



Press Release

## **Phil Vickery announced as Coeliac UK Food Ambassador and judge of the Gluten-Free Chef of the Year Competition**

Coeliac UK, the national charity for people with coeliac disease, announced on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2010 at Hotelympia that celebrity chef Phil Vickery is their new Food Ambassador and that he will be judging this year's Gluten-Free Chef of the Year competition.

The competition is launched in association with the Institute of Hospitality and the Craft Guild of Chefs for chefs throughout the UK to design a three course gluten-free meal with a cook-off for the three finalists in each group which will take place at KNORR'S Kitchen Culinary Business Development Centre in Leatherhead in November 2010.

Phil Vickery has worked with Coeliac UK for the past few years to help raise awareness of the condition and for the need for more catering establishments to offer gluten-free menu options. Last year in association with the Charity he published a best selling cookbook, *Seriously Good Gluten-Free Cooking* which has sold over 70,000 copies worldwide.

"I am very honoured to accept the role as Coeliac UK's Food Ambassador and to continue to support the work of the Charity. I'm passionate about improving knowledge in the food industry and the necessity for more gluten-free cooking as more and more people are diagnosed. Since embarking on the cookbook I have learnt so much and it is essential that chefs understand the importance of having gluten-free recipes. I am therefore delighted to be judging this year's competition and urge chefs of all experience to enter."

Coeliac disease is an autoimmune disease caused by intolerance to gluten. Damage to the gut lining occurs when gluten is eaten; there is no cure or medication for the condition and the only treatment is a strict gluten-free diet for life. Without a gluten-free diet, the disease can lead to other conditions, such as malnutrition, osteoporosis, bowel cancer and also can cause infertility problems. At least 1 in 100 people in the UK has coeliac disease; representing a potential £100 million market amongst those diagnosed with the condition and the friends and family they eat out with.

The recipe competition comprises two categories; 'Gluten-free Chef of the Year' and the 'Up and Coming Gluten-free Chef of the Year'. The Charity is calling on all chefs, from those who are well established to trainees, to design recipes for an innovative three course gluten-free meal.

### **Prizes**

#### *Gluten-free Chef of the Year*

A stage at an award winning restaurant, to be announced.

#### *Up and Coming Gluten-free Chef of the Year*

A stage at an award winning restaurant, to be announced.

Additional prizes for winners and runners up are kindly supplied by Sodexo and 3663.

### **Entries**

Written submissions will be judged on:

- Innovation – for example, use of different grains to replace gluten containing cereals
- Taste and texture – for example, can you tell it is gluten-free?
- Balance of flavours across the three course meal
- Seasonality – is the entry a spring/summer/autumn/winter menu.

Deadline for the written entries: Friday 15 October. Three entrants will be shortlisted for each category, and will be notified by Friday 29 October for attendance of the live cook off.

For more information go to: [www.coeliac.org.uk/glutenfreechefoftheyear2010](http://www.coeliac.org.uk/glutenfreechefoftheyear2010)

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### **Notes to editors:**

1. A range of case studies of men, women and children are available on request from Coeliac UK.
2. Coeliac disease is a serious illness where the body's immune system reacts to gluten found in food, making the body attack itself.
3. 1 in 100 people in the UK has coeliac disease, however only 12.5% of these have been diagnosed and average length of diagnosis is 13 years.
4. Gluten is a protein found in wheat (including spelt), rye and barley. Some people are also sensitive to oats. Obvious sources of gluten include breads, pastas, flours, cereals, cakes and biscuits. It is often used as an ingredient in many favourite foods such as fish fingers, sausages, gravies, sauces and soy sauce.
5. The symptoms of coeliac disease range from mild to severe and can vary between individuals. Not everyone with coeliac disease experiences gut related symptoms; any area of the body can be affected.
6. Symptoms can include bloating, abdominal pain, nausea, constipation, diarrhoea, wind, tiredness, anaemia, headaches, mouth ulcers, recurrent miscarriages, weight loss (but not in all cases), skin problems, depression, joint or bone pain and nerve problems.
7. Around 1000 newly diagnosed people are joining Coeliac UK every month. For further details on membership please call the Helpline on 0845 305 2060 further information can be found at [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk).