

TOUR 8 EAST MIDLANDS

Lying off to the east of the country, Lincolnshire is often overlooked as a tourist destination. However, it has some beautiful landscapes, with sprawling, low-lying, colourful fields stretching out under big skies, and the Lincolnshire Wolds offering attractive rolling hillsides. This fertile land produces some of England's finest harvests and, in season, this tour will give the visitor a sense of that.

Beginning in the south of the county, you'll find local produce available to sample at the **Abbey Parks Farm Shop** in the village of East Heckington on the A17 between Sleaford and Boston. You might also like to take a minute to enjoy a mid-morning scone or some home-baked bread from the coffee shop before heading off on the short drive to the county capital.

Take the A17 back westward through Sleaford before turning right on to the A15, a long, straight road that takes you into Lincoln. For lunch head to **The Cheese Society**, home to Britain's only specialist cheese café, and then enjoy a walk around the town and a look at the cathedral recently given a new lease of dubious celebrity by *The Da Vinci Code*.

Heading out of town on the A158 and then A157 upwards into the Lincolnshire Wolds, you can enjoy views of the patchwork blanket of fields laid out before you as you gently descend into Louth. The A16 north leads into the A18, with the sea on the right, and continues past Humberside Airport and through Brigg. After crossing the M180 and heading straight on over a crossroads and a roundabout, a left turn followed by a right will bring you to a hamlet named Holme, on the outskirts of Scunthorpe. Call in at **Pink Pig Organics** (*Holme Hall, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire DN16 3RE; 01724 844466; www.pinkpigorganics.co.uk*), an award-winning farm shop and café. The food at both is excellent, and of particular note for carnivores is the

three-week hung Lincoln Red beef, a tender, tasty and favourite of beef aficionados.

Back on the A18, take the A1029 to skirt around Scunthorpe and follow the A1077 towards the river Humber with the vast suspension bridge to the right, celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2006. This unimposing and serene corner of Britain near the banks of this broad river might not immediately strike you as an obvious location for one of the country's best restaurants, but the village of Winteringham is home to the highly acclaimed, double Michelin-starred restaurant **Winteringham Fields**. The rose garden here offers the perfect place to watch the sun set over the river with a glass of fine wine, before dinner in the restaurant and if you cannot tear yourself away, there are also wonderful rooms available.

This drive has been created in association with Rachel Green, a farmer's daughter from Lincolnshire who works tirelessly as a Food Champion for the East Midlands region.

