



Yes Chef

He started culinary life at The Ritz, likes Heston's style and can't resist a cheese sandwich. Jordan Cummings, head chef at Hinxton's Red Lion Inn, shares his food secrets with Alice Ryan

WHAT ARE YOUR EARLIEST MEMORIES OF COOKING?

I remember cooking for my mum and sister as a child. I'd take 20 minutes to plate up a dish, doing atrocious swipes on plates with tomato ketchup and such, trying to copy all the chefs I'd seen on TV.

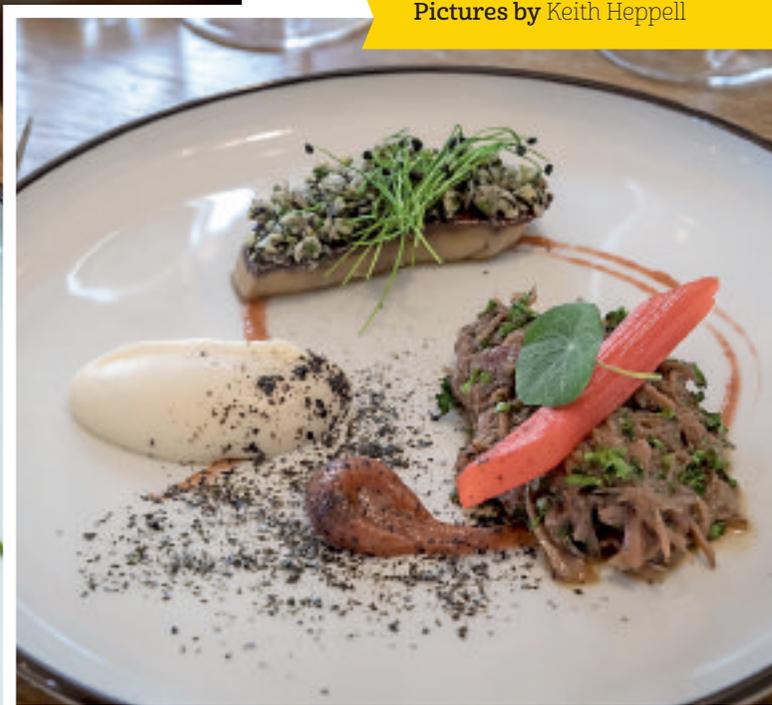
WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A CHEF?

I was very much pushed at first, but as soon as I walked into my first kitchen and felt the adrenaline of my first service I was hooked. Working every day with such passionate, creative people is inspiring.

TELL US ABOUT THE FIRST PROFESSIONAL KITCHEN YOU COOKED IN.

My first professional kitchen was at The Ritz in London, one of the world's most iconic hotels! The standards were always set to the maximum and this was embedded in you every day, using whatever means necessary. A very demanding place to start, but very inspiring.

Pictures by Keith Heppell



WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO THE RED LION?

The project. It's such a beautiful old pub in a quaint country village with bags of potential to provide that special dining experience.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE OF FOOD?

The one word I find myself repeating 10 times a day to the team is 'delicious'; every bite must be exciting and tasty. Beyond that I like to have a bit of fun with the food, keep everything fresh and bright with a little theatre. Obviously, sustainability is a big thing these days and something we take seriously here.

IF WE'VE NOT EATEN AT THE RED LION BEFORE, WHICH THREE COURSES – SIGNATURE DISHES, IF YOU WILL – SHOULD WE ORDER?

For me it has to be the duck liver. With forced rhubarb from my native Yorkshire, confit leg and a deliciously creamy celeriac puree, you can't go wrong. Follow

that up with our venison loin with snails and Boulangère potato. Finish with our banana, whisky and Tonka parfait, and I guarantee you'll leave delighted.

WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE DISH YOU'VE EVER EATEN?

As a kid my mum took me to Greece. I remember sitting on this beautiful terrace overlooking the Aegean, when the chef comes to our table and takes me into his kitchen. He let me select my fish, some beautiful fresh sardines, and showed me how to cook them. He didn't speak English, but I could feel his enthusiasm – and taste it on this simple fresh plate of food.

ANY GUILTY FOOD PLEASURES TO CONFESS?

I just love a bowl of nachos or a big cheesy sandwich. . .

WHO'S YOUR FOOD HERO?

Heston Blumenthal. While I wouldn't

dream of comparing my food to the man's wonderfully unique style, his enthusiasm and drive is purely inspirational.

WHICH THREE STORE-CUPBOARD INGREDIENTS COULD YOU NOT COOK WITHOUT?

I love to cook with Marmite! Butter is every chef's best friend, and I'm somewhat partial to a splash of sherry vinegar here and there.

WHAT WOULD YOU EAT FOR YOUR LAST SUPPER?

Beef Wellington for sure: the king of English classics.

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The Red Lion Inn is at High Street, Hinxtton. Call (01799) 530601 and see redlionhinxtton.co.uk.