

simon hulstone



Fellow chefs
always comment
on the crockery
I use

award-winning chef, Simon Hulstone talks to Steelite about his love for plates and the 'Potteries'



local connections

I was born and bred in Stoke-on-Trent and I am very proud of my family's 'Potteries' origins. My father, Roger, was a chef there and that was how my passion for food started.

I began entering competitions at the age of 16. Winning the Roux Scholarship was great for my career and industry recognition and I also won World Junior Chef and was the UK's Bocuse d'Or candidate. Getting a Michelin star for The Elephant Restaurant in 2006, which we still have, was the icing on the cake.

I am delighted to be working with Steelite and use a range of their products in both my restaurant and brasserie. The tableware is of the highest quality and does not lose its appearance.



Choosing the right crockery is just as important as the dishes on the menu



framing his dishes



With the right ingredients, the plate is the frame.

My menus and dishes are all created from locally sourced produce, and mostly from The Elephant's dedicated farm. We grow all our own vegetables and fruits and have our own livestock of pigs, turkeys, sheep, bantams and lambs. This means that our ingredients are entirely seasonal.

I work my dishes around what is in season. To complement the natural presentation I love to use stylish pottery shapes and artisan colours, particularly the Craft range in a lustrous brown glaze, to complement my natural plating style.

Winter is a great time to experiment with the seasonal larder to create rustic winter warmers. My dishes, in keeping with menus for the season, are based around hearty braises of ox cheek, beef cheek, lamb's breast, roasts and hocks with nutritious leafy greens such as kale, sprouts, cabbage and broccoli, which are at their peak in cooler weather.

Customers want an experience they can't create themselves and I always enjoy leaving them with a lasting impression.

Consumers like their table to be well presented when eating out



tableware is an ingrained part of the dining experience



Choosing the right tableware is crucial, as it is the first thing that diners notice. It can instantly lift a table and set the tone for the rest of the meal. It should also be hardwearing and well balanced, so waiting staff can manage dish transfers to the table.

The rules are more relaxed on tableware trends - in fact there are no rules. I am all for mixing it up with different shapes and colours to create a natural and earthy feel, like my dishes.

The Craft range has an earthenware rustic style and pottery feel that inspires my natural, no gimmicks dish presentation.

I also love the shapes and symmetry of the Organic range.

The Opera bowls are great for fine dining where there are often a lot of small dishes such as starters, desserts, sauces, dips and light soups. They add depth to food and frame smaller portions so that they appear bigger.

Contour plates have a clean shape and are the perfect shape for main courses.

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Introducing stylish tableware can add a unique touch

Diners expect a higher level of tableware the more they pay for a meal



a day at the factory

I recently spent the day at Steelite's factory in the heart of The Potteries in Stoke with my team of chefs. Seeing first hand the production processes and working with the design team at the factory helped us appreciate how the tableware we use is really key to the dining experience. We thoroughly enjoyed being able to style a range of cover plates with our own colours and it's enormously gratifying to have our own signature plates.

