

THE COUNTRY RANGE GROUP MAGAZINE FOR CATERERS
MARCH 2024

Stir it up

TINY TASTEMAKERS

MASTERING
CHILD-FRIENDLY
CATERING

RISING STAR: BRIAN PRESTON

AN INTERVIEW WITH
NACC CARE CHEF OF
YEAR 2023

The Science of Spending

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR
RAISING THE AVERAGE
SPEND PER HEAD



Ingredients

There are so many key events happening this month from Mother's Day to Nutrition and Hydration Week and Easter.

Whether you are a caterer in the hospitality, education or care sector these dates give plenty of opportunity to increase footfall or provide food focused activities to students and residents.

If you would like to get involved in one of our features, or have any feedback please contact us at editor@stiritupmagazine.co.uk

The Stir it up team



NEWS

- 03**
Readers' Lives
- 05**
Cooks Calendar
- 07**
Customer Profile
Sambrook House
- 10-11**
New From Country Range
- 32-33**
Marketplace
- 44-45**
Food & Industry News
- 47**
The Country Club

ADVICE

- 13**
Health & Welfare
Unlocking the secret to healthy aging
- 23**
Experience & passion meets fresh challenges at NACC
- 17**
Education
Drones deploying school meals
- 25**
Heads Up
Employee wellbeing packages for small businesses
- 35**
Advice From
Is your restaurant too noisy?

INSPIRATION

- 09**
Eat the Season
Swede
- 21**
Making Ends Meet
Special occasions
- 36-37**
Leading Lights
Lisa Marley
- 39**
Five Ways to Use
Pear halves in light syrup
- 41**
Rising Star
Brian Preston
- 43**
On the Range
Chicken balti

TRENDS

- 03**
Fresh from the Kitchen
French cuisine
- 15**
Hospitality
Chatty Café's recipe for community engagement
- 18-19**
Category Focus
Practical tips for raising the average spend per head
- 29-31**
Melting Pot
Tiny Tastemakers Mastering child friendly catering
- 38**
Special Feature
Student Chef

Contact us...

Writers

Lindsey Hoyle
Sam Houston
Jackie Mitchell

Subscriptions

stiritup@countryrange.co.uk

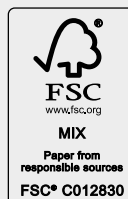
Design & Print

Eclipse Creative
www.eclipsecreative.co.uk

Front Cover

By Igishevamaria
on Adobe Stock

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



32



21



10

Readers' lives

NAME: Sam Taylor-Bolshaw

JOB TITLE: Head Chef

PLACE OF WORK: Giddy Kippers, Nelson

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED IN THE CATERING INDUSTRY? 9 years

PASSIONS OUTSIDE OF THE KITCHEN? I have a degree in Music Production so when I'm not working, I love making music in my home studio.

WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO BE A COOK/CHEF? I kind of fell into the career but when people started complimenting my cooking, it was the first time I realised that I'm good at this and I have continued to learn and develop ever since.

WHICH CHEF DO YOU RESPECT THE MOST AND WHY? My old head chef Steve Coupe. He has done every job there is to do in catering. The lessons I learnt were invaluable. The stories he would tell me about his time cooking for artists such as Frank Sinatra, Queen and Nile Rogers also showed me that

there is more to catering than working in a restaurant.

WHAT DO YOU DO TO SWITCH OFF/ RECHARGE? Walks with the dogs.

WHAT TRENDS DO YOU SEE TAKING OVER IN 2023? Plant based cooking is on the rise, I think is something that will continue. I also think the cost-of-living crisis will force restaurants to look at cheaper cuts of meat such as beef shin and brisket.

DEAD OR ALIVE – WHICH THREE PEOPLE WOULD YOU LIKE TO COOK FOR THE MOST? Greg Wallace, Anthony Bourdain and Ozzy Osbourne.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE COUNTRY RANGE PRODUCT AND WHY? Tinned Chopped Tomatoes, they are so versatile and can be used for everything from a simple marinara to mixed veg chilli.

**Country Range
Chopped Tomatoes
Pack size 800g / 2.5kg**



Fresh FROM THE KITCHEN

This month, we take a closer look at French cuisine which is enjoying a global renaissance and is set to be a key food trend this year. As consumers continue to seek comfort, French fare adds to this an element of indulgence, simplicity and guaranteed deliciousness.

SUPER SAUCES - An essential part of the French culinary repertoire, classic French sauces have been adapted into many other cuisine styles around the world. Think mornière, Bordelaise, béarnaise, beurre blanc to name but a few.

CONFIT - This technique that was traditionally used for preserving is now commonly used for meats like goose, duck and pork, which are cured in salt before being cooked long at a low temperature for several hours in their own fat. This makes the meat exceptionally tender, rich and delicious!

CHARCUTERIE - Encompassing many prepared meats, such as ham, pâté, terrines and saucisson, charcuterie is one of the most important branches of French culinary tradition.

TARTARE - A classic French dish which appears on most French bistro menus, tartare is traditionally prepared using ground raw beef, onion, capers, Worcestershire sauce and raw egg yolk.

CASSOULET - This simple farmhouse dish has evolved to become one of France's most popular dishes. The most popular versions include white beans and confit duck or pork and sausage. In France, meats are more varied, such as goose, mutton and partridge.

CHEESE DREAMS - We can't talk about French cuisine without mentioning cheese. With over 400 styles produced across the country, French restaurants in the UK and Ireland tend to import specific varieties for their cheese boards.

PASTRIES & BREADS - French patisseries and bakeries are one of the most notable aspects of French cuisine and culture which are thriving in the UK and Ireland. Favourites include macarons, croissants, pain au chocolate, millefeuille, éclairs and not forgetting the wonderful bread too!



Confit Duck

From Thefoodpeople French Cuisine UK Report

thefoodpeople.
inform | inspire | realise potential

Get them together over delicious desserts this Easter



Product Name	Size
Wellcare Reduced Sugar Chocolate Cake Mix	4 x 1kg
White Icing Ready To Roll	6 x 1kg
Vanilla Extract	6 x 95ml
Milk Chocolate Chips	10 x 750g
Dark Chocolate Chips	10 x 750g
White Chocolate Chips	10 x 750g
Billionaire Chocolate Chips Mix	6 x 750g
Rainbow Chocolate Chips Mix	6 x 850g



Scan here
to view the
full range

Occasion **MAKERS**

Discover more: oetker-professional.co.uk in  



Cooks CALENDAR

March



4TH TO 10TH MARCH – BRITISH PIE WEEK

The ultimate comfort food for a wet and windy day, try this Beef and Ale Pie recipe from MAGGI®.

11TH TO 18TH MARCH – NUTRITION AND HYDRATION WEEK

This Tiramisu Milkshake from Country Range is like a dessert in a glass, providing both calories and hydration (and deliciousness!).

25TH MARCH – INTERNATIONAL WAFFLE DAY

To celebrate all things waffle – how about loading up some Country Range Signature Waffle Fries?

31ST MARCH – EASTER SUNDAY

This Hot Cross Bun Rosette with Ginger Glaze recipe from Opies is a simply stunning Easter centrepiece and a clever way to use up leftovers.



April

4TH APRIL – INTERNATIONAL CARROT DAY

This Free From Carrot Cupcakes recipe from Country Range is gluten-free and suitable for vegans.

16TH APRIL – DAY OF THE MUSHROOM

Mushrooms add some meatiness to this hearty Spinach, Pea and Mushroom Hot Pot recipe from Country Range.

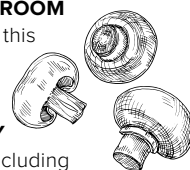
21ST APRIL – NATIONAL TEA DAY

Add tea to everything on this day, including these decadent Dark Chocolate and Tea Truffles from Country Range.

23RD APRIL – GREAT BRITISH BEEF WEEK

Give your beef a classic French twist with this rich Beef Bourguignon with a Cheesy Garlic Bread Topping recipe from Opies.

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



Thank you to Nestlé Professional, Country Range and Opies for sharing their recipes

**WIN
FACE-TO-FACE
ADVICE FROM
DEBORAH***



**APPLY
TODAY**



**MAKE YOUR BUSINESS
THRIVE WITH DEBORAH
MEADEN AND NESCAFÉ**

Purchase necessary. Registration opens from 22.01.24. Closing date for applications 31.03.24. Eligibility restrictions apply. For full terms visit <https://www.nestleprofessional.co.uk/nescafe-discussions-deborah-terms-conditions-2024>

NESCAFÉ



MIDLIFE CRISIS LEADS TO CARE

Sambrook House, Shropshire

While the classic midlife crisis often results in the purchase of a Porsche or maybe even divorce, Neil and Sue Robson took a rather different route. They bought a care home in the wilds of the Shropshire countryside, and then a year later set up a successful domiciliary care company.

Neil, a graduate engineer, had spent his career in engineering and IT, and Sue, a graduate nurse had worked her way up to NHS Director. In 2004, they reached the stage when they were ready for a change and decided that together they had the skills to make a success of it in the residential care arena.

Originally based in Portsmouth, the couple realised that they couldn't afford the real estate in the south of England but had family in Norfolk and Shropshire. They soon found,

and fell in love with, Sambrook House in Shropshire and quickly moved to purchase the business and house next door, which would become their home.

"If we thought the businesses were going to be a smooth and easy run towards retirement, we were sadly very mistaken, but after 19 years, we're still loving every minute of it. Our guests and our team have become our family



and no day is the same. Last week I was fitting a new bathroom while this week I'm installing a cloud-based digital care-planning solution for staff." Neil Robson explains.

"We didn't really know how much we didn't know, which is probably for the best, but we are quick learners and hard, ethical workers, and with our wonderful team we have got to where we are today. A home with an excellent reputation, gold stars for food hygiene and fabulous food!"

Sambrook House has 28 residents (the eldest being 102) and has been extensively refurbished to showcase rustic charm alongside hotel-like accommodation. Offering a warm, homely and comfortable environment in which to live, Head Chef Michelle Harmer has also helped the home gain several awards for its food.

"We're blessed to have Michelle. She is quite extraordinary and has been with us since 2014. Her creativity has no bounds and the choice and variety she offers

"We are a small team and we take the welfare of our staff as seriously as that of our residents. It is a real privilege caring for people"

throughout the day, seasons and year is incredible," continues Neil. "Our residents love a lot of the classics like our daily homemade soups, fish pie, steak & ale pie and traditional roasts, but we also have regular curry nights and all-day brunches. Our new second chef is from Thailand, so we are also discovering some beautiful South East Asian flavours and dishes."

"When it comes to products, the Country Range portfolio is always on point – great quality, immense variety and fantastic value. The pasta, rice, flour, butter and juices are the sort of raw materials that feature widely on our menus, plus we will use other items like tinned fruits and cooking sauces, the Korma Curry Sauce being a particular favourite."

Neil and Sue have a team of twenty-three. "We take the welfare of our staff as seriously as that of our residents. It is a real privilege caring for people and it still gives me a buzz going into work every day."

Above (main, clockwise)
Residents watching the coronation
Sambrook House
Michelle Harmer



Lamb Weston® 

MORE TWISTS
MORE TASTE
MORE PROFIT*

*Up to 15% more portions per kg – LW Internal study 2023



More of what matters

IN SEASON: Swede

This month we are exploring how to make the most of a much-underrated vegetable, swede.

Chef Stuart Gillies has a wealth of experience under his apron, having earned international acclaim as chef at a host of Michelin-starred restaurants before becoming Gordon Ramsay's number two and CEO of Gordon Ramsay Group for 7 years. Today, Stuart is the proud founder and co-owner of Bank House wine bar and dining rooms in Chislehurst and has also recently opened Number Eight, a restaurant and bar in Sevenoaks.

A form of brassica, swede is a hybrid between a turnip and type of cabbage and is in season from September to March. Whether you know it as neeps, rutabaga or Swedish turnip, it has been widely used in England since the early 1800's after King Gustav of Sweden sent the first swede seeds as a gift to Patrick Miller of Dumfries and Galloway, resulting in the vegetable adopting the name by which we know it today – swede.

Although swede has a rich, sweet flavour, it is low in calories and high in vitamin C and just three tablespoons of cooked swede is equal to one portion of your 5 a-day. While many root vegetables are increasing in price, swede tends to be a little cheaper as it is often overlooked, so it is a great option for maximising your budget.

"I actually really like swede but only during winter. I lived in Stockholm and New York amongst other places for a few years and both those cities love and cook swede in many ways, as well as both calling it rutabaga not swede."

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

There are so many ways to use up any leftover swede. It is a great addition to pie and pasty fillings or casseroles, or use as a topping, mixed into mashed potato. In fact, anywhere that mashed potato is used, swede can be added to bulk it out and add additional nutrients.

1/ SATISFYINGLY GOOD SOUP

We make a family winter broth with swede. Mixed together with Savoy cabbage, onions carrots and potato, chicken breast, chicken stock and herbs, slow cooked for 2 hours. Then we add small pasta into the same pot and cook until tender. This makes the best warming healthy broth for a whole family meal.



2/ SIMPLY DOES IT

Another great way is to cook as a 'Fondant' which means we peel and cut into a puck shape. Then cook with foaming salted butter, garlic, thyme and black pepper until tender.

3/ CUT & FRIED

Cut into thick sticks you can fry swede like chips, seasoned with cajun spice and served with a sour cream and chive dip.



4/ TAKE A TRIP TO ITALY

Swede makes a great and unusual gnocchi also. Mixed with equal amounts of mashed potato, mashed swede, egg yolk and some flour well seasoned, then shaped and poached in boiling salt water.

5/ MASH IT UP

During game season I annually pair mashed swede cooked with butter and black pepper, with venison accompanied by a chocolate and cherry sauce.



Also In Season



Sardines



Wild Garlic



Venison



Kale



Celeriac

Springing INTO ACTION THIS MARCH

NEW

March is a busy month, starting with St David's Day, British Pie Week, Food Waste Action Week and then followed by Mother's Day, the first day of spring and Easter to finish, but the opportunities to be creative are endless.

NEW COUNTRY RANGE KING PRAWNS

We're launching our new King Prawns. Perfect for putting a modern twist on the classic prawn cocktail. Or how about spicing things up with these King Prawn Satay Skewers.

Sustainably sourced and farmed in warm tropical waters, our King Prawns are IQF frozen within hours of harvest, guaranteeing the freshest and finest quality. Available in two sizes, they're raw, peeled and deveined for ease of use.

Prawn Size: 26/30 Count or 16/20 Count
Pack Size: 1kg (700g net)



4TH - 10TH MARCH

PIE WEEK

Great for utilising food leftovers, cheaper cuts of meat, the first of the new season spring produce or to simply showcase your pie creativity, it's time for these deliciously filled pastry parcels to take centre stage once again as British Pie Week kicks off.

Our versatile, ready-to-use Puff and Shortcrust Pastry Blocks, plus our Suet Pastry Mix, provide pastry perfection every time and our store cupboard flours, seasonings, spices, stocks and sauces will give you all the tools for terrific tasting pies.

For some South American inspiration, why not whizz up some of these smoky, sweet and spicy empañadas.

Scan here to see all of the recipes featured on this page



*King Prawn
Satay Skewers*

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

A great month to launch some nutritious dishes, this recipe is for the ultimate brain and body boosting breakfast bars, made wholly with Country Range store cupboard ingredients.

Granola Bar



Columbian Empanadas

FOOD WASTE ACTION WEEK

4TH - 10TH MARCH

Huge strides have been made by chefs to reduce food waste, which is not only good for the environment but also good for business.

As Food Waste Action Week returns it's another brilliant opportunity to highlight your zero waste skills and also bring your guests and diners along with you so they can start making positive changes at home.

To celebrate this year's special week, check out our video with tips on how to make a delicious cherry ice cream using a broken piece of our cherry pie. Perfect for Pie Week too!

For more information on how you can get involved, visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com.

Scan to watch the video



Broken Cherry Pie Ice Cream



Pea and Spring Onion Soup



Rhubarb Queen of Puddings

10TH MARCH

Mother's Day

Mother's Day is one of the busiest days of the year for many chefs and caterers. It comes early this year on the 10th March so it's the time to make magic for the matriarchs. The recipe for success (as always) includes the finest ingredients and a good dose of inventiveness.

It could be a special dish or sweet, an exquisite three-course menu, an on-trend tasting menu or even a champagne brunch. Whatever you have planned, mum deserves the best.

For a super starter, why not create this seasonal Pea and Spring Onion Soup or for a decadent dessert, try this fantastic Rhubarb Queen of Puddings.



Easter



Our first Easter in March since 2016, Easter Sunday falls on the 31st of the month, which means catering businesses can get off to a flying start this spring.

Roast dinners take centre stage at Easter but that doesn't mean you should be dishing the usual Sunday norm. Try some unique cuts and joints, the freshest and latest in-season veg, stupendous stuffing, mountainous Yorkshire puddings and, of course, glorious gravies. Our range of seasonings, flours, gravy granules, cooking wines, stocks, mustards and sauces never fail when it comes to pushing flavour up and keeping costs down.



// **IDEAL FOR CREATING DELICIOUS
TASTING GRAVIES, WHICH GUESTS
WILL KEEP COMING BACK FOR** //



Assisting the amazing



Maggi® ORIGINAL GRAVY, GLUTEN FREE VEGETARIAN GRAVY AND DEMI GLACE
Take the hassle out of making thick, glossy and flavourful gravies

*Serving suggestion

®Reg. Trademark of Société des Produits Nestlé S.A.

To find out more visit www.nestleprofessional.co.uk/maggi



UNLOCKING THE SECRET *to healthy aging*



*(Murrin et al., 2017)

It's important for care home residents to receive the right balance of nutrients to meet their needs and support their health and wellbeing. This is crucial for some residents who may experience a lack of interest in food, a low appetite or difficulty eating.

Research studies have shown that dietary changes even later in life can make a difference. Jenna Mosimann from the social enterprise, RaisingNutrition, who gave a presentation on the subject at a National Association of Care Catering (NACC) forum, says, "I would encourage care home caterers to use as many whole, unprocessed fresh foods as possible as these tend to be more nutrient-rich, and to avoid or reduce ultra-processed foods and foods high in fat, sugar and salt. Review menus and ingredients and consider how you can adapt them. There are often simple ways to do this without affecting costs."

Her suggestions include serving a more diverse range of vegetables, increasing wholegrains, reducing sugar content in cakes, adding

pulses into meat dishes and offering more plant-rich meals.

In the case of residents who struggle to maintain their weight, instead of fortifying dishes by adding foods high in fat such as cream, a better approach is to use more nutrient-dense foods and those rich in healthier fats such as nuts and oily fish. Jenna adds, "Sugary foods are often low in vitamins, minerals and fibre and can increase the risk of diseases such as dementia. They can also cause low moods due to blood sugar peaks and dives."

Although some level of processed food is unavoidable, according to Jenna about 60% of the average UK diet is thought to be ultra-processed. Foods which have gone through industrial processing, have substances added, such as preservatives, and are far removed from their natural, grown state. "Research has shown significant associations between consumption of these foods and increased ill health. We would advise caterers to be more aware about the processing level of foods."

Meals can be created using nutrient-dense foods, but if residents won't eat them, they are not deriving the benefits. "The dining room at the care home needs to be inviting so that residents can be encouraged to enjoy eating," says Jenna.

A useful model to review the eating experience is the Five Aspects of Mealtimes Model (FAMM). The five aspects to review are the room, meeting (social interactions), the management, the product (the food served) and the atmosphere.

Jenna says, "Food that looks great and is full of flavour will be more appealing. There is no one approach that will work for everyone. A care home will need to trial different approaches such as serving food in front of residents so they have more input into what's on their plate,

60% of the average UK diet is thought to be ultra-processed. In Ireland 52% of the energy intake of Irish people is coming from ultra-processed foods*

encouraging carers to talk socially to residents over mealtimes, playing music, trying different lighting and using different types of cutlery and crockery."

RaisingNutrition runs an accreditation programme for caterers, offering a framework to

review food offerings and knowledge, as well as training, education and consultancy services. Jenna says, "One care home that we've worked with added more fresh vegetables and moved away from carbohydrate-heavy "beige" meals. As a result, residents were more willing to try new foods and the catering team felt more engaged and motivated."

Visit <https://raisingnutrition.org/> for more information.



NEW
DESIGN
&
NEW
FLAVOURS

BRONTË

ONLY THE BEST FOR
YOUR GUESTS



BRONTË TRADITIONAL
5 FLAVOURS. 100 x 2

LEGENDS IN THE BAKING

WWW.BURTONSBISCUITS.COM

customer.services@burtonsbiscuits.com



MORE THAN A CUPPA

CHATTY CAFÉ'S RECIPE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



'Chatter and Natter' tables are a place for customers to sit if they would like to have a conversation with other customers. The scheme operates in 900 cafés, pubs, and community centres, including 440 Costa Coffees, and provides a safe space for customers to get together and reduce loneliness.

The Chatty Café Scheme, a not-for-profit organisation, trains local representatives who volunteer to help set up and host the table. The tables tend to run for one or two hours each week on the same day and time.

Alex Hoskyn, who founded the scheme in 2017, says, "Although the aims of the scheme are to reduce loneliness and get people chatting, we decided not to use the word loneliness on any of the publicity that is displayed in cafés. Instead, it is very positive and focuses on bringing people of all ages and from all walks of life together. We want to mix everyone up!"



plays a key role in connecting communities and tackling loneliness.

It's easy for venues to participate in the scheme. Alex says, "We send cafés all the promotional material, including a poster asking if any customers would be interested in volunteering. We provide all the volunteer training."

Café owners can sign up on the web site. You need to identify a specific day and time that the 'Chatter and Natter' table

will be available on a weekly basis and nominate a staff member or volunteer to help host the table by greeting customers and facilitating conversation during the sessions, especially in the first few weeks. Chatty Café signage, which is

included in your pack, needs to be displayed in and around the café area. Alex adds, "Encourage the table host to take photos and forward to us so we can put it on our web site and social media. Consent would be required from those sitting at the table before sharing pictures."

The Lounge Café Bar & Restaurant in Brackley, Northants, has been running the scheme for over a year since it opened. Richard Rainbow says, "Jon Haslam, a volunteer from the scheme asked me if I would be interested in having a 'Chatter and Natter' table. The idea resonated with me. We just added our venue to the Chatty Café web site and pay a yearly



subscription for the marketing materials. It makes me feel we are doing something for the community. It also helps us financially, as you know times are hard in the hospitality industry and every little helps, although this was never the main driver. I never expected it to grow so big so quickly. It also gives our venue some good publicity making people aware we are here, and we are a friendly and caring place."

Visit <https://thechattycafescheme.co.uk/> for more information.

"We decided not to use the word loneliness on any of the publicity, instead, it is very positive and focuses on bringing people of all ages and from all walks of life together."

The benefits of the scheme for café owners include the opportunity to attract more customers outside peak hours, increased footfall, repeat business and promotional exposure on social media, in the local press and on web sites and blogs. By participating in the scheme, the café



DOES EVERYTHING DAIRY DOES AND MORE



NO ALLERGENS
TO DECLARE



BETTER FOR
THE PLANET



DAIRY
FREE



Rich and creamy
alternative to dairy



Learn more at violifeprofessional.com/en-gb

A BRAND OF

Violife
PROFESSIONAL

Ain't No Mountain High Enough

DRONES DEPLOYING SCHOOL MEALS

Last year, Argyll and Bute Council teamed up with Skyports, drone specialists, to trial the use of drones, known as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) in delivering school meals. The Council is planning to create the UK's first UAV logistics and training hub at Oban Airport with funding from the local authority's Rural Growth Deal.



Christine Boyle, senior manager at the Council says, "The pilot project aimed to test the use of drones to reach rural and remote schools that currently rely on traditional methods of transport such as taxis, ferries and vans. The trial was for "proof of concept" to show this was possible. The idea came about as drones had been used for medical supplies during Covid. This cutting-edge trial was developed with the Council's catering department in what is a UK first."



For the trial, the school meal was freshly prepared in Park Primary School in Oban and delivered by drone from Oban Airport to Lochnell Primary School, which is 1.5km away. It was macaroni cheese and a yogurt, which were chilled and transported in a small, insulated box and regenerated at Lochnell Primary School. Christine says, "The drone only went a short distance as we had to conform to certain regulations."

The pupils at Lochnell Primary School were over the moon to see a school meal being delivered in

this way. "They loved watching the drone land in the field by their school and the catering manager take it into the kitchen. They thought it was the best thing ever!" says Christine.

Argyll and Bute Council, which provides 78 schools with 1.2 million meals a year, has 63

production kitchens and 12 dining centres. At the dining centres, there are no production kitchens on site, so the meals are freshly made at a nearby school, frozen, transported to the dining centre and regenerated on site. "The drone technology will give us the opportunity to deliver meals where there is no provision, help us review our existing delivery options and come up with solutions that are cost-effective and better for the environment. We are still at the start of this journey, and I am sure as we progress, we will have lots of learning to share with colleagues across the industry," says Christine.

Some rural island schools in the region find it difficult to recruit skilled catering staff, "so we hope drone technology may solve the problem as we won't need as many skilled staff," she adds.

The Council has now embarked on the next phase – how school meals can be transported from one school to another, using the UAV airport hotspot. "We're looking at the logistics – what size of drone is needed, what distance can it do, what temperature does the food need to be, the size of

box and the frequency of deliveries," Christine says.

The initiative has won a COSLA 2023 Excellence Award in the service, innovation and improvement category. Christine says, "It was a great achievement for everyone involved. Argyll and Bute is Scotland's second largest council area with the highest number of inhabited islands. We are committed to making sure our remote and rural communities have

access to mainland services and this special project highlights what is possible with our UAV plans."

"Some rural island schools in the region find it difficult to recruit skilled catering staff, so we hope drone technology may solve the problem as we won't need as many skilled staff."

Above

Loading Skyports drone with school meal

Left

Collecting school meal after landing

The Science of Spending

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR RAISING THE AVERAGE SPEND PER HEAD

Attracting customers into your business can be very challenging when economic conditions are tough, however, the real challenge lies in ensuring each customer contributes substantially to your bottom line. In the hospitality sector, the prospect of low average customer spend looms large and it is capable of casting a shadow over even the busiest establishments.

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

The average spend per customer delivers transparency to managers, and is the tangible value achieved each time a customer steps through your doors. While broader goals like expanding sales or optimising operations might appear daunting, elevating average spend is a more achievable objective with a bigger impact.

Armed with just two key metrics—total sales value and the number of customers served—you can unveil insights into your operation's financial health. Simply divide your total sales by the number of customers served.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT SPENDING

Having crunched the numbers and faced the reality of your current average spend per customer, you may find the figure falling short of expectations. The following are a few strategies that can be implemented to give your average spend per head a boost:

SIDES, SAUCES & STORYTELLING

The first go-to strategy is to improve your upselling techniques. Not everything about this activity is training based, although it certainly helps. "We train all the front of house staff to upsell sides to customers," comments Matt, Head Chef at The White Lion, Weston. "Upselling little extras like adding cheese to a garlic bread, pepper sauce with a steak and garlic bread with a pasta dish or risotto is something we encourage our staff to do. On occasion we play upsell bingo, staff get bingo cards with things like 'sell 5 onion rings and

sell 2 garlic breads', a great way to incentivise the staff and make upselling fun."

Investing in training can negatively impact profitability temporarily, but get it right, and it reaps rewards. Alternatively, if you have employees with a talent for upselling, inviting them to skill share would be a more cost-effective approach. Improving communication between front-of-house staff and your kitchen team is another way to get waiting staff more excited about what's on the menu, understand how it is created and convey the story to your customers.

"We've empowered our staff to act as brand ambassadors," notes Jon Morgan, CEO, Venture Smarter. "They're well-versed in

the nuances of our menu and are trained to eloquently describe dishes, emphasising the quality and craftsmanship that goes into each one. This storytelling approach has been instrumental in encouraging customers to explore beyond their initial choices, ultimately driving up the average spend."

Drinks pairings can also be beneficial as beverages tend to deliver higher margin potential. "The impact of enhancing the beverage pairing experience on the average spend per head is significant," notes Kartik Ahuja. "Our staff are trained to expertly suggest wine or cocktail pairings that complement chosen dishes. Signature or craft beverages with a slightly higher price point are introduced to entice diners and enhance

INSPIRE YOUR DINERS

There are many reasons why customers choose to eat out, but if your menu never changes, it can become staid. Offering Chef's Specials, a tasting menu or fixed price menu for 2 or 3 courses not only makes it interesting for returning customers, it also elevates the price per head. "We've strategically highlighted premium options on our menu without compromising the accessibility of our offerings. This includes featuring a "Chef's Recommendation" section that showcases unique and slightly higher-priced items. Customers are naturally curious, and by presenting these options prominently, we've seen an uptick in orders of these premium choices, contributing to a higher average spend per person." Jon Morgan



result. "Our top tip would be to offer a 'build your own fries' menu, giving customers a choice of sauces, toppers and extras that can change regularly to offer something fresh and new, but all built around good quality fries" says Pete Evans, Lamb Weston's UK Marketing Manager.

Customisation is not restricted to personalising each dish. Offering a variety of price points within a menu can help diners select dishes that enable them to stay within budget without compromising

on the experience. "At our Steak Night we offer three types of cuts – a bavette for £14, a sirloin for £29.50 or a chateaubriand for £115 – so it gives variety."

Says Hubert Beatson-Hird, Owner, The Apollo Arms.

"By offering three cuts of steak all equally as delicious as each other, we allow diners on all budgets to enjoy the offer. We also offer a range of sides which are normally priced at two for £10, which allows customers to build their dinner the way they want it."

CREATE AN INVITING ENVIRONMENT

There is no doubt that a welcoming atmosphere will help to increase your average spend per head as diners stay for longer and add to their bill. It also keeps your operation looking busier for longer which often entices new customers through the doors. "You want your venue and space to be inviting, allowing guests to be immersed into the space, leading them to not want to leave," notes Hubert. "They forget about the outside world and lose track of time through the creation of a great ambience. We ensure everything from our seating, environment, and lighting stand out, but the most crucial is customer service. This really helps to deliver the ultimate comfort and cosiness, allowing guests to relax and enjoy their time at our pubs."

As you make those critical adjustments to your operations, don't forget to keep track of your average spend per customer on a daily, weekly or monthly basis to identify what works for your business, making changes gradually so you can monitor their impact.

their culinary journey. Consideration is given to creating themed beverage flights or pairing events to elevate the overall dining experience, encouraging patrons to explore diverse drink options."

INTRODUCE ALTERNATIVE PRICING STRATEGIES

Often, diners know what the average price of a starter, main meal or dessert is. Changing your menu slightly, adding sharing platters or build-your-own dishes, breaks through this barrier. When a sharing platter individually works out cheaper, customers can then be tempted to indulge with a dessert. Alternatively, offering a number of small plates for customers to select from and share can increase the spend per head as the propensity to over-order is high. To entice diners, think about offering 4 plates for the price of 3, keeping the number low enough for small groups to benefit from the offer and order 1-2 dishes more.

"We have had sharing platters on the menu for the last 12 months," says Matt. "We also offer a selection of nibbles, like red wine and honey chorizo, whitebait, cauliflower bites. These tend to be ordered in a tapas style and tend not to come with salads or expensive accompaniments. They are simple and inexpensive. A dining party would typically share several dishes to the table as an alternative to starters.

Offering customisation such as build-your-own burgers, nachos, fries or sandwiches can also achieve a similar

A number of country pubs are adding dog-wash facilities and canine friendly menus, inviting owners to dine in without worrying about their dog leaving a trail of mud or pestering them while they eat, which can cause a meal to end before dessert.



Award-winning
products,
*created for
the makers*



Country Range
Katsu Curry Sauce



Country Range
Hummingbird Cake



Country Range
Signature Waffle Fries



Country Range Extra
Virgin Olive Oil



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

Making ends meet

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

With Easter just around the corner, Paul Dickson shares some last-minute tips to make catering for special occasions run smoothly, with an eye on margins and efficiency.

It can be easy to get carried away when planning for big events in the calendar, but with a few tweaks to your menu and a bit of clever planning, you can take some of the pressure off the busy service as well as your margin. Here are some simple ideas which can be applied to any last-minute Easter planning but work equally well all year round.

A Crusty Timesaver



Don't overlook the classic pie when planning your menu. They can be made in advance, they're a great way to avoid food waste and you can be as inventive as you like. How about a roast dinner in a pie for a bank holiday special? My Roast Chicken Pie even has a surprise stuffing ball in the middle!

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.



THE Main EVENT

When it comes to the main course, the key here is not to feel like you need to include too many elements. The fewer trips to the plate you can do, the more efficient your service will be. It doesn't need to be overcomplicated. Simple, good quality ingredients, treated well, and being clever with your time will all turn into a winning menu and service. Take this Poached Cod in Creamy Dill Sauce for example. The vegetables and cod are poached in the oven together and the sauce is made in the same tray, so all that is left to add to the plate is the potato.



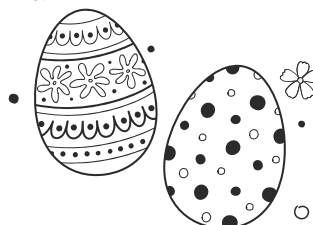
Poached Cod in Creamy Dill Sauce

Sheep Cupcakes



RAISE A SMILE

Whether you're catering for care residents or customers, it's the little extras that make special events that bit more memorable. We often think to add a little something to our menus at Christmas, such as coffee and a mince pie as part of a set a meal, but there's no reason to miss this step at other times of the year too. For Easter, for example, chocolate of course in all of its many forms would go down a treat, or why not add a bit of fun with these themed cupcakes? Easy to make and sure to raise a smile.



A Sweet Swap

Controlling your portions is of course a top priority throughout the year to keep on top of margins, particularly at a time when everything is being squeezed. A great no hassle way of doing this at busy times is through swapping some of your homemade desserts to ready prepared versions. Country Range frozen desserts are created especially for foodservice and are pre-portioned, so you clearly know the cost per portion, then it's completely up to you how you wish to serve it. The variety in the range is huge, with something to suit all tastes and times of year. My top pick at the moment would be something like the Affogato Dessert, as it's sophisticated in flavour and is gluten-free and suitable for vegans, so it ticks all the boxes.



Affogato Dessert

CARING IS ESSENTIAL

The value foodservice
brand you can trust



**CATERING
ESSENTIALS**

Ask your local **Country Range Group** wholesaler for details on the full range



*Experience
& passion*

MEETS FRESH CHALLENGES AT NACC

Finding staff and attracting young people into the industry is a major concern. Neel says, "We need to make the industry more appealing and add more value to it through training and development."

There are so many talented people working in the sector, so we need to promote these roles and opportunities so that young people consider the sector as a career."

Neel is a well-known figure in the industry with over 25 years' experience working with wholesalers and food manufacturers in hospitality and public sector catering, as well as leadership roles in the not-for-profit sector. At 16, he knew hospitality was his chosen career, undertaking work experience at a local hotel in the housekeeping department and the local hospital. He then attended West Herts College, where he attained a GNVQ in Hospitality and Tourism

Management, before heading to Brighton University to study International Tourism Management. He did a short stint with Walt Disney World in Florida as

cultural representative of the UK. "It was a fantastic experience. The organisation encourages learning and development."

Neel is a strong believer in giving back to the community. During Covid, he set up Cake4Kindness to alleviate loneliness and social isolation for those experiencing homelessness. "We work with communities in London, bringing people to bake together and distribute cakes to rough sleepers and through shelters in London. Food is an amazing connector of people, so we find this gives an opportunity to connect and talk to people going through homelessness," he says.

A trustee of St Luke's Hospice, Neel supports various charities through fundraising initiatives. He says, "If there are things you believe in or have a passion for, you will always make time for them."

Past fundraisers have included the Couch to London Marathon in six months and a Tough Mudder assault course. He says, "Every two years, I do a fundraiser that allows me to step out of my comfort zone. The activities (apart from the London Marathon) were all completed with others in a similar position to me. Together we worked to overcome our fears to achieve these goals, which was mesmerising. I'm planning another fear factor activity this year. You'll have to watch this space for that!"

For more information about the work of the NACC and how to get involved visit www.thenacc.co.uk



**NEEL
RADIA**

Raising awareness of the importance of good nutrition and hydration in care settings and growing membership are some of the aims of Neel Radia, the recently appointed National Chairman of the National Association of Care Catering (NACC). Prior to his appointment, he was the lead for the NACC's Meal on Wheels campaign.

He says "The sector is facing many challenges and as a lead organisation for caterers working within the care sector, we need to keep banging the drum to ensure our members' voices are heard and equally represented in a sector where good nutrition and hydration is still not given the podium it deserves."

This is the fourth term Neel has served as National Chair. "The challenges we had when I was last chair (2013-2019) have got deeper and then Covid hit the industry hard. The biggest issues are lack of funding and recruitment. But I'm confident that as a team and industry, we will overcome them successfully."

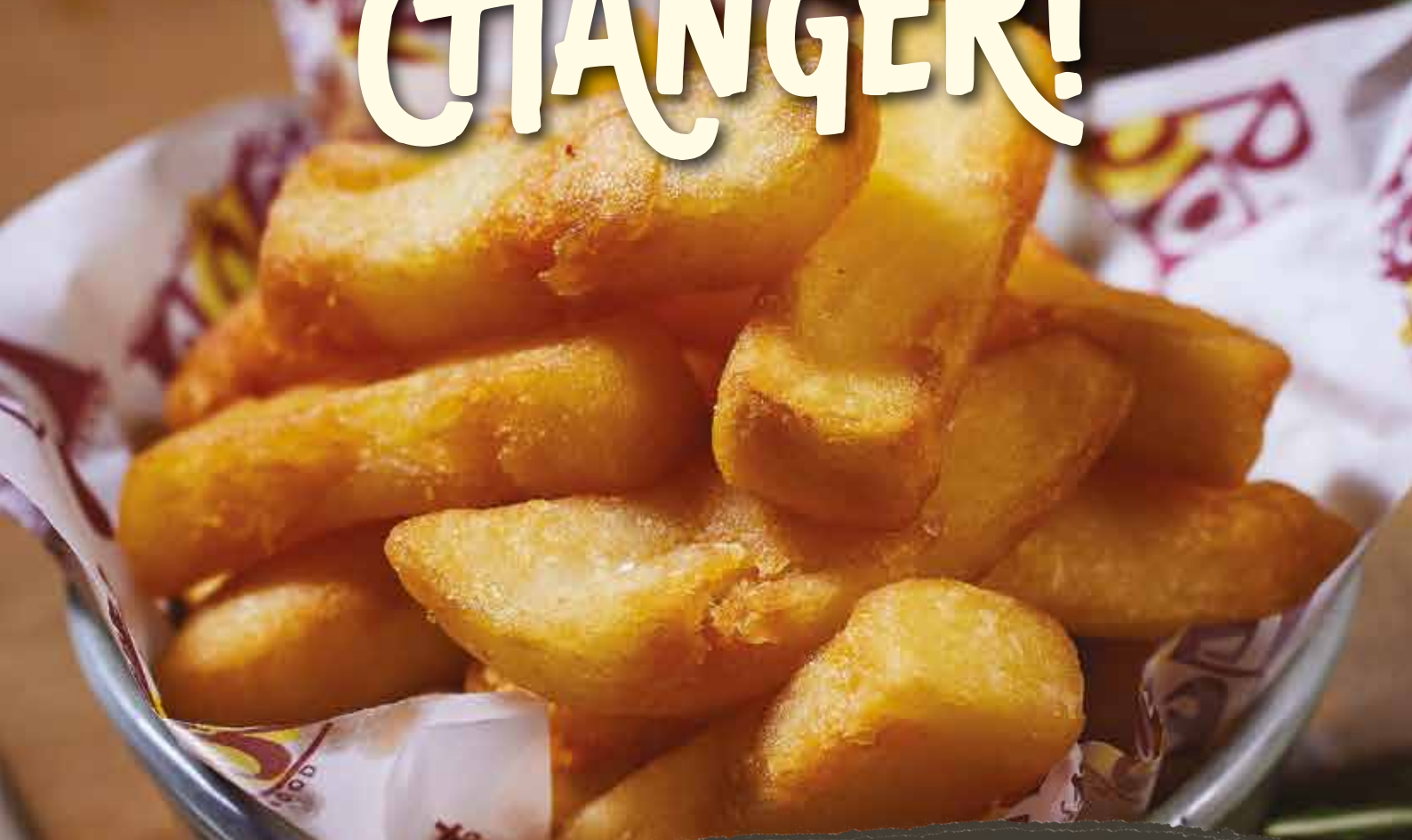
Training and development have played an important role for the NACC over the years and this year, the NACC is continuing this for members and the wider sector. Neel adds, "By training and sharing best practice, we can work together to raise the awareness of good nutrition and hydration and ensure we are offering the best to our service users."

"By training and sharing best practice, we can work together to raise the awareness of good nutrition and hydration and ensure we are offering the best to our service users."



Our Menu Signatures

GASTRO TRIPLE COOKED THE GAME CHANGER!



OUR CLOSEST TO
CHEF MADE

With a rustic chunky cut and triple cooked style, these Menu Signatures Gastro Chunky Chips add instant premium appeal to your menu and have been rated as indulgent as chef made chips by consumers.*

*Source: Opinium research 2022

To discover more visit: www.mccainfoodservice.co.uk

FOR FURTHER INSPIRATION

 @McCainFoods_B2B

 @mccainfoodserviceuk

www.mccainfoodservice.co.uk



FOODSERVICE
SOLUTIONS

HEADS^{UP}

Thriving in Hospitality:

Employee Wellbeing Packages for Small Businesses

In the hospitality sector, demands on employees can be both physically and emotionally taxing. In an environment where employee turnover rates can be notoriously high, investing in the wellbeing of your workforce can be a game-changer. As such, employers are taking the topic of mental health more seriously now than ever before, but some businesses are taking this one step further by forming a wellbeing package to attract and retain staff.

A wellbeing package is a set of initiatives, benefits, and policies designed to enhance the overall health, happiness, and job satisfaction of employees. A robust wellbeing package not only attracts top talent but also fosters a positive work culture, enhances employee morale, and ultimately contributes to higher productivity and customer satisfaction. While you may feel that this activity is

best suited to larger organisations with bigger budgets, small to medium-sized businesses can also create impactful initiatives without breaking the bank. Some cost-effective examples include:

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

Implementing a flexible scheduling system that allows employees to request preferred shifts or time off in advance empowers

staff to balance work and personal commitments, reducing stress and enhancing overall job satisfaction.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Offering online training modules or workshops on stress management, communication skills,

and career development not only helps employees grow professionally but also demonstrates a commitment to their long-term success.

HEALTH PROGRAMMES

Organising challenges or fitness classes during breaks can help employees shake off stress and boost endorphins. Simple exercises or mindfulness activities that promote physical and mental health can be achieved by collaborating with local fitness instructors or wellness experts to build a set of exercises to follow.

RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION

Implementing a peer recognition programme where employees can nominate their colleagues for outstanding performance can build self-esteem and improve teamwork. Recognition doesn't always have to come with a hefty price tag; a simple "Employee of the Month" announcement or a box of chocolates can go a long way.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES (EAPs)

Establishing partnerships with local counselling services to provide confidential support for employees facing personal or work-related challenges can be offered at a discounted rate or as part of a subsidised EAP.

To ensure the effectiveness of your programme, gather feedback through anonymous surveys,

focus groups, or regular check-ins with your employees. Monitoring key metrics such as employee turnover rates, absenteeism, and overall job satisfaction can also provide valuable insights into the success of your wellbeing package.

Simple exercises or mindfulness activities that promote physical and mental health can be achieved by collaborating with local wellness experts

By fostering a culture of care and support, even with limited resources, employers can create a workplace that not only attracts top talent but also retains and nurtures it for long-term success.





TURN THE ORDINARY INTO THE EXTRAORDINARY

Nachos are as popular as ever, featuring in over **80% of pubs & bars in the UK***. But how does your business stand out from the crowd? Let **Santa Maria's range of sauces, rubs, spices and toppings** elevate your offering. Our inspirational recipes feature a **3-step build** which is operationally simple to deliver, no matter how skilled your team are...

*Source: Lumina Intelligence Menu Tracker, April 2022

SANTA MARIA FOODSERVICE IS NOW



It's as easy as 1, 2, 3...

1 Base



Place warm tortillas in a bowl.

2 Toppings



Pour over the cheese sauce and add the jalapeños.

3 Garnish



Top with salsa and guacamole.

This recipe is so simple and tastes great. Just like all our recipes it can be made using 3 simple steps, **1. Chips, 2. Toppings and 3. Garnish**. It's so easy anybody can make them, so whether you already have Nachos on the menu and you want to elevate them or you are looking at introducing them, contact us to find out more.

PRODUCT NAME	PACK	WEIGHT
Tortilla Chips Salted	x12	475g
Mexican Salsa Roja	x4	2.3KG
Sliced Green Jalapeños	x12	500g
Cheddar Cheese Sauce	x1	3KG
Frozen Guacamole	x6	1KG



NO MORE NACHO CLUMPING WITH OUR CHEDDAR CHEESE SAUCE



CONTACT US FOR A **FREE RECIPE BROCHURE**

Discover how our range of products can elevate your Nachos

VISIT US AT PAULIGPRO.COM/UK/NACHOS

Knorr
PROFESSIONAL

CATER FOR ALL WITH THE UK'S NO.1 GLUTEN FREE GRAVY*



**NO
ALLERGENS
TO
DECLARE[^]**



Scan here for recipe
inspiration and more

*Aggregated UK wholesaler value sales 52 WE 28/03/2022. ^This product does not contain allergenic ingredients which require declaration under EU regulation 1169/2011 (Annex II)



Unilever
Food
Solutions



FUTURE
50
FOODS



Tiny TASTEMAKERS

MASTERING CHILD FRIENDLY CATERING

Whether shy or outgoing, there's no doubt about it – children know what they want, or more importantly what they don't want. As a caterer, this makes life very challenging, especially when you need to encourage a child to eat healthily. From playful presentations to innovative recipes, our expert panel this month share strategies to make nutritious options irresistible for the youngest diners in restaurants and schools alike.



BEN DODARO

Executive Chef at Maria and Enzo's and Enzo's Hideaway, Disney Springs, Walt Disney World

I think generally, at least three dishes is a good starting point. Children have different tastes and palates, so you want to have an option that can appeal to anyone. There are plenty of ways to make healthy options for a kid's menu – use fresh ingredients and offer diverse side options. For example, we offer fruit salad as an alternative to fries at Maria and Enzo's. One way to encourage children to make healthy choices is to offer smaller versions of items on the adult menu – making them feel more grown up! For example, at Space 220, we offer a Galactic Salmon on the kids' menu, presented similarly to the salmon on the adult menu.

**KAREN GREEN***Marketing Manager,
Aimia Foods*

When it comes to younger children in particular, the look of a dish usually significantly influences the choice made, particularly when it comes to desserts which are all the more appealing when created with colour.

Available in strawberry, chocolate and mixed berry, Moosebreak powders can be quickly transformed into large quantities of mousse by simply adding water. What's more, it has specifically been developed for foodservice environments, allowing school caterers to offer simple yet appealing dessert options that contain all of the nutritional goodness of fresh skimmed milk.

For extra nutrition and colour, why not allow children to top their Moosebreak mousse with their favourite fruits? From blueberries to bananas, pineapple to pomegranate, children will love being able to choose the taste and appearance of their dessert.

**SEAN COWDEN***Chef Trainer, London
Early Years Foundation*

Use your imagination and the fruit you have to create a fruit cake made entirely out of fruit.

Making a fresh, no bake dessert not only tastes fresh and delicious, but proves popular with children. They contain no refined sugar, are gluten free and contain lots of fresh, healthy fruit. They are also a great way for children to experiment with new, unusual fruits such as star fruit and Sharon fruit. A watermelon cake is one example, using nothing but fresh melon and seasonal fruit for decoration.



Grilled chicken with bulgur tabbouleh salad with tomatoes, parsley and olive oil



Fish tacos with mango salsa

**KIERAN TURNER***Chef Manager,
Angus Grill + Larder*

Making a great dish for children starts with using fresh produce. Far too often you

see bigger businesses in hospitality buy in frozen produce for a kid's menu which is more cost effective but with not a lot of nutritional value at all. Most menus I have put together I normally have five to seven options on it. I would also always have things like veg sticks and fruit bowls on there as most kitchens will have these ingredients just sitting there and having them as an option also helps move the stock and help minimise food wastage.

Whilst we still use chips on our menu for children, we always have boiled potatoes in the fridge that can easily be reheated if you want something healthier. On the menu at the grill, we have grilled chicken instead of nuggets. Much healthier and normally with beans or peas but we do get the odd veg stock side for kids.

**FRED MCGINTY***Chef & Catering Manager,
York House School*

Engagement is the most important tool in encouraging children to make healthy

choices. Asking for their input and feedback, whilst praising them when they do, helps them, in time, to choose more healthy options.

We like to keep dishes quite simple, with ingredients that are separated and can be added together by choice, rather than mixed together from the start. For example, our beef stew is meat and gravy, and we always give the children the option to add in carrots, parsnips, peas etc. separately. This helps to avoid the child feeling overwhelmed and gives them the option to add the vegetables to their dish rather than waste the entire meal simply because they are put off by one element.

**IESHA MULLA***Parenting expert, and
founder of Parental Questions*

A great kid's dish balances nutrition with appeal. We can't ignore the fact that children

are often picky eaters. So, an ideal kid's dish would contain a mix of protein, carbohydrates, and fruits or vegetables but presented in a visually enticing way. We might incorporate bright colours, interesting shapes, or even a fun theme. I recommend a variety of around five to seven options on a menu. This range gives children a sense of autonomy to choose, without overwhelming them with too many decisions.

Replacing dishes with low nutritional values with healthier alternatives can be an exciting culinary adventure for kids. One option is baking homemade fish fingers using white fish fillets. The fillets can be coated in breadcrumbs with a mix of herbs for added flavour, then baked until crisp. Served with a side of sweet potato fries, which are high in beta carotene and fibre, this makes for a nutritious and child-friendly meal."

**JOEL CARR***Development Chef,
Young's Foodservice*

Nothing hits the mark quite like a fish finger sandwich! To be honest, even the adults will be

tempted by this classic. As well as delicious fish fingers, the bread, roll or even wrap is key to this menu option. Fresh bread or a crispy roll, even a sweet brioche stuffed with Young's Foodservice's fish fingers is an easy, quick and tasty option. Add shredded carrot, pickles, caramelised onions, relish, avocado... the list of extras is endless and will make a fish sandwich the star of a menu.



DANIEL MATCHAR,
*Licensed Social Worker
and Therapist*

A great kid's dish should be visually appealing, incorporating colourful and fun elements to attract their attention. Menus should offer a variety of

options, catering to different tastes and dietary needs, with about five to seven choices.

Replacing traditional options like chicken nuggets with baked versions using whole grains can be a healthier alternative, such as a quinoa rainbow salad. This dish is not only packed with nutritious whole grains but is also visually vibrant, aligning perfectly with our concept of making healthy eating appealing to children. The salad features a mix of colourful vegetables and quinoa, a versatile and child-friendly whole grain. To encourage healthy choices, involve children in the selection process, perhaps through interactive menus or creative names for nutritious dishes. It's about making healthy eating a fun and engaging experience for them.



BECCA BENNING
*Functional Health Coach,
Nutrition Counsellor & Teacher*

It is very powerful for children to understand the basic elements of a meal in simple terms. For example, explaining the roles of macronutrients,

and where they are coming from in a given menu option. A jacket potato with tuna mayo contains proteins (mostly coming from the tuna), which are building blocks our bodies use for growth and repair. It also contains carbohydrates (mostly coming from the potato) which are our main source of energy and fats (mostly coming from the mayo), used for energy and as building blocks to help cells function and communicate - for instance in the brain."



ROSS MACTAGGART
*Deputy Catering and Events Manager,
Downe House School*

It is important to make the presentation on the counters/serving areas appealing and inviting and prepare dishes in a way that children prefer i.e.

sliced pepper rather than diced and be mindful of our captive audience when using herbs or spices in dishes such as curries.

Menus also need to be written in a way so that everyone can understand from Year 7 to Year 13 using simplified language. Our pupils like continuity and familiarity – we see this when they have the opportunity to create a menu for their House Menu Day and we also incorporate this in menu planning. We use seasonal produce whenever possible; the girls always enjoy fresh British strawberries and seasonal produce. Food is very emotive, and our pupils are here more than at home. So, we like them to have some of their home comforts, so we cater for the needs of cultural and religious as well as specific dietary needs.



TEAR AND SHARE ROAST SHOULDER OF LAMB, ROSEMARY INFUSED BISTO GRAVY, SEASONAL VEGETABLES AND ROAST TRIMMINGS

INGREDIENTS

5kg shoulder of lamb (2 shoulders on the bone)	2 bay leaves
1 bulb of garlic, cut in half	8 whole black peppercorns
4 onions, roughly chopped	500ml red wine
4 carrots, roughly chopped	2tbs redcurrant jelly
4 sticks of celery, roughly chopped	1.5ltr lamb stock
2 leeks, roughly chopped	
4 large sprigs of rosemary	

Prep: 20 minutes
Cook: 3½ - 4 Hours
Serves: 10

FOR THE ROSMARY INFUSED BISTO GRAVY

5kg shoulder of lamb **1.5lts of cooking liquor from the braised lamb**
120g Bisto For Meat Gravy Granules (Ve)

METHOD

- Pre-heat the fan oven to 160°C.
- Season the lamb shoulders well with salt and pepper.
- Place a large frying pan on a high heat and add a drizzle of olive oil, seal the shoulders all over until golden brown.
- Place the lamb into a deep roasting tray.
- Using the same frying pan, on a medium heat fry all the veg, herbs and peppercorns for 3-4 minutes. Add this mix to the roasting tray.
- Place the pan back on the heat, pour in the red wine and simmer for a minute or two. Pour over the lamb and vegetables in the roasting tray.
- Add the stock and redcurrant jelly to the roasting tray. Cover with tin foil and cook for 3.5-4 hours until the lamb is tender.
- Remove the foil and let the lamb rest in the braising liquor for an hour.
- Transfer the lamb onto a parchment lined roasting tray and set aside.
- Strain the cooking liquor into a saucepan and skim all the fat off the top (keep this fat, as you can use it on your roast potatoes for extra flavour).
- Use the liquor to make the **Bisto Gravy**. To serve, the gravy is poured over the dish from a gravy boat/jug.
- Serve with roast potatoes and seasonal vegetables.



ALLERGENS

Please check the ingredients declaration on the products you use making this recipe. This recipe may contain: Soya, Celery, Dairy, Sulphur Dioxide,

Always on hand to help.

X @ f www.premierfoodservice.co.uk

THE MARKETPLACE

KEEPING YOU UP-TO-DATE ON PRODUCTS AND SERVICES WITHIN THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY



DÉLIFRANCE INNOVATES WITH LAUNCH OF NEW INTENSELY DELICIOUS CINNAMON AND BRIOCHE BUNS

Leading baked goods manufacturer, DéliFrance, has launched two premium, ready-to-bake viennoiseries – the Cinnamon and Brioche Buns.

The perfect marriage of tradition and innovation, the Cinnamon Bun boasts a classic shape infused with a popular filling to offer an ever more refined experience for consumers. The Brioche Bun is versatile and can be used as a sandwich carrier, served with a sweet filling and topping, or enjoyed on its own.

By catering to both convenience, taste and texture, the ready-to-bake pastries not only help baked goods operators delight their customers,

but also alleviate pressures from a staffing and scheduling perspective.

Stéphanie Brillouet, marketing director at DéliFrance said: "The nostalgic Cinnamon Bun and remarkably versatile Brioche Bun are a testament to our dedication to pushing the boundaries of convenience, taste and texture. Ultimately, consumers continue to seek indulgence and convenience in the morning and throughout the day, so we're delighted to expand our viennoiserie range with products that deliver on both of these fronts."

The products are now available via DéliFrance from national wholesalers. For more information visit: www.delifrance.com/uk



Vegan Dishes Made Easy

The creamy taste you love, now plant-based



Visit the website for recipe inspiration and more

📍 www.philadelphiaprofessional.co.uk

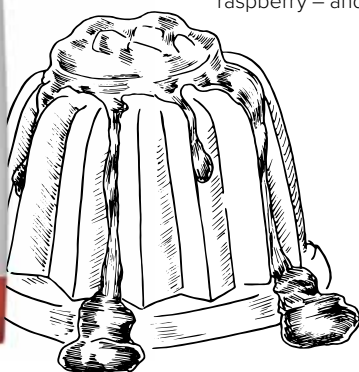
Premier Foods launches McDougalls Vegan Jelly to help operators provide inclusive menus



Premier Foods has launched McDougalls Vegan Jelly into the foodservice sector, which has been officially certified by the Vegan Society.

With research showing that around 1.4 million people in the UK are following a vegan diet*, this addition to the McDougalls range offers an inclusive dessert product for chefs to work with.

McDougalls Vegan Jelly comes in three flavours—orange, strawberry and raspberry – and has a two-



hour setting time. Unlike traditional jellies that require a combination of boiling and cold water, McDougalls Vegan Jelly simplifies the process by utilising 100% boiling water, making it a convenient choice for busy kitchens.

Sarah Robb, foodservice marketing manager at Premier Foods Foodservice said, "In response to the growing demand for increased vegan offerings in out-of-home dining, McDougalls vegan jelly provides operators with an inclusive dessert option, reducing the need for multiple products. Vegan jelly, being such a versatile ingredient can be enjoyed on its own, topped or set with fruit, or incorporated into other desserts with other ingredients, such as Angel Delight."

For further information and recipe ideas visit <https://www.premierfoodservice.co.uk>

"IN RESPONSE TO THE GROWING DEMAND FOR INCREASED VEGAN OFFERINGS IN OUT-OF-HOME DINING, MCDUGALLS VEGAN JELLY PROVIDES OPERATORS WITH AN INCLUSIVE DESSERT OPTION, REDUCING THE NEED FOR MULTIPLE PRODUCTS."

* <https://www.finder.com/uk/uk-diet-trends>

BREAK NEW GROUND *with*



**NEW
PRODUCT
MIX!**

MORE choice of  **The No.1 OOH Confectionery brand for the break occasion***

AVAILABLE NOW

*Sales Out. Confec + CBB's, 52w/e 1st Oct 2023
For illustrative purposes only.



PULL IN A CROWD

Get ready for a summer of sports with Pringles



Contact local
CRG Wholesaler
for more
information.

CHANCE TO
SCORE A
BIG
SCREEN
SYSTEM worth
£10,000*



TO ENTER:
Buy 4 cases and
upload your proof
of purchase here*



Find out more and view the
range at [kelloggsuantage.co.uk](https://www.kelloggsuantage.co.uk)

Kellogg's®

TM, ®, © 2024 Kellogg Europe Trading Limited.

*18+. UK Only. Open to Foodservice Operators, including Pub & Bar business operators in UK. Promotion opens 00:01 GMT on 13/03/2024 and closes 23:59 BST on 08/05/2024. Purchase required. To participate in the promotion, purchase four cases of Pringles 12 x 40g (Sour Cream & Onion, Original, Salt & Vinegar, Texas BBQ or Paprika flavour) from a UK wholesale stockist, visit www.pringles.com/pringlesfootball to complete your details and upload the receipt to be entered into the prize draw. The winner will be drawn at random from all valid entries received during the promotional period and verified by the promoter. Prize: 1 x installation of audio and visual equipment at the business premises worth up to £10,000. Max 1 entry per business. Internet access required. Retain receipt. For further details and full terms and conditions see www.pringles.com/pringlesfootball. Promoter: Kellogg Marketing and Sales Company (UK) Limited

Is Your Restaurant TOO NOISY?



**RICHARD
MCKEARNEY**

Richard McKearney, MSc PhD, is an Audiology Adviser at national hearing loss charity RNID. Richard has been an audiologist since 2016 and has experience working in the NHS as a clinical audiologist and as a clinical researcher in audiology.

WHY IS LOUD MUSIC IN RESTAURANTS A PROBLEM?

Excessively loud music in restaurants can make it challenging to have a conversation for all of us. This is especially true for the one in five people in the UK who are deaf or have hearing loss. Due to dim lighting, challenging acoustic environments and a lack of deaf awareness among staff, deaf people and people with hearing loss may avoid eating out, leave early, or opt for a takeaway instead.

WHY DO YOU THINK VENUES HAVE THE MUSIC TURNED UP SO LOUD?

Music can add atmosphere to a dining setting. When people are chatting in a noisy place, they have to raise their voices in order to be heard, which in turn

increases the background noise even more. This phenomenon is known as the Lombard effect. Some venues may feel that their music should be heard at a certain level above the chatter, and so end up setting the volume too loud, which in turn forces people to raise their voices to compete with the music.

According to the HSE, 8% of adults have a significant hearing loss and need intervention – that's 300,000 adults in Ireland.

DOES IT AFFECT STAFF AS WELL AS CUSTOMERS?

Repeated or prolonged exposure to loud sounds can cause hearing loss and tinnitus. Staff may be more at risk than customers, as they are regularly exposed to the noise for longer periods of time. Employers should be aware of the risks to staff from continued exposure to loud noise and follow the appropriate regulations.

ARE RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS AND PUBS LOSING BUSINESS AS A RESULT?

If people have an unpleasant experience in a restaurant, where they are unable to hear a

conversation over the background noise, or cannot lipread due to dim lighting, they may decide not to return to the venue again. RNID's Speak Easy report found that nearly 80% of people we surveyed have left a restaurant, café or pub early because of the noise.

WHAT CAN RESTAURANTS DO TO COUNTER THE PROBLEM?

Whilst bare floors and walls, open kitchens and exposed ceilings might be popular in some restaurants, the sound waves in the room will bounce off hard surfaces creating a loud, echoey environment which makes listening harder. Venues can consider using softer materials to absorb sound such as carpet, tablecloths, and curtains. Installing partitions into open plan spaces

can make it easier for people to hear their own conversation. Creating designated quiet spaces can allow people to choose to sit in a quieter part of the venue, making it easier to enjoy conversation without the interference of background noise. Reducing other sources of background noise can also help. For example, you could consider using quieter air conditioning, extractor fans and other equipment to reduce distraction. Improving the lighting can help with communication for those who rely on lipreading and need to see people's faces.

You can find out more about making your venue accessible at <https://rnid.org.uk/>.





Lisa

MARLEY

PRIVATE CHEF, NUTRITION COACH

Plant-based private chef and certified nutrition coach, Lisa Marley has a wealth of experience under her belt. Having trained at Ashburton Cookery School in Devon and as pastry chef in London, Lisa spent time delivering face to face plant-based cooking training to local authorities and MAT caterers before branching out. This month she will be representing England in a new TV series of The World Cook, on Amazon Prime.

When did your passion for cooking start?

My love for food started young, although my initial connection was more about eating than cooking. However, it was only later in life, after a decade-long career as a TV presenter, that I decided to channel my passion for food into a more hands-on pursuit. I found comfort and creativity in baking at home. What started as a therapeutic outlet soon blossomed into a passion, leading me to train as a pastry chef at Westminster Kingsway College. I set up a company with my husband, Nathan, called The Cocoa Box, dedicated to teaching chocolate-making workshops and cake decorating classes. We were Lastminute.com's biggest seller. We closed the company after 10 years, just before the lockdown. By that time, I was fully plant-based.

How have you honed your skills over the years?

My culinary skills have evolved through a combination of formal training, hands-on experience, and a genuine passion for the art of cooking. My formal training provided me with a solid foundation in techniques, flavour profiles, and kitchen management. I studied culinary skills at Ashburton Cookery School. I regularly attend workshops and courses. I love learning.

Have you always focused on plant-based dishes?

Despite my relatively recent transition to a plant-based lifestyle just six years ago, it has proven to be the single most transformative

decision for my well-being, the environment, and the welfare of animals. Embracing a plant-based diet has not only elevated my personal health but has also aligned my values with sustainable living and ethical choices.

What excites you about your job?

It is the diverse elements that it encompasses. The prospect of travel introduces me to new culinary landscapes, allowing me to explore and integrate regional flavours into my plant-based repertoire. Television work adds an exciting dimension, providing a platform to share my passion and culinary expertise with a broader audience. Cooking for people brings an immediate sense of gratification, as I see the joy and satisfaction that plant-based dishes can bring too.

What lessons have you learned?

One of the most significant lessons I've learned throughout my culinary journey is the understanding that learning is a lifelong process. The world of food is ever-evolving, with new techniques, ingredients, and trends constantly emerging.

Moreover, I've come to recognise that food is inherently emotive and can be a divisive topic. People often have deep-rooted connections to their culinary traditions and dietary choices, making it essential to approach discussions with respect and an open mind. In navigating this, I try to avoid judgement and preachiness, recognising the personal nature of people's relationships with food.

As a champion of reducing waste in the kitchen – what activities do you now implement instinctively that other chefs should adopt?

I instinctively incorporate practices such as utilising food scraps for soups, stocks and composting, mindful portion control to minimise leftovers, and creative repurposing of ingredients to limit waste. I encourage fellow chefs to adopt these habits, fostering sustainability without compromising culinary excellence.

What tips do you have for chefs who want to achieve a carbon neutral kitchen?

Where possible, use local and seasonal ingredients to reduce the carbon footprint associated with transportation. Supporting local farmers and producers not only lowers emissions but also promotes community sustainability.



Implement rigorous waste reduction practices by composting organic waste. Scrutinise kitchen processes to minimise food waste and consider repurposing or donating excess food to further reduce environmental impact.

Replace single-use items with reusable alternatives, such as cloth napkins, glassware, and stainless steel straws. Embrace sustainable packaging and consider offering incentives for customers who bring their reusable containers.

Having worked within the education sector, what are the biggest challenges facing education catering?

The education sector grapples with multifaceted challenges, including the soaring cost of living, budget constraints, and persistent misconceptions about plant-based food. Escalating living expenses make education less accessible, exacerbating socio-economic disparities. Budget restraints impede schools' ability to innovate and provide quality resources. Moreover, misconceptions about plant-based diets hinder efforts to promote healthier, sustainable food choices among students, impacting overall well-being and environmental sustainability. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, involving policy changes, financial support, and enhanced education on nutrition.

Is the inclusion of plant-based dishes in education on the rise?

Yes, the inclusion of plant-based dishes in education is on the rise. Initiatives like the ProVeg UK School Plates Programme contribute significantly to this trend. The program encourages schools to offer more plant-based options, promoting health and sustainability. As awareness grows regarding the benefits of plant-based diets, there's a positive shift towards incorporating these choices into school meal plans, reflecting a broader societal move towards more sustainable and nutritious eating habits.

You currently work with clients in the health sector – how have you adapted your practice to meet their needs?

In my capacity as a plant-based chef specialising in crafting meal plans for clients in the health sector, I have integrated my practice with the expertise of top nutritionists. Understanding the pivotal role nutrition plays in health, especially for individuals navigating illnesses such as cancer, I collaborate closely

with leading nutrition professionals to ensure that my plant-based meal plans align with the latest scientific insights and meet the specific dietary needs of each client. This collaborative approach allows me to create personalised, nourishing plant-based meals that not only exceed the standards of culinary excellence but also contribute significantly to the overall well-being of my clients.

“Travel introduces me to new culinary landscapes, allowing me to explore and integrate regional flavours into my plant-based repertoire.”



WHAT WILL YOU CREATE TODAY?

Giving a great depth of flavour just like a kitchen-made jus, saving you valuable time and money in the kitchen



Scan Me for Samples



To discover the latest products, trending recipes and samples delivered to your front door:
www.majorint.com

part of Givaudan

* Includes products that do not contain any food allergens as designated by EU Legislation

FINAL TEAMS SET TO BATTLE IT OUT FOR



Student Chef Glory

With spring on the horizon, the competition season is about to begin and the eagerly awaited finale of the Country Range Student Chef Challenge will soon be here.

Taking place on the 26th March in the Live theatre at the Hospitality, Restaurant and Catering Show at London's ExCel, the final will see five teams battle it out for eternal glory plus a major boost to their career prospects.

Following the initial round of paper judging in January headed by Chris Basten, Vice President of the Craft Guild of Chefs, the judges have deliberated and decided on the worthy teams of culinary students, who will now compete for the Country Range Student Chef Challenge crown.



The full line up of colleges for this year's final includes

- CORNWALL COLLEGE
- LOUGHBOROUGH COLLEGE
- NEW COLLEGE DURHAM
- STOKE COLLEGE
- WESTMINSTER KINGSWAY
- WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE

“It’s fantastic to make the final once again and the team are all very excited.

We’ve had some great practice sessions so while I’m sure there will be some nerves on the day, I have every confidence in the team.” Darren Creed, Culinary Lecturer at Loughborough College

On the day of the grand final, the teams will have to recreate their menus in front of the Craft Guild of Chef judges and a live audience. Four covers of each course will need to be prepared, cooked and presented to a high standard within only 90 minutes.

The food culture and traditions of a local area are heavily influenced and entwined by its history, landscape, people and weather so the focus for this year’s competition is “Love Local” and challenges teams to showcase the best of their local area to the below criteria:

STARTER

Vegetarian - can contain dairy and eggs.

MAIN

Seabass, one whole (suggested weight 1.2kg) can bring gutted but must be filleted as part of the competition. Served with a mollusc or bi-valve garnish, a starch, and British seasonal vegetables.

DESSERT

Chocolate - at least 50% of white or dark chocolate must be used or a combination of both.

This year's challenge has an added twist!

To celebrate the rebranding of Country Range, each team's menu needs to include five Country Range kitchen staples.

“In the lead up to the grand final our team’s dishes were featured on the menu at our student-run restaurant on campus. There is no better way to iron out mistakes and perfect a dish than to make it for paying customers, every day for four weeks under intense conditions. Hopefully it will give our team the edge in the final but whatever happens, it’s been an incredible learning experience.” Stuart Ascott, Lecturer at West Suffolk College

★ Not just an optional extra, college cookery competitions play a vital role in developing student chefs and preparing them for roles in professional kitchens. Given the labour shortages in the industry, competitions are key to attracting new talent while ensuring they can grow and succeed.

“It’s the first time we have made it to the final of a prestigious competition like the Country Range Student Chef Challenge so it’s going to be a brilliant experience for the students and the support team. The menu really highlights some special local producers and ingredients, so we just want to make them and our local area proud.” Lynn Mitchinson, Lecturer at New College Durham





WAYS TO USE

Pear Halves in Light Syrup



Believed to have originated in the Caucasus region around 4,000

years ago before spreading to Asia and Europe, the mighty pear was revered by the Ancient Greeks and dedicated to the goddess Hera, who represented women and fertility. Still packing a powerful punch of vitamins, fibre and nutrients today, pears continue to be an important and tasty part of a healthy diet. Country Range Pear Halves in Light Syrup are sourced from Italy and are juicy, sweet and refreshing whenever they're called upon. Ultra versatile, they're delicious served on their own but are a fabulous ingredient for all manner of pies, crumbles, cakes, turnovers, tarts and sauces.

ABOUT: MARK FLETCHER, CHEF LECTURER AT LOUGHBOROUGH COLLEGE

With over 30 years working in the industry as a chef, Bath-born Mark Fletcher has held a variety of head chef and executive chef roles across Michelin star kitchens and 5-star hotels and resorts around the UK. In 2022, Mark won the Banqueting & Event Chef of the Year Award from the Craft Guild of Chefs for his work at Church's Mansion Bar & Restaurant in Nantwich. With a passion for supporting the next generation of cooks and a vast experience of judging various cooking competitions such as The North West Young Chef of the Year, The Springboard Future Chef and The UK Young Restaurant Team of the Year, Mark joined Loughborough College to help prepare its talented team for the next instalment of the Country Range Student Chef Challenge.



1/ Cracking crumble

Perfect for a pear crumble but I like to balance out the sweet syrup with a little lemon juice and some spices such as vanilla. I then add the pears to create a time-saving filling. Adding nuts to the crumble topping is also a must for texture.

2/ Tasty tarts

A Pear and Almond Tart is sublime simplicity personified and always takes some beating if done right. Think of a classic frangipane topped with sliced pears before baking. Then use a little syrup for the final glazing.

3/ Magically mulled

Mulled poached pears are another favourite of mine which can be tweaked in a variety of ways throughout the year. Take the syrup from the can and flavour with cinnamon, nutmeg and even a few sprigs of thyme. Add red wine, simmer it away, then pour back over the pears and allow to mull away. The pears will take on a lovely burgundy colour and can be used as a garnish for a chocolate dessert or rice pudding. Or simply serve them warm with a dollop of vanilla ice cream.

4/ Caramelised & spiced

I've historically made these Spiced Caramelised Pears as a garnish for a celeriac cheese pithivier. Simply infuse the syrup with cider vinegar, fresh ginger, star anise, cinnamon, coriander seeds, peppercorns, and a pinch of chilli flakes. While still warm, pour the syrup back over the pears and allow the flavours to develop. They keep well in a Kilner jar and just need to be seared in a hot pan to caramelize before serving as a garnish.

5/ Sweet or savoury tarte tatin

A great dish that can work as a starter or a sweet – you just need to plate up slightly differently. Prep the pear halves, cover neatly with puff pastry and cook your tarte tatin as normal. For a savoury dish, serve with blue cheese, walnut, celery and chicory salad with a little honey and mustard dressing. For sweet – serve with a suitable ice cream or custard.

Country Range Pear Halves in Light Syrup
Pack Size: 6 x 2.65kg >>



Kara

FOODSERVICE BAKERS



Best Selling

Premium Floured Baps

Did you
know...



Vegan main
dishes carry a price
premium across the
majority of channels.*

*Data collected from Lumina Intelligence, 2023



CATERING MANAGER AT LISTER HOUSE

Brian Preston, catering manager at Lister House, Royal British Legion, was crowned NACC Care Chef of the Year 2023. He started his catering career in the local fish and chip shop before moving to the Army Catering Corps at 16. After working in Germany in a number of roles, the highlight of his career was working and living at The Tower of London for the Governor General and Keeper of the Keys. Leaving the Army, his next post was executive head chef at the Harrogate Hotel before starting up his own business providing hand-made patisserie and desserts to local hotels, restaurants and caterers. After 23 years, he sought a new challenge at Lister House.

Why did you choose the care sector as your next challenge?

I didn't know much about the care home sector when I took the job. I thought it would be a semi-retirement post, but I was wrong. The care industry grabs you and pulls you in. It makes you innovate, change, and push yourself. It's always a challenge, but very fulfilling.

What do you like best about your current role?

The best aspect is the residents and staff I work with. The residents are amazing, very much a captive audience, which can make the job harder but far more rewarding. The staff are wonderful individuals and every day is different. It's a humbling experience, but so gratifying.

How did it feel to win NACC Care Chef of the Year in 2023?

Fantastic! To be judged by top industry chefs and come out on top proves that there is life in the old dog yet! You are never too old to learn. It was such an enjoyable experience and I have made some great friends. I loved every minute.

Tell us about Royal British Legion's Lister House, the food and the philosophy behind it?

My philosophy is that the residents 'fancy what they fancy, when they fancy it'. There is no pre-ordering as the dining room is open 12 hours a day, with 24-hour food availability. Residents may only fancy egg and chips, so make it a good egg and chips! Sad as it is, the meal you serve may be the last one a resident has, so you need to make it the best you can.

Would you encourage young people to enter the care home catering sector?

Yes I would. The care home sector is an ever-growing market with greater expectations. It offers such a wide variety of food compared to a restaurant and the hours you work give a home/work life balance. None of this is mentioned at catering colleges. You should be able to do a care home catering placement from college as with other career paths. Quality locally sourced produce, cooked well and finished with a resident's smile and an empty plate. That's what it's about.

How do you relax?

DIY – I've done five house renovations, now I'm working on my children's properties. Reading, painting, drawing, growing my own fruit and vegetables in our garden. Annoying my wife of 41 years, without whom I wouldn't be where I am today and of course, cooking, my true passion. I'm just embarking on my daughter's wedding cake.

FRESH NEW LOOK SAME GREAT TASTE



STOCK UP NOW

CHICKEN BALTI

SERVES
30

INGREDIENTS

- 3.5kg diced Country Range Chicken Breast Fillets
- 5 tsp Country Range Ground Paprika
- 2.25kg Country Range Chopped Tomatoes
- 2 ½ tsp Country Range Ground Turmeric
- 2 ½ tsp Country Range Ground Cumin
- 2 ½ tsp Country Range Ground Coriander
- 2 ½ tsp Country Range Chilli Powder
- 5 Country Range Dried Bay Leaves
- 100ml Country Range Olive Pomace Oil
- 8 tbsp garlic puree
- 5 tbsp grated ginger
- 1kg onions, finely diced
- 5 red peppers, deseeded and chopped
- Bunch of fresh coriander

METHOD

1. Heat the oil in a pan and gently fry the onion for 2 minutes. Add the chicken and cook until browned.
2. Add the garlic, ginger, spices, diced peppers, and tomatoes.
3. Bring to the boil and cook slowly for at least two hours, longer if possible.
4. Serve in a large bowl garnished with freshly chopped coriander.

Bold New Approach Reaps Rewards at Oldershaw School

The quality of the food and drink has dramatically risen since Andrea Thomson took over as Catering and Hospitality Manager at Oldershaw School in Wallasey.

Having successfully worked for one of Oldershaw's feeder primary schools, Andrea Thomson was tasked with completely overhauling their food and drink philosophy, taking catering back in-house. The school's first in-house menu launched in April 2022.

"Previously, the menu seriously lacked variety – it was pretty much cheesy bean baguettes and pizza. Now we scratch cook wherever possible and have three exciting concepts – all offering freshly prepared dishes. Our restaurant focuses on classics like fish and chips and roasts, our deli provides sandwiches, snacks and salads, and our newly built Dr John's restaurant provides the ultimate, on-trend street food, whether it's smoky pulled pork, nachos, burritos, katsu curry or burgers."

"We will always try and offer a different cake each day. The Country Range Crème Cake Mixes are essential for this as they can be used in so many different ways. The Country Range Cookie Pucks are another great product."

Minnie, my next in line makes this chicken balti recipe from scratch using an assortment of Country Range spices and store cupboard ingredients.

It's one of the top sellers and a great example of how the right dishes can nourish, while also ensuring kids are excited about mealtimes and have a positive relationship with food.

Scan here
to read
more



MINNIE, ANDREA
(CATERING AND HOSPITALITY
MANAGER) DAISY, STACEY.

FOOD & INDUSTRY *news*

HOSPITALITY

Bisto launches guide to help pubs create an unforgettable Easter and Mother's Day

With marketing ideas including set-course packages and spin-the-wheel discounts, activity inspiration such as bingo nights and scavenger hunts as well as a series of menu ideas and upselling tips, this guide is set to be a valuable tool for pub operators.

Sarah Robb, foodservice marketing manager at Premier Foods Foodservice, says, "The guide is filled to the brim with ideas and inspiration, to give operators the tools they need to create an unforgettable season of experiences and celebrations for their customers."

5

EASTER MENU IDEAS

1. SHARING ROASTS – Add theatre to your Sunday roast experience by offering a sharing platter, complete with bottomless gravy.

2. CHOCOLATE INSPIRATION – Don't just save chocolate for puddings, use cacao in a rub for beef brisket or dark chocolate in a chilli.

3. GET BUNS ON SEATS – Offer some indulgent burger specials and appeal to younger audiences with bunny shaped patties.

4. NOSTALGIC DISHES – Feature fun dishes with fond memories to raise smiles and sales. Try a Bakewell Trifle or a 'posh' jelly and ice cream.



5. VEGGIE DISHES WITH VA-VA-VOOM! – Make seasonal vegetables the stars of your dishes for diners who choose plant-based options. Try a wild garlic and nettle risotto or spring vegetable vol-au-vent.



To download a copy of the Easter Guide, scan the QR code



FREE POS BUNDLE WORTH £50

WITH EVERY FREEZER DEAL

Wide range of POS available including menu cards, pavement signs, flags & flavour sticks



**FREEZER COST*
£1090
+VAT**
*Includes free stock value of £1125

Gelato GOLD
Ice Cream SOLD HERE

For more information contact Country Range Group member wholesaler
www.suncreamicecream.com

Freezer deal only valid for the Gelato Gold branded IC300SCE + canopy (pictured) from Tefcold Refrigeration. Free stock quantity is 9 free tubs of Gelato Gold ice cream. Free stock value is based on 50 scoops per 5 litre tub, sold at £2.50 per scoop. Freezer deal pricing correct at time of print & offer is subject to eligibility, to check for eligibility contact Suncream Ice Cream.

FOOD WASTE

FARESHARE CALLS ON BUSINESSES TO TURN SURPLUS INTO SMILES!

FareShare, the UK's biggest food waste charity, is continuing its campaign to help turn more surplus food into meals for people in need, with the help of food and drink retailers, manufacturers and foodservice operators.

The food given will be distributed to 8,500 frontline charities and community groups across the UK, reaching a wide variety of those in need including school breakfast clubs, older people's lunch clubs, homeless shelters and community cafés. Each week, FareShare is able to provide enough food to make almost a million meals for vulnerable people.

Speaking about the initiative, Simon Millard, Director of Food at FareShare has said, "We know that surplus food can be put to good use – it's what we do. In 2022-23, 91% of the food we provided was excess that otherwise would have gone to waste. By signing up, your business's seasonal surplus can make a huge difference to the lives of people across the UK."

To sign up and prevent good food from going to waste, food businesses are encouraged to visit <http://fareshare.org.uk/winterfood> or scan the QR code and fill in the form – FareShare will do the rest.



TURN
SURPLUS INTO
Smiles!



"IN 2022-23, 91% OF THE FOOD WE PROVIDED WAS EXCESS THAT OTHERWISE WOULD HAVE GONE TO WASTE. BY SIGNING UP, YOUR BUSINESS'S SEASONAL SURPLUS CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE THE LIVES OF PEOPLE ACROSS THE UK."

✓ No artificial colours or flavours

✓ Source of B Vitamins & Iron

NUTRI-GRAIN®

Make every day **balanced**

Fruity flavours wrapped up in a satisfying bar, for your customers on the move.

SCHOOL FOOD COMPLIANT

On Offer
Contact your Country Range Group wholesaler for more details



Find out more at
kelloggsuavantage.co.uk

Kellogg's®

*Nutri-Grain is a source of vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, B9 & B12 and Iron. Vitamin B1 contributes to normal energy-yielding metabolism. Enjoy as part of a healthy and balanced diet and lifestyle. *School Food Compliant UK only, excluding Scotland for Rice Krispies. Serve as part of a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle.

HEINZ
ESTD 1869

PROFESSIONAL MAYONNAISE

NEW

**ONE QUALITY INGREDIENT
TO MEET ALL YOUR CULINARY NEEDS**



CARRY FLAVOUR



FRY



HEAT STABLE



BLEND



MIX & HOLD



**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT
YOUR HEINZ REPRESENTATIVE**

The Country Club



EXCLUSIVELY FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE COUNTRY RANGE GROUP

Spring Clean **CYBER-STYLE!**

It's that time of year again when our thoughts turn to the big spring clean. To help keep your home ship-shape all year round, we're giving away a Lefant M213S Robotic Vacuum Cleaner.

This is a compact, quiet super-slim design robotic vacuum with powerful suction that can lift embedded dust and hair with ease and delivers a perfect cleaning performance to medium pile carpet and hardwood floor.

At 3.07" in height and only 11" in width, the vacuum can reach tight spaces and clean under furniture efficiently. Plus, it's easy to control either from the Levant app or even using Alexa or Google Assistant. Choose from five cleaning modes and 3 levels of suction and away it goes!

This clever robot even self-charges, with up to 150 minutes runtime and it automatically returns to its charging point when the cleaning cycle is complete or the battery gets low. And if you're concerned about it getting stuck, never fear, as its infrared sensors help it to stop bumping into things or getting stuck, even preventing it from falling down the stairs!

For your chance to win, send an email titled 'Robot Vacuum' along with your name, contact details and the name of your Country Range Group wholesaler to competitions@stirupmagazine.co.uk.



- Tangle-Free Pet Owner Friendly
- Flexible Slim Body but Big Capacity
- Smart App
- Long Runtime & Large Coverage

WIN
a Lefant
Robotic Vacuum
Cleaner

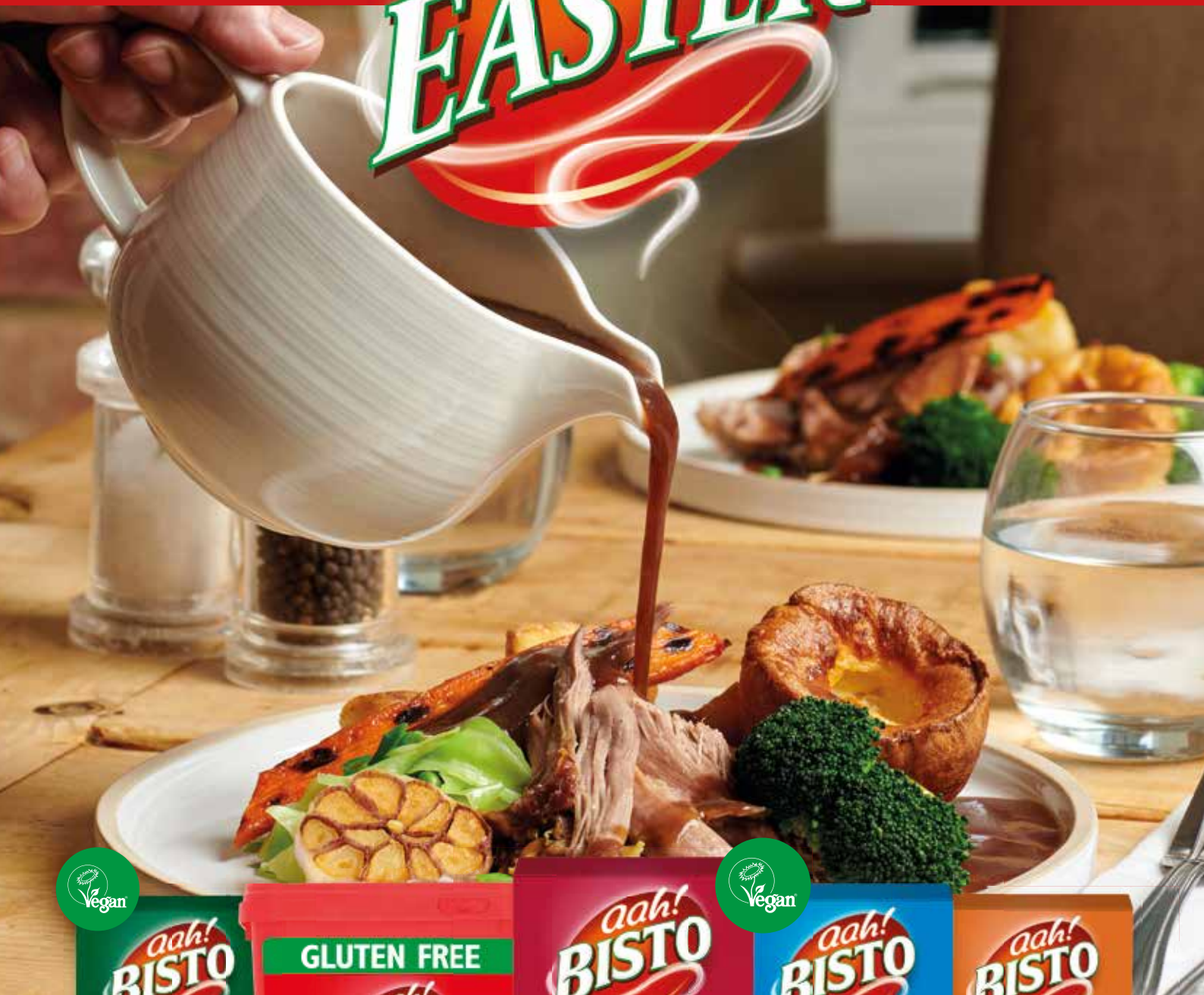
- Voice Control
- Auto Charge
- 4 Cleaning Mode



3200Pa

Closing date for the competition is 31st March 2024. All winners will be notified by 30th April 2024. 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.stirupmagazine.co.uk/about

aah!
EASTER



Always on hand to help.



www.premierfoodservice.co.uk