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October 2016 £3.25

SPECIALITY FOOD

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EDITOR'S LETTER



This issue we're coming fresh from Speciality & Fine Food Fair 2016, which, as ever, offered a valuable opportunity to reconvene with those one only sees once a year, meet the new faces making waves and get an overview of how the industry stands.

It's always great to get out and about, not least because face-to-face meetings invariably bear more fruit than telephone conversations or email exchanges. I am thankful that the fine food and drink industry shares my appreciation for good old-fashioned communication – throughout the year, shows and events offer a chance to catch up with old friends and discover what's new in their world. Exploring the story of the producer is even more enjoyable when it involves an on-site visit. For this issue I visited Woodall's, a charcuterie producer which exemplifies the past, present and future of the British charcuterie market. Spending a day in the presence of the inspiring Colin Woodall, descendent of the inimitable Hannah Woodall who began the company, was a true pleasure (and the snacking wasn't bad, either). Colin shares an exclusive glimpse into their world on page 18.

We also tell the story of Stuart Gooderham, the man who through sheer hard work and determination transformed a potato-selling business on the side of a Norfolk road to one of the UK's most successful farm shops, Goodies Food Hall, on page 26. If you're looking for an invigorating read complete with hard-earned advice to apply to your own business, this one's for you.

> "You can't beat a good old fashioned face-to-face conversation"

By now your Christmas preparations will be well underway, so on page 40 we share our final set of tips and tricks to help your festive season be profitable, productive and, most importantly of all, merry. Following in the seasonal theme, we present the ultimate party spread on page 23 – complete with artisanal nibbles and quality drinks both alcoholic and soft.

Also, on page 31 we highlight some of the British cheeses making their mark by combining innovation, talent and simply great flavour. Perfect for UK-centric cheesecounters in need of a refresh.

Holly

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NEWS IN BRIEF

DELI PROMOTES STORY INITIATIVE

The Norfolk Deli in Hunstanton has launched its 'Every Product Has A Story', or #EPHAS initiative, which is intended to promote small artisan producers and tell the story behind their products.

The Norfolk Deli has gathered its key 20 local suppliers to take part in interviews on its website. The interviews offer insight into how buying locally-made products directly affects real people with real stories to share.

Mark Kacary, co-owner of The Norfolk Deli said, "I'm sick and tired of large corporations trying to jump onto the 'local' bandwagon, like Walkers selling 'deli' crisps and Tesco's creating fake farms. I wanted to show our customers that there's a difference between a shop like ours and a supermarket.

"Our products are made by real people and I wanted to highlight this."

UK APPETITE FOR HALLOUMI GROWS

The UK tops a list of countries in which Cypriot halloumi cheese is being consumed the most, according to a report by Waitrose.

Online searches for halloumi have risen by 83% over the past two years, and increased fivefold in the space of five years.

Chris Dawson, cheese buyer at Waitrose said, "It's easy to see why halloumi popularity has soared in the UK – it's a tasty, quick mid-week meal option and we've seen sales increase 26% in the past two years."





Consumer Confidence Grows After Post-Brexit Dip

Consumer confidence picked up in August against a dip during the preceding months, according to new figures.

The aftermath of the Brexit vote saw more hesitant consumers, however the GfK Consumer Confidence Index showed a five-point increase in August to -7.

The view of the general economic situation over the next year saw the biggest rise, up 11 points, from -33 in July to -22 in August.

Joe Staton, head of market dynamics at GfK said, "We're reporting some recovery in the index this month as consumers settle into the new wait-and-see reality of a post-Brexit, pre-exit UK.

"The uptick in confidence is driven by good news from hard data, the combination of historic low interest rates matched with falling prices and high levels of employment."

The report also showed that shoppers were more confident in their personal finance outlook over the next year, which saw a five point increase to +4 in August. In contrast, this is 25 points lower than in August 2015.

We speak to a wholesaler and deli owner about the referendum vote has impacted on business for them and how they expect it to affect the lead up to Christmas.

PAUL HARGREAVES, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF COTSWOLD FAYRE



It is too easy to jump to quick conclusions. Even any impact from the degrading of Sterling following Brexit will not have any real impact until the beginning of 2017, because all transactions – for example, Christmas buying this year – will already have been agreed and currency hedged to minimise this. The real impact will be next year.

As for Brexit itself, personally I don't think it will ever happen. I was alone in this view immediately after the vote, but more and more business people I talk to seem to be of this opinion. In fact, I have only met one person in the SME world that voted leave (or admitted to it), so it does seem that the current governing party can no longer call itself the "party of business".

It's meant we are being a little more cautious about buying products from the United States for next year, where Sterling has been hit the hardest. Apart from that, it's business as usual.

Apart from the retailers that view the world as a half empty glass, and will find a negative slant on most things, it should be business as normal. Many people have more money in their pockets due to extremely low mortgage rates, so retailers should be benefiting from this. Also, many are saving large amounts of money on fuel for their cars, which is still lower than two years ago. Many customers made their buying decisions before the vote – orders both before and afterwards have been significantly up on last year with us.

There will political upheaval next year, which could have an impact on the economy, so we need to be aware of that, but we need to remember that we are in a strong sector full of creativity and innovation, so we need to run with that and brighten everyone's day. Even if there was another recession, speciality retail normally does very well at these times as people choose to eat out less, cook at home more and shop a little more for better products.

JAY HICKSON, CO-FOUNDER OF HICKSON & BLACK'S



August is always one of our quietest months. It was a particularly bad August, but I wouldn't say customer confidence increased after the Brexit dip. The vote itself didn't have much of an influence on us, although it was a big talking point amongst customers and a lot of people had an opinion on it.

I don't believe the business has been too affected by the Brexit vote. We've seen some slight price rises start to pop up, but it's mainly on the product which we sell by weight, so the customer doesn't really notice it – if they want a certain sized slice we cut it and it just costs a bit more than it used to, but that's all. Other than new products which have priced themselves a lot higher than they would have done before, I don't think we have had to increase any prices just yet.

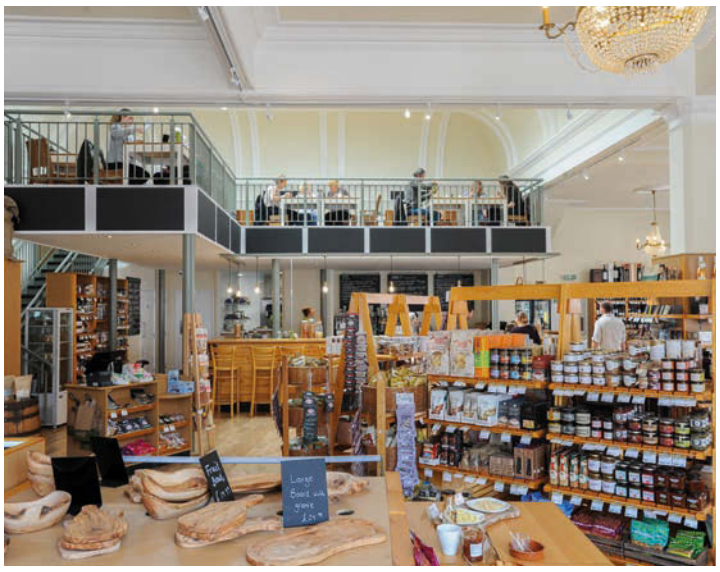
With regards to the run up to Christmas, it depends on how Sterling is doing against the Euro. We're potentially looking at higher costs of stock on the run up to Christmas, which is obviously a bit more of a precarious position for us to be in then we'd like, and customers will notice if they're spending more on the run up to Christmas, so it could become an issue.

We're in a position where we carry a lot of stock from the UK and a lot from Continental Europe, so if it is looking like European stock is not good value for money or not that profitable, we'll simply switch to more British products. We're in a situation now where European products, in particular cured items, generally do offer much better value for money than their British counterparts.



OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Deli, farm shop and food hall openings and expansions across the country



WEST KIRBY WELCOMES NEW FOOD HALL

Fine wine and food hall merchant Whitmore & White has expanded its portfolio and opened a third branch in West Kirby on the Wirral.

The food hall will run with the continental-influenced concept of its other two locations, based in Heswall and Frodsham, but will offer customers the option to be able to sit down for a coffee, a glass of wine or enjoy a beer on tap. Antipasti, charcuterie and cheese sharing boards will be served throughout the day to complement the drinks, with breads, quiches, cakes and confectionery being made on-site. The food hall will also stock more than 300 different wines and 100 spirits, as well as 30 different gins.

The addition of a wine tasting machine is also a feature of the new Whitmore & White location. Customers wishing to buy wine by the glass or to try a bottle before purchasing it can choose from a regularly changing array of wines available from state-of-the-art dispensing machines.

Joe Whittick, owner said, "From the outset our aim was to source fantastic wine, food and spirits from across Europe, the UK and locally, and we set about finding ways to import the best stuff ourselves. Many of our imported ranges from Spain and Italy are exclusive to Whitmore & White. We also wanted to support local artisan producers and were amazed to find how much superb food and drink is made right here on the Wirral.

"We have always wanted to make more of our own fresh produce, but up until now we just haven't had the space. The West Kirby store has a much bigger kitchen, which will allow us to really get stuck in to making some fabulous fresh food, not just for West Kirby, but for our other two stores as well."







DELILAH FINE FOODS OPENS SECOND SITE IN LEICESTER

Independent delicatessen and food bar Delilah Fine Foods has opened a second location in St Martins, Leicestershire.

The store will bring the signature touch of its award-winning Nottingham-based operation, offering thousands of different products from fine food and drink producers from across the country.

The delicatessen is coupled with a fully licensed food bar, meaning where the range of produce on offer will also be used in breakfast, lunch and dinner options cooked by the team. Delilah Fine Foods also prides itself on an enormous selection of wine specially sourced from independent vineyards.

Sangita Tryner, owner said, "Leicester has a vibrant food scene and we're delighted to now be a part of that. We're a fiercely independent delicatessen and have enjoyed welcoming in our first visitors during the soft launch period.

"We love meeting with new customers and talking to them about our products and we look forward to doing that a lot more."



RETAILER GIVEN NEW LEASE OF LIFE

Formerly known as The Fruit Basket, newly relaunched specialist shop Fink has opened on Boroughbridge High Street, North Yorkshire.

Under new ownership from locals Hugh Fink and Sharon Longcroft, Fink will still continue to cater to the previous grocer's loyal customer base, but will sell a wide array of fine food and drink options, too. Fink will provide 3,000 different product lines in-store, with fresh local produce, artisan baked goods and Continental fine foods for sale, plus a counter selling fresh fish, cheese and meat.

The relaunch event for the shop welcomed nearly 100 customers, suppliers, friends and food industry professionals to celebrate the occasion, with a local chef announcing the official re-opening.

Hugh Fink, owner said, "I've lived in Boroughbridge for the last 20 years, but until now I haven't had the opportunity to get so involved with the local community and I'm really enjoying it. Not only are Sharon and I key members of the Boroughbridge Chamber of Trade, but I've even joined the community choir!"



GOODNESS IN A CUP OF TEA

Dilmah Founder Merrill J. Fernando had a unique vision - he wanted to offer consumers the finest tea on earth and to do so with ethics and integrity. That pledge is fulfilled in our commitment to garden fresh, unblended tea of the finest quality. Our Founder's intention to make his tea ethical, is honoured in the work of his MJF Charitable Foundation and Dilmah Conservation. In making our business a matter of human service, the natural goodness in every cup of Dilmah is extended by the positive humanitarian and environmental impact Dilmah has on communities and ecosystems.

Ethical tea — Grown, Handpicked & Packed at Source



EDUCATION

The lack of educational opportunities for underprivileged kids being an area of particular concern for the Dilmah Founder Merrill J. Fernando, the MJF Charitable Foundation provides such impoverished children with education and life-skills training.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The MJF Charitable Foundation reaches out to deserving individuals who have the capability, commitment and the desire to progress in life by providing them equipment and funding to launch, resume or develop their chosen livelihoods.





CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Our child development projects provide care, welfare and nutrition to the children of the communities that Dilmah closely works with – particularly the children of our plantation workers.

Merrill J. Fernando established his business on family values and humanity, which naturally led him to commit to the unique philosophy of making business a matter of human service. The powerful expression of Merrill J. Fernando's pledge is in the thousands of lives transformed by the work of his foundation in the areas of education, health, community development, care for the elderly and differently abled, as well as the environment.

"I devoted my life to tea, and built our family business on a commitment to quality and integrity. 66 years since I had resolved to do so, I offer you Ceylon's Finest Tea, each tea handpicked for quality and made with integrity. As you enjoy my Dilmah Tea you bring a smile to the faces of the underprivileged in Sri Lanka".

Earnings from the sale of Dilmah fund the work of the Merrill J. Fernando Charitable Foundation www.mjffoundation.org and Dilmah Conservation www.dilmahconservation.org



Dilmah

For lovers of tea



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JOHN SHEPHERD OF PARTRIDGES

"What are the Brexit brands?"

Do our favourite brands show how divided Britain is? This is the topic of a recent article I read on the BBC News website. At first glance the premise seems completely daft.

Following our recent Brexit experience it has been suggested that certain brands appeal to Leave voters and certain brands to Remain supporters, revealing a deep difference in cultural identity across the country.

The thinking behind this is that those brands that appear to be down to earth, offer good value, are traditional, straightforward, simple and friendly will be bought by those whose preference has been to leave the European Union.

On the other hand, those that appear progressive, up to date, visionary, socially responsible and intelligent will be sought out by those who see the future of the Country within the European Union. I do not think that the two lists of brand qualities are mutually exclusive for a start, and if I was a brand manager I would aim for my product having all of the above qualities. This is probably why I have never been employed as a brand manager.

The top brands for the Brexiteers featured in the article were HP Sauce, Birds Eye, Cathedral City, PG Tips and Richmond Sausages. Unfortunately no food brands were suggested for the Remain voters, which is a pity because I would have been interested to learn which visionary, progressive and intelligent brands appeal to them. Also, examining the Brexit Brands, nearly everyone buys HP Sauce from time to time – it is one of those Tabasco-type products where lots of people have a bottle or jar in the cupboard just in case. And nor does this mean that high streets will witness a stampede of customers buying PG Tips, Birds Eye and Richmond Sausages, either. So does the article have any relevance to actually selling the brands? There is one obvious plus following a thought provoking article, in that any collective mention of food brands in the news encourages us to examine what brands we actually do sell. Which products really are the best-sellers and bring us the most customers? As our best- selling groceries are basically traditional brands, they would be more likely to fall into the Brexit camp on the assumption of the article I read (and much to the horror of many of the actual brands, I would suspect). However, what of the Remain products – those regarded as progressive and visionary and up-to-date? Where would they feature on the list? We do actually have a category of products that we call Startisans, which groups the smaller start up and artisan brands together. They would be among the Remain brands I would suggest, and it is very interesting to note that they are slowly working their way up our best-sellers lists. Yet, ironically, they are the type of brands that some have predicted will be the worst affected by Brexit. Hopefully these new stars will become household names one day in their own right and long outlast the Brexit fallout. So let's keep buying them!

Speciality & Fine Food Fair Takes to Asia

Speciality & Fine Food Fair and Speciality Chocolate Fair will be launching in Asia next summer.

The show will debut in Suntec, Singapore from July 18th until 20th 2017 and will bring its signature array of producers, up-and-coming trends and insightful talks and demonstrations. Just like the London edition, the Singapore Speciality & Fine Food Fair will also host the affiliated Speciality Chocolate Fair, which promotes the luxury and gourmet chocolate market.

After the success of the UK-based speciality fairs, food and hospitality expert Fresh Montgomery, which has run the Speciality & Fine Food Fair for the last 17 years, will be working with its sister company, Montgomery Asia, to showcase the innovative, artisan food and drink producers from across the globe. This offers a spectacular opportunity for food and drink producers to reach new global markets and to discover trends.

The inaugural events in Singapore will mirror the UK concept, which draws in more than 850 exhibitors and 12,000 trade attendees each year. There will be artisan exhibitors from a wealth of food and drink categories travelling from across the world and a host of top attractions including Fine Food Live, a chef's demo theatre; a Small Business Forum where experts can offer free one-to-one advice and a Start-up Village, a zone exclusively for 30 new artisan food producers.

Speciality & Fine Food Asia and Speciality Chocolate Asia was organised after receiving huge demand from exhibitors and buyers. The events will be held in Singapore's Central Business District at Suntec, Singapore. The show is considered a must-visit for trade buyers from retail, food service, travel, import, wholesale and distribution from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Hong Kong and The Philippines.

Christopher McCuin, business development director of Fresh Montgomery and Montgomery Asia said, "We are delighted to finally announce the exciting launch of Speciality & Fine Food Asia and Speciality Chocolate Asia. This is an exciting new chapter for Fresh Montgomery and a much anticipated addition to the trade show calendar. The culmination of months of planning, the events have been designed to inspire food and beverage buyers from across South East Asia."





Young Food & Drink Entrepreneur of the Year 2016 Announced

The final of the third annual support scheme to find Britain's most promising start-up food company run by a young entrepreneur was announced at the Speciality & Fine Food Fair 2016, held in September.

The title was awarded to 24-year-old Olly Hiscocks and his brand Olly's Olives, a range of naturally-cured olives in snack pots that are marinated with fresh ingredients, after being chosen by the attending audience. Three finalists pitched to the crowd for 10 minutes and shared samples of their products.

Runners up in the competition were Nut Blend, a sugar-free nut butter company set up by Gabriella Block, and Infustic, a brand of frozen fruit-infused water sticks that slot into water bottles founded by Rory O'Connor.

As winner, Olly will receive a year of mentoring from Paul Hargreaves, chief executive of Cotswold Fayre, a £1,500 cheque and marketing support for his venture.

Olly Hiscocks said, "Winning this award will help greatly as I'm looking to get into the ambient market and to raise cash for pouches. In terms of further development, we've got new flavours coming out – Japanese and Indian-infused olives – so we're aiming to push the olive market as far as we can while retaining the best quality and flavours. We also want to lock down some stores, especially independent health shops."

Paul Hargreaves, chief executive of Cotswold Fayre said, "Our first aim with Olly is to grow his number of customers and retailers, as he has a really good product. I can help him with sales and marketing and also set him up with product development experts. Each year that we've run this competition the standard has just got higher and higher – all of the three finalists are further down the road than any of the finalists in previous years; they have a brand, they have a product and packaging."



STUART GATES

"Christmas is coming... Don't panic"

For those who don't know me, it may be useful to explain how I came to be writing my inaugural column for Speciality Food. I'd been in the fine food and drink industry for well over three decades – including 20 years at Harrods, 12 years at Fortnum & Mason and two at Daylesford Organic – before creating my own food and training consultancy firm in 2010. During my stint in the sector I have also chaired the Guild of Fine Food, been a council member for Food From Britain, and been a proud part of the Bord Bia Taste Council.

This is the best (and my favourite) time of the year for British and regional foods. The perfect season to start cooking again and to replenish the post-summer pantry. Having said that, the Christmas goodies are starting to appear. Whilst respecting their importance, they can take over valuable shelf space and often send a shiver of fear down the spines of customers who generally do not get into Christmas until after *Strictly Come Dancing* has had its Blackpool special!

The build up to Christmas should be exciting for everybody, and if producers, distributors and retailers get their planning and merchandising right it should be a stimulating and profitable time for all. However, it's important to ensure everybody, including the members of the shop team, do not suffer from retail fatigue.

I her from shop keepers that Christmas shopping patterns are getting later and later. Of course, I have been hearing that for 40 years, but I actually think it is. Black Friday seems to have been and gone (thank goodness) as it's not in sync with our trading patterns and requires retailers to discount heavily in November.

The bigger players offer discounts on the Christmas classics and set the challenge for the other retailers to follow. The best offer I ever saw, or perhaps the most desperate, was 'Buy 1 Get 3 Free' in October for a well-known brand of mince pies that would sit well with the name Rudyard. This activity must achieve somebody's goals, but possibly has a negative effect by putting people off these Christmas items as they essentially suffer 'festive overdose' by October. Shoppers also complain that the quality products available in the stores and delis look expensive.

A lifetime ago when I was at Fortnum & Mason, we waited until after Remembrance Sunday weekend to decorate and merchandise the store for Christmas. Our customers were always excited about the new items, fabulous displays and the seasonal appearance of marrons glacés and brandy butter.

So, my plea and suggestion is not to tie up all the money too early. Celebrate these wonderful autumn days and keep something back for December. I know your customers will appreciate your efforts when they will come to buy those Christmas classics from you.





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CHARLES CAMPION

"How to make a food town"

In Northern Ireland in County Armagh there's a small town called Moira. It's not a big place and has a population that nudges 5,000 on a good day. Over the years it has been known for a couple of pubs and McCartney's, an impressive butchery on the high street which has won Supreme Champion at the Great Taste Awards (with a magnificent homemade corned beef). But anyone watching for the last decade or so would have seen this small town turn into something of a foodie hub. There's another butcher – Hannan Meats – which operates on a larger scale out of a spotless factory on a Moira industrial estate.

Hannan has a number of agiing rooms lined with Himalayan salt blocks, and sells magnificent salt-aged Glenarm shorthorn beef as far afield as Fortnum & Mason and a number of London's top restaurants. Like McCartney's, Hannan has also won the Supreme at the Great Taste Awards. The very tail end of last year saw a crisp new restaurant – Wine and Brine – open on the sensibly named Main Street. Not so long ago editors would commission a succession of articles about Ludlow, pointing out the five butcher shops, the Michelin-spangled restaurants and the annual food festival. But keeping the public educated and motivated in favour of good food is a tricky business.

At the end of August this year, Moira held its second ever food festival in the town park. It was a charming day out despite several vicious showers when it rained hard enough to sting. There was a large tent full of local producers, Abernethy Butter was there and the Krazi Baker was selling epic potato breads hot off the griddle stuffed with crisp Guanciale (pig's cheek bacon). There was a grand array of local beers, ciders and gins all sold from a giant tepee. Children and dogs scampered hither and thither paying little heed to parental instruction. Grown-ups sat on straw bales and nursed a glass or two of local ale or cider. The mainspring of this food festival is a lady called Joanne McErlain who is to be congratulated on keeping the event to a single day and hanging on to that precious local vibe. The stall-holders were all happy with the level of sales, the locals were happy with their purchases, the demonstration tent was packed, and everywhere there was a contented murmur.

When it comes to festivals, charm is a potent attraction and one that is easier to create when working on a smaller scale. Gradually the people of Moira and its surrounds are changing the way they see food and drink. It's no longer merely fuel but something that they can engage with. There will be a third Moira Food Festival next year, but in the meantime locals will be slightly more interested in the provenance and quality of that steak, those vegetables, that sausage. Ultimately this will change the tone of the place, and that will benefit small and large producers alike. Build-up your customers' love of food and drink and you will have a sporting chance of engaging with them.

Look out Glastonbury, the Moira Food Festival is on your heels.

SIAL Paris Returns

The world's largest food and drink innovation exhibition, SIAL Paris 2016, takes place on 16th until 20th October, and will showcase innovative new zones and sections.

Over 7,000 exhibitors from over 104 different countries and 160,000 industry professionals are expected to attend SIAL Paris, alongside top French and international agri-food leaders. There will be 21 product sectors exhibiting including meat, dairy products, organic food, beverages, wine and spirits, deli items and more.

New to the 2016 event is a Gluten-Free Zone, a demonstration of how food markets are adapting to consumer's dietary preferences and habits. There will also be a strong focus on the organic and fresh produce sectors and beverage market, especially beers and hot drinks.

The theme for this year's event is to 'look deeper', to understand the opportunities and demands in today's constantly-changing global market.

SIAL Paris has also announced the most celebrated Michelin-starred chef in the world, Joël Robuchon as the event's patron. He will be part of both the SIAL Innovations Awards committee and will also be selecting his favourite products amongst the exhibitors attending.

Nicolas Trentesaux, SIAL network director said, "All eyes will be focused on Paris in October. The food industry is one of the most dynamic industries in most G20 countries. By discovering new trends and business opportunities, participants will find the tools they need to achieve their objectives. SIAL Paris is a platform for stakeholders to test new markets, launch new products and meet today's main players to discuss the challenges of the future. Over 2,500 new products will be presented at the SIAL Innovation feature this year, inspiring the food and beverage industry even more than ever."







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Organic Sector on the Rise

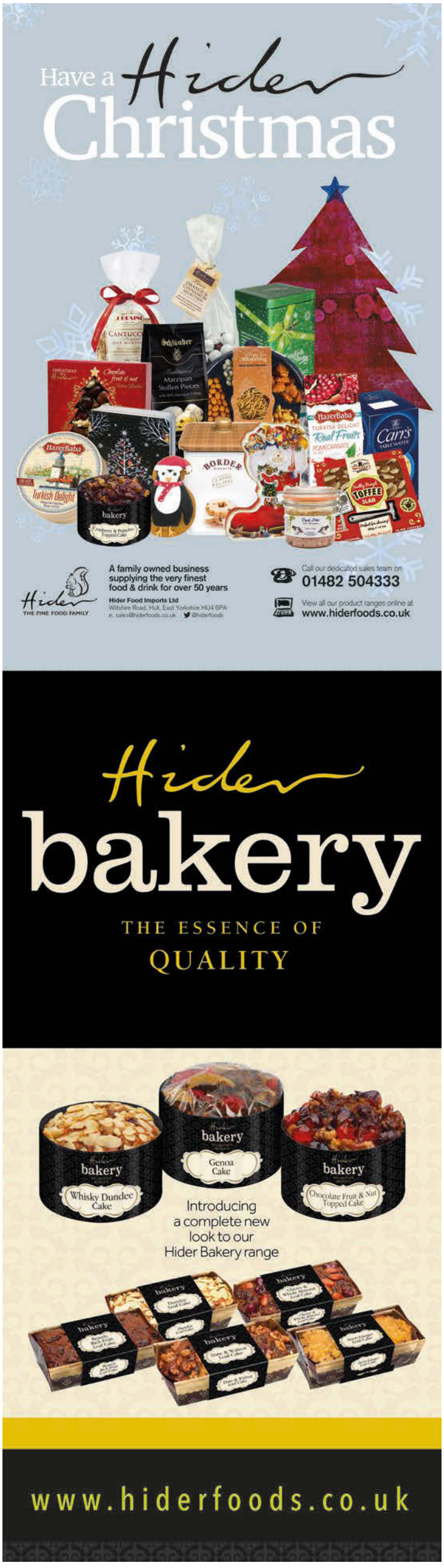
New research commissioned by Soil Association Certification has revealed growth in the organic sector has doubled in the 53 weeks to 13 August 2016, up 5.6% from last year.

Clare McDermott, business development director at Soil Association Certification said, "The organic market is in the fourth consecutive year of growth against continuing decline in non-organic food sales. There are clear opportunities across a variety of sectors, with growth driven by fresh produce and grocery, but also home baking and store cupboard essentials.

"83% of households have bought organic in the last year. It is obvious that organic has a huge part to play in the future retail landscape and more people than ever are aware of organic and seeking out organic purchases."

The new research from marketing consultancy service The Crow Flies was revealed at the annual Organic September trade briefing, with market data from Nielsen showing that the organic market is set to break the £2 billion mark this year and continues to outperform non-organic sales.

Presenting the research, David Preston from The Crow Flies said, "People want organic to be the everyday way of doing things – they want it normalised – but there are challenges. If we can understand the range of segments and motivations of organic consumers we will be able to grow the organic market and consistently communicate the rich tapestry of what organic is. But this has to be supported throughout the industry."





Dual Audit Option Launched



Small producers in the UK can now combine a Safe and Local Supplier Approval (SALSA) and Soil Association certification scheme audit into one working day.

Announced at Speciality & Fine Food Fair in September, the collaboration is the first of its kind and will be available to new and current SALSA and Soil Association licensees. Planned to start in November 2016, small producers will be able to condense what usually entails two audits into just one day, helping to save them time, money and resources. Businesses which register for this option will save £100 on the regular SALSA fee.

The Soil Association Certification is the UK's leading organic certification body and certifies over 70 per cent of the organic food and drink sector. SALSA is the food safety certification scheme for the UK's small food and drink producers.

Sally Ball, SALSA scheme manager said, "This new tie-in represents a significant milestone for both certification bodies and for our small producers. It allows members to reap the significant time and cost saving rewards, while ensuring they are operating to a robust, recognised food safety standard. Approved businesses can confidently access a wider market, in particular supermarket chains and catering suppliers."

James Horwood from Kitchen Garden Foods said, "We know that organic is growing, but there are still hurdles small businesses like us need to cross. A joint audit will help us prove to buyers and customers that we have people's best interests at heart – that we are producing organically grown, safe food independently certified by both Soil Association Certification and SALSA. As a small business, we don't have huge amounts of resource, so being able to combine the two accreditations really makes sense!"

Lee Holdstock, trade relations officer at Soil Association Certification said, "We've already had a significant amount of interest in the new dual audit, and Soil Association Certification licensees are welcome to register for the new audit through the SALSA website. We are aware that SALSA is becoming increasingly important to key food retailers. The process of a dual audit is intended to help businesses who want both these independent assurances, saving them both time and money. For many the other food safety certifications out there aren't a feasible option, so by teaming up with SALSA we can help more businesses improve their chances for increasing sales."

The Cress Co. Launches Chilled Catalogue

Fine food distributor The Cress Co. has launched a catalogue detailing its chilled offering.

The chilled range extends to over 400 lines and includes charcuterie, pies, fish, seafood, soup, vegetables, puddings and dairy. International ranges feature alongside the products of British brands.

Nikki Castley, buyer at The Cress Co. said, "We have been offering chilled products for the past eight years – the product offer has extended so greatly that the range now warrants a dedicated catalogue..

"We deliver across the majority of the UK using our own dual temperature-controlled vans. The Cress Co. is expanding and has recently recruited account managers to service retailers in the South East of England. We also have plans to open another southern depot early next year, which will enable us to deliver across the UK using our own liveried vehicles."



Anchors Away!

Anchors away! Set sail on an adventure with Marshmallow Mateys®. This frosted wholegrain oat cereal has 12 essential vitamins and minerals and no high fructose corn syrup. With a sweet toasted oat flavour and a treasure of marshmallows hiding within, they are a delicious treat for any time of day. To produce them, Malt-O-Meal uses only the highest quality ingredients fortified with vitamins and minerals, so that their cereals not only taste great but also form part of a nutritious breakfast.

Malt-O-Meal is a fourth generation family-owned business focused solely on breakfast cereals. UK families will love iconic Marshmallow Mateys, the delicious Chocolate Marshmallow Mateys and all-American S'mores - squares of honey graham crackers combined with marshmallows and a chocolatey crunch – a real camper's feast!

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SWEET TALK

The rise of craft beer and artisan coffee ushered in a more curious consumer – are we approaching chocolate differently now, too?



It's often proclaimed that we're a nation of chocoholics, depicted as being quite happy to casually gorge on colossal-sized bars that could moonlight as some form of life raft. It could seem that, in time, chocolate has become less of a treat and more of a daily necessity; devoured in a few bites, enjoyed for its purposely saccharine kick. The major manufacturers capitalised on our complacency and we became ambivalent about the simple points that a producer should offer: strong and intriguing flavours; ethically-sourced and minimally processed ingredients; a respect for heritage twinned with forward thinking.

Just like with craft beer and artisanal coffee, we've started to look across the pond to our American counterparts, who have paved the way for a chocolate renaissance. Craft chocolatiers from the US have long been advocating a 'bean to bar' approach to chocolate making, opting for single origin wherever possible. The growth of the premium industry, which has now started making waves here with multinational brands and supermarkets paying close attention, has seen a growth in consumer demand for exciting products and a desire to learn more about the producers and their practices.

Bean on the scene

Willie Harcourt-Cooze, the chocolate maker behind Willie's Cacao, has noticed this trend and says, "The world of small-batch chocolate making is having a real boom. When I started my factory in 2008, I was the first person making chocolate from the bean in Britain. Now there are about 10 of us; some are on a really micro-scale, but everyone brings their own approach and philosophy." Willie also agrees that the Americans are setting the example for artisan chocolate, "We're currently behind, as there are said to be about 250 small makers in America, with companies like Dandelion leading the way."

It is also important to understand where the cocoa beans come from to be able to have a better grasp on their quality and flavour profile. This is a point Willie feels passionate about. He explains, "What you're really looking for are 'single estate' beans, because these are the ones similar to fine wines, that come from individual farms or co-operatives and have distinctive characteristics. Single origin sounds good, but it's like saying 'French wine' – a blend of cocoa beans from one country is less likely to be using quality beans."

Willie also states that 'bean to bar' is becoming more understood as a shorthand that signals provenance and quality to people, because it means that the chocolate maker has gone to great lengths to source specific beans and manage every step of the process themselves to obtain the perfect flavour. And like most movements, there are inevitable pretenders, too. He says, "The problem is that many makers are jumping on this bandwagon and trying to give the impression that they manufacture from the bean, when in fact they buy bulk industrial chocolate and then remould it." But this doesn't deter him as, "the explosion of small makers each with their own style and approach is hugely exciting." He also notes that pairing different single estate chocolates with teas, whiskies and brandies makes for a really eye-opening experience.

Drink it in

On the subject of chocolate, drinks and innovation, the team at Hans Sloane has combined all three to create a unique beverage. Consumers can melt down its chocolate beads – there are specific instructions on the Hans Sloane website detailing correct water temperatures and procedures – to enjoy a cup of unique hot drinking chocolate. "As well as chocolatiers being creative with how they make and mould their chocolate, there are lots of people beginning to put the cocoa back into chocolate," says Brian Watt, managing director at Hans Sloane. He mirrors Willie's sentiments on an increasing number of educated customers who are seeing the benefit of seeking products where cocao takes centre stage.

Brian believes this is the case with the drinking chocolate market, too, and says, "The mainstream companies have focused on reducing costs – so taking cacao to the legal minimum of 25%, which means there's not much of a chocolate taste. Our chocolate beads are made with more cacao, for example our Ecuador variety contains 70% cacao."

With the scene growing considerably, Brian thinks that the consumer is rightly asking for more from their chocolate producers. "The drinking chocolate market is dominated by sugary powders," he says. "So, when consumers taste a Hans Sloane product with over 50% cacao, they say, 'Wow, this actually tastes of chocolate!' When we sample in stores we will always use our Rich Dark so we can explain the idea that the more cocoa there is, the more taste there is, too."



BEANS IN BRIEF:

- 'Raw chocolate' is hailed as a superfood and is one to look out for – raw means the cacao beans are not roasted
- Raw cacao powder is made by cold-pressing unroasted cacao beans
- Doisy & Dam and Ombar are companies currently using raw cacao in their products

> "Although there is a big focus on health at the moment, people still lThe world of small-batch chocolate making is having a real boom... everyone brings their own approach and philosophys"





Menier



Celebrating 200 YEARS!

Menier, maker of fine Swiss cooking chocolate is celebrating its 200th Anniversary this year. The company has a remarkable history with its origins as a pharmaceutical company based in Paris where it sold chocolate powders for medicinal purposes and its chocolate was used as a covering for bitter tasting pills. In 1836 Menier was the first company to introduce bars of chocolate!

Today, Menier is one of the world's most respected and widely recognised chocolate brands.

In 1996 production was moved to Broc in Switzerland.

To mark this auspicious anniversary, Menier has launched a new website www.menier.co.uk, complete with chocolate recipes and the history of the chocolate company.



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Take stock with our new food and drink round-up



Tracklements' Medlar Jelly Saves Bees

Wiltshire-based condiment-maker Tracklements is supporting the struggling British bee population with the launch of its limited edition Aromatic Medlar Jelly.

The independently-run company is calling on locals to donate unwanted medlar fruit which it will transform into jelly to save bees in the process. As part of the business's 'Plant a Tree, Save a Bee' project, 50p from every jar sold will be dedicated to funding bee-friendly medlar trees.

Guy Tulberg, managing director of Tracklements said, "It's a worrying time for British bees – in the last 80 years our populations have reduced significantly and this is due to a shortage of flowers to feed from and places to nest in the countryside.

"Medlar trees are a firm favourite with bees and we're pleased to be doing our bit to help support the bee population. What's more, Tracklements is dedicated to using only the best, natural ingredients and it's wonderful to be able to use the produce of nature's larder, which may otherwise go to waste, towards such a brilliant cause."

tracklements.co.uk

Coldpress With New Milk Alternative

Fresh juice producer Coldpress has created a new almond milk-based drink to offer the vegan and lactose intolerant communities more choice.

The beverage contains almond, banana and raw cacao and aims to bring a more indulgent drink to a loyal band of consumers looking for low cholesterol, low sodium and low saturated fat drinks which are high in vitamins D and E and contain beneficial omega-rich fatty acids.

Andrew Gibb, founder of Coldpress said, "Our first foray into discerning milk alternatives underpins our team's ongoing determination to marry meaningful flavours with nutritional indulgence because a commitment to embracing a healthier lifestyle should never mean depriving your tastebuds."

cold-press.com



Hawkshead Relish Introduces Mudd Spreads

Lake District-based The Hawkshead Relish Company has announced a range of handmade luxury sweet spreads.

Available in three different flavour combinations – Salted Chocolate, Chocolate Honey and Salted Banoffee – the Mudd collection is all handmade, completely natural and contain no artificial flavourings, colourings, additives, gluten or nuts and is suitable for vegetarians.

Mark Whitehead, co-owner of Hawkshead Relish said, "I love to experiment with flavour combinations and the essence of these all-natural ingredients have the ability to create exquisite flavour combinations when they are paired well."

Maria White, co-director said, "We couldn't just call these luxurious treats 'spreads' – it just doesn't do them justice and show off their quality. Mudd just seems to fit with everything we like to do here; it adds a little fun!"

hawksheadrelish.com





Booja-Booja Unveils Fresh Flavours

Luxury chocolate producer Booja-Booja has launched a new range of dairy-free ice cream flavours.

The new offering consists of four varieties, including Caramel Pecan Praline, Raspberry Ripple, Hazelnut Chocolate Truffle, Chocolate Salted Caramel, plus revamped versions of Keep Smiling Vanilla M'Gorilla and Hunky Punky Chocolate.

Louise Truswell, marketing communication manager said, "We believe that dairy-free ice cream can be even more alluringly delicious than its most luxury dairy counterparts and with this in mind have developed a new generation of luscious flavours with an abundance of nutty caramel sauces, fruity ripples and swoons of truffley swirls.

"They're presented in boldly beautiful pots, which are meticulously designed to express fully and vividly the delights of the products inside."

500ml and 100ml tubs are available now from frozen food wholesalers.

boojabooja.com





Dilmah Announces t–Series

Quality tea brand Dilmah has announced the launch of its t-Series, a collection of teas that celebrate the individuality and taste of tea from estates around the world.

Each individual variety included in the range is meant to complement certain moods – some help to relax, others invigorate and stimulate calmness – and can be drank hot, iced or in a cocktail.

Dilhan C. Fernando, director of Dilmah said, "This is an art collection of teas individually selected by Merrill J. Fernando, the founder of Dilmah, with the objective of celebrating the variety, the individuality and the spectrum of taste and aroma that only teamakers know and relish. Drinkers can experience single origin, handpicked, garden-fresh, passionately-crafted and indulgently artful tea.

"Tapping into the soul of the t-Series is the mistletoe of the designer gourmet collection, which is an extra special Christmas tea. There's also the softly spirited and energetic Ceylon Western Pekoe from the Dimbula Valley – sensuous rose offers a floral note, while a nutty marizpan and mint complete the tea."

Other flavours available are Nuwara Eliya Pekoe, Green Tea with Jasmine Flowers, Vanilla Ceylon Tea, Ceylon Cinnamon Spice Tea, Mediterranean Mandarin and Brilliant Breakfast Tea.

dilmahtea.co.uk





Duke of Delhi Launches Bombay Mixes

British and Indian-influenced company Duke of Delhi has introduced two savoury Bombay mix products to its street snack-style offerings.

The packs contain a Bombay mix consisting of crunchy potato shards, lentils, roasted nuts, mung beans and aromatic puffed rice, with one variety including chocolate chunks and the other orange pieces.

Asif Walli, co-founder of Duke of Delhi said, "My sister and I were both born in England, but we still have roots in India, and so does the brand. The new packs are a concoction of flavours and ideas – why not have dark chocolate in a savoury snack rather than raisins?"

dukeofdelhi.co.uk

Healthy Granola Range Launches

Established to target the nation's desire for a well-balanced breakfast, Rollagranola brings a range of healthy and nutritious packs full of natural ingredients.

The packets include fruit, nut and seed granola combinations include no additives or artificial sugars and are gluten-free. 11 varieties are available including Healthy Hazelnut, Zesty Caveman, Cool Raspberry, Caveman's Dream and more. Robin Longden, founder of Rollagranola said, "It was clear that in the drive to make food cheaper manufacturers had taken out the most nutritious ingredients – nuts, fruits and seeds – and replaced them with sugar, fats and cereals. Our granola is made with products you recognise on the label, packed full of natural protein and no additives. Anyone looking for clean, unambiguous claims about food ingredients will not be disappointed!"

rollagranola.com



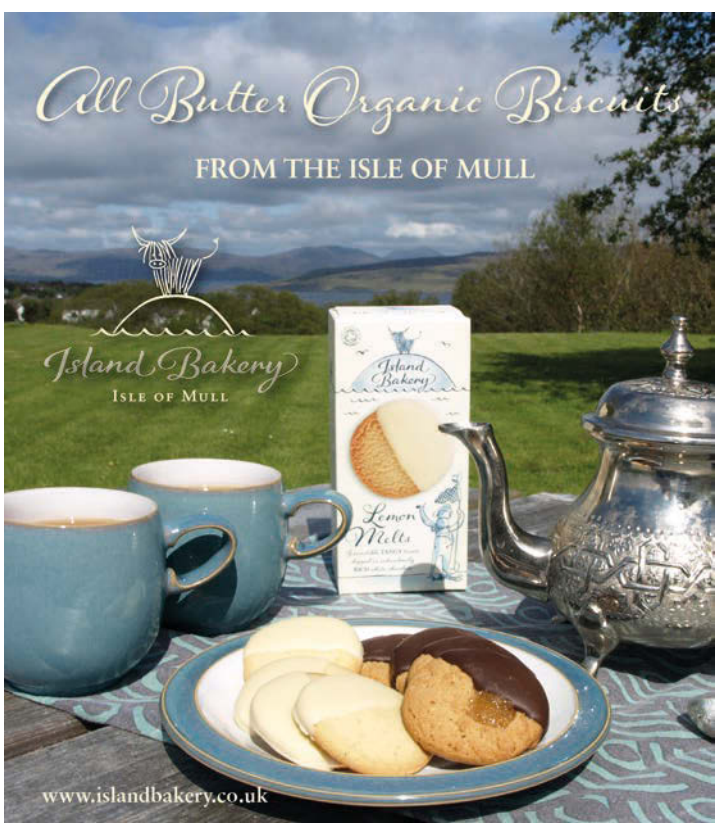
Roots Collective Releases Whole Vegetable Juices

Healthy drinks company Roots Collective has launched Blends: a range of whole vegetable juices. The drinks consist of 80% vegetable with no added fruit juice. Vegetables and herbs are blended with vegetable juice and cold-pressed to lock in essential nutrients, with each recipe containing a quarter kilogram of pure vegetable.

Susie McIntyre, founder of Roots Collective said, "Blends are popular among fast-paced New Yorkers, and we wanted to give people in the UK the opportunity to enjoy them. There's a growing swell of health conscious consumers who want to be able to enjoy high quality vegetables with ease."

rootscollective.co.uk











Welcome Italia 2016

Discover the best of Italy in the heart of London this October

If you are an Italian food lover, you definitely won't want to miss the fourth edition of Welcome Italia. Enjoy three days of great Italian food and drink at the prestigious Royal Horticultural Halls in the heart of London.

Welcome Italia is the event organised by the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the UK in order to promote the excellence of 'Made in Italy'. The food fair will host around 60 Italian companies looking to enter or strengthen their presence in the British market. Moreover, it will be a chance for visitors to discover the best Italian products.

The event will start on 21st October with the Trade Only Day, open exclusively to trade specialists coming from different distribution channels, with the purpose of establishing and developing business relations. The remaining two days (22nd and 23rd October) will be open to all visitors with the opportunity to taste and buy exhibitors' products. In fact, a wide and varied range of traditional Italian specialties will be offered, thanks to cooperation with both small companies and groups of exhibitors coming from all over Italy.

Cooking shows, tastings and seminars about healthy food practices will also be scheduled at Welcome Italia. Buyers and visitors will learn how to cook traditional Italian recipes with some of the most famous Italian chefs, as well as how to taste and appreciate different wines. Furthermore, the Italian Chamber of Commerce will assign the Ospitalità Italiana Award to some Italian restaurants based in UK, which recognizes those establishments which have stood out in promoting the image of the Italian restaurant abroad.

This year the event will be sponsored by Nonno Nanni, San Benedetto, Alessi, Pulia, Portioli Coffee, Ciao Gusto, Italians Card and F.I.C. Delegazione UK. Moreover, cooking shows by important chefs in the UK such as Francesco Mazzei and Danilo Cortellini and wine tastings by Enzo Gullone will take place.

What's new?

SAN BENEDETTO

Founded in 1956, San Benedetto is one of the leading companies operating in the beverage market. Tradition, innovation and respect for the environment are the key to



success, as well as great attention to product quality. Thanks to its unique combination of minerals, San Benedetto water is considered a healthy beverage, recommended for the body's wellbeing. Today, the company operates in more than 100 countries with a range of water and soft drinks.

NONNO NANNI

In 1947, Giovanni Lazzarin, known as "Nanni", started producing the first cheeses at the dairy's workshop. Over 60 years later, the Nonno Nanni company still produces the same inimitable, genuine taste of homemade cheese. As the result of a long tradition, the Italian family-owned fresh cheese producer has become a leading company in the stracchino market and has launched in the UK with its unique and unmistakable taste.

ANTONIO CASTELNUOVO WINES

Located in central Italy, the company produces the best wines in the Abruzzo and Marche regions. The warm climate and the maritime influence play a crucial role in winemaking. Therefore, the unique terroir produces the world-famous Montepulciano DOC, Montepulciano DOC Riserva and Offida Pecorino DOCG. With the purpose of creating authentic handcrafted products, Antonio Castelnuovo Wines only works with natural techniques to promote the excellence of Italian culture.

BIRRIFICIO ANTONIANO

The farm brewery owes its name to St. Anthony, the saint patron of Padua city located in the north of Italy. The mission is to create local beer by only using high-quality raw ingredients. This is the reason why the company uses craft brewing methods which respect the environment and cultivates barley within roughly 100 hectares between three lands in north-eastern Italy. As a result, natural maturation allows Birra Antoniana to develop its unique flavour and golden colour.

BONTÀ SARDE

As the second-largest island in the Mediterranean, Sardinia offers different kinds of food and wine. Bontà Sarde selects the best local food producers in order to promote the culinary traditions of the beautiful Italian island. Specialising in cheese produced using traditional methods, the company also offers a diverse array of Sardinian foods such as cold meats, pasta, bread, sauces and wines.

HOW TO REGISTER

Entry to Welcome Italia is free. Please visit the website welcome-italia.co.uk to book your ticket. The visitors' entrance is admitted on Saturday and Sunday, while Friday is exclusively open to buyers.

IN DETAIL

WHERE: Royal Horticultural Halls, The Lindley Hall, Elverton Street, London SW1P 2QW

WHEN: TRADE DAY: Friday 21st October 1pm-5:30pm
CONSUMER DAYS: Saturday 22nd 10:30am-7pm Sunday 23rd October 10am-5pm.

BY CAR: Elverton St is located just north of Vincent Square, Victoria
BY RAIL/UNDERGROUND: Victoria; Victoria and Pimlico

WEBSITE: welcome-italia.co.uk

CONTACT: 0207 495 8191

EMAIL: lrizza@italchamind.org.uk
ftirelli@italchamind.org.uk

COMPANIES FROM LAZIO REGION

Thanks to the cooperation of the Development & Innovation Agency for Lazio Region (ARSIAL), 11 companies will promote a rich diversity of regional foods and beverages. The wholly-Italian group will showcase a wide variety of local food, from the best wines, craft beers and soft drinks as well as coffee, extra virgin olive oil, olives, cheeses, gluten-free and biological products. In addition, famous chefs will run a series of cooking shows to teach visitors different ways of preparing food from the Lazio area.







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CAVE-AGED. IN PEACE.

BEST OF BRITISH

Colin Woodall of Woodall's is leading the charge of British charcuterie producers. Here he shares his views on the sector's past, present and future



People still assume there is no history of charcuterie-making in the UK. In fact, if you look back in history it was produced – although in those days it wasn't known as charcuterie, and was just a case of making use of what you had. A couple of hundred years or so ago, every rural household had a pig, and at the end of the year that pig would be butchered. Everything they did was about making the best possible use of the carcass, and could be kept at ambient temperature for extended period of time because there was no form of refrigeration or freezing methods. They wouldn't want to waste anything as food was quite scarce in those days, so they would cure the pig, make the back legs into hams and the shoulder and the trimmings into Cumberland sausages, and the meat between the two legs into a side of bacon. They would hang it from the ceiling of the farmhouse kitchen and for the first few months cut pieces off and serve them as you would expect raw meat to be served. Thereafter they would get too dry to eat cooked so would be shaved and eaten like prosciutto or charcuterie. Pigs in those days would be very large so would last a long time – they wouldn't throw anything away as it was far too valuable. Nobody else really knows about this, and I only do because my family has been doing it for eight generations, but sausages would be hung up and cooked as we would expect to eat them, then they would dry out a little so be boiled to put some moisture back into it before cooking like that again, then they got too dry to do that with so people would slice it very thinly and eat it like we eat salami today. Cumberland sausage is the only product you can do this with because it has three unique characteristics: it shouldn't contain any rusk or filler as this would go sour because of the yeast, the meat is filled into one long wide casing so it dries evenly, and it has relatively high levels of salt and spices which goes some way in curing the meat as it dries out.

The industrial revolution in the middle of the 18th century happened to a much greater degree here than it did anywhere else in the world, which meant that lots of people decided to move out of the country and into towns and in doing so left their traditions behind. That didn't happen so much in the Continent – there are lots of people in small villages still doing the same thing and using the same techniques as their ancestors have done for centuries. Over the years people come up with new ways of curing meat – brining, for example – some of which are cheaper than others, and perhaps because of that are better known today than other, more expensive methods. Traditional dry curing is relatively slower and more expensive than mass-produced stuff, and for a long time people weren't that concerned about the quality of the food they ate. Even going back 40 years, people didn't have much interest in whether their meat was reared organically and to a high welfare standard with provenance and clear labelling. You wouldn't see people paying much attention to the label on their food to inspect what was in it; it was of no consequence. Thankfully for us that has changed significantly over the past 30 years – the pendulum has swung back the other way and these things which we demonstrate have become increasingly popular.

The Woodall family business started in 1828 and I am the eighth generation of the family to run it, but in September 2013 it was updated to its latest format. The business was started on the west coast of Cumbria in 1828 by my great, great, great, great, great grandmother – her husband died on his way home from church one Sunday morning and left her as a widow with five young kids. In those days there was no benefit system – you had to look after yourself – and although the family wasn't in the meat industry (her husband had been a cabinet maker), she started helping her neighbours with butchering and curing their pigs. The business was borne out of necessity, and turned out to be a great success because there was a real call for what she was doing. Her eldest son left school and built himself a butchers cart which he would travel around the local area with. They next converted a part of their home so people would bring their animals to the house and they would undertake the whole process. From there it grew throughout the generations – always in the same place and always essentially doing the same thing. All the techniques that she used are the ones that we've continued to use throughout the ages and still use today.

Our heritage is our USP – for a long time we were the first and only business in Britain producing specific charcuterie products. Around 35 years ago we were producing traditional dry cured ham, traditional dry cured bacon and Cumberland sausages. All of these had to be cooked to eat, but then a customer asked my uncle why nobody in this country made Parma-style ham. That was how it started, and over the period of a couple of years we produced this country's first prosciutto-style ham. It's easy to forget that in the 1980s a lot of people had no idea what Parma ham was – they didn't travel abroad as much as they do now, and simply didn't like the idea of eating ham which hadn't been cooked. Leading on from that we developed the UK's first cured and fully air-dried pancetta. We now have three flavours of ham and four of salami. There are a number of producers making Continental-style charcuterie in Britain using British meat, but I would point out that these







products are already being produced to a very high standard in Europe – is it enough of a selling point to produce the same products using British meat? Personally, I don't think it's enough any more.

Educating people about what we do, why we do it and how it's different is something we've been doing for 40 years. We've always had to explain to consumers why our range appears to be more expensive than conventional mass-produced meat products. Our story has to keep being told to engage with people and get them to taste the product. Sampling is key – you can tell people about the story, techniques and cures, but once you've got them to try the product you have them hooked. It's very easy to persuade people to buy something once. The tricky bit is getting them to come back and buy it again and again and again. If you make a good product and sell it at a fair price, the chances are they'll do it. If they don't buy it again, either it's not good enough, it's too expensive, or both; it's simple, really. If that happens you have to go back to basics and start again. While being out talking to chefs and independents, the feedback we get is 100% positive – nobody's said anything derogatory, even people from Spain and Italy. They enjoy it so much that they don't believe it was made in Britain! At shows people are happy to try the air dried hams, but when it comes to the salamis they don't want to try them as they think they don't like salami. Nine times out of 10 they'll really enjoy them, particularly the Cumberland Salami as it contains the familiar flavours of Cumberland sausage.

Anything that helps to raise the profile of British charcuterie is a good thing in my book, so long as it's produced to a high standard. My only caveat would be that if it's not as good as it could be, if it's someone's first experience of charcuterie produced in this country they could think that's the general quality and be put off from buying it again – even from a different producer. People are really starting to innovate and put their own twist on charcuterie now, in ways we couldn't have dreamed of even just a couple of years ago, and I think that's very exciting. In fact, I think British charcuterie producers are a lot more innovative than they are on the Continent – although everything we do at Woodall's has its roots in historical recipes and techniques that my family has been using for the best part of 200 years. All of our hams, the pancetta and Cumberland salami follow that rule, although our three latest salamis are made using modern recipes.

The demand and awareness of British charcuterie is growing, partly thanks to chefs like Jamie Oliver and James Martin featuring it on their telvision programmes. These shows are switching people onto the idea that British charcuterie is a good alternative to that from the Contentinent, although there is a challenge in getting people to step away from the Continental products with the PDO mark to try something new. That won't happen overnight, but awareness is increasing and the more producers are out there the more that awareness will increase. Because we've been doing this for so long hopefully we can lead the charge and take it to the next level. There are people making fantastic, innovative things out there – this is a very exciting time for British charcuterie.

Perhaps one day we'll start producing charcuterie from other meats. If you go back around 500-600 years, a lot of salt was exported from where Woodalls began, in the Lake District, to Ireland, and was used to salt Irish beef, some of which would then come back. There is an argument for stretching what we do to go beyond working with pork, but we started with pigs and will continue to focus on that – at least for the moment!



SEAN CANNON
CANNON & CANNON

The Rise of British Charcuterie

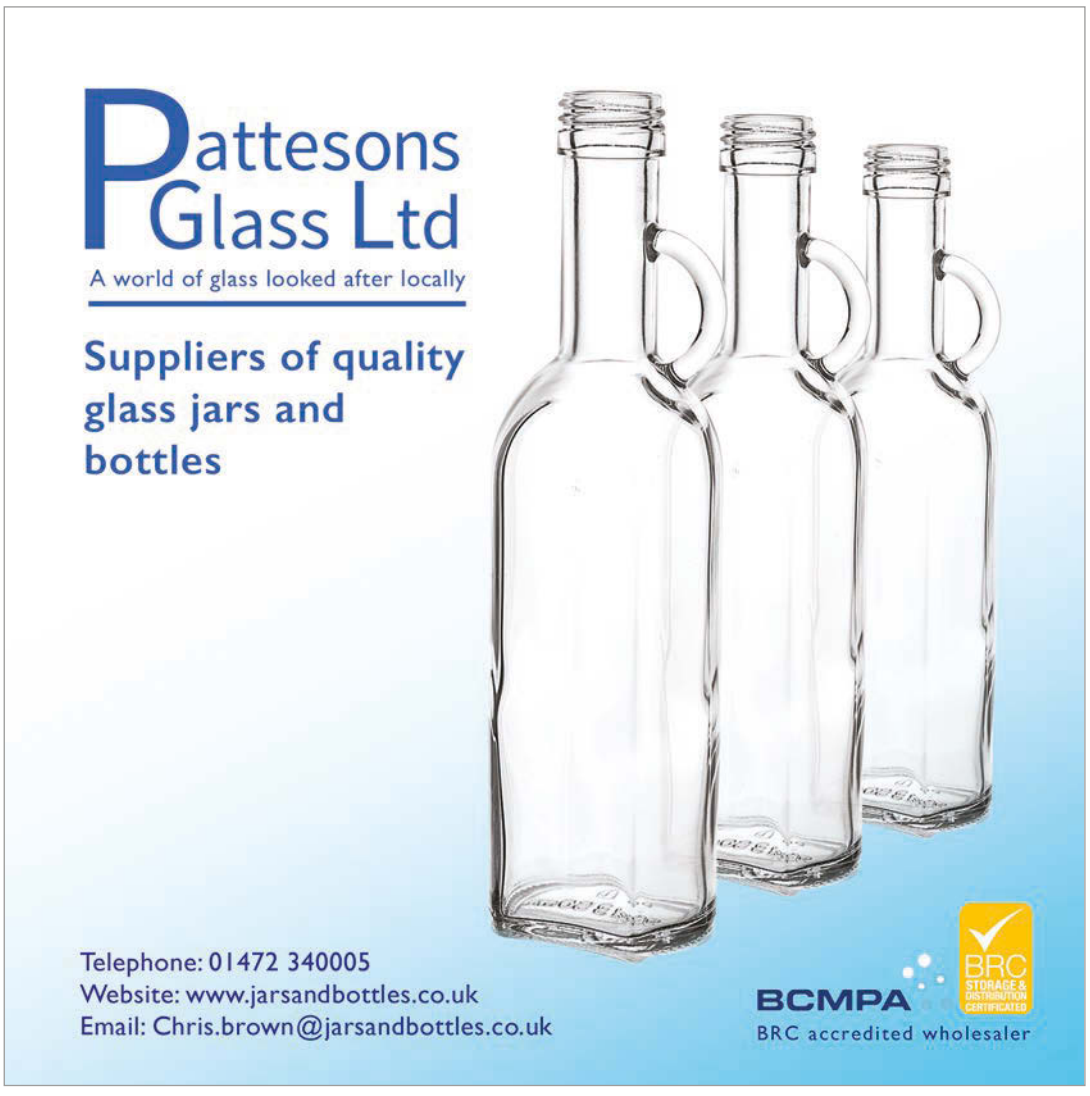
British fine food retailers are having to understand, respond to and get ahead of new eating trends in quick time as British consumers reach ever increased levels of knowledge and demand ever better provenance and quality of their produce. There is a strong sense of revolution in the British consumer – driven, I would suggest, by our new found status as a 'food country' and the incredible amount of food-led media, cooking programmes, new restaurant openings and the cult of the 'foodie.'

Charcuterie, particularly, is a product and a 'language' that our Continental friends have always spoken, yet only now are we here in Britain learning how to sell it, buy it, cook with it, present it and talk about it. We should not fear it and we should be absolutely confident, as British consumers and retailers, to own it and refer to it as quintessentially British. The work of producers such as Capreolus Fine Foods with their wonderful air-dried and smoked mutton and Trealy Farm with their Bath Chaps (hot smoked pigs' cheek) is creating not only an industry that imitates Continental products, but starts to create our own British range and therefore our own language of 'British charcuterie' or perhaps (as we prefer to say) 'British cured meats.'

10 years ago and still to some extent today, the vast majority of the charcuterie we bought was mass produced, but this is starting to change as British consumers get more confident and their knowledge (and 'language') increases. This trend means everyone in the supply chain has to get better: farmer, abattoir, artisan, wholesaler, retailer. This is extremely good news for everyone and indeed, importantly, for our livestock. There are fewer hiding places now for poor quality meat.

Over the next 12 months to two years I think two major trends will develop in British charcuterie: firstly consumers will demand that the finest producers, ideally locally, will be supported and this will mean a rise in the number of new, small and locally based artisans. Secondly, big business will move in and try to hoover up some of the British charcuterie market. These two trends are mutually inclusive, as savvy shoppers will know they can get better quality and better prices at the local farmers' market or online – and yet of course there will always be a large enough market of supermarket consumers to support the bigger brands.

Food buying is essentially about trust. Consumers who care about what they eat and are willing and able to pay for the best will always find the products, producers and retailers they trust. It is the job of everyone in the supply chain from farmer to consumer to be clear about what matters to them, how we want our livestock raised and how we want our meat processed. The good news is that the message is already getting through.





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With trends and legislation turning the soft drinks market on its head, we take a look at the flourishing trend for healthier thirst-quenchers

The furore surrounding the contents of sugary drinks has been a much-publicised concern for the general public and soft drinks sector for years, with beverage producers investing in lower calorie and diet options to tackle the problem. Then came the surprise announcement of the controversial sugar tax, which was publicly championed by Jamie Oliver, as part of the former chancellor George Osbourne's Budget for 2016. This brought the topic very much back into the public eye once again.

The research is frightening to read and formidable in size; a 13-year study conducted by experts at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden states that consuming overly sugary soda and juices doubles the risk of developing rare cancer in the gallbladder. It also showed that compared with those who avoided sugar-sweetened drinks, people who consumed at least two juices or fizzy drinks a day had a 79% higher risk of cancer growing in the liver bile ducts. There's also been ample research into sugar causing diabetes, obesity and heart disease.

Whether or not it was the correct decision to implement the sugar levy, which will start in April 2018, a huge pool of health-conscious producers and consumers had already been looking elsewhere for flavourful, thirst-quenching alternatives. There's been a meteoric rise in the sales of healthy drinks like coconut water, kombucha, unsweetened sparkling water and birch water. Producers of these drinks were largely willed on, not by a desire to piggyback on the latest 'wellness' trends advocated by a crop of charismatic health food bloggers, but for a growing concern for our personal welfare.

This spawned major carbonated soft drink companies to introduce lower calorie versions, but also entrepreneurial go-getters to bring healthier options to the market. Take unsweetened water company Ugly Drinks for example – founders Hugh Thomas and Joe Benn were so dissatisfied with drinks being laden with sugar and sweeteners that they took matters into their own hands. Consisting of just sparkling water infused with natural fruit flavours (it's available in two options: Lemon & Lime and Grapefruit & Pineapple), they were urged on by a lack of healthy options. Hugh said, "Joe and I started to understand the huge impact of sugars and sweeteners on society and set about trying to create a solution to the problem. There are huge problems in this country with obesity and diabetes, which both have a massive impact on the NHS and happiness of our population." Hugh is proud of his product and says it, "provides the cold sparkling refreshment of a fizzy drink without the sugars and with the hydration of water."

It's not only a reluctance to consume sugar or sweeteners that drives many consumers to look for healthier drink options. Many of the new style of beverages claim to include a host of health benefits, superfoods and taste delicious, too. The fermented tea drink kombucha has risen in popularity amongst nutritionally-keen consumers due to its ability to promote a healthy gut thanks to the organic enzymes and antioxidants it contains. As it still features a small amount of sugar, it's seen as a healthy alternative to those who would admit to having a fizzy drink habit and want to consider a transition to the healthier options available. This was the driving force behind Melanie Millin setting up her company Love Kombucha. Available in a range of different flavours, including Original, Blueberry, Ginger and Ginger & Lime, they offer a refreshingly tart flavour and nutritional credentials that are prized by educated consumers.

Shoppers also have an insatiable appetite for nutritionally-rich fresh fruit juices, with cold-pressed juices - especially the ubiquitous 'green juice' - becoming a mainstay of healthy café, gym and juice bar menus across the nation. The drinks are packed with fruits and vegetables and commonly eschew pasteurisation to avoid it diminishing the ample beneficial ingredients within the bottle, as well as the flavours. Andrew Gibb, the owner of Coldpress, a juice company which has recently ushered in two brand new low-calorie options, feels that the interest is on the up. "We believe that inquisitive tastebuds deserve to be rewarded as part of our ongoing mission to actively champion nutritionally-dense juices with everyday appeal," he says. "Tomorrow's juices have a responsibility to provide a daily dose of essential vitamins and nutrients while simultaneously turning heads."

Health-conscious consumers are typically known to go above and beyond in search of the latest innovative product, so it's wise to keep an eye on the trends and explore the products that boost beauty, too. Lately there has been a rise in superfood powders, which are stirred into water and include ingredients like turmeric, probiotics and zinc, which contribute to promoting healthy skin. Products like this can offer an alternative to regular customers, and entice a fresh customer base through the door.

"It's not only a reluctance to consume sugar or sweeteners that drives many consumers to look for healthier drink options. Many of the new style of beverages claim to include a host of health benefits, superfoods and taste delicious, too"

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SHOW REVIEW: SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD FAIR 2016

New faces and flavours abound at this year's show

When it comes to must-attend events, Speciality & Fine Food Fair, incorporating Speciality Chocolate Fair, undoubtedly tops the list – and with good reason. This year, 11,181 people attended the show (pending ABC audit) while 856 exhibitors showcased their wares to an expectant audience of buyers, retailers, caterers and professionals spanning the food and drink industry.

Speciality Food was in attendance, and as ever was excited to add the latest talent to our radar. Here, Holly Shackleton, editor and James Fell, deputy editor, share their picks of products they think are worth adding to your shelves.



> Speciality & Fine Food Fair is such a special place, for so many reasons. This year was no exception. It was an extraordinary showcase of extraordinary producers celebrating their passion, creativity and talent. We have been truly blown away by the incredible products that we have seen and tasted. Visitor numbers remain strong, confirming that the insatiable appetite for all things 'artisan' shows no sign of waning – and that the sector continues to bask in well-deserved glory

SORAYA GADELRAB, EVENT DIRECTOR AT SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD FAIR



EDITOR'S PICKS

Holly Shackleton, editor of Speciality Food shares her picks of the event's best bites



Smoky Brae Smoked Sugar

Whenever I'm asked whether I'm sweet or savoury-toothed, I never know how to answer. A combination of both is my ideal, so the discovery of Smoky Brae's smoked sugar was a true joy – not least because it was presented in the form of fudge. The brand's range also contains Smoked Gravlax Cure and a Smoked BBQ Rub – also well worth a go, in my humble opinion.

Graham Johnston, director: "The Speciality & Fine Food Fair was our first ever trade show and the whole experience was amazing. We met so many helpful and interesting people ranging from organisers and exhibitors to retailers, distributors and producers. The reaction to our new smoked products was overwhelming and we feel very lucky to have experienced such an incredibly positive show. We had our products used by chefs in Fine Food Live, took part in many interviews and received great feedback from visitors to our stand; it turns out saying 'We smoke sugar' really gets people's attention! We will definitely be back next year!"

Sibling Gin

Gin has been reincarnated countless times in recent months to feed consumers' thirst for craft spirits, so much so that it could be easy to write this tipple off as a mere passing trend. Sibling's gin, however, stands out from the crowd just enough to revive my excitement. Pairing classic juniper with blackcurrant and vanilla may sound unusual, but trust me – it works. Clarice Elliott-Berry, co-founder: "With this year being our first at the S&FFF we were not sure what to expect, although from other exhibitors we had been warned to bring our Lucozade! From the very beginning of Sunday there was a steady flow of credible buyers that continued through to the end of Tuesday. While we were at the show we already had orders coming in from people we had met the previous days, confirming for us how valuable the show was. There was also a great amount of press there to help us spread the word. Back in the diary for next year!"

Savoursmiths

There are a number of potato crisp producers rightly proud of their innovative flavours and quality ingredients, but Savoursmiths take it up a notch with their truly indulgent combinations. The brand's Champagne flavour crisps boast real fizz and the truffle variant doesn't overpower – not easy feats, especially considering that this is the first show for the brand. Fans of luxury snacking have met their match.

Mike Russell Smith and Colette Cronje, founders: "We were very proud to launch Savoursmiths at Speciality & Fine Food Fair and are absolutely delighted with the response we have had. Everyone seemed to genuinely love our packaging and really enjoy the exciting and more adventurous flavours. We felt the show gave us some wonderful exposure to new contacts, and we are very excited about the future for Savoursmiths."

DEPUTY EDITOR'S PICKS

James Fell, deputy editor of Speciality Food welcomes a new generation of producers



The Sauce Shop Green Sriracha

During a long stint of tasting sessions, around the midway mark, a slight case of food fatigue can sometimes become apparent. The products you taste are all marvellous and attention-grabbing in their own way, but you're sometimes left craving a freight train of flavour to awaken the senses and send you on your merry way. Step forward, Sauce Shop's resplendent Green Sriracha. A twist on the classic red version, thanks to the fermented jalapeños, it's bursting with fiery flavour, citrussy spices and garlicky goodness – it's now a mandatory addition to my burritos. Pam Digva, one part of the founding duo, noticed a distinct buzz at SFFF surrounding the sauce, explaining, "It went down really well at this year's show – it was a great opportunity for potential and existing customers to try the new product."

Posh Pasty Co.

A well-produced pasty can be a parcel of utter joy. Seriously, what's to dislike about a food that's hugely comforting, jam-packed with delicious ingredients and encased in buttery, golden pastry? Housed in recyclable cardboard boxes lined with red gingham check, Posh Pasty Co.'s offering immediately caught my eye as I walked past the stand and I just had to learn more. With interesting flavour combinations like Brazilian-style Pork with Sweet Potato & Turtle Bean and a Spicy Three Bean vegan version, the company has no qualms when it comes to keeping things exciting. So much so, they launched a sensational un-pasty-like product at the show, The Strawbridge's Cornish Cream Tea. James Strawbridge, founder of the company said, "It seemed to provide a little boost for tired legs to take a seat at our picnic table, enjoy some classic clotted cream, jam and a scone while touring the fair. We now conclude that Cornish cream teas are perfect for SFFF retail therapy!"



PARTY **SEASON**

'Tis the season to be merry, so stock up on celebratory food and drink for the party crowd

The term 'party food' conjures up two things. Firstly, a celebration, and secondly, the memory of struggling with too-big/not-portable-enough food items. It's imperative that as a retailer you offer products which straddle both of these needs – foods which are special enough to warrant a place at your customers' table, and which are small and convenient enough to be enjoyed with one hand (the other, of course, will be cradling a well-chosen beverage). Speaking of beverages, it's worth stocking one or two representatives of the following categories: spirits, beer, wine and bubbly. The important thing here is a varied selection of portable consumables – crisps, nuts, mini pies and some bitesize desserts offer sustenation without the need for cutlery.

This is one sector for which being a 'one stop shop' is a very positive thing – by stocking nibbles, drinks, canape ingredients and perhaps even partyware (attractive paper plates, plastic glasses, cocktail sticks and the like) you can avoid any need for your customer to go elsewhere to cater for their gathering.

"I think one of the key benefits of food halls, like Ludlow Food Centre, is that when customers are catering for any type of celebration, we really do provide a one-stop party shop," says Caroline Jones, buyer at Ludlow Food Centre. "From a simple 'drinks and nibbles' affair through to a five-course dinner party – fine food retailers naturally deliver all the ingredients needed to host a successful celebration."

Ludlow goes one step beyond the expected to ensure their one-stop-shop status, as Caroline explains: "The fact that so much of what we sell is made on-site is a bonus for customers planning special events, as it means each department can fulfil their special orders. Whether from the bakery, deli counter or the butchery, with some pre-planning each team can (and have!) accommodated very specific needs."

When it comes to keeping things seasonal, timing can be tricky. "In terms of seasonality, there are specific festive products that are introduced in the autumn," suggests Caroline. "Our Turkey & Ham Cutting Pie, containing cranberry sauce and stuffing, is a very popular choice for Christmas parties. We also have a pressed duck terrine with apricots and raisins, as well as our award-winning chicken liver pâté, which received a Great Taste gold star earlier this year. Head butcher, John prepares a range of home-cured hams from the Estate's Gloucester Old Spot pigs which sell exceptionally well in the run up to Christmas and New Year."

The winter months may be recognised as 'party season', but don't forget that summer brings with it a fair number of parties, too. "When it comes to spring and summer," Caroline says, "fresh seasonal ingredients are reflected in the types of quiches and pies that are on sale. From April to September lighter flavours are more popular, but the changes are often quite subtle. Many enduringly popular party foods are enjoyed throughout the year – scotch eggs, sausage rolls, cold meats and a big plate of cheese."

The majority of Ludlow Food Centre's regular customers tend to be fairly traditional in their purchasing choices, according to Caroline. "However, there is always scope for introducing new products," she says. "When preparing for a party, consumers are far more likely to push the boat out and indulge in something new to impress their guests. This has led to the development of our own handmade charcuterie range – this expansion reflects the casual dining and sharing plate trends and is easily transferred to catering for larger parties."

Trends are frequently reflected in the purchases customers make for parties. "In different areas we can see influences coming through," says Caroline. "There has been an explosion in premium quality snacks. Crisps and popcorn have been transformed in recent years. Similarly, *The Great British Bake Off* has influenced consumer expectations when it comes to cake! We endeavour to respond to these changes. Hazel's bakery team has recently introduced a range of bespoke celebration cakes. After all, no party is complete without cake."

Meanwhile, "On the drinks side – and in keeping with our ethos – we have beer and ciders from our local breweries based in the area. The wines we stock are selected extremely carefully, with a special range chosen by Lord Windsor himself. We are lucky enough to stock some fantastic British spirits such as Chase's gin and vodka."

And it's not only edible party fare that Ludlow supplies: "With the gift shop upstairs, there is also an opportunity for customers to select a locally-sourced, hand-crafted gift and card to complement their food purchases," says Caroline. "Retailers with the space should be aiming to cover all these bases in terms of marrying quality and convenience."

> "From a simple 'drinks and nibbles' affair through to a five-course dinner party, fine food retailers naturally deliver all the ingredients needed to host a successful celebration"





1 POPCORN KITCHEN POPCORN

"No party is complete without a large bowl of popcorn," says Clare Sykes, founder. "At Popcorn Kitchen we still hand-pop specially selected corn kernels to create a traditional popcorn with bags of flavour and texture. Our best-selling variety is still Sweet & Salt, but look out for Sweet Chilli and Sea Salt & Olive Oil
popcornkitchen.co.uk

2 NEWTONS APPLE FIZZICS

A curiously refreshing blend of apple juice and sparkling water which contains no added sugar or sweeteners. In fact it contains about 40% less sugar than apple juice on its own, and nothing artificial at all. "It is perfect for the growing number of people looking for a non-alcoholic option," says Chris Banks, founder.
newtonsapplefizzics.com

3 CHUNK OF DEVON GAME & RED WINE PIE

"A tasty new cold eating pie for Christmas 2016 from the Hunks at Chunk," says Suzi Bryon-Edmond, co-founder. "This little squealer pie has chunks of venison, pheasant and rabbit with a sensible splash of red wine. Serve with some of your favourite chutney for cracking Christmas flavour!"
chunkofdevon.com

4 COTTAGE DELIGHT SALSAS

Inspired by the popular cocktail, Cottage Delight's Bloody Mary Salsa includes vodka, chilli sauce, tomatoes and Tabasco to create a rich flavour. Hot Red Pepper and Roast Garlic Salsa combines red roasted peppers, chilli, tomatoes, onion and roast garlic puree to create a spicy salsa.
cottagedelight.co.uk



5 GREAT BRITISH BISCOTTI SAVOURY BISCOTTI

"Savoury biscotti are ideal as canapé/finger-food bases, cheese biscuits or as a savoury snack by themselves with a glass of wine," says Paul Rostand, director. "They're available in three delectable flavours: Parmesan & Fennel, Chorizo & Parmesan and Indian Spice."
greatbritishbiscotti.co.uk

6 FIDDLER'S LANCASHIRE CRISPS

Fiddler's Lancashire Crisps is a family business spanning three generations and dedicated to making the tastiest, most authentic local crisp made using premium potatoes grown in Rufford, Lancashire, and flavoured with the local flavours of Lancashire Ellsey's Malt Vinegar, Lancashire Cheese and Lancashire sauce.
fiddlerslancashirecrisps.co.uk

7 THE FINE COCKTAIL COMPANY COCKTAILS

"A freshly blended cocktail is an experience that shouldn't be confined to a bar," says Graham Abbott. "Our ready to pour cocktails are made with natural fruit juices and flavours. We offer three cocktail choices: Raspberry, Lemongrass & Vodka; Lychee, Elderflower & Gin and Mango, and Mint & Whisky."
thefinecocktailcompany.com

8 DINA FOODS LUXURY BAKLAWA SELECTION

"A delicious combination of filo pastry, nuts and syrup, this luxurious selection of baklava adds a touch of exotic class to your party," says Vincent Decamps of Dina Foods. Each item in the box is made using traditional methods and ingredients for a true taste of the Mediterranean.
dinafoods.com

9 FLOWER & WHITE MERANGZ

"These bitesized Swiss meringues are made using the finest ingredients," explains Leanne Crowther, co-founder. Available as a limited edition gift box of 12 in mixed flavours including Mocha, White Chocolate & Raspberry, Chocolate Orange, Chocolate Strawberry, Chocolate and Hazelnut Praline.
flowerandwhite.co.uk

From humble beginnings, Goodies Food Hall has grown into a thriving farm retail destination

Grass roots

Despite its small-scale start, owners of Goodies Food Hall, Stuart and Kim Gooderham, always knew they were onto a good thing. "We had a vision of what we wanted to achieve," they say. "We have lots of customers telling us we must be surprised by how successful the business has been, but we've learned that you just have to keep going and growing." It's this attitude which has seen the business bloom from a potato cart on the side of the road to a retail destination visited by food-loving shoppers from across East Anglia and beyond.

"We offically opened in November 2002," starts Stuart, "but the story of Goodies begins when I was 18 and need of some extra money. At the time I was working on a farm run by my father, who told me that I'd have to earn it and gave me some produce to sell. Years later, I asked the same question and he gave me the same answer, so I took myself down to the layby off one of the nearby fields and started sell potatoes from a trailer. I was then approached by a strawberry farm and asparagus grower who wanted me to sell their produce too." Although what came next was unexpected, it was to pave the way to the Goodies that stands today. "The council evicted me saying my enterprise was dangerous for drivers, although I believe it was a competitor trying to put me out of business," says Stuart, "so we moved the trailer onto the farm. Business was slow to start, but in time it grew steadily and we moved into a redundant building on the farm." From this base Goodies Food Hall has grown from strength to strength.



Standing out from the crowd

Stuart doesn't believe that it's possible to make a living by selling only things made locally. "We wanted to stock the very best of Norfolk as well as the best from elsewhere in Britain," says Stuart. Having said that, locally-reared meat is Goodies' top seller – it is sourced from nearby and has been ever since it opened. "We get consistency that way," Stuart says, "and it helps to be able to tell our customers exactly where the meat they're buying comes from." This attention to detail is reflected in the care the meat receives once it's on-site: "We go the extra mile by hanging our beef for three weeks – we like to do it the old fashioned way," he continues.

This open-minded approach has helped ensure that Goodies is consistently selling things which other farm shops aren't. "When we first started we didn't have much competition," Stuart says, "but over time the competition has grown. We know when a new one is going to appear, as they always come into the shop with a camera and notepad to make notes. Months later, they are selling the same items as us. We created something unique when we first started, but over time other shops appeared and started doing what we were doing. To an extent our customers stayed loyal to us, but suppliers didn't so much – over the years most of them have started to supply our competiton as well as us. If suppliers support us we'll support them, so in some cases we've had to move onto other producers to keep our offering unique and financially successful."

Lessons learned

Like many businesses, Goodies struggled with the effects of the recession a few years ago, and throughout its growth has experienced setbacks. "When we first opened we went for a rural development grant which took 15 months to prepare, but the people concerned turned it down because they said our business wasn't viable... We've proven them wrong!" says Stuart. "That was a big setback, and if we had've had that funding we could have grown a lot faster than we have. I've learned that you've got to keep moving on – during the recession we took a step back from spending for a couple of years, but I wish we hadn't have done that now. We grew very quickly from 2002 onwards, then when the recession hit we were moved down the ladder a few steps. I think most shops are the same in that sense – in situations like that it's not possible to react quickly enough. Customer spend really dropped during that time, but it's important to have confidence to keep building the business – don't be afraid to borrow money if you need to."

"One of the most important things to remember when running a business," says Stuart, "is to listen to the customer – that's how we get them to return. If they're not happy with their most recent visit they won't come back, and may share their disappointment on social media." Despite Goodies' recognition of this issue, they still struggle with getting their customers to communicate dissatisfaction

> "We had a vision of what we wanted to try to achieve. We have lots of customers telling us we must be surprised by how successful the business has been, but we've learned that you just have to keep going and growing"











when it occurs – despite offering unhappy customers vouchers as compensation – as Stuart explains: "The customer is not always open about being unhappy with something in our restaurant or shop, which is hard for us – we do try to make it easy for them to communicate with us so we can improve our service but they rarely do."

Expansion reaps rewards

Despite this, Goodies can boast a great number of returning customers, not least thanks to its impressive product range. A lot of independents aim to be a one stop shop, but this farm shop has gone one step further in this mission, as Stuart explains: "We opened a homewares department so people could pick up everything they needed to make a meal, from the ingredients and storecupboard items to utensils and cookware. The trend for homebaking has helped build this section of the business too. We also have an alcohol licence so people can buy a bottle of wine or local beer to enjoy with their meal – we really are offering the whole package!"

"We've been criticised by other farm shop owners and the council for selling international foods, but we've learned that it's necessary to sell a full meal. If someone's coming in for beef mince for a spaghetti bolognese, you need to offer them the other ingredients to make that so they don't go elsewhere."

In time, the food hall as expanded to incorporate a popular café and restaurant. "We started our café in 2003 as a place to stop for coffee and a cake," Stuart says, "but we've developed it to serve food all day. It's getting very busy now, not least for our all day breakfast which is our best-seller. It's made with sausages and bacon from our own butchery as well as local eggs and locally-grown tomatoes and mushrooms – we sold 16,000 last year! The cafe in particular demonstrates the importance of produce made in-house, explains Stuart. "We now make our own cakes and pastries for the restaurant and counters, and that is a key part of our offering. Seven or eight years ago a Co-op opened in the village and the local lady who was baking cakes for us starting supplying them too, so we brought it all in-house. We had to make sure that we did something different to what else was available locally."

Offering a meeting place for locals has become of key importance to Goodies' success, "Our prominence in the local community is largely thanks to our coffee shop," Stuart says. "The local area isn't the same as it was a few years ago and the pub has declined, so we get people in here up to five days a week to meet their friends for a coffee."

Looking forward

"We don't know what the future holds – we hope our children who are currently 16 and 19 will come into the business. Our son has been working for us during the summer and that has been great; he's given us some fantastic ideas!" As well as extending the family's presence in the shop, Stuart plans to extend the business as a whole: "We had an architect come just last week – we're going to do a major refurbishment and extension to the restaurant at some point in the next two years."

With its focus on quality, great customer service and a unique offering, it's almost no wonder Goodies Food Hall has exceeded expectations – despite the modest attitude of its owners. It offers a lesson to us all: that hard work, perseverance and working long hours can open the door to great success.

TOP TIP

"We should all use supermarkets to learn from, as they're spending millions of pounds on looking at the market and developing new meals and formats to suit the customers' changing needs. They're doing all the hard work for us with regards to upcoming trend and the like, so let's let them get on with that and we can reap the rewards! I know a lady who works for Marks & Spencer and spends all of her time travelling around the world with chefs, discovering new food and coming back and establishing it here. We don't have the capacity to do that, but there's no reason why we shouldn't get inspiration from the people who can."

Dos

- Be innovative
- Listen to the customer
- Keep an eye on supermarkets
- Ensure you have good staff offering good service
- Turn a bad experience into a good experience

Dont's

- Don't expect the best
- Don't let cleanliness slide
- Don't be lazy about putting your ideas into practice
- React badly to negative reviews
- Don't forget the importance of good presentation



PROMOTION



FROM
FARM
TO SHELF

Passion, dedication and skill combine to make Arla's high-quality award winning cheese

Set in glorious Denbighshire countryside by the River Clwyd in North Wales, the famous Llandyrnog creamery is one of Britain's oldest Cheddar makers.

For almost a century, this creamery has built a reputation for crafting award winning cheeses, from subtle well- balanced Milds through to rich and powerful Vintages. Patience is a virtue at Llandyrnog creamery. After all, vintage Cheddars are matured for up to two long years to develop their intense depth and complexity.

Grading is a highly specialised part of the process, and each cheese is carefully graded following maturation to ensure it passes Llandyrnog's ultra-high expectations for flavour and texture. But you also need time honoured skills, real passion and a special something to make cheeses of this quality, as creamery's master cheesemaker Paul was quick to point out: "What makes our cheese unique is the recipe we use which has been fine-tuned over many years."

Llandyrnog's award winning Cheddars are finely crafted in time-honoured fashion. Its passionate cheesemakers certainly take no short cuts, but the end result is worth every ounce of care; their moreish Cheddars always boast a satisfying balance of sweet and savoury notes with a deliciously creamy mouth-feel.

The creamery offers a wide range of Cheddars to offer from Mild all the way through to Vintage, including Medium, Mature, Extra Mature. Being one of Britain's oldest cheesemakers, it boasts a vast amount of knowledge and skill over the years, so knows exactly what it takes to produce the very best Cheddars.

The creamery has very high standards it sticks to, and perhaps this is why this famous creamery has won more than its fair share of awards over the years. They are clearly proud of the many accolades their cheese have received from expert judges far and wide: "In 2016 so far we've won Supreme Champion at the Cheshire Country Show and also in the Royal Highland Agricultural Show," says Paul. "We've also won the Cheese Lovers' Trophy at the Nantwich International Cheese Show."

Arla have five other awarding winning creameries across the country, producing a wide variety of cheese from creamy Bries to tangy Blues.

arlacheese.co.uk

Arla



Cheesemaker Faces Bankruptcy

The health and safety watchdog, Food Standards Scotland issued an immediate recall on 15th September of all cheeses produced by Errington Cheese, stating that potentially harmful strains of E.coli 0157 have been found in a number of its varieties of cheese.

Errington Cheese produces Dunsyre Blue, Dunsyre Baby, Maisie's Kebbuck, Cora Linn, Lanark Blue, Lanark White and Sir Lancelot cheeses. Its Dunsyre Blue and Lanark White cheeses had been linked to an E.coli outbreak in July, which infected 20 people, including a Scottish girl who died.

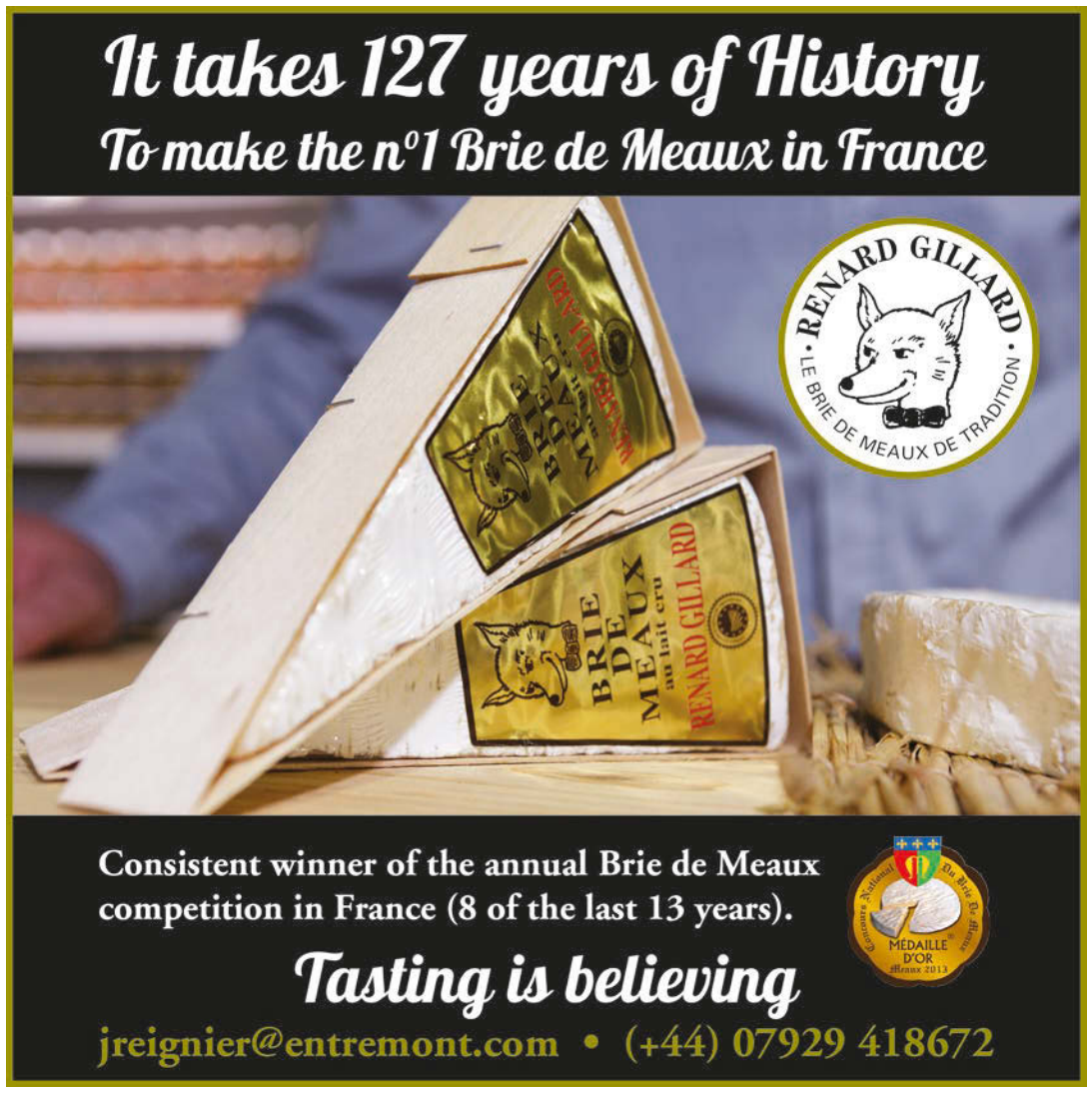
Due to the same strain now being found in two more people, Food Standards Scotland has recalled all of the cheeses produced by Errington Cheese. The products could have been purchased up until 15th September, some of the cheeses are likely to have been distributed throughout Scotland and England.

The artisan cheesemakers strongly deny the claims brought against them and have stated that the business now faces bankruptcy after having to destroy cheese to the value of £300,000. A statement by Food Standards Scotland said, "Of the 22 confirmed cases to date, the IMT has established that 19 had eaten blue cheese prior to becoming ill. Of these, 15 are known to have eaten Dunsyre Blue while others cannot be certain about the brand of blue cheese they consumed. Investigations are ongoing on the other cases."

Errington Cheese has issued a statement denying the claims, explaining that all testing the company has carried out has found no trace of E.coli 0157 in the cheeses. A statement on the cheesemaker's website read, "Further to FSS announcement last night that all our cheese should be withdrawn, I would like to re-confirm my position that all the testing we have carried out on our cheese to date has found no trace of Ecoli 0157. We have used Micro testing laboratories in the UK and Europe and found no trace of pathogens, we have shown results of all our testing and all Local Authority testing to date to various microbiological experts which has enabled us to come to this decision."

The company also mentioned that there was an inadequate amount of time to reply to the FFS's claims and said, "I was not given an option from FSS last night who emailed me at 6.56pm asking for a response by 7.15pm – it's impossible for me to seek advice and respond to something like this in 18 minutes."

Speciality Food has contacted Errington Cheese for further comment but had received no response at the time of going to print.



Producers Request Mandatory Origin Labelling

In a letter to Andrea Leadsom, Defra secretary of State the NFU, NFU Cymru, NFU Scotland and National Pig Association have expressed the need for origin labelling on British products and have noted concerns over the loss of food name protection, which includes Stilton cheese, as the UK negotiates a new deal with the EU post-Brexit.

The organisations state that origin labelling will give shoppers more choice and confidence when buying British food. They claim that it could usher in a potential increase in transparency in the supply chain.

A joint statement said, "More needs to be done to make labelling clearer. The French government is now implementing a two-year trial of country of origin labelling for meat and milk in processed products, while other European governments have outlined their plans to implement country of origin labelling for processed foods.

"It's important to stress that we do want to see the continued use of food name protections in the UK that guarantees authenticity and origin and prevents imitation products from using the name. This includes some of the UK's most famous foods, such as Stilton cheese.

"We believe the use of the European Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) have been vital in protecting food provenance in the marketplace."



KEEN'S FARMHOUSE CHEDDAR PDO

Belton Director Remembered with Award

Belton Cheese's late director, John Beckett has been posthumously awarded the Lifetime Ambassador of Dairy Award at the 2016 Cream Awards, held in Birmingham on 15th September.

The judging panel and organisers recognised the huge contribution John made to the dairy industry, detailing many of his achievements. As well as working as director of Belton Cheese, John was also past president of the Royal Association of British Farmers, chairman of Genus and the creator of the MBA Agrifarm Charitable Fund Setup to allow farmers to study for an MBA.

Justin Beckett received the award on behalf of his father and said, "It's a great honour to collect the Lifetime Ambassador Award on behalf of my father, which was such a kind and generous tribute."



JUSTIN TUNSTALL RETAIL CONSULTANT

"Brie-prodders and infant prodigies"

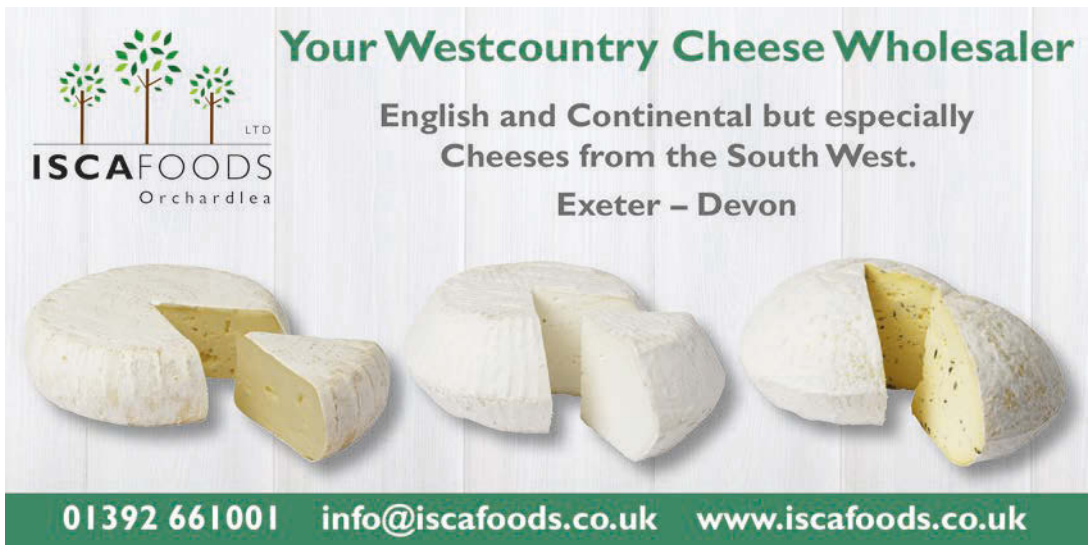
In London there's a rather grand, yet admirably discrete, hotel, much loved of the aristocracy. Despite public interest in many of its patrons, few stories emanate from their stays there. An exception relates to a duchess who was in residence with a party of her unruly grandchildren, who had run the staff ragged over a number of days. Ordering afternoon tea for herself, she asked the waiter what he would suggest for the children. "Strangulation, Your Grace", came the instant reply.

After the long school holidays, that's a sentiment that might be shared by more than a few deli-folk. I find that cheese shops tend to have two types of children pass through the door. Polarised by their level of interest, they're either begrudging or absolutely riveted and engaged. The first group want to get out as soon as possible. Their antidote to the ennui is to see how much of an indentation their paws and fingers can make into ripe Brie. Sadly their disaffection can impact on parents about to make a purchase, who will abandon their tastings rather than have the children show them up. The least disciplined children seem to belong to families where both parents work and entrust the care of the little darlings to nannies. The nannies get time off in the summer and the parents, unusually 'in charge', are completely unaware of how to control little Tarquin and Jocasta.

I need to keep reminding myself that keen and eager children are the future patrons of small delis (or, as I like to call it, my pension). Propelled to the front of the family group by a proud parent, he/she is proclaimed to be their 'cheese fiend'. Youngsters, even those with precocious tastebuds, tend to struggle to describe what they like or don't like about what they're sampling and it can be an exercise in random shots in the dark to proffer a taste of something they do like. I know, because I've been our family's cheese prodigy myself. When I was 10, we visited Normandy; I came back with a proclaimed love for cheese (probably just BabyBel) not always easy to find in 60's Britain, despite its ubiquity these days. I was that child who shook his head, seemingly irrationally, as an increasingly frustrated cheesemonger tried to replicate the taste I claimed to remember, but had probably grown out of.

I believe the best way to sell to small customers is to try and engage then with the cheese's provenance just as one would with a very keen adult. Tales of animals, pasture, area of origin and cheesemaking technique do the trick. Rather than trying to replicate a taste that may be long-forgotten, replace the memory and affection with a brand new story and experience.

There's a final type of young shopper that I have experienced – a curious overlap between disinterested and keen. "He doesn't like cheese – what can you convince him with?". Generally this puts the tasting into a tailspin. "Too cheesy", "Do you have anything plainer?" – unless you stock the mildest of mild Cheddars, you're unlikely to make a sale and a convert here. I suggest a bar of chocolate and hope that the coming years will lead to a maturation of their palate. Or there's always strangulation!





Cheese Talk

New retail perspectives from industry experts



GEORGE PAUL OF BRADBURY'S

"Double trouble!"

It's rare that cheese runs through a period of stability for more than 18-20 months, and we are seeing another of those cyclical surges that are the hallmark of this trade.

There are of course two lanes, the fast lane of mass manufacture cheese and the slow lane of the artisan and speciality types, where many are generally less moved by base milk cost influences.

The doom loop of milk pricing for farmers has been a bitter bruising issue for almost two years, with so many now at the end of their tether, gone or actually waiting to go. I sometimes wonder why we have so little respect for a farming community which if fairly rewarded is the envy of Europe in terms of quality and efficiency.

The arguments about how and why would fill several chapters, but dependent on where the milk pendulum on surplus or shortage rests, cheese may be over-supplied, under-priced and seeking buyers, or as it is now seeing itself deprived of milk share, lagging behind the economic return curve or in the slow lane of price recovery. Right now milk is well below previous volume production levels, and although main milk contracts still look low at circa 22-23p, it's rising quickly with spot milk in the 35p zone.

Cheese is always last in line for milk availability, so if major makers want to maximise their production facility output they will quickly be made to take higher prices from those with milk to offer, and in turn, seek to pass it on or simply not invest in laying down cheese that has to be in a home nine-12 months hence. All this whilst the main cause of the issue, the low price of fresh milk, is kept in check by those using it as a consumer war weapon. The irony being that no matter how low the price of fresh milk, no one sells any more.

With Cheddar at least there is some stockpiling potential and an opportunity period of grace to be able to pass on and recover costs. So the Cheddar brands will play their own Russian roulette of who blinks first, knowing that someone will take a mauling from some retailer over daring to ask.

Types like Wensleydale, Cheshire, white Stilton, English Brie and even Mozzarella have no chance to hold large stocks, so the impact here will arise much more swiftly, and prices at trading level have already moved upwards.

So as we enter the autumn period and the big slow down in milk production, there will be an acceleration of milk availability stress and price increases on traded lines.

Meanwhile, in the slow lane, many of the artisan makers, especially those who provide their own milk, are protected from much of this as almost all did not join in the price tumble in the past year, continuing to cost their milk for their own cheese at its 2013-14 price. Those in contract, too, should find little pressure this side of Christmas, with the exception of some commodity short life cheese.

As if that weren't enough, with a determined double whammy, the trade has now to begin facing in full the effects of the Sterling fall which began immediately after June 23rd, with Sterling slipping some 11-12% at its height, and with unwelcome speed many makers on the Continent now feel a price rise is deserved, some without the pretence of a base milk cost increase, so we may see 15-18% increases across many family favourites. Many importer wholesalers and distributors have already passed this on quietly and effectively with probably minimum impact, but it's not genius to predict an autumn of increases. Cushioned by deflationary food costs, there is now the sensitive position of managing any cost changes at a time when that's going to be truly unpopular to the consumer. I suspect that in the haze up to Christmas it will largely be accepted as a reality, but with the cold months of winter to follow and the impending price wars, the time I should be concerned about is February onwards, the potential sales impact of the cocktail of milk prices increases, and exchange rate recovery.

Let's welcome the arrival of an early spring, a dose of sanity and stability.

As the first salvos of the latest price war reverberate around the market, seeking increases may well be a death knell for some brands, some lines, in some retailers, and the biggest victims will be mid-range makers and suppliers who haven't the big brand cash cow crutch to call on, or can't begin the size engineering deception that was the main tool of cheating the consumer in the recent past with same price, less volume.

All of this is about to be fought out on the big stage and some elements will cascade down to the independent trade, who may well manage this more sensitively and sensibly.

> "As the first salvos of the latest price war reverberate around the market, seeking increases may well be a death knell for some brands, some lines, in some retailers"



MARY QUICKE

"Keeping the faith"

Our aim is to produce world class cheese and have it sold world class around the world. What does that take?

First off, we need to produce world class cheese. That starts off with the 'between the ears' bit. We put producing world class cheese ahead of other considerations. If we are doing a great job on making cheese, and communicate effectively, the sales will follow. We have to be clear to ourselves and others what makes the difference to our quality, and keep upping our game over the years.

For our cows' milk cheeses, that is milk from our own herd that we have bred to produce what we want. That takes years of careful and thoughtful breeding. It's four years from when you chose a breeding direction for that milk to become mature Cheddar. We've found it matters what the cows eat. Our cows graze a high percentage of the time at pasture, giving grass-fed flavours, golden colour and luscious textures.

Our heritage 'wet pint' starters give complexity to our flavours. They are more difficult to manage, and take two days of preparation to use. We nearly lost them, and get suggestions to use more industrial starters, and we love the richness of our flavours.

The finances can't determine if we do a step that makes the difference to quality: it's up to us to communicate to customers why our cheese costs what it costs, and make sure our quality delivers on that extra price. Hand-cheddaring makes a big difference to the flavour, as it presses out moisture and gets the right flavour and texture. Machines would do the job quicker and cheaper, but we value the attention and intention that our skilled cheesemakers bring. The same goes for clothbinding and naturally maturing, requiring all the care we lavish on our cheese in store.

If you ask some customers what they want, 'no rind' could come towards the top of the list. We don't listen to what all customers tell us, we keep the faith with what we know and what the best palates around tell us: rind gives our characteristic complexity of flavour and lovely variations in from heart to rind.

Our independent grader takes cores from all vats at three months and 12 months. We check we are making correctly, how the cheese is against the perfect flavour we're after and select for the flavour profiles we've agreed with customers.

Over the years we've had generous advice from the champions of artisan cheese: our customers, advisors and knowledgeable people of all stripes, who have guided, encouraged and supported us to fulfil on world class.

We've got a great team, engaged in our joint effort: farm and cow team, cheesemakers, experts in storage and care of cheese, our packing team who present and quality control the flavour and aroma of the cheese before it goes out to customers.

It always comes down to communication to remove the barriers to world class status, and that is needs constant attention.

We need to tell the story of the cheese. A couple of years ago, we examined who we are for ourselves and who we are for our customers. We realized we didn't tell the story of who we are: world class; from a farm in Devon; a committed team; passionate about quality. We created a new look, a woodcut that signals what the cheese is and who we are. We get the message out with infographics, monthly blogs and social media: we share the life of a farm and cheese.

Our partners are all those champions of artisan cheese in retail, food service and opinion-formers who buy the cheese and tell the story. Our sales work is about talking and tasting, supporting those people to spread the love.

I'm part of the team setting up the Academy of Cheese, certifications to create the same kind of cachet as the Master of Wine programme. The future will be about getting that direct experience out, to empower people so they are no longer consumers, instead co-producers who understand why a gorgeous cheese is more expensive, and why we should stand tall and proud alongside the amazing cheeses of the British Isles.



MODERN BRITISH CLASSICS

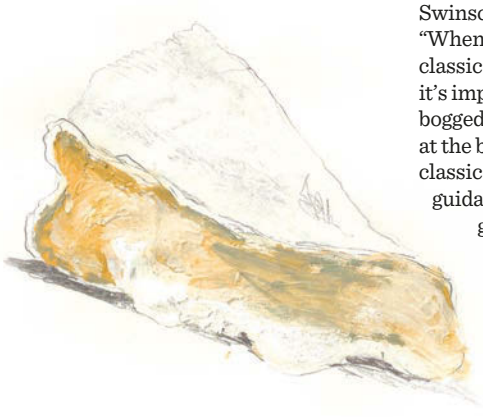
Cheesemakers are reinterpreting classics and pushing the envelope. Consider following suit when freshening up your cheese counter

Invigorating, innovative, exciting – there's myriad descriptions which can be used to articulate the energy surrounding the artisan cheese industry at the moment. The scene is awash with fresh ideas, whether it's infusing a classic style with an unexpected flavour – Quicke's Elderflower Clothbound Cheddar for example – or simply looking to established recipes and letting their own signature nuances to develop, one cannot complain about a case of cheese lethargy nowadays.

Here we highlight a few of the cheeses which we deem modern British classics – cheeses created with a nod to the past, but with a keen drive to conjure something for the future. It's this school of thought that cheesemongers need to harness and transfer to their counters. A diverse array of cheeses is key to inspiring your customers to want to know more about the contemporary cheese movement. A clearly labelled 'modern British classics' section with a spread of blue, soft, hard, washed rind and soft cheeses, explaining date of creation and how they're noteworthy will work wonders for piquing shoppers' interest – this same approach would transfer well to a designated sample section too; it's well worth a trial period at least.

Sage advice

To create a variety which can challenge perception and elicit excitement from consumers is a fine art for cheesemakers, says Andy Swinscoe of The Courtyard Dairy. "When it comes to reinterpreting classic styles of cheese, I think it's important not to get too bogged down on how it has to be at the beginning," he says. "Using classic cheesemaking recipes and guidance to start the process is great, but then you'll have to see how the recipe adapts to your milk, farm, the constraints on your business and working day, and finally, what your customers want. Reinterpreting these recipes is a great place to start, but each cheese will evolve to become something new and unique."



There are lots of cheeses which draw inspiration from this formula, and Andy lists, "Old Winchester, Ragstone, Cote Hill Blue, Rollright, Haford and Young Buck" as ones which, "really stand out as British modern classics." And when it comes to the makers themselves that are testing expectations and flavour, Andy says, "The ones really pushing the boundaries are Martin Gott of St James Cheese up in Cartmel and Haydn Roberts of Lightwood Cheese, who are playing around and coming up with some really clever little stuff."

Find your niche

A cheese which epitomises this approach is Wild Garlic Yarg produced by Lynher Dairies Cheese Company. Managing director Catherine Mead notes how the producers applied it to the Yarg, saying, "Modern British tends to describe a cheese that's made to a familiar or traditional recipe, but developed more recently with a twist. The Garlic Yarg is ostensibly a Caerphilly recipe; a young, fairly lactic cheese, slightly acidic and light and fresh. Unlike Caerphilly though, the Wild Garlic Yarg is aged and the garlic leaves that coat the cheese enables the flavour to permeate through the body of the curd giving it the point of difference. It's these reasons that it would be considered a modern British cheese rather than a territorial."



Distinctive cheeses like the Wild Garlic Yarg can be utilised expertly on a cheese counter to draw in a consumer which might not have experienced the novel appearance before. Pungent washed rind cheeses can be used in the same manner too – we've all heard someone with a self-confessed layman's cheese knowledge effervescently explaining the potency of these cheeses. And there are lots of modern British classic washed rind cheeses to choose from, as contemporary cheesemakers experiment with unique liquid to develop the cheese's smell; take Doddington Dairy's use of Baltic Summer Ale to wash its Baltic semi-soft cheese for instance. It's imperative to keep up with the trends, so make sure you're visiting cheesemongers and makers across the country and asking questions – it really pays to do your research.

> "Whether it's infusing a classic style with an unexpected flavour or simply looking to established recipes and letting their own signature nuances develop, one cannot complain about a case of cheese ennui nowadays."





MODERN BRITISH CLASSICS

Revitalise your cheese counter with these quality creations



1 CURDS & CROUST: The Truffler

"Made in small batches from great quality milk, this cheese contains a hint of truffle," says Belina Shipp, manager of Curds & Croust. "It's an earthy Brie that offers an interesting alternative to the other Bries on offer – this creates a distinctive cheeseboard talking point.

"This really is a unique cheese. We pride ourselves on the passion, knowledge and understanding that we have for great cheeses. When developing The Truffler we were looking to combine a traditional Brie recipe with something innovative and new. Truffle seemed to be the perfect choice – the oil delicately perfumes the milk to achieve the perfect balance."

curds-croust.co.uk

3 LYNHER DAIRIES: Wild Garlic Yarg



Quickly cementing itself as a firm favourite amongst cheese aficionados, Wild Garlic Yarg catches the eye with its unique ramson wrap. It doesn't solely rely on its appearance to resonate so strongly though; the leaves impart a gentle garlic flavour while their moisture lends the cheese a firm texture.

Catherine Mead, owner of Lynher Dairies says, "There are a number of cheeses that contain bulb garlic – the flavour can be harsh and not necessarily a subtle enough partner for cheese: the garlic leaf is very soft but distinctive, the flavour runs through the cheese but doesn't dominate, and for many the real advantage is that it doesn't linger in the way garlic can. It can also totally affect the way the cheese matures, as the leaves are not permeable and so the body of the cheese retains moisture as it develops."

lynherdairies.co.uk

4 ILCHESTER: Five Counties



This multi-layered cheese incorporates five classic British tastes in one innovative offering. It captures flavours from the famous cheesemaking regions of Britain and includes Double Gloucester, Red Leicester, Cheshire, Derby and Cheddar varieties – its unusual appearance and marriage of flavours makes it a popular choice for consumers.

Lisa Harrison, brand manager for Ilchester says, "There is a growing desire amongst consumers to buy British products, and Five Counties offers shoppers a 100% British product that tastes delicious and makes for a great talking point for guests, too. With a £2.1m market value, it's a logical choice for retailers wanting to entice shoppers and increase sales."

ilchester.co.uk

5 GODMINSTER: Organic Brie

A lusciously creamy and fresh Brie, Godminster pins the smoothness of this cheese down to the fact that organic milk is delivered to the dairy daily from its 1,300 acre farm based just one mile away. The process of creating the handmade cheese takes only seven days between collecting the milk and wrapping the product ready to sell.

Deborah Bradfield, head of sales says, "Brie had long been thought of as a French staple, but now we're producing award-winning Brie in the South West. The rich pasture grazed by our herd produces creamy milk perfect for Brie making. As well as classic Brie we also produce gently-flavoured Garlic & Chive and Black Peppercorn versions, which appeal to the modern shopper."

godminster.com





2 SHEPHERDS PURSE: Yorkshire Fettle

"Yorkshire Fettle has become a British classic as it was one of the cheeses that heralded a new era in British cheese making in the late 1980s," says Caroline Bell, director of Shepherds Purse. "Made on the family farm in North Yorkshire, it offers a quality twist on a traditional brined Feta. Made with 100% ewe's milk, it delivers a great taste and texture that has led to it being loved by top chefs and consumers, too.

"Each cheese is hand-salted to ensure you can taste the unique piquant, lemony flavour, as well as giving it a slightly crumbly texture. As it matures, the salt infuses into the whole cheese and then we hand-wax or seal each truckle to lock in the creamy texture and fresh flavour.

"In 2008, we had to stop calling it Yorkshire Feta and rename it Yorkshire Fettle due to a PDO being awarded to Greece. However, despite the name change, it remains the same cheese – an international award-winning Feta with true Yorkshire character."

shepherdspurse.co.uk





RETAILER'S CHOICE:
THE COURTYARD DAIRY

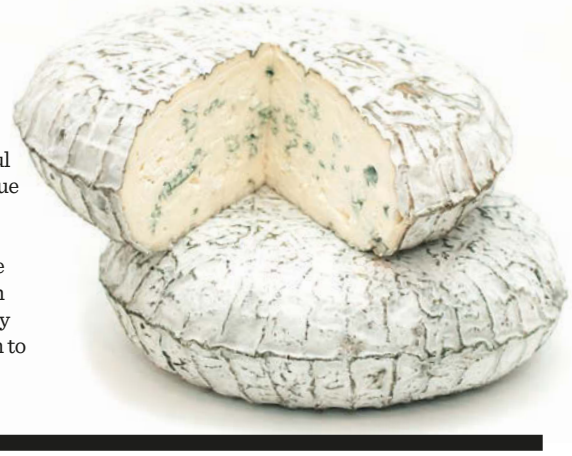
6 KINGSTONE DAIRY: Rollright

"We established King Stone Dairy in July 2015, and started selling Rollright a month later," says David Jowett of King Stone Dairy. "When we set out to produce Rollright, I was looking at styles of cheese produced in the French and Swiss Alps, cheeses such as Reblochon from Haute-Savoie and Vacherin from Franche-Comté. Although I certainly took some specific elements from the recipes and ripening methods of these cheeses in the early days, I feel our recipe now follows its own structure, and Rollright often bears little obvious resemblance to those cheeses.

"Generally our rinds are washed a little more than either Reblochon or Vacherin, resulting in deeper and more savoury characteristics – like flavours of cured meat and roasted peanuts. The rind will be pigmented from the rind washing process, from a blushing peach colour to a robust brick red, often with a light dusting of white Geotrichum. The paste below the rind tends to be buttery and yielding. When young there may be fresh yogurty flavours, which mellows as the cheese ripens to a richer, rounder flavour profile."

rollrightcheese.com

7 BURT'S CHEESE: Burt's Blue



Bursting onto the scene back in 2009, Burt's Blue immediately picked up a huge amount of accolades and admirers. It's easy to see why, as the cheese has a wonderful depth of flavour due to its semi-soft texture and striking blue veins.

Claire Burt, owner of Burt's Cheese, understands the appeal which made it an instant classic: "I think people like our cheese once it begins to soften – our smaller truckles in particular. Perhaps because of its texture, which is typically associated with white, mould-ripened cheese. People seem to like this paired with a strong blue flavour.

burtscheese.co.uk



ELLIE GILLARD PHOTOGRAPHY

8 FERNDALE NORFOLK CHEESES: Norfolk Dapple

Made by Ellie Betts at the family-run Ferndale farm in Norfolk since 2003, this mature and full-flavoured Cheddar-like cheese owes its name to the dappled rind it develops during the maturation stage. The original cheese from Ferndale Norfolk Cheeses, it has picked up silver and bronze medals in the British Cheese Awards and is used by a plethora of chefs across Norfolk due to its versatile nature.

Arthur Betts, cheesemaker at Ferndale Norfolk Cheeses says, "The key thing about Norfolk Dapple is its depth of flavour. This is a result of using unpasteurised milk from a single dairy in Binham, along with the traditional methods we use in maturing and wrapping the cheeses in cloth bandage and butter. When we speak to people about our cheese, they love tasting different batches and learning to recognise the subtle differences in flavour between cheese made on different days.

"Dapple is based on the traditional English 'Cheddaring' method, though much of the flavour and personality of the milk is dictated by the diverse pastures which the cows at Abbey Farm graze on. We hit on something of great quality, which became instantly popular from the start, so we have no desire to change it. However, enlarged stores now mean we're able to mature our cheese for a lot longer than we have done before."

ferndalefarmnorfolkcheeses.co.uk





THE INTERVIEW

What drives Rick Sheepshanks, MD of Stokes? Teamwork, professional pride and great taste

My time in the fine food industry began when I started a company in my cottage making mayonnaise with my brother and a couple of other guys. According to the British Sandwich Association, of which we were a founder member, we supplied 53% of all the sandwiches made in the UK with our mayonnaise. We then broke into doing sauces and sadly, from my point of view, the business came to be sold as there were four different shareholders who wanted different things. There I was, left with no job or income, completely unemployable and with a fantastic crowd of very special and highly skilled people who had been working together for many years and knew how to make sauces. One of the frustrations for me during the beginning of my career was having to make really poor sauces. I'm not doing a Gerald Ratner here, but we were supplying a lot of different people – lots of high street names you would have heard of and quite a lot you wouldn't have heard of. 400 tonnes a week. We used to have two or three tankerloads of oil in a day. It was pretty big business, but some of it was just white gloopy stuff rather than something I could be really proud of. Joe Public would be amazed by what he ate in sandwiches and restaurants!

When I was a kid, my part of the world was a gastronomic black hole, and the only place I used to go to was Pinney's in Orford, run by David Pinney and his wife. As a fisherman, he found an old Roman oyster bed in Butley Creek and started farming oysters, then smoking salmon. He was one of the first to set up a salmon farm in Scotland – which he did with a guy called David Stapleton – he was the first to supply Marks & Spencer, and they were the first supermarket to sell smoked salmon! That was about the only place to eat out in Suffolk, whereas now we're very spoilt when it comes to restaurants and producers.

I don't see the point in being mediocre; I cannot stand mediocrity. Trying to be the best is what it's all about. Why do we exist? To make the best tasting sauce in a jar. We're relentless about that and chase down the best ingredients. One day, I went out for lunch somewhere and the waiter asked if I'd like some ketchup. They brought it out in a jar with a spoon which made me think: that's exactly how ketchup should taste. I got to work making some at home, then the brilliant people I work with set to work making it on a larger scale. Later on we made brown sauce, too, focusing as we do on ingredients and their ratio. The leading brand of brown sauce uses less than 1% of date puree. We use 9%. Mayonnaise has also become commoditised and all about profit, so manufacturers make it using all sorts of gums and lots of water, less oil and a small amount of cheap egg. It's a bit like people saying 'bread is bread is bread' – most people know there's a difference between cheap bread and a well-made sourdough, but if you are one of the people who thinks that bread is bread is bread, then you probably think that mayonnaise is mayonnaise is mayonnaise. If you're a little more discerning, I think you can tell the difference. We used to have a tin of Quality Street at home every Christmas, and it was delicious – a real family treat. These days the chocolates taste nowhere near as good because Nestle has massively lowered the cocoa content and filled them with artificial sweeteners, so much so that even my kids won't eat them! This is one of the things we at Stokes are fighting against. Partly because of this commoditisation, the supermarket has become a really boring, uninspiring place to shop. Independents have never had such a great opportunity – they must make the most of it!

We have an ongoing debate here over whether we should make a low fat mayonnaise. I may be overuled one day, but so far I haven't been – I genuinely wonder why one would choose to eat a low fat version. It's not like you eat a jarful at a time, you eat a spoonful. Our mayonnaise is not bad for you, all it contains is British free-range eggs, fantastic oil and seasonings and great vinegar. I would much rather have less of the best than a mountain of rubbish.

QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson number one: always work with people who are cleverer than you are – which isn't too difficult in my case! I learn almost every day that most people are clever than I am; that everyone needs a hand up sometimes – there's no such thing as a self-made man or woman; and how people are willing to help if you ask them.

FINE FOOD AND DRINK

Our industry is always changing. Lots of people have a great recipe and want to set up in fine food, but the fact is that there isn't room for everybody. Don't get me wrong, there's always room for new products, but if a market gets overcrowded new businesses may struggle to survive. Having said that, the sector is currently very exciting; there are lots of great things happening.

INSPIRATION

All of my team inspire me; the strength of any team are the differences between the individuals. There are a lot of food companies around here who are truly inspiring, for example Purely Pesto who make a truly incredible product. I've also got a lot of admiration for local producers Gressingham Duck, Adnams and Aspalls. What Gabriel does at Luscombe is incredibly inspiring, too. I'd get in trouble if I didn't say my wife and children are an inspiration, and recently I've learned a lot from management expert Simon Sinek.

WHAT'S NEXT

When it comes to the future, I don't know what's in store for me – you'll have to ask my god! – but Stokes will continue to innovate with packaging and presentation, and to create a couple of new products each year. As will.i.am would say, "be fresh"! This can be an uphill struggle sometimes; we're not one of those brands with infinitely deep pockets, so we have to be canny and do things a little differently. Onwards and upwards!

> "I don't see the point in being mediocre; I cannot stand mediocrity. Trying to be the best is what it's all about. Why do we exist? To make the best tasting sauce in a jar"

MAKING IT WORK

I'm not sure you can ever achieve perfection, but the journey is about so much more than that. We build people here; we do a lot of training and that is an important part of our job. There are 55 people who work here, and they're such an eclectic bunch. When someone comes on their trial period, it's up to the rest of the team to decide if they want them there. You don't want to be doing a job when you're having to carry someone, so it's important that the wider team get a say. We try to look after them as they look after us.

If your definition of success is making money, I would be chasing down a completely different route. We all want to make a good living and be profitable, because if you're not doing so you're not going to be in business very long. I firmly believe that profit is a result of doing things right – the more you do right and the more you do it, the more profit you'll make. Business is about far more than just making money; it's about a lot of processes, and the fun is in fine tuning those processes, watching people grow and having fun.

Stokes is an unfinished work. It's a bit like climbing a mountain or running a marathon – sometimes it's slowgoing, but sometimes you look back and can be really proud of what you've achieved. It's continuous, it's evolving, it's far more than just me or any single person, and it keeps changing. It's a great learning process – every single day I learn something new.

There are a number of ways we differentiate ourselves from the crowd; firstly, it's all about what's inside the jar – that's why customers will come back and buy it again. If you do manage to make something which you think is the best, don't mess around with it. It's got to look nice and be a tactile kind of shape, but it's what's inside that counts. One thing I do know is that while taste is very subjective – some people like sugar in their tea and some people don't – quality is instantly recognisable. That's what I think about our sauces – you instinctively know they're great. We stick to our guns, we don't cheat, we don't try to reduce our costs; it's about being honest. Ultimately, our behaviour defines us. I've had lots of people shortchange me over the years, and that will define them as people. It's even more important as a brand; if we started watering our products down or using cheaper tomatoes, we'd be shooting ourselves in the foot.

Great British FOOD AWARDS 2016

A celebration of today's fine food and drink industry

This summer, *Great British Food* – sister publication to *Speciality Food Magazine* – ran its annual great British Food Awards as a celebration of the food and drink products and producers across the UK.

This year's event saw an unprecedented number of fine food and drink producers of all sizes showcase their very best produce, from innovative condiments and spirits to classic cheeses and pasties, to an esteemed judging panel which brought together the great and the good of food and drink.

Judging this year were TV personalities such as John Torode, Valentine Warner, Edd Kimber, John Whaite, Caroline Quentin and Rosemary Schrager, revered chefs Richard Corrigan and Nathan Outlaw and food writers Tim Hayward and Sophie Atherton – all of whom brought their love and experience of food and drink to the table.

Entries were judged on their provenance, traceability, tradition, innovation and, most importantly, taste, to offer Great British Food readers a taste of the very best food and drink Britain has to offer.

Independent retailers were also celebrated in the awards, with businesses from East of England, West of England, South of England, Wales, Midlands, North of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland awarded for their food and drink offering and reputation in the local area and beyond.

Judging for next year's wards begins in April 2017; producers and retailers are welcome to enter by emailing natasha@aceville.co.uk.

> "Any keen GBF readers will know how much we love small local producers. In fact, we set up the Great British Food Awards three years ago purely to give them the praise they rightly deserve! While there are countless national food awards schemes out there, it tends to be the medium-large-sized companies that get the attention. So for this year's awards I'm absolutely delighted to see so many tiny start ups coming top. After an unprecedented number of entries and four months of rigorous shortlisting, testing and tasting, we are proud to reveal the winners of the Great British Food Awards 2016"
>
> **NATASHA LOVELL-SMITH, EDITOR GREAT BRITISH FOOD**

WINNERS

For a full list of winners visit greatbritishfoodmagazine.com/awards

Retailers judged by Great British Food readers

SCOTLAND
Valvona & Crolla, Edinburgh

NORTHERN IRELAND
Picnic Delicatessen & Cafe, County Down

WALES
Llwynhelyg Farm Shop, Ceredigion

NORTH OF ENGLAND
The Hollies Farm Shop, Cheshire

WEST OF ENGLAND:
Padstow Farm Shop, Cornwall

EAST OF ENGLAND
Goodies Food Hall, Norfolk

SOUTH OF ENGLAND
The Hungry Guest, Kent and West Sussex

English Wine
judged by Valentine Warner

HAMBLEDON PREMIERE CUVEE
This sparkling English wine from the chalky hills of Hampshire was the best I tasted... by a long chalk. In fact, it was so good I (almost) struggled to find any other winners! It has a fruity, brioche note on the nose and then, once sipped, gives a lovely minerally, 'antique' and yet harmonious taste.

Charcuterie
judged by John Torode

MOONS GREEN COBNUT & RED WINE SAUCISSON
Now these guys are amazing. I love the whole range from Moons Green, but this interesting and very exciting saucisson really stuck out for me. The company has a great story and wonderful provenance too. Top marks!

Confectionery
judged by John Whaite

CANESMITH & CO SOY & SESAME CARAMELS
These sweets have that reassuring familiar texture of a classic caramel, but with a weird, wonderful and totally complex flavour profile. One of the most delicious confections I've ever tasted!

Cheese
judged by Nathan Outlaw

CROPWELL BISHOP CREAMERY BEAUVALE
Amazing condition, with a well-rounded, mature flavour that really made me want to eat more and more....and more! All my chefs tried it and it was their favourite too.

Smoked Fish
judged by Richard Corrigan

JOHN ROSS JR THE BALMORAL FILLET
A beautifully presented centre cut smoked salmon fillet with a lovely oak flavour and very tender texture.

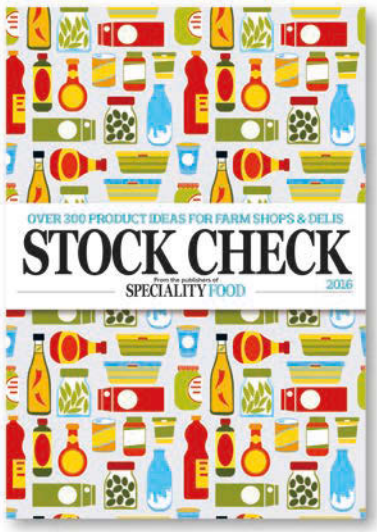
Savoury Preserve
judged by Rosemary Schrager

CARTMELL FARM FOODS THE ORIGINAL DAMSON KETCHUP
A genuinley original idea. The sauce is deliciously sweet and fruity, with that perfect ketchup consistency. More impressively it's also extremely versatile, enhancing all kinds of dish.

Sweet Bake
judged by Edd Kimber

PUDD'ENG CHOCOLATE & ALE PUDDING
A classic steamed chocolate pudding with a delightful twist; the ale flavour isn't too strong, it just makes the pudding more interesting. A perfect curl-up-on-the-sofa dessert for cold, cosy nights.

COMING SOON



STOCK CHECK 2017
Get in touch now to make sure your products are included!
01206 505 934

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Bold new look. Dazzling new flavours
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SPOTLIGHT ON: JAMS, HONEYS & SPREADS

Experts from across the sweet spreads sector share their views on the future of the market

When it comes to demand for honey, it's the raw, unprocessed honey that's proving popular, says bee farmer Cris Reeves of Haughton Honey. "There's a growing trend in the popularity for raw, unpasteurised honey because it's not processed. It still contains all the natural enzymes, proteins and pollen, unlike brands that are filtered," says Cris. Thousands of people swear by using raw honey as a natural remedy for hay fever, taking a teaspoonful a day as a preventative measure. The principle behind the theory is that the tiny amounts of pollen found in raw honey helps to desensitise the body – preventing a reaction to pollen in the atmosphere. Others enjoy honey as an alternative to sugar and add it to their tea, coffee or use it in cooking.



In short, it has become much more than just a topping for toast, and for many it has become a store cupboard essential. This is all helping to boost the demand for pure honey, said Cheshire-based Cris, who supplies about 60 outlets including farm shops and delis. "The medical evidence around hayfever and honey is anecdotal at the moment, but we know for a fact that a lot of our customers buy Haughton Honey to try to ward off some of the unpleasant symptoms they suffer during the hay fever season," says Cris. "It's the unprocessed, unfiltered nature of raw honey that gives it a point of differentiation."

This is all helping to boost raw honey sales all year round, rather than just during the summer months.

"Traditionally honey has sometimes been seen as a 'summer' product, but the growing demand for raw honey, whether that be as an ingredient in a recipe or as something taken by someone trying to ward of hay fever, is helping sales over the whole year," says Cris.



We have found that the growing understanding of, and interest in, healthy eating and reducing sugar as part of our diets, means that honey is increasingly in demand," says Panos Manuelides, founder of Odysea. "And because of greater consumer awareness of food provenance, honey produced in natural habits from a variety of blossoms is booming. Latest research into the sweet spreads category by market researcher Canadean shows that honey and jam dominate and will help to boost the total category by 22.5% in the UK to reach $960m by 2018. However, it's honey that will be the star performer - growing 31.1% between 2013 and 2018. And we agree with Canadean that consumers of all age groups like honey, not only for its naturally sweet flavour, but also the added health benefits, such as helping to boost the immune system and fighting bacteria."

"There has been lots of publicity around the environmental threats to honey bees around the world," he says, "which we also believe has led to consumers seeking out artisan honeys produced from blossoms grown without the use of pesticides. Odysea's Pine & Fir Tree Honey and Wild Thyme & Fragrant Herb Honey are both produced by Alexandros Gousiaris in the small village of Ilias in central Greece. Alexandros ensures the hives are protected during the winter months and then moves them during spring and summer to areas where blossom, wild thyme, fragrant herbs and conifers grow in abundance. The honey is harvested by hand using traditional methods from late spring to late autumn before being extracted cold and left unfiltered to ensure that the beneficial properties of the nector and pollen remain. It is full of flavour and packed with nutrients because of the natural way it is gathered and processed, plus this further reassures consumers looking for products with true provenance."



Pippa Murray, founder of Pip & Nut explains the recent popularity of nut butters as a health food:

"Nut butters have been given a new lease of life as a health product in recent years. The backlash against sugar has contributed to their rise in popularity where people are moving away from sugary items and picking up ones that are refined sugar free. For the spreads category this means that jams and honeys are loosing popularity and instead people are picking up nut butter, and in particular ones like Pip & Nut that contain no refined sugars, as a replacement. Consumers are becoming much more educated to the fact that fats aren't a bad thing, and that good fats, like unsaturated fats found in nut butters, are actually an essential part of a balanced diet."

"In addition to this nut butters profile has been raised in the sector by some high profile personalities, like Ella Mills (AKA Deliciously Ella) and Joe Wicks (AKA The Body Coach) who not only talk about their health benefits but also importantly illustrate their versatility. Fewer people are using nut butters as a spread on toast and instead using them in their smoothies or porridge. And it's not just a breakfast food anymore; nut butter is snacked on throughout the day on slices of apple or banana rather than picking up a sugary energy bar or chocolate bar. People want choice and nut butter is delivering on this front.



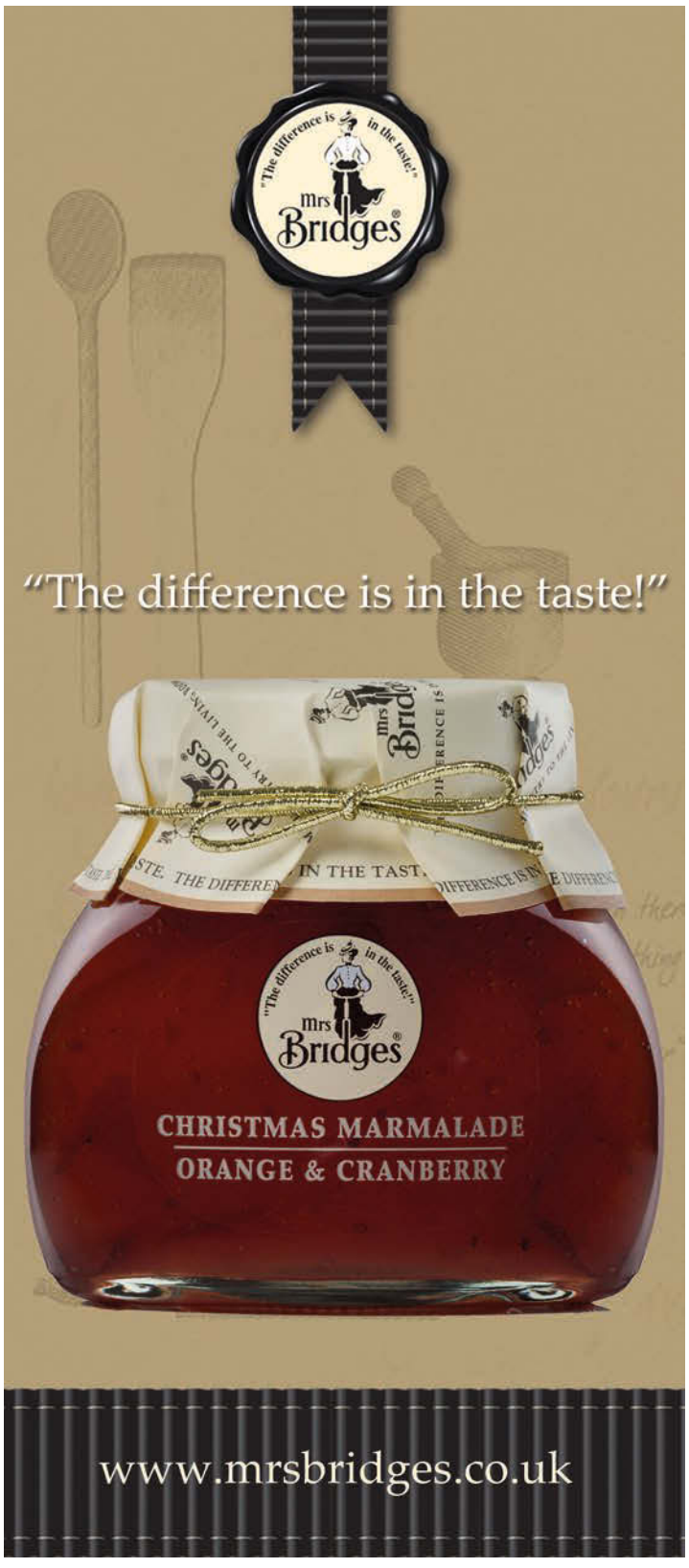
"Finally, as a brand we've noticed that it's a younger demographic that's engaging with Pip & Nut and this largely comes down to the fact that they are much more willing to pay a premium on healthier products and are looking to brands to offer clean labels, real foods and interesting flavours – our Coconut Almond Butter, for example, is now our top seller! At Pip & Nut we're showing that health food isn't a boring alternative or sacrifice, and in doing so more people are picking up our products not out of obligation but out of choice."



Since launching The Bay Tree in 1994, the preserves market has grown in the artisan food arena with lots of new and interesting ideas, says Emma Macdonald, founder:

"The slightly odd thing about this," says Emma, "is that, as more preserves businesses emerge, the actual consumption of jams and spreads is in gradual decline across the whole grocery sector. The way we eat today has altered so much, with greater reliance on convenient, food-to-go options – there are far fewer people tucking into toast and jam for tea."

This does not spell the end of the sweet spreads market, however, as Emma explains: "That's not to say it will continue that way as market trends move over time; I'm not ready to hang up my jam pan just yet." Instead, "what it does mean is that we have to adapt and change our focus accordingly – all of The Bay Tree's communications now centre on what can be done with the finished product. It's about being creative. Great tasting food doesn't have to be labour intensive and in essence our jars provide a quick fix. It's about being responsive to the changing pace of our lifestyles."



> "Because of greater consumer awareness of food provenance, honey produced in natural habits from a variety of blossoms is booming"



FROM THE **RETAILER...**

Lindsey Gray, events and marketing manager at The Food Company, Marks Tey: "Spread A Little Happiness"

Here at The Food Company we know a thing or two about store cupboard essentials. The kind of thing which can rescue a recipe and transform your toast, our spreads, preserves and honey selection has never been more exciting.

Whilst consumers were once happy with a straightforward soft fruit in our jam, the artisan choices now being offered are truly outstanding. Our current favourites are Raspberry & Chocolate Jam from The Artisan Kitchen and Lime & Mint Curd from Scarlett & Mustard who are based close by, just outside Woodbridge in Suffolk. Other innovative flavours include Lemon & Horseradish Marmalade from the Proper Marmalade Company, and a range of exotic flavours such as Pink Guava, Tamarillo and Mango Jam from Balinese producers Awani.

Traditional choices from the UK are still popular, particularly the beautifully packaged options from Cartwright & Butler in jars with earthenware lids. Wilkins & Son, with their factory just down the road in Tiptree, have an extensive range which is constantly updated with new combinations, such as Rhubarb & Vanilla jam and Cranberry & Cointreau, always popular at Christmas time.

With the rise of the popularity of afternoon tea and programmes such as Great British Bake Off, customers are reaching a quality filling for their Victoria sponge cakes. There is little point in spending an afternoon in the kitchen creating beautiful cakes if you are going to use a cheap filling, and you can't beat The English Cream Tea Company's Lemon Curd or Cherry Tree's Pina Colada Curd to raise the bar on your baking and impress family and friends.

The health benefits of eating honey have been widely reported, and our range includes both local honey from Essex (purported to reduce hayfever symptoms) and Raw New Zealand Manuka Honey from Wedderspoon. At the top end of the market, this honey retails for just short of £35, but for the initiated it's a small price to pay for the health benefits they believe they get from eating it.

As well as being great sandwich fillings and toast toppers, jams, preserves and spreads now have much more of a use in a clever cook's kitchen. Add a blob of Scarlett and Mustard's Blackcurrant and Star Anise jam to a sauce for duck or game, enhance an apple crumble with a couple of scoops of Rhubarb and Ginger jam from Cherry Tree Preserves, and make a hassle-free dessert with a jar of Wilkins & Son's Salted Caramel Spread or Banoffee Spread. The range of flavours now being produced in jams and preserves has cut down on the time busy folk have to spend in order to add extra layers and depth to their recipes.

STOCK CHECK



HAUGHTON HONEY
A raw honey which comes straight from the hive, is cold extracted and never pasteurised, which means it is 100% natural and pure.
haughtonhoney.com



STUTE FOODS THICK-CUT MARMALADE
This marmalade boasts the optimum level of peel-to-jam ratio, adding both flavour and texture.
stute-foods.com



RAW HEALTH SUPERSEED SPREAD
A mixture of sunflower, pumpkin, sesame, flax and hemp seeds for a great source of natural protein.
rawhealth.uk.com



COTTAGE DELIGHT RHUBARB & CUSTARD JAM
A classic combination of tart rhubarb and sweet custard with a touch of vanilla.
cottagedelight.co.uk



LUPETTA PISTACHIO CREAM
With a smooth, sticky texture and a stunning, sweet pistachio flavour, this makes a fantastic and unusual dessert or baking ingredient.
lupetta.co.uk



GIGI & SONS WOLFBERRY JAM
A centuries old tonic, Wolfberries are renowned for boosting vital energy and aiding longevity.
gigi-sons.com





KEEPING STAFF HAPPY

In the first part of SFM's investigation into staffing, Robin Goldsmith looked at what makes a great employee and the preferred ways of finding one. In the second part, he explores the best methods of staff retention and what to do when things go wrong



TEAMWORK AT KEELHAM FARM SHOP



JOHNS OF INSTOW – AN AWARD-WINNING TEAM



HAPPY BUTCHERY STAFF AT FODDER

Adhering to employment law, including health and safety, is crucial, not just from a legal standpoint, but also for keeping staff safe and enabling them to feel confident in their employer's integrity. While red tape and paperwork are inevitable and, at times, tedious consequences of running a business, the responsibilities of an employer towards his or her employees can be one of the most satisfying aspects of a manager's role, as Rod Marsh of Middle Farm explains. "Managers should develop the best possible practice in all areas of the business and to prioritise keeping abreast of updates to legislation. Giving employees an environment that is safe, comfortable, vibrant and challenging will generate its own rewards in smiling faces and increased turnover. Genuine respect for the individual displayed by management will help to generate reciprocation and an experienced manager should always find a way."

Equipping staff with the knowledge and skills to do their jobs well and to enable them to further their careers is central to building a happy and successful workforce. Jon Edwards of Ludlow Food Centre comments: "Everyone needs to be aware of their responsibilities and to take it upon themselves to cultivate an understanding of the business as a whole. In order to develop staff, we have regular, informal meetings to encourage the team to share ideas and report on what's happening across all the departments. We also organise job swaps, so that people appreciate what is happening in other departments and what they add to the business as a whole." Similarly, John Sinclair of Craigie's Farm believes in sharing ideas and rotating jobs: "In order to foster and maintain interest in the job, we have regular chats with the team, so that they feel appreciated and know that they have the authority to make decisions based on the values of the business. We train up team members for all areas, allowing staff to appreciate everyone's challenges, making for a happier work place, but we get suppliers to fund skills training, whenever possible, in areas such as carving charcuterie or cutting and wrapping cheese. We also get team members to research and then explain products to the rest of the team, which works much better than being lectured to by us!" Training also encompasses stock-checking for sell-by dates, cleaning and hygiene schedules, but, as Marsh points out, "it's of no use unless implemented on a daily basis, so constant reminders may initially be necessary."

Knowledge will increase through trying products, which in turn provides staff with the confidence and desire to talk about them. This can be successfully supplemented by making producer visits central to a training program. "Knowing the basics of how different products are made, by visiting producers or through other forms of training, is the foundation", says Marsh. "Ideally, your team members will then bring their own individual slant on that product to the table. Building pride in what they do is key to a team's success, so acknowledge an individual's acquisition of new skills and always push for more. Make it clear that your ambitions for them are significantly important to the development of the business." Edwards agrees that visits to and from producers are essential. "We encourage staff to attend relevant trade shows, supplier days and local





food festivals as well as visiting other farm shops. On a regular basis, we have producers come in to give demonstrations of their ranges. Internally, staff attend tasting sessions to develop their product understanding, and we also provide external training courses run by the Guild of Fine Food that focus on specific areas, such as cheese or charcuterie retailing."

When it comes to sales skills, can they be taught? According to Charlotte Gurney of White House Farm, the value of experience is as important, if not more so, than an inherent ability to sell. "Some people are born with this, but the more the employee knows the product, the more confidence they have talking about it and the more they can sell." However, Gary Mercer of Holwood Farm Shop & Deli notes that although a less pressurised approach works best, especially for encouraging repeat business, a traditional selling model can be more appropriate for specific items such as hampers, particularly when selling to the corporate market. "It all comes down to understanding etiquette, having a depth of knowledge regarding merchandise availability, design, style, presentation and price. Listen to your client, address their needs, solve their problems, convey their image and service their gift recipients in a way that does their company justice." He also gives the following advice: "Get the customer to invest time and choose some products just to get an idea of the type of thing they are interested in. When they start to invest time in the process, it's more difficult for them to walk away. Never be negative in response to a customer. If you can't help straight away, don't say 'No' – get contact details and even offer to email ideas."

Allowing some leeway with regards to time off for special occasions or personal reasons has benefits in staff loyalty and instils a sense of wellbeing. For Gurney, employee care is essential. "We've gone to all that trouble hiring and developing someone, so I really like to look after them. I'm flexible where I can be with childcare, holidays, appointments and family events, and I like to give my loyal staff a meat allowance from the butchery plus 10% off in the shop and a free lunch every day. I want to make working here fun!" For Mercer, disruption can be minimised if staff know their timetables weeks in advance. "We run a rota that we prepare at least four or six weeks ahead. It's available online, so people need to take responsibility for looking at their shifts. It stops many short notice changes and ensures days/weekends off are balanced."

Rewards are another way of keeping staff happy, as Gurney confirms: "We encourage days out and often pay for expenses, such as lunch. I know how watching competitors has helped me, so have no doubt that it will inspire the minds of the team. We also have two staff parties a year to say thank you and let the hair down!" Mark Billington of Billingtons of Lenzie adds: "It's important to reward your staff, be it training visits to suppliers, buying trips or food fairs. Staff are encouraged to manage their own time off and we allow them to swap shifts in an effort to accommodate their needs. We arrange many social events, not just one at Christmas, as this brings a sense of team bonding and closeness."

Inevitably, things can go wrong, which, in the worst case, may lead to staff dismissal, so what are the best ways of both pre-empting and handling such difficult situations? Billington advises looking out for changes in behaviour patterns which could indicate potential staffing issues, but giving individuals the opportunity and support to try and combat any problems. Firing staff should always be a last resort and can affect the rest of the workforce. "Sacking an employee would bring a sense of nervousness and unease to the team, so it's important not to shut out other staff members. They may not need all the information, but they would need reassurance that all was done fairly." Similarly, for Marsh, sensitivity is crucial. "Everybody has some strength or another, and identifying what that is and how it fits (or not) into your business is only going to happen over some weeks or months. We use a six-month probationary period to ensure that we have sufficient time to give everyone a fair chance. We will extend this period if, for any reason, we have not been able to come to a meaningful assessment of how best to optimise any member of the team to their and our satisfaction." Other options should be tried before dismissing an employee. Marsh advocates informal meetings with the individual concerned and with the other team members to gently gather as much information as possible. "Verbal warnings", he explains, "can be used if the problems are recurrent, or serious enough to warrant them, but improvement notices should be issued sparingly with understanding of the feelings and morale of the team member involved and need to be time-specific. Ultimately if, for whatever reason, improvement is not forthcoming and no other way forward can be agreed, then dismissal in strict adherence to employment law must follow." If a staff member has to be dismissed, then explaining the situation to the remaining staff must be handled sensitively too. As Marsh highlights, "Destroying a carefully assembled team by undermining their collective morale is all too easy and not worth the hassle over one member who did not fit in."

Ultimately, fostering and maintaining interest in the job is central to retaining a happy and cohesive workforce. Mercer offers some final advice: "Give responsibility and positive feedback. If customers give praise, ensure it's passed on. Constantly try to improve, because although change can be hard, if your employees see progress, it makes things better for everyone – staff and customers."

> "Allowing some leeway with regards to time off for special occasions or personal reasons has benefits in staff loyalty and instills a sense of wellbeing"

5 TOP STAFF RETENTION TIPS

- Regular training and tastings to instil thorough product knowledge
- Visits to and from producers Job rotations
- Informal management with regular chats
- Rewards and incentives





PLAN AHEAD TO BOOST CHRISTMAS PROFITS

2016 has been a year of uncertainty, however the festive season hails a time of fruitfulness and helps generate enthusiasm from eager customers. We've gathered expert advice to help you capitalise on this wave of confidence



PARTRIDGES CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS IN STYLE

Consumer hesitancy after the Brexit vote is slowly dissipating, but retailers will still need to pull out all of the stops to attract high levels of custom this year. Fine food shops, delis and farm shops are lucky enough to have a loyal customer base and it's important to nurture this approach, with exemplary customer service and high levels of product knowledge remaining key. The power of suggestion can go an awfully long way too – up-selling and cross-selling are important tools to harness and can really help to maximise sales.

It's important to not let this busier time of the year affect your ability to uphold these techniques. Christmas shoppers commonly turn to fine food shops to curate their festive cheeseboard – be sure to direct your customers to an eclectic mixture of exciting cheeses and firm favourites, while ensuring they're aware of complementing wines, beers, crackers, crispbreads and chutneys.

Keep an eye on the internet

The Black Friday sales craze, which originated in the States but has spread to our shores, has now established itself in the UK and has disrupted the prominence of store-based purchases. This year it will take place on 25th November and is largely used by online shoppers – last year saw a relatively low footfall on the day itself but a phenomenal surge of online shopping activity. This has a knock-on effect to the shopping in December, with savvy shoppers planning the majority of their Christmas haul using this sales incentive.

According to Visa, e-commerce rose by 7.4% in December 2015 to the previous year, whereas it only grew by just 0.1% for physical stores. This might seem a disheartening











FROM THE **RETAILER...**

We speak to Caroline Jones, buyer at Ludlow Food Centre, about delivering a successful Christmas shopping experience

WHAT PRODUCTS ARE YOU STOCKING THIS YEAR THAT YOU'RE EXCITED ABOUT?

We're introducing Pwllheli-based Matt & Ben's new Christmas fudge. The current range is a huge seller for us throughout the year, and seasonally flavoured and packaged products have obvious appeal. As for top tipples, Hobsons Brewery produces its seasonal Plum Porter, Wood's Brewery bring out its Christmas Cracker, and Monty's Ding Dong comes in a 5-litre swing top bottle and is great for adding a festive pop to parties.

However, the majority of the products that we sell are our own, produced on-site at the Food Centre. This makes November and December a particularly exciting time because with all that festive preparation and baking going on, the food hall always smells incredible!

WHEN DO YOU START INTRODUCING YOUR CHRISTMAS STOCK?

Our handmade mince pies are on sale all year round, as is our range of hampers. Sales of these go through the roof at Christmas. We start stocking ambient festive products during October and gradually introduce additional ranges throughout November. Our decorations go up on 1st December and from then on there is a really big increase in fresh produce, from the dairy through to the butchery, deli and bakery counters.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE CHRISTMAS DISPLAYS AND DECORATIONS?

From the moment visitors arrive in the car park there should be a sense of anticipation – we have fairy lights and decorated trees outside the building. Our large foyer is a fantastic area for showcasing key products, as well as displaying additional promotional signage to communicate our late night opening, product sampling dates, upstairs gift shop and how to place meat orders. Christmas can be a bit of a sensory overload, so there needs to be a balance. You don't want shoppers to feel overwhelmed – have a coherent colour scheme and ensure that your messaging is clear and concise.



HAVE YOU GOT ANY TIPS ON HOW TO MAXIMISE SALES?

One of the key elements that makes a memorable Christmas is good food, so our in-store tastings are always incredibly popular and have proved to be very effective for promoting sales. Additionally, we all know that consumers are looking for convenience wherever possible, so retailers can make the hectic festive schedule easier by offering dedicated late night shopping. This year we are planning to combine both sampling and extended opening hours with a special producer festival located in the grounds of the Food Centre. It will be the first time we've hosted a pop-up event on this scale in the run up to Christmas, but we hope that it will prove popular and encourage customers to sample new products from our local suppliers.

proposition for retailers, but you should not be deterred; the internet can be utilised in a rewarding way. A strong online presence will be key around this time, with announcements about your Christmas promotions and events hosted on the shop's website and constant social media updates helping to ride this wave and boost attention.

Fine food forecast

If your customers want to stay ahead of the curve, it's important to conduct some research into emerging trends. Christmas 2015 saw the rise of prosecco-orientated products, artisan gin, farmhouse ales, superfood infused raw chocolate, and they have been flourishing products ever since. This year the hot trends in food and drink range from Iberico ham (a great alternative to typical festive meats, especially on Boxing Day when we're tiring of the same old fare), coconut milk ice cream and fermented foods like sauerkraut, with shoppers' gastronomical discernment seemingly growing by the day. This time of year can breed lots of over-the-top products which exist for novelty reasons and not much else – it's a wise idea to be weary of this and steer well clear. There's nothing wrong with keeping things traditional – the classic Christmas theme is steadfast and resonates easily with shoppers. It's incredibly important to understand the peculiarities of your customer base, though, and to stock what you feel they'll be looking for. Sometimes, keeping things conservative is a safe solution, and will help to avoid the irritating situation of encountering a surplus of overstocked gimmicky products post-Yuletide.

Go easy on the elves

It's also important to consider your decoration and merchandising – your shop window is the customers' primary introduction to your shop. Think of it as serving the same purpose as an immaculately-produced trailer to a film – it should engage, entertain and entice over a short snippet of time. Celebrating with bucketfuls of Christmas cheer is all well and good, but make sure you're not overdoing it with the decorations; too much can easily appear garish. A smart and minimalistic approach will always look nice, accompanied with a well-positioned tree and clearly signed festive areas. The last thing you want to do is become a Christmas grotto, thus diverting attention away from your offerings and potentially damaging profits.



Simon Johns, general manager at Cartmel Sticky Toffee Puddings, offers his advice for boosting your pudding sales this festive season:

Comfort food is what people are looking for during the season and a good selection is important. Many people like the convenience of being able to pick something up as a hostess gift or to take along to a pot luck event.

Christmas pudding is the obvious 'go to' for lots of people and is the more traditional choice, but we do see a surge in sales of our original Sticky Toffee Pudding during the holiday season, too. We recently launched our Festive Sticky Figgy Pudding, which is somewhat of a marriage of the two. It has a texture similar to our original combined with the flavours that evoke the Christmas pudding: figs, dates, sultanas, orange zest, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg and a hint of chocolate.

An interesting selection of season items really draws the eye. Our family share pudding, Festive Figgy Pudding, Christmas Pudding and Brandy Butter all come packaged in a Christmas-themed sleeve.



> "Christmas can be a bit of a sensory overload so there needs to be a balance. You don't want shoppers to feel overwhelmed – have a coherent colour scheme and ensure that your messaging is clear and concise"



STOCK CHECK — 2016 — SPECIALITY FOOD MAGAZINE



ASPEN ORIGINAL MULLING SPICE BLEND
A classic combination of spices which dissolve into cider, wine, tea and brandy to offer the a warming taste of Christmas.
aspenspices.com



BELVOIR FRUIT FARMS SPICED GINGER PUNCH
A seasonal drink which is cooked with freshly sliced root ginger and blended together with a dash of lemon and orange juice and lovely spices like cinnamon ad nutmeg.
belvoirfruitfarms.co.uk



CARTMEL BRANDY BUTTER
Slather your Christmas pudding with this creamy sauce laced with delicious brandy.
cartmelvillageshop.co.uk



COTTAGE DELIGHT CRANBERRY & CLEMENTINE DAINTY MINCE PIES
Oozing fresh cranberry and clementine mixed with mincemeat, all encased in sumptuous pastry.
cottagedelight.co.uk



CHIOSTRO DI SARONNA HAND WRAPPED PANETTONE WITH SAMBUCA
This variation on the classic sweet bread load includes sambuca – pair it with sweet wine or a mulled hot drink.
empirebespokefoods.com



BALLANCOURT GOOSE FAT
Much loved for its ability to make the cripiest roast potatoes, this goose fat is an essential Christmas item.
ballancourt.co.uk



Gerry Moss, retail development manager at WBC, explains the importance of merchandising

"Nostalgia still remains inspirational in terms of how consumers engage with retailers during the Christmas period. From our continued love of classic storytelling to old-world themed winter scenes, our annual love affair continues to look back in time when the idea of yesterday's world seemed that bit more magical. WBC's Noel Print Christmas range includes bottle boxes and gift cartons and encapsulates this trend perfectly, with many retailers using them as part of their seasonal displays.

"'Create Your Own' is becoming increasingly popular as the desire for personalisation rises. Offering bespoke hampers where customers can personally select the contents included is a great way to tap into this growing market. Signage is also key if bespoke hampers are available. It's important to let your customers know that this is what you can offer, as when it's busy direct customer service can be tricky, especially as 76% of shoppers never even speak to a sales assistant when shopping! Our range of store signage and ticketing includes low-cost mini blackboards and counter top cards that work perfectly for communicating your message – it's definitely the way forward for 'silent selling'.

"Independent shops have challenges all around them. From high street chains with large visual merchandising budgets to the increasing public drive to shop online, the shop window for an indie is the biggest calling card for this type of business. A store window can be the biggest marketing tool you have and attracts shoppers to your store way before they even step through the front door. Having an impressive window during the holiday season doesn't always have to mean lots of money, but it does mean being creative and provocative.

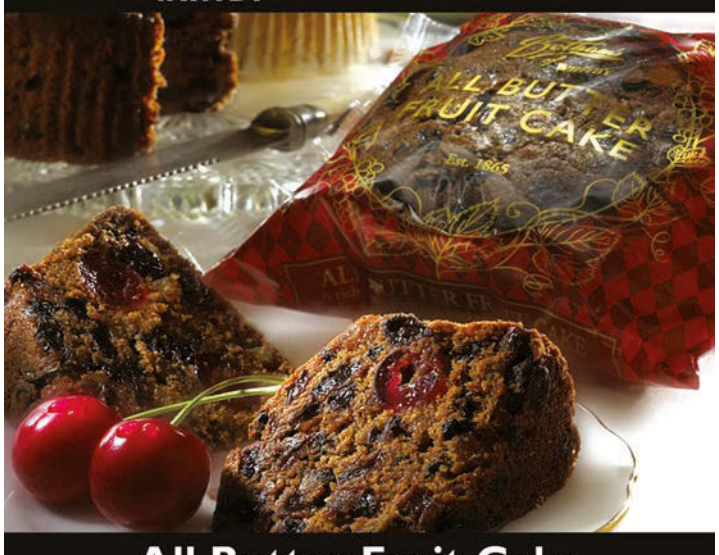




"As the modern pace of life increases and working hours continue to break from the traditional 9 till 5, customers have become ever more demanding. We want to eat, drink and shop wherever and whenever we choose. Ahead of Christmas is the ultimate time to really think how to use your window to its maximum effect; attracting shoppers and setting yourself apart from competitors so your window display is working even when you're not.

"Shopping in a business with a positive community message is important and becoming expected. Integrating this social message within your displays creates an encouraging shopping experience. A broad range of product lines within your range is key to a good shopping experience. Having a comprehensive range not only supports good consumer selection, but also supports returning business and residual spends further down the line. Always have your expected items in stock and items with point of difference. It's the latter of the two which people will talk about year in year out, growing your customer loyalty."

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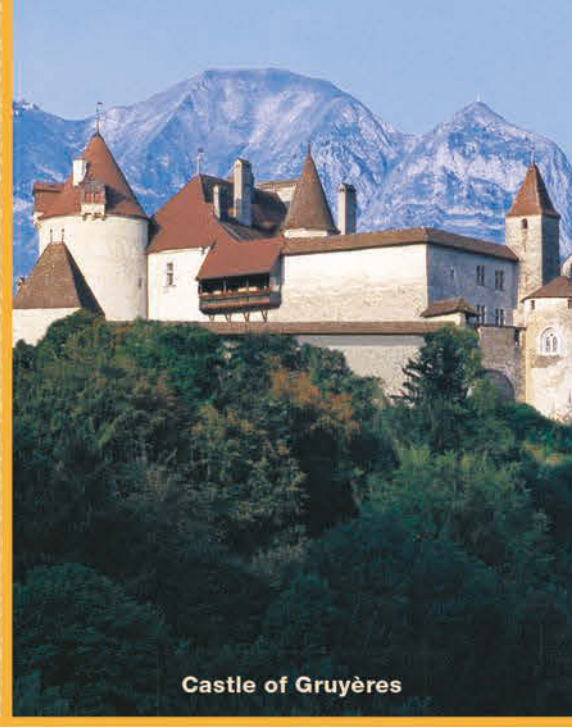


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www.switzerland-cheese.com



MAKING A GOOD IMPRESSION

What makes a good display and how can it help to attract potential customers? John Bensalhia reports

First impressions. A key introduction in many walks of life: Job interviews. First dates. That first day at work.

It's also a key consideration for delicatessens, farm shops and food retailers when it comes to the display. Potential customers will make up their minds in seconds when they see a display. An eye-catching, well-organised, innovative display will pique their interest, and attract their custom.

Eve Reid, visual retail specialist of Metamorphosis, explains that in the days of sitcom *Are You Being Served,* visual merchandising was known as 'display'.

"Due to extensive research into customer behaviour and buying patterns, 'display' has evolved into something more powerful. It now combines the creative art of display, with customer insight and commercial know-how, to attract, engage and motivate the customer to make a purchase."

In today's retail environment, it is even more important to make a big impact. As Eve says, in addition to making products look pretty, visual merchandising ensures that they sell. "It impacts on the way a store is designed; the way a store is laid out; the store's signage; how the products, services and the store's atmospherics are presented. If used wisely, all of these elements can be an incredible lever that can have an amazing impact on sales."

A visually appealing display is a great way of attracting customers, as Lydia Hodge, Gog Magog shop manager explains: "Attractive displays make a great first impression. A well-arranged display can make a huge difference when it comes to sales. This can be achieved by making them eye-catching and interesting. They also need to be full of products and regularly topped up, and correct labelling is a must!"

"We tend to find that once a customer has picked up and handled a product they are more likely to purchase it," says Liam Redmond, shop and purchasing manager and Emma Green, PR and event manager of Uncle Henry's Farm Shop, Butchery & Cafe.

Liam and Emma say that a display must have strong visual impact, using bright and balanced colour blocks or complementary colours displayed together.

"Using an eye-catching centrepiece can attract attention to the display, we tend to find that pyramid-shaped displays work well with our store layout. This ensures the display is accessible but also safe and secure. The display also needs to be customer friendly with the right stock levels so they feel encouraged to pick items from it to purchase and not feel like they are damaging the display. Good signage, in terms of pricing and promotion, is key to the display's success."

Clear messages

Ken Corsie, Createpose director, says that several key elements are required to produce a good display, including positioning. "Great visual merchandising will help to sell your products, as will communication. Clear messages simply conveyed, but with content to stimulate the browser into a buyer!"

"The actual purchase of the product and that experience is what brings customers back," says Andy Swinscoe of Courtyard Dairy. "Cheese products, for example, should be arranged so that the display looks nice and attractive. Clean, clear and easy-to-buy displays guarantee more sales."

Eve Reid says that there are six key factors in display preparation. It must have impact, a clear story and theme; and demonstrate strong composition and use of colour. It should have a strong message, show good use of props, and provide an emotional connection with the chosen products.

For extra impact, creativity and imagination are musts. "Create interest and be different," says Ken Corsie. "Utilise lighting, themes and props built around the product and its story, no matter how simple. Show the products that people would aspire to buy and not what they are going in for. Make it interesting and enticing for the customers to touch and feel, so when people pick up products they are more likely to buy."

Variety is also the spice of life, as Andy Swinscoe explains: "It's good to provide plenty of variety with cheese. Include different shapes, sizes and colours. For example, include a bit of Red Leicester or coloured Appleby's Cheshire cheese in the mix."

Because the display must be visually inviting, Liam Redmond and Emma Green say that it is important to create the right balance using colour, height and the right number of items. But, the display must also be safe and secure; if items are purchased from the display, it must remain a sound structure.

"Signage is key to providing the right message to customers," add Liam and Emma. "We find that asking Uncle Henry's staff for tips and advice on displays is a great tool. We also take photos of our displays





for social media and they provide a great reference when it comes to re-creating successful displays, especially for Christmas!"

Accessibility and simplicity

A full, accessible display makes much difference as Lydia Hodge discusses: "Make sure the display is full and it's easy for the customers to take products off. It's a good idea to ensure they are not symmetrical as this psychologically deters customers from picking items up. It's also important to ensure you have enough stock to top the display up regularly."

Lydia adds that customers are less inclined to take products if displays are stacked too high or symmetrically. Making displays with patterns also has the same effect.

Stacking too many of the same kinds of food or too many items are two mistakes in assembling displays. Poor signposting should also be avoided, as Andy Swinscoe explains: "You need to say what the cheese is, where it comes from, how much it costs, and what it tastes like. Make sure that it's written clearly, well and big enough for people to see."

Keeping things simple is key to a successful display. "It is all too easy to overstock a display and it looks too busy which is off-putting to customers," say Liam Redmond and Emma Green. "Your displays should complement and enhance the products. We also advise checking the displays regularly during the day to keep them maintained and stocked up. Lack of signage and clear pricing is another mistake. During busy periods, customers will not enquire about a product price which leads to lost sales! Also, ensure the display is in a location which will be seen by the majority of your footfall. It's no use having the world's best display and promotion hidden in a corner where 20% of the footfall will notice it."

Special and seasonal promotions require care and attention. Lydia Hodge suggests that owners should consider how much back-up stock they have to keep the display looking full and fresh. "Any special promotions should be written clearly on signage for customers to see and pricing needs to be visible to make the buying process as simple as possible."

Advance preparation is vital in order to bring in plenty of custom for the likes of Valentine's Day, Easter, and Christmas. Eve Reid says: "Using a seasonal calendar to plan ahead will help you to ensure that you are making the most commercial decisions for your seasonal products." Eve adds that a seasonal calendar ensures that you have enough preparation time, manpower, required stock volumes, advance props, and the right budget for additional stock, fixtures or props.

"Seasonal displays should be prepared well in advance," says Andy Swinscoe. "Events such as Father's Day and Valentine's Day should be showcased two weeks in advance, and in the case of Christmas, this display should be prepared about three months in advance."

Promotions must also be relevant: for example, being aware of what's in season. "It's important to be on the ball with displays in terms of seasonal events," say Liam Redmond and Emma Green. "You need to give your products time to sell, don't be afraid to get the products out early. It lets customers know this event is coming soon. If the display has the right impact they may buy early which from a stock point of view is great. The last thing you want is seasonal specific items being left past the event in question."

A useful tip for seasonal displays is to make them quirky and original. In the case of Courtyard Dairy, specially designed mice play their part. "We dress up the mice in kilts and with bagpipes to spotlight Scottish cheeses," explains Andy. "People come in regularly and adore the mice: it's a quirky touch that people will remember."

Window gain

When it comes to first impressions, an instant attraction is the window display. The bid to attract custom is literally a matter of seconds. "You have less than two seconds to catch the eye of a potential customer with a window display," says Andy Swinscoe.

Andy's advice is to keep it simple, and on point. "A customer-friendly display will use big simple, signage which conveys the message effectively. Again, include a quirk. People instantly recognise this, and will see this in those immediate two seconds."

Fascia and window displays are the window to the world of potential customers. "Your brand application and supporting window displays are the three dimensional representation of your brand," explains Ken Corsie. "They talk about who you are, what you offer in terms of a product range and in pricing terms, and are the one opportunity to convert these browsers into customers. Be bold, be consistent but above all be creative with your displays and your POS and never fail to surprise!"

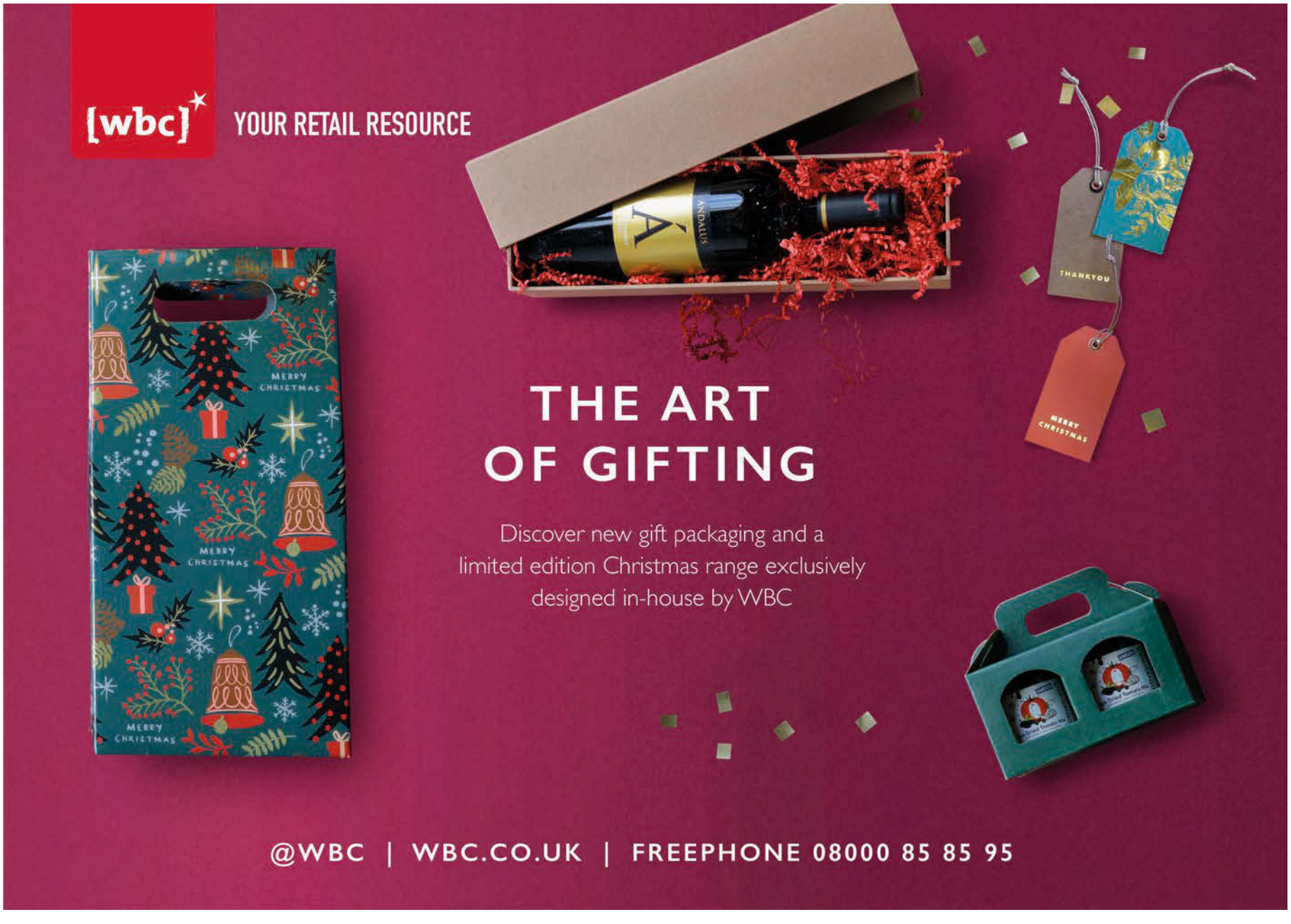
"Your window theme should be chosen to help focus your customer's attention on the products," says Eve Reid. "It is crucial that the story or theme speaks to your customers, tapping into their thoughts and desires in order to create an emotional connection to the product."

Taking care to avoid damage of the products is a priority. Is the window subject to strong daylight? Liam Redmond and Emma Green discuss: "Certain product packaging can fade easily in the sunlight so it is worth regularly checking items or replacing them to ensure that no damage is sustained. Do not display perishable goods in the window: sounds simple but it's easily done."

"A window display should be visually inviting externally and internally. It is a great way to encourage passing customers to come in for a further look."

Get it right, and a good, well-prepared and organised display brings many benefits, as Ken Corsie concludes: "A good display can capture your customers' attention, awaken the senses, and provide them with a wonderful buying experience, which will bring them back to the store for the next time and become a loyal customer both now and in the future."

> "Display combines the creative art of display, with customer insight and commercial know-how, to attract, engage and motivate the customer to make a purchase"



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Jimmy Doherty

"October is already here! How did that happen?"



Our new menu is well under way. Seasonality is key and this month we're still reaping what we've sown earlier in the year. Squashes, greens and root vegetables from our garden coupled with our rare-breed meats give us a taster of what's to come throughout the winter. Of course, shooting season has started and we will be adding all kinds of game to the offering.

We're committed to using as much as we can from right on our doorstep, and this is where our head chef, Jon Gay and his team can get creative with what we forage – blackberries hazelnuts and puffball mushrooms are all to be found within metres of the kitchen door, and not forgetting all the delicious preserved produce that was worked hard for over the summer and will add even more flavour and colour.

Butchery-wise, demand for the cheaper cuts rises as people are starting to hunker down for hearty winter stews, so we tailor our online offerings and target those products. We have to make sure we keep a track of trends and how previous years have been to keep ahead of the game, and this year we expect to be sending out plenty of our winter meat boxes! The online 'grab and go' meat box concept is one that really works as it's quick and simple, and we are looking at enhancing the whole online shopping experience.

Working farm-wise we're always on the go, and with Christmas on the horizon we're caring for our 10,000 free-range Kelly Bronze turkeys to make sure they're fattening up nicely! They're great to have on the farm and it's even better to know that we are providing something that will be part of so many families' special day.

Talking about Christmas when it feels like it was only yesterday that it was 'back to school' day reminds me that we need to keep ahead of the game. We've got plenty planned for half term, as it's our chance to bring new people to the Farm Park as the main attraction and then explore all of our other offerings. We hope that they might head to the restaurant for lunch and then take a walk around the butchery and Farm Shop and see what else we can offer. This means it's important that we keep our offerings seasonally relevant and broad enough to be valid to a wide cross section, yet not dilute the main products and farm ethos – this keeps our team very busy! It's a great team and that's part of our strength. We're a real family and, whilst we have a broad and varied business, we're all aiming for the same thing – sharing the good life.

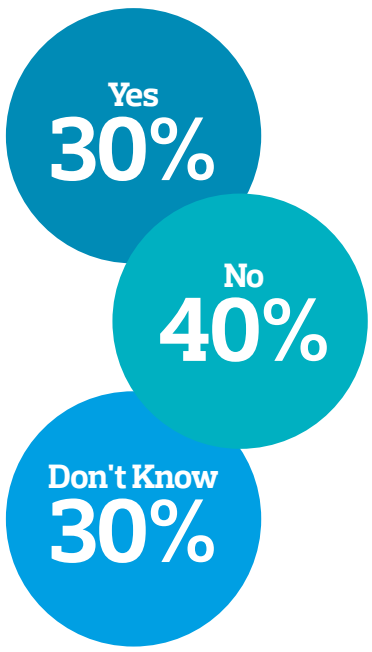


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TWITTER POLL

Do you expect the post-Brexit climate to have a negative impact on your Christmas sales?



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Published by
Aceville Publications Ltd, 21-23 Phoenix Court, Hawkins Road, Colchester, Essex, CO2 8JY

Next issue available November 2016

Subscriptions 01293 312188
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The BAR rate UK £29.25. Overseas £40.00
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SPECIALITY BITES

Paul Hargreaves of Cotswold Fayre



I have written a fair amount recently on Generation Y (millennials) but nothing on Generation Z, which are those just coming into adulthood now. I have had some good opportunity to observe them whilst on holiday recently in Malaysia with my teenage and post-teenage children!

Those that know me know that I tend not to do conventional holidays, although we tend not to stay with families in the jungle when the children are travelling with us. Those families might never recover the shock! Whilst in the main central jungle (Taman Negara) in Malaysia, however, it was too good an opportunity not to take my own Generation Z-ers to a tribal village.

Bear in mind that my children had previously had meltdowns earlier in the holiday when there was either poor or no Wi-Fi at certain places we stayed. For them it was on the same level to there being no bed in their hotel room. Now, imagine these same children in a village where the people had no electricity, no running water (apart from the river), no privacy (whole family in one hut), no school, and until recently no clothes (and probably only now because tourists visit them). This generation, who can't conceive of a life worth living without at least four hours a day on a social media account, were meeting people who seemed happy enough living from the forest.

Now, I don't really want to have a philosophical debate about who are happier, western Generation Z or tribal people who have lived the same way for more than thousands of years, but, as always, when confronting other cultures and people we should shine a light onto our own lives and cultures and make us ask ourselves questions about work, relationships, the environment and other areas.

> "I wonder how strong the work ethic of Generation Z will be"

I love the way the younger generations embrace new technology and learn so fast, but at the same time wonder whether the relationships they make are real enough. I also consider whether they will be good enough at embracing work and jobs that don't involve working within social media. Those that are able to do that are the lucky ones! I was trying to explain to my daughter that the "job" of a friend of hers who has over a million Instagram followers – which sees her getting paid for posting images and receiving free clothes and free holidays – isn't possible for everyone. Most people have to do a job that gets their hands dirty and involves being told what to do by others. Sorry, but it's true, I said.

I wonder how strong the work ethic will be of those that are to follow the current Generation Y-ers, who in many ways have the best of both worlds, being entirely adaptable and flexible when it comes to technology, but also having the earthiness of the previous generation about them.

However, let's not fear the consequences but work with them, and mentor them to fully harness the potential of this exciting generation. Then they may be the generation that changes the world for the better, but then again those jungle tribes probably don't want change! Probably more questions here than answers, but hopefully food for thought.



5 MINUTES WITH... PIPPA MURRAY

Founder of Pip & Nut

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE FILM?
An oldie but a goodie, Stand By Me.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DESERT ISLAND-MUST HAVE?
Snorkel – there are probably more practical things that I should take but I'd be able to keep myself entertained at least.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE SNACK?
Love our Coconut Almond Butter on a banana – satisfies any sweet craving.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE SONG?
The National, Fake Empire. It's a bit moody but I could listen to it on repeat for hours.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE ICE CREAM FLAVOUR?
I love a scoop of Cookies & Cream.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE THING ABOUT SUMMER?
London park life – it's an altogether different city when the sun (occasionally) comes out.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?
If I'm being intellectual then Midnight's Children by Salmon Rushdie, otherwise I've always got a soft spot for Harry Potter.

ARE YOU AN INDOOR OR OUTDOOR KIND OF GIRL?
Outdoor.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU?
The people I work with!

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A FILM OF YOUR LIFE?
I used to get told that I looked a bit like Minnie Driver...

WHAT'S YOUR DREAM HOLIDAY?
I'm definitely more of a backpacker than a hotel person and Colombia's been top of my hit list for a while.

DESCRIBE YOUR IDEAL WEEKEND?
Friends, food, wine. Repeat.

DO YOU HAVE ANY PETS?
No, but I'm a big fan of cats and dogs. You'll notice they pop up on the Pip & Nut instagram feed quite a lot...

TEA OR COFFEE?
Tea. All day, everyday.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE MEAL?
Tough to pick just one but I don't think you can beat a roast dinner.

> "My ideal weekend? Friends, food, wine. Repeat"

DIARY DATES

October

16th–17th
SIAL
Paris
sialparis.com

21st–23rd
WELCOME ITALIA
Royal Horticultural Halls, London
welcome-italia.co.uk

31st–6th
SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS
Olympia, London
spiritofchristmasfair.co.uk

November

4th–6th
CAKE INTERNATIONAL
NEC, Birmingham
cakeinternational.co.uk

4th–6th
BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW SCOTLAND
SECC, Glasgow
bbcgoodfoodshowscotland.com

13th–16th
BBC GOOD FOOD LONDON
Olympia, London
bbcgoodfoodshow.com

16th–18th
INTERNATIONAL CHEESE FESTIVAL
San Sebastian, Spain
internationalcheesefestival.eus

22nd–24th
FOOD MATTERS LIVE
ExCel, London
foodmatterslive.com

26th–29th
BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW WINTER
NEC, Birmingham
bbcgoodfoodshowwinter.com

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