

Kent on Sunday

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Star turn as Michelin chefs team up for special dinner

Chapter One's Andy McLeish talks to **Greg Miles** about why he and other top chefs are raising money for charity the Nicholls Spinal Injury Foundation...



KITCHEN WHIZZ: Chapter One's Andy McLeish will be joined in the kitchen by fellow Michelin star chefs

THE county's top five chefs will unite in the kitchen for a spectacular charity dining event next month.

Graham Garrett, Andy McLeish, Daniel Hatton, Stephen Harris and Tim Johnson, who all work in Michelin star restaurants, will be creating a menu to die for at The Chapter One, in Farnborough Common, near Orpington, in aid of the Nicholls Spinal Injury Foundation on March 17.

But the quintet will not just be turning up on the night to cook, they will also be going out hunting the food on a fishing trip and shoot.

"We have never done it before," said McLeish, the restaurant's chef patron.

"I was speaking to Graham, from the West House, and Stephen at The Sportsman and thought it would be a good idea if we got together."

The menu will start with champagne and canapés before amuse-bouche of local oysters from Stephen Harris; roast saddle of local wild rabbit from Daniel

Hatton; warm escabeche of wild seabass from Graham Garrett; roast saddle of Chart Farm sika venison from McLeish; finished with warm brioche and bramley apple charlotte from Tim Johnson.

There is also a pre-dessert dish of blood orange trifle being prepared by McLeish and his team.

"We sat down and talked the menu through," said McLeish.

"Everybody has a different style; Stephen is very rustic with a lot of emphasis on local produce and Graham is also very much into local produce too.

"We are going out fishing for the seabass and hunting for the venison too.

"We want to make it completely field to fork. So many chefs advertise themselves as field to fork, but we do it as much as we can, it's a passion.

"Choosing a deer in the wild beats picking one up at a market.

"I don't shoot for the trophy, I shoot for the quality of meat. I wouldn't want to rely on a market where the butcher doesn't know

the difference between the deer."

All the proceeds from the seven-course event will be benefiting a charity which is particularly close to McLeish's heart.

Daniel Nicholls, who the foundation is named after, was a weekend runner at Chapter One before he was paralysed from the arms down after breaking his neck.

It happened in 2003, when he dived into a wave on Bondi beach in Australia and hit his head on an unseen sandbank beneath the water. His father David Nicholls had worked with McLeish earlier in his career.

"The charity is quite close to our hearts," said McLeish.

"We all hear stories like this, but I know the guy. It really brings it home. It was such a huge shock."

■ Tickets for the event are priced at £120 per person, which is inclusive of wine paired with each course. To book contact Cheryl Almond via email cheryl@chaptersrestaurants.com, or by calling the restaurant on 01689 854 848.

THE CHEFS

Andy McLeish

Chef patron at Chapter One
PREVIOUSLY worked with Nico Ladenis at Chez Nico, at Hotel The Ritz and in Koh Samui, Thailand, before taking up the head chef job at The Dining Room in the Landmark Hotel and latterly the executive chef and director at Chapter One.

Daniel Hatton

Head chef at Thackeray's
HAS gone full circle after starting at Thackeray's aged 16. Now back as head chef after spells with Gordon Ramsay and Marco Pierre White, while also heading up the Hengist in Aylesford before his return.

Graham Garrett

Chef/owner at The West House
FORMER rock drummer who has run restaurants for Nico Ladenis and Richard Corrigan and now has his own in Biddenden which was awarded its first Michelin star in 2004.

Stephen Harris

Chef patron and founder at The Sportsman
TOOK over the Sportsman pub in 1999 with his wine expert brother Phil. Grows his own veg and churns his own butter. Awarded first Michelin star in 2008, and last year received the National Restaurant Awards' Chef's Chef of the Year.

Tim Johnson

Chef/owner at Apicius
LEARNT his trade under Brian Turner before becoming third chef to Gary Rhodes at the Castle Hotel. Also worked for Sir Paul Getty and with Roger Verge at the three Michelin starred Moulin de Mougin in France. Opened up the Apicius in Cranbrook 10 years ago.