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CHEF MARCEL KAUER – BIOGRAPHY

Marcel Kauer has held the position of Executive Chef at Hastings House since 1996, after four years as Sous Chef. Born in Switzerland, where he apprenticed, Marcel marries his training in the continental style with use of the freshest of local, seasonal ingredients to create culinary masterpieces.

Hastings House has its own kitchen gardens for fresh flowers, vegetables and herbs, as well as orchards for soft fruits and berries. Having homegrown produce at his fingertips each day allows Marcel to plan the menu daily, according to produce that is in season. Each year, Marcel works with the Hastings House gardener, to plan the next year's crop.

Produce from farmers on Salt Spring Island supplements the harvest at Hastings House. Dubbed "the organic capital of Canada" Salt Spring Island farms yield a cornucopia of produce.

Marcel enjoys working with the local Salt Spring Lamb, which has a subtle yet distinct saltiness to it, similar to lamb from the Provence region of France. The saltiness is a result of the sea air constantly blowing across the Island's sheep pastures. When it is delivered fresh from a local supplier, Marcel cuts the lamb to his own specific requirements, and nothing goes to waste.

Marcel and his team create mouth-watering dishes for an à la carte dinner each evening, and a full breakfast. The Dining Room at Hastings House seats approximately 30 people, with additional seating for 60 people in the Verandah. When planning the daily menu, Marcel also takes into consideration any food allergies the dinner guests may have.

The memorable flavours at Hastings House have a following worldwide. The Zagat Survey for 2006 endorsed this and Hastings House was voted top Canadian hotel with its "first-class kitchen turning out some of the best dinners west of the Rockies".

Beginning in 2007 Marcel has invited guests into the kitchen for cooking demonstrations. Guests bring back their crab catch and watch as Marcel transforms the sweet crabmeat into crab risotto or crab cakes.

"Many of our guests are sophisticated travelers who appreciate noble food and wine, but tire of the pretentious attitude that often comes with it. At Hastings House, we offer the fine dining, personalized attention and ambiance guests expect, that's absolutely essential of course – but everything is very relaxed. I concentrate on providing memorable dining by using the freshest local ingredients prepared in a continental manner, utilizing simplicity of flavour, thinking of how food will work with wine, and specializing in little details that delight. It's then served expertly in a charming country setting where guests are truly comfortable. When our guests say they've just had the best dining experience of their lives, I'm happy. That's perfection!"

Marcel Kauer