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A vision realised

It's **all** about **provenance**, openness, honesty and **confidence** at the new **Ludlow Kitchen** in Bromfield

Ludlow Kitchen, the restaurant that forms part of Ludlow Food Centre, has expanded its operation, increasing covers from 60 to 140 and introducing an evening restaurant service.

The centre is part of the Earl of Plymouth's Oakly Park Estate, which extends to approximately 8,000 acres of Shropshire

countryside, and prides itself on the fact that 80% of the food it sells comes from Shropshire and the surrounding counties of Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Powys.

The restaurant is managed by Ben Crouch and its new layout includes a soft seating area, a log-burning stove, a sharing table and a garden room, while a state-of-the-art kitchen with open pass affords diners a view of their food being freshly prepared.

Head chef Damien McNamara's menu is seasonal and changes to reflect the abundance of local produce the region has to offer. Provenance is a key focus with virtually all the food for the restaurant being sourced in-house from Ludlow Food Centre, named UK Farm Retailer Of the Year 2013 at the National Farmers' Retail and Markets' Association Awards, just 100 metres away.

Diners can expect homemade bread which is

baked seven days a week, together with cheese, yogurt, butter, ice cream, jams, pickles, chutneys, cookies and cakes. Coffee is freshly roasted on site in the centre's coffee roasting room and ground to order by a barista. The beef, lamb and Gloucester Old Spot pork are reared on the estate and a selection of seasonal fruit and vegetables are grown in Lady Windsor's walled garden less than a mile away. The crockery for the restaurant is handmade at Wenlock Pottery.

"Our vision for Ludlow Kitchen was to showcase the provenance of our produce and bring an openness, confidence and honesty to our offering," says Edward Berry, managing director at Ludlow Food Centre. "I honestly believe that we are as local as you can possibly get and I want our customers to believe this is the best locally sourced food they will ever find - so it was imperative that the designs for Ludlow Kitchen mirrored this vision."



"It's not about trends and fads, we're here to stay. We want customers to walk in and say 'I get this place – I know I'm going to be looked after here and eat great food'. It required informality by day, moving into sufficiently grown up in the evening for a restaurant feel."

The brief to commercial catering design company Catering Design Group (CDG), which carried out the refurbishment, was to create a relaxed and diverse environment that was both friendly and inviting. It was important that the space showcased the exceptional quality and provenance of the food, together with the fresh, local, seasonal ingredients. The dining areas had to provide customers with choice, and appeal to local visitors and tourists of all ages.

The space was trebled to allow for the increase in numbers and the existing 'barn-style' building with its

exposed beams was replicated in the new build. Different areas were created using a mix of floor finishes, fabrics and textures, with the option to close the new garden room for private functions for up to 40 guests.

The new design includes varying furniture styles – high seating for customers waiting to be seated at their tables and a large rustic reclaimed sharing table for individuals, families and large groups of friends. The leather-upholstered booths and fixed seating, with contrasting buttoned backs, create more intimate dining, while a blend of painted and upholstered oak chairs sit together in sympathetic tones and colours.

In the entrance area, a bespoke feature light utilises recycled wine bottles displayed over a chef's table to showcase tempting pastries and cakes to whet the appetites of arriving customers. Hand-crafted wall mounted and free-standing display units are prominently located to showcase the centre's products.



The open-style kitchen, which has doubled in size to 60sqm, features equipment that gives a high-end aesthetic appearance. The design and specification makes best use of the narrow space and is a perfect platform to display the artistry of the chefs who cater for breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea and dinner.

Dishes include Ludlow Smokehouse smoked salmon, scrambled eggs, toasted soda bread for breakfast; rabbit terrine, leek and mushroom salad at lunchtime; and pork belly, roast apple, pomme saladaise, celeriac purée on the new dinner menu, which is served from 6:30pm with last orders at 9:00pm.

"CDG realised our vision for the space and we have what we set out to achieve," says Berry. "What we've created with them is a space that has a down to earth feel. It has a certain level of sophistication with some stylish aspects and a bit of the 'wow' factor but not in a London way. They brought lots of added style, particularly in terms of the lighting, furniture design and table-tops; and designed zones, ensured good flow of the space and made a great feature of the bar area."

"We opened for business on the 25 March 2013. To date, customers have increased by 10% and spend is up by around 30-40% by day. Our evening clientele is new and I'm delighted to say we had 40 covers on Saturday evening which is great."

www.ludlowkitchen.co.uk

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