

Dean cooked lunch for Leonardo today



The staff at one Queensferry Street restaurant were much envied today as they spent a couple of hours at lunchtime with Hollywood actor, Leonardo DiCaprio.

And the star of films such as Titanic, The Revenant and The Great Gatsby gave the thumbs up to his first taste of Scottish food after he tucked into a Scottish-themed lunch at Maison Bleue at Home.

Chef Dean Gassabi, founder of the Maison Bleue restaurants, cooked the exclusive lunch for the Oscar-winning actor at the Queensferry Street eatery. Meantime hundreds of fans were gathering outside the restaurant waiting for a glimpse of the star.

[VIDEO] Leo in Edinburgh today! pic.twitter.com/27pfy0zDLK

– Leonardo DiCaprio (@LeoDiCaprioFans) [November 17, 2016](#)

Dean said: “It was a real honour to welcome Mr DiCaprio to Maison Bleue at Home and to cook for him and have our team serve him.

“Understandably, we were all a little nervous but he was so courteous and pleasant all the way through the meal.

“He looked relaxed and was happy to chat to everyone and find out about the work we do here to help combat homelessness, and tell us about his work on climate change.

“He also said the food was lovely and he thanked us for looking after him so well.”

Around 31 guests attended the secret lunch, including Elise Lovell who won a competition to dine with DiCaprio.

The guests were treated to a Scottish-themed three-course menu, which included a red deer carpaccio starter, followed by a choice of North Sea halibut, Scottish Borders lamb tagine or mac and cheese with wild mushroom and black truffle shavings for main, and passion fruit key lime posset for dessert. DiCaprio opted for the mac and cheese.

Dean added: "I spent months planning the menu and tried various ideas and dishes.

"We wanted to provide a menu that showcased the best of Scottish produce and local suppliers, as well as bringing Mr DiCaprio all the elements that make the Maison Bleue restaurants so successful – fresh ingredients, high quality cuisine and excellent customer service.

"There was a great buzz around the place – not least from our staff who were itching to get a chance to be near him or serve him. We were thrilled to hear he was full of praise for our dishes."

Maison Bleue at Home is the third venue in Edinburgh opened by Dean Gassabi, and for this venture, he is working in partnership with Josh Littlejohn of the Social Bite sandwich chain.

The restaurant donates 100% of its profits to charity and feeds members of the homeless community once a week – made possible by "pay it forward" contributions from diners.

It will also provide training and employment programmes for members of the Social Bite Academy, a four-year paid course for homeless people.

The sittings for homeless guests run weekly on a Monday from 3-5pm and around 50 guests enjoy a hearty mixed *carte du*

jour of French and Scottish cuisine.

The venture is backed by an impressive list of prominent names from the Scottish restaurant scene. Along with Dean and Josh, other board members including David Wither of the Montpelier Group, restaurateur Simon Littlejohn and Michelin-starred chef Martin Wishart.