



Ascot Racecourse Media Release
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FINE DINING AT ROYAL ASCOT CONTINUES TO DIVERSIFY AND DELIGHT

Royal Ascot 2018: Tuesday 19th – Saturday 23rd June

- Raymond Blanc OBE, Phil Howard and James Tanner to return to play key roles
- Adam Handling and Simon Rogan to make Royal Ascot debuts
- A new 'Royal Ascot Afternoon Tea' with Claire Clark will launch
- Four new Fine Dining restaurants will open – The Balmoral, The Windsor Forest, The Furlong Restaurant and The Gallery
- Five Michelin stars and a Bib Gourmand boost the 2018 line-up

Ascot, Berkshire – Ascot Racecourse prides itself on tradition as well as innovation and the Fine Dining concepts at the Royal Meeting in June perfectly illustrate this.

This year, three of the nation's most respected chefs are returning; Raymond Blanc OBE, Phil Howard and James Tanner. They will be joined by Adam Handling and Simon Rogan, both of whom will make their Royal Ascot debuts. A new 'Royal Ascot Afternoon Tea' designed by Ascot's in-house culinary team, led by Executive Chef Gemma Amor and Head Chef Ben Dutson, and celebrated pastry chef Claire Clark will also be introduced to the Parade Ring Restaurant.

Two Michelin-starred chef **Raymond Blanc OBE** celebrates five years at Ascot this year, having most recently taken up residence in the prestigious Panoramic Restaurant in the Royal Enclosure. There for a third year, he will be back with a tailored menu and a refined service which promises to be one of the finest gastronomic experiences at the Royal Meeting. A bright and spacious restaurant for 120 guests, the Panoramic boasts uninterrupted views of the racing and the Royal Procession from its private balcony and terrace.

Speaking about his work with Ascot Racecourse, Raymond Blanc OBE says; *"I am honoured to return to Royal Ascot for a fifth year with a fresh new menu. The standard and expectations will be higher than ever and my team and I will continue to evolve and deliver. We have been hard at work on our menu and look forward to welcoming our guests soon."*

Having been praised for his previous stints at Royal Ascot and winning a Michelin star for his Elystan Street restaurant in 2017, having previously received two stars at The Square, **Phil Howard** returns to On5 – the Queen Anne Enclosure's award-winning restaurant on the fifth floor of the Grandstand. For his third year in residence, Phil will create a spectacular menu championing the best of British produce, providing a relaxed and contemporary dining experience for racegoers. Also in the Queen Anne Enclosure, **James Tanner** will return for a

second year presenting his Queen Anne Kitchen - a seated gastro experience – as well as an ‘on-the-go’ food concept The Burger Kitchen.

Adam Handling of Frog by Adam Handling and The Frog E1 makes his Royal Ascot debut at The Balmoral – a brand new restaurant concept for this year’s Royal Meeting. Recipient of a Bib Gourmand in 2017, Handling promises to bring his creative flair and modern execution to the table. Diners will be surprised and delighted by the ingenuity of his cooking techniques and flavour combinations.

Adam Handling says, *“I am excited to be debuting at Royal Ascot this year, presenting an innovative concept that combines the traditional values of Royal Ascot with a more contemporary, relaxed fine dining style of service to the Royal Enclosure Gardens. Classic summer dishes have been reimaged in a playful way.”*

Announcing his presence at Royal Ascot shortly after relaunching Roganic in London, two-Michelin star chef **Simon Rogan’s** high level of skill and extensive experience in Fine Dining are the perfect recipe for discerning racegoers. Praised as being a culinary leader and champion for impeccable standards, he promises to deliver a memorable experience for Royal Enclosure guests.

In addition to this year’s impressive line-up, Ascot’s Executive Chef Gemma Amor and Head Chef Ben Dutson are delighted to introduce a new ‘**Royal Ascot Afternoon Tea**’ menu to the Parade Ring Restaurant, designed in collaboration with celebrated pastry chef Claire Clark. The dynamic duo, who have a combined experience in hospitality of more than 40 years and who share a mutual appreciation for high-end patisserie, have conceptualised a decadent menu in celebration of the afternoon tradition that is held dear at Royal Ascot. Classic in style with a fresh twist, it comprises a selection of delicate sandwiches, handmade scones and cakes paired with fragrant loose-leaf teas and Champagne Bollinger.

Brand new for this year, **Adam Handling’s The Balmoral** is inspired by a summer in the Scottish Highlands and celebrates the best of British food with fresh Scottish seafood, Royal Estate beef and locally-sourced cheese featuring on the menu. Benefitting from an enviable trackside location, The Balmoral has spectacular views down the finishing straight and a spacious outside viewing deck. Diners have the flexibility to create their own dining experience by choosing from an array of chef stations or ordering from the a la carte menu.

With a new concept for 2018, **The Windsor Forest** will re-open this year as one of the most exclusive restaurants in the Royal Enclosure. Seating just 45 guests and with prime views over the Winning Post, it will be characterised by the highest degree of personalised service. Diners can enjoy a relaxed a la carte menu all day with total flexibility to tailor their food choices to their personal taste and preferred timings.

The Gallery is another new restaurant joining the 2018 line-up offering fine food in a relaxed and social environment within the Queen Anne Enclosure. With outside seating just metres from the track, it is the perfect spot to soak up the electric atmosphere as the horses gallop towards the Winning Post.

Finally, the well-known **Furlong Club** in the Queen Anne Enclosure will be revitalised for 2018. New light and airy lounge areas provide guests with a space to retreat to, with a mixture of grazing and seated menu concepts available.

Speaking about Fine Dining at Ascot Racecourse this year, Jonathan Parker, Director of Food & Beverage at Ascot Racecourse, said;

“We are excited to welcome five exceptionally talented and highly respected chef-restaurateurs to Royal Ascot 2018 and to finally reveal our exciting new Fine Dining concepts. Following in-depth analysis of our customer feedback and extensive research, we are implementing these changes in response to what our guests want from their experience as well as inspiring them with new ideas. Our insight has shown that there is a strong preference for interactive chef stations, social feasting and tapas style menus that provide flexibility whilst still affording guests the convenience of allocated seating. We’re excited by the new concepts for this year and look forward to seeing the reactions from our diners.

“Over the past 300 years, Ascot Racecourse has established itself as a national institution and food and drink serves a huge part of that. With the reputation of being the most important event in society’s calendar, we are constantly evolving and enhancing the experience for visitors, setting the standards high.”

Royal Ascot promises five days of world-class horse racing, high fashion, pageantry and Fine Dining as the racecourse opens its gates to more than 300,000 racegoers from across the globe. From the arrival of the Royal Procession at 2pm to communal singing around the Bandstand after the last race, each day of Royal Ascot is a truly remarkable and memorable occasion.

To book or for further information with regards to Fine Dining at Royal Ascot, please call 0844 346 3000 or visit www.ascot.co.uk.

#RoyalAscot

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