

Maison Bleue goes back to the future with £5 lunch



Delighted diners are helping a renowned restaurant mark its anniversary – by enjoying lunchtime meals at prices last seen 15 years ago. Dean Gassabi, who owns the respected Maison Bleue restaurant in Edinburgh’s Old Town, has turned back the clock to 1998, when his eatery opened.

The talented chef is celebrating 15 years in business by offering lunch for a fiver.

Dean said:- “It’s certainly been a rollercoaster 15 years and few of the restaurants which opened around the same time as Maison Bleue are still around today. So we are delighted to be reaching this anniversary.

“We’ve gone from strength to strength in that time and we wanted to say a big thank-you to all those loyal customers who have helped Maison Bleue to become something of an Edinburgh institution.

“We racked our brains to think of a way to celebrate and make sure our customers got something out of. So our lunch for £5 deal is perfect. It lets us look back fondly at where we’ve come from while also looking forward – very much a case of back to the future.”

Dean’s daughter Layla, 32, now takes a key role running the restaurant her dad created. To mark the launch of the £5 offer, which will run until August 1, the pair joined some of the restaurant’s 30 strong staff to pose with a vintage DeLorean gull wing car like the one which transported Marty McFly through time in the hit series of Back to the Future movies.

As the ongoing credit crunch continues to bite, lucky diners may well be wishing they could turn the clock back on other prices to make life easier.

In 1998 a pint of beer cost an average of just £1.20 (now £3.80), a cinema ticket would set you back £3.30 (£8.80), while a gallon of petrol cost just £2.77 (£6.31) and the average house prices was just £99,600 (£133,700).

At the time Tony Blair was less than a year into his time as Prime Minister, while details were only just emerging of US President Bill Clinton's indiscretions with Monica Lewinsky. It was also the last time Scotland appeared in a World Cup, playing in the tournament opener against Brazil.

Work started on the highly controversial Millennium dome while a little company called Google was founded in California's Silicon Valley.

Since opening in August 1998 in the heart of Edinburgh's Old Town, a World Heritage Site, the restaurant has proved a major success story with a menu which blends French, Scottish and North African Cuisine.

The consistent quality of the food has underpinned the restaurant's success and the choice of dishes is inspired by Dean's French and Algerian roots combined with the finest Scottish produce – with venison and Haggis Balls among the most popular dishes.

Renowned for its distinctive blue frontage on historic Victoria Street, Maison Bleue also boasts colourful hanging flower baskets every summer, which are a hit with tourists and locals alike.

Inside Maison Bleue has made important features of the A-Listed, three-storey building it occupies, with rugged stone walls and alcoved passageways giving it an intimate and homely feel.

A series of themed events are planned at the restaurant in the run up to the anniversary in August – menu and booking details plus event information can be found at <http://www.maisonbleuerestaurant.com/>.