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Luxury Hospitality Magazine speaks with Steve Smith, Head Chef at fine dining restaurant Latymer ||almuni Connect|| 2020-11-25 23:33:38

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Sauce are proud to be working with Pluma – the new restaurant from couple Arantxa Fuentes and Charlie Baxter – specialising in regional Spanish cooking in Old Amersham, Buckinghamshire

Opening in July 2020, Pluma's first few months have been a huge success. Despite current crises, the restaurant has been welcomed locally – fully booked every Friday & Saturday night until January 2021.

It is the newest addition to Amersham's burgeoning food scene – joining Atul Kochhar's Hawkyns and Michelin-starred Artichoke on the town's historic high street.

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Pluma is the debut restuaurant from Spanish/English couple Arantxa Fuentes and Charlie Baxter – both seasoned front and back of house experts, having worked at restaurants including Blumenthal's Michelin-starred Hinds Head. They dreamed of opening a restaurant which combined their passions for Spain, its cuisine which has stood the test of time, and good hospitality. Pluma aims to serve regional Spanish dishes, simply and beautifully cooked. The small, adaptable menu nods to all corners of the country – from Toledo to Bilbao – championing fine ingredients first and foremost.

It has quickly become a must-visit restaurant in Buckinghamshire, reachable via London's Metropolitan line direct to Amersham. Spotting a gap in the market, Charlie & Arantxa jumped at the opportunity to turn the former high street Chinese takeaway into their dream restaurant.

On the opening and initial reception of the restaurant founders Charlie and Arantxa say:

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“We have been overwhelmed by the support of the local community, many who have already become regulars. We were concerened about opening under the cloud of Covid but we have taken great precautions to be as safe as possible and our measures have been well received. The restaurant seems to be thriving despite these difficut times and we are thrilled to be a part of life in Old Amersham.”

https://youtu.be/0VIhza1IyE0

The site itself accomodates 56 diners across a spacious split-level dining room, a casual bar area, and a covered outdoor courtyard. The eyecatching open plan kitchen is tiled floor to ceiling with azure blue mosaics and fit with a Josper oven. With dark oak finishings, delicate lighting and a soundtrack of traditional Spanish music, Pluma conjures up the feel and excitement of the bars, life and smells of Spain.

Pluma’s Head Chef is Luis Urrutiabeaskoa, Bilbao-born with a passion for Basque food. He has travelled extensively across Spain, undergoing mentorship from the likes of Spain’s most acclaimed chef, 12 Michelin-starred Martin Berasategui.

The menu includes snacks (*para picar*) to enjoy at one of their high-rise bar tables, a tight menu of tapas ranging from the well-known to more adventurous, and larger dishes to share.

Tapas, hot and cold, includes classics like: *Pan de cristal* (signature bread topped with tomato and Spanish extra virgin olive oil), *Gambas al ajillo* (king prawns in garlic and chilli), slices of *100% Iberian jamon* and *Arroz negro* (creamy black rice, baby squid and garlic saffron alioli). There are *croquettes* filled with *Payoyo cheese and spinach*, *Patatas bravas* in secret house-smoked sauce, runny *Tortilla Espanola* and *Regional cheeses served with quince, walnuts and Gallego bread.*

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Main plates to share or enjoy solo include Pluma's namesake dish, *Pluma 100%* Ibérica *de bellota* – Iberian pork, marinated in secret house spices, served blush, sliced and salted – *Mussels in* Albariño *wine*, *Cod loin and stewed chickpeas in langoustine bisque* and *Cauliflower, smoked tofu, roasted peppers in pimenton chilli sauce*. Desserts are enlivened Spanish classics like *Caramelised Basque brioche, yuzu & passionfruit sorbet; Lemon curd, meringue, hazelnut crumble* and, of course, *Churros with hot chocolate sauce*.

A Spanish-orientated wine list includes plenty of the nation's sparkling Cava, white wines from Galicia to Rueda, sherry from Jerez as well as rosé and reds from founder Arantxa's hometown, Toledo.

Pluma – new Spanish restaurant open in Amerdam

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