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# SPECIALITY FOOD

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# EDITOR'S LETTER



2016. What a year. A lot has happened within Britain during the last 12 months, and it goes without saying that the food and drink industry has seen its fair share of change. The decision to implement a tax on sugar has had an expectedly dramatic affect on our world, with some producers facing troubled times while others jump on the sugar-free bandwagon. Never before have so many iterations of sugar or 'free-from' been visible on the supermarket shelf, and consumers are expecting the same if not even more from independents.

Meanwhile, the consumer desire for food with a story gives indies an opportunity to boost footfall and basket spend – a bit of thoughtful sourcing and a display or two is all you need to cash in. This means that farm shops, delis, food halls and the like are in a good place right now, so readers, gen up on the current and upcoming trends, polish your fittings and get the word out about the fantastic work you're doing. It's sometimes forgotten how valuable to the industry and nation as a whole the work of supporting small-scale businesses is, whether local to you or not.

This issue, we're sharing the stories of Nicholas Rodda (p14), the foodie at the helm of his family's renowned clotted cream business; Chatsworth Estate Farm Shop (p38), a fine example of how to do it right; and Wagyu beef (p24), one of the most successful and iconic Japanese exports and soon to come to a counter near you soon.

> "It's sometimes forgotten how valuable to the food and drink industry and nation as a whole the word you, independent retailers, do to support small businesses"

We also share a sneak peek at what's to come at Food Matters Live (p30); explore the hot drinks market including the teas, coffees and other beverages to stock now (p26); and shine the spotlight on the food, drink and delicacies of Italy (p19).

Holly

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

### BRITISH BRANDS CONTINUE TO PROFIT IN FRANCE

Despite initial concerns within the trade that the Brexit vote could be detrimental for export of British brands, leading export company Sutralis has noted a growing interest in the French retail sector throughout 2016.

Philippe Demarest, director and founder of Sutralis said, "Many fabulous opportunities exist within the retail market. The UK is an extremely important market for the French food and drink sector, and we are getting more and more enquiries from British brands keen to explore new market opportunities. Brexit has had no impact on the number of enquiries we've received."

### FUNDING BOOST FOR SCOTTISH FISHERIES

Fishing groups across Scotland will receive a share of £4.1 million funding to help boost the sector and make it more sustainable.

With £3.07 million of the funding coming from the EU and £1.03 million from the Scottish government, it presents a benefit of continued EU membership for Scotland's fishing communities.

Fergus Ewing, rural economy secretary said, ""This investment will provide crucial support to businesses, allowing them to upgrade technology and buy new equipment to maintain and enhance the sustainability of the sector, protecting and creating jobs while also building growth in the rural and coastal economy."






# How to Benefit from Brexit

**Since the retail landscape was altered due to Britain's decision to leave the European Union on 23rd June, we've witnessed dips in consumer confidence, the value of sterling has hit record lows, and there's potential increased import costs for retailers... and that's all without Article 50 having been triggered.**

**If a satisfactory decision is not found before Brexit takes effect, which is predicted to be March 2019, trade regulation would default to World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules. The UK and EU would then need to apply to each other the tariffs and other trade restrictions they apply to the rest of the world. According to the British Retail Consortium, under WTO rules the tariffs on food could rise sharply.**

**As the immediate ripples and disarray from the Brexit vote hopefully soften ahead of the prime minister's decision to trigger the exit (expected to be late March 2017), we look at the way independent retailers can shuffle the effects of Brexit to work to their advantage.**

### BRITISH-MADE:

2017 could prove to be a beneficial time to promote the provenance and heritage behind goods. This is the sort of service the multiples have a harder time capitalising on, especially with Tesco's 'fake farm' debacle making headlines earlier this year. The 'British' image plays a big part in UK retailers' and producers' international appeal, so highlighting this at home can forge new emotional connections with customers. The sense of a genuine story behind a product resonates heavily with shoppers, and a designated 'best of British' section can go a long way in appealing to customers with Brexit fresh in their minds. Regionally-focused areas could also work well.

The weak pound could make food and drink produced abroad more expensive to buy in the UK, so while stocking a selection of international products will continue to reap rewards, a label which highlights an item's UK provenance may well tempt shoppers to spend on British-made products.

### PROMOTE TRUSTED BRANDS:

While innovative artisan food and drink companies catch the attention of consumers, recognised brands are trusted and often produce the items which make up the bulk of shoppers' baskets. The furore which resulted from Tesco potentially dropping Unilever brand Marmite is a strong example of the deep-seated attachment the public can have with certain brands; don't underestimate the comfort household names can provide during turbulent times.

### TOURISM:

The fall of sterling has made holidaying abroad a less desirable prospect, with many holidaymakers predicted to turn to locations in the UK for a 'staycation', findings by VisitBritain show.

With UK-based self-catering cottages and airbnb stays a popular choice, the option of a stock-up shop in a supermarket may appear cheaper, but the idea of spending time in one during a break away won't elicit too much enthusiasm.

Delis, farm shops and speciality stores have the benefit of appealing to those going on holiday and wishing to treat themselves, while also whetting the appetite for more luxury one-off purchases. Seasonal promotions of local, artisanal items can be utilised to boost sales and footfall.

The Centre for Retail Research notes that devaluation is "marvellous for tourists, as the UK becomes a less expensive destination, prompting more visitors from abroad and making staycations comparatively less expensive."

### FOCUS ON VALUED CUSTOMERS:

While sponteneous purchases may dwindle as a result of Brexit, it's essential that retailers focus their attentions on their committed customer base, rather than channel all of their efforts into appealing to new, possibly fairweather consumers. In the speciality and luxury sector, retailers should have a stable core customer base – make sure you're fostering these high-value relationships and tailor marketing techniques to them.

### TIME TO TAKE STOCK:

Retailers can't afford to refer to Brexit as an excuse for sub-par results. The industry is altering rapidly and a post-Brexit world will require businesses to have concrete plans to deal with what's to come. Take time to reassure staff about their future – worried staff will directly impact customer service. Retailers will need to be prepared – trade negotiations can take two years to work through, and the most challenging aspects to face in the short term are weakness of sterling and consumer confidence.

### RULES AND REGULATION:

The EU strongly influences how retailers label and package goods, however these rules are set to change, and UK retailers will need to keep a key eye on this shift. Up until now the environmental and social rules governing retail in the UK have generally been shaped by EU ruling. Retailers will likely be able to push for different regulations and will be given the chance to work with different legislators.

### FOCUS ON LOCAL STAFF:

Local recruitment and staff training may become more challenging than ever as migration is set to be controlled. Martin Hayward, founder of Hayward Strategy and Futures and a member of the KPMG/Ipsos Retail Think Tank said, "Greater competition for staff may in turn increase wages and prices, but this will then stimulate sales elsewhere and allow government support for the low paid to be invested more productively."





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## JOHN SHEPHERD OF PARTRIDGES

# "Six things I learned this year"

We are now just about to enter our 45th year at Partridges. So much has been learned along the way and (dare I say it) quite a lot forgotten. However, in every year that passes there is, it seems, an increasing barrage of information attacking us from all directions, which becomes very hard to process let alone remember.

So I thought that, as the year draws to a close, I would share various bits of unusual information that have managed to connect with my memory bank during the last 12 months. Here goes:

**1** The Ole Line Dudes is a company that exists in New York to wait in line until your intended purchases finally reach the cashier. Their main business is queueing for iPhones and concert tickets and the like, but I understand they are quite prepared to push the wonky trolley up the queue to the till while the client goes off to have a time out. I suspect these are for shops a lot busier than Partridges!

**2** Elvis Presley's favourite sandwich was peanut butter, banana and bacon according to MSN.com, and Hilary Clinton eats raw jalapenos every day. Donald Trump's preferred meal is apparently Filet-o-Fish from McDonalds, and Barack Obama is very much a broccoli man. The Food Timeline concluded that the Beatles' favourite food was honey and their favourite beverage was tea. By the way, Leonardo Da Vinci was a vegetarian.

**3** Talking of vegetarians, many people do not know that beer contains a product made from fish according to BBC News in September. It is in fact isinglass – a gelatine made from the swim bladder of fish which has been used since the 19th century as a fining agent to make beer clear, bright and more attractive. Its prevalence naturally causes a problem for vegetarians and vegans, so CAMRA is calling for alternatives.

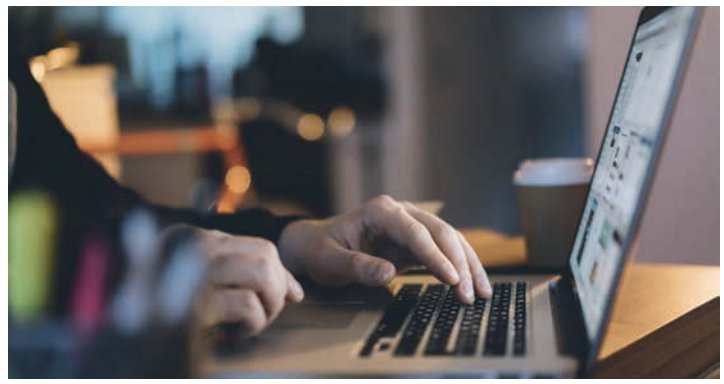
**4** City Pages announced that there is in New York a vending machine created by Pizzametry that aims to make fresh pizzas for customers in under four minutes. I love New York! Forget about Quattro Stagioni – now it is Quattro Minuti.

**5** The List Verse recalled the great Canadian Maple Syrup Heist of 2012 when £6m of syrup (worth $18m wholesale) was stolen in a daring raid. It is for this reason that the province of Quebec has created a global maple syrup reserve to ensure there is enough syrup to meet international demand. Apparently it takes up to 13 gallons of maple sap to make a litre of syrup.

**6** The LA Times revealed a phenomenon from Los Angeles called the Wine Rave which involves dancing, lights, music, glow sticks and actual wine. According to the mission statement, the aim is to get rid of the pretension that surrounds wine. "A wine rave is a state of mind... free yourself from colour... stop swirling and derobe." Just imagine how many old school wine connoisseurs would be turning in their graves or even medocs at the thought of that.

# Food Innovation Network for Businesses Launched

**A new online portal, Food Innovation Network (FIN), has been launched by environment secretary Andrea Leadsom, offering British business owners access to facilities such as test kitchens to launch products onto the market.**



More than 6,000 British food and drink companies can use FIN, which provides resources and expert advice on food production. Businesses will also be able to gain information on complex issues like intellectual property, developing new technology and waste management.

Andrea Leadsom said, "Our thriving food and drink sector has already helped make Britain more globally competitive through its incredible innovation. The UK's food and farming sector generates over £100 billion a year and employs one in eight people, with the food manufacturing sector bigger than cars and aerospace combined. From extending the shelf life of our food to increasing the amount of Vitamin D in our eggs, FIN will help make the sector as forward-looking as possible and push the boundaries of British food production."

Simon Baty, FIN coordinator said, "The Food Innovation Network will identify the innovation needs of agri-food businesses and connect them with research experts, so they can transform their superlative science into valuable, innovative and commercial products."

# BRC Warns Government of Brexit Price Hikes

**British shoppers could face higher prices and retailers could suffer if the government is unable to strike a 'good Brexit' deal with the EU, says the British Retail Consortium (BRC).**

In a letter addressed to secretary of state for international trade Liam Fox, the BRC has pledged to work alongside the government to avoid, "a disproportionately severe impact on retailers and their customers."

The BRC's main concern is the added effects of defaulting to the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) rules after the activation of Article 50. Under WTO rules the tariffs on food could rise sharply with meat increasing by 27 per cent, according to the BRC. They believe the government must establish trade deals ensuring import costs are kept to a minimum.

Richard Baker, BRC chairman said, "We will be supporting the government through this complex and difficult process, helping them analyse how increased cost pressures on retailers could mean higher shop prices and identifying any opportunities for new trade deals that could benefit consumers.

"The retail industry is the UK's biggest importer and has huge experience of importing from every corner of the world. We will be engaged in a constructive dialogue with the government, that will bring our experience to bear on the Brexit talks to the benefit of everyone in the UK."





# Retail Sales to Grow an Estimated 2.5 per cent in December

**Mintel expects that total UK retail sales will reach £42.4 billion in December 2016.**

New research from Mintel reveals that as many as one in five Britons plan to shop online more for Christmas 2016. It also uncovered that the top three reasons why shoppers went online for gifts last year were to get cheaper prices, to avoid the crowds and to shop when it suited them.

Figures show that consumers are keen bargain hunters, as almost three in five gift buyers agree that seasonal promotions mean that they resist paying full price for gifts and instead wait for dates such as Black Friday and Cyber Monday to kick-start the Christmas shopping season. Mintel reports that in 2015 the promotional days helped boost November retail sales by 1.5 per cent to reach £440 million. According to the the research, one in five Brits bought gifts online and one in 10 ventured in-store on either of these days in 2015. 55 per cent bought things that they would normally have waited to buy in the January sales, and 26 per cent held off spending ahead of the Black Friday and Cyber Monday promotions.

Richard Perks, director of retail research at Mintel said, "The economic background for consumers continues to be favourable. Real incomes are rising and unemployment is falling. There are some worrying signs though. Consumer credit has risen back to record levels and the housing market has weakened a little, but overall, the prospects for Christmas remain good.

"When it comes to Christmas shopping, it is increasingly artificial to make a distinction between online and in-store as the two increasingly are working together to suit shoppers' needs. We are seeing pure players recognise the advantages to having a physical offering, signified by Amazon and Zalando's interest in moving to the high street. At the same time, a number of high street retailers now price match against online retailers, trying to fight back against the continued belief among shoppers that it's cheaper to buy online."



## CHARLES CAMPION

# "Shop happy"

Every year, early October sees a good number of restaurants holding their breath in anticipation. Setting aside the merits of a tyre-maker's opinion about gastronomy, the Michelin Guide to Britain and Ireland is a plump red book much beloved of chefs. For many otherwise sane and sensible cooks this guide is the one, and to win a star is the ultimate cheffy ambition.

At the last count there were over two dozen different British restaurant and hotel guides to choose from, and that's without the growing number of opinions strutted on the web and in the social media. At last, Britain has restaurants to be proud of. But what about food shops, delis, farm shops, and bakeries? Where is the shoppers' guidebook? In the 1987 Henrietta Green toured the country with her dog Violet and produced the first guide to food shops and small producers, British Food Finds, which went on to become The Food Lover's Guide to Britain. This book was an absolute godsend to anyone interested in food and drink – both foodies and cunning shoppers.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the Channel, an American food writer called Patricia Wells published The Food Lover's Guide to Paris. This book had a brilliant lay out. There was a section reviewing restaurants, there were the favourite recipes from each of those restaurants, and then a section on food shops and kitchen hardware shops. Over the last couple of decades there have been a few attempts to publish a comprehensive guide to British food shops, but they have all failed. For one thing, the level of churn in the food shop sector means that keeping any guide up to date is a well nigh impossible task. Shops change hands, a limitless host of new products flood onto the marketplace in time to catch the eye of the Christmas shopper, and, simultaneously, half as many products are discontinued. For anyone contemplating a comprehensive shoppers' guide, even a glance down the possible schedule of visits required would be enough to send shivers down the spine. That's a compelling reason why no one has attempted a Food Lover's Guide for the 21st Century.

Maybe the internet would be a better bet? Nowadays, the tablet on the kitchen table is the first port of call for recipes; it just remains to create the Food Shop equivalent to Wikipedia and then somehow to keep it updated. Perhaps it is time to look into crowdfunding? While the chefs are worrying about their star spangled future, everyone else is starting to shop for Christmas. In our household there is a simple division of labour: I am very fond of food shopping while my wife hates it. Her idea of hell is to wander aimless from butcher to deli to cheese shop, sampling while unfurling menus in the mind.

When selling, everything from the store layout to the rigid smiles of the sales folk has a single objective – a happy shopper is more likely to be a spending shopper.

It's time to embrace the run up to Christmas and make the shopping experience more enjoyable, whether you are selling Louboutins or Stilton. It's such a pity that there is no longer a Food Lover's Guide – it would've made a splendid Christmas present.








## GILES HENSCHEL OF OLIVES ET AL

# "Let's have a traditional Christmas"

Christmas is coming; geese are looking nervous, the sprouts are on, Cyber Monday is about to follow Black Friday, till bells are being oiled ready for action, lords are about to commence a-leaping over maids a-milking, tinsel factories are in overdrive and somewhere a large fat man in a red suit is greasing up his elves and polishing his sled. And all for one day. Well 12, actually, but who still carries the party on for 12 whole days? Most wheelie bins have got a needle-less twig of a small fir tree sticking roots-upward out of it by the time the Boxing Day sales have started and indigestion has kicked in.

Now, far from being all Bah Humbug and Ebenezerish about the festive season, we here at Olives Et Al, being a not entirely traditionally British oufit in outlook but one who eyes foreign shores and cultures with an open mind and heart, need to be aware of some of the Christmas traditions from places around the world we operate in, export to and deal with. Not that these are things we would advocate adopting...

The Catalonians have a thing for poo. They include the figure of the Caganer (a small defecating man) in their nativity scenes as well as the Tio de Nadal or pooping log which is beaten with sticks until "treats" fall out. Nice. The Japanese have a fetish for KFC (of all things) on Christmas Eve and flock through the doors in their thousands. Believe it or not, we export a small amount to our friends in Scandanavia where I reckon we're probably served as light relief, as in Greenland you are likely to be served a dish called Kiviak: 500 dead Auk birds stuffed into a seal skin and left to ferment for 7 months. Tasty. In Norway it's Rakfisk, trout fermented for up to a year and served without the benefit of cooking to remove the smell. In Finland, things concentrate on alcohol and the more concentrated the better – probably to disguise the flavour of whatever fermented delicacy Grandma Fin has dug out of the shed.

So what of our closer friends in Europe? The French have it just about bang on – very few Christmas cards (who wants a round robin about someone else's kids doing sooo much better than yours?), a thoroughly Gallic approach to the Christmas feast, where alcohol and food are consumed in more or less equal quantities of ever increasing strength, leaving you smilingly conscious but still able to hold a conversation.

As the years pass I am learning that, from a commercial point of view as much as anything else – religious, spiritual or otherwise – it is better to have a long, hot summer than a successful Christmas, so even as I hang up my stocking and pour myself another egg nog I'll be looking forward to the next olive season and wondering how we can have an even better summer than the last. That, and avoiding any fermented fish or birds is, I think, a fine tradition to while away the quieter festive moments.

# Opportunities For Food Start-ups at New Event

**The UK's first food and drink founders' festival, Bread & Butter has unveiled a programme providing insight and advice to food and drink producers, as well as they opportunity to pitch products to Whole Foods Market, Fortnum & Mason and online retailer Not On The High Street.**

The festival, which takes place on November 12th and 13th at the Institute of Directors in London, was created to offer start-ups help to bolster their footing in the UK food and drink community.

As well as the chance to pitch, visitors can attend insightful talks from the likes of Tom Newton from Graze, can browse the offerings of 24 exhibitors at The Marketplace, can put questions to industry professionals at The Advice Bar, receive instant feedback on their products from experts at The Tasting Table and can attend a drinks and networking after party.

Jason Gibb, Bread & Butter co-founder said, "We're bringing together a dream team of speakers – food and drink entrepreneurs who have been there and done it. The people that can share their experience on how to build a food business, how to pitch to a retailer or how to export their products. We've also signed up key retailers Whole Foods Market, Fortnum & Mason and Not On The High Street Street to run pitching sessions, where they can meet the exciting producers coming along to the festival. All in all it's a must-visit event for anyone wanting to learn from an outstanding line-up of experts all in one place who are happy to share their knowledge."

# Employers Urged to Check Payrolls

**The national minimum wage boost went up on 1st October, with employers being reminded to check payrolls as almost 500,000 young workers are owed a pay rise.**

Around 270,000 workers aged 21 to 24 earning the minimum wage will see their hourly wage rise by 25p an hour to £6.95. It is the largest increase since 2008, outstripping average wage growth and inflation.

Around 210,000 workers aged under 21 and apprentices will also see an increase to their pay packets.

Employers who fail to pay will be found and punished, as well as being publicly named and shamed.

Greg Clark, business and energy secretary said, "The government is committed to ensuring the National Minimum Wage works for both employees and employers, which is why we continue to work with business to create an environment in which they can thrive. Today's changes will ensure low paid workers get their largest pay increase since the recession and employers have an obligation to make sure their staff are being paid appropriately."

The government has increased HMRC's budget by £7m this year to £20m, strengthening its ability to crack down on employers who fail to pay the national minimum and living wage.



# Contactless Card Spending Increases

**A total of £2.1 billion-worth of contactless payments were made in July, new figures from The UK Cards Association show.**

More than 1.2 billion card purchases took place during the month, with nearly a fifth of all card payments made using contactless technology.

The "tap and go" method of payment has grown in popularity in recent years as a convenient alternative to cash. The average contactless payment was £8.75 in July, up by £1.76 on July 2015. The trade association Payments UK has previously predicted that debit cards are set to overtake cash to be the UK's most frequently-used payment method by 2021, boosted by the rise in contactless transactions.

Richard Koch, head of policy at The UK Cards Association said, "Consumers' adoption of contactless continues apace, with the number of contactless payments jumping by a tenth in just one month. At over £2 billion, contactless spending in July was more than three times higher than the same period last year."









# Brexit Fears Cause Confidence Dip in Food Industry

**Confidence is dwindling within the food and drink industry (the largest manufacturing sector in the UK) following the Brexit vote, a survey of Food and Drink Federation (FDF) members reveals.**

The survey coincides with quarterly figures from UK retailers showing food sales at their highest levels since 2013, suggesting a disparity between business and consumer confidence levels.

A majority of food and drink companies responding to the survey reported increased ingredient prices, a drop in product margins and concerns raised by their EU workforce. 69.5 per cent of respondents are less confident about the UK business environment, with only around one in 10 feeling positive.

Food and drink producers face tough trading conditions, with three quarters of companies seeing ingredient prices increase largely as a result of the weak pound, with product margins falling for most survey respondents. This trend is expected by most companies to continue over the next 12 months. Urgent action from the government is needed to ensure essential imports of ingredients and raw materials from the EU and EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) countries do not face tariffs or costly non-tariff barriers.

Food and drink manufacturing supports 3.9 million jobs across the £108 billion UK food chain and employs 400,000 people directly. Of these, almost a third are non-UK EU nationals. 71 per cent of the companies surveyed that employ EU staff report their EU employees have expressed concerns about the referendum outcome, with around one in 12 reporting that EU employees intend to leave the UK. FDF is calling for urgent assurances for the industry's workforce from the EU that they will have leave to remain in the UK.

Ian Wright CBE, director general of the Food and Drink Federation said, "We share the government's view that we need to make the best of Brexit. Food and drink industry confidence is low. Slower revenue growth, coupled with prolonged business uncertainty, is affecting the industry's ability to invest. The assurances we heard from the government last week must be underpinned by credible plans for restoring confidence and negotiating a workable future relationship with the EU. Working with the government through an industrial strategy partnership, we believe we can counterbalance uncertainty arising from the EU exit process and secure world-class status for the sector."

The FDF's survey results reflect the sentiment of one third of its full membership including micro, small, medium and large food and drink manufacturers.




# Waitrose Pushes Local Beer Focus

**Supermarket chain Waitrose has announced an artisan beer focus through its 'Locally Produced' initiative.**

It now offers over 300 beers from England, Wales and Scotland, and a number of branches aim to stock a selection of beers brewed within a 30-mile radius.

The increasingly popular trend for craft beers from artisan breweries is what the supermarket pinpointed as the reason behind the initiative. The supermarket now stocks more than 20 different varieties of craft beer, from Belgian blondes to aged-cask options.

Owen Morris from The Campaign for Real Ale said, "As an independent consumer organisation we are continually campaigning for greater appreciation of traditional beers and ciders. Waitrose's support of small breweries will help ensure that more locally-produced British beer is available for people to enjoy and that the industry continues to thrive."






# OPEN FOR BUSINESS

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

### BRISTOL'S CARGO WELCOMES INDEPENDENTS

**A host of independent retailers have opened in the new CARGO retail hub in Wapping Wharf, Bristol.**

CARGO is constructed out of converted shipping containers and can be found in Bristol's Harbourside area, which is being hailed as the city's new 'foodie hub'. CARGO is the newest addition to the Wapping Wharf quarter, with plans in place to create 600 new homes, as well as provide premises for a number of independent food and drink retailers.

The independent businesses that have opened up in the CARGO unit are Bristol Cider Shop (a store that stocks over 100 types of artisan cider), Corks at CARGO (offering specially-selected European-focused wines) and Lovett Pies (an award-winning producer of gourmet pies).

CARGO will be joining a host of other food and drink retailers already established in the Wapping Wharf shopping area, which include Wild Beer Co (a craft beer shop from the brewery of the same name), Better Food (an organic health food store) and others.

Stuart Hatton, director at Umberslade, the developer of CARGO said, "We can't wait for CARGO to come to life and along with our other fantastic retailers, begin playing its own part in supporting the city's thriving independent retail scene. It really is a hugely exciting time to be involved in the vibrant foodie culture for which Bristol is so well known."





### FINK OPENS SECOND LOCATION

**Following the launch of their Fink deli in June, owners Hugh Fink and Sharon Longcroft have opened a second confectionery-focused branch called Sweet Fink on Boroughbridge High Street, North Yorkshire.**

Located just a couple of doors down from the first shop, the site sells hand-picked selections of premium chocolates, biscuits and cakes, with the owners keen to promote small independent producers.

Hugh Fink, co-owner said, "Our customers at Fink really appreciate provenance and high quality, as well as the opportunity to buy beautiful gifts, and this encouraged our idea of opening a more chocolate-focused shop. When an ideal location became available just down the road, we couldn't resist. Sweet Fink will continue to champion independent producers who share our passion for provenance and great taste."

Sharon Longcroft, co-owner said, "We're delighted to be stocking an assortment of luxury confectionery, which includes single origin chocolate bars from Yorkshire company Lauden, exquisite handmade chocolates from German brand Lauenstein Confiserie and products from Italian confectionery specialist La Perla. We're proud to stock unique chocolates from Vietnamese company Marou, which handmakes its chocolate in a factory on the outskirts of Ho Chi Minh City, with beans that were handpicked on a skinny strip of an island called T'an Phu Dong in the Mekong Delta."




### NEW DELI FOR LIVERPOOL

**A new traditional delicatessen has opened in Mossley Hill, Liverpool, showcasing an array of artisan goods.**

Andrew Dykes, owner of Rose Lane Deli said, "I opened the deli with the intention of selling speciality food as a quality alternative to supermarket shopping."

The shop has a chilled counter selling a range of pies, quiches and cheeses, as well as ambient sections stocking fresh bread, oils, confectionery and other food and drink. Andrew hopes to highlight produce from Liverpool and the surrounding regions, including the Lake District and Cheshire.

Andrew Dykes said, "This is my first shop, as I had previously been working in the legal sector for the past 30 years. I've always been interested in speciality food, so the next step was to open a shop. The lack of there being something of a similar style in the area was one of the main reasons why I decided to open Rose Lane Deli. Business has been ticking over nicely and people are starting to get to know us."






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# As more people are making the switch to a plant-based diet, is it time independents stocked up on vegan products?

It's nigh-on impossible to scroll through a social media platform and not see an image of a vegan dish these days. With a-list celebrities, top athletes and highly-influential bloggers heavily advocating the lifestyle, it's shaken off the 'dreadlocked, hemp sandal wearing and tree-hugging' image and has quickly become a mainstream dietary choice.

In fact, according to market researcher Ipsos MORI, more than half a million Britons have converted to a vegan diet. It has also grown 350% in Britain over the last decade, making it one of the fastest-growing lifestyle choices, a report by The Vegan Society and *Vegan Life* magazine has revealed. The report also notes that the typical age range of vegans in the UK is between 15-35, with almost 90% living in urban or suburban areas compared to just 12% in rural locations, and most are motivated by ethical and compassionate reasons.

Viral documentaries and articles in major newspapers exploring the huge benefits a vegan diet can have on the environment have also contributed considerably to converting people to veganism. With an abundance of helpful resources available at our fingertips, paired with endorsement from plant-based influential figures, we can only expect to see the amount of educated consumers adapting to this dietary switch increasing.

## Ethical eating

While vegetarians eschew foods that contain meat, vegans completely omit meat, eggs, honey, dairy and all other animal-derived ingredients from their diet. Many vegans also exclude foods that are processed using animal products, like certain wines that are produced using milk protein during the filtration process.

A vegan diet typically includes vegetables, fruits, beans, grains, plus soy and tofu-based products.

As veganism continues to increase in popularity, there are many companies creating great-quality products to cater to the ever-increasing market. Fry's, Mr Organic and inSpiral create meat-substitute mains, vegan-friendly condiments and dairy-free snacks, which provide different textures and flavours that you might not find in the the staple grains and beans of the diet.

The mock-meat style products are sought after due to their similarity to the genuine article – they generally consist of a chewy texture and are intended to contain the same flavour similarities to the meat they're based on. These substitutes, ranging from meat-free chorizo (Bute Island sells a fantastic variety) to mock bacon, are beneficial to stock up on as they can target those who are eyeing up making the switch to a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle.

Many international food ingredients are hailed for being vegan-friendly while boasting health credentials, too. Fermented foods like sauerkraut, kimchi and miso bean paste are ingredients that many opt for due to their vibrant flavours, but they also promote good gut health and aid digestion. Stocking products like these can cater to vegan customers while providing options for health-conscious consumers as well.

## Dairy-free direction

Vegan cheese, which had a bit of a bad stick for a while, has vastly improved in recent years. Companies like VioLife produce dairy-free cheese which is considered a delicious alternative that are popular with vegans. It's versatile too, with spreadable cheeses, Mozzarella-style and infused-flavours now available.

Dairy-free milk has also seen exponential growth lately, marketing itself not only for those following a vegan diet, but as a healthy and nutritional option as well. Ingredients like coconut, soya and almond are often used to produce the alternative milks, with manufacturers also experimenting with chocolate and strawberry flavours.

## Cruelty-free and connected

A strong social media and web presence is an important tool to increase your shop's stature with free-from shoppers. Incentives like #MeatFreeMonday, for example, which promotes adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet once a week, has a following on Facebook of over 102,000. Awareness campaigns like this one are great to utilise – it's really beneficial to be a part of the conversation. Every Monday you could take to social media to post a photograph of your vegan-friendly products or section, while integrating hashtags and including influential vegans in your posts, with the hope they will share or promote your message.

Labelling is also key to growing a vegan-friendly image. Make sure your free-from and health-food section is prominently signposted and well-categorised. Customers who are new to the dietary switch may be daunted by the products and ingredients that aren't considered household names, so helpful stickers and advice should be readily available. The free-from food market is constantly changing, so make sure that you keep your staff up-to-date with new product additions, and explain the target customer they're intended for.

> "A strong social media and web presence is an important tool to increase your shop's stature with free-from shoppers. Incentives like #MeatFreeMonday, for example, has a following on Facebook of over 102,000"

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# SINGING THE PRAISES OF THE GREAT BRITISH BANGER

## One of Britain's best-known butchers, David Lishman who runs multi award-winning Lishman's Butchers in Ilkley, West Yorkshire, provides an overview of the UK sausage market.

Sausages are one of the most popular meat products in the UK. They are versatile, great value, easy to cook, and are one of the few foods that are fully acceptable at any meal of the day. Take bangers and mash, for example, the ultimate comfort dish which feeds a family of five for less than it costs to buy a pint of beer sold over the 'reclaimed scaffolding timber' bar in any one of the new brewhouses popping up on every secondary high street across the country.

Sausages are homely, reminding us of our childhood when we bought them loose in the butcher's shop, rather than pre-packed from the supermarket shelf. Of course, there are plenty of us still selling these loose!

Even with the constant bad press about the state of the nation's health and food scares – sausages generally are included in most food scares – we Brits still love them, and the history of the sausage is written in folklore.

As with most foods, sausages were made to utilise all the cuts from the animal. We should remember that it wasn't so many decades ago when the population did not have 'full bellies' all the time. Food was less plentiful, more expensive, and the thought of wasting precious protein was never considered.

The pig (to use the main sausage-producing animal as an example) would be fattened on the farm, or in the orchards, or behind the cottage, throughout the summer and early autumn, feeding on roots, apples, and whatever 'swill' there was from the household.

From St Martin's Day, 11th November, the pig slaughter would start. This is still observed in many countries. Often, families in the village would help each other, staggering the kills over weeks, sharing the more perishable products and curing the main cuts. The trim from the curing and some of the cuts were chopped, seasoned and stuffed into the intestine, and the sausage was made.

Nothing was wasted, the blood being collected, seasoned and cooked and made into black pudding, another style of sausage. This still goes on to a degree in mainland Europe, where there is arguably a greater connection with the countryside than there is here. Blutwurst, boudin noir, morcilla, all are examples of blood sausage. Salami is also produced, and is possibly a more favoured sausage over there.

But here in the UK, we enjoy the fresh sausage. If I look back in some of my old butchers' manuals from between the wars, I notice that we haven't changed recipes much in the last 100 years or so.

There are a few that have fallen out of favour and probably waiting for the likes of Heston Blumenthal 'et al' to reinvent them – for example, fresh liver sausage, polony or blood tongue sausage (containing 90lb of hog snouts and eye pieces, 90lb of cured tongues and 15lb of blood). I am also quite fond of the recipe from 1924 for empire sausage, formerly known as German sausage.

The majority of recipes, however, are still made from similar ingredients as they were then. Pork or beef – also a lot of veal was used, but I would guess this was the very young 'bobby calf' veal which we don't see much today – with seasonings of salt, white pepper, nutmeg, ginger etc, and usually bread rusk.

During rationing times, sausages were made to 'go a bit further' and extra bread rusk was added. This often had the effect of them spitting and bursting in the pan, where the phrase 'banger' was coined.

The war and rationing did little good for the desire to eat decent food, and it probably took until the 1980s for sausage to shake off a poor image and once again to be considered a respectable meal to be enjoyed by all.

Sausage categories are divided into roughly three tiers:

1 Value sausage – using cheaper cuts, lower declared meat content, and maximum rusk content.

2 Butchers tier – what I would consider to be the traditional British sausage, with 75-85% meat content, and rusk that gives them a typically softer texture, more associated with breakfast sausage, but also great for other meals.

3 Gourmet/Premium Range – a high meat content sausage of 95% + that is a much firmer and meatier sausage, with more of a harder 'bite' to it.

4 I make no apologies for favouring the butchers sausage. They are soft yet firm, they are light yet filling, and you would probably eat three of these, where you would only eat two of the gourmet ones.

Rusk is a type of dried breadcrumb. It gives the texture we look for and a little flavour, as well as binding quality. I've no doubt that it was only ever introduced to add value, or use up the waste from the bakery next door, but it is now an important ingredient. We don't bother making the value range, but I recognise there is a market for these which needs to be fulfilled.

Gourmet doesn't necessarily mean better – I've tasted some hard and dry shockers with a high meat content. However, this tier of sausage continues to gain market share and, more importantly, the independent retailer is taking some of this share from the supermarket (Kantar World Panel) .

I started my own butcher's shop in 1986 and discovered almost immediately a new trend for the sausage carrying different flavours. It started pretty simply with the addition of fruit (dried is best for the colour) or herbs and spices, and then progressed on to more unusual ingredients. I recall the great Northern Ireland butcher George Mcartney winning the national sausage title one year with his Pork & Banana sausage. We were



fortunate to win the coveted British title 'Champion of Champions' on two occasions with our Pork Chipolatas and a Pork and Fresh Chive sausage.

We also make a range of Continental sausages. I suppose this falls into the gourmet range. About 12 years ago, I was determined not to be drawn into creating recipes for a 'passing fad' that would soon disappear and be long forgotten. It was called 'Gluten Intolerance'. However, to accommodate for these 'fusspots' and also to fulfil a growing demand for the well-travelled consumer, we made a sausage that is recognisable on the continent, and which also were naturally gluten-free: bratwurst, toulouse, Italian fennel, merguez and so on.

I now accept that gluten-free is here to stay and a growing market, so we currently make most of our new and one-off sausages with wheat-free rusk, but in the style of the butcher's range. Ironically, the rusk has been costing more recently than the pork we have put in it, so what was once added to the product to cheapen it is now pushing up the cost, but it is there to achieve the desired style and texture.

The making of good sausage is down to a few basic procedures:

- Using good meat: we try to source pork from gilts (young female pigs). Boar pigs, once they start 'chasing the ladies,' can give an unpleasant smell in their meat known as boar taint. It's a testosterone/teenage thing which may be familiar to people with growing-up sons. It's not always possible to procure just gilts, but sourcing from a good producer is key.

- Lean to fat ratio is around 75:25: fat gives succulence and flavour. Too lean and the sausage will be dry, too fat and the pan will fill with drip. A combination of shoulder and belly works very well.

- Seasonings and spices: use the freshest ones, not those you've had stored in the ingredients cupboard for a year or more. There are spice blenders who will make up your recipe for you, rather than you blending them yourself. This means that you are drawing from the freshest ingredients all the time.

- Production: the mincing and mixing of the meat with the ingredients is paramount to how the sausage binds, and how well it cooks and tastes.

- There is a skill and an art to making consistently good sausage, which only comes with experience and knowledge. We are all still learning.

As the population travels further and reads more food magazines, they gain a taste for far-off flavours. Sausage are the natural food form to carry these tastes and it only takes a global sporting event for a new breed of meat products to be seen on the shelves. This year's Olympic Games were typical of this, with an influx of Brazilian spiced products appearing. This is probably not too unusual in this case, as Brazilian and Latin American flavours are now identified as one of the new food trends, along with authentic Mexican and Korean styles of meals.

Customers in the UK have become more discerning with their choice of food. Where once British food was viewed down the noses of our European counterparts, it is now recognised that this country produces some of the best food, with the greatest variety on the continent. The French may still view any food made or produced outside their own country with suspicion (the Italians view any dish made outside their village with the same suspicion), but the British embrace all flavours and are willing and enthusiastic to try these.

This probably stems from the days of the Empire, when new styles of cooking and flavours were tasted by our traders and military men, and the spices were shipped back to these shores for their enjoyment once they returned.

I believe the next generation of sausage will be a recognisable style. The last few years saw a resurgence of the traditional hot dog. The correct name is the frankfurter, a smoked emulsified sausage, rather than the looser textured English sausage.

I expect this trend to continue, perhaps with more Eastern European sausages being in demand now there is a greater workforce from that region – possibly including a Polish-styled sausage. I would also anticipate more Spanish-style chorizo sausages being in demand. Spanish food is very much en vogue right now, and it would surprise me, seeing the countless tapas bars opening up, if it was not a permanent trend.

But, the main sausage, the best seller by lightyears, will remain the simple British-style pork sausage, which goes down a treat on every occasion and still makes up over 50% of our sales.

## MEET DAVID

David Lishman, who is this year celebrating his landmark 30th anniversary in business, remains one of celebrity TV chef Rick Stein's Food Heroes. He has regularly appeared on television as a meat industry expert on programmes such as Great British Menu and James Martin's Home Comforts series, and as a judge in the BBC's Young Butcher of the Year competition.

David, who has captained to British Butchery team on three occasions, is north-east regional chairman and national vice-chairman of the Butchers Q Guild, which represents 120 award-winning independent butchers across the nation.

> "Five years ago, Lishman's, working in partnership with the county's tourism champions, Welcome to Yorkshire, created Yorkshire's very own signature sausage after a four-month campaign involving county-wide public tastings. The recipe is now being widely used by fellow butchers throughout the UK"



Take stock with our new food and drink round-up

# Franklin & Sons Unveils Lemonade

**Soft drinks company Franklin & Sons has announced an Original Lemonade flavour, intended as a mixer for vodka and other premium spirits.**

Specially sourced Argentinian lemons are used to make Original Lemonade, which is hailed to be one of the highest percentage natural lemon juices on the market, making it a appeal as stand-alone drink option, too.

Justin Horsman, marketing controller at Global Brands said, "Franklin & Sons is a brand rooted in its Victorian heritage and has a passion for original, great tasting drinks. We strive to use the best quality ingredients, specially procured from around the world, in order to deliver a high quality taste.

"We wanted to create a lemonade that stands out as a great serve alone, yet is also brought to life when used as a mixer with premium spirits."

**franklinandsons.co.uk**







# Brown Bag Crisps goes Veggie

**Family-run potato crisp producer Brown Bag has added vegetable crisps to its range.**

Available in a Beetroot, Carrot & Parsnip flavour, the ingredients are gently cooked in sunflower oil and sprinkled with salt before they're sealed in foil-lined bags to keep them fresh.

Viv Lambe, founder of Brown Bag said, "Brown Bag has always been big on flavour, ensuring the delicious snacks are cooked and seasoned to perfection to make them stand out from the crowd, and this newest addition to the family is no exception. As well as being amazingly tasty, the secret method of cooking these delicious veggie crisps means they are a healthier option, containing 30% less fat than many other brands and fewer calories than all other vegetable crisps in the UK market."

The crisps are gluten-free and suitable for vegans.

**brownbagcrisps.co.uk**

# New Autumn Range From Me Too!

**Mediterranean food brand, Me Too! from Ramona's Kitchen, has expanded its selection of products.**

The new range includes frozen falafel bags, which are available in Original Falafel, Sweet Potato Falafel and Spinach and Kale Falafel variants, plus new Turmeric and Smoked options in its hummus range. It has also launched new Crunchy Chickpea snacks, which come in five flavours including Sweet, Smoked Paprika, Miso Salted, Salt & Vinegar and Wasabi.

Ramona Hazan, owner of Me Too! said, "We have always felt at the forefront of innovative Houmous varieties incorporating trendy ingredients with added healthy benefits (like Seaweed Houmous). We pride ourselves on maintaining delicious, moreish, homemade flavours that keep our customers coming back for more. All of our products are made to taste as though they were made in a small kitchen in the Med a few hours before. We create real recipes and use real methods of making the food.

"Our Humous is a three-day process and our falafel is a two-day process; that allows us to guarantee this quality. We are super excited about the crunchy chickpeas, they are a healthy snack that's better than nibbling on a bag of crisps, and this is the perfect time to launch them as 2016 is the International Year of Pulses."

**metoofoods.com**












# Delamere Launches Sheeps' Milk Products

**Delamere Dairy, known for its goats' milk products, has expanded its offering with the launch of a Natural Sheep Yogurt and Sheep Cheese. The new sheep milk range offers a source of protein, vitamins and minerals and contains almost 50 percent more protein than cows' and goats' milk.**

Made from milk sourced from a single herd in Lancashire, the dairy's Natural Sheep Yogurt will appeal to consumers looking to add a protein boost to their diets. The Sheep Cheese is similar to Cheddar in texture and comes hand-packed in 150g wedges.

Ed Salt, managing director of Delamere Dairy said, "The benefits associated with sheep milk products are very similar to our goats' milk range, as well as being a great source of protein, which is very topical at the moment. We're pleased to offer a wider range of choice to our consumers looking for naturally nutritious alternatives to cows' milk."

**delameredairy.co.uk**







# Mr Organic Launches Vegan Mayonnaise

**Mr Organic has launched a new Free From Mayo to sit alongside the rest of its free-from range.**

The jarred mayonnaise is egg-free and vegan-friendly, and partners well with chips, sandwiches and baked potatoes.

Jemma Greenwood, marketing manager at Mr Organic said, "For Mr Organic, it's about making food that everyone can enjoy, whilst consistently delivering on fantastic taste and quality.

"With a growing demand and very little on the market, it was important to create the perfect mayonnaise for all of our customers, whether they're vegan, gluten-free or simply looking for a lighter option. Now no one has to go without!"

**mr-organic.com**




# Corndale Releases Chilli Chorizo

**The first Northern Irish chorizo-maker Corndale Charcuterie has launched a chilli variety of its smoked product, which features pork shoulder from the company's own herd of free-range Saddleback pigs and cayenne pepper, oregano and fennel.**

In addition to its two chorizos, Corndale is currently developing a salami and coppa-cured products.

The business was launched in early 2016 by Alastair Crown, a part-time pig farmer, and is based at a farm in Limavady in County Londonderry.

Alastair Crown, founder said, "The chilli chorizo is a response to chefs already using my chorizo for another and spicier variety. There's been tremendous feedback from restaurants, particularly in the Londonderry area, for the recently-launched chorizo. It means they no longer have to depend on chorizos from abroad. I've been working with them on different varieties, including my new chilli chorizo."

**corndalefarm.com**

# Heavenly Organics Brought to UK

**Empire Bespoke Foods has been appointed the exclusive distributor of ethical American brand Heavenly Organics, launch its Cocoa Honeys to the UK market.**

Coming in bite sized discs, they offer are a cocoa-rich alternative to chocolate, and are filled with pure wild white honey. The three flavours included in the range are Double Dark, Mint and Peanut, all of which are GMO, gluten, dairy, sugar and soy-free and suitable for vegetarians.

Nick Thomas, sales & marketing director, "Heavenly Organics have skilfully blended flavour, goodness and ethics to develop Cocoa Honeys. This unique, healthier confectionery brand is a must-stock for retailers in the US, which we hope UK retailers will emulate so they can tap into the consumer trends of switching to healthier snacking alternatives.

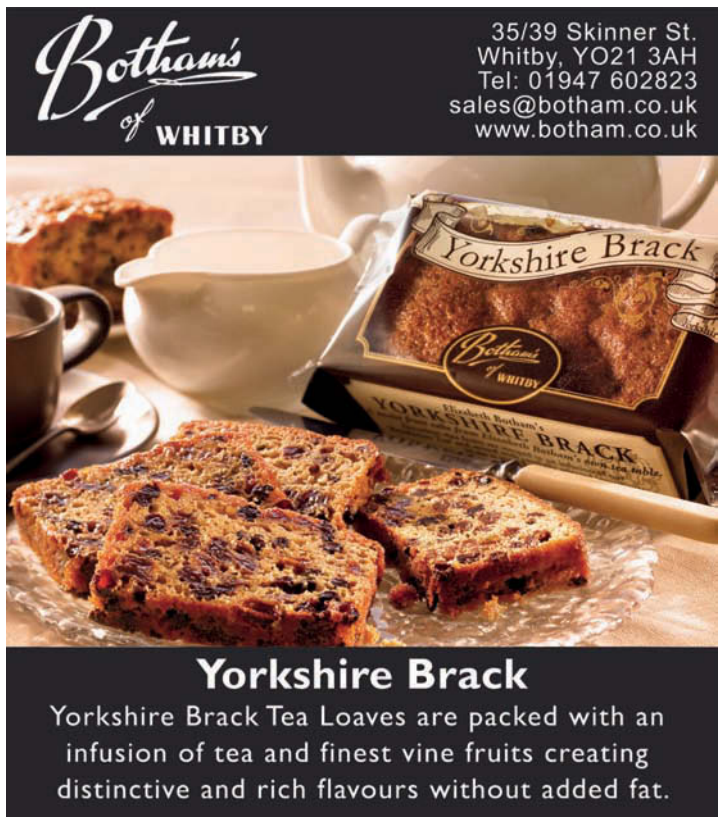
"Empire Bespoke Foods shares many values with Heavenly Organics, so combining this with our passion for innovative foods from around the world, we expect tjhat the range, which has incredible shelf appeal, we expect will change the face of confectionery in health food stores and multiples alike."

**empirebespokefoods.com**











# THE INTERVIEW: NICHOLAS RODDA

## Cornish pride and a sense of stewardship keep the man at the helm of Rodda's excited about the future

Making Cornish clotted cream is steeped in the family history, and I am proud to be the fifth generation of the family to work in the business. I planned to go away to university, but then an opportunity arose within the company for the summer and I decided to stay and gain experience in every aspect of the business – from helping to produce the clotted cream to delivering it in the vans – which gave me a proper grounding in the industry and stood me in good stead. Around the dinner table every evening my father used to talk about his day at work, and I always thought that it sounded like a really exciting place. We were all fans of good, homemade food, but the focus was always on clotted cream; my grandfather used to say to me, "if you don't eat good clotted cream, you don't eat" – so we always made sure we made good clotted cream!

Over the generations we've worked to improve elements of the cream, but the quality and consistency have always remained the same. In the 1940s my grandather brought in refrigeration, electricity and gas followed, and then we changed from cooking the cream over hot water to baking it in a hot air oven – it must always be better than it was before, but maintain its familiarity. It must be just how people remember it.

You've got to have a very strong set of values, ones which you've set out very early on and stick to. You've also got to be able to see the big picture – what you're trying to achieve and how you're going to get there. You also need the impatience and enthusiasm to make that a reality today, and the drive to put your thoughts into action. You also need to be able to take some knocks, and if something's not going right to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and carry on with a different tack. Pride in what you're doing is key, particularly if you're doing something difficult or are putting your name to it. When you get out of bed in the morning, you've got to make sure you do a really good job.

Throughout the years I've learned that you need to be yourself. You have your values and must not copy those of others. You need to do what's right for your business and find your own way forward. Sometimes people will tell you that can't be done, but you need to find that pioneering spirit inside you to make it happen; it may not happen precisely how you envisaged, but you've got to be determined to find a way to meet your goal.

I've made mistakes during my time here. One which stands out in particular is not having done enough research into a market we were hoping to get into, and as a result we weren't quite prepared and had to revise our packaging and forecast in line with that. For me, it's very important to not be frightened to step out and make a mistake, and to have the courage to step forward again. The most important thing is that your business continues to move forward. I love all the great innovations that are going on in all the counties throughout the UK. Through provenance and history, many counties have foods which are synonymous with their location. There's such a great consumer hunger for regional foods, and it's certainly a very exciting time for the food industry in the UK.

I want to make Cornwall proud, so as a business operating out of the county, I want to make sure that I'm helping to put Cornish food on the map. I want people to be pleased when they see our clotted cream on an airline or at The Ritz.

## QUICKFIRE QUESTIONS

### STANDING OUT

**We've had a bit of a head start because we are an iconic product of our region, and our great history built over the past five generations aids this as well. However, I think that your products need to be memorable – when people taste and enjoy them, the product has to resonate. One's product really needs to stand up to the occasion. We're thankful that Cornish clotted cream is eaten on lots of special occasions, and we frequently receive letters from people who have enjoyed it.**

### FAMILY

**My great uncle Eric and my father Alfred inspired me hugely. They were the fourth and third generation in the business, and it was their work ethos and focus on the quality of the product and getting it out to consumers in the UK and beyond which really stands out to me. When my grandfather was 16 years old in the 1920s, he was sent to London with a few jars of cream in his overcoat pocket and told to get some new customers. We had a load of cream here on our farm in Cornwall and needed some new customers to buy it. He had never left the county before, so took a leap of faith and went out to get what was needed. He had conviction in the product and let it speak for itself.**

### THE FUTURE

**There are some really exciting times ahead for us. Over the coming years we're looking forward to strengthening the relationships with our farmers, and working together into the future with mutual benefit. Over the next five to 10 years the world is to become our oyster – there are lots of markets we're yet to explore. We also plan to develop our range extensions, for example our custard and butter. There's lots of stuff going on, and lots of people out there who still need to discover Cornish clotted cream!**

> "One's product really needs to stand up to the occasion. I want to make Cornwall proud, and to make sure that I'm helping to put Cornish food on the map"

## MAKING IT WORK

**There's a responsibility within a family business to make sure that it is kept safe for future generations.** Within my role in the business, I'm not thinking about a three or a five-year horizon, I'm thinking about a 20-year horizon. I'm always planning well ahead of what we need day to day – I think that's a distinct difference between a family business and a non-family business. There's a sense of stewardship; I'm the fifth generation of the family to be in this role after the company was created by Eliza-Jane in 1890, so it's very much a privilege to work within the business, to improve it, and to pass it onto the next generation in an even better state than when I received it.

**Each generation evolves what they were given by the previous generation, and builds on those foundations.** Since I've been here, we've redeveloped the site to meet our customers' needs in the future, we've rebranded our packaging to communicate our values and make sure that we identify and communicate with our customers, and then we signed up a direct supply group to supply our milk. We now work with local farmers within a 25-mile radius who supply rich, creamy milk into the creamery. In doing this, we're helping them to work towards building a strong future for their business, too. It's important that our customers know exactly what we're all about. None of this is possible without great people, and the skill and commitment of the team here are vital ingredients in the business.

**There are many elements to running a business, and the most important one of all is staff.** You have to do what's best for them even when it's difficult. You have to be aware also that you're representing a community, both within the company and the local area. It's a case of taking personal ownership, and never accepting second best. Our product has to be perfect; it's got my name on it!

# MEET THE PRODUCER

## Lovers of biscuits and canapés alike will love The Great British Biscotti Company's unique take on an Italian classic

If you're looking for an innovative combination of homegrown and international, traditional and modern, then look no further. The Great British Biscotti Company has made great strides into the fine food sphere, largely thanks to the food-loving partnership of Rebecca Starling and Paul Rostand at its head. Founder Rebecca was working in catering when she spotted the gap in the market for a truly versatile canape base and came across New Forest Biscotti, a kitchen table operation run by a local housewife, which she purchased and evolved into the modern business which stands today.

Rebecca's former role stood the brand in good stead, as she was able to recognise that versatility was something sadly missing from a lot of snacking and canape options available in the market. With this in mind, she set out to produce a product that could work well in all manner of situations, from impromptu snacking to more formal party situations. "All of our savoury biscotti are great as a nibble to have with a glass of wine or beer," she says, "but they also work brilliantly as croutons in soups and salads, as cheese biscuits and as canapé bases – they're a great alternative to the










blinis and mini toasts which you see an awful lot of these days."

### A modern classic

Modernising an Italian classic to meet the demands of today's consumers was key to the brand. "Traditional Italian biscotti is very hard and needs to be dunked in coffee before it can be eaten, so we decided to produce something which is a little softer and can be eaten as more of an everyday biscuit," says Rebecca. "We want to create excitement, innovation and lots of flavours, and move this product forward into today's market."

"Sweet Biscotti has, of course, been around for years as a traditional Italian product, containing nuts and sometimes chocolate, but we wanted to expand the range to incorporate exciting flavour combinations, such as Honey, Lemon & Ginger which we developed for people to have with tea." Rebecca explains, "Coffee drinkers are given a biscotti with their coffee, but tea drinkers don't get anything, so we introduced a variant for tea drinkers too to stop people arguing over who got the biscuit!"

The producer also satisfies shoppers with more traditional tastes with their chocolate and nut variants: "We also created Belgian Chunky Chocolate, Almond – which is packed with whole Californian Almonds – and Coffee & Walnut, which combines ground roasted coffee beans with walnut pieces," she explains. "They really are delicious!"

### Versatility is key

The flavours of the savoury biscotti have been chosen to be both delicious on their own and to match well with a range of other ingredients; the team was keen to get away from the bland, ubiquitous carriers for flavoured toppings seen elsewhere in the market. "On the savoury side," explains Rebecca, "we have three flavours: Parmesan & Fennel, which is great with smoked fish; Chorizo & Parmesan, delicious with onion marmalade and Manchego; and Indian Spice, which works brilliantly with raita and mango chutney – to name but a few great flavour combinations!"

Foodie consumers and retailers alike have welcomed the innovative new products with open arms. "The range has been phenomenally popular so far," Rebecca says. "Nobody's seen them before, so people have been very excited by them. They've been shortlisted in The Caterer's Food Excellence Awards Final, which is very exciting for us. Everyone who's tried them has loved them, particularly at the recent lunch! show, where people were telling us that our biscotti were the best things they'd tasted at the event – this was great to hear!"

### Backing Britishness

With Britishness baked into the very name of The Great British Biscotti Company, it's no surprise that "Britishness is incredibly important to the brand and the public is relishing the variety of great British food on offer." For this company, the challenge at hand is to develop new exciting flavour combinations for the increasingly discerning UK consumer. It's not only Brits who have shown an interest in what we do. We've had a lot of interest from International buyers and consumers who are loving our Britishness, both within Europe and further afield. Ultimately, we want to be a local British company producing British products for everybody."

### Looking forward

The future's looking bright for this biscotti business: "We've only been going since March, so we're currently developing our POS. We're working on display boxes for retailers, as well as a plan for in-store tastings which we're looking forward to running. We're working very closely with wholesalers to ensure that our customers get what they need from us, and look forward to developing these relationships in the future.

"We also have lots of plans for new flavours in the pipeline, lots of both sweet and savoury additions in 2017. There are going to be really fun new varieties with lots of strong flavours and textural additions, and also some non-cheese flavours such as garlic and herbs, and a few different chilli options."








# STORE CUPBOARD ESSENTIALS

## A well-stocked cupboard of all the basic essentials is the cornerstone to any good meal. John Bensalhia looks at a selection of notable must-haves from Cornwall to the Caribbean

It wasn't Old Mother Hubbard's day when she found that the cupboard was bare. A well-stocked cupboard is crucial for everyone. While new, exciting ranges of food tempt the tastebuds, a back to basics food cupboard forms the backbone of any good meal as Lindsey Grey, The Food Company's marketing and events manager, explains.

"At The Food Company, we know our customers love trying new products and our artisan ranges ensure an ever changing array of sauces, marinades, rubs and preserves. But despite a voracious appetite for all that is new and exciting, we realise that without the store cupboard essentials to back them up we are not offering a complete service."

"So we dedicate a certain amount of shelf space to basics, including flour, sugar, butter, oil, preserves, salts, peppers and herbs and spices. We've looked at favourite recipes and realised that there is no point in selling the best steak mince for miles if you are going to send customers to another shop for the cumin to make a chilli with. Seasonal changes to this are minimal, with the addition of more salad dressings and marinades in the summer to cater for BBQs etc and a wider selection of pulses for casseroles in winter."

Here are 10 notable store cupboard foods and ingredients, along with some examples of each type.

### SALT IT OUT

For the ultimate pinch of salt, let's look at two notable British regions.

Cornish Sea Salt is famed for its fresh taste which boasts over 60 natural occurring trace elements. The salt is harvested from water which is in a protected marine zone, meaning a high level of water purity, hence the freshness. The original version of Cornish Sea Salt is available in both tub and pouch formats, and there are also other special products available containing other flavours like chilli, garlic, and lemon and thyme sea salt.

Moving north, Hebridean sea water, heat and time come together to form delightful pure white crunchy Hebridean Sea Salt. The Pure Original Hebridean Sea Salt creates a fine and instant flavour for any savoury dish (again available in pouch and tub formats). For an extra smoky element, you won't go wrong with the Peat Smoked version. The local peat, cut and dried on the surrounding moors, is smoked in the company's traditional Hebridean smokehouse to add a unique peaty sensation. Meanwhile, the Seaweed Infused salt is made with top local seaweed which is collected and dried to form a mild peppery flavour which is the perfect yin to the sea salt's yang.

Lindsey Grey of The Food Company says that while trends change, there are still notable examples of good salts. "Trends come and go. For instance Himalayan salt is very popular at the moment, but our favourite is smoked sea salt from just down the road in Maldon."

### PEPPER BIG

Not to be sneezed at, the right pepper can also add a distinct extra flavour to dishes. A good pepper port of call is Salthouse Peppermongers.

The Peppermongers side of the business offers a selection of fine peppers famed for strong flavours. One such example is the Tellicherry Black Pepper. Regarded as a top quality black pepper worldwide, Tellicherry Garbled Special Extra Bold whole black pepper is organically grown, having been harvested and sun-dried in the hills of the Western Ghats, Kerala, India. This offering allows for a dense, fruity sensation thanks to its rich oils.

Indonesian Long Pepper contains a slow-burning spicy, floral taste. It's a good choice to be used with soup or as an ingredient in pâtés or terrines. Another notable product is Grains Of Paradise, which comprises pyramid-shaped grains that originate from the same food family as ginger. Also known as Alligator Pepper, although not a true vine pepper, it's still a worthwhile buy, offering a fresh and vivid taste of ginger.

### SPICE OF LIFE

Traditional spices still have their place in the cupboard, but the lesser known ones are fast becoming popular choices. Lindsey Grey of The Food Company comments: "As well as stocking a traditional selection of seasonings, we also carry less well known spices such as zatir and sumac which are appearing more and more in recipes from chefs






such as Ottolenghi and other middle eastern cookery."

Lindsey adds that the same pattern has also applied to dried herbs, as the more conventional types are making way for more exotic examples. "Dried herbs which can now easily be purchased fresh such as parsley, tarragon and rosemary are being replaced with more exotic flavours such as harissa and ras el hanout, and we keep an eye on cooking trends to ensure that we offer what our more adventurous customers might be seeking."

Meanwhile, EHL Ingredients has launched a new range of international herb and spice blends from Asia, the Americas, the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East, with some from unexpected and unusual regions.

## THE RIGHT STUFFING

With Christmas on the way, one vital resident in the cupboard is stuffing. With that in mind, EHL Ingredients introduced two new stuffing products in 2016.

"Earlier this year, EHL also launched two new organic stuffing mixes," says Tasneem Backhouse. "Perfect for speciality food retailers to stock for shoppers looking for organic ingredient blends for Christmas, as well as for roast dinners with a twist. The first is a Middle Eastern style organic sultana, lemon and spice stuffing: a mix of juicy sultanas, breadcrumbs, a burst of citrus lemon with aromatic fennel, coriander, ginger and black pepper. With a distinctive Mediterranean flavour, the second addition is an organic garlic, tomato and herb stuffing: a blend of organic breadcrumbs, garlic, tomato, spices fennel, cumin, black pepper, parsley and oregano."

## FULL OF BEANS

Baked beans make for a great accompaniment to many meals such as toast, jacket potatoes and fry ups.

One of the current notable trends is a greater move towards organic baked beans. Suma, for example, has come up with its own take on baked beans organic style, using tomatoes and fresh onions for flavour.

Another popular product is Whole Earth organic baked beans. It's made to a special recipe: in addition to conventional healthy ingredients like organic plum tomatoes and haricot beans, the finished result also contains a winning set of extra flavours such as cider vinegar, apple juice and a slew of herbs and spices for an extra kick.

## VINEGAR GO

Organic is also a key watchword for vinegar. Aspall's Organic Balsamic Vinegar is a great instance of its kind, successfully melding sweet vinegar and a sharper, bitter flavour to create a strong addition to many dishes. It's available in both container and bottle format, and is suitable for coeliacs and vegans.

Organic apple cider vinegar is also doing the rounds, providing a healthy accompaniment to meals such and a refreshing apple taste. Higher Nature's Organic Apple Cider Vinegar makes for a good twist of zesty apple flavour, while being low in acidity (5% acetic acid).

## TAKE STOCK

Make a stock warm welcome with Atkins and Potts. This company offers a range of tasty stocks in beef, chicken and vegetable flavour. All of these are delicious companions to dishes such as casseroles, risottos, soups and stir fries. The stocks use the best of British ingredients to bring together a rich and flavoursome experience.

Kents Kitchen is also home to a good choice of stocks and stock pots, including the key flavours such as beef and chicken. Gluten-free, these are fine choices to go with roast meals and stews.

## THERE'S THE RUB

Rubs are brilliant additions to food, and an unbeatable source of eclectic and tasty products is The Food Rub Company.

Maintaining the popular trend of using inspiration from around the world, The Food Rub Company boasts a striking collection of products that can make memorable dishes with little fuss. An added bonus is that the rubs are mad from natural ingredients and are free of artificial additives. Again, gluten-free, these rubs can be added to vegetables, meats and fish dishes – either for snacks or for main meals.

Among the rubs are the Moroccan Meat Rub, the New York Steak Rub, the Louisiana Fish Rub and the Spicy Seafood Rub – available in both sachets and tins.

## PRESERVE YOUR PLACE

It's not just the savoury goodies that take centre stage in the cupboard. Sweet items are also important choices, and these include preserves.

For a dash of luxury, The Artisan Kitchen works a treat with a broad range of preserves including jams, marmalades and curds. The brand sells a welcome mix of styles and flavours that range from Raspberry Chocolate Jam to Sweet Orange & Lemongrass Marmalade. For a taste of Seville, there are also various options of marmalade such as Orange Sea Buckthorn and Orange Seville Gin.

From Seville to Dartmoor: Clare's Preserves is an award-winning artisan producer of sweet and savoury treats that include Pink Grapefruit Marmalade, Spiced Damson Chutney and Mulled Cranberry 'Extra' Jelly.

## FLOUR POWER

Whether making breads, cakes or pasta, flour has cemented its place in the storage cupboard. For the ultimate in organic flour, speciality miller Shipton Mill is one of the best known. Whether for breads or cakes, Shipton Mill has risen up to cater for all tastes.

A bunch of flours? Without a doubt. Strong white and wholemeal flour. Seeded white organic flour for those tasty seeded breads and rolls. Chestnut flour for crepes and other sweets such as cakes. The list is long, and also includes gluten-free and vegetarian/vegan alternatives.




## STOCK CHECK




### MR LEE'S HONG KONG STREET BEEF NOODLES

An award-winning gourmet instant cup noodle with six oriental flavours. Certified gluten-free and low in sugar.

**mrleesnoodles.com**




### CURRY ON COOKING TIKKA MASALA CURRY KIT

Suitable for vegans and free-from sugar, gluten, dairy, additives, nuts and yeast.

**curryoncooking.com**




### PEPPERMONGERS TELLICHERRY BLACK PEPPER

The highest quality black pepper in the world, this is hand-harvested and sun-dried in the hills of Kerala.

**salthouseandpeppermongers.com**




### ISLE OF SKYE SEA SALT

Produced entirely naturally so you enjoy all the flavour and beneficial trace minerals that the sea contains.

**Isleofskyeseasalt.co.uk**




### MUTTI CHOPPED TOMATOES

An award-winning store cupboard must-have from Italy.

**mutti-parma.com**




### ACETOMODENA CONDIMENTO ORO

A supreme balsamic, containing cooked grape must aged for six years.

**acetomodena.it**




### AVLAKI EXTRA VIRGIN ORGANIC OLIVE OIL

An oil which is exceptionally subtle on the palate with long lasting afternotes.

**oliveoilavlaki.com**




### TASTE COLLECTIV HARISSA

Warm earthy spices and ancho chillies refreshed with zingy mint.

**tastecollectiv.com**




### CAPSICANA BRAZILIAN CHILLI & COCONUT COOK SAUCE

This sauce features frutuscens chillies and is based on the classic Brazilian dish 'Moqueca'.

**capsicana.co.uk**




### DON GAUCHO CHIMI CHURRI

This best seller brings to your plate piquant pleasures, along with awesome aromas of parsley and oregano.

**don-gaucho.com**

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# VIVA L'ITALIA

## As a nation, Britons are captivated by Italian food. *Speciality Food* shares the products to stock now

From a refreshing, silky-soft ball of burrata to spicy, spreadable 'nduja, Italian cuisine exudes class, flavour, pride and artisanal care and consideration. Its plethora of flavours captured the British palate a long time ago, but the enthusiasm for Italian flavours continues to grow exponentially. In fact, a study of 2,000 people which was conducted earlier this year, commissioned by Welsh Lamb strangely enough, found that Italian was the second most popular cuisine amongst the British, just behind our own.

Consumers are flocking to Italian delis and markets, and they're not solely on the look-out for storecupboard favourites risotto rice and tagliatelle. The current 'foodie movement' has ushered in a customer with an insatiable appetite for the unmistakeable flavours of Italy. Plus, the Mediterranean diet is consistently advocated as one of the healthiest lifestyles around – there's a lot to love about the food.

### Know your pasta

It doesn't get much more Italian than pasta and sauce, which is something Malcolm Pullan, UK commercial director for pasta company Garofalo and also the managing director of Specialist Foods Ltd, the company that handles Grangusto sauces in the UK. Malcolm puts the enduring appeal of pasta in the UK down to its versatile nature and says, "It's easy to cook and relatively quick to produce a filling and tasty meal that's not complicated to create. Many different dishes can be created from something that's made with just flour and water. There's still a lot to learn about pasta. Like bread, good pasta doesn't need to be smothered with lots of sauce or fillings – premium pasta tastes delicious simply served with good olive oil and seasoning. It's all about understanding that the pasta is the champion of the dish and not just a carrier for sauce."

Shapes play a pivotal role in the UK consumer's pasta choices, admits Malcolm. He says, "Fusilli is the most popular shape in the UK and has been for the last few years. Previous to the rise in popularity of fusilli, penne was the best-seller in the UK. It's hard to know exactly why fusilli has become the most popular shape in recent years, however it's a great shape for holding thick sauces and ensures that you get an even sauce to pasta ratio in every bite. It's also a fun shape for families to introduce pasta to their children and it's quite adaptable for recipes."

The question of the Italians' relationship with dry pasta has to be asked, if the British are continuously following suit. Malcolm says, "Let's say that dried pasta is for everyday consumption, while fresh pasta is seen as something for special celebrations. There are two types of fresh, filled and non-filled. For the first, Italians would use a simple sauce or condiment to enjoy the filling, such as extra virgin olive oil and a bit of Parmesan, for the non-filled the sauces and condiments would be the same as with dried pasta."

Which segues us onto the multi-faceted subject of Italian sauce, part of the holy alliance of Italian ingredients. Malcolm explains the breadth of interesting flavours behind the Grangusto sauce brand, saying, "The sauces and creams are producer by Finagricola, one of Italy's leading producers of fruit and vegetables. All the tomatoes and vegetables are grown by Finagricola in the Piana del Sele, one of the most



### ALDO'S TOP CHEESE PICKS

- **STRACCHINO:** It's very popular among our customers – we can't order enough. It's a wet, light and spreadable cheese and tastes fantastic on its own, on a simple crostini or inside a piadina
- **BUFFALO MOZZARELLA:** Normal mozzarella often isn't much to shout about, but buffalo has the most amazing texture with a super creamy taste
- **TRUFFLE PECORINO:** An absolute favourite. Truffle-infused cheese is often a winner in our shop but the Truffle Pecorino from L'Antica Cascina is something from another world









fertile areas of Italy, with a long tradition in produce cultivation. It prides itself in being positively different from the other sauce manufacturers, because the story of the sauces doesn't begin with the arrival of the raw material, but from the seed. From this point to harvesting by hand, they carefully control the process in a way that preserves intact all the valuable nutritional characteristics, along with the intense taste of the main ingredients, which are the vegetables and tomatoes within each sauce."

What makes the sauces appeal to time-limited British consumers who want a taste of Italy on their plate? Malcom says, "The sauces are stir-in so they need no further cooking, just heating and adding to the pasta. All of them are suitable for vegans and coeliacs, and none of the range contain any artificial sweeteners to boost the flavour. It all comes from the high concentration of tomatoes and vegetables in the recipe."

## Italian inspiration

Aldo Mazzocco is the CEO and founder of Bellavita, an ambassador of the Italian food and drink which holds four trade shows throughout the year, showcasing the best products in the business. It also has an e-commerce shop, which brings favourite picks from the Bellavita Expo and sells them on an online platform, to be delivered to Londoners hungry for Italian food. Aldo has a vast amount of knowledge when it comes to the country's cuisine, and he has a deep-seated understanding of the British demand for Italian food.

He feels that British consumers are becoming more discerning with their food choices and believes that Italian-themed casual dining restaurant chains, supermarkets and



television programmes have helped with the idea of Italian food. "The days of having an Italian meal come in the shape of a bowl of spaghetti bolognese or a pizza are long gone, and it's now become a much more sophisticated business," he says. "Pasta has come a long way. It's no longer all about one-size-fits-all pasta; the current consumer is equipped with the names and uses of different shapes, and is willing to spend more to buy higher-quality ranges. The quality of wheat, method of production, heritage of producers and cooking suggestions all play a huge part. In our shop, we have a selection of exceptional pasta, for example La Molisana's Speghetto Quadrato, which is a square-ended pasta. We have realised that the most successful new product these days is authenticity. Consumers are constantly asking for it and seeking better-quality options, especially with their storecupboard essentials like pasta, oil and tinned tomatoes, which have a strong place in the market."

Due to his close working relationship with Italian producers and businesses, Aldo has his finger on the pulse of trends and developments emerging and witnesses first-hand how consumers react to them. He believes there's a lot to be excited about at the moment and says, "Regional food is receiving lots of attention. Consumers are seeking to purchase an experience, rather than a product. They're learning the importance of matching the right pasta with the right sauce, cooking from scratch and pairing it with a suitable wine – it's exactly what happens in Italy. Consumers are interested



## DELI MUST HAVES...

### Helen Lenarduzzi, buyer at London's Lina deli

**WHAT TO STOCK**

As an historic Italian delicatessen, I would say that are three things we have become most famous for over our 70 or so years. Cured meats are obviously key – Italy produces so many varieties and we do our best to reflect as many regions as possible in our offering. It isn't sufficient to have the most famous, such as Prosciutto Di Parma, Salame Milano and so on. We think it's just as essential to stock the lesser-known varieties, like 'nduja from Calabria, lardo, ventricina and finocchiona to name a few. The same can be said of our cheese selection, which encompasses the staples, but we also source many unusual varieties like the Ubriaco cheeses that are submerged in wine for several months during the maturation phase. Our fresh, homemade pasta really is a linchpin of the business. We have a dedicated pasta chef that produces filled ravioli and extruded pasta every morning. There has been an uninterrupted tradition of pasta-making on-site ever since the shop first opened, and customers regularly regale us with their memories of eating it over the decades.

**TOP SELLERS**

The counters are busting with delicious items, but the top sellers are still the classics like Parmigiano Reggiano, Prosciutto Di Parma, olives and baby artichokes. Whereas once upon a time you would have to travel to a specialist deli like ours to buy these products, they are obviously now available in supermarkets, however we remain unique in the freshness and quality that we provide. Nothing








compares to the flavours you get from freshly-sliced, wafer-thin prosciutto; the pre-packed plastic trays found in supermarkets just don't come close!

**SEASONALITY**

We're gearing up for Christmas now, which will see a sudden influx of hundreds of types of panettone, panforte, nougat and other seasonal specialities synonymous with an Italian Christmas. There are certain items that just aren't produced in Italy during the summer months, so we will generally have fewer varieties of chocolate and confectionery during July and August, but will increase the levels of antipasto as people start having more barbecues and picnics. Certain products are produced at different times of the year, such as olive oils, artichokes and tinned San Marzano tomatoes. What people eat is influenced by the seasons and the products in the shop reflect that. Sales of truffles and truffle-based products are highest in the winter, for instance. Post-Christmas, people start eating more frugally and we sell more beans, rice and polenta. At Easter people shake off the post-Christmas guilt and start allowing themselves more indulgences, just in time for the arrival of the traditional Italian Easter cakes called Colomba and enormous chocolate eggs.

**CHEESE**

I think a festive cheeseboard should contain no more than three or four varieties and I like to opt for a range of styles and textures. If it were my dinner party I would include the Vacche Rosse Parmigiano Reggiano, which is an exceptional Parmigiano made with the milk of the Reggiana cow. Its nutty, fruity and grassy flavour is richer than most Parmigiano and has a creamier texture despite a longer ageing process. Alongside that, I'd serve our creamy Gorgonzola that's so smooth that it needs to be scooped rather than sliced. We've recently added a new cheese from the Veneto region called stravacco, which would fit the bill perfectly – it's sweet and buttery with just the right level of saltiness to leave you craving more.



in the passion and heritage behind products – supermarkets don't offer such information and their Italian ingredients are produced in large quantities. People want to reignite this connection with nature and provenance and have an awareness of what they're eating. Free-from products are very popular, especially gluten-free pasta and flours. Among standard dried pasta, Spaghetto Quadrato and orecchiette from Puglia are amongst weekly top sellers. Pecorino truffle will be a big trend, as people are becoming increasingly interested in luxury foodstuffs."

And what products should deli owners or buyers be aware of? "Prosecco has grown 47% in popularity the last year alone," he says. "We sell quite a fair amount, and iconic Italian Prosecco brand Villa Sandi is the top seller. Wines are popular among our customers. We have a good selection of wines from small producers that truly deserve attention, as they are excellent. Mortadella, which is a cured, smoked sausage from Bologna, gourmet chocolate and spreads, as well as artisanal patisserie biscuits are all in high demand, as well as truffle items and olive oils." When it comes to producers, Aldo lists, "La Molisana for pasta, Caseificio Poggiocastro for cheese, L'Antica Cascina for cheese, Toscobosco for truffle and Loison for panettone."



## **DELI** MUST HAVES...

### Steve Turvill, director of Limoncello in Cambridge

**WHAT'S YOUR MUST-STOCK PRODUCT?**
Boscaiola olives from a company called Sapori D'Italia. I think it's fair to say these olives have the power to change people into olive lovers – there's just something about their meaty texture, zingy marinade and peppery and garlicky finish.

**WHAT ARE YOUR TOP SELLERS?**
Fennel salami has been building in reputation over the years – it's soft and succulent and makes you want more and more. As well as San Daniele, we are stocking Spianata salami and a delicious, juicy smoked Italian ham from Veroni – we buy these direct from Italy.

**IS YOUR STOCK AFFECTED BY SEASONALITY?**
Yes – we specialise in panettone, which take up a lot of space, so at the moment our storage is at maximum capacity – we're even hanging them from the ceiling!

**YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD REGION OF ITALY?**
I'll probably get into trouble for this, but it has to be Sicily. The flavours seem to be more intense and a little more rustic from the south.

**YOUR TOP ITALIAN CHEESES FOR WINTER?**
We love Gorgonzola Dolce – this year I'd like to do a whole wheel and scoop it out in all its delicious creaminess. For more delicate palates, there's a pasteurised sheeps' milk cheese with black truffle from Sicily, and another sheeps' milk mild cheese matured in grape, which is a must.




> "What people eat is influenced by the seasons and the products in the shop reflect that. For instance, sales of truffles and truffle-based products are highest in the winter"

# **APERITIVO** TIME



## Prosecco and Aperol Spritz are both having a moment while negronis are proving ever-more popular. We discover what's next for Italian alcoholic thirst-quenchers

Italy is world-famous for its wine. From its deliciously crisp Pinot Grigios to its dry and tart Chiantis, its wine-making heritage is awe-inspiring, before we get started on prolific Prosecco. However, it's important not to ignore the other fantastic-quality tipples that originate from the country, especially with the art of mixology becoming increasingly popular.

British consumers are increasingly sniffing out fresher-tasting, more vibrantly-coloured and sophisticated Italian beverages, you only have to look at the meteoric rise of Aperol Spritz, undeniably the tipple of choice for in-the-know bar goers in Britain. A strong marketing campaign helped bolster its position on the UK drinks market, but a more curious, educated consumer definitely helped propel it into becoming an established household name.

But, there are myriad examples of other, lesser-known Italian alcoholic drinks, cocktails and apéritifs that are being given another lease of life. The classic lemoncello was once perceived as a souvenir item, but there are artisans experimenting with it to good effect nowadays. It's also helpful to keep a close eye on prevalent cocktail trends, so you can stock the ingredients and mixers accordingly. The Negroni cocktail is currently a hugely popular option, and is made with vermouth, Campari and gin, and usually garnished with a piece of orange peel.

We talk to forward-thinking producers of Italian drinks with a British spin to get the scoop on the nation's artisan drinking movement:



**Cosmo Caddy, owner of Devon Distillery, the producer of the UK's first and only version of grappa, talks us through the much-loved Italian beverage:**

"Grappa, and Dappa, is not always for the timid, it's usually enjoyed after dinner with an espresso as a digestif. Dappa has a grassy nose and an earthy palate, it's young yet complex. In basic terms, I say it's somewhere between a brandy and vodka – there's grape notes but they're clean and unoaked.

"We have stayed very true to Italian methods, in fact, I was taught by a ninth-generation distiller in Italy and with his help I worked with an Italian manufacturer to custom-produce our equipment. I even try and follow my mentor's advice of only distilling with a glass of prosecco in one hand, although English sparkling wine is more local!

"We use English grape skins that have been used in red wine production. We currently source from Sharpham, but also from Bolney Wine Estate, Denbies, Plumpton College, Three Choirs, Bagborough Winery, Gusbourne and Biddenden Vineyard, with more joining each year. My grandfather started Sharpham vineyard and I was picking grapes aged four; wine, grapes and the wonderful Devon surroundings are in my blood. Everyone is making gin these days and the UK wine industry is growing so much in volume and quality, it was only a matter of time before someone started this.

"Those that already know of grappa were amazed by the quality and are big fans. Those less used to digestifs took a little more educating, however once explaining the appeal and letting them enjoy it in the right setting, they were quickly converted. Also, our cocktail recipes are helping people become better acquainted with Dappa."






STOCK CHECK 2016 SPECIALITY FOOD MAGAZINE



**LUPETTA EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL**
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**lupetta.co.uk**




**FRATELLI LUNARDI CHOCOLATE CANTUCCI**
These crumbly bisuits are called 'cantucci' in Tuscan dialect.
**fratellilunardi.it**




**CROSTA & MOLLICA TARALLINI**
Crisp rings of baked dough, seasoned with aromatic fennel seeds, Tarallini is a very traditional snack from Puglia usually served as a nibble with drinks.
**costamollica.com**




**PECCATI DI MARE SUGO ALLE VONGOLE**
An authentic Italian sauce containing ristic passata, mushrooms, extra virgin olive oil and white wine.
**lebonta.it**




**TRUFFLE HUNTER TRUFFLE TAGLIATELLE**
Delicious truffle pasta which is made by an expert at a truffle cookery school in Italy.
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**PELLINI TOP ARABICO 100%**
A blend of the finest Arabica qualities, creating a mosaic of rich and elegant aroma and flavours.
**pellinicaffe.com**




**BIONA ORGANIC SPELT PASTA WHITE FUSILLI**
Spelt is high in fibre and has a higher content of protein and vitamins than wheat, making this a delicious and healthy pasta pick.
**biona.co.uk**




**GRANGUSTO RED TOMATO & BASIL SAUCE**
All fresh natural ingredients make a tasty meal in the time it takes to cook your pasta.
**gustalia.com**



**CHIOSTRO DI SARONNO PANETTONE**
Two new flavours this year: Pear & Chocolate and Sambucca, both made from the highest quality ingredients using traditional recipes.
**empirebespokefoods.com**




**PASTA MARTELLI**
Coming hand-packed in traditional paper packets, this pasta is considered an artisan great amongst Italians.
**familgliamartelli.it**





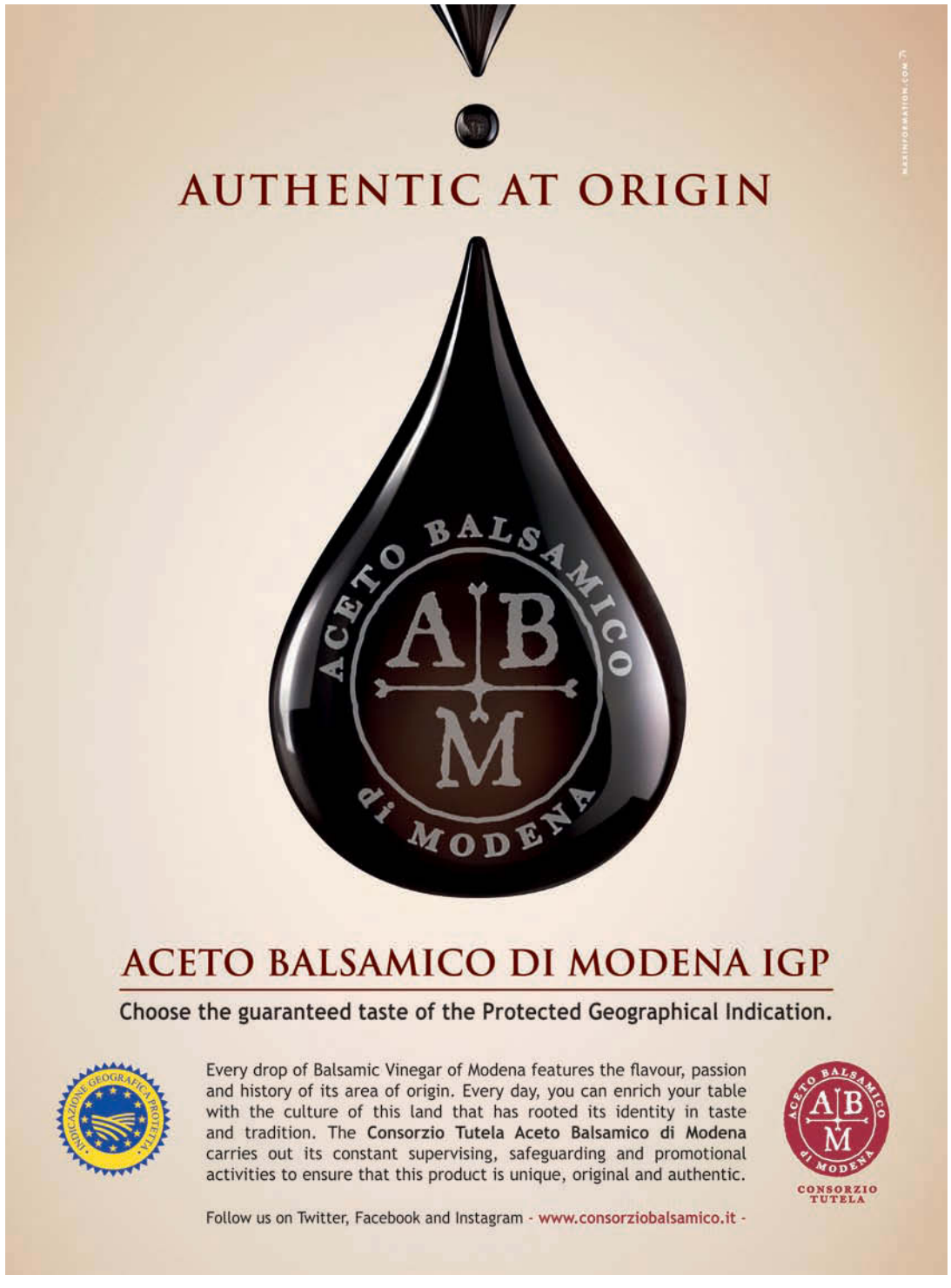

**Nancy Dell'Olio, founder of the new premium drinks brand Limonbello, explains why she launched an organic, sugar-free reinvention of the classic limoncello liqueur:**

"I have always felt that the limoncello currently available on the market is far too sweet – it's almost too sickly to enjoy as an after-dinner drink. It was for that reason that I wanted to create my own sugar-free version, sweetened only with natural agave syrup. I think it's really important to take action against sugar as it's so prevalent in our everyday diet. It was also important to me to create a drink that would work well enjoyed alone or mixed into a cocktail, which is a new, innovative way to enjoy limoncello.

"Limoncello is a very important part of Italian heritage – Italians have such a relaxed lifestyle and positive attitude to responsible alcohol consumption. My own Limonbello is based on a family recipe that has been handed down through the generations. I remember when I was a child I would watch my mother and grandmother working together to create and bottle their own – this is a process I have now replicated. I have fond memories of helping my mother source the lemons and watching her infuse the peel; I've always found it to be a fascinating process!

"Lemon is a very popular flavour, but the selection of lemon-based drinks is quite limited. I was hoping to bring another option to the market and I feel it differs on three main points: it's sugar-free, it's completely organic and I can assure consumers that only the finest Sicilian lemons are used, and it's alkaline, unlike many other spirits available at the moment."

> "We're generally looking beyond traditionally British-produced beverages to the Italian drinks market for inspiration"



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# PIAVE **PDO**

## From the Italian Dolomite mountains, the cheese which conquered the British gourmets. Twice

### The gift of abundance

With dozens of cheeses available nowadays in the market, some of which are wonderful, and others that perhaps are not so excellent, we would sometimes like to receive an advice by a professional gourmet, or even better, by a whole jury composed of food experts. The UK is definitely the country in which the majority of the most recognised international food contests take place. In these public events groups of gourmets have the chance to blind taste hundreds of different food products, being sent from eager producers from all over the world. Their task? Simple, yet hard: to determine which of them are the best in terms of flavour, scent, structure and organoleptic properties in general. The Great Taste Awards and the Global Cheese Awards are two perfect examples of contests of this kind.

### A successful year

2016 has been a golden year for Piave PDO cheese, and in particular for the Vecchio 'Oro del Tempo' type, its Extra-Aged version. Not only it was the only Italian hard cheese to be included in the Top 50 Foods, the Great Taste Awards' list of the World's best 50 foods of 2016, but it also received the Gold Medal in the Best Hard Cheese class at the Global Cheese Awards. Its taste has conquered the juries of both of these major international contests, and one of the judges has even described its tasting experience as, "A journey through a layer of sweetness, followed by a whoosh of heat, lactic crystals and 'a tongue tickle on the finish." The humble mountain farmers and cheesemakers of the Italian Dolomites who, more than 50 years ago, started to produce Piave PDO cheese were certainly not expecting that their cheese's popularity would grow this big, and that one day it would have been selected as one of the best 50 foods in the world.

### The flavour of the Dolomites

However, these awards do not come in as a surprise, as about everyone who tastes Piave PDO cheese notices that it has a very distinctive flavour. A taste that is the expression of the territory where the milk is collected. Mountain grazing and hays decisively contribute to the blend of flavours and scents that make Piave PDO cheese to be appreciated in any of its stages of aging. The microclimate, ecosystems and the model of a sustainable agriculture make dairy cow breeding in the province of Belluno – and in the 15 municipalities of the Dolomiti Bellunesi National Park, from where most of the milk is collected – an inimitable mix conveying fragrances and tastes that are unreproducible anywhere else. This perfect matching of uniqueness and the special enzymes found in the lactic and whey starter cultures is the secret of a tradition that keeps in tune with our time, while respecting shared values. This "miracle" keeps happening every day, through the work of the farmers and dairymen. Piave cheese's unique link to its territory of origin, in terms of origin of raw material, as well as the production and ageing steps, granted it the Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status in 2010.

> "In 2016 Piave PDO cheese has been included in the "Top 50 Foods" list of the Great Taste Awards"

### Four agings of a unique taste

Piave PDO cheese is a hard, cooked curd cheese proposed at four ages, which correspond to four different tasting experiences: from the Fresco (aged 20 to 60 days), semi-hard with a sweet and milky flavour, to the Mezzano, (Medium – 61 to 180 days), semi-hard with a sweet and nutty flavour, plus the two more aged versions, the Vecchio (Aged - over 180 days), hard and flaky with an intense flavour and the Vecchio Oro del Tempo (Extra Aged - over 12 months), hard and crumbly, with a full bodied flavour. The rind, which is tender and light coloured in the Fresco type, increases in thickness and consistency with aging, becoming hard and ochre in colour in the Vecchio Oro del Tempo (Extra Aged). The curd, compact and free of holes, is very light coloured in the Fresco type and takes on an increasingly intense straw colour. As the various awards confirm, Piave PDO cheese reaches its full potential after being aged for at least one year, when the structure becomes crumbly, as is typical of grating cheeses, and the taste turns full-bodied. Its peculiarity is that it remains mild, never sharp and maintains a very intense, fruity flavour, characteristic of longer aging, with a lingering taste.

### An eclectic personality

Piave PDO is an outstanding table cheese, that can be eaten simply accompanied by a glass of red wine. In addition, it can be a key ingredient for the preparation of several recipes. The younger agings of Piave PDO cheese, for example, are excellent with an Italian-style bread roll, as a base to build up a gourmet sandwich treat. In addition, the more advanced agings of Piave PDO are perfect grated onto pastas, risottos, gnocchi or pizzas, or even shaved on top of a raw meat carpaccio or roast beef. But apart from its use in preparing all these dishes, Piave cheese is also perfect to finish off a meal. It naturally combines well with various wines, such as Amarone, Merlot, Valpolicella or Prosecco, to mention just a few. As the awards recently gained in the UK confirm, Piave PDO's popularity is growing far beyond the boundaries of the Dolomites area, and the uniqueness of its taste has conquered a strong base of consumers that have made it their favourite Italian hard cheese – which now can boast a Gold medal and the membership card of the exclusive club of the World's Top 50 Foods.

**Find out more at formaggiopiave.it**

GLOBAL CHEESE AWARDS FROME 2016
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great taste 2016 TOP 50 FOODS

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# DISCOVER GENUINE JAPANESE WAGYU

As one of Japan's finest exports, real Wagyu beef is revered across the world for its unique flavour, texture and heritage. Here's why you should stock it

When it comes to beef, none come finer than Japanese Wagyu. Testament to the quality of the beef as well as the dedication of the professionals working to impressively high standards, this Japanese delicacy has found a passionate audience across the world.

While there are now multiple producers of Wagyu beef in Britain, retailers keen to focus only on the very best and most authentic product should look to genuine exports from Japan – the home of Wagyu.

## Universal Wagyu Mark

In order to ensure that the quality of real Wagyu beef is consistent, the Universal Wagyu Mark was established in 2007. Working as the proof of authenticity, the mark ensures that the Wagyu enjoyed around the world is of a consistently high standard. The Mark is used both in Japan and the EU to demonstrate that the beef holding the mark has been endorsed as genuine Japanese Wagyu.

The mark is used over 40 countries in the world including Japan and EU, and if the cattle is not raised in Japan, the mark shouldn't appear on package of meat. In order to obtain the Universal Wagyu Mark, it is essential that the meat must have come from pure breed cattle. In this sense, Wagyu cattle from elsewhere in the world has been cross-bred and will therefore not meet the mark's expectations.

Meat quality is of paramount importance to the producers of genuine Wagyu beef. The cut surface between the sixth and seventh ribs are judged based on four criterior: marbling, colour and shine of the meat, firmness and texture, and the colour and shine of the fat. The fine marbling of Japanese Wagyu is key to its recognisability and success, affecting as it does the meat's texture and flavour, while the fat itself needs to be clear white in order to meet the high standards of the graders.

Traceability is key to the quality of Japanese Wagyu, so each animal is given a ten-digit identification number so that its provenance can be verified; this is demonstrated in the family census register which documents each detail of the animal's history including information about the pedigree going back up to three generations, its DNA data, and the farm the animal was raised on.

## Why choose Wagyu?

There are many reasons why Wagyu stands out amongst other beef products:

### VALUABLE MARBLING

Real Wagyu beef's unique fat marbling means that the meat





maintains its soft, smooth texture when cooked. Unlike other beef, the fat of which melts at around 30-40 degrees Celsius, the fat of Wagyu melts at 25 degrees – creating a melt in the mouth texture.

### HIGH QUALITY MEAT

The unquestionable quality of genuine Japanese Wagyu beef means that it fits well into the product selection of fine food retailers. Shoppers at these establishments are conscientious about buying the best quality food they can and are keen to learn the story behind these products; real Wagyu beef offers retailers a unique story to share with their customers.

### UNIQUE FLAVOUR AND AROMA

Japanese Wagyu gives off a sweeter, richer aroma than standard beef when cooked. The aroma, which some liken to coconuts and peaches, is unique to this meat and is in part due to its high content of oleic acid. This natural element of real Wagyu boosts its flavour, and producers are working on ways to increase its levels in the meat to add value.

### TRACEABILITY

Genuine Japanese Wagyu beef is produced according to high hygiene standards, and every stage of the production process is closely monitored to ensure the best possible product reaches the consumer. Information regarding the gender and breed of the cattle, the history of its mother and the geography of the farm it was raised on are all to be found on the calf registration certificate.



## THE HISTORY OF WAGYU

The story of Japanese Wagyu begins with the production of one of Japan's most essential foods: rice. Cattle have long been indespensible in the farming of rice after being brought to Japan from the continent in around 400BC, but due in part to their value in this capacity and some religious reasons, meat was not traditionally eaten in the country. This was the case until around 1877, when 558 gyunabe hot pot restaurants – seen as an aspect of the Westernisation of Japan – opened in Tokyo.

In time the demand for beef grew, and the draft cattle used in this practice – which is now largely managed by machinery – have were improved throughout the years to boast a fine flavour, unique fat content and subsequent high value. The roots of genuine Japanese Wagyu beef is thought to lie with Chiya cattle, which were crossbred in 1830 to produce quality Takenotani Tsuru-ushi beef.

When it comes to the feeding of Japanese Wagyu cattle, only the best food will do and from the day they are born until they're eight to ten years old. Wagyu cattle are raised in the open air and feed on the natural pasture of meadows. The animals are then fed by whole crop silage – invaluable for the marbling and bright white colour of the fat – as well as grass and rice straw roughage.

## FROM THE **RETAILER...**

**Scott Winston, grocery buyer at Selfridges**

Selfridges, located on London's Oxford Street, has been named the World's Best Department Store three times. Respected across the world for its cutting edge food, fashion and beauty departments among many others, both its London and Birmingham sites attract millions of international visitors each year

We're constantly looking at what direction we should be going in order to stay ahead of the curve, and in the past couple of years we've seen that Japan is becoming a strong trend in the UK – if you look at the work the Japan Centre (a Japanese food hall in London) is doing, the popularity of Japanese chefs and the number of Japanese Michelin stars, you can see that this is becoming a strong market in Britain. The integrity of Japanese products, their quality, heritage and fun, quirky and colourful attitude are all things which Selfridges admires.

Wagyu and Kobe beef are a fantastic example of Japanese food which has been produced to an incredibly high standard, and are currently enjoying the popularity they deserve. They're cornerstone products for us, a very important part of our offering. In the past year or so they've become almost a mainstream product thanks to their reputation for quality, to the extent that some supermarkets are offering it and some farmers in the UK are starting to develop their own versions – imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!

**Matt McWhinnie, head of marketing at Fenwick**

Fenwick is recognised across the world for its dedication to quality. Its Newcastle store, one of its 11 sites, recently revamped its Food Hall to represent the best food and drink available both locally and across the world – making it one of the UK's must-visit destinations for food lovers

## MEET THE JAPANESE WAGYU CATTLE

**Primarily raised in the Kinki and Chugoku regions of Japan, The Japanese Black was certified as an indigenous beef cattle in 1944 after being used as work cattle and cross-bred with foreign breeds during the Meiji era to produce a uniquely textured and flavoured meat.**



## FAST FACTS

- **In 1966, a competition focused on the improving quality of genuine Japanese Wagyu was held in Okayama with the theme 'Can Wagyu be used as beef cattle?'. Since then, the competition has been held every five years**
- **Real Wagyu has been important to the Japanese public for generations. So much so, that the animals play a part in many festivals and traditional arts across the country**
- **Japanese Wagyu cattle are nurtured by hand since birth to ensure a fine flavour. Some farmers even provide their calves with handmade jackets in cold weather!**

WAGYU
JAPANESE BEEF

> "The word 'Wagyu' represents the harmony and peace at the heart of Japan"

# HOT RIGHT NOW

## As one of the trendiest sectors of our industry right now, the time is ripe to reinvent your hot drinks offering



Few could have failed to notice the recent explosion in popularity of coffee in recent times. These days, it seems like every town has its own independent gourmet coffee shop – and even a craft coffee roaster, if it's lucky. Meanwhile, the growth of tea shops has been steadily growing for years; with a side of craft (knitting, stitching et al) and an attractive aesthetic, the owners of these establishments have been well and truly cashing in on the trends for 'vintage' and 'make do and mend.'

And the trends for hot drinks keep on evolving. Just started selling iced coffee? Read up on nitro cold brew – a creamy, rich update on this modern favourite. Consider yourself a herbal tea expert? Look into cascara, a tea/coffee hybrid made from coffee cherries. Lattes and cappuccinos will always have their fans, but there's no harm in trying out the new trends to welcome new tastebuds to your counter – rainbow milk art or turmeric latte, anyone?

With all this reinvention, it's easy to forget that the hot drinks market will be a different beast in the next few decades for reasons beyond trend and taste. The Climate Institute has stated that coffee could be extinct by 2080 if global warming continues at its current pace, and the possible extinction of arabica beans within mere decades is being touted as yet another unpalatable effect of climate change.

Heritage and provenance continue to bring in the bucks when it comes to tea, with 'Britishness' being an ever-more valuable asset post-Brexit, and health benefits are as popular and lucrative as ever with the increasingly wellness-conscious consumer.

In this piece, you'll find industry experts offering up their opinion on the value of ceremony when it comes to hot drinks, the importance of 'Britishness' in the hot drink sector, and the health benefits to be relayed to your readers when promoting and selling herbal teas.

**Jonathon Jones, MD of Trading at Tregothnan: How important is 'Britishness' to the tea industry?**
After fears of export fallouts since the referendum, we are happy to say that we have had record summer sales since Brexit, which we might put down to the fact that people must be spending more time debating the issues over a cup of tea! To cap it all we won the European 2016 Friends of the Countryside award with the top prize of €15000 euros. Tregothnan expects to welcome more and more guests from Europe and will reassure them with a favourite quote of Bernard-Paul Heroux 'there is no trouble so great or grave that cannot be much diminished by a good cup of tea'. Looking beyond Europe has always been key to the business plan, and Tregothnan is happy to reach the top few percent of tea drinkers around the world. There is huge enthusiasm in the Commonwealth for Tregothnan and the fact that tea and gardening are brought together at such a high level. Tregothnan's support for the GREAT campaign (a Downing Street initiative which aims to showcase the very best of what Britain has to offer) is strengthening, with our GREAT British tea being exported globally and being poured at the most delicate trade negotiations.

> "We've got plenty up our sleeves – the tea and coffee market is changing so rapidly and that means more opportunities for innovation and creativity"







## FROM THE **RETAILER...**

### Florence Holzapfel, tea and coffee buyer at Fortnum & Mason

**HOW IMPORTANT ARE TEA AND COFFEE TO FORTNUM & MASON?**
Tea and coffee have been important to Fortnum's more or less since we first opened our doors in 1707.

Tea is our most iconic product, but we've always travelled far and wide in search of exceptional tea and coffee, and created plenty of famous blends of our own too.

**WHAT TEAS/COFFEES DO YOU SELL?**
With regards to tea, we have our range of Famous Blends, but we also have a particular focus on loose leaf and rare, single origin teas. With both tea and coffee, we work closely with producers, and make regular journeys across the world to grow those relationships. Our Costa Rica Las Lajas coffee is made using experimental processing methods which we got to see first-hand on a trip out there – seeing it happen was enough to convince us to sell it.

**HOW IMPORTANT IS TRADITION TO CONSUMERS PURCHASING TEA/COFFEE?**
It all depends on the customer – we have those who come to Fortnum's seeking something new, something rare or something seasonal, but we also have very loyal customers who have bought our teas and coffees for decades. The traditional way of taking tea certainly remains popular though – sales of tea strainers and tea sets are always strong.

**AND INNOVATION?**
We've always innovated – not just in the tea and coffee department, but as a business in general. From the new Steampunks in our Tea department to new drinks in our restaurants like Matcha Latte, we're always working to cater to the ever-changing tastes of tea and coffee drinkers. Our customers expect that blend of tradition and innovation.

## THE CEREMONY OF COFFEE

### Iley Özerlat, Özerlat company director

The nation's love affair with coffee has gone to a whole other level. Consumers are now so discerning about their coffee – they want to know about the beans used, where they are from and how they were roasted. They also want to recreate and enjoy the sophisticated 'coffee house' barista process of making coffee in their own homes.

Coffee is much more than a drink. For some it is a way of life, part of tradition and culture. This is true in Cyprus, where we roast our Turkish coffee. Turkish coffee is the original gourmet coffee – a luxury beverage dating back 500 years to the heights of the Ottoman Empire. It has had strong cultural importance for centuries, with the making and serving of the drink, a ceremonial event that is deeply respected and lavished over.



## DRINKING CHOCOLATE GOES PREMIUM

### Brian Watt, managing director of Sir Hans Sloane on the importance of the origin of chocolate and high cocoa content

Consumers are now becoming more aware of origins of cocoa and the difference between a 25% cocoa sweet tasting drink and a 70% richer darker drink. Hans Sloane has an Ecuador 70% which gives consumers that darker taste in their drinking chocolate that many already eat in their chocolate bars.

Like coffee 10 years ago, drinking chocolate has the opportunity to educate consumers into the different types of cocoa beans and their different tastes. We sample our Ecuador 70% at many of the consumer fairs and people are always surprised how good it tastes.

We make unique chocolate beads (which take half a day to make) and sell a range of Posh Hot Chocolate from the 33% Milk and 53% Dark to 67% Madagascar and 70% Madagascar – ideal for chocolate aficionados.

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STOCK CHECK 2016 SPECIALITY FOOD MAGAZINE



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## "TEA IS NATURE'S GIFT TO MANKIND"

### Discover the passion behind Dilmah Tea

In 1988, founder of Dilmah Tea, Merrill J. Fernando pioneered three important initiatives which have today become the hallmark of Dilmah – he offered consumers Garden Fresh, Single Origin and Pure Ceylon Tea, packed at origin. That was the first time that a tea producer offered tea that was picked, perfected, packed and branded at source, direct to consumers.

Garden fresh: it is freshness that guarantees a rich and satisfying cup that is also potent in healthy antioxidants. Scientific research has also confirmed that powerful natural antioxidants in green and black tea protects regular tea drinkers from many degenerative diseases of concern today.

Single origin tea: unblended tea is important because one of the most desirable features in tea is terroir, the sense of place. The tea terroir; or where it is grown, affects its taste and personality creating a wide variety of black teas.

Traditional tea: made in the orthodox style produces tea that are varied and sophisticated, as opposed to the tea produced using the more recent CTC method designed to offer a quick cuppa. For Merrill, tea produced using the CTC method is simply 'tea without a soul.'




## 3 REASONS TO DRINK HERBAL TEA WITH PUKKA'S KATE WALLACY

**There are lots of great reasons to drink herbal tea – from the delicious taste of our planet's finest plants to the health benefits nature's bounty brings**

### ● CALM FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Energy boosts don't have to be bad for you, you just need to be smart about where you get your intake from.

When we feel tired or drained, we reach for coffee to give ourselves an energy boost. But tea can be a better choice when we're stressed is thanks to its content of a natural substance called L-theanine, which is virtually unique to the tea plant. L-theanine has been found to have a relaxing effect on the mind, reduce anxiety, and help with focus and concentration. It's thought to do this by increasing alpha waves in the brain, which are associated with being 'calm but alert'.

### ● ANTIOXIDANT PROTECTION AGAINST POLLUTION

Free radicals exist in the air pollution surrounding us and contribute to skin and cell damage. Plants are naturally brimming with antioxidants that protect our skin from those nasty 'free radicals'. Green teas and matcha green teas in particular are packed full of antioxidants, which combat 'free radicals' and help to keep our skin and cells healthy.

### ● NATURAL ENERGY BOOST

Whether it's your physical or mental energy that needs a boost, natural botanicals are a great alternative to energy drinks. The nutrients included in well blended organic herbal teas are naturally occurring in the plants themselves and are not synthetic additives; this means your body can absorb and use them more easily, and they're gentler on your system.






# CEYLON'S FINEST TEA

## HANDPICKED & MADE WITH LOVE



### THE PROVENANCE OF A DELICIOUS BREW, UNMATCHED IN TASTE AND VARIETY, HAS A 150 YEAR OLD HISTORY

Established during the late 19th century by the British, tea gardens in Ceylon along with their beauty speak of a labour of love. Each day, thousands of tea pickers pick with nimble fingers the two leaves and a bud which is then manufactured in the traditional way with the art of the teamaker and nature's best coming together. It is only a true teamaker – one who nurtures his crop and then lovingly manufactures it in an artisanal manner perfected over centuries – who knows his tea and can produce the best in quality and variety.

Dilmah owes its success to the quality of Ceylon Tea. Dilmah tea is produced by a family of tea growers who care for tea from the nursery to the cup. With over 65 years in tea, Dilmah founder Merrill J. Fernando is today the most experienced teamaker in the world. Dilmah is respectful of the traditions of an industry that is centuries old, and of a beverage with a 5000 year history. The teas we offer are traditional and orthodox, made using a process perfected over generations. Every cup of Dilmah tea that you enjoy is as rich in heritage as it is in flavour, aroma and natural goodness.

Dilmah
*For lovers of tea*



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# FOOD MATTERS LIVE 2016

## The best place to discover the latest industry trends, innovation and insight into the food and drinks industry



### IN DETAIL

**FOOD MATTERS LIVE 2016**
**WHEN:** 22nd–24th November
**WHERE:** ExCeL London
**WEBSITE:** foodmatterslive.com

Meet the latest innovators in food and drink and fill your basket with the most exciting new products on the market, all under one roof at this year's Food Matters Live.

As different diets flood into the mainstream to cater for increasingly changing appetites, discover the newest ingredients setting the culinary world alight in the Food Matters Live exhibition.

More than 600 organisations are taking part at London's ExCeL on 22nd-24th November – from global multinational companies to young and emerging enterprises from the UK and internationally – all offering a unique blend of innovation, research, expertise and an exploration of new trends.

With the food and drink industry facing ever louder demands to do more to tackle obesity and reduce sugar, fat and salt in its products, the Food Matters Live education programme provides a timely forum to discuss these and many other complex issues. Over three days more than 400 experts from different aspects of the food and drink industry will take part in 17 live conference debates and 80 practical and applied seminars.

A series of thought-provoking attractions provide insight into eating behaviours, product development and the way we think about the future of food and nutrition.

In addition, a unique series of special events present visitors with opportunities to network, innovate, forge relationships and recognise industry best practice.

Food Matters Live is free to attend. It's easy to register – simply go online at foodmatterslive.co.uk.

### Feed your imagination: find new products, new trends and inspiration at the Food Matters Live exhibition

The Food Matters Live exhibition is fast becoming the pivotal event of the year for showcasing innovation from well-established global brands such as Nestlé Cereals, Innocent Drinks and Refresco Gerber alongside a host of young and emerging newcomers like Dutch family firm Van Koolen, which has transformed the humble mushroom into a range of tasty alternatives to meat, or CocoNuts Naturally, who will be enticing visitors with their delicious raw chocolate organic dairy-free ice cream.



This year more than 15,000 influential visitors are expected to use the opportunity to network with policy makers, scientists, healthcare experts and academics, alongside dietitians, nutritionists, retailers and manufacturers driving innovation.

### Novel foods becoming mainstream

To make navigation simpler, the diverse range of products is arranged into themed areas, such as the Enterprise zone, which focuses on innovative start-ups demonstrating new foods, including alternative forms of protein like Jimini's crunchy Sweet Mango Crickets or MicroNutris' Pralines with Crickets, a crispy organic chocolate with a light taste of hazelnut. Yumpa's Coco-a-go-go energy bars are protein-packed with cricket flour, nuts, dried fruit, seeds and other healthy treats, while One Hop Kitchen's Mealworm Bolognese boasts comparable protein to beef – but with half the saturated fat and one third less cholesterol.

Other new products to hit the retail shelves include Wow Cake Company's carrot cake and Functional Food Company's gut-friendly IB'Snack, designed for people with coeliac condition, lactose intolerance or IBS. Bang Curry's authentic Bangladeshi spice kits provide a natural alternative to ready-made curry sauces, while ManiLife's Argentinian Peanut Butter has no added sugar or palm oil. Hoogly's Chocolate Brownie Black Tea is an indulgent blend of comforting luxury real teas, while Noa Relax & Focus beverages contain natural herbs that help cope with stress and maintain focus.

### Find the brands forging ahead

To help emerging businesses of between two and five years old, Food Matters Live has introduced the Development Zone, a place for showcasing latest products and services in food and drink, health, nutrition and sustainability. Here visitors can sample sodium-free natural mineral water Aqua Caratica while savouring Limpopo Butchers' fresh and dried meat. Foodie Flavours offers deliciously natural flavours for serious foodies, ranging from creamy buttery caramel to lychee and liquorice, Christmas mas pudding to fruits of the forest and bubble gum, while Nutristrength's Classic Vanilla or Roasted Cocoa Pea Protein adds a dairy-free boost to any smoothie drink.

### Sweet–tasting innovation

As demand increases for reformulation and innovation in healthier and 'better-for-you' drinks, visitors should seek out the Drink Well zone, featuring manufacturers such as Molecule Beverages' Coconut & Mango Protein Water – a low sugar, fat-free thirst quencher – or Vit Hit's healthy juice-based vitamin drinks. Alternatively, try Yakult probiotics or Protein Water Co's refreshers in Grapefruit & Yuzu, Coconut & Mango and Raspberry & Cranberry flavours, or even a humble cuppa transformed by Teapigs' range of Rhubarb & Ginger, Chai and strong Earl Grey teas, and Tetley's super teas to detox, increase alertness and support the immune system.

Meanwhile, members from the British Fruit Juice Association will be serving up pure juice and explaining how it is a key source of vitamin C, folates, potassium and micronutrients together with Tropicana juices and Cobell Ltd processed fruit suppliers.

### From free–from to frozen, seaweed to superfoods

Elsewhere, gluten, dairy-free and vegan foods are featured in the Free-From zone, where visitors can find a range of innovative products across different categories. Saile Irish Seaweed Foods will showcase their Organic Kelp Krispies Mix –

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chocolate bites that don't even taste like seaweed, while Nutural World will tempt visitors with a range of nut-based spreads in Almond Butter, Hazelnut & Carob and Crunchy Pecan & Figs. Suma Wholefoods will be offering samples of their vegetarian, organic and fairtrade chilled and frozen products, while Protein Pow will show how its all-purpose protein mixes can help cooks create their own protein bars, shakes and pancakes devoid of artificial sweeteners, refined sugars and gluten. For a natural boost of energy, Creative Nature superfoods has created nutrient-rich Organic Cacao Powder, Nibs and Brownie Mix.

## Natural selection

With organic sales set to break the £2 billion mark this year, natural and organic food and drink such as Rachelli's Italian ice cream, Googly Fruit children's snacks and Utkins UK5 Organic Vodka feature throughout the exhibition, along with no added sugar products like Shameless Smoothies, Oliphen chocolate with Stevia and Naturelly Jelly Juice – fruity, natural, no-spill treats to fill little tummies after school.

Ingredients suppliers will also be showcasing their 'better for you', natural and organic ranges such as Homecraft pulse flours – protein rich, vegan and gluten-free flours made from lentil, pea, chickpea and faba bean sources, and Meatless Fibres, which are used as a raw material ingredient in vegetarian food or a substitute in processed meat products to improve health, juiciness and sustainability.

NTC Flavours will demonstrate its range of natural taste modifiers that replace salt and fat, improve stevia and block acidic and bitter notes, while Sensus offers inspiration for tomorrow's health by using chicory root fibre to produce inulin and oligofructose to reduce the amount of processed sugar and fat in food products. At the same time, advice can be found at the PureCircle Stevia Knowledge Hub on formulating with stevia, taste performance and product positioning – as well as the role stevia can play in modern diets.

A sneak preview of the products that will be on display can be found in the new online directory at foodmatterslive.com/visiting/product-and-ingredient-directories/product-directory.

Visitors looking to collaborate with key ingredient suppliers can meet innovation teams from Mane, DSM, BENEO, Glanbia, Dow Europe and DuPont to discuss their nutritional solutions for NPD and reformulation challenges.

## Have your say

Alongside the exhibition, BBC journalists Anita Anand, Jonathan Dimbleby and Sarah Montague will host the Food Matters Live conference, which brings together business leaders, psychologists, chefs and commentators with politicians, health campaigners and food scientists to debate some of the most hotly contested issues to affect the food and drink industry this year.

The UK government's decision to introduce a sugar tax on carbonated soft drinks, combined with a controversial obesity strategy, will come under the spotlight, with world-renowned behavioural economist Tim Harford discussing whether the measures will reduce sugar consumption and improve public health.

Pret A Manger's Mark Palmer will join Iceland's Nick Canning, Marks & Spencer's Claire Hughes and Tesco's David Beardmore to look at what the retail sector can do to influence healthier food choices, while eating behaviour expert Professor Brian Wansink will consider profitable solutions to make consumers healthier, such as slim by design, the small plate movement and smarter lunchroom approach.

Other debates will focus on what it will take to put sustainable diets at the top of the menu, the ethics of marketing food to children and how eating habits are formed.

Experts will also discuss if so-called 'tomorrow foods' - such as 3D printed meals, jellyfish salads or artificial meat – will ever be accepted at scale by consumers, how teenagers and young people can be encouraged to eat more healthily, and the impact of Brexit on industry.

Among the conference speakers are celebrated chef Raymond Blanc, the shadow health minister, sugar and carbohydrate expert Professor Julian Cooper, food writer and historian Bee Wilson, You Tube vlogger and health commentator Marcus Butler, Channel 4's Supersize vs Superskinny presenter Emma Woolf, neuroscientist Daniel Glaser, scientist Professor Lord Robert Winston and industry representatives from Britvic, Mars, Brakes and apetito.

## Fact packed: 80 seminars give answers

Meanwhile, cross-sector experts will use a series of case studies in a range of seminars to explore the future of free-from food, which in the UK market alone is estimated to be worth £531 million in 2016.

Simon Hazlett, Boulder Brands' UK managing director, will outline the technical challenges that need to be overcome to meet the wishes of the global free-from market, while Planet Organic's Al Overton will join Marks & Spencer's Helen Seward and Tree of Life's John Weaver in a panel discussion to consider the free-from trend from a retail perspective.

Coca Cola vice president Julian Hunt will join Cranfield University's Professor Mark Jolly to debate the scope of smart technology and innovation on sustainable food manufacturing, while in the packaging and marketing seminars, Innocent Drinks' Dan Germain will discuss how creative design and language can attract consumer buy-in and Leon Restaurants Kirsty Sadler will consider the potential of 'moment marketing' and harnessing the power of social media.

## International innovation

To highlight the innovation in food and drink taking place around the world, Food Matters Live plays host to many international pavilions, showcasing functional and natural ingredients, 'better for you' food and drink, science and research.

This year exhibitors from Belgium, China, Denmark, France and Germany will join colleagues from Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands and the Czech Republic to share knowledge on a range of issues, from product development to farming and food safety, ready meals for better health, and vitamin production and research.

Elsewhere, the Food Matters Live Research Pavilion makes the link between academia and industry with a host of the food sector's top research, testing and analysis organisations leading sessions on the science behind taste and how to establish a resilient food supply chain for the 21st century.

## Challenging assumptions

Live attractions give visitors a chance to investigate what is shaping the future of food, and even be part of the research into consumer eating behaviours at the Experimental Café, organised in association with the Institut Paul Bocuse. Participants will have their reactions tested to a menu of delicious bites, from fresh fruit skewers with berry coulis and



## PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS




### WISH SNACKS NO ADDED SUGAR

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Stand EZ47







Stand 590

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**nutripot.com, enquiries@nutripot.com**

## THE GROWTH LAB

### Steve Osborn, commercial director and food technology scout at The Aurora Ceres Partnership Ltd

**"THE GROWTH LAB"**



The food and drink industry is an exciting place for the entrepreneur. It provides a platform for them to pursue something that has been a homespun passion or hobby and to commercialize Grandma's old recipe.

It is also so often driven by a frustration of the lack of availability of products that suit an individual's particular nutritional or ethical position. Such trends are key to the many exciting new entrants into the market place that will be seen at Food Matters Live in 2016.

There are 4 key trends that currently stand out:

- Mainstreaming free-from
- Alternatives
- Clean label
- Health and Nutrition

These trends present enormous opportunity to young companies, since they are seen as an antidote to the dominance of established brands which are continually attracting criticism that they are the root cause of the need for change. An aspiring company has the opportunity to establish itself, not only with new products that are on-trend, but by portraying a degree of premium positioning through the narrative and storification of the product, gaining trust amongst early consumers.

There are challenges that come with such holistic ideals in terms of product development, stability and scale up. Firstly, it may be in product quality and sensory profile. It must not be overlooked that the prime reason why certain ingredients have become common place is because of their ease of use, stability and their taste profile. The relative scarcity of such raw material, and here I am particularly considering the trend in alternative and heritage grains, can make the product immediately prohibitively expensive. There is a wave of activity around sugar reduction, not surprisingly, with the use of date syrup, honey and agave becoming common. But questions regarding their longevity as suitable alternatives needs to be considered, since such 'natural sweeteners' are in reality unlikely to present any differently than sugar in terms of nutrition. The balance of health and clean label also creates 'the clean label paradox', which is a manifestation of the desire to make products healthier through removing sugar, for example, but replacing it with chemical sounding non-nutritive sweeteners and additional bulking ingredients. Such alternatives may also be barriers to scaling up as industrial formats are not yet available, meaning that early adopters and innovators have a harder battle ahead of them.

These should however not be considered barriers, but opportunities for young and aspiring food and drink developers. These are hurdles to be overcome, navigated and broken down to establish the next generation of cleaner and healthier foods. It is increasingly apparent that to achieve further reductions in fat, salt and sugar we need to re-invent our processes and view of food production and it is essential that the visionaries and entrepreneurs within the food and drink category continue to challenge the scope and boundaries of the status quo.

The Growth Lab at Food Matters Live, hosted by The Aurora Ceres Partnership Ltd provides the opportunity for young and growing food companies to connect with the essential support functions, form innovation specialist, product developers and trading standards that can help them achieve their dreams and ensure that those obstacles are nothing more than minor distractions.



barbecued cauliflower with saffron yoghurt, to dark chocolate and beetroot brownie or cucumber cheesecake.

The FEED Sensorium showcases scientific developments that will impact the food industry, education and policy-making in the coming years, offering potent tools for companies to design more exciting, commercially viable, sustainable and healthy foods of the future. Visitors can take part in educative sensorial experiments to discover a range of science innovations, from learning how our brain perceives food and brands to the exciting potential of digitising flavour.

New concepts underpinning innovations in 'better for you' food and drink, brand health and wellbeing strategies will be explored in the Evidence Base theatre, with the help of Mars Food, Ella's Kitchen, The Bell Institute of Health and Nutrition/General Mills, Nutricia and a2 Milk.

Meanwhile, in Catering for Health, renowned chefs Jenny Chandler, Paul Gayler, Domino Teague, Mark Kennett and Preston Walker will join Premier Foodservice, Artizian, Bidvest, foodologists and nutritionists to create healthy, nutritious and cost-managed meals to suit a variety of consumers, workplaces and dietary needs.

Through live cooking demonstrations, talks and tastings, they will show how free-from food and drink, sugar and salt replacers and natural ingredients like pulses can help tackle obesity, manage diabetes and other diet-related diseases.

And with nearly 45% of the UK population experiencing food sensitivity, Benjamin Xavier, executive chef at the Rainforest Café, will show how to make tasty foods for allergen sufferers, such as flourless chocolate cake.

New to this year's Food Matters Live is the Sustainable Food Futures attraction, which will show sustainable food practice at work, including how disused London Underground tunnels are being used to grow mouth-wateringly fresh micro greens and salad leaves 33 metres below the busy streets of Clapham.

## Supporting SMEs

Meanwhile, the Growth Lab gives young and enterprising food and drink businesses the chance to meet experts and hear their thoughts on a range of issues, from getting products ready to manufacture, open innovation and collaboration for SME growth, to unlocking hidden benefits of the R&D tax credit scheme, crowdfunding, complying with trading standards, getting innovation grant funding from the EU and the power of storytelling.

A team of experts will be on-hand during the course of each day for one-to-one meetings with visitors and exhibitors, including Macknade Fine Food's Stefano Cuomo, Crowdfooding's Alessio Dantino, Giant Peach's James Read, Eat Well Global Inc's Erin Boyd Kappelhof and Barker Brettell's Susan Fridd.

In addition, visitors and exhibitors have a chance to attend a range of special events include: Enterprise Europe Matchmaking Meetings and Grub Club Cambridge social networkers, the May Contain and Precautionary Allergen Labelling event and the Food & Drink Federation's briefing on sugar reformulation.

Also on offer is the chance to be part of the Sustainable Food Business Hackathon, the N8 AgriFood round table debate exploring the future of food, the FreeFrom Eating Out Awards and the Sustainable Restaurant Association's plans for making food good.

**Food Matters Live is free to attend, including entry to the conference, seminars and all visitor attractions. Simply register at foodmatterslive.com**






Cheese Talk

New retail perspectives from industry experts



## GEORGE PAUL OF BRADBURY'S

# "Keeping it in the family"

**It's a historical reality that British artisan cheese was affected more between 1939-45 than any other European country, and hundreds of unique regional types lost out in the drive to uniformity, mass production and Government cheese that created the dominance Cheddar still holds today.**

In the late 50s, and then through the next three decades and on to today, a hardy breed of enthusiasts, farming families, foodies and others chose to take up the mantle of recreating that lost heritage. A 40 year journey that has bequeathed some real jewels in the crown of British regional and speciality cheese. True, some have fallen by the wayside as economics and changes in taste have overtaken the infectious enthusiasm of what was then probably youth, or, as in some instances, the inability to adapt and develop has not been mastered.

If one was to choose ease of life, then the dairy trade from maker to distributor would not be the wisest move in modern Britain, and so the crossover point for many families is here on the horizon now.

The younger generation is inculcated from all angles with the work/life balance theory, and that is reinforced by a demand for greater leisure time and a less pressured existence, as well as a myriad more things to do and more opportunities to fulfil that desire.

Generations of farming families are finding that sons and daughters no longer want to follow the hugely demanding, uncertain and increasingly complex life their parents trod.

Cheesemaking is probably not that dissimilar in generational terms. Unearthly hours, demanding and relentless input everyday, a harvest of cheese each day that can have a mind of its own if that intensity of care and skill is not practiced, and all with ruinous consequences.

The veritable army of auditing bodies from governmental, local and customer sources, all with their own agendas, are never aligned. Indeed, they are often in total conflict, and each takes time and adds cost. Few, if any, have ever made cheese, but experts all. I often muse that had most of today's regulations been around in the 50s and 60s, we would have just bland Cheddar in mass blocks, made in something akin to a nuclear facility, necessary though some regulations clearly are!

Through all this tangle of change our hardy cheesemakers have struggled and succeeded, despite all the obstacles hurled in their way.

A few of the high risers of the 70s are coming to their own maturity, and maybe thinking of retirement and some ease and comfort after so many years of toil. A number have successfully made the generational change, bringing family in to drive the next period of growth.

Amongst these, the Appleby and Bell families have succeeded, as have Cumberland and Fowlers along with Quicke's, Keens, Swaledale and others, as one generation passes the baton to the next – a cocktail of tradition and values, techniques and mystery.

Elsewhere, some of the transitions are harder to deliver, and releasing or protecting the asset value of a lifetime's work creates a puzzle, or even a headache, to find the right solution for the future.

Could there be a role here for third party investment to maintain and grow the legacy of the founder, to continue the employment and the skill set of many operatives and maintain that countryside presence that allows tradition to pass to the future, and that may prove an interesting option for a number in this business? The hardest part is to seek that support or change, as opposed to working to exhaustion and leaving an unstructured future for what is now part of Britain's food heritage.

The young should not be the sole beneficiary of fun and enjoyment, and the future will inevitably demand more capital investment, more contribution of skill, more technical demands, tougher market access and finance to fund growth, so seeking future investors, partnerships and crowdfunding may for some be a way to release their assets, enjoy the present and secure the future.

Keeping it in the family is almost always the right approach, but there are other options if sought at the right moment.

> "Expectant and demanding shoppers are to be wooed and maintained"



## PHIL STANSFIELD OF CORNISH BLUE

# "Looking forward"

**Recently we have been celebrating 15 years of Cornish Blue and as I prepared quotes for media articles I found myself often saying "we look forward to the next 15 years". That made me think about the challenges that lie ahead for ourselves and other artisan food producers.**

What do we need to do if we are collectively going to grow sales and attract more customers?

I do think that educating the consumer ought to be very close if not top of our list.

As the number of cheese producers grows – and there are growing amount just in Cornwall where we are based – it's going to be increasingly important that the buying public understand the reasons why they should buy artisan products as opposed to mass-produced and often lower-priced alternatives.

Much of our business has grown on the back of getting our brand in front of the buying public and our cheese into their mouths! Shows and events are perfect opportunities to do this and we attend numerous across the UK each year.

What often amazes me when people come along to shows and sample Cornish Blue is how little knowledge or understanding they have as to how our cheese is made. When I explain how Cornish Blue starts life with the cows in our fields on the edge of Bodmin Moor, how we then convert the milk into the cheese and that it only leaves the farm after it is ready to be sold, they just absolutely amazed. I'm sure some assumed that the cheese must all come from a big factory somewhere!

I'm certainly not decrying the intelligence of the buying public, but as artisan cheese producers, and indeed local food producers, we need to collectively recognise that telling our story is something we have to continually do. 'Marketing is relentless,' as our marketing consultant constantly reminds me.

Of course, when we first started producing cheese 15 years ago the ways we could tell our story and encourage buyers were limited. Nowadays we are constantly adding to our website, posting on social media (my wife Carol is fast becoming a social media whizzo), producing articles, running competitions, circulating newsletters and even ensuring our son Ben wears his 'I love Cornish Blue' t-shirt during his current world tour adventure.

Someone once told me that 'the more you tell, the more you sell,' and to me the telling is the educating bit, taking the time to tell the story in order to raise the profile and ultimately attract sales.

But as in all businesses, the artisan cheese sector needs to seize its opportunity. There is without doubt a growing demand from people to understand the provenance of their food, and our task is to keep that momentum going.

In Truro, Ruth Huxley, who heads up Cornwall Food & Drink, has opened alongside the new Waitrose supermarket the Cornwall Food Store. It's a fantastic showcase for artisan products. I think its great and not just because Cornish Blue has sold really well but also because the staff take the time to engage with the customers and explain what they are buying.

And with the pound trading at unusually low levels following the Brexit vote, the export market is well set. Another opportunity.

So back to the original question: 'what about the next 15 years?'

Personally I'm very excited by the future. I can see more and more artisan producers emerging and as such creating a bigger sector. The challenge is that between us we need to persuade more and more people to be choosy when it comes to their food and to educate them to the benefits of consuming the wonderful cheeses and foods we produce.

All new ideas for promoting and developing our industry should be welcomed. Here on the edge of Bodmin Moor I can say for certain that yes, we are looking forward to the next 15 years.

> "The more you tell, the more you sell"

# Wyke Farm Appoints New Cheese Grader

**Independent cheese producer Wyke Farms has announced the appointment of Diane Cox as technical director in charge of cheese and butter grading.**

Cox takes over the role from now-retired Nigel 'the nose' Pooley, whose nose was insured for £5 million by the company in 2009. The business has stated that it is now in talks with insurance companies to protect Diane's nose. Nigel had graded approximately 520 million packs of cheese and butter in his lifetime, and has been training Diane for over 10 years with the intention that she would replace him.

Rich Clothier, managing director of Wyke Farms said, "This is a big transition for Wyke Farms – replacing Nigel is no easy task. Diane's background is a great fit for this role and I have no doubt that she will continue to make sure our cheese and butters are of the consistent high quality our consumers demand. She has been part of the family for some time now, and we are delighted with her promotion."






# Cheesemaker Keeps £20,000 Stock After E.coli Probe

**Errington Cheese, the producer linked to an E.coli outbreak in Scotland, has won a battle to keep £20,000 of its stock after Food Standards Scotland (FSS) withdrew its order to destroy its cheese.**

FSS last month issued a blanket ban on cheese made by the Lanarkshire-based creamery, stating tests results on certain examples had found strains of E.coli 0157. This was linked to an E.coli outbreak in the summer in which 22 people were infected.

Errington Cheese has strongly denied claims brought against them, with the company asking the Court of Session for a suspension of instructions from FSS ordering enforcement officials to destory all stocks of the product. With the company's own testing unable to find a trace of the bacteria, it is also seeking details of the tests carried out by the agency which linked the cheese to the outbreak to be made public.

In a statement, FSS said, "As the product withdrawal concerning products produced by Errington Cheese Ltd remains in place, Food Standards Scotland is satisfied that there is no current risk to public health.

"As part of ongoing legal proceedings we have asked local authorities in Scotland to suspend in the interim the part of the 'food alert for action' solely in respect of the destruction of the withdrawn products."

# Aldi Launches British Artisan Cheese Range

**Discount supermarket Aldi has announced that a range of British cheeses from artisan producers will now be stocked in its stores across the UK, with prices starting from 99p.**




The range consists of 12 varieties of regional and hand-crafted premium cheeses sourced from established creameries, including Appleby's Double Gloucester, Regional Swaledale and Trevarrian Cornish Brie.

Tony Baines, joint managing director of corporate buying at Aldi said, "We are committed to supporting British farms and offering exceptional quality products at unbeatable prices. Our extended range of artisan cheeses continues this promise by making some of the finest cheeses from a selection of the UK's best producers available to our customers."

To coincide with the launch, Aldi commissioned a survey that revealed that almost one third of shoppers have changed their shopping habits and are purchasing more premium foods than they were 12 months ago. Research also uncovered that 45% of Britons now buy cheeses such as Camembert at least once a month, with this shift in consumer's preferences prompting the multiple retailer to expand its range of premium cheeses.









# Artisan Cheeses Celebrated in New Awards

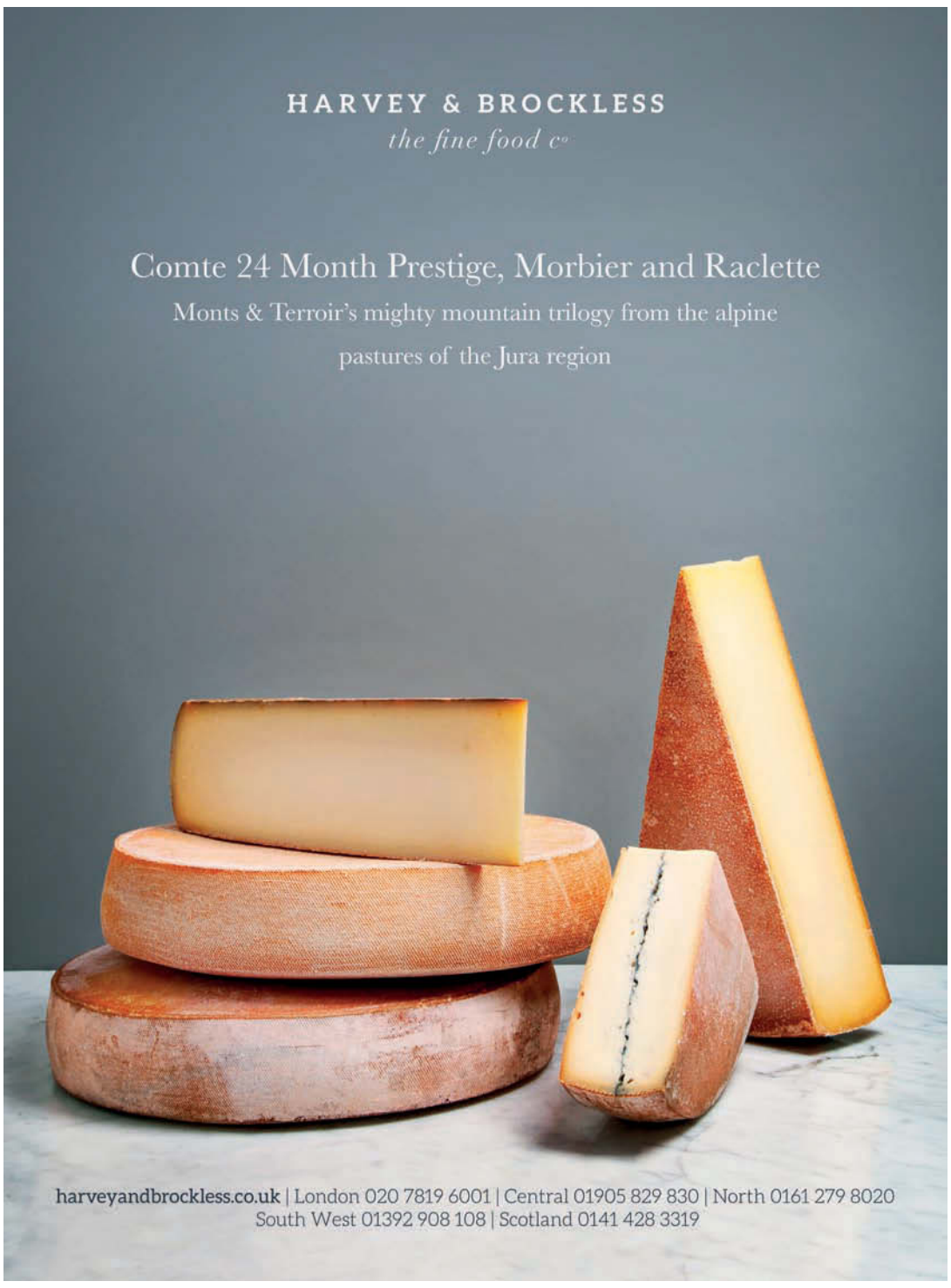
**The winners of the inaugural Great British Cheese Awards have been announced, with both established and new cheesemakers scooping awards.**

Voted for by the general public, the awards were created to emphasise the diversity and talent of the artisan British cheese industry. Over 7,500 people voted for their favourite cheeses, producers and retailers in numerous categories, with those receiving the most votes reaching a shortlisted stage. A panel of industry experts and specialists tasted and judged the shortlisted entrants to reach a final verdict for each category.

Winners included Mrs Kirkham's Lancashire Cheese (Artisan Producer), Barkham Blue (Blue), Moody's Rosary Ash (Fresh), Cornish Gouda (Hard Cheese), Country Cheeses (Retailer), Yorkshire Pecorino (Semi-Soft Cheese), Rollright (Soft), Kingstone Dairy (Newcomer) and Cornish Blue (People's Choice).

Ollie Lloyd, CEO and founder of Great British Chefs said, "We launched The Great British Cheese Awards with the hope to produce a catalogue of great artisan cheese and discover up-and-coming cheesemakers. We are grateful to the remarkable support we have received from producers, retailers and especially the general public."




## JUSTIN TUNSTALL RETAIL CONSULTANT



## "Q – score more than 10 points"

It's an oft repeated cliche that we are a country of shopkeepers; also that we Brits respect, indeed LOVE a queue. Consequently the line of customers that most cheesemongers experience in December could be seen to represent the British Christmas as definitively as a Robin on a greetings card, Dickens' A Christmas Carol or The Queen's Speech.

Queues form as more people arrive at a bottleneck. The creation of a queue can be avoided by adding more resource – additional servers and cutting areas, perhaps opening additional tills to take the money. But that's a luxury that few delis can afford – we tend to be busy throughout the shop – so it's of no advantage to move staff from one task to another, nor to allocate costly space year round to cater for the 10 days when it would come into use.

Canny retailers learn how to manage their queues and indeed, derive benefit from what might be seen as an unpleasant inconvenience. Ensuring that customers are dealt with in order is the first consideration. If your staff can't keep track of who is next to be served, you could consider sending them off for evening training at a pub where serving out of order can lead to customers getting... well, out of order. There's a deli in Berkeley, California (The Cheeseboard), which uses a deck of playing cards and calls customers to be served in rank and suit order. These systems free customers up to browse other areas of the shop and hopefully add to their basket of purchases.

However, if you are stuck with an orderly line of people waiting to be served, it's worthwhile giving consideration on how to entertain them and reward them for their patience. Some shops have seasonal staff to offer samples up and down the queue – a job for a Saturday boy/girl, perhaps, and a way of introducing a line that they might not have asked for from their pre-prepared list of purchases. If there's a snaking queue going out of the door and down the street, then warming toddies, cocoa and umbrellas may be appropriate! A queue outside a shop is a great advert – people tend to see it as a 'happening place' rather than indicative of slow customer service. If you have a local newspaper, submit a picture story on how you attracted a queue and what you did for those queuing.

If we choose to accept and celebrate our Christmas queue as an opportunity and have a bit of fun with it, minor inconvenience can turn into a bit of a party. The best example I've seen of working a queue to good effect was in Leicester Square about 30 years ago. A lengthy line was waiting to buy tickets for the latest blockbuster and a raft of chancers was trying to get benefit from it. I recall a ventriloquist and a tap-dancer, but the real star was just panhandling his way down the queue. Unusually, he seemed to be getting on well, despite offering no real entertainment on exchange for the customary 10p donation. When he got to us, we discovered why: "I'm saving up for a REALLY big bottle of cider," he said "Can you spare 50p?" How could we refuse? Humour and a definite, bold request go a long way.



PROMOTION



THE MAKING OF A
**CLASSIC**

Meet Tuxford & Tebbutt, a respected favourite in the world of speciality blue cheese

From humble beginnings as farmhouse cheesemakers, the Tuxford & Tebbutt creamery was formed in 1780 in Melton Mowbray, making it the world's longest surviving maker of Stilton cheese. They have a huge amount of experience and knowledge and have seen the product develop and grow over the years. Today, whilst the creamery has certainly kept pace with the times to satisfy demand, Tuxford & Tebbutt still makes its award-winning cheeses from the same building in the same time-honoured way.

Tuxford & Tebbutt is famed as one of only six creameries in the world permitted to make Blue Stilton – the 'King of English Cheeses'. It's a responsibility this close-knit team of passionate cheesemakers takes very seriously.

The creamery's Stilton and Shropshire Blue cheeses are matured individually and graded and turned by hand. The result? A classic Stilton with rich, complex flavours and a piquant finish.

Peter Hughes, responsible for the quality of the creamery's Stilton, is as excited by the challenge of crafting champion cheeses as the first day he began: "I'm still passionate after working at Tuxford & Tebbutt for 27 years to make the highest quality cheese we can," he says.

It's this care and belief in tradition that makes this creamery's cheese so prized amongst cheese lovers and judges alike. Indeed, Tuxford & Tebbutt are frequent gold medal winners in national and international cheese competitions. "It's nice to have a trophy so that we can parade that with our team", Peter says with pride. "Customers enjoy us getting awards too and we like that competitive edge."

Tuxford & Tebbutt's expert cheesemakers are very precise in making sure the exact quantities of ingredients are added to perfect its strong and creamy characteristics that it is known for. Stilton cheese has acquired Protected Designation Origin status and can only be made in Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire using milk exclusively farmed from the same three counties. It is well known that Arla is a farmer owned cooperative, so they can ensure the milk they provide to Tuxford & Tebbutt is of the very finest quality. After all, top quality milk makes for the best quality cheese.



Both Stilton and Shropshire Blue are particularly versatile. Always allow the cheeses to reach room temperature to bring out the full flavour, then simply enjoy a generous chunk with crackers or selection of fruits and a glass of port. Stilton is also a prized cooking cheese which can bring a smooth, tangy richness to soups, sauces and salads.

arlacheese.co.uk

Arla

# BOOST YOUR BLUES SALES

Blue cheeses are reliably popular during the festive season, yet they can also prove to be a divisive topic amongst customers. The answer is to assemble a counter that boasts a well-balanced range



For many customers, blue cheese is considered the apex of cheesemaking, and is the variety which a number of well-versed cheese lovers gravitate towards. But it's also capable of making many consumers turn the other way, due to its strong and tangy flavour. However, it's important to accommodate and not discriminate. There are plenty of milder options out there which can appeal to those who come armed with the pre-conceived notion that strong is wrong.

Although a bonafide must-buy throughout the year, Christmas sees a surge of blue cheese sales. Most self-confessed novices will have dabbled with the likes of Roquefort and Stilton, and perhaps found them off-putting due to their bold taste characteristics, so it's important to provide ample options of milder choices which will convert the most hesitant shopper. Varieties like Shepherds Purse's Yorkshire Blue and Cropwell Bishop's Blue Shropshire are revered for their milder flavours, but they compensate with a subtle nuances like delicate nuttiness to keep the taste buds intrigued and satisfied.

## Sell well

It's easy to understand why some consumers are put off by the idea of blue cheese; it's made using mould,





after all. Mould, most commonly Penicillium Roqueforti, is mixed into milk with some salt. It's the Penicillium strains which create a distinctive blue colour. Educating customers about the process involved in the production of blue cheese can go a long way in helping them to decide which cheese to purchase.

Those who tend to keep blue cheese at arm's length might also benefit from pairing advice. Most food lovers know that blues complement red wine, but it's essential to know which red suits which cheese. A stronger blue will pair perfectly with a big red, but dessert wines also work wonderfully; the sweetness can balance well with the strong or salty flavours of the cheese.

Alongside recommended wine pairings should sit an array of crackers, crispbreads and chutneys. A tart apple chutney is favourable as its bold flavour can stand up to a punchy blue.

## Cheese classic

Sandra Bell is marketing manager for The Wensleydale Creamery, maker of Wensleydale Blue, renowned for being closer to 'subtle' on the blue cheese strength scale. The handcrafted cheese from the Yorkshire Dales, "is ideal for blue cheese newcomers," she says. "It's a delicately flavoured and creamy blue cheese that has a mellow yet full flavour, so is a great introduction to the category which will appeal to newcomers to blue cheese and connoisseurs alike."

Experimentation is what spurred The Wensleydale Creamery to create its latest product; a brand new blue cheese called Blue 16. Sandra is enthusiastic about the newest member of the blue family and said, "It's an eye-catching russet colour, full of character. The creamy, velvety texture of the cheese leads you through to sweet caramel notes, and a nutty, savoury flavour."

Sandra also notes how popular blue cheeses are during the festive season and explains, "Blue cheese is synonymous with Christmas, which is when we see a huge rise in demand for Wensleydale Blue – we will sell around double the volume versus a normal month. Christmas is an ideal time for customers looking to explore the varieties of blue cheese on the market, and indeed, we're launching Blue 16 in advance of the festive sales period."



**Owen Davies, the category manager for dairy products at Harvey & Brockless, is responsible for overseeing the fine food wholesaler and distributor's artisan cheese listings. He shares his five picks for seasoned cheese connoisseurs and five milder options for the more hesitant:**

## 5 STRONG BLUES:

### ROQUEFORT TROUPEAU AOP

While much Roquefort is produced on an industrial scale, leading French affineur Hennart, is one of the last to still be made by hand. Spicy, salty, fruity and wonderfully creamy, it is undoubtedly one of the world's greatest cheeses.

### PICOS BLUE

From the mountains of Northern Spain, this plucky maple leaf-wrapped, cow' and goats' milk cheese has plenty of spice and buttery richness. Made by the Alonso brothers for more than 30 years, it delivers a sticky rind and salty tang.

### COLSTON SHROPSHIRE BLUE

Colston Bassett is synonymous with world class blues. This cheese is made in a similar way to Stilton, with the addition of annatto to give it a sunset orange hue. It's sweeter and more delicate than its better-known cousin.

### MRS BELL'S BLUE

A compelling ewes' milk blue named after its creator Judy Bell of Shepherds Purse. It has a sweet burnt-caramel flavour that envelopes the sharp smack of the blue mould This is milder than Roquefort but equally complex.

### NORBURY BLUE

This is the most powerful blue we have! It has been made since 2001, using raw milk from the family farm's closed herd of Friesians. The lush meadow grasses are conveyed along with peppery notes.

## 5 MILD BLUES:

### ROCHEBARON

Under its ash-covered rind, this French blue unveils a soft texture and a subtle, slightly fruity flavour.

### MONTAGNOLO

This German blue has been produced for more than a century by Käserei Champignon. Sourcing cows' milk from the rolling grasslands of southern Bavaria, it's combined with cream to make a decadent cheese, rich and buttery with mild musty notes.

### CASHEL BLUE

A pioneer of Irish cheesemaking, Jane Grubb first made this soft, subtle blue in 1984 using milk from her husband Louis' herd of pedigree Friesians. It's handmade by the second generation on their 200 acre farm in Tipperary. This balanced, creamy cheese has the merest hint of saltiness.

### BEAUVALE

Nottinghamshire Stilton maker, Cropwell Bishop has branched out with a distinctly different blue. This has a lot in common with Gorgonzola Dolce thanks to its soft, silky texture and mellow flavour. It's sweet, spicy and framed by an underlying earthiness.

### BARKHAM BLUE

This ammonite-shaped cheese is made with super-creamy Guernsey and Jersey milk to give a gorgeous melt-in the-mouth consistency without harshness. Often described as a blue cheese for people who don't like blue cheese, it's handmade daily by the husband and wife team at Two Hoots.

## STOCK CHECK



### COTE HILL CHEESE
### COTE HILL BLUE

A velvety smooth and creamy cheese has a distinctive, delicate flavour.

**cotehill.com**




### THE WENSLEYDALE CREAMERY
### WENSLEYDALE BLUE

A delicately-flavoured creamy blue cheese – it has a mellow yet full taste.

**wensleydale.com**



### CROPWELL BISHOP CREAMERY
### BEAUVALE

The soft, melt-in-the-mouth texture and mellow flavour makes this a top choice for Stilton fans.

**cropwellbishopstilton.com**



### BUTLERS FARMHOUSE CHEESES
### BLACKSTICKS BLUE

A distinctive amber hue twinned with soft blue veins decorate this scrumptious cheese.

**butlerscheese.co.uk**



### HIGH WEALD DAIRY
### BRIGHTON BLUE

A slightly-open, semi-soft texture accompanies a mellow blue flavour and fragrant aroma.

**highwealddairy.co.uk**



### H S BOURNE
### BLUE CHESHIRE

The Bourne family has been produced Cheshire cheese since 1750, with this blue one of its classics.

**hsbourne.co.uk**



### SHEPHERD'S PURSE
### HARROGATE BLUE

Introduce customers to something different with this creamy blue made from buffalo milk.

**shepherdspurse.co.uk**



### CORNISH CHEESE COMPANY
### CORNISH BLUE

A young, blue cheese that could compete with imported blue cheeses.

**cornishcheese.co.uk**




### OXFORD CHEESE COMPANY
### OXFORD BLUE

A Stilton-style cheese with an especially creamy texture when the cheese is allowed to mature.

**oxfordcheese.co.uk**




### LONG CLAWSON
### STILTON

This fine Stilton will be ready at around eight weeks old and is crumbly and creamy, with a bold and expressive flavour.

**clawson.co.uk**



# FARM SHOP FOCUS

## Chatsworth Estate Farm Shop is truly a shop with a story to tell. Andre Birkett, manager, tells all

### A retailer with history

When it comes to retail establishments with heritage, not many can match the farm shop located on the famous Chatsworth Estate in Derbyshire. "The farm shop was opened in 1977 by the Duchess of Devonshire as a direct outlet for mainly estate-produced products," explains Andre Birkett, farm shop manager, "mainly those from our in-house farms which produce predominantly is beef, lamb and game when in season." Staying true to its roots was always integral to the business. "We wanted to cut out the middle man and pay our producers more, and sell directly to our customers. An element of this was that many things we were selling were made by local producers on the estate – which is something we're very proud of."

Although this sounds like a surefire recipe for success, the business – like all others – had to overcome obstacles to make this vision a reality. "At the beginning," Andre explains, "it was very hard because we had to have change of use of the building the shop is located in, as originally it was used as a shirehorse stud. In 1953 these horses became redundant as the tractor became the tool to have, so the building became derelict. We had to change the use from agricultural to retail, and the planners put some big restrictions on us." These restrictions seem rather strict by modern standards: "We could only sell half a lamb, half a pig, or a 16th of a cow." The team used their ingenuity to make the business a success regardless. "You can imagine," Andre says, "at that time you couldn't buy a sausage, pork chop or a steak, so we relied on home freezing – this was pretty popular at the time, thankfully, so allowed us to grow, and we've continued to grow ever since."

### Staying true to its roots

"All of our beef, lamb, venison and pheasant come from the estate, and everything else comes from our tenant farmers," explains Andre. "It's very important to us that our meat offering is local, because that's where the roots of the farm shop lie. All of our beef is hung for 21 days no matter what it is, which is really important to us as it's the way it always has been – it's the only way you can guarantee great quality and flavour. All of our pork is free-range. If you consider the fact that only 2% of the UK's pork is free-range, this really makes us unique. The customer can see this – we tell the story on boards around the shop, so they can see the deer grazing in the parkland and the gamekeeper looking after them. I don't ever want to go down another route, as this has always stood us in good stead and I believe it will continue to do so. If anything, this is more important today than it was before, as these days consumers really do want to know where their food is coming from. They also increasingly share my belief that it's better to have a little of something of really great quality than a lot of something which is poorer quality."



As the story of Chatsworth itself it integral to the business, so is the story behind the products sold in the shop. "Every single week we have a producer booked in to talk to our customers about their product," says Andre. "We have a tenant brewer 300 yards away, and when the head brewer comes to tell his story and introduce his beers there's an invaluable connection built between the product and the consumer.

"Our business ethos remains the same as it was when we first opened," explains Andre. "Firstly, we focus on produce which has been sourced from the estate itself. Secondly, from our tenant farmers. Thirdly from the best of Derbyshire's producers, and finally from the rest of the UK. Only 5% of our sales comes from products which are sourced from overseas. and things like olives and antipasti.

This ethos has worked very well for us, and we stick to it rigidly so every supplier that we see and product we look at, this comes first.

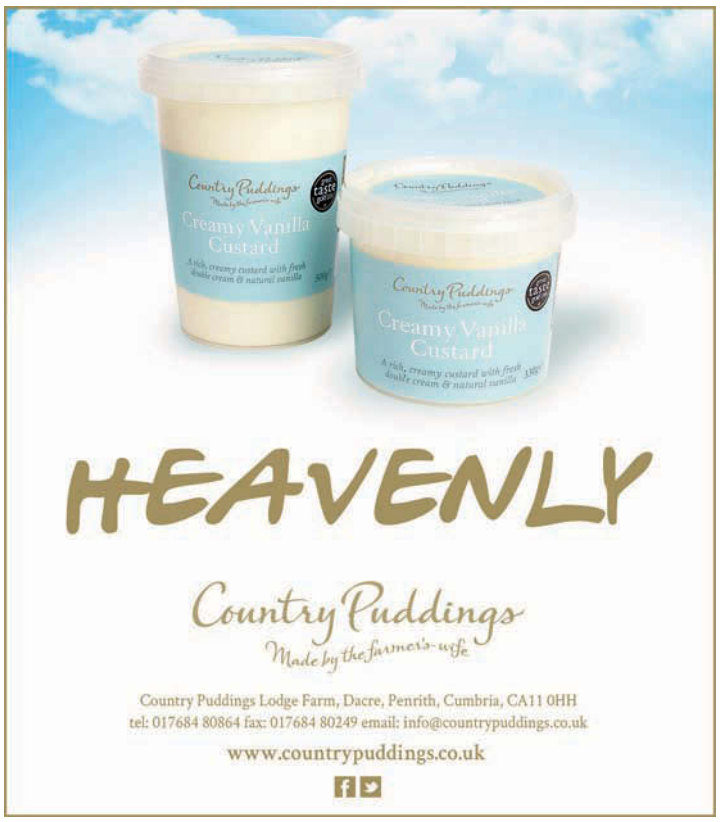
"I'm so proud that we've stuck to these ethoses throughout the years – the importance of eating real, local food rather than highly-processed food from the supermarket. I'm proud of our suppliers, the staff here and their knowledge, and the fact that we're still passionate about making the very best product ourselves." Despite this success, Chatsworth is far from resting on its laurels. "We're always looking forward and investing in new ideas, trends and technologies," explains Andre. "We try to be creative with products; there are so many world foods which British producers are now replicating, and its these producers we look to in order to help us keep moving forward and one step ahead of our competitors."

### Meat sells

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the biggest sellers at Chatsworth Farm Shop are the meat products produced on the estate. "However," says Andre, "we don't do things exactly the same as we used to, as we recognize that the customer is always changing. The customer today is very different to the customer from even 10 years ago, so our butchery offering is now split between a serviced counter where they can buy traditional cuts of meat, and one where they can pick up a pre-packed meal.

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> "We can see on a daily basis the value of our work, and how we're helping to maintain and develop the estate. It's very gratifying to be able to look around the estate and see the difference we make"













Shop has proven that sticking to its guns can pave the way to success, the business is forward-thinking, too.

"We've always tried to be ahead of the trends, so in 1984 we introduced an in-store bakery and kitchen which were hugely popular, and our café was a very important part of our business because it became a tasting room of sorts for the products we sold in the shop."

This methodology has proven to be impressively successful. "We're now quite a large farm shop with a sizeable turnover," says Andre, "and any money which has been made is ploughed back to the estate and Chatsworth House itself. This means that we're all doing a very important job in maintaining the estate. We can see on a daily basis the value of the work that we're doing, and how we're helping to maintain and develop the estate. It's very gratifying to be able to look around the estate and see each day how important the work we do is."

## Keep it local

The retailer's link to its surroundings is absolutely vital to its success, according to Andre. "In my opinion," he says, "many farm shops that open these days have no link to their own farm. Here, we're in the heart of the farm of Chatsworth and surrounded by our herd of pedigree cows and sheep. As real farm shops, it's imperative that we make this distinction and ethos clear. It's easy to open a farm shop and sell products from around the world, but when it comes to long-term success, I think traditional farm shops will win out."

Equally important is the shop's connection to its local community. "Many people consider us a tourist business," Andre says, "but the truth is that the farm shop stands a mile and a half away from the house, and over 60% of our customers come to the shop as local people and not tourists.

"Our local village, Chatsworth, is very closely linked to us as its school and other amenities are supported by the estate," he says. "There are 50 houses within the village which are mainly staff housing, and there are another three villages on the estate which we work closely with, too."

Chatsworth is absolutely passionate about education, and this is evident in the multiple educational programs that the retailer offers. Andre explains, "We show school children our farm yard, and explain the connection between this and retail and, ultimately, their plate. Seven days a week, we educate children about food and farmers. It's astonishing that some children are amazed to learn that their milk and burger comes from a cow in a field. They then come to the shop, café and kitchen and understand the link; I'm confident that we tell this story very well."

As well as proving successful for the business, this dedication to being true to its roots is of personal importance to Andre. "I'm so proud that we've stuck to these philosophies throughout the years – the importance of eating real, local food rather than highly-processed food from the supermarket," he says. "I'm proud of our suppliers, the staff here and their knowledge, and the fact that we're still passionate about making the very best product ourselves."

Although Chatsworth Farm Shop has proven that sticking to its guns can pave the way to success, the business is forward-thinking, too.

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**TOP TIP**

**"Within the farm shop, Chatsworth has its own butchery, bakery and kitchen teams producing for the delicatessen.**

**Our farms are supplying the butchery counter and kitchen, and the bakery supplies the shop and café. These are the things which keep us unique.**

**Nobody's hidden away; you can see butchers working on carcasses – including beef, lamb, venison and game – which allows our customers to see the full story behind the product.**

**This openness means that we don't need to tell the story as much as we would have to otherwise, as they see the process for themselves.**

**Our kitchen and bakery are visible too, and it's really nice to see the bakers filling up the bakery section in the shop, and the chefs in the kitchen stocking up the deli counter with pies and other freshly-made foods. It all makes it real, which is invaluable."**

### Dos

- Stick to your principles
- Look after your customers
- Continue to develop staff with product knowledge and customer service skills
- Be proud of local and British produce
- Know your limitations

### Dont's

- Be tempted by cheap imitation food
- Be swayed by what others are doing





# LAST MINUTE CHRISTMAS IDEAS

## How can fine food retailers make Christmas magical? What fantastic gift ideas are available in 2016? John Bensalhia reports

Ebenezer Scrooge initially took to Christmas with all the warmth of a supermarket's deep freeze department. Declaiming the season with a "Bah humbug", Scrooge's festive cheer was in short supply. But by the end of A Christmas Carol, a redemptive Scrooge has discovered that Christmas magic.

Today, farm shops and food retailers are weaving their very own festive spells with a range of seasonal initiatives and tempting gift ideas which will warm the hearts of everyone.

In the food and retail sectors, the magic of Christmas is conjured up in the lead-up to the season, as Lindsey Gray, The Food Company's marketing and events manager, explains: "Christmas is always an exciting time for anyone in retail, but more so for us as we combine both food and gifts under one roof. Our gifts department start buying in June for Christmas, and regularly attend trade shows in Paris to ensure a unique selection is always available to our customers."

### Widespread appeal

Making the Christmas experience appeal to all ages is key. Lydia Hodge, Gog Magog shop manager, says that it provides a wide range of food-related gifts to please all of the family. "One of our favourites has to be The Big Cheese Making Kits. They contain everything needed to make Mozzarella and Ricotta, Halloumi or Scottish Crowdie from the comfort of your very own kitchen!"

"Loved by a long list of top chefs, Big Green Eggs are at the top of most foodies' Christmas lists. So much more than just a BBQ, they are ideal for low and slow cooks, perfect pizzas and or even your Christmas dinner. The Mini-max tends to be most popular size around this time of year, perhaps because it's slightly easier to wrap! For those who already have one of these outdoor ovens, Eggcessories are always a welcome treat!"

Lydia adds that another popular present choice is gift vouchers, which become increasingly popular at Christmas. "They're the answer for when you're buying for someone who has everything!"

### Home quirks and top traditions

This year, the quirky, imaginative gift remains a good choice for customers. At Uncle Henry's, handmade wooden reindeers in various sizes are produced by local supplier John Watson Woodcraft. Gog Magog will again stock Joe & Seph's Giant Crackers this year, following their popularity in 2015. "They contain six packs of their fantastic popcorn as well as hats and Christmas jokes so they are great to take to parties!" says Lydia Hodge. "We'll also have Mince Pie Fudge from artisan confectioner Buttermilk. It makes a great stocking filler if you can wait until Christmas



Day to devour it!"

Tradition is still a notable watchword when it comes to Christmas gifts. "We find that traditional gifting items are always incredibly popular," says Caroline Miller, Ludlow Food Centre's senior buyer. "So we sell an awful lot of hampers, as well as our own handmade preserves and pickle gift sets in the run up to December 25th."

Hampers are also a popular choice at Gog Magog, for both men and women. "We have a selection of pre-made hampers available to buy off the shelf," says Lydia Hodge. "They are so popular because they make present-buying so easy for time-poor customers. We can also tailor-make hampers to suit specific tastes or genders!"

## Children's choices

If there's one audience guaranteed to eagerly count down the days until Father Christmas appears, then it's children. The young ones certainly won't be disappointed with the massive scale of gift ideas at food retailers and farm shops. These can include some delightful cuddly toys. "We have some great gifts for children with snuggly soft toys from Jellycat and every kid's favourite, Fatboy beanbags," says Lindsey Grey.

A safe bet for a happy Christmas is a confectionery gift, and there are many brilliant examples. "Chocolate is always very popular at Christmas and we are fortunate to have an



artisan chocolatier based locally called Special Edition Chocolates at Market Rasen," says Liam Redmond. "Their festive range includes handmade Santa's and Snowmen and the chocolate is gluten and nut-free. Novelty confectionery items such as Santa on a Scooter and the Jelly Bean Factory range are perfect stocking fillers!"

"Sweeties and chocolate continue to get the thumbs up!" says Caroline Miller. "We have retro packs of classic confectionery which are great little stocking fillers. These include candy canes, chocolate penguin lollipops, and chocolate Santa figurines. The favourite is still the classic bag of chocolate gold coins – so pretty traditional all-round! We have some beautifully decorated gingerbread biscuits from Image on Food and our bakery manager, Hazel, is also producing Christmas themed shortbread and cupcakes. The upstairs gift shop now also has a dedicated children's section so there is plenty of scope for gifting if customers want to avoid sugar laden treats."

## Making magic

Creating a magical Christmas experience in the shop is important when it comes to bringing in the customers. The right atmosphere, display, and also lighting instantly puts customers in a festive mood.

"We love our lighting at The Food Company," says Lindsey Grey. "It's the difference between a mediocre display and something with the WOW factor. Plenty of fairy lights at Christmas make for great photos which we publicise through channels like Facebook and Instagram, getting folk in the Christmassy mood before they've left their sofa."

Christmas displays should be arranged to instantly catch the eye, along with bold, clear signage: "In store we create attractive displays which are eye catching as well as signage along the drive and around the farm," says Lydia Hodge. "This builds anticipation before customers even enter the shops. We also promote gifts on our social media outlets as well as in the gift guides published by local magazines."

The position of the festive display is a factor to consider, as Liam Redmond comments: "Ensure your festive displays are in the right area of the shop with direct footfall to create maximum impact which results in higher sales. Use props to increase the visual aspect of your displays i.e tree branches to display gift tags and Christmas decorations. We also ensure that there are Christmas decorations and displays everywhere so that the customer is reminded of Christmas throughout their journey through Uncle Henry's."

### THE MUST-STOCK GIFTS OF 2016

- The Big Cheese Making Kit
- Big Green Egg
- Spade glassware
- Joe & Seph's Giant Crackers
- Pre-made, themed hampers
- Retro confectionery
- Locally-made chocolates

## Feel-good festivities

That good old Christmas magic means that any Scrooge-like tendencies will vanish in a flash. Farm shops and food retailers are ensuring that the festive experience is both memorable and productive for customers. As Lindsey Grey explains, excellent customer service is a must.

"Our staff make Christmas truly special for customers with their enthusiastic and passionate attitude," says Liam Redmond. "We endeavour to help in any way we can especially when it comes to picking out products for a bespoke hamper or providing cooking advice."

Liam adds that Uncle Henry's creates a buzz about Christmas through eye-catching displays and unique products. "We also offer festive themed tasting events every weekend in the run up to the big day so that customers can taste 'Christmas' whilst they are browsing."

Caroline Miller says that Christmas is a great time for farm shops to engage with regular shoppers to cement existing relationships and also to attract new visitors. "This year we're hosting a special late night shopping event exclusively for our loyalty card members, as well as other evenings where we'll be open until 8pm."

"Setting the scene makes a huge contribution to people's shopping enjoyment and so we are really extending the range of decorations that we have on sale. This in turn means that the overall visual effect in the Food Hall will be much more Christmassy too."

Ludlow Food Centre is also keen to cater for families and is making the most of its sister sites at Bromfield. "The Clive is hosting a Santa's Grotto lunch and we also have a Santa Storytelling event. The intention is to capture the magic of Christmas that kids love and make sure that the Food Centre becomes a destination offering a great experience to everyone."

"Additionally, in order to deliver convenience and embrace the festive spirit, we're hosting two special tasting weekends where hoppers will be able to meet a wide range of our local suppliers and sample their produce: it'll be our own mini Christmas market."

Every Winter at Gog Magog, a special marquee covers the outside area between the different departments. "Not only does this offer shelter but it provides a much larger retail space," says Lydia Hodge. "This year we'll be decorating the marquee with beautiful fairy lights and greenery to create a wonderfully festive atmosphere."

"Our customers are so happy and full of anticipation at this time of year so it's a great time to engage with them. Tasters always put a smile of faces too and there's so much to offer and taste out in the lead up to Christmas."



> "Creating a magical Christmas experience in the shop is important when it comes to bringing in the customers. The right atmosphere, display and lighting instantly put customers in a festive mood"






# SWEET TALK



## Sweets and alcohol are firm foodie favourites, but what happens when the two worlds collide?

Gastronomical experimentation has got to be one of the most en-vogue elements to 21st century living. When it comes to leaving no stone unturned, food and drink artisans are in indefatigable in spirit – who wouldn't put it past them to turn that stone into some form of cutting edge edible treat?

But it's the consumers which propel this mode of thinking, this desire to create. The culinarily curious are all around us, and they want to indulge. And indulge they will, with the latest sweet treat sensation that's grabbing gourmand's attentions. Step forward, alcoholic sweets – perhaps the most indulgent cooking convergence yet.

While drink and food pairings have been the forte of many establishments for years, they're more of a facet to a meal than something bite-sized to enjoy at the drop of a hat. That's why the arrival of 'adult sweets' is one that's hotly anticipated.

There have been lots of companies giving it a try; last year saw ice cream experimentation behemoth Ben & Jerry's enjoy a foray into the craft beer market, collaborating with Colorado's New Belgium Brewing to produce a New Belgium Salted Caramel Brown-ie Ale ice cream (a visa versa version has been released in beer form, too). Artisan popcorn makers Joe & Seph's also boast a whole host of alcohol-inspired snacks, with Mojito, Gin & Tonic and Margarita varieties garnering lots of attention.

### Boozy bites

One innovative company which is currently pushing the envelope is Smith & Sinclair, which creates the only solid sweets on the market to contain real alcohol, at 6% ABV each. Melanie Goldsmith, co-founder of Smith & Sinclair, had her light bulb moment while assisting with events, and says, "We started as a bi-product to a serious of adult 'board game' dating nights. The theme of the nights stemmed from the idea that when you play, all sense of inhibition tends to reduce in exchange for laughter and tactility. Our primary product, the Edible Cocktails, launched at the nights as the ultimate added-value product; a pick'n'mix station for grown ups!"

The excitement for the sugary pastilles generated quickly, and a year on, the company has secured listings in Harrods, Harvey Nichols, Selfridges and more. With flavours like Gin with Elderflower & Thyme and a Rhuby Mule, it's easy to understand why these treats appeal to a sophisticated, specialist food market. Melanie realises the instant appeal of the sweets, and enjoys witnessing the flavour sensation that first-timers experience. "New customers find it hard to imagine what it's going to taste like, with the closest point of comparison being a chocolate liqueur (which tastes nothing like our pastilles) so there is that 'wow factor' on first taste. They are pretty moreish, so giving people a taste usually leads to a second!"

With Christmas right around the corner, grown up sweets are destined to flourish during this season, especially with Smith & Sinclair in the process of bringing out two new range of products collaborating with other well-known brands. Melanie foresees it being a hectic time of the year and says, "Christmas is around 70% of our year with gifting, celebration and parties being at the forefront – we have a lot planned for this year and have doubled the team in preparation!"

### Forward thinking flavours

Another gourmet company producing adult sweets that speak to the inner child is SugarSin, which has its own Covent Garden shop and stocks the likes of Selfridges. Although differing to Smith & Sinclair in that its products contain no alcohol, flavours in its range of Cocktail Gummies include Classic Prosecco, Fizzy Prosecco and Real Italian Prosecco, as well as Cuba Libre Gummies and Spiced Rum & Bubbly Cola. This makes them perfect for teetotallers, who wish to explore the world of alcohol-inspired sweets without encountering a hangover the following morning.

Co-founder of SugarSin, Josefin Deckel, has always aimed to create sweets for a different customer base, and travelled around the globe with her sister-cum-business partner Anna on a mission to create distinctive confectionery that's just as beautiful to look at as it is to taste. She says, "Our ambition has always been to create fabulous sweets for grown ups. We wanted to make sweets fun and festive, and that's when the idea of cocktail-inspired gummy sweets popped up. People absolutely love them and think they're fun and more indulgent than other sweets. Usually those who don't normally like sweets are really intrigued by them."

Just like Scott & Sinclair, the festive season has proven to be a hugely popular time for SugarSin as well. Josefin says, "Last year, the Prosecco Gummies went completely bananas, so we're expecting some super busy weeks in the run up to Christmas. The Cocktail gummies are fantastic stocking fillers and secret santa gifts. We also have lots of new flavours in the pipeline and we will be launching a new one in January."

> "The arrival of 'adult sweets' is hotly anticipated"





# WELCOME IN **WINTER WARMERS**

## Capitalise on your customers' cravings for comforting, hearty food with a diverse range of soups and one-pot meals

One should never underestimate how profoundly weather, environment and atmosphere influence on our dietary choices. Shorter, darker and, sadly but rather inevitably, rainier days are capable of eliciting pangs of hunger for wholesome dishes like soups, ready meals and one-pot dishes which offer a quick fix of comfort.

Soups, stews and broths have long been a staple of the British diet and are a guaranteed favourite with shoppers during this time of the year. There are some fantastic-quality products boasting genuine health-boosting ingredients on the market. Convenience products aren't synonymous with sub-par last resort meals any more – most of us will pop a fresh soup in the microwave for a satisfying office lunch or will look forward to enjoying a hearty, healthy evening casserole wrapped under a blanket after a long day.

### Filling and flavourful

It's important to identify your customers' preferences when it comes to winter warmers. Most will tend to opt for the British classics, such as beef stew with dumplings and leek and potato soup. There's a reason why these are essential shelf fillers – they're homely, straightforward, nostalgic and wholesome. Though they're traditionally simple concoctions, it doesn't mean they have limited appeal. Often they're filled to the brim with fibre, vitamins and protein due to liberal helpings of vegetables, meats and grains. The benefit to a one-pot meal is that it can be crammed with an abundance of healthy ingredients. Shoppers will tend to have a deep seated draw to slow cooked dishes – these pots of flavourful food appeal as they offer slow-cooked comfort without the hours of stirring and waiting.

### Internationally inspired

When perusing a soup and ready meal section, it's common to see a section of international flavours. The rise of miso soups and ramen-topped broths have found their

### MUST-STOCK FLAVOURS FOR 2017

**It's important to not rest on your laurels by solely opting for familiar favourites – explore the options out there and offer a well-balanced range of intriguing flavours combined with much-loved classics:**

- Curried Sweet Potato
- Carrot & Butternut Squash
- Kale & Chickpea
- Red Lentil with Apricots & Crushed Chillies
- Pea & Mint
- Three Bean Vegetable Chilli
- Goan Spiced Chicken & Lentils
- Tomato & Chorizo

> "Often soups and stews are filled to the brim with fibre, vitamins and protein due to liberal helpings of vegetables, meats and grains. The benefit of a one-pot meal is that it can be crammed with an abundance of healthy ingredients"



STOCK CHECK 2016 SPECIALITY FOOD MAGAZINE




**SOUPOLOGIE ANCIENT GRAINS AMARANTH, FLAXSEED & MILLET**

A nutty and flavoursome soup takes inspiration from ancient grains to create a uniquely moreish bowl.

**soupologie.com**




**THE SOULFUL FOOD COMPANY PULLED PORK STEW WITH CHORIZO, BEANS & SPELT**

Hearty and rustic, with smoky British chorizo and nutty grains.

**soulfulfood.com**




**ME TOO! FOODS BUTTERNUT SOUP**

Deliciously creamy and sweet, butternut squash soup is a favourite amongst vegetarians and flexitarians.

**metoofoods.com**




**EASY BEAN BRAZILIAN VATAPÁ**

This pot contains plenty of black turtle beans – a favourite ingredient found in Brazilian cooking.

**easybean.co.uk**




**TIDEFORD ORGANICS BROWN RICE MISO BROTH**

Made with kale, mushrooms and tamari to give it an extra superfood boost and dried red chillis for an extra kick.

**tidefordorganics.com**




**ROD & BEN'S LEEK, POTATO & BACON SOUP**

A new addition to the range, this is a collaboration with The Well Hung Meat Company to accompany Rod's home-grown leeks.

**rodandbens.com**




**NUTRIPOT MOROCCAN COUSCOUS**

These delicious pots contain half of the recommended daily nutrition – they're a great on-the-go meal for health-conscious consumers.

**nutripot.com**




**ROOTS COLLECTIVE ASIAN SLING BLEND**

This range of whole vegetable blends may look like juices, but they can be heated up and served as a soup, too.

**rootscollective.co.uk**




**MASH DIRECT MASHED POTATO, CARROT, BACON & PARSNIP MASH POT**

Carefully selected heritage ingredients steam cooked for optimum flavour.

**mashdirect.com**




**COOK MOROCCAN SPICED LAMB TAGINE**

A slow-cooked leg of lamb comes with chickpeas and a blend of Moroccan spices and almond flakes.

**cookfood.net**

way onto our plates, with Mexican bean-based pots and Thai-style coconut-infused curries becoming increasingly popular. These styles of cuisines are favoured due to their ability to play with spice, in a way traditional British food might not provide. With a thick, hearty dish, the rousing heat of a chilli or the sweet and citrussy hint of lemongrass can offer a welcome twist.

## Quick-fix favourites

Customers often use their own ingenuity to create their own bespoke dishes using soups, stews and broths as the foundation to a quick dish, so it's a good idea to stock up on tinned and dried beans, grains and flavour-enhancers like herbs, spices and cured meats (chorizo is a popular addition to stews). Make sure that customers know that they can pep up their soups with some fresh vegetables or salads available – clearly labelled signage to your fresh produce area will help to boost further sales.



It would be wise to make sure your soup and ready meal offering is catering to healthy shoppers, too. A lighter one-pot meal doesn't need to solely be sold in the warmer months; section healthy food next to thinner broths, gazpacho and smoothies to attract this demographic to the the soup and ready meal section. One pot and ready meals typically cater quite well to consumers with intolerances or dietary restrictions, so you might find it advantageous to group together these meals together with free-from foods and healthy alternatives. The versatility and wide appeal of soups and one-pot meals make them great options to fit into a multitude of store sections.

## FROM THE **MAKERS...**

### We caught up with producers of soups, stews and one-pot meals to share news of product developments and explain the benefits of a warming bowl



**Roddy Hall, founder of Rod & Ben's, on the enduring appeal of a good soup:** Soup showcases veggies in an especially positive light, converting even the most reticent greens-dodger. Also, soup provides the scope to help people circumnavigate various food needs like lactose-free, gluten-free and vegan.

The silly soup season tends to run from September until April, however it's increasingly apparent that soup sells well all year, which is why seasonal specials are such an intrinsic part of our experience. Our most popular products are the Chicken & Vegetable and Smoked Haddock Chowder, but the strongest seller of all has got to be Pea & Mint.



**Christina Baskerville, managing director of Easy Bean, on the importance of exotic flavours:** Britain has long been a nation that adopts and experiments with food from international cuisines. Our target customer is often well-travelled and urban-based – they tend to be surrounded by an exciting plethora of style of cuisine; from street food to fine dining influences. Our latest launch was inspired by the Olympic games in Brazil and is our take on the Vatapá – one of their classic dishes. It hails from the Bahian coastal region where many of the dishes have African origins as a result of the slave trade.

During the summer months consumers have an abundance of salads available for quick and easy meals. As the weather turns cooler, most of us want something warm and more filling for lunch or dinner, so our one-pots fit the bill perfectly. In January we see another increase in demand, as we all recover from the excesses of Christmas. We have definitely seen an increase in sales over the past 12 months as more consumers look for quick and easy healthy mealtime solutions.

## TOP 5 SELLING SUGGESTIONS

- **Create a designated soup and ready meals section**
  It's not necessarily a necessity for the entire year, but it's worth trialling a refrigerated section over the winter to maximise promotion of these seasonally popular products
- **Offer mix-and-match deals**
  Variety is the spice of life, so encourage shoppers to combine products for a discounted price
- **Highlight time-saving benefits**
  Most people choose the products for their convenience and ease – make sure this is clearly labelled
- **Group one-pot meals and soups into healthy hampers**
  An exclusive hamper that includes complementing health foods will promote the products' healthy appeal
- **Make sure popular varieties are well stocked and have a strong shelf presence**
  Don't fall short during the busy winter season, make sure that you identify best sellers and ensure you have plenty in stock



# THE EIGHT: PIES & PASTIES

Make sure your pastry section is a strong source of revenue with the help of these irresistible pastries



## 1 PIEMINISTER: Gluten Free British Beef & Craft Ale Moo Pie

"We've been working hard to perfect a gluten-free pastry for almost a year and our success at the British Pie Awards is proof that it was worth taking the time to get the recipe perfect," says Tristan Hogg, co-founder and managing director of Pieminister. "Our famous Heidi and Moo Classics are two of the most popular pies we make, so we wanted to create gluten-free versions that didn't compromise on the perfect pie-eating experience our customers expect from us.

"We were determined that our gluten-free pasty – which we make with soya and rice flour – would have the same golden, buttery lightness as our regular shortcrust recipe. So we tested our gluten-free pies on coeliac and non-coeliac customers and lovers of our classics, who all agreed that these versions were just as delicious."

**pieminister.co.uk**

## 2 POSH PASTY CO.: Minted Lamb Pasty



"When I developed this pasty I wanted to take the classic combination of lamb and mint and add my own brand of innovation," says James Strawbridge, founder. "I love aromatic spices and fennel, so have built a flavour profile that tastes more North African than roast dinner, balancing the mint and chilli with fennel seeds and Cornish yoghurt from Trewithen Dairy.

"Marinading the Cornish lamb shoulder overnight is a vital part of the process, adding real depth of flavour. I also wanted the pastry in all my pasties to have as much impact as the filling. Often in the baking industry it seems pastry is seen solely as a carrier to hold the flavour rather than being filled with flavour itself. One of the unique aspects of Posh Pasty Co. is that we love to make pastry really special with my golden butter shortcrust recipe using Cornish butter and some other little tricks."

**poshpasty.co**

## 3 THE REAL PIE COMPANY: Steak & Kidney Pie



A true classic in the pie field, it's adored for being the ultimate comfort food and is quintessentially British in its appeal. This pie is created following a traditional family recipe passed down to the bakery. It's hand-crafted and crammed to the crust with flavour; expect chunks of British lean beef steak and juicy kidney soaked in a rich, savoury gravy. A slow cooking method is applied to accentuate the melt-in-the-mouth flavour, with a blend of crisp, light puff pasty for the top and a traditional short crust pastry base.

Christine Cossins, managing director at The Real Pie Company said, "Our Steak & Kidney Pie is a best-seller. And no wonder, it's hand-crafted like all of our pies, and full of meaty flavour. The awards it has received just go to prove hot tasty it is!"

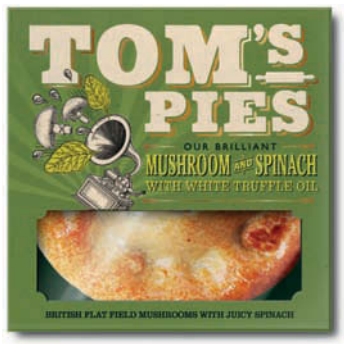
**therealpieco.co.uk**

## 4 TOM'S PIES: Mushroom & Spinach with White Truffle Oil Pie

Started by executive chef Tom Cull on a family farm, each pie is handmade in Devon. This vegetarian pie is a firm favourite with customers.

Tom Cull, founder said, "Our best-selling vegetarian pie steals hearts across the country, and deservedly so. Its combination of wilted spinach, mushrooms and fragrant white truffle oil is no less than irresistible, especially when paired with some lightly buttered seasonal vegetables."

**toms-pies.co.uk**




## 5 PYES FARM: Goat's Cheese with Roasted Mediterranean Vegetables Pie

The Goat's Cheese with Roasted Mediterranean Vegetables pie is one of the family bakery's best-sellers and is perfect for vegetarians, explains Jenny Roberts, business manager at Pyes Farm.

"It contains delicious roasted vegetables, such as red and yellow peppers, aubergine, cherry tomatoes and onion," she says. "The pie is made using all-butter shortcrust pastry and can be eaten cold, but is delicious served hot with a fresh, green salad."

**pyesfarm.com**



## 6 PROPER CORNISH: Christmas Dinner Pasty



Proper Cornish, the handmade Cornish pasty manufacturer based in Bodmin, has recently launched a Christmas Dinner Pasty. A quirky spin on a classic, its seasonal appeal stirs with shoppers, especially fans of Christmas-themed products. They're available in boxes of 20 and come frozen and ready to bake.

Daniele Colebrown, marketing manager says, "It's filled with succulent chunks of turkey and pieces of bacon, combined with trimmings of Cornish potatoes, onions and green beans. Cranberries and sage are also added to give an authentic Christmas flavour, all wrapped in a hand-crimped pastry."

**propercornish.co.uk**

## 7 THE TOPPING PIE COMPANY: Game & Poultry Pie



"This pie is a core product in our speciality range and continues to sell well all year round," says Matthew Topping, sales and marketing manager. "But it's particularly sought-after at Christmas as a luxurious treat. It's available in 450g, 1.1kg and 2.2kg sizes and has been enjoyed by royalty and aristocracy alike!

"It's inspired by the Tudor times, and Maggie Topping's family recipe and contains seasonal game sandwiched between layers of pork and cranberries to complement the rich flavours of our chicken liver pâté."

**toppingspies.co.uk**

## 8 CHUNK OF DEVON: Steak & Blue Pasty



This company produces true Devonshire pasties, and is proud of it. Starting from the back of a butchers' shop, Chunk of Devon was the brainchild of Simon and Suzi Bryon-Edmond, who shared a mission to create simple, tasty and natural food. After walking away with the coveted Britain's Best Pastry Award back in 2009, the company has been cooking an array of pies and pasties ever since.

One delicious product it boasts is the Steak & Blue Pasty, which offers a parcel of strong-flavoured cheese paired with succulent meat. Suzi says, "The Steak & Blue Pasty is a classic, hand-crimped pasty made to the same recipe as our award-winning steak pasty formula with beef skirt, but with the addition of some delicious Stilton cheese. It's sensational, providing you like Stilton, of course!"

**chunkofdevon.com**



COTSWOLD FAYRE*

-EST 1999-

Sponsored by the speciality food wholesaler to the UK & Ireland
cotswoldfayre.co.uk

# Jimmy Doherty

## "Spreading our wings"



Diversification has become a necessity within the farming industry, and at Jimmy's Farm we are no different. At our very core is the working farm and everything that goes with it. However, over the years we have built the business to ensure that we can appeal to as many people as possible. There are risks associated with that of course; too many strings could be seen as diluting the offering, but we have distinct strands which we are working hard to keep fresh and the results of a year-long project have come to fruition. We now have a zoo licence!

This means so much to the farm in terms of potential, but also what we have gained so far in experience. Being granted a zoo licence is not a simple case of filling in a form, paying a fee and receiving a certificate – it's a whole lot more! We have invested heavily in time, personnel and infrastructure, which in terms of sustainability bodes well for the future. We now have a full-time zoo-keeper and assistant, research programme with higher education establishments and, of course, new animals! Meerkats and wallabies have arrived and our butterfly house has been open – always a great draw! The day we were granted the licence and let them in to their enclosures was pretty special. The reaction we had from visitors over half term was fantastic, so it's all very encouraging.

We're heading in to the Christmas season and it's so important to make sure that we're able to reach as many customers, new and old, as possible and deliver on their expectations. We have recently revamped our online offering. Our new butchery website is a real representation of how beautiful our meat is. We want people to see what the products are and how they can be used. We want to inspire people to click the 'buy' button, and from that moment on make the buying experience simple but also deliver what people want. The turkeys that we're rearing right here on the farm can be pre-ordered for people's Christmas dinner as well as all the butchery trimmings and delivered all over mainland UK; it's quite a buzz to know we're providing the main element of one of the most important meals that families will sit down to all year. We have regular orders from a customer in the USA who buys turkeys for her whole UK family. We really do live in a global economy now and everybody is part of it. Commercially, life is very different from when we first started out and it's all so exciting. We just need to make sure we are never complacent and are always prepared to move with the times. You never know what is around the corner.

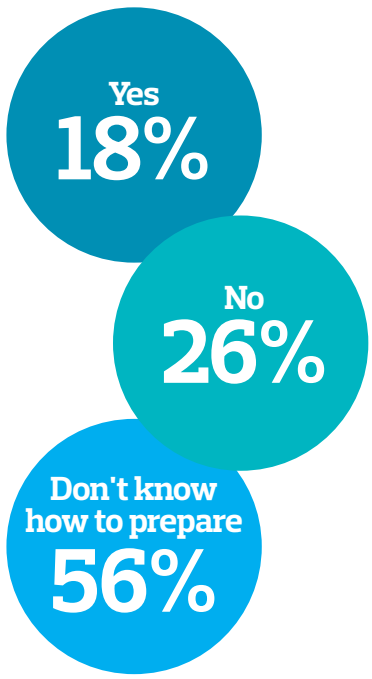


Words Last

the final word on fine food

## TWITTER POLL

### Is your business prepared for Brexit?










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# SPECIALITY BITES

## Paul Hargreaves of Cotswold Fayre



I had to chuckle to myself the other day whilst flicking through the channels on the TV. On Sky Sports there was the Ryder Cup with the few European supporters that had made it over to Minnesota shouting, "Europe, Europe, Europe!" whilst on the BBC news channel it was the first day of the Tory Party Conference with party members still insisting, "Brexit means Brexit!" If ever there was a phrase that means nothing at all, this is surely it. Those on both sides of the debate are sick of hearing it.

There is a danger in writing an article like this in advance of publication that sometimes events have moved on. I am in no such danger in this case, with the Brexit debate probably being more confused in a few weeks' time than it is now! Of more concern to food manufacturers and exporters maybe that it seems there is a hard core developing within government that simply doesn't want to negotiate to maintain our free trade agreement with Europe at all and are happy to throw it down the drain. To many, this would be absolutely catastrophic for lots of small food businesses throughout the UK.

The sophistication of the UK food market has increased exponentially since I started Cotswold Fayre 17 years ago. It would be naïve to suggest that this wouldn't have happened without a free market, but surely it must have helped! Not only is it simpler to trade without barriers, but it is also easier and cheaper for people to travel at low cost for weekend breaks to Europe. This has increased the knowledge and appetite for 'foreign delicacies' for many who hadn't enjoyed them previously.

> "In terms of the world of food, I feel European is not just British"

I'm not suggesting that the far broader enjoyment of foods from around the would disappear if free trade agreements disappeared, but it would seem such a shame to make more difficult the flow of good food and ingredients around Europe. In terms of the world of food and all the European food shows, I feel European not just British. And this is true of many of the others in this sector. By the way I still haven't met anyone within the speciality food sector that voted for Brexit! Put your hands up if you are out there!

Many British food companies have done a good job of raising the profile of British food within Europe. 17 years ago, British food was laughed at by our Continental cousins, particularly the Italians and French. But the sad old days of "meat and two veg" have gone, loads of British food is eaten by Europeans and UK chefs are revered all over Europe. Overall, well over 50% of the UK's exports are to Europe, yet certain government ministers seem happy to jeopardise these exports. Yes, there may well be opportunities to export to other markets and reach other trade agreements, but why you would do anything to hinder half the UK's exports simply amazes me. One argument is that this will be compensated by trade with other parts of the world, but being part of Europe has already opened up these areas already and our membership of the Commonwealth means that British companies are already trading well in some of these countries.

The debate continues...



# 5 MINUTES WITH... DAN ROOK

## Founder of Chash Tea

**WHAT WOULD BE YOUR DESERT ISLAND-MUST HAVE?**
The Wi-Fi password.

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE SNACK?**
Nuts. I keep a tray on my desk!

**WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING IF YOU WEREN'T WORKING IN THE TEA INDUSTRY?**
Training to be a teacher,

**ARE YOU AN INDOOR OR OUTDOOR KIND OF GUY?**
Always outdoor,

**WHAT'S THE WEIRDEST THING YOU'VE EVER EATEN?**
As a little boy I once ate shark only minutes after seeing one beached. Eating it felt weird and uncomfortable.

**WHAT'S YOUR DREAM HOLIDAY?**
As unlikely as this might be for a multi-stop, my dream holiday would be four nights whale-watching under the Northern Lights, three nights skiing and then to fly out to Cuba for seven nights!

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE FILM?**
In The Heat Of The Night or L'Homme du Train, Star Wars (inevitably, for nostalgia) followed by Trading Places and Beverly Hills Cop.

**WHAT INSPIRES YOU?**
People prepared to not conform and be what they want to be.

**WHO WOULD PLAY YOU IN A FILM OF YOUR LIFE?**
I had no idea how to answer this so I asked around. The most common answer was Orlando Bloom. My brother helpfully suggested Dawn French.

**DESCRIBE YOUR IDEAL WEEKEND**
Seeing my niece and nephew, playing football and golf (not at the same time), a nice stroll with the dog, having brunch at one of my clients places and on Sunday evening realising how little I have looked at the time. All topped off with a Spurs win!

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE BOOK?**
Animal Farm, Picture of Dorian Gray and Atlas Shrugged all beaten narrowly by The Iliad. How can I vote against the first novel written?

**WHAT WOULD BE YOUR LAST SUPPER?**
My mum's lasagna.

> "People on both sides are sick of hearing 'Brexit means Brexit"

# DIARY DATES

## November

**12th–13th**
BREAD & BUTTER FESTIVAL
Institute of Directors, London
**breadandbutterfest.com**

**11th–13th**
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**

**24th–27th**
BBC GOOD FOOD SHOW WINTER
NEC, Birmingham
**bbcgoodfoodshowwinter.com**

## January

**15th–17th**
TOP DRAWER SPRING
Olympia, London
**topdrawer.co.uk**

**22nd–24th**
SCOTLANDS SPECIALITY FOOD SHOW
SECC, Glasgow
**www.scotlandsspecialityfoodshow.com**

WINTER FANCY FOOD SHOW
San Francisco
**my.fancyfoodshows.com**

**23rd–25th**
GREAT HOSPITALITY SHOW
The NEC, Birmingham, UK
**www.hospitalityshow.co.uk**



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