



VANESSA SCOTT

Owner, Stratton's Hotel and Restaurant, Swaffham

Vanessa Scott opened Stratton's Hotel and Restaurant in 1990, developing a run-down, private, listed building into an award-winning boutique hotel with a reputation for strong environmental ethics.

Located in the Norfolk Brecks, the hotel has rooms that are individual and eclectic in style, with sustainability one of Stratton's watchwords. Stratton's was winner of the Sustainable Food category at The Considerate Hotel of the Year 2011 Awards, while at the same awards, Vanessa was also winner of the Good Egg category. Stratton's also has the Green Tourism Business Scheme's Gold Star Award, while Vanessa has also been honoured as a recipient of the EDP Norfolk Food Awards' Outstanding Achievement Award.

A driving force behind the Brecks Food & Drink Festival, which this year will be held from Friday 14th to Sunday 16th September, and which won an Action for Market Towns Award this spring, Vanessa runs the hotel with her husband, Les (whom she met at art college) and two directors: their daughter, Hannah Scott, and Dominic Hughes.

QUOTES:

Vanessa Scott on the EDP Adnams Norfolk Food & Drink Festival: "The Festival is an amazing chance to shout out about our wonderful diverse food offering - from the landscape that offers the opportunities, to the finished products themselves; the very passionate people involved in making or producing them; and the happy consumers."

"For my part in organising the Brecks Food Festival, the Norfolk Food & Drink Festival has given us a much-needed platform to show what an amazing larder the Brecks has, from the reared and cultivated through to the enormous wild offering from wild fungi to game."

Vanessa Scott's Festival highlights: "As an organiser of the Brecks Food & Drink Festival during the third weekend of September, I have a vested interest in all the Brecks events. The pop-up restaurant on Friday 14th will - like last year - do more than serve up a fabulous Brecks dinner by three local chefs, it will also have a serious story to convey. Last year's restaurant was a sell-out: 'From root to fruit', with tables covered in grass to serve our main course of pork, a forager from the earth; starters were on guests' seats to convey the root vegetables growing below that grass and a key component of the starter along with pigeon pastrami. Puddings of local mincemeat stuffed apples baked in pastry were suspended above the tables."

"The Brecks Food Festival Farmers' Market was a fantastic success last year and this year, a Farmers' Market challenge will take place in the form of a 'Food Team Pram Race' in the market place with the road closed especially for it."

"But other Norfolk Food & Drink Festival highlights for me will be the Aylsham Show, because it has something for the whole family and I've been going to it for years; the Chefs' Challenge organised by The North Norfolk Festival because it gives the younger chefs a chance to show what they're made of and the heats take place at the wonderful Creake Abbey Farmers' Market; and the Lloyd Addison Moveable Feast because it is such fun as a diner, though as a chef I can well imagine the challenges it poses restaurants!"

Vanessa Scott on the 2012 event: “More people in the county are aware of it as a not-to-miss date on the Norfolk calendar, but the real appeal of the Norfolk Food & Drink Festival is that it’s organised by local people to celebrate what is uniquely Norfolk in terms of the county’s diverse food offering and gets buy-in from a huge cross sector of the population because we all need to eat.”

Vanessa Scott on producers and suppliers: “I really believe that the Festival and all the benefits that go with it from a marketing point of view are an incredible benefit to producers and providers. People go into food out of passion and often work 24/seven. It’s a massive undertaking to manage a product physically, and to have a successful business you need to be a ‘master of all trades’ including marketing. The Festival offers an intensive month-long ‘shout out’ about our wonderful food offering across the industry however big or small a business is - that’s pretty special!”

“There are clear benefits of local food and drink – it is often fresher and usually more tasty having longer to ripen; it helps connect buyers with producers and seasonality; reduces food miles and packaging; supports local economies; and conserves traditional and often rare varieties and breeds.”

Vanessa Scott on being a Festival Patron: “Becoming a patron was a no brainer; it’s my birth county and I love it and over the years spent working in food at Stratton’s Hotel, it’s the producers who I so admire who arrive at the kitchen door with their products and news. As a patron, I will be attending as many events as I can.”

In addition to providing the above quotes, Vanessa Scott is happy to conduct further interviews and can be contacted in the first instance via email at office@strattonshotel.com. Stratton’s Hotel is located at Ash Close, Swaffham, Norfolk, PE37 7NH. Tel. 01760 723845.

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More information about the EDP Adnams Norfolk Food & Drink Festival 2012 can also be found at: www.norfolkfoodanddrinkfestival.co.uk.