

THE COUNTRY RANGE GROUP
MAGAZINE FOR CATERERS

Stir it up

SPRING

APRIL
2025



Event Catering

**Bold flavours and
indulgent street eats**



THE POWER OF PROVENANCE | DIPNA ANAND'S SIGNATURE DISH
NURTURING TALENT IN THE CARE SECTOR

Ingredient

April is a big month with Easter on the horizon and everything ramping up for the summer season. This month's issue has no end of menu inspiration and advice to help you to hit the ground running.

Our Melting Pot feature celebrates the importance of provenance, with expert advice and inspiration, whilst our Category Focus provides fresh ideas for planning events this summer. Don't miss our fantastic Rising Star and Signature Dish featuring two inspirational female chefs.

If you would like to get involved in a feature or if you have any feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Please email us at editor@stiritupmagazine.co.uk

The Stir it up team



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As part of our environmental policy this magazine is printed using vegetable oil based ink and is produced to high environmental standards, including ISO14001 and FSC® certification. It is also fully carbon balanced.



OUR EDITORIAL PARTNERS...



ALLERGEN REFERENCES

VG - Vegan **V** - Vegetarian



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Fresh FROM THE KITCHEN



Plant forward eating is one of the latest trends in health food, with consumers addressing the growing awareness of dietary health and sustainability through plant-powered eating. This trend is not limited to vegan diets – from omnivores to flexitarians, vegetarians to vegans – everybody is welcome.

THE NEW '5-A-DAY' – The concept of 'plant points' encourages the consumption of a wide variety of plants, awarding a point for each type of plant consumed within a week, with the goal of achieving 30 points each week. Studies have shown that eating 30 or more plant types per week increases gut microbiome diversity, and this concept is moving into the mainstream, with chefs such as Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall becoming advocates.

WHOLE FOODS – Nutrient-dense whole foods are becoming more prevalent on plant-based menus. The tastes, textures and visual appeal of nutritional fruit, vegetables and legumes are being celebrated on menus, showing the versatility and creativity of plant-forward dishes, from smoothies to burgers.

BEANS & ROOTS – As consumers are looking for a fresh approach to plant-based eating, tofu and tempeh are high on the agenda, thanks to their minimal ingredients and clean labels. Funghi is also rising in popularity, due to the umami-rich flavour and rich nutrition. Look out for mycelium, which is being used increasingly to produce plant-based meat alternatives.

HEALTH DRINKS – Plants take centre stage in the surge of interest in functional drinks. Fruit and veg combos provide convenient, measured ways for consumers to address their bespoke health requirements.

BRAIN FOOD – There is a shift in consumers looking to food and natural options to support their functional health. The nutritional benefits of plants on various aspects of cognitive health are being explored and moving into the mainstream, with M&S recently launching a new 'brain food' range.

Green smoothie with avocado, spinach, apple and chia seeds



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From thefoodpeople trend report 2025.

Cooks CALENDAR

APRIL

4TH APRIL – INTERNATIONAL CARROT DAY

Add a unique spin to your carrot cakes through the power of healthy breakfast with this Carrot Cake Sandwich Cookie recipe from Nestlé Cereal Partners. Simple to make, simply wonderful to enjoy.

21ST APRIL – NATIONAL TEA DAY

Have a refreshing National Tea Day this April with this delicious Iced Tea recipe from Country Range.



MAY

17TH MAY – WORLD BAKING DAY

Try something new with your cereal this World Baking Day with this delicious Cheerios Mallow Bars recipe from Nestlé Cereal Partners.

18TH – 24TH MAY – SANDWICH WEEK

Upgrade your classic fish finger sandwich to a sensational version this Sandwich Week with this Gourmet Fish Finger Sandwich recipe from Country Range.



The full recipes can be found at www.stiritupmagazine.co.uk



JUNE

16TH JUNE – FATHER'S DAY

Treat Dad to a first-class meal this Father's Day with this mouth-watering Beef Stew and Dumplings recipe from Country Range.

17TH – 24TH JUNE – NATIONAL PICNIC WEEK

Make your picnics extra special this summer with this Mini Coronation Chicken Pie recipe from Opies. These hand-held delights are packed with flavour and are the perfect addition to your summer picnic.

Thanks to Cereal Partners®, Opies, and Country Range.



IN SEASON

Radishes

Watercress

Rhubarb

Pea



Sharpham Cheese Mousse

This recipe is a great light starter here at Green Tree Court. We serve it with homemade gingerbread crisps, poached apricot and raisins.

INGREDIENTS

- 200g Sharpham Brie
- 300ml double cream
- Pinch of salt and pepper
- 2 sprigs of thyme
- 1 tsp honey

METHOD

1. Start by removing the rind from the brie with a knife. Place the cheese in a food processor and leave to soften at room temperature.
2. Place 200ml of double cream in a bowl with the salt and pepper and whisk to soft peaks.
3. Take the remaining cream and add to the softened cheese. Make sure the cream is at room temperature, as if it is too cold it will split the cheese. Blend in processor until smooth.
4. Fold the cheese and cream mixture into the whipped cream and finish with honey and finely chopped thyme.
5. Place in a piping bag and chill in the fridge until ready to use.

Readers' lives



NAME: Tim Ware

BORN AND RAISED: Exeter, Devon

JOB TITLE: Head Chef

PLACE OF WORK: Green Tree Court (Lexicon Health Care)

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED IN THE CATERING INDUSTRY? 22 years

PASSIONS OUTSIDE OF THE KITCHEN? Running, automobiles.

BIG TARGET FOR 2025? I am looking to be involved in more competitions in order to better showcase the care home catering sector.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE CUISINE TO EAT? Italian.

WHICH CHEF DO YOU RESPECT THE MOST AND WHY? Tom Kerridge and his approach to Michelin star food. It's all about simplicity and punchy flavours with less formal dining rooms.

WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU WERE EVER GIVEN AND BY WHOM? My old head chef told me to never let your mistakes leave the kitchen.

WHAT IS YOUR MUST-HAVE KITCHEN GADGET? Vacuum packer.

WHAT'S YOUR TIP TO CUT WASTAGE IN THE KITCHEN? Change menus daily and use fresh ingredients cooked to order.

WHAT IS YOUR TOP TIP FOR SOMEONE STARTING OUT IN THE CATERING INDUSTRY? Work in as many different restaurants and countries as possible. Learn different cultures and kitchen environments and you will find your direction naturally.

WHAT'S YOUR DREAM JOB? I would love to work on private yachts one day.

WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO BE A COOK/CHEF? When I was around 14 years old.

WHAT TRENDS DO YOU SEE TAKING OVER IN LATE 2025? 3D printing, personalised food and paperless kitchens - all app controlled.

DEAD OR ALIVE - WHICH THREE PEOPLE WOULD YOU LIKE TO COOK FOR THE MOST? Queen Elizabeth, Tom Kerridge, Ricky Gervais.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE COUNTRY RANGE PRODUCT AND WHY? Stock powders as they are a handy back up in the kitchen.

Country Range
Chicken Bouillon
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Shoots

Cauliflower

Wild Garlic

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Sorrel

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*ZEAL Creative Shopper Panel February 2023

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NO ORDINARY JOE

Chef Spies Ten Years at The Tolly

Joe Buckley impressively realised his childhood dream to own a pub by the time he was 30, three years ahead of schedule and is set to celebrate a decade as Chef/Proprietor of the beautiful Tollemache Arms at Harrington in 2025. Based in Northamptonshire, the Tollemache Arms dates back to the 17th century and with its thatched roof and original features, it can't help but exude that warm and welcoming, quintessential British pub character.

"I wasn't from a family of chefs so Jamie and Gordon have to take a lot of the credit for my interest in cookery," says Joe. "I took my professional cookery qualifications at college, and then built up my experience with stages at Royal Hospital Road, Sat Bains, Lace Market Hotel and various other hotels, restaurants and pubs."

While focused on having his own pub, Joe also had a desire to expand his horizons and see the world. "I had taken my qualifications and worked straight from school so before really settling down to develop my career, I went travelling for 18 months. I probably needed a bit of a break, but I also saw the trip as an opportunity to grow as a person and as a chef. I travelled extensively in Asia, Australia, New Zealand and South America."

On arriving back in Britain at the age of 21, Joe moved back into the pub sector before being head-hunted to lead a local gourmand pub. "I realised I was a bit of an old school chef and maybe a bit loud and abrupt at times. This just doesn't translate to front-of-house, so it was a period of self-development and sanding out the rough edges. I was also lucky to meet my now business partner, who has been a great mentor and friend. Together, we decided to go it alone and took on the 'Tolly' in 2014."

"Three other pubs joined our portfolio before Covid threw a big spanner in the works. At



the time, we were overdrawn with no money, we had 120 staff and a negative culture across the business. It gave us a shot in the arm, pushed us all to be creative, and gave us the opportunity to reset the business and re-draw our vision."

The food at the Tollemache Arms is refined, classic pub food but with global influences and all of the chefs have an input on dishes and the menu. "Pre-pandemic we probably had 35 mains on the menu, now we have 8. Less can be so much more, especially when you can focus on the best in-season local produce. We have a brilliant bunch of suppliers all within 20 miles, which helps set our menus apart. The Country Range brand is great for seasonings, dried herbs and other store cupboard essentials."

With the business back on a positive footing, Joe is on an expansion drive with the aim of having a new site open by spring 2025.



**Above Left to Right:
The Tollemache Arms.
Joe Buckley and Flo Pearce.**

"The food at the Tollemache Arms is refined, classic pub food but with global influences and all of the chefs have an input on dishes and the menu."



EXPLORE ASIA TONIGHT



EAT THE SEASON



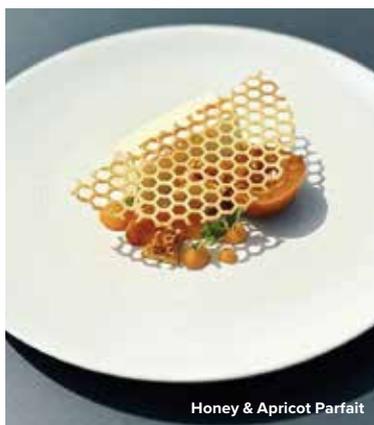
It is believed apricots have their origins in Asia and spread across the continent via the Great Silk Road before arriving in Europe. Apricots are now grown across the world and provide an

impressive array of vitamins, fibre, antioxidants and flavonoids. The UK and Ireland apricot season runs from May to September offering chefs a fantastically fresh and fragrant fruit for an array of summer dishes.

This month's seasonal inspiration comes from Head Chef Charlie Whitton. Based at The Swan Restaurant that is run by the I'll Be Mother Group and set within the stunning Chapel Down vineyard near Kent, Charlie is passionate about showcasing the very best local, seasonal produce and is lucky enough to have an apricot tree within the estate. With 80 covers, a chef's table, function space and terrace dining, Charlie has a decade of experience working in professional kitchens with time spent at the Wheatsheaf at Bough Beech under mentor David Fuller critical to his development.

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

Apricot seeds or kernels can be poisonous if eaten raw, but boiling, roasting or baking reduces the toxin levels making them safe to eat. A great ingredient for jams, cakes, marzipan and even liqueurs, I mix the grated apricot kernels with egg whites, sugar and ground almonds to make amaretti-like biscuits. These are great for functions, petits fours and to accompany hot drinks.



Honey & Apricot Parfait

1/ HONEY & APRICOT PARFAIT

A dazzlingly delicious dessert, I use a locally sourced honey and apricots to create the perfect parfait and serve it alongside an apricot gel, poached apricots and honeycomb.

2/ PRESERVED APRICOTS

A wonderful store cupboard ingredient to add sweetness and vibrancy to savoury dishes such as tagines and stews, we preserve our own apricots with a spice stock made of cinnamon, cloves and juniper. We will often serve this alongside vanilla ice cream with the spiced preserving liquor drizzled over the top.

3/ BARBECUED APRICOTS

Chargrilled fruit over the fire is a thing of beauty and the versatility of apricots means they can complement a wide range of barbecued meats and fish. I personally love to pair them with a nice cut of pork or lamb.

4/ APRICOTS, SMOKED YOGHURT AND BEIGNETS

I like to keep it as simple as possible by cooking the apricots down and serving with a smoked yoghurt. This can be a delicious breakfast but by adding some dainty beignets, it can also be a superlative sunshine sweet.

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SECTOR INSIGHTS INTERVIEW

Amanda Pettingill, chair at The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO)



Last year, Amanda Pettingill took the helm of TUCO as national chair, bringing a wealth of experience in the catering industry with her. After joining the University of Nottingham as

Catering, Hospitality and Conferencing Director in 2019, Amanda was promoted last year to Deputy Director of Estates and Facilities, extending her responsibilities to cover university housing and the business systems, support and performance teams. We caught up with Amanda to learn more about her plans and thoughts on the education catering sector.

CAN YOU TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH TUCO?

My experience at the University of Nottingham provides a practical, on-the-ground understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by university caterers. It allows me to bring real world insights into my work with TUCO, helping to shape industry standards, advocate for best practices and support the development of the university catering sector. This synergy ensures that I am well-equipped to represent and support the interests of TUCO members, while also staying grounded in the operational realities that our sector faces.

AS THE NEW CHAIR, WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR TUCO?

Our key strategic goals include driving savings and efficiency through procurement, creating opportunities for collaboration and sharing of best practice and delivering professional development activities for members. It is paramount to continue to engage with our membership and partners, and I am keen to raise the profile of hospitality as an excellent career opportunity for young people. I will continue to support the TUCO Foundation, which was set up last year to provide subsidised training via the TUCO Academy, provide donations to charities, hold competition events and a winter conference.



HOW CAN UNIVERSITY CATERERS ACCOMMODATE THE CHANGING NEEDS OF STUDENTS, ENCOURAGE FOOTFALL AND INCREASE REVENUE?

I'm sure most colleagues will have tried the obvious, but here are a few ideas:

- Collaborate with campus events and initiatives.
- Engage with small businesses and local vendors when it comes to offerings that are not necessarily your specialism.
- Utilisation of core marketing channels and socials so you can communicate with students in forms they engage with.
- Collaborate with student organisations such as student unions – we are here to enhance the student experience.
- Think about the environments, people dwell longer in areas where they are comfortable.
- Ask the students what is important to them, they will let you know if they want convenience, grazing opportunities, community events.
- Ensure you are engaging with technology, ordering systems, monitoring what is happening in the high street.
- Go on study tours and food development workshops with TUCO Academy.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO ATTRACT MORE YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY?

What would help is if people working in hospitality could speak at schools and colleges about career pathways and act as a role model and mentor. We need to demonstrate the positive work environment which includes supporting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). We need to start changing the message by engaging with educational providers earlier and collaborate showing the value we add to communities.

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A BIT ON THE SIDE

Why cafés are adding side hustles to the menu

Adding features such as a small grocery shop, meal delivery service or workshops are just a few initiatives café owners are offering to encourage customers to visit more frequently and stay longer. From art classes and book clubs to live music events, the café is emerging as an integrated community hub.



The Cabinet Rooms in Winchester, named as one of the UK's most groundbreaking coffee shops in the Brita Grounds of Innovation Awards, has always been more than just a café since it opened in 2017. It offers free and exclusive use of its event space to locals who run free events for the benefit of the community. The Menopause Café, part of an international initiative, is one such event held at the café and is facilitated by a local menopause coach. Gary Whiter, co-owner says, "We host our own cultural events such as the Secret Underground Film Society where we pick and show films in our downstairs space where people can enjoy a glass of wine and a bag of popcorn."

The Cabinet Rooms runs a comprehensive annual programme of events including book groups, networking, tasting events and festivals. It also organises the city's annual cocktail festival, as well as supporting city-wide events such as Hampshire Pride. "Our objective was always to become a community hub," Gary says. "Our events don't contribute significantly to our bottom line. The benefit is being able to carry out our mission to provide a safe and inclusive space for our community."

Since it opened, the aim for GIRO café, in Surrey's Esher high street was to be a destination café for cyclists and a community hub. "We decided on this location as it is on the main route for cyclists from West London to the Surrey Hills," says owner Jordan Addison. Last year, the team opened a bike repair shop in the high street. Jordan says, "Not many people knew we offered a bike repair service or that we sold bikes, so this has added a significant part to the business. For us it's about brand awareness and brand values. If we can communicate these in a sincere way it raises our profile, business opportunities and in turn footfall into the café." In addition, they organise cycle rides for beginners and hold a Bikes and Beers night every Thursday comprising a short gravel or road cycle starting and finishing at the café.

Another popular initiative is to hold repair "cafés", where customers can take toys, lamps, damaged clothing and textiles to be fixed by skilled volunteers for an optional donation while enjoying a bite to eat and a hot drink. The repair session is held at a regular time every month and visitors sit alongside repairers while they undertake the work so that practical skills are passed on.

With so many different initiatives launching in cafés around the country, why not look at your premises with a fresh pair of eyes and discover new ways to use the space that compliment your existing business?

Visit www.repaircafe.org to learn more.

"It's about brand awareness and brand values. If we can communicate these in a sincere way it raises our profile, business opportunities and in turn footfall into the café."

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How will you serve yours?

Event Catering

BOLD FLAVOURS AND INDULGENT STREET EATS

The events season is upon us once again, bringing with it a fresh round of weddings, summer parties, festivals, and of course, the classic barbecue. For caterers, this is a prime opportunity to showcase creativity, stand out from the competition, and deliver memorable experiences. Yet with high volume events comes a challenge: how to maximise profits, minimise waste, and accommodate diverse dietary requirements without compromising on flavour – all while delivering an unforgettable, unique experience. This month, we take a closer look at how event caterers can elevate operations without compromising their business models.





BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR PROFIT AND VERSATILITY

A well-stocked store cupboard can be the culinary equivalent of a secret weapon. Core ingredients such as dried pasta, rice, pulses, tinned tomatoes, stocks, flour, and a variety of herbs and spices can form the backbone of a multitude of dishes. Their long shelf life allows you to buy in bulk and reduce the number of deliveries, ultimately cutting costs and streamlining operations. Moreover, these staples can be easily adapted to suit different diets, ensuring you never run out of versatile menu options.

For instance, take lentils: they are inexpensive, packed with protein, and can form the base of anything from mini shepherd's pies to fragrant curry flavoured fillings for pasties, or vegan pâtés. "The key is to use core staples as a base while highlighting fresh, seasonal ingredients to maintain quality and variety. It's all about striking a balance between creativity, sustainability, and profit potential," says Jimmy Garcia, owner of Jimmy Garcia's Catering.



TIME-SAVING TIPS AND STRATEGIES

- Batch cook dishes that can be reheated and finished on the day of the event.
- Adopt a mise en place strategy, ensuring all the peeling, chopping, marinating and portioning is done ahead of time.
- Consider partially cooking certain items to cut down on final cooking times without sacrificing quality.
- Pre-portion delicate garnishes to add a professional finish without the last-minute scramble.

"We add what we call a '2.0 element' to our dishes. It's a secondary, complementary snack, that utilises any leftover or trim ingredients. It's a creative way to minimise waste while also enhancing the dining experience. For instance, when we serve a beef fillet as the main dish, the trimmings are used to prepare a small, beautifully seasoned steak tartare, presented separately as a prelude or small bite. Similarly, our whole lobster dish celebrates the tail as the centerpiece but comes with a playful twist; a lobster donut made from claw meat, paired with a bisque dipping sauce made from the shells."

FLEXIBLE DISHES FOR DIVERSE DIETS

One of the biggest challenges (and opportunities) for modern caterers is addressing a wide range of dietary requirements – from vegan and vegetarian to gluten-free, nut-free, or dairy-free. Building a portfolio of customisable dishes helps cater for a broad spectrum of requests while streamlining the cooking process. For example, a Mediterranean-inspired quinoa salad cone can easily transform into a vegan dish with roasted vegetables, fresh herbs, and a zingy vinaigrette. The same dish when topped with grilled chicken or seafood, can become a heartier option for meat-eating guests.

FOOD TRENDS FOR EVENT CATERING

Plant-based cuisine remains high on the agenda in hospitality - even guests who aren't strictly vegan appreciate lighter, more sustainable menu choices, and many like to experiment with new flavours. Incorporate global influences such as Middle Eastern spice blends or Southeast Asian herbs to set your dishes apart.

Nostalgia is another big theme this year, with classic comfort foods seeing a revival – but with a modern twist. Think gourmet versions of favourites like fish and chips, bangers and mash, or sticky toffee pudding served in miniature pots for a playful, yet elegant finish. "Refined comfort food is becoming a major trend," says Jimmy. "More clients are requesting dishes that blend indulgence with creativity. From luxurious Caviar and Crisp trolleys to elevated takes on nostalgic favourites like our Ex-Dairy Big Mac Steak Tartare, comfort food is being reinvented with a touch of sophistication. Even classics like the traditional ice cream sundae are getting a modern makeover for 2025, offering a mix of familiarity and excitement."

Interactive food stations are also on the rise, tapping into guests' desire for entertainment and personalisation. A build-your-own poké bar, gourmet burger stand, or customisable dessert station can enliven even the most traditional events. "Presentation has become as important as flavour, with caterers exploring bold and interactive serving methods. From espuma guns spraying foam onto wrists, to canapés suspended from trees or even graffitiing edible bricks, the boundaries of catering are being pushed to create unforgettable moments," notes Jimmy.

When it comes to serving drinks, consider how to leverage the low-and-no alcohol trend – from unique mocktails with event-related names, or a dedicated mocktail bar – alcohol free drinks shouldn't mean sacrificing flavour or creativity.

GET CREATIVE WITH PRESENTATION AND SERVICE

Make your service style as imaginative as your dishes. Instead of serving everything in conventional chafing dishes, consider decorative platters, rustic wooden boards or mini cast-iron pans. If you need to create a visual impact, think about natural tables - where food is creatively presented on a wipeable surface amongst bunches of fresh herbs, flowers and branches – akin to an artist creating a painting. For outdoor events like festivals or barbecues, try incorporating live cooking stations where guests can watch chefs preparing tacos, stir-fries, or waffles to order. This not only engages guests but also showcases the freshness and quality of your ingredients.

In venues where guests are seated, sharing platters or family-style service is an option which encourages interaction among guests. Vibrant trays of roasted vegetables, grains, and proteins can be placed at the centre of the table for everyone to dig in, adding a sociable, relaxed vibe.

Whether it's a laid-back barbecue, a boho-chic festival feast, or the most elegant summer wedding, there's no reason why efficiency and creativity can't go hand in hand. With thoughtful planning and adaptable recipes, you'll be able to delight clients, reduce waste, and keep your margins healthy – the recipe for a truly successful events season.



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COCONUT RICE PUDDING

with Chinese five spice apple

With his dad a landlord of a pub in the Scholes area of Leeds, Oli Mischenko-Maiden's journey as a chef began at the age of 16 working in the pub kitchen. After passing his qualifications at college, he worked in a variety of local eateries, pubs, restaurant chains and fine dining establishments such as Gordon's Ramsay's one Michelin star Maze restaurant.

Deciding he needed better work life balance to enable him to see more of his family, Oli moved into the nursery catering sector at the age of 30. Immediately enjoying the responsibility, the opportunities to be creative and of course the hours, Oli became Executive Chef at 22 Street Lane Nursery in 2022 – a bespoke high-end nursery in Leeds.

Catering for just under 100 kids every day, Oli is passionate about making as much from scratch as possible including biscuits, cereal bars, cakes, bread, pies and jams. The nursery also has its own allotment, which Oli utilises for a host of seasonal produce throughout the year. "It was actually a tough last year with the weather, but the allotment still managed to provide plenty of seasonal fresh ingredients for the kitchen and the kids," says Oli. "It's brilliant for me as a chef, but also great to get the kids involved in the process of growing."

"Country Range is a great brand offering fantastic quality. The Country Range Solid Pack Apples are a dream for chefs as they have a wonderful flavour and can be used in so many different ways. Apple turnovers, crumbles, pies, jams, sauces, stewed with some Chinese five spice and served with yoghurt or ice cream – the list could go on. Here is a recipe for one of my favourite ways to use it."

For more information visit -
www.22streetlanenursery.co.uk



OLI MISCHENKO-MAIDEN

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cans Country Range Coconut Milk
- 100g Country Range Desiccated Coconut
- 150g Country Range Round Grain Rice
- 1 can Country Range Solid Pack Apples
- 10ml Maple & Agave Syrup
- 2 Country Range Star Anise
- 5g Country Range Chinese Five Spice
- 150g golden caster sugar
- 45g butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract



METHOD

1. Start by washing your rice in warm water.
2. In a large pan, melt the butter until sizzling and toast your rice for 2/3 minutes until it starts to brown a little.
3. Add your vanilla essence, sugar and coconut milk. Bring everything to a simmer on a high heat then turn it down and cover and cook for 40 minutes.
4. Lightly toast the coconut flakes in the oven until brown, at 180° c for 5-6 minutes making sure you move them around.
5. Marinate the apples in Chinese five spice, maple syrup and star anise. Cook in the oven for around 15 minutes until soft and nicely glazed.
6. Serve hot with the apples glazed on top and toasted coconut.

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Introducing Alpen's great **new pack design and even tastier recipe!** Together with its delicious crunchy roasted nuts and creamy rolled oats, Alpen now has a whopping **30% more juicy raisins!** And with a **big nationwide marketing campaign** launching in March, demand for the nation's favourite muesli will be greater than ever, **so stock up today!**

- Two delicious variants – Original and No Added Sugar
- Tasty & nutritious**
- Available in a variety of pack sizes offering convenience and value
- 100% recyclable packaging



100% Natural
Ingredients



Wholegrain



High in Fibre



Portion Packs – 30 x 45g

Convenient individual servings – perfect for portion control and lower volume service



Bulk Packs – 6 x 950g

Perfect for high volume service



**BIG MARKETING CAMPAIGN
INCLUDING NATIONAL TV
FROM MARCH 2025!**



For more information about our
delicious foodservice range visit
www.weetabixfoodservice.co.uk



*Nielsen 52 w/e 05.10.24 – Total Coverage.

**Protein contributes to the maintenance of normal bones as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Nurturing talent in the Care Sector

To nurture talent and fight attrition, an increasing number of care sector caterers are introducing their own chef training programmes, helping chefs develop their careers and learn new skills. Aria Care is one such company and has set up a chef academy working with Lifetime Training, its training supplier partner. James Clear, Hospitality Director at Aria Care, explains, “This enables us to upskill current chefs or future budding chefs to progress through the academy to achieve an NVQ Level 2 or 3. The academy helps with staff retention as it has enabled us to move our recently qualified chefs into senior roles. It also helps chefs to grow their confidence to try new dishes and techniques which benefit our residents.”

The course includes external practical master classes with Lifetime Training specialising in key areas such as butchery, desserts and pastries, fish as well as vegetarian and vegan dishes. Alongside the masterclasses, the chefs work in their current care home kitchen and on their course (practical and theory), supported by their head chef and Lifetime Training designated chef trainers. The training programme usually lasts 12 months for Levels 2 and 3.

“We have worked hard to ensure the course is more accessible and affordable by utilising available technology.”

Care UK also works with Lifetime Training delivering courses for chefs to achieve Levels 2, 3 and 4. Jon Bicknell, Food & Hotel Services Director at Care UK, says, “Setting up tailored courses for specific needs means improved delivery of our menus, better colleague management, retention and progression. It encourages staff to stay as they see there is a real chance to move up the career ladder. Giving the best training to our colleagues means quality food coming out of kitchens which means happy and healthy residents.”

The training has developed from purely online to a mix of online and in person masterclasses and meetings. The Level 4 management course is suitable for head chefs who want to gain a management qualification and includes projects that might benefit the business. Jon says, “One head chef’s project showed how

a company could save money by using an electronic HACCP system.”

The National Association of Care Catering (NACC) in partnership with the Hospital Caterers’ Association (HCA) is introducing a new qualification for chefs in healthcare, approved by Ofqual, later in the year. Neel Radia, chair of the NACC, says, “This qualification is designed to upskill our chefs across health and social care, giving them the practical knowledge of the wider spectrum of dietary needs they need to cater for those they serve. The course was originally launched eight years ago by the NACC and HCA, but the take up from colleges was not great, so we have reviewed the delivery to make it more accessible for all.”

Iain Robertson, chair of the HCA, adds, “The qualification will give our chefs an added level of knowledge so they can safely and confidently feed our patients and residents who can present a broad and complex range of specific dietary needs. We have worked hard to ensure the course is more accessible and affordable by utilising available technology, enabling as many caterers as possible working in health and social care to upskill.”

For more information:
www.ariacare.co.uk
<https://www.careuk.com/>
<https://www.thenacc.co.uk/>
<https://www.hospitalcaterers.org/>



ELEVATING EASTER WITH *Signature Solutions*

This month, we're elated to launch our 28-strong Signature collection to help chefs go all-out to elevate Easter and celebrate spring.

Providing the tools and ingredients to help chefs tempt guests while keeping costs at a minimum, the Signature range includes dazzlingly delicious desserts and ice creams, spectacular spud solutions, cheese excellence, sensational sourdough-style dough balls, stunning sauces, terrific teas and pristine prawns.

With many kitchens short on staff, our development chef has also been busy crafting an array of innovative Signature dishes to save you time and ensure your menus have star quality.

Prizeworthy Potatoes

Potatoes can often steal the show, and our ten-strong Signature spud selection is as unconquerable when it comes to taste and visual appearance as it is for convenience. Double crunch and triple cooked fries, wonderful wedges and delectable Dauphinoise, plus our award-winning Sidewinders® and Chef's Chunky Fries, provide a plethora of potato solutions.

Whilst roast dinners are flying out this Easter, why not try something different, like this beef cobbler topped with Signature by Country Range Duck Fat Roast Potatoes?

BEEF STEW COBBLER

**CHEESE AND
CARAMELISED
ONION TARTS**



EXTRA MATURE CHEDDAR

AGED TO PERFECTION

Developed for foodservice, our new extra mature cheddar is a naturally crumbly cheese, with a smooth taste followed by a lingering rich and creamy after taste. Its versatility makes it equally perfect for a ploughman's platter or in a high-quality cheese and caramelised onion tart.

**New Signature by Country Range
Extra Mature Cheddar 8 x 2.5kg**

STARTLING SEAFOOD

Truly exquisite prawns with astonishing versatility, our Signature Premium North Atlantic 10% Glaze Prawns can be used in a myriad of starters, snacks and mains. So, if you're prawn to be wild in the kitchen, how about these Vietnamese prawn rolls?



**VIETNAMESE
PRAWN ROLLS**

CHOCOLATE CAKE

Signature Sweets
and Treats

Offering that homemade touch without mounting labour costs, our Signature selection of ready prepared desserts includes award-winning Chocolate & Marmalade Marble Cake and Salted Caramel & Chocolate Tart, plus our new triple layered, hand finished cake trio.

New Signature by Country Range Chocolate Cake
1 x 16 Pre-portioned

New Signature by Country Range Victoria Sponge
1 x 16 Pre-portioned

New Signature by Country Range Carrot Cake
1 x 16 Pre-portioned

For an ice cream that can seamlessly stand alongside these stunners and more, our Signature ice cream foursome is made on a regenerative family farm with at least 50% real dairy content and 1p from every tub sold is donated to the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation.

VICTORIA
SPONGECARROT
CAKEA 'PIZZA'
THE ACTION

Our new rustic 12" Neapolitan sauced pizza bases can take your pizza menu to a premium level, without the need for a pizza chef. The bases are part baked and can be cooked straight from the freezer, saving time and reducing waste in your kitchen. You don't need a special pizza oven either, as these versatile bases can be cooked in all oven types.

New Signature by Country Range Neapolitan Sauced Pizza Bases 1 x 10



PIZZA

Sweet & Sour
Doughballs

Another time and labour-saving ingredient, our new Signature doughballs provide the perfect canvas for both savoury and sweet delights. The dough can be cooked from thaw with a single prove and can last all day in proving trays.

For a sweet option try Doughnuts with Rhubarb Jam & Custard Dipping Sauce, and for a savoury option, don't miss our recipe for Garlic, Chive and Cheese Filled Doughballs.

New Signature by Country Range Sourdough Style Doughball 210g 1 x 60

New Signature by Country Range Sourdough Style Doughball 270g 1 x 40

RHUBARB CUSTARD
DOUGHNUTS

* WIN!

To celebrate the launch of our Signature Portfolio, we're challenging you to experiment and get creative this April. Using at least one product from the new range, we want you to create a Signature solution that could be a seasonal sensation.

Send your best recipe and creations to competitions@stiritup.co.uk to be in with a chance of winning an Ooni Pizza Oven Bundle worth over £400. The winner will be selected by our Country Range Development Chef Paul Dickson and announced on our Instagram and website, as well as featuring in a future edition of Stir it up magazine.

SCAN ME



SWITCH IT UP WITH

NEW

FRENZY FRIES



Dare to dish up a fresh take on fries with the authentic flavour and creative cut of Frenzy Fries

Boldly Reimagine the Classic Fry

Lamb Weston 

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY

A Spotlight on Seafood

Seafish are the public body supporting the seafood industry in the UK. Working with the seafood supply chain, from producers to sellers, the team champions a number of causes from research and insights to training and trade support. We caught up with their team to discuss how operators can introduce more sustainable seafood to their menus.



WHAT DOES 'SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD' MEAN AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

For seafood, responsible sourcing from well-managed capture fisheries and aquaculture farms involves the industry's adherence to ethical operating standards, compliance, and traceability. However, sustainable production extends beyond compliance, encompassing broader economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

HOW IMPORTANT IS TRANSPARENCY AND TRACEABILITY IN THE SEAFOOD SUPPLY CHAIN?

Environmental responsibility is a key area for the seafood industry in the 21st century. The UK is a world leader in responsible practice, and fishermen – and the wider seafood supply chain – have been working with conservation organisations and statutory agencies for some years to ensure a sustainable future for our seas.

To lessen the demand on more traditional types of seafood, Seafish always actively encourages consumers to be more adventurous and try a wider range of seafood such as mussels, sardines, squid and hake – an approach that is supported by the wider seafood industry – and a great standpoint that the foodservice sector can champion to the consumer.

HOW CAN CHEFS AND OPERATORS EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE THE VALUE OF SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD TO CUSTOMERS?

For wild caught species, the price of many fish and shellfish can at times fluctuate due to supply, demand, and seasonality – the

vagaries of the weather can also often influence whether fishing boats are able to fish and supply fish to markets. However, this quite unique situation – when compared to many other year-round available foods – can be used to advantage by restaurant operators; focusing on and promoting the seasonal aspects of the bounty of the seas.

A daily 'Catch of the Day' specials board can be a fantastic way to promote fish and shellfish to customers and is an excellent opportunity to utilise the best and freshest products each day, without the restrictions of a permanent printed menu.

Consumers increasingly expect more information regarding the provenance of the fish and shellfish they are served when dining out of home. The need for menu transparency is clearly growing and today's restaurant chef has a great opportunity to tell customers an exciting story about how the fish and shellfish they are eating has been sourced, in many cases even informing diners of the name of the boat their fish was caught from – from net to plate; linking fishermen to diners, which can all add to the enjoyment when eating seafood.

In addition to information about the provenance of menu items, some simple written explanations on a menu or point of sale materials, comparing and contrasting tastes and textures of different seafood, can again contribute to persuading customers to choose one of the offered seafood options.

For more information, training materials and support, visit www.seafish.org



Signature
by Country Range

Elevate YOUR MENU



Chocolate &
Marmalade
Marble Cake



Potato
Sidewinders®



Chocolate
Dairy Ice
Cream

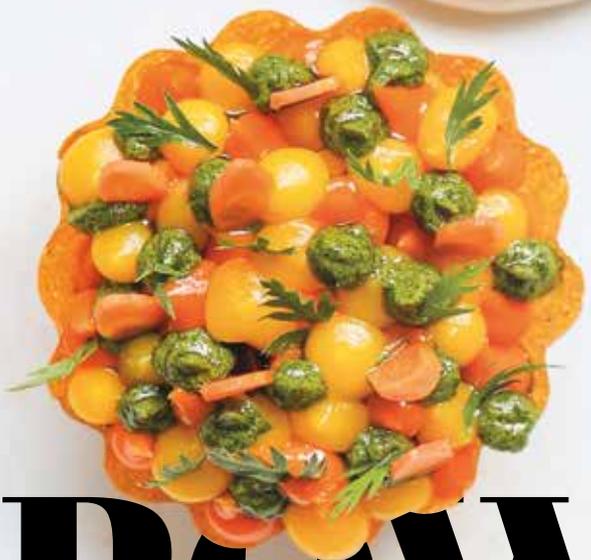


Chef's
Chunky Fries



Find your local Country Range wholesaler and recipe
inspiration at www.countryrange.co.uk

*Rhubarb Hospitality Collection's
Vegan Carrot Tart*



The POWER of Provenance

as we increasingly focus on sustainability and environmental factors, understanding where our food comes from is no longer a trend topic, it is part of how the vast majority of us think about food and form opinions regarding the quality of an operator or chef. To keep the provenance movement progressing, we invited a panel of chefs to tell us about the fresh and exciting sustainable dishes they enjoy cooking, and how they have been embedding seasonality into their kitchen's DNA.



DANE SHELTON

Head Development Chef, Rhubarb Hospitality Collection

Chickpeas are a fantastic staple cupboard ingredient to maximise profit and minimise waste. They're incredibly versatile and can be used in a variety of dishes, such as hearty vegetarian curries, creamy hummus, or vibrant, healthy salads, making them perfect for starters or sides.

My vegan carrot tart is a standout zero-waste carrot dish. Imagine transforming the humble carrot into a culinary masterpiece by using every part—from the vibrant tops to the delicate skins—crafted into something innovative, sustainable, and visually stunning. Zero-waste cooking and sourcing local ingredients are also leading trends, perfectly aligning with efforts to reduce carbon footprints and embrace sustainability.



GREG LAMBERT

Food Director, SIX Rooftop, Newcastle

We only cook using seasonal ingredients, so it's close to 100%. We love making handmade fresh pasta, changing the flavour of ravioli from peas & pancetta to asparagus & Isle of Wight tomatoes and then onto pumpkin and wild mushrooms.

I absolutely love fresh, seasonal raspberries. They pack so much flavour and colour. I would recommend trying them in a crisp choux bun with a pistachio creme diplomat and raspberry ripple & clotted cream ice cream.



STEVE HARRIS

Head Chef, The Albion

We take pride in the fact that 90% of our ingredients are sourced locally and are seasonal, ensuring our dishes reflect the best of what our region has to offer. For the remaining 10%, where local options aren't available or up to standard, we source the best of British ingredients, maintaining our commitment to quality and provenance.

For late spring and early summer, a Grilled Asparagus and Strawberry Salad with Goat Cheese and Balsamic would be an excellent addition to a menu.



“There are many adaptable dishes that are perfect for all year-round menus. Each of the following dishes are very versatile and provides a base for seasonal ingredients to shine, keeping the menu fresh with what’s locally available.” – STEVE HARRIS, THE ALBION



*Chanterelle
Mushroom Tart*

RISOTTO

Spring: Asparagus, peas, and mint.

Summer: Cherry tomatoes, courgette, and basil.

Autumn: Roasted pumpkin, sage, and chestnuts.

Winter: Mushrooms, truffle oil, or root vegetables.

SALADS

Spring: Baby greens with radishes, asparagus, and soft-boiled eggs.

Summer: Mixed greens with peaches, strawberries, and goat cheese.

Autumn: Spinach with roasted beets, walnuts, and blue cheese.

Winter: Kale with citrus, pomegranate seeds, and toasted nuts.

TARTS

Spring: Ricotta and asparagus with fresh herbs.

Summer: Tomato and courgette with thyme.

Autumn: Squash and caramelised onion with sage.

Winter: Mushroom and leek with gruyere.

SOUPS

Spring: Pea and mint.

Summer: Gazpacho of I.O.W tomatoes and cucumber.

Autumn: Roasted pumpkin or squash soup with cinnamon.

Winter: Lentil or root vegetable soup with crusty bread.



Asparagus Risotto



TOM CENCI

Executive Chef, Nessa and Yasmin in Soho

The menus at Nessa and Yasmin are seasonally driven and we use as much produce sourced from the UK as possible, which in turn, helps us follow the seasons. We have a spelt risotto at

Nessa which uses spelt sourced from the UK and we change up the flavour throughout the year.

Wild garlic, pumpkin, and beetroot are just a few of the ingredients that we use through the seasons. During the spring and summer months I'd recommend adding any dishes with British peas to the menu. The sweetness and texture they offer makes them so versatile. They can be used in so many different dishes.



DAVID SMITH

Head Chef, The Dipping Lugger, Ullapool

Within our eight-course tasting menu, we strive to only use seasonal produce as that's when it is at its best and all the meat and fish we use is local... shellfish only comes from the loch in

front of the restaurant.

We have a Black Isle yoghurt parfait dessert that changes throughout the year, starting with rhubarb, moving on to raspberries and then finishing with blackberries at the end of the year.

When spring comes we love making soup from the wild garlic that grows along the river and making pesto from it as well.



NINA MATSUNAGA

Chef-Owner, The Black Bull, Sedbergh

Almost all of what we use in terms of meat, vegetables and seafood is sourced from the northwest and northeast of England. I've essentially utilised my heritage and taken

the Japanese food philosophy of kaiseki, the belief that ingredients are at their tastiest, most vibrant, most flavourful, and most nutritious when they are in season.

Try getting started with a seasonal pea velouté, broad bean, pea and asparagus tartare or a nice fresh homemade pasta with spring vegetables. Asparagus is a real celebration of the seasons as you know once it's available it's finally becoming warmer, and spring is well underway in the UK.

MCDUGALL'S ORANGE PANNA COTTA WITH CARAMELISED ORANGE SEGMENTS, ORANGE AND POPPY SEED SHORTBREAD



SERVES: 10

PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES

COOKING TIME: 15 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

- 200g McDUGALL'S ORANGE JELLY CRYSTALS
- 440ml BOILING WATER
- 560g LOW FAT NATURAL YOGURT
- FOR THE GARNISH:
- 30 ORANGE SEGMENTS
- 150g GRANULATED SUGAR
- 30ml ORANGE JUICE

FOR THE SHORTBREAD:

- 100g BUTTER
- 150g McDUGALL'S PLAIN FLOUR
- 50g CASTOR SUGAR
- ZEST OF 1 ORANGE
- 20g POPPY SEEDS
- 30g CASTOR SUGAR (for dusting)

METHOD

FOR THE PANNA COTTA:

1. Dissolve the McDougall's Jelly crystals in the boiling water and allow to cool slightly.
2. Mix through the yogurt and pour into 10 suitable moulds, then place in the fridge until set.
3. Heat the sugar in a pan and cook to a caramel stage. Allow to cool slightly, add the orange juice, then place in the orange segments. Leave to one side.

FOR THE SHORTBREAD:

1. Rub together all the ingredients until an even dough is formed.
2. Roll out the shortbread, cut into rounds and bake at 165°C for approximately 15 minutes or until they just begin to colour.
3. Remove from the oven, dust with castor sugar and cool.

TO SERVE:

Carefully remove each panna cotta from the mould and place on a plate with 3 orange segments and two pieces of shortbread.

TOP TIPS:

For a more traditional panna cotta, replace the yogurt with double cream. Dust the shortbread with castor sugar as soon as it comes out of the oven!



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FREE**



**UK's fastest
growing
flavoured
water brand***

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samples here



*Source: The Zenith Global Report 2023 for 'Water Plus'.

LET'S TALK TIKTOK

With over 16 years' experience working with social media platforms, Jax Buckland is no stranger to executing campaigns for a broad range of consumer brands. Currently working for Wild Card PR as their Senior Social Media Account Director, we asked Jax for her take on TikTok and how UK hospitality businesses can leverage the platform's unique format to engage and attract diners.



WHY SHOULD HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES CONSIDER JOINING TIKTOK?

TikTok offers a great opportunity for businesses to increase brand awareness, get in front of potential new customers and tell their story in a fun and personal way.

HOW SHOULD A BUSINESS GET STARTED WITH LIMITED TIME AND RESOURCES?

TikTok loves content that is shared in separate parts so filming a bank of footage that can be cut down into several posts is a great way to start.

WHAT TYPES OF CONTENT TYPICALLY PERFORM BEST?

Recipe videos remain a consistent top-performer when it comes to food content but a current trend generating great results is chef tips. This could be how to produce restaurant standard food at home, how to prepare large volumes of poached eggs

at once or sharing experiments and the science of cooking.

HOW FREQUENTLY SHOULD BUSINESSES POST?

Quality and quantity should be considered when posting with equal measures. Best practice shows that a minimum of two posts per week is favoured by the TikTok algorithm.

COULD YOU SHARE ANY TIPS?

Get into the subject of the video straight away. You have less than 3 seconds to grab someone's attention as they are scrolling through a busy newsfeed.

WHAT ROLE DO TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND POPULAR MUSIC PLAY?

Trending music especially should be explored as the algorithm really favours users being served the same sound they have engaged with previously, especially on a same or similar subject.

HOW CAN BUSINESSES MEASURE THEIR SUCCESS AND ROI?

In app, the main metrics to analyse are reach, likes, comments, shares and saves. Reach is a form of passive engagement where users consume your content but don't take action - this should be measured as brand awareness. Everything else is active engagement with saves being a good indicator of users with intention - to make a purchase, visit a restaurant or recreate a recipe. Outside of the app, success can be measured through increased bookings, content creators visiting and posting about your business or media picking up and using one of your posts.

“You have less than 3 seconds to grab someone's attention as they are scrolling through a busy newsfeed.”

HOW CAN HOSPITALITY OPERATORS PROMOTE THEIR BUSINESS IN A NATURAL WAY?

One of the most used forms of content creation in hospitality at the moment (and recommended by TikTok) is a voiceover tour explaining your offering. Visually, the edit should show the eyeview of a customer walking into the venue, looking around at the furnishings, drinks going down on the table and cutlery digging into the food. This should be accompanied by a voiceover describing everything shown on screen.

Rising Star

SUSANA VILLASUSO

CHEF AND RECIPE DEVELOPER FROM MEXICO

Born, raised and trained in Mexico, chef Susana Villasuso worked throughout the catering sector before travelling over to the UK in 2014. Working in restaurants across the capital, as well as being a consultant and recipe developer, Susana is one of a growing number of chefs passionate about showcasing the real authentic Mexico. We chatted following the launch of her first book, *Sobremesa* – a must-have Mexican masterpiece.

How did you end up in London?

It's a long story but I met my now husband, who is English, while studying English prior to culinary school in London. Following a long-distance relationship, I decided to head back over in 2009. After getting married and having children, working in a professional kitchen became a bit more difficult so I started consulting and began recipe developing. I've been doing that for nearly ten years now. I have worked with online and printed media publications, and I have worked with other Mexican chefs in the UK. It may be creating a special menu, a dish for Cinco de Mayo or a seasonal recipe.

What do you miss most and what would you like to see more of?

First of all, corn tortillas. Many people may not have tried real corn tortillas as they are hard to find over here and wheat tortillas rule, but they are so delicious and central to Mexican food. It's a no brainer for me and they should be available everywhere for everyone to enjoy.

I would like more farmers to see the potential in growing poblanos or tomatillos. They are key ingredients in Mexican food and canned versions just aren't the same. I grow them myself and I think there are a few farms who grow them on a smallish scale. I know South Devon Chilli Farm grow them and we're starting to see them in restaurants,



but it would be great if they were more widely available for people cooking Mexican food, whether that's in a professional kitchen or at home.

Tell me about your new and first book *Sobremesa*

The book is filled with recipes I have picked up in my family and professional life. They're very personal, easy to make at home and showcase the authentic Mexico. You don't need millions of different ingredients so hopefully it will make it accessible for people to discover different areas and recipes from Mexico's rich food heritage.

What are your next goals?

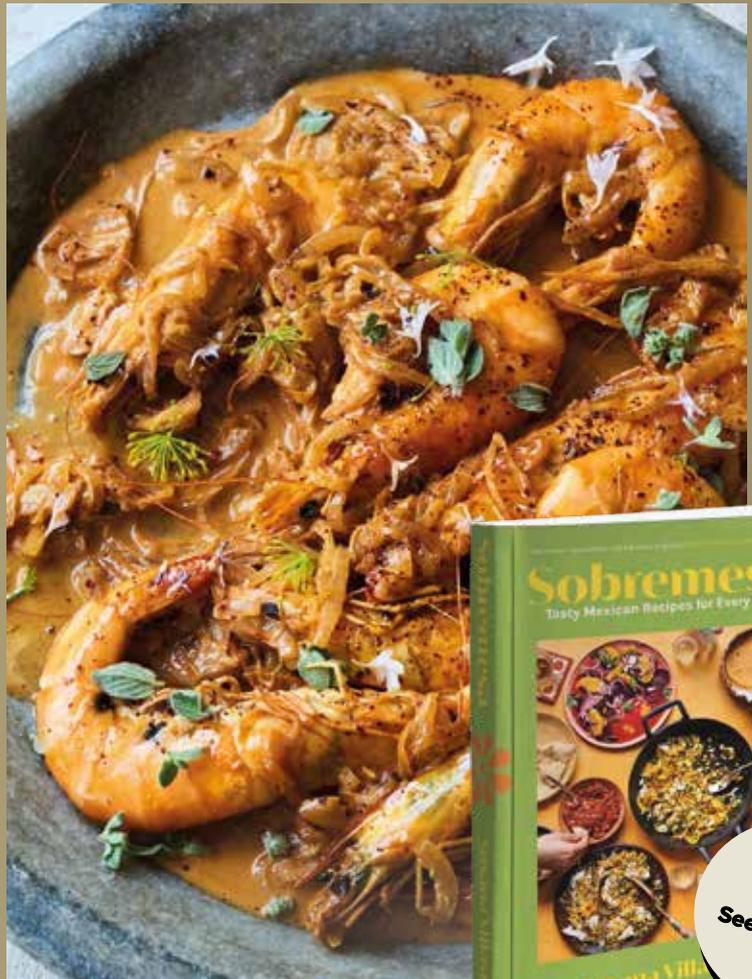
Good question. In addition to the recipe development and consulting, at the moment I am working with a company that sells Mexican products so I am delving into product development, which is very exciting. I want to see more real Mexican products on the shelves across the UK and am very passionate about showcasing the authentic Mexico. The quality and choice on offer at the moment in the UK leaves me feeling very sad.

How do you switch off and relax?

I love going to markets. When I feel overwhelmed or a bit flat, markets inspire and lift me.

What are your three tips for success in a professional kitchen?

1. Sharp knives and clean as you go – that's a good starting point.
2. There is more than one way to be a chef. Don't just stay in one lane as there is a world of opportunities.
3. Follow your passions and persevere. It won't always be easy so you have to stay focused on your goals.



WIN
See page 42

Prawns with Miso and Mezcal



SERVES 3-4

COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

- 2-3 tbsp rapeseed oil
- 2 white onions, thinly sliced
- 12 raw king prawns, shell on
- 1 tsp ground guajillo, plus extra to serve
- 2 tsp white miso
- 1 shot of mezcal
- 1 tbsp butter
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 3 tbsp crème fraîche
- Handful of fresh chervil or oregano leaves
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Corn tortillas, to serve

METHOD

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large frying pan, add the sliced onions and fry over a medium heat for 6-7 minutes until translucent. Remove from the pan and place them in a bowl.
2. Add a bit more rapeseed oil to your pan; when hot add the king prawns, guajillo and white miso paste and stir to make sure they get well coated with the spice and miso. Sauté for a few minutes until the prawns get a nice pink colour on both sides.
3. Return the cooked onions to the pan, then increase the heat to high, carefully pour in the mezcal and flambé the prawns to let the alcohol evaporate on its own.
4. Add the butter and let it melt. Squeeze in the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper, then stir in the crème fraîche and cook for a couple more minutes.

5. Remove the prawns from the heat and sprinkle with a little extra guajillo and the chervil or oregano. Serve with warm corn tortillas, ready to make tacos.

If you like prawns as much as I do this is a great way to serve them at home. The key is in the sauce, made with ground guajillo chilli and white miso. Butter gets melted into the prawns, mezcal brings a fresh and lightly smoky taste and a bit of crème fraîche brings it all beautifully together. Everything about this recipe is enjoyable and a feast to the eyes. I recommend using whole king prawns, the heads and shells just help to carry more flavour. Serve these prawns as tacos in corn tortillas or try my recipe for Chipotle and Roasted Sweet Potato Tortillas.

TREAT YOUR
GUESTS TO THE
NATION'S favourite coffee*



*Nescafé is the No.1 Coffee Brand. Source: Circana, All Outlets, Hot Coffee, volume sales for 52w/e 2nd December 2023. @Reg. Trademark of Société des Produits Nestlé S.A.

NESCAFÉ



RAISE THE BAR

Here's something I love to make in the warmer months of the year - ice cream versions of popular chocolate bars! They add some fun and theatre to your menu whilst using low cost ingredients. Here, I've used Signature by Country Range Salted Caramel Dairy Ice Cream to make an ice cream version of the popular peanut and caramel chocolate bar (I'm sure you know which one I mean!).

Making ends meet



ICE CREAM DREAMS

As we head towards summer, ice cream moves up the ranks to being one of the star attractions on the menu. But when you get to the bottom of the tub, what do you do with the last bits that won't make a perfect scoop? Paul Dickson believes that you can use up every last scraping, saving money and preventing waste.

Ice cream is probably something that we waste in the kitchen without even thinking about it. No kitchen wants the big tubs taking up space in the freezer when you've already re-stocked with a nice fresh new batch, so we're frequently disposing of a few portions of perfectly good product. Here, I show you some of my tips for turning your wastage into profit. For all of these recipes, I've used Signature by Country Range Dairy Ice Cream, as I always try to use the most premium, high dairy ice cream that budget allows, but this also makes it all the more important to maximise every last scoop.

Paul is a Home Economist and food stylist working in London and the North West, creating exceptional visual stories in film & tv, on social media and in print. All of the recipes and videos featured in the article can be accessed online at www.countryrange.co.uk/recipes or by scanning the QR Code.



Mini Treats

Dessert can be a tough sell to some customers, who don't want to commit to a full portion and the additional price that comes along with it. Mini desserts are a great upsell opportunity, which you can offer as a great value, 'guilt-free' little sweet treat at the end of a meal. My ice cream chocolate bites are little chocolates filled with creamy dairy vanilla ice cream, and they can be made using the bits of ice cream that would otherwise be thrown away. It's little additions like this that give customers a great experience that brings them back for more.



RHUBARB RIPPLE

Here's a waste-saving double-whammy for you! There is nothing new about ice cream rippled with a fruit flavour, traditionally raspberry. Creating a rippled ice cream isn't only a great way to use up leftover vanilla ice cream, but I also make it super-seasonal and waste-saving by using up seasonal fruit to create the ripple. As maincrop rhubarb is just coming into season right now, this is a great use of this versatile fruit, and we all know how well it pairs with vanilla.



ELEVATE A RETRO CLASSIC

Capitalise on the big trend for putting modern twists on retro recipes whilst using up every last bit of ice cream which might otherwise have gone in the bin. There is something so nostalgic about Neapolitan ice cream and this recipe adds luxury by using high quality dairy ice cream. Turn it into a terrine with crisp chocolate in between each layer, which is reminiscent of another classic ice cream dessert!



Dipna

AWARD-WINNING CHEF, AUTHOR
AND CULINARY INSTRUCTOR

ANAND



Chef, author, TV personality, culinary teacher, entrepreneur - Dipna Anand can do it all and continues to lead the way when it comes to showcasing the finest, authentic Indian cuisine in the UK. Honing her skills at her family's acclaimed restaurant, The Brilliant in Southall launched half a century ago and is said to be a favourite of King Charles. We caught up with Dipna to discuss her route to the top.



Tell us how and why you first became interested in food?

I was lucky to be born into - and brought up in - a family of chefs and restaurateurs. I have very fond memories of going to the restaurant on the weekend and helping out with the set up. We would set the tables, lay out the disposable tablecloths, put out the cutlery and even restock the shelves with the small bottles of ginger ale, coke or tonic. I vividly remember my dad holding the fort at the front and in the kitchen. I would think, "one day I want to be just like my dad."

The business sounds like a family business in every sense of the word?

Yes - it truly is. In our family, there are seven restaurants altogether but the first Brilliant restaurant, hotel and nightclub was started in Nairobi, Kenya by my grandfather. It was very much a family affair and the same can be said for it today. It was seven sisters and four brothers who used to run the ship for my grandfather in Kenya.

The recipes were passed from my great grandfather to my grandfather, to my father and then from him to me. Keeping those recipes alive is a real passion of mine.

What was your journey to becoming a chef?

At university, I was studying hospitality management with food studies. I graduated with a first-class honours degree and was offered a masters scholarship. While I was studying, my professor asked me if I knew anyone who could teach Indian cookery. I said no and he said, "what about you?". I did a teaching qualification and before I knew it, I was teaching Indian cooking at the University of West London. To a certain extent, while I was teaching Indian cuisine at the university, I was teaching myself. I realised I was good at it and loved it, so started teaching at two other colleges.

How did it progress?

While teaching, I would head over to Brilliant and work with my dad. I would watch, help



Samosa Chaat Blast



The Butter Chicken I cooked with James Martin took the world by storm but recently I think I'm pretty well-known for my Samosa Chaat recipe below. It's a street food classic and delicious.

MAKES 4 INDIVIDUAL SERVINGS OR 1 LARGE SERVING TO SHARE

INGREDIENTS

- 4 tbsp yoghurt
- ¼ tsp salt
- 4 deep fried meat or vegetable samosas
- ¼ medium red onion, finely chopped
- Chickpea curry (scan QR code)
- 4 tbsp tamarind chutney
- 4 tsp Bombay mix
- 3 tbsp fresh coriander, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp pomegranate pearls
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- ¼ tsp black pepper

METHOD

1. Spice up the yoghurt by adding cumin powder, black pepper and salt, mix well (put into a small squeeze bottle if desired).
2. Crush or cut the samosas into ¾ pieces and put into bowl.
3. Sprinkle over a small handful of red onions.
4. Spoon over a tablespoon of chickpea curry.
5. Drizzle over some seasoned yoghurt followed by the tamarind, use a squeeze bottle if preferred to make a zig-zag design all over.
6. Sprinkle over a small handful of Bombay mix, coriander and a few pomegranate pearls.

and learn. My mum would give me more of a grounding on home cooking although she was a fantastic chef at the restaurant in her day as well. I was very fortunate in having two hugely skilled parents to learn from. I also met Gordon Ramsay at about this stage as he came to film at the restaurant. He told my dad, pointing at me, "this one is going to go a long way", and that gave me huge confidence and motivation.

Who have been your key mentors?

My dad has been my biggest mentor and guide – even today. I always wanted to be like him, although I'm not sure anyone can match his skills. He is my hero and a true genius. No task was ever too big for him.

What do you love most about your job?

I'm very passionate to carry on our family's legacy and hopefully leaving the business in an even better place. I also love engaging and hearing from fans as I'm really thankful for their support. I wouldn't be anything without them, so I love to give back as much as possible.

How do you switch off?

I love watching cricket but shopping, shopping, shopping is my true therapy. I do like my fashion.

Who are you most proud to have cooked for?

King Charles takes some beating.

What would you like to see from the government to help the hospitality sector?

More support for bringing in specialist skilled chefs from abroad. Better grants, more support.

What trends do you expect to see in 2025?

Healthy eating will continue to be key, but street food continues to evolve and is a very exciting, innovative and fast-moving sector to watch.

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THE MARKETPLACE

Keeping you up-to-date on products and services within the foodservice industry

NESCAFÉ DISTRIBUTES 21 MILLION PLANTLETS TO BOOST SUSTAINABLE COFFEE FARMING

Nescafé has released its second Nescafé Plan 2030 Progress Report, highlighting significant strides in regenerative agriculture. In 2023, over 20% of Nescafé's coffee was sourced from farmers practicing regenerative methods, leading to improved yields and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The company distributed 21 million coffee plantlets to support farm rejuvenation, contributing to a cumulative total of over 290 million since 2010. More than 800 agronomists and specialists collaborated with coffee farmers through Nescafé Plan field programs. An independent assessment by the Rainforest Alliance evaluated regenerative practices across 37 farmer units in 11 origins. These efforts underscore Nescafé's commitment to sustainable coffee farming, benefiting both the environment and farming communities.



Confidence Grows for Gluten-Free Diners but Challenges Remain



Coeliac UK's latest 'Eating Out Gluten Free' report highlights growing confidence among gluten-free diners, with 67% noting improvements over the past five years. However, challenges remain, with 77% reporting accidental gluten consumption when dining out.

Venues with Coeliac UK's Gluten Free Accreditation (GFA) enjoy greater trust, as 93% of gluten-free diners feel safer eating there. Businesses benefit too—gluten-free diners influence group dining choices, and this market contributes £3.3 billion annually to the food industry.

Despite progress, 87% still struggle to find gluten-free options, especially in transport hubs. Coeliac UK urges more venues to adopt the GFA scheme to ensure safer, more inclusive dining experiences while tapping into a lucrative market.



Henley Bridge Introduces Vibrant New Food Colours Range

Henley Bridge has launched an exciting new range of Food Colours, bringing vibrant possibilities to the UK's baking and confectionery market. As the exclusive UK distributor for Polish brand Food Colours, Henley Bridge now offers six collections, including coloured cocoa butters, velvet sprays, natural cake drip toppings, water-soluble powders, liquid food colourings, and metallic shimmering dust. These high-quality products help bakers and chocolatiers add creativity and flair to their designs. Managing Director Tracey Hughes describes the range as a perfect addition for professionals looking to elevate their creations. With a strong reputation in the food industry, Henley Bridge continues its mission to provide outstanding ingredients and support to culinary experts.





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of chefs said that Heinz Banz flavour is recognisable and customers can tell when an alternative is used.¹



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1: Craft Guild of Chefs product testing of Heinz Banz, September 2024.



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LEMON JUICE



Like other citrus fruits such as oranges, mandarins and limes, lemons are thought to be hybrids of other ancestral fruits that were naturally created over time. A great source of Vitamin C, lemon juice provides an instant nutritious hit to dishes but can also enhance colour, texture and flavour, cleanse the palate and balance richness. An important ingredient used across the year and menu, the Country Range Lemon Juice comes in a 500ml catering bottle in a pack of 12.

This month, Nathan Wilford demonstrates the versatility of lemon juice and how it can be used in a variety of different dishes. Nathan has worked in some of Blackpool's iconic-and-best restaurants, hotels and bistros including The Seafood Restaurant. Fifteen years ago, he made a transition to public sector catering as head chef at Cross & Passion Convent, a care home with nursing facilities which looks after 16 retired nuns and sisters.



Salmon Ceviche

INGREDIENTS

- 250g Country Range Salmon Fillet
- 150ml Country Range Lemon Juice
- 2 tbsp rock salt
- 20g caster sugar
- Sliced red onion
- Sliced green chillies
- Avocado
- Fresh dill

METHOD

1. For the ceviche, lightly sprinkle the salmon fillet with rock salt. Transfer to the fridge and leave for 20 minutes.
2. Remove the salmon from the fridge, carefully wash off all the salt and pat it dry.
3. In a small bowl, mix the jalapeños and lemon juice together and add the sugar. Toss to combine.
4. Slice the salmon at an angle - each piece needs to be about 2-3mm thick.
5. Lay four slices evenly in a straight line onto each serving plate.
6. Spoon all but two tablespoons of the ceviche dressing over the salmon. Set aside for about 30 minutes.
7. Mix sliced avocado, sliced red onion and fresh dill with the reserved two tablespoons of the ceviche dressing. Place on top of the salmon and serve.

SIMPLE CEVICHE

One of the simplest ways to prepare seafood and the best way to taste the fish in all its glory. My choice would be halibut ceviche with chives, capers, shallots and lemon juice.

WOO WITH STEW

Lemon juice added to stews and sauces can help balance flavours and richness. I often add lemon juice to a lamb tagine and couscous. It helps cut through the fattiness of the lamb and provides added zing and freshness.

TASTY TARTS

A fresh lemon dessert to finish a meal can't be beaten in my opinion. One of my favourite desserts of all time is a Lemon Tart and I usually follow Marco Pierre White's recipe. Simplicity and stardom all in one.

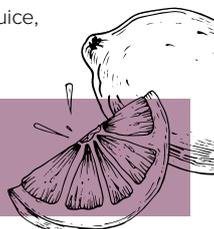
DESIRABLE DRESSINGS

A zesty lemon dressing over a crisp seasonal salad takes some beating. I make mine with half olive oil, half rapeseed oil, lemon juice, salt, pepper, sugar and a dollop of Dijon Mustard. Great when served with a roast chicken that has been stuffed with a lemon.

MASTERFUL MARINADE

Lemon is such a versatile ingredient when used in marinades and really helps the flavour to penetrate. Chicken, pork, fish and lamb – lemon can lift them all. My favourite would be a butterflied lamb shoulder that is marinated in thyme, garlic, lemon juice, salt and pepper.

Country Range
Lemon Juice
Pack Size: 500ml



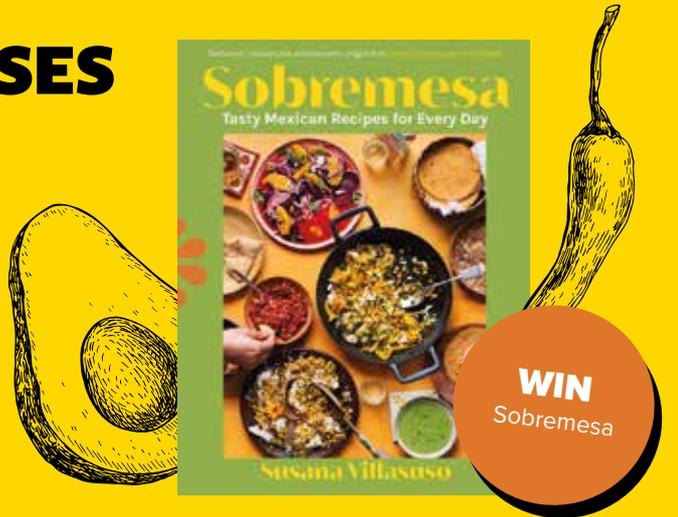
The Country Club

Exclusively for customers of the Country Range Group

A FEAST FOR THE SENSES

This month's Rising Star, Susana Villasuso, brings the vibrant flavours of Mexico to your kitchen with *Sobremesa: Easy Mexican Recipes for Every Day!* Packed with 75 mouthwatering recipes—from Crispy Bean and Ricotta Taquitos to zesty Salmon Ceviche and indulgent Mexican Blood Orange Vanilla Cake—this cookbook is a feast for the senses. With stunning photography and easy-to-follow guides, it's perfect for weeknight meals or festive gatherings. Enter now for your chance to win and bring the joy of Mexican cooking to your table!

For your chance to win, enter online or send an email titled 'Sobremesa' along with your name, contact details and name of your Country Range Group wholesaler to competitions@stiritupmagazine.co.uk.



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Closing date for the competition is 30th April 2025. All winners will be notified by 31st May 2025. Postal entries can be sent to: Country Range Group, 4 & 5 Jupiter House, Mercury Rise, Altham Business Park, Altham, Lancashire, BB5 5BY. Full terms and conditions can be found at: www.stiritupmagazine.co.uk/about

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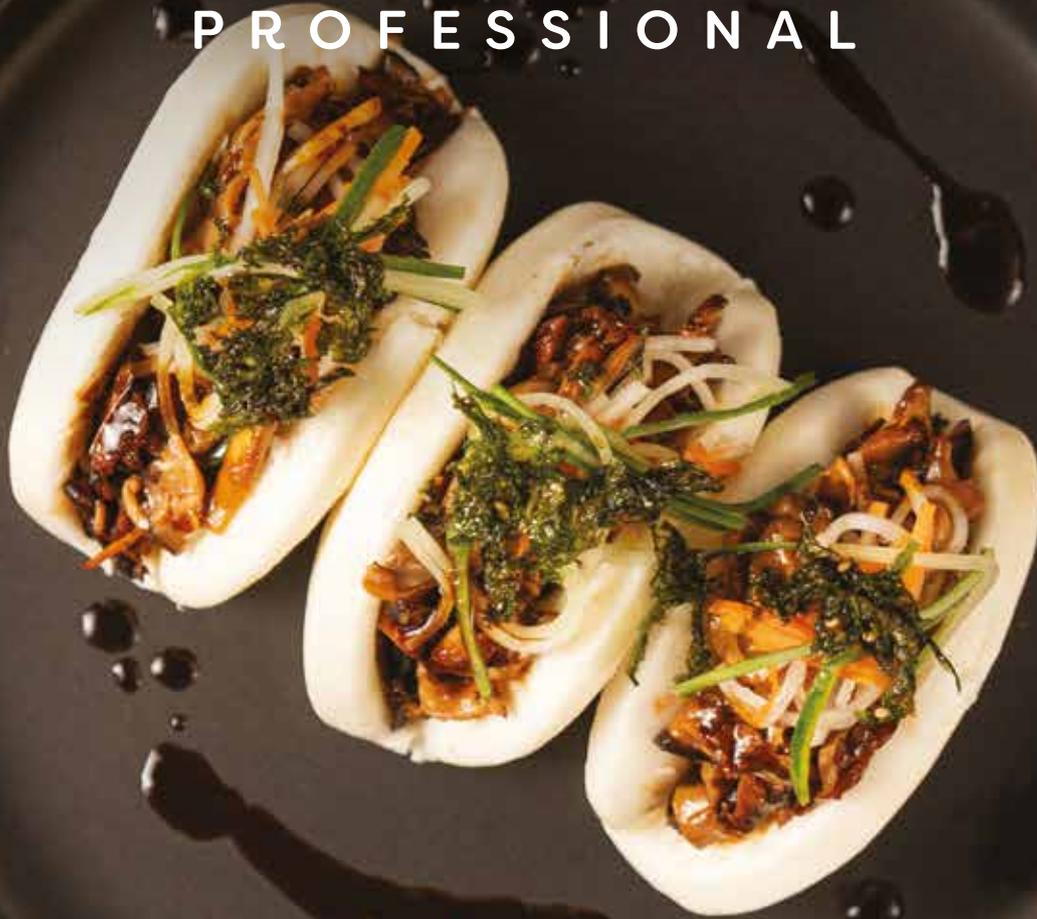


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