

Picture: James Douglas 093917_9



Jenny and Gerald Hyett from Pound Farm Shop in Whaddon

Picture: Simon Pizzey 971476_7



Rob and Andrew Herring at Portway Farm Shop in Upton St. Leonards

LOCAL FOOD HEROES



Helen and David Everitt-Matthias

Stephen Wheeler, commercial manager at speciality food company Mise en Place, now part of Cheltenham-based Creed Foodservice, is responsible for sourcing the best food ingredients for top chefs across the county

DAVID and Helen Everitt-Matthias are the owners of Le Champignon Sauvage restaurant in Cheltenham – the only two Michelin starred restaurant in Gloucestershire and one of only 15 others in the UK holding this culinary badge of honour. Life could easily have taken a very different course for chef David. “My mother was a dreadful cook,” he says. “Her idea of haute cuisine was a supermarket flan case, filled with a tin of sliced peaches in orange jelly. My aunt inspired me with her Suffolk country cooking. When I left school I was either going to be an Army cook, or a commis chef in a London Mayfair hotel.”

David chose the latter, where he met Helen who was working front of house. David was recently awarded an honorary PhD at the university of Gloucestershire for his work with food, but he’s just at home with books as he is with chef’s knives. As well as writing two of his own recipe books, David has a private collection of over 1,000 cookery books. “My oldest book dates back to 1680, written in Kentucky. I regularly browse my bookshelves for new combinations,

methods and ingredients,” David says. So where are the new ideas in cooking going to come from in the next few years? “Scandinavia is re-inventing its traditional dishes resulting in some wonderful flavours. I think we’re starting to do the same here – taking a regional classic and enriching it with indigenous ingredients and contemporary seasoning,” he says. When David and Helen aren’t working (they haven’t missed a service in 22 years) they often take their dogs into the countryside foraging for wild ingredients. “I love the seasonal food England has to offer,” David says. “Wild garlic, local asparagus, pink gooseberries from Primrose Vale, squashes from Over Farm and woodland mushrooms from the Forest of Dean.” So what does a top chef eat on his night off? “Fish and chips or a mega-hot take-away curry,” he smiles. And for Christmas lunch they will be tucking into roast turkey and Brussels sprouts, although David will have knocked up a few home-made venison sausages to go with it – while Helen’s speciality is the two years old vintage Christmas pudding.

