

Client: Merchant Inns
Source: Morning Advertiser (Main)
Date: 14 May 2009
Page: 42,43
Circulation: 31288
Size: 155cm2
AVE: 1408.95

Top 20 UK Pubs

Horse & Groom Inn

Malmesbury, Wiltshire
Merchant Inns managed house

Up 14 places, the Horse & Groom Inn has gone from strength to strength under the ownership of Merchant Inns, which has four out of six pubs in the Top 20.

General manager Dave Whitney-Brown has been at the helm of the archetypal country inn since last summer and has reached out to the community with various initiatives.

Customers who turn up for a pint may well find a self-defence class taking place in the pub's rolling grounds, where the children's play area and secret garden are a draw for families.

Food, the leading element at all Merchant Inns pubs, is overseen by Michelin-starred executive chef Rob Clayton. Everything is home-made, right down to stocks and sauces.

At the Horse & Groom, head chef Paul Nicholson makes the most of Cotswolds produce, and on the menu scallops sit alongside fish & chips, and liver & bacon.

Like all others in the group, the pub runs a two-courses-for-£10 offer from Monday to Friday.

"One of the reasons for our success is our ability to offer fantastic quality at sensible prices in a much more casual, informal environment," says Merchant Inns sales and marketing director Gabrielle Grazebrook.

