
CITY INSIDER



Charlie Grainger

Meat Sommelier, The Abu Dhabi Edition

How did you become a Meat Sommelier?

I started my career in butchery ten years ago, and I've progressed gradually to bring me to this special role I hold today. After experiencing butchery at school when I was thirteen, I found it struck a chord with me, and so went on to find myself a traditional English apprenticeship in whole animal butchery. From there, I excelled in the field and completed what was meant to be a two-year apprenticeship in six months due to my eagerness to learn. From then on, I gradually progressed from junior butcher to butchery manager, going on to train three apprentices of my own. British chef Tom Aikens became aware of my work, and contacted me with the opportunity to come and

join Oak Room, as Meat Sommelier, and the rest is history.

Tell us three things that make Oak Room special...

Firstly the concept of having myself, a southern UK butcher and my counterpart, Ryan Cook as our Chef de Cuisine, works really well. Having us both working in partnership creates a really different dining experience. Ryan is the youngest Four Rosette Chef in the UK, from Yorkshire. The combination of his skill in the kitchen, and my knowledge of butchery, makes Oak Room a truly unique experience. Secondly, the design of the restaurant is incredible, with the live Butchery Room and vintage rock 'n' roll imagery, it's really atmospheric and a beautiful place for a meal. Thirdly, the staff is

what makes Oak Room stand out.

The team is fantastic, all vibrant characters with fantastic knowledge of the menu.

What would be the most interesting facts about your role?

For me, the chance to educate guests is the most interesting fact. Living in a society where food has become more of a commodity than a luxury,

I have been given this incredible opportunity to educate guests about why we should eat meat and how it will affect us as people, as well as our health. This interaction really is the best and most interesting part of my role. When you come to Oak Room you're not only going to enjoy a beautiful meal, you're going to learn something new and, most importantly, have fun!