

Somerset Cider & Apple Juice

Somerset Cider Makers

1 Shepton Mallet Cider Mill

Kilver St, Shepton Mallet, BA4 5ND.
Tel: 01749 334000
website: www.sheptoncider.co.uk

The Shepton Mallet cider mill in Somerset is the most efficient and modern cider mill in the world pressing over 40,000 tons of locally sourced apples to produce over 30 million gallons of cider every year. The senior team at the mill have over a hundred years of cider making experience between them and although the mill uses the latest technology, the traditional principles of cider making are the same today as they have always been. The result is a range of well known and well loved cider brands produced to the highest standards that the team at the mill are justifiably very proud of.

Familiar ciders produced include *Blackthorn*, *Gaymers*, *Old English*, *Allstone*, *Natch* and *K*.

Visits of the mill can sometimes be accommodated by special arrangement, please call during office hours.

2 Burrow Hill Cider

Julian Temperley
Pass Vale Farm, Burrow Hill, Kingsbury Episcopi, Martock, TA12 5BU.
Tel: 01460 240782 Fax: 01460 249220
email: apples@ciderbrandy.co.uk
website: www.ciderbrandy.co.uk

Burrow Hill has been a cider farm for 150 years and Julian Temperley has been running it for the last 40 years.

In 1984 he won the 'triple crown', winning cider competitions in Hereford, Devon and Somerset. The cider is pressed from 40 different varieties of cider apple and the farm owns 150 acres of orchard. Apart from traditional farmhouse cider, Julian makes two exceptional bottle fermented sparkling ciders. The cider is matured on its yeast for a year and then disgorged by freezing the ends of the bottles. This so called 'Champagne Method' was pioneered in Hereford in 1632 by Lord Scudamore before the Civil War and had reached Montacute House in Somerset by 1664, long before the French even claim to have invented the method. Old cider house, huge vats, barrels, farm animals. Single Variety Bottle Fermented Sparkling Cider: Kingston Black and Stoke Red. Dry and Medium Farmhouse Ciders & Cider Vinegar. Apple Juice: Russet, Cox and Bramley.

Open: Monday-Saturday 9am-5.30pm all year, closed Sundays. Orchard trail & toilets.

3 The Somerset Distillery

Pass Vale Farm, Burrow Hill, Kingsbury Episcopi, Martock, TA12 5BU.
Tel: 01460 240782 Fax: 01460 249220
email: apples@ciderbrandy.co.uk
website: www.ciderbrandy.co.uk

Somerset Cider Brandy evokes all the magic and mystery of the West Country. Over the years The Somerset Cider Brandy Co has singlehandedly masterminded the revival of Somerset's monastic distilling traditions. Today their old French pre-war stills, Josephine & Fifi, produce copious quantities of apple spirit which is matured in oak barrels in a special spirit bond. Internationally acclaimed, the Cider Brandy can be bought as 20, 15, 10, 5 or 3 Year old, all bottled at 42% abv. Added to this is the highly successful Kingston Black Aperitif at 18% and the clear but delicious Eau de vie at 40%. Recently, the Somerset Cider Brandy company won a PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) making them the only legal distillers of Cider Brandy in Europe. The two copper stills are on display at the farm. Conducted tours by arrangement. All products available by mail order, credit card hotline or website.

Open: Monday-Saturday 9am-5.30pm all year, closed Sundays. Orchard trail & toilets.

 Disabled access varies. Most outlets are working farms. If in doubt, please telephone the cider maker first.

4 Perry's Cider Mills

Perry Family
Dowlish Wake, Ilminster, TA19 0NY.
Tel: 01460 55195
website: www.perryscider.co.uk



Housed in a sixteenth century thatched barn this traditional and picturesque cider farm has been in business since 1920, although cider has always been made in the ancient barn. The apples used in cider making are from their own orchards and local farms. The art of craft cider making is still very much alive and cider is stored in wooden barrels. Their cider has won many awards over the years and the ciders now produced are of the highest quality, with a wide choice of draught ciders and speciality bottled ciders including a large range of Single Variety Ciders. Apple juice. Free entry to the cider mills which houses a large collection of old farm wagons, machinery, tools plus a Rural Life Museum. Cider can be sampled in the large Cider/Farm shop & Tea Room/Eatery which sells a wide variety of local foods, drinks, gifts and ciders.

Open: Weekdays 9am-5.30pm, Saturday/Bank Holidays 9.30am-4.30pm, Sunday 10am-1pm all year.

5 Sheppy's Cider Ltd

David and Louisa Sheppy
Three Bridges, Bradford-on-Tone, Taunton, TA4 1ER.
Tel: 01823 461233 Fax: 01823 461712
email: info@sheppscider.com
website: www.sheppscider.com
f Sheppy's Cider Ltd
t @SheppysCider

The Sheppy family runs a traditional cider farm, with over 200 years of cider making experience, producing a wide range of high quality draught and bottled ciders. Many of Sheppy's ciders have been winners of prestigious awards over the years, and their range includes Oak Matured Vintage, a range of single variety ciders, Gold Medal, traditional scrumpy and

many more. Fifty-five acres of bush and traditional orchards are available for the public to walk in, including areas for picnics and a children's playground. Visitors can enjoy an excellent rural life museum and DVD of the Sheppy's cider maker's year. Samples can be tasted in the farm shop where cider and local produce can be bought. Licensed tea rooms. All buildings and public areas suitable for disabled.

Open: Monday-Saturday 8.30am-6pm all year, Sunday (July and August only) 10am-4pm.

6 Thatchers Cider Company Ltd

Martin Thatcher
Myrtle Farm, Sandford, BS25 5RA.
Tel: 01934 822862
email: info@thatcherscider.co.uk
website: www.thatcherscider.co.uk
f thatcherscidercompany
t @thatchers_cider

Out of a Somerset farming family has emerged one of the country's most distinctive craft cider-makers. Formed in 1904, Thatchers Cider has grown from local farmhouse producer, to a family-led company widely respected not only for its expertise in cider-making, but for its beautiful orchards, its commitment to sustainability, and its firm belief in all that is great about Somerset cider. From its century-old oak vats to recipes that have been passed down over the generations, Thatchers sticks to what it knows to be right. Thatchers' master-cider-makers craft a complete range of bottled and draught ciders, from fresh, vibrant and modern, to traditional, vintage and speciality, including: *Thatchers Gold*, *Katy*, *Thatchers Rosé*, *Vintage*, *Cox's*, *Green Goblin*, *Pear*, *Heritage*, *Traditional* and *Cheddar Valley*. Thatchers' cider shop is open all year round. Visitors can also walk or cycle along the Strawberry Lane, a popular cycle path which runs through several of Thatchers' orchards.

Open: Monday-Saturday 9.00am-6.00 pm, Sunday and Bank Holidays 10.00am-1.00pm.

APPLE ORCHARDS ARE A VITAL part of the Somerset landscape and this map will help you to discover the main farmhouse cider and apple juice producers who rely on those orchards. Half the fun of exploring a region is the journey to the farm. Some working farms are large concerns, others small, but each has its own local distinctiveness.

Many of the cider farms are now geared up for visitors and you will always be able to sample the produce. Almost all are open to the public but some require you to phone first. There are plenty more smaller cider makers out there, but you will have to hunt around for them, which also adds to the fun...



7 Rich's Farmhouse Cider

Family run
Mill Farm, Watchfield, Nr. Highbridge, TA9 4RD.
Tel: 01278 783651 Fax: 01278 786651
Restaurant tel: 01278 794537
Legbender Cider Shop tel: 01934 744127
website: www.richscider.co.uk

Cider has been produced at Rich's Cider Farm at Watchfield for three generations. There have been many changes since Gordon Rich started pressing cider apples at Mill Farm, although essentially the production of the juice is still traditional. One of their oak vats holds 10,000 gallons of cider. They are a family run business offering a range of farmhouse ciders, farm pressed apple juice, local cheeses, chutneys, jams and crafts. Also on the farm is the Cider Press Restaurant serving breakfasts, lunches and chilled cream teas and a museum featuring vintage cider equipment. You can also visit their Legbender Cider Shop in Cheddar Gorge, next door to the famous Cheddar Gorge Cheese Co where you can watch Cheddar Cheese being made and sample the range of Rich's Ciders.

Open: visit www.richscider.co.uk for opening times.

THE PHILOSOPHY of traditional farmhouse cider making owes its origin not just to the monasteries but to the generations of small farmers who have over the centuries excelled at using the very best cider apples from their own orchards and surrounding villages. Apples that they have themselves had a hand in selecting, grafting and even naming. Orchards, soil and climate are therefore vital ingredients and farmhouse cider became distinctive in the same way that wine from certain vineyards in France has become famous.

The cider makers of Somerset are marketing not just a fine drink, but a landscape and a distinct locality where the role of the individual craft cider maker is paramount. Cider made from pure cider apple juice, pressed and matured in oak barrels on the farm is the true Spirit of Somerset.

8 Hecks Traditional Farmhouse Cider

Chris and Andrew Hecks
9-11 Middle Leigh, Street, BA16 0LB.
Tel: 01458 442367
email: enquiries@hecksfarmhousecider.co.uk
website: www.hecksfarmhousecider.co.uk

The Hecks family has been making cider for six generations, since 1840. The award winning farmhouse cider is fermented in wooden barrels and sold draught from the wood. They have specialised in draft and bottled Single Variety Ciders and Perry and at least a dozen different varieties of apple juice. Their shop also sells fruit and veg, local cheddar cheese, chutneys, pickles, jams, marmalades, cider mugs and cider jars.

Open: Summer 9am-5.30pm weekdays and Saturday, Sunday 10am-12.30pm. Winter 9am-5pm weekdays and Saturday, Sunday 10am-12.30pm. Group tours welcome. Coaches welcome by appointment.



9 Parson's Choice Cider

Jeanette and Phil Dolding
Parsonage Farm, West Lyng, Taunton, TA3 5AP.
Tel: 01823 490978
email: info@parsonschoicecider.co.uk
website: www.parsonschoicecider.co.uk

Parson's Choice is a traditional Somerset Farmhouse Cider made on the Somerset Levels with pure cider apple juice from their own orchards. There is also a small farm shop which sells apple juice, cider vinegar, jams, chutneys, tankards and gift baskets. Oak barrels, plants in season. Compost & veg.

Open: 9am-6pm Monday-Saturday, Sunday 9am-5pm all year.

10 Bridge Farm Cider

Nigel Stewart
Bridge Farm, East Chinnock, Yeovil, BA22 9EA.
Tel: 01935 863287
email: info@bridgefarmcider.co.uk
website: www.bridgefarmcider.co.uk
f www.facebook.com/bridgefarmcider

Bridge Farm has been making award winning artisan cider for over 25 years. All the fruit is home grown or harvested locally and pressed on the farm. We produce range of fine ciders, traditional still or sparkling. Pear Cider/Perry and five year old Cider Brandy. The traditional still farmhouse cider is available from oak barrels in the farm shop. Bridge Farm also presses between 8 and 10 single variety apple juices ranging from a sweet Egremont Russet to a delicious, crisp Brown's Apple juice.

Open: seven days a week Monday-Saturday 9am-6pm, please phone for Sunday hours.

11 West Croft Cider

John Harris — West Croft Farm, Brent Knoll, Highbridge, TA9 4BE.
Tel: 01278 760762/760259
email: info@somersetvinegarco.co.uk
website: www.somersetvinegarco.co.uk

John Harris has been making cider since 1992. He sells Janet's Jungle Juice, Dry, Medium and Morgan Sweet and has won many awards. The Somerset Cider Vinegar Company makes traditionally fermented cider vinegar (unpasteurised and containing 'mother') from 100% juice at West Croft Farm.

Open: 10am-7pm closed Wednesday, Christmas, Boxing Day, New Year and Sunday afternoons in winter. A large Wassail takes place on the third Saturday after Xmas.

12 Barrington Court Cider

Rachel Brewer — Barrington Court, Barrington, near Ilminster, TA19 0NQ.
Tel: 01460 241938
email: barringtoncourt@nationaltrust.org.uk
web: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/barrington-court

Barrington Court has been making award-winning ciders and apple juices since 2006, reviving the estate's historical tradition. This picturesque National Trust property has 10 acres of traditional Somerset orchards consisting of over 100 different varieties of apple. Cider is made from hand-picked apples, and pressed on a traditional 200-year-old cider press. Their prize winning Dry and Medium Farmhouse cider along with their apple juices are available to buy in the restaurant and gift shop. There are also the Tudor manor house and beautiful gardens to explore, along with a small cider exhibition detailing their cider story.

Open: March-October 11am-5pm daily, winter open weekends.

13 Orchard Pig Ltd

Give us an oink, or trot us a line
West Bradley Orchards, West Bradley, Nr Glastonbury, BA6 8LT.
Tel: 01458 851222
email: oink@orchardpig.co.uk
website: www.orchardpig.co.uk
f The Orchard Pig
t @OrchardPig

Somerset Ciders & Orchard Drinks - With Roots! It all started in 2004, when founders Andrew & Neil were enjoying their home made cider & hog roast with friends... No Porkies... Orchard Pig was born out of a shared passion for great food and Old Spots, the original Orchard Pigs, and an accidental discovery that home-grown apples make the best tasting cider - A simple pleasure, best shared! Now that's something to Snout about! Although life in our orchards is pressing for apples, we know good cider is a craft and takes time to mature!

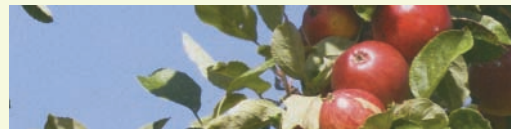
Open: shop open for juices any time, Cider Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

14 Wilkins Farmhouse Cider

Roger Wilkins — Land's End Farm, Mudgley, Wedmore, BS28 4TU.
Tel: 01934 712385
website: www.wilkinscider.com

Roger's grandfather started the cider business in 1917. Roger took over when his grandfather died in 1969. A rare insight into Somerset's ciderhouse culture. There are chairs and newspapers to pass the time of day. The free taster is always half a pint... good clean cider - just Dry, Medium and Sweet Farmhouse Cider. Roger also sells cheddar cheese.

Open: Monday-Saturday 10am-8pm, Sunday Communion 10am-1pm, Sermon optional...



15 Wilcox Cider

The Cider Shop, The Bays, Cheddar, BS27 3QW.
Tel: 01934 740005
email: enquiries@wilcox cider.com
website: www.wilcox cider.com

Traditional cider making in the heart of the Mendips with our shop at the bottom of Cheddar Gorge. We also take our cider around the South West doing a number of shows where we are known as 'arts cider shack'.

Open: summer 10am-5.30pm 7 days a week, winter 10am-5pm Thursday-Sunday.

16 Crossman's Prime Farmhouse Cider

Ben Crossman — Mayfield Farm, Hewish, Weston super Mare, BS24 6RQ.
Tel: 01934 833174 Mbl: 07770 531621

Good clean traditional farmhouse cider served from oak barrels. Dry, Medium and Sweet. Working farm with farm shop selling seasonal produce ie cheese, sausages, bacon, free range eggs, vegetables, potatoes, etc.

Open: Monday-Saturday 9am-6pm, Sunday 10am-1pm, open all year.

17 Torre Cider

Jill Gillman — Torre Farm, Washford, Watchet, TA23 0LA.
Tel: 01984 640004
email: torrefarm@gmail.com

Cider on tap or bottled: Farmhouse, Medium, Dry and Sweet, Sheep Stagger & Tornado. Not just cider, but Gloucester Old Spot Pigs and pygmy goats. Large shop selling trucks of Cheddar cheese & Somerset Camembert, country wines, Exmoor honey, jams, pickles, jellies and mustard.

Open: 16th March-October 10am-5pm, November-February 10am-4pm.

18 Bennett's Cider

Viv Bennett — Chestnut Farm, Edithmead, Burnham on Sea, TA9 4HB.
Tel: 01278 785376

Like his father Viv has won a whole string of prizes at the Bath and West as well as at the Devon County Show. This is a working farm. Viv's father Tom won over 150 prize cards in 15 years. Viv thinks he has now caught him up...

Open: Monday-Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 10am-4pm summer, Sunday 10am-1pm winter.

19 Gold Rush Cider

Jim Lockyer and Chris Smoldon — Woodpecker Lodge, Bere, Aller, Langport, TA10 0OX.
Tel: 07934 424797 and 01458 250166
email: lockyer1b@tconnect.com
website: www.sites.google.com/site/goldrushcider

We have been making cider with the family at our farm since 1988 and it is now sold as a guest cider in local pubs and can be bought direct from the farm. We welcome visitors and they will be able to give our cider a good try before they buy.

Open: seven days a week, 9am-7pm.

20 Pennard Cider

Hugh Tripp — Avalon Vineyard, The Drove, East Pennard, Shepton Mallet, BA4 6UA.
Tel: 01749 860393
email: pennardorganicwines@gmail.com
website: www.pennardorganicwines.co.uk
f pennardorganicwines

Proper scrumpy cider pressed by hand in straw cheese. All on draught, dry, medium or sweet. They also make organic mead, loads of fruit wines, stunning liqueurs, English grape wine and organic apple juice.

Open: 10am-6pm daily, all year round.

21 The Tricky Cider Company

Steve Watkins and Alistair Brice — The Bakery, Honiton Road, Churchinford, Taunton, TA3 7RF.
Tel: 01823 602782
email: info@trickycider.com
website: www.trickycider.com

Award winning traditional cider from the Blackdown Hills, also available in bottles.

Open: by appointment only.

22 Ashill Cider

MA House — Ashill Farm, Ashill, Ilminster, TA19 9NE.
Tel: 01823 480513
email: iahn.house@btinternet.com

We pride ourselves on a full strength, full bodied traditional farmhouse cider produced from local apples.

Open: Monday-Saturday 9.00am-6.00pm and Sunday 10.00am-5.00pm.

23 Honey Pot Farm Cider & Apple Juice

Colin & Julie Comben — Honey Pot Farm, Fosse Way, Yeabridge, South Petherton, TA13 5LW.
Tel: 07971 656440
email: thecombens@aol.com
web site in progress, ready late Spring 2013.

Honey Pot Farm Cider & Apple Juice is produced on our 5 1/2 acre holding. We produce 4500 litres of Cider per year as sustainably as possible, integrated with our sheep and other animals which graze our orchards and feed on the pomace. We also keep bees to pollinate.

Open: Fridays March-December 11am-5pm (other times by appointment).

24 Lawrence's Cider

John Lawrence — Ridge View, Corton Denham, Nr Sherborne, DT9 4LS.
Tel: 01963 220650
email: info@lawrencescider.co.uk
website: www.lawrencescider.co.uk

Lawrence's has been making traditional cider since 2003. Apples are harvested by hand to ensure only the best fruit is used. All the fruit comes from local Somerset orchards, including my own trees, the Cider is then matured in Oak barrels, the influence of the Oak on Cider creates a stronger, deeper flavour.

Open: seven days a week 9am-5pm.

Somerset Apple Juice

1 Charlton Orchards

Sally Bail/Duncan Small
Creesh St Michael, Taunton, TA3 5PF.
Tel: 01823 412959
email: sally@charlton-orchards.co.uk
website: www.charltonorchards.com

45 acres of orchard, 35 different varieties of apple, apple juice, plums, damsons, pears, soft fruit, pumpkins and squash plus jams and chutneys. Fruit trees and bushes also available. Also orchard visits and short courses, tastings, talks and open days.

Open: Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, Saturday 10am-5pm, Saturday opening September to February only.

2 North Perrott Fruit Farm

Jonathan Hoskyns — North Perrott Fruit Farm, North Perrott, Crewkerne, TA18 7SS.
Tel & Fax: 01460 77090
email: farmshop@parrettbrand.co.uk
website: www.parrettbrand.co.uk
f www.facebook.com/farmshop

Family run fruit farm with farm shop, garden centre and coffee shop. Their own apples, plums and pears are available in season and they make 30 varieties of apple and pear juices under their Parrett Brand logo. The farm shop stocks a large range of local and artisan products.

Open: seven days, 9am-5.30pm, 4.30pm Sunday.

3 Quality English Apple Juice

Keith Goverd — The Bailiff's Cottage, The Green, Compton Dando, Pensford, Bristol, BS39 4LE.
Tel: 01761 490624 m: 07770 937437
email: keith@goverd.co.uk
website: www.englishapplejuice.com

Over 100 different varieties of English Apple Juice, cider, cider vinegar, perry and plum, pear, raspberry, blackcurrant, cherry and gooseberry juice. Consultancy work for orchards, apple juice and cider production. Individual and group tutoring can be arranged.

Open: please phone first. Apple juice available at Bath farmers market.

4 Bradleys Juice

Miles Bradley — Box Bush Farm, Box Bush Lane, Near Hewish, Somerset, BS24 6UA.
Tel: 01934 822356
email: info@bradleysjuice.co.uk
website: www.bradleysjuice.co.uk
f www.facebook.com/BradleysJuice
t @BradleysJuice

We specialise in producing single variety apple juice using only the very best hand picked apples. Our juice is made in small batches and pressed using traditional methods of production - taste the freshness of apple in a bottle.

Open: by appointment only, please phone first. Juice is available at Somerset Farmers Markets.

25 Worley's Cider

Neil Worley — 55 Dean, Shepton Mallet, BA4 4SA.
Tel: 01749 880016 and 07855 951718
email: ask@worleyscider.co.uk
website: www.worleyscider.co.uk
f worleyscider
t @worleyscider

Renowned for their passion and dedication, Worley's Cider combine a traditional fruit-focused approach with modern techniques. Their popular ciders range from easy-drinking farmhouse varieties to refined, lightly sparkling bottles, full of fruity flavour.

Open: Monday-Saturday 9am-6pm, Sunday 11am-2pm. Please call ahead to make sure we're around.

26 Ernie & Gertie's

Ian & Mandy Sinclair — Pitney House, Pitney, Langport, TA10 9AR.
Tel: 01458 252038
email: info@ernieandgertie.com
website: www.ernieandgertie.com

Ernie & Gertie's make traditional cider using only locally grown apples. The cider is allowed to ferment naturally, finished in oak whisky barrels and is available in bottles and bag-in-box. Ernie & Gertie's also make traditional apple juice, dairy ice cream made with Guernsey milk and double cream, and fresh fruit sorbets.

Open: by prior arrangement only so please telephone or email in advance of your visit.

The Apple in Antiquity and Myth

Apples travelled to Europe from the Tien Shan mountains in Kazakhstan in Central Asia, where they still occur in wild forests today near Alma Ata.

In 300BC the Greeks noted the difference between wild crab apples and domestic apples. In Greek myth Hercules stole magic apples from the garden of Hesperides, the apple tree guarded by Ladon the serpent that never slept. Then again where would Troy, Paris, Aphrodite and Helen be without the Golden Apple... Who's the fairest of them all?

For the Romans Pomona was the Goddess and Spirit of the Orchards. Her garden was her passion and her love... In the 1st Century AD Pliny mentioned 20 different varieties of apple. And Virgil mentions pruning and grafting in the Georgics. The Romans also brought their own apples to Britain, some of which may well have stayed.

By 800 AD the apple was so popular in Europe that Charlemagne ordered fruit trees to be planted in every town in his kingdom.



Half-gallon cider firkin, also known as a costrel

Somerset Cider Apple Varieties

BITTERSWEET: Ashton Bitter, Ashton Brown Jersey, Broadleaf Jersey, Brown Snout, Bulmers Norman, Burrow Hill Early, Cadbury, Camelot, Chisel Jersey, Churchill, Coat Jersey, Dabinett, Dove, Early Red Jersey, Ellis Bitter, Filibarrel, Hangdown, Harry Master's Jersey, Improved Dove, Improved Hangdown, Major, Michelin, Norton Bitters, Pennard Bitter, Red Jersey, Royal Jersey, Silver Cup, Somerset Redstreak, Stable Jersey, Stembidge Jersey, Tommy Rodford, Tremlett's Bitter, Viberie, White Close Pippin, White Jersey, Yarlington Mill.

SHARP: Backwell Red, Brown's Apple, Cider Ladies Finger, Crimson King, Fair Maid of Taunton, Gin, Improved Kingston Black, Improved Lambrook Pippin, Langworthy Neverblight, Somerset, Vallis Apple, Yeovil Sour.

BITTERS/SHARP: Cap of Liberty, Kingston Black, Lambrook Pippin, Lorna Doone, Porter's Perfection, Sharpshooter, Stembidge Clusters, Stoke Red, Yellow Redstreak.

DUAL PURPOSE: Buttery Door, Congresbury Duty, Court de Wick, Hoary Morning, King's Favourite, Long Tom, Pig's Snout, Poor Man's Profit, Royal Somerset, Sheep's Nose, Shoreditch Wine, Sops in Wine, Stubbard, Ten Commandments, Tom Putt, Wear and Tear.

SWEET: Bell, Court Royal, Dunkerton's Late, Honey String, Improved Woodbine, Le Bret, Morgan Sweet, Redworthy, Slack-ma-girdle, Sweet Alford, Sweet Coppin, Sweet Pethyre, Taylor's Sweet, Woodbine.

BITTERS/SHARP: Cap of Liberty, Kingston Black, Lambrook Pippin, Lorna Doone, Porter's Perfection, Sharpshooter, Stembidge Clusters, Stoke Red, Yellow Redstreak.

DUAL PURPOSE: Buttery Door, Congresbury Duty, Court de Wick, Hoary Morning, King's Favourite, Long Tom, Pig's Snout, Poor Man's Profit, Royal Somerset, Sheep's Nose, Shoreditch Wine, Sops in Wine, Stubbard, Ten Commandments, Tom Putt, Wear and Tear.

Photographs and names of cider apples from Somerset Pomona by kind permission of Liz Copas

January: Wassail... Usually Jan 5th, the eve of Twelfth Night, but some stick to the old



calendar and prefer Jan 17th. Shotguns, mulled cider, wassail songs, wassail mugs, boys and toast in trees. Offerings to the orchard spirits. Trees beaten with sticks to wake the spirits up. Old Customs revived for fertility and prosperity. Time for testing last year's cider and blending. Some songs are original and continuous. A slice of the past.

February: Pruning and propping up trees. Essential tasks if the orchard is to survive winter storms. Pruning is vital and can double the yields if done well. Letting the light in is half the secret and allowing good branches to mature and spread without over crowding.

March: Planting. Many orchards have been grubbed out in the name of progress or been submerged in suburban tarmac and planning proposals. The new wave of planting has been very successful and many old varieties have been brought back from extinction. There are three distinct types of orchard, standard, half standard and bush. Each has different spacing and cropping characteristics.

April: Grafting is essential and is the only way to propagate successful cider trees on certain root stock. Best when the sap is rising

just before blossom time. Great care in selection and propagation needed. One of the well known grafters in Somerset was called Punch Garland of North Wootton. They had special curved knives for grafting to make the cut to insert the scion into the root stock.

May-June: Blossom Arguably one of the most beautiful

times in the orchard. The whole success of the year's crop depends on the weather when the blossom sets. There are three nights in May around the 21st called *Frankan* nights when frost can severely harm the autumn's crop. Sometimes only one or two varieties suffer.



Bees are essential for propagation of pollen, many people put hives in orchards at this time.

July-August: Grass has to be mowed by sheep or machines and the crop slowly comes to fruition. Another magical time of year when you can see how the apples are forming. Eating apples start to come on stream, the earliest being *Beauty of Bath* and *Discovery*.

September: The main month for eating apples which are either sold directly to the public or stored ready for the lean months. The first bite of certain varieties is one of the great pleasures of life.

Apple picking is at its peak, the packing sheds working overtime.

October-November: Cider apple harvest in full swing either with manual pickers or with machine picking. Tree shaking and great trailer loads of apples on the move. Farmyards stock piled with hundreds of tons. The wonderful smell is out of this world. Cider making starts in earnest to keep ahead of the crop. The first variety that is made is Morgan Sweet. This should be ready by



Christmas. Some cider farms work round the clock pressing apples whilst they are in prime condition. Working all day on a press is hard work, making cheeses, taking them down and then tipping out the pomace, which is often fed to sheep, cattle and pigs. Farms are forever pumping apple juice and checking on the fermentation of vats. Barrels start to overflow.

December: Last of the apples crushed before they go rotten. First of the Morgan Sweet comes on tap. A great feeling of having got the apple harvest in and pressed. The year is measured in thousands of gallons. Some of the oak vats hold 10,000 gallons or more. Winter Solstice. Christmas and mistletoe. Time for a well earned rest and a pagan feast. Cider brandy vicar?

Cider Health Quote:

"Cider, generous, strong, sufficiently heady, excites and cleanses the stomach, strengthens the digestion and infallibly frees the kidney and bladder from breeding the gravel stone..."

From John Evelyn's *Pomona* — Royal Society 1664

Weights & Measures
Bushel 4 pecks or 8 gallons
Quart 2 pints
Firkin 2 Quarts
Gallon 8 pints or 4 quarts
Six 6 gallons
Kilderkin 18 gallons
Barrel 36 gallons
Hogshead 54 gallons
Puncheon 84 gallons
Butt 108 gallons
Port Pipe 110-120 gallons
Tun 2 pipes or 220-240 gallons
Vat up to 10,000 gallons

Historical Notes and Juicy Quotes relating to the history of Cider & Somerset.

1230 First listings of cider presses as a source of income in a Royal Charter granted to Jocelin Bishop of Bath.

1265 Bishop Winchester's Bailiff purchases 129 apple and pear trees for an orchard at Rimpton

1310 First recorded case of mulling spices being purchased for a heavy duty session at Glastonbury Abbey. Brother Robert of Lydeard buys 3 pounds of ginger, honey, cloves, mace and rock sugar.

1334 Glastonbury Abbey gardener Thomas of Keynsham sells 2 bushels of apples and 3 tuns of cider. (A tun is the equivalent of 2 pipes or 4 hogsheads).

1408 Cider quoted by Chaucer: "This Samson no cider drank, no wine".

1533 Richard Harris, fruiterer to Henry VIII "imports many apple, pear and cherrie grafes from France and the Lowe Countries," lays down the first large commercial orchard at Teynham in Kent... "the Chiefe mother of all other orchards for those kindes of fruites." and sells grafted trees to wealthy landowners...

1536-9 Dissolution of monasteries, abbeys and priories. Orchards, presses and stills come on the open market.

1560 First recorded case of a still being left in a will. Robert Gibbs, otherwise known as Robert of Sherbourne, last prior of Montacute, leaves a 'lymbeck' or an alembic as well as a 'stillatorie' to his nephew Robert, a parson.

1580 First accounts of distinct actual apple varieties. The note book of Sir John Trevelyan of Nettlecombe refers to Leather Coats (Royal Russets) Red Star, Glass Apple, Essex Apple, Dorset Apple. Catsheads, permains and pippins and costard apples had been known since Twelfth Century.

1628 Daniel Defoe writes that Cider is used as an anti-scurvy agent at sea.

1676 Publication of "Vinatum Britannicum" by John Worlidge.

1696 "In most parts of Sommersetshire it is very fruitful for orchards... plenty of apples and pears..." Celia Feinnes.

1708 "Cyder - A Poem" by John Phillips written and published.

1763 Cider tax increased from 4/- to 10/- a hogshead by Lord Bute to help pay for the Seven Years War. General riots in Somerset, effigies burnt etc etc. as it gives Excise Men the right to enter homes for inspection without a warrant. William Pitt the Elder opposes the tax and coins the phrase "An Englishman's home is his castle".

1766 Cider tax reduced. Much rejoicing. Local landowner Sir William Pynsent leaves William Pitt his estates near Curry Rivel. In return William Pitt commissions Capability Brown to design a tower known locally as the 'Cider Monument' at Burton Pynsent.

1632 Lord Scudamore Ambassador to Charles I introduces the Redstreak and starts his experiments in orcharding and bottled cider...



A Cider Shoe for mulling



1772 Bath & West of England Society founded. By 1780 they begin to publish letters and papers some of which refer to cider.

1808 Bath & West offer prizes of 20 guineas for producing 3 superior hogsheads of cider.

1820's Rev Thomas Cornish plants orchards and makes cider at Heathfield Rectory near Taunton.

1830 Cider taxes lifted

1840 Rev Cornish's cider goes to Queen Victoria, Lord Rivers, William Cavendish at The Carlton Club, the Duke of Bedford and the Bishop of Bath & Wells.

1894 Robert Neville Grenville and chemist FJ Lloyd begin ten years of research into so called 'champagne' ciders at Butleigh Court.

1903 National Fruit and Cider Institute founded at Long Ashton outside Bristol.

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1911 Arthur Moore, cidemaker for Spurways who had taken over from Rev. Cornish, goes to make cider at Norton Fitzwarren for an extra 1/- a week. This later becomes the Taunton Cider Company.

1916 Cider taxes re-imposed

1923 Cider taxes lifted again

1976 Cider tax re-introduced by Dennis Healey... 1500 gallon exemption introduced.

2003 Long Ashton formally closed down



1987 First legal distilling takes place in Somerset for over 150 years... Somerset Cider Brandy Company formed.

2003 Long Ashton formally closed down

1766 Cider tax reduced. Much rejoicing. Local landowner Sir William Pynsent leaves William Pitt his estates near Curry Rivel. In return William Pitt commissions Capability Brown to design a tower known locally as the 'Cider Monument' at Burton Pynsent.

A new wassail mug by John Leach

Terms used in the Cider Trade

Apple engine: in the old days a horse used to walk round a solid granite trough to crush the apple. Then ingenious were invented with men turning wheels and cogs, and the apple was crushed between wooden teeth or granite rollers. Now high speed mills do the job fed by an elevator.

Cheese: refers to neat layered mounds of chopped cider apple and straw which is built in situ within the press. Now cheese cloths are used, first horsehair then hessian, now nylon. In large farms the cheeses are built on small trolleys and wheeled in, pressed and then out. They weigh about a ton.

Cider: or cyder, syser, siser, sidera, cidre (French), sicerca (Latin), sikera (Greek), shekar (Hebrew) refers to strong drink made from fermented apple juice.

Cider Brandy: refers to the distilled liquor of cider aged in oak. The word brandy comes from the Dutch meaning burnt wine.

Ciderkin: small cider made from the second pressing. Often drunk at harvest and less potent for those wielding a scythe.

Cyder: old term used for real cyder, of wine strength ie 8-12% not the gassy liquid made from fermented apple concentrate, water and glucose syrup.

Cyder Royal: "Distill one hogshead of cyder and add the spirit to another. Spice with coriander seed in a muslin bag and if an aide to digestion was needed add wormwood." Richard Haines in 1684.

Cyiser: cider strengthened with honey before fermentation. Common in medieval times. Also refers to apple flavoured mead.

Firkin: small wooden barrel carried into the fields by farm labourers, holds half a gallon of cider. Also called a costrel.

Gribble: young tree that has grown from a pip from pomace thrown out at last year's pressing.

Jaisy: old South Somerset term for apple now corrupted into Jersey as in Chisel Jersey.

Keeving: a skilled method of making cider which allows some of the natural sweetness to remain.

Mulling: a way of using spices and sugar to make a warm and heartening winter drink. Usually involves cloves, mace, nutmeg and cinnamon in a muslin bag.

Orchard: derived from Old English *ortgeard*.

Pomace: term used for the milled or pulped cider apple and also used for the layers of spent apple after it has been pressed. Pomace is often fed to pigs, sheep and cows. They love it. Pectin is extracted for jam making.

Posset: a drink made with cyder, sugar, cream, eggs and spices.

Press: a device for pressing apples. There are beam presses, single thread wooden presses, double metal thread presses, castpan presses, hydraulic presses, belt presses and centrifugal presses.



'Hard at it' — Creech St Michael, 5th October 1934

Scratter: mill for cutting up apples whilst crushing sometimes driven by a horse.

Scrumptie: cider made with apples that have been scummed or stolen. A slightly derogatory term today when compared to the high quality ciders. It is an unfiltered cider produced with natural yeasts.

Syllabub: a light frothy pudding made with cider, cream and cider brandy.

Tundish: old type of funnel used for filling barrels.

Verjuice: sharp green juice from fresh crab apples and cider apples, used in possets and syllabubs.

Wassail: The act of drinking a toast to the Cider God in the orchard, along with shotguns, songs and banging of old pans. Wassail cups and bowls are much prized. Most celebrate this on Twelfth Night, 5th Jan but others still choose the old New Year, 17th January.

Booklist about apples, cider and orchards

Somerset Cider - Philippa Legg & Hilary Binding
Cider the Forgotten Miracle - James Crowden
Ciderland - James Crowden
A Somerset Pomona - Liz Copas
21st century Cider Apples - Liz Copas
Guide to the origins of Somerset's Apples - June Small
Somerset Cider Handbook - Alan Stone
In Search of Cider - Alan Stone
Cider's Story Rough and Smooth - Mark Foot
The Common Ground Book of Orchards
Apple Games and Customs - Common Ground
The Apple Sauce Book - Common Ground
Orchards - Local Distinctiveness - Common Ground
Community Orchards Handbook - Common Ground
Craft Cider Making - Andrew Lea
Naked Guide to Cider - James Russell
Man Made Eden - James Russell
Cider - Camra - photography Mark Bolton
Also see: www.ukcider.co.uk



Cider Links

BRISTOL CIDER SHOP - Specialist shop stocking over 100 varieties of local artisan cider and perry. Tel: 0117 3821679 www.bristolcidershops.co.uk

CAMRA - National organisation for real cider - very informative. Tel: 01272 867201 www.camra.org.uk

COMMON GROUND - 'Apple Day' info etc. www.england-in-particular.info

FARMING AND WILDLIFE ADVISORY GROUP SOUTH WEST - Day orchard courses and advice on small grants for orchard planting - Ann Langdon. Tel: 01823 355427 www.fwagsw.org.uk

JOHN LEACH - Potter of Muchelney, for robust stoneware cider flagons in willow jackets and all manner of drinking vessels, wassail mugs, jugs and cups. Tel: 01458 250324.

K&G CONSULTANTS - Specialists in cider and applejuice. Tel: 01761 490624 email keith@govard.co.uk

ROYAL BATH & WEST SHOW - Orchard section. End of May/early June. Tel: 01749 822200 www.bathandwest.co.uk

SOMERSET RURAL LIFE MUSEUM, Chilkwell St, Glastonbury - for old cider presses, machinery, artefacts and exhibitions. In 1976 twenty scarce Somerset cider apple trees were planted as a 'gene bank'. Tel: 01458 831197.

SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND CIDER MAKERS ASSOCIATION **SWECA** Tel: 01749 334007 email: bob.chaplin@sheptoncider.co.uk www.sweca.org.uk

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CIDER MAKERS is the governing body of the cider and perry industry in the UK. Tel: 07761 874277 www.cideruk.com

VIGO PRESSES www.vigopresses.co.uk Tel: 01404 892101 for all manner of pressing, bottling and filtering equipment.

Other useful Links

www.ciderandperry.co.uk
www.england-in-particular.info
www.orchardmarketplace.org.uk
www.orchardnetwork.org.uk
www.scrumpyandwestern.co.uk
www.somerset.gov.uk search for orchards
www.somersetcider.co.uk
www.ukcider.co.uk



'Hard at it' — Creech St Michael, 6th October 1934

Cider Health Quote:
"Constant use of this liquor...hath been found by long experience to avail much to health and long life; preserving the Drinker's of it in their full strength and vigour even to very old age".
John Worlidge 1676