

THE HEAT IS ON...

Lisa Allen head chef at Northcote talks to *Jan Woolley* about winning the regional heat on this year's Great British Menu and what it's like to be the only female chef competing



Lisa's winning Great British Menu will be featuring at Northcote from 12 May 2010



“It is such an honour to be in the show – I am so excited. Being the only woman competing is a real thrill too – it's very satisfying to represent women chefs in the UK in such a male dominated industry,” says Lisa Allen about her experience on this year's Great British Menu.

For five years Lisa has been head chef at Nigel Haworth's Michelin-starred Northcote following roles at Le Champignon Savage and Holbeck Ghyll.

The fifth series of the Great British Menu which is currently showing on BBC2 sees Lisa competing against 23 of Britain's top chefs, for the opportunity to cook a glorious final banquet for

the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall – both advocates of seasonal local produce.

Lisa began her run on the TV competing in the north west regional heats against culinary talents Aiden Byrne and Johnnie Mountain.

Each chef is producing a menu inspired by a National Trust property – Lisa's menu, inspired by Sizergh Castle and Garden included a starter of a wild rabbit and leek turnover with piccalilli, a wild bass and shrimp toastie with tomato liquor and samphire for the fish course, a main course of salt marsh lamb with sweetbreads, woodland mushrooms and sorrel and a stunning dessert of strawberries,

meringue and mint cake water ice.

Coming from winning stock – Northcote's chef patron Nigel Haworth has previously won the competition – has up to now been a lucky charm for Lisa who won the regional heat and is now through to the next round.

Speaking after her win was announced, Lisa commented: “I am absolutely over the moon to have been voted through by the judges. It was tough but fantastic to make it through to the final – it is the ultimate prize! I am a northern girl born and bred and I am incredibly proud to represent the north west in such a prestigious arena, I can't wait for the final.”

Nigel Haworth is also appearing

on this year's programme judging the culinary feats of the new GBM generation – picking his favourites from the north east regional heats.

Delighted at Lisa's current success, he said: “Lisa represents the spirit of Northcote moving forward. I am extremely proud of her as a chef and of her achievements. I cannot think of anyone better that represents the strength of young British cooks today.” ■

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