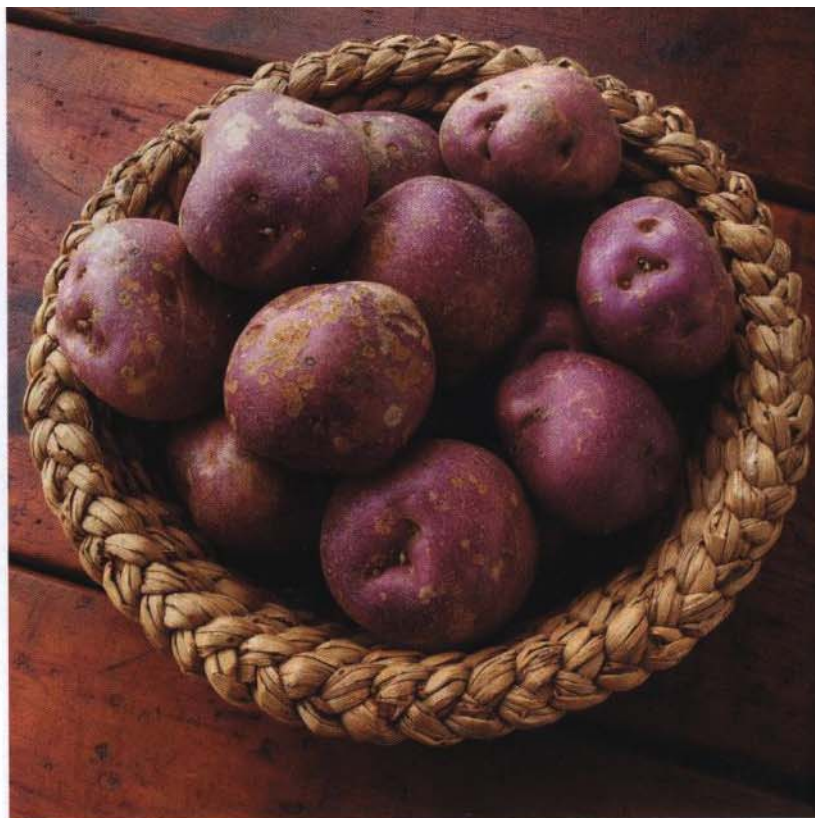


WORD OF MOUTH

September

SCOTCH TWIST

Perfect picnics include food that is a) tasty, b) transportable, c) easy to eat, and d) made by someone else. The Handmade Scotch Egg Company in Herefordshire ticks all the boxes. Penny and Neil Chambers offer an ever-changing collection of rare breed and other free-range meats wrapped around free-range hens' and quails' eggs, posted to you in the Toblerone-shaped 'Trube'. There are also veggie options, 'wee ones' and canapés. Available from farmers' markets and by mail order (01885 490520; www.handmadescotcheggs.co.uk).



SPUDS TO SAVOUR

Weather permitting, the first main crop of heritage potato varieties from Carroll's in Northumberland will be available from mid-September. The varieties rediscovered by Lucy and Anthony Carroll include the rare Arran Victory, a floury potato with a purple-blue skin named to celebrate the end of the First World War, and Highland Burgundy, a large oval tuber with striking red and white flesh that dates back to 1936 and makes great novelty chips. Call 01890 883060 or visit www.heritage-potatoes.co.uk.

FINE DINING

THE WHITE SWAN INN, Market Place, Pickering, North Yorkshire (01751 472288; www.white-swan.co.uk).

It's not hard to pig out at The White Swan Inn. In fact, it's recommended, since it is the only restaurant outside London to serve organic meat from The Ginger Pig, voted Best Producer in last year's *Observer Food Monthly* awards. It helps, of course, that the inn is just a few miles away from the farm across the North York Moors, but it would never have been offered the distinction without its commitment to top-notch, local ingredients, cooked in the sort of deceptively easy way you'd want to repeat at home if only you were willing and able. Best-ever rich belly pork and amazing crackling with mustard mash and apple sauce was as memorable as meaty ham-hock terrine. The Ginger



Pig's meat also stars in Longhorn beef shin and kidney pudding, comforting toad in the hole, succulent pork chops with glazed kidney, and Swaledale lamb with root vegetables and caper sauce. Whitby cod, fresh off the boat, had no tell-tale woolly freezer texture, and made great 'posh' fish and chips; Whitby crab was simply served in a light, delicious mound; fishcakes came with shrimp salad and lemon sauce.

The relaxed, low-key, 16th-century former coaching inn is a mix of traditional



and modern chic: bedrooms in the converted stable block include wet rooms, heated York-stone floors and the last word in high-tech gadgets. Having worked your way through a seriously good wine list, scoffed a great, candlelit dinner and slept in White Company sheets, all you have to do is power shower and head to the burgundy-painted dining room for breakfast. Among the choices are the full Yorkshire, kedgeree and eggs Benedict. Oink, oink. 🐷