



The Granary Beefeater Premier Inn Peterborough (Ferry Meadows)

This year's Hotel Restaurant Team of the Year demonstrates just how diverse the hotel sector in the UK has become.

While last year's victor, Galvin at Windows, has arguably one of the country's most salubrious addresses, 2008's equally deserving winner operates in a market a world away from Park Lane.

2008's Hotel Restaurant Team of the Year are the employees and management of the Granary Beefeater adjacent to Peterborough (Ferry Meadows) Premier Inn.

General manager John Mackle, from a four-star hotel background himself, oversees a 224-cover restaurant that has exceeded its budget task for profit every year for the past eight years (managing profit at 110% of budget most recently). Like-for-like sales growth last year was 11%, an achievement in itself but even more impressive given the years of like-for-like growth preceding it.

But it's not simply the Granary's impressive financial achievements that helped the restaurant to this year's title but the commitment and camaraderie demonstrated by a team who continued delivering top-notch customer care in a flooded 12-year-old building, struck during last summer's flooding crisis, which saw large swathes of England temporarily under water.

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Despite this life aquatic, staff turnover at the Granary is a commendable 38% and the Beefeater still managed to achieve a 78% score in owner Whitbread's Sales for Service benchmark, a mystery guest programme run throughout the Premier Inn/restaurant estate.

The Granary's team really did deliver more than 100% at their last Premier Inn audit for breakfast service, achieving 101.8% after receiving bonus points for wowing their guests and our judges.

Judge Charles Boyd, chief executive of Chester Boyd, said: "You have a mid-range offer punching way above its weight. The planning and organisation and drive behind this place is an example to any business."

THE SHORTLIST

- Filini Bar & Restaurant**
Radisson SAS hotel, Birmingham
- The Granary Beefeater**
Premier Inn Peterborough (Ferry Meadows)
- One-O-One**
(highly commended), Sheraton Park Tower, London
- Princess Dining Rooms and Brasserie**
Ramada Mount Royal hotel, Edinburgh