



Yorkshire  
Pigeon Breast

# Quietly *does it*

It might have been a quiet day at The Parkmore Hotel in Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees, but the food's certainly something to shout about

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**I**t was a quiet day in the restaurant at The Parkmore Hotel when we turned up one Wednesday lunchtime. In fact, we were the only party dining that day.

Apparently, if we had wanted company we should have come on a Tuesday or a Friday when they have their 'Young at Heart' menu. 'It's very busy then,' said our charming waitress Sharon. 'Lots of bookings.'

Still, we were there to eat, and at least we had Sharon's undivided and efficient attention.

We sat at a window seat in the bright and cool looking restaurant, and it's worth mentioning the really stylish cutlery and crockery.

We ordered our meal and a glass each of wine - a crisp Rio Rosa 2010 Sauvignon blanc for my lunch partner, and a smooth Broken Shackle Rose 2010 for me - from a comprehensive list.

I'm a sucker for baked Camembert, so chose it as my



**Inset above:**  
Head Chef, Fergus Robertson  
**Above right:**  
The Parkmore Hotel  
**Below:**  
Yorkshire Chicken Breast

starter from an eclectic mix of six. It came boxed, with the edges of the waxed paper neatly turned down, and with basil crostinis and watercress salad, and very nice too. Baked until it was soft and runny, the creamy taste of the cheese was complemented by the crisp salad.

My lunch partner had chosen pan fried (is there any other way to fry?) Yorkshire chicken breast with beetroot, apple and cashew nut salad. He confessed never to have

had pigeon before, but declared it 'really excellent'.

On to the mains and there were six to choose from again. I love venison and have had it served in many different ways. I always think the trick is to cook it just enough - too much and it becomes chewy.

The just pink Loin of Yorkshire Black Mountain Estate venison wrapped in pancetta didn't disappoint. There was almost too much of it, but it cut beautifully and melted in the mouth. The buttered baby leeks might have been just a trifle overcooked for me, but the roasted sweet potatoes were a great accompaniment.

More tastes from Yorkshire in my partner's Yorkshire Chicken Breast, which came with an unusual crispy lemon and thyme risotto and a wild mushroom mousse.

It's another test of a good chef to see how chicken is cooked. We've all had that disappointment when you cut into a piece of chicken to find it dry and tasteless inside. Not so here. My partner loved the risotto and the chicken was plump and moist. Full marks.

We shared a dessert. The Pear and Amaretto Crumble tart came with vanilla custard and was quickly polished off, the flavours mingling

perfectly, bringing a great lunch experience to an end.

We also managed a chat with Head Chef, Fergus Robertson, who has been at the Parkmore for two and half years, having worked as far afield as Australia, France, Scotland and Bali.

He said the restaurant was busy in the evenings with guests, but also with local people who just came in for a meal.

He said: 'I like to try different combinations of flavours and use as much British and local food as I can so the offer is different. And menus should

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always change with the seasons, so you get the best quality food at the right time of year.'

After our experience at the Parkmore, he can be quietly confident he's got it right. ■

The Young at Heart Menu is available on Tuesday and Friday, two courses for £9.50 and three for £12.50. We ate from the dinner menu, where the starters start from £5.25 and the mains from £11.50. Our food cost £50.1, plus wine.

The Parkmore is at 636 Yarm Road, Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, telephone 01642 786815. For the website please go to [northeast.greatbritishlife.co.uk/community/links](http://northeast.greatbritishlife.co.uk/community/links)

