

STRICTLY UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00.01AM ON TUESDAY 12 JANUARY 2016

AA ANNOUNCES NEW MULTI ROSETTE AWARDS

The AA has today announced the latest restaurants to be awarded the coveted three and four rosettes. These higher rosette awards are only made twice a year, January and September, and recognise those restaurants that have shown great improvement in the culinary standards and service they are providing.

Fourteen restaurants will be celebrating the new awards from Glasgow to the Channel Isles. While London sees five restaurants awarded multi rosettes, the North of England is well represented with four restaurants gaining a higher level of rosettes.

Simon Numphud, Head of AA Hotel Services, said, 'The restaurants receiving the multi rosette awards should be duly proud of their achievements. The four rosettes restaurants can now classify themselves as among the top restaurants in the country where cooking demands national recognition. Those with three rosettes are outstanding restaurants that demand recognition well beyond their local area offering sympathetic treatment of the highest quality ingredients with consistent timing, seasoning and judgement of flavour. Around just ten percent of the restaurants in our guide have three rosettes.'

New Four AA Rosettes

- The Black Swan at Oldstead, Yorkshire
- The Five Fields, London SW3
- Manchester House Bar and Restaurant, Manchester

New three AA Rosettes

- A Wong, London SW1
- Avista, London W1
- Cambrium, Careys Manor, Brockenhurst, Hampshire
- The Dial House, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire
- The Gannet, Glasgow

- The Hare Inn, Scawton, Yorkshire
- Lake Road Kitchen, Ambleside, Cumbria
- Lumière, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire
- Orrery, London W1
- Portland, London W1W
- Tassili, Grand Jersey, St Helier, Jersey

- Ends -

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4 Rosettes

The Black Swan at Oldstead (Oldstead, North Yorkshire) Dazzling intrepid modern cooking on a family farmstead

An appealing stone-built country house out on the North York Moors, The Black Swan has become a coveted destination restaurant in the region, a remarkable achievement for having been brought about without TV appearances or even a book. Whether or not Tom Banks chooses in time to head along the media route, nothing can detract from the creative energy currently driving the place. Members of Banks's team work at least one day a week in the kitchen garden, which helps deepen their understanding of dishes.

The Five Fields (London, SW3) Stunning ingredients and creative flair

It's over two hundred years since this area was mapped by John Rocque and the pastoral name of Five Fields was transcribed into history. Chef-patron Taylor Bonnyman has revived the name for his dashing townhouse restaurant which has taken to this part of the city like a duck to water. With experience at some top addresses in New York, London and Paris, Bonnyman and his team – including head chef Marguerite Keogh – deliver intelligent, thrilling and sometimes playful contemporary food that is based on outstanding ingredients, some grown in their own kitchen garden in East Sussex. The dining room is a soothingly elegant space with neutral, natural colours, and plush designer leather chairs, looking the part for this exclusive postcode. There's a swanky private dining room on the first floor, too. Whether you go for the eight-course tasting menu or à la carte, expect stunning looking plates and clearly defined flavours.

Manchester House Bar & Restaurant (Manchester) Aiden Byrne's see-and-be-seen venue for contemporary dining

Aiden Byrne's operation in Manchester House is a see-and-be-seen sort of spot, so if you'd like to kick-start the experience by slurping a cocktail and eyeballing the Mancunian beau monde, the lift whizzes you up to the 12th floor of Spinningfields' Tower 12 for a sharpener with cityscape views and DJs setting the mood. Then slide back down to the second floor, where Byrne's restaurant pays homage to Manchester's industrial heritage with its exposed girders, concrete and wrought-iron features. Diners rub shoulders with the chefs as they enter through the open kitchen, while the casually dressed staff back up the laid-back vibe with impressive knowledge.

3 Rosettes

A. Wong (London SW1)

Exploring China's vast culinary range

In an unassuming modern block down the road from Victoria station is one of London's most dynamic Chinese restaurants. Andrew Wong acknowledges the melting pot that is Chinese cuisine, a result of trade, migration and invasion, and helped by the fact the country has 14 national borders. Respect is shown for traditional ways, but this is modern dining too, so there are contemporary elements to many of the dishes. Take a seat at the bar counter or at one of the wooden tables, or secure the kitchen table if you fancy getting up close and personal.

Avista (London W1)

Classic Italian flavours and creative flair

The Millennium Hotel Mayfair with its Georgian frontage and grand neo-classical Doric columns is an imposing presence on Grosvenor Square, while its Avista restaurant, with its own separate entrance, is one of the most inspiring modern Italian restaurants in the capital. The dining room is suitably attired for the Mayfair postcode, with a contemporary finish including modern artworks and even some exposed brickwork. Executive chef Arturo Granato's bilingual menus deliver classic combinations in a modern manner, but the 21st-century cooking techniques enhance the first-rate produce rather than obscure them.

Cambium, Careys Manor (Brockenhurst, Hampshire)

Refined, contemporary dining in stylish spa hotel

The New Forest location inspired the interior designers of Careys Manor's classy contemporary restaurant, Cambium, and also informs the cooking of the dynamic team in the kitchen. There are three dining options in this handsome and much extended Victorian manor house with a luxe spa, but Cambium (named for the rings that indicate the age of a tree) is the pick of the bunch, a serene space with shades of gold and cream. Executive chef Paul Peters draws on the regional larder to create a modern menu combining classic flavour combinations with up-to-date techniques. The service is slick and informed.

The Dial House (Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire)

Amazingly fine food in a honeypot village

A mellow stone house dating from 1698 in a chocolate-box (and hyper-touristy) Cotswolds village may not be the most obvious place you'd come looking for top-drawer modern cooking, but prepare for a treat at the Dial House. There are large stone fireplaces as reminders of its antiquity, while the intimate dining room provides an elegant backdrop, and the staff deliver fine-tuned service with oodles of charm and personality. The kitchen takes its cue from France, yet also flies the flag for British ingredients, seeking out the best produce, much of it locally, and using it inspirationally.

The Gannet (Glasgow)

Buzzing contemporary venue with Scottish flavour

The guys behind The Gannet looked to the wild and rugged Hebridean coastline for inspiration before opening here in Glasgow's West End, focusing on the fabulous ingredients those islands and the rest of Scotland have to offer. They've created one of the city's hottest addresses. The pared-back interior suits the mood of our times with its urban/rustic finish of exposed bricks, natural woods, simple furniture and minimal decorative touches – it's cool, contemporary and very, very popular. Grab a stool at the front bar and tuck into a small plate (warm cured salmon confit with herb purée and crisp capers, say) and a cocktail such as the evocatively named Wild Lady. There are some interesting Scottish beers to be had, plus a short and appealing wine list.

The Hare Inn (Scawton, North Yorkshire)

Creative modern cooking in an old village inn

The Hare is a 21st-century restaurant in a 13th-century inn, and although there may well be local ales at the pumps, it's really all about the dazzling cooking of Paul Jackson. It certainly looks the part of an old moorland inn, with a rugged exterior painted in pristine white, and indoors there's plenty of character in the form of original features and some quirky fixtures and fittings. Mr Jackson seeks out the very best ingredients that abound in this part of the world and offers them up in creative ways via fixed-price menus.

Lake Road Kitchen (Ambleside, Cumbria)

Northern European seasonal food that rings the daily changes

The converted shop premises just off Ambleside's main street feature two broad windows that let passing strollers see what they are missing. James Cross styles the place a north European bistro, which gives some indication of his determination to work with the seasons and the climate, pickling and bottling for the winter months, foraging for summer berries and autumn mushrooms, as well as bringing in much fine Lakeland meat, supplemented by Cornish fish. The menu changes daily, and the hits just keep on coming.

Lumière (Cheltenham, Gloucestershire)

High-octane cooking from a hands-on chef

The discreet frontage is easy to miss on Clarence Parade, but look out for the restaurant's name etched onto the single window pane and a small awning over the door. Jon and Helen Howe's restaurant, with its gently contemporary interior and smart table settings, is one of the town's most alluring dining destinations, where everything from dynamic canapés (smoked eel and wasabi croquette, say) and breads (check out the amazing brown fig and raisin version) are made in-house. Jon runs the kitchen with verve, delivering a repertoire that reveals classical roots and an up-to-date approach. Every ingredient is on the plate for a reason, with every flavour and texture hitting home, and the food is very prettily arranged, too.

Orrery (London W1)

Stylish, elegant restaurant above designer store

This Marylebone hotspot cuts a contemporary swagger with classy good looks, polished service and skilful, contemporary French cuisine. On the first floor above the Conran store, the long, narrow room is fashionably clean-lined in the classic Terence Conran style and filled with light from its striking arched windows and room-length ceiling skylight. Pale blue banquettes and chairs blend with blond wood, mirrors and white linen, while a glass wine cellar signals that the grape is taken seriously here. Menus are driven by prime ingredients and seasonality, and come dotted with luxuries (attracting the odd supplement here and there), with dishes showing a lightness of touch, matched by eye-catching presentation and flavours to savour.

Portland (London W1)

Compact, seasonal menu of big-hit flavours

Just up the road from the BBC, new-kid-on-the-block Portland has been making headlines of its own with its on-cue vision of new-Brit cuisine, scoring high with precision cooking, unstuffy, spot-on service and understated good looks. On first impression, Portland feels more neighbourhood gaff than city-slicker, with its small pared-back interior of wooden tables and chairs, plain white walls, dangling retro-like Edison lighting, and a fast tempo backing track. Upfront, the in-vogue counter and high stalls look out streetwise, while at the back, the must-have open kitchen fires up the culinary action. The concise menu brims with innovation and a genuine sense of seasonality. The equally stimulating wine list delivers a top choice by glass, including all of its 'Special' wines.

Tassili (St Helier, Jersey)

Refined Anglo-French cooking in a historic bayfront hotel

The white-fronted Grand Jersey Hotel lords it over the island capital's seafront, with St Aubin's Bay laid out in sparkling array before it. Full of elegance and swagger since it opened in 1890, it was used as headquarters by Nazi occupation forces during the war and, despite much of its furniture being burned for fuel, emerged on VE Day with its dignity intact. The principal dining room, Tassili, is done in chic contemporary style, with textured abstract paintings and a sober dark grey colour scheme, a setting where Nicolas Valmagna has brought the cooking to a high pitch of modern Anglo-French refinement, as befits the location. Dishes are carefully structured but not overworked, leaving an overall impression of lightness and grace.