

SEAFOOD FROM
SCOTLAND

EMBRACING SCOTTISH SEAFOOD THIS CHRISTMAS

SEA TO CELEBRATION

HOW SCOTLAND'S REMOTE COASTAL AREAS ARE SWITCHING UP THE FESTIVE NORM WITH SEAFOOD DISHES ANCHORED IN TRADITION.

WITH THE HOLIDAY SEASON WELL UPON US, RESTAURANTS ACROSS THE UK ARE PLANNING FOR THE CHRISTMAS RUSH. FOR CHEFS, THIS TIME OF YEAR OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO ELEVATE THEIR MENUS WITH LUXURIOUS INGREDIENTS THAT BRING WARMTH AND JOY TO EVERY TABLE. WHILE SEAFOOD MAY NOT TRADITIONALLY TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN BRITISH CHRISTMAS DINNERS, IT'S OFTEN SERVED AS A STARTER OR CANAPÉ, WITH SCOTTISH SEAFOOD LEADING THE CHARGE.

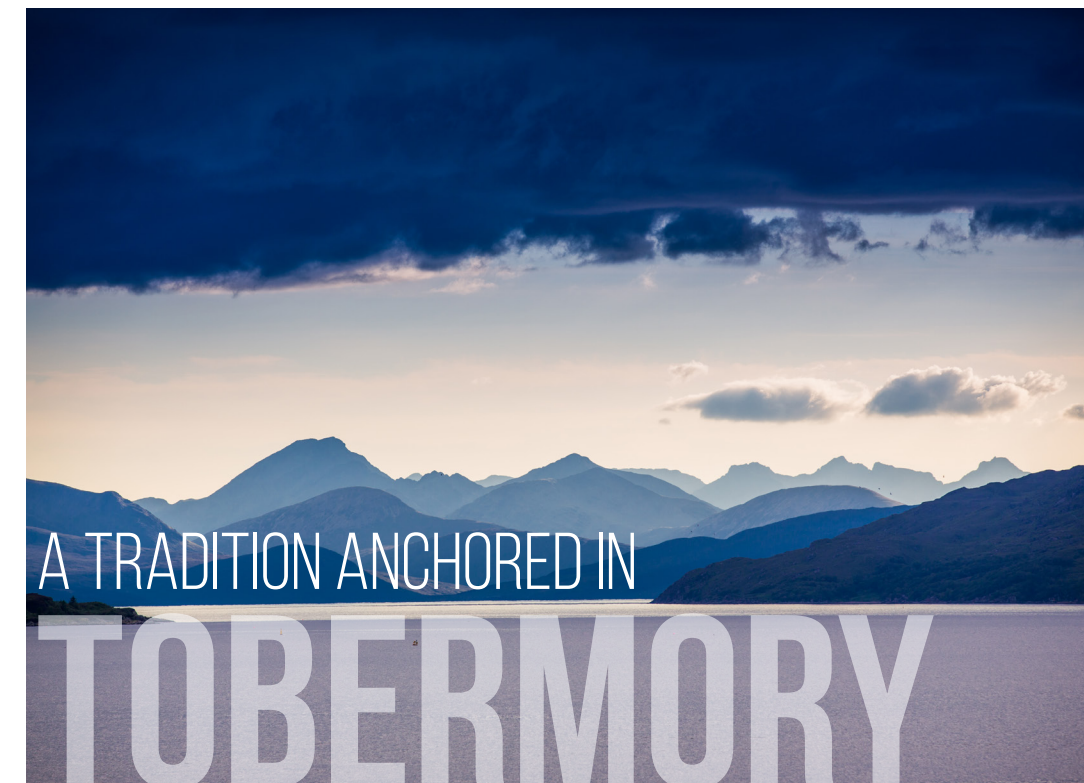
However, for Scots, fish is a historic staple during the winter, especially over the festive period.

Herring takes a variety of forms throughout remote areas in Scotland, with many families serving it on Hogmanay to welcome good luck and prosperity for the new year. In Orkney, it's known as 'bait fish', cooked in oil and served with oatcakes. Those in the Highlands may know herring better as 'silver darlings', a pickled

variation served individually or as a tasty component of a layered dish with onions and potatoes.

In Shetland, 'heid (head) broth' is served as a unique festive dish. Often made with the heads of whitefish such as cod and haddock, it's popular in winter for its heartiness and richness – prized by islanders as a delicious way to use all parts of the fish.

Scottish coastal communities from Tobermory to Port Appin are preparing their beloved seafood dishes for the festive period; chefs throughout the UK should consider how they, too, can highlight some of the country's finest seafood this season. With so many recipes steeped in tradition, it's a great way to build on the nostalgic side of Christmas while adding a bit of luxury to the table.



For Sally MacColl, owner of Tobermory Fish Co. on the Isle of Mull, Christmas is more than just a busy season – it's the heart of her family's legacy. "Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without Tobermory Smoked Trout," she says, reflecting on the traditions her grandparents began decades ago.

"They built the business around Christmas, creating a mailing list of 3,000 names – a huge number back then – and sending out brochures. Even now, we get calls from people saying, 'My granny's passed, but we'd like to stay on the list because it wouldn't be Christmas without your smoked trout.' Hearing that makes it all worthwhile."

Tobermory Fish Co. has embraced its heritage by continuing to use Sally's grandparents'

original recipe while continuing to innovate for modern palates. "We've just launched beetroot-cured trout, and our Whisky Salmon and Tippy Trout with orange liqueur are Christmas favourites," she shares.

Yet, it's the smoked trout that remains the star, with customers throughout the UK, including Devon, Wales, London and Northern Ireland, seeking out this Scottish delicacy. "It's a leaner, subtler alternative to smoked salmon, and my grandpa's recipe just melts in your mouth."

Her advice for chefs looking to add a touch of Scottish luxury to their holiday menus? Keep it simple. "Soft brown bread with lemon and butter or rough oatcakes with whipped crème fraîche – that's all you need. The product speaks for itself."

PRIDE OF PLACE

Michael Leathley, head chef at the Pierhouse Hotel & Seafood Restaurant in Port Appin, Argyll, champions Scottish seafood as a year-round essential, with Christmas offering a unique spotlight opportunity.

"Scottish seafood is such a special thing," Michael says. "We should be proud of the skills and dedication in our seafood industry. You're not just getting the freshest seafood but also backing generations of seafaring families."

Michael's Christmas menu celebrates seafood in all its glory, with standout dishes like monkfish Wellington providing an elegant twist on a traditional festive roast. "We use monkfish at its prime, stuffing it with venison from Great Glen Charcuterie and mushroom duxelles, encased in pastry. It's festive, luxurious, and perfect for sharing."

Other festive highlights include freshly caught langoustines and lobsters stored in creels right outside the restaurant: "the best lobster tank in the world," Michael quips.



WHY LONDON AND MANCHESTER SHOULD LOOK NORTH

Sally and Michael agree that chefs across the UK should embrace Scottish seafood for their festive menus. "It's the ultimate luxury, yet it's versatile and accessible," says Sally. "Having smoked fish from a Hebridean island adds an authenticity and charm that diners love."

Michael echoes this sentiment, emphasising the range and quality available. "Whether it's creel-caught lobsters, hand-dived scallops, or more humble options like plaice and ling, there's a fish for every budget."

A TASTE OF TOGETHERNESS

As the days grow colder, Scottish seafood provides a sense of togetherness and indulgence, whether served as part of a

grand celebration or a simple yet elegant gathering.

Sally takes great pride in knowing people throughout the UK have developed their own traditions around her grandparents' recipe and consider it an integral part of the holiday.

For Michael, it's about the shared experience: "Winter is about *coorie-ing in* – coming together to embrace comfort and connection. What better way to do that than with a seafood platter fresh from our waters, enjoyed with loved ones by the fire?"

This Christmas, let Scotland's seafood inspire menus across the UK. Whether it's smoked trout on brown bread or inverting expectations of a Wellington by featuring monkfish, the unparalleled quality of Scottish produce is sure to make every festive feast unforgettable.

WINTER WARMERS

A GIFT FROM THE PIERHOUSE HOTEL & SEAFOOD RESTAURANT



THIS YEAR, TURN TO SCOTLAND WHEN LOOKING FOR
A SEAFOOD CLASSIC TO ELEVATE YOUR FESTIVE MENU.

CULLEN SKINK – A year-round classic that never fails to warm the soul. Smoked haddock, potatoes and onions simmered with milk and herbs to create the perfect winter soup.

ARBROATH SOUFFLE – Made with Isle of Mull mature cheddar cheese, Scottish eggs, flour, and Arbroath smokies, this celebratory dish is light, simple, but luxuriously rich.

PARTAN BREE – Scots for crab broth. It might be a humble fisherman's soup, but refined with cream, butter, and herbs, it's a celebration in a bowl.



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