

# Deelicious

Winter 2010/11

ROYAL DEESIDE LARDER - THE FOOD & DRINK OF ROYAL DEESIDE



## A taste of Winter

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# The Butcher's Bequest

Words by Ruby Forbes - Photography by John Paul Photography

**It sounds like a scene from a Dicken's novel where friends and family gather together in the trusty retainer's office for the reading of the will.**

To say that John Sinclair and Barry Florence were surprised to be called into the office of their boss Mike Sheridan's lawyer following his death in April 2006 is an understatement. Surprise was soon followed by total shock as the solicitor announced that Mike had bequeathed them his renowned butcher's business H M Sheridan in Ballater.

John explains, "Both Barry and I had worked for Mike for many years. I started with him in 1981 and Barry had started in the 1970's as the message boy. He'd often joked that he'd 'see us alright' - but we thought it was just his way of encouraging us to stay working with him. Or even to work harder! It never entered our heads that he planned to leave us both the business in his will. I'd say it took us a good three days to get over the initial shock."

Mike Sheridan had first started out in 1963 with a mobile butcher's van, establishing the shop in its current location in 1979.

"Mike was highly thought of in the community," continues John, "Barry and I are keen to honour his bequest to us by upholding his high standards of quality and service at the same time as developing the business."

If the Sheridan award haul is anything to go by - Top Shop of Scotland, Best British Breakfast, Make it With Meat and Q

Guild awards to name but a few - then their standards are the highest. But, on a sliding scale of accolades, there can be few which states quality as nobly as a Royal Warrant - and H M Sheridan has been granted three. The first, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother's Warrant, was granted in 1981; followed in 1987 by the granting of Her Majesty The Queen's Royal Warrant in the same year as His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, Duke of Rothesay, granted his warrant. When Mike passed away, the two current Royal Warrants were then, uniquely, assigned to the two new proprietors rather than to the business.

But for the 'butcher's boys' the future is as important as keeping the shop's traditions. Some of their best sellers are relatively new introductions. Amongst their more than 20 varieties of sausages you'll find a venison variety, beef and horseradish as well as ... wait for it ... Irn Bru bangers!

In the true tradition of inventors John and Barry didn't start out to 'create' sausages from 'Scotland's other national drink'. They were trying to devise a new sweet cure for bacon ... and the rest is butcher's folklore. But, popular as the new kids on the butcher's block are, it's the old favourites which are still the best sellers. In summer, the shop can produce up to 700lbs of pork sausages alone on top of the combined 600 or 700lbs of all other flavours. That's a whopping 6 300 bangers a week being BBQ'd across Royal Deeside and The Cairngorms.

"The only word for Christmas in the shop is hectic. We do at least 300 turkeys as well as capons, geese and roasts. Hogmanay is busy with roasts - beef, pork and lamb in particular, but steaks are becoming increasingly popular for New Year."

And, it will be John and Barry's produce which will grace the New Year's breakfast, lunch and dinner tables of Balmoral Castle as it has done for years.

It's John's view that, in recent years, the best butchers have got stronger and that those who have not diversified have suffered and gone out of business.

"A traditional butcher's shop offers so much more than a supermarket meat counter," explains John. "The quality is unquestionably better and we can always tell you exactly where our meat and products come from. But it's definitely the service which counts. We can prepare exactly what our customers who come to the counter want as well as the local chefs. There's a clear correlation between the increase in lifestyle cooking programmes on television and the number of customers who come asking for specific cuts to be prepared in a particular way. If Nigella or Delia uses a new recipe on their television shows one evening, we can see the halo effect in the shop the next day. The current trend seems to be for lamb shanks! We'll obviously have the traditional rush for our haggis for Burns Night in

January but we're also seeing it become increasingly popular throughout the year.

Seeing the success of H M Sheridan and the demand for its produce to be sent across the UK, it seems that as well as being a generous man, Mike Sheridan knew he was bequeathing his life's work into safe and wise hands.

You can visit the H M Sheridan shop at 11 Bridge Street in Ballater or order by phone on 013397 55218. A new online shop for the website will be launched early in 2011 at [www.hmsheridan.co.uk](http://www.hmsheridan.co.uk).

Eat in some of Deeside's finest restaurants and you'll be dining on H.M. Sheridan's premium produce. Chefs across Royal Deeside and The Cairngorms – and beyond – are proud to serve the produce which graces royal tables.



The next generation





Chef Calum Buchanan creating in the kitchen



# Simple, tasty, rustic food

Words by Ruby Forbes  
Photography by John Paul Photography

Calum Buchanan, head chef of Buchanans at Woodend Barn by Banchory likes simple, tasty, rustic food. He's a long term, respected advocate of local produce and slow convivial tables and has a real understanding of the food chain.

Serving local, seasonal and organic is Calum's aim, with great taste and efficient service. Don't even dream of asking him for strawberries in December or asparagus in September! Everyone at Buchanans takes time to talk ... and to taste. Stocks and sauces are made from first principles and all pastry, pasta, puddings, ice creams and accompaniments are created in house.

Buchanans is supplied by H M Sheridan the butchers. Try Calum's recipes using their produce.





## Slow cooked rump of Aberdeenshire beef

### Ingredients

3kg piece of H.M. Sheridan beef rump    50ml olive oil  
 100 ml balsamic vinegar                    300ml double cream  
 50g cornflour                                    Seasoning

### Method

Heat olive oil in a heavy based pan and brown beef on all sides ending with fat side uppermost. Pour balsamic vinegar over meat, evaporate off then pour the cream over the meat. Bring to simmer, reduce heat and cover with lid. Cook for approx 3 hours basting occasionally. Remove beef from sauce and rest for 15 mins. Thicken sauce with the cornflour, adjust seasoning to taste. Serve with your own choice of local potatoes and seasonal vegetables

## Beany sausage casserole

### Ingredients

250g onions – sliced  
 2kg H M Sheridan sausages – any flavour - but spicy ones are best  
 3 x 400g tins organic chopped tomatoes  
 50g organic tomato puree  
 4 cloves of garlic  
 Pinch of dried chilli flakes - optional  
 2 x 400g organic haricot or chickpea or kidney beans  
 Seasoning  
 Herbes de Provence

### Method

Sauté the onions in olive oil till soft and caramelized then add the herbs. Add tomato puree, then tinned tomatoes and then add whole cloves of garlic and the chilli. Add beans and simmer for half an hour. Roast or grill the sausages, cut into chunks and add to tomato bean mix simmering for 15 mins. Adjust the seasoning.

The dish is best served the day after making and served up with crusty bread and grated parmesan.



## Apple & almond tart

### Ingredients

100g whole blanched almonds                    100g caster sugar  
 100g butter diced                                    2 free range eggs  
 Almond or vanilla essence                        1 pre baked tart case  
 2 medium cooking apples

### Method

Peel, slice and sauté the apples and then cool. Place apple mixture in tart case. Then, in a food processor blitz the almonds and sugar till fine. Add the butter and eggs and blitz until smooth. Add one teaspoon almond or vanilla essence and blitz quickly again. Pour this mixture over apples in tart case and bake for 25mins at 170C. Serve with vanilla ice cream – ideally homemade!

Visit Buchanans at Woodend Barn by Banchory  
<http://www.buchananfood.com/barn.html>



# 'Tis the season for...

Words by Sammy Lamb  
Photography by John Paul Photography

## Snifters for Santa, Hogmanay drams and glasses raised to the Bard - and where better to find out about Scotland's National Drink than at Royal Lochnagar Distillery?

Some say that the Victorians were the first 'tourists', and it could be said that Prince Albert himself was responsible for the idea for one of the first visitor attractions in Royal Deeside and The Cairngorms.



The toast of Lochnagar

Within walking distance of Balmoral Castle, lies Royal Lochnagar Distillery. We know that it's within strolling distance of the castle as, one day in 1848, the 'neighbours' dropped by to see the workings of the distillery. Distillery owner John Begg had handed a note into the castle when the Royal Family first stayed at Balmoral. In his note he mentioned that he knows how keen Prince Albert is 'to make himself acquainted with all things mechanical' (Prince Albert was later influential in the organisation of The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations at Crystal Palace in 1851). Visit the five star distillery today and you'll be offered pretty much the same

experience as that of Victoria's family - a guided tour of a traditional working distillery, which is a whisky lover's dream. It's very pretty and retains much of its original charm. The small team of operators continue to tend to the open mash tun, the wooden washbacks, the gleaming copper stills, the worms and then fill the oak casks to take to the warehouse to mature for 12 years. And, as with Victoria and Albert, the tour rounds off nicely with a dram of the fine 12 year old Royal Lochnagar Highland Single Malt. You may not be able to bestow a Royal Warrant at the end of your visit as they did, but you can note your comments in the visitor book!



### Liz's Larder shortbread

#### Ingredients

225g/8 oz butter  
285g/10 oz plain flour  
170g/6 oz ground rice  
110g/4 oz castor sugar  
Extra sugar to sprinkle

#### Method

Line a Swiss roll tin with baking parchment or butter and sugar a shortbread mould. Rub all the ingredients together in a bowl to fine crumb consistency. Place in the prepared tin, level out and press down firmly or roll with small rolling pin. Prick all over with a fork, sprinkle with extra sugar and bake @ 200c until a pale golden colour.

Cut into fingers or shapes while still warm and leave in the tin to cool until firm. For variations add orange zest or lemon, or Liz's favourite - finely chopped preserved ginger.

## Petticoat tails, fingers or hearts?

Words by Sammy Lamb - Photography by John Paul Photography

Shortbread and celebratory days go hand in hand in Scotland. At one time this sweet delight was an expensive luxury and viewed as a special treat by ordinary working people. Shortbread was ever present at occasions like weddings, and Christmas. Shortbread has always had a role in New Year celebrations and is offered to 'first foos' on Hogmanay.

Like all the best foods, it's a simple recipe with only three ingredients - butter, flour and sugar ... but the connoisseur bakers know that the addition of rice flour gives shortbread the x factor. We persuaded Liz Peck from Liz's Larder at Glen Tanar to share her 'special' shortbread recipe with Deelicious readers - try it in heart shapes for a special hand made Valentine's treat - or in fingers or a petticoat tail mould.

Words by Ruby Forbes - Photography by John Paul Photography

# Dine on Deeside

A new ten day celebration of quality local produce launches for March 2011 with set price menus across the area.

A new foodie event which celebrates passion for regional cuisine launches in March 2011. Dine On Deeside is the perfect ten day recipe designed to fire up gastro imaginations and tickle your taste buds. Dine On Deeside takes place from Friday 18th March to Sunday 27th March 2011 in towns and villages across this beautiful area including Ballater, Braemar, Banchory and Aboyne. As Royal Deeside and The Cairngorms is home to some of the finest quality produce in the UK, our chefs will be serving up sensational seasonal Spring menus from rustic bistro to fine dining. Special menus in cafes, restaurants, hotels, and bars will be on offer in price bands - up to £10; £11 to £20; £21 to £30 and over £30 so there will be something on offer for every pocket - and taste. More can be found at

[www.discoverroyaldeeside.com/Larder/dine-on-deeside](http://www.discoverroyaldeeside.com/Larder/dine-on-deeside).

Dine On Deeside gastronomes can enjoy:

- Prize winning Cairnton Aberdeen Angus as part of a three course steak celebration evening (£24.50) at **Deeside Activity Park by Aboyne**. Alternatively you can try steak sandwiches as part of a three course £10 menu.
- **Cambus O May and Strathdon Cheeses or Deeside smoked venison** as part of a three course dinner at **The Glen Lui Hotel in Ballater**.
- **Local nettle soup**, a trio of **Sheridans Sausages** (H M Sherdians supplies meat to the Royal family at Balmoral Castle and Birkhall), **rare breed organic Wark Farm pork and local rabbit** can be sampled in a variety of set price menus from £12.95 at **Loch Kinord Hotel by Dinnet**.



Dine on Deeside promises to tickle the taste buds

- Warm confit of **free range chicken** with **Wark Farm smoked sausage** and **Deeside smokehouse haggis** or slow cooked **brisket of Murtle beef** in **Cairngorm beer gravy** at **Buchanans Woodend Barn by Banchory**.
- A six course fine dining Taste of Deeside menu at luxury **Raemoir House Hotel by Banchory**.

Details on accommodation and short break packages in Royal Deeside and The Cairngorms during Dine on Deeside from luxury country houses to lochside log cabins; and hostels to Highland estate self catering cottages can be found at <http://www.discoverroyaldeeside.com/accommodation>.

Dine on Deeside is supported by the Scottish Government and the European Community Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER programme (2007-2013) with Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Enterprise.



# What's on!

Compiled by Sammy Lamb

## There's plenty going on this season in the Royal Deeside Larder



### Deeside Sessions Christmas Party

**When** - Thursday 23 December from 8pm  
**Where** - The Potarch Hotel by Banchory  
**Cost** - FREE

The Deeside Sessions Christmas party will be hosted by Frieda Morrison and Paul Anderson and features local musicians, singers and dancers. Sup up warm cider and mulled wine along with plenty of festive canapés.

### Royal Deeside Railway Mince Pie Specials

**When** - Weekends throughout December 11am – 4pm and Monday 27th December  
**Where** - Royal Deeside Railway, Milton of Crathes  
**Cost** - Adults £5.50, Children £7.50  
**Contact** - [www.deeside-railway.co.uk](http://www.deeside-railway.co.uk) for more info

Enjoy a mince pie with Santa on the Royal Deeside Railway before taking a trip through the heart of Royal Deeside on a vintage Victorian coach. All children who meet Santa will be given a special treat so that they will have a memento of their day.

### Five-Course December Tasting Menu

**When** - Wednesday – Saturday 7pm – 9pm throughout December  
**Where** - The Green Inn, Ballater  
**Cost** - £45 per person  
**Contact** - To reserve a table call 01339 755701

The ultimate festive treat is on offer at The Green Inn Restaurant in Ballater throughout December. Courtesy of top Scots chef Chris O'Halloran, foodie fanatics will enjoy a five course tasting menu consisting of succulent signature dishes. The Green Inn has recently been awarded a third rosette by the AA, which places it in the top twenty restaurants in Scotland.

### New Year Gala Dinner and Ceilidh

**When** - Friday 31st December  
**Where** - Raemoir House Hotel, Banchory  
**Contact** - 01330 824884 for further details

Dance yourself dizzy into 2011 after a fabulous seven course dinner at the Raemoir House Hotel. Booking is essential for this popular event which includes a gala dinner and ceilidh.

### Deeside Activity Park - Famous Burns Lunch

**When** - Sunday 23rd January, 12.30pm  
**Where** - Deeside Activity Park, Dess, By Aboyne  
**Cost** - £16 per person (smaller portion sizes are available for £14)  
**Contact** - Call 013398 83536 to book

Celebrate one of the greatest Scots, Robert Burns, by tucking into a three course feast of traditional Scottish dishes including haggis, cock-a-leekie soup and cloutie dumpling in his honour. Local entertainment throughout the afternoon will ease those January blues. Tickets are expected to sell out fast, so book now to avoid disappointment.

### Valentine's Dinner

**When** - Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th February  
**Where** - Tor Na Coille Hotel and Restaurant, Banchory  
**Contact** - 01330 822242 to book

Indulge your loved one this Valentine's day with a six course dinner at the Tor Na Coille Hotel and Restaurant. The romantic Victorian mansion house setting, candle lit restaurant and resident pianist will hit all the right notes for a perfectly romantic evening. Or, make a weekend of it by staying in one of the newly refurbished 22 rooms.

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