

## **CHAOPHRAYA MANCHESTER LAUNCHES NEW MENU FOR AUTUMN 2016**

Iconic Thai restaurant Chaophraya, on Chapel Walk, off Cross Street, is repositioning in its aim to take Thai dining to the next level in the UK. The change will see the restaurant launch a revolutionary new menu alongside a full change to its logo and signage.

Fusing culinary imagination with fine Thai cuisine, Chaophraya's new menu delivers a sophisticated edge to Thai dining, by offering a mix of eclectic and contemporary dishes inspired by the tastes from across the Thai regions.

The new menu draws its inspiration from the provinces of Thailand, namely; Chiang Mai, Maeklong River, Khanchanaburi & the banks of the Chaophraya River in Bangkok, and cleverly takes the diner through a culinary and cultural journey, by combining the new menu with traditional Thai hospitality and opulent décor.

Popular dishes from the new Chaophraya's menu during testing with customers were the Thai Tacos, Phad Thai served in a contemporary way, the chamber aged sirloin steak, cooked on a Himalayan salt block and the range of British desserts with a Thai twist.

As part of the change, the restaurant is encouraging guests to embrace the traditional way to dine in Thai culture, eating 'family style,' where multiple dishes are shared by everyone at the table. They are also challenging the misconception that Thai food is eaten with chopsticks, as in the majority of cases only noodle dishes are eaten this way, instead a spoon and fork are presented at the table.

Speaking of the new menu, Nattawut Leela - Development Chef of Chaophraya – says: ““The launch of our new menu is a really exciting development for Chaophraya. Over the past 6 months our senior culinary brigade have travelled to Thailand to research the latest developments in Thai cuisine, we have blended this with the knowledge of our expert chefs in our restaurants.

“With a dash of imagination we believe we have created a menu that takes Thai dining to a new level here in the UK.”

Chaophraya's new 'Essence of Thailand' menu will be served at lunch and dinner from 8<sup>th</sup> September 2016. Individual dishes will be priced from £6.50 for starters, £10.50 for mains and £7.50 for desserts.

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#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

Chaophraya, takes its name from the main waterway in Thailand and was seen to breathe life into the families who lived along its banks. Today, the Chaophraya River is still regarded as the spiritual heart of Thailand and is a strong source of inspiration behind the restaurant's new menu.

Chaophraya is part of the Thai Leisure Group of restaurants and bars that is owned jointly by Kim Kaewkraikhot and Martin Stead. Kim was a chef and she ran her own small restaurant in Bangkok. Kim's food was renowned in the local neighbourhood for its fantastic flavours. Kim was committed to finding the freshest produce available and she could be seen out-and-about each morning scouring the local market stalls carefully selecting her ingredients.

Kim operated a basic menu but her forte was in developing dishes of the day using the ingredients she could source. As Martin learnt more about Thailand, he also began to see an opportunity and set about creating a vision. That vision brought authentic Thai cuisine and genuine Thai hospitality to the UK.

In 2004, Kim and Martin opened Chaophraya Leeds to widespread acclaim. This was the first real premium-level authentic Thai restaurant in Yorkshire.

In 2006, they opened Chaophraya Manchester. Once again Kim and Martin went to Thailand to buy a container full of statues, artefacts and fixings that still adorn the site today. Manchester, like Leeds, was an unprecedented success.

The next site to open was Chaophraya Liverpool, which also incorporated the group's first Palm Sugar Bar. With all its glitz and glamour, Palm Sugar quickly became popular with the people of Liverpool for Thai cocktails, champagne, prosecco and a great party atmosphere at the weekends.

In 2011, the group expanded further with the opening of Chaophraya in Birmingham,

In 2012 Chaophraya opened two new sites in Scotland. Chaophraya Glasgow, which is set over four floors on the busy Buchanan Street, and is the largest Thai restaurant in Europe. As well as a Palm Sugar Bar, the site also incorporates a VIP whisky bar offering more than 100 different brands. The site also has four uniquely styled private dining areas.

Chaophraya Edinburgh, on the corner of George Street and Castle Street in the city, is the latest addition to the group and boasts spectacular views of Edinburgh Castle.

Each of Chaophraya's existing sites is unique and a statement of expression in its own right. The Group continues to resist any move towards becoming a homogenous chain of outlets. Each site retains the hallmark features of the Chaophraya brand with water features, black granite, opulent décor and stunning lighting but each is also unique to reflect its surroundings and to appeal to the local market.

Throughout Kim and Martin's journey, the company has invested in its core value of 'Ow Jai Sai' which translates from Thai into 'we care about everything' – you can see these few words on the collars of the uniforms of all our staff each of the restaurants. The Group's vision is to continue to develop the best of Thai within the UK.