



WORDS IL-BIZZILLA

TOM TALKS

AN INTERVIEW WITH TOM PETERS, THE NEW EXECUTIVE CHEF OF GRACY'S ARTS AND SUPPER CLUB, VALLETTA.

TOM, YOU MOVED TO MALTA EARLIER THIS YEAR - HOW ARE YOU SETTLING IN?

I've settled in very well, for me it was a much-needed change from the hustle and bustle of London. Not sure how I will handle the summer heat as I am working in a kitchen all day, so I am still as white as a ghost!

HOW DID THE MOVE TO MALTA HAPPEN? HAS YOUR FAMILY MADE THE MOVE WITH YOU?

The actual decision to move to Malta came out of nowhere, I had recently left a position in London and needed to make some changes, I was looking at relocating to either Cornwall or the Lake District. I was at home when I got the call from Gracy's. I had never been to Malta before so I went straight online and immediately liked what I saw! The following week Danny Drinkwater (CEO) and Greg Nasmyth (Owner) were in London and after a very inspiring initial conversation, a few days' later, I found myself here in Malta to check it out. It went very well and instantly I felt I could work with the team at Gracy's and oversee the changes they wanted and to make the restaurant a major culinary destination for the island. Ultimately for me it was about finding the right people to work for. Within three weeks my girlfriend and I had our flat in London boxed up and that was it, we were moving to Malta! Luckily for me, Tuva (my girlfriend) is a world renowned sommelier and she is now heading that department of Gracy's, so you can be sure that the wine list as much as the food, is something we are both very proud of.

YOU'VE WORKED AT SOME ICONIC RESTAURANTS AROUND THE WORLD, WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH TO FOOD AND DINING?

After working at some amazing restaurants like Bob Bob Ricard in London and famed 3-star Maemo in Norway this is finally the time for me to cook the food I want to cook. For the last fifteen years I've been told what to do or my menu has been dictated by an owner or investor so I'm incredibly happy to finally have that creative freedom. I am able to take experiences from the past, the good and the bad and put into practice what I've been learning from some great culinary teachers. My approach to cooking and creating dishes is firmly about the produce first and foremost, combined with classical cooking techniques and how to truly make the most both out of each and every ingredient and also the fantastic team of chefs at Gracy's.

TELL US WHAT YOUR PLANS ARE FOR GRACY'S - WHAT DISHES CAN GUESTS EXPECT FROM YOUR MENU?

All the team at Gracy's want to take the place to new heights and give it the recognition it deserves, this starts with the food but also the service, wine list, cocktails and with that idea, everything from the ground floor to the roof is being revamped. The change we have made already in the last few months has been incredible and I'm very proud of the team who have embraced it. When I started here I was very clear that I wanted to start something different to the offer from most of the other restaurants on the island, and (to the dismay of some) we decided to take pasta/risotto off the menu and create something that has a very British feel to it. The menu adapts seasonally so that every month we change at least a third of it which keeps it exciting for the guests and also for the chefs in the kitchen. Some of our most popular starters include King Crab with pickled cucumber and soft boiled Quail egg and I will be adding Heirloom Tomato with Ġbejna, a local soft cheese and Caviar to the menu. We also offer dishes for vegetarians and vegans as well as lots of options for the meat eaters. Having the newly opened roof terrace means we can also use the outdoor Green Egg BBQ which has been a huge hit with our customers especially dishes like the turbot, cooked over coals for two to share, which we serve with burnt buerre blanc and herbs.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN THE KITCHEN? ANY SECRET HAUNTS YOU CAN SHARE?

The time I spend out of the kitchen at the moment is amazing, after all I have a new country to explore – I am so excited to be somewhere where the summer sun shines every day and so I've been on some hikes, some amazing boat trips around the island and of course, BBQ's at home! That being said, it's not all about exploring and adventures, after a long week in the kitchen I do like to put my feet up and catch some zzz's on a Sunday afternoon! ✨

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