

REFINED TASTE

New owners of the Kingham Plough, Matt and Katie Beamish, have continued the tradition of fine dining at the 17th century inn

WORDS BY STEVE MATHER

Taking over a pub previously owned by a former protégé of Heston Blumenthal and a *Great British Menu* winner, could be considered a hard act to follow.

But not for the new owners of the Kingham Plough, as the hospitality operators Matt and Katie Beamish have an impressive background of their own.

They took over the Oxfordshire village pub from Emily Watkins in February and they have put their own stamp on the 17th century inn.

Under its previous owners, the pub became known for fine dining.

Foodies can still enjoy an evening of the highest standard, but this is now a place where families with children can eat merrily.

It was a late summer evening when I went along to see the new Plough for myself. After a warm greeting, I was shown to my lodgings.

The bathroom was a bit of a jaw-dropper, featuring a luxurious drench-style showerhead and the biggest bathtub I'd ever laid eyes on.

Matt and Katie recruited chef Jonny Ponds in June and he has been busy making the menu his own, using local ingredients.

I chose the salmon with capers, pink shallots and squid ink tapioca crisp as a starter. The salmon was excellent and is supplied from a company in nearby Daylesford.



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I then plumped for the partridge, served with raspberries, which was a perfect accompaniment. Rounding off the meal was a warm plum and almond tart with amaretto crème fraîche. The range of flavours produced in the courses was top-notch, with the salmon dish providing an exhilarating array of flavours and textures.

The food that followed at breakfast was just as moreish. Warm drop scones are produced alongside freshly-baked pastries and home-made granola.

The Plough has six en suite rooms costing from £145 per night for two people on a B&B basis, all year-round. Dogs can also stay overnight in two of the rooms for an extra £10 each.

A tough act to follow? Not for Matt, Katie and Jonny. With their friendliness, passion and knowhow, they are skilfully guiding the Plough down exciting new furrows.

Kingham Plough, Kingham near Chipping Norton, OX7 6YD. 01608 658327

