

For immediate release

November 6, 2006

17TH CENTURY FARMHOUSE OFFERING THE 'QUINTESSENTIAL ENGLISH EXPERIENCE' HAS SHORT BREAKS DOWN TO A FINE ART

Guests with an artistic flair and a love of literature can satisfy all their creative instincts by taking an 'Art Break' at the beautiful Cheshire-based Harrop Fold Farm (www.harropfoldfarm.co.uk)

With the support of the North West Farm Tourism Initiative (NWFTI), the farm has diversified into tourism to become a self-catering and bed and breakfast 'Guest Farm' offering a unique blend of artistic, literary and rural options, as well as excellent accommodation and farmhouse fare.

Art courses, available in oils or watercolours, are provided on either a residential short-break basis taking place over one or two days, or as day courses, under the tutelage of professional artist, Michael Moore, a member of the Fine Art Trade Guild.

Guests choose their medium prior to arrival and are greeted with refreshments and home made biscuits before moving to the studio or outdoor location. They paint until lunchtime, breaking for a farmhouse lunch of home made soup, sandwiches filled with local produce, home made cake, a glass of wine, or juice, tea or coffee. Painting then recommences until the afternoon tea break.

Every guest leaves with a beautifully framed painting of their own art and there is much to encourage creativity. Harrop Fold Farm is set in a secluded location and within 20 acres of farmland in the Peak National Park. Beautiful countryside and two babbling brooks rich in wildlife and with an abundance of birds and flora enhance stunning views over the Cheshire Plain to the Welsh Mountains.

Walks are available right from the front door to some of Cheshire's most famous routes. A footpath from the farmhouse entrance reaches the Gritstone Trail, whilst a Wild Flower Circular Walk from Bollington picks up Harrop Fold half way round.

It is also a perfect location for guests wishing to follow the Cheshire Literary & Film Trail being minutes from the setting of Alan Garner's 'Thursbitch' and a short drive from Lyme Park, where 'Pride & Prejudice' was filmed.

History oozes from the courtyard of attractive stone buildings of both architectural and archaeological interest, with evidence of a Roman road passing through. Archives also suggest that it was the site of a tannery visited by Bonnie Prince Charlie as he made his way to Derby to seize the English crown.

Accommodation is either self-catering, in Mellow Brook Cottage, or on a bed and breakfast basis, in the farmhouse. The cottage has two bedrooms, one with a four-poster bed that sleeps up to four people and one with a feature draped bed sleeping up to three.

The farmhouse has an Oak Bedroom sleeping up to four, retaining original oak trusses and boasting a king sized, English oak four-poster bed. The Valley View Room has an 18th century, French king sized bed with sofa and can also sleep up to four. Every room has an en-suite bathroom.

A luxury feel emanates from the roaring log fires, pure down duvets and pillows, Molton Brown toiletries and fluffy bathrobes and white slippers. To encourage bedtime reading, Harrop Fold leave a novel with links to the local area on one bed-side table and a local guide book on the other.

The food is also fantastic, being based on locally sourced produce and traditional farmhouse cooking that has made Harrop Fold the winner of a Peak Cuisine Award. Breakfast includes an opportunity to sample the farm's own free-range eggs and home made preserves, whilst flapjacks are available in the bedrooms for those feeling peckish after a walk and a welcome tray of wine, water, teas, coffee, hot chocolate, nibbles and sweets makes guests feel right at home.

Dinner is available by prior arrangement, usually comprising a choice of home made pate, or home made vegetable soup, followed by the farm's own reared beef or an alternative. Dessert is often a fresh fruit pavlova, hot pudding or a plate of local cheese and biscuits. These are washed down with coffee, accompanied by home made truffles and guests can bring their own wine, if they wish.

Meal suggestions are discussed with guests on arrival, as every meal is cooked fresh to order in the Aga, whether it be smoked fish, or wonderful local sausage.

The Stevenson family, who own Harrop Fold Farm, love to entertain and guests are welcome to join in with farm tasks such as egg collection and calf feeding. They believe in creating an ambience that cannot be experienced at a hotel, of any size, at what they call their 'Guest Farm'.

Their aim is to provide "Somewhere very special ...A Quintessentially English Experience" and the art breaks complement what is already a wonderful package of scenery, walking, wildlife, luxury and traditional farmhouse life and cuisine.

Harrop Fold Farm is located four miles from Macclesfield, 15 miles from Manchester Airport and 18 miles from M6 junction 18.

Self-catering guests can stay on a weekly basis from Friday to Friday, which costs from £350 per week, or can stay from Friday to Monday, for a short break, which costs from £200. Bed and breakfast costs from £30 pp per night for double occupancy and from £35 pp per night for single occupancy. The farm operates a non smoking policy and pets are not allowed.

A residential weekend art break costs £300 pp inclusive of all materials, food and drink, or £200 pp for non painting guests. A day course costs £70 per person, inclusive of all materials, food and drink.

Further details are available on www.harropfoldfarm.co.uk or by ringing **01625 560085**.