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NORTHCOTE

**CRAIG BANCROFT AND NIGEL
HAWORTH BUILD A LEGACY**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

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Informed...

AA HOSPITALITY AWARDS 2015-2016



This immensely successful annual event is attended by industry-leading chefs, hoteliers and restaurateurs, and recognises the accomplishments of high-achieving establishments and individuals within the hospitality industry. This year's spectacular black-tie event will be held on Monday 5 October at Grosvenor House, a JW Marriott hotel, Park Lane, London.

It will be a night to remember! Tickets are on sale now; to avoid disappointment, book before 30 June and receive an early bird discount.

To book your tickets, visit aahospitalityawards.com/book-your-tickets

For further information on the awards, visit AAhospitalityawards.com or email HotelServices@theAA.com

Categories for 2015 AA Hospitality Awards

AA Hotel of the Year (England)
AA Hotel of the Year (Scotland)
AA Hotel of the Year (Wales)
AA Hotel of the Year (London)
AA Hotel of the Year (Northern Ireland)
AA Restaurant of the Year (England)
AA Restaurant of the Year (Scotland)
AA Restaurant of the Year (Wales)
AA Restaurant of the Year (London)
AA Spirit Award
AA Pub of the Year (England)
AA Pub of the Year (Scotland)
AA Pub of the Year (Wales)
AA Wine Award (England)
AA Wine Award (Scotland)
AA Wine Award (Wales)
AA Hotel Group of the Year
AA Chefs' Chef of the Year
AA Eco Hotel of the Year
AA Eco Hotel Group of the Year
AA Food Service Award
AA Lifetime Achievement Award



The AA is thrilled to announce that Cornwall-based chef Nathan Outlaw is to create the menu for the 2015 AA Hospitality Awards.

The awards, to be held on 5 October 2015 at the Grosvenor House hotel, are a key event in the hospitality industry calendar. The great and the good in the industry come together to recognise the amazing achievements of some of the country's best hotels, restaurants and pubs.

Four-AA-rosette chef Outlaw is the AA's current Chef's Chef, an award voted for by his fellow AA-rosette chefs, and he now has the challenge of creating a menu for his contemporaries to enjoy on the night.

Outlaw says: "It's an honour to be asked to create the menu for such a prestigious event as the AA Hospitality Awards and I am looking forward to working with the team from the AA and at the Grosvenor House hotel."

Simon Numphud, head of AA Hotel Services, says: "We are thrilled that Nathan has agreed to create our menu for the awards. Our guests will be delighted to experience the exquisite food that Nathan is renowned for creating."

Sponsors



Supporters



Contact details

AA Hotel Services, 14th Floor, Fanum House, Basing View, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 4EA

General enquiries 01256 844455

Fax 01256 491647

Email HotelServicesCustomerSupport@theAA.com

Web AAhotels.com



Follow us on Twitter

See [@TheAA_Lifestyle](https://twitter.com/TheAA_Lifestyle) and [@AAHospitality](https://twitter.com/AAHospitality) for updates to the scheme, hospitality news, stories from our establishments, updates on awards events and much more.



Comments from the AA

THE CATERER Comments from *The Caterer*

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Welcome notes

As the Chelsea Flower Show, the first Test cricket match and other key events kick off our summer, we look forward to a busy peak season. While the weather may be slightly unpredictable, the decisive outcome of the general election will hopefully be good news for the industry as consumer confidence starts to grow.

Last month we held our annual B&B Awards luncheon at the Landmark Hotel in London supported by our well-established partner Eviivo. This is one of my favourite events in our calendar as it always creates a very special atmosphere and it's great to meet the proprietors who have been nominated by our inspection team. Every year I am impressed by the commitment and dedication they show in looking after their guests. Congratulations to all our winners, who are featured on page 7.

People are at the heart of any hospitality business and one of the key challenges is developing and nurturing our best talent.



Simon Numphud
Head of AA Hotel Services

The Master Innholders' fantastic scholarship programme enables managers to access some outstanding courses. The closing date for applications is 17 July and I know the Master Innholders would like to receive more, so take the time to read about this superb opportunity on page 23.

Looking further ahead, October is set to be a busy month with the AA Hospitality Awards and the Independent Hotel Show. We have already completed the first tasting with Nathan Outlaw and the four-course menu looks stunning. Last year we were delighted by the attendance at the Hospitality Awards, with 1,100 covers, so thank you for supporting the event. Please also come and see us at the Independent Hotel Show. Now in its third year, the show offers an interesting mix of suppliers and features – see page 18.

Here's to a successful summer and I look forward to seeing many of you in the autumn.

With the general election behind us, now is the time for operators to enjoy some stability and confidence.

The eating-out market continues to look positive, but there are still some challenges. The latest Coffey Peach Tracker pointed to a good Easter, but March proved tough, with like-for-like sales down on the previous year, even in London.

In the meantime, recent Horizons research has shown that while people are eating out more than they used to, average spend per restaurant visit dropped.

That perhaps explained the pre-election nervousness among hospitality bosses about a minority government or coalition. Most hospitality businesses *The Caterer* spoke to certainly appeared to favour a Conservative victory.

Meanwhile, the hotel sector has been dominated by a plethora of transactions, with volumes during the first quarter nearly doubling to £1.89b, compared with the same period in 2014. An increase in investments for the first three months looks likely to set the UK up for a robust year with regards to new hotel ownership.

One hotel still in the same hands after 30 years is Northcote, and this issue celebrates the incredible endeavours of Craig Bancroft and Nigel Haworth. A £7m refurbishment has transformed the legendary hotel into the ultimate place to stay and an exceptional one to work at. The training and development strategy is inspiring stuff and goes some way to explaining why this Lancashire landmark has always been a hothouse for talent.



Amanda Afiya
Editor
The Caterer



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HAVE YOU JOINED YET?

TOP HOSPITALITY STORIES

Each week, *The Caterer* and www.thecaterer.com bring you the most important news from around the hospitality industry. Here's a selection of stories about AA members from the past three months

SIMON ROGAN TO UPGRADE MANCHESTER'S THE FRENCH



Simon Rogan's restaurant the French at the Midland hotel in Manchester is set to close in the summer for a "significant" upgrade, including additional seating and a new entrance allowing access directly from the foyer of the hotel.

Rogan also plans to close his two-Michelin-starred L'Enclume in Cartmel, Cumbria, in December to make improvements.

YORK'S GRAND HOTEL AND SPA SUBMITS £15M REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Plans have been submitted for a £15m, two-year redevelopment of the newly rebadged Grand hotel and spa in York.

Formerly called the Cedar Court Grand hotel and spa, the five-AA-star, 107-bedroom hotel has been renamed nearly a year after being sold by Cedar Court Group to Splendid Hospitality Group for an undisclosed sum.

If the redevelopment plans are approved by the council, the hotel will double its number of bedrooms by expanding into the adjacent Roman House property recently acquired by Splendid. There are



Ramside Hall hotel

also plans to replace the existing Hudson's restaurant with a new 140-seat version and to upgrade the existing bedrooms.

BHA SLAMS OTAS FOR 'STIFLING COMPETITION' IN HOTEL BOOKINGS

The British Hospitality Association (BHA) has hit out at a decision by EU competition authorities to enforce rate parity with online travel agents (OTAs).

On 22 April, the competition authorities in France, Italy and Sweden agreed to commitments

offered by Booking.com following a series of investigations into its market dominance. The commitments allow Booking.com to prohibit hotels from marketing and offering hotel rates at a discounted rate on their own websites.

Jackie Grech, legal and policy director at the BHA, said the industry is "deeply concerned" that OTAs are stifling competition through high commissions, rates and service parity, and by manipulating search results and ratings to attract customers to book with them.

"Hotels, especially small independents, must either sign up to sell rooms through OTAs and fork out up to 35% of their total room costs or face invisibility online," she said. "Customers and hotels alike will benefit from transparency and fairness. The authorities' decision to uphold rate parity was not a meaningful solution and doesn't return freedom to the market."

"While we acknowledge the effort of the competition agencies to consider this area, these commitments fall short of progress and will not benefit customers or hospitality businesses in a meaningful way."

Leading OTAs such as Expedia and Booking.com now have the ability and funding to control online search results by purchasing key word searches.

As a result, when customers search for a hotel by characteristic or by the name, the top search result isn't the hotel itself, but rather the online booking agent.

The BHA is calling for a solution that benefits both businesses and customers. "We will work to ensure OTAs offer one-stop shopping for customers, but at a price that both hotels and customers find acceptable."

AN EVENING WITH JASON ATHERTON AT THE ARTICHOKE



One of our former AA Restaurants of the Year, the Artichoke in Amersham, hosted a phenomenal 'one night only' guest chef and charity event with Jason Atherton at the beginning of June. Combining their talents, chef patron Laurie Gear and Atherton produced a bespoke six-course tasting menu. The special event was held in aid of a local charity called Drumbeats.

RAMSIDE HALL HOTEL

Ramside Hall Hotel near Durham has opened a new wing of 47 premier bedrooms, some of which have balconies with views over Ramside's championship golf course. The wing is part of a £16m development that will be completed when the new spa opens this summer.



York's Grand hotel and spa

ASHFORD CASTLE OPENED BY IRISH PRIME MINISTER

Ireland's historic Ashford Castle – owned by the Red Carnation Hotel Collection – has been opened by the country's prime minister, Enda Kenny, following a two-year restoration costing nearly £30m.

Kenny was joined by Beatrice Tollman, president and founder of Red Carnation Hotels, to launch the 82-bedroom hotel on the shores of Lough Corrib and the River Cong in County Mayo.

The restoration of the 787-year-old castle, located within a 350-acre estate, included the addition of a 32-seat cinema, billiard room, cigar terrace, luxury lakeside cottage and a children's games room.

A spa, featuring five treatment rooms, indoor ozone-filtrated swimming pool and Techno Gym, will open in July 2015.

The staff, headed by general manager Niall Rochford, has increased from 215 to 300 to support the improved facilities at the hotel.

Jonathan Raggett, managing director of Red Carnation Hotels,



Ashford Castle

said: "Ashford Castle reopens as the jewel in our collection and certainly one of Europe's finest luxury hotels."

Bought by Red Carnation Hotels from Irish developer Gerry Barrett for £21.4m in 2013, the hotel is now part of a

17-strong portfolio of properties located throughout the UK, Ireland, South Africa, Switzerland, and the USA.

HOSPITALITY PINS ITS HOPES ON NEW CULTURE SECRETARY

The prime minister David Cameron has announced John Whittingdale as culture, media and sport secretary in his first cabinet as head of a Conservative majority government.

Whittingdale's appointment has been well received, with Tourism Alliance director Kurt Janson describing him as a long-term advocate for the sector with a good understanding of the industry, citing his past role as chairman of the Commons' culture select committee.

"With the recent release of the committee's inquiry into tourism, we would hope that the recommendations form the basis for his approach to his new remit and we look forward to working with him on the implementation of the report's recommendations," Janson added.



New culture, media and sport secretary John Whittingdale

Whittingdale will take up the role previously held by Sajid Javid, who has been made business secretary, while a further announcement about who would

be the new tourism minister was yet to be made at the time of going to print.

The decisive end to May's general election was welcomed as good news for the hospitality industry following weeks of speculation. All polls leading up to 7 May suggested it would be a tight race, leading to fears of a hung parliament, which the majority of hospitality chief executives, polled by the British Hospitality Association (BHA), said could negatively impact business.

One CEO had said that "no real result" would be as bad as the "wrong result".

But with a decisive outcome, the BHA chief executive Ufi Ibrahim said there was now "no room for excuses".

She added: "The hospitality and tourism industry expects the new

Conservative government to start delivering from day one."

"Our top agenda item for the prime minister and the chancellor is to cut tourism VAT to 5%, which could massively boost jobs, bring billions of new revenue to the Treasury and directly improve the livelihoods of people in struggling communities across the UK.

"Let's hope consumers are the winners in the final result and can look forward to the benefits of an increasingly healthy economy."

Meanwhile, Luke Johnson, restaurant investor and chairman of Risk Capital Partners, wrote in his column in *The Sunday Times* that the Tory win was a boon for entrepreneurs. "The electorate rejected the left-wing policies of Ed Miliband and chose free enterprise instead," he said.

SCRUM DOWN FOR THE RUGBY WORLD CUP

With the world's premier rugby competition only months away, *Piers Warne* explains what businesses should do to prepare

THE PROBLEM

If the final day of the Six Nations did not pique national interest in international rugby, the Rugby World Cup this autumn is sure to. Licensed premises wanting to show the games will need to prepare ahead of time to make the most of this sporting event.

THE LAW

The Licensing Act doesn't count live television broadcasts as a licensable activity and therefore does not require a specific licence to show the games. But there will be a large number of premises that do not normally show matches on TV and will therefore need to be aware of the legal consequences of choosing to do so.

Of course, unlike last year's football World Cup, matches will be played during most normal operating hours for premises with licences. This means that TENs (temporary events notices) will not be required to provide licensable activities during the matches. However, it is worth checking the match times to ensure that you are prepared for a potential influx of customers.

EXPERT ADVICE

Any TV broadcasts will incorporate broadcasts of music – albeit incidental to the programme. This technically requires a PPL and PRS licence. Most premises should already have licences in place for background music or something a little louder and, as such, this will not be a concern. But for those that don't, there has been an increase in enforcement action from PRS/PPL in recent years.

Some premises' licences have conditions on them limiting or even preventing the broadcasting of sporting events. There are two ways around this: apply for a TEN to circumvent the condition, or seek to remove it altogether. With agreement from the police and environmental health officer, it may even be possible to do this by minor variation.

More likely to be a concern is the number of people attending licensed premises to watch the matches. Ensure that fire risk assessments are up to date and that capacity figures are adhered to. Customer safety and security will be paramount for bigger games as the tournament progresses. If you are expecting significant crowds, consider carrying out a risk assessment and putting on additional staff.

There will be a lot of noise and general good humour generated during matches – certainly



There could be a lot of noise, so perhaps let your neighbours know what to expect

If you are expecting significant crowds, consider carrying out a risk assessment and putting on additional staff

with good home nation results. It is worth letting your immediate neighbours know of any particularly busy match days so that they can be prepared for it as well. This will lessen the likelihood of complaints.

TO-DO CHECKLIST

Quite simply, taking the time prior to the Rugby World Cup to assess what you are putting on and the likely draw for customers

will solve a majority of problems. Creating an event risk assessment will help identify areas to concentrate on and the measures needed to ensure that watching the matches is fun for customers and profitable for you. Think about:

- dates and times of matches and likely attendance
- additional staffing and door staffing
- easy food offers if you are likely to be very busy
- minimising the chances of breakages
- fire risk assessment requirements, such as capacities.

BEWARE

The World Cup will be a celebration of rugby and a great opportunity for businesses that are prepared. Not taking the time to consider what can happen in advance and mitigating risk can lead to licence reviews, noise abatement notices or even prosecutions. As such, preparation is time well spent.

CONTACT

Piers Warne is a licensing solicitor at TLT
Piers.Warne@TLTsolicitors.com

B&B WINNERS CELEBRATE IN STYLE



Congratulations to the winners and finalists of the AA Bed & Breakfast Awards 2015

The winners and finalists of the AA Bed & Breakfast Awards 2015 celebrated in style at the Landmark London Hotel in May. The event recognised and rewarded 32 very deserving finalists for all-round excellence, unfailing standards and outstanding service to guests.

All the finalists were treated to a Champagne reception and a formal four-course celebratory lunch. Winners of the AA Guest Accommodation of the Year Awards for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as Funkiest B&B of the Year and the ever popular Friendliest B&B of the Year, sponsored by Eviivo, were awarded prizes provided by AA Hotel Services' partner, Villeroy & Boch.

AA Friendliest B&B award sponsored by:



The 2015 AA B&B Awards winners (clockwise from top left): Kingsmuir House, San Pietro, Tara Lodge, The Old Railway Yard, Trefloyne Manor and The Glove House

AA Friendliest B&B of the Year Winner

Graham Collier and Suzanne Wilson

The Old Railway Yard, Redruth

AA Friendliest B&B of the Year Runners-up

Annie and Colin Fletcher

Munden House, Sherborne

Gordon and Debbie Garrity

Bloodstock Barn, Newmarket

AA Friendliest B&B of the Year Finalists

Neil Baines and Marco-David Soares

Plas Dinas Country House, Caernarfon

John and Patricia Bees Labuan Guest House,

Newport

Kathryn and Reginald Berrie Aaron House,

Port St Mary

Carol and Gordon Bulloch The Dulaig,

Grantown-on-Spey

Trevor and Julie Cammack Charlton Twenty

Eight, Charlton

Mary and Douglas Clements Little Rannoch,

Ventnor

Morris Cockman Rigsby's Guest House, Hertford

Julia Cogswell 76 Duke Street, Windsor

Liz and Dave Coulthurst Ladygate Farm,

High Peak

Jane and Steve Epperson Anchorage House

Guest Lodge, St Austell

Peter Graydon and Tony Fuell The Auld Kirk,

Ballater

Nigel and Helen Hake and David and Sophie

Littlewood Kildrummy Inn, Kildrummy

Gerard and Maggi Heelan Roseleigh Guest

House, Buxton

Gareth Houston Fraoch House, Edinburgh

Bunty Kirk Bo'mains Farm Bed & Breakfast,

Linlithgow

Gary and Donna MacRae Hazel Bank Country House, Borrowdale

James Martin and Jan Gibson, Alan and

Jill Mitchell Pineapple House, Appin

Edna Mycawka and Peter Slee-Smith

The Gate House, Ely

Anne and Andrew Paylor Badgers Wood Guest House, Keswick

Peter and Hilary Prall Shorefield Guest House, Portree

Joan and Martin Slack Dannah Farm Country House, Belper

Howard and Anne-Marie Street St Hilary

Guest House, Llandudno

AA Funkiest B&B of the Year Winner

San Pietro Scunthorpe

AA Funkiest B&B of the Year Runners-up

Grassington House Grassington

The Pig in the Wall Southampton

AA Guest Accommodation of the Year

England Winner

The Glove House Woodstock

AA Guest Accommodation of the Year

Wales Winner

Trefloyne Manor Tenby

AA Guest Accommodation of the Year

Scotland Winner

Kingsmuir House Peebles

AA Guest Accommodation of the Year

Northern Ireland Winner

Tara Lodge Belfast





SPOTLIGHT ON...

WIRRAL THORNTON HALL

Part of the Wirral's tourism scene for 50 years, this hotel, spa and restaurant is all about delivering terrific food and a stand-out experience

This independent four-star hotel and spa offers fine dining, newly refurbished boutique bedrooms and an award-winning spa, all set against a backdrop of beautiful countryside and a quaint Wirral village.

Thornton Hall Hotel and Spa in the Wirral has never been one to rest on its laurels, as its latest £1.5m investment programme demonstrates. It's now nearing the end of a seven-month overhaul of its 62 bedrooms, hotel, restaurant, brasserie, spa, health club, event suite and external areas – this country hotel is setting the bar high.

Thornton Hall has been part of the fabric of the Wirral tourism scene for 50 years and has stayed under the same ownership – that of the Thompson family – during all that time.

With a clear sense of direction, the hotel has always put the focus on doing things well and providing the personal touch. It's something that's particularly clear in the three-rossette fine-dining restaurant, the Lawns.

With high ceilings, sparkling chandeliers, wood panelling and a dramatic fireplace, the dining room has been cited as one of the best in the North West and the food has a reputation to match. Now with a newly appointed executive chef, 27-year-old Liverpool lad Matt Worswick, the Lawns is pushing the quality and creativity of the food further.

Since joining the hotel in October 2014, Worswick has overhauled the menu and brought his signature style of bold, modern flavours to the restaurant, with dishes such as halibut with smoked almonds, milk crumble, and chocolate delice with burdock root ice-cream.

Worswick says of the hotel and restaurant: "Thornton Hall is something really quite special. It attracts food lovers from across the region keen to try something different. We also have a very local and frequent customer base. We create a sense of occasion for all our guests, whether it's a fine-dining tasting menu or a traditional Sunday lunch, and the new menu has been incredibly well received."

Thornton Hall is something really quite special. It attracts food lovers from across the region

Newly appointed restaurant manager James Campbell has also made his mark, introducing a cheese selection that would rival many a UK trolley. With more than 40 cheeses, mainly British and European, on offer, and fantastic individual wine pairings, Campbell, Worswick and the senior management are all working hard to keep the focus on delivering great food and a stand-out experience.

For more information about Thornton Hall Hotel and Spa or to book a table at the Lawns, visit www.thorntonhallhotel.com or call 0151 336 3938



INTERVIEW WITH...

MATT ASHTON



Name Matt Ashton

Restaurant Hand Picked Hotels

Position Group executive head chef

How did you get where you are now?

Hard work, determination and tenacity, but also by being fair and having an understanding of others.

Who is your greatest inspiration?

There are so many and it would be unfair to name just one. However, it was my dad that really put the fire into my belly for cooking. He was a chef in the army and used to reminisce about life in the officers' kitchen, which really intrigued me and inspired me to cook.

What are your top tips for an aspiring chef?

My favourite saying is 'the more you put in, the more you get out'. For me that means that being a chef takes a lot of training and dedication; the more you are willing to be like a sponge and learn, then the better the chef you will be. With hospitality there is something to be learnt every day. With foods, flavours and tastes constantly evolving, you need to be riding the crest of the wave if you are ever to become successful. I try and instil this thinking into the chefs we train and develop in our chefs' academy at Hand Picked Hotels.

If you weren't a chef, what career would you have chosen?

I was a painter and decorator before I started cooking, and I think I would still be one otherwise. In fact, my wife would say that it's still my second job at home.

What has been your greatest career achievement to date?

Being promoted to group executive head chef for Hand Picked Hotels. The learning curve has been steep and fulfilling.

What is your favourite ingredient?

Love. If you do not add it to a recipe, then the dish will not be worth eating.

What would be your 'last supper'?

T-bone steak cooked rare, garlic flat mushrooms and a jacket potato with sour cream, all accompanied by a glass of Malbec.

Where do you eat on your night off?

I eat at all of the hotels, which I visit weekly, so when I am off duty I stay at home as my wife can cook really good, honest food.

For more information on Hand Picked Hotels, visit www.handpickedhotels.co.uk

GREECE IS THE WORD

Assyrtiko, Malagousia, Agiorgitiko and Xinomavro may be unfamiliar grapes, but they are the basis of some fresh and modern wines, and some are world-beaters, says *Roger Jones* of the Harrow at Little Bedwyn

Greek wines are not new in the UK. They have been around since the late 1990s, mainly available through Oddbins. But in recent years there has been an emergence of small, quality-focused, modern wineries. Although there are some pretty special wines being made with more common grapes – such as Chardonnay, Viognier and Sauvignon Blanc – grapes such as Assyrtiko, Malagousia, Agiorgitiko and Xinomavro are here to stay.

Despite – or because of – the financial issues in Greece, its wineries are some of the most modern and best-equipped in Europe, with highly trained winemakers. In general, the white wines are incredibly intense, fresh with minerality and lifted, persistent acidity, making them perfect with food. They are Greece's trump card. The reds continue to excite, but you do need to search for them as some can be quite big and heavy.

Santorini, a volcanic island halfway between the Greek and Turkish mainland, continues to set the pace in terms of quality. Assyrtiko-Santorini wines are rare and distinctive. These wines are born from the indigenous Assyrtiko grape, cultivated in some of the world's oldest vineyards, dating back 3,500 years.

Assyrtiko-Santorini produces a dry white wine of distinctive character and great minerality, unoaked and pleasant to drink young. However, there are examples of oaked Assyrtiko which age well and offer a luxurious, deep texture – similar to aged Sémillon but with a hint more citrus.

The grape thrives on the island, despite the hot Aegean climate and the dry conditions, and its fruit aromas are very fine, elegant and restrained – more along the line of citrus fruit than tropical fruit. Assyrtiko-Santorini also has the uncanny ability to retain high acidity as it ripens and accumulates sugar – a trait it shares with Riesling. Hence, it produces wines with great freshness and wonderful vibrancy.

The best wineries on the island are Gaia, Hatzidakis and Argyros Sigalas, though in recent years other wineries such as Gavalas, Koutsogiannopoulos and Santo Wines have made huge strides in quality.

WINERY SPOTLIGHT GEROVASSILIOU

The first modern boutique producer in Greece was Vangelis Gerovassiliou, who makes exquisite white wines and has spearheaded the growth in popularity of the aromatic Malagousia. This grape was once at the point of extinction and is now widely planted throughout Greece.

Vangelis has recently finished building a state-of-the-art tasting room, wine museum and visitor centre, offering tastings and food matching. He also has one of the greatest corkscrew collections in the world, with over 2,500 examples.

Gerovassiliou's Syrah-inspired reds are beautifully balanced, structured and very Rhône in style. Look out for names such as Avaton and Evangelo, but my picks are these whites.

MALAGOUSIA, SINGLE VINEYARD, 2013 GEROVASSILIOU

Partially barrel-fermented and then matured on its lees for a few months to give it extra depth and texture, this wine is straw-coloured with an aroma of pears, mango and unwaxed citrus fruit. The rich flavours are balanced by lemon zest – similar to a bright, New World Sémillon.

VIIGNIER, 2013 DOMAINE GEROVASSILIOU

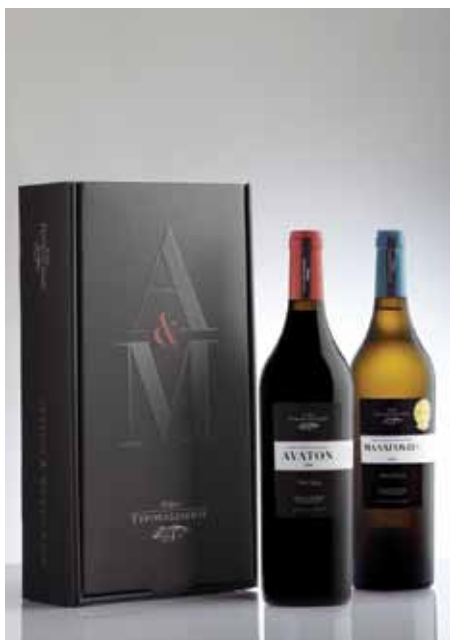
Gerovassiliou's Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay are excellent, but my pick of his 'recognised grape' wines is the Viognier.

It is fermented and aged in oak and it has fooled many a top wine critic. It is very much New World in style, with bright, fresh tropical nuances, ripe white stone fruit, and juicy with a tantalisingly smokey finish.

This wine works well with food with some spice, such as skate with dried chilli flakes and kaffir lime leaves. It has also won Gold at the recent World Wine Awards.



“The white wines are incredibly intense, fresh with minerality and lifted, persistent acidity, making them perfect with food. They are Greece’s trump card”



WINERY SPOTLIGHT GAIA

Gaia was founded in 1994, and the company owns two modern wineries: one at Nemea on the Peloponnese mainland and the other on the island of Santorini.

The aim of the two founders, Leon Karatsalos and Yiannis Paraskevopoulos, is to highlight the indigenous grape varieties of the regions and make Assyrtiko a global name.

Gaia focuses more on Greek grape varieties for its red wines, with Agiorgitiko highlighting the quality of this indigenous grape. Its translation into English is St George.

The range of wines deliver a Rhône style, highlighted by the Gaia Estate, which has a hint of new oak delivering a long, lingering, full-flavoured, juicy wine. Top of the class is Gaia S, which has a New World twist with 35% Syrah, adding some spice and soft coconut nuances.

To end my visit to Gaia I tried a spectacular Vinsanto 2005 – aromatic with clean, deep flavours of peaches; intense but not over-sweet.

THALASSITIS ASSYRTIKO, 2013, GAIA

This stainless steel-fermented, clean, zesty wine is full of bright, fresh flavours and delicate honeysuckle aromas. It's a cross in flavour between Riesling with its lovely acidity and Sémillon with its depth and structure.

WILD FERMENT ASSYRTIKO, 2013, GAIA

This is Gaia's star wine. Aged in oak it has slight citrus and orange blossom aromas, well combined with elegant oak notes. It's honeyed with a rich mouth feel, crisp acidity, intense mineral flavours and a long finish. Aided by decanting, this wine has a lovely texture and depth.

ALPHA ESTATE

Alpha Estate in Amyndeon – the coldest winegrowing region of Greece – is making exceptional wines from international and indigenous varieties. Its old vine Xynomavro is very good, as is its estate red blend. Alpha also makes great Malagousia and a Sauvignon, including the Alpha Estate Sauvignon Blanc. This is another Gold Award wine: clean, crisp gooseberry and sweet pink grapefruit on the nose; flinty berry aromas; and on the palate it is mineral with crunchy orchard fruit.

BIBLIA CHORA WINERY

This organic producer from Kavala is making great white wines. The Biblia Chora Estate white is a blend of Sauvignon and Assyrtiko, and it also produces a top white called Ovilos. This is a blend of Sémillon and Assyrtiko and is barrel-fermented, giving a wonderful elegance and layers of complexity, as well as spicy fruitiness and long ageing potential. It is sim-



ilar to white Bordeaux, and would be beautiful with a plate of simple grilled Dover sole and English asparagus.

MONEMVASIA WINERY

The best red wine I have tried from Monemvasia was simply called the '300' 2005 – a blend of Agiorgitiko and Mavroudi. It is

richly structured with hints of blackberries; smokey, complex and, with 10 years' age, it delivers a lovely, silky wine.

The comprehensive supplier of Greek wines in the UK is Hallgarten Druitt, which encompasses Novum Wines (www.hdnwines.co.uk)

TRAINING AT NORTHCOTE

Encouragement and opportunities are part of Bancroft and Howarth's approach to employee development. "It's in the DNA of the business," says Bancroft.

Training loans are available, which do not have to be repaid in full if the employee remains for a year after completing the training. And all staff who complete the compulsory online training course in safety and hygiene are given a £10 voucher to spend at Ribble Valley Inns.

A sustainable approach to talent comes in the apprenticeships programme that Northcote has run with local colleges and Liverpool's L20 for the past 25 years. Students combine paid work with study, and Haworth organises visits to local fish markets and producers, and international catering schools to broaden their outlook.

"Courses are NVQ-led, but I go into the college to work with the staff and try to develop a style that will suit our staff," he says.

Northcote currently has 12 chef apprentices, who are expected to progress in its kitchens or Ribble Valley Inns, which is where many of the head chefs started as Northcote sous chefs or apprentices.

Northcote paid for Adam Palowski's training as a master sommelier and funds monthly visits by a master of wine to enrich staff learning.

Management training is also encouraged. Hotel manager Craig Jackson, 27, who started as a weekend casual at 16, says that he benefitted from financial and practical support – work experience and time away from the business – while completing his degree in hospitality management and his Master Innholders Aspiring Leaders diploma.

"I am pretty much home-grown talent," he says.





BUILDING A LEGACY

The 30-year working partnership of Craig Bancroft and Nigel Haworth at Northcote may be one of the longest in the business, but they have secured a £7m refurbishment and a wave of new talent to ensure that they can look to the future rather than reflect on the past. *Stephanie Sparrow* talks to the far-sighted operators



Few hotels and restaurants, particularly those in a country-house setting, successfully combine tradition with confident modernity, but Northcote in Lancashire's Ribble Valley is determined to pull the trick off.

Design flourishes included in the £7m redevelopment and refurbishment of the 19th century manor are a metaphor for the forward-thinking yet still homely hotel and restaurant. Cushions in fuchsia-coloured raw silk brighten up the serviceable, tweedy sofas, and a bold chandelier of crystal 'icicles' illuminates the 60-seat restaurant and its deep-buttoned hide chairs.

Three phases of building work and decoration have extended the kitchen and restaurant, and added a cookery school, a new staff wing and a cocktail bar. The Louis Roederer dining room has become a suite of private rooms with its own entrance (modelled on that of the label's château near Reims in France), courtyard and four bedrooms above, creating the flexibility of a standalone unit. The construction work, completed over 18 months, culminated in the opening of the Garden Lodge in December 2014, boasting seven bedrooms and a master suite, although activity continues in the gardens where a pond and herb gardens are taking shape.

Northcote's glamorous comfort epitomises a Lancashire business that champions local food producers, and nurtures home-grown talent while also attracting acclaimed international chefs to its annual gastronomy festival, known as Obsession. Its new look coincides with Northcote's chef patron Nigel Haworth and director of wines Craig Bancroft celebrat-

ing 30 years at the business. In that time they have taken a six-bedroom hotel, where newly appointed chef Haworth despaired of the Formica-topped facilities ("I remember Nigel's first day in the kitchen, because most of it went in a black bin bag," says Bancroft), to a 26-bedroom, four-AA-red-star hotel with a £500,000 kitchen.

From being manager and chef, the pair became business partners, buying Northcote for £380,000 in 1985. Along the way they have gathered national and international recognition, including four AA rosettes, a Michelin star, and dozens of industry awards including the Special Award at the 2009 Cateys. Staff are encouraged to share the limelight, and so along with *Great British Menu* winner Howarth, Northcote boasts two other finalists (head chefs Lisa Allen and Aled Williams), a new master sommelier (Adam Palowski) and an up and coming advanced sommelier (Tamas Czinki). In late 2014 the property joined the Relais & Châteaux portfolio while retaining its membership of Pride of Britain. It has now fixed its sights on a fifth rosette and a second Michelin star.

The redevelopment was made possible by the spring 2012 restructuring of Northcote Leisure Group (which owned the hotel, Ribble Valley Inns and catering at Ewood Park, home of local team Blackburn Rovers). Bancroft and Haworth are no longer major shareholders after selling some of their equity to local businesspeople and enthusiastic customers Richard and Lynda Matthewman. Matthewman is now chairman of Northcote Leisure Group, with Bancroft and Haworth remaining as managing directors.

“We needed to reinvest in Northcote to continue to put it up the ladder,” says Bancroft. He explains that plans had been hindered by the impact of the recession on the Ribble Valley Inns portfolio.

“We really struggled, and so we had to go out and find an investor. They have given us a platform to be the best hotel restaurant, for me, in the North of England and to be mentioned in the same breath as Gidleigh, Whatley and Lucknam Park.”

The redevelopment has also created the potential for many different profit streams (hotel, restaurant, private dining, cookery school), operating from a comparatively small site of just 7.5 acres. “We will be an extremely powerful entity,” says Howarth, “because we have got a very small footprint. We don’t have 10,000 acres, a golf course or spa to maintain, or any of that.”

Northcote now features on the Relais map of the UK, but its local following means that its business model differs from that of its national peers because food and beverage income is so dominant. Bancroft estimates that this constitutes around two-thirds of the £4.5m turnover, whereas other country houses are more likely to see that sort of proportion coming from accommodation.

“Where I struggle, compared to some of the luminaries, is that I can’t demand the bedroom rate for Friday, Saturday, Sunday, which underpins everything enormously,” says Bancroft. “But as our reputation grows, and our stock is bedded down even further, those days will arrive.”

The kitchen

This important income stream is reflected in the new kitchen area. Designed by Haworth and head chef Allen, the kitchen was completed in December 2013 and is twice the size of the original (the new preparation areas alone occupy much of the old kitchen space). Bancroft estimates that the final bill, including building alterations, came to around £500,000, with £380,000 going on equipment.

The wide, bright spaces and the long L-shaped pass feel cool thanks to induction hobs in the main cooking suite. There is extensive use of CCTV in the prep areas and the pass, designed to give chef an up-to-the-minute overview during service.

Raw prep is carried out in a dedicated area close to a suite of coldrooms (previously housed outside), rather than in the main kitchen area, to avoid cross-contamination. The Louis Roederer private dining rooms have a dedicated work space in the kitchen too.

Further adding to the mix is the cookery school, which runs events three times a week, and can also be used for events at the Chef’s Table. Its eight workstations, CCTV and a hydraulic table are separated from the main kitchen by plate-glass doors and give the appearance of a kitchen within a kitchen. Its side door opens onto one of the new courtyards and entertaining spaces that now encircle Northcote. Up to 14 guests can be accommodated at the Chef’s Table, hosted by a dedicated chef and sommelier, while enjoying an overview of the pass.



After initial worries that the kitchen might be too big, Bancroft feels that the expansion is justified, particularly when afternoon teas and private dining are included. “You have a potential 340 covers if everything is full, and if we hadn’t built a kitchen that has got the available space to mise-en-place, to prepare, and enough fridging to be able to roll the stock, and enough space for people to work in pockets and do various things, and to do the private dining while not interfering with the à la carte dining, and run a Chef’s Table and a cook’s school during the day, it would never work.”

It also demonstrates a commitment to the staff. “If your income streams are so powerful in that kitchen area, you have got to invest in the people and give them a work environment in which they can execute to the highest possible level,” he says.

Northcote, which has run its own apprentice schemes for the past 25 years and also pro-





vides training loans, further emphasised its commitment to staff by building “a welfare wing” in the same phase as the new kitchen. Its entrance is framed by the hotel’s motto: “An oasis of food and wine excellence with genuine and outstanding hospitality.” There are staff changing rooms, showers and lockers, a staff canteen serving three meals a day, a ‘chill room’ with television, and an extensive library of food and wine books. There are also computers for compulsory online training and plugs for personal devices. Staff are expected to read the customer reviews and comments displayed there, and charts showing who’s who in the hotel.

‘Our future’

The staff facilities fulfil a long-term ambition to be attractive recruiters in what Bancroft terms a “geographically challenged area”. Northcote’s rural location, on the fringes of

the Ribble Valley, stops staff popping out to a coffee shop or the cinema as they might in London, particularly during the split shifts that Bancroft says he is trying to phase out.

“Apprenticeships and stages are a big factor in our future,” says Haworth, pointing out that the seven new student bedrooms in the roof of the staff wing will help the talent pipeline. These facilities, due to be finished by the end of the year, will extend the opportunities for placements or stages from catering schools here and abroad, and staff exchanges with long-standing contacts, such as Vila Joya in Albufeira, Portugal.

So, after three decades, what has sustained one of the longest partnerships in the industry? Both Haworth and Bancroft talk of their mutual respect for each other’s skills, and a shared compulsion to build a legacy.

“I think the key is that we have been able to keep the passion for Northcote for 30 years.

OBSESSION AT NORTHCOTE

This year’s Obsession food festival – the 15th running of the annual event – featured 27 chefs with 27 Michelin stars between them, including Jacob Jan Boerma from Restaurant De Leest, near Amsterdam. The 2015 festival ran over 15 nights earlier this year, from 23 January to 7 February.

Guest chefs fly in with a commis to run the kitchen with Howarth and stay at Northcote. Bancroft takes the opportunity to explore new wine pairings. He says that all staff learn from the discipline of the event, and Howarth, who first persuaded him that they should hold the festival to “brighten up January”, admits that it inspires him too.

“Technically there are lots of things you see that you can put in the memory banks,” says Howarth, citing Shaun Hergatt, from New York’s Juni, as an example. “Shaun took a lot of time to look at the presentation and textures and use a lot of subtle ingredients – like hibiscus flower with beetroot.”

Such inspiration is translated into the Northcote vernacular – “That’s one of the nice things Obsession does; it can refresh the palate but not change the direction.”

The profile benefits of Obsession are obvious, but despite sponsorship deals and guests paying around £150 a head, does it make any money? Bancroft is tight-lipped about the finance. “It’s a break-even business,” he says, “but we never made any money at all for probably 12 years. It’s much more a brokering of PR, training, enjoyment, good fun, and covering your costs.”

Names for the 2016 Obsession will not be revealed until autumn 2015. In the meantime, Bancroft is assessing the impact of having more bedrooms: he is excited to welcome new guests, but does not want to run lots of tables of two if this risks altering the “house party” atmosphere created by local customers who bring groups of friends.

“They are the ones who have meant 100 covers-plus every single night of every single Obsession there has ever been,” he says.

That has never waned, even when we have had really tough times. We have always been united and able to get through,” says Haworth.

They share a determination to make the most of the opportunities that have been created by the new look. “My team is now targeting five rosettes and the second star,” says Howarth. “Development becomes more intrinsic, as we look at more details and finish to the dishes,” he says, adding that he is strengthening expertise in seasonal and even foraged ingredients.

“My son, Kirk, senior sous chef, will follow a line of development in keeping with our seasonal British programme and mandate, and he will link in strongly with myself, Lisa and Aled.

“We have got great facilities, and a great platform, and it’s a wonderful time to be cooking in the UK,” says Haworth. “Maybe we can just grab that moment and achieve those goals.”

HOW TO...

...HANDLE WASTE COOKING OIL

It is illegal to dispose of waste cooking oil down drains – and if drains are blocked, it's often the business that foots the bill. *Ian Collins* reports

Fat, oil and grease (FOG), suspended in water, congeal as they cool and harden. By disposing of FOG down the sink or the drain, caterers not only risk the possibility of their businesses closing if drains get blocked, but also of receiving an expensive bill from the water company as well as potential legal action.

Each year, 100,000 tonnes of waste cooking oil is generated by the catering industry, a large percentage of which is disposed of illegally via drains or sewers.

As of 1991, the Water Industry Act made it a legal duty for catering businesses to ensure waste oil is stored and disposed of correctly. The law aims to prevent waste oil from being disposed of down drains.

Vermin love used cooking oil. If stored incorrectly, the smell of used cooking oil affects the sex hormone in rats and acts as an aphrodisiac

It is still a commonly held myth in the industry that, if a main drain or sewer becomes blocked, it is the water company that picks up the bill for unblocking and repair. This is not the case. If a drain is blocked within the boundary of a business, it is often the business owner who ends up footing the bill.

Drain-line backups are expensive to remove and the charges from the water companies can be anything from an £80 call-out to £2,000 for a unblocking a main sewer.

Repeated chemical dosing and using plumbing equipment to remove the blockage sometimes work, but often cause further damage to the drain beneath the business property.

The Building Act of 1984 gave local authorities the power to ensure that all businesses maintain their own drainage systems. If a drainage problem persists and is reported to a local authority, a formal notice to a business will be served to repair and unblock the drain and a repair bill will be issued.

Caterers also need to be aware that vermin love used cooking oil. If stored incorrectly, the smell of used cooking oil affects the sex hormone in rats and acts as an aphrodisiac, which can lead to pest infestation.

Ian Collins is managing director of cooking oil recycling firm Living Fuels



BEST PRACTICE FOR HANDLING WASTE COOKING OIL

- Educate your staff about why it is important to keep fat, oil, grease and food waste out of drains and sewers.
- Do not pour waste fat, oil and grease down drains or sewers.
- Good kitchen practice is to scrape plates into a bin. Do not jet-wash them under a tap. Sinks should have a strainer in the plughole to prevent waste food from going down the drain.
- Use a grease trap and empty it regularly.
- Ensure all oil is kept out of washing water.
- Collect waste fat, oil and grease in air-tight (ie sealed/leak-proof) containers to prevent odours and avoid attracting vermin.
- Store containers holding used cooking oil in a secure area away from all drains to prevent spills and leakages into the sewage system.
- Do not dispose of used cooking oil and fat with the general waste stream or with the rest of your catering or kitchen waste. Waste contractors may refuse to remove it, and there may be odour or pollution problems.
- Used cooking oil from catering firms must not be used as an ingredient in animal feed.
- Seek advice from your local environmental health office and building control department.
- Arrange for collection of your used cooking oil from a reputable organisation and retain the waste transfer note for any inspections.



INDEPENDENT HOTEL SHOW

Inspiring and informative, the Independent Hotel Show – the UK's only event for the luxury and boutique hotel industry – returns to London's Olympia West for its fourth year this October.

With the hospitality sector entering a golden age, and the independent, luxury and boutique sector in the UK continuing to grow, the show has become the must-attend event for independent hoteliers and industry professionals.

The event will once again present a bespoke collection of the UK's finest, most innovative suppliers and service providers, hand-picked to inspire you with new ideas and opportunities for your hotel. There will also be expert insight and advice from profitability seminars to trend reports and new product showcases.

A carefully chosen collection of more than 250 suppliers at the 2015 event features many

companies that exhibit exclusively at the Independent Hotel Show, providing a unique opportunity to source new products, services and ideas in one place.

An in-depth, free-to-attend programme of business sessions will once again offer expert insight and advice from leading hoteliers and industry frontrunners. The Innovation Stage will present discussions on areas including interior design, trends and social media through to sustainability. And the Business Theatre will feature experts from the business community, identifying the real nuts and bolts of running a successful, streamlined and profitable hotel.

Another key feature to keep an eye out for this year is the introduction of the brand new Independent Think Tank, which offers hoteliers an opportunity to be part of in-depth,

limited-capacity specialised seminars that tackle many of the tougher questions currently facing hoteliers.

Other exciting areas not to miss at this year's event include the Hub, the VIP Lounge, the Business Clinic and the Destination Spa.

As the industry responds to the needs of the modern traveller and the boutiques boom, and the chains take inspiration from independent thinkers, the 2015 event will see hotel owners and operators come together to share ideas, do business, forge new relationships and learn from one another.

If you are in the independent, luxury or boutique hotel business, don't miss the Independent Hotel Show, on 20 and 21 October 2015.

You can register free to attend the show at www.independenthotelshow.co.uk

Entries for Caterer.com's Best Employers in Hospitality awards are now open and it's already looking like a bumper year for these prestigious awards, with a huge number of employers already registered to enter. These are the only established, recognised and free-to-enter hospitality employer awards in the UK. Employers from all hospitality sectors and all areas of the UK, with 50 permanent employees or more, are eligible to enter. Entry is free and simple.

When you enter you will be sent a link to an online engagement survey. Just forward this to your permanent employees and encourage them to complete it by 13 July. Your entry will then be ranked on the basis of their responses alone – there is no judging panel for these awards, so they are truly representative.

Every employer who attains the minimum number of employee engagement surveys will be ranked against other employers who enter, based only on the results of the surveys. The Top 50 Best Employers in Hospitality 2015 will be announced, along with the category winners, at a spectacular awards ceremony on 12 October at Lancaster London Hotel.

All employers who complete the required number of surveys will receive a free comprehensive report of their results from engagement experts People Insight.

Some of last year's winners are pictured here. This what they said about the awards:

● "Winning Caterer.com's Best Employers in Hospitality 2014 award made me feel humble, because it's my team's award. They were the ones who filled out the questionnaires and that is really humbling. Especially to win it two years in a row." *Suresh Banarse, people director, Yo Sushi*

● "We're successful in engaging with our employees because we really act on the responses from our engagement survey." *Jenny Williams, resourcing and talent manager, Marston's*

● "We wanted the benefit of the external recognition that is part of winning a national award. Winning this prestigious award allows us to celebrate as a team, and also helps to attract the best talent to the business." *The Rezidor Hotel Group*

Will you be among this year's winners? Make sure you enter and let your employees be the judge.

The best hospitality talent wants to work for the best employers in hospitality. Don't miss this chance to be recognised.

Enter today at
www.bestemployersinhospitality.com

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Matt and the team at PSL"*

Andrew C Grahame – Chief Executive, Farncombe
Estate (Dormy House)





MOBILE MATTERS

‘FISHING WHERE THE FISH SWIM’ DRIVES BUSINESS TO YOUR B&B

In this fast-paced world where everyone is constantly connected to their phones and tablets, you need to ‘fish where the fish swim’ if you want to get your business in front of them. Whatever the size of your business, the best way to keep that competitive edge is to give customers the best mobile experience possible.

Savvy surfers go to their mobile first to search for places to stay. A mobile website improves the customer experience: if it’s easy to search, view and book all in one session and on any device, you get more business. The any time, anywhere, as easy as possible approach really does pay off. According to industry news site Mobile Marketer, some 70% of mobile searches lead to a purchase or a booking within an hour.

In this personalised world where everyone

is looking for instant results online, you need to be ready to take advantage at the click of a button. Your business could benefit from increased bookings, an improved online reputation and people coming back for more.

An important thing to remember is that mobile and tablet screens are very high resolution. If your property’s website has photos that aren’t particularly good, then someone who has got to your site easily enough may find that the experience when they get there doesn’t meet their expectations.

Content-wise, less is more for mobile devices, so aim to have a website that’s easy to navigate and that clearly details rooms, location and prices. A beautiful photo gallery with images of your rooms, interior and exterior shots (and let’s not forget the all-important bathroom) will help convince guests that yours

is a great place to stay. A secure website for taking bookings also reassures them that they’ve made a safe transaction online. Don’t forget to add the social media sharing buttons to help spread the word.

If you have a bigger-size business, it may make sense to create an app – it isn’t as expensive as you might think. A custom app can give your guests an even more bespoke experience, from being able to check in online and finding your property via Google maps to getting personalised offers and messages sent directly to their mobile.

Don’t be a digital dinosaur. Get mobile – it really matters.

For more advice and tips on running a successful and profitable B&B, visit eviivo.com/my-bb

SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED

BEACON'S SUMMER 2015 DRINKS TRENDS

Beacon
Your purchasing partner

James Bond made the Martini famous, but the classic cocktail's days are numbered, according to hospitality purchasing company Beacon, as consumers switch to longer, fruitier drinks for summer 2015.

Harder, 'short' cocktails are declining in popularity on the high street and drinks such as the Pornstar Martini, June Bug and Piña Colada are on the rise. Mark Holness (pictured below), drinks buyer at Beacon, says: "As always, this summer, some drinks are in and some are out of fashion. At Beacon we work with a wide variety of drinks suppliers and have drawn upon expert knowledge and trend reports to compile our key advice."

KEEP IT SWEET

Our suppliers and customers are telling us that the traditional, bitter-tasting cocktails are being replaced by sweeter-tasting drinks as consumers scale down on alcohol and turn up the fun and fruit. Bars should therefore be carefully considering their cocktail menus to account for this change in tastes.

ADD A TOUCH OF DRAMA

Drinks supplier Matthew Clark and its team of cocktail experts say that consumers no longer want to be served the same drink, the same way. They want a splash of drama – they like to see the flames, the colours and even be involved in making them.

CHOOSE A PREMIUM OPTION

Prosecco is still extremely popular but fans are now trading up to premium (20-50% more expensive) and super-premium Prosecco (50%+ more expensive), so it's worth investing in a premium option for your customers.

CONSIDER YOUR FLAVOUR CHOICES

Heineken, which supplies drinks to Beacon customers, is predicting that the popularity of fruit ciders served over ice will continue to grow, but recommends that bars consider the brands and flavours they choose. Bars should offer width of choice not depth, so just stock one brand of modern cider. Then, maximise choice by using the flavours within the brands – consumers see apple as separate from fruit flavours such as mixed berries, so ensure you have enough variety on clear display.

Remember, as an AA member you benefit from 50% discount on Beacon subscription fees when joining in 2015. For more information, visit www.beaconpurchasing.co.uk or call 01904 695588





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THE MASTER INNHOLDER SCHOLARSHIPS

APPLICATIONS NOW WELCOME

The Master Innholders sets professional standards in hotel management and actively helps shape and influence the hospitality industry. Its scholarship programme is designed for general managers and heads of department to learn from highly qualified leaders about market evolution, future challenges, managerial skills and global demands.

To date, more than 200 people have completed a Master Innholders scholarship thanks to the generous support of the Worshipful Company of Innholders, the Savoy Educational Trust and the Lord Forte Foundation, who have funded the programme.

Master Innholders chairman Jonathan Raggett is encouraging everyone in senior management to consider applying, "Whether you work in a large five-star city hotel, a small provincial property or a boutique B&B, the programme is designed for both general managers as well as those heads of department with clear management potential."

THREE SCHOLARSHIP OPTIONS: LAUSANNE, CRANFIELD AND CORNELL

The Master Innholders scholarship programme offers three study alternatives. Scholars can choose to follow any of three courses at Lausanne, Cranfield and Cornell, each of which lasts for two weeks.

The Lausanne executive education programme is held at the École Hôtelière de Lausanne in Switzerland. Here, the priority is the hospitality market's evolution and participants' future challenges.

The Cranfield talent development programme develops fast-track managers early on in their careers and challenges them to develop greater managerial visibility, credibility, influence and managerial value. Held at Cranfield University in the UK, participants benefit from world-leading teaching in management studies.

And the general managers programme at Cornell University in New York focuses on specific and workable solutions to real-world, real-time demands and brings a worldwide perspective to the table. Held in the US at the world-famous Ivy League university Cornell,



Master Innholders
scholar Emma Rathbone

the programme is designed to mould decision-makers into strategic thinkers, expand their knowledge, broaden their viewpoint and produce new solutions for challenges they face.

Emma Rathbone, meetings and events sales manager at Thistle Marble Arch Hotel in London, won a Master Innholders scholarship in 2014 and was thrilled to gain such a rare opportunity.

She says: "I have been given career development leading to a promotion from my previous role. The commercial knowledge and the

key development learnings since gaining the scholarship will stay with me for many more years to come, and I would encourage other hoteliers to put themselves forward for this special lifelong experience."

The closing date for applications is 17 July.
For more information visit
www.masterinnholders.co.uk/scholarship

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