

## Journey's End

### Ringmore

Dining rooms at this gourmet pub have all the elements of an old Devon cottage - overhead beams, wood panelled walls, brown tables and chairs and warming log fires. With reasonably high ceilings, there's a sense of space and warmth in the historic 16<sup>th</sup> century building so that it's neither dark nor cramped.

We arrived early and from the moment we entered the hallway, felt the comfortable mood from ages of locals in the Devonshire vernacular. Wide hearths, old kitchen implements and framed pictures of cottages, adorn the walls.

Our arrival was ahead of the other 21<sup>st</sup> century locals who drifted in. They were clearly at home in their pub. Locally brewed beers and ciders of quality are on tap in casks and easy conversations with the barmaid (who is also the owner) were soon underway.

There's a bar menu and an a la carte menu. From them you can choose typical English fare or SE Asian dishes. The vegetarian menu is imaginative. Grilled figs, goat curd, maple butter and walnuts combine to make a superb starter that is garnished with young basil leaves. Or start your meal with the mussel, squash and bacon chowder. I will go back to the Journey's End for that delicious chowder.

Other dishes to savour include fabulous fish and chips or excellent rib-eye steak, as well as crisp duck leg with Hoisin sauce and steamed pancakes. All the dishes and sauces are made from scratch without synthetic flavourings and we were told that only English mustard comes from a jar. Locally sourced fish, that is strictly fresh, appears through the menu.

Burgers are as good as you'll get anywhere and the range includes an excellent burger for vegetarians. Among the vegetables are samphire, and bok-choi as well as the usual British vegetables. Everything that's meant to be eaten hot is served that way – piping hot.

Behind the scenes, producing these dishes is an Irish chef. As a young 20 year old he went to Australia and stayed away for 13 years. His experience comes from working in Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia as well as Australia. The menu at Journey's End authentically reflects those traditions and flavours. This is a man who is passionate about food. He keeps abreast of world trends and produce and takes no short cuts for flavour.

The numbers of patrons increased through the evening and the hum of chatter and laughter didn't become too loud for us to hear ourselves. The locals, who in the main are not Devon folk, were enjoying fresh drawn beers as well as good wines. The ambiance gets ten out of ten from me. The village of Ringmore is made up of lovely homes many of which are refurbished farm barns and it's on a road that goes nowhere else. Drive to St Anne's Chapel and follow the Ringmore sign. This farming hamlet is a mile from there. Parking at the pub's crossroads car-park is free. You walk just 100 yards along a lane to find the Journey's End.