

# **Out of town – Karma Lake of Menteith – new name for redesigned hotel**

**Following a buyout by the worldwide Karma Group, Karma Lake of Menteith is launched with exciting plans to collaborate with local visitor attractions and further develop its impressive whisky vault.**

A beautiful country hotel in a truly idyllic Scottish location which has become the latest addition to a worldwide collection of outstanding resorts and estates. It was this tempting proposition that brought Chris Diplock out of retirement and back into the world of hospitality.

Chris (62), who is originally from Sussex, and has worked in senior roles in both retail and hospitality all over the world, is the General Manager of Karma Lake of Menteith, the recently rebranded Lake of Menteith Hotel, near Aberfoyle in the Trossachs, which was purchased by the Karma Group last year.

With more than forty four resorts, retreats and estates all over the world, including Bali, Thailand and India, together with prime locations in Europe and Australia, Karma Group is an award-winning international travel and lifestyle brand offering extraordinary experiences and exclusive curated entertainment in the world's most beautiful locations.



The luxury brand is the brainchild of British born entrepreneur, John Spence, who had the vision to create a holistic, connected community of five-star destinations, linking like-minded individuals on every continent. Karma Lake of Menteith is the Group's first Scottish acquisition.

Able to accommodate forty eight guests, Karma Lake of Menteith has eighteen en-suite bedrooms including several with picturesque lakeside views. Along with a bright conservatory, and Whisky "Malt Vault" bar area, it offers a 32 seater dining room with a wooden deck overlooking the lake, which is Scotland's only natural lake Loch, Loch Inchmahome. The resort also has a number of dog friendly rooms.

Busy welcoming guests, recruiting new local staff, and overseeing subtle refurbishments and redesigns of key areas in the Hotel, including the bar and Malt Vault, Chris is right back in the thick of things, and loving every challenge.

"I'm delighted to be here at the truly stunning Lake of Menteith, this resort is a fantastic addition to the Karma

portfolio,” said Chris who first joined Karma in 2007 in Goa, India as General Manager of a sixty three apartment holiday resort in North Goa near Baga Beach.

He went on to become GM for a beautiful thirty five bedroom luxury villa resort on the Thai island of Koh Samui, moving onto a role at Karma Head Office in Bali. In 2012 he was appointed Regional Director and Vice President of Karma India responsible for all seven luxury resorts throughout India at that time.

Later Europe was added to his remit, with Chris assuming responsibility for a Karma resort in Bavaria. He opened Karma St Martins on the Isles of Scilly, Karma Borgo di Colleoli in Tuscany, Karma Normandy, and finally, Karma Minoan in Crete.

It’s an impressive CV which ensures he knows what guests are looking for in a luxury resort.



“Many of our Karma locations have a calming holistic air to them, and certainly you feel that here – looking out over the Lake is truly mesmerising with Stirling’s hills and mountains in the distance. It’s so peaceful and tranquil that you can’t help but feel better when you come here, so important for guests after the trials and tribulations of the last two

years,” he said.

Continued Chris: “There’s heaps of potential to develop our offering here at Karma Lake of Menteith in the coming months. We’ll add value to the guest experience through our outstanding range of whiskies – with another seventeen bottles just added to the collection – together with collaborations with other visitor attractions in the area.”

Chris explained that Elizabeth Gilmour, a British Cycling qualified mountain bike leader and cycling coach who lives in the area, had agreed to offer guided bike rides around Loch Ard Forest.

“This is a brilliant way to appreciate the local scenery, whilst enjoying an exhilarating bike ride with an expert,” said Chris. “It’s this type of relationship we want to foster moving forward.”

With a significant “own label” range of beers, wines and spirits, which are available across Karma resorts, and can also be purchased by guests, Chris is reaching out to local artisan suppliers in the area who could furnish him with some lovingly crafted products.

“We work with vineyards and distilleries all over Europe,” he said. “We’re always on the lookout for local suppliers, not necessarily just for alcoholic drinks, but for any product that is delicious, sustainable if possible, and reflects local heritage and location.”

“We have a particular requirement for our own label honey which we thought would be a fantastic addition to breakfast, and could be retailed to guests here, and across our global resorts. We’ve already had a very positive conversation with local renowned chef Nick Nairn who has his own hives.”



Chris continued by saying that since he had arrived at Karma Lake of Menteith, he and his team had been implementing some changes to the look and feel of the Hotel, which initially appeal to Karma owner and founder, John Spence, because “it had the air of a New England lakeside retreat with lots of local timber and stone used in the décor, along with a huge open hearth fireplace by which to sit and relax.”

“We’re certainly going to retain that airy, paired back look, as it lets the views do the talking,” said Chris, “but, as with any hospitality business, there’s always maintenance to complete. We are replacing wooden flooring, dining tables & chairs, and refreshing décor in the common areas.”

A cosy nook in the Hotel where guests can savour a fine Dram, Chris explained that he was looking to completely redesign the Malt Vault area, which would be unveiled soon.

“Yes, we want to make a few changes here,” he said. “We’re going to go for a “gentleman’s club” type of look with Chesterfield Sofas and muted lighting. But we are aware that

many ladies drink whisky too, so it will be a cosy space to appeal to all.”

Chris finished by saying that, although he had retired to Spain in 2019, he quickly realised “retirement wasn’t for me.”

“I jumped at the chance to re-join the Karma family and head up this amazing place, it’s a real privilege, and I know I can achieve a great deal, not just in the day to day running of the Hotel, but in passing on my extensive skills and experience to younger people in hospitality as the sector recovers. We must build for the future.”

[Hotel details here](#)

Only 20 minutes from both Stirling, with its historic Castle, and Loch Lomond, Karma Lake of Menteith is within an hour’s drive time of both Edinburgh & Glasgow. It is situated within the Trossachs National Park, an area of outstanding natural beauty.

