



View of Filey Brigg from the Downcliffe

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## YORKSHIRE LIFE DINNER

The Downcliffe House Hotel, Filey, North Yorkshire

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# Boast of the coast

Guests join us for a delightful dinner at one of Yorkshire's best boutique hotels.

JO HAYWOOD REPORTS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDY BULMER

**T**he weather in Filey is notoriously fickle. One minute you're basking in glorious sunshine, the next you're engulfed by a sea fret thicker than a fisherman's socks. But at the Downcliffe House Hotel, come rain or come shine, a warm welcome is

always guaranteed.

Darren and Lizzi Booth, who have spent more than a million transforming the hotel into a superb boutique establishment since taking over the helm four years ago, are warmth personified, virtually glowing when praise is inevitably heaped on their achievement.

'I was the manager here 15 years ago

before Darren popped in for fish and chips one day and whisked me off to Wakefield to be his wife,' said Lizzi, as we sipped champagne on their terrace overlooking the wide expanse of Filey bay. 'I always had a passion for this place and grabbed it with both hands when it became available in 2007.

'It had been lovingly decorated and



Jonathan Smales



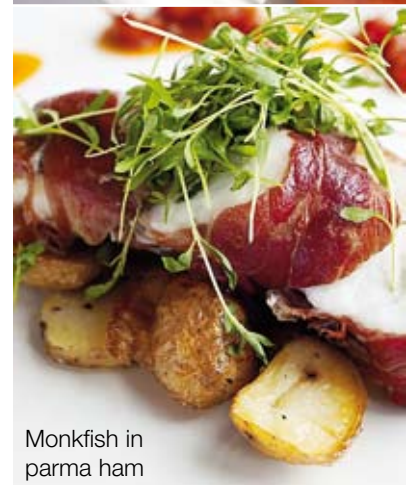
Sam Burt



**Left:** Dave Cartlidge and Luke Kempson  
**Below:** Annie Stirk



Flamborough scallops with belly pork and black pudding



Monkfish in parma ham



Arnold Van Huet and Richard Burt  
Rebecca Baird and Jamie Adam



**Menu**

Flamborough scallops, black pudding and belly pork

Monkfish and parma ham parcels with tomato salsa

A trio of fresh fruit crème brulee



Lee Darke and Lilian Mason



Wayne Low and Andrew Foreman



Trio of fresh fruit brulee

furnished, but we wanted to put our own individual stamp on it. It was a long, expensive process, but it was worth every minute and every penny we spent on it. We just love it.'

And when she says it was a time-consuming, cash-sapping process, she's not kidding. Every detail has been painstakingly thought through and

brought to fruition with considerable finesse, from the wallpaper specially chosen to reflect the ripples in the nearby sandy beach to the carpet, designed by Darren and Lizzi and handmade in Dubai.

After four years of hard work, many hoteliers would be happy to simply sit back and bask. But that's not the

# GOURMET LIFE



Janet Low, Brit O'Sullivan and Wille Van Huet



Mark Hunter and David Hunter



Gary Mason, Lizzi Booth and Russell Lovitt



Darren Booth and Karen Bonnett



Ken Stirk



Susan Pearson



Jill Ryder

## MUSIC NOTES

Our guests were serenaded throughout their meal by Jill Ryder, house musician at Red Brick Mill in Batley and a regular at the Downcliffe, where she performs beautiful renditions of classic songs and modern favourites.

She got her first guitar at the age of nine after pestering her dad for four years, and started performing as a teenager at Watermill Folk Club in the Dales.

Jill turned professional as part of a seven-piece band that travelled the length and breadth of Europe, but eventually decided to follow her heart and go unplugged and acoustic as a solo artist.

**To find out more about her and her music, visit [jillryder.co.uk](http://jillryder.co.uk).**

Booths' style. They believe in constantly refreshing their creation to reinvigorate themselves and their customer base.

The next phase in this never-ending process of regeneration is a relaunch of their already successful restaurant with the aim of creating a destination dining experience that people will flock to from across the region.

'We are rebranding the restaurant in September as The Waterside to really get the message across that while the Downcliffe is a successful boutique hotel, the restaurant is an equally successful fine dining establishment in its own right,' said Lizzi.

'It's not a major redesign; it's more of a refresher to encourage people to see us as a dining option. We specialise in fine dining in a relaxed atmosphere and we want people to know that this is our home as well as our hotel and we're happy to welcome them in for a meal at any time.'

And if our meal was anything to go by, it's well worth a visit. Head chef Dave Cartlidge treated us to a starter of plump, juicy scallops with cubes of flavourful pork belly and deeply delicious black pudding. His main course was a triumphant plate of fresher-than-fresh monk fish with a piquant and distinctly moreish tomato salsa. And to finish, he served up a creamy yet refreshingly fruity trio of cr me brulee, ably aided and abetted along the way by his young sidekick, Luke Kempson.

Annie Stirk, our food and wine consultant, was mightily impressed: 'I have to congratulate Darren and Lizzi on what they've achieved here. They've really made their mark on Filey and have done it in their usual fine style. The food – especially the beautiful local seafood – is sublime and the warmth of the welcome is second to none.'

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## WINE NOTES

**Sauvignon Gris 2007, Cousino-Macul, Maipo Valley, Chile:** with a bouquet of white peach, mandarin and touches of ginger, this medium-bodied wine has a full, unctuous texture and spicy character. This combination makes it a fine choice to pair with a wide range of cold meats, fish and well-seasoned poultry, pork and veal dishes.

**Chablis 2008, Joseph Drouhin, Burgundy, France:** flinty, crisp and with razor-sharp acidity, this is reckoned to be the best vintage for 25 years. It is pale gold with greenish hues and has very fresh aromas reminiscent of citrus with touches of fern and coriander.

**Crown Estates of Hungary Tokaji:** sweet but not cloying pudding wine made using a technique dating back to the 1630s. A base wine is made before raisin-like, sugar-rich Aszu grapes are handpicked into puttony tubs, lightly crushed and added (up to six 25g puttony go into 136 litres of base wine). After maceration and a second fermentation, the wine is aged in small oak barrels for a minimum of four years. The result is delicious drunk on its own, with nuts, blue cheese and most desserts (particularly those with a fruit element).

**All the wines for our dinner were provided by Pol Roger via Scarborough-based Betton Wines. For more information, visit [polroger.co.uk](http://polroger.co.uk) or [bettonwines.co.uk](http://bettonwines.co.uk)**