



■ From left, front of house assistant Nicky Bidmead, apprentice manager Kate Williams, front of house manager Karen Hunt and owner Tina Bowden at Lavender Bakehouse and Coffee Shop in Chalford.

# So good that we went back twice in a week

By Jo Barber

**A** FIRST chance visit so delighted us that we returned en famille only a week later to the Lavender Bakehouse and Coffee Shop.

After dropping in one Saturday lunchtime for just coffee and cakes we simply had to go back with the whole gang in tow to sample the lovely looking light lunches that we'd spotted when they were being served too.

Snug at the bottom of Cowcombe Hill in Chalford, Lavender was heaving with customers on both occasions.

Tribute, I'm sure, to the excellent homemade and reasonably-priced food and to the unfussy relaxed and cosy atmosphere.

We had actually booked a table, any way as we had five hungry souls to satisfy.

But now the secret of Lavender is out perhaps you had better ring ahead too.

Because with winter warmers like local Amberley sausages roasted in red wine, honey and seasonal root vegetables served with fresh crusty bread (£7.95) there could soon be a stampede to the door.

SOsp201202021-003\_C



A Spanish chickpea and chorizo stew, again served with fresh crusty bread, was another of the much enjoyed lunchtime specials at the same price.

Both were good hearty fare, served with hardly a wait, while the grilled paninis (£5.50) all came with generous servings of mixed house salads and marinated mushrooms which Dad said were to die for.

But Lavender Bakehouse and Coffee Shop really lives up to its name with its cakes.

If you have room for dessert you must try their patisserie and "other irresistible" items, to quote from the menu.

Obligingly available with cream or, wickedly, even clotted cream, the house specialities include orange and lavender cake, carrot cake, and even chocolate and beetroot cake, to name but a few.

All we shared were luscious and don't forget Lavender serves breakfasts up until 10.45am as well as lunches, including a daily specials board, between noon and 3pm.

Amazingly, it also does almost everything to take away too.

All in all, enough to make Lavender a new family favourite to which we shall no doubt return.



■ Two of the examples of delicious homemade cakes at Lavender.



## The verdict

- Stars (out of five)
- Atmosphere: \*\*\*\*
- Service: \*\*\*\*
- Food: \*\*\*\*
- Value for money: \*\*\*\*
- Overall: \*\*\*\*

SOsp201202021-007\_C

SOsp201202021-003\_C