50 members of staff and award-winning chefs are on stand-by at Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri to fulfil your expectations of an experience away from the hustle and bustle of life in the city, leaving you refreshed, recharged and pleased with the high quality of this historical guesthouse.

By Marte Eide | Photos: Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri

“The best way to explain our concept is to imagine coming to someone’s home and being catered for,” says daily manager and head chef of Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri, Ørjan Johannessen. The guesthouse is located down by the harbour of the idyllic Bekkjarvik, surrounded by history in the shape of old buildings and remains of what used to be the heart of the fishing village.

Not all guesthouses have a history as rich as Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri. “It was built back in the 1600s,” says Johannessen. It was the Danish king, Christian Quart, who requested the establishment of guesthouses along the coast. “It has a perfect location, not too far from Bergen and is also close to Stavanger,” Johannessen continues. From Bergen airport, it takes about an hour including the boat trip. In addition to parking space for cars and easily accessible public transport, there is a helicopter pad and landing space for seaplanes for those who wish to arrive in a more extravagant way.

The Johannessen family has been running Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri for the past 35 years. The parents bought the guesthouse back in 1982, three years before Ørjan Johannessen and his twin brother Arnt were born. Naturally, they have both been involved in the family business for as long as they can remember. “We live at the hotel ourselves and are dedicated to all aspects of providing our guests with a memorable stay. We want to make sure that everything goes smoothly and is as enjoyable as possible,” says Johannessen, adding: “Our ambition is to maintain and further develop what we have started, as we just finished a big renovation project. Now, our guests can enjoy the villa in our garden as well as the main mansion.”

Award-winning kitchen

Today, Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri is a haven for both local and foreign guests. Many come to the area to get some peace and quiet, enjoy a few slow-paced days with beautiful scenery, and of course eat and drink well. The twin brothers have certainly made a name for themselves, winning the Chef of the Year in 2011 and the gold medal in the prestigious cooking competition Bocuse d’Or Lyon in 2015.
No doubt, the food served in the restaurant will be of exceptional quality.

“It is nothing too fancy. We focus on locally sourced ingredients such as fish, seafood and meat including veal and deer. Because we work closely with local producers we rely on what they have available, which means that we can change the menu as often as we want to. It is quite nice to have that kind of flexibility to be creative with the food we serve,” explains Johannessen enthusiastically.

What better location to serve such food than at an outdoor restaurant by the harbour? A more idyllic setting is hard to find. “It’s nice that both locals and people from far away come here to eat and just enjoy themselves,” says Johannessen.

But Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri has more to offer. “Our main focus is to give our guests a break from their everyday life. For those who want, we can offer excursions, wine tastings and cooking courses.” Quite an interesting list of activities considering the international recognition the chefs have received.

Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri has developed significantly since the Johannessen family took over back in the 1980s. “When my parents first bought it, they did a lot of refurbishing and added ten guestrooms. Since then, it has only grown, and today we have 50 guestrooms, facilities for courses and conferences, and space for events, groups, weddings and celebrations.

The award-winning chef points out that Bekkjarvik is the ideal location to be if you are looking for something a bit more exclusive and unique. “It is possible to rent out the whole hotel or the villa if you want some privacy. We also have a renovated barn that can fit about 150 people, perfect for a fancier gathering or celebration,” he says. If you are a small or a large group of people looking for a brief escape from the city and some good food, Bekkjarvik Gjestgiveri is definitely worth the trip. If you are lucky enough to have some time off, you can book a room and stay overnight to enjoy another day in the relaxing surroundings.

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