



Alladale's chef, Natasha Buttigieg

Where / when did your love for food and cooking start?

Since I was a little child, I definitely loved to eat :) I started cooking around the age of 10, at home in Malta.

What's your history as a chef?

I started kitchen jobs at the age of 17; shy but very eager to learn. My first important job was in the Lake District, Windermere, in a 2AA Rosette restaurant. I was working side by side with many talented Chefs, mostly French nouvelle cuisine.

In Malta, working mostly with Italian chefs, I mastered the authentic Italian food from all regions, and I held the position of sous chef, followed by being the head chef for quite a few restaurants. I opened my own pastry shop at the age of 23 and after that a very

popular and high-end restaurant in St Julian's, Malta. Wanting to travel more, I worked in the French Alps, as a Chalet Chef.

What do you like most about working at Alladale?

The fact that I am part of such a great rewilding project that is combined with building a self-sustainable hospitality structure. And I love meeting new people from all around the world and making their stay a memorable one. That really is the most incredible feeling.

How would you describe your food?

I love to create flavours, even in the simplest of foods. If I had to describe it from what guests I've served told me, it would be mouth-watering, authentic, hearty with a twist.

What are your favourite ingredients to cook with?

Fresh vegetables, spices, game & fish.

If you were to put up a dish that would symbolize Scottish food as a whole, what would it be?

My recent recipe is a slow cooked Venison Stew with cheddar scone dumplings, mashed turnips and potatoes.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

I find the Scottish highland inspiring on so many levels. I get highly motivated when I meet our guests and hear about their love of food. Fresh, organic & foraged ingredients make me create new dishes.

What is the nicest compliment your food ever received?

"Can we take you back home with us!" "This is the nicest food I had in a decade!"

What kind of food do you like to cook at home?

Usually is pasta and pancakes and During holidays is mostly BBQ's.

Who in the food world do you most admire?

I love Marco Pierre White, and the Roux brothers.