

# **Newly appointed head chef loves working near water**

## ***KARMA LAKE OF MENTEITH APPOINTMENT PROVIDES NEW HEAD CHEF WITH PLENTY OF INSPIRATION FOR FORAGING & CREATIVE PLATING***

Having run his own restaurant on Guernsey, and cooked for guests on the beautiful Isles of Scilly, as well as Indonesian paradise, Bali, Head Chef Mike Potts certainly loves working near water. This time, he's bringing his maestro's touch in the kitchen to a very famous stretch of Scottish water – the tranquil shores of the Lake of Menteith, Scotland's only natural lake.

Mike (48), originally from Homes Chapel in Cheshire, is the new Head Chef at Karma Lake of Menteith in Stirlingshire. Having acquired the former Lake of Menteith Hotel last year, Karma Group, who have forty six luxury resorts across the world, have been busy putting a fresh stamp onto the eighteen bedroom property, which includes a bar, restaurant, lakeside terrace and its own Malt Vault, into Karma Lake of Menteith. With subtle refurbishments ongoing, plus the recruitment of Mike and several other key kitchen and front of house staff, the new luxury brand is going down well as it is introduced to a new Scottish audience.



Having worked in the past at Karma Group resorts in Bali, India, plus the Isles of Scilly, where he achieved two AA Rosettes for his cooking, Mike is extremely familiar with the ethos of Karma Group, an award-winning international travel

and lifestyle brand established by entrepreneur John Spence. Guests enjoy “extraordinary experiences in the world’s most beautiful locations.”

Before the pandemic he was running his own restaurant in the Channel Islands, but, like Karma Lake of Menteith General Manager, Chris Diplock, another Karma Group stalwart who came out of retirement to take on his new role in Scotland, Mike has been tempted back to Karma Group.

“I’m so pleased to be here in this truly beautiful location at Karma Lake of Menteith,” said Mike. “I’ve been very fortunate to have worked as a Chef, which is my passion, in some outstanding locations, not least Bali and the Isles of Scilly. Here is no exception -the Lake and its views out to the mountains are mesmerising. I’m obviously delighted to see that we have fresh locally caught trout, right out of the Lake, on the menu – you can’t get fresher than that!”

“Acquiring this Hotel, our first property in Scotland, is indeed a fantastic addition to the Karma Group portfolio,” he added. “It’s come at the right time for me, as I was looking for a fresh challenge.”

A keen forager, Mike is looking forward to exploring the Trossachs countryside all around the Hotel.

“This is a bountiful area for foraging, with so many amazing plants, herbs and berries around,” said Mike. “I think I’m going to be well rewarded on any foraging expedition, and

I’ll certainly add seasonal foraged treats to my menus which include daily specials.”



Having already devised new breakfast, lunch and dinner menus, with signature dinner dishes such as Charred Pork Chops with Belhaven beer infused blue cheese Welsh rarebit; Chargrilled Highland Wagyu Beefburger, and Prime Rack of Trossachs Lamb with garlic potato cake, sauteed greens, and pea puree, Mike has been very impressed with the excellent local suppliers already on board at the resort. These include Skinners of Kippen butchers, Katy Rodgers Crème Fraiche, and Old Leckie Farm Eggs. Ice cream and vegan friendly sorbets are from Luvians of St Andrews, whilst Great Glen Venison is another renowned name that the resort works with.

“A chef is only as good as his produce and ingredients,” he said. “We are already partnering some amazing names and I hope to add to this list by linking up with other artisan producers in the near future. Karma Group is all about creating experiences for guests, and we certainly have the most incredible natural larder to work with in Scotland, coupled with scope to introduce whisky paired dinners and many new dining initiatives.”

“The Malt Vault is a great asset to the resort, and Chris is

doing a great job adding to the collection with many fantastic local Whiskies, alongside collector edition Malts from many parts of Scotland including the Western Isles and Campbeltown.”

In the next few weeks, Mike will be busy improvising and designing new dishes.

“I often try another chef’s dish and think to myself what can I do to improve on that and come up with my own slightly different version? I love elegant plating too, as we all eat with our eyes.”

“The local dining market is very important to us,” added Mike, “we want to attract diners from Stirling, Glasgow, across the Central Belt, and all the local villages in the Trossachs. We want them to be choosing us as the location in which to celebrate birthdays and special occasions. We’ll also build back weddings and events.”

Mike finished by revealing that a new look would be given to the conservatory dining room. “Our Karma Group Interior Designer has recently visited to take a look and come up with some ideas to subtly reference Scotland, and the unique environment surrounding us, in this very special space. We can’t wait to see what she comes up with, and I will certainly try to make sure my food is as impressive as the amazing views across the water!”

Commenting on Mike’s appointment, General Manager of Karma Lake of Menteith, Chris Diplock, said: “Mike and I have worked together before, so I can personally vouch for his attention to detail and commitment. I wish to welcome him back to the Karma Group family. He’s a fantastic chef whom, I know, will do his utmost to create memorable dining here for guests and day visitors alike.”

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