

Loch Melfort Hotel & Restaurant

The finest views on the West Coast

EXCITEMENT is in the air as visitors approach the newly refurbished 25-roomed Loch Melfort Hotel – something is happening here that is very special.

Set in the hillside above Loch Melfort overlooking the harbour at Craobh Haven and beyond to the islands of Shuna, Luing, Scarba, towards Knapdale and the Paps of Jura, there is more than the view to please the eye.

Rachel and Calum Ross have transformed what was a rather tired building into a luxury, fresh, contemporary Scottish country hotel using Scottish fabrics and local designers. Rachel says that she also took advice from the invaluable local tradesmen and women who helped the couple with their project.

The bistro, for example, has been completely refurbished and renamed Chartroom II, an update on its original name. They have had bespoke blinds made with charts and maps of the surrounding area.

The popular bistro will continue to serve a wide range of food for lunch, teas and evening meals all year round – both contemporary and traditional, yet only a 25-minute drive from Oban – no reservations required. A popular Scottish music night is held on the first and third Friday of the month, encouraging locals to bring their instruments in and sing or just come and listen.

Langoustines, lobster and crab are landed at the beach next to the hotel by local fisherman Nick Milton and these are complemented by more traditional homemade Scottish fayre such as mince and ratties and local haddock and chips – a menu to suit every budget. Ask for a coffee and you'll get the finest homemade tablet you will ever taste. Children are welcome, with high chairs and toys provided, as well as kids meals.

The elegant AA 2 Rosette Arduaine Restaurant is open daily for dinner between 7 and 9pm – reservations required - for a high quality dining experience, with the kitchen headed up by talented head chef Matt Mitchell from Kilmelford. A new private dining and meeting room is also available in the old wood panelled library for parties of up to 14 people.

In the grounds are the beginnings of what will prove to be a small stock farm. Two black Highland cows will soon be jostling with hens and ducks on



the nearby pond. With a children's play park arriving in April there is plenty for both kids and adults to admire.

Rachel said: 'The cows are only the beginning, we want to understand the heritage of all the products we are serving to our customers. The ethos of our hotel is knowing we have the best quality products alongside the highest level of sustainability possible.'

'We are aiming to be the greenest hotel on the West Coast mainland within the next few years.'

The couple, who both have plenty of hospitality experience, have guest satisfaction at the heart of what they do in Loch Melfort Hotel, providing top class service within a warm and friendly family run hotel environment.

Calum, aged 44, from Glasgow, has taken fishing holidays in Scammadale Glen since he was a child, with his grandparents hailing from Lochgilphead. The couple, who were working for a large food organization in Brazil prior to taking over the hotel, could not believe that the perfect hotel location would come onto the market just as they decided to invest and put down roots in a place they both see as home.

Despite the challenges of transforming the hotel in such a short space of time, Calum and Rachel are both looking forward to their next big project – marketing the hotel as a stunning wedding venue. With breathtaking views and a capacity of up to 100 guests in the dining room, or 150 on the lawn in a marquee, this news is sure to be received with excitement by newly engaged couples. Indeed the first locals are getting married there in May, arriving by boat at the shore to the sounds of a piper and spending the night in the spectacular honeymoon suite.

There is so much that delights the eye at this country hotel; simple walks along the coast, smooth rich coffee with a slice of tablet, feeding the cows or just absorbing the view in front of the fire - take a drive out to Loch Melfort Hotel to see it for yourself.



Loch Melfort Hotel re-launched its bistro with a champagne and canapé party held in luxurious surroundings in Arduane near Kilmelford.

Owners Rachel and Calum Ross were on hand to meet friends old and new and show off the recently refurbished hotel.



Amelia Inglis of Raera, Kilmilver



Patrick Cadzow of Duachy, Kilmilver with Tootie Cadzow of Luing and Charles Struthers of Ardmady Castle



Jane and Falcon Scott of Craobh Haven with Christine Roberts of Kilmelford

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