

Stirritup

**TASTE OF
TOMORROW**

CAFÉ FOOD
& BEVERAGE
TRENDS



Beyond the crust

AN INTERVIEW WITH PIE MASTER CALUM FRANKLIN



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Ingredients

Well, what an incredible cover shot of this month's Leading Light star Calum Franklin.

We love sharing the stories, achievements and tips of chefs and caterers right across the marketplace and Calum's passion for pastry and pie making really shines through in his interview. Don't forget to try making his stunning Apricot & Lemon Thyme Cobbler recipe too.



Who else would you like to read about in Stir it up magazine? Tell us via our Readers Survey which you're still able to enter until 31st May 2024, alternatively email us at editor@stiritupmagazine.co.uk

The Stir it up team



07



NEWS

- 03 Readers' Lives
- 05 Cooks Calendar
- 07 Customer Profile
Twelve Restaurant & Lounge Bar, Lancashire
- 10-11 News From Country Range
- 28-29 Marketplace
- 40-41 Food & Industry News
- 43 The Country Club

ADVICE

- 15 Health & Welfare
Unlocking potential: The key to retaining your care sector caterers
- 17 Education
Cost-effective menu planning to combat £250m food waste
- 19 Heads Up
Supporting muscular skeletal health
- 25 Advice From the Experts
Catering for parents with children

INSPIRATION

- 09 Eat the Season
Mackerel
- 23 Making Ends Meet
Making the most of bread
- 31 On the Range
Pan-fried seabass, baby potatoes and a green pea, samphire and prawn linguine
- 33 Rising Star
Michael Zee
- 37 Five Ways to Use
Tomato paste
- 38-39 Leading Lights
Calum Franklin

TRENDS

- 03 Fresh from the Kitchen
Japanese cuisine
- 13 Hospitality
On your marks ... get ready... for a summer of sport
- 20-21 Category Focus
Taste of tomorrow
- 34-35 Melting Pot
Feeling nostalgic: Classic comforts in a contemporary kitchen

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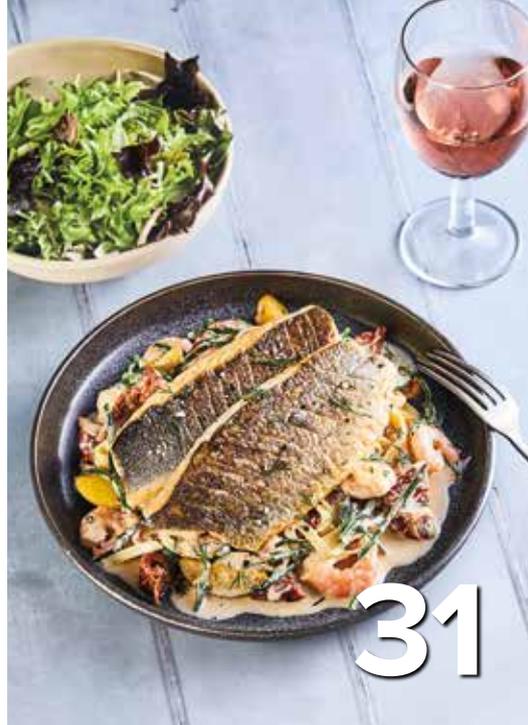


OUR EDITORIAL PARTNERS...



ALLERGEN REFERENCES

VG - Vegan V - Vegetarian



Readers' lives

NAME: Mark Henderson

JOB TITLE: Head Chef

PLACE OF WORK: Coppi, Belfast

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

PASSIONS OUTSIDE OF THE KITCHEN? Golf

WHICH CHEF DO YOU RESPECT THE MOST AND WHY? The great, late Anthony Bourdain for his honesty about the industry, kitchens and life.

WHAT'S THE BEST ADVICE YOU WERE EVER GIVEN AND BY WHOM? My grandfather always told me - don't let other people's opinions shape the person you become. Be your own person and have your own beliefs.

WHAT'S YOUR TIP TO CUT WASTAGE IN THE KITCHEN? Use any trim for stocks and never prep too far in advance. Training is invaluable. Time spent mentoring junior chefs helps reduce mistakes and ensures prep is carried out properly and efficiently.

WHAT IS YOUR TOP TIP FOR SOMEONE STARTING OUT IN THE CATERING INDUSTRY? Don't over-work, and find something outside of the kitchen. It makes coming to work more enjoyable and feels less pressured.

WHAT'S YOUR DREAM JOB? PGA golf professional or to start my own street food truck.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE CUISINE TO EAT? Italian or Asian.

WHAT INGREDIENTS DO YOU MOST LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH IN THE SPRING/SUMMER? Lamb, fresh peas, fresh mint and strawberries.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE DISH TO COOK? Spiced pork and fennel ragu or a simple fried rice.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE COUNTRY RANGE PRODUCT AND WHY? The spices - they are full of flavour and reasonably priced.

Country Range Turmeric Powder
Pack size: 500g



Fresh FROM THE KITCHEN

This month we take a closer look at some of the main elements that make up Japanese cuisine, which is one of the key trending cuisines in the UK and Ireland this year.

SUSHI – Originating from the historic storage and preservation of fish in fermented, vinegared rice, sushi is now a mainstream cuisine. There are many versions, shapes and textures available, from maki rolls and nigiri to hand rolls and Osaka-inspired pressed sushi.

DEEP FRIED – The airy, light batter of tempura is probably the most famous deep-fried Japanese dish and often used in sushi. Panko breadcrumbs are also increasingly used to give everyday favourites such as fried chicken a Japanese twist, in popular dishes such as katsu curry.



RAMEN – A popular dish on menus, ramen is the name of the noodle that is used in this soup dish featuring broth and various toppings. It lends itself well to fusion and creative experimentation.

YUZU – With zingy citrus flavours trending, this East Asian fruit is often used instead of lemon or lime in dressings, dips, desserts or bakery items. It is most familiar in Japanese cuisine in ponzu, which is a dressing served with sushi or beef and tuna.

DASHI – This stock is the foundation of Japanese cuisine and gives the important umami flavour. It generally consists of kombu seaweed and katsuobushi dried bonito flakes and is commonly used in miso soup, as a dressing or dipping sauce or in rice dishes.

SEAWEED – The umami flavour of kombu is used to cure fish, add flavour to sauces, pickles or stews and can also be braised and served like a vegetable side dish. UK and Ireland grown varieties such as dulse or laver are also being adopted, mainly as a seasoning. Nori is most famously used in sushi but also as square sheets with ramen.



Chicken ramen, asian noodle soup

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Cooks CALENDAR

May

1ST – 31ST MAY – NATIONAL STRAWBERRY MONTH

Add some Da Vinci Gourmet Strawberry and fresh strawberry pieces to your Angelito Thickshake Mix for a delicious milkshake special this month.

5TH MAY – CINCO DE MAYO

This Mexican burger recipe is made with a Garden Gourmet Sensational Burger loaded with a fresh hot tomato salsa and chipotle mayonnaise, served with a fresh and crunchy salad.

13TH MAY – WORLD COCKTAIL DAY

Celebrate with a Passion Martini Bellini created by MONIN. Combining the fresh flavours of passion fruit and indulgent vanilla with prosecco to create a light, moreish and lower alcohol version of the familiar favourite Pornstar Martini.

17TH MAY – WORLD BAKING DAY

Try adding mayonnaise to your carrot cake (yes you heard right!). Simply replace the oil or butter you would usually use with Country Range Real Mayonnaise, it stays nice and moist!

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



June

1ST JUNE – INTERNATIONAL PINEAPPLE DAY

Delight customers and residents with the award-winning Country Range Hummingbird Cake which comprises a lightly spiced sponge made with banana and pineapple, filled with a zesty cream cheese filling, finished with cream cheese frosting and topped with pecans.

14TH JUNE – UEFA EUROS 2024

Hellmann's have created a whole host of global inspired bar snack recipes including this amazing Currywurst, pilsner onions and wasted sauerkraut dish.

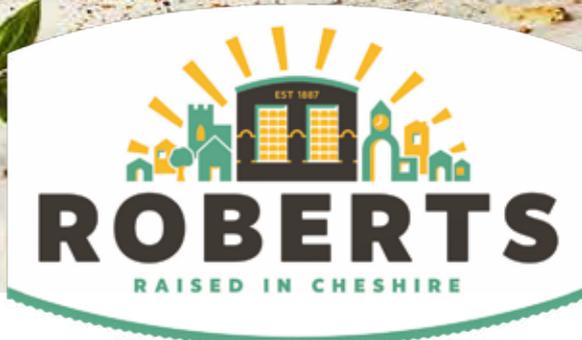
16TH JUNE – FATHER'S DAY

Premier Foodservice have created a whole host of Father's Day recipes including this delicious 'Hey Toni' Italian sausage meatball rigatoni dish.

20TH JUNE – WORLD TAPAS DAY

Sharing boards are a great way to entice customers to spend when they're out having a casual drink and aren't interested in a full meal.





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FROM MINI CLOWN TO RINGMASTER IN THE KITCHEN

Twelve Restaurant & Lounge Bar, Lancashire

While he spent the first eight years of his life quite literally clowning around, once Graham Floyd got the taste for a career in food, he jumped through hoops to make a success of it. The ringmaster in the kitchen at Twelve Restaurant & Lounge Bar for the past decade, Graham continues to seamlessly juggle the pressures of running an award-winning restaurant kitchen alongside a growing event business.

"I was born in Scotland but my mum ran off to join the circus when I was two weeks old, so I spent my first eight years travelling around the UK with a circus troupe, animals and a big top. My mum looked after the Indian elephant and performed the trapeze. I even debuted myself as a mini clown in those early days," says Graham.

"When I was nine, we moved in with my Nana in Blackpool for some schooling stability. It was here cooking with my Nan that the first embers of my passion for cooking were lit. After studying Food Technology at school and completing work experience at a local bakery, who gave me a job afterwards, it was an easy decision to pursue a career in the kitchen, so I enrolled at Blackpool College to complete my NVQ qualifications."

"I joined Twelve at 18 and after a couple of stints away developing my skills at Holbeck Ghyll Hotel, which had a Michelin star, and then launching the kitchen at Blackpool Football Club's four-star hotel, I returned as Head Chef. I have

been in the role 10 years now and I'm incredibly proud of what we have built."

Multi award-winning Twelve Restaurant & Lounge Bar is the epitome of a dynamic and successful independent business employing over 40 local people. Uniquely positioned alongside one of Europe's tallest windmills, Twelve is a bustling neighbourhood restaurant in Marsh Mill Village in Lancashire. The venue showcases edgy urbane décor featuring exposed girders, graffiti artwork, brick and reclaimed wood, a sleek cocktail bar, an outdoor area and has won countless awards including a Michelin Bib Gourmand.

"When I started it was a small restaurant with 60 covers," notes Graham. "In the last ten years, we have extended and refurbished, which has

provided us with the ability to grow revenue. For example, the event side of our business has been a key element of our growth and in generating positive word of mouth publicity. We can offer bespoke catering for ten guests at their home, at our restaurant or for thousands at event spaces such as Blackpool Tower, Browsholme Hall, The River Barn and Staining Lodge."

"Our food showcases great locally sourced seasonal ingredients and combinations that customers aren't necessarily afraid of. We like to put our own special stamp on everything though. It's about stimulating the senses and showcasing a dish or a flavour combination in a way customers didn't expect and couldn't

Above (left to right)
Twelve's Graham Floyd
Twelve's chocolate marquise,
compressed strawberries and
strawberry sorbet

Below
Interior view of Twelve

(or hadn't) thought of replicating at home. Our banana butty dessert is a good example and a big favourite comprising a raspberry & banana parfait alongside a Biscoff shake. Another is our bread-and-butter pudding, which is deep-fried and rolled in sugar. Country Range is crucial to our pantry with the spices, seasonings and baking chocolate widely used."



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NESCAFÉ

IN SEASON:

Mackerel

It's a clear portent of summer when shoals of Atlantic mackerel arrive in the shallower waters off the British and Irish shores. An oily, nutrient-dense fish that is easy to identify thanks to its beautiful stripes, mackerel is flavour forward, easy to prepare and offers incredible versatility in the kitchen.



About Scott Goss, Executive Chef at I'll Be Mother

Born and raised in Kent – the Garden of England, Scott Goss moved to London to work for Gary Rhodes as an 18-year-old after completing his qualifications at Thanet College. He then went on to work for Anton Adleman at Allium and Robert Spencer at The Admiralty before heading back to Kent. His talent was quickly spotted by Peter Cornwell at The Swan in West Malling, and he was made Head Chef at the age of 25. Scott followed Peter as he launched the I'll Be Mother group a decade ago, joining as Executive Chef. During his tenure he participated in the 2018 series of the Great British Menu and is just as passionate about food today as he was when he first started in the industry.

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

Leftover mackerel can be utilised in various delicious ways. Try flaking it into salads for added protein and flavour or mix it with mayo and herbs for a tasty sandwich spread. Alternatively, incorporate it into pasta dishes or use it as a topping for pizzas for a savoury twist.

Scott Goss



TARTARE

We get our mackerel from Rye on the day, and it couldn't be fresher, so a mackerel tartare is a fantastic way of showcasing the fish in its glorious raw form. We brine it quickly and then serve with macerated cucumber, a gooseberry compote, and horseradish snow.

GARNISH

A brilliant garnish to enhance a wide range of dishes, we smoke our fillets before freezing them. These can then be taken out when required and grated to finish dishes and boost flavour.

TERRINE

A sumptuous seasonal starter, snack or lunch, a mackerel terrine or pâté are always big crowd-pleasers. We confit potato and mackerel to make our terrine and smoke our own mackerel for the pâté.

BBQ

I love cooking over fire, and you don't get much better than mackerel straight off the flames. Stuff them with dill, tarragon, and thyme before searing over the fire. I like to serve simply with a potato salad.

WHOLE

A great fish to have whole, we cure them for 12 minutes before vac packing with lemon oil and water bathing. To finish, we then blowtorch for that charred character.



Also In Season



Asparagus



Strawberries



Lamb



Watercress



Sea Bass

May days

Bank holidays, picnics, barbecues and a burst of new season ingredients make May the lift off point for the alfresco season, so it's the last chance to refine your menu ahead of the summer.



5TH MAY

Cinco de Mayo [↖] Mexican Baked Eggs

With Mexican food plus iconic drinks like tequila and mezcal booming, Cinco de Mayo presents a great chance to be the controlling cartel of the finest Mexican menu in your area this May. Commemorating Mexico's victory over the French at the Battle of Puebla, Cinco de Mayo is often marked in a bigger way outside of Mexico than within the country. The day really started to gain traction as a celebration for Mexicans who had emigrated to the USA, it then grew to become an internationally recognised Mexican occasion.

Our top-notch tortillas, sublime salsas, seasonings and sauces, hot and juicy jalapeños and kidney beans are the foundations and finishes to so many Mexican classics. Why not spice it up Mexican-style at breakfast this year? This Mexican Baked Eggs recipe uses a few store cupboard basics and is a bonified breakfast beauty. Experiment with cheaper cuts of meat for unique and cost effective, slow cooked tacos or try in-season seafood as a point of difference.



13TH MAY

INTERNATIONAL HUMMUS DAY

While many countries lay claim to being the birthplace of hummus, the common consensus seems to be that no one really knows for sure. What we do know with absolute certainty is that this luscious legume mash is delicious, versatile, cheap to make and extremely good for you. Our Country Range Chickpeas just need to be blitzed along with some tahini, lemon juice, salt, olive oil and garlic for a super snack, side, starter or sharer. For a hummus twist, why not create this Butternut Squash Hummus for International Hummus Day.



Butternut Squash Hummus

“QUALITY AND MARGIN ARE BOTH ESSENTIAL FOR OUR BUSINESS TO SUCCEED AND COUNTRY RANGE PRODUCTS HELP US ACHIEVE BOTH.” CAFÉ

Brioche Loaf Spiced Bombay
Toast Fried in Ghee With
Mango, Banana, Honey and
Cardamom Yoghurt

20TH MAY

World Bee Day

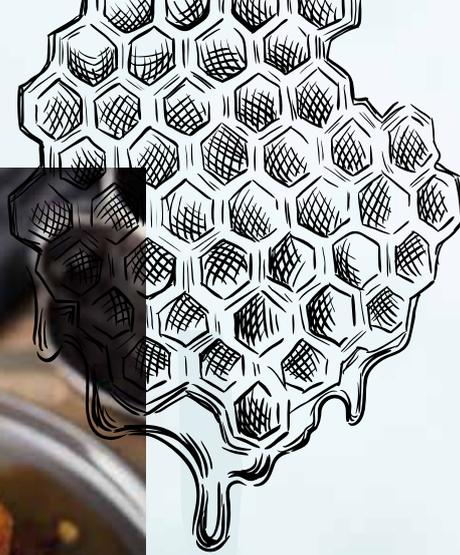
Playing a vital role in pollinating our wild plants, trees and flowers, even Albert Einstein was a fan of bees, pronouncing that the human race wouldn't last long once they were gone. So, with bees under threat, it's more important than ever to raise awareness and do all we can to help them flourish. A great educational theme for schools in May, World Bee Day presents a great opportunity to get your kitchen buzzing. For a nutritious snack, how about these honey roasted mixed nuts or this indulgent spiced Bombay toast dish layered with mango, banana, honey and cardamom flavours.



Honey
Roasted Nuts



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



**SPICE OF
THE MONTH**
Country Range
Blackened Cajun
Seasoning

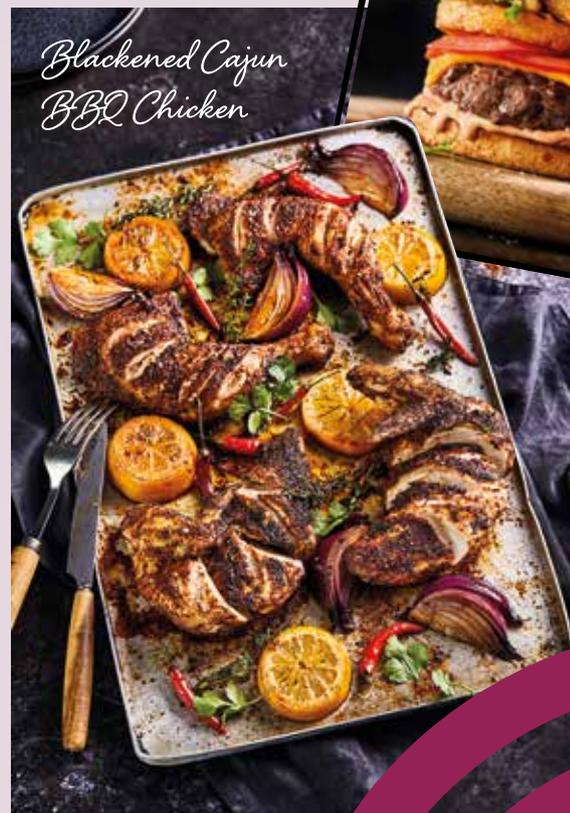
27TH MAY - 2ND JUNE

NATIONAL BBQ WEEK

The smell of charcoal and wood is in the air so it's time to turn up the heat on your BBQ plans for the summer. With National BBQ Week kicking off at the end of the month and fire cooking one of the standout trends in hospitality, it's time to up your game and perfect your menu.

Our Country Range burgers, sausages, bacon and chicken provide the ultimate protein for the flames and our colossal collection of spices, seasonings, herbs, dressings, sauces, mayo and pickles offer an unassailable selection for marinating, infusing and finishing dishes.

Our spice of the month is Country Range Blackened Cajun Seasoning which is a match made in heaven with the BBQ. Why not use it to create this delicious Blackened Cajun BBQ Chicken.



Blackened Cajun
BBQ Chicken



Potato Halo
Burger



GET MATCH FIT FOR A SUMMER OF FOOTBALL

With a **BIG** summer of football ahead don't miss out on the chance to sign a new top scorer for your menu. Nachos feature on over 80% of pubs & bars in the UK*. But how does your business stand out from the crowd? Let **Santa Maria's** range of **sauc**es, **rub**s, **spice**s and **topping**s elevate your offering. Our inspirational recipes feature a 3-step build which is operationally simple to deliver, no matter how skilled your team are. Perfect handheld bar food for enjoying the **big game** – **don't miss out!**

PRODUCT NAME	PACK	WEIGHT
Tortilla Chips Salted	x12	475g
Mexican Salsa Roja	x4	2.3kg
Sliced Green Jalapeños	x12	500g
Cheddar Cheese Sauce	x3	3kg
Guacamole Style Topping	x6	940g



*Source: Lumina Intelligence Menu Tracker, April 2022

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

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

1 Base



Place warm tortillas in a bowl.

2 Toppings



Pour over the cheese sauce and add the jalapeños.

3 Garnish



Top with salsa and guacamole.



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ON YOUR MARKS ... GET READY... *for a summer of sport*

This summer offers great potential to boost business with two major sporting events, kicking off with Euro 2024 from 14th June to 14th July followed by the Olympics in Paris from 26th July to 11th August. With both events taking place in Europe, the time difference is favourable for hospitality establishments across the UK and Ireland.

"Football will always draw crowds so investing in extra screens will usually pay for itself in excess revenue," says Jane Pendlebury, CEO of the Hospitality Professionals Association (HOSPA). "Even if your venue is unsuitable for showing sport on TV, you can offer special promotions such as 2 for 1 cocktails for the hour after the game finishes."

It's important to tailor events depending on the type of outlet and customer base. Chris Dutton from Incipio Group, which runs several London venues, says, "A pre-game bottomless brunch party at The Prince for Euro 24 would work well, while sangria specials

for Spanish games at The Palm House feels more suitable. At The Libertine, sport is never shown in the main restaurant and bar, so we'll offer a bespoke exclusive viewing experience in the private dining room. It's all about finding the perfect fit and experience for each space."

If your venue has semi-private areas, pre-bookable packages



for key interest games are a good idea, says Dee Sturgess from Bums on Seats. "This would include table service, great food and drink and the best screen views. Ensure you add your new sporting events onto your websites and booking systems."

At Three Cheers Pub Co, a menu of summer spritzers will be on offer, paired with food at a set price, which includes a seat to watch Euro 24.

Mark Reynolds, founder, says "It's good value for customers, upfront revenue for us and it means they are going to show up, solving the problem of no shows. We'll have a different approach for each pub. The Bedford is a big venue, so we'll split it between a ticketed event and a walk in one which we find works well. For smaller community pubs like The Abbeville, we'll take bookings."

The approach to the Olympics will be different. "We'll be doing

special dishes, but it can be hard to get crowds in as there are so many different events," he says. "We'll have it on screens, but it's not the same as a 90-minute football match. People don't necessarily go to a pub to watch the Olympics, but it will be on for those who are interested."

Establishing partnerships with local sports clubs can increase footfall during the Olympics and promote loyalty. Antony Woodcock, owner of Parliament House Hotel, Edinburgh and managing director of Gig and Staff Hive, says, "This is particularly relevant for several Olympic sports that often don't get the recognition. Can you partner with the local cycling, swimming, or hockey club when these sports take centre stage?"

As always, making sure staff are well prepared and shifts accommodate peak times with plenty of breaks will help your sporting events go smoothly this summer.

"It's all about finding the perfect fit and experience for each space."



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Unlocking potential

THE KEY TO RETAINING YOUR CARE SECTOR CATERERS

Staff shortages and recruitment is endemic in the hospitality industry, but the care sector has borne the brunt of the impact. As operators seek lasting ways to keep staff happy and motivated, we caught up with Phil Raynsford, consultant, trainer and motivational speaker to get some advice.

“There’s no single answer for the issue of staff shortages” says Phil, “but I do believe a key part is for management to discuss how staff would like their career to progress and both encourage and support them to get there. Where do they see themselves in the near to medium term future? What development do they need and want to get there? Would they like to move to a different department? They might not know all the answers as they are unaware of opportunities. By talking to them, the manager is saying I want to help you progress.”

Not all team members have the confidence to voice their aspirations, when this occurs, try helping them become aware of the skills they have. This could include things that seem straightforward but are essential to the job such as the ability to help people, working as a team, being a self-starter and multi-tasking. “Not everyone will have all these skills,” says Phil. “Some people may not be aware of the massive range of skills and abilities they already have. This can cause many to be reluctant to step out of their comfort zone because they lack confidence and don’t realise what they can already do.”

Phil recommends using a “drip-feed” approach in helping staff realise their potential. “It may sound basic, but it’s about spotting people doing something right,” he says. “If someone has managed to prioritise three things in a stressful situation, you don’t just say ‘well done’, you catch up with them later and have a chat

with them and explain what it is you’ve noticed and why it was so good. The individual will recognise that and think ‘maybe I’m

better at this than I thought.’ The care home catering sector is a real balancing act as staff are putting on special menus, meeting dietary needs and making meals tasty and nutritious to a strict deadline. It’s an incredible achievement and yet they think they’re just doing their job.”

Praising staff helps to make them feel valued. One way of doing this is for staff to nominate colleagues when they do something outstanding and perhaps offer a prize for the person with the most nominations. Phil says, “It needs to be done in the right way so people feel recognised for what they do.”

Asking staff to complete a task they’ve not done before needs to be carefully handled. Chefs, for example, could be encouraged

to enter competitions or do a cooking demonstration to residents and families. Phil says, “This is a great way for staff to develop their skills, but they may feel it’s too daunting. This is where it’s important for managers to help team members realise just how good they already are and the foundation of skills they already have. Then introduce the new challenge and talk it through answering any concerns.”

Communication with staff is vital and makes them feel part of the team. “Get people together in small groups. Mention to people the great things they’re doing and

“Praising staff helps to make them feel valued. One way of doing this is for staff to nominate colleagues when they do something outstanding”

recognise their achievements and be sure to share any testimonials from satisfied customers. Research shows that motivated workforces stay longer and reduce recruitment and training costs.”

SYRUPS

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COST-EFFECTIVE MENU PLANNING

To combat £250m food waste



ACCORDING TO A RECENT LACA SURVEY, SCHOOL CATERERS ARE

INCREASINGLY CONCERNED BY RISING COSTS AND FOOD SHORTAGES, WITH:

77% of members having to change menus

26% reducing menu choice

29% substituting meat with alternatives such as lentils and pulses

8% reducing portion sizes

Managing rising food costs is a fine balancing act between providing nutritious tasty meals for students and keeping within budget. Not one to ignore a challenge, education charity Chefs In Schools has picked up the mantle and is now incorporating the topic in their training programme for school kitchens.

Laura Mumford, head of training at Chefs In Schools says, "It's about managing stock well, planning menus and making sure you are using up any surplus products." Reducing food waste is key to managing costs.

According to WRAP, food waste costs schools and colleges around £250m a year and eliminating avoidable waste would save 22p off an average school meal.

Better communication between the kitchen and the school's administrative department is crucial. "You need to know how many meals will be needed," says Louis, chef trainer at Chefs In Schools. "Meals can be over-catered because there is a fear there won't be enough food and that comes from a position of insecurity and lack of communication. If you produce too many meals that

can't be re-used, you are likely to throw them in the bin." Conversely, losing sight of portion control can also cause food waste and incur extra costs. "If the food cost is £1.50 and £2 worth of food is being put on the plate, that builds up over time if meals aren't properly portioned," says Louis.

Laura recommends having a visual guide, a dummy meal plated up which staff can copy. "This helps when hundreds of meals are being served. Portion guidelines need to be communicated to the rest of the school. People outside the kitchen don't understand that serving a student a huge portion of pasta isn't a good idea, even if they're hungry, as it doesn't lead to them eating it."

Talking to your suppliers is essential. Brian Gardiner, Chef Development Manager at LTS Catering Services, which provides lunch to primary and secondary schools in Leicestershire says, "I negotiate prices with suppliers to get the best price. Even a penny saving on some items makes a difference. We pride ourselves that the menu is still over 75% freshly cooked food, and we are serving a well-balanced diet to our customers."

As meat is expensive, discuss with suppliers cheaper, alternative cuts of meat you may be able to use. Top Days

Nurseries, who run 32 nurseries in Dorset and Hampshire, is reportedly partnering with Eat Wild to serve venison to children in a bid to help reduce wild deer numbers and lower costs.

"Venison is lean and nutritious, and the added benefit is that it's sustainable. We would encourage chefs who know their communities to think what they could serve students. Consider other meats that are overlooked, but may be cheaper, such as turkey. It's always served at Christmas, but what about the rest of the year? The team may need training on using different meat products," notes Louis. "Also, most schools have a meat-free day at least one day a week. Through our training, we encourage school caterers to look at perhaps not just one day and to consider other substitutions."

Above

Chefs In Schools training team left to right, Sophie Gastman, Laura Mumford, Louis Davidson



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HEADS UP

Supporting muscular skeletal health

When jobs are as physically demanding as those in hospitality, the importance of looking after our physical health to support our overall wellbeing cannot be underestimated. Physical pain takes its toll on our mental health and when it is left unaddressed, it wears us down.

Recognising and addressing these challenges is not just a matter of employee welfare; it's also a business imperative. Muscular-skeletal disorders (MSDs) accounted for 27% of new and long-standing cases of work-related ill health in Great Britain during 2022-2023. These conditions can affect employee morale, turnover rates, and the overall quality of service, potentially impacting your reputation and bottom line.

Front of house and back of house staff often endure long hours on their feet, performing repetitive tasks and handling heavy loads. Chopping ingredients or carrying trays, coupled with prolonged standing, can strain the muscular-skeletal system. Over time, this can lead to chronic pain, joint issues, and even long-term disability.

EXERCISES FOR PREVENTION AND IMPROVEMENT

Implementing a routine of the following simple exercises can be a powerful tool in preventing injuries and improving physical wellbeing:

WRIST FLEXOR AND EXTENSOR STRETCHES

Purpose: To relieve wrist strain from repetitive tasks like chopping or carrying trays.

How to Do: Extend one arm in front of you, palm facing down. Gently pull the fingers back with the other hand, hold for 15 seconds, then push them forward, holding for another



“Small, inexpensive steps can go a long way to improve the physical wellbeing of your staff and is a worthwhile investment.”

15 seconds. Repeat on the other hand.

SHOULDER BLADE SQUEEZE

Purpose: To counteract the forward hunch and relieve upper back tension.

How to Do: Stand or sit upright. Squeeze your shoulder blades together as if trying to hold a pencil between them. Hold for 10 seconds, then release. Repeat 10 times.

STANDING CALF RAISES

Purpose: To improve circulation and reduce the risk of leg cramps from prolonged standing.

How to Do: Stand with feet hip-width apart, slowly raise onto your toes, hold for a few seconds, then lower back down. Repeat 15-20 times.

NECK AND SHOULDER STRETCH

Purpose: To alleviate neck and shoulder tension.

How to Do: Gently tilt your head towards one shoulder until a stretch is felt on the opposite side of your neck. Hold for 15 seconds, then switch sides. For shoulders, roll them forward and backward in a circular motion 10 times each.

Supporting staff by encouraging regular breaks and giving them space to stretch or relax tired muscles is just as important as training in proper lifting techniques and ergonomics. Offering a contribution towards supportive footwear or laying anti-fatigue mats for staff (where hygienically compliant) will also help ease leg pain during long shifts.

Small, inexpensive steps can go a long way to improve the physical wellbeing of your staff and is a worthwhile investment, after all, a healthy team is the backbone of any successful hospitality business.

¹ www.hse.gov.uk Work related ill health and occupational disease in Great Britain



Taste of TOMORROW

Beetroot Hummus



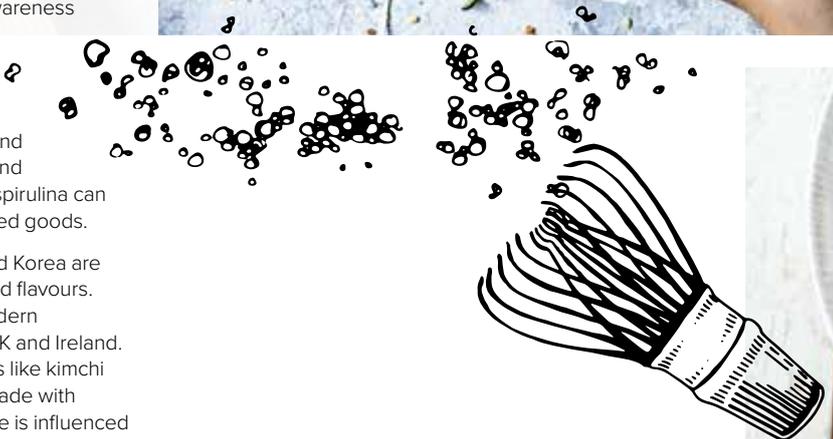
A source of news, food and comfort, cafés are the lifeblood of our local neighbourhood, offering an inviting place to meet friends and treat ourselves in the process. Over the years, cafés have faced significant pressure, so this month's Category Focus shines a spotlight on this special sector and the trends set to shape it.

2024 FOOD AND BEVERAGE TRENDS

More of an ongoing movement than a trend, veganism is driving more plant-based offerings. Rather than cater for this target market with standard fare, add some creative flare to your menu and think about filling sandwiches featuring pulled BBQ jackfruit or beetroot hummus and Indian spiced crispy chickpeas. For a hot option, try a vegan meatball sub or roast aubergine with garlic potatoes, nutmeg and sundried tomatoes. We expect to see plant-based milks evolve, oat milk will still lead the charge, but newer entries like potato and hemp milk will start making waves.

Linked to the increase of plant-based options is a continued consumer focus on wellness. "Consumers are showing a heightened awareness regarding overall wellbeing, with greater interest in better quality food options, attention to premium quality ingredients and clean label products," says Charlotte Perkins, Commercial Manager, Pan'Artisan Ltd. These items are designed to offer health benefits beyond basic nutrition and include probiotic-rich kombuchas, adaptogenic herbal teas, and CBD-infused coffees. Superfoods like turmeric, matcha, and spirulina can also boost the nutritional profile of smoothies, lattes, and baked goods.

This diversity of ingredients, with origins from India, Japan and Korea are reflective of an overarching desire to explore new cultures and flavours. The trend not only satisfies the adventurous palate of the modern consumer, but also celebrates the multicultural fabric of the UK and Ireland. As fusion cuisine continues to explode, menus featuring items like kimchi grilled cheese toasties, matcha croissants and sandwiches made with artisan bread will become more prevalent. "Our product range is influenced



OW

THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

We are now living in a world where technology is embedded into our daily lives. Within the hospitality sector, we have seen how innovative software solutions have transformed operations from ordering to delivery, and cafés are not exempt. Going forward, we anticipate mobile ordering will become the norm, paving the way for more efficient service and convenience – for business owners, this may also counterbalance the current staffing crisis affecting the sector. Additionally, AI-driven recommendations could enhance personalised experiences, suggesting menu items based on previous orders or dietary preferences. The notion of technology taking over what is for many, a valuable social interaction is a little uncomfortable for some, however it can still be leveraged without losing the personal touch that is so synonymous with a café environment.



by authentic Italian bakery following regular trips to Italy. We often utilise traditional Italian production methods in our dough” comments Charlotte.

Offering artisan, home-grown or items made with local produce can also be a strong competitive differentiator, adding depth to your communications and attracting consumers with sustainability at heart. “Café customers appreciate their traditional dishes, but it’s equally important to elevate their experience with twists

and innovative redesigns of these classics. At BaxterStorey, we’ve bolstered our fish and chips offering by sourcing only the most local and fresh fish, triple cooking our chips for extra crispiness, and infusing our peas with mint for zingy taste.” comments Rob Mitchell, General Manager, Winchester Cathedral Café.

This appreciation for quality and craftsmanship will continue to grow as cafés complement their food offering with a curated selection of speciality coffee, tea, and artisanal drinks. Single-origin coffees, cold brews, and nitro-infused teas will cater to connoisseurs and homemade syrups, date or agave sweeteners will elevate café beverage menus beyond the standard fare.

The sharp growth in non-alcoholic beverages has been a boon to cafés, offering greater variety, innovation, and high-margin options over and above market leading brands such as Coca-Cola and Pepsi. Manufacturers are increasingly producing beverages featuring natural ingredients and flavourings. One such company is the Cracker Drinks Co who have recently launched a new brand of lemonade inspired by the traditional flavour of homemade recipes. “Lemon Grove represents what we describe as real lemonade, with some exciting variations for an on-trend twist made with all-natural flavour ingredients” comments Chris Banks, MD, Cracker Drinks Co.

WEATHERING THE ECONOMIC STORM

There is no doubt that the current economic slowdown is hitting the whole of the hospitality sector hard. Rising prices and increasing business demands are a heady mix for any organisation, but there are many ways in which cafés can adapt to secure their place on the high street.

Transforming your café from a place where people go for a cup of coffee, to a community hub where customers want to hang out will increase repetitive business and average spend. “Creating a cozy and

comfortable space can turn your café into a go-to spot. Consider adding some cozy nooks, maybe host events or live music. Don’t underestimate the power of marketing. Social media is your friend – share behind-the-scenes glimpses, customer stories, or even run promotions. Engaging content can create a buzz and draw more people through your doors.” says Gabrielle Yap, Culinary Entrepreneur, CarnivoreStyle.

Whether you are creating a snug for book lovers or a trendy tech-friendly spot for nomadic workers, the key is to make it an experience and tap into your target audience on a personal level. “We host regular car meetups for supercar enthusiasts, taking advantage of our ample parking space” says Ben Southall, Co-Founder at Seven Districts Coffee. “These events not only serve as a unique draw for a specific audience but also create a community around shared interests. Beyond our daily café operations, we also host quarterly wine tasting evenings, leveraging the similarities between coffee and wine tasting notes to offer our customers a unique and sophisticated experience.”

Partnerships with other local businesses such as yoga studios or artists who might like to use your venue for an exhibition forges community connections and enhances trade. “Get to know your customers and their preferences. If you notice a group of students studying every weekend, consider introducing student-friendly deals or study-friendly environments. It’s all about making people feel seen and appreciated” says Gabrielle.

Accommodating different dietary needs is another way to increase turnover. When customers feel heard, they become loyal champions, and as consumers today suffer from more allergies than ever before, delivering enticing menus that are inclusive will be rewarded. “By crafting dishes that deliver the same mouthwatering taste and texture as non-alternative favourites, you’ll not only cater to a wider audience but also earn a reputation for culinary innovation and inclusivity. Every dish on our Winchester Cathedral Café menu can be adapted to each dietary need, from buttermilk pancakes to our avocado on toast!” says Rob.

Over the years, much has changed – and will continue to change – but what has remained constant, is the love for a place where people can meet, eat and take a few precious moments to watch the world go by. They are the heart of our communities, the caffeine boost when we need it most, and the gentle social interaction that eases isolation – they are our cafés.

Mint Lemonade



Bbq Jackfruit baked sweet potato



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Ultimate Cheese Toastie



SUPERSIZE YOUR TOASTIE

Toasted cheese sandwiches are a comfort food classic for all ages. Easily customisable for your audience, you can stick with simple ingredients or make them gourmet by switching to special cheese blends or including high-end additions. Lobster toastie, anyone? If you get creative, you can turn this snack into a main menu item that customers keep coming back for.

Making ends meet

MAKING THE MOST OF BREAD

With Sandwich Week taking place between 22nd – 28th May, Paul Dickson focuses on getting the most out of bread in your kitchen.

The classic sandwich is something that we can often take for granted, but every now and again it's a good idea to revisit your sarnie offering and appreciate the appeal and convenience of this versatile and beloved light meal. What shouldn't be overlooked is the cost-saving opportunity involved in these bread-based snacks, let alone the up-sell opportunities such as adding soup or a side of chips to create a more substantial meal.

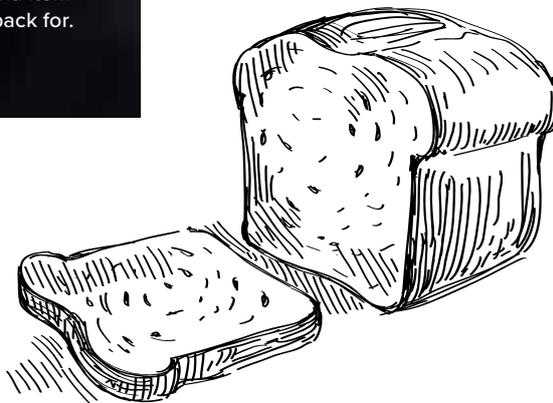


Paul is a Home Economist and food stylist working in London and the North West, creating exceptional visual stories in film & tv, on social media and in print. All of the recipes and videos featured in the article can be accessed online at www.countryrange.co.uk/recipes or by scanning the QR code.



A Magnifique Madame!

Don't overlook your breakfast and brunch menu when giving your sandwiches a makeover. French influences such as pastries and the classic Croque Monsieur are often featured, but less common is the Croque Madame. This French delicacy elevates the humble ham and cheese sandwich to gourmet heights, featuring ham and Gruyere cheese sandwiched between slices of crusty bread, topped with bechamel sauce and crowned with a fried or poached egg. Indulgently rich and satisfying, it's a staple of Parisian café culture.



“WHAT SHOULDN'T BE OVERLOOKED IS THE COST-SAVING OPPORTUNITY INVOLVED IN THESE BREAD-BASED SNACKS.”



Croque Madame



Italian Tuna Melt

GIVE TUNA THE ITALIAN JOB

When you're refreshing your sandwich offering, I suggest keeping an eye on the cuisines that are generally trending, which might just give you the inspiration to put a twist on one or two of your menu staples. The tuna melt has been a favourite on many a school, café or pub menu for years. Why not add the familiar Mediterranean flavours of Italy to create a delightful fusion of savoury, tangy and cheesy goodness. **Bellissimo!**

aah! **PERFECT**

flavours for every taste



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We are family

CATERING FOR PARENTS WITH CHILDREN

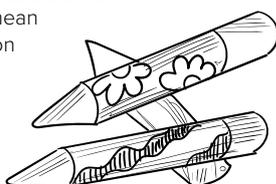


MARK HARRIS

Having entered the hospitality industry straight out of school, Mark Harris started his career washing dishes at Claridges. Over the years his experience and love for the sector has grown, enjoying roles at The Savoy Group of Hotels, The Capital Hotel, Green's Restaurant & Oyster Bar, and Searcy's at The Gherkin. Mark is now the Managing Director of Harris Restaurant Consultants, working with clients to build their businesses and expand their clientele.

HOW CAN CAFÉS AND RESTAURANTS MAKE THEIR SPACES MORE PARENT/CHILD FRIENDLY?

Offer child-friendly and cleanable equipment from chairs, menus, utensils and even their own crockery (melamine) and cutlery. Even the decor can be child-friendly, and this does not necessarily mean having cartoon characters stenciled on



the walls but can be imaginative lighting and fabrics to amuse children. Simple activity packs can keep children entertained. Then of course for the tech-friendly family, which is most these days, have phone charging facilities near to the table - a battery dying phone or tablet that has held a child's interest for some time causes anxiety.

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 3 TIPS FOR IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE WHEN SERVING FAMILIES?

1. As with all guest interaction, it is so important to read the guest. Is it appropriate to be making a fuss of the child? Do the parents look stressed? Speak to the children through their parents and get permission to say hello.
2. Ensure the child's order is taken first and they are served first. (or ask the parents if they would like their order to be sped through the kitchen). This will relax the children as well as the parents!
3. Think ahead and always keep thinking how you can make the family experience as good as it can be without becoming over familiar or a nuisance.

WHAT ARE THE COMMON MISTAKES YOU HAVE SEEN OPERATORS MAKE?

Many operators fail to target both elements of the family and their needs.

On the one hand there are the children that the parents want to see looked after and treated well and then on the other hand there are the parents who also want to be looked after albeit in a different way to their children. Complex menus also make it hard for parents to make quick and easy decisions.

The biggest mistake is where restaurants promote themselves as being family friendly, yet have a team of untrained staff who do not know how to deliver service and hospitality for both the children and/or the adults.

WHEN BUILDING A CHILDREN'S MENU, WHAT SHOULD OPERATORS INCLUDE?

The key tip is to have a number of ingredients and accompaniments that can be mixed and matched. The kitchen should also be prepared to use ingredients from the main menu upon request and then also be flexible enough to offer dishes



HOW IMPORTANT IS THE FAMILY CATERING MARKET TO THE HOSPITALITY TRADE?

I believe that the ONS have estimated that there are over 19.4 million families in the UK. This on its own is enough to make operators sit up and take notice that 'family' trade can be a vitally important audience for their business. An essential element to catering for families is the fact that a family is not unique to one socio economic grouping. Every group from A to E has families in the social make up, so whatever the restaurant there is the potential to appeal to families.

from the main menu in smaller portions and at reduced prices.

Also think about dishes that can be 'grazed' on by children that do not deteriorate if not eaten immediately - chicken strips, nuggets, speciality sausages, crudités and dips etc. There is also the enjoyment factor for the children to be considered, especially as they get a little older and understand the concept of going to a restaurant. To be like the grown-ups, perhaps they would like a starter, a main and a dessert?

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*Lamb Weston category data and internal comparison with Private Reserve 9x9mm

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NEW GLUTEN FREE PIZZA BASE FROM PAN'ARTISAN

Around 1 in 100 people have coeliac disease – an autoimmune condition caused by an adverse reaction to gluten. People with many other conditions, including non-coeliac gluten sensitivity, also need to follow a gluten free diet and it is now estimated that at least 10% of UK consumers are doing so.*

Charlotte Perkins, Commercial Manager, Pan'Artisan Ltd: "We aim to deliver on trend, versatile, Italian-inspired bakery products that not only taste delicious, but also provide catering operators with convenient and exceptional quality menu staples that support an inclusive food offering for a myriad of diet types."

Pan'Artisan's frozen, Gluten Free pizza bases simply need defrosting at room temperature until fully thawed before topping and baking at a recommended oven temperature of 230-250°C. Cooking times will vary depending on oven and toppings used.

Pan'Artisan's Gluten Free bases are available in a 12" size, with 22 units per case.

*coeliac.org.uk



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Introducing Hellmann's New Professional Mayonnaise - Designed for your Kitchen Needs

Established in 1913, Hellmann's has been making the best mayonnaise for over 100 years. Hellmann's is the number 1 brand of mayo* in foodservice, providing chefs with a range of pack sizes and formulations for every scale and style of operation.

The team at Hellmann's are always looking to invest to help accelerate category growth.

This spring welcomes the launch of their best performance mayonnaise – Hellmann's Professional!

Chefs have been asking for a mayonnaise that delivers every time in the toughest applications for a quality product they can rely on, a product made by chefs, for chefs.

"In a busy service, I need to trust that my mayo performs every time, over time".

Hellmann's Professional in detail:

- ✓ Perfect coating & minimal water loss for 72 hours in bound salads

- ✓ Great binding & consistency for signature dips & sauces
- ✓ Heat stable in grill & oven
- ✓ The classic Hellmann's taste, perfect for a base you can build your signature dishes with
- ✓ Free-range eggs and sustainably sourced oils, no artificial colours, gluten-free & lactose-free
- ✓ Designed by chefs for professional kitchens
- ✓ Even more profitable

This ingredient is "versatile in hot and cold dishes, holding its thickness and delivering maximum stability" and provides an "ideal thick texture to my sauces and dips – even when I add my own twist".

Available in a 10L format, scan this QR code to discover the full Hellmann's range, recipes and insights.



"Versatile in hot and cold dishes, holding its thickness and delivering maximum stability."

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PAN-FRIED SEABASS,

baby potatoes and a green pea, samphire and prawn linguine

SERVES
1

INGREDIENTS

- 60g Country Range Linguine
- 30g Country Range Sundried Tomatoes
- 20g Country Range Fancy Peas
- 20ml Country Range Lemon Juice
- 200g fresh seabass
- 100g freshwater prawns
- 4 baby potatoes (quartered and pre-boiled)
- 20g samphire
- Splash of double cream
- Freshly chopped dill
- 25g butter (half for fish, half for sauce)
- Salt & pepper

METHOD

1. In a hot pan add a little oil, place the seabass skin side down and cook for 2 mins. Turn over to seal and cook for another 2 mins with a little butter and a squeeze of lemon juice. Cover and leave to rest.
2. In the same pan, throw in 4 quartered boiled baby potatoes to crisp up and colour. Then add in the sundried tomatoes, peas, samphire, prawns, wine, cream and a little more butter.
3. Cook for 2-3 mins before adding your cooked linguine and check the seasoning.
4. Make sure the pasta is coated before plating up with the seabass on top of the linguine bed. Garnish with fresh dill.

With his parents working long hours, a young Ruairi O'Connor discovered a knack for food when he often cooked for his siblings. After signing on at Newry Catering College at the age of 16, he knew he had found his career and place in the world.

Ruairi earned his first head chef role by the age of 19 and spent the next 20 years building a reputation as a leading cook in Armagh and County Down, before buying The Downshire Arms, a Georgian coaching inn, with his wife.

"The previous owner had built a great business and reputation so I knew from day one that I could make it work. We initially kept the menu as it was before gradually tweaking and improving the offering. We have seasonal specials alongside our favourites such as fresh seabass, wagyu beef burgers, curries and roasts. We're not pretentious and simply concentrate on doing the basics well. We have a fantastic historic venue, our food is seasonal and modern, plus you're guaranteed to get a warm welcome."

"We use a vast selection of Country Range products and are always delighted with the quality and value. The chicken fillets for example are exceptional, as are the spices and seasonings and staple products like dried pasta.

The recipe I am sharing is a vibrant, full-flavoured dish for the spring and summer months that uses a selection of Country Range staples such as the linguine, sundried tomatoes, green peas, cooking wine and lemon juice."



RUAIRI O'CONNOR,
DOWNSHIRE ARMS HOTEL

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INITIATIVES



Rising Star MICHAEL ZEE

AUTHOR, BROADCASTER & SYMMETRY BREAKFAST CREATOR

many cuisines can be so serious and borderline boring but with Filipino food I feel it's quite camp!

What are the biggest challenges for chefs at present?

What I hear from chefs from all over the world right now, is they can't get the staff. From China to Colombia, no one wants to work six double shifts in a hot kitchen for minimum wage, and why should they?

I think unfortunately there was a rockstar, drug fuelled, macho culture over the last 20 years that now every TikTok chef bro aspires to, that hasn't produced a very positive image for the working environment in hospitality. The industry more than ever needs to show that it cares about its staff and throw its weight behind vocational catering colleges and training to bring in a new generation.

What are your tips for creating the best Chinese food?

Variety is the spice of life, in my cupboard I have maybe ten different types of 'light' soy sauce. Different brands and styles, used in a blend or solo will add incredible complexity and nuance. Using sugar as a seasoning like salt and pepper will also amplify other flavours.

An electric rice cooker, it frees up a burner on the cooker and gives you perfect results every time. There are also many cookbooks written just for a rice cooker and you can even bake in them.

Spend an hour with chef Michael Zee and you will realise he has experienced kitchen-life since the day he was born. Food and cooking is in his blood, whether working in his father's Chinese and English Chippies in Liverpool, or teaching himself how to bake for his mum, Michael understands the power of food - how it heals, supports and (in the case of his relationship with his husband), can make breakfast a sacred moment shared between two people in love.

Describe your cooking style

If I am cooking for myself, it's slap dash and a little bit chaotic! It was only when I started cooking for my now husband 10 years ago it became this ultra precise creation. A dinner party at my house is usually an extraordinarily elaborate, multi dish banquet with a carefully curated wine and drinks pairing.

Tell us about the new book

It's a non-encyclopaedic whirlwind tour of China through the meal of breakfast. It's a reflection of reality, with all the photography shot on location over five years. It's the gritty detail of everyday life focussing on how 1.4 billion people live their life. I wanted to give readers and cooks a window into a vast culture without the romanticising I see so much with cookbooks on non-European cuisines.

What makes breakfast in China special?

The enormous diversity is remarkable. Before we even get into specific dishes the most special thing about breakfast in China is you can eat something different every day for years. Even when I was at the peak of SymmetryBreakfast I arrived in China and was just amazed by the choice.

How do you create new dishes?

How can recipes be a reflection of the world today? Historically, recipes were born out of necessity, an abundance or shortage of ingredients, a preparation for the winter ahead or symbolic religious representation. One recipe I came up with was for coffee eggs, a spin on the traditional tea eggs and both recipes are in my book.

What cuisines, flavours or techniques are you loving right now?

At the moment we are living in Rome and I am in love with a Filipino restaurant next to the Vatican called Neighbourhood. It's so comforting, the delicate spice punctuated with vinegar with wonderful friendly service. So



Above (left and right)
Michael Zee's Sheng Jian Bao

Feeling Nostalgic

CLASSIC COMFORTS IN A CONTEMPORARY KITCHEN

Every now and then we all seek home comforts, whether that's a dish that reminds us of our childhood, a special moment in time, or a place we visited. Reminiscing fond memories is good for our mental health and for older residents, it can provide a sense of security in an uncertain world. In this month's melting pot, our expert panel share their favourite traditional dish and how they have elevated it to suit a modern audience.



MARK GREENAWAY

Chef & Creator of Grazing at The Caledonian

My favourite dish from childhood has to be a Sunday roast chicken. It's something that I try and do as much as I can even now. It's a straightforward dish to make – you just put the chicken in the oven, take it out half an hour later, put in your roast potatoes and carrots, and put it back in while making your gravy. It's a one-pot wonder and to this day would be my desert island dish. We serve an elevated roast chicken dish at Grazing, it's a sophisticated and indulgent take on the classic meal, inspired by the fond memories I have of weekly Sunday roasts as a child.



*French Cassoulet
of chicken, sausages,
white beans*



ROB BOER

Head Chef, The Mutton

Growing up, my mother regularly made a cassoulet dish which was always a real house pleaser! It is such a comforting, tasty dish, and very nostalgic for me now. My sister became a veggie when we were quite young, so this was an easy way to satisfy everyone around the dinner table! Cassoulet is actually a dish on our menu at The Mutton right now, although with the addition of a beautiful olive baguette from a local bakery.



GARY TOWNSEND

Chef Owner, Elements

I love a Sunday roast, it's so typically British and showcases so much wonderful UK produce all on one plate. If I was to elevate this, I would replace the beef with roasted venison, served with a celeriac mash, potato fondant, spiced poached baby carrots, roasted radishes, crumbled Stornoway black pudding and a rich red wine and bramble gravy.

I feel quite strongly that vegan dishes should be able to hold their own, using the wonderful natural plant-based ingredients we have, but if I had to transform a meat dish to a vegan one, I would probably go for a lasagna; using puy lentils, roasted cherry tomatoes, portobello mushrooms, cashew cream and vegan parmesan.



DAVID SMITH

*Head Chef,
Dipping Lugger*

Mince and tatties bring back great memories from my childhood and my wife

Rachael makes the best one I've ever had. It reminds me of comforting meals prepared by my mum, the aroma filling the house, and the feeling of sitting down with my family to enjoy a delicious homemade meal.

This might sound like sacrilege to anyone of Scottish heritage, especially if you're a fan of serving your mince and tatties with tomato ketchup – try swapping that out for pickled walnut purée, which definitely adds a unique and tangy flavour to the dish and really gives it a lift. To make walnut purée, simply blend 200g of pickled walnuts with 2 tsp of the brine, a dash or two of soy sauce and a little sugar until it becomes smooth.



JULIA CHEBOTAR

Private Chef & Consultant

Favourites like Shepherd's Pie and Chicken Parmesan hold a special place in my heart, but acknowledging

the impact of modern processed foods is vital. Infusing these classics with natural alternatives such as chia, mushroom, lentils, and beans promotes wellness while honouring tradition. Prioritising clean oils, veggies like cauliflower breadcrumbs, and nutrient-rich swaps transforms dishes. For vegans, mushrooms and beans add heartiness and nutrients.



HANNAH ROBINSON

*Head Pastry Chef,
BaxterStorey*

My journey as a pastry chef is woven with threads of nostalgia,

tradition, and innovation, inspired by my family's culinary moments. Fond memories of baking with my great grandma ignited my passion for pastry, shaping my approach as a Head Pastry Chef. At BaxterStorey, we blend tradition with innovation, offering nostalgic treats with modern twists. Take our reinvented Eton Mess, featuring individual nests, jelly discs, sherbet, and mint oil. Each bite evokes cherished memories while delighting with unexpected flavours. Guided by a commitment to creativity, I aim to spark joy and evoke memories through pastry, honouring tradition while pushing culinary boundaries."



CRAIG WESCOTT

*Trade Marketeer, Lamb
Weston EMEA*

Traditional fries on the side are OK but with a little imagination, they can be

much more versatile. Consumers want choice so why not promote your humble chips and elevate them to give a greater margin opportunity, more choice on your menu and to keep the most demanding grazers, sharers and snackers happy. Try our delicious loaded fries recipe for two for a modern twist on a classic: Cook 300g Lamb Weston Stealth® Skin-On Fries 9x9 according to the pack, then place in a shallow bowl. Top with 100g mac 'n' cheese and place under the grill for 3-5 minutes. Sprinkle with chopped chives before serving. You can add crispy bacon bits for a non-veggie version.

*"Each bite
evokes cherished
memories while
delighting with
unexpected
flavours"*



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WAYS TO USE

Tomato Paste



A vital ingredient across the menu to add depth of flavour and body to sauces, ragu, stews, curries, soups and a wide range of other dishes from around the globe, the Country Range Tomato Paste is double concentrated and made from the finest Italian tomatoes. The Tomato paste comes in 6 800g tins.

ABOUT: NICHOLAS AYIEKO

Beginning his culinary journey in Kenya 23 years ago, Nicholas Ayieko has worked in a wide range of culinary establishments. With vast experience in the conferencing, banqueting and the rosette fine dining arena, Nicholas joined Stoke on Trent College in August 2023. Passionate about sharing his experience and love of food to the next generation of hungry young chefs in the Staffordshire area, Nicholas has been crucial in helping students Adam Hughes, Nicolas Tachenny and Charlie Watton-Emsley make the Country Range Student Chef Final back in March this year.



1/ *Punchy pasta*

I love using the tomato paste to provide real backbone to my Bloody Mary tagliatelle. I make this with sundried tomatoes, vodka, tabasco, tomato paste, cannellini beans and crispy pancetta topped with celery leaves.

2/ *Crust is a must*

Slow roasted belly pork is one of my all-time favourites and I especially like making it with a crust. For the tangy and crispy crust, I use the tomato paste, thyme, garlic, and breadcrumbs. It never fails to impress.

3/ *Baste your bread*

We all love garlic bread but for a change I often slightly dilute my tomato paste and paint it on my favourite bread such as focaccia before finishing in the oven.

4/ *Savoury swirl*

A cinnamon swirl is much loved, but I enjoy making a savoury version with herbs and the tomato paste. Simply add to your white bread dough before baking.

5/ *Moreish marinade*

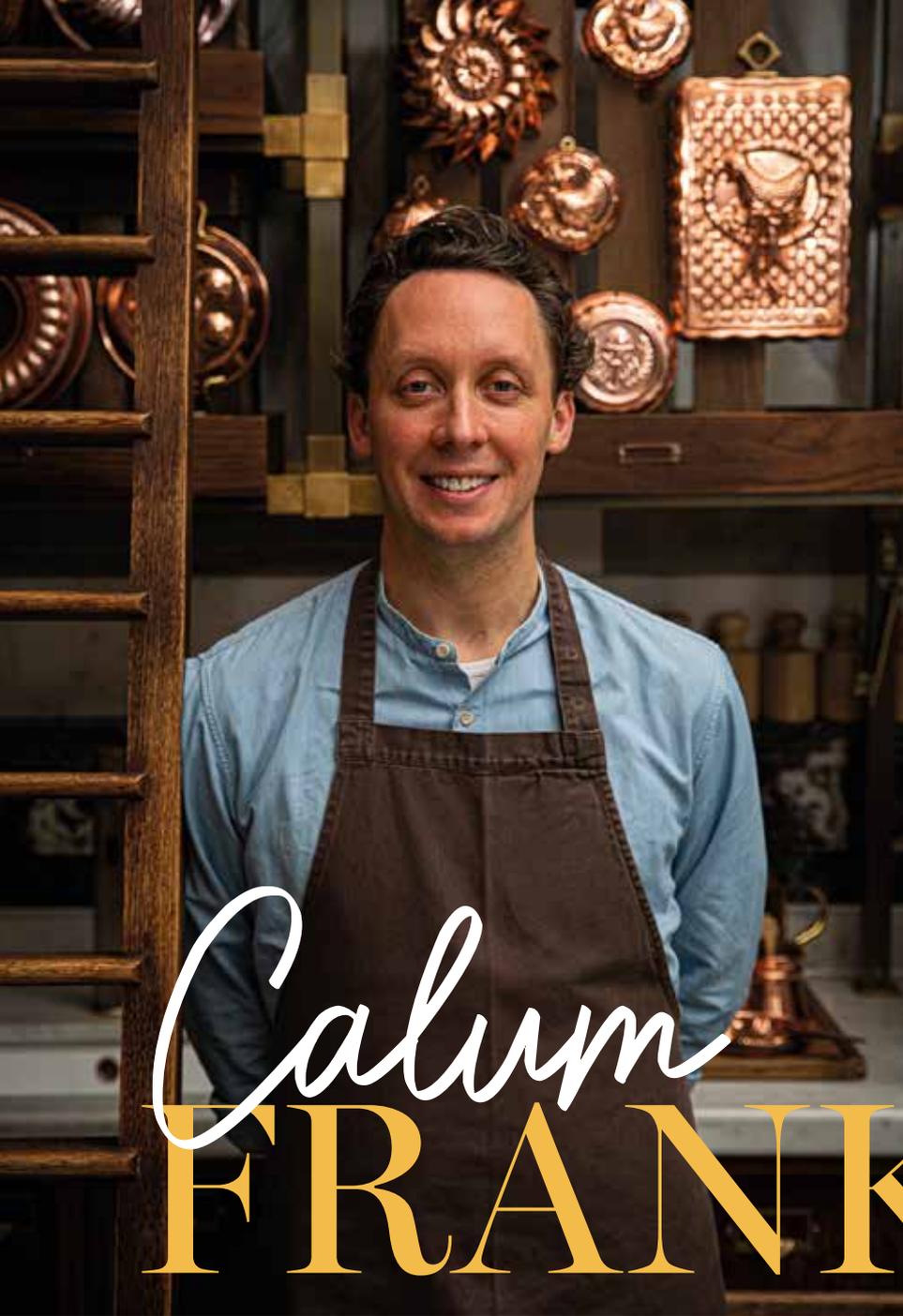
A great ingredient for marinades, I often use tomato paste with onion, dried red chillies, spinach, Urid dhal, Channa dhal and tamarind water as a marinade for chicken or fish. I then serve this with pilau rice and fenugreek chapati.

“A great ingredient for marinades, I often use tomato paste with onion, dried red chillies, spinach, Urid dhal, Channa dhal and tamarind water as a marinade for chicken or fish.”



Country Range
Tomato Paste

Pack Size: 6 x 800g >>



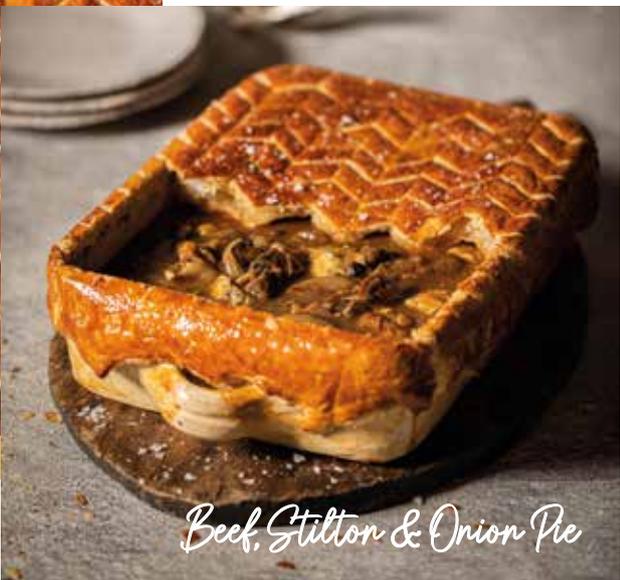
Widely acclaimed as the ‘King of Pies’, Calum Franklin has made people around the world sit up, take notice and think again about British food and most notably - the potent pie. With his success at the Holborn Dining Room and bestselling book - The Pie Room - helping to put pies on a pedestal, Calum has now taken his repertoire to the mean streets of Paris with the opening of Public House in March. We caught up with Calum ahead of the launch.

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

My mum was a great cook and we would always eat at the table together. I was born at Guys Hospital in London Bridge and brought up in Grove Park in Southeast London, so pies were always a key part of our weekly menu at home. Pies always remind me of a better time. Saying that, my younger years were the late 80s and 90s where processed food ruled so I would be lying if I said a Happy Meal didn't feature in my early food memories.

I wasn't really that academic, that was both my brothers, and as a teenager I really couldn't envisage a career behind a desk. On leaving school, like many chefs, I got a job dishwashing in a restaurant. From the get-go, I was entranced by these brutish, shouty chefs doing the most delicate, skilled work in the kitchen and producing beautiful dishes. I remember finishing my first day and going home and saying to my older brother that I knew exactly what I wanted to be. That was quite unique as my brother and most people at that age didn't

CHEF, AUTHOR & ‘KING OF PIES’



Beef, Stilton & Onion Pie

have such clarity. I soon asked the chef to help with prep and I was on my way. I got my head down and absorbed as much as I could.

When and how did your interest in pastry begin and develop?

I have always been passionate about improving and testing myself, so following my time at Chapter One, I went on to work in kitchens at The Ivy, Aurora at the Andaz Hotel, The Savoy, Indigo at One Aldwych Hotel and Roast in Borough Market. I always loved pastry, but it was really when making Beef Wellington or Salmon en Croute when I was working with Rory Lumsden from the Savoy, that I realised just how spectacular pastry could be. The craft, art, discipline and the labour-intensive nature of it. This is where my fascination truly began and after being appointed Executive Head Chef of the Holborn Dining Room in 2018, my life of pie really took off.

Early on, it was probably all about modern European cooking but pies helped me reconnect with my love of British flavours and cooking heritage. That was my path to piemaking. What I have realised since is that we've only just scratched the surface of what British pies can be. There is so

much we can do and so much I plan to do to put British pies on the global map. I simply want to make the best pies in the world, anything else is a bonus.

Who has inspired and mentored you on your journey?

I have learnt from and been supported by so many, but Andrew McLeish from Chapter One and Rory Lumsden showed me what fine dining at the highest level was all about. Tony Fleming was another inspiration, who is now at D&D. He drilled into me that you should never accept compromise. If something isn't good enough, it doesn't go out. When you start compromising, that's when standards slide.

Tell us about the opening of Public House in Paris

I want to be a beacon for British cuisine around the world so Public House is the first expression of this. It's been two years in the making and we have had a year developing the menu. We have a team of 35 chefs prepped and ready to go so we just need to blend it all together with the front of house team as we open so everyone has the same mindset.

Nothing easy is worth doing and I felt after 20 years cooking in London, it was getting too comfortable for me so I decided our first project abroad had to make a statement and you couldn't really beat the heart of Paris. It's about showcasing British cuisine, hospitality and how we do pastry, pies and a host of other classic dishes. We'll also have other beauties like scotch eggs, sausage rolls, gin-cured salmon, the best fish 'n' chips Paris has ever seen and sticky toffee pudding. We'll also have a great selection of British cheeses as there really are some world-beating producers and varieties coming from these shores.

What are your goals for 2024?

I'm always looking ahead. I feel momentum with Public House now, so my brain is starting to give time to the next projects. I can't say too much but I expect more to be happening towards the end of the year or early 2025. I'm working on a new book, which I'm very excited about, that is going to look at Britain's pie heritage, the regional classics, the stories and people behind them. I made a pie from Norfolk and after posting it on Twitter (I'm not calling it X), a row erupted on what the traditional recipe should be. The pie passion was insane and kicked off my regional research. I want to produce a pie book in a similar vein to Magnus Nilsson's Nordic Cookbook, which is unreal. I want it to be a historical reference for pies for eternity when I'm gone.

What's your favourite pie?

It's obviously a tough one but I ate a hot pork pie in the pub – The Kingham Plough in the Cotswolds, and it is a key moment in my pie-lights to date. I had it with hot gravy and it has been a mainstay on my menus ever since.

What are your tips for Pie-fection?

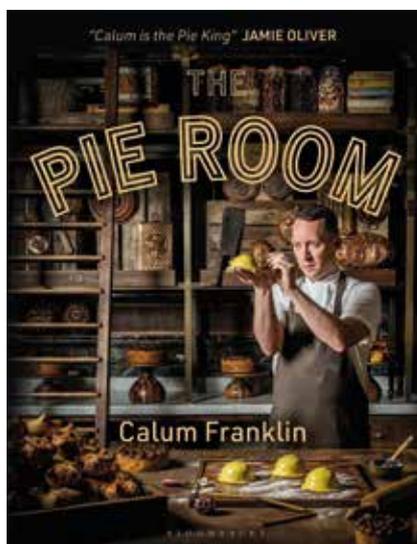
Correct pastry for the filling – if you have a wet filling, delicate pastry isn't the way to go. You need hot water crust pastry or suet.

Don't over egg wash – give it a light coat before, maybe another during but keep it light. Less is more.

Not including my cookbook - The Pie Room - but for any other recipe you see in a book, add ten mins cooking time to the recipe. The pastry should be a rich mahogany in colour.

Who are you most proud to have cooked for?

I had my stag do planned a few years ago and suddenly a booking came through at the last minute from the great Pierre Gagnaire. Him of 14 Michelin stars. It was a tough but easy decision. I told the lads to celebrate my stag without me. It's not the thing anyone in my position would turn down and it was a wonderful night and experience for me and for the kitchen team who all got to meet him.



Extract taken from *The Pie Room* by Calum Franklin, published by Bloomsbury on 24 September 2020, (£26, Hardback)
Photography © John Carey



SERVES
6

Apricot & Lemon Thyme Cobblers

INGREDIENTS

500g sweet shortcrust pastry
15 apricots, halved and stone removed
60g caster sugar
1 vanilla pod
20g lemon thyme, leaves picked

For the crumble:

100g plain flour
80g cold salted butter, diced
80g caster sugar
80g ground almonds
10g flaked almonds

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C fan/180°C/gas mark 4 and line two baking trays with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the pastry to a thickness of 1.5cm. Cut out six pastry circles large enough to line the cups of the muffin tray. To line the cups, carefully place the pastry circles in the cups, leaving no air bubbles and pushing down any creases. Place the muffin tray in the freezer and chill the pastry cases for 30 minutes or until hard.

2. While the pastry cases are chilling, put all the ingredients for the crumble mixture in a mixing bowl and gently rub together until just combined. Spread the crumble mixture over the first lined baking tray. Lay the apricot halves on the second lined baking tray, flat side down.

3. Remove the muffin tray from the freezer. Line each pastry case with a circle of parchment paper and then fill with ceramic baking beans or dried pulses or rice.

4. Place the muffin tray and both baking trays in the preheated oven to blind bake the pastry cases and roast the crumble mixture and the apricots for 20 minutes. After the first 10 minutes, carefully turn over each apricot half and gently move around the crumble mixture with a spoon so everything cooks evenly. After the full 20 minutes remove both baking trays from the oven and set aside to cool a little. Remove the muffin tray from the oven. Lift out the parchment paper from the pastry cases to remove the baking beans. Increase the oven temperature to 180°C fan/200°C/gas mark 6, return the muffin tray to the oven and cook the pastry cases for a further 5 minutes or until an even golden colour. Remove the muffin tray from the oven and set aside.

5. Transfer the apricots to a mixing bowl and, while still warm, sprinkle over the caster sugar and scrape in the vanilla seeds from the pod. Stir everything together, gently breaking up the apricots while stirring. Spoon the apricot mixture into the tart cases. Loosely scatter the crumble mix over the top of each filled tart case and then finally add the picked lemon thyme leaves to decorate the cobblers. Serve immediately while warm with either custard or ice cream.

FOOD & INDUSTRY *news*

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

New report revealing the growth opportunity for the £1.2bn bread market

Published this month, the Prove It: Breaking Bread report predicts the UK's £7.8bn bread market will grow by 15% to reach a value of £9bn by 2026.

The report says businesses have a huge opportunity to take a slice of this growth by embracing evolving trends in the bread category such as:

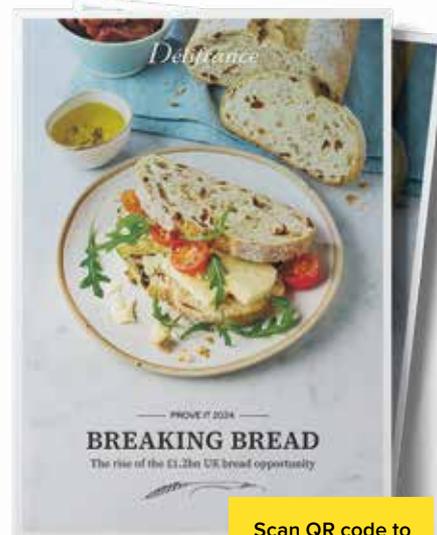
- Demand for speciality and world breads
- Products using clean-label and regeneratively farmed ingredients
- Bread that offers health benefits or caters to specialist diets
- The impact of smaller bakeries on the wider market
- Consumers' response to the cost-of-living crisis

These topics and many more are examined in the report, which has been compiled following a survey of 1,000 UK

adults who regularly eat bread and offers insight into bread consumers' behaviour in and out of home. The report also makes use of DéliFrance's internal market estimates and insight, external market data and the experience and views of Harris & Hayes, one of the UK's most trusted food consultants and future forecasters.

"Our latest Prove It report looks at the trends shaping the category, from the continued growth of sourdough to the opportunities offered by breads from across the globe," says DéliFrance marketing director Stéphanie Brillouet.

"We also take a deep dive into consumer attitudes to bread and examine what drives purchasing decisions, how consumption differs in and out of home, and the impact of consumers' environmental and economic concerns."



Scan QR code to download the full report:



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INDUSTRY AWARDS

AA REVEALS NEW ROSETTE AWARD WINNERS FOR 2024

The nation's top restaurants and hotels have been recognised at the highly anticipated AA Rosette Awards spring update held at RAK Ceramics Design Hub, London.

Among the celebrated, one establishment was awarded the distinguished four AA Rosettes, while an impressive sixteen have been presented with three AA Rosettes, a true testament to the outstanding quality and originality across the nation's culinary landscape.

Earning three AA Rosettes places restaurants on a pedestal of national recognition, showcasing their excellence far beyond their local borders. Meanwhile, the award of four AA Rosettes positions the recipient among the top restaurants in the country, marking it out as offering the crème de la crème of dining experiences.

Simon Numphud FIH, Managing Director at AA Media said: "We are delighted to



La Dame de Pic London



Fallowfields

celebrate and recognise the latest collection of outstanding restaurants. All deliver excellent culinary experiences where provenance, seasonality, flavour and great cooking take centre stage. Here's to the remarkable chefs and front-of-house teams whose dedication has brought these accolades to life."

Since 1956, the AA Rosette Awards have been a mark of leading restaurant and hotel venues across the UK. The allocation of multi-Rosettes is determined by one or more visits by an AA inspector to a hotel or restaurant.

THE FULL LIST OF 2024 ROSETTE WINNERS

New four AA Rosettes:

- La Dame de Pic London, Four Seasons at Ten Trinity Square | London

New three AA Rosettes:

- Social Eating House | London
- Pavillon London, Four Seasons Hotel at Park Lane | London
- Claridge's Restaurant | London
- The Silver Birch | London
- Studio Frantzén | London
- Fallowfields, Housel Bay | Cornwall
- Summer Lodge Country House Hotel | Dorset
- Toffs by Rob Palmer | West Midlands

- The Gin Trap Inn | Norfolk

- The Dining Room and Cellar, Hillbark Hotel & Spa | Merseyside

- The Little Chartroom | Edinburgh

- Mingary Castle | Highlands

- Thomas by Tom Simmons | Cardiff

- The Tasting Room, The Vineyard | Berkshire

- The Angel Inn | Suffolk

- Kintsu | Essex

To discover all the latest 3 and 4 Rosette restaurants, visit: [ratedtrips.com/aa-rosette-restaurants/aa-rosette-awards-february-2024](https://www.ratedtrips.com/aa-rosette-restaurants/aa-rosette-awards-february-2024)




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The Country Club



EXCLUSIVELY FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE COUNTRY RANGE GROUP



EASY AS PIE

Calum Franklin, this month's Leading Light, and self-confessed pastry deviant has given us a copy of his debut cookbook, *The Pie Room*, to give away to one lucky Stir it up reader.

Discover the secrets to 80 delicious and achievable pies and sides, both sweet and savoury including hot pork pies, the ultimate beef Wellington and rhubarb and custard tarts.

WIN

Calum's *The Pie Room*

Alongside the recipes Calum guides you through the techniques and tools for perfecting your pastry. Say hello to your new foodie obsession.

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

Zao Fan

Breakfast in China is an important affair. Locals are spoilt for choice, with a huge variety of spicy noodles, plump dumplings and fluffy buns all made fresh to order right on their doorsteps.

Michael Zee, this month's Rising Star, has recreated these dishes at home so that you can too. We have one copy of Michael's 'Zao Fan: Breakfast of China' to give away to one lucky reader.

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



WIN

Michael's Zao Fan: Breakfast of China

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



Closing date for both competition is 31st May 2024. All winners will be notified by 30th June 2024. Postal entries can be sent to: Country Range Group, 4 & 5 Jupiter House, Mercury Rise, Altham Business Park, Altham, Lancashire, BB5 5BY. Full terms and conditions can be found at: www.stirupmagazine.co.uk/about

aah!

GRAVY FOR EVERYONE



Bisto Steak with a Chilli and Dark Chocolate Sauce

Prep: 15 minutes Cook: 15 minutes Serves: 10

INGREDIENTS

50ml sunflower oil	850ml prepared Bisto Gravy
200g onions, diced	150g dark chocolate, broken into pieces
2 garlic cloves, crushed	salt and pepper to season
2 tsp fresh chilli, diced (or ½ tsp dried crushed chilli)	10 x 150g sirloin steak
75ml red wine vinegar	

METHOD

1. Heat the oil in a pan, add the onions, garlic and chilli and cook without colour for 5 minutes.
2. Add the red wine vinegar and cook for 3 minutes.
3. Pour in the prepared Bisto Gravy and bring to the boil, reduce to a simmer and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and whisk in the dark chocolate.
4. Season and cook the steak on a char-grill until it is cooked as ordered.
5. Serve steak with the sauce on the side.

ALLERGENS

Celery, Cereals containing gluten, Soybeans. Please check the ingredients declaration on the products you use making this recipe.

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