

THE COUNTRY RANGE GROUP MAGAZINE FOR CATERERS
NOV/DEC 2024

Stirrup

Spotless Standards

The role of cutting edge cleaning products and equipment

Vegan Vibes

TRENDS AND NEW
PLANT-BASED
DISHES



Ingredients

The festive season is upon us and we have plenty of inspiration for your last minute menu and specials board, including some new showstopping Country Range desserts, plus some alternative Christmas turkey ideas in development chef Paul Dickson's Making Ends Meet feature.

Looking ahead to the New Year, our Melting Pot feature includes a wealth of expert advice to inspire your menu planning for Veganuary and don't miss our hospitality feature about catering in sports venues.

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

The Stir it up team



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



OUR EDITORIAL PARTNERS...



ALLERGEN REFERENCES

VG - Vegan V - Vegetarian



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Fresh FROM THE KITCHEN



A favourite cuisine on most menus, the food of India is rich, diverse and flavourful. Whilst classic biryani and tikka masala are not going anywhere in terms of popularity, diners are also keen to explore regional fare, as well as global twists and mashups. We explore the latest trends.



Readers' lives

NAME: Matthew Salisbury

BORN AND RAISED: Basingstoke, Hampshire

JOB TITLE: Head Chef

PLACE OF WORK: Sandymouth Beach Café & Tearoom, Bude

BIG TARGET FOR 2025? To keep improving as a chef and growing the business. We started some themed evenings this year, which worked extremely well so I'm looking forward to expanding this in 2025.

WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU WERE EVER GIVEN AND BY WHOM? One of my first head chefs told me you get out what you put in. It's the same for everything in life.

WHAT'S YOUR TIP TO CUT WASTAGE IN THE KITCHEN? Be careful with your ordering. Don't over order, rotate stock and run specials to use up any stock.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE COUNTRY RANGE PRODUCT AND WHY? The Southern Fried Chicken

Goujons are magic. We use them in one of our popular wraps with a sweet chilli mayo.

WHAT'S YOUR DREAM JOB? To one day own and run my own restaurant.

WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO BE A COOK/CHEF? I started as a pot washer at 13 and was asked to fill in making sandwiches when they were short one day. I think I pretty much knew then that I could do this and more to the point – enjoyed it.

WHAT TRENDS DO YOU SEE TAKING OVER IN 2025? I expect street food from all corners of the world will continue to be on-trend. Tacos, bao buns and Korean style wings are exciting me at the moment.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE DISH TO COOK? A classic paella loaded with the finest seafood.

Country Range
Southern Fried
Chicken Breast
Goujons
Pack Size: 5 x 2kg



REGIONAL CURRIES – Curry styles vary greatly across India due to cultural differences, geography, local ingredients etc. and diners are increasingly aware of the diversity of cuisines on offer. Try offering some regional specialities such as Kerala fish moilee, Goan vindaloo or Chettinad pepper chicken alongside the traditional favourites.

VEGETARIAN – Perhaps one of the most vegetarian-friendly cuisines, with the abundant use of chick peas and lentils along with flavoursome spices, Indian menus can be created with little need for meat, and carnivores would be as happy as vegetarians to tuck in and not be lacking.

BREADS – When it comes to the all-important sides to mop up all of those delicious spices, think beyond the naan with regional varieties such as paratha, pav, kulcha, pashti, idli, dosa, appam...the list goes on.

SHARING – Indian cuisine lends itself perfectly to sharing and grazing. The traditional thali plate epitomises this, but sharing menus can be devised to suit all tastes and dietary requirements, with a range of curries, side dishes, starters and dips.

GLOBAL TWISTS – Some of the most exciting developments in Indian cuisine globally involve chefs creating bold fusion dishes and mashups. British twists include sticky toffee gulab jamun or a full Indian fry-up with Goan sausage, an American-Indian example is fried chicken with makhani sauce, tamarind slaw and tandoori tater tots, whilst other mashups include Mexican desi tacos and Italian pizza with jalfrezi paneer and green chutney.



Aloo Paratha

From thefoodpeople trends report 2024.

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[THISISCHOC.COM](https://thisischoc.com)

* CGA X Callebaut Bespoke Insights

PURE INDULGENCE

CHOCOLATE YULE LOG

These mini chocolate yule logs are ideal for catered events or a Christmas-themed afternoon tea. The Yule Log is traditionally a dessert to share, but these miniature versions are the perfect individual treat that not only look great, but taste great too.

Cooks CALENDAR

November



1ST NOVEMBER – WORLD VEGAN DAY

Add some extra flavour to your World Vegan Day recipe this year with this Garden Gourmet Vegetarian Tuscan Bean Soup.

3RD NOVEMBER – WORLD SANDWICH DAY

Why not try something different and spice up your traditional sandwich with this Torta Mexican Sandwich recipe from Opies.

9TH NOVEMBER – BRITISH PUDDING DAY

As the days grow colder, this Country Range Bread and Butter Pudding recipe becomes the perfect cosy dessert to warm you up.

11TH – 15TH NOVEMBER – NATIONAL SCHOOL MEALS WEEK

There's no better way to bring students together than with a delicious slice of pizza—everyone's favourite lunch-time treat! Why not try this delicious Maggi Traffic Light Pizza Recipe!



December

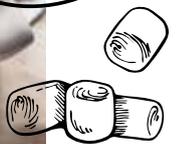


13TH DECEMBER – NATIONAL HOT CHOCOLATE DAY

Wake me up before you cocoa! Celebrate National Hot Chocolate Day with a warming cup of DeZaan's easy-to-use cocoa mix, which is crafted from 100% single origin cocoa from Ghana, and combines roasted cocoa, vanilla and caramel notes with a velvety chocolate finish.



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



A duo of festive ideas

1. Embrace the warmth of the festive season with this comforting Country Range Mulled Honey and Apple drink recipe, infused with fragrant spices and a touch of sweetness.
2. This festive season, add a touch of sparkle to your celebrations with this stunning Bejewelled Christmas pudding recipe from Opies.



Thanks to MAGGI®, GARDEN GOURMET®, Opies, DeZaan and Country Range for their recipes.



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THE TRUE BLACKPOOL SEASIDE EXPERIENCE

Langwood Hotel, Blackpool

With its coast, scenery, piers and entertainment, Blackpool has been one of the jewels in our tourism crown since the late 1800s when the Tower was erected and donkey rides began. Still a buzzing centre of seaside fun, food and frolics, the Langwood Hotel, based on the promenade to the north of Blackpool Tower, leads the way when it comes to offering the quintessential seaside experience.

Run by Srinivasan Arunachalam and his wife Manika Thapa, who have over 30 years' experience working in the hospitality industry, the award-winning Langwood Hotel has 26 beautiful rooms and offers first-class food, hospitality, bingo, theme nights and events throughout the year. Born in Chennai before moving to the UK in 2002, Srimi earned his stripes working in a variety of hospitality roles including the finance department for the Hilton Group hotels.

Harnessing their experience and knowledge, Srimi and Manika took over the Langwood Hotel in 2006 and fulfilled a shared dream. The next step was to make it work as a business and nearly 20 years on, the duo's success can't be doubted. A family business in every sense of the term, Srimi runs the front-of-house,

while Manika is head chef in the kitchen. Their children, Semyon and Semina, aged 8 and 5 respectively, even help out by chatting, singing and dancing with the guests.

"We're proud of the family feel that the hotel has built and I believe that is a crucial reason why we get so many return customers and have a loyal list of regulars," says Srimi. "It's a home away from home for many. Guests know they will always get a friendly welcome and that a lot of love is put into the preparation of the rooms, food and entertainment."

In the past, coach holidays were often the popular choice but with customers looking for a more personal approach, Srimi offers a door-to-door service for guests from across the north of England. "The personal touch goes a long way and rather than having to worry about a coach ride and luggage, we're able to take all the hassle away and get our guests here and back at their leisure. All they have to worry about is seeing the sights and having a good time."

"Everything is made in-house, fresh on the day with a lot of care and whether it's our Fish 'n Chips, pies or roast dinners, every plate has that homemade look, taste and feel."

While Manika is an incredible cook with a fantastic repertoire showcasing the best of Asia, the Langwood's clientele and customers come back time and again for the British classics served up by the seaside. "We occasionally have a few continental and Asian dishes on the menu but there are plenty of Indian restaurants nearby and our guests insist on the real British eating experience. Everything is made in-house, fresh on the day with a lot of care and whether it's our Fish 'n Chips, pies



Above (left to right)
Langwood Hotel's Christmas themed dining room
Exterior view of the Langwood Hotel

Below (left to right)
Semyon Arunachalam testing lasagne and fries
Sunset sea view from Langwood

or roast dinners, every plate has that homemade look, taste and feel. We recently re-introduced afternoon teas with homemade cakes, sandwiches and sweets. It's proving a big success and will be something we look to develop further ahead of Christmas and in 2025."

"We use a wide range of Country Range products in the kitchen and bar, including the Apple Juice, Orange Juice, Jam, butter and the incredible selection of dried herbs."

For more information or to book, visit - <https://langwoodhotel.com/>





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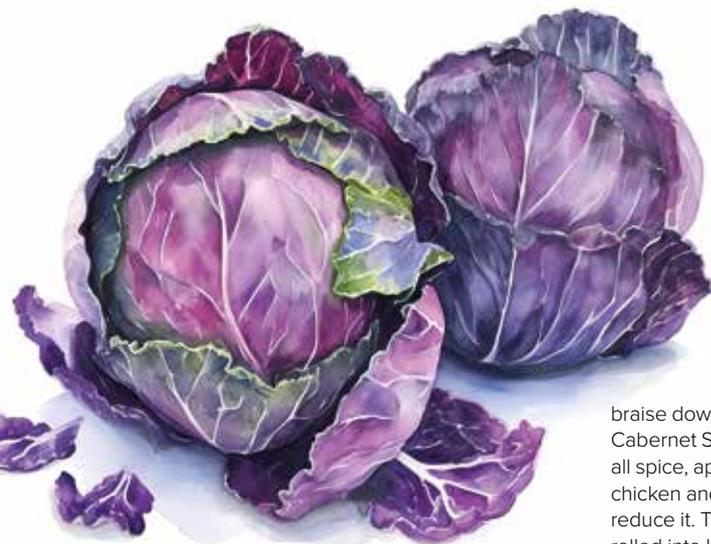
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serving suggestions

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IN SEASON:

Red Cabbage



1/ ROLLED AND BRAISED

For Christmas, we braise down the red cabbage in brown sugar, Cabernet Sauvignon vinegar with cinnamon, all spice, apple and orange. We also make chicken and mulled wine stock and really reduce it. The two get mixed together and rolled into long cylinders using cling film. It's chilled and then sliced and looks great.



A mainstay of European cuisine for centuries, especially during the winter months, red cabbage is a cultivated variety of cabbage that is thought to have existed in the Middle Ages. Roasted, fried in butter, in the wok, fermented, pickled or raw, its colour and crunch can light up any plate and palate.

ABOUT JOEL STUBB, HEAD PASTRY CHEF, THE BULLS HEAD, HOLYMOORSIDE

Joel Stubb only started out in the kitchen four years ago but has quickly made an impression, honing his skills under head chef Mark Aisthorpe at The Bulls Head in Holymoorside. Helping to put the village on the foodie map, Joel has been a key ingredient in the restaurant's recent success including winning three AA Rosettes and most recently making it into the Michelin Guide.



www.bullshheadholymoorside.co.uk

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

Whether it's sauerkraut, kimchi or other fermented and pickled treats, excess cabbage leaves can always be utilised. They're also brilliant in stocks and soup so wasting any part of the cabbage is criminal.



3/ CROISSANT

I love using leftover turkey, chicken or ham on a croissant with pickled red cabbage or braised red cabbage and then cheese. Throw it in the oven until the cheese melts. Delicious!



2/ RED CABBAGE FLUID GEL/KETCHUP

Juice the cabbage and add sugar and vinegar and whatever spices you like. Boil with 2% agar agar, pour onto a tray to chill on a baking sheet. Cut into squares and blitz down and you get this amazing clear fluid gel/ketchup.



4/ SALADS & SLAWS

Raw is one of my favourite ways to eat red cabbage as it's great in numerous salads and slaws. My go-to winter slaw is with spiced red cabbage, apple and peanut.

5/ BBQ RED CABBAGE

Cut into quarters and place on the BBQ, low and slow for an hour, until lightly smoked (we use apple wood). Then wrap up in baking paper with some cider and place back on the BBQ for another hour until it's soft. Glaze in apple bacon fat and finish on the bbq on each side to give a lovely char and make them nice and sticky.



Also In Season



Brussels Sprouts



Squash



Satsumas



Brill



Pheasant

Naughty AND NICE!

As you're dotting the i's and crossing the t's ahead of the Christmas stocking period, here's some last minute menu inspiration and don't forget our new frozen sweets. As stunning on the eye as they are pleasing on the palate, the new additions, alongside our versatile Cranberry and White Chocolate Cookie Pucks, are festive menu maestros.

**SIGNATURE BY COUNTRY RANGE
SALTED CARAMEL AND
CHOCOLATE TART**
1 x 14 Pre-portioned

Irresistibly tempting and terrifically tasty, this sublime Signature tart sees rich salted caramel topped with ganache in an all butter pastry case. The tart, which serves 14 portions, is finished with a mirror glaze and generously topped with Belgian chocolate pieces.

Signature
by Country Range

PERFECT SERVED WITH
SIGNATURE BY COUNTRY
RANGE DAIRY ICE CREAM

*Signature by
Country Range
Salted Caramel Tart*



COUNTRY RANGE FRUITS OF THE FOREST CAKE
1 x 16 Pre-portioned

The perfect cake centrepiece, our Country Range Fruits of the Forest Cake is made with three layers of forest fruit-filled marbled sponge, separated with a fruit and buttercream filling and finished with a decorative buttercream coating and dark chocolate shards.

COUNTRY RANGE BANOFFEE CAKE
1 x 16 Pre-portioned

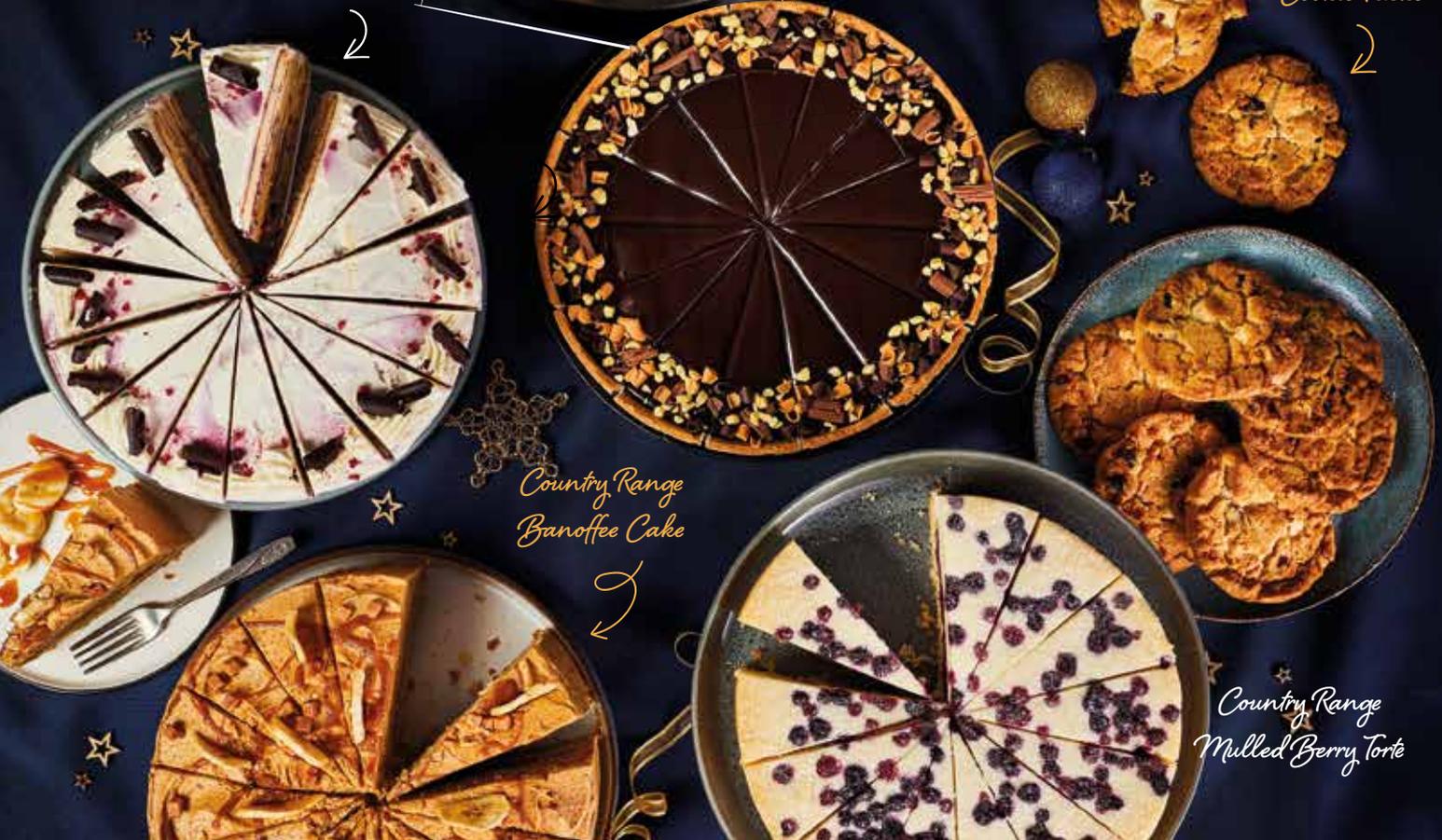
A cake twist on the classic and much-loved Banoffee Pie dessert, our Banoffee Cake sees two banana infused sponges separated by a toffee buttercream and a rich toffee sauce before being finished with a banoffee coating, toffee drizzle and dried banana pieces.

COUNTRY RANGE MULLED BERRY TORTE
1 x 14 Pre-portioned

Another seasonal showstopper, our Country Range Mulled Berry Torte sees a silky vanilla sponge topped with mulled berry gel and white chocolate mousse before being sprinkled with mixed berries and finished with a dusting of sweet snow.

*Country Range
Cranberry and
White Chocolate
Cookie Pucks*

*Country Range
Fruits of the Forest Cake*



*Country Range
Banoffee Cake*

*Country Range
Mulled Berry Torte*

NEW



FESTIVE PUCKS

COUNTRY RANGE CRANBERRY AND WHITE CHOCOLATE COOKIE PUCKS
90 x 50g

Creating a cookie revolution across catering, our Country Range Cookie Pucks have been one of our most successful innovations to date, so we're delighted to expand the range once again ahead of Christmas. This new Cranberry and White Chocolate dough is packed with chunky white chocolate pieces and cranberries, so we expect them to be a Christmas number one in the cookie charts this festive season.

This new addition to the range has inspired us to get in the kitchen and experiment with our new and classic cookie pucks flavours to create some new recipes this season. We'd love to see if you give these a try!

To make our new Cranberry and White Chocolate Cookie Pucks extra festive, why not try topping with Country Range Cranberry Sauce and a melt-in-the-mouth meringue?

The warming spices in our Speculaas Spiced Cookie Pucks are perfect for the colder months. Try creating these decadent cookie cups with a filling of your choice and topped with a thick layer of chocolate.

Pistachio is everywhere at the moment, so jump on this trend with this irresistible pistachio cream which is the perfect topping for our White Chocolate Cookie Pucks.



Speculaas Cookie Cups
Pistachio Cream Topped Cookie Pucks



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



"WE USE COUNTRY RANGE PRODUCTS THROUGHOUT OUR MENU, AND THEY ARE A CHEF'S DREAM, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE'RE UNDER INTENSE PRESSURE TO FEED A LOT OF PEOPLE, WITHOUT THE LUXURY OF TIME." HEAD CHEF, BARROW-IN-FURNESS

Roll with it

It's party season and with that comes buffets, canapés and sharing platters. For a classic crowd-pleaser that looks great on the plate, try these festive sausage rolls which are stuffed full of Christmas ingredients, ensuring that nothing goes to waste in the kitchen!



FOOD & SPORT

The Perfect Match!

The pace is fast at sports clubs where large numbers of fans need to be served quick 'grab and go' food in a very short time, but there is more than meets the eye with these venues. Covering substantial overheads by developing events for non-match days such as private parties, weddings and conferences, requires a totally different catering approach.

Filling up at football stadiums

At Blackpool Football Club, the catering service ranges from a 'pie and pint' in the concourse to formal menus in the hospitality lounges. In total, there are 18 outlets including kiosk bars, hospitality lounges, private boxes and an onsite hotel.

The most popular food for footie fans is the meat and potato pie, although steak is catching up. Adam Marriott, the club's Food and Beverage Manager, says "We've introduced a Chicken Balti pie, which proved popular at the end of last season, and we also offer cheese and onion pie and sausage roll. For our busiest games, we expect to serve around 12,000 to 14,000 people across all our outlets."

Adam says, "Including a decent cup run, we played at home on 30 occasions last season out of a full calendar year. In reality, including league matches and cup games, only 24 to 25 home games are played in a season. That's why we have focused on expanding our non-match day events business over the last year." This has included ramping up the club's social media campaign and appointing a venue sales manager. Their efforts have reaped rewards, Adam and his team cater for approximately 200

conferences per year, as well as 30 weddings. With a packed program, the team now often find their biggest issue is the scarcity of operational days. He says, "Catering for these events is tailored according to the client's budget. A wide range of options is available, culminating in our highest cost formal menus."

Another club also branching out is Stoneham Lane Football Complex. It is the biggest site run by Hampshire FA and home of AFC Stoneham and Eastleigh & District Mini Soccer League (EDMSL). The EDMSL runs every weekend in the football season bringing in 6,000 to 8,000 guests. The site has a café and bar area with a fully operational kitchen. The menu includes sausage rolls, steak pasties, bacon and sausage baps, burger meal deals, hot and cold beverages, snacks, cakes and ice cream.

"The best sort of food for spectators is quick 'grab and go' items so they can take their food and drink out to the edge of the pitches"

The most difficult aspect for the catering team is that league matches kick off at the same time. Chris Cummings, Facility Operations Assistant, Hampshire FA, says, "This creates a burst of trade which comes in "waves" – there's a half time rush when there's 15 minutes to serve all spectators of the main game before the second half starts. With the smaller leagues, our busiest moments are when a group of ten games all finish at the same time and then all the spectators head to the café."

The top seller is the Proper Cornish 10in sausage roll and last year, 25,000 were sold.

"We provide food for 40 AFC Stoneham players at the end of home games such as curry, chilli and burgers," says Chris. "For other teams that use the site, they usually go to the café after training where we always have hot food on offer."

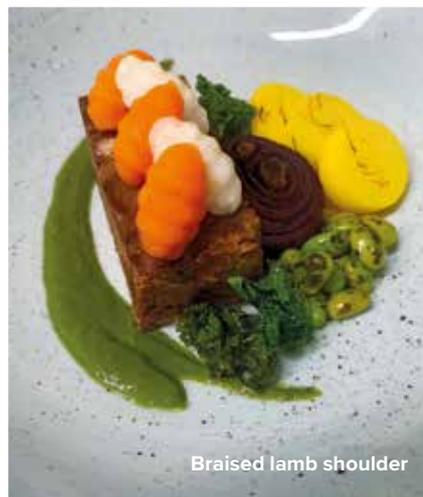
Weekend trade mainly comes from parents of young footballers, aged 8 to 12, from the EDMSI. "The best sort of food for spectators is quick 'grab and go' items so they can take their food and drink out to the edge of the pitches and watch their child play football."

Children's birthday party packages are available, offering four options. They all include an hour of play on the 3G pitch and a party in one of the meeting rooms. A hot food buffet is served which includes burgers, chips, chicken nuggets and hot dogs. Some packages include novelty Hampshire FA medals and trophies, a new Nike football, 'pick and mix' and a cake.

Stoneham Lane Football Complex also works with Saints Global, part of Southampton FC. "They host a group of children from different countries and use our facility to provide coaching sessions. My team prepares hot or cold lunches for them to eat here or take away with them to the next part of their itinerary. We've had groups from all over the world."



Proper Cornish 10in sausage roll



Braised lamb shoulder



KINGSWOOD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

Mains

Hand pressed beef burger

Melted cheddar, lettuce, tomato, baker's bun and club house chips

Crispy buttermilk chicken burger

Lettuce, tomato, bun, homemade burger sauce and spiced chips

Fish and chips

Homemade curry sauce or tartare sauce

Mushroom bourguignon pie

With flash grilled tomato, club house chips and caramelized onion sauce

Desserts

Dessert of the day

Cheese board for one

Three scoops of ice cream, chocolate sauce

The menu includes breakfast, brunch, sandwiches, ciabattas, light bites, salads and kids' menu.

Dining with a view

In Tadworth, Surrey, Kingswood Golf & Country Club, offers a wide range of catering services as it has hotel rooms, function suites and a club house restaurant open to the public. In addition, it provides food and drink for its 600 golf club members.

Manisankar Kalaiselvan, executive head chef, Kingswood Golf & Country Club, says "The food choice of the golfers differs according to the event which makes golf clubs an interesting place to work. If a member or a visitor plays a round of golf, they usually prefer something quick such as a bacon bun before they start and perhaps a burger and pint after the golf. It's different for a charity golf day, when they prefer a traditional English breakfast in the morning, a cold buffet for lunch and a three-course plated meal for dinner. In the case of a Captain's dinner, where there are visiting golfers, we serve a fine dining experience."

In the case of a tournament, the catering offering includes breakfast and a one course meal such as battered fish and chips after the round of golf. For a county or national tournament, there will be a breakfast menu, a Halfway Hut serving food and drink, a lunch buffet for the players as well as a formal black tie dinner for the prize presentation.

An important part of the operation is the events side of the business. On average there are four a day, with up to 150 covers for each. Various menu packages are available for weddings, conferences, anniversaries, birthdays or wakes. Manisankar says "We offer a vast choice of menus, although I do enjoy creating bespoke menus for private dinners."

In the club house restaurant, the five course Sunday carvery is popular among local residents, with an average 120 covers every Sunday. This includes a soup station and a cold buffet offering seafood, cold meats and salads. For the main course, the chefs carve roast meat in front of the guests, which is served with the traditional accompaniments.

BLACKPOOL FOOTBALL CLUB MATTHEWS SUITE HOSPITALITY MENU

Main Course

Slow cooked lamb

Sautéed thyme potatoes, buttered petit pois, roasted carrots, red currant and rosemary jus

Dessert

Treats of the Golden Mile

Biscuit Crumb "Sand", Blackpool Rock Dust Ice Cream, Candy Floss, Miniature Donut, Marshmallows and Tangerine Coulis

Half Time

Cheese Plate

Celery, Grapes, Crackers, Chutney

Vegetarian/Vegan/Dietary options available

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A SECTOR FIRST *for care home caterers*

Delivering a positive mealtime experience, menu planning and design, screening for malnutrition, how to cater for special diets. These are just some of the topics covered in Care Home Digest, the first menu planning and food services guidelines for care homes.

The publication aims to support care homes in providing appropriate food and drink for residents and are invaluable for care homes without access to a dietitian to help with menu development. Within its pages, caterers receive guidance on how to ensure menus include varied and balanced meals that will tempt residents to eat.

The digest, which is free to download, has been produced by the Food Services Specialist Group and Older Specialist Group of the British Dietetic Association

“Caterers receive guidance on how to ensure menus include varied and balanced meals that will tempt residents to eat.”

(BDA) in collaboration with the National Association of Care Catering (NACC).

Helen Ream from the BDA, also a member of the NACC, says, “Until now there hasn’t been any food service or menu planning guidance for care home teams. It can be challenging meeting both the mealtime preferences and nutritional needs of residents, especially as many have special dietary requirements and/or are at a greater risk of malnutrition. These guidelines offer information to chefs and caterers to help plan their menus and service to meet the needs and preferences of residents.”

Caterers can use the document as a ‘toolkit’, navigating to specific areas of interest. It also contains two checklists which enables teams to review their services, understand what they are doing well and identify areas for development. Helen adds, “The checklists can also be used to provide evidence to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and other regulators to demonstrate how they are meeting the

nutrition and hydration needs of their residents.”

Neel Radia, chair of the NACC, comments that mealtimes may be the highlight of many residents’ days and something they look forward to in their daily routine. “Food can enable residents to express who they are and what is important to them. The Care Home Digest brings together the latest evidence to support staff on a vast range of topics including how to deliver a positive mealtime experience, dining room environment, meal preparation, menu structure, menu content, special diets and unusual preferences. It will become the ‘go to’ tool for caterers to use when reviewing their food service and menus. We hope these guidelines will be widely used and become a nationally trusted resource.”

In the chapter on special diets, there is invaluable information and advice on how to cater for residents with dementia, dysphagia and those at risk of malnutrition. Extensive meal ideas are given for vegetarian and vegan diets, religious and cultural diets and for those with food allergies.



To download a free copy of Care Home Digest visit

<https://www.bda.uk.com/practice-and-education/nutrition-and-dietetic-practice/care-home-digest.html>



Andy Cullum, National IDDSI Craft Trainer, says, “This guide is essential reading for care home caterers and chefs. It demonstrates how to provide individualised meals for residents according to their needs and preferences. As a chef, I believe this publication will change the way we think about hydration and nutrition for our residents. It demonstrates how to serve a nutrient dense diet tailored to each resident. The old approach was to load dishes with cream and butter. The guide advises giving them these ingredients in moderation. What we need to aim for is protein without saturated fats. It includes easy to follow nutritional break-down of meals such as a continental breakfast.”

Nestlé

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HFSS
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MASTERING MENUS FOR

Top marks at school

Analysing the performance and profitability of each dish on your menu can help improve the financial performance of your school catering service. It enables you to identify the most profitable dishes, the ones that might be dragging your financial results down and those that just need to be tweaked.

These are some of the points made by Judy Roberts, who runs RightProductRightPlace in her presentation on “Menu Engineering” to TUCO members earlier this year. She says, “Menu engineering is the process of evaluating menu pricing and item placement to increase profitability per customer. It helps to determine which dishes to feature and guides customers to purchase what you want them to buy.”

Judy recommends analysing menus to highlight opportunities for reformulating recipes to increase vegetable content and to reduce meat or other expensive ingredients. Judy says, “If you use a cheaper cut of meat, then you’d also need to factor in a potentially longer cooking time, so the way the recipe is put together may change. In this way, recipe innovation is encouraged as new ideas are tried out.”

Accurate sales data will show you the popularity of each dish. “Hopefully this data will come from the tills,” says Judy. “Each dish is given a code which can be tallied during service to show sales breakdown dish by dish. If that is not available, then a portion count will be needed – portions made

compared to portions left gives you the number of portions sold.”

If there is a dish which makes a good return, but isn’t as popular as you want or expect, then speak to the students who did choose it. Knowing why some like the dish may throw light on why others haven’t. Judy says, “It might be the position on the menu or counter so that new students don’t see it, whereas the regulars know exactly where to find it. The best way is for a team member to speak to a student – that way you are getting specific

“Generally, menus should change with the season, but in schools, where students visit daily, it makes sense to change it every four weeks as a minimum, or even more frequently”

feedback. Online feedback will probably end up with more generalised answers.”

Once recipes have been adjusted to improve costs, the way dishes are presented on the counter or menu is crucial. Judy says, “Positioning the products you want to sell most of in the most visible positions will ensure more are sold. Eye-level and right in front of students is the mantra.”

The number of times that menus are changed depends on the regularity of service. Generally, menus should change with the season, but in schools, where students visit daily, it makes sense to change it every four weeks as a minimum,

PRINTED MENU TIPS

Judy gives the following advice on how to make printed menus as effective as possible:

- Keep menus uncluttered so you can highlight specific dishes.
- Use coloured fonts to make them stand out – red is always good for catching attention, but don’t overdo it.
- Pricing – don’t put everything in price order.
- Include pricing with the dish description rather than in a column off to the right. That way customers don’t scan down and pick on price rather than the mouthwatering description.

Visit www.rightproductrightplace.co.uk for more information.

or even more frequently “or it will become boring and predictable,” adds Judy. “If students only visit occasionally, maintain the same menu across the season with a few daily or weekly specials to capture the attention of more frequent diners.”

SPOTLESS STANDARDS

THE FUTURE OF
CLEANING EQUIPMENT
IN CATERING KITCHENS

The combination of new viruses and increasing risk of allergens is amplifying the need for maintaining pristine kitchen environments. What was once a heavily manual task, has since been revolutionised with the introduction of technology and innovative new materials that help caterers clean up at the end of a busy day.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

One of the most significant advancements is the integration of automated cleaning systems. These systems can be programmed to clean kitchen equipment and surfaces at specific intervals, ensuring consistency and making the most of any down-time. Automated floor scrubbers equipped with sensors can detect dirt and debris, adjusting their cleaning intensity accordingly and hood cleaning systems can be programmed to clean daily without halting operations. This not only guarantees a spotless kitchen environment but also reduces the need for manual intervention, allowing staff to focus on food preparation and service.

Appliances are also aiding the cleaning process, arriving equipped with antibacterial and antimicrobial surfaces which inhibit the growth of bacteria. Others, such as the Convotherm ConvoClean oven takes care of the entire combi oven cleaning process, so that staff do not have to handle harsh cleaning chemicals. "Our new Convotherm maxx pro takes hygiene and cleaning to the next level with its 4 cleaning settings and

3 cleaning modes. The cleaning scheduler allows date and time of cleaning to be pre-programmed and a kitchen team can even create their own customised cleaning program and start it running at the tap of a button." Says Alistair Farquhar CFSP MIH, National Account Director UK & Ireland, Welbilt.

UV-C light technology is another innovation making waves in the catering industry for its anti-odour and antibacterial capabilities. UV-C light is a powerful disinfectant that can eliminate bacteria and viruses on surfaces and exhaust systems within seconds. This ensures that even the most hard-to-reach areas are kept germ-free, reducing the risk of contamination and fire hazards.

Smart sensors and IoT (Internet of Things) devices are also becoming increasingly prevalent in modern kitchens. These devices can monitor various aspects of kitchen hygiene, such as temperature and humidity levels, to ensure they remain within safe ranges. For example, IoT-enabled refrigerators can alert kitchen staff if the temperature rises above a certain threshold, preventing food spoilage and ensuring compliance with food safety regulations. Additionally, improvements in the function of appliances such as blast chillers make it possible to lower the temperature at the core of foods that have just been cooked. "All food cooked and left to cool slowly, to be served later, loses its finest qualities," says Alistair. "This is due to the extremely high bacterial growth that takes place while the food is at temperatures between +150°F and +50°F. The Delfield blast chiller takes cooked food down to +38°F in approximately 90 minutes, reducing bacterial proliferation and dehydration of the



food. The final result is the preservation of the quality, colour and aroma of the food, extending its shelf life.”

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY CLEANING METHODS

As sustainability becomes a key concern across all industries, the catering sector is no exception. The future of cleaning equipment in catering kitchens is likely to be dominated by eco-friendly solutions that reduce environmental impact while maintaining high hygiene standards.

One of the most promising developments in this area is the use of electrolysed water to clean and sanitise kitchen floors, tables and counter tops. Electrolysed water is created by passing an electric current through saltwater, resulting in a powerful yet non-toxic disinfectant. This method is particularly beneficial for catering kitchens as it eliminates the need

for harsh chemical cleaners, which can be harmful to both the environment and kitchen staff. Electrolysed water is effective against a wide range of pathogens, including bacteria and viruses, making it an ideal choice for maintaining hygiene without compromising on sustainability.

“ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ADVANCEMENTS IS THE INTEGRATION OF AUTOMATED CLEANING SYSTEMS... ENSURING CONSISTENCY AND MAKING THE MOST OF ANY DOWN-TIME.”

Another environmentally friendly cleaning method gaining traction is the use of enzymatic cleaners. These cleaners contain natural enzymes that break down organic matter such as grease and food residues in grease traps and drains, leaving surfaces clean and odour-free. Unlike traditional chemical cleaners, enzymatic cleaners are biodegradable and do not release harmful fumes, making them a safer option for both the environment and those working in the kitchen. Schools and care caterers, where the health and well-being of vulnerable individuals are paramount, are increasingly adopting these cleaners as part of their sustainability initiatives.

In addition to cleaning solutions and equipment, there has been significant development to make commonly used tools such as cling film sustainable and more hygienic. The Wrapmaster professional range includes a collection of compostable or recyclable cling film and compostable baking parchment. “AAA endorsed by the Craft Guild of Chefs, our Wrapmaster ultimate chef wrap system is recommended by food safety professionals. Its tough plastic casing protects your wrap from spills and dirt, plus - unlike traditional cardboard cutter boxes - it can be easily sanitised with sanitiser spray between uses and 100% disinfected in a commercial dishwasher (with a rinse temperature of above 80°C) – so it’s always hygienically clean and ready for service.” Says Adrian Brown, Managing Director, Cofresco Foodservice.

TIME-SAVING DEVICES FOR EFFICIENCY

With many kitchens operating with smaller teams due to labour shortages or budget constraints, time-saving devices are becoming indispensable. Steam cleaning machines are a time-saving device that is gaining popularity in catering kitchens. Steam cleaners use high-temperature steam to clean and sanitise surfaces, cutting through grease and grime without the need for harsh chemicals. This method is not only quick and efficient but also reduces the time spent on scrubbing and rinsing, allowing staff to focus on other tasks. Steam cleaning is particularly useful in cafes and small restaurants, where space is limited, and efficiency is key.



PREVENTING THE CROSS-CONTAMINATION OF ALLERGENS

The growing complexity of dietary requirements is resulting in multiple dishes which need to be cooked separately. For many small businesses, it is too costly to invest in additional equipment and it also adds to the cleaning time for kitchen staff too.

“Ensuring that speed of service is optimised as staff switch between serving food with and without allergens/meat/gluten etc. Merrychef® has developed a range of colour-coded accessories to help caterers,” says Alistair. “Accessories such as trays and liners are available in various colours to make separating menu items easy for staff, green can be used for vegetarian or vegan food and purple accessories for allergies. Using different coloured cooking trays or liners in a Merrychef® high speed oven such as the conneX® range, an operator can cook different items one after the other, without having to clean down the equipment.”

The effectiveness of cleaning equipment in catering kitchens ultimately depends on proper training and maintenance. As new cleaning technologies and methods are introduced, it is essential that kitchen staff are adequately trained to use them effectively. Holding regular training sessions and inductions for new staff is important, not only to maintain high standards, but to update teams on changes to regulations and reaffirm your team’s understanding of the processes in place.



Merrychef accessories to prevent cross contamination

*Brightening
mornings since 1892*



Stock up for Christmas



HEADS UP

The Fundamentals of Financial Wellbeing

With the cost of living increasing and economic conditions tightening, many of us are finding it a struggle to manage our personal finances. In February 2020, the Financial Conduct Authority reported that 5.8m people were struggling to pay bills and credit repayments in the UK, 3 years later and the figure had almost doubled to 10.3m. While this has since reduced to 7.4m in January 2024, the pressure is still on. The sheer volume of people affected has given rise to a new mental health category – financial wellbeing.

WHAT IS FINANCIAL WELLBEING?

Defined as the state of being financially secure, financially healthy, and having the freedom to make choices that allow individuals to enjoy life, financial wellbeing encompasses more than just our salary. Financial stress can adversely affect our mental health, job performance, and overall wellbeing.

In sectors such as hospitality and retail, where irregular hours and seasonal fluctuations in business are common, employees may face additional challenges in managing their finances effectively.

Addressing financial wellbeing within the workplace not only enhances employee morale by easing stress, it also reduces absenteeism and turnover rates, ultimately leading to a more stable and productive workforce.

SUPPORTING FINANCIAL WELLBEING

There are a number of ways to support the financial wellbeing of your team without needing to offer extortionate salaries. Giving teams the tools they need to manage their finances is just as important.



FINANCIAL EDUCATION AND COUNSELLING:

Working with local financial advisors or partnering with local banks to organise regular workshops on budgeting and saving will help employees of all ages and life stages get to grips with managing their money better. Your team may not have the financial literacy life skills they need, so offering educational opportunities can empower them to make informed financial decisions. If you partner with a bank or building society, you could schedule private appointments on site, giving staff the opportunity to talk about their finances and arrange the support they need, instead of ignoring the issue or having to make time during their lunchbreak or day off to do it.

RECOGNITION AND INCENTIVE PROGRAMS:

Recognise employees' contributions through a transparent and fair rewards system tied to performance metrics.

FLEXIBLE COMPENSATION SCHEMES:

Tips are one of the biggest perks of working in the hospitality sector, but look a little harder and you can find a series of great benefits that will be meaningful to your team. Partnering with a local garage to arrange a car maintenance and repair service via a salary sacrifice scheme that delivers savings

and spreads the cost of MOTs, services and repairs can ease the burden of keeping your team safe on the roads. Alternatively, you could help make Christmas more affordable with a savings club that employees pay into throughout the year and delivers a discount with local shops or interest rate bonus as the festive season approaches.

By fostering a culture of open communication about financial matters and creating a supportive environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their financial challenges, you will learn more about what means the most to them, enabling you to adjust your program accordingly for continual improvement. As the industry struggles with staffing gaps, understanding what makes your team tick will help you get closer to becoming an employer of choice and will reap long-term rewards for you both.



Foster a culture of open communication about financial matters and create a supportive environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their financial challenges





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TOM KERRIDGE
KNORR PROFESSIONAL BOUILLONS
CREATIVE DIRECTOR



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†Aggregated UK wholesaler value sales 52 w/e 14th January 2024

*Department of Health UK 2024 salt targets for bouillon

^This product does not contain allergenic ingredients which require declaration under EU regulation 1169/2001 [Annex II]





IF YOU CAN BE ANYTHING IN THIS WORLD, *be kind*



Above (clockwise)

Residents at Newbury Grove Care Home joined forces with the catering team to celebrate Cake4Kindnes

Selection of cakes

Residents at Karuna Manor decorating cakes

Cake4Kindness is encouraging care homes, schools, businesses and consumers to participate in its second Cake4Kindness awareness day on Thursday 21st November by baking together and delivering cakes to local charities for distribution to the homeless. Participating care homes include HC-One, Avery Healthcare, Danforth Care and TLC Care.

The ethos of Cake4Kindness, a not-for-profit company, is to reduce loneliness and social isolation by distributing cakes to those going through homelessness. It was started by Neel Radia, chair of the National Association of Care Catering (NACC) during lockdown when he baked cupcakes for those sleeping rough or in homeless shelters across London, which were distributed by volunteers. "Volunteers said how those receiving the cupcakes were overjoyed that someone was thinking about them. The cakes stimulated conversation, interaction and joy," he says.

He continued baking and by the end of the pandemic, had personally made over 3,000 cupcakes. "The joy I received from baking and the support I received from my local community was amazing. Once COVID restrictions had ended, I decided I wanted to continue baking for homeless people and other marginalised communities."

Another important aspect of Cake4Kindness is holding "bake together" events, bringing together community groups and elderly people as a way of combatting loneliness. Cakes are then distributed to local charities for the homeless. Neel says "Baking is a productive form of self-expression and communication and can also be a great stress reliever. There is also a symbolic value in baking for others because food has such physical and emotional significance."

Currently, Neel spends one weekend a month with others baking and distributing cakes. "Some of us share cakes with rough sleepers," he says. "We only operate in London but hope to support charities in other cities in future."

This year for Cake4Kindness Day on 21st November, cake recipes will be shared on social media. "We also have a recipe for dog biscuits as many rough sleepers have a companion with them," Neel adds.

During last year's event, several care homes participated, spreading kindness amongst their community. Residents at Karuna Manor, part of TLC Care Homes, baked cupcakes and distributed them to local under-privileged families and the catering team at Newbury Grove Care Home, part of Care UK, baked 100 cupcakes for residents and their families to decorate. The cakes were delivered to the Two Saints Newbury Homeless Shelter.

HOW TO TAKE PART IN CAKE4KINDNESS DAY ON NOVEMBER 21ST

- Organise residents in your care home, students in your school, universities and colleges to make cakes and enjoy decorating them while learning a new skill and engaging with each other.
- Make contact with a charity for the homeless or another charity and arrange to donate cakes to them.
- Hold a cake and coffee morning and ask for a small donation for those who attend and donate to charity.
- Share on social media platforms pictures of your cakes and tag #Cake4Kindness

Visit www.cake4kindness.org for more information.

At HC-One, the team encouraged its care homes to bake and decorate cupcakes with residents and donate cakes to a local charity. The catering teams put together a cake recipe book (downloadable from the Cake4Kindness web site) with ideas including Carrot Cake, Lemon Drizzle, Classic Vanilla Sponge, Raspberry Almond and Coffee Walnut Cake.

Vegan Vibes for 2025



SAMANTHA RAIN

Head of Innovation and Training, Henley Bridge

Consumers expect exciting vegan desserts to be on the menu, so it's worth investing time and effort into creating them. It's important to arm yourself with a few key vegan ingredients – for me, these include a great quality vegan milk chocolate, such as Belcolade or Chocolat Madagascar, and Sosa's vegan mousse gelatin powder is a must. In fact, the Sosa range is a brilliant toolbox for vegan cookery. I used several of their products to create a delicious hazelnut mousse with surprise layers inside: maple jelly, pear gel and crunchy hazelnut.



ADONIS ICALINA

Author & Chef

One must-have ingredient in our vegan menu is tofu. It's incredibly versatile and can absorb flavours beautifully. One dish I always recommend is our Tofu Sisig. It's a vegan twist on a classic Filipino dish, where we marinate the tofu in a blend of soy sauce, vinegar, and spices, then sauté it with onions and peppers. It's a hit among our vegan customers!

Right now, we offer around ten vegan dishes on our menu. This includes everything from appetisers to main courses and even desserts. We have dishes like Vegan Kare-Kare, a rich peanut stew with vegetables and tofu, and Vegan Adobo, where we use mushrooms and tofu instead of meat. Our vegan dessert options include a delightful Coconut Milk Leche Flan.

Vegan Cream Cheese & Avocado Toast

Veganuary is just a few short months away and is expected to be another nationwide event with more people than ever participating. Whether you are a care caterer, restaurant, event caterer or work in the education sector, Veganuary is an event that can be tailored to meet audiences young, old and every stage in between. Every year we invite chefs and business owners to share how they mark the occasion, and we are never disappointed with the creativity and innovation demonstrated – this year proves no different.

Photo by Bakd&Raw by Karolin Baitinger on Unsplash





BRAD SAVAGE
CEO, GardenCup

We offer eight vegan salads and grain bowls, including our popular Superfood Salad with kale, broccoli, chickpeas and a lemon tahini dressing. My personal favourite is our Buddha Bowl, packed with sweet potatoes, black beans, avocado and a spicy peanut sauce. For Veganuary, we're launching new salads featuring meat alternatives and spotlighting our vegan menu on social media.



KIERAN CORBITT
Head of Marketing,
KG Hospitality

Halo Burger, first established in 2017 disrupted the fast-food market by replicating the branding, and menu of iconic fast-food joints such as McDonalds and In N Out Burger, only 100% vegan. Our menu is fully vegan with burgers that taste like beef, thanks to a secret recipe for smoky seasoning that is blended through the pea-protein patties. A personal favourite is the Smoky BBQ Carolina Burger with barbecue sauce, smoked vegan gouda and crispy onion strips. Follow it with a Vegan Biscoff Shake or Soft Serve.



CLARE COGHILL
Owner, Café Cuil

Veganuary is always an exciting time of year for chefs, mostly for inspiration and creativity. Café Cuil offers plenty of vegan dishes all year round, showcasing the abundance of produce that grows around us, whether grown by organic producers or foraged from the land. Our most popular vegan dish has to be our foraged Chanterelles on toast, served with vegan miso butter & sage pesto.

Café Cuil's Beans on toast with veggie haggis and wild garlic pesto

"Encouraging children's participation in Veganuary can be an exciting journey for schools."



GARY TOWNSEND
Chef & Owner,
Elements

Our plant-based tasting menu features six courses, but we can adapt more and offer alternatives where dairy or meat is to be avoided. My favourite ingredient is our dark-salt cashew nut butter, it is so versatile to cook with. It adds real depth to our roasted cauliflower dish and Fenland leek course. I spent a long time searching for a 'dairy butter substitute', however, our dark-salt cashew butter is genuinely outstanding, I can't even call it a substitute.



DEAN HARPER
Chef & Director, Harper
Fine Dining

Encouraging children's participation in Veganuary 2025 can be an exciting journey for schools. To get children interested, teachers should be looking to engage in enjoyable interactive activities, like cookery classes focused on plant-based dishes. Colourful veggie wraps with hummus, playful fruit skewers and vibrant vegetable stir-fries are likely to spark children's curiosity, so don't be afraid to highlight the variety in vegan cuisine!



CRAIG WESCOTT
Trade Marketing
Manager, Lamb Weston

Try my favourite vegan recipe; baked cauliflower tacos with loaded REALLY Crunchy Fries. Simply toss small cauliflower florets in taco seasoning and olive oil and bake until golden. Blend avocado, fresh coriander, vegan sour cream, salt and lime juice until creamy. Warm tortillas, load up with some shredded, pickled red cabbage, the roasted cauliflower and REALLY Crunchy Fries. Drizzle with the avocado cream and serve garnished with freshly chopped coriander and sliced jalapenos.



GARETH PENN
Head Chef, Spaces
at The Spine

At Spaces at The Spine, we offer environmentally-conscious catering, from using locally sourced and sustainable ingredients to placing our vegan dishes front and centre by listing them first on all of our menus.

This year, we have focused on our vegan desserts. Our culinary team have produced delicious, fully vegan desserts to ensure all our visitors can enjoy a sweet treat while attending a conference. These include Parkin and sticky toffee pudding, two eggless recipes that feature oat milk and vegan baking margarine and our berry crumble which is sprinkled with gluten-free porridge oats and gluten-free cornflakes for extra crunch.



BARNABY MACADAM
Development Chef,
Santa Maria
Foodservice

Santa Maria is proud to offer a wide range of vegan spices, sauces, tortilla chips and wraps to help operators unlock a world of flavour and drive growth. Our Fermented Chili Sauce is extremely versatile and can add a vibrant, tangy bite and spicy kick to any vegan burger, wraps, loaded fries or cauliflower bites. A popular protein replacement is Tofu, so enhance your tofu dishes with our Kimchi Paste Chili and Garlic for a bold and flavourful twist. The chili and aromatic garlic not only adds a spicy kick but also infuses the tofu with rich umami flavours – perfect for marinating, stir-frying, or grilling.



DANIEL MEURSING
CEO/Founder,
Premier Staff

We've seen a significant increase in requests for skilled

vegan chefs and servers who can expertly present plant-based dishes. Our most popular vegan offering is a deconstructed avocado sushi roll, which combines the luxury of traditional sushi with a modern, plant-based twist. We typically offer 3-5 vegan options at our events, ensuring there's something for every palate.



NICK COLLINS
Founder and CEO,
Cleverchefs

The must-have ingredient we use at Cleverchefs is oat milk.

We use a chai concentrate along with light oat milk to create a fantastic chai pannacotta. The oat milk gives a super clean finish. It's rich in calcium, low in sugars and fat and 100% plant based. My personal favourite dish is lentil and sweet potato dahl. Made from scratch using authentic Indian spices, it is full of flavour and contains great amounts of fibre, vitamin C, B6, calcium and potassium.

This Veganuary we plan to get the children involved by turning watermelon into fish. We marinate slices of watermelon in a secret mix of ingredients and roast in the oven. This is a great way to encourage kids to participate in trying new innovative plant-based food.



BRANDON BLACKWELL AND JEN SHERROD
Co-founders, Elysian
Events Catering

One of our standout vegan dishes is the Farmer's Market Salad featuring locally sourced vegetables, fresh tomatoes, baby greens, garlic croutons, and a zesty olive vinaigrette. This dish is a celebration of fresh, local produce and vibrant flavours. Additionally, we offer a variety of other vegan options that highlight the best of what the season has to offer. These include Roasted Oyster Mushroom Sauce Piquant, Eggplant Creole with Roasted Poblano Peppers, Herb-Roasted Carrots & Fennel, and the refreshing Watermelon Tartare with Chili Oil and Mint. These dishes are perfect for anyone seeking delicious, plant-based options.

Hazelnut mousse

INGREDIENTS

- 140g Sosa roasted hazelnut paste
- 190g rice milk
- 3.5g Sosa Natur Emul
- 7.5g Sosa Vegan Mousse Gelatin
- 75g water
- 4g Sosa Potatowhip
- 65g sugar
- 20g Sosa Inulin Cold
- 1g salt

METHOD

1. Blend together the nut paste and natur emul. Bring to the boil the rice milk and Vegan Mousse Gelatine.
2. Once boiled add to first mixture and blend. In a kitchen aid bowl combine the water, salt and potatowhip and whisk.
3. When the mixture is about halfway start slowly adding the inulin and sugar and whisk for 10 minutes further.
4. Once the first mixture has reached 55-60°C pour into the meringue on low speed until fully incorporated.
5. Take the mixture off machine, place in mould and freeze.

MAPLE JELLY

INGREDIENTS

- 100g water
- 150g maple syrup
- 10g Sosa Veggie Gel

METHOD

1. Bring all ingredients to the boil and pour into the mould.

PEAR GEL

INGREDIENTS

- 200g Leoncé Blanc pear puree
- 10g Sosa Gelcrem Cold
- 50g stock syrup

METHOD

1. Blend together all ingredients with hand blender, then leave the mixture to hydrate for at least 30 minutes then blend again.
2. Place the gel into mould and freeze as insert.

CRUNCHY HAZELNUT

INGREDIENTS

- 100g Chocolat Madagascar Vegan Milc
- 40g Irca praline noisette (hazelnut)
- 75g chopped hazelnuts

METHOD

1. Melt the Vegan Milc chocolate and incorporate all other ingredients until all the hazelnuts are fully coated.
2. Set the mixture into a square tart ring and place into mould once set.

GLAZE

INGREDIENTS

- Irca gold glitter glaze

METHOD

1. Once your layered slice is fully compiled and completely frozen, place on a cooling rack with a tray underneath.

Heat the glaze up to 50°C to activate the pectin inside the product before pouring over frozen mousse slice.

GARNISH

Crushed roasted hazelnuts.

Recipe by Henley Bridge.

THE MARKETPLACE

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

Introducing KaterVeg! VG Sausage

**A NEW VEGAN AND
GLUTEN-FREE OPTION**

Central Foods has expanded its free-from range by launching the new KaterVeg! VG sausage, which is both vegan and gluten-free.

This new product shares the same popular recipe as the company's KaterVeg! vegan meatballs and is made from soya, offering a high-fibre, low-sugar protein option. Gordon Lauder, Managing Director of Central Foods, highlighted the versatility and appeal of the new sausage, emphasising its moist, juicy, and flavourful profile. Designed to cater to both vegan and gluten-free diners, the 50g sausages come in packs of 40 and are supplied frozen. The KaterVeg! range, a part of Central Foods' offerings, includes a variety of meat-free and vegetable-based products suitable for vegetarians, vegans, and those with gluten intolerance.



SANTA MARIA LAUNCHES NEW KOREAN-INSPIRED RANGE TO CAPTURE UK'S GROWING K-FOOD TREND

Santa Maria is tapping into the growing popularity of Korean cuisine in the UK with the launch of its new range of Korean-inspired products.

This versatile selection includes sauces, seasonings, and pastes, such as Black Pepper Soy Sauce, Fermented Chili Sauce, and Kimchi Paste, all designed to capture the rich and complex flavours of Korean food.

The vegan and lactose-free range aims to help chefs easily incorporate Korean flavours into their menus, whether for casual dining, quick service restaurants, pubs, bars, or contract catering. Barny MacAdam, Santa

Maria Foodservice's development chef, expressed excitement about empowering chefs to create unique dining experiences that meet the high demand for K-food. These products are now available through national wholesalers, offering a convenient way for foodservice operators to innovate and attract customers by adding Korean-inspired dishes to their offerings.



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NESCAFÉ

Turkey Escalope



CHRISTMAS CORDON BLEU

This classic dish involving an escalope stuffed with cheese and breaded is often associated with après-ski culture and so is the perfect menu addition during the winter months. My version includes turkey and the classic flavours of sage and onion, and you could always add some cranberry sauce to make it extra festive, as it would go perfectly with the cheese. Serve simply with some green vegetables and a tomato-based sauce (my favourite is the very versatile Country Range Tomato and Basil Sauce).

Making ends meet

BREAK WITH TRADITION

The festive season is upon us and whilst menus will be full of the traditional roast dinners, Paul Dickson explores some alternative ideas – as always with an eye on the bottom line.

Turkey in my opinion is an underused meat which often only makes an appearance at Christmas and only on a traditional roast dinner plate or sandwich at that. Of course, nobody is going to take away the popularity of the Christmas dinner with all the trimmings, but the festive season includes weeks of dining opportunities and therefore provides the chance to include turkey and even some of the classic trimmings in different ways, which both saves food waste and offers some fresh options for those who want to break from tradition.



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.



Fruit and Nut Tablet



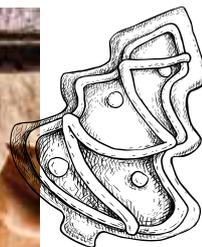
Little Treats



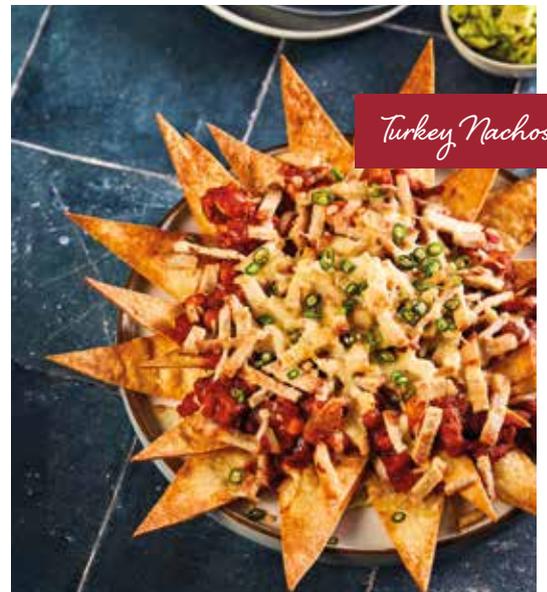
The festive season is a great time to show a little generosity to the people you're catering for. Little edible gifts are easy to make in bulk and have the power to put a smile on someone's face, which is what it's all about really. Whether served alongside a coffee in a café or pub, given to students on the last few days of term or given out as an afternoon treat in a care home, the simplest ideas can make a big impact. Two ideas from me are the classic gingerbread, which never fails to make people happy, and a fruit and nut tablet which is a traditional Scottish crumbly and buttery fudge and the perfect festive treat.



Gingerbread Men



Turkey Nachos



HO-HO-HOLY GUACAMOLE!

It's important to cater for get-togethers over this period, as people break with their usual routines to socialise more often. Sharing dishes are great for this and easy to put together. Add some festive twists to your menu such as these turkey nachos. Here, I've used leftover tortilla wraps to create the tortilla chips which is a good waste-saving hack which creates larger nachos and a more rustic homemade feel to the dish.

REALLY

CRUNCHY FRIES

MADE FOR THE
CHAMPIONS
IN THE KITCHEN



Beat the competition

Serve the ultimate crunchy sensation
that's ideal for takeaway and delivery



Lamb Weston
THE ORIGINAL POTATO FRY BRAND

REALLY CRUNCHY FRIES



30 MIN.
LONG LASTING
CRUNCH
SENSATION

9x9 SKIN ON FRIES
Your partner in potatoes 250g (1/2 lb)

- GLUTEN-FREE
- VEGAN
- NO MSG ADDED
- NO ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS

30 MIN.
LONG LASTING
CRUNCH
SENSATION

Lamb Weston



Ben CRITTENDEN

CO-FOUNDER AND CHEF, STARK

With a CV full of experience from working with rockstar-turned-Michelin-star-chef Graham Garret to competing in MasterChef: The Professionals, it's no surprise that Ben Crittenden had the skill and confidence to open his first restaurant, Stark in Broadstairs at such a young age. Almost 10 years (and a series of awards) later, Ben is on the move once more, opening his restaurant in a new location in West Mersea. We caught up with him to learn more about his culinary journey.

How and when did your passion for food and cooking begin?

At the age of 16, I took an apprenticeship opportunity because I wanted to work and earn money, but my first job at Marchesi's in Broadstairs made me love the job. I worked with a great group of people who were passionate about the job and most of them are still my best friends to this day because they encouraged me to pursue my career after seeing potential.

When you secured your original space in Broadstairs, was it always the dream to transform it into the business you have today, or did the vision evolve over time?

I just wanted to work for myself and continue doing the job I love with a better work/life balance.

Stark offering a set tasting menu wasn't always the intention, but because it's our sole household income, I needed to know what kind of income we were relying on, so we decided on a set price per head and worked backwards from there as to what justifies that price, based on the price/quality of the ingredients I use.

Can you describe the guest experience at Stark?

Upon entering, you're greeted by the smell of the Harrison oven, which is fuelled by charcoal and the slightly louder than usual, Stark playlist, which is a mix of pop, indie and rock music that Soph and myself like. From the get-go, it's a very relaxed, friendly

atmosphere that should hopefully make you feel like you're at a dinner party at our home. We like to leave you to enjoy the meal and evening with whoever you've chosen to bring with you, only asking for the occasional drinks order if you haven't chosen the accompanying wine flight. Hopefully no one feels uncomfortable or out of place at Stark, as there's no set dress code and we just want all of our guests to feel welcome and enjoy their evening.

What prompted such a radical break from the norm?

Never seeing my kids! Before I worked for myself, I only ever had two days off and worked from 9am until midnight or 1am so they were in bed asleep when I got home and usually when I had to leave for work in the morning.

Do you miss not having a wider team around you in the kitchen?

Sometimes I miss the banter but, on the whole, I like getting on with what I have to do and not having to worry about other people too much. I just want to get my prep work done to see the kids after school for a quick break and then I go to work with Soph and we have a laugh so I'm happy with that.

What are your main flavour influences?

Whatever is seasonal and high quality. I prefer to support smaller businesses because they tend to have more passion behind the product they're offering, but whatever seems the best quality when I give it a try.

What challenges have you had to overcome and what did you learn?

We learnt fairly early on not to pander too much to what some people think is their right as the customer. We've made Stark everything we'd want in a restaurant if we were dining out as a couple; relaxed and informal service, the experience focussing on the flavour profiles and presentation.

What are your future ambitions for the restaurant and your career?

Just to keep doing what I do; cooking decent food that people can enjoy on their night out and seeing my kids grow up at the same time.

What inspires you to continue working in the hospitality sector?

Good question! Some sort of self-destructive obsession with trying to please people!



Hake Korma

SERVES
2

HAKE

- 2 large hake fillets skinned
- Salt

1. Generously sprinkle salt over the fish on a tray, cover and leave for 1-2 hours in fridge to remove some moisture from the fish.

2. Wash off the salt and roll tightly in cling film, return to fridge for 2 hours and divide into 150g portions.

MARINADE

- 40g mild cheddar
- 100g single cream
- 100g natural yogurt
- ½ bunch mint leaves
- ½ bunch coriander leaves
- Juice of ½ a lemon
- 1 green chilli
- 2 inch knob ginger, peeled and grated
- 4 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp sunflower oil
- 2 tbsp gram flour
- ½ tsp turmeric

1. Mix the gram flour and oil with the turmeric in a pan. Cook out gently for 5 mins or until the flour turns slightly golden. Blitz in a blender with all the other ingredients. Smother the hake in the marinade for a few hours or overnight. Cook in BBQ at 200°C for 6-8 mins. Use a blow torch to char a bit if it hasn't in the BBQ.

KORMA SAUCE

- 2 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 10 cardamom pods
- 2 blades of mace
- ½ tsp garam masala

- 1 inch knob ginger peeled and grated
- 4 garlic cloves, grated
- 100g cashew paste
- 100g single cream
- 100g natural yogurt
- 200g cashew milk
- Pinch salt

1. Lightly toast the cardamom pods, mace and garam masala for a minute. Add the onions, garlic and ginger and cook lightly for 5 minutes. Add the remaining ingredients and cook in Thermomix at 90°C, speed 5, for 40 minutes. Then blitz on full and pass through a fine sieve.

ONIONS

- 2 red onions
- 50ml white wine vinegar
- 25g sugar
- 10 mint leaves
- Pinch salt

1. Thinly slice the onions on a mandolin. Salt lightly and leave for 1 hour. Wash off the salt and dry off a little on a cloth. Whisk the sugar and vinegar together until dissolved. Chop the mint and mix everything together and vacuum seal on full pressure.

TOASTED CASHEWS

- 100g blanched peeled cashew nuts
- 500g sunflower oil
- ½ tsp mild chilli powder
- Pinch salt

1. Heat the oil to 160°C. Add the nuts and stir constantly until golden brown. Drain from oil onto a cloth and dust in chilli powder and season with salt.

TO SERVE

- Red grapes, thinly sliced
- Coriander cress
- Coriander oil

1. Spoon a few tablespoons of sauce into bowl, place a small pile of pickled onions in the middle, top that with the hake.

2. Arrange the sliced grapes on top, followed by the cashews and coriander cress, finish coriander oil.

BACON WRAPPED TURKEY BREAST

STUFFED WITH CRANBERRY, SAGE & SAUSAGE STUFFING & SERVED WITH BISTO POULTRY GRAVY & SEASONAL VEGETABLES



PREP TIME: 1.5HRS
COOK TIME: 2HRS 40MINS
SERVES 10

aaah!
BISTO
GRAVY
GRANULES
FOR POULTRY
MAKES 25 LITRES

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE STUFFING MIX

- 150g white onion, finely diced
- 450g Cumberland sausage meat
- 150g dried cranberries
- 80g Paxo Sage and Onion Stuffing Mix

FOR THE WRAPPED AND STUFFED TURKEY BREAST

- 2 skin-on and butterflied turkey breasts (approx 2.2kg each)
- 2 tbsps Bisto for Poultry Gravy

METHOD

Pre-heat a fan oven at 190°C ready to cook the turkey.

1. To make the stuffing, sauté the onion in a little olive oil on a medium heat until soft with no colour and then leave to cool. In a bowl, mix and combine the sausage meat, cranberries and Paxo Sage and Onion Stuffing Mix.

2. For the stuffed turkey breast, make a thick paste with the Bisto for Poultry Gravy Granules, by adding a little hot water. Mix together with the thyme.

3. Lay the breasts (skin side down) and coat liberally with the Bisto paste. Season with salt and pepper. Spread the stuffing along the centre of each breast and roll, ensuring the seam is at the bottom. Drape the bacon width ways across the top of each breast. Tie each breast with kitchen string to help hold its shape.

4. Put the turkey in a roasting tray and place into the pre-heated oven, and cover with foil. Cook for 1 hour and 30 minutes.

5. Remove the foil and cook for a further 25 minutes to allow the bacon to crisp up. Pierce the centre of the turkey to ensure juices are running clear and that it is cooked through.

6. Place the turkey onto a carving board, wrap with foil and cover with a clean tea towel. Let the meat rest for 25 minutes before carving to serve.

7. Slice and serve with seasonal vegetables, poultry gravy made with Bisto for Poultry Gravy Granules, cranberry sauce and roast potatoes.

Suitable for Vegetarians: No | Suitable for Coeliac: No

Allergens: Gluten, Soya, Sulphur Dioxide

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TRACKING THE PULSE OF Hospitality



CRAIG RACHEL

With extensive experience in corporate advisory services and a decade of experience in professional services and investment banking, Craig Rachel, Director, AlixPartners has his finger on the pulse of market influences in hospitality. Having produced a number of sector publications, including the Growth Company Index and Market Growth Monitor, we asked him for some insights as we head into 2025.



HOW HAS THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY PERFORMED SO FAR THIS YEAR?

Our most recent report (produced in conjunction with CGA) shows the first overall increase in outlet numbers in two years, and the first time since COVID where both the managed and independent sectors are now growing. Overall, we've seen an easing of the significant pressures that have challenged the sector, which has paved the way for a more positive outlook and to enable businesses to open new units.

HAVE THERE BEEN ANY OUTSTANDING MARKET SEGMENTS?

Its difficult to pinpoint specific segments, as there are winners and losers across the market as customers are increasingly discerning during periods when consumer spending is under pressure.

AlixPartners conducted some

consumer research at the turn of the year which indicated that customers looking to manage their spending will increasingly trend towards quality operators rather than trading down, meaning those businesses in the 'squeezed middle' between a value proposition and quality are most likely to struggle.

We see food-led pubs as an area which has seen substantial growth in recent years, as a combination of a high quality offer (often with accommodation) as an alternative to chain restaurants plus broader trading windows have led to strong economic performance.

IS THE SECTOR OUT OF THE WOODS YET?

There are still structural challenges facing the sector that are being managed, in particular the impact of wage inflation, energy costs and at times uncertain consumer confidence. There is also uncertainty regarding any potential new government legislation that may be introduced.

Continued growth and operational excellence is critical, and the best operators have shown that it is possible to drive margin growth with strong service levels and a compelling proposition.

WHAT CONTRIBUTED TO THE GROWTH IN THEMED BARS?

Expansion in this segment has been driven through growth in competitive socializing venues. These businesses have been particularly popular as they drive both corporate and social spending and enable customers to mix with friends and colleagues who may not drink alcohol.

Competitive socializing venues are also popular with landlords as they drive footfall, and the higher margin operations are attractive to investors who have backed roll outs of these business.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, YOU REPORTED A REVIVAL OF M&A ACTIVITY, WHAT HAS DRIVEN IT?

The year has seen a continuation of M&A activity across the broader sector, with deals a combination of the backing of smaller roll-outs and strategic acquisitions from trade investors looking to add additional brands or operating capabilities to their portfolios.

The return to margin expansion has been key, particularly as investors have to drive returns through profitable growth rather than financial engineering. This has meant that high growth businesses such as QSR, franchise and competitive socializing concepts have been in demand.

WHAT IS YOUR TREND/ PERFORMANCE FORECAST FOR 2025?

We expect to see continued deal activity into 2025 as trade buyers increasingly look externally for growth opportunities, and as private equity buyers obtain greater comfort over the financing and consumer spending environment.

There are a number of high quality businesses that will be looking to seek external financing over the next 12-18 months, and we expect to see these come to market as we get more clarity over trading performance.

This continued momentum in deal activity could help bring further confidence to the investor community and will help drive further deal flow.

“Customers looking to manage their spending will increasingly trend towards quality operators rather than trading down”

As good as **Gold**

More than just double cream



For whipping, cooking and pouring



SMASHED AVO, BACON & EGG

Toasted crumpets

Orchid Care Home part of Angel Care

With over 20 years working as a chef in the care sector, Orchid Care Home's Executive Chef Dale Buckland remains passionate about driving standards and improving the quality of the food and drink on offer.

After completing his NVQ level 1 and 2 in Professional Cookery, Dale worked briefly in corporate catering before finding his place in the care sector in 2001. Instantly loving the variety, challenge and sense of achievement each day provided but disgusted at the quality and choice on offer to guests, Dale made it his mission to provide the best home-cooked food possible. Twenty-plus years later and Dale's determination remains undiminished.

"It's a huge honour to cook for our guests and I love the challenges that every day throws at us," says Dave. "We have to work on tight budgets and cater for all types of allergies and dietary requirements so it's a great test for a chef."

"We change the menu every 4-6 weeks to keep it seasonal, but the favourites tend to be classic dishes such as cottage pie, sausage and mash, as well as two roast dinners a week and fish and chips on Friday. Whether it's specials, homemade cakes, theme nights, afternoon tea or other events, we work extremely hard to keep everything fresh and stimulating."

"Our residents play a big role in testing and shaping our menus. This interaction with the residents is one of the most rewarding and enjoyable parts of our jobs."

"My pantry is filled with Country Range products from the tinned everyday saviours to flours, custard powder, nuts, dried fruits, herbs and seasonings."

DALE
BUCKLAND

INGREDIENTS

- 3 rashers Country Range back bacon
- Country Range chilli flakes
- Country Range salt & pepper
- 1 egg
- 2 toasted crumpets
- Cherry vine tomatoes

SERVES
1

METHOD

1. Pop your bacon under the grill and after a few minutes add in the cherry tomatoes.
2. Smash your avocado in a bowl, season and if you like a little heat, add a few chilli flakes.
3. When the bacon is nearly ready, toast your crumpets and poach the egg.
4. Assemble with the crumpets on the bottom with a good dollop of avocado on each, before adding bacon, the poached egg on top and tomatoes on the side.



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Paneer Loaded Naan



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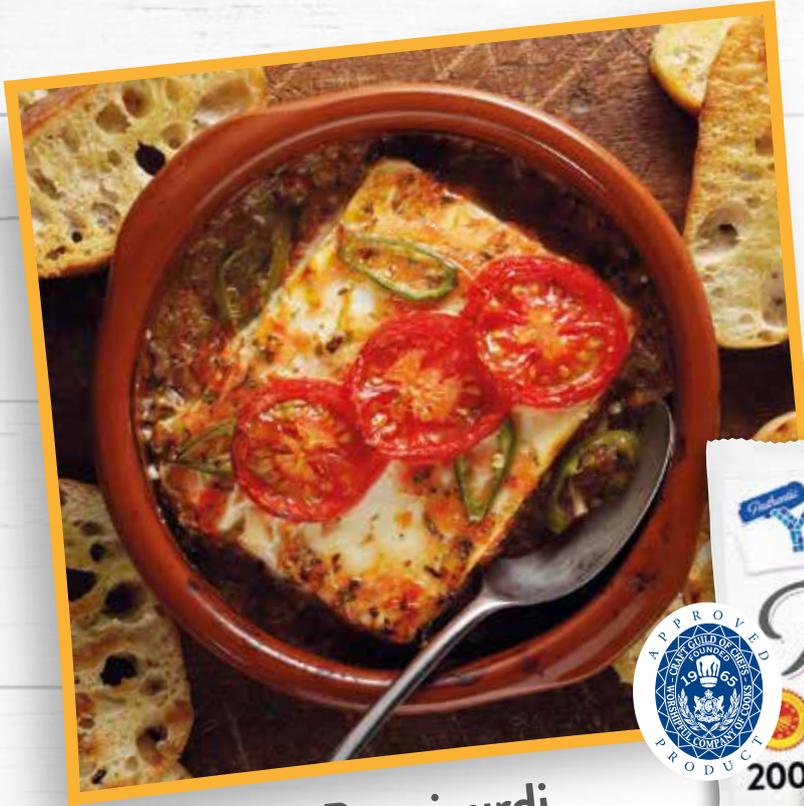
Mozzarella, Tomato & Bean Salad



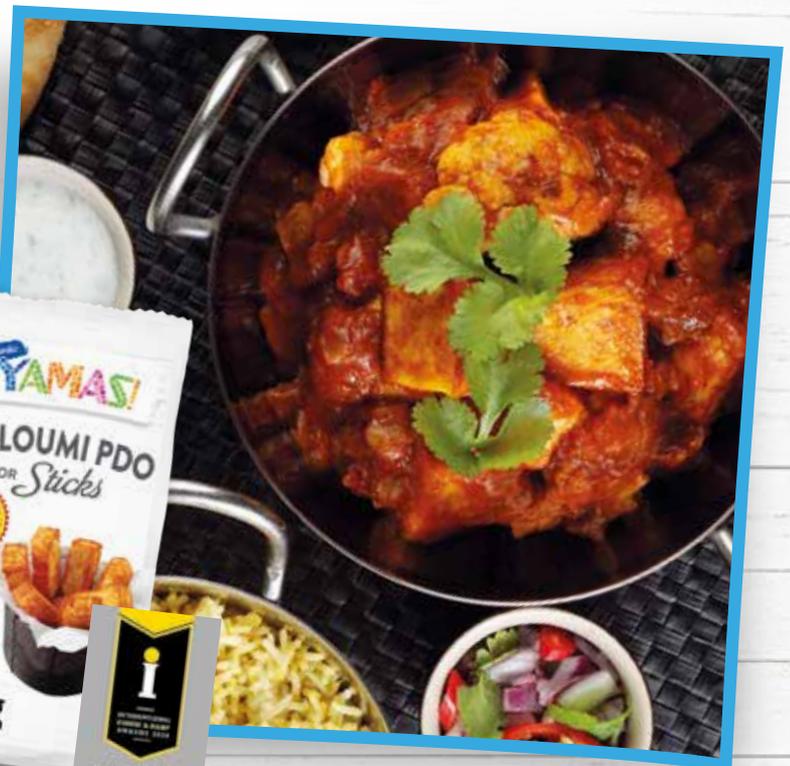
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Halloumi Curry



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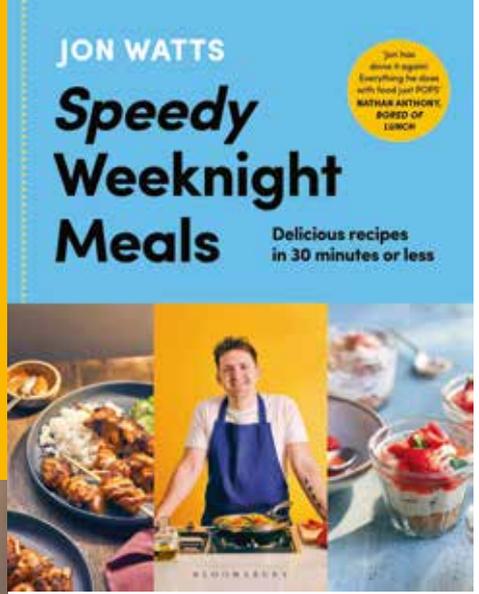
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Rising Star

JON WATTS

Speedy Weeknight Meals by Jon Watts is out now (Bloomsbury Publishing, Hardback, £20) Photography by Jonathan Gregson. We're giving away a copy to one lucky reader. See page 47.



CHEF AND AUTHOR

After being sent to prison as an 18-year-old for six and a half years, cookery rescued Jon Watts and helped him turn his life around. The first person in custody to complete his bronze, silver and gold Duke of Edinburgh awards, Jon went on to work for the likes of Jamie Oliver before setting up his own private dining business. Now amassing millions of followers on his digital channels and through prime-time TV appearances, we caught up with Jon as his first book – Speedy Weeknight Meals launched.

What led you on the road to prison as an 18-year-old?

The main factors were a lack of guidance and feelings of frustration. There were a lot of negative influences around me at an impressionable time, and it was the easy place to find a sense of purpose.

How did your passion for food and cooking begin?

Although I started cooking in the prison kitchen, and then the officers' mess. My passion didn't really begin until I started working on day release in a restaurant. I loved

the adrenaline fuelled environment, and I was drawn by the passion that the chefs had. I remember seeing fresh herbs for the first time, and all types of vegetables. It was then that I began to fall in love.

What were the key steps in your development and career?

The Duke of Edinburgh's award was where it began, it taught me interpersonal skills as well as teaching me the benefits of working towards a goal. During my time in restaurants, I had a few chefs who took their time to mentor me. I was always pro-active in asking for help and advice.

Who have been your biggest mentors?

Ian, my first ever head chef. He came into the prison and gave me a lifeline. I'm friends with him to this day, and he's still there to offer advice, or to have a friendly chat.

How do you create new dishes?

I think about what I want to eat. Then I create whatever that dish may be, but using as simple a method as possible, and always using ingredients I can buy from any supermarket.

I then write down how I think it would go, then I prepare my ingredients, and cook. I am often tweaking the ingredients as I'm cooking, until I have a final dish.

“My passion didn’t really begin until I started working on day release in a restaurant. I loved the adrenaline fuelled environment, and I was drawn by the passion that the chefs had. I remember seeing fresh herbs for the first time, and all types of vegetables. It was then that I began to fall in love.”

What are your next goals and targets on a work level?

I want my new book ‘Speedy Weeknight Meals’ to become a Sunday Times best seller. I know it’s a bit of a vanity goal, and the important thing is long term consistent sales, but I set my sights on it a long time ago and I want to reach it.

Tell us about your new book

My new book ‘Speedy Weeknight Meals’ has 80 recipes that make dinner times exciting in less than 30 minutes. Each recipe uses ingredients that you can find in any supermarket, or you might even have them in your cupboard at home. They are written in a simple way so that even first time cooks can create something special.

Can you share a recipe from the book that would work well in Nov/Dec?

The ‘Loaded schnitzel’. It’s a chicken schnitzel loaded with brie and cranberry sauce. Around xmas time you can even use turkey breast.



SERVES 4

PREP TIME 15 MINS

COOK TIME 15 MINS

Loaded festive turkey schnitzel

INGREDIENTS

- 600g skinless turkey breast, cut into 4 equal portions
- 80g unsalted butter, softened
- 8 tablespoons cranberry sauce
- 140g Brie cheese, sliced
- 8 slices of prosciutto
- 80g plain flour
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 250g breadcrumbs
- vegetable or sunflower oil, to shallow-fry

until it’s well combined. Divide the cranberry butter between the 4 escalopes and spread it over, leaving a 5mm border around the edges. Lay the Brie over the butter generously, then lay the slices of prosciutto over the cheese to cover.

3. Use the clingfilm again to cover each escalope in turn, then bash lightly to seal the prosciutto over the top.

4. Place the flour in one dish, the beaten eggs in another and the breadcrumbs in a third. Coat each escalope in the flour, then in the egg, and finally in the breadcrumbs. Be careful that you cover each of them all over.

5. Heat a good amount of oil in a large frying pan over a medium-high heat: you need enough oil to come halfway up the sides of the schnitzels. Shallow-fry them for 3–4 minutes on each side, or until cooked through and golden brown. (If you cut into a thick piece of turkey, the juices should run clear. If not, continue to cook for another couple of minutes, then test again.) You will probably have to do this in batches, unless you have a very big pan. Place on a plate lined with kitchen paper, to blot off excess oil, then serve.

METHOD

1. Fold a long length of clingfilm over itself to create a sheet of multiple layers. Place each portion of turkey breast on to a sheet of baking paper, then place the clingfilm over the top. Bash with a meat tenderiser or a rolling pin until the turkey has flattened into a thin escalope, about 5mm thick, being careful not to break the meat. Repeat to flatten all 4 pieces.

2. Mix the softened butter with the cranberry sauce





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FOOD & INDUSTRY *news*

EDUCATION

Teachers Praise Government Breakfast Initiative but Stress Need for Resources

A recent Magic Breakfast survey, conducted with TeacherTapp and gathering insights from up to 10,000 teachers, found that an overwhelming majority (88%) support the UK Government's plan to introduce breakfast programs in all English primary schools.

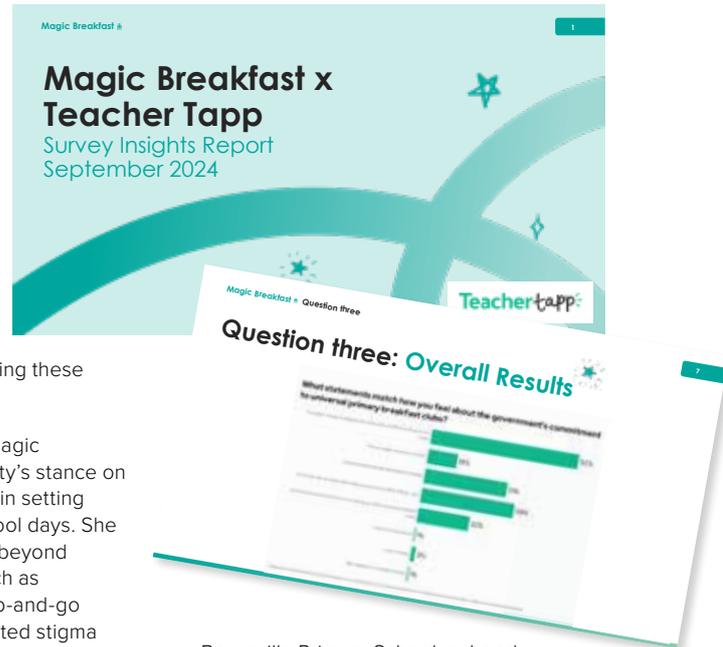
Most teachers believe this initiative would positively impact school attendance (78%) and enhance classroom behaviour and concentration (67%). However, educators emphasised the importance of ensuring that funding covers staffing and resources, with 92% agreeing on this point. A third of teachers also expressed the need for

support in setting up and running these breakfast provisions.

Lindsey MacDonald, CEO of Magic Breakfast, reaffirmed the charity's stance on the essential role of breakfast in setting children up for successful school days. She advocates for various models beyond traditional breakfast clubs, such as classroom breakfasts and grab-and-go options, to reduce hunger-related stigma and expand access to nutritious meals.

The campaign "Breakfast Powers Opportunity" was launched by Magic Breakfast to ensure the Government's breakfast policy is implemented effectively. Marie Berry, headteacher at

Bournville Primary School, echoed the sentiment, praising the positive impact of Magic Breakfast over the past seven years at her school. She emphasized the need for adequate funding and resources to ensure every child can benefit from the program.



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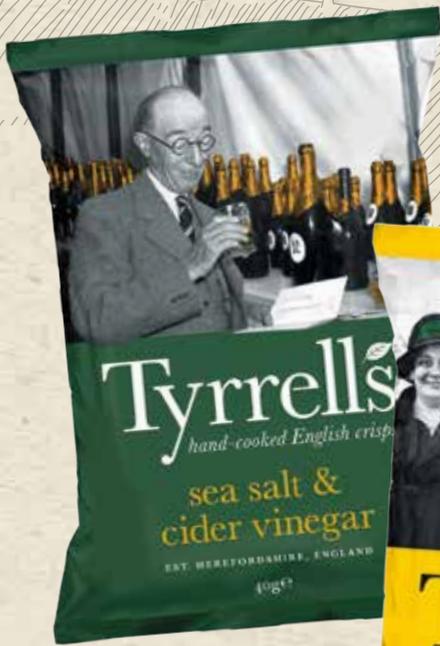
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5 WAYS TO USE

Dried Mixed Herbs



A superb store cupboard ingredient used throughout the world to inject depth, intensity, aromatics and flavour, Country Range Dried Mixed Herbs

continue to be a favourite for chefs in the hospitality and public catering sectors. A beautiful blend of floral thyme, marjoram, oregano, parsley, sage and basil, the Country Range Dried Mixed Herbs come in 190g jars, in packs of four.

ABOUT: ELLIOT TYLER

Born in south London, Elliot Tyler caught the cooking bug at a young age and as a nine-year-old was already helping his mum cook the family meals such as spaghetti Bolognese, lasagne and the Sunday roast. While he completed all of his GCSEs, the academic route didn't appeal so instead Elliot followed his passion for cookery by enrolling on a Professional Cookery Diploma at Westminster Kingsway College.

Loving the buzz of a professional kitchen from day one, Elliot spent the last three years learning his craft and honing his skills. One of three talented students who clinched second place in the Country Range Student Chef Challenge in March, Elliot completed his diploma in the summer and has already secured a full-time job at the iconic Claridge's. With a dream to one day run his own restaurant, Elliot's full concentration for the time being is on expanding his knowledge, skills and experience through his work at Claridge's, before hopefully experiencing what it's like to travel and work in kitchens around the world.

Here's Elliot's Five Ways with Dried Mixed Herbs.



1/ Tasty tagine

We were given an assignment at college to research the cuisine of a certain country and create a menu. I chose Morocco and experimented with various lamb tagine recipes. It's been a favourite of mine ever since. Mixed herbs are great to add aromatics and depth.

4/ Stuffed tomatoes

A classic Mediterranean dish and a brilliant starter to transport you to sunnier climes and times. I use breadcrumbs, dried mixed herbs, garlic, olive oil and a few chilli flakes. I mix it all together before loading on top of the tomatoes and baking them in the oven. Finish with some fresh basil and a drizzle of olive oil.

2/ Awesome arrabbiata

One of my favourite sauces as it's brilliantly versatile, simple to make and it has that all important chilli kick. I like to use mixed herbs to add base flavour to the sauce and then fresh herbs to serve. It can be utilised in so many ways, but my preference is to serve it with gnocchi.

5/ Perfect porchetta

Dried mixed herbs are brilliant for all kinds of herb-forward stuffings, but I love using them in a classic porchetta alongside some fresh sage.

3/ Pukka pizzas

My parents have a pizza oven, so I have spent many an hour kneading dough, testing combinations and perfecting my pizza skills. Dried mixed herbs are a must to boost flavour and are an ever-present alongside tomato sauce, mozzarella and artichoke on my favourite pizza.

Country Range
Dried Mixed Herbs
Pack Size:
4 x 190g >>



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NEW

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Speedy Weekday Meals by our Rising Star Jon Watts

Our Rising Star this month is Jon Watts and we have his new cookbook to give away to one lucky reader.

Jon believes everyone can create amazing food from scratch, having worked hard himself to learn how to cook and put himself on track as a chef after serving time in prison when he was young. You can read more about Jon and try one of his recipes on pages 40 – 41.

Speedy Weekday Meals is the ultimate cookbook for quick, easy, and delicious dinners under 30 minutes. From classic crowd-pleasers to fresh and healthy flavours, Jon has an answer for every night of the week.

There's no limit to just how easy it is to put delicious food on the table. 80 tried and tested recipes, with something for everyone and every occasion, like Bang Bang Chicken, Gnocchi Cacio e Pepe, Beef Stroganoff, Creamy Tuscan Cod and S'mores Traybake.

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



You can now enter all of our competitions online. Simply scan this QR code or visit www.stirupmagazine.co.uk



Closing date for the competition is 31st December 2024. All winners will be notified by 31st January 2025. Postal entries can be sent to: Country Range Group, 4 & 5 Jupiter House, Mercury Rise, Altham Business Park, Altham, Lancashire, BB5 5BY. Full terms and conditions can be found at: www.stirupmagazine.co.uk/about

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 **PREMIER**
FOODS FOODSERVICE

*Source: Circana Foodservice data (c.52% Coverage) : 52we 5.4.24 : Value sales