

THE COAL SHED

# HOT TAKES



VOLUME ONE

# HOT TAKES

## VOL I : NEW BEGINNINGS

“ IF PEOPLE THINK  
THEY KNOW THE COAL  
SHED ALREADY, THIS  
IS GONNA BLOW THEIR  
MINDS. ”

“

After 13 years of serving up incredible wood-fired steak and seafood, and gaining a reputation as one of the best restaurants in Brighton, The Coal Shed has moved from its original home on Boyce's Street to our incredible new restaurant space on North Street, signaling the start of an exciting new era which pushes the boundaries of anything we've done before.

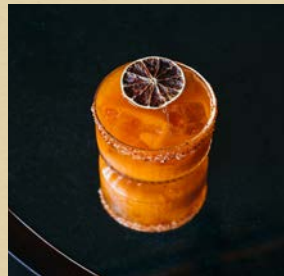
We're going to be doing things a bit differently around here, using the knowledge and experience we've picked up over those 13 years. Our Executive Chef Lee Murdoch has designed a new menu with flame-cooking and quality produce at its core. For the first time, The Coal Shed has a designated bar area which will rival the best drinks that London and New York have to offer.

Over the years, we've built a team of people around us bursting with knowledge and ideas, and we wanted to find a way of passing that back to you in some meaningful way. What you hold in your hands is Volume 1 of 'Hot Takes' - a quarterly zine filled with interviews, photography, recipes and top-tips which you can use to recreate a bit of our Coal Shed magic in your own kitchen.

We hope you love the newest evolution of The Coal Shed, and everything that comes with it.

”

*Raz Helalat, Founder and Owner of The Coal Shed.*



## WELCOME TO THE NEW COAL SHED BRIGHTON

On Saturday, 14th September, The Coal Shed will open its doors to its new home at Clarence House, North Street, ushering in a new era.

The restaurant is like no other in Brighton, featuring a chic industrial aesthetic inspired by NYC brasseries and a standalone cocktail bar serving an array of the world's finest alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks

Our Executive Chef, Lee Murdoch, has reimaged our menu, taking everything, you love about The Coal Shed and elevating it to new heights. We've sourced the best meat, seafood, and produce to create a menu of exceptional fire-cooked dishes that cater to everyone.

The Coal Shed has been designed for every occasion, from intimate booths to elegant private dining rooms perfect for celebrations, parties, and life's milestones. A weekly rotating line-up of Brighton's top DJs will create an energetic atmosphere from day to night.

We can't wait to welcome you to the new home of The Coal Shed



# CHEWING THE FAT



WITH OUR EXECUTIVE CHEF

# LEE MURDOCH

How a simple tomato soup recipe turned a teenage school-dropout into a master of fire cooking. We sat down with Lee Murdoch, Executive Chef of The Coal Shed Brighton, to get the full story.

**Q:** What food can people expect from the new Coal Shed?

**Lee:** When The Coal Shed started 13 years ago, cooking over coals on a Josper oven was new, but everyone is doing that now. We want to take it to the next level and set the next trend. We want to showcase the best products we can work with.

You need to understand where your product comes from, and I'm talking to our suppliers, farmers and fisheries every day. They send me pictures on WhatsApp of produce they've just farmed. These guys that we work with, they've been farmers for their whole lives; their grandfather, their mother - we can learn so much from these people. They know these products better than anyone. How to cook it, what to pair it with. How the position in the field, or the amount of sunlight has produced a different flavour. For a lot of restaurants, farm to table moves in one direction. I'm about going back down the line and talking to these producers to learn from them.

So, they could send me a picture of some fresh radicchio or buttermilk lettuce from that morning and we can say "yeah bring that in, we'll make something with that tonight". We want to have that flexibility of being able to work with the best produce of that day. We don't want to confine ourselves to what we've put in a menu description. And if we're changing the leaves in the salad, we can think "maybe a lemon is too sharp with this leaf, let's use something softer like a desert lime or a smoked virgin olive oil tonight". We've also got the Salt Chamber here, it's our own dry ageing room. We're gonna be doing the butchering ourselves. We'll get prime ribs on the bone which we can age with pink salt using its own tallow to change

the dynamics of the beef. Just using different techniques to bring out the best of that product.

**Q:** When did you first get into cooking?

**Lee:** My brother was a chef; he went to culinary school. He was like, you know, the straight one. I hated school, hated teachers, had no interest in it, and I never knew at that age I was dyslexic, but I just couldn't focus. I had never been interested in food, never at a young age. I'd make fun of him basically.

One day he goes, "Come on, let me show you something." He took me upstairs and he says, "I'm gonna make tomato soup". And I swear, mate, hand on heart, I thought tomato soup came out of a tin. Like in the way a plant grows in the wild. I knew nothing about food. I hated cheese, I hated mushrooms. I was so fussy.

My mum used to work sh\*tloads, right. Growing up, we'd open the tomato soup, put it in the microwave and that was it. So, my brother showed me how to make it. It was like watching somebody invent the wheel. I was f\*cking blown away. I thought, yeah, cooking, that was it for me.

My brother was working in the Turnberry Hotel which was near where we grew up, and he got me a job there cleaning when I was 14 or 15. I'd try to get morning shifts and then I'd go in early so I could get my work out of the way and spend time in the kitchen helping out. It was chaos, like the opening scene of Saving Private Ryan. We were serving 700 covers a day. But you're all in it together, you're a team working towards one goal. It was like a brotherhood. They asked me to do an apprenticeship.

They asked me to do an apprenticeship. I got my chef whites, I bought a knife, and I thought, yeah, this is it. But I just always have to be better than everyone else, I think it goes back to when I was a kid on the streets. So, if I saw a chef who was better at fine dicing onions than me, I'd line up 20 and try and do it faster. I'd practice with my eyes closed. I was a 17-year-old boy in there with 30-40-year-old chefs from all over the world, trying to better them.

*Q: What kind of food were you serving?*

**Lee:** It was like classical French cooking. We had saucier station, poisson, pastry.

**“ I SWEAR, MATE, HAND ON HEART, I THOUGHT TOMATO SOUP CAME OUT OF A TIN. ”**

*Q: How would you describe your cooking style now?*

**Lee:** I still love the French style, making great sauces, stocks. Making flavours which are really bold in depth. I spent time in Germany in a 1-Michelin star restaurant for about a year. I learnt a lot - we had this crab dish with roasted papaya, and we were cutting these diamonds of papaya, and they had to be so equal. Everything was like that. But there was flavour behind it. That's when I realised you can have a bit of fun with flavours. Like breaking out of the rules of classic French cooking. But I wasn't falling in love with Michelin cooking as I did when I was a kid.

Then I started to get interested in how our ancestors used to cook. I decided to travel the world and see how different cultures cooked; I spent time in Southeast Asia, Japan, Europe. I went to the Middle East and got my first head chef job; I worked with a guy called Jason who was the sous chef for Thomas Keller at the French Laundry, and he really taught me about depth of flavour. We used to braise a short rib, marinate it for 18 hours in red wine and mirepoix, and then we'd cook it at 72 degrees for three days. Then, we take the sauce, remove the rib, press it and reduce the sauce. We'd add beetroot and you'd eat it and go "f\*ck me".

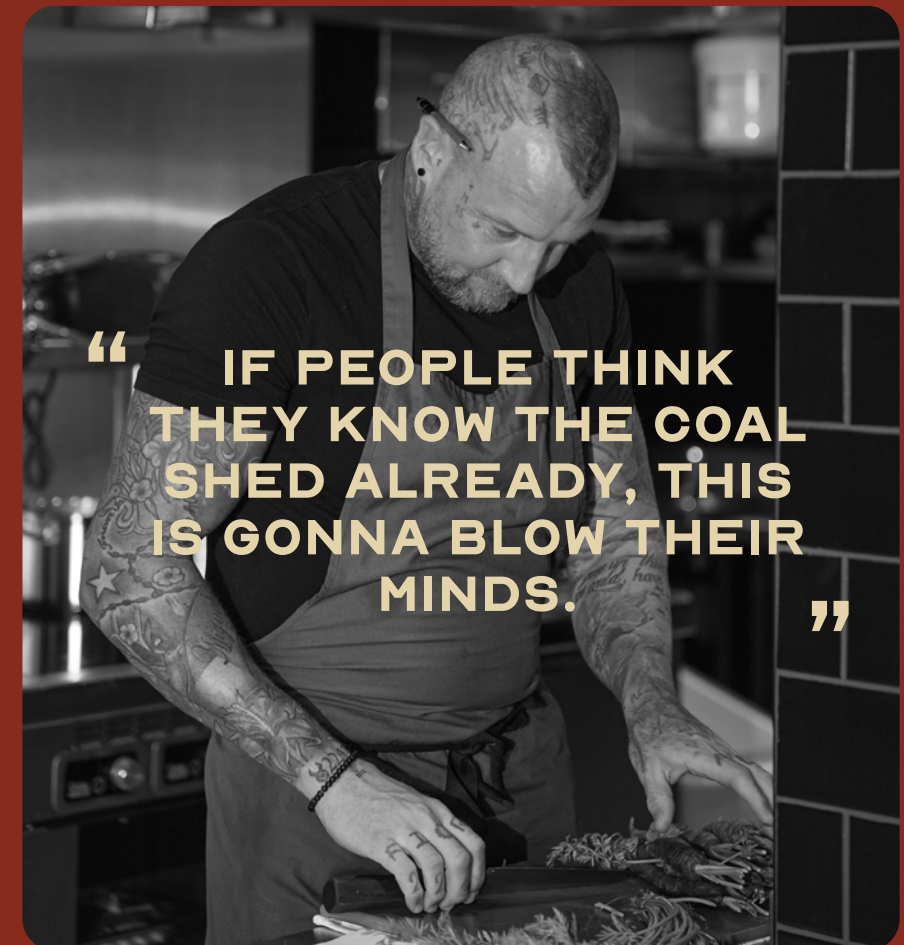
We used to cook a lot of things Sous Vide in Turnberry, but this all comes from ancient methods of cooking you know. We've put things in pig stomachs, cooked over ash, dug holes in the ground for earth cooking in the Middle East, Africa, cooking with hot stones in Europe; all these techniques we're starting to use now are ancient. So that's the style I go for now, it's not just about putting a piece of meat over a flame, which is delicious, but let's get a clay pot and steam it first with different herbs, different wines. It's almost spiritual, because you're using a raw earth product, rather than just turning on some gas and cracking on.

*Q: Will the menu be similar to the previous Coal Shed?*

**Lee:** Yes and no. At the heart of it, we're still working with the best beef we can find, the best seafood. But we're introducing these techniques of cooking; clay pots, the copper kettle oven, and it's going to take all that produce to another level.

It's a bigger menu, and we wanted to have something for everyone. The DNA is still the same, we're still serving the best steak and beef you can get. But we're in a seaside town so we're cooking the best fish and seafood too. We've got great veggie and vegan food, cooked over coals, cooked in the ash, steamed in clay pots. There are bar snacks for if you're coming in for a drink, and then on the other end of the scale there's that real special occasion type of food.

I'm bringing together everything I've learned, from the French classical cooking at the Turnberry, Michelin cooking in Germany, wood-fired cooking in the Middle East, the precision of Japanese kitchens, and I'm putting it into this menu. If people think they know The Coal Shed already, this is gonna blow their minds.



**“ IF PEOPLE THINK THEY KNOW THE COAL SHED ALREADY, THIS IS GONNA BLOW THEIR MINDS. ”**



## RESTAURANT & PRIVATE DINING ROOMS

Introducing the Private Dining Rooms at The Coal Shed—perfect for any occasion. From milestone moments to epic parties, we ensure every event is a remarkable experience.



### THE GRAND DINING ROOM

Our largest private dining room, seating up to 50 guests, is ideal for bigger events. Separated by wooden doors, it features plush chairs, banquet seating, parquet floors, and striking chandeliers that reflect off a mirrored ceiling.



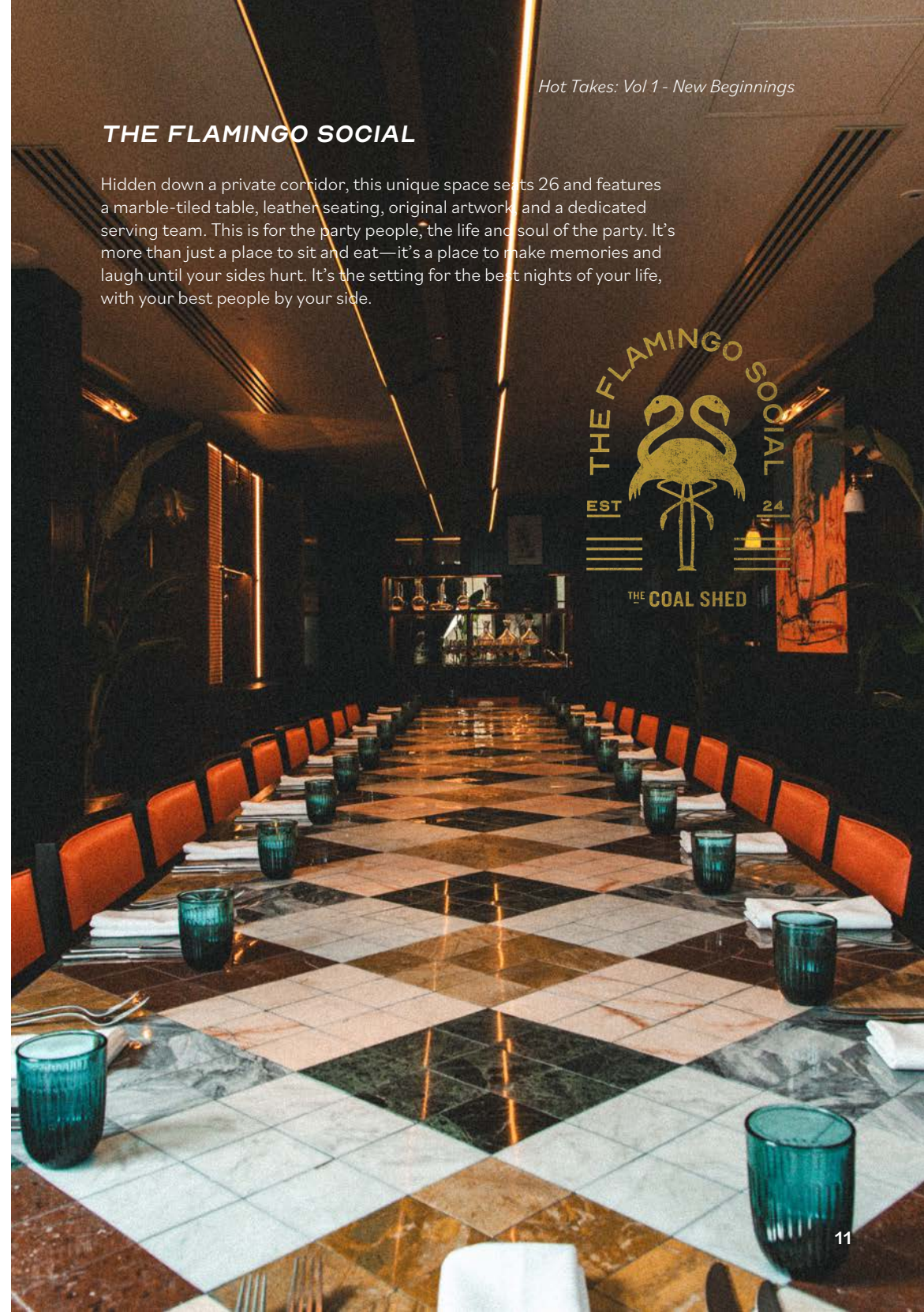
### THE LONGHORN

Located within the Grand Dining Room, The Longhorn is our most intimate space, accommodating up to 16 guests. Closed off by heavy curtains, it's perfect for smaller gatherings and celebrations.

To enquire contact our expert events team at:  
[events@blackrock-restaurants.co.uk](mailto:events@blackrock-restaurants.co.uk)

## THE FLAMINGO SOCIAL

Hidden down a private corridor, this unique space seats 26 and features a marble-tiled table, leather seating, original artwork and a dedicated serving team. This is for the party people, the life and soul of the party. It's more than just a place to sit and eat—it's a place to make memories and laugh until your sides hurt. It's the setting for the best nights of your life, with your best people by your side.





## FUDGE ESPRESSO MARTINI

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Every great bar needs a great espresso martini, and we're giving you the recipe for our latest take on this classic. The inspiration for this one was "Espresso Martinis at Grandma's House" and, if that doesn't sell it, the date & coffee sugar syrup, brandy and freshly grated fudge over the top of the drink probably will. Check the recipe below for the full spec (slippers not included).

### INGREDIENTS

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30ml Burnt Faith Brandy  
30ml Fresh Espresso  
20ml Coffee & Date Syrup  
20ml Coffee Liqueur  
2-3 Dashes of Fee Brothers Aztec Chocolate Bitters  
Roly's Sea Salt Fudge & Maldon Sea Flakes

100g Demerara Sugar  
100ml Water  
20ml Fresh Espresso  
50g Dates

### METHOD

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1. Start by preparing your date & coffee syrup by dissolving demerara sugar in a simmering pan of water.
2. Once the sugar has fully dissolved, take off the heat, add fresh espresso and finely chopped dates and blend until smooth.
3. Pass the syrup through a sieve to remove any lumps.
4. To make your espresso martini, add brandy, fresh espresso, coffee liqueur, coffee & date syrup and a few dashes of chocolate bitters to a cocktail shaker. *We use Fee Brothers Aztec chocolate bitters because it's got earthy, spiced notes of cinnamon and clove which help balance the drink and add depth.*
5. Add plenty of ice to your shaker and shake vigorously for 20-30 seconds. Shaking the cocktail hard will ensure that it is properly chilled before serving but will also help give your espresso martini its signature head.
6. Double strain your cocktail into a chilled coupe or martini glass. *For a touch of decadence, we grate sea salt fudge over the top which we get from local Brighton fudge shop Roly's.*
7. Finish by sprinkling a pinch of flaked sea salt over the top and serve immediately.



**"ESPRESSO MARTINIS AT  
GRANDMA'S HOUSE"**




## THE NEW COAL SHED WHAT TO EXPECT

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We've always operated under a simple principle when it comes to our menus: finding and working with ingredients which are already phenomenal before they enter the kitchen. Our newly appointed Executive Chef Lee Murdoch has developed a menu which hasn't been seen before in Brighton - sourcing the very best grass-fed beef from British farms, sustainable seafood, and exceptional local produce.

To put even more control into our chef's hands, we've built a one-of-a-kind ageing room, The Salt Chamber, which will preserve and showcase the best beef in the British Isles. Our aging room creates a unique microclimate that naturally regulates humidity and temperature, drawing upon ancient techniques which not only preserves the meat but also infuses it with essential trace minerals, resulting in an unparalleled flavour. Taking inspiration from the best restaurants and bars of London and NYC, we've created a space filled with intimate booths, three private dining spaces and a cocktail bar stocked with some of the best alcoholic and non-alcoholic spirits in the world.

Dining out should always be an experience to remember, and our team are prepared to welcome guests with open arms no matter the occasion; whether it's for those big celebrations, to smaller intimate gatherings or even a nightcap to finish the evening sat up at the bar.



### BUTTERFLIED SEA BREAM PIL PIL

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**"INCREDIBLY SOFT, FRESH, AND DELICIOUS.  
THE BEST FISH I'VE EVER EATEN"**



## INTIMATE INTERIORS

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“LIKE THE FOOD, THIS IS A RESTAURANT OF  
**EFFORTLESS CHARM** AND UNDERSTATED  
**QUALITY”**

**THE STEAK WASHED  
OLD FASHIONED**

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“SMOOTH, BOOZY,  
**ZERO WASTAGE TONS OF FLAVOUR”**

## ROTISSERIE CHICKEN RECIPE

**SERVES** 3-4  
**COOK** 1HR  
**PREP** 48HRS

*A home cook lives and dies by the strength of their roast chicken. Whether it's the centrepiece of your Sunday Roast or an easy mid-week lunch with a garden salad, having a great roast chicken in your arsenal is always a good idea. Our Executive Chef Lee Murdoch has shared his simple but failproof recipe guaranteed to be the star of the show.*

### INGREDIENTS

1.2kg Sussex Chicken (Tied & Prepared)  
450ml Water  
50ml Sake  
20g Salt  
30g Sugar  
10g Fresh Ginger  
10g Fresh Garlic  
10-15 Peppercorns  
1 Lemon  
1 Fresh Thyme Sprig  
Smoked Sea Salt  
Espelette Pepper Powder

4 Crushed Garlic Cloves  
4 Fresh Thyme Springs  
250g Butter

### PREP

For this recipe, you will need to wet and dry brine your chicken two days before cooking. For the wet brine, mix the water, sake, salt, sugar, ginger, garlic and peppercorns together in a sealed container, place your tied bird into the brine so it's submerged, and leave it in the fridge for 24 hours.

After 24 hours, remove the bird from the wet brine and pat dry. For the dry brine, finely chop a sprig of fresh thyme and mix with the zest of a whole lemon. Coat the bird in the thyme and zest mix, place on top of a dish, and leave uncovered for

24 hours in the fridge. It is important that the bird is not wrapped or covered, as being exposed to the air will start drying the chicken skin, resulting in a crispy texture once cooked.

Make your garlic thyme butter the day before and store it in the fridge ready for when you come to cook the chicken. To make the garlic thyme butter, finely chop thyme sprigs and mix into softened butter along with crushed garlic cloves. Ensure the ingredients are fully mixed in, place in a sealed container, and store in the fridge.

### METHOD

1. After your chicken has been dry brining for 24 hours in the fridge, it is ready to cook. Pre heat your oven to 250°C. If you have a covered barbecue grill like a Green Egg with a rotisserie attachment, you will be able to get an even cook on the bird while imparting smoke and char to add more flavour. If not, a conventional oven will still work well.

2. Brush your chicken with the garlic thyme butter and season with smoked sea salt and Espelette pepper.

3. Place the chicken into the preheated oven for 11 minutes, after which you can drop the temperature to 185°C. Brush the chicken again with the garlic thyme butter and continue to do so every 8 minutes until the bird has been in the oven for 1 hour overall.

4. Remove the chicken from the oven and place on a wire rack to rest for 20 minutes. Carve the chicken with a sharp knife and serve with a simple English salad, potatoes and garlic aioli.





# FAREWELL BOYCE'S ST.



25 ft x 17 in

PHOTO SHOOT 2.0



29.2.02



THE LAST  
SERVICE



“

13 years of service, 13 years of incredible hard work. Thank you to every staff member that made The Coal Shed what it is today.

*Raz Helalat, Founder and Owner of The Coal Shed.*

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# HOT MERCH



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THE COAL SHED

# HOT TAKES



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