

Ross on Wye Cider & Perry Co.

**THE KEG CONDITIONED CIDER & PERRY LIST!**

**2020 THORN PET NAT** – 4.3% – £69+VAT 20L (20 available)  
(Latest batch kegged 30-10-21)

Thorn worked so well in the Thorn, Flakey & Friends Blend in 2020 that we wanted to bring it back for our third kegged perry. Here it stands as a single variety, but we have chosen to find a fuller flavour by blending 80% of matured 2019 juice with fresh 2020 juice that had started fermenting but not finished – leaving us with the perfect amount of sugar to naturally condition in the keg on it's own – aka Pét Nat.

This perry is crisp, juicy, with medium green kiwi-like acidity and some light astringency. If you like our Thorn 750ml, this is a version of that that's perfect for sinking all night.



**DABINETT** – 2018 – 7.4% - £99+VAT 30L (17 available)



The king of cider apples. Dabinett is a **bittersweet** apple that originates in Somerset. This means it has **high tannin** and **high sugar**, although in the process of cidermaking, the sugar is converted into alcohol.

2018 was an exceptional year for cider because we had such a hot, sunshine-filled summer. This pushes the sugar levels in the apples up which means we end up with much more alcoholic, much more intensely flavoured cider.

This is an example of what Dabinett can truly be – with such high sugars, the flavour of the apple is expressed far more than compared to an average year. Creamy vanilla notes mix with a juicy, full-bodied middle, and a little spice filled finish.

**ELLIS BITTER BLEND** – 2019 – 6.8%  
**Oak Cask Ferment** - £69+VAT 20L – 1 available

This cider is around 85% Ellis Bitter with 15% Foxwhelp. All fermented in 2019, a blend of two pure Ellis Bitter ex-bourbon oak barrels and one neutral barrel of Ellis and Foxwhelp. The final cider is an exquisite balance of honeyed acidity, aromatic barrel influence, and a long, smooth bittersweet finish.

Ellis Bitter has typically been a particularly tannic, challenging apple in the past. However in 2019 it was the first year where we really left our Ellis in the orchard until later, as we are no longer supplying Bulmers. The result is a cider we are very excited about, with a much fuller, softer flavour than in the past.



**HARRY MASTERS JERSEY – BROWNS APPLE – 2019 –**  
**7.0%**  
**£70+VAT 20L – 18 available**

This is a fruity, funky blend of two great apples. Harry Masters Jersey is a characterful bittersweet with oodles of flavour, whilst Browns Apple adds some rich, juicy goodness, as well as the earthy aromas we associate with our Browns. Smashable and unique to explore the wild side of pure juice cider. This is a great cider to introduce people to keg conditioned cider with.



**FOXWHELP – 2019 – 5.7% - £63+VAT 20L – 16**  
**available**



Foxwhelp again. It seems the world just cannot get enough of this sour, tangy, zippy, crushing, punchy, powerful acidic number. The big red button for intense, flavoursome cider. This is a pure 2019 vintage (the badge on the left is wrong) that was keg conditioned with priming sugar (not pet nat). A bit more sour, a bit higher acid than the double year blend, but with all the character that Foxwhelp lovers adore.

This cider will be divisive – but for some people, it will be what they have always craved and never knew existed. A great option for introducing sour beer drinkers to cider.

**SOMERSET REDSTREAK / MAJOR / FOXWHELP –**  
**2019 – 6.6% - £66+VAT 20L – 12 available**

This is the second kegged cider made using this trio of apples. The perfect early season blend of cider apples never fails to disappoint – our trees from each variety grow side by side and fruit in the same window. They are meant to go together.

In this blend they are all roughly equally proportioned, though Major is just eeking out ahead as the largest component. A full bodied cider, with a balance of tannins and acidity, meaning this is a cider with drinkability and identity. So enjoyable.





**Somerset Redstreak S.V. – 2019 – 6.9% - £70+VAT  
20L – 5 available**

If there is a day or a time that is not right for drinking single variety Somerset Redstreak, I have not experienced it. One of the gentlest and yet still most recognisable cider apples. Somerset Redstreak produces a lighter, smoother cider that stands on its own as a great choice single variety for drinkability. With low acidity, a big green juicy mid palate, and tannins that are welcoming rather than forceful, this is one of our favourite apples.

**BASTET 2020 – 7.9% - £80+VAT 20L – 10  
available**

Cider is meant to be shared with friends, and so it's not a surprise when the best ciders are the ones you make with their help. Nicky Kong, founder of the Manchester Cider Club and The Cat in the Glass bottle shop, came with our dear friends Cath & Dick down to the farm to blend a cider for sharing with your mates. Five apples – Dabinett, Michelin, Reinette d'Obry, Sweet Coppin & Somerset Redstreak – bring their unique characters to a delicately balanced cider oozing with flavour and complexity in this bottle conditioned delight.



## KEY TERMS

**Single Variety** – At Ross on Wye, we are perhaps more in tune with orcharding and apple varieties than the typical cidemaker. Because of our position as both grower and producer, we spend our year in the field, walking amongst the trees, and appreciating a range of different varieties far bigger than most are able to access. Our '2040' project is our attempt to graft 11 acres of approx 1500-2000 trees from sixty-three rows of one variety, into sixty-three varieties with one row each! (And in fact, Mike has just suggested we aim for 126 varieties of a half-row each...).

Single variety ciders are objectively less complex than 'blends', but drinking single varieties and valuing the input of each different cider apple is, in our opinion, key to a fuller enjoyment of cider drinking and crucial to build a connection between cider drinker and orchard grower. In a nation where 95% of cider drunk is at or not much higher than 35% 'apple juice', and orchards are being abandoned or even taken out at a rate of hundreds of acres a year, whilst the looming spectre of the climate emergency becomes ever more real, talking about trees is something we strongly believe in.

**Keg Conditioning** – Why? At Ross, around 90% of the bottled product we sell is naturally conditioned, either using priming sugar or recently, pét nat. This is our preferred style of package; and we think it's the best way to enjoy our ciders. The gentle effervescence, compared to either a 'still' product that can taste lacking in life, or a force carbonated product that can seem devoid of character, suits our mellow, mature, bone dry ciders down to the ground. It adds a 'lift' to the flavour that complements the various tannins found in bittersweets.

It's also very practical: keg conditioning allows cideries to invest into keg products without huge capital outlay. This is something very valuable, as we do not have many cideries, and the ones we do have, do not have huge capital! It also reduces food miles/carbon cost – Birdbarker, our force-carbonated, stabilised medium cider, has to be sent away from the farm and re-collected to be packaged. Keg conditioning we can do on site in the exact same way as we bottle condition. The juice in these kegs has not travelled further than half a mile from it's tree the entire time of it's existence, until it shows up direct to your bar.

Keg cider is at a crossroads – in the past, what has been available are often variants on the 'medium carbonated' theme, offering little identity to drinkers and few reasons to value the product on sale (Birdbarker!). But in the last year, a few cidemakers such as Little Pomona and Pilton Cider have begun experimenting, putting products into keg that have purpose and reason.

**Cider drinkers want to be engaged through interesting, drinkable products. As drinkers value integrity and authenticity more than ever, we are determined to make our voice heard, championing single variety ciders made out of love for the orchard where the apples are grown.**