

Where the sun always shines

Michael Alexiou brings a touch of the Mediterranean to Chipping Campden

Name: Michael Alexiou
Restaurant: Michael's Mediterranean Restaurant
Address: High Street, Chipping Campden, Glos, GL55 6AG. Tel: 01386 840 826
www.michaelsmediterranean.co.uk

What is your earliest memory of food?

My mother preparing fresh Halloumi cheese and baking olive bread in time for breakfast, served with fresh figs from our garden.

Tell us about your menu.

The menu has a modern Mediterranean twist using the finest produce wherever possible. Some of the dishes derive directly from my family recipes from Cyprus, Moussaka, Kleftico and the Mezedakia to name a few. We serve a lot of fresh fish which is delivered daily from Devon. A favourite dish is the renowned 'Marathona' fillet steak served on a wooden board and cooked in mountain herbs.

How often do you change your menu?

Approximately four times a year to take full advantage of the seasonal produce. Our specials change daily.

Which dish on the menu would you recommend to a customer?

Lamb Kleftico: shank of lamb slowly cooked in the oven with herbs and white wine until it falls off the bone. Delicious!

What initiated your interest in cooking?

Watching my mother preparing the fresh produce from the farm, and every morning waking to the smell of homemade olive oil dripped onto freshly baked bread.

How would you describe your approach to food?

Passionate!

What advice would you give to a novice?

Know your customers and give them what they want. It's very hard work, but extremely rewarding!

What is your favourite local restaurant?

The Butcher's Arms, Priors Hardwick.



Michael Alexiou.

What has been your most memorable (or unusual) meal?

My wedding breakfast at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons.

Which chef has been your greatest inspiration?

Raymond Blanc.

What are your favourite local ingredients?

Game and lamb.

What's in your fridge at home?

A selection of cheeses and a large watermelon.

Why should people visit you?

We serve simple Greek and Mediterranean food cooked well in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.

What would you recommend about the local area?

Chipping Campden, described by the historian GM Trevelyan "The most beautiful village street now left on the island".

What would you choose for your last meal on earth?

Simply charcoal-grilled sea bass. ■

SAMPLE DINNER MENU

STARTERS:

- Soup of the day, served with crusty bread £4.95
- Homemade Hoummous with hot pitta bread and vegetable crudités £6.90
- Halloumi cheese, pan-fried, with a coriander, lime, caper & olive oil dressing on salad leaves £7.95
- Fresh calamari with lemon or lime £9.20
- Mezedakia for sharing: a selection of nine hot and cold Greek hors d'oeuvres served with hot pitta bread £12.50

MAINS:

- Moussaka served with a crisp Greek salad £13.90
- Kleftico on creamy mashed potato with green beans £15.80
- Succulent chicken kebab marinated in Greek yoghurt, and mint, served on rice £13.70
- Seared fillet of sea bass, on mashed potato dressed with a sweet chilli & onion sauce £16.90
- Filletto Marathona prime fillet steak served on a wooden board with chips £26.50

DESSERTS:

- Ice cream and sorbets
 - Crème brulee
 - Baklava or Kataifi
 - Chloe's nutty chocolate cake
- All at £4.95