

Saturday 31st January 09

Jason Atherton



Maze, 10-13 Grosvenor Square,
London W1K 6JP
Tel: (020) 7107 0000
www.gordonramsay.com/mazegrill

7.30pm for 8.00pm
Louis Roederer Brut Premier & Canapé Reception
5-Course Signature Menu
£85.00 per person
Wines to complement every dish are chosen specially by
Craig Bancroft from Northcote's cellars, please enquire
for an exclusive wine package price

Jason Atherton worked his way up in the business via Pierre Koffmann, Nico Ladenis, Marco Pierre-White and Gordon Ramsay amongst others, and also completed a stage at the legendary El Bulli restaurant in Roses, Spain. He's been head chef at Maze since its launch in 2005, and has won a Michelin star and three AA rosettes, as well as opening branches in America and the Czech Republic. He also won the Great British Menu in 2008, which is when Nigel Haworth approached him about Obsession.

This is the first time Jason will have cooked at the event, and he's looking forward to it. 'I like the opportunity to introduce my cooking to a new audience, and promoting my restaurant. Also, it's good for up-and-coming chefs to work with different head chefs, even if it's only for one night. It's going to be a lot of fun and excitement, and maybe it'll whet people's appetites for more – both in the kitchen and the dining room.'

He's cooking pressed marinated foie-gras with Lincolnshire smoked eel, baked potato foam and dill; beef tongue and cheek with caper, raisin, and ginger carrots; and bitter chocolate and hazelnut

parfait. His style is 'one foot in the past and one in the future: I'm a purist when it comes to flavours and ingredients but open to new ideas, techniques and equipment – after all, I worked at El Bulli. I think that these "cutting edge" chefs are doing fantastic work, but I don't like it when some people in the business try to drive a wedge between what are seen as "traditionalists" and "modernists". I'm both. We do experiments in the kitchen all the time but we don't bother the customer with the details. When we get it right we put it on the plate and put it in front of the customer. We don't tell them how we did it – we're not out to dazzle people with how clever we are, we ask them simply to enjoy it.'

One of Jason's previous incarnations was at Oliver Peyton's Mash and Air in Manchester, which is where he first met Nigel Haworth back in the 1990s before backpacking to Spain and El Bulli in 1998, and he's really pleased to be "coming home" to the north west to cook at his old friend's restaurant. What does he expect from the evening? 'I want to show people a really good time and an excellent dinner.'

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