

HENLEYlife contents

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Food & Drink

Fine dining right on your doorstep

Following major renovation work, Stoke Place in Slough has been building a reputation for fine dining. Phil Simms went along to try it out.

The Garden Room restaurant at Stoke Place has debuted with four stars from the *Good Food Guide* and has been awarded two AA rosettes.

Inspired by celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal, head chef Craig Van Der Veer puts his own slant on traditional British food, presenting a series of dainty mouthfuls, cubes, foams and emulsions on the plate.

Two of the recommendations include Lobster tortellini, which is combined with baby fennel, Pernod jelly and bisque foam while beef fillet is served with tongue, cheek, swede and Bordolaise sauce.

Meanwhile, a twist on the cheeseboard includes a Roblochon ice cream, served with Perl Las, sweet figs, red onion marmalade and manchego crisp.

Menus are seasonal and influenced by local produce and guests can choose between a tasting menu, the à la carte or a lunch menu.

The restaurant itself has exposed wooden floorboards and is decorated in whites and greens to emphasise the botanical feel and eye-level windows look out on to the garden.

The adjacent garden bar includes a butterfly gallery wall and is the place for cocktails, light lunches and afternoon tea.

Stoke Place is reached via a sweeping gravel driveway and sits within 26 acres of Capability Brown-designed gardens, which have a carp pond and surrounding wood.

On summer afternoons, in-between rounds of croquet, clay-pigeon shooting or a game of chess on the over-sized garden set, you can relax in a double hammock on the terrace.

It was originally built in 1690 and is a William and Mary-style manor house, offering a range of stylish modern bedrooms.

There are 40 bedrooms in the main building, with huge televisions and DVD players and access to a DVD library. Twelve of the rooms are suites and some additional features include free-standing baths, fireplaces and giant bay windows overlooking the lake and lawns.

Win...win...win...win

Henley Life is offering a chance to win an overnight's stay at Stoke Place for one lucky couple, which includes champagne on arrival and a tasting menu with accompanying wine. Second prize is a champagne afternoon tea for four, including home made scones and seasonal cakes, finger sandwiches and speciality tea. To enter, email sdinsey@higgsgroup.co.uk by Friday, August 26th with your contact details.

Terms and conditions apply, see www.henleylife.co.uk



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