



A FRESH PERSPECTIVE

Jamie's original east London restaurant, Fifteen, has relaunched with a sleeker, more modern look - while its new head chef Jon Rotheram has rewritten the menu, making seasonal produce the star

Words **Claire Nelson** Recipes **Jon Rotheram** Photography **David Loftus**

There's a change in the air. And behind the doors of Jamie's iconic London restaurant Fifteen, things are certainly looking different. After ten years making a serious name for itself, the restaurant has had a makeover; it's sleeker, fresher and "a bit more grown up", remarks Jon Rotheram, Fifteen's new head chef.

Jamie and Jon were at school together and both would go on to become chefs. But Jon was determined to forge his own path. His dream to work in a kitchen kicked in at an early age, thanks to growing up in a foodie family and watching the likes of Keith Floyd cook his way around Europe with fascinating produce - something Jon thought was "so cool".

After earning his stripes as a chef at the Admiral Codrington, the world-renowned Groucho Club and 192 in Notting Hill, Rotheram became sous chef at the acclaimed St John Hotel. And it was here, in a somewhat serendipitous turn, Jon and Jamie's paths would cross again.

"I went to St John Hotel last year and had the most incredible meal," says Jamie, "I went to thank the chef and found this smiley, floppy-haired, handsome chap. I felt like he knew me... but it took me a little while to figure out who he was. Suddenly it clicked, and I was 15 years old again on the back of the school bus with this lad who I always got on so well with."

When St John Hotel went into administration last October (now mercifully bought out), Jamie jumped at the chance to get the chef on board for the revamped Fifteen. As Jon recalls, "He said, look, do you want to come to Fifteen and give it a bit more life?" The prospect of tearing up the menu and starting afresh was an exciting one, and has allowed Jon to be more creative. "The great thing about Fifteen is that we can try anything. We've really got no boundaries."

The restaurant's updated menu focuses on a small but varied selection of inexpensive dishes, designed with sampling and sharing in mind. Just as well - it's hard to pick only one option from mouthwatering morsels such as cockles and pig's cheek with butter beans and laverbread, bocca di lupo with ricotta and nettles, or a zingy lemon meringue pie. Jamie describes Jon's cooking as "all man but quite feminine at the same time, which is a really difficult balance to achieve - it has depths of flavour and incredible textures and notes."

Looking over the menu it's clear that seasonal produce is the star but, rather than





The restaurant has had a cool new makeover, complete with revamped bar. Watch the apprentices hard at work in the kitchen or at the woodfired oven

selecting ingredients and seeking them out, Jon finds out what's available and weaves the menu around it. The seasons, you might say, dictate dinner. "Your body tells you what you want," says Jon. "Now I want everything to be green, fresh, light and lovely; in winter I want someone to put their arms around me and give me pumpkin or squash. And that's how we are driven - by what's going on outside."

Fifteen might be inspired by British produce, yet there's still a European element to it - from its Italian olive oil to artichokes from France. "We're British-driven, but I don't want us to say we're a British restaurant. You're not going to get fish and chips - you know what I mean?"

That said, fish is absolutely on the menu. Speaking to suppliers on a daily basis means the chef can keep in touch with what's going on - Did the boats go out? What's good today? "The great thing about Fifteen is we can change things that just like that. And bless him, Jamie's given us the freedom to do so quickly."

Jamie, keen to take a step back and take on more of a supportive role for his new head chef, says, "This is more about Jon identifying with his own cooking rather than with mine, or Fifteen's, or any of his past employers'. The menu is so blatantly Jon's own style and what I've seen so far is really exciting."

It's not just the menu that looks impressive - the whole restaurant has been restyled. Sitting at the plush new bar with its slick cocktail menu, housed within the beautiful old brickwork building, there's an element of Manhattan about it. "I want that bar to be buzzing and people spilling out into the street in summer, like they do in Soho," says Jon.

Of course, the heart of Fifteen is still its apprenticeship scheme, offering chef training to young unemployed people. For Jon, who enjoys teaching, working with the apprentices has been another new experience. "What's lovely is that they really want to do it. It's nice to see them actually turn a corner." And he's keen for the trainees to be seen, more than ever, as chefs in their own right.

"I think it's time we stopped saying, 'Oh, we're a charity' and actually say 'We produce some bad-ass chefs - and by the way, we're a charity.' I want Fifteen to be a restaurant where you actually walk out and go 'wow'."

With a new look - and a new outlook - it's exciting to see how Fifteen will develop in its second decade. Jamie is right to be optimistic. "Although I'm obviously biased, Fifteen is one of the top ten places to eat in London right now. And I'm sure - with glowing reviews already - that people are going to love it."

LEMON SOLE WITH BROWN SHRIMP, CUCUMBER & ALMONDS

Serves 1

- 20ml olive oil
- 60g butter
- 1 lemon sole (400-600g)
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ¼ cucumber, sliced 5mm thick
- 30g peeled brown shrimp
- 10g wild fennel, thinly sliced
- 10g whole almonds

1 Heat the olive oil in a frying pan over a high heat until almost smoking. Add the butter, followed by your fish and cook on each side for about 4 minutes, or until golden brown.

2 Once cooked, transfer the fish to a plate (keeping all the juices in the pan) and keep it warm. Return the pan to a low heat. Add the lemon juice and stir, making a nutty brown butter.

3 Remove the pan from the heat and add all of the remaining ingredients. Spoon this over the sole and serve.

Per serving 983 cal, 79.7g fat (35.2g saturated), 61.5g protein, 3.5g carbs, 0.9g sugars

ROAST CHICKEN WITH ARTICHOKE & LOVAGE MAYONNAISE

To get the best flavour, baste the chicken using a herb brush - just tie sprigs of sage, rosemary or thyme to the handle of a wooden spoon.

Serves 2

- 1.5kg chicken
- 4 small violet artichokes
- 1 bunch of spring onions, finely chopped
- 2 baby gems, finely chopped
- A few sprigs of sage, rosemary or thyme for your herb brush
- 500ml chicken stock

Brine

- 6 bay leaves
- 5g all spice
- 5 juniper berries
- 100g sea salt

Lovage mayonnaise

- 1 bunch of lovage
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 garlic clove



EASY & ELEGANT

LEMON SOLE WITH BROWN SHRIMP, CUCUMBER & ALMONDS

- ½ tsp dijon mustard
- ¾ tsp lemon juice
- 300ml olive oil

1 Combine all the brine ingredients in a pan and bring to the boil. Stir until the salt has dissolved then remove from the heat and leave to cool. Once cooled, place the whole chicken in the brine and refrigerate for 24 hours.

2 To make the mayonnaise, blanch the lovage in a bowl of boiling water until soft (no more than 30 seconds), then refresh in iced water. Squeeze out any excess water and add to a food processor with the egg yolks, garlic, mustard, lemon juice and 1 tsp salt, and blitz until it forms a smooth paste and the yolks become lighter.

3 With the processor still running, slowly incorporate the olive oil until it forms the consistency of double cream. (This makes 1 jam jar of mayo. Store any leftovers in the fridge.)

4 Trim your artichokes and remove the chokes. Cook the artichokes in a pan of boiling water until tender, about 4 minutes. Heat a glug of oil

in a frying pan over a high heat and fry the artichokes, flat-side down, until slightly crispy. Add the spring onions and baby gems and cook for 1-2 minutes. Take the pan off the heat, add the lemon juice and zest, a little olive oil and season.

5 Preheat the oven to 190C/gas 5. Remove the chicken from the brine and place in a roasting dish. Using your herb brush, baste the chicken with stock. Cook in the oven for 60-75 minutes, until the juices run clear when the thickest part of the bird is pierced. Baste the chicken every 20 minutes to keep it moist.

6 Serve the chicken with the greens and lovage mayonnaise on the side.

Per serving 502 cal, 23.6g fat (5.1g saturated), 52g protein, 13.9g carbs, 3.3g sugars

CUTTLEFISH, COURGETTE & HERB VINAIGRETTE

Serves 2

- 1kg cuttlefish, with its tentacles, cleaned (ask your fishmonger to do this)

ROAST CHICKEN WITH ARTICHOKE
& LOVAGE MAYONNAISE



- 100ml white wine
- 100ml olive oil, plus 1½ tbsp extra
- 2 courgettes, very thinly sliced
- 1 small fennel, very thinly sliced
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 1 sprig of thyme
- 300ml sparkling water
- 100g self-raising flour
- Vegetable oil, for deep-frying

Marinade

- 20g fennel seeds
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 bay leaf
- 100ml olive oil
- Zest of ¼ lemon

Herb vinaigrette

- 1 bunch of tarragon
- 1 bunch of chervil
- 50g mint
- 50g parsley
- 1 bunch of dill
- 2 garlic cloves
- 10 capers
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 4 anchovies
- 100ml olive oil

- 1** Using a pestle and mortar, bash the marinade ingredients together. Add to a bowl with the cuttlefish and leave to marinate overnight.
- 2** The next day, preheat the oven to 120C/gas ¼-½. Add the tentacles to an oven dish with the white wine and 100ml of olive oil, and braise for 1 hour, until tender.
- 3** In a bowl, toss the courgettes and fennel with the lemon juice and 1½ tablespoons of olive oil. Set aside.
- 4** For the herb vinaigrette, blanch all the herbs in boiling water then quickly refresh in a bowl of ice-cold water. Squeeze out the excess water and whizz in a blender with the garlic, capers, lemon juice and anchovies, gradually adding the olive oil until the mixture is smooth.
- 5** Heat a griddle pan to very hot. Chargrill the body of the cuttlefish for 1-2 minutes each side, until cooked through and nicely charred. Slice very thin and toss with the courgette and fennel.
- 6** Add enough vegetable oil to a pan so that it will sufficiently cover the



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GRILLED CUTTLEFISH,
COURGETTE & HERB VINAIGRETTE





BEEF & BARLEY BUN WITH HORSERADISH

tentacles, and let it heat up to 190C. In a bowl, whisk the flour into the sparkling water until combined. Dip the tentacles in the batter and, once the oil gets to 190C, deep-fry the tentacles for 1½ minutes, until golden. Allow to cool on kitchen paper, then chop into chunks.

7 Spoon the vinaigrette onto serving plates, top with the cuttlefish salad and the crispy tentacle pieces.

Per serving 856 cal, 61.2g fat (8.7g saturated), 48.6g protein, 23.4g carbs, 0.9g sugars

BEEF & BARLEY BUN WITH HORSERADISH

Makes 16-18

- 500g bread flour
- 104g Tipo 00 flour
- 44g sugar
- 22g yeast
- 32g milk
- 110g butter

Beef filling

- 500g beef mince
- 200ml red wine
- 200ml chicken stock

- 1½ tsp minced garlic
- 12 sprigs of thyme, chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 30g fine oats
- 5 pickled walnuts, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp pickled walnut juice
- 3 Spanish onions or 5 regular, finely chopped
- 1 star anise

1 Place all the bun ingredients (except the butter) in a bread machine, along with 330g of water and 5g of salt. Use a dough hook to combine, then leave the dough to prove for 20 minutes at room temperature.

2 Return the mixture to the machine and add the butter. Use the dough hook to bring everything together. Weigh out the dough into 50g balls and leave to prove for 1 hour.

3 Add the chopped onions to a pan with a little olive oil and sweat down over a low heat for 5 minutes, until soft and sweet but not coloured.

4 Preheat the oven to 100C/gas ¼. In a cast iron pan or casserole, fry the mince for 10 minutes over a medium-

high heat, until it has lots of colour. Deglaze the pan with the red wine. Add the rest of the filling ingredients (except the walnut juice), bring back to the boil, pop the lid on and slow cook in the oven for 4 hours.

5 Season to taste and add the pickled walnut juice. Your beef mixture should be quite moist at this stage, but if it is too loose, remove the lid and reduce it further over a high heat. Leave to cool, divide into golf-ball sized pieces and roll into balls.

6 Preheat the oven to 170C/gas 3. Flatten each dough ball, add a ball of beef and mould the dough around it. Place on a greased and lined baking tray, crease-side down, and bake for 15 minutes, until they rise slightly and turn golden. Best eaten warm.

Per serving 314 cal, 12g fat (6g saturated), 13g protein, 34.7g carbs, 6.6g sugars

PINK FIR POTATOES WITH LINCOLNSHIRE POACHER

Serves 2

- 400g pink fir potatoes
- 2 pickled onions
- A small bunch of tarragon
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 onion
- Vegetable oil, for frying
- 2 regular potatoes, thinly sliced
- 200g sea beet (see note)
- 100g butter

Lincolnshire Poacher sauce

- 50g butter
- 350g milk
- 50g flour
- 250g Lincolnshire Poacher, grated

1 Put the pink fir potatoes, pickled onions, tarragon, bay leaves, onion and 15g of salt in a saucepan and cook over a medium heat for 15-20 minutes, until the potatoes are soft.

2 Heat a glug of vegetable oil in a frying pan over a high heat and deep-fry the potato slices for about 5 minutes, until golden and crispy. Set aside to drain on kitchen paper.

3 Blanch the sea beets in boiling water for 1-2 minutes, until tender, then drain and toss with the butter.



PINK FIR POTATOES WITH LINCOLNSHIRE POACHER



EVERYBODY
LOVES IT



LEMON MERINGUE PIE

4 Make your Lincolnshire Poacher sauce. Melt the butter in a pan over a low heat. Add the flour and, once it's incorporated, slowly stir in the milk to make a béchamel. Gradually add your cheese, stirring to combine.

5 Toss your potatoes and sea beets in a bowl, add some pickled onion juice and mix to combine. Spoon your cheese sauce over your serving plates, add the potatoes and sea beet, some pickled onions and top with the fried potato slices.

Note Sea beet is a type of wild coastal spinach. It's a distant relative of chard, which you can use instead.

Per serving 573 cals, 41.7g fat (23.3g saturated), 16.9g protein, 31g carbs, 5.7g sugars

LEMON MERINGUE PIE

Serves 12

- 125g butter
- 90g caster sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 225g flour

Lemon curd

- 4 egg yolks

- 175g sugar
- 300ml lemon juice
- 2½ gelatine leaves
- 125g butter, softened
- Zest of 2 lemons

Brown butter

- 25g cream
- 75g butter

Meringue

- 3 egg whites
- 200g caster sugar

1 Make your pastry the day before. Lightly cream the butter and sugar in an electric mixer with a paddle attachment, until incorporated but not fluffy. Slowly add the yolks and mix until completely incorporated.

2 Sift the flour into the creamed mixture and mix on the lowest speed until just combined - be careful not to overwork it. Wrap the dough in cling film and refrigerate overnight.

3 When ready to make your dessert, roll your pastry as thinly as possible and use it to line a shallow 29 x 27cm rectangular tin. Cut off the overhanging pastry and prick the

base with a fork. Leave to chill in the fridge for another 30 minutes.

4 Preheat your oven to 160C/gas 2-3. Line the chilled pastry with greaseproof paper and blind bake in the oven for 20 minutes, or until a dark golden colour. Set aside to cool.

5 To make the curd, add the gelatine to ice-cold water and leave to soak. Whisk the eggs and sugar together in a large metal bowl, then add the lemon juice and zest. Place it over a simmering pan of water, whisking the mixture until the temperature reaches 83C. The curd should start to thicken (this should take about 15 minutes). Remove from heat.

6 For the brown butter, heat the cream and butter in a pan until it splits and turns golden brown.

7 Squeeze any excess water from the gelatine. Whisk it into the lemon curd until it dissolves. Add the butter gradually, whisking as you go, then stir in the brown butter. Pass the curd through a sieve to remove the zest and any lumps. Spoon the mixture into your base and leave in the fridge to set for 1 hour.

8 Once the curd has set, wipe out the bowl of your electric mixer with a touch of white wine vinegar to remove any residue that might impede the aeration of the meringue. Add a whisk attachment.

9 In a saucepan, mix the sugar with a splash of water to make a thick paste. Heat to 120C. Add the egg whites to the bowl of your electric mixer and, when the heat of the sugar mixture reaches 115C, start the egg whites whisking on a medium speed. Once the sugar reaches 120C, remove it from the heat and slowly pour into the whisked whites. Increase the speed and whisk until the bowl is cool to touch. Transfer the mixture to a piping bag with a round nozzle.

10 Pipe dollops of meringue onto the curd in even rows. Using a cook's blowtorch, slowly brown the outside of the meringue until caramelised all over. Best eaten straight away. ●

Per serving 464 cals, 25.6g fat (15.3g saturated), 5.6g protein, 52.3g carbs, 39.1g sugars