

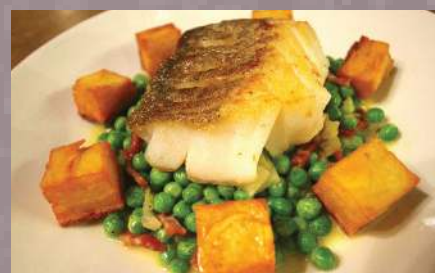
The Lion at Malpas

The focus of village life for over three centuries, in recent years The Lion has enjoyed a complete renovation by Bear Inns, who also run The Swan in Tarporley.

Bear Inns have spared no expense in updating The Lion at Malpas, in Cheshire, close to the Welsh border. In 2018, landlords Si and Chrissy Lees Jones bought the pub and in conjunction with local operator Woody Barlow set about creating a fabulous home-from-home experience. The bar and dining areas have been refurbished in contemporary country style and 16 luxury rooms added. With so much thought going into the refit, we were keen to try the dinner menu and sample its hospitality with an overnight stay.

We arrived at a busy time, but the service was prompt and friendly – it's clearly a well-run team. Chef Krystian Jurek's menu is a modern take on British classics with a few surprises thrown in, and very reasonably priced. We could have had duck, prawns, mussels, salmon or Welsh rarebit to start but chose the black pudding and Scotch egg. Both dishes were delicious. A perfectly poached egg was smothered in robust ndjua hollandaise, over a thick slice of black pudding and a muffin. The pickled onions were a winning touch. The Scotch egg was

Fun fact
Scotch eggs were devised as a travel snack for those heading north by stagecoach.



Clockwise from top: the Cholmondeley Room; pan roast cod; Scotch egg

well executed: a crispy exterior and juicy pork casing enclosing a soft, golden egg. The Lion's brown sauce was the perfect finish.

The main course, cod loin, was a marvel. For gastro pub dining, this is a whole new level. Pan fried with crispy skin topside, the soft, juicy flakes were served on a bed of tiny green peas with crispy bacon and sautéed cabbage, in a buttery sauce. The revelation was the confit potatoes: layered and deep-fried, bite-sized cubes surrounding the plate that were just delicious.

Other dishes that caught our eye were the mussels, beef burger and buttermilk fired whole chicken – all looked terrific.

We spent a comfortable night in one of the duplexes. The wi-fi was good enough to watch a movie downstairs before we retired to bed in the room above. The spacious, four-star accommodation offers a walk-in shower, freestanding bath and Molton Brown toiletries.

Breakfast was everything we hoped, with table service, plenty of menu choice, real coffee and fresh fruit. We drove home refreshed, and can heartily recommend The Lion at Malpas.



Chef Krystian Jurek and (below) his chocolate delight. Right: the courtyard

WOODY BARLOW,
FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR
OF BEAR INNS, SAYS:

'To me, an amazing pub is one that has a joyful, lively atmosphere created by its people – not only its guests but those delivering genuinely great hospitality. Our pubs, The Swan in Tarporley and The Lion at Malpas, are places where guests feel they can sit back, relax and enjoy.'



Our menu

Black Pudding, poached egg and nduja hollandaise on a toasted English muffin £7

Scotch egg with house recipe brown sauce £8

Pan roast cod loin, petit pois à la française, crispy confit potatoes, beurre blanc sauce £18

Chocolate delight, hazelnut brittle, Cheshire Farm pistachio ice cream £8

Great deals at The Lion

ROAST AND RELAX

- Sunday roast for two with a bottle of wine
- Cheese board and a glass of port for supper
- Bed and breakfast
- From just £169 for two sharing

LEISURE BREAK

- Bed and breakfast
- Early check-in at 12 noon
- Late check-out at 12 noon
- Free bottle of wine when dining
- From just £129 for two sharing (Sunday-Thursday)