

= The Whitebrook =

The Whitebrook , formerly known as The Crown at Whitebrook , is a restaurant with rooms in Whitebrook , 6 miles ( 9 @. @ 7 km ) south @-@ south @-@ east of Monmouth , Monmouthshire , Wales , near the River Wye and the border with England . The building is thought to date from the 17th century and by the 19th century it was used as a roadside inn . Its restaurant was run by Chef Patron James Sommerin until 2013 ; it gained a Michelin star in 2007 . It contains eight double rooms and a 2 @-@ acre ( 0 @. @ 81 ha ) garden . On 7 March 2013 , it closed because of financial difficulties ; at the time it had the longest held Michelin star in Wales . Critics praised the food under Sommerin , but have criticised the difficulty in finding the restaurant . It re @-@ opened in October 2013 under new chef and owner Chris Harrod , and regained the Michelin star in 2014 . Harrod serves a menu using locally produced meat and vegetables along with foraged ingredients such as charlock , hedge bedstraw and pennywort .

= = Description = =

The Whitebrook is a restaurant with rooms located 6 miles ( 9 @. @ 7 km ) south @-@ south @-@ east of Monmouth in Monmouthshire , Wales . It is near the River Wye and the border with England . It is located on a minor road running between Lydart and the A466 road at Bigsweir . The restaurant can seat up to 34 customers , and the kitchen is run by four staff plus Harrod . In addition to the restaurant itself , there are eight double rooms ; as of 2016 , four had been recently renovated . They each look out over either the adjoining garden or the valley . It had previously operated with a further bedroom under the previous owner . There is also a apartment onsite for the manager of the premises . The building has an adjoined garden of 2 @-@ acre ( 0 @. @ 81 ha ) .

= = Menu = =

The menu under Chris Harrod is seasonal , using locally produced meat and vegetables . Tasting menu dishes include asparagus which comes from the nearby Wye Valley , while turbot from Cornwall is used . There are foraged items included in the menu , such as hedge bedstraw and pennywort . Charlock is served with crab , while hogweed is used in an asparagus based dish . He uses foams on dishes , including on a Jerusalem artichoke starter comprising caramelized artichokes with goat 's curd , trompette mushrooms and Parmigiano @-@ Reggiano .

Another dish which highlights local vegetables is a salt baked turnip side which accompanies duck . Harrod explained " Turnips don 't deserve their unloved image , they add a wonderful freshness to a dish . " The signature of the restaurant is a suckling pig themed dish , incorporating a pork shoulder which is cooked over two days in a bain @-@ marie , served with shallot and mugwort . This is accompanied by a croquette made from pig 's head and a pork cutlet with celeriac , pear , sorrel and cauliflower mushrooms . The restaurant serves breakfast to residents staying in the rooms , which includes Trealy Farm produced sausages and bacon .

= = History = =

The restaurant claims that the building dates from the 17th century , although little is known of its history . The village of Whitebrook developed as a centre of water @-@ powered industry , with wireworks and later paper mills . The Whitebrook was run as a roadside inn by the Seaward family , and later the Ricketts family , in the second half of the 19th century .

It remained in use as a small public house , until it was extensively refurbished and reopened as a high quality restaurant . It was awarded a coveted Michelin star in 2007 , one of thirteen newly starred restaurants in the UK in that year 's Guide . In 2010 , Martin Blunos joined Crown restaurants as executive chef of the group which oversaw both the Crown at Whitebrook and the Crown at Celtic Manor . That same year , it won a Gold Award from Visit Wales for the rooms on site . As of 2011 it was one of only four establishments in Wales to hold a Michelin star . During the

same year , it was named the Welsh Restaurant of the Year by the AA . In 2012 , it was ranked as the 27th best restaurant in the UK by the Good Food Guide with a score of seven out of ten .

It closed on 7 March 2013 due to financial difficulties ; twenty staff were reported to have lost their jobs . The closure was blamed on recent poor weather , and on economic circumstances . In April 2013 , the building was marketed for sale for £ 850 @, @ 000 or for a yearly lease with an upfront payment of £ 50 @, @ 000 . At the time it had been the longest standing Michelin starred restaurant in Wales .

In August 2013 , it was announced that it would reopen in October under a new chef @-@ owner , Chris Harrod . Harrod had previously worked under Raymond Blanc at two Michelin starred restaurant Le Manoir aux Quat 'Saisons . He had been looking for a restaurant with rooms to purchase , having originally thought to look for one in the Chiltern Hills where they could be added . Harrod said that " I went and had a look and was amazed to find that the Crown at Whitebrook ticked all the boxes for what I was looking for . It had the location , the quality suppliers and I knew straight away that I had been looking in the wrong place . " The Crown at Whitebrook reopened the following October , and gained a new Michelin star under the new team in the 2014 list . In February 2015 , the restaurant was renamed to The Whitebrook .

= = Reception = =

= = = Under Sommerin = = =

Victor Lewis @-@ Smith reviewed the restaurant for The Guardian in 2005 , thought that a spring onion risotto accompaniment to a pan fried seabass tasted so good that it would have been sufficient as a main course itself and was also quite pleased that crêpe suzette was served on a trolley for table side service . Claire Ogden visited the restaurant for the Metro newspaper shortly after it was first awarded a Michelin star in 2007 . She thought that a John Dory main course was " pristine " , and overall thought that the star was well deserved . The only negative thing she had to say about the experience was a toffee foam served on top of a pear granita which she described as " flimsy @-@ flavoured " . It was named the best restaurant in Britain by Les Routiers later that year . The critic from the Western Mail stated in 2008 that " the menu is short and to the point , with around five choices for each course . The wine list is huge , an insurmountable challenge for me but another 's utopia . " However , he remarked that the main course was " genuinely brilliant food " and deserving of its Michelin star .

It was awarded the wine award for Wales by The Automobile Association in 2008 . Matthew Fort of The Guardian described its location in 2009 , " The Crown is not the easiest place in the world to find . It lies off a narrow lane winding between steeping , canopied hills in an odd corner between Monmouth and Chepstow . In spite of its lost world location , the Crown has been a beacon of gastronomic adventure for at least 30 years ? those with long memories will recall Stephen Bull carving out his reputation here . " He said of the food , " There is clearly a distinctive palate at work here . In lesser hands , such a meal could be not so much a car crash as a multiple pile @-@ up , but it is not , because the ingredients are handled with originality , assurance and , more importantly , a keen sense of pleasure . "

= = = Under Harrod = = =

Tony Naylor , writing for The Guardian in 2016 , said that the menu featured unusual ingredients which complement each other resulting in " astonishing depths of flavour " . But he added that not all dishes were as good as each other , saying that a broccoli amuse @-@ bouche had akin to " a car veering on to a motorway ? s rumble strips " . The Whitebrook has retained the Michelin star through to 2016 , which it first earned under Harrod in 2014 .