

PIECE DE RESISTANCE

With more than a soupçon of Gallic charm, Andrew Kay finds **Herve Guyat** and his team at **The New Steine Hotel & Bistro** are true bon viveurs

There is a corner of Brighton that is forever... France? Yes, in the heart of Kemp Town Herve Guyat and his team wave the tricolor high above The New Steine and Gullivers hotels. Although their business is Brighton based, they're French to the core, and it shows, from the eclectic and sparkling design, an individual sense of style rather than a sheep-like adherence to a corporate mentality, and lashings of passion and humour. You don't have to be there long before you are joining in with the laughter.

As a hotel the business runs well. It's a warm and friendly place that's welcoming to all, with rooms of all sizes from singles to family rooms – all en-suite.

But for those of us who are resident here in Brighton the real draw must be the New Steine Bistro. I first visited with my parents, and we all immediately fell in love with both the setting and the food. Service is key to a great dining experience and in Stephane's capable hands you are bound to have a good time. His passion for the food and his tireless sense of fun made our evening bubble along.

The food is equally good: no fancy pants fashion fads here, but some well executed classics. A classic fish soup is delivered in text book order with crisp croutons, good cheese and vibrant rouille. A magret of duck has crisp skin and succulent flesh, and their pomme dauphinoise is just like mamam used to make, or, in my case, my fiercely Parisian tutor who believed that the only good French food available was in France. Well, I hate to contradict her but there is great and honest French cooking here – including an historic crème brûlée.

It's brilliant value too, with a set price of £14.50 for three courses in the week, rising to a still modest £18.50 at weekends. Two courses is,



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of course, less. And just because the menu is inexpensive, it does not mean they skimp in their sourcing. In fact, they have a passion for all things local, and a great deal of their produce is from Sussex, from the bacon and sausages, honey and jams at breakfast, to the meats and vegetables used at dinner. Their loyalty to serving locally sourced food is second to none.

The dining room is small and cosy, but downstairs they have a larger space, prettily decorated with fin-de-siècle murals. You can book to use the room for a variety of purposes, from small scale conferencing with catering if you wish, to private dinners, parties,

wedding and civil partnership celebrations. With a maximum capacity of 26 sitting down and 70 for standing up parties, it's an ideal medium sized space, and, once again, the food offered is of top quality at very affordable prices, as is the well conceived wine list.

I have attended fabulous wine-tasting gourmet dinners here with friends and can safely say that as well as being gourmet they are also generous to a fault with lashings of delicious wines, great experts to help us enjoy them, and delicious food too. A popular event coming up is their Bastille Day Supper Club on Wednesday 14 July, run by the amazing Henry Butler from The Butlers Wine Cellar.

The team are also committed to displaying quality artwork throughout the year and host regular exhibitions. May will see an exciting exhibition of Romany Mark Bruce, the sculptor of the long-awaited Brighton Aids Memorial in the New Steine, showing a new collection vibrant acrylic paintings based on the human form, together with exclusive sketches of the Aids Memorial, in support of the Sussex Beacon. Romany Mark Bruce is one of the brightest stars on the Brighton's vibrant art scene.

During the 2010 Brighton Festival they have decided to revive their interest in cabaret too. The Pink Sinatra event promises to be an evening of great food, great songs and great fun too – swing with a twist, they say – and I'm sure they mean it too. Entry to the show is a modest £6 and runs throughout May on Thursdays and Fridays at



7.45pm, Saturdays at 7.45pm and 9.30pm, and Sundays at 6pm. On the 6th, 14th and 21st May there is a dinner and show deal at £27.95, with a three-course dinner at 6.30pm followed by the show. Booking for this is essential.

With so much going on it's a wonder how they deal with the day to day running of the hotel, but they do, and the place is always alive with happy smiling people enjoying a break by the sea, or choosing the



less formal atmosphere when here on business.

Most importantly though is their open attitude: everyone gets the same charming welcome – guests and diners, locals and visitors alike – and when you have been once, you will want to return again and again.

The New Steine Hotel & Bistro and Gullivers Hotel, 10, 11 & 12a New Steine, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 1PB, 01273 681546/ 01273 695415, www.newsteinehotel.com or www.gullivershotel.com

COMPETITION

Win a dinner for two with a bottle of wine by answering the following question:

Who is the President of France?

Email your answer to competitions@thelatest.co.uk with 'New Steine' in the subject box. Don't forget to add your name and contact details. Alternatively write on a postcard to the address at the front of the magazine. Closing date: 17 May 2010. Entrants must be aged 18 or over.

WIN!

OFFER

Bring this feature along to the Bistro during May to receive a 10% discount on your food bill.

