

## **From Deck to Dinner! Cornish fishermen cook up delicious fish with Gregg Wallace**

Three Cornish fishermen joined their contemporaries from around the country at a 'Deck to Dinner' event at Billingsgate Fish Market last week, hosted by Masterchef presenter and food writer Gregg Wallace.



Left to right: James Chown, Paul Trebilcock, Gregg Wallace, Tom McClure, Andrew Pascoe

The event, organised by the National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO), launched a new campaign that will encourage more people to try different types of fish caught around our shores. It follows the release of new scientific research showing that stocks of many commercial fish species have reached Maximum Sustainable Yield, which is the gold standard of sustainability.

According to the NFFO, the big 'seafood staples' including cod and haddock have seen a dramatic resurgence in sustainability over recent years, and this success is paralleled by many other tasty and sustainable species that rarely find their way into our kitchens.

Deck to Dinner saw Wallace and a team of award winning, household-name chefs join forces with the fishermen to create a series of easy to cook recipes for what the NFFO calls its 'Magnificent Seven of Sustainable Seafood' - crab, megrim, plaice, coley, mackerel, hake and gurnard.

The Cornish fishermen, all members of the Cornish Fish Producers Organisation (CFPO), attended the event to offer their seafood knowledge to the chefs. James Chown, Tom McClure and Andrew Pascoe have been fishing for most of their lives, and catch a diverse range of species. They enjoyed sharing their expertise with the chefs, some of whom were cooking with species they had never handled before.

Tom McClure of the Harvest Reaper said: “it was a very worthwhile event and an interesting experience, getting close to famous chefs cooking our seafood. It was surprising to find that megrim is little known, even amongst the professionals. When Gregg Wallace tasted megrim, he declared that it was better than Dover sole. And it costs less than half the price!”

The initiative is designed to show that more unusual species can be just as easy to cook as the ‘big five’ - salmon, cod, haddock, tuna and prawns - which command over 70 per cent of all UK seafood sales, according to the latest data from Seafish.

Gregg Wallace, said: “It’s interesting to see from the new research that despite over eighty percent of people saying they prefer to eat seafood at home rather than in a restaurant, the majority stick to the same two or three species. Deck to Dinner is all about showing people the breadth and variety of sustainable seafood offered by the UK fleet and most importantly how easy it is to prepare a simple yet delicious, nutritious and often more affordable meal at home.”

“Fish is one of the healthiest and tastiest food options out there and hopefully through Deck to Dinner people will find a new and unusual favourite!”

“The UK fleet catches a variety of unique, delicious and highly sustainable fish that are regularly overlooked. Deck to Dinner is all about championing these and the fact some of these fish are at the more affordable end of the market means people’s taste buds, wallets and conscience will benefit from eating them.”

Paul Trebilcock, chief executive of the CFPO and president of the NFFO, commented: “The range of species we land in Cornwall is diverse, giving consumers plenty to choose from, and sustainability is a key focus of our fishing industry. We are excited to be involved in Deck to Dinner, which is getting these messages across to the public. Over eight million kilogrammes of fish is eaten every week by

UK adults, and this predicted to increase to over nine million by 2026, so there is much work to be done.”

Andrew Pascoe of the Ajax and Lamorna, said: “Gregg Wallace was a very good host at the launch event, getting across the fact that there are alternatives which are actually cheaper than our staples, as well as being very tasty. Hake, which we catch, is plentiful and sustainable and is great in fish and chips.”