

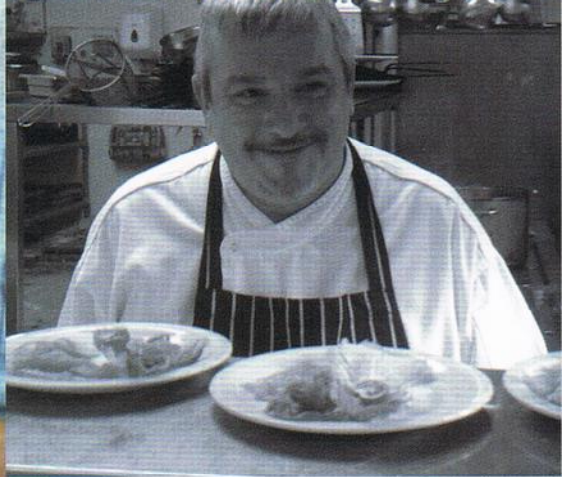


IFFLEY BLUE HIT'S THE SPOT WITH FOOD CRITIC

A recent write up by Christopher Gray in the Oxford Times described Iffley Blue – the new restaurant at Hawkwell House, as “warm welcome and excellent food in a stylish new restaurant” He ate at Iffley Blue with his companion Rosemarie and Tim Spittles – the General Manager.

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CAT SAVES IFFLEY BLUE'S NEW HEAD CHEF

A chance to read about the brains behind the food at Iffley Blue.

Name & Position: Alex Turner, Head Chef

Favourite Dish: Anything that is cooked for me...apart from that, Mediterranean and Asian food are particular favourites.

Life story: Unlike other chefs who claim to have been able to whip up a soufflé from the age of 6, my first foray into cooking was not quite so auspicious....I remember, at the age of 10, almost burning down my mum's kitchen whilst try to cook sausages - it was lucky our pet cat woke me up! However, undeterred, I had found my love of cooking, and eventually enrolled at a Catering College which enabled me to travel and work abroad, first in Jersey, then in Switzerland.

I returned to England and, together with a business partner, opened The Crown, a gastropub just outside Maidenhead. After 9 great years we sold this business and I bought a beautiful thatched-roof pub/restaurant in Wiltshire, The Royal Oak in Easterton, which I ran for 6 years before moving to Oxford, and then here, to run the kitchens at Iffley Blue.

Iffley Blue experience: I have worked in many different kitchens, but I must say that I think I've found my place here at Iffley Blue - I love the location, the design of the restaurant, and the overall ambience. I've really enjoyed using the Clay Oven here - they aren't very common in the UK, and in my opinion are the only way to make really authentic pizza....and the special Tuesday nights are going well so obviously there is something of a following already!

Hobbies: Cooking and watching cookery programmes (sad, I know!), fishing (fly, sea, and carp), painting and poetry (which makes me sound very intellectual, but does relax me)

In the write up, Mr Gray mentions the various eateries that he had eaten at where Tim Spittles, Hawkwell's GM had previously owned, and despite reminding Tim of the time when he had served them stone cold soup in a previous write up, the evening was by all accounts enjoyed by all!

Locals enjoy specials at Iffley Blue

Gourmet Pizza and a glass of wine for a tanner! Tuesday nights at Iffley Blue is becoming a regular for the residents of Iffley Village, where they (or anyone) can stroll up to their local and enjoy some of the best homemade pizza around alongside some excellent wine from The Oxford Wine Company for less than £10 per person.

Current best seller is the Chorizo and roasted pepper alongside a glass of House Merlot. Head Chef Alex Turner is always looking to introduce more inventive pizzas alongside the traditional, and his latest addition, is a King Prawn, Mussel and Chilli Pizza with garlic and rocket – probably best to share that one!!

Wine evenings all the rage

The wine tasting nights have started to become very popular. Hosted by the gregarious Neil Gladding from Oxford Wine Company, they are an informal way to taste a selection of wines alongside the excellent food at Iffley Blue. The evenings start off with Neil talking you through a selection of

whites and reds, accompanied by some nibbles from the kitchen, and then a meal afterwards with all of the wines available at discounted prices – this is all for the princely sum of £25.

Wines are picked for their interest and recent white wines sampled were Three Choirs Coleridge Hill, Gloucestershire, Dr. Loosen Estate Riesling from Mosel, and Viñas del Vero Gewürztraminer of Somontano (Spain). Food dishes included Belly of pork and ham hock terrine with tomato and grape chutney, toasted rye bread. Classic coq au vin with dauphinoise potatoes, and white chocolate and black berry cheesecake with toasted pistachio.

More improvements planned for Hawkwell House After completion of another 11 bedrooms and the launch of Iffley Blue, the management of the hotel are looking to improve the front public area and the terrace at Hawkwell House. Working sketches are being drawn up in readiness to consult with the planning department on a number of options.

General Manager Tim Spittles said "this is a logical step for us to back up the significant investment that has gone on elsewhere in the business".

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