



Sally Abé



Sally Abé was born in Nottingham and lived there for most of her life, before moving to Sheffield at the age of 18.

Sally came to London in 2007 at the age of 20 to undertake a year placement at The Savoy – and then never left! It took only six months for Sally to fall in love with the kitchen and realise her true passion in cooking. Sally remained working in London and then joined **Gordon Ramsay at Claridge's** later that year.

Two years later, Sally joined **The Ledbury** in Notting Hill. This is where Sally spent the next five years, honing her skills and technique under the expert guidance of two-Michelin-starred chef, **Brett Graham**. It was here that Sally feels she really mastered the art of the cooking and, working across all sections of the kitchen, experiencing how a Michelin-starred restaurant comes together.

After five years, Sally took a break from the kitchen to explore other areas of the industry. When she was younger, she wanted to be a journalist, and she took this opportunity to combine her love of writing and cooking, and was appointed **Technical Food Editor at Great British Chefs**. Sally spent a year and a half with the GBC team, creating and editing recipes alongside food styling for photoshoots.

In 2016, Sally was itching to get back into the kitchen, and her mentor and friend Brett Graham set up a meeting with chef Phil Howard, who was set to open **Elystan Street**. Sally was subsequently appointed Sous Chef at Elystan Street and stayed there as part of the opening team until February 2017, when Brett invited her to take over as Head Chef at **The Harwood Arms** – which remains to this day **London's only Michelin-starred pub**. Sally led the team at The Harwood Arms for over four years, where she not only retained the pub's Michelin star, but also placed the pub as the **number one gastropub in the UK** in Estrella Damm's Top 50 Gastropubs for the very first time.

In October 2021, **Conrad London St. James** announced Sally had been appointed as **Consultant Chef** and would be overseeing the development and opening of four new food and drinks concepts in Westminster, following a £1.75 million investment from the hotel.

The very first of the four openings was **Blue Boar Pub**, which opened on 17th May 2021. Already a much-loved local favourite with longstanding political links, the new Blue Boar Pub is a modern take on the classic London pub, where Sally has refined and elevated the pub menus whilst retaining the nostalgia and quintessential Britishness we've come to love in our proper London pubs. Blue Boar Pub was named '**One to Watch**' at Estrella Damm's Top 50 Gastropub Awards and most recently the Best Pub in Greater London at the National Pub & Bar Awards 2022.

Sally's restaurant, **The Pem**, named after suffragette Emily Wilding Davison, opened in Conrad London St. James in July 2021. The menu at The Pem displays an elevated style of the food that Sally has become renowned for; it's more refined, more considered, and more sophisticated – yet still retains the fun and liveliness that Sally's guests have come to know and love. Sally builds on the foundations of historic British cuisine and celebrates flavours and ingredients that are familiar and much-loved but interpreting them in her own way. The Pem was named '**One to Watch**' at the **2021 National Restaurant Awards**.

Sally's cooking style is simple, hearty, tasty food, intensely focused on flavour. Sally has a gift for capturing classic, nostalgic British dishes that many will remember fondly from their childhoods, and subtly modernising them. She makes a point of working with long-standing trusted suppliers when it comes to fresh produce, meat, and fish; people who she knows attach the same importance to quality and sustainability as she does, and who support smaller producers and maintain traditional methods.

In Sally's words, "I'd rather have three incredible ingredients on a plate than 10 superfluous things. I want to make food that makes people happy and makes people full."

'Chef to Watch' – National Restaurant Awards 2019

Chef of The Year & No. 1 Pub (The Harwood Arms) – Estrella Damm Top 50 Gastropubs 2020

Nominated for 'Chef of the Year' – GQ Magazine Food & Drinks Awards 2021

Squaremeal's Ayala Female Chef of the Year 2021

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