

# FISH UNION

**KICKER LINE HERE IF POSSIBLE PLEASE. THANKS!**

DRIVEN BY A PASSION FOR QUALITY SEAFOOD AND THE DESIRE TO SHARE NOT ONLY THEIR DELICIOUS CREATIONS BUT ALSO THEIR EXPERT KNOWLEDGE WITH THE PUBLIC, FOUNDERS OF FISH UNION, RICHARD KIRKWOOD AND ANDY ROBERTS, HAVE BROUGHT AN ELITE AND UNRIVALLED SEAFOOD DINING EXPERIENCE TO CHISLEHURST. **BY OLIVIA RICCINI**



With a resume that is coloured with the names of some of London's most superior restaurants renowned for their fine dining, chef Richard Kirkwood met co-owner Andy Roberts while heading up the kitchen at J.Sheeky. It was here they discovered and nourished their shared zeal for fish and the myriad of pleasure and taste it can bring the world of dining. However, it wasn't until the impact of the pandemic hit that Richard and Andy were compelled to live out their dream of combining an upmarket wet fishmongers with an exquisite seafood and champagne bar.

It is this on trend combination of top-notch, quality dining mixed with the ability to shop bespoke products used in the food that has given Fish Union not only its delicious uniqueness but a nurturing atmosphere. Sitting at the core of what Richard and Andy wanted to provide to the locals of Chislehurst and beyond is the idea that quality fish should be available to everyone, as should be the expert advice on how to cook and prepare it. It is undeniable that Richard and Andy are at the top of the seafood game, but despite this Fish Union is far from intimidating. 19 year old Isobel tells me that she has caught the passion for preparing seafood while working at Fish Union, 'Community is a big part of our ethos. For us it's not about keeping our secrets

and withholding our recipes and tricks, but about sharing this knowledge with others.' This is one of the main reasons that Fish Union holds their masterclasses at which people can come together to learn top-tips with expert guidance and eat their creations at the end.

With a seasonal menu that changes daily, diners can select from an array of inspirational small plates and market fish that emit flavour simply from reading the ingredients. With a huge emphasis on individual and original tastes, the smaller plates allow for guests to feast upon an eclectic selection of delectable dishes and different types of fish. I opted for roasted scallop, cauliflower puree and chorizo; yellowfin tuna tataki, pickled radish wasabi mayo and ponzu – which Richard tells me is a favourite, and Galician octopus with delicata pumpkin and garlic butter. With fish, texture is almost as important as flavour and another factor that Fish Union vanquished. The scallops melted like butter in the mouth, the tuna tantalized the tongue and the octopus gave a satisfying squeak on the teeth – not to mention being paired with carefully selected vegetables and relishes that intensified flavours to extremes.

After moving on to a classic bouillabaisse and added side dishes of pickled cucumber and chili, as well as

a dish of confit crispy potatoes with aioli, (that have become so popular they now have a 'cult following') I felt at ease in my relaxed surroundings that gleamed with clean, sleek simplicity yet echoed the tradition of a fishmongers and the history of this building that sits on the stylish Royal Parade. Fish Union have taken ambience one step further, making sure that no overpowering fish smells are present, through the use of fresh fish, H3O ice (to which no bacteria can stick) and oxygeniser machines. Offering unique cocktails and desserts as well, diners are sure to relax in comfort and style at the end of their meal, knowing that they have enjoyed dishes of painstakingly researched and carefully sourced fresh fish, that have been prepared with unwavering passion and the ultimate expertise.

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