

EAT L'AUBERGE @ THE BLACK LION

French connection is a roaring success



TABLE SERVICE: Philippe Sadowski, Leandro Moraes, Marine Sadowski and Chris Kemp on opening night at The Black Lion

PICTURE BY LEIGH QUINNELL

► A riverside pub has transformed its old skittles alley into a haven of French cuisine in a bid to tempt in legions of local diners, writes **Daniel Lyons**

THE French and the English haven't always got along. But an atmosphere of *entente cordiale* now reigns at a riverside pub in Hammersmith following the opening of a new restaurant.

L'Auberge at The Black Lion, which welcomed its first customers on March 3, promises

the best in French food and wine at reasonable prices.

It is situated in an old skittles alley at the back of the traditional English pub in South Black Lion Lane – an under-used space which pub manager Chris Kemp says only ever filled up completely during psychic conventions.

But the crystal balls and tarot cards have gone, and Chris and Parisian restaurant manager Philippe de Azevado predict a rosy future. "We think word of mouth will be important, and building up a loyal local clientele who live within 20 minutes' walking distance," said Chris.

The restaurant is the brainchild of Englishman Peter Linacre and Frenchman Rachid Noui and is one of three L'Auberges in the South East.

However, Philippe insisted



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that each one has its own individual character and said each diner will be offered an authentic, high-quality French dining experience.

He also hopes to introduce regular gastronomic attractions, including wine dinners, cooking demonstrations and even 'bring what you catch' evenings.

"What's important to me is that we are smart, simple and good," he added.

• For more information on L'Auberge visit: www.theblacklion-hammersmith.co.uk.

• See the next edition of *h&f news* for Daniel Lyons' review on L'Auberge at The Black Lion.