



BITE
SIZED
GUIDES

KENT'S APPLES, CIDERS & JUICES

THE KING OF FRUITS
FROM THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND

kentfoodtrails.co.uk

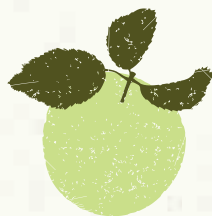


Produced in Kent

We want to inspire you with the amazing food and drink of Kent. From products grown here for hundreds of years to 21st century innovations, food and drink has shaped the landscape of our wonderful county and we hope you enjoy exploring all it has to offer.

This series of publications will introduce you to a whole range of fabulous food and drink and kentfoodtrails.co.uk will guide you through what to do and where to eat and stay so you can make the most of the Garden of England. Enjoy!

Go to producedinkent.co.uk to find out more about the tasty work we do inspiring everyone to buy locally.



THE KENT APPLE STORY

While apples have been grown in most counties since Roman times, Kent has become the major producer of apples with more than 60% of English apples grown in the county. History supports Kent with its deep fertile soils and continental climate located close to London as an early centre for successful apple production. In 1533 King Henry VIII's fruiterer Richard Harris established what is believed to be England's first large fruit collection on 105 acres at Teynham, which influenced many wealthy landowners to follow suit, setting in motion Kent's dominance as a producer of English apples and the beginning of The Garden of England.

John Guest, The English Apple Man



THE NOBLEST OF FRUITS

Be they red, green, sharp, sweet, crunchy or creamy we have always held apples in the highest regard and continue a definite love affair with their shiny, spherical, little selves to this very day. And that's never truer than right here in Kent, the beating heart of apple country!

To say Kent is synonymous with apples is an understatement; we grow two thirds of the UK's entire apple crop, grow more varieties than you can shake a stick at, live in a county carpeted by abundant orchards, specialise in some truly astonishing craft cider and juices and have all the right conditions – the right soils, the right amount of sunshine, rain and frost. In short, Kent is apple heaven!

Kent also has a long apple-coloured history, being the cradle for Henry VIII's fruit fascination and growing fruit for London's tables. By the end of the 19th century, Kent was home to 25,000 acres of orchards.

But what's really exciting is what's happening in Kent right now, as science pushes the boundaries, develops new varieties, increases yields and makes harvests more efficient.

**So take a big bite and join us for the truly
scrumptious story of England's Apple County.**



THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT APPLES & CIDER

1. Coming up smelling of apples...

Apples are a member of the rose family, and, just like roses, a symbol of love!

2. The original garden of Eden...

Apples originate from the Tian Shan region in Kyrgyzstan. But any apples you munched back then would have been smaller and bitterer than the apples we know today.

3. Fickle little blighters...

An apple seed will never reproduce the exact same variety. But thanks to the ancient Egyptians we know that grafting a piece of apple wood onto a rootstock will grow an identical tree.

4. A clean bill of health?

In the 14th century, babies were baptised in cider as it was cleaner than water! Centuries later Captain Cook carried cider on his ships to help treat scurvy.

5. A hard day's graft...

Historically, farm workers' wages included four pints of cider a day.

6. Blame the monks (and the Victorians)!

Our modern UK varieties are the result of centuries of careful grafting and planting, first within the monasteries, later by Victorian estate owners; hence some of the aristocratic names apples bear today.

7. A sign of Royal approval...

Henry VII paid huge sums for individual apples, Henry VIII planted orchards, Queen Victoria loved baked apples and Prince William said "everybody thinks I drink beer but I actually like cider".

8. Get scoffing...

The average person eats 65 apples each year, but you'd need to up your game to try all 7,500 varieties grown worldwide. That's one apple a day for over 20 years!

9. Juiced up...

Apples will yield up to 60 - 70% juice by weight! Around 9 kg (20lbs) of apples will yield up to 4.5 litres (one gallon) of juice...

10. And fermented...

About 36 dessert apples will make 4.5 litres of cider. Of all apples grown in the UK, 45% are used in cider making, producing around 591,000 kilolitres (or 130m gallons) a year!

FROM THE TREE OF LIFE TO AVALON

A history of apples in Kent

The humble crab apple is the ancestor of almost all domestic apples and evidence shows it was growing wild in Kent back in Neolithic times. Whilst we know the Romans introduced larger and sweeter varieties to the country and established our first orchards, evidence suggests the Celts and other tribes were cultivating apples for food and planting them alongside their sacred spaces.

Fast-forward to the Normans who developed new apple varieties in their monastery orchards. A manuscript plan of Christ Church Monastery at Canterbury (circa 1165) shows a pomerium (an apple garden) consisting of apples and pears for eating, and apples for cider making.

War, disease and the dissolution of the monasteries all led to a decline in apple growing until Henry VIII came to the rescue and instructed his fruiterer, Richard Harris, to establish a model orchard at Teynham in Kent which was used to distribute trees to other growers.

So began the good times with orchards extensively planted in the 16th and 17th centuries. Demand for apples was high, cider was hip and new varieties were on the rise. 1809 gave us the popular Bramley cooking apple and 1850 saw the advent of the famous Cox's Orange Pippin and by 1898, Kent's area 'under fruit' stood at 25,000 acres.

Things have settled down somewhat since then, but whilst today's acreage is a fraction of that peak, Kent remains the country's premier apple-growing region and right at the forefront of the industry's development.

"Kent, sir - everybody knows Kent - apples, cherries, hops and women"

Charles Dickens

A POTENT SYMBOL...

...quite literally across history and cultures.

You've probably heard of apples appearing as mystical or forbidden fruit, but did you know that Chinese mythology regards the apple as a symbol for peace and its blossom a symbol of feminine beauty?

Closer to home, in the legends of Celtic Britain, Avalon (Appleland), where King Arthur rested, is a symbol of divine joy.



APPLES DON'T JUST GROW ON TREES...

The science and technology behind modern production

Kent has the perfect growing conditions for apples: good soils and a moderate climate with plenty of sunshine. However don't think for a moment that growing apples is easy. Modern production is based on solid science and innovation, something Kent has had in spades ever since the first orchard in Teynham, but especially since the turn of the 20th century when the East Malling Research Station was established.

You could say that East Malling is the father of the modern apple industry as it was here that apple growing was revolutionised through research, identification and breeding of 'dwarf' rootstocks to give smaller tree sizes (the shorter height makes trees easier to maintain and harvest). Now 95% of modern apple varieties worldwide are grown on rootstock from their breeding programme!

Modern farming practice takes these 10ft trees and plants them closely together to ensure maximum yields. This is helped by a system called "tall spindle" where each tree is grown as a trunk with small fruiting branches along its length (no lateral branches). Wires are run alongside each tree to maintain the shape, and the trees are regularly pruned and trained so as to optimise exposure of the fruits to our lovely Kent sunshine, turning the pips brown and raising the natural sugars that sweeten their juice and allowing them to develop a good colour and flavour.

**THE FIVE BIGGEST
ENGLISH APPLE
GROWERS ARE ALL
BASED IN KENT!**



Growing is just the start!

Autumn shows its colours in the form of a bountiful apple harvest, when the majority of Kent's apples are picked by hand to ensure optimum quality. Much of the quality control is done in the orchards where they're picked according to the retailers' specifications, following checks to determine sugar and starch levels and pressure tests (that's what a penetrometer is for) to determine apple firmness.

Those that meet the grade are rushed by 'fruit train' to state-of-the-art cold stores to keep them in peak condition until they are ready for distribution. From cold storage they are taken to the packing houses where they may then be gently bobbed along water filled channels to the packing team. Every apple needs to be graded and modern technology allows each to be photographed up to 60 times a second to spot any imperfections.

As much work goes into maintaining and monitoring the orchard as it does in producing the apples themselves. Growers will monitor soil conditions (sometimes up to 60 times in a single hectare) throughout their orchards to ensure quality of the crop. Often they encourage growth of wild flowers amongst the trees, bringing nectar for beneficial insects (and reducing the need for pesticides) as well as encouraging a population of bees for pollination.

All this adds up to higher yields and a longer selling season, with several varieties now available in April and May, as well as throughout the summer and early autumn.

**THE FUTURE IS HERE
IN THE ORCHARD**

GPS-guided driverless tractors? Robotic fruit pickers? Artificial intelligence in the orchard may seem the stuff of science fiction but robotic technology is already being used for packing and grading. As a country we're on the verge of going driverless and we're only about five years away from mechanical harvesting!





KENTISH TO THE CORE

Crispy, juicy, sweet or sharp

THE FLOWER OF KENT

Great for cooking and juicing, this is allegedly the apple Isaac Newton saw fall to the ground from its tree in his garden, inspiring his laws of universal gravitation. The National Fruit Collection at Brogdale has an example listed as Isaac Newton's Tree.

Today, 80% of all English apples are sold in our major supermarkets and the varieties on offer are selected specifically for the task of looking good. The market demands apples that handle well without bruising, come in a uniform size and conform to the ideal of spherical shininess with no unsightly lumps and bumps!

Whilst the Cox has been the number one English dessert variety for 60 years, the Gala is expected to overtake it as the most prolific. Already the single largest variety of eating apple grown in England, it accounts for 25% of all sales.

Other familiar varieties include the Braeburn, Jazz (a fusion of Braeburn and Royal Gala) Cameo (grown predominantly in Kent), Discovery, Spartan, Kanzi, Zari, Rubens, Fuji and, the most famous cooker, the Bramley.

Apples with a Kentish connection

Considering there are around 7,500 apple varieties worldwide, the range available in our supermarkets is actually rather small! As a result of our illustrious fruit growing heritage we've produced many more over the centuries and as fashions change, so do our taste buds.

Nearly 60 varieties of apple originated in Kent, some of which you may find at farmers markets and farm shops during the season. Look for the Falstaff, Fiesta (also known as Red Pippin), Saturn, Kent or the delightfully named Scrumptious, described as having a honey like sweetness with a hint of strawberry. Tydeman's Late Orange and Early Worcester are also packed with flavour. Plus we have a great range of cookers such as the Kentish Fillbasket, Warner's King, Gooseberry Apple and Measday's Favourite.

The National Fruit Collection at Brogdale

The importance of the National Fruit Collection in preserving our apple heritage cannot be understated! And it's here that you can taste and buy varieties that you won't find anywhere else. With 2,300 apple varieties, this is the largest fruit collection in the world. All have been popular at some time in the past, but, whilst many aren't suitable for commercial production, they provide a vital gene bank for future varietal development, as well as a truly memorable experience!

Brogdale's 150 acres of orchards are a sight to behold in spring when the blossom is in full bloom. Harvest starts in late July and runs through to late November, depending on the variety. You can explore the collection on guided walking or tractor trailer tours. See brogdalecollections.org for details.

Throughout autumn, numerous apple and cider festivals take place across the county, also providing opportunities to discover apple nirvana and sample our many craft ciders. Check out kentfoodtrails.co.uk for details.



BROGDALE
COLLECTIONS

FOR THOSE WHO ENJOY THE GOOD LIFE...

Make space in your garden and grow your own tree. Easy to grow varieties include the Bountiful which, when cooked, simply ooze with juice. Limelight's yellow-green eating apples are deliciously crisp, sharp and refreshing and Winter Gem are rich, aromatic, crisp and juicy.



LET YOUR CREATIVE JUICES FLOW...

for a sublime blend

With perfect conditions for growing apples as well as an abundance of other fruits, Kent naturally produces a fantastic range of juices. Kent's juice producers supply direct and to retailers, pubs and restaurants all over the county. See kentfoodtrails.co.uk for details.

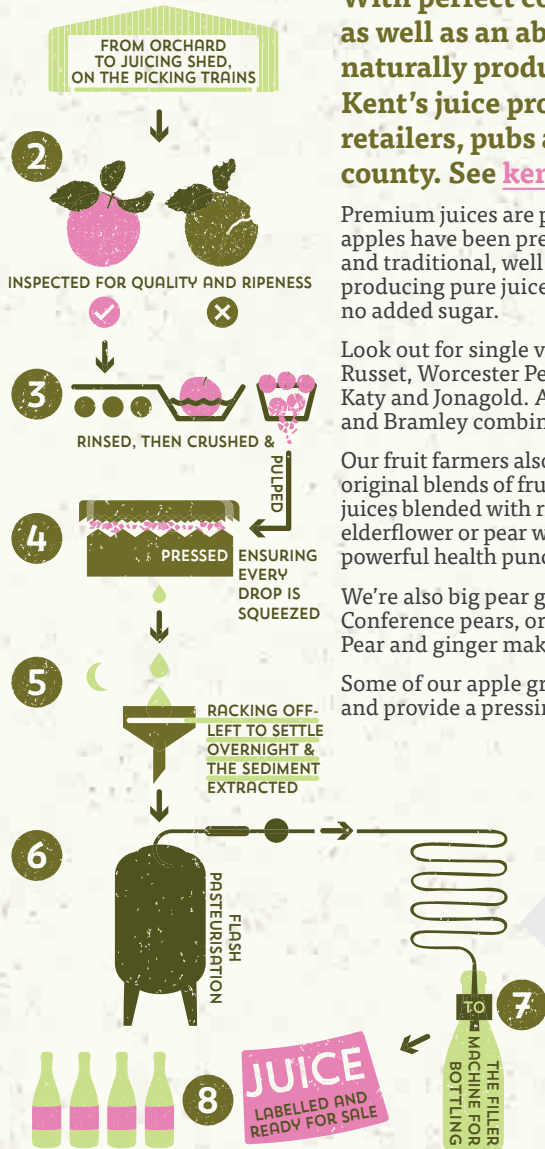
Premium juices are processed as little as possible after the apples have been pressed. Kent's juice makers use a mix of new and traditional, well known and some lesser known varieties, producing pure juice! Orchard ripened, naturally sweet with no added sugar.

Look out for single varietal juices such as Cox, Discovery, Russet, Worcester Pearmain, Red Pippin, Falstaff, Spartan, Katy and Jonagold. And then there's the ever popular Cox and Bramley combination.

Our fruit farmers also produce an extensive array of highly original blends of fruits, berries and flowers. You'll find apple juices blended with rhubarb, raspberry, strawberry, blackcurrant, elderflower or pear whilst apple blended with beetroot packs a powerful health punch!

We're also big pear growers - look for juice made from Conference pears, or blended with Comice and Concorde. Pear and ginger makes for a very compatible match.

Some of our apple growers have their own juicing press, and provide a pressing service for other orchards too.



CRAFT CIDER THE KENTISH WAY

Nothing but apples

Eating and juicing apples is one thing, but things get really exciting when you make booze out of them! Fortunately the abundance and quality of our apples means that Kent has been making cider since well before the Romans as part of a venerable tradition that stretches back thousands of years (although we suspect the cider from 6500 BC might not be quite as refined as today).

Cider is now worth nearly £3billion in the UK which is the biggest cider market in the world, consuming 800 million litres a year - or enough to fill 5 million bath tubs!

We're hugely excited by the craft cider revival in Kent where a dazzling display of ciders are produced, combining tradition with innovation, vision and passion that truly embody the Garden of England. Kent's cider is traditionally made from a blend of dessert apples (we don't grow cider apples in these parts) and cooking apples, resulting in a range of cleaner, crisper, refined ciders with a good balance of sweetness and acidity.

A radically different product to the mass produced varieties, Kent's ciders are perfect for summer drinking, as an aperitif, a great alternative to wine and accompaniment to food!

CRAFT CIDER...

is traditionally made in small batches from 100% fresh pressed apples, fermented naturally - usually by the apple's own wild yeasts on the skin and in the flesh - without adding sugar or using concentrate, allowing the fruit to full express itself.



Kent has a long history of producing cider but today we are witnessing a terrific revival in interest due to the growth of artisan ciders. They are creating distinctive, characterful ciders which appeal to a broad range of drinkers. The styles vary due to the different apples used and the approach used by the makers; from the fresh dessert apple style to the intense scrumpy style. All bring the flavours of the orchard to the glass.

Clive Barlow MW



HARVESTING

APPLES ARE HARVESTED AT THEIR OPTIMUM RIPENESS TO CAPTURE THE FULL FLAVOUR AND AROMA.

CRAFT CIDER THE KENTISH WAY

Making cider

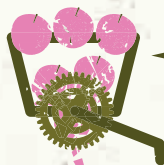
Cider may be made from a single apple variety or mixed, resulting in a range of sweetness. Those made from a single year's crop are sold as a defined year vintage, just like wine.



WASHED & INSPECTED



3 CRUSHED, PULPED OR MILLED



SCRATTER

4 PRESSING



THE APPLE PULP IS PRESSED TO EXTRACT THE JUICE.

5 FERMENTATION



THE JUICE IS CAREFULLY TRANSFORMED THROUGH YEAST IN WOODEN BARRELS, WHISKY CASKS OR STEEL TANKS, BRINGING OUT THEIR VIVID FRUITY CHARACTER.

6 RACKING



THE CIDER IS SYPHONED OFF FROM THE YEAST DEPOSIT (LEES)

7 STORAGE



8

CIDER
LABELLED AND
READY FOR SALE

WASSAIL
The first recorded mention of the Apple Wassail was here in Kent, in the town of Fordwich, in 1585. The Wassail comes from the Anglo-Saxon Waes Hael, meaning Be Thou of Good Health. Trees within the orchard are blessed by having cider poured on their roots, whilst a great deal of noise is made from the banging of pots, pans and firing of shotguns.

The craft movement is all about innovation and experimentation, making great use of everything that's available to the cider maker locally.

Fruity blends

Fruit cider is currently all the rage, accounting for 27% of all cider sold in the UK, and many of Kent's cider makers like to experiment with different flavours.

Look for ciders flavoured with toffee, elderflower, strawberries, raspberries or damsons. Or simply spiced - great served warmed or chilled.

Kentish sparkling

This enthusiasm for the craft has been taken to the next level in Kent where there's also been a revival of sparkling ciders made through a process of natural or force carbonation.

It is a well known fact that the bubbles really enhance the flavour of the fruit!

Find where to buy and drink these premium products at kentfoodtrails.co.uk.

Sample, buy and drink Kent's ciders

As the cider making process is so close to wine, the tasting process is also remarkably similar:



Kentish ciders are available in single serve glass bottles and cans, or kegs and bag-in-boxes for draught serve. They're served in many of our pubs and restaurants and can be found at farm and village shops and farmers markets. You can try Kentish ciders all over the county - whether it's a refreshing pint in a beer garden or a bottle to take home, find out more at kentfoodtrails.co.uk.



**BUY LOCAL,
SUPPORT THE
ENGLISH APPLE!**

The market was dominated for many years by imported varieties (we're looking at you Golden Delicious and Granny Smith) but since 2003 English apples have been on the rise. Better production methods and solid research and development helped English apples to 38% of the UK market share by 2011. Look for English apples next time you shop and we can push this even higher!

AS SURE AS APPLES ARE APPLES

You'll find the noblest of fruits in Kent

Here in Kent we love to show off the fruits of our labour (and we feel we have plenty to show off about)! You'll be amazed by the abundance and variety of apples, ciders and apple products you can sample and buy across the county. Apples are often sold locally with different varieties available according to their season.

Many of Kent's pubs hold annual cider (plus beer) festivals whilst apple events are held in towns and villages and at our major visitor attractions. Be sure to check out kentfoodtrails.co.uk.

Exploring our orchards

Perhaps the best known area for apple growing is around Faversham and Sittingbourne, especially the orchards near the villages of Hernhill, Boughton-under-Blean, Chartham Hatch and Selling. Even the train line between Canterbury East and Faversham is almost continuous blossom during those magical weeks in April and May. Grab copies of the Faversham Food Trails at visitfaversham.org/walks and explore the area once known as London's Larder.



Fabulous orchard views can be seen along the Greensand Way walking trail as it passes from Yalding to Linton (check out chapter 2 of the Kent section) and along the North Downs Way National Trail between Chilham and Canterbury. Go to explorekent.org for information.

Community orchards provide a wonderful oasis for quiet enjoyment. The Hucking orchard near Maidstone (look behind the church) has a special collection celebrating the life of local apple breeder Hugh Ermen whilst the Yalding Fen orchard, adjacent to Teapot Island, grows around a dozen varieties of apple which are harvested, pressed on site and bottled as the community's own Yalding Fen Apple Juice, available in the village. You'll find information on these and other orchards at kentorchards.org.uk and details of the Yalding Rail Trail at explorekent.org.

The Garden of England is also worth exploring on two wheels. Check out National Cycle Routes 1, 17 and 18 at sustrans.org.

Produced in Kent

This is one of a series of food trails promoting Kent's local produce and distinctive landscapes. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the content of this leaflet is accurate and up-to-date at the time of printing, no liability can be accepted for any errors, omissions or misrepresentation of fact contained herein.

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The European Agricultural Fund
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Europe investing in rural areas.



LOVE, KNOWLEDGE,
WISDOM, JOY



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