

food for thought

with Benjamin James

Our resident foodie Benjamin James of the **George & Dragon** in Chipstead reveals what's been keeping the pub busy this month and shares his favourite recipes



For the latest news, visit our new website at www.georgeanddragonchipstead.com and follow us @GeorgeChipstead on Twitter

Cocktail of the month: Apple & Blackberry Daiquiri

As I mentioned earlier September is the month we say goodbye to the berry fruit. And what a great berry to end on, the blackberry. For so many of us a walk along most hedgerows or glance at the back of the local playing field will reward us with this splendid, rambling, thorny bramble. Enjoyed fresh on their own, whisked into a cheesecake, stewed into jam... the possibilities are endless. At the George & Dragon, Chipstead this September we are celebrating the blackberry with an apple and blackberry daiquiri cocktail:

50ml Gold Rum

25ml apple liqueur

1 lime (cut into wedges)

5 blackberries

1/2tsp soft brown sugar

Place the lime wedges, brown sugar and blackberries into a cocktail shaker and muddle together. (To muddle means to squash and press, extracting valuable oils and juices, the end of a small rolling pin or similar works well).

Next pour over the rum and liqueur; add a generous hand full of ice, place the lid of the shaker on top and shake vigorously. Strain the finished drink through a fine tea strainer into a martini style glass.



September brings different things to different people. To parents it's the welcome return of a school routine after a long summer break, for rush hour commuters its that extra 15 minutes now the schools are back in session, for fruit farmers it is the end of the berry season and start of the tree fruits and for the outdoor type it's the time to enjoy the long awaited Indian summer. In order to draw out every last possible moment of outdoor enjoyment, this year I invested in some tall, elegant storm lanterns to light the tables in the herb garden of the George & Dragon, Chipstead. Admittedly other than the fabulous two weeks of sun during the Olympics they have not seen many outings yet, but I am still optimistic that September will provide some glorious late summer evenings.

For many, September signifies the lead up to Christmas. Like in previous years we have at least a dozen names on our Christmas enquiry list, all eagerly awaiting the release of the Christmas season Menus on September 6th. Earlier this year we launched our new website (www.georgeanddragonchipstead.com) and I am pleased to announce that for those that want it, Christmas at the George and Dragon Chipstead, has a strong online presence.

With the arrival of autumn our menus will still be filled with local ingredients but with addition of exciting items that begin to filling the fields, hedgerows and woodlands of our great countryside. For many foodies this signifies the arrival of Game. September is the official launch of Game season, Venison from Chart Farm, Pheasant for Chevening Estate, wild rabbit, pigeon and partridge will all have pride of place on our autumnal menus. If Game is a dish you have never really tried before or worse still a dish that you haven't enjoyed before, then I urge you to come and join me and my team at the George and Dragon, Chipstead this September to taste Game as it should be served. I pride myself in knowing the origin and husbandry of all of our meat including our Game and I am equally proud of the way we chose to present it. I'm sure that's also why many of our customers are 'game' to try them.

■ Visit the pub at 39 High Street, Chipstead, TN13 2RW and for more information or to book, call **01732 779019** or visit www.georgeanddragonchipstead.com