

MY KIND OF TOWN CHELTENHAM



Georgina Pearman runs The Lucky Onion group of boutique hotels, pubs and restaurants in and around Cheltenham alongside her husband, Sam, and business partner, Julian Dunkerton. Their venues include 131 The Promenade, No 38 The Park

and The Tavern. Their latest venture is The Lucky Onion Club, which runs pop-up restaurants and events. She and Sam live 20 minutes outside town with their children and dogs (theluckyonion.com). 'Sam and I are both local - he went to school here and I grew up in Worcestershire, so Cheltenham was the nearest town for shopping and going out. Originally we were looking for sites in London, but we moved back here when we had our first child - and not long after, we came across The Tavern. 'Cheltenham is unique - it's a Regency spa town and has so much going on. People make the move as a lifestyle choice; there are lots of lovely places to go. I'd always start an evening with drinks at **The Tavern** (thetaverncheltenham.com) - as it's one of ours, I would say that! It has a Michelin Bib Gourmand award and a low-key vibe. If you're looking for fine

On The Promenade: Cheltenham is packed with Regency charm



Maison Chaplains (maisonchaplains.com), which is a great artisan deli and cafe.

'**Olive** (oliveclothing.com) is a lovely clothes shop that has some quirky, unusual and cool stuff. **Pink Vintage** (facebook.com/pinkvintage) in Montpellier sells vintage homeware. **Montpellier** is another area that's worth having a mooch around. There are lots of gift shops, such as **Pod** (thepodcompany.co.uk), while **John Gordons** (johngordons.co.uk), a tiny specialist off licence, also serves drinks and snacks.

I recently had an amazing massage at **The Chapel Spa** (chapelspa.co.uk). And, while we're talking health, **The Core** (01242 224898), in **Charlton Kings** - a village that has basically been assimilated into Cheltenham - specialises in natural food and juices.

AMY

*SOURCE: RIGHTMOVE.CO.UK BASED ON LAST YEAR'S FIGURES. **SOURCE: CHELTENHAM.GOV.UK (2012 FIGURE). WORDS: KARA O'REILLY. PHOTOGRAPH: AL

dining, **Le Champignon Sauvage** (lechampignon-sauvage.co.uk) has two Michelin stars. David Everitt-Matthias does the cheffing, while his wife, Helen, runs front of house. And **The Curious Café & Bistro** (01242 226854) on Bath Road has a queue round the block on Saturdays, thanks to its fantastic breakfasts.

'**Great Norwood Street**, in a part of town they call **The Suffolks**, has lots of great little vintage shops and cafes - so is good for a wander. There's a bar called **The Retreat** (theretreatwinebar.co.uk), which has been going for an eternity and is very popular.

'**The Promenade** is where you'll find all the big-name shops, and close by is **The Swallow Bakery** (swallowbakery.com), which does nice snacks and light lunches. On the same road, **The Sandwich Box** (thesandwichbox.co.uk) is a local favourite - it sells nice bread and good sandwiches - while not too far away you'll find

'We've got masses of festivals, too (cheltenham-festivals.com), from October's **Sunday Times Literature Festival** to the **Science Festival** in June; **JazzFest**, which falls on the first May bank holiday, and the **Gold Cup** (cheltenham.thejockeyclub.co.uk) every March, which brings a great atmosphere to town with all the owners, jockeys and race-goers. The racecourse hosts lots of events throughout the

year such as **Giffords Circus** (giffordscircus.com) - a must-see.

'**Cheltenham Food & Drink Festival** (cheltenham-food-festival.garden-events.com) in June is also fun; local suppliers showcase their products. On the second and last Fridays of every month there's a **farmers' market** in town, with items such as local cider and cheeses. And there's a great little cheese shop in town called **CheeseWorks** (thecheeseworks.co.uk), near the **Everyman Theatre** (everymantheatre.org.uk).'

FAST FACTS

AVERAGE PROPERTY

PRICE: £272,681*

POPULATION: 116,080**

DID YOU KNOW...

- Cheltenham was a market town as far back as 1226.
- It has been a popular health resort since mineral springs were discovered in 1716.
- 10,745 bottles of fizz are sold each year at the Gold Cup.

FANCY A MOVE?

COMES WITH 'GRANNY FLAT'



£675,000 Classic four-bed period property in desirable location; includes one-bed flat (knightfrank.co.uk/cheltenham).



£415,000 Three-bed Victorian house that has been updated with a modern kitchen and town garden (peterball.co.uk).



£309,950 Modern three-bed semi, designed so that you can really add your own stamp (andrewsonline.co.uk).



£215,000 Semi-detached, brand-new two-bed townhouse complete with all mod cons (nickgriffithsthestateagents.co.uk).



£200,000 Two-bed flat, ripe for modernisation, set in landscaped gardens (erringtonsmith.com).