

# Outstanding Contribution



**2013 winner**  
**Patrick Dempsey**  
 Managing Director,  
 Whitbread Hotels  
 & Restaurants

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Patrick Dempsey has been recognised for spearheading the Big Hospitality Conversation, an initiative which is leading the way in creating more quality work experience, apprenticeships and jobs for 16 to 24-year-olds.

From a germ of an idea that initially sprung from Dempsey's involvement in the Business in the Community's National Talent Skills Council, the hospitality sector has become a shining light in introducing work opportunities for young people.

The initiative has been so successful that the hospitality industry has revised its initial target figure of 33,000 new job opportunities by the end of 2014 to 60,000. An initial event in July 2012 at London's Royal Horseguards hotel, at which pledges of apprenticeships and internships were made by hospitality firms, has led to 12 more events around the UK involving 1,200 employers.

Spurred on by a determination to wipe out youth unemployment, Dempsey, with the support of the British Hospitality Association and Springboard, has led the Big Hospitality Conversation with drive, ambition and passion – and he has made the government sit up and listen.

Harry Murray, chairman of Lucknam Park Hotel & Spa, near Bath, said: "The Big Conversation has been a revelation in terms of giving the young unemployed an opportunity to work in hospitality."

Ufi Ibrahim, chief executive of the British Hospitality Association, said she

believes Dempsey has been driven to create and drive the project for two reasons. "Firstly, I think he has been inspired by Samuel Whitbread, the founder of the company he works for, who worked as an apprentice in the 18th century. He showed that by being given the opportunity, you can go to the very top. And secondly, he has been propelled by his own journey, having left school at 16 to wash dishes in a motorway service station."

Dempsey's career took him through the ranks of Forte, becoming managing director of its Posthouse chain and its London hotels division before being appointed chief executive of Restaurant Associates, part of the Compass Group.

After becoming chief executive of Macdonald Hotels, Dempsey joined Whitbread in 2004, initially as managing director of the Marriott portfolio, before moving on to manage Premier Inn and then become managing director of Whitbread Hotels & Restaurants. He was appointed an OBE in 2012.

"Patrick cares very genuinely that the work of the Big Hospitality Conversation can make a real difference to young people and provide them with a future," said Ibrahim. "He wants to show that academic roots are not the only starting point to a successful career. He has a strong sense of care, combined with a very canny business sense. There can simply be no more deserving winner this year than Patrick."

## The judges

The editorial team of *Caterer and Hotelkeeper*



# Food and Beverage Manager of the Year



**2013 winner**  
**Peter Bradley**  
The Montague on  
the Gardens, London

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The judges praised Peter Bradley for the initiatives he has helped to introduce to the hotel's restaurants. Describing him as an "inspiring individual", the judges said they were impressed with his achievements, as well as the high level of staff retention he has helped to achieve.

Bradley works across seven food and beverage sections at the Montague on the Gardens, a four-star London hotel in the Red Carnation portfolio. He oversees a total of 450 covers over six outlets and manages a team of 30.

He initiated the Montague Ski Lodge in 2011 and repeated it in 2012, having promoted it throughout the year. The lodge attracted 2,000 guests and generated nearly £75,000 in revenue, representing a return on investment of 280% over two years. Even when other venues started to offer their own versions of a ski lodge, the Montague's did not suffer any ill effects, finishing nearly 25% above plan.

Bradley and his team also created an Alpine food concept for the ski lodge, as well as the "12 Vodkas of Christmas". For this Christmas, the concept is the Montague's festive-themed cream liqueurs collection.

In summer 2012, Bradley worked closely with the Red Carnation PR and marketing teams to launch the Secret Garden at the Montague, in association with designer Kenneth Turner. The intimate space on the

hotel's Wood Deck was also the venue for the launch of the Montague's Best of British season, which promoted the Olympic Games, Wimbledon and the Diamond Jubilee. This initiative saw specialised tennis afternoon teas and a Pimm's bar with a selection of "Pimm's 10 ways" cocktails, which increased footfall and drove F&B revenue.

Bradley makes sure his team is aware of all the promotions and incentives through a series of monthly food and beverage briefings, and prepares packs with all the relevant information, prices and menus for all hotel team members.

In addition to having a close working relationship with Livebookings and Toptable, he also works with the hotel's conference office in developing and promoting special offers and events for the summer, Christmas, weddings, anniversaries and special occasions. This year he has also redesigned all of the brochures and packages for all events to be held throughout the hotel.

Every three months, Bradley holds one-to-one meetings and appraisals with all his staff, setting them goals and objectives, which has helped lead to an excellent retention rate, with 70% of staff members having over two years' service. Some 45% of the total staff complement have been with the department for five or more years.

## Shortlisted

- Peter Bradley, The Montague on the Gardens, London
- Nick Davies, Brown's Hotel, London
- Stuart Geddes, The Goring, London

## The judges

- Paul Boyce, Food and Beverage Director, DeVere Hotels & Village Urban Resorts
- James Clarke, Director – Operations, London Hilton on Park Lane
- Patrick Harbour, Director, Harbour & Jones
- Amit Jaitly, Director of Operations, Hilton Liverpool
- Erick Kervaon, General Manager, the Bingham, Richmond
- Anne Pierce, Chief Executive, Springboard Charity
- Craig Robertson, Director of Events, Lancaster London
- Julia Sibley, Chief Executive, Savoy Educational Trust
- Moses Solomon, Food and Beverage Manager, Flemings Mayfair



# Hotel Restaurant Team of the Year



2013 winner  
**The Montague  
on the Gardens**  
London

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The Montague on the Gardens, a Red Carnation hotel, sees its restaurant team work across five distinct areas, all of which are crucial to the guest experience.

The main venue is the Blue Door bistro, which comprises 42 covers and serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Wood Deck and barbecue, during the summer period, create an additional 30 covers. Then there are two conservatories, which serve the hotel's afternoon tea, comprising another 35 covers, and the terrace bar and lounge (which is also used for al fresco dining), which provides another 30 covers. As a result, the total dining operation is 150 covers, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, as well as drinks and cigars, from 7am to 2am, seven days a week.

The members of the restaurant team, aside from helping to run these venues, are also heavily involved in promoting and staging a series of events and packages, such as the Montague Ski Lodge, which was introduced in 2011 and attracted 2,000 guests, as well as Wimbledon-themed promotions and, capitalising on the 2013 exhibition at the nearby British Museum with an Afternoon Tea and Pompeii package, which the hotel promoted in conjunction with Livebookings.

In fact, the restaurant team at the hotel,

along with the hotel's food and beverage manager, have fostered a close relationship with Toptable and Livebookings, which has led to increased revenues. Reservations at the Blue Door bistro through the Toptable channel have, for example, climbed 160% year-on-year.

Training is a key part of the team's success. Every member of the team has undergone Barcode training, a national scheme designed to provide confidence and knowledge in beverage product, service, licensing laws and health and safety, while some of the staff have undergone training with Hunters and Frankau to improve their knowledge of cigars. Other areas the team have received training in include cheese, tea, and whisky.

In three and a half years, the Montague has never dropped below 11th place in the rankings for London hotels on TripAdvisor, while the Blue Door has risen from a rank of 285 for London restaurants to 41 out of over 12,000 restaurants.

Commenting on the Montague's team, Stephen Moss said: "It's all too easy to give this award to a Michelin-starred hotel restaurant, but the team really went the extra mile with a four-star product to give five-star food and service and so consistently exceeded customers' expectations."

## Shortlisted

- Alain Ducasse at the Dorchester, London
- Mr Todiwala's Kitchen at Hilton London Heathrow Airport Terminal 5
- The Montague on the Gardens, London

## The judges

- Mark Bevan**, Operations Manager, Chewton Glen hotel, New Milton, Hampshire
- Geoff Booth**, Vice Principal, Westminster Kingsway College
- Michele Caggianese**, Restaurant Manager, the Rib Room bar and grill, Jumeirah Carlton Tower, London
- Stuart Geddes**, Director of Food and Beverage, the Dining Room at the Goring, London
- Silvano Girdalin**, Director, Le Gavroche, London
- Simon Girling**, Executive Food and Beverage Operations Manager, the Ritz, London
- David Hobbs**, Head of National Accounts, Tchibo Coffee Service
- Helle Jensen**, General Manager, Firmdale Hotels
- Stephen Moss**, Chairman, the Springboard Charity
- Fred Sirieux**, General Manager, Galvin at Windows, London
- Stephen Wilkinson**, National Key Account Executive, the AA Hotel Services

