

**Press release**  
Edited 20.03.19

## **Abergavenny Food Festival announces early highlights for 2019**

- 21st edition of the festival to take place from 21st-22nd September
- 2019 programme welcomes chefs, farmers and food-writers from across the UK and beyond for demos, discussions and the delicious exploration of all things food and farming
- More events and speakers to be announced over the coming months

Abergavenny Food Festival has announced the first highlights from the 2019 festival programme (21st-22nd September) and following on from last year's 20th anniversary edition, the festival looks set to go from strength-to-strength. Welcoming leading food aficionados from across the world to the Welsh market town of Abergavenny, expect a top-quality line-up of chef demos, cookery classes, drinks events, foraging tours, wild-cooking classes, debates and discussions.



In 2019 the festival will welcome **Asma Khan (above)** - the first British chef to feature on Netflix's cult *Chef's Table* and Founder of Darjeeling Express, as she shares the story of her [Life in Food](#) with Telegraph food writer **Xanthe Clay**. The founding father of the modern fermentation movement, **Sandor Katz**, will be joining us from Tennessee, USA for ['Beyond Sauerkraut'](#) a fermenting masterclass that will include the opportunity to troubleshoot your home-ferments. Katz will also join acclaimed food writer **Bee Wilson**, author of ['The way we eat now'](#) for a discussion in the Borough Theatre exploring what the modern age means for our diets and health.



Chefs joining the demo-stage line-up this year include: **Gareth Ward (above)** of the Michelin-starred Ynyshir in Mid Wales, **Josh Eggleton** from the Michelin-starred Pony & Trap near Bristol, eco-chef, food waste columnist and author of *The Natural Cook* **Tom Hunt** and Cardiff-based chef **Tommy Heaney**.





Leading UK herb grower **Jekka McVicar** will be teaching us [how to make more of herbs](#), Copenhagen's **Trine Hahnemann** will be running a Scandinavian baking class, and **Elly Curshen** aka Elly Pear will be teaming up with friend and food-writer **Rosie Birkett** for a lesson in stress-free dinner party cooking. On the 'Cooking Over Fire' stage **Christian Stevenson** (aka DJ BBQ), Sam and Shauna from **Hangfire BBQ (above)** and Bristol chef, **Freddy Bird** will be firing up the grill at The Castle.

Our popular Mutton Tasting masterclass returns with **Cyrus Todiwala**, joined by **Nick Miller** and **Sarah Dickens** of Black Welsh Lamb. Drinks writer **Jack Bevan** will be teaming up with leading producer **Trealy Farm** for a **Charcuterie and Vermouth** pairing masterclass, and visitors can discover Welsh beers and ciders with drinks writer **Pete Brown**.



Don't miss, multi-awarding winning author and chef, **Anissa Helou**, joined by **Fozia Ismail** – founder of Somali supper-club Arawelo Eats & one of *Observer Food Monthly's 2019 Top 50*, for thoughts and stories on [Foods of the Islamic World](#). The programme of discussions and debates in the Castle Dome includes: **The rise of #MeToo in hospitality** – problems and solutions, with **Asma Khan, Trine Hahnemann, and Xanthe Clay**; a look at our emotional relationship with food and the rise of eating disorders, plus the return of our food & farming rants.

**Aine Morris**, CEO of Abergavenny Food Festival says of this year's festival:

“To have a programme that is such a reflection of the dynamic change and creativity we are seeing across UK food and farming is massively exciting. We are very pleased to be showcasing more women and more diversity at the food festival than ever before.”

“If you love food in all its forms, then Abergavenny offers so much more than just the chance to fill your bellies. This year’s festival promises to be truly world class, delivering delicious experiences, whilst also dealing with the thorny issues facing the future of the industry.”

“Abergavenny is fundamentally about food and introducing visitors to the people who dedicate their lives to making it. We aim to get you tasting new products, learning new skills, and shaking the hand that feeds you. In the face of great environmental and economic uncertainty our farmers, food producers and restaurants need the support of the British public more than ever, and food fest 2019 is the place to come if you want to understand why.”

Day and weekend wristbands are on sale now, along with initial event tickets. Please check the [abergavennyfoodfestival.com](http://abergavennyfoodfestival.com) website for further details and to sign up to the festival [newsletter](#) to receive updates.

### ‘Wild & Foraged’ events

Look out for the expanded [‘Wild & Foraged’](#) programme, which will take visitors out of town to discover the bounty that the surrounding Welsh countryside has to offer. From a mushroom walk in the Wye Valley to a [Seashore Forage](#) with **Henry Ashby**. You can make [Wild Cocktails](#) with grower and author **Mark Diacono** and forager **Liz Knight** and learn [Wild Cooking](#) with fire aficionados, **Genevieve Taylor** and **Henry Eldon** of The Cauldron restaurant.

### Feasting at the Festival

A merry band of chefs, cooks, wine merchants and hospitality pros are set to whip up a storm for the food fest’s annual Saturday night feast [One More, No More](#). Featuring in the kitchen, *guardian* columnist and cookbook writer **Rachel Roddy**, chefs and authors **Rosie Sykes** and **Claire Thomson** along with chefs **Matthew Williamson** and **Sam Sohn-Rethel** with **Stacey Smith**, **Ben Llewelyn** and **Ruth Spivey** on the floor. Five courses with wine to match. More details to be released soon.

### The Farmyard grows for 2019

[The Farmyard](#) area is expanding significantly to include the ‘Farming Matters’ stage with talks, debates and discussion on the future of farming in the UK. Our Welsh chef demo stage returns to showcase the very best produce and the incredible talent that Wales has to offer. Around the festival farmyard you’ll find a **Tiny Rebel** bar, a rare breed animal petting paddock, art installations and a market for products made on-farm.

### After Hours

Tickets for the annual [Community Feast](#) in Abergavenny’s iconic Market Hall with the **Angel Bakery**, plus the Friday night [Stomp at the Castle](#) and legendary Saturday night [Party at the Castle](#) are all now on sale via the website.

As always visitors can expect to find around 220 food and drink producers trading across nine market sites including: Cheese and Wine, Fish & Fizz, Street Food and night market, and a special area for New Food Producers. Traders will include Trealy Farm Charcuterie, Halen Mon, Borough Market’s Heritage Cheese, and many, many more.



### **Wristband and ticket sales**

Weekend and day wristbands giving access to all Producer Markets and free chef demos are on sale now via [abergavennyfoodfestival.com](http://abergavennyfoodfestival.com).

Tickets will be sold separately for all events at the Borough Theatre, Masterclasses, Drinks Theatre, Tutored Tastings, Foraging Tours and off-site events and the Cookery School. Check the website for further info.

The full line-up for the festival will be announced and on sale in June.

Those with an NP7 postcode will receive 20% off the cost of their wristband available online now using the code LOCAL. To qualify for the local discount, proof of address must be shown when online purchases are exchanged for wristbands during the festival.

There will be a 10% discount available for groups of 10 or more. Please go to [abergavennyfoodfestival.com](http://abergavennyfoodfestival.com) for more details.

Abergavenny Food Festival is excited to welcome returning sponsors Triodos Bank, Chase Distillery, Belazu, Riverford Organic, Real Kombucha, Seedlip and Pipers Farm.

Twitter: [@afoodfestival](https://twitter.com/afoodfestival)

Instagram: [@afoodfestival](https://www.instagram.com/afoodfestival)

Facebook: [Abergavenny Food Festival](https://www.facebook.com/AbergavennyFoodFestival)

**ENDS**



## **Photography:**

High res photos of those announced for the 2019 festival are available to download [here](#). Credits are in the image file names.

Photography highlights from the 2018 festival are available to download [here](#). Please credit Neil White.

For all Welsh media enquiries please email:  
[jane@abergavennyfoodfestival.com](mailto:jane@abergavennyfoodfestival.com)

For all other press enquiries and interviews with any of those appearing at the event please contact:

Caroline Peel  
07771 957225  
[caroline@abergavennyfoodfestival.com](mailto:caroline@abergavennyfoodfestival.com)

## **Notes to editors:**

Since its inception, the Abergavenny Food Festival has grown its audience from 3,000 visitors to become the largest food festival in Wales with 37,000 attendees last year, showcasing the very best food and drink from Wales and across the world. Generating an estimated £4 million impact for the local economy, we are committed to supporting our local community, employ over 120 young people over Festival weekend and support catering students to gain work experience in our kitchens.

Abergavenny Food Festival was created in 1999 by two local farmers in response to the BSE crisis and the resulting lack of consumer confidence in British produce. With the outbreak of Foot and Mouth in 2001, difficulties worsened and pushed the Festival forward in terms of showcasing the wonderful food we have to offer locally, and the passion of the people who produce it.

Abergavenny Food Festival enjoys a reputation as a place for chefs, food businesses, journalists, farmers and food producers to come together. We are known for being an inclusive and welcoming event, delivering a delicious opportunity for people from all walks of life to explore and learn about food.

Through our programme of activities, including product tastings, kids' activities, masterclasses, hands-on cookery lessons and topical debates, we provide the inside track on food issues, offer new ideas about the future of our food and showcase rising stars emerging from the industry.

The Festival aims to transform the way people think about food; challenging and promoting new ideas, pushing the boundaries of current thinking and encouraging people to look differently at where their food comes from.

Over the years, the festival has attracted top food heavyweights such as: Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, Jamie Oliver, Monica Galetti, Jane Baxter, Jose Pizarro and Valentine Warner, to name but a few.

We cherish our history and remain committed to offering a genuine market experience in the rural setting of our beautiful market town.