

When Bury went to Bildeston

Six of Suffolk's top chefs got together at The Bildeston Crown to cook up an extra special menu for an extra special cause, St Nicholas Hospice Care

WORDS: Tessa Allingham ♦ PHOTOS: Sarah Lucy Brown

It is a rare treat indeed to enjoy the food of some of Suffolk's finest chefs in one long, delicious sitting. But, one dark night in November, six of the best piled into Chris Lee's kitchen at The Bildeston Crown and cooked up a storm of a menu for a packed dining room – and for St Nicholas Hospice Care.

The menu kicked off with the lightest of tempura oysters. James Carn, on canapés, arrived in the nick of time to arrange his shells and deep-fry his oysters. "I

got lost, it was dark, it took a year to get here," he joked, buttoning up his whites and unpacking ingredients onto the bench. It romped through Greig Young's (The Northgate) inventive potato and cep terrine, Justin Sharp's (Pea Porridge) legendary curried lamb sweetbreads, and a colourful dish of pan-fried cod with sweet pops of orange butternut squash from Pascal Canevet (Maison Bleue). Chris kept things super-seasonal with partridge, sprouts, the

flavour intensified after an early frost, smoky bacon and sweet compressed pear (finishing the dish with a signature shave of truffle) while Zack Deakins (1921) on dessert left palates singing with a sensational lemon curd parfait, iced tea sorbet, crème fraiche and mint. There was – of course – just enough space for James' petits fours canelés with their deliciously sharp yuzu curd.

Inventive wine pairings, from Ed Keith at Hallgarten Wines,



ABOVE: Six of the best (from left) Pascal Canevet, Greig Young, James Carn, Zack Deakins, Justin Sharp and Chris Lee.

LEFT AND RIGHT: The chefs each produced a course from canapés to starters, mains, desserts and petits fours.



MENU DU SOIR

Canapés by James Carn

Potato & cep terrine, black
garlic, quail's egg by Greig
Young, The Northgate

Lightly curried lamb
sweetbreads by Justin
Sharp, Pea Porridge

Pan-fried cod with
yoghurt, basil dressing and
butternut squash velouté
by Pascal Canevet, Maison
Bleue

Partridge, sprouts, bacon,
onion by Chris Lee, The
Bildeston Crown

Lemon curd parfait, tea,
crème fraîche, mint by
Zack Deakins, 1921

Petits fours by James Carn



included a minerally wild ferment assyrtiko (vinified using only the natural yeasts from the grapes) from Santorini, a fresh accompaniment to the fish, while a rich, ripe Chateau de Campuget syrah from the Rhone Valley stood up boldly to Chris's partridge. Justin brought some bottles from his own cellar, sharing his love for natural wines with a crisp, herbal, qevri-fermented chinuri from central Georgia that cut like a knife through the rich flavours of his sweetbread dish.

The idea for the event was Chris's. How did it come about, I wondered? "No idea, must be

mad!" came the instant reply and accompanying gale of laughter from across the pass. "Seriously though, of course it's great to have the dining room full on a Monday evening, but it's about raising money for charity, and everyone having a good time. Love it." He smacked the stainless-steel bench, turned to administer instruction, because service was imminent and he was fired up.

Later, relaxed with a post-service Bud, he said it was also about a group of chefs working together, having time out of their own kitchens, and simply catching up. "We're all

TOP LEFT AND RIGHT: Everyone pitches in to help James carn with his oyster canapes

TOP RIGHT: Bury Chefs Come to Bildeston Event at the Bildeston Crown in aid of St Nicholas Hospice.

BOTTOM LEFT: Potato and cep terrine by Grieg Young

BOTTOM RIGHT: Everyone had a good time, in and out of the kitchen.

friends and we don't do that enough." Shona Doig, community administrator at the hospice, said: "It's incredible when people support us in this way. It costs £11,000 a day just to keep the hospice open, and we're only 22 per cent funded by the NHS so we rely on constant fundraising.

"Everything from a WI cake sale to legacies and major donations, keeps the service available for everyone who might need it."

Profits from the dinner tickets, raffle of prizes donated by the chefs, and an auction – compered energetically by Chris – that offered the likes of a thrilling trip around the Silverstone track in a Porsche, a dinner and overnight stay at Tuddenham Mill, and Chris cooking for a dinner party (and, he promised, doing the washing up) meant the event raised a remarkable £10,000, a vital contribution to a vital local charity. ♦

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