

Ashley Giles  
Benefit Dinner  
15<sup>th</sup> August 2006



As part of Ashley Giles's Benefit Year, 'taste...VINOPOLIS' and the Crown Group of Catering Companies were proud hosts of a unique gastronomic experience just prior to the fourth and now infamous test against Pakistan. It is a long established principle in cricket, especially given the fact that it is not a sport that has enjoyed the highest financial rewards for its exponents, that long-serving cricketers are given a benefit year by their county. In a pleasing, and entirely voluntary, modern trend high profile, international cricketers have tended to devote a proportion of their proceeds to charity.

Set in the contemporary Mezzanine, the evening was attended by a number of well known England cricketers including Kevin Pietersen, Marcus Trescothick, Simon Jones, Matthew Hoggard, Monty Panesar, Paul Collingwood and Gladstone Small. Four wonderful celebrity chefs as well as 'taste...VINOPOLIS' Head Chef Nathan Trustam and his culinary team produced a spectacular banquet for the 200 lucky guests.



The evening started with a champagne reception in the European Odyssey Rooms and was followed by a 4 course gourmet dinner featuring cuisine from various cricketing nations. The Celebrity chefs include Cyrus Todiwala, Nigel Haworth, Mohammed Aslam and Anton Edelmann. Each chef held his very own masterclass giving the guests an insight into the inspiration behind every course. Venison Tikka Aflatoon; Treacle Cured Salmon with Dorset Crab; Murgh Sindhi Biryani, and a Mille Feuille of English Summer Fruits with a Honey Sabayon were just a taster of what was prepared on the night.

The evening continued with an auction, hosted by BBC Rugby Correspondent Ian Robertson, that provided guests with the chance of getting their hands on 'money can't buy' sporting memorabilia. This was followed by a Q & A session with members of the current England cricket team, plus of course entertainment to ensure the party was in full swing all evening!

Throughout his Benefit Year Ashley is supporting his chosen charity Cure Leukaemia. Cure Leukaemia is aiming to fund a new Leukaemia Centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham - providing a base for world class research, support and treatment to the 7,000 patients living in the West Midlands with leukaemia.

David Ford Chief Executive of Tattershall Castle Group said, *"The venue for such an event had to combine functionality with style. Somewhere within easy reach of the Oval, but not one of the usual suspects you might associate with a night like this. In short, there had to be a "wow factor". Vinopolis was the outstandingly appropriate choice. Rarely has an event operated on so many levels – being held in a spectacular venue, for a pre-eminently worthy charity, giving guests the chance to recognise one of our Ashes heroes, plus an opportunity to listen to some great stories from the England camp and not to mention a 4 course meal of stunning quality prepared by four outstanding chefs in their field."*

Peter Hazzard, Chairman of Chaddlewood Consulting said, *"this truly memorable evening was made all the more special by holding the event in such a unique and stylish venue where the welcome and service matched the exceptional quality of food."*