



A New Chapter Awaits

Born out of the ruins of the global pandemic, Chapter is a restaurant that values sustainability and seasonality above all else. With menus changing daily to suit the freshest British ingredients local suppliers can offer, you can eat with a clear conscience at Chapter.



We sat down with Chef Director, Ben Ternent, to find out more about this relatively new dining phenomenon.

Turning the page

Chapter was created after Ben's previous restaurant, Opus closed during the lockdown. Like so many other establishments at the time, they couldn't justify keeping the restaurant open, without a supportive landlord despite it being an icon of Birmingham City Centre for over 15 years.

Ben ran the restaurant alongside Ann Tonks and Irene Allan. When the opportunity to open Chapter arose, all three jumped at the prospect of starting again, along with executive chef, Nathan Swift. With the help of landlord, Calthorpe Estates, they were back up and running in no time!

Making their mark

When it comes to standing out in a crowded restaurant marketplace, Ben thinks the key is to leave pretensions at the door and offer somewhere that provides high-quality food for everyone.

"You feel like you're in a nice environment [at Chapter]; not too stuffy. Especially at the weekends, with Sundays being very family-friendly. It's a very accessible place to come and enjoy.

"Sustainability and seasonability are our core values. We try and buy as locally as possible and 100% British if we can. Supporting other small local businesses and seasonality is key to everything we do so we change our menus regularly. We're very much led by what's available and when it's available.

"Most of our suppliers are through relationships we've built over the last 20 years or so, so it's a lot of existing relationships with people that we know and trust and share our core values. We invite conversations for other local suppliers to come in and work with us. It's very much about the people behind the businesses rather than the price that leads everything we do."

Setting the right tone

Ben and his business partners knew they had a prime location when they were offered the Calthorpe venue. "We're outside of the ring road, which in the current climate is a nice place to be; just outside of the city and the Clean Air Zone. Calthorpe has invested heavily in Greenfield Crescent and on the granite stones outside, with beautiful lighting. On the outskirts of Edgbaston village, it's a two-minute walk from the tram stop."

But it's not just about location - the food has got to be right too.

"Our care in sourcing is up there with the very best restaurants in the City but we use cuts in such a way that we keep all our menus as accessible as possible for everyone. So we always have a three-course set menu running for £31, or main courses for just £17. But then you can still get beef fillet and Dover sole and those sorts of things along with it.

"What we try to do at Chapter is to cook for the public. But we've found over the last 12 months, dishes like a well-cooked and sourced fish and chips or slow-cooked meats, things like that, that's what people want to eat more often. At the minute, food's coming back to comfort food."

Looking to the future

Because the way he cooks is so dependent on suppliers and seasons, Ben gets to mix it up in the kitchen, meaning he never gets bored of any particular dish. However, he does have a favourite ingredient: "There's just something about searing a fresh fish that was in the water just one or two days ago. When you get that golden colour on it, I think fish is my favourite thing to cook."

And he has his head screwed on when it comes to talking about the future too: "We're still a young restaurant. We just want to keep building our team and keep doing what we're doing. And that should hopefully keep us in good stead for the next five to ten years."

Have you visited Chapter yet? This is a culinary experience not to be missed!

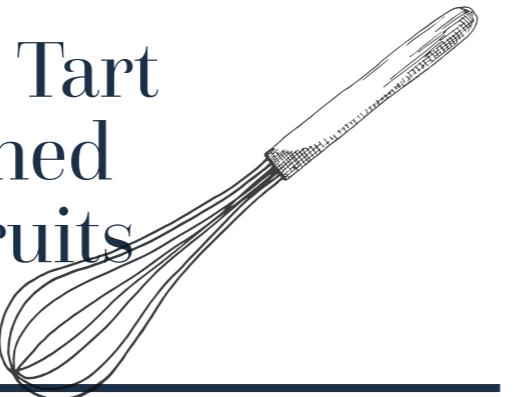
TURN THE PAGE FOR THIS MONTH'S RECIPE...





Frangipane Tart with poached Autumn Fruits

BY CHAPTER



Ingredients

PASTRY

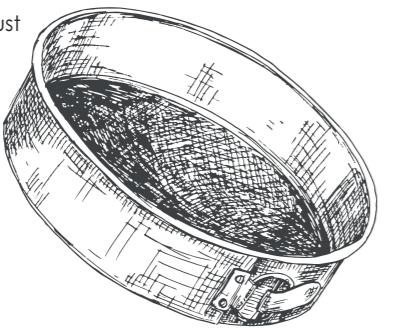
- 200g plain flour
- 100g butter (cubed)
- 50g golden caster sugar
- 1 egg yolk

FRANGIPANE

- 150g butter
- 150g golden caster sugar
- 150g eggs beaten (approx. 3 small eggs)
- 150g ground almonds
- 30g plain flour
- 100g good apple sauce/compote (homemade is best)

POACHED AUTUMN FRUIT

- Plums
- Granny Smith Apple
- Blackberries
- Pears
- Sugar syrup with vanilla
- Vanilla ice cream or Chantilly to serve
- Icing sugar to dust



Method

- Mix flour and butter in a food processor and pulse until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. At this stage, add the sugar and pulse again. Add the egg and 1-2 tbsp ice-cold water, and pulse until the dough just comes together. Tip out and shape into a disc. Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface and line a 22cm loose-bottomed tart tin (or 4 individual ones if preferred), pressing it into the sides. Chill for 30 mins.
- Using an electric mixer, beat the butter and sugar until light, creamy and fluffy. Then, gradually add the eggs, beating well after each addition, then, on a low speed, mix in the almonds and flour. Once well combined, transfer to a piping bag.
- Heat oven to 180C/160C fan and put in a baking tray to heat. Spoon the apple compote and spread a layer over the bottom of the tart case, now pipe the frangipane filling evenly into the tart case (it doesn't need to be overly smooth as it will even out when baked). Transfer to the baking tray and bake for 40-50 mins (cover with foil after 30 mins if the tart is taking on too much colour) until a skewer poked in the frangipane comes out clean.
- Poached the autumn fruits gently in sugar syrup until tender. Pears are best peeled and cored and poached whole, the apples peeled and cut into eights, plums pitted and poached as halves and the blackberries as they are. These can all be done in advance as a garnish and if preferred, warmed to serve.
- Leave the tart to cool in the tin for 10 mins, then transfer to a wire rack. Heat a little of the poaching fruit syrup in a pan until thickened, then glaze the tart with it. Serve warm or cold, dusted with icing sugar, with either ice cream or Chantilly cream and along with the poached fruits.