

James Archer, of Archers Butchers, Norwich, whose Pork Wellington, seen below during its creation, has been declared a national champion. PHOTOS: STEVE ADAMS



# Pork Wellington proves a real recipe for success



## 'It's a tender and tasty dish'

→ Reporter David Bale tries out the winning Pork Wellington. **The first thing to say is that it is very filling. The mixture of succulent pork fillet and light puff pastry is definitely different, and might be classed as an acquired taste by some. But it's certainly a quality product. You can**

**taste the mushrooms, onions, garlic and butter and the Parma ham is a favourite of mine. James Archer and Ian Plunkett, who created the dish, would not tell me the special recipe they use. But they are definitely on to a winner – it's a tender and tasty dish.**

A champion pork product has put Norwich firmly on the gastronomic map of England by beating off competition from 1,500 other entrants to win a national award.

The Pork Wellington made by Archer's Butchers in Plumstead Road was named 'national champion' at the 2011-2012 British Pig Executive (BPEX) regional roadshow and product excellence final.

The speciality product had previously triumphed in the east of England leg of the roadshow when it stopped at the Norfolk Showground in Costessey last September.

It then went on to join seven other champion products from each region in one final taste test by the toughest of critics – members of the public.

And they were unanimous in their decision that the Pork Wellington was the stand-out product of the day.

Butcher James Archer, who followed both his father and grandfather into the trade, said: "I'm absolutely thrilled.

"This is a real credit to the great team we have at the shop. We were blown away to get the regional champion award and be in the top eight, so to come away with this national title is an honour, as well as a complete shock.

"The Pork Wellington was introduced especially for the competition. Like all of our other products, it is made from scratch on the premises and has gone on to be a popular addition to our range – ideal for weekend dinner parties and celebratory occasions such as Christmas."

Mr Archer picked up the award – an original watercolour

painting of a Saddleback pig by artist Chris Pendleton – at a special ceremony at Butchers Hall in London.

He said they sourced 100pc free-range Suffolk 'Blythburgh' pork for its quality, flavour and consistency, and added: "And it really shines through in this dish. We use pork fillet, combined with mushroom duxelles and Parma ham, which is then encased in a light puff pastry to deliver a tender and tasty dish.

"To be able to say it is now the supreme champion product in England is hugely exciting and another string to our awards bow."

The family butcher, which has been serving quality food since 1929 and has picked up

numerous awards over the years, employs 16 staff and includes a delicatessen and takeaway food bar.

BPEX butchery and product development manager Keith Fisher said judges were extremely impressed by the Pork Wellington, made to a secret recipe known only to Mr Archer and colleague Ian Plunkett.

He said: "It really is a very worthy winner and proves that pork performs just as well as other meats in some of our most favoured classic dishes.

"We received almost 1,500 products for evaluation from the eight regional events, so to be judged as the best from so many high-quality entrants is quite truly a fantastic achievement."

The Evening News Love Local campaign aims to boost support for local businesses.