

GREAT FOSTERS HASN'T LOOKED BACK FOLLOWING SWIFT RETURN TO PSL

Background

Since its conversion in the 1930s by the Sutcliffe family to a 44 bedroom hotel, Great Fosters has earned a reputation for exquisite luxury and superb food - currently boasting 3 rosettes and listed in the top 10% of AA accredited restaurants.

Hosting weddings in its 14th century Tithe Barn and conferences in its Coach House, the hotel is well versed in providing first class events.

In turn, Director and General Manager, Richard Young, is no stranger to running successful exclusive hotels. Previously at Lords of the Manor in the Cotswolds, Richard joined Great Fosters in 1998. He said, *"I have worked with PSL since the early 1990s and had no hesitation in bringing them in to work with Great Fosters when I moved here in 1998.*

My reasons were simple. I needed to improve food quality and margins and knew that PSL could deliver. They proved themselves within weeks!"

Significant and sustained savings

At one point one of the chefs at Great Fosters believed he could achieve the same margins without PSL's assistance so the arrangement was terminated. *"In less than three months it was clear that we were unable to match the quality with price independently so we brought PSL back!"* Richard explained.

"PSL's skill in purchasing, advising on menu costings, back door checks, etc may appear to be simple but they are experts in their field and are an excellent bolt-on to the business, ensuring we consistently meet targets and customer expectations. It was apparent within a very short space of time that we could only achieve such significant and sustained savings by working together with PSL hence our decision to re-appoint them."

Meeting changing demands

A significant element of Great Fosters' business is its conference and banqueting. With PSL's assistance the banqueting/events menus were reviewed in detail to gain a realistic picture of costs in a challenging environment and establish whether today's needs were being met.

Richard said, *"PSL scrutinised our offering and reviewed whether it was unique and good enough whilst still being cost effective. These days our guests demand nutritional food of the highest quality which is healthy, interesting and different. They want food that is reflective of the high quality we provide in our highly-acclaimed Oak Room restaurant."*

GREAT FOSTERS
BUILT AS A ROYAL HUNTING LODGE 1550 AD



Another factor was that Great Fosters has always prided itself in publishing event prices up to two years in advance. Richard continued, *“This has always been important for us as it reflects our honesty and transparency and clients want to know the cost even if they are booking two years ahead! Of course in recent times, with high inflation of food prices, this could have had serious consequences and placed us in a difficult position because of committing to prices two years prior. However with PSL’s assistance we have undertaken a review of dishes to include more seasonal products, resulting in better costs for us whilst still providing the menu requested and achieving the same quality standards expected by our guests.*

By looking at our menu offerings in a different way we have also totally revised our way of thinking; becoming more aware of prices and taking PSL’s knowledge of cost fluctuations into account by using seasonal produce for our dishes resulting in a superior quality of ingredients at the peak of their season.

The result has been hugely successful both from profitability and a quality perspective.” confirmed Richard.



Ensuring success

Bringing in external assistance requires both parties to make an effort to work together. Richard clarified, *“For our chefs, working with PSL has involved an important education process and consultation to ensure success. We are well aware that you must buy through PSL’s recommended suppliers or you will not achieve the required savings.*

However PSL also appreciate that occasionally a chef may have a few key ingredients from long-standing suppliers which they wish to incorporate to give the dish their signature. In every instance, food purchased through PSL suppliers has been able to match, and in many cases exceed our specification, invariably improving quality whilst reducing costs. We could not achieve such savings on our own.”



Matt Tough, Sales & Marketing Director EMEA of PSL said, *“Working with Great Fosters is a great privilege for us. Our long working relationship is based on trust and respect for each other in addition to our proven success in consistently gaining best possible prices whilst still maintaining superior quality standards. We look forward to achieving further success with them; constantly reviewing how they can improve their offering to guests and implementing agreed new strategies together.”*