



As summer shines through the thoughts of a foodie turn to al fresco dining and you would be hard pushed to resist the lure of a Shropshire countryside picnic. The vast countryside of the county offers an abundance of picnic spots as well as a wealth of delicious local pickings to fill your basket to the brim, so grab your rugs and hamper and head to the great outdoors.

The pork pie is a picnic favourite and four tasty varieties can be bought from Grub, in Hadnall near Shrewsbury; British Lean Pork, Chicken and Apricot, Pork, Bacon, Apple and Cider, and British Veal and Ham. For other meats for your picnic you could choose from a selection of charcuterie from Wenlock Edge Farm, Longville, near Much Wenlock. Try its prosciutto crudo, prosciutto di speck or the bresaola. Buttercross Farm, Market Drayton also produces its own pancetta, cooked hams and dry cured bacon which are available from the on-site farm shop. Or if you prefer fish you could pack some smoked salmon from Bings Heath Smokery near Shrewsbury.

Before you go any further you will need something to wash it all down with so you could opt for still or sparkling water from Wenlock Spring, Much Wenlock, or if you fancy a bit of afternoon fizz, try Wroxeter Roman Vineyard's English sparkling wine or choose from a variety of whites and reds.

For a healthy snack to nibble at during the day you could include some nuts from the Ludlow Nut Company which offers a wide range of plain, roasted, salted and glazed nuts as well as yogurt and chocolate coated varieties. They also sell packets of dried fruit which are ideal for picnic snacking. Or you could sample different types of olives from The Olive Press, Ludlow, including various different pitted and non-pitted, plain, stuffed and marinated. But if you fancy a savoury treat, opt for a bag of Tyrrells Potato Chips produced over the border in Herefordshire which come in a variety of flavours. Try the seasonal flavours, Garden Herb and Summer Barbecue which you'll find from April to October.

You could also make up your own ploughman's lunch with some Wrekin White, Newport or Newport 1665 from Mr Moyden's Handmade Cheese, Newport, or some coloured or white, smoked or unsmoked Cheshire or Double Gloucester from Applebys of Hawkstone. You could accompany this with some chutney from Heather's Harvest, Shrewsbury, with flavours including Spiced Carrot Chutney, Mango, Pineapple and Passion Chutney, Fiery Chilli and Tomato Chutney and Indian Fruit Chutney, with a chunk of fresh bread from your local bakery and an apple from your farm shop. And while you're at your farm shop you could pick up some local apples and fresh ingredients to make different salads. In fact you could get most things you need for your

Picnic pickings

Local food eaten in the open air of Shropshire – what could be more satisfying?



picnic from a farm shop. Visit The Shop at the Cocks in Stottesdon, Citadel Farms Ltd in Shawbury or Canal Central in Maesbury Marsh. All shops are members of our Savour the Flavour retail scheme and are committed to selling local produce. Just look for the Savour the Flavour swing sign outside and branded equipment in store, like shelving, chillers and freezers, to be sure that regional produce is stocked.

And to finish on a sweet note, delve into a Pot of Deliciousness from Sweet Stuff Slow, Ludlow. These single-serving desserts are made using local seasonal fruit, local cream and a variety of high cocoa-solid couverture chocolates and are presented in glass ramekins. Desserts include Shropshire Damson Crème Brûlée and Single Origin Milk Choc Mocha pot. Or for cakes and flapjacks sample the offerings from Baked for You, Bomere Heath, Shrewsbury, including Heart of Gold, Lemon Drizzle and After the Harvest Rich Fruit Cake.

So keep an eye on the weather forecast and make the most of the sunny days. ■

To find out more about the producers mentioned and where to buy their products visit www.heff.co.uk