

The Alderley Edge Hotel experience

Jonathan Schofield relaxes with a view, the paper, the Beaune Supremacy and the best puddings in the region

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Oh to be in Cheshire now that spring is sprung: Nodding daffodils, wine bars, stirring walks through beech woods, fine Victorian houses and linen and keys. (And for that matter, oh to be in Cheshire now that spring is sprung, and one of the perks of the jobs dictates that you get to stay over to road test one of the reader deals).

Scott Surtees' desserts are at least fifty per cent better than any others in the region. I will have a fight with anybody who says any different.

But linen and keys, what am I on about?

Well the Alderley Edge Hotel ties with the Lowry Hotel for the best presented tables in the region. It wins on the charm front at the point of bedroom entry, by proudly sporting old-fashioned jangly keys. The bedrooms behind are cute and folksy and include a mightily well-stocked bar, a great little bathroom and all the usual internet links and so forth.

Best end of Welsh lamb, 48 hour braised shank, morel truffle potato croquette and rosemary fumet



[ENLARGE IMAGE](#)

Those in north facing rooms get an uninterrupted view across the whole of Greater Manchester to the West Pennines 15 miles away. Beetham Tower and the city centre's mini Las Angeles profile is very clear. At night when the street-lights come on it's perhaps even more impressive. Humbling to think that contained in that view is the whole of Greater Manchester's 2.5m population.

Meursault heaven



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Weirdly this is a view that for most of the hotel's history would have been unavailable to the residents. The building began as a Manchester cotton-baron's home on the hill within a short rail journey from the Royal Exchange and the swing and sway of textile prices. In the nineteenth century the view north would have

been a view into fog, as the mightiest engine of industry the world had ever known did its thing in a blur of smoke and steam.

Veloute of truffled celeriac



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You catch echoes of that energy in the grand but liveable space of the old building. No more so than in the elegant, dining space. This is a later add-on but the former external wall makes up one side and speaks of solidity and commercial power.

The great thing about the present Confidential deal we have with the hotel is that you get to sample Chris Holland's fabulous cooking as part of the deal. This is the second time I've been since he gained his third AA rosette, and I could easily go every week.

Wild mushroom soup and Parmesan crisp



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We ate from the Market Menu and had veloute of truffled celeriac; roasted lobster sausage, sauteed spinach and sous-vide salmon and citrus jelly; best end of Welsh lamb, 48 hour braised shank, morel truffle potato croquette and rosemary fumet; composition of coastal seafood, Jersey Royal potatoes and saffron lemon emulsion; warm hot cross bun financier, spiced tangerines, buttered toast ice cream and hot cherry soufflé with its own sorbet. There were a couple of amuse as well, with the bubble olives exceptional.

Composition of coastal seafood, Jersey Royal potatoes and saffron lemon emulsion



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Both the roasted lobster sausage and the warm hot cross buns were dishes worth a couple of Michelin stars each. Holland is one talented chef and he has one talented pastry chef partnering him in the kitchen, Scott Surtees.

The desserts the latter is producing are at least fifty per cent better than any others in the region. I will have a fight with anybody who says any different.

Hot cherry souffle with its own sorbet



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Stuart the wine man provided us with a divine Meursault and Beaune and offered helpful hints, as did, Nico, a Greek Daniel Craig look-alike, who was in charge that evening.

We shared the restaurant with a snappily-dressed young AstraZeneca executive or two and a gentleman who likes to eat out very regularly. For him it's Tuesday here, Wednesday the Moss Nook, Thursday here, Friday the Moss Nook and Saturday here again. Perhaps its McDonalds on other days.

Warm hot cross bun financier, spiced tangerines, buttered toast ice cream



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The gargantuan breakfast the following morning was as good as the dinner, but wasn't fine dining. It was big hearty selection of English scran, with all the usual suspects involved from delicious black pudding through bacon and hash browns to fried eggs and beans.

Linen, keys, olive bubbles, sharp Astra Zeneca execs: the Alderley Edge Hotel has so much character, you wonder why it hasn't been on a reality TV show. Then you realise it wouldn't let itself be. It's better than any of that crap.

Crazy jellied olives



[ENLARGE IMAGE](#)

Take advantage of this deal folks. It's a steal. For the food, for the sleepy atmosphere of away-from-it-all yet minutes away from home feel of the place.

It's perfect for people with young kids who want to get away but not go too far. It's perfect for combining designer seconds purchases from the Alderley charity shops, with a bit of people-watching at Panacea. It's even perfect for potholers who want to go down the Bronze Age copper mines under the nearby Edge but who also like fine dining. There must be loads of them.

It's even perfect for a freeloader who loves the food and found another excuse to eat it.

[Click here](#) to take advantage of this offer. The wine in this article was purchased separately and may not be the wine that arrives as part of the £150 for two package.

Homemade bread



[ENLARGE IMAGE](#)

Cute traditional bedroom



[ENLARGE IMAGE](#)

A key, not a card



[ENLARGE IMAGE](#)

Roasted lobster sausage, sauteed spinach and sous-vide salmon and citrus jelly



[ENLARGE IMAGE](#)

Room with a view - the big city in the distance



[ENLARGE IMAGE](#)

A decanted Beaune supremacy

