

Burns Night – MacDonald Holyrood Hotel, 26th January

✘ One of the UK's largest independent hotel groups, Macdonald Hotels & Resorts, just hosted one of the most prestigious and lively Burns Suppers across the UK, and we went along to the Holyrood Hotel in Edinburgh to witness exactly what was on offer.

Loyal to the Ayrshire-born poet the traditional fare of haggis, neeps and tatties will naturally be on the menu, alongside Highland venison and a rich, aromatic game stew. This is one evening for Macdonald Hotels & Resorts to revel in being a traditional Scottish host, so there will of course also be the chance to enjoy a dram or two along the way. In fact they encouraged you to have a different malt from the Glenmorangie brand with near enough every course.

With several courses, all locally supplied, starting with scallops and Stornoway black pudding, followed by the anticipated haggis, then Venison, loganberry sauce, game stew and red cabbage, a cheeseboard, with a fine selection and a light cloutie dumpling, this tasting menu was certainly not lacking.

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John Maltby, chef at MacDonald Holyrood Hotel, discusses the locally supplied dishes for this spruced-up Burns menu.

Take the taste home – Macdonald Hotels & Resorts' Haggis, Neeps and Tatties

Ingredients:

300 grams of haggis;
300 grams of mash potato;
300 grams of bashed turnips;
150 grams of butter unsalted;
25 ml of whisky;
100 ml of double cream;
100 ml of beef gravy;
50 ml of milk.

Method:

Peel and quarter the potatoes. Rinse in cold water. Bring to a gentle boil in salted water. Simmer until fully cooked. Drain into a colander and allow to steam dry. Pass the potato

Through a potato ricer or potato masher, add the butter and a splash of milk. Season to taste – then keep warm.

Now, peel the turnip and cut into 2cm dice. Bring to a gentle simmer until fully cooked. Drain into a colander and allow to steam dry. Pass the turnip through a potato ricer or potato masher, add the butter and milled black pepper to taste.

Next, bring the cream and gravy to the boil, then reduce to a pouring sauce consistency. Take care while you flame the whisky by pouring into a hot pan and exposing to open flame. Take off the heat and allow the alcohol to burn off then pour into the cream sauce. Mix well and check for seasoning.

Finally, steam the haggis until piping hot. Cut open and release from the skin. Shape into a large rugby ball form with two wet dessert spoons. Shape the mash potato & turnip in the same way.

Add the finishing touch by serving with the whisky sauce.