

# CHEF'S NOTEBOOK

## Nathan Outlaw

Clare Hargreaves discovers why Cornwall's two Michelin-starred chef loves fish – and trifle!



### First food memories

When I was six or seven, I was playing football with my mates when my dad, who is a chef, called us in to watch him cooking a live lobster.

I was fascinated to see it change colour. When I was eight, I helped him provide Saturday breakfasts for workers at a paper mill. I loved watching the toast going round on the 'rollertoaster' and cracking eggs, 50 at a time. Dad made it all such fun - I knew I wanted to work with food.

### Best meal ever

Actually this wasn't just one, but all the meals I ate during a three-night stay at Henne Kirkeby Kro ([hennekirkebykro.dk](http://hennekirkebykro.dk)), Paul Cunningham's country house hotel in Denmark's wild west. Four hours' drive from Copenhagen, it's in an area not covered by Michelin, but for me it's three stars. Paul's seafood soup was pure nostalgia. His food is original, personal and lovely.

### Favourite places to eat

In Cornwall, I go to The Seafood Restaurant in Padstow ([rickstein.com](http://rickstein.com)), where I used to work. I always have the Roast turbot with hollandaise - really indulgent. In London, I'm crazy about the Pitt Cue ([pittcue.co.uk](http://pittcue.co.uk)); I've queued for two hours. As well as rearing his own Mangalitsa pigs, Tom Adams is the best meat chef in Britain.

### Best fish shops

In Port Isaac, I like Fresh from the Sea ([freshfromthesea.co.uk](http://freshfromthesea.co.uk)), which sells the best crab sandwiches in the world. Another favourite is Rock Shellfish ([rockshellfish.co.uk](http://rockshellfish.co.uk)) in Porthilly. In London, I love The Chelsea Fishmonger ([thechelseafishmonger.co.uk](http://thechelseafishmonger.co.uk)).

### Cornish produce

I run a pub called The Mariners ([themarinersrock.com](http://themarinersrock.com)), and we get all our meats from a wonderful butcher in Launceston called Philip Warren ([philipwarrenbutchers.co.uk](http://philipwarrenbutchers.co.uk)). We buy our vegetables from a tiny farm called Restharrow near Polzeath. They grow basic stuff, but it's top quality and cut that morning.

### My top treat

Puddings, particularly trifle - I've been known to eat it for breakfast! It reminds me of childhood. On our birthdays, I

would always ask for toad-in-the-hole followed by trifle. When I was a child, my dad cooked it - now it's my wife.

### Why should we eat more seafood?

It's healthy, a great source of protein. Provided you buy it from a sustainable source, you can eat it with a clear conscience. It's also takes just minutes to cook. People often overcook it. You need to allow for the residual heat - fish continues cooking after it's taken off the heat.

### Sustainable species

Mackerel and hake are both sustainable, as well as being affordable. If you see sardines or herrings, grab them. Oysters and mussels are good too.

### My catch of the day

Mackerel. You can prepare it so many different ways. I like the fact that it has to be fresh to be good - you can't hide behind it. Mackerel also looks stunning.

Nathan Outlaw's Everyday Seafood (£20) is published by Quadrille this April. Nathan will be cooking a five-course Cornish Seafood Feast using recipes from the book in Long Ashton Village Hall, near Bristol, on 29 May. Tickets £49.50 via [feastwithachef.co.uk](http://feastwithachef.co.uk). For more about Nathan, visit [nathan-outlaw.com](http://nathan-outlaw.com)



Rick Stein's Padstow restaurant