

Juliet's food column for May

The Roxburgh

The first bar my parents took me to was at the Roxburgh Hotel, in the days there was also the George Hotel bar and Madogs: that was your lot for a drinkypoos on George Street. The Roxburgh Bar was run by Edinburgh legend Michael Coyle who entertained regulars with tales of celebrity encounters and naughty jokes. Michael made the best Bloody Mary in town, not that I ever tasted one (I was eight years old at the time). He's still a lovely fellow and it's something of a tragedy there's no bar in Edinburgh run by such a personality. He made every customer feel like a million dollars.



I went to an event at the Roxburgh, now one of the Kimpton Group with a sad longing for yesteryear, however I had a fabulous time at their 'social hour'. All the hotels in the group do this: at five o'clock residents have two hours to

enjoy complimentary drinks and canapés. The wine was lovely and the canapés delicious and generous, a splendid way for residents to begin their evening. The setting of the Garden Room was fresh and elegant and the atmosphere had quite a buzz with holiday makers and business people meeting up. I was there to sniff Essence of Harris Candles and have never craved smelly combustibles more, they were beyond delightful and I type to the exotic aroma of their Huisinis Pink Pomelo. They're the perfect host/ess gift when you next get invited to a dinner party. Sublime.







If, like me, you think the 1980s was twenty years ago, you'd be surprised to know that Hendersons, the original vegetarian

restaurant, turns 60 this year. The first residency at Hanover Street was one of Edinburgh's few iconic eateries and a trailblazer for veggie dining at a time when hippies and bohemians could afford to live in the New Town and Stockbridge, and celebrities like Sir Ian McKellen and Woody Harrelson dined there.

Sadly, due to Covid, the restaurant shut down but has risen, phoenix style, in a new location at Brunstfield Links. Barrie Henderson, grandson of the founders, has captured the legacy and with some of the chef team from the former restaurant created a fresh space with, as you would expect, a passion for good, fresh cooking along with a commitment to environmental sustainability. They've a series of events coming up, including an introduction to foraging, sustainable wine evenings and live music. Personally, I hate live music in restaurants and am not at all outdoorsy. However a forage gives a long walk a delicious purpose.

Republican Chipotle Marinade

On 6 May, living in a Conservative and royalist area, I must temper my Republican notions. A Coronation Quiche I will not be baking. Why do they patronise us with such shoddy dishes? Go all out with a Fricassee of Swan accompanied by a Martini of Baby Roe Deer Tears: that, I would respect. I'll enjoy the day off and host the first BBQ of my life. Here's my recipe for Republican Chipotle Marinade:

1 tin chipotle peppers, such as La Constena

1 tablespoon olive oil

Juice of one lime

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cumin

1 roughly chopped red onion

2 garlic cloves

Pinch salt and freshly ground pepper

Pinch smoked paprika

1 tablespoon honey

Whizz the lot in a blender, marinate whatever meat you like for up to 24 hours, or baste on aubergine, butternut squash or potatoes.

CASK & BARREL

Many people ask me where to go for lunch in Edinburgh? My answer's always the same: the Cask and Barrel pub at the bottom of Broughton Street to sample some of the best home-cooked food in Edinburgh. Gail does a fantastic Mince and Tatties and is (like Michael, mentioned above) an Edinburgh legend. There's no better value meal in town and you'll congratulate yourself for being in Edinburgh's best run pub and meeting one of the city's loveliest ladies and true cooks.

I'm signing off from these pages and swapped my digs in the ex prostitution zone in Leith for the glorious countryside of the Scottish Borders where I wake up to birdsong. What a racket: I've put in several noise complaints to the local police.

And to diners everywhere: stop making an idiot of yourself tasting the wine – and tip the staff well.



Juliet Lawrence Wilson is moving to the country – watch out for a new business venture soon PHOTO ©2022 The Edinburgh Reporter