

Hospitality sector fighting back against pandemic

Some of the biggest names in Scottish hospitality are backing an initiative to help Edinburgh's leading independent restaurants, bars and hotels get through a bleak winter.

Curfews, closed doors and travel restrictions due to the pandemic have hit the hospitality sector hard and the Taste Edinburgh campaign is being boosted by Michelin-star chefs, Tom Kitchin and Martin Wishart.

James Thomson from Prestonfield House Hotel and The Witchery; Carina Contini from Contini George Street, The Scottish Cafe & Restaurant at The Scottish National Gallery and Cannonball Restaurant on Castlehill; as well as Nic Wood from The Signature Group, which includes Cold Town House in The Grassmarket and Kyloe Restaurant & Grill in the West End.

The Broughton and Fhior on Broughton Street; 21212 on Royal Terrace; Timberyard on Lady Lawson Street; Civerinos on Hunter Square and Forrest Road and Fingal in Leith also feature in the campaign.

Taste Edinburgh aims to spread some much-needed festive cheer by encouraging people to give the gift of authentic Scottish hospitality and support the capital's independent and family-run restaurants, bars and hotels.

The initiative urges people to buy online gift vouchers from their favourite Edinburgh restaurant, bar or hotel as a Christmas gift for family and friends to use as soon as lockdown measures have been eased.

The campaign been devised and coordinated by Edinburgh's Taste Communications, Scotland's first dedicated food, drink and hospitality media agency.

Michelin star chef and owner of Edinburgh's The Kitchin and Scran & Scallie, Tom Kitchin, said: "Supporting Scottish hospitality has never been as important as it is this year. Buying a hospitality gift voucher is a contribution which makes a difference to not only a restaurant and its team but to the whole supply chain of fishmongers, butchers, veg growers, florists, taxi drivers and so many others. Helping your local hospitality business means supporting many people and their livelihoods. Any contribution is welcome and appreciated."

Michelin star Edinburgh chef, Martin Wishart, said: "After 21 years of cooking and offering a Michelin experience to Edinburgh and all its visitors, I have certainly missed in 2020: the buzz and community feel a restaurant has. Please support your restaurants."

"Remember that by buying a voucher you will not only support the restaurants but also the whole hospitality chain from our lovely food suppliers, wine and drink providers, taxi drivers, florists, laundry and cleaning services and so many more. It is our desire to bring back good food, happiness and something to look forward in 2021."

Carina Contini is owner of Edinburgh's Contini George Street, Cannonball Restaurant & Bar on Castlehill and The Scottish Cafe & Restaurant, and she said: "2020 was the year we weren't allowed to enjoy restaurants. In 2021 we need to fall in love with dining out again. Restaurants provide confident spaces with beautiful food (and they do the dishes) for you to relax and meet friends and family that we've missed so very much all year."

"Gifting a voucher for a restaurant is like giving a hug to your community. The restaurant, the suppliers and their team will all be so grateful for your purchase. The dining experience will feel like the best treat ever. A voucher is a wonderful purchase for our independent restaurant community."

We so very much appreciate all your support you have given us in a very difficult year and look forward to sharing happy times ahead. Keep well and keep safe, Carina.”

James Thomson, Owner of The Witchery and Prestonfield House Hotel, said: “As we build up to what is going to be a very different Christmas, it has never been more important to make sure we’re supporting our local businesses. Whilst we’re hugely grateful for the support we’ve received from customers to date, this campaign has been set up to highlight the local and independent venues in the capital that need a little extra boost to get through what is going to be a very difficult winter for many.

“Whilst we may not be able to gather in the same way with friends and family in our hospitality venues at the moment, we can all look forward to spending much happier times together in the future once restrictions permit. In anticipation of this, give the gift of a truly memorable experience with great Scottish hospitality this Christmas and purchase a gift voucher from an independent business. It is the easiest way to support your favourite bar, restaurant, café and hotel and allows the recipient with something to really look forward to once this is all over.”

Nic Wood, owner of Scotland’s leading pub, bar and restaurant collection, Signature Group said: “I’m proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with these incredible chefs and restaurateurs. Ordinarily, our competitors, but 2020 has rendered all competition null and void as we work to build Scotland’s hospitality industry to the world-class levels it was at before the pandemic.

“By purchasing a gift voucher from one of your favourite cafes, bars or restaurants, you’re helping that venue get through what is going to be a very tough winter. Any purchase is hugely appreciated and we look forward to welcoming you all again once you’re ready to do so.”

Full list of participating Edinburgh chefs and restaurateurs:
Tom Kitchin, The Kitchin & Scran & Scallie, Martin Wishart,
Restaurant Martin Wishart, Carina Contini, Contini
Restaurants, James Thomson, The Witchery and Prestonfield
House Hotel, Nic Wood, Signature Pub Group, Stefano
Pieraccini, The Broughton & The Westroom, Scott Smith, Fhior,
Michele Civiera, Civerinos, Mark Alston, Fingal, Katie
O'Brien, 21212, Andrew Radford, Timberyard

Gift vouchers can be purchased through each venue's website or
through the Taste Edinburgh campaign page:
<https://tastecommunications.co.uk/taste-edinburgh>. Terms and
conditions depend on the venue. Please check before
purchasing.

Christmas dinner and Hogmanay home deliveries are also being
offered by Contini Restaurants, Signature Group's McLaren's on
the Corner and Kyloe, 21212, and Tom Kitchin's Scran and
Scallie.

People can follow the Taste Edinburgh campaign on social
media, including Instagram <https://instagram.com/tasteedin> and
Twitter <https://twitter.com/tasteedin> using the hashtag
#TasteEdinburgh