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**Steak expectations: Scotch Beef puts the meat on the bone for top London restaurant**

One of London’s most talked about new places to eat has credited the Scotch beef it serves for helping win rave reviews.

Michelin-starred chefs and top food critics have been some of the first to book a table at The Devonshire, tucked away in central London behind Piccadilly Circus.

Charlie Carroll, founder of the well-known Flat Iron steak restaurants, is behind the Soho venture with business partner Oisin Rogers.

“We’ve only just opened, at the end of November,” says Charlie, whose team cooks the meat on a unique wood ember grill; the first of its kind in the country. “It is very rewarding to be on the radar straight away after opening. We’ve had a lot of industry interest, with three Michelin starred chefs in one week for Sunday lunch.”

Critics have been quick to book a table, with stellar write-ups from highly influential reviewers like Giles Coren who wrote in *The Times*: “What a place. What. A. Place.” Adding: “It’s just insane what the team is doing here.”

Co-founder is ex-Fat Duck and Dinner by Heston executive chef Ashley Palmer-Watts. George Donnelly is head butcher and a key member of the crew, storing the meat in an on-site ageing chamber.

Charlie buys the beef from AK Stoddart’s, in Scotland, where he has visited farms and seen the entire process from field through to the abattoir.

“The truly exceptional taste of the beef comes from a combination of things including the farmers’ husbandry, the climate and the grass. It is no exaggeration to say the Scotch Beef we are serving stands toe-to-toe with the finest from anywhere in the world.”

Most of the beef served is Aberdeen Angus, with the inspiration for the open grill cooking coming from Old England.

“Characters like Henry VIII didn’t eat their meat from an oven - it came off the roast, bringing out the traditional taste,” explains Charlie, who adds that he has visited lots of abattoirs over the years but finds “something rather special” with the way the process is dealt with at AK Stoddart’s.

Supplying top restaurants around the globe is nothing new to the beef supplier’s managing director Grant Moir, who regularly ships Scotch Beef out to places including Japan, the Far East and Europe.

“What is satisfying is the relationship with Charlie, who understands the whole supply chain and works with us in a long-term collaborative way,” says Grant, who has been in the meat industry for 30 years.

“He understands and appreciates that our butchers know the quality specification of meat he is looking for.

“It’s this way of working that more farmers are starting to understand, and I very much want to encourage. They realise what people at the top of their game, like Charlie at The Devonshire, are after in terms of fat coverage and marbling and put the effort into producing it. It’s great when you get that three-way relationship going between us, the farmers and places like The Devonshire.”

Two neighbouring farmers, Jim Fowlie and Gavin Ross, from Strichen in Aberdeenshire, are among those whose Aberdeen Angus cattle have ended up on The Devonshire’s in-demand plates.

Jim, who farms around 2,000 acres, says “it’s a real feather in the cap” to hear about the acclaim The Devonshire is receiving.

“We’re in the cold shoulder of Scotland and there is a lot of hard work goes into rearing the cattle, especially in winter, so it’s great to have the effort we put in recognised in all these reviews. If ever I get down to London I will certainly go in and try one of their steaks.”

Gavin Ross, who farms cattle, sheep and cereals (used to feed the animals) alongside his father Allan, son Stuart and wife Lindsey, says he too would like to sample The Devonshire’s traditional way of cooking meat.

“It’s great to hear of Scotch Beef where it belongs, in the finest restaurants,” says Gavin.

“It means a lot to us to hear that people all the way down in London are enjoying the meat we produce. We are all working hard and trying to tick all the boxes, looking at things like carbon footprint, so it makes it all worthwhile when people are saying the end product tastes good. Scotland’s leading the field when it comes to providing the customer with consistently premium quality meat.”

Commenting on the Devonshire, Sarah Millar, CEO of Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) concludes: “This is such a wonderful example of the farm to high-end tables that Scotch Beef, as a brand and a product, can achieve. The team at Stoddart’s has invested great care in ensuring that the meat supplied to Charlie, and his team, is consistently of exceptional quality with a fantastic associated story of dedicated farmers producing livestock to the highest of standards, from the landscapes of Scotland.”

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**Editor’s Notes**

QMS is the public body responsible for promoting the PGI labelled Scotch Beef and Scotch Lamb brands in the UK and abroad and also promoting Scottish pork products under the Specially Selected Pork logo.

Please note that the use of the word Scotch in the Scotch Beef PGI and Scotch Lamb PGI brands is correct and should not be substituted for an alternative such as Scots or Scottish. The history of the use of the word Scotch in this way, traces back to the 18th century.

QMS also helps the Scottish red meat sector improve its sustainability, efficiency and profitability and maximise its contribution to Scotland's economy.

The quality assurance schemes run by QMS cover more than 90% of livestock farmed for red meat in Scotland. They offer consumers in the UK and overseas the legal guarantee that the meat they buy has come from animals that have spent their whole lives being raised to some of the world’s strictest welfare standards.

Scotland’s beef, lamb and pork producers make an important contribution to the country’s economic, social and environmental sustainability, contributing over £2 billion to the annual GDP of Scotland and supporting around 50,000 jobs (many in fragile rural areas) in the farming, agricultural supply and processing sectors.

For more information visit www.qmscotland.co.uk or follow QMS on Facebook or Twitter.