

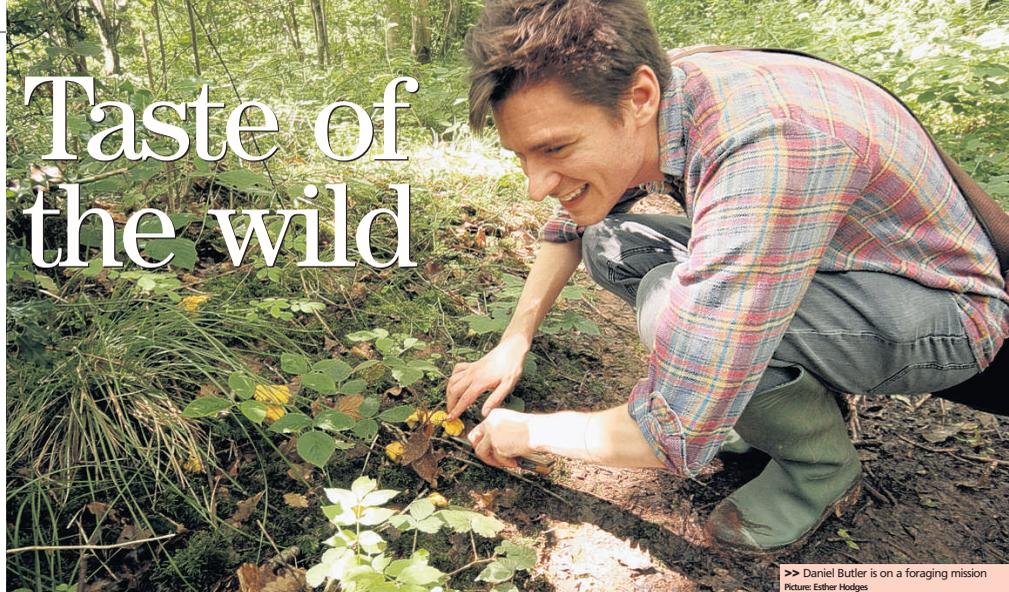


### CREAMY WILD MUSHROOM AND ASPARAGUS RISOTTO

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 50 g butter
- 30 g shallots chopped
- ½ tsp herbs, such as thyme and rosemary, finely chopped
- 100g fresh wild mushrooms, sliced if large
- 30g dried porcini mushrooms
- 100g arborio risotto rice
- 400ml hot stock – chicken or vegetable
- 2tbs of single cream
- 30g parmesan shaved
- 8 tender asparagus spears
- Free-range eggs

Soak the dried porcini in a little hot water for a few minutes to soften before removing and finely chopping. Heat the oil and half the butter in a large heavy-based frying pan over medium heat. Add the shallots and herbs, and gently fry for a few minutes until the shallots are translucent. Add the mushrooms and cook until they begin to soften. Add the rice, stirring constantly. When the rice has absorbed all the moisture in the pan, stir in a ladleful of the hot stock. Keep stirring until it's all absorbed then add another ladleful. Continue stirring and adding stock until all the liquid has been absorbed and the rice is al dente. Stir in a dash of cream and the remaining butter. Season to taste. Add the asparagus to boiling water for three minutes before removing and adding to risotto. Poach free range egg and place on top of each portion. Scatter the parmesan over the top and serve.

# Taste of the wild



>> Daniel Butler is on a foraging mission  
Picture: Esther Hodges

*Forage away in the Mid Wales hills and you could find the perfect mushrooms for these delicious dishes*

**T**he monsoon summer hasn't been good for many things, but it has produced fungi in abundance. The unspoilt Mid Wales landscape is something of a mecca for mushrooms, and canny foragers are already out there collecting a succulent harvest for free.

Chanterelles, which sell for lots of money in delis, have put in an early appearance, along with other desirable, edible varieties. The only problem, of course, is knowing



which mushrooms are good to eat, and which ones are better left where they are.

Justin Baird-Murray, MD of The Metropole Hotel & Spa in Llandrindod Wells, runs popular fungi forays with expert, and self-confessed fungi fanatic, Daniel Butler.

"Porcini, wood hedgehogs, giant parasols, are all delicious to eat, but most of the crop goes to waste as people don't know what's safe to pick and eat," says Justin.

"With Daniel, foragers can have a great day out, and learn what's good for cooking. "They can also take the mushrooms they have collected home with them, having learnt how to dry them for future use."

To get you in the mood for picking your own, Metropole chef Nic Edwards has put together two simple mushroom recipes that are very tasty but easy to prepare.

■ **The Metropole's next fungi forays take place on August 7 and 14. Call 01597 823700 or see [www.metropole.co.uk](http://www.metropole.co.uk) for booking information**

>> Left, Justin Baird-Murray of The Metropole Hotel & Spa, above



## STRAIGHT OFF THE VINE

Neil Cammies

When you think of someone working at the sharp end of private equity, setting up the likes of Virgin Money and the One Account, an image of a sharp suit and a slightly stuffy demeanour may spring to mind. But Rowan Gormley, the man behind Naked Wines, isn't anything like that.

After his highly successful collaborations with Sir Richard Branson, including CEO of Virgin Wines, he left to set up his latest venture, Naked Wines.

Rowan greeted us at the Cardiff leg of the UK tasting tour of Naked Wines in cargo shorts, polo shirt and a mile-wide smile as we proceeded to get the

**What looks on the surface as a fairly straight forward wine club actually has a lovely idea behind it**

lowdown on this unique approach to wine.

What looks on the surface as a fairly straight forward wine club actually has a lovely idea behind it. If you take the option and become a 'Naked Angel' and pay £20 per month into your account, you get discounts and lots of benefits every month.

But the money also enables wine makers from around the world to concentrate on just that – making wine. The wine makers want to invest in quality and not waste funds on slick marketing campaigns. They know their wine is sold before they've even grown the grapes, so they can invest all their time, money and energy in the vineyard crafting delicious wines and pass the savings on to members.

Talking to the wine makers at the event, who are some of the best at their craft, they are able, due to this business model, to concentrate on the important aspects of the process and even take a punt on certain unusual approaches, such as New Zealander Rod Easthope, senior wine maker at Craggy Range, and his full throttle, rich EASTHOPE AND EASTHOPE GATECRASHER

SAUVIGNON BLANC, which has a full 12 months on the lees plus a whole year in barrel, so unusual for sauvignon blanc.

Staying with New Zealand, Bill Small was showing his and wife Claudia's SMALL AND SMALL VIOGNIER, THEODORE SAUVIGNON BLANC and PINOT NOIR. The Theodore is another barrel ferment sauvignon that carries a good heft of muscle and the delicate, refined pinot had echoes of a good Burgundy. Another sauvignon specialist is Mike Paterson, formerly head wine maker at Jackson Estate, whose LAY OF THE LAND DESTINATION SAUVIGNON BLANC and MORVEN FARM PINOT BLANC showed why these varieties have made Kiwi wine the world class performer it is.

After a great chat with the trio we rejoined Rowan who introduced us to the charismatic Jock Harvey, big in stature and bigger in personality. His FARMERS STORY SAUVIGNON SEMILLON and SHIRAZ are coming soon to the Naked Wines portfolio to add to his already very popular BREWERY HILL REDEMPTION CHARDONNAY and

ASSEMBLAGE, all from the McLaren Vale region. He in turn introduced us to the lovely wines from Matt Fowles, including LADIES WHO SHOOT THEIR LUNCH RIESLING and SHIRAZ. You have to love the Aussies! Next up were amazing wines from Anita Bowen including the lovely BALTHAZAR BAROSSA ISHTAR GSM, a delicious blend of grenache, shiraz and mourvèdre and her world-beating BALTHAZAR BAROSSA SHIRAZ, that has won her the prestigious 'Best Australian Shiraz' at the national show.

Other wines we had a nibble at were the delicate German Pfalz wines from Peter Klein and some interesting fizz, especially Prosecco from Paolo Sacchetto.

The event in Cardiff was hugely successful and certainly gave us the opportunity to try some excellent wines and talk to the great people who made them.

■ [www.nakedwines.com](http://www.nakedwines.com)

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### SAUTÉED WILD MUSHROOMS ON TOAST

- 400g mixed wild mushrooms
- 2tbs chopped parsley
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1oz butter
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Good bread for serving

Melt butter in heavy-based frying pan. Add mushrooms and garlic, and season with salt and pepper. Cook until the mushrooms are golden brown, add parsley and stir through. Serve on hot, buttered toast.

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