During these months of plenty.  
But winter will come.