



Pictured above; Chewton Glen Hotel Cookery School

ELEVATED *dining* EXPERIENCES

If you're looking for a once-in-a-lifetime food experience, learning firsthand from celebrity chefs in incredible venues, or inside your holiday property, *Dream Escape* can show you how – taking your trip to the next level

Words: *Karyn Noble*

“Is it okay, chef?” Watching the legendary Raymond Blanc OBE unmould the soufflé I’d made with my own hands at The Raymond Blanc Cookery School at Le Manoir aux Quat’Saisons in Oxfordshire was simultaneously terrifying and exhilarating. Yet it’s a precious moment I return to regularly; for gourmet travellers (especially those short on time), how better to capture the essence of a destination than to learn from (or dine with) those at the top of their field? Thanks to Dream Escape’s impeccable connections, your culinary wish-list in the UK and Ireland can become a reality, whether it’s a lesson from a celebrity chef at a prestigious venue or enjoying a top-calibre private dining experience, delicious journeys await.

Visit a Celebrity Chef’s Cooking School

You’ve seen them on television; their cookbooks may grace your shelves...what would it be like to cook at a celebrity chef’s venue?

It’s impossible to visit Padstow in Cornwall without seeing the influence of TV chef Rick Stein. Apart from his seafood restaurant; cafe; fish and chip outlet; and gastropub; there’s an

award-winning Cookery School that has been running for 25 years. It’s here you can enjoy private courses as well as seasonal tastings and chef demonstrations, depending on how hands-on you’d like to be, while revelling in the view across the picturesque Camel Estuary. Seafood is, of course, a primary focus, but the inspirations of Rick’s travels aren’t far away. You might even spot Rick himself signing books in the deli downstairs.

Guests at the Chewton Glen Hotel and Spa on the edge of New Forest National Park in Hampshire can take a dedicated buggy down to the purpose-built, open-plan cafe and cooking school called The Kitchen.

Celebrity TV chef and journalist James Martin is a frequent instructor here; his sessions are so in-demand they generate immediate waiting lists. Using state-of-the-art equipment, including Gaggenau induction hobs and ovens, Kenwood electrical appliances and Robert Welch knives, you’ll be guided through the creation of delicious dishes over the course of several hours, savour them at the Chef’s Table with a glass of wine then toddle back to your exquisite treehouse accommodation or a pampering session at the spa.

When the Raymond Blanc Cookery School opened in Oxfordshire in 1991 the world paid attention, not least because Monsieur Blanc's restaurant here – Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons – has held two Michelin stars continuously since 1984, the only restaurant in Britain to have done so. And while the venue is closing in January 2026 (a 'transformation' and reopening expected in the summer of 2027),

for Tamarind). Whether it's a gathering of eight or an elaborate party for 100, Atul will prepare your dream meal in a private room or across the entire premises.

Gordon Ramsay is a chef who needs no introduction, and there are many private-dining spaces at his prestigious restaurants, whether you fancy the exclusive hire of Michelin-starred Pétrus in Knightsbridge or partaking in

‘Settle into Aldourie Castle, a 300-year-old baronial castle in the Scottish Highlands and revel in its rustic dining room, perfectly set for your bespoke banqueting requirements, all catered exclusively for you by one of the country's highest-calibre chefs.’

there's still a vast array of courses held almost every day here in 2025. While it's unlikely you'll find 'RB' (as he's affectionately known by the chefs) teaching, it's not unheard of for him to make an appearance, especially if the aroma of Comté cheese (from the region he was born in France) wafts up to his upstairs office..

The Jamie Oliver Cookery School launched in London in 2016, and while Jamie doesn't teach public classes himself (he will occasionally do so for charity/special occasions), the team of chefs are trained in his signature style. Guest chefs, such as Gennaro Contaldo, who will be familiar to viewers of Jamie's cooking shows as his culinary mentor, also often take classes.

High-End Dining Rooms

The UK is blessed with an abundance of special-occasion private dining rooms with renowned chefs either on the pass or overseeing the menu concepts. Kanishka, in London's Mayfair, serves cuisine from Atul Kolchar, one of the first two Indian chefs to receive a Michelin star (in 2001

Restaurant Gordon Ramsay's Inspiration Table for a bespoke tasting menu.

Relax with Luxurious Private Catering

Settle into Aldourie Castle, a 300-year-old baronial castle in the Scottish Highlands and revel in its rustic dining room, perfectly set for your bespoke banqueting requirements, all catered exclusively for you by one of the country's highest-calibre chefs. Sound dreamy? It could be the family getaway or special occasion that makes your trip one that everyone talks about for decades to come.

Or if you'd prefer to delve deep into Scotland's Cairngorms National Park, Candacraig, an historic mansion, provides a remarkable setting for your private dining in Aberdeenshire. Settle into the dedicated whisky library for rare drams, take a gourmet picnic to the heather-dotted hills or the Victorian walled garden, or indulge in an expertly matched whisky-pairing fine-dining occasion that highlights Scotland's best seafood, meat and game.

Pictured below; Aldourie Castle, a 300-year-old baronial castle in the Scottish Highlands



Pictured below: Candacraig, and dining room, in Aberdeenshire



Or what about Lismore Castle in Ireland's county Waterford? A weekend or a week for your exclusive use, attended by a private butler? Where all the meals are taken care of, to your exact dietary requirements?

Ultimately, Dream Escape can reward your taste buds with both impeccable venues in lavish locations and impressive names hovering discreetly at your elbow with a silver tray. The 'pinch-me' moments of your trip can transcend the queues at hot-right-now restaurant doors to the hushed sophistication of exclusive venues, where it all comes to you, your way.

Elite private-dining with world-class private chefs

Dream Escape works alongside Caroline Yates, founder of The Good Cook Co, to arrange some of the most elite private-dining experiences the UK and Ireland has to offer. With a longstanding reputation for placing discreet, highly skilled chefs, Caroline provides

bespoke culinary solutions for the most discerning of palates and for every occasion.

Whether it's a family holiday in Cornwall or an elegant shooting weekend on a Scottish Highlands estate, Caroline sends chefs who deliver seamless, restaurant-quality experiences in the privacy of your luxury accommodation.

From formal game dinners to laid-back country lunches, every detail is handled with professionalism and care.

"Having a private chef is like inviting a restaurant into your home," says Caroline. "You get to enjoy your surroundings, your guests, and your time – without ever needing to lift a finger."

With over two decades in luxury hospitality, Caroline works with Dream Escape to ensure that your trip is a memorable one, with every culinary detail to your exact requirements, from the quality of the ingredients to the carefully tailored menus delivered by a chef handpicked for your location. 🍷



Pictured left-right; Caroline Yates, founder of The Good Cook Co and Chef Dan Lee, winner of Masterchef 2021