

Industry names a rising culinary star

By JILL CLEAVE



TOP ACCOLADE: Bistro at the Falls Retreat chef Brad King is one of five NZ Beef and Lamb Ambassador Chefs in the country.

After months of assessment by culinary-trained experts, a Karangahake chef has been revealed as one of the top five in the country in the Beef + Lamb New Zealand awards. In its 19th year, the awards have recognised 163 restaurants from across the country with 2015 Beef + Lamb Excellence Awards and the Bistro at the Falls Retreat in the Karangahake Gorge was right up there with them receiving the award for the third time. The Bistro's owner and chef, Brad King, rose one step higher this year and was named as one of five Beef + Lamb New Zealand Ambassador Chefs thanks to displaying "exceptional culinary skills" during the assessment period. He said it was an honour to be named as an ambassador. "This will bring massive exposure to the Bistro, as well as the area in general, putting us on the map as a foodie's destination," he said. He said both his beef and lamb dish are still available to try on the dinner menu. "Our point of difference, I believe, is the majority of our menu comes through our woodfired oven and the food has an earthy quality with a lot of love and raw energy pumped into it," he said. He said his award-winning dishes were of the same quality everyone who visits the Bistro enjoys. "Creating a dish which gives customers so much pleasure is what keeps pushing me forward and the reason I come to work every day," he said. He said he was blessed with working in a beautiful environment in the stunning Karangahake Gorge in an open, outdoor kitchen surrounded by bush. "It helps me to come to work everyday and living on the property means my kids can come over and be a part of what we do," he said. King will be involved Beef + Lamb New Zealand activities throughout the year, culminating with a special Beef and Lamb degustation dinner at the Bistro in November. No8 Restaurant & Bar in Whitianga, Peppertree Restaurant and Bar in Coromandel and Koru on the Tapu-Coroglen Rd were also awarded 2015 Beef and Lamb Excellence Awards.