

On the trail of ... Cheshire's ice-cream

Cheshire isn't known for its sandy beaches, yet it's just the place to go for an ice cream. There's been a thriving dairy industry in the county's lush green pastures for centuries and today some of that local milk is being put to delicious use creating the sweet treat. Try some homemade Cheshire ice cream on a tour of its makers and you'll also discover an ice cream-themed play park and encounter a friendly giant bee.

It's no wonder **The Ice Cream Farm** near Tattenhall is one of Britain's favourite tourist attractions. After all, what kid wouldn't want to romp around an adventure playground themed on the sweet stuff? There's sand-and-water play at Honeycomb Canyon, trampolines at Marshmallow Mound, even quad-bike racing on the Silvercone track. Plus you can refuel on one (or more) of the 50 flavours sold here in the world's largest ice-cream parlour. Perhaps get your little ones to play first and eat later... [The Ice Cream Farm](#), Newton Lane, Tattenhall, Chester, Cheshire CH3 9NE (0800 133 7000, www.theicecreamfarm.co.uk).

At **Snugbury's Ice Cream** near Nantwich you can wander around a 40-foot high, 5-tonne bee while devouring a scoop of white chocolate honeycomb, 50p of the price of which goes to The Bumble Bee Conservation Trust. The giant bee is the latest straw sculpture to take up residence in the field next to Snugbury's farm shop. Previous landmarks on this horizon have included Peter Rabbit, a British Olympian cyclist, and a Dr Who Dalek – or should that be DaLICK. [Snugbury's Ice Cream](#), Park Farm, Hurleston, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 6BU (01270 624830, snugburys.co.uk).

After a long day's shopping at Cheshire Oaks Designer Outlet, or a few hours talking to the animals at Chester Zoo, make a refreshing pitstop at nearby **Backford Belles**. Choose from 14 flavours of award-winning ice cream – including the rainbowtastic Unicorn – all made from the milk of the farm's herd of doe-eyed Jersey cows. [Backford Belles](#), Acres Farm, Chester Road, A41, Backford, Chester CH1 6PE (01244 851029, www.backfordbelles.com).

Great Budworth Real Dairy Ice Cream Farm is set on the edge of one of Cheshire's prettiest villages. So after you've admired the timbered cottages and quaint church, enjoy a freshly made cone on the farm's tearoom patio or while meeting resident goats Monty, Raisin and Dig. There's a Maize Trail to follow, too – though it's more a wiggly path to maintain social distancing. [Great Budworth Real Dairy Ice Cream Farm](#), New Westage Farm, Great Budworth, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 6ND (01606 891211, icecreamfarm.co.uk).

Small is beautiful at **Daresbury Dairy**, where they pride themselves on creating only 12 flavours in limited-size batches. Even the journey from cow to cone is a little one – just across the farmyard. And it's not much further to where you can order a scoop or a tub, which are sold fresh from the dairy at the small on-site shop. [Daresbury Dairy](#), Penkridge Lake Farm, Newton Lane, Daresbury, Cheshire WA4 4HZ (www.daresburydairy.co.uk).

It doesn't get more indulgent than at **Seven Sisters Posh Ice Cream** – lemon meringue, Kinder Bueno, cake-batter mix are some of the naughty but nice treats in store here. They're all made with milk from the farm's Holstein-Friesian herd, which Seven Sisters assures us are "the supermodels of the cow world". (Fat-free options are also available, naturally.) [Seven Sisters Farm](#), Holmes Chapel Road, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 9ER (01565 723813, <https://sevensistersfarm.co.uk>).

Fancy a scoop of Hilly Billy Ice Cream? That's what they sell at **Blaze Farm** in Wildboarclough, on the edge of the Peak District. Coconut, Ginger, Turkish Delight with White Chocolate Chip, take your pick of the unusual (as well as traditional) flavours on the menu in the parlour and café. There's a Nature Trail to follow, too, with carvings and other creations to spot. Blaze Farm, Wildboarclough, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 0BL (01260 227229; www.blazefarm.com).

Please check the ice-cream farm websites for the latest on opening times, access and Covid-19 safety measures.