

2015

EXCITING PRODUCTS, LATEST TRENDS, EXPERT ADVICE

CONFECTIONERY

& CHOCOLATE BUYER

From the publishers of
SPECIALITY FOOD

JELLY BELLY

The original gourmet jelly bean



RETAIL

**SELFRIDGES:
THE JEWEL IN OUR
CONFECTIONERY
CROWN**

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WELCOME TO CONFECTIONERY & CHOCOLATE BUYER



Welcome to this year's confectionery and chocolate round-up, brought to you by the creators of Speciality Food Magazine. The times they are a'changing in the world of fine food, and in the confectionery sector more than any other while contentious issues such as sugar content and ethical value are rife.

Unsure of what to stock for the coming months? Use our trend report for advice on what to order now to be 2016-ready (p6). Hint: international confections are popular as ever (p10), free-from options are gaining a loyal following (p8), and the array of chocolate bars on offer is becoming ever-more varied (p28) – as you'll see from our profile of Selfridges' Chocolate Library (p4).

If your customers love the sweet taste of nostalgia, you'll find our feature on fudge, toffee and nougat a worthwhile read (p20), while confectionery fans of all ages will delight in our focus on boiled and gummy sweets (p24).

Plus, we share the stories of three pioneers of the chocolate world – Willie Harcourt Cooze, founder of Willie's Cacao (p5), The Grenada Chocolate Company (p9) and Esther Ephraim Mintah, a farmer behind Divine Chocolate (p31).

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FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH: JELLY BELLY JELLY BEANS

Jelly Belly jelly beans is a confection with all the right credentials for independent food retailers looking for lively shelf presence and a strong point of difference

Jelly Belly jelly beans offer independent food retailers a quality product with cross-generational appeal. Fitting nicely with the gourmet foods of delis and farm shops, these carefully-created and originally-flavoured beans are available in top outlets and appeal to customers who like their confectionery a cut above the average. Jelly Belly, the original gourmet jelly bean, is known for its quality and variety. A wide range of

well-designed packaging helps add impact to the shelves of independent retailers, while the product itself appeals as much to adults as it does to children. Another interesting USP for retailers is that many of Jelly Belly's extraordinary 100-plus flavours are sold individually. While favourite tastes vary in different parts of the world, Very Cherry, Buttered Popcorn, Tutti-Fruiti and Bubble Gum are always in its global Top Ten.

The Jelly Belly range has had time to mature and arrive at its current state of perfection. The Jelly Belly Candy Co, which launched its famous branded jelly bean in 1976 and celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2016, revolutionised the humble jelly bean by creating a bean flavoured both in the candy centre and in the shell. Jelly Belly jelly beans are also smaller and have more intense and exotic flavours than traditional jelly beans.

Great care goes into the creation of each individual bean. Each part of the production process is designed to enhance the flavour and texture of the Jelly Belly bean, some of which can take up to 21 days to create. Jelly Belly has automated production where possible, but to this day a Jelly Belly jelly bean is still very much a handmade

product. In between each stage there is a resting period to allow the flavours to develop, further explaining the time needed to create each bean.

Jelly Belly jelly beans have a great many skus to suit individual tastes and thus retailer's requirements. The sampler boxes come in 10, 20, 40 and 50 flavours and make perfect gifts. The 100g, 150g and 250g packs, which are ideal for sharing, are available in a variety of flavour combinations. In addition, there are seasonal packages, single flavour novelties and small gift items.

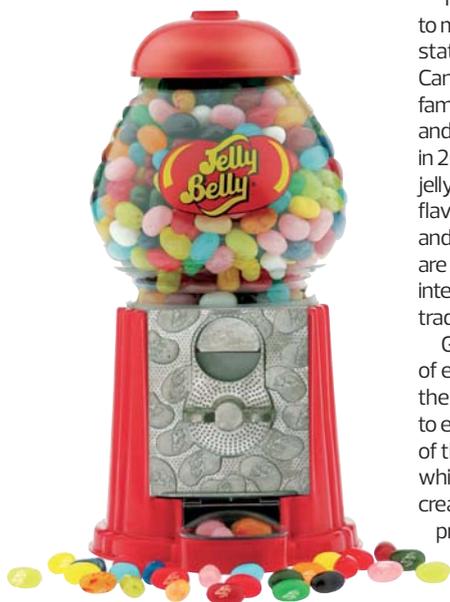
Flavours and formats

The intense and often original flavours are integral to the company's thinking. Jelly Belly Candy Co believes its gourmet jelly beans are all about the flavour adventure and pushing taste horizons: they have to taste like the real thing. If an authentic flavour can be created, it will be. Jelly Belly points out that while people love their favourite flavours, they also enjoy experimentation. Feedback from independent retailers stocking the brand has been strongly favourable. "Once a retailer stocks Jelly Belly jelly beans, they quickly 'get' the brand as they reap the benefits in increased sales," says Tony Alfano of

Best Imports, the UK importer of Jelly Belly jelly beans. "Our agents are able to recommend the most appropriate package for any retailer, who will very quickly discover that the presence of Jelly Belly jelly beans in any shop generates surprise and delight. It's a much-loved brand."

BeanBoozled

Along with their extensive and always-changing range of regular flavours, Jelly Belly also produces the BeanBoozled jelly bean line which is bringing a real sense of fun to retailers' shelves. BeanBoozled is a range – but it's also a crazy game in which players take on the 'challenge' of accepting a weird and wild flavour instead of the normal great tasting bean (both share the same colour). This amazing bit of innovation has captured the hearts, minds and tastebuds of millions, proving to be massively successful in the market place as a year-round novelty. This extraordinary phenomenon has generated an amazing 500,000 separate YouTube video uploads and many millions of views on the internet. With the September introduction of two new items, the 56g BeanBoozled bag and the 99g BeanBoozled Mystery Dispenser, BeanBoozled is the ultimate proof that Jelly Belly Candy Co can actually create any flavour that's imaginable!





What does your role as Selfridges' confectionery entail?

As a Selfridges Chocolatier or 'Chocarian' I help to educate and inform customers on how to navigate the vast range of chocolate, spanning white, blonde, milk and dark chocolate, bean to bar and everything in between, making sure I find the right chocolate bar for them or the perfect well thought-out gift. Chocolate is so personal, and with over 400 different types available here, customers are spoilt for choice – so they need an expert to help find their perfect bar. We also help the buyers with new and artisan products – we have recently added six new American artisan chocolate bars – which enhance our offer.

Why open a Chocolate Library?

We wanted a real stand-out, never-been-done-before element to the newly-launched Selfridges Confectionery Hall. Spanning over 4000 square feet, Selfridges was keen to become a true destination for all confectionery needs – the chocolate library is the jewel in the crown!

Why not a standard chocolate display?

It's fun! The motto of Selfridges founder Harry Gordon Selfridge was to always 'surprise, amaze and amuse' customers. So when the Chocolate Library launched, it did and still does exactly that. Seeing customers' faces when they see the Library for the first time is always exciting. They take pictures and – more often than not – we

A NEW CHOCOLATE EXPERIENCE

Emma Murphy, confectionery buyer at Selfridges, welcomes you to its Chocolate Library, home to the wonderful, wacky and downright weird world of 'the food of the gods'

have their favourite bar, and that is a really satisfying part of my job. It's like a little Willy Wonka-esque chocolate world!

It's pretty vast – we have everything from dark and sultry chocolate, heavily loaded with 70% cacao, and 'bean to bar' (made from the producers who own the plantation) such as Willie's Cacao, right through to the good old plain bar of milk chocolate. We currently stock just under 500 bars of chocolate and that's just in the library!

Where are the bars sourced from, and how?

We have spent months scouring the globe for the finest range of chocolate tablets available – we used resources such as buying trips, competitive shopping, recommendations from current suppliers and chefs, and even the new world of social media, such as Instagram, has given us inspiration and insight to some wonderful new



additions to the library. Two extremely beautifully packaged and high quality brands found this way are Ocelot and Omnom – two of our now top-selling brands.

What does it offer consumers?

Variety and the chance to try a new type of chocolate outside of their standard bar – a new chocolate experience! We recently added 'blonde' chocolate which is really popular. Our customers are now becoming mini experts and are willing to try something different and unusual. The breadth of the range will take customers on a journey where they are able to buy a £3 bar of peanut butter chocolate or purchase a £10 bar of single origin, limited edition Criollo, which will satisfy even the most adventurous chocolate fanatic.

What's the weirdest chocolate on offer?

We have a few unusual ones – Almond & Orange Peel,

Lemongrass, Green Grape and Cacao Nib. The Black Olive & Peppercorn is really delicious and we stocked the first camel milk chocolate in the UK!

And the most luxurious?

John Kelly's 8oz Bar of Semi-Sweet Chocolate & Peanut Butter is divine, and is perfect for slicing, sharing or gifting. It starts as an incredibly luscious peanut butter fudge, layered on top of John Kelly's classic semi-sweet chocolate truffle fudge and is finally enrobed in a chocolate coating. Lovers of this classic combination won't be disappointed.

LESSONS FROM THE LIBRARY

1 Retailers can learn that chocolate houses can be accessible to all customers, irrelevant of retail price point – we can offer the most luxurious range of single estate, artisanal bars alongside the fun and quirky, flavour-filled and mass-produced bars without discrimination

2 The Library teaches retailers that given the right merchandising solution they can help support small and upcoming brands find a space on shelf in a very competitive marketplace

3 The Library gives a platform for the customer to learn about the origin of cacao, its long history and its complex nature, as well as various production methods and an understanding of how this all makes chocolate the 'Food of the Gods'

My chocolate story began when I was lying on a beach in Venezuela and a man told me about a fabled cacao farm which was up for sale. The farm was up in the cloud forest, home to 7% of the world's bird species and chuao cacao, the most prized in the world, so I was eager to go for a tour. The next day I found myself trundling along to the farm and spending the day with the farmer who invited us to stay. He handed over the keys and a few minutes later we were walking around; we had a tour of the entire farm which took my breath away, then the next day we made a simple hot chocolate by roasting and shelling cacao beans by hand, then ground them in a little hand-cranked coffee grinder. The tastes and aromas opened my eyes and imagination – I had never known what real chocolate tasted like before that moment. It was a revelation; this wasn't chocolate as a sweet confection, but as the endorphin boost which had been revered for thousands of years – the Mayan elite used to be buried with cacao, which shows how highly it was prized. I decided to uproot my life to the cacao farm and had a magical decade there; I'm now living back in the UK but still own the farm.

When I began my journey into chocolate, I learned that 99% of production in the UK is simply a case of melting, flavouring and remoulding chocolate. I decided to be different – to make real chocolate by sourcing cacao directly from the farmers and letting its natural flavours shine through. I found that different farms produce beans of distinct flavours; provenance is everything. A really good example of this is my Venezuelan 72% from Las Trincheras – it's made from Trinitario beans which tend to have deep coffee notes, but the flavour's completely different, rich and nutty. My product range now spans 100% cylinders for use in cooking, single estate bars, caramel 'pearls' and bars of dark, milk and white chocolate flavoured with natural extracts. Next in line is a range of Mexican chocolate inspired by its Aztec history, and I'd

THE CHOCOLATE ADVENTURER

Self-confessed 'chocolate romantic with a knowing smile' William Harcourt-Cooze talks us through his journey through chocolate



like to explore Nicaragua and the fabled cacao of Papua New Guinea.

There are three key things which join to create good chocolate – the genetics of the bean, the post-harvest, and the chocolatier. By getting the beans

directly from the farmer I'm getting the genetics I want, as well as a close eye on the fermentation and drying processes. It's a real artisan craft; I have beautiful old-fashioned roaster on which I roast the beans, always checking the size of the bean, temperature and

humidity and tasting as I go along, before making the chocolate in batches. You will have seen 'single origin' on the labels of various products, but that only means that the beans have come from a particular country, which can have scores of different cacao variations. By being specific about the origin of the bean, I'm capturing the flavour of the bean from that particular location. A good bean is paramount to good chocolate, so it's important to be a purist.

I'm very specific about the sugar in my chocolate, and only use raw sugar cane from Barbados. If you look at the back of the packets of my chocolate, there's no lecithin, no vanilla – if you're working with the best beans in the world, why would you put greasy lecithin and pungent vanilla in there? The perfect balance of sweetness is difficult to find – producers often madly high percentages with a bean that doesn't work, or they use too much sugar. Too much sugar will mask the flavour of the chocolate, while too little often tastes bitter. White chocolate was a challenge to produce as it's got a bad name in the British market; leading brands are using 50–60% sugar in theirs because sugar is £600 a tonne while cocoa butter is £7,000 a tonne. I use natural cocoa butter in my chocolate, so it hasn't been deodorised and contains all the flavour of the cocoa butter. I conch it as I would chocolate then put 30% sugar in, and the rest of the sugar is simply the lactose sugars within the milk. Low sugar levels and no vanilla; my white chocolate is all about superb flavours and the very best ingredients – there's no cutting corners.

As much as we like to exceed expectations with the flavours of my chocolate, I go above and beyond when it comes to farmers, too. We pay well above even Fairtrade prices, and put that money directly into the hands of the farmer which means there's no middle man taking a cut of their money – and that they want to work with me! Clarity and trust is imperative, both with farmers and customers.

“ My dream is to build a working chocolate factory museum with the incredible turn of the century cocoa making machines I've amassed. The top will act as a greenhouse where we'll grow the world's finest cacaos, and a sub-level basement where people can taste all of the greatest cacaos, like a wine cellar ”



CONFECTIONERY TREND-SETTERS

*What key chocolate and confectionery trends are emerging as we roll into 2016?
Daisy Phillipson investigates*

Healthier by nature

We've seen all sorts of changes within the fine food confectionery sector over the years, from the boom of fairtrade to the increased use of sugar alternatives. Despite the sweet and indulgent nature of sugary products, it's evident that we will consistently continue to have to appeal to a healthier consumer. Low sugar, natural and functional are all terms we are seeing an increase of.

A recent report from Mintel showed that 23% of customers who buy non-chocolate candy indicates that natural ingredients are something they look for when buying these items. "Interest in better-for-you eating will make it more important for manufacturers to offer products with natural ingredients," says Amanda Topper, Mintel food analyst.

There certainly has been a sharp rise in natural claims within the industry. For example, companies such as Naturlolly™, whose range of lollipops and canes, available in a variety of fruit flavours, don't use any artificial flavourings or colours. Additionally, Simpkins has released a limited edition Strawberry & Cream boiled sweet product, which again uses only natural colours and flavourings. "Natural" is very much a trusted term both within the speciality food industry and also with a wider pool of consumers worldwide, and so this is a

prospect that manufacturers will continue to strive for when developing new products.

The market has also seen a growth of fruit juice and piece inclusions. "Interest in products made with real fruit juice goes hand-in-hand with interest in natural ingredients," says Amanda. For example, The Jelly Bean Factory recently released their Super Sours range, which is made using 100% natural flavours and colours, including fruit juices. The use of fruit is a trait that is forecasted to grow as consumers see the ingredient as a trusted and healthier source of sugar, an idea that has been further fueled by the great sugar debate.

Further branches of the 'healthy' confectionery trend have seen customers seeking products with functionality. Gone are the days when it was satisfying to buy some candy drops as an enjoyable snack or eat a chocolate bar as a lunchtime treat. Now there is the demand for food that contains health-promoting or disease-preventing properties, as consumers no longer dismiss the idea that their candy can come with added health benefits. There are now companies such as Good Superfoods, who claim they created the world's first Functional Chocolate® incorporating South American raw superfoods and patented nutraceutical ingredients. The range includes flavours such

“ Consumers no longer dismiss the idea that candy can have health benefits ”

as Amazon Berry NutriHEART, Toasted Coconut Omega-3, Mandarin Orange Sculpt and Lemon Ginger Immunity.

Confectionery-to-go

In addition to the health trend and its many implications for confectionery manufacturers, 2016 will see eating-on-the-go continue to thrive as consumers are leading progressively busier lifestyles. "On-the-go eating is impacting practically all food and beverage categories. Single-serving sizes, resealable packaging and miniature formats all help cater to this trend. 26% of adults who buy or eat candy eat it on the go," says Amanda.

Davina Whiteoak, Founder of Get Fruity, agrees that this trend is here to stay and states that it is helping a steady growth pattern for fruit bars. "The emerging need to eat on-the-go has facilitated the movement with consumers looking for a longer lasting

sustenance rather than a quick fix," she says. Bars such as the Get Fruity range, which are made with fruit and fruit juices, gluten-free wholegrain oats and virgin coconut oil, fit the brief of providing a healthy, fulfilling snack, whilst also being in an easy-to-carry format.

Chocolate bar manufacturers such as Divine also now offer a wide range of miniature snack pack varieties in order to cater to this trend, and Barú marshmallows released bite-sized, signature marshmallows which are individually wrapped. This is something that we will likely continue to see as we head into 2016.

Shelf stand-out

It's no surprise that there is direct competition between confectionery manufacturers to stand out on the shelves. According to Mintel's report, 50% of consumers who buy or eat

sugar confectionery buy it on impulse, which highlights the importance of promoting purchase in the aisles.

As a result of this trend we are seeing more innovative colours, flavours and packaging being used within the fine food market. Seed & Bean recently updated their product range with three new flavours including Fennel Seeds & Almond, Rose & Vanilla and Coconut & Lemongrass. The packaging comes in bright blue, pink or green. NPD such as this can ensure that a product does not fall back amongst its competitors in the shopping aisle.

Discussing the future of candy products, Amanda says, "while consumers have concerns about these products' ingredients, or specifically look for products with natural ingredients and sweeteners, many still want the opportunity to indulge freely." Not only this, but utilising fruit inclusions, functional ingredients

and innovative flavour combinations, manufacturers of chocolate and candy can tap into the key trends next year and ensure that they hold a steady foot within the fine food market.

SUSTAINABLE COCOA

Sustainability is an issue that is heavily affecting the cocoa industry. This year saw key brands such as Mars, Hershey and Ferrero committing to sourcing 100% certified cocoa by teaming up with Fairtrade, UTZ and others by 2020, while KitKat has claimed will use only sustainable cocoa by 2016. This movement will have a wider affect on the fine food industry. Now more and more consumers are waking up to the importance of this claim and we will see transparency continue to thrive in 2016.

“ While consumers have concerns about ingredients or specifically look for products with natural sweeteners, many want the opportunity to indulge freely ”

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Every so often, the food market moves to a new beat. Fads come and go. Salted caramel and Scandinavian liquorice are popular right now, but who knows about next year? Fads aren't the only affectors of markets, and recent years have seen the rise, fall and rise again of the organic sector, the slow increase of interest in Fairtrade and also in ethical selling. Free-from is a sector that has progressed from an uncertain start to a place where it is not only taking more aisle space in the supermarket, but is migrating from these free-from ghettos into the rest of the shop.

Confectionery has perhaps been slow to catch on to this movement, and it has been left to artisan producers to lead the way and open up the confectionery market to consumers who prefer their chocolate organic, ethically-produced and dairy and/or sugar-free. One of these producers currently offering a good range of free-from chocolate is Plamil, which was pioneering the production of dairy-free milk chocolate as long ago as 1983. Its production process necessarily differs from that of mainstream chocolate makers. "The majority of brands do not make their own chocolate," says Adrian Ling, managing director of Plamil. "They purchase ready-made chocolate and flavour it to their recipe and remould it into their own shapes. They often claim that they 'make' chocolate. Our process starts from the ingredient, so we are in total control of all aspects."

WHY BUY FREE-FROM?

It's not what's in the product but what is not that interests the free-from buyer

Reduced sugar

Reducing sugar has been a goal of many manufacturers. "The free-from consumer is often a little ahead of the market, and this year we have seen significant increase in consumers seeking alternatives to chocolate made with cane sugar," Adrian says. "Alternatives such as coconut blossom sugar, reduced sugar and no added sugar is the big trend. To reduce or replace sugar, we use chicory root powder (sometimes called inulin), but we select the only kind allowed to be called chicory root powder due to the natural and direct process used to produce it. To replace dairy milk powders (liquid milk is never used in dairy milk chocolate – the water part does not mix with chocolate) we use soya or rice milk powders."

Transparency is key

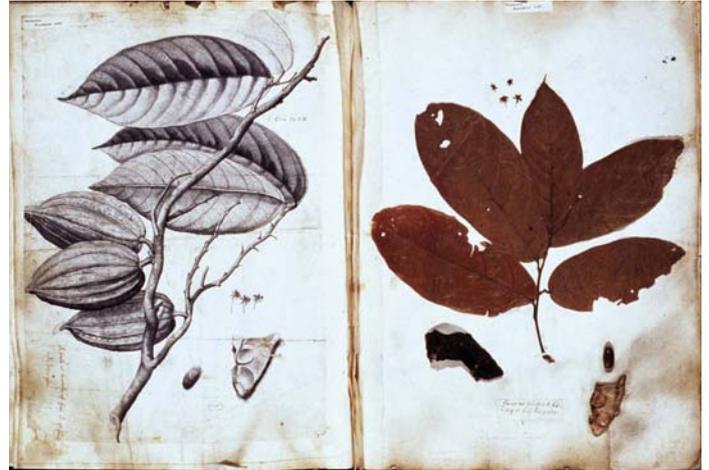
Consumers of free-from foods are more interested in what has not gone into their foods than what has. It's essential for manufacturers to know exactly what is in their product and to know this in the finest detail. "If manufacturers do not know what has not gone into their product," Adrian says, "this means they do not have full control. Consumers and retailers need trust in the brand, and to know the brand has full control and knowledge of every aspect. We love the idea of raw, but we concentrate on producing products that have complete transparency and quality assurance. Like all brands, having undertaken a full hazard assessment we do not use 'raw' cocoa as there are unanswered

questions concerning proven levels of traceability in production methods and bacteriological controls. Low temperatures often cited do not control inevitable farm bacteria."

Stocking free-from chocolate and other confectionery opens the retailer's doors to customers who might otherwise have gone elsewhere. People with low or no tolerances for dairy products or gluten will find a rare treat in dairy free-chocolate, and diabetics and weight-watchers will provide a ready market for sugar free products – unless the removal of these ingredients adversely affects the flavour of the food. Manufacturers such as Plamil work hard to ensure that the taste of their products is as agreeable to the consumer as other chocolate. Plamil sources most of its cocoa "from a co-op in Dominican Republic, but as quantities grow, we need to find additional sources but all are organic, Fairtrade or UTZ." Ensuring that your free-from range has an ethical element too with attract interest from the ethically-motivated buyer.

One word of warning. According to Adrian, "despite selling to the free from market, most dairy – free milk chocolate that is promoted by other brands to children has very high levels of sugar." Buyers should also be aware, he says, "that some products labelled with vegan trademarks do not necessarily mean free-from." Some, he says are labelled 'may contain milk'.

“ Stocking free-from chocolate and other confectionery opens the retailer's doors to customers who might otherwise have gone elsewhere ”



WELCOME TO GRENADA

James Mort, general manager of The Grenada Chocolate Company, tells the story of this most unique of confectionery ventures

The Grenada Chocolate Company was founded in 1999 by Mott Green (born David Friedman), Doug Browne and Edmond Brown who had the idea of creating an Organic Cocoa Farmers' and Chocolate-Makers' Cooperative. The company makes fine organic chocolate using beans grown around the chocolate factory, and the farmers co-operative own 20% of the shares of the company.

This radical new business model created the first 'Tree to Bar' chocolate company this century, adding all the value to the local economy in the village of Hermitage, St Patricks. Mott Green often said "It takes a whole village to make a bar of our chocolate." Doug Browne died from cancer in November 2008. Mott Green died in an electrical accident in June 2013. Edmond Brown is the sole surviving founder, and continues to be responsible for making fine organic chocolate using beans grown around the chocolate factory every day.

I have been general manager of the GCC since July 1st this year, and there are so many intricate moving parts to my role. One of the most important things is to communicate with the farmers and make sure we

have enough cocoa for production, then at the factory there are lots of systems that need to be updated so we can plan ahead for the immediate future and make a long term plan, too. We have a great team of chocolate makers and bar wrappers; my role is to support them going forward and transition onto a more digital platform for the admin side of the business. There are lots of machines that need to be kept in good working order and I also need to ensure quality control all the way through from tree to bar.



As a result of this attention to detail and the exceptionally fine organic cocoa we use to make the chocolate, it has won multiple international awards.

GCC are cocoa growers and chocolate makers, and while there are many 'bean to bar' producers around the world, GCC was the very first company to go the whole way from 'tree to bar', focusing on sustainability both on a human and environmental level, and going way beyond Fairtrade. The farmers are paid a premium for organic beans, the factory creates lots of jobs making and wrapping the chocolate, and there is now a whole chocolate economy on the island that has been created around the GCC. The factory is solar-powered and the chocolate is shipped by a sail-powered boat. Ceres are the organic certification board, and the carbon neutral certifier is Fair Transport.

Our 'tree to bar' status means that we grow the cocoa, ferment and dry the beans, then sort, roast, winnow and grind them to make

chocolate. After that, it's conched and tempered and the finished chocolate bars are made and wrapped, ready to sell on the island or export to the US and Europe.

Looking to the future of the Grenada Chocolate Company, we would like to secure more organic cocoa land and at some time in the future build a bigger factory with more capacity – right now there is a shortage of organic beans and we are almost running at full tilt, so we cannot supply the demand that is out there!



“ While there are many 'bean to bar' producers around the world, GCC was the very first company to go the whole way from 'tree to bar' ”



FOREIGN FLAVOURS

Why introducing a selection of international confectionery can increase interest in your offering

Across the independent sector, customers are becoming more adventurous. Farm shops and delis stock any number of items which would be strangers to a supermarket shelf and in doing so attract a more inquisitive sort of customer, someone who likes to look beyond the long established lines and find something different. If this is true for artisan cheeses and ambient goods, why not for confectionery too? One confectionery display can look very much like another to the jaded eye and introducing a peppering of interesting, alien items can arouse curiosity in the items themselves and also encourage the consumer to take a closer look at the wider display. International confectionery is the place to look for something that is different.

The world of confectionery may have a solid base of boiled sweets and chocolate but it is also a sector in which novelty thrives. Home-grown sweets have achieved such a degree of familiarity with the confectionery-buying public that novelties are just the thing to catch the eye. Such is the case for international sweets, which presently are increasing their foothold in the home confectionery market. Confectionery items from the US, Japan, Spain and a handful of other countries have proven they possess sufficient novelty value to attract attention. These strangers to our counters can also boast a variety of alien flavours and sufficiently unusual textures and shapes to create interest. They appeal to people who have been abroad and want a taste of items

they have enjoyed while they were travelling, and also to people who may have heard of such iconic products as Hershey's bars or Popsicles through various media and want to try the real thing. And, of course, international confectionery sells well to expatriates and to people from abroad who are now domiciled here and pining for a taste of home.



Adrian Beale of Buckley & Beale

For Adrian Beale, sales and marketing manager of Buckley & Beale, international confectionery will always appeal to the curious. "Confectionery is one of the most innovative sectors of the food market," he says, "and with social media being global and

instant, UK customers want to buy what they see the rest of the world buying." Buckley and Beale decided to stock confectionery from overseas because, Adrian says, "it's important that we have a confectionery offering to sit alongside our other categories. This is especially important in the current market, with impulse buys and snacking taking an ever-increasing market share."

And is there a specific demographic for buyers of international sweets? Apparently not, Adrian says. "International confectionery definitely has its younger followers, especially the branded lines, but we've noticed that the lines we carry have a much broader appeal and are being purchased by all age groups. This is great, because our trade customers don't then have product sat on shelves not moving." Dominating the market in international confectionery, he says, is the US, but products from there "may start to struggle with public awareness of ingredients, and the desire for 'free from' foods." But just for now, it seems, the US is king. This is because "the confectionery market in the US is huge, and has been for years. Some of the world's largest food companies are confectionery businesses; it's impossible to avoid them, as they are so dominant. However, we choose to avoid that market and focus on the speciality side of confectionery."

Best selling lines for Buckley and Beale, he says are "our VerMints (as in Vermont). These have been our no.1 line from day one. It's rare for any product to tick so many boxes such as organic, gluten free, Kosher etc, so customers love them. It also helps that they have fabulous packaging and branding, and flavours such as cinnamon, which can be hard to find but have a huge following. There's a lot that can't be imported due to legislation regarding banned ingredients, but that's not necessarily a bad thing!"

American sweets often feature flavours quite unknown in the UK, such as malted milkshake and peanut buttercup and this has a great appeal for British customers who, he says, "love to try something different. This applies to all foods these days as more international cuisine finds its way to our shores, but especially with confectionery as an impulse purchase, as consumers don't mind spending a pound or two trying something new."

Some international confectionery is ideal for sale in



KEITH TORDOFF
THE OLDEST SWEET SHOP

farm shops and delis. Buckley and Beale's offering falls into this category. "We don't sell to supermarkets," Adrian says, "so in that context they are a point of difference for the farm shop or delis." VerMints are ideal in this respect, he says. "We can also support the retailer with sampling and point of sale displays, both free of charge." Adrian's personal favourite chews from abroad, he says, are "Goo Goo Clusters from Nashville, made with chocolate, marshmallow and peanuts. I'm working on bringing them to the UK, so watch this space."

Liquorice from abroad in various forms is making solid inroads into the British confectionery market, especially some of the salted varieties. Johan Bülow's Lakrids range of Danish liquorice has the variety, presentation and originality of flavour to sit well in delis, food halls and farm shops. Some varieties of liquorice have already become staple confectionery items at farm shops and delis. Among the range sold at The Oldest Sweet Shop, owner Keith Tordoff says, are "Finnish soft eating liquorice, Belgian salt liquorice and Dutch double and triple salt liquorice. We do a liquorice and chilli, too." The Oldest Sweet Shop, while not specialising in chocolate, does sell some high quality foreign chocolate. "We do a range of sugar-free chocolate, mainly from Belgium," Keith says. Best selling

international item at The Oldest Sweet Shop is his salt liquorice.



Chandresh Patel of Empire Bespoke Foods

West London-based Empire Bespoke Foods is a key importer and

distributor of international confectionery, particularly American, African and European. It selects its imported confectionery, says Chandresh Patel, "by the performance in the country from which we are importing it from, and also on whether we think they will have a place in the UK market in terms of flavour and a point of difference." Exclusively stocking a range of international confectionery makes sound sense, according to Chandresh. "Confectionery from abroad offers the consumer variety and a different taste experience, something the new generation are looking for. They are constantly looking for innovative brands from around the world". One of these is the newly launched Marshmallow Fluff Caramel Flavour. It may not be a classic confection but is a well-loved American spread which is becoming hugely popular with the UK consumer.

Brand names such as Klik, Cookie Dough Bites, Mike & Ike, Pop Rocks and Games for Motion may not be familiar in the UK

market, but with the amount of media available to consumers now, he says, such brands soon become familiar from exposure on "American TV programmes or social media posts from celebrities." For consumers these days, Chandresh says, "anything that is that little bit different has appeal." Hard confectionery is especially popular, as is confectionery from the USA and Europe. "American products go down well here," he says, because their producers "have been producing the most innovative products, and social media helps promote these."

Another international area to watch, Chandresh says, is the kosher market, which is growing and could be larger, if the product is right. Among the kosher confectionery brands Empire Bespoke Foods exclusively stocks is the brand Klik, but other exclusive kosher products they list are: Tabasco Chocolate, Mike & Ike and Games for Motion. Also available for retailers wanting to introduce a point of difference are confectionery from the EU, Africa and Australia. One of the African chocolate bar products exclusively imported and distributed by Empire Bespoke Foods is the award-winning Madecasse range, which offers bean-to-bar chocolate bars ethically-produced in Africa by ex-American Peace Corps volunteers. Their bars are produced entirely in Madagascar, from cocoa bean to the packaging.

The Hershey's Bar, aka The Hershey's Milk Chocolate Bar or even The Great American Chocolate Bar first appeared in 1900 and thanks to innumerable appearances in popular culture is perhaps the American confectionery item whose name is most widely-known beyond North

America. Made by a unique process, the bar has an equally unique taste to which its home market has developed a partiality.

Jolly Ranchers: originally produced in 1949, these deeply flavoured hard candies are like Spangles with attitude. Featured flavours are cherry, blue raspberry, grape, sour apple and watermelon. Favourites of a generation growing up in the 1990s, the sweets are now available through various specialist importers.

Another iconic American confectionery product is the Tootsie Roll. This chocolate-flavoured candy, which has similarities to both chocolate and toffee, has been manufactured in Chicago since 1896. More than 64 million Tootsie Rolls are produced every day.

Cherry, orange, vanilla, lemon, and lime flavours are available in the US and sales were accelerated when the sweets became the subject of a long-running comic strip called 'Captain Tootsie'.



“ Confectionery is one of the most innovative sectors of the food market, and with social media being global and instant, UK customers want to buy what they see the rest of the world buying ”

CANDY CRUSH

The British love for American confectionery is growing, thanks to importers like the pioneering Empire Bespoke Foods

Bringing more than a little excitement to British confectionery counters and the shelves of independent retailers is American confectionery, a sector which has shown a marked increase in take-up since Empire Bespoke Foods began importing it in 1998. Brand names with which British consumers have become familiar through films, television, and increasingly through Britons sampling for themselves on holidays to the United States, are providing a new market for consumers looking for something a little different – something with a dash of glamour, even.

Since Empire Bespoke Foods renewed its focus on confectionery in 2005, their range of US-made sweets has greatly expanded. Responding to perceived gaps in the market, market research and also to customer demand, Empire Bespoke, already an importer and distributor of the finest, most authentic food and drink brands



from around the world, began specialising in importing US-branded products and then using their marketing expertise to make it a success in the UK. Empire Bespoke has sole UK rights to most of its imported confectionery. Key lines are Tabasco Chocolate, Flipz, Marshmallow Fluff, Mike and Ike (available in eight flavours), Cookie Dough Bites and Pop Rocks. The latest addition to this ever-expanding and always exciting range is Marshmallow Fluff Caramel Flavour.

For lines such as these, there are no exact British counterparts; retailers ordering any of these items can be assured that they will be filling their shelves with unique and original Stock Keeping Units. To ensure ranges are always fresh, Empire Bespoke Foods works

closely with its team in New York to find the latest products certain to bring excitement to UK confectionery counters. These eye-catching American products are bought by a variety of retailers. Confectionery sales are increasing in the UK, so this is a key area for any store. Independent retailers such as owners of delicatessen and farm shops find that American confectionery, being less familiar to British consumers, offers them that necessary point of difference, and sells well alongside British confectionery. Other factors providing this point of difference are the bright packaging and unique flavours such as peanut butter. More and more retailers, it seems, are finding that it pays to add a taste of America to their shelves.



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BARÚ

Maarten Krieken, co-founder of Barú, talks creativity, magic and fun

It was a meeting of minds when Gunther D'Hondt and I started freewheeling about doing 'something' with Belgian chocolates. Having been colleagues for a number of years, we both gave up sales and marketing roles in the drinks industry to launch Barú. We teamed up with Jaak van Royen, former MD at Barry Callebaut, to help, advise and create the new confectionery range.



range of gifts. Our marshmallows are chocolate wrapped 'clouds' made using a carefully developed recipe that includes real honey and ground vanilla pods to create a soft, light, melt-in-the-mouth experience. They are perfectly complemented with a generous coating of luxurious milk or dark Belgian chocolate. We've been careful with flavour profiles to ensure they perfectly complement the marshmallow and do not overpower, so toppings such as Fleur de Sel Caramel work especially well as do the new flavours for 2015 – Strawberry & Toasted Coconut, Dark Caramel and Coffee & Cream.

Creative confections

The Barú range includes our signature premium chocolate coated marshmallows, super-cute Dreamy chocolate hippos, swirly chocolate drinks powders and also a

#trending

When it comes to the trend for marshmallows, I suppose we were amongst the trailblazers as we entered the UK already a couple of years ago. More recently, hot chocolate was an obvious addition to our range – perhaps it's because we drink hot chocolate all year round! We wanted to create a range that was of exceptional quality, so we went back to basics; no stirring of chocolate sticks or melting chocolate pieces in hot milk. Our drinking chocolate is fun as we add mini marshmallows or moulded chocolate pieces (hats, cars, moustaches, stars and moons) that slowly melt into the hot chocolate. We see hot chocolate an upcoming trend, and our new flavours of Salty Caramel, Peppermint and White Chocolate Latte also reflect the on-trend flavours.

Quality meets contemporary

We are a small company with a sense of fun and magic. Our dedication to using premium all-natural ingredients, as well as our traditional Belgian expertise, ensures that everything we make is both full of flavour and creativity. We like to use 'real' ingredients like ground vanilla pods rather than essences or aromas.

From the outset we focused on developing a quality brand with a contemporary edge. For a new brand to stand out in the crowded chocolate and confectionery market, we realised that as well as a great tasting product packaging was also important.



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TRADITIONAL VALUES

Attractive packs of handmade chocolates in traditional flavours has kept Guilberts at the top of its game for over 100 years

Traditional chocolatiers Guilberts has been creating quality chocolates for over 100 years, when the company was founded by a French-Swiss exile living in Bristol. "We make chocolates, fudge and truffles and also do crystallised work," says managing director, Alan White. "We specialise in handmade traditional

English chocolates, as opposed to praline-based confections."

Currently selling best for Guilberts are English Rose and Violet Creams, for which this small company is presently fulfilling a large contract. Guilberts offers traditional flavours which have long been established in the British taste palette.

"We do orange, coffee, lime and other flavours which other people may have dropped from their selections," Alan says. "The rose and violet are definitely gaining in mass popularity. Coffee is another flavour which was dying out a few years ago but is now back in favour." Guilberts knows the value of trading in time-proven varieties but, as Alan says "we do



occasionally come up with something a bit different."

"Our chocolates are 100% hand made. Because they are made by hand, the consumer will always get a good, thick coating of chocolate as opposed to moulded and enrobed chocolates where the chocolate is very thin and chocolate is always the most expensive ingredient."

Freshness is important for Guilberts. "We don't use any preservatives, meaning that the shelf life of our general chocolates is six months and for fresh cream truffles, it's four months. More often than not, the chocolates are usually dispatched within a week of being made, ensuring their freshness. We typically don't carry much stock, we work from a cycle of customers, primarily in the Cotswolds, Lake District and London, whom we deal with on a

regular monthly basis. This means we always have an idea of what we need to have in production at any given time. It's a simple system that has worked extremely well for us over the years."

Guilberts package chocolate for other people, so even if you haven't seen the stylish, modern designs on Guilberts' packaging, you may well have already tasted its contents. The company also produces an iconic range of gift tins, featuring the sights of Bristol. Guilberts Chocolates are especially suitable for delis and farm shops. Their range "offers something original and distinctly individual." Retailers looking for exclusivity will be interested to hear that Guilberts tries to keep its products as exclusive as possible and in smaller towns will not supply more than one retailer in the same area.



Established in Bristol in 1910

We have been hand making chocolates for over 100 years.

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We supply some of the top names under their brands, so although you may not be familiar with the Guilberts name or brand, you could quite possibly be familiar with our product.



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A strong confectionery display should entice, excite and offer something beyond what customers will see in the convenience stores and supermarkets. Hider Foods offers a wide and comprehensive range of top-flight products which satisfies on all fronts.

"The range we stock is very different," confirms brand manager Rupert Titchmarsh. "We have our own production facility on-site, so we can make bespoke products. Being large-scale importers of fruit and nuts, we can turn those into confectionery with the addition of chocolate. If the demand is for dried bananas covered in yogurt, we can provide that item. Dependent on the volume, we can also white label brand for the customer."

Hider's own-brand sweets are sold under The Hider Sweet Shop brand, and dedicated stands are available for customers who would like to stock a larger range of these products. The own-brand line also includes nuts and dried fruits which are available in snack pots with peelable lids, and Bear, an attractively-packaged line of 100% pure fruit confections which have been baked into the shapes of bears' paw prints.

Selling well for Hider right now is a range called Candy Kittens, which offers more adult-oriented versions of much-loved confections, and also popular at present are retro sweets of various types. "There's definitely a taste for nostalgia just now," Rupert says. "It's always there, but it's a little stronger now. Some of the old-fashioned sweets like sherbet pips, cola cubes and pear drops seem to be eternally popular, but sometimes you get spikes for them, too. In times of recession, when

HIDER: OFFERING QUALITY AND CHOICE

Duncan Hider's customers can choose from an array of quality confectionery offered by Hider, the Fine Food Family,

people think in terms of comfort foods and hark back to easier and more innocent times, retro products come into their own. This side of the business is increasingly strong and I don't see it disappearing." Parents, he says, are very much instrumental in sustained interest in older formats, being always keen to share their own favourites with a younger generation of consumers. Catering for this demand, Hider offers the familiar confections liquorice allsorts, jelly babies, wine gums, fruit pastilles and also, delightfully-designed tins of Simpkins travel sweets.

Hider offers a huge range of turkish delight. "We are exclusive importers of the Hazer Baba brand," Rupert says, "who are producers of the best quality turkish delight." Turkish delight is a great and much misunderstood product, Rupert says. "It has two or three



ingredients; it's kosher, Halal, and suitable for vegetarians and vegans." This may surprise those people who have dismissed it as a product that is packed with animal gelatin. "Good turkish delight, Rupert explains, "is thickened with corn starch, not gelatin. Also, it's important to realise that this is a product that is evolving. A lot of people remember turkish delight as a cloying confection flavoured with rose water, but there is a myriad of flavours and textures available now. Good quality 'lokum', as the Turks call it, is unflavoured, and may contain pistachio or cashew. It really is a wonderful sweetmeat."

Also seeing strong signs of growth, Rupert says, "is the new generation of products for the health-conscious" There is, he says, a whole sector of products aimed at people who prefer something other than sugar-based confections. "Creeping onto the market now are some more natural products, "lots of free-from ranges, dairy-free chocolate, and products which use sugar alternatives." Trending for the last couple of years, he says, are gourmet marshmallows. "These have seen huge growth and are now available in every every conceivable flavour." The company has recently formed an association with Monty Bojangles, "who produce a fantastic range of French-made, cocoa-dusted truffles in wonderful packaging." Such products have a lot of appeal for adults, but the

tastes of children are comprehensively catered for by Hider, which carries everything from jelly beans from Jelly Bean Factory to liquorice laces.

Great care is taken when making additions to the Hider confectionery range. "It's all about offering a



wide range of products," Rupert says. "If someone comes to us with a really good range of traditional sweets, we probably wouldn't be looking at it just now as we think we are covered in that area. However, if someone approaches us with a product that is genuinely innovative, or a similar range of products that is packaged in a really clever way, we may give it a go. We will all sit down and look at it, and try and put ourselves in the position of the consumer. We ask ourselves if this is a product that will sit well in the market, and in our range, too."

Hider, which celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2015, is keen to use its wealth of experience to help retailers set up successful confectionery counters. "If someone tells us they have a 10,000 sq ft store and want a large confectionery section that is going to appeal to the octogenarian down to five year old children, we can come up with a selection for them. We might, for instance, include Beech's Fine Chocolates, a range of high quality turkish delight and American type candy. All this will provide the retailer with a necessary point of difference from the supermarkets." Retailers with smaller space for confectionery should include a selection of impulse buys for the point of sale area, a range of chocolate, and retro-type confections. Hider also offers a full catalogue of solutions for Christmas confectionery stocking.





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SWEETS TAKEN SERIOUSLY

Bold branding, a Harrogate heritage and a sense of fun have proven to be a winning combination for the Serious Sweet Company

Despite only being set up three years ago, the English roots which run through The Serious Sweet Company are clear. Founded with the aim of bringing new flavours and formats to a long-neglected and commoditised category, the brand has revamped the confectionery sphere in the UK with its bold branding, ever-popular flavours and a fresh take on the business.

The company's product range – fudge, toffee, coconut ice, nut brittles and honeycomb – have been created for the independent market to great applause; "We make our premium sugar confectionery – fudge, toffee, coconut ice, nut brittles and honeycomb – using traditional, time



proven recipes and techniques," explains Rob Whitehead, founder. "Specifically, we allow our confectionery to cool naturally (seeding is the technical term) which improves texture and flavour, and our customers tell us this."

While Serious Sweets' range has been welcomed by the fine food

market in the local region of Yorkshire – current retailers in the county include Fodders, Keelham Farm Shop, Drewtons, Hunters of Helmsley and Lewis & Cooper – the time has come for the brand to expand its horizons to include retailers across the UK.

"We launched Ultimate English to supply farm shops, delis and independent retailers in the Yorkshire area, and now we're looking to roll out nationally through our wholesaler, Hider Foods," says Rob.

Combining a sense of fun – a popular approach within the confectionery market – with some weighty business acumen has proved a winning blend, as Rob explains: "Whilst we take our products seriously, we try to have some fun too! Hence the term 'Serious'!" Also valuable to Serious Sweets Company is its thoroughly British, Harrogate heritage of which Rob is rightfully proud. "Harrogate has

been a centre of confectionery manufacturing for over 150 years. We wanted to build on this and capture this heritage with our name and design, recalling a heraldic past with a modern twist."

This unique angle is sure to make the brand's confectionery selection a popular stocking choice – "People love our confectionery as an inexpensive gift or a personal treat. With attractive branding, two distinct formats, competitive pricing, good margins and a track record of proven sales demand, retailers can stock Ultimate English with confidence."

With an expanding customer and consumer base, what's next for Serious Sweet Company's product range? "We have a Christmas gift tin available with our Clementine and Cranberry and Salted Maple Fudge," Rob says, "and for 2016 we will introduce new flavours and new packaging formats."





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Chocca Mocca's new counter top display offers retailers a delicious, original product in stylish packaging for easy counter top sales

Chochca Mocca's new display, containing its delicious chocolate-smothered fruit and nuts, proved a hit when it was launched at the recent Speciality & Fine Food Fair at London's Olympia. "Chocca Mocca," says The Original Candy Company's managing director, Claudia Rushworth, "gives the retailer something different to offer and the consumer to enjoy. We have worked very hard to ensure that this range is delicious."

Among the 15 flavours featured in this smartly-packaged line of fruit, nut and chocolate delights, are Real Pieces of Apricots Smothered in Delicious Dark Chocolate, Dark Chocolate Balls Dipped in Delicious Dark Chocolate, Real Raspberries

Dipped in Fine Dark Chocolate, Orange Peel Dipped in Fine Dark Chocolate, Real Blackcurrants Covered in Delicious White Chocolate and Real Blueberries Smothered in Blueberry-Flavoured Chocolate. The most popular flavour, Claudia reports, is Strawberries & Cream.

"We have developed the range to cater for a wide variety of tastes and have carried out a large amount of product tasting to ensure we give the best quality product to the consumers," Claudia says. "This means we offer a variety of different formats of product. The product is aimed at the chocolate lover; it's a great gift for anyone, and a perfect treat in a hamper."



"We only launched The Chocca Mocca Display on the 6th of September, and are delighted with the orders so far as they are higher than we expected. It's a great time to launch as we can offer an easy gifting solution in the run-up to Christmas. The display has been very positively received, with lots of orders being placed at the recent show. The reaction had been wonderful and it's great to hear customers saying 'this is perfect! We were looking for easy counter-top displays.'"

The Original Candy Company offers a display that "is excellent for farm shops and independent food stores because there is no merchandising required, it's easy to refill, it looks great and offers a wide

variety of products and price points, along with high quality." This range of attractively-styled products also gives the retailer originality. "We were one of the first brands in the UK to offer such a product," Claudia says, "and we have stayed true to the brand, only offering new products when we felt certain they were as good as the existing range."

The response to the recent launch has exceeded expectations. "We have been delighted with the feedback," Claudia says. Customers have been highly pleased with the size, the look, and the quality of the display and the variety of product it holds and, Claudia adds, "feel that it offers a great opportunity for easy counter-top sales."

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CONFECTIONERY CLASSICS

Fudge, toffee and nougat have long been stalwarts of confectionery shelves, but what's next for the family favourites?

Offer your customers a free sample of fudge, toffee or nougat, and we'd wager that it's only one or two – if any – who would turn it down. The buttery, rich and comforting flavours of these classic confections have had consumers young and old in raptures for generations, but are the traditional sweets keeping up with the rest of the marketplace when it comes to exciting flavours, eye-catching branding and new product development?

Famously moreish, fudge and toffee have long been popular with shoppers of all ages, but what of nougat? This traditional Italian sweet made from whipped egg whites and honey, and commonly studded with nuts or dried fruit, has come a long way since its garishly-packaged incarnation commonly found in corner shops in decades past. These days it's easy to pick up at independent speciality food

retailers and food markets across the UK, and – thankfully – these days it carries a lot more of a handmade, artisan cache, making it popular with the more discerning confectionery shopper and well worth shelf space in your establishment.

We've spoken to faces from two of Britain's fudge and toffee stalwarts to find out how they ensure their product is able to fight off competition from the more modern of confectionery products, and to learn what's next for the ever-popular confections.

The future of British family favourites

Fudge, toffee and nougat have been loved by people of all ages for generations. With nostalgia still playing an important part in the shopping habits of consumers, what does the future hold for these century-spanning favourites?



Is the market for fudge, toffee and nougat growing? Sian Holt, MD of Fudge Kitchen thinks so. She

explains, "At a speciality level this is high on impossible to actually quantify, but you only need to look around you at trade shows, in gift food and speciality retailers and, at a

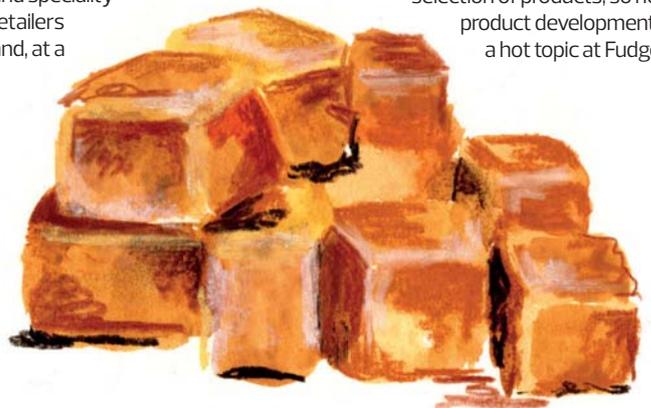
locally-produced level, at farmers markets and farm shops, to see the emergence of a host of new brands of varying sizes, styles and platforms."

According to Sian, this excitement for new products isn't limited only to the fudge market, and in fact spans the whole of the confectionery sector – and indeed fine food as a whole. "It's not really all about the fudge," Sian says, "it's about the activity and the trends in food generally and in chocolate confectionery in particular." As seen across the speciality food world, consumers desire to know the story behind the products they're purchasing. "As the consumer has shown a preference for brands with provenance, stories and quality ingredients, it has led to the development of new brands in all areas," Sian explains.

When it comes to the consumers of Fudge Kitchen products, Sian has a strong idea of the products and branding they're looking for – knowledge which has paid dividends during the business's continued development. "Our fudge, in terms of quality, format and presentation, is positioned towards the higher end of the market, particularly as regards our boxed selections," says Sian. "The loyal Fudge Kitchen follower is most likely to be adult although widely spread across the ages, purchasing our product as much for a self-treat as for a gift. There is perhaps a slight female bias, but having said that, some of our flavours – Boozy Fruit & Nut and Peanut Butter – appeal strongly to men, and Father's Day is one of our busiest seasons."

This wide customer base reflects the varied marketplaces that Fudge Kitchen supplies. "Our range has been developed to cater for a variety of markets – food service, gift food and speciality food – so the wide range of formats, both boxed and loose, allows us to provide our customers with exactly what suits them." This varied selection of consumers requires a varied

selection of products, so new product development is a hot topic at Fudge



Kitchen HQ. "The move into brittles and caramels was a natural one," Sian explains, "it uses the same great expert techniques and largely the same ingredients; and once we realised we could top this off with the Fudge Kitchen magic twist we were off."

One of the company's most popular – and versatile – products, Liquid Fudge, "came about as indeed fudge did itself – a happy mistake," Sian says. "We were trying to see if vacuum packing might help extend the shelf life of our whipping cream range and inadvertently crushed the product until it presented as a pourable sauce!" The next step, Drinking Fudge, "was a brainstorm step away from that – invented in fact by my daughter Rebecca. Since launch it has been a hugely successful product."

According to Sian, what's next for this market? "For fudge, brittles and caramels there will always be new flavours, textures and formats to develop or improve on," she says. "We love inventing new things at Fudge Kitchen but also to continue to better the things we already have in the range. There's half a dozen new concepts for 2016 in trial already; watch this space!"



SWEET SUCCESS

Specialists in quality toffee, Walkers Nonsuch is a household name in the food industry. We speak to Emma Walker, export & marketing director, about what makes the brand so popular and to find out more about the future of toffee.

What does Walkers Nonsuch produce?
Walkers specialises in making only toffee. It uses just good ingredients like whole milk and butter. The founder of the company, Edward Joseph's, mission was "to make quality toffee at affordable prices". This still stands today.

Any new products just arrived or on the horizon?
The latest launch is Mint Toffees. The family company has wanted to

make this for years but were concerned that the mint could potentially contaminate the whole factory. Thankfully, after lots of research, we have found a natural mint flavour that gives a cool strong chew.

Who are its customers?
Walkers has a wide range of products from traditional 50g and 100g bars to 150g and 2.5kg bulk bags of twist wrapped toffees and a unique gift range. This enables it to supply customers across the range with different products, from independents, specialist food suppliers, online shoppers and supermarkets.

Is that customer base growing?
Distribution has grown for Walkers over the last 10

years. There are probably fewer accounts than there previously were, but the good ones are good and we have better distribution.

Is the toffee market evolving? How?
The toffee market is a decreasing market but Walker's has increased its share. Only using good ingredients helps, and all the toffee is free from anything artificial and gluten-free, too.

What trends have you spotted recently?
In our range, the consumers like strong flavours like liquorice and the new mint flavour.

And how have you met this demand?
Liquorice is available in most of our ranges and Mint is just in its infancy.

What do you think is next for the toffee market?
At Walkers, we want to maintain the quality which we are world-

renowned for and look for new varieties to produce. We continue to look at new packaging format to fit different markets.

Finally, what does the future hold for Walkers Nonsuch?
Walkers has recently invested in increasing the factory floor space where we are adding a further production line and have bought further land and storage on an adjacent site. Walkers invest all profits back in to the company.



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A GIFT FOR EVERYONE

Attractive packaging in a range of formats and high quality confectionery make the Gardiners of Scotland range ideal for the independent retailer

“Gardiners of Scotland Ltd has a large and varied range of products,” says managing director Tom Gardiner Snr. “In the last year, we have had particularly good sales of the butterfly and fairy tins and this trend looks set to continue for the foreseeable future. These particular tins are beautifully embossed, with the butterfly tin being bright and bold, and the fairy tin being delicate and colourful. These particular tins make very attractive gifts for all the family and were designed with this in mind. “Our best performers in the market place are too many to mention individually by name, but the branded whisky fudge tins and cartons, along with the butterfly



and fairy tins, have been performing extremely well in the current market.

“Retailers looking for strong gifting items have a fantastic choice of beautiful packaging, with a high quality product within. All our confectionery is produced using only the finest of ingredients to

ensure that the quality is never compromised.

“Initially, we decided to specialise in Scottish confectionery and to get started we focused on the tourist trade. Such was our success that this continues to be a large part of our business today. Having said that, we have built up a very good customer base in other areas of the British Isles, with sales of the vast range of branded whisky fudge products and flower and luxury fudge tin ranges all excellent.

“The quality of our confectionery and unique packaging make our tins and cartons across the range very appealing to the independent farm and deli shops. These can also be used as attractive gifts which are also not too expensive for the customer.”

Our products also have a global appeal and yet we manage to provide a personal service to our wholesale and retail customers. Being a family company, it is very important to us that we maintain this service at

all times.

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QUALITY AND INNOVATION FROM BYSEL

The Bysel range offers high quality, handmade confectionery that's not available in the supermarkets



“We offer products that people remember from yesteryear,” says Bysel’s managing director, Chris Bottomley. “We make traditional confectionery, using traditional skills. The taste for retro confections has been growing over the past two or three years in

response to demand from the consumer, who is looking for something different.” Finding quality examples of classic confections is not as easy as it was. “Many of the products made by Bysel were very common 30 or 40 years ago,” says Chris, “but have since disappeared with the coming of large-scale automation.” Confections such as cinder toffee and honeycomb proved difficult to automate, he says. “It’s the same with fudge. Cheap commercial fudge is very easy to find, but it’s harder to find fudge which is a little bit more specialised.”

Bysel’s own range of speciality fudge is a strong one. “At this time of year, the most popular are the

mince pie and Christmas pudding flavours, but throughout the year, our sea salt or ginger versions are very popular, and so is caramel.” Bysel is keen on NPD; as well as trying out a new recipe for its nougat, Chris says, “we are currently developing a peanut butter fudge, which is very much in vogue at the moment. The trial batches we have made taste very good indeed, so we are highly optimistic about those.” Simply Delicious is a range of attractively-designed gift packs of a wide selection of confectionery, from fruit jellies and butter fudge, to chocolate coconut ice. And another new launch for Bysel is a Simply Delicious cardboard tube “which will contain 275g of fudge and be sold in duty-free shops and other gifting outlets.”

Bysel uses “very traditional methods of production,” Chris adds. “We use copper cooking vessels, cold slabs and we manually pour and cut; everything we produce is handmade. This gives us great flexibility and enables us to tailor-make

products to customer requirements, e.g. if somebody asks for a bar of cinder toffee in a given dimension, we are able to react to that very quickly.” The demand for traditionally-made, classic confections is strong. Selling well for Bysel just now, Chris says, are “our two formats of nut brittle (a thin toffee with peanuts, either plain or half chocolate coated), cinder toffee (plain or chocolate covered), coconut ice and traditional, crumbly or smooth fudges. Bysel is also renowned for its nougat. In response to what Chris reports as a growing demand over the last few years, the company also provides a sugar-free range of boiled sweets. The company also operates a successful own-label service.



Bysel

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Manufacturers of traditional confectionery



EVERYBODY'S FAVOURITE

Boiled and gummy sweets remain popular with young and old but which should have a place on your confectionery shelf?

When it comes to selecting sweets, bear in mind the two types which continue to sell consistently at confectionery shops: the boiled and the gummy sweet. Wine gums and variations of gummy sweets enjoy as loyal a following as do boiled sweets, and both will always earn their shelf space. These are sweets whose very names strike chords and evoke responses. Rhubarb & custards, pineapple chunks, raindrop, aniseed balls, pear, acid and cherry drops, fizz balls, cough candy, herbal and

cough sweets, chocolate limes, butterscotch, apple & custards, mintoes and barley sugars are all likely to be somebody's favourites. Putting just a few of these out on taste will often be enough to remind sweet-lovers of flavours they have missed, and introduce younger customers to confectionery they may not normally consider buying.

Wesley Thorne is director of family retail and internet business Treasure Island Sweets. Proving themselves in this sector just now, he says, are old-fashioned bulls

eyes and traditional sweets such as rhubarb & custard, sours, sherbet lemons and sherbet strawberries. Treasure Island Sweets is in a good position to reflect on market trends as it buys in bulk. "Take today – we have a tonne of sour sweets on order. Sour is really big and is especially popular with younger people, teenagers and people in their twenties. Mega sour cherries and Toxic Waste are always very popular." Violet Cream chocolates are selling well, he says and one old-fashioned product currently showing promise is Edinburgh Rock.

The Oldest Sweet Shop makes a speciality of its jarred boiled sweets. "We are a very traditional sweet shop," says owner Keith Tordoff, "where people expect to see rows of jars and to experience some theatre as the sweets are taken from the shelf and weighed out. This business is a sweet shop as older people remember them and these customers take great pleasure in introducing a younger generation to the pleasures of their own youth." Jarred boiled sweets, he says, are very much a part of this. Currently selling strongly at The Oldest Sweet Shop, Keith says, are "dandelion & burdock and cherry cola fizz balls." The best-selling boiled sweets for this family business, he says, are "rhubarb & custard, and then pear drops, although the super sours are doing well, too."

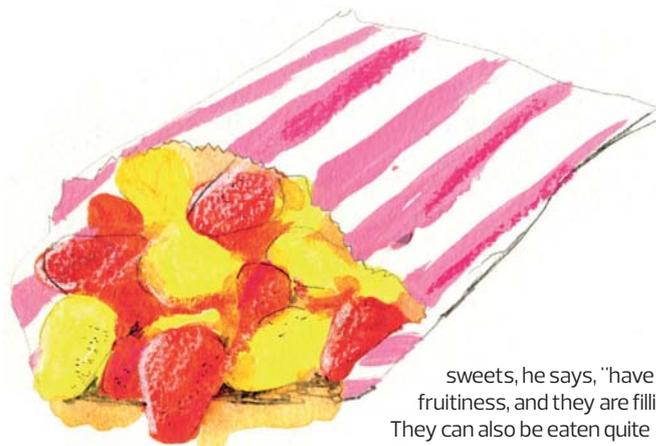
As might be expected, while younger customers "go for the gummy sweets," older ones gravitate towards the massed rows of jarred boiled sweets. Boiled

“ These are sweets whose names strike chords and evoke responses: rhubarb & custards, pineapple chunks, aniseed balls, cherry drops, cough candy, chocolate limes and butterscotch are all somebody's favourites ”

sweets sell in "vast" quantity. "When I get a boiling made for us, I will buy the full boiling," Keith says. "A full-sized jar on the shelf is about 7lbs in weight and I'll take 25-30 jars at a time. We will probably go through a jar a day just of rhubarb and custard." Sales of boiled sweets have been aided by the online side of the business, which Keith says is on course to outstrip sales from the shop.

Iconic gummies

Kids love them, dads love them. Soft and squidgy, sweet and sour gummy sweets have a wide and enduring appeal and come in all shapes and sizes. Supermarkets always carry a selection, either in packet or sold as pick-and-mix. They also sell a lot of gummy sweets in small bags, ideal for small hands, and thus ensure that the taste for all things gummy is one that is born early. While such iconic gummies as wine gums, sports mix, cherry lips and midget gems are sold in supermarkets, alternative brands sold by independent retailers are often sought out by gummy connoisseurs. The difference in flavour and texture can be quite considerable and it is always worthwhile testing as many brands as you can before deciding upon your own gummy selection. Some medium-sized brands have been



overshadowed by the promotional power of bigger brands, but a lot of gummy aficionados remain faithful to their product and maintain that it is much superior to the better-known version. Whichever you choose to stock, you can expect a good take-up from customers looking for a last minute purchase or something to keep the kids content while they have a good look around the rest of your shop's shelves.

"Gummy bears are always good," says Wesley Thorne. "Haribo gummy sweets consistently do very well." Among Wesley's best-selling gummy sweets, he says, are "fried eggs, friendship rings and jelly buttons – sometimes called Horse Tablets or Spoggs – which are the pink and blue buttons you get in Liquorice Allsorts." These tend to be the preferred choice of the younger customers, he says. "The older people who come into our shop, the mums and dads, go for traditional boiled sweets, and they try and get the kids to have their boiled sweets, but in fact, the kids always want the jelly gummy sweets. That's because it's what they have been used to." Gummy

sweets, he says, "have the fruitiness, and they are filling.

They can also be eaten quite quickly to get the sugar rush, whereas boiled sweets have to be sucked." New in stock at Treasure Island Sweets, he says, is "a giant gummy bear about the size of your hand, which is about a quarter of a kilo in weight."

At The Oldest Sweet Shop, owner Keith Tordoff says that the traditional staple, the wine gum, is now favoured mainly by older customers. "We give them a choice of soft or hard," Keith says, "because some people with older teeth can be a bit wary about having the harder ones."

Midget gems, Keith says, "are always a massive seller, so long as they are made by Lion and not one of the softer makes. These are the hard gums people know and the black ones must be liquorice, not blackcurrant. I have 20-30 boxes of Lion Midget Gems, which I expect to get through in the next three weeks." At The Oldest Sweet Shop, pastilles, for so long a popular choice with young people, are bought "exclusively" by the older generation. Keith's young customers, he says, prefer his gummy options. "They love the giant strawberries and jelly snakes," he says.

SWEET STORIES

The Mysteriously Non-Alcoholic Wine Gum

Legend has it that when Charles Gordon Maynard pitched his idea for gelatin sweets he would call wine gums, his father, a strict teetotaler and Methodist, nearly fired him on the spot. This gummy troublemaker was to be the subject of similar confusion exactly 100 years later, when a sales assistant in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, refused to serve a 15 year old schoolboy with what

he thought was a product containing alcohol. It's reported that the boy was chased down the street before the sweets were confiscated and a refund issued.

Cola Bottles and Road Kill

Also perennial favourites for lovers of gummy sweets are cola bottles, but these are just one of a whole host of shapes which have sold the gummy format to the world. Red frogs and teeth are preferred

shapes of Australians. Other shapes popular in various parts of the world are soldiers, snakes, sharks, rings, hamburgers, human hearts, faces, and, until the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals made its feelings plain, road-killed squirrels, snakes and chickens.

Peace, Baby

Dr Who's favourite confection, the jelly baby, is said to have been invented in 1864 by an Austrian working at Fryers of Lancashire. The

confections got off to an unpromising start, because of their original name, Unwanted Babies. In 1918, while being manufactured by Basset's of Sheffield, these soft and colourful sweets were renamed Peace Babies, in celebration of the ending of the First World War. Peace Babies was a name they kept until production was suspended with the outbreak of World War Two. When production resumed in 1953, the now iconic confection was more successfully rebranded.

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

Sherbet lemons

The boiled sweets with the surprise-you-once sherbet centre appear in Harry Potter, where they are described as a 'Muggle sweet' by Professor Dumbledore. The flavour range of these sour-sweet confections has much expanded and it's now possible to source sherbet fruits, sherbet limes, sherbet strawberries, blackcurrants, raspberries and sherbet orange flavoured confections.

Barley sugar

This was often made in the shape of spiral sticks, and gave its name to the barley sugar twist style of chair and table legs. The earliest examples (17th century) were made by boiling down refined cane sugar with barley water to a recipe created by Benedictine monks at Monet-sur-Loing in France, site of the present Barley Sugar Museum.

Gobstoppers

Known in the US as 'jawbreakers,' these hard, layered spherical sweets were a great favourite of schoolboys between the wars. Designed to be sucked or licked, larger gobstoppers can take days to completely dissolve.

Humbugs

Usually peppermint-flavoured and black and white striped, the traditional pillow-shaped mint humbugs, which featured in the TV series Blackadder, have been produced since at least the 1820s. Similar to humbugs are Bulls-eyes, which are also black and white striped, but ball-shaped. Black and white striping is also found on the Everton Mint, which was first made as a sustaining snack for team members of Everton FC when they played away.

Pear drops.

In a survey of 2009, the pink and yellow pear drop was voted the nation's 14th favourite sweet. The world's biggest pear drop weighs half a tonne and is on permanent exhibition at Stockleys Sweets in Oswaldtwistle Mill, Lancashire.



A MATTER OF TASTE

Creme d'Or is offering much more than high quality Belgian chocolates and a personal service for its satisfied customers

Very possibly, you know Creme d'Or for its range of visually-striking, high-quality Belgian chocolates, but in fact this interesting company, which celebrates 25 years of specialising in the import and distribution of quality European confectionery in August next year, offers a much wider range.

Along with niche products such as the currently popular Scandinavian salt liquorice, the company offers exciting new lines such as the selection of Happy Jackson brand confectionery. Launched in April this year, the range will be exhibited at next year's ISM trade show. This range of jellies and foam sweets, which is available in a range of sharing bags and gift pouches, has great appeal, says Creme d'Or product development manager Jenny Baillie. This is helped by the packaging, Jenny says, which is "quirky, bright and cheerful, with some quite eye-catching designs, and witty phrases." Also appearing under the Happy Jackson brand is a line of four chocolate bars and boxes of chocolate-covered mallows.

But of course, at the heart of Creme d'Or is its range of quality loose chocolates. Selling particularly

well just now, Jenny says, are examples from Ickx in Belgium. "The cupcake chocolates, especially the salted caramel and cream, are much in demand" Jenny says, as they offer stores "premium and prestige appeal." These attractive chocolates also create a sense of drama which retailers won't get anywhere else.

Creme d'Or offers retailers an extensive range of not only loose chocolates but also premium bars, gift boxes and decorated chocolate items, as well as a comprehensive selection of sugar confectionery – both seasonal and all year round. The company is also able to provide customers with private label and bespoke options.



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HOT STUFF

The Tabasco Spicy Chocolate range offers eye-catching branding and a touch of sophistication for confectionery shelves

Tabasco is a brand known the world over, so perhaps it's not surprising to find the familiar green and red lettering adorning the tins and bars of Tabasco Spicy Chocolate. This American-made confection, which neatly taps into the current craze for chilli products, was launched in the UK by Empire Bespoke Foods in 2011 and the company still holds the exclusive right to distribute this popular chocolate within the UK.

The product is offered in three formats, a red embossed circular gifting tin containing eight chocolate wedges, a 900g paint-tin style can containing 120 individually-wrapped chocolate wedges, and 28g chocolate bars. The appeal of such a

product is strong. Already a proven success in the US, the Tabasco range has been selling well in the UK, appealing as it does not only to lovers of chilli but also to those who like their chocolate with bite. It's also kosher and suitable for vegetarians.

"It's an amazing flavour combination," says Nina Prabhu of Empire Bespoke Foods. "Initially you get the sweet, dark chocolate taste and this is followed by the heat of the Tabasco flavour at the end."

Consumers are looking for something new in chocolate these days, Nina says. "There is a huge variety of unique flavours available at the moment, and new flavours are being introduced all the time." This, she says, is evident by the

recent interest in salted caramel and chilli-infused products. Tabasco Spicy Chocolate satisfies consumers' cravings for different flavour combinations and also provides a touch of sophistication for retailers' shelves. This is a product with strong appeal for adults already familiar with the Tabasco brand.

More adventurous

"It provides an interesting alternative to mainstream chocolate," Nina says. "We are seeing people becoming more adventurous when it comes to spice levels. For those who love a bit of sweet with their spice, customers will find the perfect product in Tabasco chocolate. Sales of chilli sauces are up 69 per cent, indicating shoppers are looking to indulge in products that not only taste delicious, but also have a kick to them."

"Tabasco isn't an odd flavouring for confectionery. If anything, chilli-flavoured food products are as

popular as ever." On the market now, Nina says, are chilli crisps, chilli popcorn and chilli chocolate.

"However," she says, "there is only one Tabasco Chocolate. All the rest are chilli-infused chocolate and don't have drops of actual Tabasco sauce in each chocolate wedge." Tabasco Spicy Chocolate is one of a number of Tabasco products created by McIlhenny Co in response to the worldwide recognition of the

Tabasco name. Selling particularly well, Nina says, is the tin embossed with Tabasco's iconic branding, which is popular as a gifting item and has "real stand-out appeal" on the shelves. "It's a perfect gift for chilli lovers," she says.

The product, which is made with high quality ingredients and contains actual drops of the unmistakable Tabasco Red Pepper Sauce, also "makes a tasty ingredient in both sweet and savoury dishes, for example, Tabasco chilli chocolate brownies, and Tabasco chilli chocolate and cherry cupcakes, and it's fantastic in a fiery beef chilli."



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WHICH CHOCOLATE BAR?

A good chocolate bar made by an artisanal producer makes a good last-minute purchase for independent food shop customers, but what else should guide your choice?

There are many confectionery types you can easily do without, but chocolate bars are an essential element in any selection of snacks for the sweet-toothed. Ever since the mid-nineteenth century, when Bristol-based Fry's unveiled the first nationally-available chocolate bar, chocolate lovers have found the convenient grab-and-go style of chocolate bars the ideal chocolate format. These tasty, versatile and supposedly mood-changing confections are popular with everybody but slimmers. In recent years the quality of the product available has shot up. Previous to this, dark chocolate bars were very much a niche product and chocolate came in three varieties: dark chocolate, milk chocolate and white chocolate. The quality of bars available a couple of decades ago was not particularly good overall, and few consumers had heard of such terms as cacao content or single estate. Now that so-called niche products have been found to offer wider possibilities, the market has blossomed.

The trouble for independent food retailers is that the idea of the quality chocolate bar has caught on everywhere. Quick to pick up on trends in chocolate, supermarkets have bought into the dark chocolate with high cacao content trend, and have also caught onto newly popular flavours such as salted caramel. All these bars fit well with the independent market, which makes it harder for these retailers to offer something that the multiples don't. Brands readily



available in the big multiples such as Green & Blacks and Lindt offer consumers a more sophisticated alternative to the brands whose bars are to be found with the sweets at the aisle ends.

As an independent food retailer, the last thing you will want to do is to devote an area of your valuable display space to confectionery which is readily available at your local supermarket. However, with the multiples already stocking a lot of high-cacao content dark chocolate products in a variety of flavours and a lot of stores offering some examples of Fairtrade and organic chocolate, how do you really differentiate your offering?

Top sellers

Unfamiliarity with product and packaging is one such way. A necessary point of difference can be established by seeking out the smaller, artisanal chocolate producers who wholesale their wares and can offer high quality chocolate bar products which for some reason or other are different in themselves, and whose brand name and wrapping will not be

over familiar to most of your customers. Ludlow Food Centre appears to follow a similar tactics when stocking chocolate bars. Their top selling chocolate bars, says buyer Caroline Jones, are Nom Nom Salted Caramel Dark Chocolate Bar and Nom Nom Honeycomb Dark Chocolate Bar.

"We carry a few brands focusing on single estate such as Doble & Bignall, Amelia Rope and Marou. Our 70% cocoa content out of our Marou range sells particularly well," Caroline says. "Although these are in the higher price bracket, and sales are slower than non-single estate, I think consumer awareness of quality chocolate is growing, which is reflected in the sales of our most popular brands."

Top-selling chocolate and chocolate bar brands at Ludlow Food Centre, Caroline says, are Ludlow's own-branded assorted chocolates and truffles, which are made by Holdsworth Chocolates based in Derbyshire, Nom Nom ("Welsh chocolate producers of amazingly flavoured bars"), Coco Pzazz ("cube boxes containing flavoured chocolate discs – another fantastic Welsh producer!"), Camaya Chocolates ("Midlands-based producers of flavour-topped chocolate bars") and Doble & Bignall ("Gloucestershire-based producers of quality handmade bean to bar chocolate").

Think also in terms of ethics: there's an increasing interest in products that have been produced without unfairly exploiting the primary producer. Chocolate bars which appear to offer a healthy



alternative to mainstream chocolate bars are also likely to do well these days. The recession may be over, but the ethos of 'buy little but buy well' seems to persist and offering a premium quality product will offer you a point of difference which sits well with the high quality of your other stock. There is a world of difference between chocolate that is reasonably fresh and chocolate with a long sell-by date. If you can find a supplier of handmade, fresh chocolate bars which you can promote as such, this can prove attractive to customers, especially if they are allowed to taste the product before buying. Chocolate bar makers to watch these days appear to be those offering new and original flavours, raw, organic chocolate and ones whose chocolate has been ethically produced.

“ With the multiples already stocking a lot of high-cacao content dark chocolate products in a variety of flavours and a lot of stores offering some examples of Fairtrade and organic chocolate, how do you differentiate your offering? ”



THE WORLD OF CHOCOLATE

Sourcing your chocolate bars from different parts of the world can offer your customers a variety of easily-distinguishable tastes and increase interest in the product and its provenance. From here it's not a big step to introducing them to single origin types (chocolate from a single country) and single estate (chocolate from a single farm or estate). Selling such chocolate is made easier, of course, if you know something about the differences in taste yourself and can communicate this to your customers, through word of mouth or clear signage. Cocoa beans are found in the pods that grow on cocoa trees. These trees need hot, tropical places and are to be found within 20 degrees latitude of the Equator. There are three main types of cocoa tree and flavour, colour and quality are all affected by the type of tree that the bean is sourced from. The Forastero tree from the upper Amazon also grows in Ghana, Cameroon and the Ivory Coast. Used in 85% of the world's production, it offers strong, earthy flavours. With up to 5% of world production, Criollo (from Creole) is harvested in Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua and Venezuela and the Caribbean and produces chocolate that is mildly astringent and slightly bitter and often used in luxury chocolate products. Trinitario grows the Trinitario cocoa tree, a hybrid of the Criollo and Forastero, which accounts for of 10-15% of worldwide production.

Organic varieties

"We don't tend to do the mainstream chocolate bars," says Wesley Thorne, director of Bristol-based retailer and wholesaler Treasure Island Sweets. "There's no profit in them as everyone else sells them at low cost." Instead, the company prefers to specialise in British and organic varieties of chocolate bar. "Montezuma's from Brighton are very good," Wesley says, "as are Seed & Bean." Raw chocolate is being seen as "quite a healthy alternative," he says. "There's a very good company called Ombar and Conscious Chocolate which do some really good flavours such as rose oil and raw chocolate." Chocolate bar makers to watch these days

appear to be those offering new and original flavours, raw, organic chocolate and ones whose chocolate has been ethically produced.

Emma Jackman, Conscious Chocolate's founder and managing director lists her top three selling bars as "Mint Hint, Essential Orange and The Nutty One," and says that chocolate starts to sell well at 60% cacao content and

above. Innovative flavours and a "creamy, truffle-like, melt-in-the-mouth texture" are important factors in a chocolate bar with the potential to sell well. Ideally, the bar should be edible for all, "regardless of dietary requirements". Chocolate made by Conscious Chocolate appeals to buyers of artisanal products because, as Emma says, it is "all made by hand. We still ladle the chocolate out by hand in moulds and then chill them to set." New directions in chocolate bars for this producer include a 15g mini bar.

For some, the appeal of a chocolate bar lies not in its premium quality, but in its nostalgic appeal. "Because we are a niche, traditional sweet shop," says Keith Tordoff, owner of The Oldest Sweet Shop, "we don't try and compete with general newsagents who sell various chocolate bars, but we do sell a lot of the Fry's Chocolate Cream and Peppermint Cream bars. Unfortunately, this year they stopped making the orange one. I get a lot of customers saying 'I didn't realise you could still get those.'"

ATLAS OF CHOCOLATE FLAVOURS

A quick guide to the taste of chocolate from around the world

- Mexico:** cocoa, fruity, bright
- Dominican Republic:** Grassy, winey, tobacco
- Brazil:** Bitter, fruity, bright
- Venezuela:** Cocoa, bright
- Equador:** Spicy, floral, cocoa, fruity, grassy
- Panama:** Cocoa, fruity, bright
- Ivory Coast:** Cocoa, fruity, bright, bitter
- Peru:** Bitter, winey, fruity
- Java:** Fruity, bright, nutty, cocoa





POP TO THE TOP

Adam Sopher of Joe & Seph's talks us through the magic and innovation behind the popular popcorn brand

Joe & Seph's is a small family business from London, on a mission to produce the best tasting popcorn in the world. We are known for producing the best tasting handmade popcorn in a range of over 40 innovative flavours, both sweet and savoury. We've very recently extended our offering by launching a range of six caramel sauces, and have now won a total of 24 Great Taste Awards!

We strive to do things differently to ensure all of our products have the very best taste possible.

Everything is handmade by a small team of chefs in our London kitchen using only the finest natural ingredients, and we also "air-pop" our extra-large 'mushroom' kernels



– this is a healthier cooking method than frying, resulting in better texture and taste. We're famous for our unique "flavour-sequencing" technique, which means the individual flavours "unlock" as you're crunching on the popcorn. This led to Joseph (our founder) being nicknamed "the Willy Wonka of popcorn"! The diverse nature of our product means that our customers are quite varied, but in general our popcorn and caramel sauces appeal to foodies – people who appreciate quality and want to try something a little different.

We have an extensive variety of flavours, ranging from the more traditional Salted Caramel and

Toffee Apple & Cinnamon to savoury varieties like Goats Cheese & Black Pepper and Camembert Cheese. Central to our popcorn is innovation, and in 2014 we launched the world's first Gin & Tonic popcorn, and now have an entire cocktail range including Margarita, Cosmopolitan and Mojito. We now offer over 40 flavours of popcorn, which have won us a total 23 Great Taste Awards!

Since 2010 we have been known for producing award-winning popcorn, made using our secret smooth caramel recipe. We've now bottled this smooth caramel sauce straight from the kitchen, and have created six indulgent varieties:

Salted Caramel (which won a 1 Star Great Taste Award this year!), Sticky Toffee, Chocolate Caramel, Chocolate & Hazelnut, Cappuccino and, of course, Gin & Tonic. They're all made with fresh double cream to give them a luxurious taste and texture, and can be used in a variety of ways including

spreading on a pancake, drizzling on ice cream, using in baking or just devouring straight from the jar! By using the same caramel recipe we use for our popcorn, jarred caramel sauces felt like a natural brand extension for us, and we hope this range will help Joe & Seph's appeal to the growing home baking market – especially with Great British Bake Off back on our screens at the moment.

We're always experimenting in the kitchen and will continue to do so.

We have some great new flavours due out in October, and have two brand new gift products hitting the shelves soon (a giant cracker and Christmas stocking) so for any stores looking to add value to their Christmas range, please get in touch!

This year we won nine more Great Taste Awards, bringing our total up to 24 which was very exciting, and we'll try for more next year as they're really important in positioning the Joe & Seph's brand as producers of the tastiest popcorn (and caramel sauces too!).



HANDMADE IN ENGLAND

JOE & SEPH'S
GOURMET POPCORN CHEF & CONNOISSEUR



24
GREAT TASTE
AWARDS



GOURMET POPCORN



NEW CARAMEL SAUCES

Since 2010, Joe & Seph's have been renowned for making award-winning popcorn in over 40 flavours, using our unique smooth caramel recipe. You can now enjoy our handmade smooth caramel as a sauce, in six amazing varieties...

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FAIR FARMING

Esther Ephraim Mintah, farmer member of Kuapa Kokoo – the farming cooperative behind Divine Chocolate – tells the story behind this iconic ethical brand

“Our slogan is “pa pa paa” – best of the best”

Quality beans make quality chocolate, so to ensure quality beans, Kuapa Kokoo members give special attention to the growing, fermenting and drying of their cocoa beans. Field officers are employed to give quality training on Fairtrade standards to cocoa farmers, and elected farmers are represented on the Divine Board, which exposes them to the chocolate business and means they have a say in the value chain. Kuapa representatives contribute to manufacturing and marketing decisions on the Divine Chocolate Board.



“Kuapa Kokoo farmers are very proud to own their chocolate company”

As well as receiving the Fairtrade premium, Kuapa Kokoo owns the biggest share of Divine Chocolate, and so farmers of Kuapa Kokoo have been able to add any distributed dividend to the premium to improve their livelihoods. These benefits have empowered farmers – especially the women who have been empowered to build self-confidence, independence and ensure a sense of community participation and ownership.

The farmers have invested Fairtrade Premium, including the premium from Divine, in dozens of social projects, including the

provision of wells and boreholes for drinking water, construction of public toilets and schools. A mobile health programme visits Kuapa Kokoo farmers in their societies to treat their health needs.

The Fairtrade premium is used not only for community improvements, but also as direct payments to farmers in the form of end of year cash bonus. Profits from Divine have been used to initiate alternative income generating schemes, particularly for women, to help them bring additional income into their families such as tie-dyeing textiles, soap making, palm nut production and palm oil extraction, corn milling and snail farming for local and export markets.

Each year Divine also sets aside 2% of its turnover (the Producer Support & Development Fund) to support Kuapa programmes such as adult literacy and numeracy classes, the model farm project comparing farming techniques, and Kuapa's own radio programme which reaches out to our large membership all over Ghana.

“I am very proud to call myself a farmer and co-owner of Divine Chocolate Company”

I have been empowered as a woman and now, through visits abroad and



exposure to the chocolate market by Divine, I have now built the confidence to hold a leadership position as the Protocol officer of the National Executive Council of Kuapa Kokoo Farmers Union, which is the mother organisation.

Esther Ephraim is in the UK for Chocolate Week chocolateweek.co.uk

WHAT'S NEXT FOR KUAPA KOKOO

As part of a Fairtrade requirement, Kuapa has started going through restructuring to ensure better services to its members. This restructuring will provide further enlightenment in the cocoa business.



CHOCOLATE TO CHERISH

Owned by cocoa farmers, made for chocolate lovers

- ♥ All Fairtrade certified
- ♥ Wide range of beautifully packaged bars, gifts and seasonal specialities
- ♥ Natural ingredients
- ♥ Palm oil free



A LOVE THAT GROWS

DISCOVER THE CHOCOLATE COMPANY WITH COCOA FARMERS AT ITS HEART
For sales enquiries, please contact Jean-Paul@divinechocolate.com





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