

CLASSIC DRIVER

[Driving to Goodwood off-season for a nose-to-tail experience](#)

Lead

The sprawling Goodwood estate is so much more than just the home of the Members' Meeting, Festival of Speed, and Revival. We took a plucky British sports car to the new Farmer, Butcher, Chef restaurant to prove that Goodwood is a destination for the whole year round...

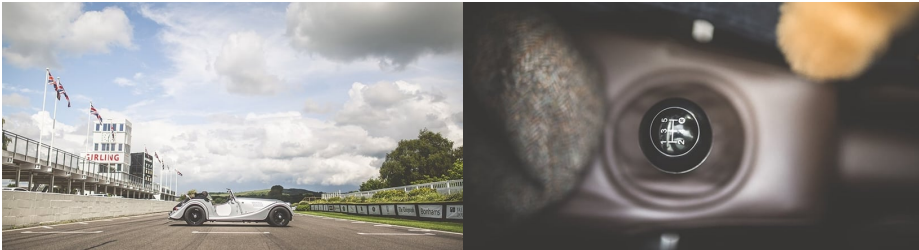
Pilgrimage



Whether you're travelling from London or Luxembourg, the drive to Goodwood for the Members' Meeting, Festival of Speed, or Revival has become something of a ritual for us car-minded folk. Even what feels like miles of tailbacks — wreaking havoc with the thousands of temperamental old cars sharing the journey — fail to quash the anticipation of the nirvana that lays ahead. But there's much more to Goodwood than 'just' motorsport.

Farmer, Butcher, Chef is a great example. The restaurant, which opened in November 2016 and adjoins The Goodwood Hotel, serves award-winning beef, pork, and lamb reared and butchered on the 3,400-acre organic farm that, quite literally, surrounds the 18th-century building. If anything, driving our gorgeous Morgan Plus 4 the long way there, on hopefully deserted country roads, was the ideal way in which to work up an appetite.

Lady luck



Naturally, the British summer weather immediately threw everything it had at us — fog, drizzle, hail, and glorious sunshine, and that was all before lunch. The folks at Morgan had amusingly told us that unless the storm had a name, they wouldn't dare put the canvas hood up. But after a persistent spell of heavy rain, and what can only be described as a puddle of water forming in the foot wells, we were forced to stop.

Mercifully, by the time we neared Goodwood and the roads began to unravel through gorgeous rolling landscapes, the clouds dispersed and the sun reared its head once again. With this, we removed the roof and the Morgan's windows, unlocking the car's thoroughly charming character. Sure, its 2.0-litre Ford motor is not the most gutsy of engines, and the ride often felt like we were driving a wooden bedframe rather than a car, but with the wind engulfing your body, the exhaust spouting delicious pops and bangs on the overrun, and fellow motorists waving, taking photos, and gladly allowing you out of junctions, what's possibly not to like?

Farmer, Butcher, Chef





After a customary snoop at the motor circuit (and, unexpectedly, an impromptu photo shoot on the grid), we followed the sound of our stomachs to Farmer, Butcher, Chef, where we were greeted by Tim Hassell, the farm's general manager of eight years and, of course, the 'Farmer' in the restaurant's name.

"As part of our roles as the farmer, butcher, and chef, Darron Bunn, John Hearn, and I used to sit together every Friday and discuss the meat availability on various parts of the estate for the coming week," he explained. "Essentially, that became the theme of the restaurant — using our combined knowledge to control every aspect of the process and design a frequently changing menu that utilises the carcasses in different and interesting ways."

Waste not, want not



Take the signature Butcher's Boards, for example. Executive Chef Bunn describes them as the story of an animal on a plate, comprising prime cuts with other interesting pieces. We opted for the beef board that combined the succulent skirt with an oxtail faggot, pickled ox tongue, beef-dripping mash, and glazed peppered salt beef. It was both decadent and delicious. "In the past, the emphasis was on making the most of the carcass because that's what people could afford," commented Hassell. "Doing it this way gives us the flexibility to use alternative cuts that we can cook exactly the same way. It's about what we've got and what's available, and it changes all the time."

Reaching far and wide



After lunch, Hassell gives us a tour of the farm to show us first-hand how the livestock is reared with the utmost respect. “We’ve only got a limited number of animals we can process on a weekly basis, because it’s purely livestock we’ve grown and reared ourselves,” he explained. “The customers come further than the food they’re served.” The farm processes four cows, 15 pigs, and 30 lambs a week, all of which have been slow-grown and fed on crops grown at Goodwood, and the resulting meat, cheese, milk, and beer are distributed across the country to such establishments as the Ritz hotel and, fittingly, the RAC Club in London.

So, the next time you’re up early on a Sunday morning and warming your classic car ahead of a country blast, why not aim for Goodwood for lunch? Farmer, Butcher, Chef’s bright yet cosy Cindy Leveson-designed interior is welcoming come rain or shine (and we should know), and the food... well, let’s just say it tastes infinitely better knowing it’s travelled fewer than 300 yards from the field to your fork.

Photos: Robert Cooper for Classic Driver © 2017

Gallery

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