



Wedding Pack 2012

Thank you for considering The Bell Inn Hotel in Stilton to hold your wedding.

By choosing The Bell Inn for your wedding celebration, you can rely on us to provide a wealth of experience and professionalism. Whatever style of wedding or degree of formality you require, we would be delighted to help you plan your special day.

As we have been granted the honour of a licence, The Bell Inn has three approved areas for Civil Ceremonies offering flexibility when it comes to numbers. Our acclaimed Marlborough Suite, complete with dance floor, was designed specifically with weddings in mind. For smaller more intimate gatherings, we have our Galleried Restaurant and there is also our Bistro available for a more modern ceremony.

Please feel free to contact our Banqueting Department who will be pleased to answer any queries you may have about holding your wedding with us, or would be happy to arrange an appointment to discuss your requirements.

Miss Johanna Grimshaw
Hotel Manager
reception@thebellstilton.co.uk
01733 241066

*Please note that the information contained in this
Wedding Pack is intended only as a guide.*

About The Bell Inn, Stilton

The Bell Inn, historically an important stop on the Great North Road between London and York, is one of the finest surviving examples of a 17th Century Coach House in the country.

Situated in the village of Stilton, The Bell has occupied its present site since 1500, though earlier incarnations, (as long ago as 1437), have been recorded. The current buildings date from 1642.

Stilton thrived throughout the coaching era of the 1630s to 1840s, at one time supporting fourteen inns and public houses. Such was the desirability of this locale that postmasters of the day reputedly not only took their office without pay, but also paid a levy of £40 for the coveted and lucrative position.

Courting such times of prosperity are characters that lent this place its fair share of infamy. Legend has it that, whilst a fugitive, Dick Turpin the Highwayman resided at The Bell Inn for nine weeks before bursting from his bedroom window and on to the back of Black Bess to gallop away up the Great North Road when surprised by the law. The Bell has also been a favourite of more salubrious company – notable guests include the Duke of Marlborough and, while stationed on a nearby American base during World War II, Clark Gable and Joe Louis were regular visitors.

The dawn of the railway era in the mid 19th Century signalled the end of Stilton's national importance as a staging post, and the sprawled wings of The Bell Inn became sub-divided into separate tenements. However, major renovations, completed in 1990, have restored The Bell Inn to its former glory. Reception facilities and twenty two individually decorated bedrooms have been skilfully blended into the stonework of this ancient inn, which offers you olde world charm, relaxing comfort and the most modern of facilities.

We have three easily accessible ground floor rooms, ideally located in the garden. These rooms are particularly suited for our less mobile guests. All bedrooms feature colour televisions with full channel reception, direct dial telephones, tea and coffee making facilities and en-suite bathrooms. For that perfect wedding night we also offer romantic Four Poster bedrooms.

Why not extend the celebration of your special day and enjoy a stay in this historic inn?

Weddings at The Bell Inn, Stilton

Your hosts and the attentive staff of The Bell Inn would like to bid you welcome! Today, The Bell Inn offers the same old-fashioned standards of comfort and a good humoured, efficient service that was the hallmark of all the famous coaching houses in their 17th Century heyday. The historic location will set the seal for your perfect day.

Our highly professional team will guide you through the months, weeks and days ahead of your wedding to ensure your perfect day flows without a hitch.

Our acclaimed air-conditioned Marlborough Suite was specifically designed with weddings in mind. Complete with dance floor, the suite can accommodate up to ninety five guests for a seated Wedding Breakfast and up to one hundred and thirty for an after - dinner party. For smaller receptions, the room can be partitioned to create a more intimate atmosphere.

Alternatively, our Galleried Restaurant can be used for your ceremony and wedding breakfast for smaller parties of up to twenty guests. However, as we need to prepare for our evening guests, the Restaurant must be vacated by 5pm. Should you wish to continue with your celebrations, The Marlborough Suite can be hired for your evening reception.

For a less traditional ceremony, we are now licensed to perform weddings in our new Bistro. This area, with its marble floors and contemporary décor, has a light airy feel, for a more casual European ceremony. It is a small but versatile area which readily lends itself to whatever theme or ideas the modern Bride and Groom may wish to incorporate.

Set in its own picturesque gardens, with a romantic stone courtyard and a wishing well, the scene is set on a perfect location for those once in a lifetime photographs.

Whether it is a three-course gourmet meal for your guests, or a spectacular Dressed Buffet, The Bell can certainly attend to every and all of the Bride and Groom's desires for their perfect wedding reception.

Some Key Points

Included in your wedding day with our compliments:

A four-poster room for the bride and groom (conditions apply)
Champagne on arrival for the bride and groom
White linen for your wedding breakfast
The use of our silver cake stand and knife
The exclusive services of our wedding co-ordinator
A red carpet on arrival

Civil Weddings/Civil Partnerships

Once you have confirmed a date with the hotel you must co-ordinate with our local Superintendent Registrar who will advise you on procedures and of the Registrar current costs.

The contact details are: -

Huntingdon Registration Office

Lawrence Court

Princes Street

Huntingdon

PE29 3PA

Telephone: - 0345 0451363

Additional Services

We hold an extensive list of recommended services that may be of use to you such as florists, photographers, cake makers and discotheques. We would be happy to assist with any other requests that you may have. For further details please contact our Conference & Banqueting Department.

Costs and Conditions

Hotel Room Costs

Marlborough Suite £550.00 (January 2012)

Ceremony Hire £290.00 (January 2012)

Restaurant/Bistro, price on application

Costs

Our wedding prices are set annually in January and we cannot confirm prices until that date.

Prices will be based on current menus at the time of the wedding.

Old out of date menus and prices **will not apply**.

Deposits

A non-refundable and non-transferable deposit of £500.00 is required to secure your special day.

When you are ready to confirm your booking, a contract will be required together with your deposit.

We can confirm your booking only when a contract and deposit have been received.

Due to the ever growing popularity of The Bell Inn as the area's Premier Wedding Venue, Minimum Numbers apply:

On Saturdays only, from May to September inclusive, bookings in the Marlborough Suite can only be accepted under the following conditions: -

There is a minimum of **sixty five** adults having a three-course wedding breakfast **with** an evening buffet being provided for a minimum of **85** people or **85%**, whichever is the greater of your evening guests (minimum numbers do apply).

At other times a charge may apply where minimum numbers and conditions are not met.

Arrival Drinks

To help you decide, the following suggestions are given as guidelines, but as we have access to a wide variety of stock almost anything is possible.

Bucks Fizz	With Sparkling Wine	£4.95
	With Champagne	£6.60
Kir		£4.45
Kir Royal		£6.40
Pimms and Lemonade		£4.40
Alcoholic Punch		£4.40
Non Alcoholic Punch		£2.95
Mulled Wine		£4.40
Sherry/Port from		£3.50
Orange Juice		£1.80
Wine	Per Bottle	£16.95
Sparkling Wine	Per Bottle	£20.95
Champagne	Per Bottle	£29.95

Nibbles

(£1.95 per person)

Warm Whole Almonds, Gaufrette Potatoes & Tortilla Chips with Dips

Canapés

(Based on a choice of three)

(£5.45 per person)

Crab & Smoked Salmon with Capers & Cream Cheese

Chicken Liver Parfait and Red Onion Jam

Beef Carpaccio

Stilton Rarebit

Pancetta, Rocket and Parmesan

Sun Blushed Tomato & Gorgonzola on Ciabatta

Rolled Anchovy & Olive

Three Course Wedding Breakfast

2012

The following selector menu is designed to offer you a varied choice of dishes that have been individually priced to suit. Please select **only one** of each course for your individual Wedding Breakfast Menu. If there is something in particular that you require which does not feature on the enclosed menus we will be pleased to discuss your requirements.

To Start

Chicken & Mushroom Soup

With Truffle Oil

£5.95

Smoked Salmon & Prawns

With Cos Lettuce & Mild Curry Mayonnaise

£7.60

Feta, Olive & Sun Blushed Tomato Salad

With Focaccia Croutons & Herb Oil

£6.15

Chicken Liver Parfait

With Red Onion Jam & Grain Toast

£7.30

Creamy Stilton Paté

With Celery & Fig Chutney & Roasted Walnuts

£7.30

To Follow

Roast Supreme of Chicken

With Chorizo & Roast Pepper Sauce on Basil Mash

£19.95

Escalope of Salmon

With Mushroom & Dill Cream Sauce

£20.75

Roast Sirloin of British Beef

With Yorkshire Pudding & Roast Gravy

£22.00

Pork & Leek Sausages

With Champ Potato in a Yorkshire Pudding with Onion Gravy

£17.80

Braised Lamb Shank

With Lyonnaise Potatoes and Redcurrant & Oyster Mushroom Gravy

£20.95

Roast Loin of Pork

With Apple Mash and Cider & Green Herb Sauce

£20.50

To Finish

All Puddings £6.85

Fresh Strawberries (local when in season)

With Clotted Cream

Baked Vanilla Cheesecake

With Spiced Plum Compote

The Bell's Sticky Toffee Pudding

With Clotted Cream & Toffee Sauce

Mini Chocolate Brownie & Raspberry Pavlova

Lemon and Raspberry Pavlova

Freshly Brewed Filter Coffee and Chocolate Mints £2.60

Cheese/Additional Course

(£7.65)

Cheeses Chosen from Neals Yard Dairy

Will be Seasonal and English

Served with Biscuits and Grape Chutney

Or

'Our' Stilton Selection

A Tempting Trio of Stilton Cheeses to include Long Clawson 'Thomas Hoe Stevenson',

Colston Bassett and Neals Yard Unpasteurised Stichelton

Served with Chutney and our Home Made Plum Bread

Additional Menu Options

2012

Vegetarian Selection

£16.95

Aubergine & Wild Mushroom Lasagne

Herb Risotta with Pesto

Penne Pasta with Spinach & Pine Nuts

Children's Menu

(12 years and under)

(£15.25)

Priced at half the cost of your Wedding Breakfast

Half Portions of Your Wedding Breakfast

Half Portions of Your Dressed Buffet

Or

TO START

Chicken Breast Goujons with Chips or Vegetables & Potatoes

Homemade Fish Fingers with Chips or Vegetables & Potatoes

Sausages, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy

TO FINISH

Mixed Ice Cream

Fresh Fruit Salad

Finger Buffet Menu

*Your Choice of Soft Filled Rolls or Sandwiches
Plus a selection of six of the items listed below*

*£13.95
Per Person*

Breaded Plaice Goujons

Spring Rolls

Vegetable Dim Sum

Chilli & Ginger Chicken Goujons

Mini Barbeque Ribs

Onion Bhajis

Mixed Vegetable Croquettes

Gala Pork Pie

Fig & Goats Cheese Parcels

Scampi & Lemon

Rustic Bread Selection

Chilli Spiced Potato Wedges

Sausage Rolls

Cornish Pasties

A minimum of 85% of your total evening guests should be catered for.

Dressed Buffet

Please select *only one* starter and *only one* dessert

£39.35

Tomato & Mascarpone Soup with Parsley Pesto

Or

Smoked Salmon & Prawns, Cos Lettuce & Mild Curry Mayonnaise

Or

Feta, Olive & Sun Blushed Tomato Salad with Focaccia Croutons & Herb Oil

Or

Chicken Liver Parfait with Red Onion Jam & Grain Toast

Cold Carved Sirloin of English Beef

With Watercress & Horseradish

Boned Leg of Grasmere Ham

With Three Mustard Mayonnaise

Seafood Presentation

An Enticing Array of Fresh Seafood to Include
Whole Dressed Salmon, Crevettes, Mussels, Smoked Trout,
Crab Meat and Prawns

Italian Platter

A Colourful Selection of Various Salamis,
Mozzarella, Olives and Rocket Leaves

Courgette, Thyme & Goats Cheese Strudel

A selection of salads to include

Beetroot & Watercress Salad

Asian Spiced Rice Salad

Potato, Sun Blushed Tomato & Basil Salad

Coleslaw

Penne Pasta, Spinach, Pesto & Pine Nuts

Mixed Continental Leaves

Buttered New Potatoes

Crispy Skin Jacket Potatoes

Fresh Strawberries (local when in season) with Clotted Cream

Or

Baked Vanilla Cheesecake with Spiced Plum Compote

Or

The Bell's Sticky Toffee Pudding with Toffee Sauce

Or

Mini Chocolate Brownie & Raspberry Pavlova

Rustic Evening Buffet

£18.60

Per Person

Whole Dressed Baby Stilton Cheese, Rag Stone Goats Cheese &
Lincolnshire Poacher with Chutney,
Biscuits & Plum Bread

Plus a selection of Five of the items listed below

Our renowned Chicken Liver Parfait Terrine

Handmade Pork Pie with our Homemade Piccalilli

Creamy Colston Bassett Stilton Pate

Hot Beef & Ale Sausages

Peeled King Prawns with Mango & Chilli dip

Goujons of Fresh Salmon with Dill Mayonnaise

Mediterranean Vegetable Brushetta

Crusty Breads & Butter

Stilton Cheese and Red Onion Tarts

Scotch Eggs with Tarragon Mustard Mayonnaise

Function Wine List (January 2012)

White Wines £16.95

Chardonnay – Rafeague (France)

Perfectly rounded and smooth, with flavours of stone fruits and melon.

Chenin Blanc – Flamingo Bay (South Africa)

A vibrant and refreshing wine with a fruity finish

Sauvignon Blanc – Franschhoek Cellar (South Africa)

Enjoy this zesty wine, with fruit flavours and bracing freshness.

Pinot Grigio – Conviviale (Italy)

A pleasantly fruity white wine with a citrus fruit bouquet

Rose Wine £16.95

Merlot – Flamingo Bay Rose (South Africa)

Flamingo Bay is an elegant wine which is clean, fresh, fruity and vibrant

Red Wines £16.95

Merlot - Desire Francois (France)

Soft juicy merlot with blackberry and cherry fruit flavours and a hint of sweetness

Pinotage – Franschhoek Cellar (South Africa)

A vibrant ruby colour with mulberry and plum aromas, with a hint of chocolate spice on the nose. Firm structure with a soft fruity finish

Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot (South Africa)

Strong blackcurrant fruit and a long silky finish

Nero D'Avola – Sicily (Italy)

Ripe black cherry and plum fruit with a hint of spice and smokiness. Soft tannins and gentle acidity

Sparkling Wines £20.95

Trivento Extra Brut

Aromas of tropical fruits, grapefruits and white peach with a fresh elegant finish

Trivento Rose Brut NV

Pale pink sparkles and aromas include cherries, apples and pineapple

Champagnes

Champagne Drappier, Carte d'Or Brut NV £29.95

From a small family vineyard deep in the Marne valley this Champagne, made primarily from the Pinot Noir grape is rich, creamy and full of fruit, winner of a Gold Medal in the 1996 Wine Challenge

Bollinger Special Cuvee Brut NV £49.95

This Champagne is unashamedly full of character with plenty of body, depth and length

Dom Perignon 2002 £110.50

The Rolls Royce of Champagne – produced from the best grapes in Champagne

*For a more comprehensive selection of wines and Champagnes, please ask to see our full wine list.
In order to better serve our guests we regularly review and update our Function Wine List.*

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLD

A Short History

The Bell at Stilton has stories to tell of a famous cheese, a highwayman and a famous horseman.

It was Samuel Johnson who said "There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or Inn." Mine host of The Bell Inn at Stilton near Peterborough, would dearly like his establishment to justify the sentiment.

To explore The Bell's charm and mystery, we need to delve into the past. The Inn, and the village itself, thrived in an age when the High Street and North Street were part of the Great North Road, formerly the famous Roman road called Ermine Street. The Coaching Era, from the 1630's to the 1840's, was the period of the Inn's prosperity. Coaches brought people and, significantly, mail. Stilton was so lucrative a posting-station its innkeepers were willing to accept without pay the position of postmaster, and even to offer £40 cash down to obtain it. When Stilton was a major posting stage, it supported as many as 14 public houses and inns.

The Bell Inn dates back to 1500 (though its origins could be even earlier, as there is a record of a local innkeeper in 1437). From 1500 to 1515 Edward Tebald and his wife Alice owned The Bell. We know that their daughter Margaret and her husband William Redehede sued her parent's tenant for possession, but little else from those early days. Today's building dates from 1642, the date marked on the southern gable, and the year in which the Civil War began. It was originally built of oolitic limestone and slates of Colleyweston stone. The architect's plans for the 1990 restoration are, astonishingly, almost identical to the plans now lodged in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, for the work carried out in 1736. They show a similar courtyard enclosed by the projecting wings of the inn, and a mullion-windowed house, with a central carriageway in the middle of the front block.

The Bell's main fascination, however, centres on the characters associated with it. Innkeepers, statesmen, outlaws and literary figures have contributed to the Inn's fame. One popular tale, handed down over the centuries, has the highwayman Dick Turpin visiting the hostelry. He is supposed to have hidden there for nine weeks while hunted by the law. Surprised by a raid, he threw open the window and jumped onto Black Bess to gallop off up the Great North Road.

Equally fascinating are the tales of more recent guests. In the early days the Great Duke of Marlborough was a notable guest. Earlier still, Cromwell's troops were here. Cromwell himself was based at Huntingdon only 12 miles south of Stilton. In 1725 Lord Harley tasted and disliked the cheese sold at The Bell. On October 3rd 1813 Lord Byron slept there. These figures, however, did not popularise The Bell as much as the 18th Century Innkeeper, Cooper Thornhill.

Thornhill was landlord from 1730 to his death in 1759, aged 54. He is invariably referred to as the man who popularised Stilton Cheese, which was served, mites and all, at The Bell.

There was Stilton cheese being made in the village of Stilton in the early 1700's. Theories about the origins of Stilton Cheese are legion. According to most accounts it was never made in Stilton; however it was always known that a type of Blue Cheese was being produced from Roman times in the Stilton area (a recent find on Stilton Fen, of a cylindrical Roman pottery cheese mould which was featured in the Channel 4 programme "Time Team" supports this theory!). Daniel Defoe wrote his *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724-27), he could say that he "passed through Stilton, a town famous for cheese". The cheese was made at least as early as 1720, if not earlier. More significantly, its association with the Innkeeper of The Bell put both the cheese and the village on the map.

Celebrity Thornhill was also renowned for his riding exploits, of which many tales abound. On April 29th 1745 he rode 213 miles from The Bell to Shoreditch Church in London, and back, and back again to London. His aim was to complete the journey in less than 15 hours and so win a wager of 500 guineas. He set out at 4 o'clock in the morning, used 19 horses, and cheered on by thousands of spectators along the way, completed the distance by 4.15pm the same afternoon. Such a feat was unequalled in his day and for many years after. Thornhill was also a man of notable business enterprise. In 1743 he purchased the Angel Inn, directly opposite The Bell and probably its major rival, with considerable property and buildings extending to Church Street, for £850.00

A D Clark, who made large-scale additions to the building, succeeded Thornhill in 1759, but it was Clark's son-in-law Henry Thornton, who followed as the inn's next colourful character. A strolling player before his marriage, Thornton was a "tall, portly, theatrical, convivial fellow of great effrontery". His match with Clark's daughter established him in The Bell Inn, but he was publicly disgraced for striking Samuel M Lawrence, Lieutenant of the Cambridgeshire Militia, who proclaimed him "to be a Bully, Scoundrel, Poltroon and Coward".

In 1814, Mrs. Scarborough of the George Inn at Buckden, purchased The Bell. She repaired and refurbished the house and made her son landlord. The Bell continued to prosper until the middle of the 19th Century and the close of the coaching era, when it declined to the position of a minor inn. The railways had taken hold and many North-South travellers would now by-pass Stilton altogether. The Bell tolled the death knell of a prosperous era – its premises being divided into several tenements.

Some villagers can recall happier days during the Second World War, when the likes of Clark Gable and Joe Louis came to the inn. They were with American Air Force units stationed nearby.

In the late 1980's major restoration works on the impressive old inn were commenced. Built around the old courtyard, Twenty Two luxury bedrooms and a conference centre were skilfully blended into the ageless stonework of this ancient inn, combining old world charm, relaxing comfort with the most modern of facilities. The restoration work faithful to the architectural heritage was completed in 1990. Once again The Bell was established as one of the finest examples of English traditional inns, welcoming many colourful characters of this era including politicians, actors (if you can tell the difference) and pop groups.

Today's owner bids you the warmest of welcomes (be it for a conference, wedding reception or just a drink in the bar) and hope you enjoy your visit whilst absorbing some of the history of this historic inn.