

'I had dinner at Kent's most atmospheric restaurant and it was like a fairy-tale'

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Vicky Castle

November 7, 2023

When news broke that Desperate Housewife star Dr Ann Kaplan Mulholland had bought Lympne Castle, we just had to check it out.



There are so many great restaurants to try in and around [Folkestone](#), offering all different types of cuisine. But there are none quite like this absolute gem.

I'm talking about the utterly stunning Lympne Castle. Nestled in the village of Lympne (near Hythe) is a stunning medieval landmark, oozing history and stories from every corner.

The Grade-I listed building went on the market in 2011 and was sold for a cool £11 million in February this year - to a rather famous new owner. [Real Housewives of Toronto star Dr Ann Kaplan and her husband Dr Steven Mulholland chose the incredible 700-year old castle](#) as their new family home.

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The multi-millionaire Canadian entrepreneur and her plastic surgeon husband made headlines for the unusual purchase, which is set to feature in an upcoming reality series showing the painstaking renovations. It's due to follow the Kaplan-Mulholland family as they figure out life living in a castle.

The star made headlines again when she promised all previously-booked weddings would be honoured by her team and offered a 20% discount to concerned brides who had their big days cancelled by the previous owner.

Dr Kaplan has spoken in interviews about her big plans for the dream building, she's shared Instagram snaps of her family enjoying "medieval life" and fully embraced the rich regal history of her stunning "British bolthole".

There's no doubt the new ownership lends itself to a reality series - who could resist watching a genuinely nice woman live out all our fairy-tale fantasies in her very own castle?

So when KentLive was invited to try out the new ['Medieval Bar'](#) and restaurant, we could not wait.



Lympne Castle was on sale for £11million(*Image: Clare Goldsmid*)

I'll start by confessing I have been to Lympne Castle before. Just once, for a wonderful wedding of a close friend but it meant I already knew how breathtakingly beautiful the setting is.

If you've not visited before, you simply must. The views across the Romney Marsh countryside and English Channel are unbelievable and are reason alone to make the trip.

But now you don't just have to wait for a wedding invite! The medieval bar offers a lunch and dinner menu for visitors on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays - for most of the year..



In December and January, the bar reduces to just special events and private bookings but regular hours resume from February 1. And if you can find time to get down there for lunch - then you absolutely must.

We were lucky enough to enjoy a dinner for two in what has to be the most atmospheric restaurant setting I have ever dined in. It was an unforgettable experience.

Our table was set in front of a medieval window, encased with historic stone and decorated by regal flags. We were served by friendly waitresses dressed in medieval attire and treated like royalty.



When I say it's a beautiful building, that truly doesn't do it justice. The nearly 1000-year-old castle is brimming with history, having first been built in the 1080s for the Archdeacons of Canterbury.

Notable guests in the past have included Sir Thomas Beckett, Henry VIII, The Rolling Stones' Mick Jagger and the cast of TOWIE. Royalty of all ilks.

We were greeted by a simple menu, reasonably priced and full of options. The other side featured a blurb with some of the story of the castle, which makes for excellent reading.



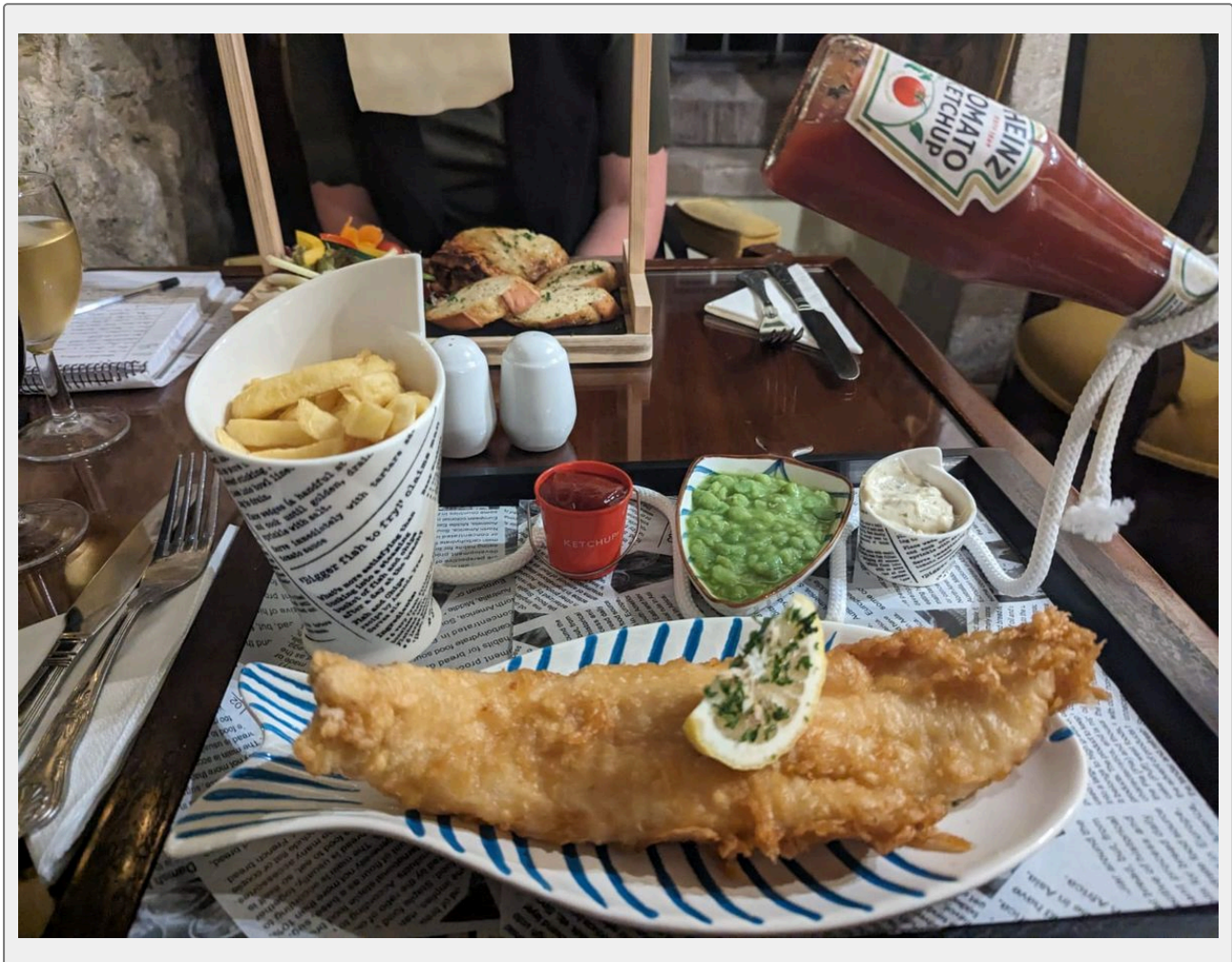
The menu is a nod to the ingredients that may have been available in the castle's medieval history, helping to transport you back in time. It's a well-selected list of Great British classics.

I opted for the classic lasagne while my husband chose the local beer battered cod and fries. There are options for children, vegans and various boards that would make it a perfect lunch option.

As we relaxed in the comfy throne-like chairs, it was a pleasure simply to take in our surroundings. To imagine who had sat where we had sat, or walked through the corridors around us.

The castle is beautifully maintained, extremely clean and respectfully decorated. The medieval bar area is a perfect balance of simplicity and comfort; style and history.

It didn't take long for our food to arrive and what a treat we had when it did. My lasagne came with its own royal flag, draped like the medieval decorations around us.



My husband's fish and chips was beautifully presented with a nod to the classic newspaper wrappings and even a gravity-defying tomato ketchup holder. Dinner and a show.

The food was delicious - especially the fish which my usually-very-fussy husband declared was the "best cod he'd ever had" (quite the compliment from him!)

We toasted to all the people who had visited the castle in the 1000 years it has stood for before finishing every bite on our plates.

Lympne Castle is an absolute must-visit on a trip to Kent. I'd recommend scheduling your lunch plans here during the darker months as the view really is not to be missed.

I'm still amazed how reasonably-priced the menu is, when the whole experience really is fit for royalty.