

# Westberry Hotel & Hội-An Restaurant Newsletter

Dear all —

It has been nearly a year since I last wrote to you. I'm sorry for such a long gap but time seems to fly by so fast that I haven't time to catch my breath, let alone time to write.

So what were the major events for us this year? We started 2022 as planned with a smaller refurbishing programme in the winter. Since most of the major upgrades had already been done, this year we decided to freshen up one wing of the hotel. It took Paul, our painter/decorator, a few weeks to repaint the 5 bedrooms with a fresher colour and they looked very nice. Unfortunately, who could have predicted that just a week after, in mid-February, Cornwall would experience one almighty storm and we lost the flat roof right above these rooms. Water poured in, ceilings came down, all the newly painted walls were ruined, and of course we had to block out these rooms for many weeks after that. However, every cloud has a silver lining, and our insurance company agreed to cover the costs in full, so as a result we came out with a new roof on this wing. Then... since the damaged wing was repaired with a new roof, new fascia boards and new gutters, we decided to replace the fascia boards and gutters for the rest of the building to make them look a part. Then... since we needed to pay for the scaffolding, we decided that it made sense to get the walls painted at the same time, as some parts of the building are difficult to reach. And of course you can't paint half a building, so we ended up with a nice fresh building as a result. And it doesn't end there... as we have already claimed on the insurance for the flat roof on one wing, if anything were to happen to the other flat roof it would be difficult to persuade the insurance company to pay out again, so we are now getting the rest of our flat roof replaced before winter arrives in earnest. Another reason for doing this is because we are considering installing solar panels on our roof to offset the increase in energy prices, so it makes sense to replace the old rooves before mounting the solar panels. It's been a bit of a long saga, but I thought you might find it interesting, and we hopefully won't need to mention the roof again !

In term of business, we did well during the summer in both the hotel and the restaurant, but profit margins have been squeezed due both to the ending of VAT relief and to the increase in staff wages and other costs. But we can count ourselves lucky when compared to many other businesses which have been affected far more than us. And we have still managed to have enough staff to cope with the number of guests. I'm happy that we were able to accommodate our local guests on their nights out or when they had visitors and didn't have to turn guests away because of lack of staff. Also, we were lucky to have nice guests so we didn't face a situation like that of the Mason's Arm, where a group of 8 people came in to eat and drink and left without paying. Unfortunately we did have a small number of guests who left their rooms in such a mess that in one case it took our 3 housekeepers an extra 2 hours each to deep-clean the 2 rooms. And within one week of our putting new fluffy spare blankets in all rooms, two went missing, but our guests denied taking them so nothing could be done — luckily no more have gone missing since.

Soon the summer season will be over and as we are now entering the cold winter months we are bringing back our 15% discount to all Cornwall residents and their guests dining in our Hôi-An restaurant from Sunday to Wednesday each week, in addition to our year-round offer of 20% off our vegan menu for dine-in customers every Thursday. We hope to see many of you coming into take advantage of our local residents' 15% discount offer from November until the end of March next year. We will be posting some additional discount codes for take-away meals on our Facebook page, so please follow us there.

Last year we didn't offer any Christmas parties because of Covid, but this year we are thinking of offering **Christmas parties on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> December** with festive menu, crackers and discos. We will upload the menu onto our website soon but if any of you are interested please let us know and we can e-mail the menu to you.

Once again I would like to thank all of you who have been so very supportive of our business throughout the years and we hope to see you again before too long.

*With very best wishes,*

*Le,*

*Westberry Hotel & Hôi-An Restaurant.*