

CHITRA RAMASWAMY

# The Glasshouse, Cromlix review: high-end food at high-end prices

The bill will make your eyes water, but Andy Murray's restaurant knows how to make a crowd-pleasing dish



The restaurant at Cromlix is in a "grande dame" of a glasshouse, says Chitra Ramaswamy

Chitra Ramaswamy | Wednesday July 30 2025, 11:50pm, The Times

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**C**romlix is the sumptuous five-star country house hotel bought by Andy Murray and his wife, Kim, in 2013 for £1.8 million and reopened a decade later following a many-more-millions refurb.

Enter the Victorian mansion three miles outside Dunblane, no doubt after ogling the tennis court beside the car park where Murray is said to bat the occasional ball — and the first thing you see are Barbour wellies in every conceivable size, standing to attention in two neat rows. Above them, a line of waxed jackets on hooks.

On a welcome table at the entrance, and every available surface through the reception and bar, are vases of fresh-cut flowers in violent bursts of colour. Then come the statement floral wallpapers, luxe velvet sofas and modern art on the walls from the Murrays' own collection. The vibe is rich, busy, Victoriana-with-a-wink and noticeably tartan-free — though the staff do wear very fetching tailored-branded uniforms. Scottish in a headband comes only, than

All of which sets certain expectations when it comes to dinner. Namely that it will be modern, cleanly plated, not too Scottish, a wee bit sexy in terms of global referencing (a muhammara here, a spritz of yuzu there), but nothing too outré, we're in Andy Murray country after all, and, yes, eye-wateringly expensive. Look, I'm well aware restaurants in five-star hotels are going to be at the very top of top-end but it stings, nonetheless, to order a £39.50 main and have to add on sides of chips and seasonal greens for £6 a piece. Even if the chips are sensational, which I'm happy to report they are.

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My dining companion, Rachel, and I wanted to come for the market lunch; great value at three courses for £42.50, but there were no tables. So Sunday à la carte it is. All of this happens in a grande dame of a glasshouse, its doors opening on to a lush green lawn where the little ones can frolic while the grown-ups tuck into 30-day dry-aged ribeye from Donald Russell in Inverurie. It's a light, airy space, alive with the flutter and buzz of the open kitchen, but there could be more fresh flowers, herbs and botanicals dotted about and the fake ivy lining the cupola I'm afraid I cannot forgive.

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After the high romance of the hotel itself, the Glasshouse feels closer to a daytime brasserie with its Parisian-style café chairs, or somewhere for afternoon tea, as opposed to a restaurant in which you want to eat a £115pp tasting menu. When I ask if it's the only place to eat in the hotel a server says yes, but a new fine-dining restaurant is planned, which will border the lawn and open next year. Good to know.

### Exactly the food I want to eat in a high-end hotel

Two sturdy if underseasoned amuse-bouches kick things off — an oxtail and horseradish bonbon and smoked salmon with yuzu and finger lime. A starter of cured salmon mosaic bears similarly bright Japanese-inflected flavours; ponzu, teriyaki slaw and a robust kombu dashi poured at the table. The fish, however, is sourced from Mowi, a salmon farming giant mired in controversy over its practices. Why not use wild Scottish trout, which is in season?





A heritage tomato tart boasts bronze, buttery pastry and soft, sweet tomatoes bordering a globe of whipped goat's curd pooled with fresh pesto. On the side? A bowl of tomatoes over which a garden-perfumed tomato consommé is poured. A tad underseasoned, again, but this is exactly the kind of food I want to eat in high summer, in a high-end hotel in Stirling.

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Heritage tomato tart, basil pesto, goat's curd, black olive caramel and tomato consommé

Our mains are even better. The cooking of Puddledub pork loin and belly is bang on, and the addition of apple sliced thin, caramelised in pork fat and coiled into a rose, as if for a sweet tart, inspired.

Rachel's salt-aged duck, sourced from the excellent St Bride's in Strathaven, is also cooked two ways — the breast blushing pink with a well-rendered ribbon of fat and a juicy kebab formed of the leg meat. There's charred red chicory — which we admire later in Cromlix's beautifully tended kitchen garden — baked kohlrabi, poached rhubarb, and a smear of divinely sweet, tart rhubarb gel. What a fabulous, elegant, crowd-pleasing dish.



The £39.50 Salt-aged St Bride's duck, chicory, kohlrabi, poached rhubarb, five-spice duck jus

For dessert we order an intriguing-sounding spiced treacle tart with pickled walnuts and German soft blue cheese but are brought a fragrant slab of French pear and almond tart with exceptionally creamy rum and raisin ice cream made by Stirling's Milk and Honey and fat juicy brambles, foraged I presume from Cromlix's glorious estate. So delicious we don't bother telling the staff it's not what we ordered.

### A taste of what's to come



The executive head chef James Mearns joined Cromlix in February from the Michelin-starred Wild Rabbit

Up until February of this year, Cromlix's executive head chef was Darin Campbell (who's worked at Restaurant Andrew Fairlie at Gleneagles, Petrus, Ballachulish House). Now James Mearns — who comes from the Michelin-starred Wild Rabbit in the Cotswolds — is in the top job and will oversee the creation of Cromlix's ambitious next dining phase. Clearly he's a talent and is only just getting started. I'll look forward to returning when his new restaurant opens next spring.

**The Glasshosue, Cromlix, Kinbuck, Stirling FK15 9JT; [cromlix.com](http://cromlix.com)**