

# Royal Exchange Coffee House wins award

✘ Scotland's Food Secretary Richard Lochhead announced that the coveted 1000<sup>th</sup> *Taste Our Best* accreditation was awarded to The Royal Exchange Coffee House, part of The Real Mary King's Close visitor attraction in Edinburgh.

The Cabinet Secretary was joined by The Real Mary King's Close general manager Craig Miller at a special event at the SECC celebrating Scotland's successes in the food and drink sector throughout the past year – which includes doubling the number of Taste Our Best accredited establishments in just 12 months.

Mr Lochhead said: “This has been a phenomenal year for Scotland's food and drink industry, and doubling the number of Taste Our Best establishments is a real achievement. We started off with 500 in January, and here we are, less than a year later, with 1000. I can't think of a better way to round up the Year of Food and Drink, and I'd like to offer huge congratulations to Craig and the team at The Royal Exchange Coffee House, within The Real Mary King's Close, for sourcing Scottish produce and their continued support of the sector.

“This year has thrown the spotlight onto our fantastic natural larder and has offered us countless opportunities to celebrate and promote it to the world. The turnover value of the sector now stands at £14.3 billion, with our manufacturing growth rate double that of the UK average. The statistics speak for themselves – more and more people are selling our food in greater numbers than ever before, and I want to see that continue into 2016 and beyond.”

Craig Miller, general manager at The Real Mary King's Close said: “We are delighted to be the 1000<sup>th</sup> business to receive the Taste Our Best accreditation from VisitScotland. At The

Real Mary King's Close we pride ourselves in offering our guests an authentic experience of Scottish history and we wanted to extend this authenticity to our recently opened café, The Royal Exchange Coffee House.

"The menu features locally sourced produce and Scottish favourites. We carefully considered which suppliers to use to ensure that our guests experience a real taste of Scotland and we are very proud to be able to work with local businesses. Scotland's food and drink is renowned worldwide and we are thrilled to be playing our part encouraging guests to eat local and experience the best Scotland has to offer."

James Withers, Chief Executive of Scotland Food & Drink said:

"2015 has been a real milestone year for Scotland's food and drink industry. The sector crossed the £14 billion mark in annual turnover for the first time and we've seen all parts of the country celebrate the fantastic people and products that make up this Land of Food and Drink. The fact Scotland can celebrate a Year of Food & Drink is testament to the journey we've been on.

"Our sector is a source of pride for Scotland and so it should be – we have an amazing mix of long-established and newly emerging businesses which are now thriving. The challenge into the future is to make every year feel like a celebration of our sector. With more and more hotels, restaurants and destinations showcasing local food, I've no doubt that the momentum from 2015 can continue in the years ahead."





Malcolm Roughead, Chief Executive of VisitScotland, said: “We are proud to reach this magnificent milestone in the Year of Food and Drink and delighted that The Real Mary King’s Close is our 1000th Taste Our Best recipient. For this five-star visitor attraction to achieve the accreditation only months after opening its cafe goes to show the excellent standards it sets itself.

“Scotland can be proud of its natural larder and the Taste Our Best scheme recognises that. Not only does it indicate to visitors that the establishment believes in quality but it also shows they are committed to promoting local produce and giving customers a true taste of Scotland.

“Taste Our Best is open to restaurants, pubs, bars, cafes, takeaways, accommodation providers and visitor attractions – any business with a food and drink offering. With research finding that three out of four visitors think eating local cuisine will enhance their visit, Taste Our Best really is a recipe for success.”

The attraction’s new café, The Royal Exchange Coffee House, opened in Summer 2015 as part of a £500,000 redevelopment project. The menu showcases locally sourced produce and a variety of Scottish favourites. Suppliers include Northern Edge Coffee, Rendalls Quality Butchers and Anteaques.

The café’s name alludes to The Royal Exchange Coffee House

which operated between the mid-18th and early 19th centuries and could be accessed via what is now the Quadrangle of the City Chambers.

*Photos Warren Media*