



EXECUTIVE CHEF JEAN-DENIS RIEUBLAND – MICHELIN STAR WITH HIS RESTAURANT LE ROYAL

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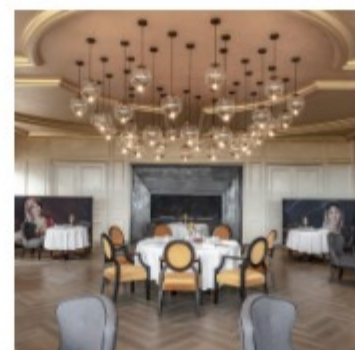
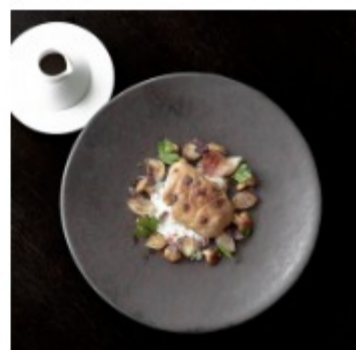
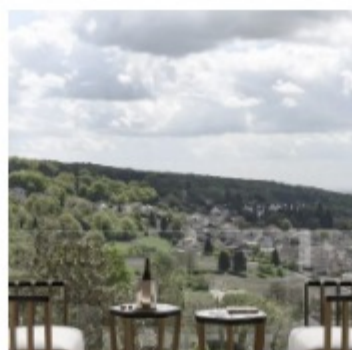
Executive Chef Jean-Denis Rieubland earned his restaurant **Le Royal** at the **Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa** a Michelin star within six months of it opening. A recipient of the highly prestigious **Meilleur Ouvrier de France** in 2007, Chef Jean-Denis has spent the last 31 years in restaurants.

Born in Agen, France, he established his career in the South of France in 1988 and started his journey at Restaurant La Chandellerie in Valbonne as a commis trainee. After obtaining his culinary diploma in Nice, he joined Le Grand Hotel Aston in Nice in 1991 under the guidance of Chef Jacques Bissière.

After spending seven years in the South of France, Chef Jean-Denis moved to Paris to take on the role of Demi-Chef de Partie at the historic Restaurant La Tour d'Argent. He then moved back to the South of France in 2000, working in some of the region's most acclaimed kitchens. He also took over the culinary helm of Hotel Le Negresco in Nice where he received two Michelin stars.

Now he heads the kitchens at the new Champagne-based hotel, overseeing two restaurants, Le Royal and Le Bellevue.

We chat to him about how being based in Champagne has impacted on his cuisine and how he balances the traditions of French cooking with the expectations of today's diners.



So Chef Jean-Denis, you earned a Michelin star for Le Royal within six months of opening – what is your secret to a successful restaurant?

The secrets for a successful restaurant are: the products, the team (kitchen and restaurant), the rigour and the passion.

How important is it to you to respect French culinary tradition?

I attach huge importance to French culinary tradition because my roots are French, and with my title, **Meilleur Ouvrier de France**, I'm an ambassador of the French culinary arts. French gastronomy is well known and we must respect it. Customers come to our restaurants just to live this experience.

How do you balance respecting this French culinary tradition while updating it for today's diners?

French cuisine has its codes and a reputation to maintain. We must keep these codes while evolving the kitchen by modernising it. It's a daily job.

By modernise, I mean that we need to stay tuned for trends. The big ones being healthier dishes, and making very, very visual dishes. We know the dishes will be posted on social networks.

Now that you're in northern France rather than down south, have your ingredients changed in any way?

I keep my cooking basics – which are centred around freshness – and my ingredients the same, but I add more Champagne in my dishes.

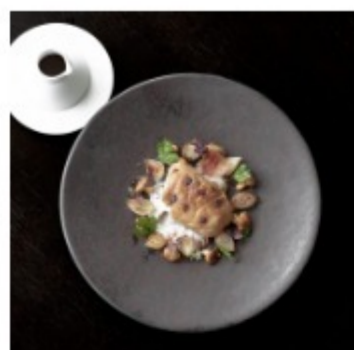
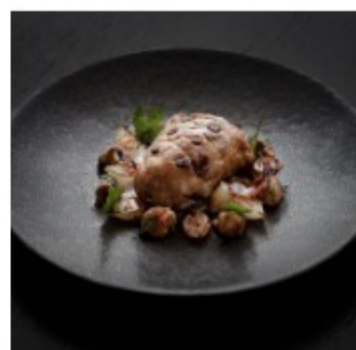
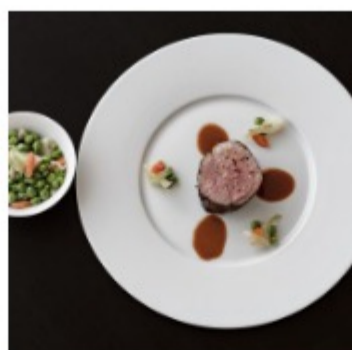
How is being based in the Champagne region affecting your menus?

Now, I compose my menus with a mix of the classic gourmet cooking of the Champagne region and my cooking basics from the south – so I add a sunny touch and a freshness to it.

You've been a chef for 30 years – how have you seen the profession change over the decades?

There has been an improvement in working conditions in the kitchen. Customer expectations have also changed, as cooking must be much more "beautiful".

There has also been a very welcome return to forgotten varieties of products, with a new crop of producers offering interesting products such as seeds and citrus fruits.



In 2007 you won the prestigious Meilleur Ouvrier de France – how important is it for a chef to develop his career through competitions and accolades?

This was a personal title and reward after years of hard work and rigour. Accolades such as this bring huge visibility for the chef and for his restaurant and can have a big impact on his or her success.

What advice would you give a young cook about to embark on a career in the kitchen?

You need to be passionate about cooking, and to be a volunteer, always wanting and offering to do more to follow your course of action. You should try to work in an establishment that allows you to be free to experiment.

Thank you, Chef Jean-Denis, and all the best with continuing success in your new home in Champagne. Do you want to read more? [Check out his recipe.](#)

THE RESTAURANT

Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa is the Champagne region's first destination spa resort. Here you can explore the vineyards, then return to a world-class destination spa overlooking the vines. The hotel offers two gastronomic experiences: Le Royal, which was awarded its first Michelin star six months after opening, and Le Bellevue. Both preserve French 'know-how' while injecting a contemporary touch into traditional cuisine.

Are you an ambitious cook with a desire for a fulfilling career? Are you interested in working at Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa in France? Check out our website <https://royalchampagne.com> and send your application via <https://royalchampagne.com/en/careers.html>.