

The French Connection at the Stratford Chefs School

Michelin One-Star Chef Alexandre Gauthier to visit Stratford, Ont., February 2 to 6, 2009

Stratford - Michelin one-star Chef Alexandre Gauthier—renowned for working wonders in the Michelin one-star restaurant Auberge de la Grenouillère near the walled town of Montreuil-sur-Mer, France—is joining the Stratford Chefs School (SCS) from February 2 to 6, 2009. In his role as a visiting celebrity chef to SCS, he will share his expertise with students, working together with them preparing multi-course dinners for the public.

“We are delighted to welcome Chef Gauthier and his team to the School. Experiencing his regional cuisine first-hand will be of great benefit to our students and faculty,” says Eleanor Kane, the School’s co-founder and director. “Gauthier describes his cooking as Cuisine Délurée—witty, smart, playful.”

For each of the five evenings at the School, Gauthier has created menus based on dishes from his restaurant at La Grenouillère. Each course will be carefully matched with French wines, and dinners will be prepared and served by second year Stratford Chefs School students. With Gauthier will be the restaurant’s Maître d’Hôtel, Pascal Garnier, who will guide the student servers in providing Michelin one-star service to the clientele. Dinners are open to SCS Dinner Club members and to the public. For reservations, please call (519) 271-7380.

Gauthier—a devoted sportsman who climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in 2005—has been the chef at La Grenouillère, the family restaurant, since 2003. Located near Montreuil-sur-Mer (mentioned in Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*), the restaurant is in Pas-de-Calais, a little-known region on the north coast of France. Before taking over La Grenouillère, Gauthier—whose favourite ingredients vary with the seasons and his desires—worked with chefs Régis Marcon (*Au Clos des Cimes*), Grégory Coutanceau (*Les Flots*) and Michel Roth (*Lasserre*). Renowned French Chef Alain Ducasse recognized Gauthier’s talent early, and in 2005 invited him as a guest chef to the famed Parisian Plaza Athénée to make two of Ducasse’s dishes, including an appetizer of soft and hard shell clams, mango and pomegranate.

“French cuisine, one of the major world cuisines, is considered to be one of the founding cuisines in our Canadian culture,” says Kane. “Its influence is widespread in our cooking and restaurant practice.”

Established as a private, non-profit educational institution in 1983, The Stratford Chefs School is the only culinary institute in Canada operated by working restaurant