



Ki te taumata, Aotearoa ki Ingarangi
Celebrating New Zealand in England



PRESS RELEASE
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ANNA HANSEN NAMED NEW ZEALANDER OF THE YEAR (UK) 2010

At a New Zealand House reception in London this week, Anna Hansen, chef and owner of The Modern Pantry restaurant, was named as the winner of the prestigious New Zealander of the Year (UK) Award 2010. Established in 1999 by the New Zealand Society, and sponsored since 2005 by Air New Zealand, the award is annually given to an individual who promotes a positive image of New Zealand in the UK. On winning the award, Anna said "I am totally thrilled and honoured to be named New Zealander of the Year!"

Nominations for outstanding New Zealanders were sought earlier this year from the ex-pat New Zealand community in the UK. 22 different Kiwis, each outstanding in their fields, were nominated, and the three finalists were Anna Hansen, chef founder of the Modern Pantry restaurant; Juliet Harbutt, cheese champion and Geoff Sewell, "cross over" opera singer. The judging panel, including the High Commissioner, Derek Leask, Air New Zealand, New Zealand Society President and a previous New Zealander of the Year, were all impressed by the growing interest to recognise success within the New Zealand/UK community.

Scott Carr, Air New Zealand's General Manager for Europe said "This award is about recognising those people from the arts and sports, from the world of food and wine, and from academia and business that have helped push New Zealand into the headlines and enhance the perception about New Zealand as a destination of modernity and sophistication in the UK. Anna absolutely embodies that passionate kiwi spirit with her huge drive and commitment for things New Zealand in all her efforts in the UK culinary scene."

The reception, organised by the New Zealand Society, saw Anna Hansen toasted appropriately with vintage Cloudy Bay Pelorus accompanied by New Zealand themed canapés from New Zealander owned Suze in Mayfair restaurant. A charity raffle, with a top prize of a sailing holiday from Sailing Holidays and a travel voucher from Air New Zealand, raised money for NZ/UK causes. Anna was awarded 2 return fares to New Zealand from Air New Zealand and an attractive glass award from the New Zealand Society. Romy Brandeis, President of the New Zealand Society commented: "The award evening was a celebration of the New Zealand spirit and Kiwi endeavours. Spontaneous gestures such as the waiata from Ngati Ranana guests, the national anthem lead by Geoff Sewell, and Anna Hansen adding a prize of a dinner for two to our charity raffle, all contributed to making this a very special evening".

Ends

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ANNA HANSEN

Named recently as one of the world's top emerging chefs, Anna's success is no doubt a result of her Kiwi background of open minded innovation, which has helped her create exciting new menu combinations.

At 16, working part time in a Nelson deli, she told her Danish mother that she wanted to be a chef. Steered away from that and into business management, Anna was in her 20's before she first trained as a chef, in London. Going on to work under Peter Gordon at the Sugar Club, they opened The Providores together in 2001.

Anna moved on in 2005 to explore her own philosophy of a "modern pantry" - exploring less well known ingredients such as tamarind and pomegranate molasses in a food style she likes to term modern global food. She opened The Modern Pantry restaurant in August 2008, and it has quickly become a well known destination on the London restaurant scene. Committed to unusual and assertive flavours, Anna has introduced London diners to tamarillos, hokey pokey icecream (a staple on her daily changing menu), and kumara/sweet potato amongst others.

The Modern Pantry occupies a listed building in Clerkenwell, and it is to Anna's credit that she had the tenacity to stick with the project through financial and planning set backs, eventually opening a restaurant with a contemporary feel without losing any of the building's historic charm. The Modern Pantry has earned 2 AA rosettes and a "Bib Gourmand" from Michelin. Her next project is a cookbook, due out in 2011, covering modern pantry staples for the home cook, and multiple ways of using them in everyday cooking.

Anna has been in the public eye several times already this year; she featured in Waitrose's influential monthly magazine in January and on Saturday 20 March, appeared on BBC's popular "Saturday Kitchen" for the first time, and along with cooking a delicious sea bass recipe, she talked about the many influences that New Zealand incorporates into its varied global cuisine.

www.themodernpantry.com

http://www.waitrose.com/food/celebritiesandarticles/chefs/2010/January/anna_hansen.aspx

