

Satisfy your al fresco appetite in Derby this spring

Derby's vibrant al fresco food and drink scene is creating a real buzz across the city centre, and boosting confidence in safely returning to city life, as lockdown lifts.

Already hitting the headlines for its innovative and colourful al fresco dining area, Derby Market Place, the city also now has a host of other outdoor outlets, from an award-winning burger shack to riverside dining... plus Derby's biggest beer garden.

Demand for tables at many of the outlets is already high, but as more outdoor venues open, Visit Derby is lending a helping hand by creating a special page on its website to highlight where to go (<https://bit.ly/3vg1fOL>).

Leading the new wave of Covid-secure outside venues this spring, is Derby Market Place, where guests can book a table and order food from any outlet in the city that offers a take-out or delivery service.

After supporting more than 50 independent restaurants, cafes and stall holders in 2020, the Market Place has once again been transformed into a colourful meet-eat-and-chill venue - and quickly saw its first two weekends fully booked.

Back with its popular mix of bookable chalets and tables, colourful parasols and street art, the outdoor dining venue, with social distancing built in, will also host live entertainment, events and festivals as restrictions ease further.

In May, the Dining Experience will be joined by Derby Market Place Sessions, featuring live entertainment, while in June, the Derby Market Place Dining and Shows experience is set to be launched, if restrictions allow.

But Derby Market Place is just one of the venues helping to breathe new life into the city centre and welcome back visitors safely.

Among a host of food and drink outlets now offering outdoor areas is an award-winning street food market in the heart of Derby's Industrial Quarter, which has moved to a new home, in a former Chocolate factory – and now home to Derby's biggest Beer Garden. Bustler Market showcases a selection of the best street foods and craft drinks the Midlands has to offer in the new garden, which seats up to 300 people.

For a taste of America, with a cold beer and burger in the sun, how about Annie's Burger Shack Derby? Winner of the Best Burger Bar in England in 2019, its outdoor seating areas are back, plus they also have cover for any spring showers.

Take a 20-minute riverside walk, or short taxi journey, from the city centre and the restored historic World Heritage site of Darley Abbey Mills, dating back to the early 1800s, provides more outdoor food and drink treats.

New venue The Cottonworks, which opened in July 2020, has been restored and converted from a Cotton Polishing factory, and has outside riverside seating with views of the historic mill bridge. For a little bit of continental al fresco dining - think candles, a river view, blankets, world wines, classy cocktails and fabulous food - head for The Shed, within the same complex.

And for those looking for a countryside view, a 15-minute drive from the city lies Kedleston Country House Hotel, a boutique hotel in a Georgian house, where the bar and restaurant service is being served outdoors on the terrace and gardens.

Many of the outlets require tables to be booked in advance, and all offer social distancing measures in line with current restrictions. Check websites for details.

For information on Derby Market Place, visit <https://www.derbymarketplace.co.uk>.

For more details about visiting Derby, and for the latest on what's open and when, see <https://www.visitderby.co.uk>