

Project: An interview-based article to promote the John Maurice restaurant

A DYNAMIC DUO

Young chefs Andrew Brndon and Christopher Law are going all out with their first restaurant venture, John Maurice, in Swansea. Hannah Giles reports on their progress.

John Maurice may seem an unusual choice of name for a restaurant, but to Andrew Brndon and Christopher Law, it makes perfect sense. The Swansea restaurant – formerly Caterer Adopted Business Dermott’s – has been under the control of Brndon and Law since October 2001, and the business’s moniker is an amalgam of the names of Law’s late father (John) and Brndon’s late grand-father (Maurice).

The restaurant is the duo’s first business venture (Law, 31, and Brndon, 21, met at the Glyn Clydach hotel, Neath, when Law headed the brigade there) and they are keen to make their mark. “We have designed our own menu. We have kept hardly anything from Dermott’s,” says Brndon.

The two chefs, who run the kitchen on their own, change the à la carte menu monthly. It offers a choice of five starters at each course level, with an extra cheeseboard option (£3.95), and customers are spending an average £30 to £35 including wine.

On the January menu, which was introduced a week ago, the most popular main dish is proving to be pan-fried fillet of sea bass with chorizo sausage, served with basil couscous, braised baby fennel and a black olive tapenade dressing (£14.50). Among the starters, a smoked salmon and cucumber parcel filled with trout and horseradish cream mousse, served with toasted warm brioche (£5.95) stands out. Black Forest fruits served with a shortbread millefeuille and clotted cream (£2.50) tops the choice of desserts.

The duo sets great store by the fact that everything at John Maurice is prepared on the premises, including all ice-creams. “We find that our customers appreciate the effort that goes into the dishes, as well as the service that comes with it,” explains Brndon.

The restaurant’s location, in a still-developing area of Swansea, presents a challenge, but it is one Brndon and Law are overcoming. “Swansea is quite out of the way, and when we started we found that a lot of the ideas we wanted to try were not possible. We are also not in the best part of Swansea for people to come for a nice meal, but people are coming,” adds Brndon.

Among guests have been tourists from the USA, as well as former regulars from Dermott’s. Brndon says of their success: “It has been fantastic. The worst comment we have had is that we are as good as Dermott’s was.”

ENDS

Originally published in *The Caterer*: <https://www.thecaterer.com/articles/40620/a-dynamic-duo>