

The great reveal

Luxurious and adventurous, we give you the Maserati Levante.

Towards the end of 2016 and into 2017, the motoring world saw a number of new car launches – some being greatly upgraded models and some being exciting redesigns of existing marques – but none as awe-inspiring as when Italian sports car manufacturer Maserati announced the arrival of the Levante, its first SUV complete with its signature beautiful styling and class.

Gravitas was invited to assist the Maserati marketing team to bring together a fabulous launch event of Champagne, hors d'oeuvres, stylish showcases and entertainment at the revealing of Maserati's new family addition.

Supporting acts included live music from The Brays lead singer Gavin Hydes; a sparkling display of beautiful and unique jewellery and watches from Crown Jewellers; quality beauty products and treatments from Maples of Stamford; breathtaking, evocative art from Tony Nero; exquisite Italian designer suits from Gagliardi; and divine canapes prepared and served by Jeeves Catering.

The evening was a huge success, with clients who had already purchased the new deluxe 4x4 as well as potential customers wanting to be the first to view the car at close quarters.

1. Parveen - The Spice Queen, Leigh Taylor - Gravitas, Taryn Johnston, Tony Nero.

2. Hugo and Will Spiegl of Spiegl Press.

3. Maserati Team L to R Steffan Wicks, Monique Almond, Dan Cooper, Carole Merry, Malcolm Owen, Andrew Pilkington MBA, Howard Dalziel, David Pattison

4. Kyle Simmonds with Cathy & Matt Powell of Crown Jewellers.



‘Levante – mild to gale force. In an instant’

Milanese mile machine

‘The open road is where the Levante really comes into its own.’

Motoring journalist, Tim Barnes-Clay pays homage to the Maserati Levante.



It's true, Italian sports car makers aren't celebrated for their SUVs, but Lamborghini and Alfa Romeo are bringing out high-riding models soon. So, Maserati is ahead of the curve with the ushering in of the Levante.

Maserati has decided that we Brits buy diesels by the bucket-load, so a diesel Levante is what I was given to test for a few days. It's the only engine option available to us at the moment, although there is also a Ferrari-derived petrol unit on the continent.



Maserati's PRs are keen for journalists to try the Levante because, apparently, we are influencers – and the Italian firm wants us to tell the world that an SUV from an illustrious manufacturer is not weird. And you know what? Maserati has a point.

Let's face it, Jaguar's SUV, the F-PACE, has gone down brilliantly here – and Jag and Maserati aren't so far apart when it comes to luxury motoring. I've driven the F-PACE – and liked it – but I like the Levante even more. Let me tell you why.

Gun the engine and the Milanese motor's diesel lump doesn't sound like a beast, but press the accelerator and that all changes. The Levante's large 19-inch alloy wheels dig into the bitumen and send you to 62mph in 6.9seconds – then on to a top speed of 143mph. Around town, things are less intense, and the ride, although twitchy on patchy urban tarmac, is never uncomfortable.

The open road is where the Levante really comes into its own. It's a top motorway cruiser, masticating through the miles manically, yet effortlessly. The lavish Levante stays planted at 70mph and the turbo diesel pulls like a train from low revs. The car's high speed ride is refined, and any changes in the road surface are soaked up by the Maserati's excellent suspension system. It's a beautiful machine to spend a lot of time commuting long distances in.

‘A warm wind from Modena’



Fast Facts

- Max speed: 143 mph
- 0-62 mph: 6.9 secs
- Combined mpg: 39.2
- Engine layout: 2987cc 6-cylinder turbo diesel
- Max. power (PS): 275
- CO2: 189 g/km
- Price: £54,335

But the best fun to be had is on circuitous rural roads. The Levante shows it is indeed a true Maserati when cornering, with no lean and a willingness to grip. Despite its bulk, it remains as agile as a cat – and its hydraulic steering delivers real feel, too.

Sending clout to the wheels is an eight-speed automatic transmission. It doesn't find the gears as quickly as the steering wheel paddles, but keep the Levante in auto and it'll blend cog changes without you realising.

Being an oil-burner, the Maserati Levante won't cost the earth to run. The official

combined fuel economy is 39.2mpg, and the emissions of CO2 are 189g/km. To put it in perspective, the Levante with the Ferrari V6 petrol lump gives off 253g/km – so that will be far costlier to run when it eventually makes its way to the UK.

For all its performance, prestige and efficiency, the Maserati Levante is a very practical car. With bountiful room for front and rear occupants, and 580-litres of load space in the boot, you need to keep this on your 'large luxury SUV' shopping list.



British royalty



A fearless design philosophy has led to the DB11's iconic looks. Discover the striking new grille, clamshell bonnet and innovative Aston Martin Aeroblade™, a way of flowing air through the DB11's bodywork.

‘Aston Martin DB11: The Latest In An *Illustrious Bloodline*’

The DB11 showcases a fresh and distinctive design language, pioneering aerodynamics and is powered by a potent new in-house designed 5.2-litre, twin-turbocharged V12 engine.

Built upon a new lighter, stronger, and more space efficient bonded aluminium structure, DB11 is the most powerful, most efficient and most dynamically gifted DB model in Aston Martin's history. As such, it is the most significant new Aston Martin since the introduction of the DB9 in 2003.

Like every Aston Martin, the heart of the DB11 is found beneath the bonnet, though unlike any Aston Martin before it, the DB11's heart is a 5.2-litre, twin-turbocharged V12. Naturally, it's the most dynamic and most accelerative too, with a top speed of 200mph.

As a true 21st century Aston Martin the DB11 combines the latest technology developed in conjunction with technical partner, Daimler AG, with the finest quality and hand craftsmanship.

Thanks to an inspiring palette of colours and a vast array of detailing options, its interior can be perfectly in-tune with your unique personal style. From calming, carefully co-ordinated tones to sharp

contrasts in hue and texture, your choices are virtually limitless. Nexus quilting and Celestial perforation add layers of beautiful complexity and intrigue, while ornate leatherwork, such as intricate brogue detailing, creates areas of visual and tactile delight.

Dr Andy Palmer, President and Chief Executive Officer of Aston Martin, said: "This is not only the most important car that Aston Martin has launched in recent history, but also in its 103-year existence. The DB11 rightfully places Aston Martin once again as a leading brand in the luxury automotive market".

The new DB11 was named Production Car of the year by a jury of experts from 10 international automotive magazines. The judges stated: "Once again Aston Martin has demonstrated being capable to blend elegance and power."

Prices from £154,900.
www.jardinemotors.co.uk/aston-martin



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CLOSE TO *home*



Properties offered for sale by hurford.co.uk

House one

This modern home was built in 2016 and makes the most of the views out on to the Nassington countryside.

What is your style? Traditional, elegant or contemporary and chic?

Whatever your taste, your home is your castle and we are always on the lookout for that something that makes our abode unique and reflects our personalities.

We have found two equally wonderful homes that exude charm and warmth, but at totally different ends of the style spectrum.

These Gravitas reading homeowners have put their own unique stamp on their houses with flair and panache, and the odd extension or two.



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CLOSE TO *home**House two*

A luxurious home in the village of Tinwell, full of original features and modernised to fit in with today's lifestyles.

Garden – established and private

Snug – cosy with exposed stonework

Kitchen – traditional with a modern twist





Snow Designs
& Interiors



32, St Mary's Street,
Stamford, PE9 2DS

W: snowdesignsandinteriors.com



Room for everyone

Urban Marque has a genius solution to help utilise part of your garden for extra accommodation.

After many years of supplying timber frame homes and commercial buildings in the UK and throughout Europe, Urban Marque identified a market in the UK for quality structures that could be built to meet UK building regulations, but without the red tape of planning permission.

Directors, father and son team, Chris and Jake Thorpe specialise in mobile homes and permitted development garden buildings, all fully engineered, manufactured and erected by them. With each design having the same thermal and acoustic levels as a traditional house, the structures conform to UK building regulations.

The process is quick, safe and stress-free, with the customer enjoying more control and choice over design and finish. The buildings suit a diverse range of uses such as an office, a playroom or a cinema room to an annexe for teenagers or elderly parents.

Jake explains: "An affordable unit of up to 136m² (four bedrooms) can be installed in your garden, which can solve many difficult family housing issues."

Urban Marque has a range of designs that can be bought as standard, or altered to suit your exact needs, or you can even design your own at no extra cost.

Urban Marque are accredited members of the IWA, so your deposit is protected along with an insurance-backed independent 10-year guarantee on completion. It is also a volunteer member of the Retail Ombudsman Scheme for your added protection.

Urban Marque's philosophy is based on old-fashioned business ethics and each project is personally overseen by one of the directors. They don't have showrooms, salesmen, reps or expensive glossy brochures, just professionally qualified people who know their business.

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www.urbanmarque.com

It's got to be *perfect*

{ 'Here are our
recommendations
for a fantastic dining
experience.' }

Great food goes without saying, but beautiful surroundings and a buzzing atmosphere can turn eating out in to an event.



Hambleton Hall

The jewel in the local food scene, Hambleton Hall, sits atop the Hambleton peninsula, bestowing stunning views over Rutland Water. It has held a Michelin Star since 1982, with 24 of those years owed to the faultless cookery of head chef, Aaron Patterson. Stylish and sophisticated, a visit to the Hall is an experience you won't forget – every aspect of a guest's visit has been meticulously considered by owner Tim Hart and his team. The sous chef, master baker Julian Carter, set up a bakery in 2008 to supply the Hall with freshly baked goods and has won numerous awards, including Britain's Best Bakery. A definite for food lovers.

Hambleton Hall, Nr Oakham LE15 8TH
01572 756991
hambletonhall.com

Prévost

Head chef/owner, Lee Clarke, has been seasoning the Peterborough restaurant scene with his flair and creativity for a number of years, but it is Prévost where Lee has finally been able to create a menu and ambience exactly to his liking. Prévost offers a relaxed atmosphere – so very different to the standard fine-dining experience – which is partnered with some of the most exquisite food, an extensive wine list and amazing cocktails, making Prévost Peterborough's most exciting dining experience.

20 Priestgate, Peterborough PE1 1JA
01733 313 623
prevostpeterborough.co.uk



Words and pictures - Jenny Garford

The Olive Branch

Hailed as the best pub in Britain (in the Good Pub Guide 2014), The Olive Branch enjoys a fantastic reputation for offering guests a fine-dining experience in a relaxed village pub environment. Head chef/co-owner Sean Hope and his team produce plate after plate of delightfully playful food, cooked to absolute perfection. With an ever-changing menu that focuses on locally sourced and seasonal produce, elevated pub classics sit comfortably alongside more innovative, explorative dishes. The Olive Branch boasts an extensive wine list, guest ales and a number of exciting cocktails.

The Olive Branch, Clipsham LE15 7SH
01780 410 355
theolivebranchpub.com



The George Hotel

Attracting a well-polished crowd, dining at The George of Stamford is a great excuse to put on your best bib and tucker, order a bottle of Champagne and luxuriate in the grandeur of the surroundings. Steeped in history, The George does old-fashioned with aplomb; from the sirloin brought to the table beneath a dome of silver, to the dessert trolley laden with trifles and profiteroles – there's an air of a bygone era wherever you turn. If you're eating in the oak-panelled dining room, then be prepared to go all out – oysters, lobster, Dover sole and veal are all on the menu and cooked to perfection by chef patron, Paul Reseigh.

The George Hotel of Stamford, PE9 2LB
01780 750750
georgehotelofstamford.com

The Bell Inn

Sit back and soak up the historical romance of one of Peterborough's most notable hotels, The Bell Inn of Stilton. Rebuilt in the early 17th century, this fine coaching inn once served thousands of weary travellers as they made their way down the Great North Road and was a rumoured resting place of the legendary highwayman Dick Turpin. These days, sitting under the exquisite vaulted ceiling beside a roaring fire and enjoying award-winning food by candlelight, make The Bell Inn one of the most romantic places to dine in the area.

The Bell Inn, Stilton PE7 3RA
01733 241066
thebellstilton.co.uk





A wicked chef

Gravitas food editor Jenny Garford caught up with talented chef Dameon Clarke.



Dameon Clarke is a talented local chef who's sophisticated palate and skilful touch in the kitchen has earned his restaurant, The Wicked Witch, a spot in the 2017 Michelin Guide.

Over the last decade, Leicester-born Dameon has been at the helm of some of the best kitchens in the area, with spells at Nick's in Oakham, The Collyweston Slater and Assiette under his belt; Dameon has

brought his years of experience in national and international kitchens to the local food scene and we thank him for it.

Dameon, now 38, spent his twenties travelling the other side of the world; he spent a year in Asia, where upon finding out that he was a chef, locals would invite him into their kitchens, showing him how to prepare traditional dishes using recipes that had been passed down through the generations.

He also spent four and a half years living and working in Sydney, notably at Cruise on the waterfront, and Tetsuya's, which at the time was one of the world's top five restaurants, before heading back to the UK. Prior to his time in Australia, Dameon worked at La Gavroche and then under Gary Rhodes in Edinburgh.

Dameon's experience in these kitchens is evident in his dishes – classic French techniques, used to get maximum flavour

out of top quality, seasonal produce with a playful nod or two to Asian cuisine, notably in the pickling and preserving of vegetables, all of which are sourced locally, some even grown in the restaurant's greenhouse. For Dameon, seasonal, local produce is king and he proudly boasted that the venison and pork that my dining companion and I ate came from Top Farm, which is just a two-minute drive from the restaurant.

Not surprisingly, when Dameon gets a break from the restaurant, the last thing he wants to do is spend hours in the kitchen at home and tells me that his favourite thing to eat when he's not at the restaurant, is baked beans and poached egg on toast with brown sauce; he also likes to kick-back with a cold lager and can often be found sinking a pint of Peroni at The Green Dragon, just down the road from The Wicked Witch.

thewickedwitchexperience.co.uk





PRÉVOST

A decorative graphic in the top left corner consists of approximately 18 solid-colored circles of various sizes and colors, including shades of brown, grey, purple, yellow, green, red, dark blue, orange, pink, and teal, scattered across the upper left portion of the page.



The personal touch

Gravitas food editor Jenny Garford delights in the atmosphere at Lee Clarke's renowned restaurant.

Fine dining has shrugged off the formality at Lee Clarke's Prévost, in Peterborough's city centre. Local lad, Lee, who has worked in the kitchen's of culinary giants such as Marco Pierre-White and Albert Roux, wants diners to walk away from their experience at his Michelin Guide-listed restaurant having had an enjoyable time as well as a great meal; stuffiness is eschewed in favour of a relaxed atmosphere and 'super-friendly, chatty staff', with dishes brought to the table by the kitchen team, including Lee himself, which makes for an altogether less formal, more personal experience.

Prévost is housed in a sympathetically renovated 16th century mews building – it's historical past evidenced by the large inglenook fireplace and stunning panelled walls of the reception lounge and bar area. The dining area is modern, and at busy times filled with the chorus of diners chatting, giggling and exclaiming about the delightful plates being served.

Prévost offers tasting menus of three, five and nine courses, with snacks being served at the start of each and the option of a cheese board at the end. There is a wine pairing option offered to truly enhance your dining experience. Lee's focus is on flavour and getting the most out of each ingredient, some of which are grown in the restaurant's courtyard garden, some sourced or even foraged locally,

others imported. In a world where chefs seem to be preoccupied with buying ingredients as locally as possible, Lee's desire to give diners the best possible produce he can find (waxing lyrical about the quality of Italian tomatoes as much as he does Yorkshire rhubarb) is refreshing; an attitude reflected in his dishes.

Lee has a knack for creating challenging dishes without pretension; the silky-soft goats curd mousse dessert with fig and granola verges on savoury, whereas the salt-baked crapaudine beets, served with walnut and Berkswell cheese are sweet, almost caramelised, yet balanced so beautifully by salty ewes milk cheese.

The snacks are worth a visit alone. The little bites are the perfect way to start a meal and highlight the team's creativity, flair and attention to detail. Cocktails are treated with equal imagination, for example mixologist Kyle's take on an old-fashioned smoky bacon infused wheat bourbon, with maple syrup and apple.

Keep your eyes peeled for Prévost's new menu, available from April, which will be completely different in concept to what has been offered before. Inspired by food memories, each dish will be a little story on a plate and lovingly called, The Romantics – a nod to the evocative journeys food can take us on.

{ 'Lee has a knack for
creating challenging
dishes without
pretension.' }



20 Priestgate, Peterborough PE1 1JA
01733 313 623
prevostpeterborough.co.uk

{grav·i·tas}

fine dining club

Gravitas has collaborated with some of the finest dining venues in the region to showcase their food and to give our readers a unique dining invitation.



The Blue Bell

The Blue Bell in Glington is the perfect mix of fine modern cuisine with a relaxed, friendly atmosphere set in an 18th century quintessentially English country pub, complete with real ales, oak beams and cosy open fires. With the addition of the new garden room dining area its Michelin-recommended food can be enjoyed while taking in the extensive garden views seven days a week.

Head chef, Will Frankgate, works hard to keep the charm of the old with the taste of the new and his food is not only beautifully thought out, cooked and presented, but also uses only the best fresh local produce to ensure a superb dining experience every time.

OFFER

Gravitas readers receive a complimentary glass of Prosecco with every two course meal ordered. Quote: Gravitas.

The Blue Bell
10 High Street, Glington,
Peterborough PE6 7LS
01733 252285
thebluebellglinton.co.uk



The Wicked Witch

Under the ownership of head chef, Dameon Clarke, The Wicked Witch is thriving. Locals know Dameon well from his previous ventures such as Asiette and clamour to eat at the cosy, welcoming gastro pub, just outside of Stamford. Dishes are prepared using only the best local and seasonal produce, applying classic techniques to get the best out of each ingredient; the food is exquisitely beautiful and packed full of flavour – his sauces are extraordinarily good!

The Wicked Witch offers an à la carte menu as well as eight or 12-course taster menus. Dameon's Sunday dinners and themed-dinner evenings are also very popular.

OFFER

Two-course lunch £14.95
OR three courses for £17.95
Also valid evenings Tuesday-Thursday. Quote: Gravitas.

The Wicked Witch
Ryhall, PE9 4HH
01780 763649
thewickedwitchexperience.co.uk



The Olive Branch

The Olive Branch was Good Pub Guide UK Pub of the Year 2014, and is just one of three places in the UK to receive a Sawday's Fabulous Food Award in 2016. It was also named Editor's Choice in the 2017 Good Hotel Guide. It combines the relaxed feel of a traditional country pub with friendly and professional service, top-notch accommodation and exceptional food.

The kitchen is led by Sean Hope, the joint proprietor, who specialises in taste-packed classics, skilfully working with local producers and ingredients from the pub's own smallholding. This straightforward, yet precise cooking philosophy, goes perfectly with the laid-back, but stylish environment that Sean and fellow owner Ben Jones have carefully crafted.

With six luxurious individually decorated bedrooms at Beech House, opposite the pub, it is the perfect gourmet getaway for two, or take the whole house and private party room, The Barn, for a special celebratory occasion.

OFFER

Book Gourmet Dinner, Bed & Breakfast in a Standard Room and receive a complimentary upgrade to a Superior Room of your choice.

Quote: Gravitas Fine Dining Club.

The Olive Branch
Clipsham, Rutland
LE15 7SH
01780 410355
olivebranchpub.com



Il Vicolo

Chef-owner Mimmo Fricha opened Il Vicolo in 2015, and since then the restaurant has quickly gained an enviable reputation as Stamford's leading eatery.

In 2016, Il Vicolo was a finalist in the English Italian awards and is frequently the number one restaurant among the 77 in Stamford (Trip Advisor).

Mimmo prides himself on providing the finest of fresh Italian food, which is all prepared in the Il Vicolo kitchen (even the pasta is prepared daily by the chefs). All ingredients are sourced locally including the amazing melt-in-the-mouth fillet steaks, which are from Nelsons Butchers in the town.

An authentic and traditional family run restaurant, Il Vicolo's staff ensures a warm welcome and provide first-class customer service in a relaxed atmosphere.

Add to that wine from an extensive list of Italy's best and there is no doubt that Il Vicolo is a hidden gem among Stamford's extensive list of fine dining venues.

OFFER

Gravitas readers receive a complimentary bottle of house wine with every two mains ordered. Quote: Gravitas 2017.

Il Vicolo
2-3 Cheyne Lane,
Stamford PE9 2AX
01780 480048
ilvicoloristorante.co.uk



"fine British dining
with a
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to classic French"

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menus & hours of service

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PE4 6QF

01733 571721

 @cherryhouse125



the
Cherry House
at Werrington

www.cherryhouserestaurant.co.uk

Asian cuisine

Gravitas presents the Kwoklyn Wan Cookery masterclass on Saturday 13th May



{grav·i·tas}



Food fanatic Kwoklyn Wan grew up within the Chinese restaurant industry, which inspired his fascination with Asian cooking. From Chinese to Vietnamese, Filipino and Korean. Kwoklyn's recipes are passionately collated, and show he is a true connoisseur of fine Asian cuisine.

Set in the stunning Bakehouse Studios on St Mary's Street, Gravitas is delighted to bring Kwoklyn's cookery school tour to Stamford. Dates confirmed for his cookery classes are 8th June, 19th July and 1st September. But we'll be giving you the opportunity to view free cookery demos and tastings by Kwoklyn himself at Bakehouse Studios on Saturday 13th May 2017 between 11.30am and 3.30pm.

The collaboration between Kwoklyn and Gravitas also includes The Bakehouse Cook School, run by founder Eveline Verdegaa, who recently launched her range of cookery workshops in the luxurious setting of the Bakehouse Kitchens showroom for anyone looking to learn new and interesting ways to cook. More information on Eveline's cookery school can be found at bakehousekitchens.co.uk/workshops

For recipes and information on Kwoklyn's classes visit kwoklynwan.com or gravitasmagazine.co.uk

Bakehouse Kitchen Studio,
5 St. Mary's Street, Stamford PE9 2DE
01780 767928
hello@bakehousekitchens.co.uk




BAKEHOUSE
Beautiful design



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