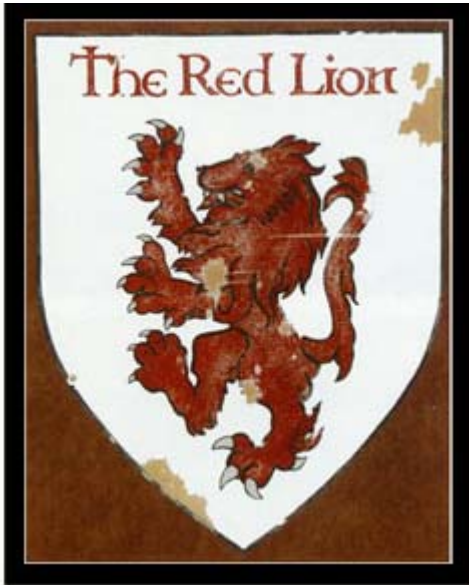


## The Red Lion

By Dave Hollingworth



Fancy a pint in The Red Lion? How about in The Elephant and Castle? There are around 60,000 public houses, or pubs, in the United Kingdom. Very often they have traditional names, which can seem very unusual. How about The Fox and Hounds or The Queen's Head?

*The Red Lion* is one of the most popular pub names. It has its origins in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, when King James VI of Scotland became the king of England. He decreed that the Red Lion, which was on his coat of arms, be displayed all over the place. Many innkeepers thought it might be wise to humour him, so it appeared outside pubs all over the country.

Pub names can come from many different sources - here is a list of some of them:

- relating to its location: The Three Arrows, The Railway, The Church
- reflecting local trades: The Mason's Arms, The Square and Compass
- local sporting activities: The Cricketers, The Fighting Cocks
- a noted individual: The Marquis of Granby, The Lord Nelson
- an historic event: The Trafalgar, The Royal Oak
- with a royal or aristocratic association: The King's Arms, The King's Head, The Queen Victoria, The Duke of Cambridge
- with the names of two objects which may or may not be complementary: The George and Dragon, The Rose and Crown, The Dog and Handgun, The Crow and Gate
- with names of tools or products of trades: The Propeller, The Wheatsheaf
- alluding amusingly to everyday phrases: The Nowhere Inn Particular, The Dewdrop Inn, The Drift Inn (known locally as the "stagger oot")

Some pub names that appear nonsensical may have come from corruptions of older names or phrases. For example, the name *The Goat and Compasses* is apparently a corrupted version of the phrase "God encompasseth us".

Many people navigate using pub names. If you ask for directions in England, don't be surprised if you're told to turn left at The Dog and Duck, and straight on until you see The Unicorn!

The pub that people visit most often is called their *local*. More often than not, this will be the pub nearest their home, but sometimes people choose their local for a different reason. This could be because it's close to work, it's where their friends go, or because of a specific beer or it's non-smoking.

Our local in Donostia is called Etxaniz - it's not the nearest but we love their pintxos!

What's your local called?