



# At the sign of The Cross

David Young's classy, classic cuisine has made The Cross, housed in an old tweed mill in the Cairngorms, a tried-and-tested favourite

WORDS RICHARD BATH IMAGES ROY SUMMERS



'David Young operates with the blithe assurance you'd expect from a veteran chef with 35 years under his belt'

On a sunny spring day, there can be few more heavenly places to while away an hour or two than on the terrace at The Cross. Overlooking the river Gynack as it burbles alongside this former tweed mill in the shadows of the Cairngorm mountains, it's hard to believe that you are in the middle of Kingussie and just a mile or so from the A9.

Outside, the trees form a canopy which lets dappled light stream through; inside the wooden-beamed 20-cover restaurant, the AA's former chief hotel inspector and chef-patron David Young operates with the sort of blithe assurance you'd expect from a veteran chef with 35 years under his belt, not to mention a whole draw of awards for his three-rosette family-run restaurant with rooms.

Many of those awards have come for the quality of their renowned wine list, but yet more have come for their food, which Young describes as 'classic French-inspired cuisine centred around the use of the best and freshest ingredients I can find'.

The use of that finest Scottish produce, whose provenance is painstakingly chronicled for diners, is at the heart of everything that Young does. This is immediately apparent from a menu which reads as follows: an appetiser of local line-caught mackerel with rhubarb salsa; followed by pressed organic Highland chicken and young grouse terrine with fig chutney; a main course of baked fillet of wild Scrabster brill with Glenfeshie chanterelle veloute, samphire, and Yukon gold potato puree; and finishing off with hot chocolate fondant and chilli ice cream.

It is the sort of classy Auld Alliance cuisine which has made this little Kingussie restaurant such a hit for so many years.

**Main image:** A starter of seared scallops and pea pannacotta is typical of the light, fresh dishes served at The Cross. **Above:** David Young, Becca Henderson (both standing) and Katie Young are the team which has kept The Cross going for the past nine years.



'Young describes his food as classic French-inspired cuisine based around the best Scottish ingredients'

## Seared Scallops & Pea Pannacotta

Serves Six

### Scallops

White meat from 18 medium scallops

Sea salt

Olive oil for frying

### Pea Pannacotta

180g peas (use good quality frozen peas for best results, but defrost first)

300ml double cream

75ml milk

1 sheet leaf gelatine (softened for a few minutes in water)

Seasoning

### Garnish (optional)

Peas

Pea puree

Pea shoots (available seasonally in some supermarkets)

Pancetta

**Method:** Make the pannacotta at least six hours in advance of serving. Put the milk and cream in a saucepan, bring to the boil, and simmer for 5 minutes.

Add the peas and liquidise until smooth. Pass this mixture through a fine sieve while still hot, add the gelatine, and stir until dissolved.

Season to taste. Pour the mixture into small film lined ramekins or round moulds and chill until set. When ready to serve, season the scallops lightly.

Add a little oil to a non-stick pan and heat to a high temperature. Sear the scallops, two minutes either side, until lightly coloured. Turn out the pannacottas onto serving plates and arrange the scallops around. Can be optionally garnished with whole peas, pea shoots, some drops of pea puree and a few pieces of diced, crispy pancetta.

## Roast Rack of Roe Deer, Perry Pickled Pear, Shredded Greens & Celeriac Puree

Serves Six

### Roe Deer

Rack of roe deer

Olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

200ml perry (pear cider, widely available)

200ml venison stock (or brown chicken stock)

4 teaspoons butter, softened

4 teaspoons plain flour

(Ask your butcher to prepare the meat for you.

Depending upon the size of the beast you should allow for a two or three bone portion per person. If roe deer is out of season it can be substituted with venison from red deer).

**Method:** Preheat oven to 200C/Gas 6. Season the meat. Heat a large, heavy-based frying pan until hot. Add a little olive oil and the roe deer and sear for a couple of minutes. Turn over to sear the other side, then sear the ends.

Place the seared meat into a roasting tin and place in the preheated oven for about 12 minutes.

Remove from the oven and allow it to rest for ten minutes. Meanwhile, make the sauce. Use the frying pan that the meat was seared in; heat the pan on the hob and, when hot, add the Perry to deglaze. Cook over a high heat for a minute or two, and then reduce the heat. Add the stock and reduce the volume of liquid by a half.

Make a *beurre manie* by mixing together the softened butter and the flour in a bowl. This will be used to thicken and enrich the sauce. Add a teaspoon or two of the *beurre manie* to the sauce and whisk until it thickens a little.

Adjust seasoning and keep warm until service. When ready, carve the meat and arrange on the plate with the sauce and accompaniments.

### Perry Pickled Pears

4 pears (peeled, cored and quartered)

400g caster sugar

400ml white wine vinegar

400ml perry

Zest of one lemon

1 cinnamon stick

1 piece of fresh root ginger

4 cloves of star anise

**Method:** (best prepared the day before)

Put all ingredients except for the pears in a saucepan and heat. Stir until the sugar has completely dissolved, bring to the boil and simmer for ten minutes.

Add the pears and poach for around 10 minutes until tender. Remove pears from the pan and leave to cool. Continue simmering the pickling mixture until reduced by half. Add the pears and leave to cool. Store in a kilner jar until required.

### Celeriac Puree

2 medium celeriac, peeled

80g unsalted butter

Seasoning

**Method:** Dice celeriac and cook in salted water for 20-30 minutes until tender, then drain. Blitz in a liquidiser with the butter to a puree and season to taste.

### Shredded Greens

300-400g seasonal greens, savoy cabbage, curly kale or similar

20g unsalted butter

Seasoning

**Method:** Finely shred the greens and simmer in lightly salted water for 3-4 minutes. Drain, add butter and seasoning to taste.

## Lemon Tartlet, Posset & Sorbet

Serves Six

*We like to serve this dish when intensely flavoured amalfi lemons are in season and available.*

### Tartlet

#### For pastry:

125g plain flour

50g unsalted butter

1 tablespoon icing sugar

1 egg yolk

A little water



**Clockwise from top left:**

Roast rack of roe deer; Award-winning Planeta olive oil from Sicily; David Young; The view of the gardens from the restaurant.



Lemon tartlet, posset and sorbet

**For filling:**

100g mascarpone cheese  
110g caster sugar  
2 eggs  
2 egg yolks

The juice and finely grated zest of two lemons

**Method:** In a food processor make the pastry by creaming the butter and sugar before adding the flour and egg yolk and thoroughly mixing. Add a few drops of water if the paste seems too dry. Allow to firm in fridge for at least 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 190C/Gas 5. Roll out the pastry to 1/8th inch thickness and fill six 4 inch tartlet pans, pressing pastry into the pan and trimming excess pastry from the top edge.

Bake the tartlets blind for 10-12 minutes. Remove and reduce oven to 150C/Gas 2. Meanwhile, make the filling. Beat eggs and egg yolks with sugar until pale and smooth. Fold in the mascarpone and then the zest and juice of the lemons. Fill the pastry cases with this mixture and bake for a further 10-15 minutes until set. Leave to cool. Sprinkle with icing sugar before serving.

**Sorbet**


600ml water  
250g caster sugar  
3 lemons

**Method:** Bring water to boil in a saucepan. Stir in sugar until it dissolves and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the grated zest of one lemon and the juice of three lemons. Cool, then strain and chill. For best results, freeze in an electric ice cream maker.

If you do not have an ice cream maker, transfer the mixture to a stainless steel or enamel bowl and freeze for 1 hour or until the mixture begins to freeze around the edges. Whisk well to break down the ice crystal evenly. Return to freezer and freeze for a further 2 hours, whisking every 30 minutes, until firm. Transfer the sorbet to a plastic container, cover and store in a freezer until ready to serve.

**Posset**

2 lemons  
125g caster sugar  
250ml double cream

**Method:** Juice the lemons and strain through a fine sieve. Place in a saucepan with the sugar and dissolve over a low heat. Keep warm. Bring the cream to the boil then pour over the lemon mixture. Pass through a fine sieve into a jug and pour into shot glasses. Leave to set for at least 2 hours in a fridge. To serve, arrange the tartlet, the posset and a scoop of sorbet on a plate. 

# Wine to dine

David Austin selects wines to go with The Cross's recipes (wine available via [www.reubensdeli.co.uk](http://www.reubensdeli.co.uk))



## Starter **Katnook Founders Block Sauvignon**

**Blanc, Coonawarra, 2009, £12.95:**

Australia is often overlooked as a source of great Sauvignon due to the overwhelming success of its Kiwi cousins, but if you look hard enough there are some real gems from areas more commonly associated with muscular reds than crisp whites. Katnook are one of Coonawarra's true wine-making dynasties and steeped in history. Their expertise shows through in this fresh, zesty unwooded Sauvignon. It's ideal with the delicate soft flesh of the scallops and has just enough bite and green crunchy acidity to complement the peas whilst cutting through the pannacotta.

## Main **Cairanne, Cotes du Rhone Villages, Domaine Boisson**

**2007, £14.50:** Don't be fooled by the tag of 'Cotes du Rhone' – this is so much more.

Cairanne is one of the villages with its own Appellation Controllee and as such has its very own character. Hand-crafted by father and son this southern Rhone star has lots of smokey gamey notes with soft juicy black cherries and underlying tannins to give a beautifully firm structure and backbone. There is a lovely balance of weight with the roe deer buoyed by the earthiness within the wine. The dominant fleshy Grenache gives the wine a lovely softness that lends itself perfectly with the sweetness of the celeriac puree and counters the pickled pear.

## Dessert **Coteaux du Layon, Beaulieu La**

**Soucherie Claude Papin, Chateau**

**Pierre-Bise 2004, £17.50:** This Coteaux du Layon from the Loire valley is a fantastic dessert wine. Claude Papin is a cult hero in the region and his wine has bags of crisp citrusy acidity and lightly honeyed tangerine flavours that compliment the dessert without conflicting or confusing the palate.

## FIELDFACTS

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