

Lothian Honey ©

Purity Lothian Honey is 100% pure and natural honey, extracted, filtered and jarred locally in Pumpherston. It differs significantly from much of the honey sold in supermarkets. It is pure and straight from the comb, full flavoured, and is not synthetic, bulked up, or adulterated with hard to detect additives such as rice or corn syrups, neither is it blended with EU / Non EU mass produced 'honeys'. Our honey is as pure as the bees made it!

Process Our honey comes from our own local apiaries only, and is gently warmed to 26°C before being extracted from the comb. To preserve all the natural goodness it is filtered once only to remove any solids, leaving the honey with the colour and flavour dependant on which flowers the bees have been foraging on at the time, generally that is light colour - milder flavour, dark colour - stronger flavour. It is finally checked for quality before being jarred, sealed and labelled ready for your use.

Source This delicious locally produced honey is from our four small apiaries situated near Wilkieston, Pumpherston, Livingston Village, and Kirknewton. Our colonies of native honeybees forage over the diverse range of flowers, shrubs, trees and crops found seasonally in our local countryside and garden habitats, giving the honey a rich "Blossom" flavour, colour, and aroma. Our bees can fly over 3 miles to forage on nectar and pollen, including as far as the Pentland's where they gather nectar from hill heather which makes the honey dark, and strongly flavoured.

Beekeeping As local artisan 'keepers of honeybees', colony health and sustainability is our primary concern, we endeavour to keep our native bees healthy by careful and responsible management, breeding from local progeny and harvesting only a percentage of the honey crop to ensure their health is maintained in the best possible way. Our honey production is dependant on our varied seasonal weather and on what the bees can afford to give. In lean years this can mean no honey harvest.

Uses Our quality blossom honey which is a natural sweetener has many uses - enjoy it as a spread, in baking, cooking, brewing, or as a replacement for sugar.

Note - honey is not suitable for infants under 18 months old.



About Lothian Honey ©

Our honeybees forage up to 3 miles from their hives gathering pollen and nectar to take back to the hive where it is stored and used as the main food source for both adult bees and their larvae. Using natural enzymes the worker bees convert the nectar into honey before storing it in the honeycomb, reducing its water content down before sealing it over with a wax cap. In this hermetically sealed state honey can last for years. As responsible beekeepers we only take a percentage of the honey being careful to leave enough to support the colonies needs. The honey we produce is in its natural state and has only been filtered once to remove unwanted hive debris but still contain all its natural goodness.

Pollen is the male reproductive component of flowers and is gathered by the worker bees and carried back to the hive on special adaptations on their hind legs (pollen baskets). Pollen is a rich source of nutrients - protein, vitamins, minerals, fatty acids and other beneficial substances. Once in the hive the workers cleverly mix the pollen grains with their special saliva which ferments and breaks down the pollen grain walls to make the nutrients more available. They then pack it tightly into the wax comb cells, sealing it over with a small amount of honey for later use to feed bees and larvae. In the cells the differing sources of pollen can be identified by the colour of the pollen they contain. Different plants flower at different times of the year and every plant produces pollen of a different colour. Beekeepers can usually identify what the bees are foraging on by the colour of pollen being brought in.

Nectar is the sweet sugar rich liquid produced by flowering plants specifically to attract pollinators. It is found close to the carpel and stamen reproductive organs in the flower head and is positioned in such a way that a visiting pollinator such as a bee will brush against the pollen-carrying anthers and then carry it inadvertently to another flower and deposit it on the stigma thereby pollinating (fertilising) the ovules of that plant. Our honeybees evolved with flowering plants in this symbiotic relationship where in return for carrying out pollination services they are rewarded with nectar and pollen. The collected nectar is passed by returning foragers to workers at the hive entrance who convert the nectar to honey and store it in the honeycomb.

Honey comes in many flavours, colours and aromas depending on what the bees were foraging on. Flowers on trees, shrubs and herbs found across the seasons in our gardens and local countryside provide the nectar and pollen. Honey may occasionally be from a single source such as Oil Seed Rape, Lime or Heather when these are in full bloom but more often it is a blend of 'Blossom Honey' from many sources. Most honeys will naturally crystallise over time but can be restored to its liquid state by heating gently or leaving on a sunny windowsill, be careful not to overheat it (max 45°C) as this will spoil it and remove much of the flavour and natural goodness.