

## CONTACTS

# « MARCO PIERRE WHITE BREAKS THE MOULD »

PHOTOGRAPHER BOB CARLOS CLARKE  
YEAR 1989  
LOCATION LONDON

Marco Pierre White was the original celebrity chef. The good-looking wild child of the kitchen, he burst on to the London restaurant scene in 1987 as head chef at Harvey's in Wandsworth, where he displayed a penchant for evicting customers whose tastes or behaviour offended him. Naturally, this garnered huge amounts of publicity, but never obscured the fact that the man was a sublime cook whose reputation rested squarely on his talents in the kitchen; everything else was just narrative PR.

He was quickly approached by publishers wanting him to do a straightforward cookery book. Instead, in 1988, White's friend, the late fashion photographer Bob Carlos Clarke, suggested a more cook'n'roll idea, which they then pitched to publishers themselves. The result, published the following year, was *White Heat*, which changed the face of cookery publishing just as White had changed the image of chefs. Much more than just a collection of recipes, the book's black-and-white shots of White smoking, fooling around and working with his brigade (which included a then-unknown sous-chef by the name of Gordon Ramsay) established the cult of the chef as sex symbol. Carlos Clarke remained a friend and was supplying the artwork for another of White's restaurant ventures, Ludano, at the time of his death. Six years after *White Heat* at the age of 33, White became, and remains, the youngest chef to win three Michelin stars. HILARY ROSE

