

Rudding Park's Chef Voted Number One

Stephen Ashburn, Rudding Park's Conference and Banqueting Head Chef, was awarded "Banqueting Chef of the Year" by the prestigious Craft Guild of Chefs at their 2008 awards ceremony held in London.

In the competition Stephen beat off chefs from some massive conference and banqueting operations – his fellow finalists were Nigel Boschetti, Executive Chef of the large conference and banqueting hotel, the Royal Lancaster in London and Steve Golding, Executive Chef of Sodexo Prestige, nationwide contract caterers.

The Craft Guild of Chefs Awards are the definitive chefs' accolade and are open to all chefs across the UK. To be nominated for the Banqueting Chef of the Year Award Stephen Ashburn was required to demonstrate an innovative approach and show outstanding commitment, producing consistently high quality food.

Peter Banks, Managing Director of Rudding Park supported Stephen's nomination with a ringing endorsement, saying: "Stephen is the epitome of a true Banqueting Chef. He is calm, accurate, quality focussed and extremely organised. Stephen's motto is that he sees no reason why the food for a function of 800 people should be of any lower quality than a meal for two".

"We are delighted that Stephen won this award, he is passionate about the quality of the food he produces, is incredibly hard working and a marvellous leader of his team. This type of loyalty is rare nowadays but the brigade of chefs he leads repay his loyalty with the utmost respect and dedication."

Commenting on his award, Stephen said: "It is a real honour to have won "Banqueting Chef 2008" from the Craft Guild of Chefs, but the real praise should go to the excellent team we have here in the Conference and Banqueting kitchen at Rudding Park."

Peter Banks concludes: "We are passionate about the quality we offer our guests; from a conference dinner, to lunch at Clocktower or a marquee event for 800. Behind the scenes that means Stephen Ashburn and his team work incredibly hard and we're delighted that Stephen (and hence his team) receive the recognition they deserve, by winning this coveted Craft Guild of Chefs award."

- Ends -

Picture: Nick Vardis, Chairman Craft Guild of Chefs presenting Stephen Ashburn with his award along with Sponsor, Tony Reynolds from Reynolds Catering Supplies.

Notes to Editors:

Situated on the outskirts of Harrogate in North Yorkshire, Rudding Park is privately owned by Simon Mackaness and his family. Over the last 30 years, a comprehensive programme of improvement and redevelopment has been carried out, which includes the opening of Rudding Holiday Park in 1978, the renovation of Rudding Park House in 1987 and the subsequent opening of the 50-room hotel in 1997.

A new development of 18 luxury holiday lodges adjacent to the golf course opened in May 2006 and a £1 million refurbishment of the award-winning Clocktower restaurant was completed in 2006.

The estate also comprises a fantastic golfing facility - the 18 hole, par 72, Hawtree golf course set in mature Parkland, the 6 hole Repton Short course created to USGA specifications, the Golf Academy with Professional tuition in both inside teaching bays and outside practice greens and bunkers and an 18 bay floodlit driving range.

**Rudding Park – Voted 12th in the Top 100 Luxury Hotels in the World
- Tripadvisor Travellers Choice Awards 2008 -**

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