

Local Produce Trade Show: 6th February 2024

Speaker Biogs



Matt Whitfield, Executive Chef at Kimbridge Barn

Attending culinary college in Eastleigh, Matt quickly began to thrive in the kitchen, impressing his chef lecturers and winning awards, and at eighteen he started to work professionally as a chef for the first time.

The first few years of his career saw Matt land his first job at The Montagu Arms as a pastry chef, as well as working for Marco Pierre White at The Yew Tree in Highclere.

Matt's opportunity did, however, eventually arrive in 2009, when he had the chance to return to The Montagu Arms. Spending another four years at the hotel, he worked his way up to the position of junior sous chef, before moving to Brussels to take up a position at the two-starred Sea Grill, where he was quickly promoted to sous chef. A position at another Michelin-starred restaurant soon followed, this time at Cornwall's Driftwood Hotel, where after a year Matt became head chef for the first time in his career.

Making it his mission to work at the three-star restaurant, Matt persistently sent in applications until he was invited for an interview, and after impressing Daniel Humm's executive sous chef with a potato dish of his own creation, he was offered a one-year contract.

Going in as a commis chef, over the course of the year Matt was quickly promoted. Having impressed the Eleven Madison Park team with his ability, Matt was offered the chance to stay on for a further three years but ultimately decided it was time to start cooking his own food, so when the opportunity to return once again to The Montagu Arms to oversee the kitchen, he didn't have to think twice. In January 2019, over twelve years after he first set foot in that kitchen, Matt took over as head chef at the hotel's main restaurant.

Matt left The Montagu Arms in 2022 to take up the position of Executive Chef at Kimbridge Barn. This marked a slight departure from the fine dining kitchens that Matt had grown accustomed to, as he now caters for a number of different styles of events. Every Friday however, he flexes his fine dining muscles, serving a twelve-course tasting menu to a few lucky guests which showcases his distinct ingredient-led style.

Darragh Ryan, Chef at 36 On The Quay

Darragh grew up in Limerick Ireland, and moved to southern England at 16 then worked his way up from a kitchen Porter in the new forest, to sous chef at a 3 rosette Michelin recommended restaurant, 1 of 5 in Hampshire.

Cooking has been in Darragh's blood his whole life as most of his family is or was in hospitality.



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Andrew Gault, Executive Head Chef, Steree Pub Co

Jamie Holmes, Executive Head Chef at the Hilton at the Ageas Bowl

Oliver Biggs, Head Chef at Forte Kitchen

Vince Wheller, Farm Director of New Forest Fruit Company

Charlotte Thomson, First Stop Catering & Hygiene Supplies

Andrew Cole, MD at Cavendish Ship Stores

Natasha Dochniak, Business Development Manager at Hampshire Fare

Dawn Harrison, Head Teacher, St Francis Church of England Primary School, Chandlers Ford

Emma Hunt, first generation farmer, Dandys Ford Dairy

James Wills, Private Chef & Caterer, Founder of Blackboard Canteen

Herbert Berger, Retired Michelin Chef