

Chef's Specials

Lewis Thornhill, Head Chef at *The Devonshire Arms* at Beeley, suggests a summery recipe for warmer days

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I was raised in Melton Mowbray and first trained at Stapleford Park in Leicestershire. I spent my 20s working in London and Dublin and then worked at Hart's Restaurant in Nottingham before coming to *The Devonshire Arms* at Beeley.

How would you describe your approach to food?

I like to seek out great ingredients, treat them with respect and put together meals which people actually want to eat. My approach to cooking is to keep things simple, with a refined touch. I believe cooking seasonally is the only way forward; it's cost-effective and you work with ingredients that are at their best.



Head Chef Lewis Thornhill

'I like people to know they're eating Chatsworth lamb... I think quality and value are important'

Tell us about your menu:

The menu offers good pub food. I work closely with my supplier to ensure provenance and seasonality. I like people to know they're eating Chatsworth lamb or Evesham asparagus. I think quality and value are important nowadays in an increasingly expensive market.

Which dish would you most recommend?

The Chatsworth Estate lamb. The Farm Shop butchers prepare the lamb and we slow cook the shoulders overnight. We serve it with a North African spiced cous-cous with plenty of mint, coriander and lime juice, finished with toasted almonds to provide a real crunch. For me, the flavours are exciting and a pleasure to eat.



The Devonshire Arms, Beeley

The Brasserie at *The Devonshire Arms***Which ingredient could you not live without?**

Butter. It just makes everything better!

Any career highlights?

Reaching Head Chef position here at the *The Devonshire Arms*. After spending 15 years listening and training it's fantastic to now have full control over the food I'm presenting and let my creative side take over.

What has been your most memorable meal?

Eating at Mugaritz in Basque

country. The forward-thinking chef experiments with flavours, textures and smells – with great results. Admittedly, it's an indulgent experience, yet so insightful and inspiring.

What would you choose as your last meal on earth?

A barbecued 4-rib of beef, just delicious!

What advice would you give to a novice?

Expect to work hard. You'll get nothing from this industry unless you're prepared to put a lot in.

Which chef is your greatest inspiration?

A Head Chef I worked under called Sean Smith. He was a great leader by example. He set a high bar, never shrugged off work and showed his team the way to achieve your personal best is with exceptional standards and a good work ethic. I left working with him at sous chef level, and have carried those attributes with me since! ◆
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SOUSED MACKEREL, PICKLED CUCUMBER, CUCUMBER CONSOMMÉ, WATERCRESS AND HORSERADISH

Ingredients

2 whole mackerels
2 cucumbers

For the pickle

50g salt
150g sugar
100ml mirin
250ml white wine vinegar
5g yellow mustard seeds

To finish

Dill
Chervil (sometimes known as French parsley)
Fresh watercress
Lemon
Olive oil
Fresh horseradish (or frozen)

METHOD

Fillet the mackerel and take time to remove all bones. Set aside. Bring to the boil all the ingredients for the pickle. Once boiled, put

into a cold container and leave to cool to room temperature. Peel the cucumber and slice thinly on a Madeleine. Save all fleshy seedy parts and skins for the consommé. (Not sure where these come from? If all cuc is sliced do you keep some fleshy part in reserve, or do you mean mainly the skin?)

Take the thinly sliced cucumber and lightly dress with the cooled pickling liquor. Put the mackerel skin side down in the remaining liquor and leave for 40 minutes.

Whilst you wait take all the wastage from the peeled cucumber and blend in a blender at a rapid speed. Once blended, pour into a very fine sieve and leave to drip. A thin clean cloth would help to get the very clearest of the liquid.

Once the mackerel has cured, remove from the liquor and place on a chopping board skin side down. Then you peel the flesh away



from the membrane. This should leave the skin intact.

To assemble, add the herbs to the cucumber and lightly toss. Place in a bowl. Pour over the consommé. Place your pickled mackerel on top.

Garnish with a little watercress. Then zest of lemon, grated horseradish and drizzle with olive oil to complete.