

The Lazy Cow Cafe, Modbury

Now here's a delightful, informal place for breakfast, lunch, or between-meal breaks.

The Lazy Cow in Modbury has style without sophistication. It's a cafe that is open between 9 and 5.30 where there is a cheerful at-home ambiance. An enticing display of cakes and pastries catches my attention as I enter and I soon notice that the hum of chatter is from office workers and trades people at lunch. There's a friendly atmosphere and I get into conversation with a bright newly-wed and her mother-in-law.

An open plan view of the kitchen brings that at-home feeling more than any cafe I have known. Pictures with a fifties flavour add to the atmosphere, as does the aroma of freshly baked cakes in the room beyond – they're out of sight, but in range of our senses. My crisp toasted teacake is wonderfully buttery and with a good pot of tea, quite sublime.

Breakfasts on the menu, range from £7.95 for the generous full English breakfast, down to £1.95 for cinnamon toast. For a light lunch, there's a selection of fillings for a Panini or sandwich which is served with crisps and a leafy salad for a moderate £4.50. At that same price you may prefer a bowl of seriously good homemade soup (today's are Broccoli & Stilton, or Spiced Sweet Potato) or for just a little more, a substantial salad. All the dishes are freshly made and where possible, locally sourced products are used.

Lazy Cow's farm-animal theme is all around. Picture portraits of cows eye you as you add milk to your drink from miniature milk bottles. Small milk pails are sugar bowls. A milk churn by the doorway holds umbrellas to get you to where your car is parked, if there's a shower.

The patios are authentically rustic and furnished with colourful tables unusually built from pallets. The patio gives a far view of South Hams agricultural land beyond the village.

Inside there is seating for 20. Menus are neatly chalked up on boards - and on a board in keeping with the fifties style:

Unattended children will be given espresso coffee and a free kitten.

There are up-to-date magazines and travel books to idle the time if you're alone; and an extra large clock face ensures you don't overstay where time can pass unnoticed.

As I leave, I see preparations underway for baking carrot cakes. It's just one of many first class cakes displayed by the door. I promise myself a return visit to sample more from the Lazy Cow cake selection.

Even an occasional visitor like myself to Modbury, can pick up the friendliness in their community spirit. Lazy Cow reflects that same friendly mood. Evidence of its popularity is their extension into the neighbouring shop – now called Crazy Cow. We browsed the attractive china, gift cards, recipe books, fudge and all we would need for making popcorn in many colours and flavourings.

Typically in Modbury, where no plastic bags are supplied, people carry shopping baskets or bags from home knowing that purchases will be handed across the counter, old-fashioned style. It's a talking point and we decide to return another day and shop for tasteful gift items.

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