

THE COUNTRY RANGE GROUP MAGAZINE FOR CATERERS
JULY 2024

Stirritup

**CULINARY
CROSSROADS:**
TRACKING THE
EVOLUTION
OF ASIAN FOOD

**HOW TO
MANAGE STRESS**
IN HIGH-PRESSURE
KITCHEN
ENVIRONMENTS

Anna
Haugh's

SIGNATURE DISH



5 023616 476309

Ingredients

With summer in full swing, we're sure you're making the most of the fantastic local produce that's in season right now, as well as increased opportunities to get creative with your outdoor and on the go menus.

If you're looking for a little extra inspiration, look no further than our Melting Pot feature where our experts share their favourite handheld dishes. The busy summer months can add extra pressure in the kitchen, so don't miss this month's Heads Up article which provides a wealth of advice on managing stress.

If you would like to get involved in a feature or if you have any feedback, please email us at editor@stiritupmagazine.co.uk

The Stir it up team

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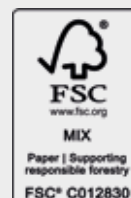
Design & Print

Eclipse Creative
www.eclipsecreative.co.uk

Front Cover

Anna Haugh
Photography © Laura Edwards

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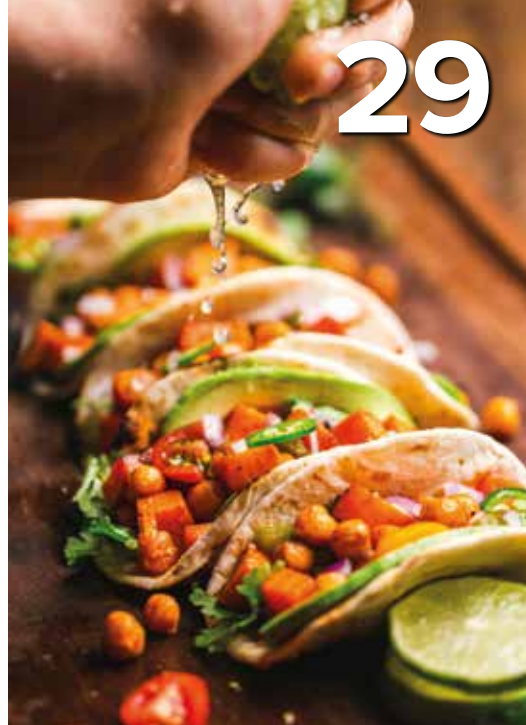


OUR EDITORIAL PARTNERS...



ALLERGEN REFERENCES

VG - Vegan V - Vegetarian



Readers' lives

NAME: Maria Katsiva

BORN AND RAISED: Athens, Greece

JOB TITLE: School chef

PLACE OF WORK: Belong Learning Gloucester

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED IN THE CATERING INDUSTRY? 21 years

PASSIONS OUTSIDE OF THE KITCHEN? Yoga, music, travelling, entertaining.

BIG TARGET FOR 2024? Introduce ethnic cuisines at school. The task is quite challenging as I work at a SEND school.

WHICH CHEF DO YOU RESPECT THE MOST AND WHY? I had the chance to meet Juan Roca at his restaurant in Spain and was impressed by his techniques in combining traditional Catalan cuisine and avant-garde cooking. My deepest respect is for any amateur chef who cooks the family meals every single day.

WHAT IS YOUR TOP TIP FOR

SOMEONE STARTING OUT IN THE CATERING INDUSTRY?

The most difficult "ingredient" you will have to work with in your career is other people, peers, suppliers, managers or customers. Be kind and gentle.

WHAT'S YOUR DREAM JOB? Running a restaurant by the sea with a very generous budget.

WHAT INGREDIENTS DO YOU MOST LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH IN THE SPRING/SUMMER? During spring and summer I work with lighter salad versions and a lot of vegetable based dishes. Radishes, dandelions, spring greens and artichokes are my favourites.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE COUNTRY RANGE PRODUCT AND WHY? I'll have to choose two: the catering Baking Parchment, because I use it all the time and it never fails, and the Vegan Mayo for its superb quality.

Country Range Vegan Mayo
Pack Size: 2.27l



Fresh FROM THE KITCHEN

Mexican is one of the key global cuisines this year. We look beyond enchiladas and nachos to explore how you can make the most of this rich, diverse culinary landscape on your menu.

CORN – So much more than tacos and tortillas, corn (masa) creates some of the most exciting Mexican dishes, such as tostadas (crunchy, topped), memelas (thick cake-like discs), huaraches (fried and smashed into pinto beans), tetelas (filled pockets), flautas (stuffed, deep fried) and tamales (shaped around a filling, wrapped in corn husk and steamed / baked) to name a few.

REGIONAL – Diners are interested in branching out and trying more regional specialities, such as mole, a complex sauce which has many variations, and tlayudas, which are large, thin tortillas topped like pizzas. Try regional stews too, like birria and pozole, which provide the classic comforts that are trending this year, with a global twist.

MODERN – There is so much fresh and vibrant Mexican fare coming through, particularly inspired by street food, such as elote (grilled street corn), tortas (sandwiches) and homemade totopos with a range of new and exciting salsas.

SEAFOOD – This cuisine adds such vibrancy to fish and seafood, from aguachile (raw citrus marinated seafood) to pescadillas (crispy fish tacos) and even traditional mextlapique (fish wrapped in roasted corn husks with nopales and vegetables).

DRINKS – There is no denying the popularity of the margarita in all of its many forms, but this is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Mexican inspired beverages. Micheladas are becoming more mainstream, and agave is being used increasingly in cocktails and mocktails. Try adding agua fresca for a Mexican twist to your fruit juice menu, or tepache for something completely different.



From thefoodpeople trends report 2024.

thefoodpeople.
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Serving Suggestion



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Cooks CALENDAR

July

7TH JULY – WORLD CHOCOLATE DAY

Celebrate chocolate with this delicious 'Crownie' – a brownie with a crunchy corn flake topping, one of a range of delicious dessert recipes from Cereal Partners.

12TH JULY – INTERNATIONAL FRENCH FRY DAY

Put the French in fries by serving this classic Moules-Frites dish using Signature by Country Range Double Crunch Fries.

21ST JULY – NATIONAL ICE CREAM DAY

No ice cream maker? No problem! Try this super-simple recipe from Opies for no churn ginger and chocolate ice cream.

22ND JULY – WORLD MANGO DAY

This tropical smoothie recipe uses MONIN Mango Fruit Mix - perfect for your summer drinks menu and for keeping everybody hydrated.



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



August

2ND AUGUST – INTERNATIONAL BEER DAY

Get the beer chilled and the BBQ fired up for these irresistibly sticky BBQ beer ribs.

4TH AUGUST – CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE DAY

Soft in the middle with a perfect crunch, these caramelised biscuit cookies with white chocolate chips won't last long! Try this recipe from Tate and Lyle.

11TH AUGUST – NATIONAL BAKEWELL TART DAY

Celebrate this classic teatime treat effortlessly. The Country Range Bakewell Tart is pre-portioned making service as easy as pie!

12TH – 18TH AUGUST – AFTERNOON TEA WEEK

Make sure everybody can join in with your afternoon tea celebrations by making your treats suitable for people with dysphagia. Try this level 4 battenburg cake from the Country Range IDDSI Guide.

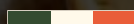
SEE PAGE 14 TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE IDDSI GUIDE.



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28014
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FOCACCIA
PRE-SLICED

36x90g



74450
MULTICEREAL
SFILATINO

34x110g



27476
CIABATTA
PRE-SLICED

36x100g



19490
GRAN FOCACCIA

24x130g



74818
GREEN OLIVE
BASTONCINO

46x80g





CELEBRATING FIVE YEARS OF SMALL STEPS AND GIANT LEAPS

MiChild Group, leading provider of childcare and early years education

Celebrating its 5-year anniversary in 2024, MiChild has quickly become one of the leading and most innovative providers of childcare and early years education in the northwest. Set up in April 2019 when it purchased its first nursery in Manchester, MiChild has grown rapidly, even in the most challenging of business environments, with further acquisitions taking the total number of nurseries in the group to 14.

An accountant by trade, Adam Sage, Owner and CEO of MiChild, worked across the hospitality and retail sectors before joining the second largest nursery school provider, who had around 150 nurseries. A proud father, it was in this role that his passion for early years education was born.

With a clear vision for success gained from his previous experience, Adam has worked tirelessly to consolidate and improve MiChild's nurseries, business practices, teaching methods, staff and brand. As a

nursery's food offering continues to be one of the most important areas of concern for new parents, no stone has been left unturned in Adam and his team's pursuit for perfection.

"Food and nutrition are hugely important, especially in early years learning and education and it is now the number one area new parents enquire about. They're eager to find out about the variety, quality, nutrition, allergens, and religious preferences available," says Adam. "It's a big spectrum that we have to cater for but building good habits and relationships with food is so important."

"When I first joined, there were seven or eight different ways of doing things and chefs were buying from all over the place. There was no measuring, quantifying and traceability so it was crucial that we had more uniformed and co-ordinated menus across the group. We now run

the same standardised menu across all of our nurseries that changes with the season. This makes it easy from a staff, training and cost perspective

but our cooks play a pivotal role in menu creation. After all, they are the heartbeat in every nursery and they know everything about what the children love, what they don't eat and what is wasted. They regularly run tastings with the children and even involve them in the cooking wherever possible."

Looking to the future, Adam is keen to retain the family values at MiChild but still has his eye on growth potential. "At the moment, we have 200 staff, and I can walk into any nursery and know every member of staff's name and history and we are really building a strong family ethos and community spirit

which is so powerful," he says. "Staff also all know me, and they know they can speak to me whenever they want. It's so important. It builds trust and highlights that we're all in it together. Once you get too big, that goes missing and so does the personal touch. That's not to say I'm not ambitious so 30-40 nurseries one day would be nice. That seems like a number I can still get my hands around and it can still have that family feel. It's about growing in a sustainable way for me, my management team, staff and, of course, the parents and children."



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IN SEASON: Beetroot

1/ RICE SALAD

Beetroot works well in salads, chef Paul Gayler MBE uses roasted beetroot and combines it with black rice, asparagus, whipped avocado, continental salad leaves and oranges.



A close relative of spinach and chard, beetroot is a highly versatile vegetable and can be used in many ways. It can be juiced, steamed, roasted, grated raw into salads, blended into a soup or added to cakes and desserts. Beetroot leaves are also edible and can be used in the same way as chard or spinach.

Rich in vitamins and minerals, beetroot is easy to grow from seed, plants take up little room and can be grown in containers.

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

There are many ways to use leftover beetroot – add to salads, blitz into a smoothie or combine with other vegetables and fruit for a healthy juice. If you want to freeze any leftover beetroot, make sure it is cooked beforehand.

For recipes visit:
www.e3vegan.com

<https://www.higgidy.co.uk/>
<https://www.risogallo.co.uk/>
<https://www.oddbbox.co.uk/recipes/beetroot-focaccia>



2/ FOCACCIA BREAD

Camille Aubert from Oddbox bakes focaccia bread with roasted beetroot wedges, sea salt, beetroot leaves, rosemary and basil. It uses honey as a sweetener to help the yeast develop better. Serve with a mustard, garlic and olive oil dressing. It will keep for a few days in a linen bread bag.

3/ FLUTED TART

Camilla Stephens from Higgidy uses roasted beets for a visually striking Roasted Beetroot and Feta Tart. “Try to find small fresh beetroot with leafy tufts – once roasted they combine well with the salty feta,” she says. The filling uses eggs, cream and Parmesan style cheese. The beetroot is arranged inside the pastry case and sprinkled with feta and oregano.



4/ CHOCOLATE & ESPRESSO CAKE

The earthy flavour of beetroot not only combines well with bittersweet dark chocolate, but it helps to keep the texture of cakes moist. Camilla Stephens from Higgidy uses grated cooked beetroot for her Gluten-Free Dark Chocolate Beetroot and Espresso Loaf Cake. Shots of espresso are added to the cake mix too, with one shot added to the icing.

5/ HEARTY SOUP

Borscht soup is a vibrant hearty beetroot soup. Marc Joseph from E3Vegan supper club and vegan café combines raw beetroot with carrots, celery, potato, beetroot juice and red wine vinegar. Vegan cream cheese is put into a piping bag and used to decorate the dish, which is garnished with sprigs of dill. The soup can be served hot or cold.



Also In Season



Samphire



Cherries



Cavolo nero



Broad beans



Greengages

Going for GOLD!

July is set to be an Olympic month in more ways than one so it's a terrific time to test your technique and go in search of gold star reviews. With a host of food and drink occasions to latch onto and catch the attention of visitors and guests, here's some tips to ensure your menu makes the winners' podium.



7TH JULY

WORLD CHOCOLATE DAY

Possibly one of humankind's best culinary inventions, a world without chocolate is one that is hard to contemplate. So, as World Chocolate Day arrives on the 7th of the month, let's make it an indulgent cocoa-fest to remember.

For the time-poor, our range of thaw and serve chocolate cakes and desserts never fail to amaze. Try our recently launched Signature by Country Range Chocolate and Marmalade Marble Cake. If you're looking to create and bake from scratch, our store cupboard staples and widely acclaimed chocolate drops, cake mixes and cookie pucks, can provide both the canvas and paints to create a chocolate masterpiece. How about this Chocolate Delight Trifle which elevates Country Range Chocolate Delight Mix to decadent new heights?



Chocolate Delight Trifle



"EVERY GREAT KITCHEN NEEDS A GREAT STORE CUPBOARD AND COUNTRY RANGE IS A CRUCIAL PART OF OURS. THE SELECTION OF NUTS ARE TOP QUALITY AND FANTASTIC VALUE FOR MONEY, AS ARE THE SEASONINGS AND SPICES."

EXECUTIVE CHEF, BELFAST

SIGNATURE CHEF'S CHUNKY FRIES

NEW

Since its launch last summer, we've been scouring the world for exclusive products and ingredients for our Signature collection to help those looking to take their offering to an ultra-premium level.

To this end, we're excited to launch our new Signature by Country Range – frozen Chef's Chunky Fries in time for the key summer months. Fries are a vital component across snacking, starter and main menus and offer fantastic opportunities for an upsell, when loaded or pimped up.

Providing a rustic, homemade finish and a silky soft centre, the chunky fries are double coated and triple-cooked to offer an irresistible crunch that holds for at least 40 minutes. Made solely using flavoursome Fontane potatoes, this special variety ensures a super-sized fry and consistency throughout the year.

**SIGNATURE BY COUNTRY RANGE
CHEF'S CHUNKY FRIES 19MM
Pack Size: 4 x 2.5kg**



Signature
by Country Range

16TH JULY

National Cherry Day

British cherries are bang in season so they're a fantastic ingredient to add seasonal star factor to the menu. For the imaginative this July, they can be enjoyed in superlative summer dressings and barbecue sauces but a cherry sweet takes some beating. Our new Sour Cherry Meringue Pie is a sumptuous showstopper and just needs to be thawed before being served. For those with a little extra time, try making these cherry and chocolate crumble pots which are also bang on trend for festival and street food vans.



*Cherry Chocolate
Crumble Pot*

21ST JULY

NATIONAL ICE CREAM DAY

A weapon of mass seduction for public caterers and every corner of the hospitality industry, nothing says summer like ice cream. With National Ice Cream Day falling on the 21st and the holiday season taking off, make sure you have a menu to allure the gelato lovers. Our Signature by Country Range Dairy Strawberry, Chocolate, Vanilla and Salted Caramel Ice Creams are cool for cones but equally as good when used in desserts. As the iconic ice cream sandwich continues its resurgence, why not try this great sandwich recipe using our cookie pucks?



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



*Country Range Sour
Cherry Meringue Pie*

REFRESHING ICED COFFEE STOCK UP NOW



Jiminy's

HEADS^{UP}

Managing stress in high pressure kitchen environments

In the bustling atmosphere of a professional kitchen, chefs are often exposed to a variety of stressors that can impact their mental and physical health. Understanding the root causes and implementing strategies to combat them is important to maintain a productive and positive kitchen environment. Some of the most commonly identified sources of stress include:

HIGH WORKLOAD AND TIME PRESSURE

With service operating throughout the day, there is a relentless pace in the kitchen and high volumes of work pre, during and post service. Working to tight deadlines and aiming to achieve perfection with every dish can be very stressful, especially when kitchens are understaffed.

To ease this pressure, efficient kitchen management is key. This can include the introduction of planning systems such as prep lists and clear, streamlined processes for each service. Scheduling regular breaks and checking rosters are effective, ensuring the right staff with the right skills are working at peak times can also prevent burnout.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The physical toll of working in a kitchen—standing for long hours, working in extreme heat, and performing repetitive tasks—can exacerbate stress levels. By addressing ergonomics in the kitchen with anti-fatigue mats, ensuring workstations are at comfortable heights, and encouraging proper posture when lifting heavy items, operators can reduce the physical strain on their teams.

COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWNS

Poor communication can lead to errors and increased tension among team members. In a high-stakes environment like a kitchen, this can significantly affect the team's performance and overall morale. Holding regular team

meetings and debriefing sessions can help address issues before they escalate, and involving team members to devise a communication protocol during service can also help reduce misunderstandings.

PERSONALITY CLASHES

In any team environment, differing personalities can lead to conflict. When the pressure is on, these conflicts can be more pronounced and can break teams apart. Taking time to implement team-building activities once a quarter can improve everyone's understanding of themselves and each other to improve relationships among staff. To quickly remedy issues when

tempers flare, conflict resolution training and a clear policy for managing disputes will also prevent situations spiraling out of control.

MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

While some people strive under stress, for others the intensity of kitchen environments can take a toll on their mental health. Stress, anxiety, and even depression are not uncommon and they can lead to bad habits such as excessive drinking or drug abuse. It is important for managers to recognise the signs of mental health struggles and offer support. Providing access to resources such as counselling services and fostering a supportive work environment can make a significant difference.

Stress in the kitchen is inevitable, given the nature of the job. However, with proactive management and a commitment to supporting staff, it is possible to create a positive kitchen environment that improves your team's wellbeing. Addressing the root causes of stress head on with some simple, easy to implement strategies will help reduce staff attrition and enhance productivity too. While the hospitality sector continues to face staffing challenges, spending a little time to make coming to work more enjoyable could be the best decision you make today.

“While some people strive under stress, for others the intensity of kitchen environments can take a toll on their mental health.”



New Country Range guide for people with DYSPHAGIA

Preparing texture modified meals for people with dysphagia can be challenging for care home caterers. Dysphagia has to be carefully managed as each person's needs can be different and must be met to prevent malnourishment and more extreme medical problems.

To support care home caterers, the Country Range Group has published a new guide full of ideas and inspiration to make mealtimes more appetising for those with dysphagia. The guide details the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) guidelines on how to provide the right dietary support and has been created in association with consultant Andy Cullum.

"The aim of the guide is to give care home caterers who use Country Range products a better understanding about IDDSI," says Andy. "It contains tips, tricks and innovative methods on how they can produce snacks, mains and desserts. The idea of the guide is to give caterers confidence in producing modified meals for anyone with dysphagia and to push the barriers. An IDSSI meal doesn't have to be a blob on a plate. Most foods can be adapted to IDSSI – all you need is belief, time and practice."

The Country Range guide provides ideas on snacks for IDSSI diets including a texture modified bread for Level 4, sausage rolls, wraps and sandwiches. Andy says, "Snacks can be difficult, but you just need to practise. To make IDSSI wraps and sausage rolls have a 'cooked' appearance, first wrap a baking tray with cling film and sprinkle gravy powder on

top. Once the pastry and bread mix has been added to the tray, the gravy powder will soak in and make it look 'cooked'. Simple but effective."

Making IDSSI meals look inviting is important. Andy recommends using a piping bag. "I use a thick plastic disposable bag. The end can be tied, put on a tray and stored in a hot cupboard, this then traps in the moisture and stops the mix changing consistency. If you put a nozzle in the bag, moisture comes out of it through the nozzle and the end of your mix will go dry and won't pass the IDSSI audit test."

The guide gives details on how foods need to be tested during preparation. For example, with Level 4 texture modified bread, once the mix is made leave the mix for 20 minutes, then check the consistency as you may need to add more food thickener or liquid until it passes the Level 4 testing method.

Menu ideas include Katsu Curry and Braised Beef and a Battenberg cake for Level 4 using Country Range dessert mix. Andy says, "The Country Range Katsu Curry Sauce is a joy to use and works with Levels 3 to 7. We also used the Crème Dessert Mix to make Swiss rolls and snack pots."

Andy's advice is to be prepared. "If you've always got a bag of modified sponge, fruit or bread in the fridge, you've got something for 10.30am and 3.30pm snacks and you can alternate it on a daily basis."

The guide is available through your local Country Range Group wholesaler or by scanning the QR code. For more information on IDSSI, visit www.iddsi.org





ANDY CULLUM'S TOP TIPS FOR CARE HOME CATERERS ARE:

- Use a dash of olive oil, vinegar and brown sugar as a grinding agent for blending lettuce. Then add milk until you achieve the colour that is needed and thicken. This must then be passed through a sieve.
- A good quality milk powder works well for fortifying food - it's high in protein and the saturated fats have been removed and replaced with vegetable fats.
- Always have an IDDSI prep box ready with items such as a food thickener, piping bags, scissors, pastry brush – anything you would need to prep IDDSI meals. When you start to prepare IDDSI meals, if you can't find items you need your food will go cold.
- Always check seasoning as you may need to add salt and pepper. Taste is important as bland food will not stimulate the appetite.
- Always try and make food look like food so that residents can identify what they are eating. Remember that we eat with our eyes first.
- When presenting a meal use the "Mum's test". Would you serve this meal to your Mum? If the answer is no, redo the meal.



Level 4 Chicken and Salad Wrap



Level 4 Tuna and Chickpea Mousse



"The idea of the guide is to give caterers confidence in producing modified meals for anyone with dysphagia and to push the barriers."

Minced & Moist



Soft & Bite Sized



Regular Food (easy to chew)

Level 4 Chocolate Jam Sponge



Eat, Meet REPEAT

A growing number of food halls are opening up across the UK and Ireland, influencing the way consumers dine out. The trend is also on the rise further afield into Europe and beyond.

Food halls help to broaden and promote new cuisines and street food concepts. Depending on their location, it can become an important local community hub. One of the main attractions for consumers is the wide choice of cuisine available, as well as entertainment and events. It's a more informal dining experience and less expensive than going to a restaurant. In many cases, ordering can be done through an app or QR code which cuts queuing time.

Food halls include Mackie Mayor in Manchester, Eataly in London, Duke Street Market in Liverpool and Bonnie & Wild in Edinburgh. There are many more in the pipeline such as White Cloth Hall in Leeds being transformed into a new food and drink hall.



St George's Market in Belfast, Northern Ireland, must be one of the oldest food halls. Built during the 19th century, it is open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with different attractions on each day. On Fridays known as "Variety Day", there are about 200 market stalls selling local produce, including Ireland's leading retail fish market. The Belfast Bap Company is well-known for its signature 'Belfast Bap' – an entire Irish breakfast packed into a bread roll. Or there's Check Out My Buns, selling vegan and gluten free cakes, buns and biscuits; Curry Sauce NI with its gluten free curry sauces; El

The Social Phenomenon of Food Hall Dining

Toro Grill with gourmet burgers and burritos; Tapitas with paella and tapas; The Crepe Markets with savoury and sweet crepes and Dezurts, offering warm puddings with custard, traybakes and cakes. On Saturday there's a food and craft market, where customers can dine and shop while listening to live music from local bands and solo artists. On Sunday there's a City Food and Craft Market, with the emphasis on local arts and crafts, as well as live music.

A relative newcomer to the food hall scene is Common Market in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter bringing together Belfast street food, function space and three bars. Food stalls include Al Pastor Mexican street food, Mono Gelato Co, LASA offering Filipino fusion cuisine and Hey Chick, fried chicken on a stick.



Peter Farrell, a former chef and founder of Epsom Social Food Hall in Surrey, which opened two years ago, says, "Food halls are popular as they are informal, casual spaces where people don't have to dress up and can enjoy a range of different food options without committing to a two or three course meal. A group of people can order what they like from various vendors,

the food arrives, and they enjoy it together. It's inexpensive when people are watching budgets. It's important to have a range of events. We attract young families, so we put on events such as parents and baby quizzes, cartoons and a family trivia quiz."

Epsom Social Food Hall stages regular weekly events such as an open mic night, live music, charity events, talks and giant board games. It is also available for customers to hire for private events such as birthday parties and bar mitzvahs.

When Peter was planning what food options to offer in the food hall, market

research revealed the most popular items were pizzas, fish and chips, Asian cuisine and burgers.

Epsom Social Food Hall runs its own food stalls as Peter wants to develop and operate the hall's own brands. "We want to achieve and maintain control over standards and service – the easiest way to do this is to develop our own," he says. "We decided to do the classics – burgers, fish and chips, pizzas, but make them high quality."

The 'Napo' street food concept serves traditional high quality Neapolitan



"Food halls are popular as they are informal, casual spaces where people don't have to dress up and can enjoy a range of food options from various vendors"

“One of the best aspects of trading here is the sense of community. You’re working alongside other business owners so there’s always someone you can ask for advice.”



pizzas, using traditional Biga dough for the base, which brings the flavour of Naples to Epsom. “I was in Naples two years ago and the pizzas blew me away,” he says. Napo also serves Angioletti alla Nutella – fried sweet pizza dough covered with Nutella. Also on the menu is pizza sandwiches – pizza dough shaped like a panini baked in the oven then sliced in half with various fillings.

Pete’s Fish & Chips is an upmarket take on the British classic, using sustainably sourced fish, a special beer batter using Epsom Social branded beer and hand cut chips. “We make all our own sauces,” says Peter.



Food halls can also revitalise areas, as in the case of Spark Food Hall in York, where the project was inspired by a vision to create a vibrant destination in a forgotten part of the city. Spark is a creative community space bringing together an array of independent businesses. These include food and drink vendors, as well as a holistic therapy studio, hair and beauty salon, a flexible co-working hub and a shared studio for resident artists.

Tom McKenzie, co-founder and managing director, says, “Our venue showcases local vendors, that are typically small or early-stage businesses, which gives people the chance to support and discover new culinary talent.”

Currently, Spark’s food offering includes Vovo Cantina’s Brazilian inspired grill kitchen, Knori Southeast Pan Asian street food, Sarras Indian Gujarai street food, Herbivorous modern vegan comfort food and Tiro Sicilian street food.

Chef Jack Jenner, founder of Baby Boy’s Burgers, has been trading at Spark in York for six months, selling classic burgers with a twist. He says, “We use fresh local produce from Yorkshire and make our own patties, sauces and pickles inhouse to our own recipes.” The best seller is the classic burger in a pattie with lettuce, cheese with dill and garlic pickles. A vegan burger is available – a portobello mushroom marinated in a Mexican style sauce. He says, “One of the best aspects of trading here is the sense of community working in the food hall – we’re like a big family looking out for each other. You’re working alongside other business owners so there’s always someone you can ask for advice. As a new business, the food hall offers stability and you also benefit from the marketing team promoting the venue and from the existing base of regular customers. That’s a massive advantage. I used to work in restaurants and there’s been a decline in the higher cost-per-head outlets. Food halls offer people quick cheap street food and entertainment.”

For a street vendor with a new concept, taking a stall in a food hall gives them an opportunity to test the idea in an internal space. There are many advantages for vendors such as reduced rental, flexibility and shared utilities. Tom from Spark says, “It’s a great chance to test an idea, at a much lower start-up than bricks and mortar premises, but it’s also the chance to be part of a collaborative community.”

With the changing high street and the popularity of the communal dining experience, it looks like food halls are here to stay, as more spring up over the country. Tom says, “As long as food halls can adjust to changing consumer preferences, adopt sustainable practices and offer innovative concepts, they will continue to thrive. Perhaps bizarrely, it’s not always just about the food. Like any hospitality offer, it has to grow and evolve with what people need.”



STREET FOOD TRENDS

The rise of food halls has also accelerated new concepts in street food, mainly driven by social media.

- After becoming a TikTok sensation, Ben Newman, known as Spudman in Tamworth, has seen customers queuing for up to three hours outside his takeaway van for his jacket potatoes with various fillings such as chicken curry, tuna mayo or cheese and beans. He can sell around 1,500 a day priced between £4 and £5.
- Humble Crumble at London’s Borough Market, Old Spitalfields and Camden Market has been successful after raising their profile on TikTok, described as the world’s first crumble bakery. It serves crumbles with a variety of sumptuous toppings.
- Tom from Spark says, “Trends are interesting - fads come and go in minutes these days with TikTok and Instagram. Personally, I like the trend of people focusing on something classic and reimagining that for a modern audience. A really good pie, a classic buttie done very well. I’m seeing more proper bagel spots and that ticks all the boxes for me.”



An Appetite for Automation

Students at the University of Sussex are dining at the speed of tech

Technology is playing an important part in the catering operation at the University of Sussex, Brighton. It has not only become the first UK university to open a 'no contact' food and drink shop, but it has also launched its first robot server in the 'Eat Central' outlet.

The new 'frictionless' shop called Atrium Market uses technology to introduce students to a new retail concept. Students simply scan their debit payment card on entering, select their food and drink, then walk out. Sensors on shelves detect what has been purchased as well as scanners at the exit point. The bill is

automatically deducted from the customer's debit card upon leaving.

Situated inside the Student Union, the shop stocks a range of sandwiches, snacks, Tanpopo sushi and gyoza, as well as Japanese and Asian halal ready meals. A hot drinks station serves coffee from

Redroast, which is also available in other cafés on the campus.

Mark Lawrence from Sussex Uni Food, the university's catering partners, explains, "The student centre is open 24 hours a day, so we wanted to offer a quick and easy option for those studying around the clock, providing a snack or hot drink at any time of the day or night. It complements the facilities available at the student centre where food can be heated using on-site microwaves or students can add hot water to snacks such as noodles."

The university worked with Amazon to install and implement the technology and once the shop was open, Sussex Uni Food took charge of the day to day running of the shop. Mark adds, "We're

really proud to be introducing the first frictionless store of its kind in a university here."

The robot server at the Eat Central outlet delivers food to tables when ordered via QR code, which saves on queuing at the counter. It uses a laser-mapping system and 3D camera to detect objects, making its journey from the kitchen to the table smooth and efficient.

The Uni Food Hub App is another innovation which enables staff and students to have food delivered across the campus free of charge whenever required. Users select the closest location for delivery, then their choice of meal. Food can be pre-ordered at a time to suit them.

These technology innovations are just part of the university's extensive refurbishment programme. Eat Central was renovated to create a food court-style layout with cosy booths. The menu was revamped offering global dishes alongside classic favourites. These include bamboo and baba thali, as well as street food options like bao buns, dirty fries and House of Cluck

“We’re really proud to be introducing the first frictionless store of its kind in a university here.”



fried chicken. It also offers the popular ‘Sussex Saver’ meal which provides a hot meal for £2 for staff and students.

Another outlet Veg Bowl @ Dhaba has also been refurbished and as a result, sales have increased by over a third compared to the previous year. It offers a “build-your-own” lunch menu where customers choose a base of either noodle broth, poke bowl, leafy salad or banh mi. This is combined with a protein or veg choice such as mushroom, tofu, egg and aubergine and topped with mango, pineapple, cucumber or sweetcorn before finished with a garnish and sauce.

For more information on the concept, visit <https://www.sussex.ac.uk/>

Above (left to right)

Uni of Sussex no contact shop artist's impression

Uni of Sussex robot server at Eat Central

PASSION STAR DELIGHT



Skill level: Intermediate

Preparation time: 10 minutes preparation time, 30 minutes to set and 2 minute to assemble

Serves: 4

INGREDIENTS

100g McDougalls Vegan Orange Jelly Crystals
280ml boiling water
280ml Passion Star Martini cocktail mix

200ml Ambrosia RTU Custard
300g vanilla cream cheese mix
2 passion fruits sliced in half
100g meringue crushed
Fresh mint sprigs

METHOD

1. Mix the McDougalls Orange Jelly Crystals with the required quantity of boiling water until dissolved.
2. Pour the cocktail mix into the jelly mix, stir well. Divide the mix between 4 Martini glasses, and place into a fridge to set.

3. When the jelly has set, layer with equal amounts of Ambrosia RTU Custard and top it with equal amounts of vanilla cream cheese.
4. Garnish with crushed meringue, half a fresh passion fruit and sprigs of mint.

Always on hand to help.

X @ f www.premierfoodservice.co.uk



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*Nielsen 52 w/e 10.06.23 – Total Coverage. **Foodservice Wholesaler sales data w/e 15.01.23 †With added calcium which contributes to the maintenance of normal bones, teeth and muscle function as part of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

5 WAYS TO USE Pine Nuts



Believed to have been an important food source since prehistoric times, pine nuts are actually seeds, which come from the cones of various species of the evergreen, coniferous pine tree.

Like all of their nutty (or seedy) brethren, pine nuts are as versatile as they are healthy and a fantastic way of fortifying dishes with nutrients, texture and flavour. Providing crunch, sweet woody notes and a beautiful moreish nutty flavour, our Country Range Pine Nuts can help lift your summer salads, dips, pestos and pastas to new levels this August.

ABOUT: PAULINA LITWIN, WEST SUFFOLK COLLEGE COUNTRY RANGE STUDENT CHEF CHALLENGE WINNER

Helping to put Suffolk on the map as a hotbed of culinary talent, Paulina Litwin is one of the trio of talented chefs that scooped the Student Chef Challenge title at the HRC Show in March. Born in Krosno in Poland, Paulina is currently completing her VRQ level 2 in Professional Cookery at West Suffolk College.

Already being tipped for big things, Paulina's dream is to open her own bakery. Here's her five ways with Pine Nuts.



1/ Crust is a must

Providing great flavour, functionality and a beautiful subtle crunch, pine nuts are my go-to nut for crusts. Very versatile – they're great on crusts for meat or fish.

2/ Punchy pesto

The classic Italian nut for a perfect pesto, my favourite pine nut pesto is one with wild garlic. It freezes well so make the most of the UK season and get foraging. It works wonderfully with pine nuts in a pesto.

3/ Nuts for sweets

Another brilliant combination is fig and pine nuts. I love bringing these two ingredients together in all kinds of sweet treats but I particularly love making a Fig and Pine Nut Treacle Galette.

4/ Set your tarts apart

Sometimes less is so much more and my Pine Nut and Honey Tart recipe epitomises this. Just a few ingredients but the combination of pinenuts and honey is a delight.

5/ Dazzling dukkah

Dukkah has definitely grown in popularity and it's easy to see why. It can be made in advance and used to great effect in finishing, boosting flavour and adding texture to finished dishes. I like to make an aromatic pine nut dukkah for finishing mezze dishes like baba ganoush.

Try this Country Range recipe which includes a labneh dressing using olives, pistachios and pine nut kernels to complement lamb chops.



Country Range Pinenut Kernels
Pack Size: 4 x 185g





CULINARY CROSSROADS



Tracking the evolution of Asian food

From Chinese dim sum to Japanese udon and everything in between – Asian food has been at the forefront of hospitality trends for a long time. Often quick to make and easy to offer in meat, fish or vegan options, it is also a firm favourite with many operators looking to bring the flavours of the orient to home shores. This month, we dive into the detail to understand the trends from this region and more specifically, what you need to produce more authentic dishes for your diners.

THE GROWTH OF ASIAN CUISINE

Asia is vast, so naturally the variety of dishes that stem from the area are plentiful. Over the years as the world has become more accessible, our palettes have broadened to regularly enjoy influences from Burma, the Philippines, Japan, Sri Lanka and Korea. This in turn has driven increased curiosity, innovation and opportunity in the hospitality sector. "Compared to where we were 10 years ago, we've seen a huge shift towards chefs and restaurants wanting to embody Japanese cuisine authentically. Head Chefs are now far more knowledgeable about the ingredients and cooking styles that create authentic recipes, and we're seeing menus created with true, Japanese produce and products," says Mike Shaw, Chef Patron at MUSU.

Today, most operators across all sectors have at least one Asian inspired dish on their menu. Handheld items such as spring rolls, bao buns and sweetcorn fritters are perfect snacks in care homes and stir fries or curries are not only great dishes for themed menus, but with a more culturally diverse population, they are also an important taste of home.

In schools, dining rooms are heavily influenced by social media trends. As such bubble tea, katsu and kimchi are finding their way onto menus as caterers continue to quickly change gear and keep up with the latest flavour of the month.

WHAT MAKES AN AUTHENTIC ASIAN DISH?

In their search for authenticity, chefs have been travelling the world, uncovering cooking techniques and traditional recipes handed down through generations. Traversing a continent as broad as Asia undoubtedly unearths a host of different techniques which are now being used in kitchens in the West.

"Grilling, for example Teppanyaki or Yakitori proves to be a very popular technique. I also find when applying a grilling technique to a dish, glazing with a Japanese sauce betters the flavour and satisfies customers' demand for an authentic taste experience," says Max Want, Chef-Owner, Yamato. Japanese food is a great example of how many different methods of cooking there are within one country. Dan McGeorge, Chef-Owner, Vetch recommends cooking on a hibachi or konro grill over bichotan charcoal due to its versatility and the distinct flavour it imparts.

In Indian cuisine, 'dum' cooking is a technique associated with Mughlai cuisine. "In this practice, the dish is left in the large 'handis' where they breathe in their own juices and aroma that makes them even more flavourful. The 'handis' are sealed with either a cloth or dough for trapping the steam until the rice or meat is cooked. One of the most popular dishes created by this cooking technique is the Dum Biryani," notes Sohan Bhandari, Executive Chef, Colonel Saab.

In Southeast Asian cuisine, clay pots are often used in cooking, a technique which involves slow-cooking food over fire. "Clay distributes

heat evenly, resulting in tender ingredients and flavourful broths,” says Sunita Yousuf, Chef. “It is common in Korea (Dolsot Bibimbap—a rice dish with vegetables and meat), China (Hong Shao Rou—braised pork belly), and Vietnam (Bun Bo Hue—spicy beef noodle soup). The clay pot imparts a subtle earthiness to the food and retains heat for a comforting culinary experience, replicating traditional home-cooked meals.”

Open fire cooking is particularly prevalent in the region, using different types of fuel to impart a variety of flavours. “Personally, I love utilising methods like pruning, where veggies get smoked over woodchip fires for amazing depth, or mastering the precise control of wok hay, that intense sear you get from stir-frying in a blazing hot wok,” says Mimi Nguyen, Cafely.



THE INGREDIENTS OF SUCCESS

Of course, it's not just the method of cooking that makes a dish authentically Asian. Traditional recipes and ingredients from the region must all combine to hit the right notes. So, what are the go-to ingredients used by chefs to re-create these dishes?

The team at Flesh & Buns recommend miso as a store cupboard staple, the umami flavour balances dishes and can enhance sweet or salty food. Another staple for the team is bonito flakes which are used on top of their okonomiyaki (Japanese savoury pancakes) and Takoyaki (fried octopus). Bonito is another smoky umami flavour and is made from dried and fermented tuna shavings.

Tom Tsappis, Chef-Owner, Killiecrankie House recommends the following ingredients for recreating a number of Japanese dishes; “The basics are soy, sesame oil, ginger, garlic, sake, mirin, rice wine vinegar, and sugar. If you want to make more specialist dishes, ingredients like kudzu, yuzu / sudachi, kinako (ground, toasted soy) and rice flour also become necessary.”

Across the region, seafood is a mainstay ingredient as many Asian countries are either islands or feature large swathes of coastline. “As a mountainous island, Japan is surrounded

with waters rich in a diversity of fish and Japan's affinity with seafood and seaweed is at the heart of its nation's cooking,” says Ben English, Operations Director, Marrfish Ltd. “For a delicious Thai dish, monkfish infused with chilli, Thai basil and coconut provides a rich, deep flavoured meal and for a classic Chinese option, try steamed sea bass sprinkled liberally with finely sliced spring onion, sliced fresh root ginger and a dash of toasted sesame oil.”

Creating a completely different flavour profile, spices feature heavily in Indian cooking. “Spices are the backbone of Indian cooking” says Sohan. “A few must-haves are turmeric, cumin, coriander, red chilli powder, mustard seeds and garam masala.”

No matter the dish or origin, sourcing the best quality produce will set you up for success, but you also need to think about how you're using and preparing those ingredients. “It's important to look at the little things like what heats your grill,” advises Mike. “The tastes and flavours are so well balanced that it only takes a small mistake or oversight to throw them off completely, so make sure you have control over every single thing that can affect your food.”



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**Bao (Hirata)
Buns**
50g 1 x 30



VEGAN

Street food sta



WHAT'S ON TREND?



First came K-pop and so it only comes to pass that K-food would follow at some point! Spicy Korean cuisine is fast making a regular appearance on our food scene, with bulgogi, bibimbap and Korean fried chicken the stars of the show. As K-food develops, we expect to see teokbokki (rice cakes) and japchae (sweet potato noodles) becoming more mainstream.



Lovers of Japanese food will undoubtedly already be aware of Chawanmushi, a savoury set steamed custard which has grown in popularity following an appearance on the Great British Menu. "We make our own version that takes its flavour from a cauliflower cheese, using roasted cauliflower as a base for the stock and combining with pickled onions, truffle and a parmesan foam," says Dan. Meanwhile at Killcrankie House, Tom makes his with produce grown in his garden, changing the ingredients with the seasons.



At Cafely, Mimi Nguyen has seen success with her Burmese curry noodle dishes, Lao salads and Filipino favourites such as lumpia (a type of spring roll) and adobo (both a type of cooking process and stew). Heading over to India, Sohan is enjoying perfecting Falahari Kofta Curry, featuring kofta rolls of lotus stem served on a mild beetroot and raisin curry, tapping into the growth of plant based dishes. "We serve it with Khameeri roti, a traditional Indian flatbread made using whole wheat flour, yeast, and milk, topped with some fresh green cress and crisp potato," he says.

There is so much to be excited about when it comes to Asian food, whether you feature one dish or focus your entire menu on a region, chefs and diners alike are not tiring of the continuous stream of new flavours making their way to our table, so start exploring and find new revenue streams you never knew existed!

JAPANESE FOOD IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF HOW MANY DIFFERENT METHODS OF COOKING THERE ARE WITHIN ONE COUNTRY.



VEGAN



**Bao Buns
Hoisin
Jackfruit**

40g 2 x 40



VEGAN



**Asian Prawn
Snack
Selection**

2 x 48

**GLUTEN
FREE**

Examples, when will you serve yours?



KEEP EXPLORING





Attracting SOLO DINERS



**JAMES
RATCLIFFE**

James Ratcliffe is co-owner of The Black Bull, Sedburgh, Cumbria, with wife Nina Matsunaga, head chef and finalist on this year's BBC TV's Great British Menu. The Black Bull is an 18-room contemporary inn, restaurant and bar, with two AA rosettes and is included in the UK's Top 50 Gastropubs. James's hospitality career includes running a street food business, café, bakery and bistro before opening The Black Bull in 2018.

“Making the effort to dine alone means they really want to try the food and potentially have a larger spend per head.”

ACCORDING TO OPENTABLE, SINGLE COVER RESERVATIONS HAVE INCREASED. WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS?

I think people feel more comfortable about the whole experience. We've seen a 10% increase in solo diners over the last year. They are a mix – lone parents dropping kids off at the nearby international school, influencers, business travellers, walkers and cyclists – we are on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

IS IT MORE SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE?

The dining experience has changed. The Black Bull is more relaxed now than a restaurant of our level would have been back in the day. People want to go to a specific restaurant to try the food and if there's no-one to go with them, they'll go on their own.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CATERING FOR SINGLE DINERS?

Making the effort to dine alone means they really want to try the food and potentially have a larger spend per head. If a solo diner comes to your venue and has a good time, they'll tell someone else and come again in a group. Sometimes with bigger parties they're coming for each other not for the dining

SHOULD SOLO GUESTS BE SEATED IN A SPECIAL PLACE?

You don't want to seat them at a table for six people and you don't want them to feel uncomfortable. Don't sit them in the middle of the room or hidden away in a corner. You have to select the right spot with a good view of the

restaurant, although many solo diners spend time on their phone and at lunchtime, they bring their laptop. In some cases, you can sit them where they may strike up a conversation with someone else, but it's up to them.

experience, they've come to meet each other and chat so the spend per head might be less, whereas someone who's coming for the total experience tends to spend more money.

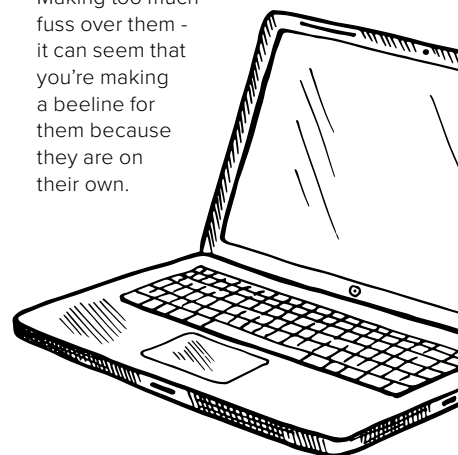
WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR CREATING A GREAT SOLO GUEST EXPERIENCE?

You've got to read the customers. There will be solo diners who want some stimulation, someone to talk to, so offer them something – a paper or something to read – maybe a book. We have books dotted round the pub for people to pick up. Some will want to be left alone, so staff need to tell if that's the case. Everybody's different – some people will look at their phone, other people will chat. Talk to them about the food and wine – as you speak to people,

you should be able to tell whether they're looking for more interaction. That's the same with a couple or a group of four.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST MISTAKES HOSPITALITY OUTLETS MAKE WHEN CATERING FOR SINGLE DINERS?

Making too much fuss over them – it can seem that you're making a beeline for them because they are on their own.



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Handheld snacks for discerning diners

In the world of handheld food, convenience meets flavour in every bite. From bustling street corners to festivals and care homes, these snacks encapsulate everything we love about cultural diversity and culinary innovation. This month our experts share their favourite handheld dishes to inspire and delight.



SEBASTIAN GARRIDO
*Marketing Manager,
Vibe Adventures*

A street food classic in Mexico City is tacos; the best tacos you'll find are always on the street and not in the restaurants. From suadero tacos (a brisket type of meat), pastor or campechano (steak and Spanish sausage), to more well-known classics like ribeye, needle or chicken. Street food in Mexico City is religion.

“We rotate the flavours to keep customers coming back for more.”



Sausage rolls



KRYSTLE SMITH

Owner, Baking Beauty

Our readers can't get enough of our Mexican street corn.

It is an explosion of different flavours and textures. It combines sweet and crunchy fresh corn with creamy cheese and a hit of spice. Use fresh corn and make it on the grill this summer for the ultimate flavour bomb. I was inspired to make it after trying street food in Mexico. We love serving it on a skewer at picnics and BBQs. It's great for eating while walking around or mingling with others. It is also a fantastic accompaniment to a sweet-and-sour margarita at a cocktail party.



LOUISE WAGSTAFFE

Senior Culinary Advisor, Premier Foods

We aim to move finger-food beyond the traditional buffet fare. As part of our Cutlery-Free Food Programme we have adapted a range of iconic meals such as traditional roast dinner, curry and fish and chips, so care chefs can continue to serve favourite meals whilst supporting a balanced diet. We recommend that portion sizes are small to avoid overwhelming diners and to ensure dishes are easily recognisable and visually appealing.



FLEUR & PAUL

Owners, The Retreat

We make lots of handheld snacks and bakes at our café for hungry students and

walkers heading out into the New Forest for the day. One of our most popular items is our handmade sausage rolls. We offer 20 different varieties including jalapeño & cheese, piri piri and sweet pepper, the classic pork and apple and one that will forever divide opinion – cheese and marmite! We rotate the flavours to keep customers coming back for more. Our pork is sourced from a local farm butcher less than 12 miles away and we use as much locally sourced produce as we can.



ZOE CARINA

Owner, The Intuitive Traveler

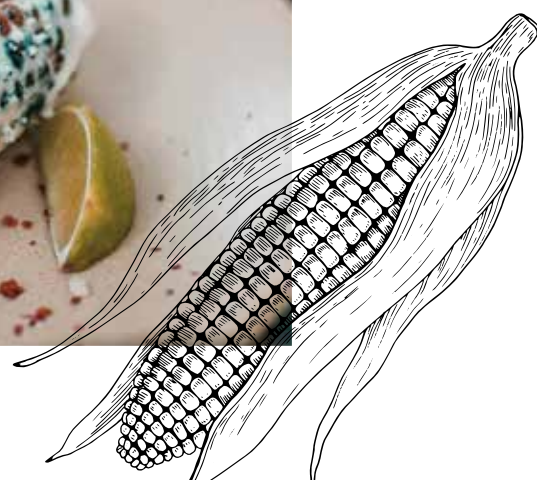
Recently, I visited Mexico and fell in love with their

street food culture. The dish I kept returning to during my stay was tlayoyos. The tasty meal consists of thick corn tortillas filled with bean paste. Usually, they are filled with green lentils. You can get tlayoyos made with yellow or blue corn. On top, you can sprinkle cheese and onions, and choose from a variety of salsas.



Mexican street corn

Photo by Drew Beamer on Unsplash





Recipe Credit: Premier Foods

Bisto mini cottage and potato pies

PREP 30 MINS

COOK 3 HOURS

PORTIONS 20

INGREDIENTS

- 25ml sunflower oil
- 1kg beef mince
- 100g onions, 5mm diced
- 25g tomato purée
- 400ml boiling water
- 10g Bisto Beef Bouillon Paste
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 stalk of rosemary
- 15g Bisto Reduced Salt Gravy Granules
- 1kg prepared McDougalls Shortcrust Pastry Mix
- 500g mashed potato (see additional tips), cooled and in a piping bag
- Egg wash for glazing

METHOD

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and add the beef. Cook until well browned.
2. Add the onion and tomato purée and cook for a few minutes until the onions have softened.

3. Mix the Bisto beef bouillon with the boiling water and pour over the beef. Add the bay leaf, and rosemary. Cover with a lid and simmer very gently for ½ hour or until the beef is tender, stirring occasionally.

4. Once the beef is cooked, sprinkle in the Bisto reduced salt gravy granules and stir until thickened.

5. Cool the mix as quickly as possible.

6. Meanwhile, line a muffin tray with the shortcrust pastry.

7. Spoon in 60g of pie filling to each of the shortcrust mini pies, and top with the mashed potato.

8. Gently brush the potato top with a little egg wash.

9. Bake at 180°C, 350°F, gas mark 4 for approximately 25 minutes, or until fully cooked and golden brown.

Allergens: Wheat, barley, celery, milk, soya, egg

Chef tips

Smash Instant Mashed Potato is a great alternative to fresh mashed potato to top these little pies.



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The new 1kg bottle has a squeezable design, making it easy for operators to create a range of desserts featuring the taste of one of the nation's favourite chocolate bars.

Danielle Cartney, Desserts Category Lead, Nestlé Professional UK&I, says: "Our new KITKAT® Sauce provides an easy solution for operators who want to whip up delicious desserts, saving time and boosting creativity."

"The sauce is versatile and ready to go straight from the bottle. It's perfect for filling doughnuts, croissants, and muffins, or for drizzling over fruit, waffles, cakes, crêpes, and ice cream. You can even use it as a dip for churros or shared desserts."

Each bottle has a shelf life of 12 months and provides 66 servings.



New pizza bases launched by frozen food distributor Central Foods

Frozen food distributor Central Foods has launched five new pizza bases for the foodservice sector.

MD of Central Foods Gordon Lauder said: "The frozen pizza bases are low in fat and low in salt (below PHE 2024 Targets), with no added sugar, and made to an authentic pizza recipe with no artificial flavours, colours or preservatives. And with a size for all occasions, we hope they will be a hit with our food service customers."

The new range includes a 9" pizza base, two 12" pizza bases, a 14" pizza base and a rectangular 15" by 9" pizza base. All are soft and fluffy except the 9" and 12" thin and crispy bases.

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The range of three unique concentrates includes Peach Apricot, Mango Passion, and Lemon Lime.

Lee Hyde, Senior Beverage Expert at MONIN, says: "We've seen an increased interest for lower calorie and lower sugar drink options, so we've developed PURE by MONIN to help operators expand their low-sugar options, whilst still providing drinks that are full of exciting, aromatic flavours."

To support the launch, MONIN branded bottle racks and 8L dispensers will be available for certain outlets, whilst the MONIN team will also share several recipe suggestions with operators to help them maximise the demand for low-sugar drinks. PURE by MONIN is supplied in 70cl glass bottles.



Délifrance expands its premium viennoiserie range

Leading baked goods manufacturer, Délifrance, has announced the launch of an irresistible Chocolate Bun, adding to its range of premium, ready-to-bake viennoiseries.

Sold in individual moulds, the Chocolate Bun is ready-to-bake enabling operators to save time in the kitchen.

Stéphanie Brillouet, marketing director at Délifrance says: "Whether enjoyed for breakfast or as a snack throughout the day, the Chocolate Bun offers baked goods operators a point of differentiation with its classic flavour profile and stunning visual appearance."

The product is now available via Délifrance from national wholesalers and is sold frozen, in boxes of 54.



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Making ends meet

SWAP OUT SUMMER

This month, Paul Dickson focuses on seafood and why making swaps to seasonal, local produce is not only kinder to the environment, it also makes sense for your bottom line.

When it comes to the fish and seafood element of your menu, it can often feel easier to continue with the usual tried and tested dishes throughout the year. However, particularly at this time of year, if you don't consider what is in season and native to our shores, you could be missing out on a whole treasure trove of delights which are both cost-effective and sustainable. Here are some of my tips to make the most of the seafood that is in season right now.

*Sea Bass with Bois
Boudran Sauce*

THE SECRET'S IN THE SAUCE

One of my best pieces of advice when it comes to sourcing local fish is to have an arsenal of banging sauce recipes up your sleeve, so you're not having to devise a recipe at short notice depending on what fish is available at the best price. The beauty of a versatile sauce is that regardless of the fish that you buy that day, the same sauce will work. One such example is this bois boudran sauce, which is not only made with store cupboard ingredients, such as tomato ketchup, it is absolutely delicious and punchy and stands up against a whole range of fish, from salmon to sardines.



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.



Lobster Bisque

Local luxury



The best time to add lobster to your specials board is right now, as the native lobster season runs from June to September. Our native lobsters can be identified by their blue shell which turns red when cooked. You can get the most out of it by not letting any of it go to waste. Use the shells to make a beautiful bisque and when it comes to the main event, let the lobster be the star of the show by serving it alongside a simple hollandaise with some good quality fries.



*Lobster
Hollandaise*

**"YOU CAN
GET THE MOST
OUT OF IT BY
NOT LETTING
ANY OF IT GO
TO WASTE"**



Smoked Mackerel pâté

THE MIRACLE OF MACKEREL

Mackerel is a wonderfully versatile fish which is most abundant and close to the shore from June to September. When the sun is shining, the mackerel and the BBQ are a match made in heaven and it is also very popular smoked, for good reason, as its robust flesh lends itself so well to strong flavours. One of my favourite recipes is this smoked mackerel pâté, which is a big hit at home too! It's a great way to make the fish go a long way, especially when serving as part of a platter which is perfect for the summer months.

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Chef and patron of Myrtle Restaurant in swanky Chelsea, Anna Haugh is a familiar face on TV screens with appearances on BBC's Ready Steady Cook, Saturday Kitchen, Sunday Brunch and most recently on Masterchef: The Professionals. We caught up with Anna to discuss her first food memories, her way to the top and her first cookery book that launches this summer.

How did your career in food begin?

My mother taught us all how to cook, so by the age of 12 I could whip up a full family roast for six people on my own from scratch. I must have enjoyed it as I could have been out with my pals. On one occasion, my friend's mum Liz Dunn said to me when I was finishing school – 'Anna I think you should be a chef – you become alive and change in the kitchen'. I remember laughing and not really thinking much of it but I asked at school about courses in professional cookery. At the time, there really wasn't much available.

Then one day, I found myself in a kitchen, in a sea of stainless-steel and something just clicked in my belly. It's weird but for the first time in my life I felt like I belonged. I waited for the chefs to come in and just asked them – how do I do this? I was in Jersey at the time so went back to Ireland and signed on to study professional cookery. The road to Myrtle began there.




Anna

HAUGH

CHEF & PATRON



Once the decision was made to go with professional cookery, did you have clear goals in your mind?

It's a good question and one I have been asked a lot recently. It's funny but I was never asked this question five years ago. I didn't really have any big dream or vision of being

head chef, a big celeb chef or even having my own restaurant. I just wanted to feel confident and comfortable in the job. I wanted to know all the answers. Why did that mousse split? Why didn't it rise? My biggest drive was to work in kitchens that could help me answer all of those questions. I looked for kitchens that were driven by accuracy, discipline and finesse. I wanted to be in those environments. Sometimes luck does come into it. I was lucky the decisions I made and the places I went to propelled me forward and into the world of food and dining.

You have lots going on in your working life – is there a favourite part?

It will always come back to my restaurant, Myrtle. That is always where my first passion will lie. Saying that I have been in kitchens for over 20 years, so the TV work takes me out of my comfort zone and is very enjoyable. TV is a buzz because it's live, anything can happen so you're learning new skills and exercising your brain in different ways. I get a little nervous

before TV, but I love the pressure and the nerves. Nerves are healthy. My team hate it as sometimes I've come back and changed the whole menu just to challenge myself and ensure continuous improvement. You need a certain amount of pressure in life.

What's your latest news?

We're gearing up for another big summer at Myrtle and as my first ever cookbook – Cooking with Anna - launches at the beginning of summer, it will mean I will have to leave the kitchen for a little while. This is a bit daunting but probably a bit exciting for my staff as well. I'm also filming a new cookery BBC TV series around Ireland where we'll meet different producers and celebrities. As I've already said, I do like a challenge so I'm also launching a wine bar below Myrtle called The Little Sister this year. It will serve delicious wine alongside simple, yet tasty, Irish themed snacks.

Tell us about the Myrtle Academy and Irish hospitality?

It all comes from the Brehon laws, which play a key part of Irish history and culture. They're one of the oldest and first documented laws written down in Europe. Look it up – they are fascinating. There were loads of different laws, which had to be obeyed, but they had real fairness to them. Many were around bees as it was the only form of sugar in Ireland at the time. The laws stated that if you were a beekeeper, you owed tax or honey to your neighbouring farms as without them, the bees would have no food to eat.

Our Academy aims to train people in the Irish way of doing things in the kitchen and on the floor.

Eliza's Pasta



INGREDIENTS

For the sauce:

- 40g (about 2½ tablespoons) vegetable oil
- 2 garlic cloves, halved
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 oregano sprig
- 2 red peppers, deseeded and chopped
- ½ red chilli, finely chopped
- 6 ripe plum tomatoes, chopped
- 4 tablespoons tomato purée
- 200g tomato passata
- 1 teaspoon sugar (optional)

For the pasta:

- 800g dried large conchiglie pasta shells, about 4 for each person (or see recipe introduction)
- 250g ricotta cheese
- 30g Parmesan cheese, finely grated, plus more to serve
- 1 tablespoon chopped oregano leaves
- freshly cracked black pepper

METHOD

1. First get your sauce on. Put the oil in a wide-bottomed pan and place over a medium-low heat. Add your garlic and salt, then the oregano, red peppers, chilli, tomatoes and tomato purée. Stir well, then add the passata. Leave this to simmer over a low heat for 15 minutes while you get your pasta ready.

2. Add 1 teaspoon of salt to a large pan of water and cook your pasta shells for 2 minutes less than it says on the packet. Drain, then run them under cold water to stop the residual heat from cooking them further.

3. Preheat the oven to 180°C fan.

4. In a bowl, mix the ricotta, Parmesan, chopped oregano and some salt and pepper. Stuff each pasta shell with this mix (this is easier if you use a piping bag).

5. Taste the red pepper sauce and add the sugar, if needed. Pour the sauce into an ovenproof dish and nuzzle in the stuffed pasta shells so they are all cheese-side up and the sauce comes up close to their tops. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes.

6. Scatter straight away with extra Parmesan while the pasta is still in the dish, then serve. This is good on a bed of spinach.

It's more than just encouraging the chefs to have the best knife skills, it's about improving communication and self-motivation. A chef or front of house professional who continually looks to improve is someone that will have limitless satisfaction and success.

What's your favourite meal?

Don't tell my mum because in all honesty, I love everything she cooks like her poached egg on Ryvita or her roast chicken, but my favourite dish is Vitello Tonnato. I remember when I worked in Paris, I saw the chefs poach the veal and then make the sauce. I watched them make it and tasted it. From that day on it became my favourite dish in the universe. I could eat it for breakfast, lunch, dinner and all that's in between.

What recipe would you like to share with us and why?

Eliza's pasta. She's my niece and very grown up now. She has always been into food and was my little kindred spirit. She asked me about stuffed pasta one day so I created this dish especially for her and it stuck as a favourite. I honestly make it at least twice a month. It's a tomato-based sauce with pasta shells stuffed with ricotta. It's really simple but so yummy and also good cold in summer. Some people have an issue with cold pasta but not me. I'm a big fan of us not all liking the same things.

Cooking with Anna:
Modern home cooking
with Irish heart by
Anna Haugh
(Bloomsbury,
£26 Hardback)

Photography
© Laura Edwards



WIN a copy
of Anna's Book!
See page 47.





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All images by Alex Baxter Photography



TOM TSAPPIS

OWNER & CHEF PATRON

One of the most creative, exciting and brave young cooks around, East Londoner Tom Tsappis, the Owner and Chef Patron of Killiecrankie House in Perthshire, didn't take the usual route into the kitchen.

When did food become an interest?

I was working in the financial markets, and I had moved to Japan where I was lucky enough to be taken to plenty of great restaurants as part of my work. The food in Japan is excellent but it is Japanese. If you're over there and missing something from home, it's really hard to find. So, I started cooking the dishes I missed and that's where the embers of my career as a chef started.

How quickly did it take to find your place?

We saw 15 places over a period of 2 weeks in May 2020. Killiecrankie House was open and previously running as a traditional country house hotel with lots of tartan. With eleven smaller bedrooms, it catered for an older demographic who would come to take in the beautiful surroundings, walk their dog or sit

in the garden. We knew it needed a big renovation as it didn't fit with what we wanted to bring to life. It's a 200-year-old building so when you start taking the wallpaper off, you discover a lot of things that you didn't know were there, so the renovation snowballed a little.

Are you happy with how it's gone?

We have all sorts of plans. We have a root cellar coming, a smokehouse in the garden, bees, so there is plenty more to come. When we opened, we had six members of staff. We're now at 11 with three new people arriving in the next few months.

Describe your cooking style?

We didn't used to describe it at all but after a while we felt we had to because lots of people thought they were coming to a French restaurant. Our food is Scottish ingredients cooked using Japanese techniques, but the pillar of our food is creativity. The food you eat here, you will not eat anywhere else.

Your kitchen is very open – what does that bring to the dining experience?

We're a very chilled out team and our kitchen is in the middle of the room so it's as open as it gets. We don't differentiate between the front and back of the house. The chefs will serve the plates. By the time guests leave they will have spoken to pretty much every member of staff.

What flavours are you testing?

At the moment, I have been doing a lot with Japanese dashi stock, which is integral to our cooking, and we also make our own tofu, which you don't see much. Dashi is made from seaweed and katsuobushi. We have loads of seaweed in Scotland but katsuobushi is a dried piece of fermented bonito fish that has been smoked until it's lost all of its moisture. It's shaved into these really thin flakes. We don't have bonito, so we have been working out how to make our own. The one we really like is venison. We're curing venison in koji, so essentially curing it in mould. Then we smoke it over peat for between 5 and 10 days until it's lost 90% of its moisture. Then it's shaved using a katsuobushi grater I bought in Tokyo and used as a base for a broth. What we have is a beautiful Scottish dish. It's local venison from here but it's not Scottish in people's minds.

For more information, visit www.killiecrankiehouse.com

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SERVES
2

This month's recipe is from the Country Range development chef, Paul Dickson, who is sharing one of his favourite summer dishes.

Paul draws on his over 30 years of experience in foodservice and food styling to work with us on product testing and innovation, recipe development, and creating inspirational menus for all sectors and budgets. Paul is passionate about reducing food waste and supporting caterers with practical and versatile solutions to create economical and sustainable dishes.

Paul says: "Sometimes, the simpler recipes are the best. Just good quality ingredients being perfectly paired together so that everything sings. I love the addition of jalapenos to give the dish that punchy kick, but you could just as easily leave them out and instead add a teaspoon of smoked paprika, which would add the flavour without the heat."

"The Country Range frozen King Prawns are a great addition to the range, as they offer the flexibility to create small dishes like this without the risk of anything going to waste – you only need to take out as many as you know you will use. They're also fantastic quality and come peeled and prepared, saving valuable time in the kitchen."



PAUL
DICKSON

INGREDIENTS

- 10 Country Range King Prawns
- 8 Country Range Sliced Jalapenos
- 50ml Country Range Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 4 cherry tomatoes cut in half
- 2 cloves of garlic sliced
- 1tsp chopped parsley

METHOD

1. Place everything in a suitable ovenproof tapas dish and bake in a hot oven at 200c for 5 minutes.
2. Allow to cool slightly for 3 minutes before serving with slices of toasted bread.

Country Range King Prawns come in two sizes: 16/20 count or 26/30 count. Pack size: 10 x 1kg. (700g plus 30% glaze).



FOOD & INDUSTRY *news*

APPRENTICESHIPS

Applications open for Bee Keeping Apprenticeship



In partnership with the Bee Farmers Association (BFA), Rowse Honey have been getting more young people into beekeeping through their Bee A Bee Farmer scheme.

So far, over 37 apprentices are either in training or have qualified through the scheme. Successful applicants have the opportunity to work alongside some of the most experienced beekeepers in the country. Alongside on-the-job training, apprentices receive practical courses delivered by industry experts.

Applicants interested in taking up commercial beekeeping full time can send their CV, along with contact details and a cover letter to beeabeefarmer@rowsehoney.co.uk with a cover letter detailing relevant skills and experience.

HOSPITALITY

SOMMET EDUCATION LAUNCHES FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT HOSPITALITY SECTOR EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

The Foundation will concentrate on tackling the sector's employment challenges by focusing on two levers of action: offering scholarships for hospitality education to talented individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, and advocating for careers and professions in hospitality.

Anouck Weiss, Executive Vice-President at Sommet Education Foundation, said, "By offering scholarships leading to employment opportunities, we aim at offering life-changing opportunities to a new generation of talents and empowering them with the necessary skills to join the thriving hospitality industry."



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ALLERGY RESEARCH

Natasha Allergy Research Foundation Clinical Trial Update

The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation is funding a pioneering clinical trial that may allow children and young people with food allergies to live without the fear of a potentially fatal reaction. The initial results are promising.

The Country Range Group is a proud partner of The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation, the UK's food allergy charity, and supports the Foundation in its mission to Make Allergy History.

The Natasha Clinical Trial uses daily doses of everyday food products, taken under strict medical supervision, rather than expensive pharmaceuticals to train the bodies of children and young people to tolerate the foods that cause them a severe allergic reaction. The four key updates are:

- So far, a total of 139 children, aged 2 to 23 years with food allergy to peanut or cow's milk, have started treatment on the Natasha Clinical Trial.
- Early evidence shows children on the Natasha Trial are tolerating milk and peanuts to which they were previously severely allergic.
- 9 NHS hospitals are taking part in the Natasha Trial, expanded from the original 5.
- The Natasha Trial is training a network of NHS staff to offer oral immunotherapy treatment (OIT).



Scan here for
more information
or visit narf.org.uk



Natasha's parents Nadim and Tanya Ednan-Laperouse, who have both been awarded OBEs for their services to charity and people with allergies, are delighted with how the trial is progressing. Tanya said: 'This is a major first step in our mission to make food allergies history. We look forward to seeing the final results.'

Nadim added: 'We can't rely on big pharma and its giant profits to be a game-changer for people living with allergies. That is why we are harnessing the support of the food industry, who have helped fund this trial, to prove that OIT can work with everyday foods, making it more feasible to be available on the NHS.'

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Introducing Ben Palmer

YAMAS! Brand Ambassador & Great British Menu 2024 Winner

Futura Foods are collaborating with Ben Palmer, award-winning chef and owner of two restaurants in Cornwall. The Sardine Factory Restaurant overlooks the river in West Looe, boasts a Michelin Bib Gourmand for quality and great value, and celebrates local seasonal produce with sustainable seafood dishes.

Ben's second restaurant is the newly opened YAMAS GREEK CUISINE. Across the water on East Looe, YAMAS serves traditional Greek Cuisine with modern British influences. Last Summer, Ben cooked in a pop-up restaurant near Kalamata where he met the authentic Greek chefs who have now moved to Cornwall to work with Ben at YAMAS.

Most recently, Ben was a winner of the Great British Menu 2024, with his vegan starter – 'Firefly' featuring at the banquet to celebrate Team GB ahead of the Paris Olympics. Ben is also a former MasterChef: The Professionals quarter-finalist from 2011.

Why not give my authentic twist on the 'Firefly' recipe a try?

Salt baked golden beetroot filo tart with whipped YAMAS! Authentic Greek Feta, black garlic ketchup & cashews.

INGREDIENTS

For the tart

4 x sheets of filo pastry
50g soft butter
Dried nori seaweed powder (optional)
8cm fluted tart moulds

For the whipped feta

100g YAMAS! Feta (at room temperature)
2 tbsp of YAMAS! Greek Yogurt
Food processor

METHOD

For the beetroot, take a large sheet of tin foil (enough to wrap around the beets) and drizzle with oil. Scatter over the thyme and sprinkle heavily with the salt. Place the beetroot onto the salt and thyme and then begin to wrap the foil around the beetroots to encase them all into a parcel. Bake in the oven for around an hour at 180° until soft but still gives a little resistance when tested with a knife. Leave to cool, before peeling and dicing.

For the filo tart, cut the filo sheets into quarters and start to brush each of the sheets with softened butter layering them up onto each

*Made with YAMAS! Authentic Greek Feta Cheese

For the black garlic ketchup

100g black garlic cloves
30g sugar
30g white wine vinegar
30g soy sauce
50g neutral oil

For the beetroot

4 x golden beetroot
A few sprigs of thyme
A good handful of sea salt
A drizzle of olive oil
Tin foil
Cashews for toasting

other as you go. You're looking to make 4 individual tarts. When layering the sheets, I like to sprinkle over the dried seaweed powder in-between each layer. Cut a circle out of your filo and place and line your tart mould. Place another tart case on top of the filo in the tart to give a nice trim finish when baked.

For the Feta, place in a food processor along with the yogurt and blitz until smooth. You could always serve it slightly coarser if you wanted.

For black garlic ketchup, place the garlic, soy, vinegar and sugar in a pan and heat gently, blitz

A twist on the Great British Menu winning starter - 'Firefly' *



the mixture until smooth. With the motor still running add the oil to emulsify.

To assemble the tart start by placing a small amount of the black garlic ketchup on the plate to help it stick whilst assembling. Add some black garlic ketchup to the bottom of the tart, then add some crushed toasted cashew nuts. On top of the nuts and black garlic add a good spoonful of the whipped feta.

Add the diced beetroot on top of the Feta and finish with more toasted cashews, black garlic ketchup and some edible flowers for a really jazzy finish.

Enjoy!

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For more inspiration visit: www.yamasdairy.uk

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The Country Club



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This innovative cooker combines several functions in one, serving as a slow cooker, stovetop, oven, and more. Its design is centred around convenience and efficiency, making it an essential tool for busy households and culinary enthusiasts alike.

One of the standout features of the Ninja Foodi PossibleCooker is its ability to replace multiple kitchen appliances, thereby saving counter space and reducing clutter. It can sauté, sear, slow cook, bake, and even steam, offering a wide range of cooking methods. This flexibility allows users to prepare a diverse array of dishes, from hearty stews and tender roasts to baked goods and steamed vegetables.

The cooker is equipped with intuitive controls and preset cooking programs, making it user-friendly for both novice and experienced cooks. Its non-stick, dishwasher-safe components simplify the cleanup process, adding to its practicality. Additionally, the cooker's large capacity

makes it ideal for preparing meals for families or gatherings.

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



WIN
Cooking
with Anna



Modern Home Cooking with Irish Heart

Our Signature Dish this month is from Anna Haugh who has kindly given us her new book *Cooking with Anna: Modern Home Cooking with Irish Heart* to give away to one lucky reader.

The book blends contemporary culinary techniques with traditional Irish flavours. From hearty stews to sophisticated seafood dishes, Anna's approach makes Irish cuisine accessible and exciting. Each recipe is crafted with love and authenticity, making it a perfect addition to any cook's collection.

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

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