



Beach cricket (18), top; the Ragged Cot (9), left; and there's a 'no cows' policy at the Pot Kiln (10)

Alan

ardines, kebabs, pork chops
e, all served by superfriendly
n the outdoor garden grill
re about £11.50). Inside, it's a
g fun-time Victorian pub, with
bistro and regular DJ nights.
sdays, you can pop back
or an alfresco film.
1533 0040, thebritanniapub.co.uk

EXETER ARMS Barnstaple, Devon

the garden at the Exeter
be tricky — such is the lure of
mic front patio, commanding
village green, a reedy duck
a steeple-spiked horizon.
n's 17th-century coaching inn
er: the pine-and-polish décor
d refreshing, just like the
the landlord, Martin Allsopp,
nearby barn. There's acres of
etch out in, with a boules
i jungly plot in the corner for
eek. Bring the kids and the
there's room for 11-a-side.
17247; doubles from €91, B&B

WHITE HORSE Brancaster, Norfolk

149, the White Horse doesn't
larly special, which is how
of this Norfolk treasure
ecret lies around the back,

where the huge, elevated terrace offers
magnificent views across Brancaster
Marsh to the sea-bird colony at Scolt
Head Island — and perhaps the most
spectacular sunsets in the country.
00 44 1485 210262,
whitehorsebrancaster.co.uk

15 PLOUGH INN Hathersage, Derbyshire

Folded into a meander of the River
Derwent, this old corn mill is greedy
when it comes to gardens. Not satisfied
with nine riparian acres of prime Peak
District, it also has a dining deck and
courtyard tables festooned with
flowers. Everything is thoughtfully
tended by the Emery family: the perky
window boxes, the neat guest rooms
and the restaurant menu, offering
scallops with rhubarb and lamb kidney
with chilli and lentils. The road from
Bakewell to Hathersage goes past the
door, but the main streamside garden
is in a sunken dell, so tyre-screech
never drowns out the tinkling water.
00 44 1433 650319,
theploughinn-hathersage.co.uk;
doubles from €103.50, B&B

16 CRAVEN ARMS Appletreewick, Yorkshire

As garden ornaments go, it's a corker
— a full-scale Tudor cruck barn,

thatched with purple heather and
lined with fleeces — just the job for
a sucking-pig banquet. The barn,
thought to be the first built in
Wharfedale since Henry VIII's day,
is the star attraction in David
Aynsworth's restoration of the
archetypal farmhouse tavern to its
16th-century spec. Set on a sort of
balcony above the Wharfe, just upriver
from Bolton Abbey, the Craven's
shelving beer garden delivers
maximum views of curvaceous hills,
dry-stone walls and all-round
loveliness. There are eight Dales-brewed
ales on tap: no obligation to try all of
them, but on a long summer evening,
you'll probably want to.

00 44 1756 720270, craven-cruckbarn.co.uk

17 RAT INN Alnwick, Northumberland

There are numerous stories about how
the Rat Inn got its name. Dating from
1750 or so, the building might be the
place where the "largest rat ever seen"
was caught; or it might be where
a former innkeeper informed on locals
during Jacobite uprisings. Whatever
— nowadays, drinkers can bask in the
landscaped garden overlooking the
Tynne Valley, supping on a local ale and
eating dishes such as Northumbrian
sausage, bubble-and-squeak cake and
onion gravy, happy in the knowledge

00 44 1877 385258, lake-hotel.com;
doubles from €138, B&B

20 FITZPATRICK'S Co Louth

Looking at the colours that burst out
from every nook, cranny and hanging
basket around Fitzpatrick's pub and
restaurant, you'd say they took their
gardening seriously here — but look
again and you start to suspect that
there's a tongue firmly in a cheek
somewhere. Those flowers are
sprouting from old boots, bicycles,
vans, carts, mangles — and, yes, that
is a blooming loo in the corner. They
like a little whimsy here, but that
doesn't distract them from delivering
the goods, including excellently kept
beers and award-winning food. Adults
can ponder issues of style and
substance while gazing out over the
Cooley Mountains as the kids pat the
pair of resident donkeys.

042 937 6193, fitzpatrick's-restaurant.ie

21 CORK CITY

An unremarkable blue exterior, a
smallish bar, an artsy but respectable
crowd: there doesn't seem to be much
to distinguish Tom Barry's from a
dozen other good pubs in a city that has
more than its share. Head to the cosily
walled, flower-strewn beer garden,
however, and the difference is clear.
It's a perfect blend of indoor intimacy
and outdoor sunbasking: it may not
have the epic views of some, but the
buzz is all you'd expect from the best
local snugs, only without a roof.
113 Barrack Street, Southside;
no phone, no website

Reviews by Stephen Bleach, Paul
Croughton, Vincent Crump, Susan d'Arcy,
Richard Green, Chris Haslam, Jeremy
Lazell, Nick Redman, Matt Rudd and
Brian Schofield