



SUMMER 2025

CHAÎNE DES RÔTISSEURS
BAILLIAGE DE GRANDE BRETAGNE

table talk

For the Love of Fine Dining

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AWARDS 2025

A night of talent, triumph and taste at The Savoy

AN UPDATE FROM THE CLINK

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OMGD FEATURE

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In this issue...

Young Professionals Awards at The Savoy



Kamila Blaszcayk, winner of the prestigious Gerald Basset Tasting Trophy, is the smiling sommelier in the photograph. There were smiles all round at the Young Professionals Awards Dinner held this year at The Savoy, especially as the top young chef was The Savoy's own Johan de Sousa. There must have been smiles at Gleneagles too, with Erazem Ocvirk winning the Young Sommeliers Competition.

OMGD – A memorable trip to Alsace and the Black Forest



Funny thing! In the very readable OMGD report of the trip to Alsace and the Black Forest, there is no mention of the celebrated Black Forest gâteau. The tour featured everything else: Classic cars, Lalique glass, rail and boat trips, fabulous dinners and, of course, the delight of vineyard after vineyard.

On the Grill with Maître Restaurateur Ian Rhodes



The more eagle-eyed of you may spot three references in this newsletter to Le Talbooth at Dedham. This, we must admit, is mere serendipity, rather than by design. Ian Rhodes, our On the Grill 'victim', was Head Chef there 23 years ago at the beginning of his career with the Milsom Hotels and Restaurants Group. Turn to Page 19 and discover how far his career has progressed since then.

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If you would like to promote a Bailliage event, or you have any news or photos you would like posted on the Chaîne Facebook page, email them, together with a brief outline, to the online editor Gabby Fok at social@chaine.co.uk

Photographs of events are now available on www.photos.chaine.co.uk

To follow the Chaîne news online internationally, visit newsonline.chainedesrotisseurs.com

Cover photo by Ruken Kobatan

Dear members and friends



I trust that you're all enjoying this wonderful summer. It makes a particularly welcome change for our outdoor events such as garden parties, and lunches and dinners to be held out on the terrace. Is this global warming or were we due to have a great summer?

In the spring we all enjoyed a terrific evening in the Ballroom of the Savoy Hotel celebrating

the talents of young people, and in particular, the talents of the top three competitors from both our Young Chef and Young Sommelier Competitions. My congratulations to them and my thanks for all who were involved in the competitions and, of course, to Rob van Eyck and the Savoy team for their outstanding support.

I am pleased to let you all know that we will soon have an updated Chaîne GB website, with a much more modern look and feel. It will be a great place to easily find out what's happening in other parts of the country. The project has been led by our Chancelier, Darryl Thompson, who is doing a superb job. When released, it will be up to each individual Bailliage to keep their 'shop window' up to date.

I am delighted to let you know of the appointment of Francisco Macedo

to the Exec Team as Chargé des Missions with a brief to help us all with membership recruitment and retention. In addition, we have recently appointed a new Regional Bailli. Andi Michie is taking over from Sheila Douglas as Bailli for Scotland. Sheila has amazingly held this role for the last 18 years. Together she and Phil have given much of their time and enthusiasm to the Chaîne in their various roles. Bravo Sheila. Our best wishes to them both.

These changes give me occasion to reflect that our organisation is always in need of new leaders and new members. Without the latter there is no source for potential new leaders, and our recruitment of new members has been very slow of late. I do encourage you all to review your contacts, in both your business and social lives, to see if there are people you might approach who would be interested in the wonderful activities that we undertake. Finally, I look forward to seeing many of you next month for what will be a wonderful Grand Chapitre in Bath. We will be joined by many of our overseas friends.

Vive La Chaîne

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Matthew Randall, Daniel Ayton, Tony Higginbottom and David Randall



University of West London gang



Rory Haigh, Caroline Stevens, David Edwards, Michael & Marie Ryan



Emma Denney & Charlie Richards



Ian Rhodes and Daniel Ayton



Ben Purton and Ben Teacher



Gaby Fok and Jamie Bearne

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL AWARDS 2025



Franciane Tatari, Ben Purton, Johan de Sousa, Philip Evins, Chris Hagen and Gerald Quadros

A NIGHT OF TALENT, TASTE, AND TRIUMPH AT THE SAVOY

This year's Young Professionals Awards brought together some of the UK's most talented young chefs and sommeliers resulting from the two fierce and exhilarating competitions. Members, competitors and their families and friends, suppliers and hoteliers assembled in the beautiful Lancaster Ballroom at the Savoy Hotel for a glittering Awards Dinner.

The Young Chefs Competition had taken place earlier in the University of West London where the young chefs had just 30 minutes to assess an undisclosed box of ingredients – plus the advance knowledge of chicken and, in a surprise twist, trout – the competitors then had 3.5 hours to produce a stunning three-course meal for four guests. All three finalists were returning competitors, a growing trend that speaks to the passion and resilience of the next generation of chefs and this year, that fire burned brighter than ever.

First place went to Johan de Sousa from The Savoy, who returned after first competing in 2023. His performance this year was confident, refined, and a clear testament to his growth. "Born in Goa and raised in London, I was immersed in a vibrant mix of cultures and cuisines, sparking my passion for food," Johan shared. "Becoming a chef was a natural choice – it's where creativity, passion, and technique come together to create unforgettable experiences. Last year, I took time off to refine my skills and come back stronger. Returning this

year, I felt more confident and focused."

His menu reflected just that – a bold, balanced display of technique and innovation that wowed the judges across all three courses. "Winning first place is an incredible feeling," he continued. "It's the result of hard work and a huge motivation to aim even higher. I'm excited to keep challenging myself, take on new projects, and continue growing my career while pushing boundaries in the kitchen."

Second place was claimed by someone who was actually cooking in The Savoy kitchen before the award ceremony. Polly Norman made a triumphant return to the podium with her refined, balanced flavours, having claimed back-to-back second place finishes. Third place went to Louis Coppen from Talbooth, whose delicate handling of the surprise trout component and beautifully presented plates impressed the judges.

"The competition is getting more and more fierce every year," noted Ben Purton, Conseiller Culinaire for Bailliage de Grande Bretagne. "And those who come back – they come back with a vengeance. The level has never been higher." Vice Conseiller Culinaire Franciane Tartari, who has supported the competition alongside Ben, echoed the sentiment: "It's lovely to see young people grow, and that there is so much talent within the UK. We should be celebrating it and promoting it more."

'It's lovely to see young people grow, and that there is so much talent within the UK'



YOUNG PROFESSIONAL AWARDS 2025



Kamila Blaszczyk



Anthony Parker, Erazem Ocvirk and Jaz Arwand

A PASSION FOR WINE, A DRIVE TO INSPIRE

Changing our focus from the kitchen to the cellar. The Young Sommeliers Competition took place earlier that week in the Savoy Hotel and was equally packed with energy and excellence. In a fitting story of determination, Erazem Ocvirk from Gleneagles – who was placed second in 2024 – returned to claim first place, just four days before ageing out of the competition.

“Last year, I had no expectations. I didn’t know where I stood, and coming second was a surprise,” Erazem shared. “This year, I put a lot of pressure on myself. I knew how strong the competition would be. I was extra motivated – and I can honestly say that the level of talent in the UK is one of the best in the world.” A native of Slovenia, Erazem studied hospitality management both at home and in the Netherlands before discovering wine – and dropping out of university to pursue his passion full-time. “I became a sommelier because I want to share the joy of wine with others. Wine isn’t about showing off – it’s about making connections. I want to demystify the language and let wine be what it should be: a source of joy and storytelling, the bridge between winemaker and guest.”

Second place went to Kamila Blaszczyk from Maison Estelle, who also earned the prestigious Gérard Basset Tasting Trophy for her outstanding performance in the blind tasting round. Calm, precise, and quietly confident, Kamila impressed the judging panel with her elegant approach.

Third place was awarded to Charlie Richards from Claridge’s, who quickly became a crowd favourite. His approachable, warm style and joyful presence stood out – both on the floor and with the judges. “Charlie lit up the room,” Philip Evins, Bailli Délégué commented. “He showed that being a great sommelier isn’t just about technical skill, but about making guests feel truly welcome.”

It was also a particularly meaningful evening for Tristan Mason-Smith, the newly appointed Echanson, who had served as a judge. “I couldn’t be prouder of every contestant this year, especially our top three winners,” Tristan said. “I couldn’t have asked for a more talented and passionate group of people. They have truly set the standard for the future of our industry.” He added his excitement at the prospect of Erazem representing Great Britain at the International Final in Geneva, where he is confident Erazem will do GB proud.

The awards took place during a superb dinner created by Exec Chef, Maître Rôtisseur Gerald Quadros, for the event. As on previous occasions at the Savoy, the service was impeccable, thanks to the world-class front-of-house team at The Savoy, who continue to raise the bar.

The evening concluded with a heartfelt acknowledgment from Philip, who summed up the mood of the room: “I am so proud of the remarkable young professionals who will be representing the UK internationally. Their talent, drive, and discipline are nothing short of inspirational.”

A special thank you to all who helped make the evening a success – especially The University of West London, who continue to play a critical role in shaping the next generation of hospitality talent, and to The Savoy for once again opening its doors with generosity and elegance. Of course, we are also incredibly grateful to all our sponsors for their continued support: The Savoy, Bragard, Campbell Brothers, Camus, Valrhona, Wüsthof, Bidfood, Daily Fish Supplies, Boulangerie de Paris, D.D.P. Limited, Powder Monkey Brewing Company and the University of West London.

Gaby Fok



Jamie B sampling the Camus Cognac XO



Kamila Blaszczyk, Erazem Ocvirk and Matteo Montone

‘I can honestly say that the level of talent in the UK is one of the best in the world’

Countrywide *with the Chaîne*



A PRIZE CATCH FOR COTSWOLDS

AT THE SEVERN AND WYE SMOKERY, WESTBURY ON SEVERN

"No wise fish would go anywhere without a porpoise" said the Mock Turtle to Alice. He was right! Chef Richard Hunt and service team Sim and Jerome swept us away with all things fishy at The Restaurant at The Barn with the most bountiful menu, featuring a tour of Britain in seafood: Scallops from the Orkneys and Lobster from Scotland met Turbot from Cornwall.

The Barn is festooned with a Warrant from the late Queen underscoring the prestige afforded to this Severn and Wye Smokery. Lest you are still in doubt: enter, turn right and into the lair of the fishmonger displaying his wares like Neptune's jewel box. Now proceed upstairs and into the light and airy restaurant to enjoy the freshest seafood selection on offer, coaxed onto the plate with the lightest touch by Chef Richard and his Brigade.

Our brief was 'to showcase fish' and how well this was orchestrated. Canapés of taramasalata and trout caviar, Jospier roasted garlic and chilli prawns, and Double Gloucester gougers whetted the appetite, especially with a flute of Three Choirs Classic Brut.

We took our seats, sipped a Tinpot Hut Pinot Gris and sliced into a perfectly roasted scallop, Scottish salmon - tartar infused with gin and orange, Wye valley asparagus and wasabi crème fraîche. Big flavours. No battle, just balance!

Domaine Laroche Saint Martin Chablis was served and the star-of-the-day arrived. Butter poached fillet of Cornish turbot crowned with Scottish lobster on a bed of spring vegetable and clam fricassé. A generous portion of this king of the sea, with rich flavour and succulent white flesh, proved to be a delectable main course.

Replete, but somehow there was still room for dessert! And the summer strawberry creations received some squeals of delight as the plates were presented. We agreed that the food, service and ambience had all aligned to create an outstanding event. It was our pleasure to present Chef Richard with a Chaîne plate. We highly recommend you experience this for yourself.

Jacqueline Horsfield



CHAMPAGNE ON THE TERRACE DÉJEUNER AMICAL AT THE OXO TOWER

On a radiant Sunday afternoon, the London Bailliage gathered for a truly memorable Déjeuner Amical at the iconic OXO Tower Restaurant, perched high above the South Bank. Hosted by London Bailli Peter George and Conseiller Culinaire Ben Purton, the event was a celebration of fine cuisine, camaraderie, with one of the most breathtaking views in the capital.

Guests were welcomed with a Champagne reception on the terrace, where the sparkling wine was matched only by the glittering view of St. Paul's Cathedral across the Thames. The selection of canapés, including a standout tempura of Jersey rock oyster with fennel, crème fraîche, and dill oil, paired with Harvey Nichols Brut NV Champagne was a perfect match on this wonderful English summer day.

The sun bathed the skyline in golden hues, setting the perfect tone for an afternoon of indulgence and celebration.

The Starter featured Wykham asparagus with a crispy duck egg, smoked cobnuts, and a miso-mustard dressing, beautifully complemented by the Alias Sauvignon Blanc from Marlborough, New Zealand.

The Cornish red mullet with confit tomato tartare, fine herbs and a citrus reduction, paired with Côtes

de Provence Rosé 2023, was a contrast yet lived in harmony with the Yorkshire beef fillet. This was served with short rib croquettes, shallots, and smoked potato cloud, finished with a rich sauce bordelaise and paired with Harvey Nichols Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley. To conclude the afternoon, a delicate Kentish strawberry Pavlova was served alongside Harvey Nichols English Sparkling Rosé, bringing a sweet and refreshing end to the meal.

The occasion was made even more special by the presence of many members from the Chiltern Bailliage, including Chiltern Bailli Barney Quinn, whose attendance added to the spirit of unity and shared passion for gastronomy. A highlight of the afternoon was the celebration of the 31st birthday of James Bearn, the London Vice Argentier, adding a joyful and personal touch to the gathering.

This Déjeuner Amical was a perfect blend of elegance, friendship, and culinary artistry – an afternoon that truly embodied the spirit of La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs.

Gaby Fok

JEUNE CHAÎNE KICKS OFF 2025

AT THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE

The first Jeune Chaîne event of 2025 marked not just the beginning of a new year, but a shared celebration of culture, community, and connection. Held in the elegant setting of the Royal Society of Medicine (RSM), the evening was a creative nod to Chinese New Year and, more specifically, to the seventh day of the festival, known as Renri.

In Chinese tradition, Renri is the “common person’s birthday” – the day when everyone, regardless of age or background, is said to grow one year older together. What better moment to raise a glass with friends, old and new?

Guests gathered for a three-course dinner, intentionally not Chinese in flavour – a playful twist that sparked conversation and reflected the inclusive nature of the evening. It was a chance

to mark the festival in spirit, rather than cuisine, celebrating unity over uniformity.

Though modest in scale, the dinner offered something far more significant: a room filled with multicultural energy, lively conversation, and warmth. It was a true reflection of what La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs stands for – a table where all are welcome, where diversity is embraced, and where food is the common language.

“It was a beautiful way to start the year,” says our London Vice Agentier, James Bearne. “There was such a sense of joy – people from all over, sharing this unique moment together.”

As the evening unfolded in the historic halls of the RSM, it served as a gentle reminder that some of the most meaningful and intimate moments happen not in grand spectacles, but

in the quiet elegance of a shared meal, among people who appreciate good food, fine wine, and each other.

Gaby Fok

‘There was such a sense of joy – people from all over, sharing this unique moment together’



BAILLIAGE DE SUSSEX AT NUTBOURNE VINEYARDS



The month of May and time for the Bailliage de Sussex’s Tour, Tasting and Lunch at Nutbourne Vineyards. This is a family-owned

and family run boutique vineyard and farm, about a mile west of West Chiltington and in the same road as Nyetimber Manor Vineyard. Peter and Bridget Gladwin have been at Nutbourne Vineyards for over 30 years and are still very much involved in the day to day running of the vineyards and business. Peter, a celebrated restaurateur and chef who has spent his whole working life in the hospitality sector, was our host for the day. Bridget Gladwin combines managing the vineyard with her work as an artist and her art features on the Nutbourne wine labels. They have three sons: Richard,

Oliver and Gregory. Gregory manages the vineyards and winery alongside his farming activities, while Richard and Oliver run the five “Local & Wild” family restaurants in London.

The day started at the Vineyards’ viewing platform with an introduction by Peter during which we were served a welcome glass of “Nuttie Wild” – one of Nutbourne Vineyards’ sparkling wines. We proceeded on a tour through the vines under the able guidance of Olivia Thomas, Nutbourne Vineyards’ Sales & Hospitality Manager. Then we stopped at the little lakeside hut for a tasting of Nutbourne Vineyards’ Bacchus 2023. Walking back to the Winery alongside the lake, we were under the gaze of curious Alpacas. We passed a metal sculpture at the edge of the lake depicting a fish on a bicycle, an echo of the phrase coined by Australian, Irina Dunn: “A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle!” At the Winery we were given a short talk

on the workings of the Winery and tasted some barrel samples. All wines are made on site.

Lunch was served in the Wine Lodge and how good it was! Five courses featuring Nutbourne Asparagus, Tortellini and Crab Bisque, slow-cooked leg of Sussex Lamb and rare roasted best end, or Fillet of Sea Bream. A dessert of Meadowsweet Posset with wild strawberry ice cream completed this delicious menu. Each course was accompanied, of course, by wines from Nutbourne Vineyards.

Nutbourne Vineyards is not a Sussex winemaker whose name is perhaps quite as well-known as others, but how glad we were to have made its acquaintance and enjoyed its excellent hospitality.

Tim Moore



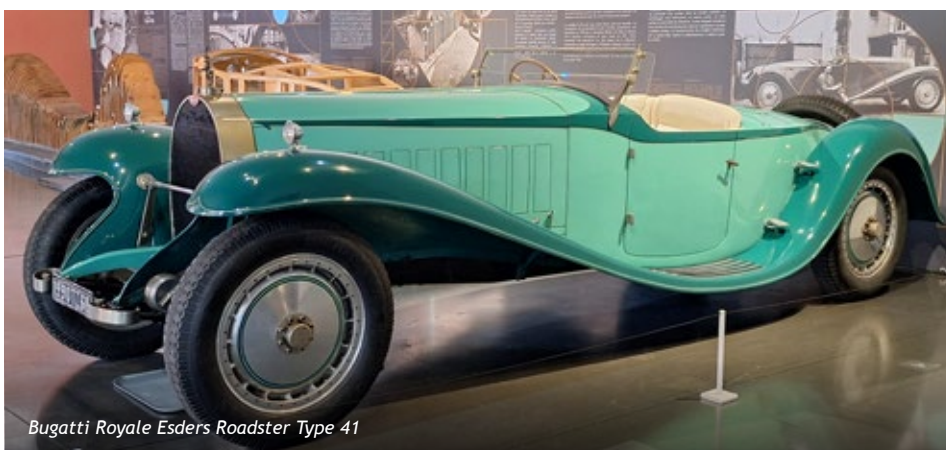
A MEMORABLE TRIP TO ALSACE AND THE BLACK FOREST

Towards the end of June, a group of GB members assembled in Basel in Switzerland and made their way to the Musée National d'Automobile in Mulhouse to wonder at the car collection in the old Schlumpf electrical factory. This houses a vast array of cars and certainly the world's best collection of Bugattis – type 41 Royales, type 37s, 52Bs and Atlantiques. This was a start of a journey through the vineyards of the finer producers of Alsace and the Kaiserstuhl. The first stop being with Veronique Mure in Clos de St Landelin. Then on to the first stay in the photogenic town of Riquewhir where small restaurants tucked in to 15th Century half-timber buildings were a joy. Our doctors' contingent tested the first of three hotel swimming pools on the trip. The next day started with a wonderful trip to the private office of Etienne-Arnaud Dopff for an insight into this thirteen generation family business.

It was hard to leave the winery because of his humour and great storytelling, which were liberally laced with very many Grand Cru Rieslings. Fascinating Facts: 50% of their output is now Cremant and it is 25% of all wines produced in Alsace.

The day continued with visits to Hugel and Trimbach – finishing on a high with some marvellous glasses of Trimbach's Frederic Emile. Dinner was in the aptly named 'Au Riesling' Restaurant in Zellenberg.

Saturday started with views from Haut Koenigsbourg before dropping down to the village of Andlau for a fascinating tutorial by Remy Gresser in his vineyard cellar. Strasbourg was the base for the weekend, but that evening we were joined by Chaîne members from both the Bailliages of Alsace and Baden Schwarzwald for a magical trip to Wingen sur Moder. We first visited the Musée Lalique to see the glass, then went on to a private dinner in the Villa René Lalique. What a venue; what great cuisine from Chef Paul Stradner (two Michelin stars); and what sublime service! All topped by wines from owner Silvio Denz's Bordeaux estates – a Chateau Faugeres 2005 served in no less than Imperials – Methusalems – with the rack of lamb! Sunday was a day of exploration and relaxation in the city with boat trips for many. The evening was balmy and we sat on the terrace at L'Eveil des Sens for dinner.



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Rory Haigh, Cath Cunningham, David Haigh, Christine Maxwell and Pauline Frise



Villa Rene Latique

On Monday we crossed the Rhine to Baden and the Kaiserstuhl to try the top Pinots and Chardonnays of the region. First stop with Arne Bercher in Burkheim, where the delightful degustation in the winery courtyard was continually interrupted by the comings and goings of pairs of nesting swallows. Then on to Franziska Schaetzle in Vogtsburg – vineyards on top of an extinct volcano – not the only heat, as the day was about 38 degrees and so everybody quickly moved inside. Here was the whole range of varietals Chardonnay, Grauburgunder, Spatburgunder, Gewurztraminer (with great minerality) and Pino Magma to wash down the lunch!

Final stop of the day was in Bad Krozingen in the Fritz Wassmer winery where we were treated to an impressive range of Burgundian style Chardonnays and Pinots – and, as in Burgundy itself, not for the faint of wallet! Then on to the excellent Hotel Colombi in Freiburg, a Chaîne member hotel, for the next couple of days. The following day was a leisurely one which members spent in the Munster, in Biergartens, up the Schlossberg, or in cafes before a dinner in the hotel (one star Michelin) with members of the Baden-Schwarzwald Bailliage. Thanks are due to Bailli Gabriele Fuerst.

Finally, the rail and boat part of the trip! We took the Hollentalbahn (Devils Valley Railway) up into the Black Forest close to the source of the Danube, then the Dreiseebahn (three lakes Railway) and, after a stop for lunch overlooking Schluchsee, travelled on to the Rhein Falls. The boat trip took us right up to the falls, giving those at the front of the boat a drenching from the spray!

Our last event together was dinner overlooking the Rhine. The river, speckled with rowing boats and wildfowl, could be viewed from the terrace or dining room of the Alte Rheinmühle Hotel in Busingen. This time we sampled Swiss wines from Schaffhausen with the friends to whom we had got so much closer over the course of the trip.

Vive la Chaîne!



Presentation to Chef Paul Stradner



Walter Steyer, David Edwards, Gabriele Fuerst-Steyer and Philip & Janet Evins

CHILTERN AND SOBO REVISITED

The Chilterns Bailliage followed its path back to the South Coast again for the second time in a couple of years. We organised two great venues for lunch at different ends of the Southbourne main street, or SoBo as it is colloquially called. We picked Restaurant Roots and The Larder House for our tour. Restaurant Roots was a venue on our 2023 tour, and it was an enormous success. The Barneys have been going to Roots for over 10 years, and Jan and Stacey Bretschneider the owners certainly look after their diners. With its 3 AA Rosettes and Michelin recommendation, Roots is regarded as one of the best restaurants in Dorset. Our special guest speaker at Roots, was Piotr Nahajski the wine maker of Chalkdown English wine. He was very well received, as we listened with a glass or two of the Chalkdown Sparkling Rosé.

We have also been going to the Larder House for many years, and it was a pleasure to put it on our programme. The Larder House is a project where James Fowler, the Founder and 2014 World Class UK Bartender of Year,

and Head Chef Jesse Wells really do serve pure passion. They pay homage to the origins of true food whether local or from around Europe. Beyond what they offer now is a lot of learning, and they are pushing to be ambassadors for the foods and drink that we all personally love to enjoy.

Both restaurants had great menus with paired wines and looked after us very well. After the lunches, members took advantage of other amenities in the local area. Sobo has lots of bars and restaurants in the vicinity which enabled our members to continue into the evening on both days. It was great to be able to walk or take a short taxi ride between venues.

To allow members to stay over, we selected the Kings Hotel in Christchurch as our operations base, which made getting to our lunches extremely easy. Overall, it was a magnificent event, and we will look to do a similar tour in 2027.

Barney Quinn



Barney Quinn, Jesse Wells, Jenny Quinn and James Fowler



Philip Evins, Piotr Nahajski, Tristan Mason-Smith and Barney Quinn

FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR WESSEX ON THE WATERCRESS LINE



This was a trip down memory lane for lucky Chaine members, relaxing in the sumptuous comfort of Pullman style first-class carriages on Hampshire's Watercress Line Heritage Railway, whilst savouring a gastronomic 3-course lunch. The original Royal Wessex service was launched by British Railways on 3 May 1951. It was one of a number of named trains introduced to commemorate the Festival of Britain of that year, and transported people from the South Coast to the festival in London. We were particularly fortunate in that our train was pulled by the Canadian Pacific, originally built at the Eastleigh Works in 1941. It is the oldest and fastest survivor of Oliver Bulleid's Merchant Navy class. Canadian Pacific was acquired by the Watercress Line in 2014 and lovingly restored. Launched

on 19 March 2025 it looked amazing with its gleaming paint and shining metal. The sight of this magnificent machine and the nostalgic smell of the steam sent hearts racing for some of us not in the first bloom of youth!

The original Mid-Hants Railway received its Act of Parliament in 1861 to connect the existing lines at Alton and Winchester. The line served the needs of the local community and enabled the establishment of commercial watercress growing in the Alresford area. (Hence the route being called the Watercress Line). This highly perishable product required rapid transport to get it to market. British Rail closed the line in February 1973 due to the extended Beeching Act. Part of the route was subsequently purchased from British Rail by

the Watercress Line. Once settled in our plush seats, our afternoon began fittingly with a glass of Hattingley Valley, Hampshire, Classic Reserve NV followed by a salad of cured chalk stream trout and watercress – all local produce. The main course was roasted topside of beef, panache of vegetables, chateaux potatoes and Yorkshire pudding with a rich claret gravy. Dessert was a delicious glazed, lemon tart with vanilla crème fraîche.

What better way to spend a sun-filled Sunday afternoon in May with good company, an excellent repast, partaken in our plush seats whilst gazing out on a bucolic passing scene?

Janet Evins



Chef Tom Stephens and Madeleine Riches

Credit: restaurantsbrighton.co.uk

SUSSEX DINNER AT DILSK IN BRIGHTON



The Bailliage de Sussex held a very successful event at DILSK - a fine dining restaurant situated in the basement of Drakes Hotel in Marine Parade Brighton and what a superb dinner it was.

DILSK was opened in May 2023 by chef Tom Stephens and Madeleine Riches, both formerly of Restaurant 64 Degrees in Brighton. The restaurant now has a loyal following and deservedly so.

We had exclusive use of the restaurant for our dinner which was well attended. After a welcome glass or two of Highweald Brut Reserve, we took our places to enjoy DILSK's Full

Tasting Menu comprising 10 courses. Through an array of oyster, scallop, cod, quail, beef, dessert dishes and more the quality of cooking was truly excellent.

At the end of the dinner the Bailli de Sussex, Tim Moore, gave a vote of thanks to Tom, Maddy and the staff. They were presented with a Chaîne Plate in recognition of their efforts in the provision of such good hospitality.

DILSK is certain to have a regular place in the annual events of the Bailliage de Sussex.

Tim Moore

WESSEX ANNUAL LADIES LUNCH AT THE WYKEHAM ARMS



This year's annual Wessex Ladies Lunch at The Wykeham Arms was attended by 15 ladies. Situated between Winchester Cathedral and the famous college, the pub is named after William of Wykeham, the 14th century Bishop who founded Winchester College. He, famously, had the motto 'manners makyth man' on his coat of arms.

Our afternoon kicked off in style with a much – enjoyed aperitive of Danebury Sparkling Cossack Brut Vintage 2021, generously provided by the vineyard.

Head Chef, Luke Emmess, created a delicious lunch menu, which was produced by his competent staff of three in the kitchen. Rumour has it that certain Wessex spouses, not to be outdone, were having

their own version of our lunch in the Jameson Room below!

The starters were a choice of Feta wrapped in Filo, or smoked Duck Breast followed by main courses of either Herb Crusted Lamb or Pan Roasted Hake. For dessert, most chose a Rhubarb and Raspberry mousse, though an Eaton mess was also on offer. These were served with a Sicilian Grillo, or red wine from Puglia.

The lunch ended with tea or coffee and the opportunity to continue chatting and relaxing around the table, catching up with familiar faces in true Chaîne style.

Pauline Frise

A WESSEX SPRINGTIME LUNCH AT THE LIME WOOD HOTEL, LYNDHURST

It was a welcome return to The Lime Wood Hotel, Lyndhurst for many Wessex members and guests. For others it was a treat to discover this gem, nestling deep in the New Forest.

This beautiful boutique hotel has retained many original Georgian features, but benefits from tasteful modernization and the hotel is justly proud of its Italian Restaurant where the team is lead by Chef Director, Angela Hartnett and Head Chef, Luke Holder. Luke devised the delicious lunch menu.

The reception was held in the Drawing Room. The 2019 English Sparkling Segreue South Downs with the intriguing name – 'The Trouble with Dreams' – was served with arancini canapés.

The Starter of English asparagus with crab aioli also included a delicious,

perfectly grilled, red mullet. This was accompanied by Terlan 'Terlaner', Pinot Bianco, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Alto Adige, Italy 2023. The main course was succulent milk fed, Saddleback Pork Loin served with fennel gratin and a 2020 Fossil Point, Pinot Noir from Edna Valley, California. Dessert was an exquisite buttermilk Panna Cotta with English strawberries and lemon verbena, which tasted like Summer on a plate!

The lunch was hosted by MD, Maitre Hôte, Kenneth Spiers, together with his wife, Maria, who ensured that the delicious meal and wines were perfectly served. The meal was completed with tea, coffee, and petit fours with the hope for more visits in the future.

Pauline Frise



HOGARTHS

A CULINARY GEM IN THE HEART OF THE MIDLANDS

Tucked away in the tranquil surroundings of Solihull, Hogarths is a hidden jewel offering a refined gastronomic experience that blends seasonal British produce with impeccable hospitality and international flair.

Renowned for its commitment to the highest standards in food and service, Hogarths was the chosen venue for a memorable evening hosted by the Mercia Bailliage. The event featured an exquisite four-course menu thoughtfully paired with distinguished Italian wines from Antinori.

Hogarths enjoys access to a rich variety of local produce from the surrounding Midlands countryside. This strategic position allows the kitchen to source exceptional seasonal ingredients from nearby farms and artisans, supporting sustainability through minimal food miles. Chef Andy Kay and his dedicated brigade transform these regional treasures into refined, contemporary dishes that celebrate the culinary heritage of central England.

The evening began with a warm welcome, accompanied by house-made bread and locally churned butter – an elegant prelude that set the tone for what was to follow. The first course featured vibrant beetroot paired

with creamy goat's cheese and a beetroot jus – beautifully presented and full of flavour.

This was followed by a delicate course of turbot, served with asparagus and black caviar, perfectly matched with Antinori's Conte della Vipera from Castello della Sala – a sophisticated blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon that brought brightness and balance to the dish.

The highlight of the evening was undoubtedly the fillet of Hereford beef, served at its tender best and paired with two wonderful wines, Antinori Badia a Passignano Chianti Classico Gran Selezione and Le Mortelle Botrosecco. The combination received the highest praise from members, exemplifying the harmony between exceptional local meat and world-class wine. To conclude, a white chocolate dessert with Yorkshire rhubarb and tonka bean was served alongside a glass of Moscato d'Asti – a light, aromatic finish that rounded out the meal beautifully.

Throughout the evening, Emanuele Barrasso, Brand Ambassador for Antinori in the UK, offered insightful commentary on each wine pairing, enriching the culinary journey with knowledge and context. Heartfelt

thanks were extended to Helena Hogarth, the gracious proprietor, and to Chef Andy Kay and his talented brigade. His artistry and attention to detail delivered an unforgettable dining experience.

With its elegant setting, commitment to regional produce, and flawless service, Hogarths stands as a shining example of modern British hospitality – rooted in tradition, yet open to the world.

David Crews



Credit: firsttable.co.uk

A TASTE OF TRULLO

Italian Hospitality with a London Twist at Harvey Nichols

In May, members and guests of La Chaîne were treated to a sun-drenched slice of Italy – right in the heart of Knightsbridge, at the “Taste of Trullo” pop-up, hosted by Ben Purton at Harvey Nichols. The evening was a celebration of traditional Italian dining: soulful, shared, and utterly delicious. Inspired by the elegant simplicity of Trullo’s Italian kitchen, the menu was crafted to follow the rhythm of a true Italian meal, served family-style to encourage conversation, laughter, and second helpings.

To start, guests nibbled on Nocellara olives and pizzette with rosemary and lardo, bite-sized delights that set the tone for what was to come. Antipasti followed with vibrant asparagus with pecorino and lemon, and the standout mussel fritti with aioli, light and golden.

The Primi were a showcase of pasta perfection: pappardelle with beef shin ragù, rich and tender, and picci with datterini tomatoes and golden garlic – a dish so bright, balanced and bursting with flavour it quickly became a table favourite (and rightly so!).

The Secondi brought further joy: a beautifully cooked pan-fried hake

with spinach and bottarga, and the comforting aubergine parmigiana served with dressed leaves – a vegetarian dish that even the meat-eaters fought over.

As with all good Italian meals, dessert was no afterthought. A zesty, silky Amalfi lemon tart with crème fraîche offered just the right contrast to a perfectly layered, pillowy tiramisu – the most fitting of finishes to a meal full of generosity and flavour.

The evening captured everything Italian food is meant to be: simple, generous, and full of heart. It wasn’t just about the ingredients, but the warmth of the room – lively, full of clinking glasses, shared dishes, and stories exchanged over each course. “It felt like being invited into someone’s home,” Kristina Szazama noted. Except their home happened to be above Harvey Nichols, next to a cocktail bar and served perfect pasta! Ben Purton’s “Taste of Trullo” pop-up proved that the magic of Italy can be distilled into one evening – and savoured bite by bite.

Gaby Fok



‘It felt like being invited into someone’s home... except their home happened to be above Harvey Nichols, next to a cocktail bar and served perfect pasta!’

A WESSEX WINTER DINNER AT THE FOX INN, CRAWLEY

Whilst Storm Eowyn raged across Northern Ireland and parts of Scotland and Northern England on a cold January night, Wessex members made their way to Crawley in comparative calm (albeit a bit damp) weather. The village of Crawley is ‘chocolate box’ perfect, with thatched cottages and even a duck pond and conveniently situated just five miles from Winchester.

The attractive building was originally built in 1876 and fits into the village scene with leaded windows, wooden beams and red brick. It is situated in the quaintly called Peach Hill Lane. In 2018 it was extensively refurbished with a modern extension to the rear of the property and four bedrooms.

Members gathered in the original dining room with a welcoming log fire for an AGM meeting, before being served a welcome glass

of Hattingley Valley Special Reserve NV – a local Hampshire wine. Head Chef, Matthew Rogers, and Senior Sous Chef, Chris Nicholson prepared an excellent three course dinner. We were particularly impressed with the starter of Pan-Fried Monkfish with Nori – Tandoori Lobster Bisque, curried potato terrine, peas, samphire and mussels which was a delicious combination of flavours and textures. This was followed by Pan-Fried Creedy Duck Breast and to finish a Dark Chocolate Orange Delice. The wines were a Jean Luc Colombo Picpoul de Pinet, a Michael Chapoutier Croze Hermitage and a Graham’s port.

Together with the usual Chaîne camaraderie, we can say a good evening was had by all.

Janet Evins



BALLIAGE DE SUSSEX AT BURNT ORANGE, BRIGHTON



The private dining room at Burnt Orange seats a maximum of 12 diners and so the Sussex bailliage booked two separate dates, early in the year, to accommodate all members and their guests, such was the interest.

Burnt Orange is the brainchild of Razak Helalat who has lived in Brighton since the age of five. After years of experience in the restaurant business, he opened his first Brighton restaurant in 2011. His group, Black Rock Restaurants, now owns The Coal Shed (Brighton), The Coal Shed (London), Burnt Orange (Brighton), The Salt Room (Brighton), and Tutto (Brighton).

Burnt Orange opened its doors in 2021 and won The Best Restaurant in Brighton Award in 2022 and 2023 and was runner up to Terre à Terre in 2024. Honour was restored this year when it won first place again! The menus focus on flavour-packed dishes cooked in wood ovens or over open flames, and these are served to share.

On each occasion Padron Peppers with Persian Lime Salt were served with our reception sparkling wine. Once we were seated a variety of dishes were then served over two courses. The following gives an idea of the range and variety in the second course alone: BBQ Chicken Thigh – Sumac Ranch – Dill Mayo – Pickles: Flamed Sea Bream – Basil Yoghurt – Mango; Barbeque Skirt Steak – Fermented Chilli Vinaigrette – carrot; Smoked Miso Aubergine – Crispy Onions – Sour Cream; Coal Roast Crayfish Kofta – Shellfish Dressing – Fennel; Skillet-Baked Potatoes – Herb Cream – Sheep's Cheese. And then two delicious desserts followed.

The flavours of the dishes were appreciated by all, and we enjoyed all the wines. Both sittings proved to be very jolly occasions.

Tim Moore

The Wykeham Arms is a familiar venue for Wessex Bailliage Members for Chaîne events have been held here for some 14 years. Since 1755, when it was a coaching inn, there has been a pub on this site situated close to Winchester Cathedral. Lord Nelson, himself, was said to have stayed here.

General Manager, Maître Restaurateur, Jon Howard, oversees this nationally famous food and watering hole. It has, many times, been voted National City Pub of the Year and recently, again, voted Fullers Dining Pub of the Year. Chef, Luke Emmess, has retained Two AA Rosettes for many years.

The evening commenced with a Tasting Tutorial of Iberian wines selected and presented by Christopher Piper of Christopher Piper Wines – a leading On-Trade supplier in South-West England. This gave an opportunity to taste less familiar wines.

The five-course dinner that followed was devised and presented by Luke. The matching

wines were selected by Christopher who talked about them throughout the meal. There was much praise for the Rabbit and Pistachio Terrine with Cherry – matched with a Tempranillo 'Castell' 2023 – Clos Montblanc, Catalunya – and for the main course of 54-degree Pork Tenderloin, Serrano Ham, Clams, and a Spiced Broth. The latter was matched with a Riona Blanco – Lopez de Haro 2023 – Bodegas Classica, Haro and this, for many, was the outstanding wine of the evening. Sufficient to say that one member was overheard declaring that it was the best Chaîne meal she had ever had!

At the Santé our BD, Philip, awarded Jon Howard with a Chaîne plate -an acknowledgement of the standard of excellence we always receive at this favourite establishment. A most enjoyable evening for all.

Janet Evins

WESSEX OMGD
WINE TASTING
DINNER AT THE
WYKEHAM ARMS

*'The best Chaîne
meal ever!'*



Douglas Wright-Khan, Tobias Wilhelm, Richard Wright-Khan, Anna Kaced, Myung-Hwa Jung and Chris Hagen



David Lewnes and David Edwards



Janet Evins with the Wykeham Arms gang



Pascal Malik & Manami Masayama and Jamie Bearne



David Crews and Alan Tang



CHILTERNs AND THAMES VALLEY JOINT LUNCH AT LE MANOIR AUX QUAT' SAISONS

On a lovely sunny morning in June, we arrived at Le Manoir for a very special lunch. Visiting Le Manoir is not just about enjoying the Michelin starred food, but also about visiting a beautiful 15th century Cotswold stone mansion. It is surrounded by beautiful gardens, both ornamental and with acres of fruit, vegetables and orchards. We were greeted with coffee and had time before lunch to wander around these lovely gardens. Gardeners were working on the produce we would be eating: the many friendly staff being happy to answer our questions. After a champagne reception with the prettiest canapés on the sunny terrace, we sat down for lunch in an elegant room where the tables were decorated with flowers from the gardens. The

food was of course superb, from the Garden beetroot terrine and horseradish sorbet - so pretty, decorated with little flowers from the garden - to the Cornish lobster and Cumbrian beef to "La Fraise" (with a strawberry theme) and finishing with coffee and petit fours. All matched with excellent wines. There was the added delight of a little box of delicious chocolates to take home. After the Santé to the chefs and for the very competent service, there was also a birthday toast to Vic Laws. Thanks were given to him and to Barney Quinn for all their organisation.

Helen Wernham





AN UPDATE FROM THE CLINK CHARITY

It has been an incredibly busy 2025 so far for **The Clink Charity**. We work within an increasingly difficult environment on our mission to reduce re-offending and prevent young people who could be at risk from entering the justice system. As always, we are so grateful for support from the Chaîne. In the face of reduced funding from the Ministry of Justice, our operations simply would not be possible to maintain otherwise.

For those unfamiliar with the charity, a quick explainer. Our flagship restaurant is situated within the walls of HMP Brixton and is run by students (people in prison) working both in front of house and in the kitchen itself. It has received multiple accolades and this year we were thrilled to receive our AA College Rosette for 2025. We are very proud of our students there, who continue to produce fantastic food and challenge perceptions as to what people in prison are like.

The **Clink Bakery** at HMP Brixton is in its third year of operation and creates artisan cakes, breads and sweet treats, as well as incredibly popular Christmas hampers each year. It was named Social Bakery of the Year

in 2023 and continues to produce fantastic results. In addition, we have just launched our brand-new **Clink Bakery** brownie boxes, which can be ordered straight from our website. We have plans to roll out an online retail site this year, which will see customers able to purchase goods from the Bakery and Catered by Clink.

Our **Clink Gardens** in HMP Send and HMP Erlestoke are therapeutic training programmes and much of the fresh fruit and vegetables they produce are sent to Brixton for our guests to enjoy.

Clink Events, our social enterprise events catering service, served a record 36,000 people across 218 events in London last year and received City AM's Heart of the City Award. As a commercial endeavour, it supports much of the work we do in prisons. Its list of venues is growing all the time, including Mansion House, The Design Museum, Cutty Sark, St Paul's Cathedral and many more. Much of its food is made by women in HMP Downview.

Finally, we have begun a new prevention-based project this year called **The Clink Training Café**. The aim of this is to work with young people who could be at risk of offending and steer them onto a better path. This is run in partnership with Lambeth Council and is a 12-week programme for young people aged between 16-25, offering them the chance to gain up to five City & Guilds qualifications, as well as the ability to serve the public in a live kitchen environment.

Our first cohort concluded in May this year and all our graduates went into further education or employment, with some even going to work for **Clink Events**. This shows that by adapting our very successful training

programmes in prisons to work more in the community, we can create real resilience and break down barriers in much the same way. In the future we hope to expand this offering to more young people in London and beyond.

We are hugely grateful to the Chaîne for its long-standing support and for what is a truly powerful relationship.

Simon Reeves



The Milsom Hotels Group collection includes Talbooth House & Spa (previously Maison Talbooth), The Pier in Harwich, Milsoms in Dedham, and Kesgrave Hall – a Grade II listed Suffolk mansion exquisitely restored to retain its period charm, while offering contemporary luxury.

The Group also established Milsoms Catering, now the go-to caterer for many premier events across the region. Still very much a family-run business, the Milsom name is synonymous with hospitality excellence, with over 60 years of experience. That legacy is continued and mirrored by Ian Rhodes, who joined as Head Chef over two decades ago and now leads operations across the group.

What inspired your love of food and beverage?

When I was 14, I was captivated by the Galloping Gourmet – some Chaîne members might remember the show hosted by Graham Kerr on Monday evenings. I absolutely loved it and credit it with sparking my passion. That led me to choose Domestic Science at school – quite a bold choice at the time, as I was the only boy in the class! I learned the basics, got my O-Level, and despite the school careers team advising against a culinary path, I went to college, completed my City & Guilds, and never looked back.

Tell us a bit about your role at Milsom Hotels & Restaurants

I joined the Milsom family 23 years ago as Head Chef at Talbooth Restaurant, having previously worked at Castle Ashby, where I first met Paul Milsom. I was immediately drawn to the family ethos, the culture, and the setting at Talbooth – it just felt right.

From Head Chef, I progressed to Executive Chef, and then gradually transitioned from kitchen to front-of-house. Paul has always believed that chefs make excellent managers – we're deadline-driven, detail-focused, and organised. He's long championed promoting chefs who prove themselves, and I've benefitted from that vision.

Today, as Operations Director, I work with a brilliant team of General Managers. I genuinely love what I do – it's demanding, and the hours can be long, but I still get excited to come to work each morning. A huge part of that joy comes from mentoring the next generation. We host a long-service dinner every year to recognise team loyalty – awards are given for every five years of service. Last year, we celebrated 120 team members – a real testament to the culture here.



'On the grill' with:

Officier Maître Restaurateur Ian Rhodes

*General Manager,
Operations Director,
Milsom Hotels
& Restaurants*

The esteemed Talbooth Restaurant (formerly Le Talbooth) was discovered by the late Gerald Milsom in 1952 when it was a charming tearoom nestled on the banks of the River Stour in Dedham. This idyllic spot marked the beginning of an extraordinary journey, one that evolved into the much-loved Milsom Hotels Group



Who has been your mentor along the way?

Early on, I looked up to culinary icons like Marco Pierre White and Gordon Ramsay – I was in the National Chef of the Year finals when Gordon won in the 1990s. He was exceptional, and I definitely admired him and Marco.

More recently, I've found great mentorship in Paul Milsom himself, and also my predecessor, Stas Anastasides, who is now Restaurants & Innovation Director for Kingsfolk & Co. Both have been major influences in my career.

When did you join the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs?

It must be around twelve years ago. Philip and Janet visited the Talbooth for lunch, and during the meal, we started talking.

One thing led to another. Gerald Milsom had been a Chaîne member, and Paul was very enthusiastic about our involvement – so it felt like a natural fit.

Why is the Chaîne important to you?

Food and wine are life's greatest pleasures – something most people value deeply. For me, the Chaîne embodies all that's wonderful about enjoying fantastic ingredients, lovingly prepared, in the company of friends.

But beyond that, the Chaîne's commitment to supporting young talent is truly inspiring. I've watched two of our chefs go through the Young Chefs Awards, and this year one of them placed in the top three – an incredible achievement. This kind of encouragement is vital to the future of Hospitality, and I deeply respect the Chaîne for the role it plays in nurturing tomorrow's stars.

What does the future hold?

Who knows! What I do know is that I still love my work and want to continue being part of the Milsoms journey. I'm 61 now, so I'm realistic about the stage I'm at in my career – but that's exactly why I'm passionate about mentoring the next generation. I want to help them see just how rewarding a career in Hospitality can be.

And finally, what would be your desert island meal and why?

I'm a lover of the simple things – at home, few things beat scrambled eggs with smoked salmon. But for my ultimate desert island meal? That's a tough one!

After much thought, I'd choose Boeuf en Croûte with Dauphinoise Potatoes, accompanied by a bottle of the finest Margaux. It's one of our signature wedding dishes at the Talbooth and an all-time favourite. For dessert, a delicate Panna Cotta, served with autumn berries or poached pears – absolutely divine.

Caroline Hole-Jones

INTRODUCING THE NEW BAILLI OF ECOSSE – ANDI MICHIE

Born and raised in the heart of Angus, Andi Michie has hospitality running through his veins. Over the course of more than 15 years, he has carved out an impressive career working in some of the most prestigious five-star venues across Scotland and beyond, earning a reputation for excellence and professionalism. He has a genuine passion for guest experience.

Andi's journey in hospitality began in his home county, but his drive and dedication quickly saw him take on roles in renowned luxury establishments. From boutique hotels to internationally acclaimed resorts, he trusts he has mastered the fine balance between operational expertise and the art of making every guest feel truly valued. "Hospitality" Andy says, "is far more than a job; it's a way of life."

Today, Andi works with the largest privately owned hospitality company in the country, where he continues



to bring his wealth of experience to the forefront of the industry. He also channels his passion into his own business. Alongside his wife, he proudly owns and operates a welcoming pub, creating a warm community hub where quality, comfort, and hospitality go hand in hand.

Life for Andi is not all about work, however! He and his wife are parents to a spirited six-year-old daughter, and the family now call the picturesque Hillfoots in Clackmannanshire home. Balancing the demands of a high-level hospitality career, running a business, and raising a young family are daunting, but Andi approaches it all with the same dedication and enthusiasm that have defined his career. A member of the Chaîne for three years or so, he's looking forward to the challenge of following in Sheila's big Bailli footsteps.

INTRODUCING CHARGÉ DES MISSIONS – FRANCISCO MACEDO

Francisco Macedo is Senior Vice President of International Operations for L+R Hotels' luxury collection, Iconic Luxury Hotels, which includes Palm House in Palm Beach and the Excelsior Venice. With a career spanning more than 25 years across Europe, Africa, and the Americas, he has held senior leadership roles with Pestana and Tivoli Hotels, before joining Iconic Luxury Hotels where he successfully repositioned Bovey Castle as a 5 Red Star property. Alongside his operational role, Francisco is deeply committed to developing future leaders in hospitality, serving on several industry and academic boards.

His journey with the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs began in 2014 when he hosted his first event at Stapleford Park. Captivated by the fellowship, tradition, and celebration of gastronomy that the Chaîne embodies, he has since travelled widely to events across the UK, from the Southwest to East Anglia, the Chilterns, and London. Each occasion has strengthened his admiration for the society. Today, as Chargé des Missions for the UK, Francisco is proud to give back to an organisation that has enriched both his professional and personal life, and he wears the Chaîne ribbon with great pride.



ANGLIA BAILLIAGE AT LE TALBOOTH A CELEBRATION OF ENGLISH WINES

Le Talbooth nestles alongside the river Stour in the heart of Constable Country. The setting is idyllic and the food matches. The Chaîne has a long association with Le Talbooth, and the original founder, Gerald Milsom, was a very loyal supporter of our organisation.

Today the Anglia Bailliage boasts two Chaîne Members at Le Talbooth – General Manager Ian Rhodes, Officier Maître Restaurateur and his partner Sarah Purkis, Professionnel du Vin.

Earlier this year Sarah suggested that we hold a Chaîne lunch there, featuring English wines from local growers. Ian worked with Executive Chef Andrew Hirst and Anglia's new Vice-conseiller Culinare, Nick Mobbs, to select a special summer lunch menu to showcase the wines from the growers that Sarah had suggested.

Our Vin d'Honneur was served on the terrace overlooking the river: this was a Blanc de Blancs Chardonnay from Martin's Lane Vineyard in the Crouch Valley. An elegant and classy Méthode Champenoise went down very nicely with a wonderful selection of Chef's Canapés. We then moved inside to the main restaurant, where Ian had set apart a large section of the restaurant for our exclusive use.

We began with Seared Yellow fin Tuna with a Siam dressing, burnt lime purée, charred beansprouts, pomello and coriander, well paired with a 2023 Baccus, Single Estate, from New Hall Wines, in Chelmsford.

After this came 'Njuda crusted hand dived scallop, with crème fraîche kale and caviar beurre blanc, nicely paired with a 2021 Chardonnay from Danbury Ridge, in Essex.

Our main was Breast of Gressingham Duck and confit leg pastilla, served with local asparagus, barbeque maitake mushroom and caramelised onion purée. This was paired with a very fine 2022 Pinot Noir from Higham Vineyard, in Suffolk. And the meal finished with a delightful Chocolate Brownie with Milk Chocolate Crèmeux, Buckwheat nougatine and pearl barley ice-cream.

It was altogether a most interesting menu, with lovely wines, delightful company and idyllic surroundings. In fact, we enjoyed ourselves so much that no-one remembered to take any pictures – you will just have to trust me!

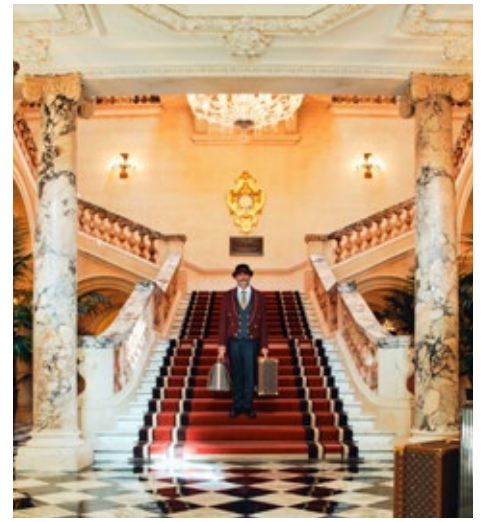
Chris Lewis





THE RAFFLES AFFAIR

“GOOD
EVENING
MR BOND”



Credit: www.raffles.com/london/

The Bailliage de London City's "The Raffles Affair" Black Tie Spy Soirée, held in July was an unforgettable evening: unparalleled elegance and cinematic sophistication. Hosted at the prestigious Raffles London at The Old War Office (OWO), this event was a unique journey into a world of culinary excellence and historical intrigue. The evening began with a champagne reception in the Spy Bar, a place of mystery hidden from the eyes of normal visitors and usually only accessible to hotel guests. This exclusive lounge transported guests back to a bygone era of espionage, with an electric atmosphere where every detail hinted at the location's secretive past. This was no ordinary dinner; it was an invitation into a realm few have the privilege to enter.

The highlight of the evening was the dining experience at Mauro's Table, a Michelin-star restaurant exclusively for a select group of guests. World-renowned chef Mauro Colagreco holds three Michelin stars for his acclaimed restaurant Mirazur in France and was recently awarded one star for his London outpost. He is also a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Biodiversity. He created a true masterpiece

of a menu. Guests savoured exquisite dishes like a cereal risotto with smoked yolk emulsion and a choice between Merrifield Farm duck or grilled monkfish. Each course was a delight, perfectly paired with exceptional wines, and culminated in a delicious strawberry dessert with coffee and petits fours.

Raffles London at The OWO proved to be the perfect setting, with its legendary service and sophisticated interiors woven with secrets and statecraft. The building is a living testament to British history, from Sir Winston Churchill's strategic planning to its role as the birthplace of modern intelligence, including MI5 and MI6. The location even inspired Ian Fleming's legendary James Bond novels, adding an extra layer of spy-themed excitement to the soirée.

"The Raffles Affair" was an evening for those who appreciate the rare and remarkable. It was an experience that will surely linger long after the final toast.

Chris Hagen



LONDON CITY WELCOME IN THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE

The Bailliage de London City hosted a magnificent Lunar New Year Dinner. This exclusive and enchanting celebration at the Four Seasons Hotel at Ten Trinity Square honoured the mesmerizing Year of the Snake.

Guests were greeted with a lavish Champagne reception in the Rotunda Bar and Lounge, setting a sophisticated tone for the evening. The excitement continued with an exquisite dinner at Mei Ume, an opulent private dining room designed for a truly immersive sensory experience.

The event's historic backdrop was the Ten Trinity Square building, a Grade II-listed neo-classical masterpiece. Originally the headquarters for the Port of London Authority, this landmark has a storied past, including hosting the first-ever United Nations reception in 1946.

Chef de Cuisine Peter Ho and his brilliant team crafted a sophisticated 10-course menu - a culinary journey based on Asian sharing traditions. Highlights of the feast included the ceremonial Prosperity Toss Salmon Salad (Yu Sheng), delicate Wasabi King Prawn and

stunning Apple Wood-Smoked Roasted Peking Duck. The night concluded on a sweet note with the Mei Miao dessert, followed by coffee or tea.

It was an extraordinary night of elegance and extravagance, a celebration that awakened the senses and created unforgettable memories.

Chris Hagen

65TH GRAND CHAPITRE FROM 18TH–21ST SEPTEMBER 2025



in the Georgian City of Bath



We look forward to welcoming you to a wonderful weekend in this delightful Georgian city whose rich history goes back to Roman times. It is a compact city, easy to reach by road, rail and from London Heathrow airport. You will find many of the venues within walking distance of your hotel.

The owners of the Woods restaurant will welcome us for a Diner Amical on Thursday evening. The venue was previously St Michael's Church House. Friday will have the option of a day trip to Bristol to visit two of the great engineer Isambard Brunel's most impressive achievements: the SS Great Britain, the world's first iron ship with screw propeller designed for luxury crossings of the North Atlantic, and the iconic Clifton Suspension Bridge. This trip will include lunch at the private members Clifton Club in the city. Friday evening's Welcome Dinner will be held at the City Guildhall in Bath. A guided walk of the city of Bath will be offered during the afternoon.

The Saturday programme will include an Induction Ceremony in St Swithin's Church, a visit to the famous American Museum followed by lunch at a riverside restaurant, or a guided literary and artistic walk of the city. Many Roman remains are centred around the Roman Baths, including archaeological remains of the Roman temple of the goddess Sulis Minerva and an extensive bathing complex. By special arrangement, we are able to hold the Gala Dinner in the Roman Baths and Pump Room – a privilege, as this is a UNESCO Heritage Site.

The programme concludes on Sunday as usual with an informal Farewell Lunch, this time in a riverside restaurant.

Full details will be published in due course. However, if overseas members wish to register their interest to attend, please email: bath@chaine.co.uk



Credit: Trevor-Sherwin



Credit: Andy Fletcher



Diary Dates

Make a note of these dates in your diary.

2025 International Jeunes Somms Competition, Geneva
September 10-13, 2025

2025 Grand Chapitre, Bath
September 18-21, 2025

OMGD Winemaker Dinner, London
November 28, 2025

International Jeunes Chefs Competition, Istanbul
April 17, 2026

World Chaine Day
April 25, 2026

2026 Grand Chapitre, London
September 24-27, 2026

International Jeunes Sommeliers Competition, Lago di Garda
October 9-10, 2026

OMGD Winemaker Dinner, London
November 20, 2026

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