

Barry Fish: Where 'Barry' truly means good

Seventeen years ago, The Shore was my regular stomping ground when I worked for a PR agency in the area. Back then, I frequented sandwich bars rather than the Michelin-starred restaurants that now line the shoreline. How times have changed!

The Shore has become Scotland's premier dining destination, boasting three Michelin stars, a new Michelin Bib Gourmand, and even a two AA Rosette restaurant aboard Scotland's only five-star luxury floating hotel.

It was high time I hopped on a tram to revisit this thriving coastal neighbourhood, specifically to check out Barry Fish, the latest addition to Leith's impressive culinary scene.

The 'Barry' in 'Barry Fish' comes from the Scottish word for 'good' – the website playfully notes it's "a Scottish word for good, also a man's name." Having followed Chef Barry Bryson's career for years, I can attest that Barry is indeed not only a good man but an exceptionally good chef.



After more than 14 years as an international specialist events chef, Barry has now established his permanent home in what's been dubbed Edinburgh's 'coolest neighbourhood.' His impressive resume includes cooking for the British Embassy in Uruguay and collaborating with luxury brands like Chanel, Louis Vuitton, and Rolls Royce. His client list features notable names such as TV chef Nigel Slater and artists Tracy Emin and Anya Gallacio – achievements proudly displayed on a wall of framed prints and newspaper articles near the restaurant's loos.

My connection with Barry dates back to 2012 when he catered events at a law firm where I worked and ran the café at Jupiter Artland, a hidden gem of a sculpture park outside Edinburgh. I've even had the privilege of cooking for him and his partner Robin – and they lived to tell the tale!

A fish restaurant wouldn't normally be my first choice, given

my fish and seafood allergy. However, friends who were quick to try Barry Fish assured me the menu included plenty for non-fish eaters, specifically recommending the croquettes and “The Big Pie.”

The 34-cover restaurant and bar’s exterior is understated, occupying what used to be part of Mimi’s cake house.





My window seat offered prime people-watching over the bus stop outside while I waited for my dining companion. There's even a private oval table curtained off near the back where diners

are welcome to bring their dogs. The interior, designed by Barry's husband Robin with their friend Kay Bennet, creates a sea of calm that mirrors the Water of Leith flowing just outside.





The open-plan kitchen allows diners to watch Barry and his team – Robbie Johnstone and Tom Pethwick – at work. The

glamorous and efficient restaurant manager Manon (sporting a beautiful green silk charity shop find) commands the front of house with impressive skill.







We deliberately staggered our order, only requesting mains after finishing our starters. I have an aversion to being rushed while dining, preferring breathers between courses. The

staff warned this might cause delays as dishes are cooked to order, but we were happy with a more relaxed experience.

As predicted by my friends, my choices hit the mark perfectly: Pork Confit Croquettes with rouille, a garlicky, mayonnaise-like sauce from Provence, France, known for its spicy, rust-coloured appearance from the Big Snacks menu, followed by The Big Pie – a rich, intense beef cheek Bourguignon with pancetta, accompanied by perfectly chargrilled hispi cabbage and tender stem broccoli. My companion's whole seabass with shrimp chicken butter was reportedly "something else".











Though thoroughly satisfied, we shared the Marmalade Ice Cream for dessert – one of only three sweet options. Barry later revealed this is made by combining homemade Seville Orange Marmalade with vanilla ice cream and brûléeing the top,

creating a delightful balance of flavours and textures.



In Barry's own words: "Barry Fish is designed for everyone. We are not a special occasion restaurant, but we do want to be a

special restaurant. It's about creating something that fits well with a community of diners – that's who I am."

I couldn't have summed it up better myself, even as a non-fish eater. Barry Fish is certainly living up to the hype generated by those lucky enough to secure a booking. In Leith's increasingly star-studded dining scene, it manages to be both special and accessible – much like the man himself.

[Barry Fish](#) is located at 62 Shore, Leith, Edinburgh

To Book – 0131 6250 000.

Instagram – www.instagram.com/chefbarrybryson

Facebook – www.facebook.com/chef.caterer.edinburgh

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