

KITCHEN GARDEN EXPERTS

TWENTY
CELEBRATED CHEFS
& THEIR HEAD
GARDENERS

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CONTENTS

Foreword 6 • Introduction 8

- 1 THE GROVE 10
- 2 THE ETHICUREAN 20
- 3 THE GEORGE & DRAGON 30
- 4 PADSTOW KITCHEN GARDEN 38
- 5 L'ENCLUME 46
- 6 THE FELIN FACH GRIFFIN 56
- 7 THE PIG HOTEL 66
- 8 THE STAR INN 74
- 9 RIVER COTTAGE 84
- 10 JEKKA McVICAR & THE COMPANY OF COOKS 92
- 11 THE RIVER CAFÉ 102
- 12 MONACHYLE MHOR HOTEL 110
- 13 VALLUM FARM 118
- 14 THE SCOTTISH KITCHEN GARDEN 126
- 15 SIR TERENCE CONRAN & THE ALBION 134
- 16 THE WELLINGTON ARMS 144
- 17 WINTERINGHAM FIELDS 154
- 18 SKYE GYNGELL AT HECKFIELD PLACE 162
- 19 WIMPOLE HALL 170
- 20 LE MANOIR AUX QUAT'SAISONS 178

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Contact details 186 • Index 188 • Acknowledgments 192

THE WELLINGTON ARMS

Hampshire



Simon Page and chef Jason King are hands-on when it comes to growing vegetables and fruit for their pub, The Wellington Arms, in Hampshire. Both enjoyed gardening before buying the pub in 2005, and were not fazed by the overgrown garden that came with the property. They have a helpful team supporting them too – anyone from their team in the pub or kitchen who has an interest in the garden has pitched in over the years.

The garden had humble beginnings, starting with two large troughs, which were filled with ornamental shrubs and positioned in front of the pub, primarily to deter customers from parking too closely. In the next couple of years after Simon and Jason bought The Wellington Arms, and when funds and time allowed, they cleared the garden and planted a herbaceous border, laid out four raised beds, established a mini-orchard and put up a polytunnel. The raised beds are made from sturdy sleepers. They are beautifully designed, with a box ball at each of the four corners and strawberry plants providing the remainder of the ‘edging’.

Growing their own vegetables determines what features on the menu. One of Jason’s popular dishes is twice-baked soufflé, and depending on the season it is adapted to incorporate asparagus, followed by leek and courgette and then spinach.

Courgette and pumpkin flowers are a menu highlight too, and are a prized crop, as they are expensive and difficult for a wholesaler to supply. They grow in abundance at The Wellington Arms, because Simon and Jason have taken the unorthodox step of

OPPOSITE Topiary box balls are used to add an element of design and structure to the raised beds.

BELOW Containers filled with herbs and herbaceous plants help Simon and Jason make the most of their growing space.



The grower,
Simon Page



The chef,
Jason King



GAME TERRINE OF VENISON, RABBIT, WOOD PIGEON & PORK WITH OUR BRAMLEY APPLE CHUTNEY & PICKLED SHALLOTS

SERVES 10

INGREDIENTS

TERRINE

200g/7oz minced venison from the shoulder or leg
 1 boneless wild rabbit, with its heart, kidney and liver
 2 boneless wood pigeon, with their hearts and livers
 300g/10oz free-range belly pork
 150g/5oz free-range pork fat or speck
 Salt for the confit, plus 1 tsp salt
 1 tbsp duck fat
 3 juniper berries, crushed
 2 sprigs of thyme, with the stems removed
 1 tsp mace
 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
 1 1/2 tsp pepper
 20 thin slices of pancetta
 4 bay leaves

BRAMLEY APPLE CHUTNEY

1.5kg/3 1/3lb cooking apples, peeled and diced
 350g/12oz onions, finely chopped
 200g/7oz muscovado soft dark brown sugar
 400ml/2/3 pint malt vinegar
 1 tbsp chilli powder or flakes
 200g/7oz raisins
 2 pieces, 7cm/3in long, of fresh root ginger, grated
 1 tbsp fennel seeds
 4 cloves
 1 tsp ground coriander seeds

SHALLOT BRINE

1 litre/1 3/4 pints water
 250g/9oz coarse rock salt
 500g/1lb 1oz small banana shallots, peeled but leaving the root cores intact

PICKLING LIQUID

10 whole black peppercorns
 5 fennel seeds
 2 cloves
 2 bay leaves
 10 coriander seeds
 1 litre/1 3/4 pints malt vinegar
 180g/6oz brown sugar
 2 red Dutch chillies, sliced thickly on the diagonal
 2.5cm/1in piece of fresh root ginger, crushed

TO SERVE

Extra-virgin olive oil, to drizzle
 Pepper

You may be lucky enough to have a cousin in the family with a gun, to provide you with the odd bit of game. However, if you do not, Jason suggests you ask your butcher in advance to bone and coarsely mince the game for you. At The Wellington Arms Jason confits the livers and hearts and put them into the terrine whole, to create an interesting cross section when the terrine is sliced and served. Alternatively you could mince them into the mix. Your terrine will taste better over time, so remember to make it a few days in advance. A really good tip from Jason is to retain the pickling liquid from the shallots as it can be used again for many things, such as a base for chutney, escabeche or even more pickles. You simply have to strain your liquid and reboil it before using a second time.

METHOD

- For the terrine**, on the largest setting of your mincer, pass through the venison, rabbit, wood pigeon, pork belly and pork fat (or speck). To confit the livers, hearts and kidneys cover them with salt and leave overnight.
- The following morning, preheat the oven to 160°C/325°F/gas mark 3. Wash the salt off the offal. Warm a little duck fat in a saucepan and add the offal; cover with tinfoil, then cook in the oven, until tender. Mix together with crushed juniper berries, thyme leaves, mace, garlic, 1 tsp salt and pepper. Cover with clingfilm and allow to infuse overnight in the refrigerator.



SIMON & JASON'S KITCHEN GARDEN SECRETS

- **Be clever with space:** Jason and Simon underplant tomatoes with courgettes and pumpkins to get double the crop from the same space. This is essential when you have limited room in which to grow plants.
- **Biological digester:** Use the 'Green Cone' composter to transform food waste into a liquid feed that seeps into the ground. Available from some councils or online.
- **Long season:** Extend the seasons by successional planting crops where possible or by researching the best varieties to provide early, main and late crops.
- **Sprouting seeds:** In Jason's opinion sprouting seeds are much better than micro-crops, being more textured and flavourful, and are very easy to grow in a glass jar on a windowsill. Companies now specialize in providing organic fresh seed that is easy to grow.
- **Mini-potager:** Create a mini-potager in a bed or border. Ornamental plants provide colour and texture often when your vegetables are either small and uninteresting or else when they are going over and looking untidy.

