

Secret addresses

Matthew Stibbe on the allure of dining at the chef's table

In association with

The Phaeton, discreet luxury from Volkswagen



BOVEY CASTLE

(01647 445016)

"We have three beehives on the grounds and produce our own honey," says **David Berry**, chef at Bovey Castle on Dartmoor. "To slip on a suit and get your own honey is awe-inspiring." You can also catch trout or shoot game and the kitchen will prepare it for you.

"Peter de Savary [the owner] wanted to place the chef's table right in the centre of the kitchen, right in the hub of things. You're not protected behind walls or cameras." Just the thing if you like your food as nature intended.



MENU AT THE CONNAUGHT

(020 7592 1222)

The Connaught's chef, **Angela Hartnett**, Gordon Ramsay's protégé, has a 12-seat table in the old chef's office. Speakers and a wall of video screens relay the bustle of the kitchen. Part of the charm is the interaction with the brigade, like going behind the bars at the zoo. The maitre d' gives a guided tour and Hartnett likes to introduce the menu while her cooks present each course personally. Guests get a chance to cook a course themselves. Of course, some "expect us to do a Gordon," says Hartnett, "and occasionally I flip a gasket and there's a

On show: (from top left) the Krug room at the Dorchester, Zuma chef Rainer Becker, Ramsay protégé Angela Hartnett, the main restaurant at Zuma and the chef's table at the Connaught

cheer from the chef's table, but generally guests are surprised at how quiet it is."

THE KRUG ROOM AT THE DORCHESTER

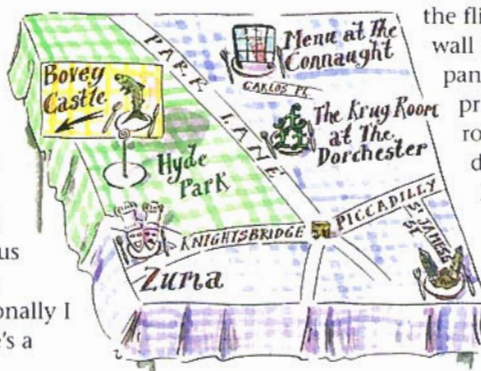
(020 7317 6322)

Step through a discreet service door in the Dorchester's lobby and take the staff lift down to the heart of the hotel's sprawling kitchens. At the flick of a switch a entire wall turns into a transparent panel and reveals a 12-seat private dining room. With a room hire of £500 and dinner starting at £90, the Krug Room is pricey, but it is also the most indulgent. Executive chef **Henri Brosi** will create and cook a bespoke menu for you.

ZUMA

(020 7584 1010)

From the chef's table in Zuma, you can see every part of the restaurant. With a dedicated waiter on hand to explain the challenging (but tantalising) Japanese menu, the table is secluded but part of the life of the restaurant. Zuma's manager, Russell Norman, used to teach drama, an appropriate training for the new generation of restaurants where the kitchen itself is part of the experience and dining has become theatre.



CHEFS' TABLES ABROAD

- **San Francisco** One Market Restaurant (+415 777 5577)
- **Los Angeles** Patina (+213 972 3331)
- **Chicago** Charlie Trotter's (+773 248 6228)
- **Paris** Alain Ducasse (+1 47 27 1227)
- **Hong Kong** Spoon (+852 2313 2256)
- **New York** Kai (+212 988 7277)