

# Stir it up

THE COUNTRY RANGE GROUP  
MAGAZINE FOR CATERERS

AUTUMN

SEPT  
2025



## Playful Plates

CHILD-FRIENDLY DISHES  
THAT DELIGHT AND NOURISH

CAFÉ & COFFEE SHOP INSPIRATION | FORAGING TIPS  
AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL HOLLYWOOD



# Ingredient

**The start of a new season brings with it a whole range of new produce as well as opportunities to update menus.**

Autumn is the perfect time to get outdoors and forage for wild ingredients. To assist and inspire you, Alex McAllister-Lunt shares his top tips in this month's Into the Wild.

As the new school term begins, we're proud to support the 25/26 Springboard FutureChef Competition sponsored by Country Range and introduce the 24/25 winner - our latest Rising Star! And don't miss baking royalty Paul Hollywood, who stops by to share a recipe from his latest book.

If you would like to get involved in a feature we'd love to hear from you. Please email us at [editor@stiritupmagazine.co.uk](mailto:editor@stiritupmagazine.co.uk)

*The Stir it up team*



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**VG** - Vegan **V** - Vegetarian





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## Fresh FROM THE KITCHEN



Jerk spice is currently in the spotlight on menus and social feeds and it's going global, with fusions that bring together the very best of culinary cultures. We explore the latest mashups that hero the versatility of Jamaican flavours and turn up the heat on global comfort foods.

**FRIED CHICKEN** – Jerk spiced fried chicken isn't new, but it's had a recent surge in popularity. Marinate or season wings and thighs to add depth and spice to your chicken.

**TACOS** – This Mexi-Caribbean fusion is a match made in heaven. Meat, fish and plant-based options are transformed with spice blends that nod to both regions, topped with fruity mango and pineapple salsas, fresh chilli and cooling sauces. The perfect blend of heat, sweetness and texture.

**PIZZA** – Anything goes when it comes to pizza toppings these days, so it's no surprise that jerk chicken is becoming a firm favourite on menus.

**PASTA** – Jerk pasta is an unexpected trend which is a delicious combination of jerk flavours, meat or fish and a spiced cream sauce.

**FRIED RICE** – Ditch the rice and peas in favour of a Chinese inspired fried rice, with the spicy flavours of Jamaica combined with the techniques of Asia.

**SUNDAY ROAST** – Yes, that's right – introducing the jerk roast! Add a spicy, smoky twist to your meat and veggies, with lashings of jerk gravy.

**HANDHELD** – Bold, spicy fillings meet convenient formats. The Jamaican patty is being reimagined with creative twists, and burgers and sandwiches are getting the jerk treatment for the ultimate grab-and-go option.

From thefoodpeople 2025 trend report.

Jerk tacos topped with pineapple, red onion and jalapeños



**thefoodpeople.**  
inform | inspire | realise potential



# Cooks CALENDAR

The full recipes can be found at [www.stirupmagazine.co.uk](http://www.stirupmagazine.co.uk)



## SEPTEMBER

### 2ND SEPTEMBER – WORLD COCONUT DAY

Celebrate World Coconut Day with a tropical twist! Indulge in this delicious Coconut, Cherry & Lime Muffins recipe from Opies.

### 4TH SEPTEMBER – EAT AN EXTRA DESSERT DAY

Who needs an excuse for dessert? This Eat an Extra Dessert Day, satisfy your sweet tooth with Nestlé's irresistible Milkybar® Pastéis de Nata – a creamy, custardy delight with a white chocolate twist.



## OCTOBER

### 1ST OCTOBER – INTERNATIONAL COFFEE DAY

A smooth, biscuit-inspired twist on the café classic. This latte layers MONIN Vanilla, Hazelnut and Chocolate Cookie syrups for a serve that feels nostalgic, indulgent, and ready to upsell - perfect for menus that turn coffee into comfort.

### 25TH OCTOBER – NATIONAL PUMPKIN DAY

Don't let your leftover pumpkin go to waste! This National Pumpkin Day, transform it into something tasty with this Opies flavour-packed Leftover Pumpkin Tacos recipe – a creative and delicious way to reduce food waste.

### 31ST OCTOBER – HALLOWEEN

Get into the spooky spirit this Halloween with a creative twist on a classic snack. Use the Country Range Cookie Pucks as your canvas to create ghoulishly fun designs – perfect for adding some frightful flair to treat time.

## NOVEMBER

### 1ST NOVEMBER – WORLD VEGAN DAY

Spice up your menu this World Vegan Day with bold, vibrant flavours. Try Country Range's Vegan Thai Red Curry recipe – a warming dish that's big on taste and packed with goodness.

### 10TH – 16TH NOVEMBER – NATIONAL SCHOOL MEALS WEEK

Celebrate National School Meals Week with some nutritious desserts, but exciting dessert offerings. Cereal Partners® No Bake Fruity Pots are a fun, simple way to serve up healthy sweetness that students will love – no oven required!

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



IN SEASON

Aubergines

Chives

Potatoes





## Cheesy Stuffed Squash



**COOK TIME 50 MINS**

**SERVES 2**

### INGREDIENTS

- 100g Country Range Grated Cheddar
- 1 pinch Country Range Ground Nutmeg
- 25g Country Range Pesto
- 1 small pumpkin / squash
- 100ml ready made vegetable stock
- 25g butter
- 1 tsp pumpkin seeds

### METHOD

1. Pre-heat the oven to 200°C /180°C fan.
2. Cut the lid off the squash and remove all of the seeds.
3. Place the lid back on top and bake in the oven for 40 minutes until the flesh is tender but not falling apart.
4. Remove from the oven and gently scrape the flesh out and place in a bowl with the butter and cheese. Add the vegetable stock and a pinch of nutmeg and season to taste.
5. Add the mix back to the warm squash, garnish with pesto and toasted pumpkin seeds and place the lid on top.
6. Serve with plenty of bread for dipping.

## Readers' lives



**NAME:** Matt Bennett

**JOB TITLE:** Sous Chef

**PLACE OF WORK:** The View At The Delmont

**HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU WORKED IN HOSPITALITY/CATERING?** 15 years

### BIG TARGET FOR 2025 AND 2026?

My big target is to push The View to the no.1 place to eat in Scarborough, shortly followed by putting us on the map of the best places to eat in Yorkshire.

**FAVOURITE CUISINE TO EAT?** This is a hard question as I'm a massive fan of Tex Mex and BBQ. Both are just wholesome and comforting. When done right it's just a party in your mouth.

**WHAT IS THE MOST ENJOYABLE PART OF YOUR JOB?** The most enjoyable part of being a chef is when you get through a busy day/service with compliments all round. The satisfaction you feel is amazing and addictive.

**WHICH CHEF DO YOU RESPECT THE MOST?** The chef I respect most would have to be my first head chef Bri Tipple. The guy that taught me a lot of what I know now. He has my upmost respect without a shadow of a doubt. Taking on a young lad fresh out of college with little to no experience and even less confidence.

### FAVOURITE COUNTRY RANGE PRODUCT?

It would have to be the Frozen Mixed Berries as they are so handy to have in the freezer. I love using them to make compote and coulis without the hassle of having to prepare and wash them first. In a fast-paced kitchen this is a Godsend.

**WHAT IS YOUR DREAM JOB?** Recipe/dish development. I've always loved cooking a dish, tasting it and then going away and thinking about what went well on the dish and what didn't and any way to improve it.

**WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO BE A CHEF?** While I was in my second year at college. I was lucky enough to be sent down to London to do a week's work experience in the prestigious Boodles gentlemen's club. I think that was the moment I saw where I could be and have been pushing myself harder to become the best I can be.

**WHAT INGREDIENTS DO YOU LOVE WORKING WITH IN AUTUMN?** I love autumn and though it may sound very cliché, I delight in pumpkin. The flesh is amazing in cakes, soups, purées or even as a ravioli filling.

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# KING OF THE CASTLE

Set in 60 acres of glorious Dorset countryside, Castle Court has been providing an outstanding and innovative education in an inspiring and naturally beautiful learning environment for over 70 years. Based near Wimborne, the school's food is headed by New Zealander Mike Worters, who has revolutionised the eating experience for pupils since he joined in September 2021.



Above Right:  
Chef Mike Worters.  
Hot Smoked Salmon &  
Ricotta Pizza.

Above: Debbie CDP  
and Jacob.  
Falafel Taco.

After passing his qualifications in Australia, Mike worked in the buzzing Brisbane restaurant scene before deciding it was time to see a bit of the world and expand his kitchen horizons. "I moved to London and started working for restaurants before getting a role for a corporate contract caterer. I then moved into the development chef world and that's where I first began my work in schools. I was Head of Innovation for a school caterer, so it opened my eyes to how our kids were being fed and fuelled. I became passionate about doing it better. My role was to drive creativity, improve the quality and the nutritional value, and ensure better relationships with food from an early age."

After having enough of the travelling to London from his home in Dorset, following the pandemic Mike got in contact with a local school, Castle Court, and pitched his ideas. "I get a real buzz out of making a difference in kids' lives and generating excitement around mealtimes, so I harassed the local school, Castle Court, with my vision and thankfully, they went for it. When I started, frozen food ruled, the choice was poor and they used the cheapest ingredients. I began by sourcing the meat from a local butcher, finding a vegetable supplier, switching in wholegrains for all the pasta and rice, launching a 'Meat Free Monday' and, most importantly, prepared a daily changing menu from scratch. We cater for around 300 pupils each day, so we serve in two sittings and also create match teas for parents following sports matches each Tuesday and Wednesday."

"We have a breakfast club, we provide homemade sweet and savoury treats plus fruit at first break, weekly specials, a pasta dish every day, a salad bar, freshly baked bread and we really try to expand our pupils' food spheres. It's as much about building good habits and getting kids excited about food as it is about nutrition. Some of the dishes we have run recently include gnocchi with a tomato and basil sauce, Mexican beef tacos, a Japanese yakisoba noodle stir fry, pulled pork wraps and chicken shish kebabs. Last summer I even got a couple of big oil drums and made old school barbecues, which I would light up on Fridays."

"The Country Range brand is our staple saviour, whether it's chopped tomatoes, baked beans, spices or the excellent Signature Double Crunch Fries. The Signature Sidewinders are another great product and one that enables our chefs to be creative."

With an ambition to teach the kids where their food comes from, Mike is looking to set up a vegetable patch in 2025 and has even reached out to a local beekeeper about the possibility of some hives to produce some Castle Court honey on site.

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# EAT THE SEASON



As September approaches, it's the perfect time to celebrate the essence of autumn with dishes infused with the sweetness of Gala apples or the robustness of Cox's Orange Pippin. Whether baked into comforting pies, pressed into refreshing juices, or finely sliced into vibrant salads, apples not only enrich your dishes but also connect your guests to the bountiful harvest of the season.

This month's inspirational dishes come from Andy Slater, chef patron of The Oakley Arms in Harrold, Bedfordshire, and Frank Fernandes, Executive Chef at Lanes of London.

Andy features apples throughout the year on his menu and recommends the following four dishes:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/KYfcUimUhc9YeqXc7>

## WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

While the flesh of an apple is perfect for pies, sauces, or juices, cores and peels can be used to make apple compote or cider. Apple seeds, when carefully prepared, can be turned into syrups or even infused into spirits. Keen gardeners can also germinate apple seeds for a new generation of trees.



## 1/ POACHED APPLES

Poached Heath Fruit Farm apple, apple caramel, caramel pastry cream, Calvados soaked golden raisins, crunchy hazelnut tuille and yoghurt, finished with caramel and black peppercorn ice cream.



Poached Apple with Hazelnut Financier

## 2/ APPLE BUTTER

My Apple Butter goes perfectly with anything pork related. We usually serve it as an alternative to apple sauce and recently served it alongside rare-breed pork from nearby Pavenham.

## 3/ TABLE THEATRICS

For our Green apple cheesecake, we fold apples into the filling before adding a refreshing centre of caramelised pineapple with cardamom and shape the dessert like an apple for a little bit of theatre.



Green Apple Cheesecake



Apple Tarragon Sorbet

## 4/ APPLE SORBET

Add apple purée, sugar, stabiliser, glucose and water to a pan and heat to 85°C. Pour it into a tub, add the tarragon, lemon juice and cover, leaving it to cool overnight before straining, freezing down and churning. It's fantastic when served with meringue.



Apple Mousse Entremet

## 5/ 'CHRISTMOUSSE' DECORATION

This is our popular apple mousse entremet, with a caramelised apple confit centre. We shaped the dessert like a Christmas bauble, sprayed with red velvet spray and placed it on a spiced sable biscuit with a Valrhona Caramelia chocolate ribbon on top.

# FEEDING HEARTS, BODIES AND SOULS

In care homes, food is much more than just nourishment, it is integral to the overall wellbeing of residents. Meals provide an opportunity for care caterers to engage with residents, promote social interaction, while supporting emotional and physical health. It may appear to be a simple meal on a plate to some, but as many who work in the sector know, there's a whole lot of thought that goes into the preparation and management of meals for residents.

## PERSONALISED NUTRITION: MEETING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

To ensure residents' wellbeing, care homes need to go beyond standardised meal plans and cater to the individual needs, preferences, and health conditions of each person. Aria Care, for example, operates a framework designed to offer a more holistic approach to food and drink provision. James Clear, Hospitality Director at Aria Care, explains: "We believe that good nutrition is more than about meeting dietary requirements—it's about honouring individuality, preferences, and cultural backgrounds. We take a person-centred approach, working closely with each resident and their families to understand food preferences, dietary restrictions, and cultural or religious practices."

This approach ensures that each resident's unique needs are taken into account, helping chefs prepare meals that align with their personal tastes and dietary requirements, as well as their cultural or religious beliefs. By prioritising individuality and respect for diversity, care homes can create an inclusive and compassionate environment that reflects the values of both the organisation and resident.

## ENGAGING RESIDENTS IN THE MEAL PLANNING PROCESS

At Avery Healthcare, feedback from residents plays a vital role in shaping meal options. Allan Brazier, Director of Resident Experience at Avery Healthcare, shares

their residents regularly give feedback, particularly around menu changes. "This insight helps us shape menus that are both enjoyable and supportive of residents' wellbeing and nutrition" he says.

Involving residents in the decision-making process fosters a sense of ownership and pride in their meals, as well as ensuring that the food served meets their preferences and needs. By encouraging regular dialogue, care caterers can respond to feedback quickly, ensuring that food remains an exciting and positive part of their residents' daily routine.

## MAINTAINING A NUTRITIONAL BALANCE

Nutrition and balanced meals are achieved by considering the different needs of residents, their medical conditions, dietary restrictions, and personal preferences. At Nellsar Care Homes, Leni Wood, Head of Nutrition and Wellness, works closely with chefs to ensure that menus meet the nutritional needs of residents while providing a variety of fresh, whole ingredients. "As a nutritional therapist, my role involves working with kitchen teams on creating personalised meal plans and involving residents in their creation. I check menus for balanced macronutrients, vitamins, and minerals. Fresh, whole ingredients are prioritised, and dietary restrictions are accommodated. Regular assessments ensure meals support residents' health, energy levels, and overall well-being" she says.







### COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TEAMS IS KEY

Regular communication ensures that any changes in health status or dietary requirements are taken into account when meal planning. For example, kitchen

teams at Aria Care actively participate in resident and relative meetings, where they gather feedback on meal preferences and provide tastings. James Clear explains: "This helps ensure meals are enjoyable and tailored to individual preferences and needs."

They also have regular communication with the clinical teams, meeting frequently to review residents' health conditions and dietary requirements."

Such communication ensures that staff are fully informed about the residents they care for, and that food choices are aligned with health goals, nutritional requirements, and personal preferences. To further enhance the quality of care, some homes appoint staff members as

"Nutrition Champions" to act as the bridge of communication between the kitchen, clinical teams, and dietitians.

### ADDRESSING THE RISK OF MALNUTRITION

One of the most significant concerns in care environments is malnutrition. According to Alison Smith, malnutrition is a common risk as many residents may have difficulty maintaining an adequate calorie intake due to age-related health issues. The biggest risk for care home residents is malnutrition, which is monitored using the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST), but the approach has changed. Traditionally, boosting the caloric content

of meals involved adding butter and cream, but Alison highlights a shift towards more nutrient-dense ingredients. "Focus on foods containing multiple nutrients – anything based on milk especially skimmed milk powder. This is important as the ingredient that's taken away to make it is water which has no nutrients. All the nutrition is left behind so it's a concentration of multiple nutrients," she says. "Also, consider yogurt, particularly Greek, cheese, eggs, nuts, seeds, nut and seed butters. Choose ingredients that complement the flavour of dishes. Think about the quantity of ingredients per portion for the people at

**"Communication ensures that staff are fully informed about the residents they care for, and that food choices are aligned with health goals, nutritional requirements, and personal preferences."**

risk of malnutrition. This is not a one size that fits all approach as there will be many people not at risk of malnutrition, so they won't need extra ingredients."

For care homes that lack direct access to a dietitian, the Care Home Digest is an invaluable resource. Published by the British Dietetic Association (BDA) in collaboration with the National Association of Care Catering (NACC), this free guide provides essential information on food services and menu planning for care homes. For more details, or to download a copy, scan here.



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NESCAFÉ





# EXPRESS EATS

# ARTISAN TREATS

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## CREATING THE PERFECT THIRD SPACE FOR CUSTOMERS

Cafés have evolved far beyond their origins as simple pit-stops for a morning caffeine boost. Today's customers see coffee shops as vital "third spaces" where socialising, wellness and remote working intersect. Diners prize reliable Wi-Fi, inviting décor and a menu that keeps quality-conscious regulars, busy mums and budget-minded diners happy, so here are our suggestions to inspire as we head towards the end of another busy year.





## TIME-SAVING & REVENUE GENERATING TIPS

### BATCH-BAKE AND FREEZE

Bake muffin and brownie batters in advance, then freeze individual portions.

### PRE-PORTION SAUCES AND DRESSINGS

Whisk up dressings like tahini-lemon or balsamic vinaigrette in bulk, storing them in labelled squeeze bottles

### USE HIGH-QUALITY BASE PRODUCTS

Partner with suppliers of prebaked pastry shells or ready-made fruit compotes.

### BUILD MISE-EN-PLACE TRAYS

Keep pre-chopped fruit, blanched vegetables and portioned proteins at eye level and grouped together. For instance, diced avocado, roasted chickpeas and micro-greens for power bowls in under one minute.

### OFFER SEMI-PREPARED RETAIL ITEMS

Make your own granola jars or overnight-oats pots for sale. These not only generate revenue during slower periods but also showcase your café's own recipes.

### SWITCH UP THE ORDINARY

Swap standard brownies for salted caramel blondies or trade sausage rolls for flaky parcels filled with mushroom duxelles and chestnuts. By refreshing classics with a gourmet twist, you give diners a reason to rave about their visit on social media.

## FROM COST-CONSCIOUS DINERS TO INCREASING YOUR ASP

Balancing the needs of younger, deal-focused diners and older, quality-driven customers requires flexibility. Think about presenting your core menu in two formats: a value "express" menu with smaller portions and lower price points, alongside a premium range that showcases artisan elements such as homemade cheese scones, farmhouse loaf sandwiches, specials boards or Vietnamese-style iced coffee using single-origin beans. This dual-track approach ensures no one feels priced out, while maximising your margin on those willing to pay for a host of indulgent extras.

To increase your average spend per diner, consider a "cake flight" of three small bakes, served on a communal board to tempt groups into sharing. This could also be a great way to showcase a new recipe or flavour amongst perennial favourites.

For a savoury option, look to the Mediterranean for mezze-style brunch boards featuring whipped feta dip, olive oil-drizzled flatbreads, marinated aubergine and spiced chickpea fritters to satisfy groups looking for something snackable that also offers variety. "We offer brunch plates designed to feel generous and special, often featuring dressed cakes or pastries, pickles, and whipped butters. Customers love variety, but also value quality and personality — those little finishing touches really count," says Jamie, founder of The Bakery TW.

Building unique meal-deals such as Create-Your-Own Snack Boxes offers customers a variety of handheld options at a mid-price point, encouraging those on a budget to treat themselves occasionally, while delivering value to those seeking a premium experience. Invite customers to choose four items from a selection (such as a smaller-portion sized sausage roll, spinach & feta puff, mini quiche and a selection of sweet treats) for a set price. By guiding

customers toward combination deals at a slight discount, you will amplify the spend per head without eroding profit margins. "build-your-own coffee pairings, or weekday coffee and toastie also combos work well," suggests Mimi Nguyen, founder, Cafely. "People love variety without commitment, especially with sweets."

## FOOD TRENDS TO TRIAL

Plant-centric menus continue to flourish, dishes such as glazed miso aubergine bowls and jackfruit "pulled pork" sandwiches are the perfect marriage of comfort and health food. Fermented foods—kimchi-topped smashed avocado on sourdough or probiotic-rich kombucha blends—also tap into the wellness wave, promising gut health and Instagram appeal. For a good grab-and-go breakfast option, try chia seed pudding layered with turmeric-spiced yoghurt, coconut crumble and fresh berries, commanding a premium without demanding complex preparation.

You can also introduce new flavours with innovative infusions. Matcha tiramisu takes the Italian food trend on a journey to the far east and earl grey panna cotta, or black sesame financiers weave familiar comforts with exotic profiles. On the savoury side, global dips such as harissa aioli or cashew tzatziki enrich loaded toasts and open-faced sandwiches. "Consumer trends reveal an increased desire for world flavours, especially spice and heat," says Bill Mathieson, Managing Director, Clawson Farms. "It's a prolific flavour profile that's popping up in everything from sweet to savoury dishes and combined with the superior flavour of Clawson Farms' cheese, it takes umami to another level! The morish Caribbean Blazer consists of mild Cheddar with Scotch Bonnet chilli relish and red peppers running throughout, adding a fiery twist to chicken wraps, quesadillas, veggie melts, and more."

Rotating monthly specials with pumpkin-spiced empanadas in autumn/winter and hibiscus-glazed doughnuts in spring give customers a reason to return. These limited-edition offerings, when teased via social channels and in-store chalkboards, tap into trends, create urgency and sparks conversation. "I see three big trends for cafés currently. Health-conscious tweaks (low-sugar syrups, milk alternatives), cultural crossover drinks (ube lattes, Vietnamese egg coffee), and functional add-ins like collagen, mushrooms, or adaptogens are really coming through in a big way. But the trick is offering these without overwhelming the customer, so just a few thoughtful, well-executed options that feel modern, added seasonally and are indulgent will give you the right balance," says Mimi.

## STORE-CUPBOARD MUST-HAVES

At the heart of any efficient café lies a well-curated store cupboard. Stock ingredients



that pull double (or triple) duty such as tins of chickpeas can morph into hummus for sandwiches, falafel balls or a warming chickpea curry. Long-life grains such as pearl barley transform into porridge, risotto or a summer salad, and frozen leaf spinach delivers vibrant colour to smoothies, quiches or toasted flatbreads. “We build menus

around multi-use components — things like citrus curd, pickles, flavoured syrups, and compound butters. These can appear across toast toppings, plated desserts, and savoury dishes, helping us keep ingredients moving” says Jamie.

Investing in a basic array of herbs and spices such as smoked paprika, cumin and dried chilli flakes, as well as a dependable base of onions, garlic and lemons means you can riff on everything from shakshuka at breakfast to seasonal tagines. Such staples not only minimise waste but also encourage creative specials that keep menus fresh without inflating costs. “Focus on versatile and long-shelf-life ingredients like condensed

milk especially if you offer Vietnamese-style drinks, shelf-stable plant milks, cocoa powder, chia seeds, oats, and canned fruits for easy compotes. These stretch across drinks, breakfast items and baked goods. Also, bulk teas, spices and syrups that can be used in both beverages and desserts reduce waste and improve margins,”

recommends Mimi.

Finally, don’t forget to make sure the ambience of your café reflects the hard work you put into your menus. Curate seating and lighting that accommodates both solo workers (with power sockets and bar-height benches) and

social clusters featuring communal tables with plush armchairs to entice guests to sit and linger. Fill shelves with community noticeboards, local art and board games and make sure there is space for parents to navigate to seating with pushchairs to reinforce your café’s role as a welcoming gathering point for all.

*“Customers love personality — those finishing touches count”*



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# BIG NUTRITION, SMALL BUDGET

## How nurseries are rising to the challenge of nutrition on a budget

Across the industry, caterers are facing significant challenges with rising food costs, but nurseries are hit with a triple threat; rising prices, budget cuts and the need to encourage young children to eat nutritious food. Thankfully, the determination and passion of chefs in the sector is helping to overcome the increasing number of obstacles. We met with a few such individuals who shared their strategies for ensuring their nurseries beat the budget blues.

Sean Cowden, Health and Food Programme Manager at London Early Years Foundation (LEYF), which has 40 nurseries in London, says, "When you plan a recipe, enter the items into a supermarket online basket and see how much it will roughly cost. Then, if a little expensive, you can adjust. Add plant-based protein meals throughout your menu. A chickpea and vegetable curry is a relatively cheap, but a highly nutritious option."

Nurturing relationships with suppliers is key. Peter Ttofis, catering manager from Tops Day Nurseries in Southbourne, Dorset, suggests keeping in regular contact to see what's available. "The excitement in a supplier's voice when they tell you they've unpacked a bumper crop of candy beetroot is infectious and you can design the day's specials or menus around it. Plan ahead to champion whatever is freshest and best priced. It keeps ingredients lean, children curious and budgets on track. So-called second-class cuts are first-class when treated properly. Beef shin, pork shoulder or chicken thighs might need longer, slower cooking but the flavour payoff is enormous. Don't shy away from meat free days either."

It is important to check prices and pack sizes to ensure the most cost-effective product is chosen. Gina Gorvett, nutritionist from Early Years Alliance (EY Alliance) says, "Canned and frozen vegetables can be as nutritious as fresh food and are often a cheap and simple way to add extra fruit and vegetables

to dishes. There is the added benefit of reducing waste as you can decant what you need each time and store what is left in the fridge or freezer. Use own brands or value ranges, compare the ingredients and nutritional information and if there is little difference, then a saving could be made. Don't rely on ready made products. For example, if you make a sauce from scratch, you can add extra vegetables, lentils, beans or pulses and eliminate any added sugar and salt that a ready-made product may include."

Bulk buying and batch freezing is another option, provided there is space in the freezer. "A simple passata is one of my favourites to batch cook and freeze," says Sean Cowden. "It's reasonably cheap to make and can be portioned into freezer bags, which stack neatly in your freezer. This can be used for ingredients such as sauces, homemade pizzas and soups."



**"Plan ahead to champion whatever is freshest and best priced. It keeps children curious and budgets on track."**

## RESOURCE CENTRE

A new document recently released from the Department of Education titled 'Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance', offers invaluable tips and menu ideas, as well as guidance for portion sizes.

**Scan here to download.**

In addition, the Early Years Alliance (EY Alliance) offers a menu review and menu accreditation award scheme, more details can be found at [www.eyalliance.org.uk](http://www.eyalliance.org.uk)



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# Making ends meet

## SOUR POWER

*Reuben sandwich  
with sauerkraut*

### THE KRAUT CRAZE

There has been a huge increase in interest in how food can impact on our health in recent years. Fermented cabbage may not have exactly been high on the list of trendy food items a few years ago, but nowadays its gut health benefits have brought sauerkraut into the spotlight. It works as a great side dish with meats, but I love adding it to a cheese toastie, like this classic Reuben sandwich.

**Now is the time to start thinking about using up the summer crop of vegetables. This month, Paul Dickson explores pickling and fermenting to add bold flavour combinations to your menu.**



It's harvest time and if you have a kitchen garden, it can sometimes be a race against time to use or lose your produce before it spoils. There are so many ways to preserve fruit and veg that there's really no reason to throw anything away. Freezing works well for things like berries and blanched beans, and I love pickling and fermenting anything from cucumber to cabbage, making some ready-made delicious new ingredients to use for months to come.

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](http://www.countryrange.co.uk/recipes) or by scanning the QR Code.



### IN A PICKLE

I love having jars of homemade pickles in my cupboard, just waiting to add a vibrant punch to all sorts of dishes. A poke bowl can really hero your pickled veg and is a versatile menu item which can be customised by the diner – all you need to do is provide a selection of rice, proteins, veggies and sauces.



*Chicken  
Poke Bowl*

### Kimchi Kick

If you want to create a gut-healthy fermentation with a kick, look no further than this Korean staple. I love making kimchi as it's got such a great flavour profile which compliments and enhances so many dishes. Add to fried rice, noodles or broths, or add some fusion to your menu by using it on tacos, pizzas and burgers.



### THE PERFECT PAIRING

If you have cheese on your menu - whether it's on a lunchtime sandwich, ploughman's or decadent cheeseboard – you can't beat a homemade chutney to elevate it to the next level. Chutneys are a great way to use up leftover veg and fruit, keeping for up to four weeks once opened. Pair it with a good quality cheese, such as the Signature by Country Range Extra Mature Cheddar, for a match made in heaven.



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*Serving suggestion*

*Margherita pizza*

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## IQF\* Mozzarella Pearls

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8 x 1kg





*Crispy panchetta, spinach  
& shaved red onion pizza*

*Serving suggestion*



## IQF\* Julienne Mozzarella - Fior di latte

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*Serving suggestion*

*Tortelloni with grated Gran Levanto  
and sage butter sauce*



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# FUTURECHEF 2026

**The Springboard FutureChef programme has been cooking up a storm for 26 years, leaving an indelible mark on the culinary landscape. From its humble beginnings in 1999, the competition has evolved into a launchpad for the nation's budding chefs, reshaping perceptions, and filling our kitchens with talent. Springboard FutureChef has evolved and flourished, transforming into the remarkable program it is today, providing support to over 243,000 students with 24% pursuing hospitality careers.**

Recognising a disconnect between young minds and culinary careers, Springboard is bridging the gap between schools and hospitality businesses. By 2010, the FutureChef programme blossomed, reaching 6,000 students annually. Fast forward to 2025, and an astounding 14,000+ students are now part of this culinary journey each year.

The program's flexibility has been its superpower. From introducing FutureChef Jnrs, to developing resources for students with additional support needs, the initiative has continuously evolved to reach increasing numbers of young people.

The real magic lies in individual journeys. Take Jessica Mitchell, for example, who went from FutureChef competitor to cooking for Scotland's First Minister. Tom Hamblet, FutureChef winner turned Master Chef the Professionals Winner or Graeme Cheevers, a regional finalist who now owns a Michelin-starred restaurant. These aren't just success stories; they're testaments to the program's ability to spot and nurture raw talent.

FutureChef isn't about creating celebrity chefs. It's about providing opportunities, building confidence, and showing young people that a career in hospitality can be creative, challenging, and incredibly rewarding.

The program offers a comprehensive approach with competitions, workshops, career guidance, and real-world connections. It's a holistic

pathway that transforms classroom curiosity into professional passion.

As FutureChef continues to evolve, following its 25th anniversary, the mission remains unchanged. For aspiring chefs, hospitality professionals, and educators, FutureChef represents more than a competition. It's a movement, a community, and a promise of exciting culinary futures waiting to be created.

Join the movement. Inspire. Educate. Connect. Be part of something extraordinary. FutureChef awaits!



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### FOR SCHOOLS:

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# Rising Star

# CARYS WILLIAMS

## SPRINGBOARD FUTURECHEF WINNER

To celebrate Country Range sponsoring this year's Springboard FutureChef competition, this month we decided to catch up with young starlet Carys Williams from Pontarddulais Comprehensive School in Swansea, who wowed judges and top chefs alike to clinch this year's trophy.

### What are your first memories of food?

I think it was probably baking at home for the family. Even at the age of three, I was always trying to help out in the kitchen, and it was no surprise that the cakes and treats first caught my interest. I had free access so would always be testing and trying new things.

### Tell us about your Future Chef triumph?

It's been an amazing journey. I first heard about it at school, and it was initially very much a local thing. To then end up competing nationally and winning felt very surreal.

I competed the year before and really had no idea of what to expect. I got to the final, but it was a completely new experience for me, and I wasn't happy with how everything went. At the time, I didn't want to do it again but when the opportunity to compete again came about, I wanted to prove to myself I could do better. I'm glad I did because just the experience gained from the year before made a huge difference. A few things still went wrong in the final, but I was able to stay calm, trust my skills and adapt.

### What did you gain from the experience?

I have gained so much confidence. I have proven to myself I can do hard things and be challenged under pressure. I have improved my cookery skills and knowledge. I have been lucky enough to experience so many new things for the first time and I have made loads of friends along the way. It's also helped me determine that a career in the kitchen is what I want.

### How else has the competition helped you?

After competing and winning the Welsh Nationals in the first year, I was given James

Sommerin as a mentor. Not only has he been amazing in supporting me throughout the competition but I was given work experience and following that, regular work at his restaurant on a Saturday.

*A few things still went wrong in the final, but I was able to stay calm, trust my skills and adapt. To then end up winning felt very surreal.*

### How did you create your menu?

First of all, it was important to study the brief and really give thought to the ingredient list we could use. I then worked closely with James to test and devise the menu. In all, I probably spent over 60 hours testing and

tweaking until it was perfect. My dishes were pan-fried mackerel with spiced crown prince squash compote, purple sprouting broccoli, potato galette and a spiced fennel seed velouté. For dessert, I made rhubarb crumble soufflé with vanilla and pink peppercorn anglaise.

### What are your next goals?

I have my GCSEs this summer and then I'm hoping to do an NVQ in professional cookery at college in September. I want to ensure I keep my passion for cooking but at the same time, I want to enjoy having fun and doing what makes me happy.

For more information or to order Carys' cupcakes, visit Instagram Caryscakesnbakes

### Left Clockwise

Carys Williams  
Carys' Double Chocolate Cupcakes  
Rhubarb crumble soufflé with vanilla and pink peppercorn anglaise



Photo credits go to Jane Henderson Photography

# New Season New Inspiration



As the new school year begins and the last day of summer approaches, we have a glut of new products, tips, recipes and ideas to ensure you're prepared as the seasonal shift begins. To celebrate the start of the new school term and as proud sponsor of the Springboard FutureChef Competition in schools, our recipes this month have all been developed with school menus in mind.



Virtuously versatile, decidedly delicious and a scintillating store cupboard superstar, our new Country Range Multi-Use Tomato Sauce is vegan-friendly, gluten-free, meets the salt guidelines and is a must-stock for schools and beyond this autumn. A taste-forward, ready-to-use, chunky tomato sauce that can work as a base in a myriad of dishes across the menu, the new sauce is made with the finest, juicy red, sun ripened tomatoes from Spain.

Perfect for all manner of pasta dishes, pizza bases, casseroles and curries, use this sauce as a base to save precious time when feeding a crowd. Here are some fresh ideas that would be just as cool on a school menu as a restaurant specials board.

## COUNTRY RANGE MULTI-USE TOMATO SAUCE

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Balls



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↖ Chicken  
Parmesan Bites





## Thai Sweet Chilli Halloumi Burger



### COUNTRY RANGE THAI SWEET CHILLI SAUCE

2.27 LITRES

As Asian flavours, ingredients, recipes and street food continue to grow in popularity, we're delighted to bolster our Country Range sauce selection with the launch of a new authentic Thai Sweet Chilli Sauce. A true Thai taste sensation, this flavour-packed sauce is a dazzling dipper, marinade marvel or can be used to add subtle sweet, spice and, of course, stickiness to an array of recipes.

Create delicious sticky Thai sweet chilli prawns, add to wraps and burgers or give your sharing platters a new zingy dip.

NEW



Tiramisu

One of the hottest desserts across hospitality and social media this past year, the titanic and timeless Tiramisu has successfully sailed back into the frenzied waters of pop culture and popularity.

Believed to hail from the Treviso region of Italy, this classic dessert literally means 'pick-me-up'. Take advantage of the trend and push your catering performance to new levels this summer with our new irresistible Country Range Tiramisu. Crafted with rich coffee notes, a smooth Marsala kick, and airy mousse in every bite.

### COUNTRY RANGE TIRAMISU

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NEW

## BEHIND THE BRAND



**Name:** Graham Caldwell  
**Role:** Marketing Manager  
**Joined:** December 2022

**Day-to-Day Responsibilities:** My role focuses on digital strategy but covers a broad range of tasks. I lead our digital presence, manage PR, and help deliver campaigns – like the Country Range Christmas range, which feels like a year-round project. I also produce sector guides, trend reports and support initiatives like our Springboard FutureChef sponsorship.

**Best Part of the Job:** The variety. One day I'm on a photoshoot, the next I'm working with suppliers or attending events with our members. Hearing feedback from people using our products is invaluable and helps shape everything we do. The central office team aren't bad either, it's a great environment to work in.

### How I Help Keep the Country Range Portfolio Ahead:

It's a team effort. I contribute by tracking data and trends, which helps shape everything from recipe ideas to planning the range.

**Favourite Country Range Product:** Tough choice, but the Oat, Lemon, and Raisin Cookie Pucks are brilliant and make a surprisingly good cheesecake base.

**Favourite Dish:** Tapas – croquetas, octopus, chorizo, olives etc. Add a cold beer and I couldn't be happier.

**Favourite Chef:** I enjoy watching Gordon Ramsay. I even tried his Beef Wellington after watching Hell's Kitchen – it turned out well, though I'm sure he'd find faults!

**Favourite Drink:** A good whiskey – neat or with ginger ale and lime for something lighter.

**Last Restaurant I Ate At:** Haighton Manor in Haighton.

**Favourite Restaurant:** El Gato Negro Tapas – it's a go-to for me and my wife. We both love a relaxed tapas night with a couple of drinks.

**Favourite Cuisine:** Italian. You can't beat fresh pasta, it's simple yet so satisfying.

**Signature Dish:** My slow-cooked chuck steak chilli is my go to. Great in a wrap or loaded nachos.

**Hobbies Outside of Work:** I'm a passionate Blackburn Rovers fan – which can sometimes be more stressful than work! Living in the Ribble Valley means countryside walks and great pubs are close by. With my first child on the way, I'm soaking up the downtime while I can.

**2025's Most Exciting Food Trend:** I'm excited by Simple Gourmet – focused on quality, everyday ingredients like cheese, potatoes and value cuts of meat. It's indulgent and a great opportunity for chefs to get creative!





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# CARBON COMEBACK

## Are we witnessing a carbon-cutting comeback for catering?

**Over the past five years the UK's hospitality catering sector has undergone a remarkable transformation in how it manages recycling and food waste.**

In 2020 the industry generated around 920,000<sup>[1]</sup> tonnes of food waste annually, much of which still went to landfill or energy recovery facilities rather than being recycled or repurposed. The financial cost was equally stark: food wasted in restaurants, cafés and contract catering schemes amounted to an estimated £3.2<sup>[2]</sup> billion each year – roughly £10,000 per outlet. Against this backdrop, a groundswell of operators, from high-street chains to care-home caterers, have introduced practices that only a few years ago would have been considered experimental.

Central to this shift has been the roll-out of digital food-waste measurement systems. Over the last 2 years, we have seen an increase of weighing scales and “waste-ometers” in back-of-house operations to record waste by source – pre-production, plate waste or spoilage – in real time. This data-driven approach enabled one contract caterer to redistribute 79.5 tonnes of surplus food in 2023 to charities like FareShare and Olio, equivalent to some 185,500 meals. Through recipe redesign and targeted training, these operators have continued to cut kitchen waste and inspire others to adopt similar processes.

Despite these advances, a 2024 survey by UKHospitality found that two-thirds of outlets still failed to segregate food waste on site for recycling or anaerobic digestion. To address this, as of 31st March 2025, all businesses, schools and hospitals with ten or more full-time employees must separate dry mixed recyclables and food waste from general refuse. This regulatory milestone is expected to raise participation rates above 80 percent by year's end, and by 31st March 2027, all businesses, schools and hospitals with fewer than 10 employees will also be included in the legislation.

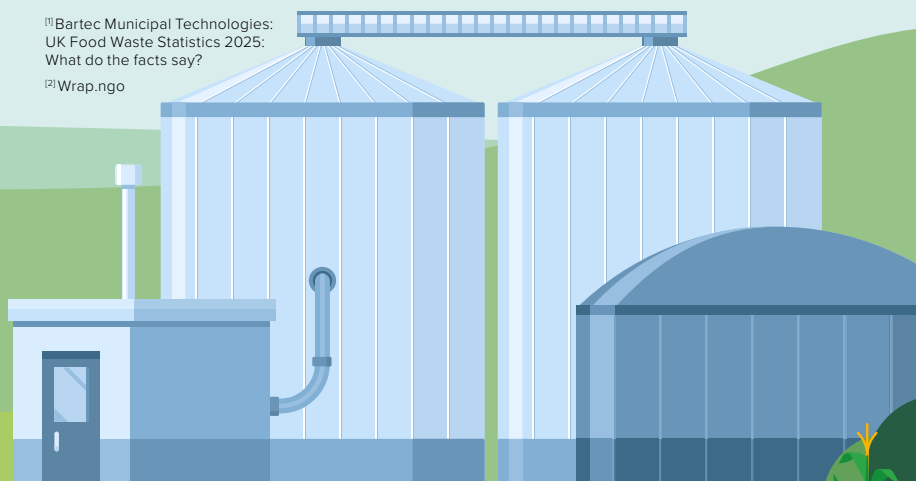
Many smaller operators and community-led ventures are not waiting until 2027 and are already leading by example. The Long Table in Gloucestershire, a not-for-profit “pay as you can” restaurant, rescued 3.4 tonnes of perfectly

good food from waste streams in the past year, using it to serve 20,000 people while paying a living wage to staff. In the education sector, Chartwells has partnered with SUEZ recycling and recovery UK to deliver interactive workshops for schools in Cornwall. By introducing simple food-waste bins and quizzes, pupils and staff diverted nine kilograms of waste at a single event and now track waste across multiple sites. Meanwhile, the University of Nottingham increased its separate food-waste collection from 63 tonnes in 2021/22 to 96 tonnes in 2022/23, sending material for anaerobic digestion rather than landfill.

Looking ahead to the next five years, the hospitality sector is poised to embrace circular-economy principles more fully. Deposit Return Schemes for drinks containers, due to launch nationwide by 2027, will complement on-site recycling and drive down single-use packaging. By combining regulatory requirements with real-time data, community engagement and innovative technologies, the hospitality catering sector looks set to make recycling an integral part of mainstream operations – and to redefine what “zero waste” means in practice.

<sup>[1]</sup> Bartec Municipal Technologies:  
UK Food Waste Statistics 2025:  
What do the facts say?

<sup>[2]</sup> Wrap.ngo



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# Playful Plates

**C**reating nutritious meals for children that are both tasty and appealing is a challenge many caterers face. This month our panel of experts are full of advice and guidance to help you develop healthy options for your menus. From using fresh, seasonal ingredients to presenting meals in fun, engaging ways, we share practical examples and strategies to inspire your menu planning and excite young diners.

# “ We turn nutritious meals into something genuinely want to eat



**KAREN GREEN**

*Marketing Manager, Aimia  
Foods for Professionals*

Chocolate mousse is a sweet dessert for hungry children.

Its decadent appeal makes it popular amongst the fussiest of eaters. For a simple way to encourage children to eat more fruit and get one of their five a day, we recommend garnishing with fresh berries before serving. It is easy to whip up as caterers only need to add water and mix for a light and airy dessert.

Beyond a basic mousse, children also enjoy ice creams, cheesecakes or trifles, especially if these are impressively decorated with whipped cream, chocolate flakes and sprinkles. Moosebreak is a versatile ingredient for any recipe, providing choice on children's menus, especially as it is both vegetarian and gluten free.





# ing kids at.



**DEAN HARPER, CHEF**  
*Harper Fine Dining*

One of the easiest ways to get kids interested in healthier dishes is to make them fun and familiar. A personal

recommendation of mine would be to serve a “hidden veg” mac and cheese. The sauce is blended with carrots and butternut squash, so it’s packed with nutrients but still creamy and comforting. Kids love the colour, and parents love that it’s balanced. You can also build dishes around ingredients children already recognise, like using sweetcorn and mild spices in a chicken and rice bake. Keeping the menu short with three or four solid options helps avoid overwhelm while still giving a sense of choice.



**JULIANNE PONAN MBE, CEO**  
*Creative Nature*

With more children being diagnosed with food allergies (currently 1 in 12), it’s crucial

that to provide safe, inclusive options that don’t compromise on taste. Younger diners are increasingly interested in health-conscious, plant-based, and global flavours, but schools must ensure these trends align with allergy safety. Dish inspiration includes plant-based comfort food such as allergy-safe versions of mac & cheese, burgers, and pizza using dairy-free cheeses and gluten-free bases, fusion dishes like mild curries, sushi-style rolls, or poke-style bowls, and snackable, protein-packed foods like seed-based snack bars and gluten free oat-based energy bites.



**AGNELO LOUIS**  
*Catering Manager at St Albans School*

At St Albans school, we try to make simple changes to recipes that remove allergens

without compromising on flavour or taste. Using ingredients like vegan mayonnaise or plant-based milk, cream and butter in our dishes as standard, opens up more dishes to those pupils with allergies or intolerances who otherwise couldn’t have enjoyed them.

We find that our pupils have a much broader and diverse food knowledge at a younger age today. They are also very brand-savvy and familiar with high street food concepts. We find that Asian, Caribbean and Mexican cuisines are very popular with the pupils and as a trend, chicken is by far the most popular protein choice.

Breakfast baguettes are very popular at break time, but also our waffles and pretzels are firm favourites. We always make sure we have a range of healthy options available too such as overnight oats with fresh fruit compote.



**CHRIS WHITTER & CALUM SCOTT**  
*Olive Dining*

To make kids’ meals more

appealing, it’s all about combining familiar favourites with a vibrant, eye-catching twist. Our BBQ chicken gyros kebab – served in toasted pitta with tzatziki and crunchy rainbow slaw – is packed with flavour and colour, making it both exciting to look at and healthy in disguise. Chicken remains the most popular protein among kids and when paired with colourful veg and fun presentation, it encourages healthier eating without compromise.

We offer at least four options on our menus to give children real choice and bring high street inspiration into schools through playful concepts like Mezze Madness. By making dishes visually fun, fresh and full of colour, we turn nutritious meals into something kids genuinely want to eat.



**LOUISE WAGSTAFFE**  
*Senior Culinary Advisor, Premier Foods*

Helping children build a positive connection with food starts by giving them

an element of creative freedom and control. It can be hugely rewarding and impactful if done right. Our Build Your Own Pasta dish is a great example – it allows children to pair their favourite vegetables, proteins and toppings with pasta and our ready-to-use Homepride Everything Tomato Sauce, which is fortified with Vitamin D and approved by the Vegan Society. My favourite topping combination is broccoli and red pepper!

The ‘Build Your Own’ concept also works brilliantly with our wider range of versatile, global-inspired sauces including Sharwood’s Thai Sweet Chilli and Sharwood’s Japanese Katsu.

Tilda is doing more than just feeding hungry tummies, it’s inspiring school kitchens across the UK through its proud support of the Eat Them to Defeat Them campaign. To keep the momentum going, Tilda has created a free recipe guide packed with playful ideas and previous winners’ dishes to help catering teams plan for success. From Curried Veg Fried Rice to a hearty Giant Yorkshire Pudding with Roast Chicken and Rice, the guide proves that nutritious doesn’t have to mean boring—and that a little creativity can go a long way in getting children to try (and love) their veg. Get your guide at: [www.marketing.tilda.com/ettdt-submit-details](http://www.marketing.tilda.com/ettdt-submit-details)



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# A TRUE SLICE OF SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

**John Welsh, an accomplished Managing Director at Hickory's Smokehouse, boasts over twenty years in hospitality. His expertise spans business growth, guest relations, event planning, and F&B operations. Formerly in pivotal roles at Soho House and The Dorchester, John has a steadfast commitment to elevating guest experiences. We caught up with him to learn more about how Hickory's connects with guests and has become a destination that encourages diners to stay awhile.**



## HOW DO YOUR SMOKEHOUSE INTERIORS CONTRIBUTE TO ENCOURAGING GUESTS TO STAY LONGER?

At Hickory's we welcome guests of all ages; from 'no teeth to false teeth' so our smokehouses have been designed with the whole family in mind. From our iconic movie rooms, designed to keep our younger guests entertained whilst the grown-up's get a chance to kick-back, to our sports focused neighbourhood bar areas complete with multiple large screens, allowing guests to catch all the latest sporting action, our spaces are created with relaxation and fun in mind.

And it's not just about dining, our welcoming outside spaces, inspired by our road trips to the Southern States offer year-round drinking and dining zones, the perfect spot for a leisurely catch up with friends, whatever the weather.

## HOW DO HICKORY'S TURN A DINNER INTO AN EXPERIENCE?

From the first 'hello' to our "we look forward to welcoming you back", the whole Hickory's experience is designed to offer our guests a true slice of Southern hospitality. We've worked hard to ensure everything from our colourful 'newspaper' style menus to our kids-packs, smoker room tours, 'masterclass' experiences with our talented bar teams and extra touches like our movie rooms, play areas and Fro-Co (Frozen Custard) stations, make every visit a memorable experience for the whole family.

## CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF THIS IN PRACTICE?

Our first Super Bowl event in Chester over 14 years ago attracted a crowd of 8 guests, but our passion for sport has seen the event grow. Fast forward to 2023, and that crowd topped 800 football fanatics, the restaurant, bar & Sports Book and an additional marquee

were packed. It's the ultimate tailgate party – game day food, cold beers, multiple large screens, cheerleaders and an all-night license! Now, all of our smokehouses run annual events of varying sizes, with a loyal and growing band of football fans who recognize Hickory's as their natural home in the UK.

## WHAT MAKES YOUR SMOKEHOUSES A DESTINATION FOR A NIGHT OUT?

Our smokehouses are designed to go seamlessly from day to night with a bustling family-friendly atmosphere all day with the casual dining style perfect for any occasion, whether guests are joining us for a quick lunch with colleagues, a celebration with family or a big treat night with friends.



**NEW**



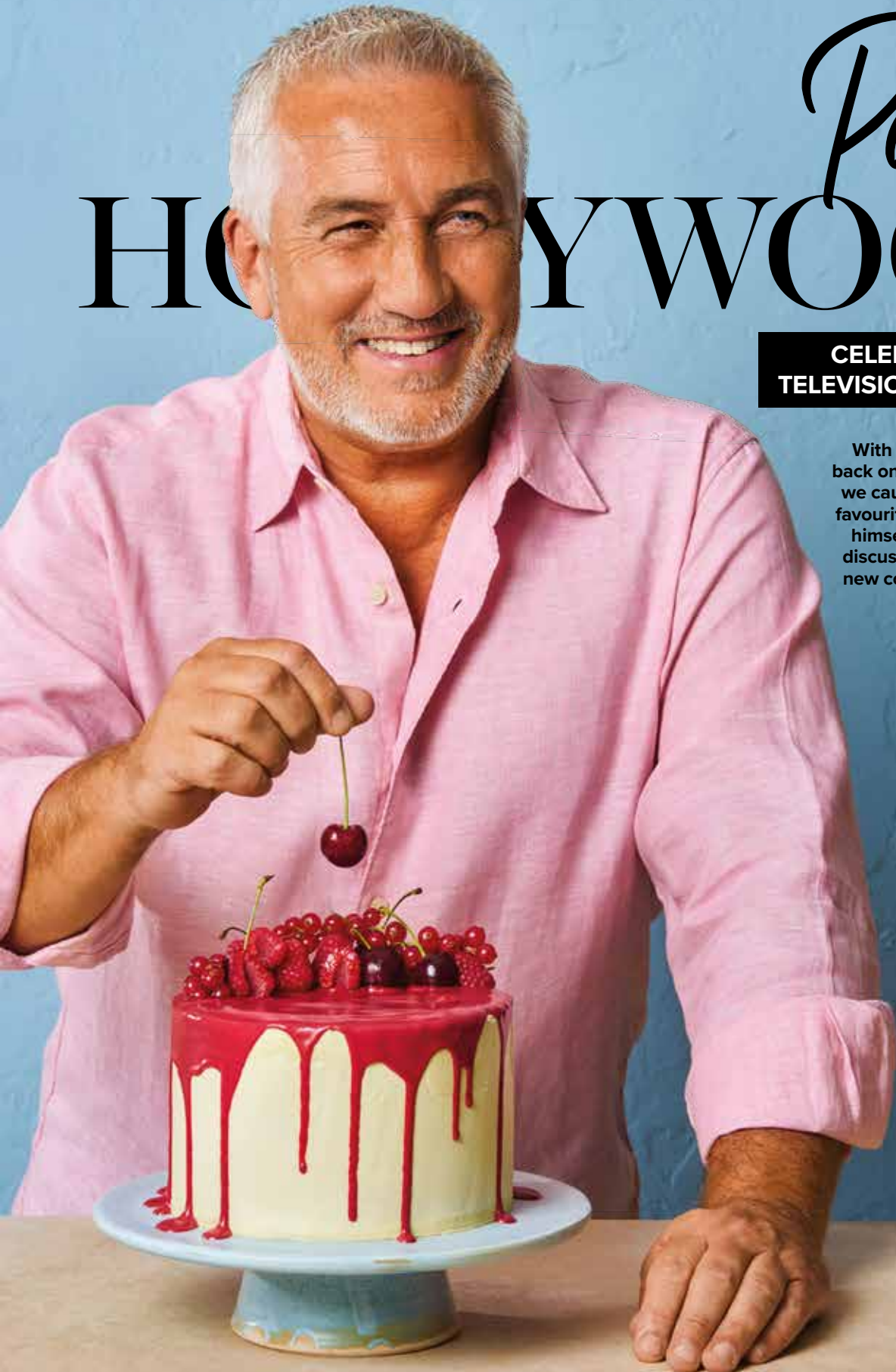
**JOIN OUR CLUB**



# Paul HOLLYWOOD

**CELEBRITY CHEF AND  
TELEVISION PERSONALITY**

With Great British Bake Off back on our screens this month, we caught up with everyone's favourite baker - old blues eyes himself Paul Hollywood - to discuss his way to the top, his new cookbook and everything else in between.



“I travel a lot filming  
and I’m always seeing  
new bakes, techniques  
and recipes that  
fascinate me”



**Can you remember the first recipe you baked?**

My dad used to bake soft rolls, and I remember he would have a towel over them in front of the gas fire in the sitting room. I remember they had that proper homemade baking taste and smell to them. That always stuck with me, but I didn't really help out or get involved with that. It was my mum's ginger biscuits which was probably the first thing I actually helped out with. She is famous for them and still makes me a fresh batch to this day every time I head up to see her. They were simply delicious – quite chewy and the ultimate dunkers. You could dunk them 8 or 9 times and they would still hold.

**If you weren't a baker, where do you think you would be now?**

I did actually sign up to the tank regiment in the army but pulled out at the last minute and ended up working for my dad's bakeries. The army was definitely an option as we had some family members signed up.

**What put you off?**

The money. This was in the 80s with Maggie squeezing us Northerners so you needed to get a trade and to get a job. The money just didn't seem that good in the tank regiment. I also flirted with teaching because after art school I actually taught a few classes in pottery but my main aim as a teenager was to earn.

**Are you still learning?**

I travel a lot filming and I'm always seeing new bakes, techniques and recipes that fascinate me. A few weeks ago I was in the Caribbean and for breakfast they would bring these Danish pastries – a bit like a pain aux raisin but they had lifted the sides and created a nest that was filled with crème patisserie. I said to them- how the hell did you do that? They actually used a mould, and I thought- that's really clever so yeah – I'm always learning.

**Do you still bake?**

Yep – I still bake. The advert showcases me using a pre-mix but I honestly don't mind a pre-mix but I generally still use raw ingredients. I bake twice a week. Sometimes it's cake or banana bread but it's mostly bread. You can't beat the smell and taste of freshly baked bread for breakfast. I'm still an egg and soldiers man for breakfast so it's about baking the best bread for soldiers. Whenever I go away, I'm always disappointed as the bread isn't exactly how I like it. I like it crispy, light, loaded with butter and perfectly cut for the ultimate dip.

**Any styles of loaves/breads that could tip sourdough off the throne?**

Pitta bread, wraps, quality corn tortillas. They have definitely become more popular and I love making these styles of breads as well. You can't beat a great baguette either – crispy, light and loads of flavour. They're





## Sausage Plait



I grew up with sausage rolls in my dad's bakery and they're still probably my all-time number one food! This elaborate plaited version is a great way to show off your pastry skills.

**PREP & COOK TIME 80 MINS**

**SERVES 10**

### INGREDIENTS

#### Puff Pastry

- Plain flour, to dust

#### Filling

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed or grated
- 2 tsp fennel seeds
- ½ tsp dried chilli flakes

- 2 x 400g packs of good-quality sausages

- 450g jar roasted peppers

#### To finish

- 1 medium egg, beaten, to glaze
- A small handful of poppy seeds

### METHOD

1. For the filling, heat the olive oil in a small frying pan, add the onion and cook over a medium-low heat for 7–10 minutes until softened. Add the garlic, fennel seeds and chilli flakes and sauté for another minute. Transfer to a medium bowl and leave to cool.

2. Peel away the skins from the sausages and then add to the cooled onion and mix well.

3. Heat your oven to 220°C/200°C Fan/Gas 7. Line a large baking tray with baking paper.

4. Drain the peppers, cut them lengthways to open them up and pat dry on kitchen paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the puff pastry to a 35 x 40cm rectangle. Arrange half of the roasted peppers down the centre of the pastry. Now form the sausage mix into a log that will cover the centre third of the pastry. Lay the sausage log on top of the peppers and then arrange the remaining peppers on top.

6. Using a small knife, make diagonal cuts in the pastry down either side of the sausage filling, spacing them 1.5–2cm apart. Fold the strips in over the filling alternately to create a plait and seal the ends.

7. Brush the pastry with beaten egg and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Bake in the oven for 35–45 minutes until crisp and piping hot. Leave to stand for 10 minutes before slicing.

Extract taken from *Celebrate* by Paul Hollywood (Bloomsbury Publishing, £26, Hardback). Photography © Haalara Hamilton.

great for breakfast with just a bit of butter and jam. I would walk down and grab them for breakfast when I was in France, eat it and go and get another for lunch. Things go in fads, but I don't think sourdough is going anywhere soon. It will only get better.

#### What do you miss most about a professional kitchen or bakery?

I was often up early preparing everything for breakfast so my team was often quite solitary but there was always a great camaraderie with the staff and team. It was always a good laugh in the kitchen. I also miss being up at stupid hours when everything else was closed and walking to work and also the fantastic kit we had to use and play with. Being creative.

#### Tell us about the new book *Celebrate*

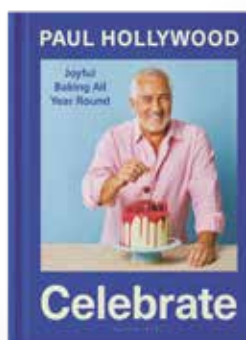
I was working on it for about a year, but I always have recipes and ideas bouncing around. I will be influenced by the bakers from the tent or bakeries I visited. I will ponder - would that work with that, or could I try that combination in a different bake? I always jot ideas down so by the

time I think it's time for a new book, I generally have about 20 ideas already bubbling, which I can refine and test. This book is unique in that it can be quite seasonal with your vegetables and fruits as you move through the year or bakes for key celebrations like Easter.

#### Who would you love to bake with or for?

Nick Mason from Pink Floyd. He's been threatening to come down and I know him quite well. Nick and I need to get our bake on. Robert Plant would be good as well.

**For your chance to win Paul Hollywood's latest book, turn to page 54.**







# SCAN TO ENTER

Submit your best dirty fries with  
Hellmann's mayonnaise to win a Russum's  
voucher worth up to £500



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# ROOM FOR GROWTH

At least half of people who stay in pubs, or are interested in doing so, say they offer a friendlier atmosphere (50%), more traditional and historic charm (53%) and a more relaxed environment (53%) than any other type of accommodation. These were some of the key findings from the 2025 Pub Accommodation Review commissioned by Stay in a Pub, a membership organisation supporting the sector. It lists over 1,600 pubs with rooms in the UK and has a community of potential guests looking for accommodation.

According to James Ratcliffe, co-owner of The Black Bull, Sedburgh, Cumbria within the Yorkshire Dales National Park, guest rooms are a worthwhile investment particularly for pubs in rural or tourist-friendly locations. The Black Bull has had 18 guest ensuite rooms since 2018. “Even if you don’t have the internal space there are options – nearby cottages can be converted into accommodation or luxury glamping pods could be added if you have land, subject to planning approval.”

Similarly, Cubitt House has offered guest rooms in pubs since the company began. “Offering accommodation gives a valuable regular income and means we have additional diners eating in the restaurants and drinking at the bars,” says Georgie Pearman, executive chairperson, Cubitt House. “If a pub has rooms, it’s worth refurbishing them, spending what you can on them and launching them onto your database. Consider offering them to local businesses at a discount and doing some meta-ads across social media such as Facebook. Even if it’s a lower rate, it’s still income.”

Sophie Braybrooke, chief executive of Stay in a Pub, says, “Accommodation is a driver of food and drink sales, as it’s estimated around 80% of overnight guests choose to eat in the pub during their stay and the average spend is £41 per person per night. It also expands a pub’s target market beyond the local, whilst still being the hub of the community.”

**“Offering accommodation gives a valuable regular income and means we have additional diners.”**

While providing accommodation can be profitable, it also brings operational challenges such as finding more staff and adapting to the demands of 24-hour hospitality. James Ratcliffe says, “Managing accommodation adds complexity such as booking systems, guest communication, check-in and check-out logistics. Guest expectations are generally high when it comes to comfort and service, meaning pubs must consistently deliver high standards to maintain their reputation and secure repeat business.”

If you’re considering opening guest rooms in your pub, conduct some research before you commit to any renovations. Make sure you have space to accommodate accessibility needs and check planning requirements before you start. When designing your rooms, think about your target market, the price you want to charge and introduce a style that will meet their expectations.

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



## TO GET YOU STARTED, STAY IN A PUB HAVE THE FOLLOWING 3 TIPS:

- Access guidance on laws and regulations via the Pink Boot, available to download from VisitBritain
- Apply for “Visitor Ready,” a badge of trust for hospitality and tourism which demonstrates you comply with current industry standards and legislation. <https://www.visitorready.com/>
- Implement a direct booking system and use niche platforms like Stay in a Pub or DMOs (local or regional tourist boards). To test the market, promote via Online Travel Agents (OTAs) who charge a commission



The  
**Balanced  
Choice**

# Grab a slice of the action

Our Balanced Choice pizza is packed full of all the good stuff needed to make it a better-for-you option that works just as well for adults as it does kids!

Not only is it school food guideline compliant for students, but it also makes for a fantastic healthier takeaway option or lighter bite menu item.

- 1 of 5 a day! 1/8 portion for a child under the age of 11. 1/4 for adults.
- Supports school food guidelines
- Low sugar, reduced saturated fat, is a source of fibre and protein
- Achieves up to 3 hours hold in a leading hot holding equipment

Code	Perfettissima	Size
Piz024	Balanced Choice Pizza	4 x 2



*Occasion* **MAKERS**  
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Scan here  
to view the  
full range







# Take a Fork On The Wild Side

## TRANSFORM YOUR MENU



**An outdoor enthusiast, Alex McAllister-Lunt moved into the world of cooking after finishing school and embarked on a successful career working as a chef in pubs, restaurants and spiritual retreat centres. Realising the therapeutic and culinary benefits of foraging while working in London, Alex has enjoyed a wild food journey of enlightenment over the past 15 years and now teaches wild cooking, ancestral bushcraft skills, foraging and fermentation.**

He also designs and tends picturesque, edible food gardens for both private and hospitality clients, has an events catering company and makes unique allergen

free miso for Umami-chef. co.uk. The company's Wild Garlic Miso is a testament to just how amazing wild, fermented products can be! We caught up with Alex to find out what free treats were on our doorstep and get his 'pick-tips' for the next few months.



### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF FORAGING FOR CHEFS?

For thousands of years, we were eating wild foods. It was our bread and butter and something I think we all need to re-educate ourselves on. Foraging offers numerous benefits to chefs and kitchens. It's sustainable, it breeds creativity in the kitchen, it connects the dishes, menu and business to the local area, and it can provide free resources that can help reduce costs and provide a unique selling point to your offering. Not only



that, but foraged and wild foods are immensely versatile, higher in nutrients, contain more vitamins and minerals, help improve your gut micro biome and can be truly delicious when prepared well.

#### ARE THERE ANY RULES WHEN IT COMES TO FORAGING?

It's important not just to go traipsing about and ripping up anything you find. We want to protect the ecosystems but there are also some things that can make you pretty ill so you have to be careful. When it comes to basic rules, you're not allowed to uproot the whole plant in the UK, but you can forage for the four F's – fruits, flowers, foliage and fungi. Make sure you pick sustainably so you should only take one tenth of what you

Tree Woods, down the canal routes or to Hampstead Heath and Wimbledon Common. There are also nettles, dandelions, daisies, cow parsley, rosehips, acorns and fruit trees lining many parks with the fruit often going to waste. The humble bramble grows absolutely everywhere, you can eat the early shoots, pickle the unopened flower buds as capers, make a Cheong from the petals, dehydrate the berries for a powder, even de-thorn the suckers and weave a basket from them or smooth out and dry the thicker stems to make straws or hand drill spindles for friction fires. Even in built up developments, you can often find Russian olives from the silver berry tree, which have these tart little berries between red currants and raspberries that are everywhere.

#### WHAT'S THE WILD BIOME PROJECT?

It's a challenge and project to understand what happens to our gut microbiome when we eat a solely foraged and wild food diet. A hundred of us took up the challenge to live off foraged and wild food for 3 months this year. I did it two years ago and it was a struggle to begin with and took a few weeks to get used to but this time my body relished the challenge. You can find out more here - <https://monicawilde.com/the-wildbiome-project/>

#### IS FORAGING JUST FOR CHEFS LIVING CLOSE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE?

No, whether they live near the coast, woodland, hills, fens, towns or big cities, there is an abundance of ingredients within easy reach of all of us. When I lived in London, I would go to Cherry



#### WHERE CAN CHEFS FIND MORE RECIPE INSPIRATION?



Head to the Eat Wild app, which enables users to access 500+ wild ingredients, delicious recipes and recipe plans, track their eating daily, and analyse the nutritional content, create and store their own recipes. It also provides expert foraging know-how on foraging basics, plant & fungi identification, safety plus cooking and preservation methods. If readers use the code STIRITUP25, they will receive a discount of £4.99 per month meaning the cost is just £5. The offer can only be used once per person and is valid to use until 30th November 2025. For more details visit - <https://bit.ly/eatwildappdesktop>

For more information on Alex, his wild food, teaching and foraging, visit [www.forceofnaturechef.co.uk](http://www.forceofnaturechef.co.uk)

[https://www.instagram.com/force\\_of\\_nature\\_chef?igsh=MTZzZmliZDk1OXhobA%3D%3D&utm\\_source=qr](https://www.instagram.com/force_of_nature_chef?igsh=MTZzZmliZDk1OXhobA%3D%3D&utm_source=qr)





# Ingredients to Forage Now

## NETTLES

One of the few native British plants to have high levels of magnesium, more vitamin C than oranges, more protein than soy, more iron than spinach and more calcium than milk. You can use them to make tea but if you simmer slowly, the protein curd will float to the top. Scoop them off and press them and you have nettle tofu. The leftover water can be used as a stock and the plant matter can be blitzed and dehydrated and made to make nori sheets. Don't eat them when they're flowering as they can be harmful to the liver and kidneys but afterwards the seeds are also great for garnishes, sprinkles, truffles or energy balls.

## GROUND IVY

Often known as Ale Hoof as it was utilised in beer making prior to hops as a bittering agent and preservative or Creeping Charlie, it is in the mint family but has a myriad of flavours from mint, sage, rosemary and even oregano at different times of the year. Brilliant in a mojito but super with soups, stews and stuffings.

## ROSEHIPS

Boil them in a little bit of apple cider vinegar, salt and alexander seed pepper. Strain that through a sieve (the seeds have hairs in them that need to be removed). The puree at the end can be used like a tomato passata and makes a great wild Bloody Mary alongside horseradish root, birch vodka and pickled cow parsley stem instead of celery.

## SLOES

Turn them into olives like the plums or they also make a nice base for a trifle. Steep in whisky for a few months or sous vide at 70c for a few hours to speed up the process. Pass through a sieve and use that as a puree between a white chocolate sponge and top that with custard. Whatever booze you make from the sloes, turn that into a jelly for the trifle. If it's a hot summer, the sloes can be quite big so the tartness can work really well with fish. Juice them and poach fish in the liquor.

## UK SEAWEED

No UK seaweeds are poisonous, and we're surrounded by coasts so we should do more with it. Do check which are the cleanest beaches first though. For all seaweed – dry it in the sun and then smoke it over an oak fire. It contains mannitol, a natural sugar so it's salty, sweet and smoky at the same time. You can blitz it down as a seasoning or make an ash to coat a wild boar fillet, then serve with dressed spider crab, sea spaghetti, samphire and a nettle colcannon for the ultimate surf and turf.

# MCDougalls STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKE



A GREAT SUMMER CLASSIC, PERFECT AS A LARGE CHEESECAKE OR WHY NOT MAKE INDIVIDUAL PORTIONS.

## INGREDIENTS

### FOR THE BASE:

200g DIGESTIVE BISCUITS  
100g MELTED BUTTER

### FOR THE FILLING:

500g FULL-FAT CREAM CHEESE  
100g ICING SUGAR  
300ml DOUBLE CREAM  
1 tsp VANILLA EXTRACT  
300g STRAWBERRIES, HALVED

### FOR THE JELLY TOPPING:

40g MCDougalls NO ADDED SUGAR JELLY  
300ml BOILING WATER  
100g FRESH STRAWBERRIES

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

CHILL TIME: 3 HOURS

SERVES: 10

## TIPS:

Use clear acetate or mould rings for clean cheesecake edges.  
Why not try using Bird's Cheesecake Mix for a delicious and easy alternative to making your own.

## METHOD

1. Crush the biscuits and mix with melted butter. Press into the base of a lined tray. Chill for 15 minutes.
2. Whisk cream cheese, icing sugar, vanilla and cream together until smooth.
3. Place the strawberry halves around the edge of the tin. Spoon over the filling and smooth the tops. Chill for 1 hour.
4. For the McDougalls NO ADDED SUGAR STRAWBERRY JELLY layer: arrange sliced strawberries in a separate tin the same size. Dissolve MCDougalls NO ADDED STRAWBERRY JELLY in boiling water, pour over the strawberries and leave to set. When firm place on top of the cheesecake.
5. Slice to serve.

# OUR JOURNEY TO SUSTAINABLY REFINED

In our 15 year partnership with Fairtrade, Tate & Lyle have partnered with thousands of small-scale sugarcane farmers to improve their lives and communities.



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[sustainablyrefined.com](https://sustainablyrefined.com)





# THE MARKETPLACE

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



## TOQUE D'OR 2025 CHAMPIONS SHARE LESSONS FROM ITALIAN ADVENTURE

The 2025 Nestlé Professional® Toque d'Or winners, Tom Brassington and Katie Blundell, returned from their prize trip to Italy with a heartfelt message to the industry: support and invest in young talent.

Their six-day journey—from Milan to Tuscany—included immersive experiences at iconic venues like the San Pellegrino plant, Starbucks Reserve Roastery, and the Acqua Panna estate, as well as hands-on culinary training and fine dining at Michelin-starred restaurants.

Both winners emphasized the importance of combining education with real-world experience, highlighting how exposure to high standards, quality ingredients, and passionate service inspired their professional growth.

Tom and Katie now advocate for more hospitality operators to open their doors to students and future professionals. Nestlé Professional's Toque d'Or continues to bridge the gap between the classroom and the industry, building confidence, skills, and long-term careers in hospitality.

## From our Kitchen TO YOURS

**JOIN OUR COMMUNITY OF HOSPITALITY,  
EDUCATION, HEALTH AND WELFARE  
PROFESSIONALS BY FOLLOWING US ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA.**

For your daily dose of recipe inspiration, industry insights, top tips and so much more, stay connected with Stir it up.

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Stunning food photography  
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top kitchens

Expert advice and industry news

Latest trends and tips from  
leading chefs and caterers

**FOLLOW US TODAY AND TAKE  
YOUR CULINARY EXPERTISE  
TO NEW HEIGHTS!**





## SANTA MARIA LAUNCHES INDIAN STREET FOOD BROCHURE

Paulig PRO, the brand behind Santa Maria, has launched a new Indian Style Street Food recipe brochure to help UK food operators tap into the booming £2bn contemporary Indian market. Reflecting modern OOH trends and the growing demand for bold, authentic flavours, the guide features 14 vibrant recipes, from Tandoori Chicken Rolls to Masala Loaded Fries and Garam Masala Cauliflower Bowls.

Tailored for casual dining, QSRs, pubs, and contract catering, the recipes use Santa Maria's high-quality spice mixes, sauces, and carriers like Kerala Curry Spice Mix and Mango Chutney. Development Chef Barnaby MacAdam describes the collection as a way for operators to offer authentic Indian flavours in accessible, street-food formats that meet modern dining habits and boost menu appeal.

The brochure is now available for download, with products stocked through wholesalers nationwide.

## New Single Origin Chocolate Range Highlights Global Flavours

Henley Bridge has launched Belcolade Origins, a premium collection of single-origin chocolates that celebrate the unique flavour profiles of cocoa from seven global regions, including Vietnam, Uganda, and Peru. With UK demand for single-origin chocolate growing at 23% annually, the range meets both market appetite and consumer interest in traceability and authenticity.

Most of the range is produced through Belcolade's Cacao-Trace programme, which ensures sustainability, ethical sourcing, and enhanced taste through better farming practices. Flavours range from zesty and woody in Vietnam Noir 73% to caramel-rich in Cameroon Lait 45%, offering versatility for chocolatiers, chefs, and bakers alike.

Henley Bridge Managing Director Tracey Hughes describes the collection as a "trailblazing range" that brings the distinct characteristics of each origin to life, delivering flavour with purpose.

Available now, Belcolade Origins is a perfect solution for professionals seeking high-quality, ethically sourced chocolate with a story.

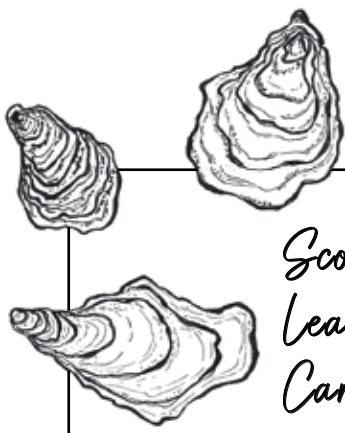


create dishes  
that are creamy,  
not cow-y



skip the cow





## Scottish Shellfish Leads with Lowest Carbon Footprint

Scottish farmed mussels and oysters have been confirmed as the UK's lowest impact farmed protein in terms of Global Warming Potential (GWP), according to new research by the Scottish Shellfish Marketing Group and the University of Edinburgh. The Life Cycle Assessment revealed that these shellfish outperform salmon, chicken, pork, and beef in sustainability metrics.

Naturally nourished by phytoplankton, mussels and oysters require no feed or fertilisers, and their cultivation methods—ropes, trestles, and baskets—leverage tidal energy with minimal emissions. Recognised by MSC and ASC certifications, Scottish shellfish not only support biodiversity but also filter and improve water quality.

With record production in 2024 and growing interest from chefs and consumers, this research boosts Scotland's seafood sector and the ongoing 'Eat Scottish Shellfish' campaign, promoting shellfish as a delicious and environmentally sound choice.

## PAN'ARTISAN UNVEILS AUTHENTIC ITALIAN PINSA TO UK MARKET

Pan'Artisan has expanded its Italiano range with the launch of the Pinsa, a traditional Italian bread known for its light, cloud-like texture, digestibility, and distinctive aroma. Inspired by its Roman roots, Pan'Artisan's Pinsa is hand-stretched in Italy using stone-milled grains, rice flour, sourdough, and a natural, long fermentation process.

Free from preservatives and suitable for vegan, vegetarian, and lactose-intolerant diets, the 250g frozen base is incredibly versatile—ideal for both savoury and sweet toppings across restaurants, cafés, events, and grab-and-go offerings. It holds toppings well without going soggy and cooks in just 4–6 minutes, supporting fast-paced kitchen environments.



Chris Dickinson, Business Development Director, highlights its premium quality and adaptability, offering chefs a unique way to add Italian authenticity and menu creativity. The Pinsa meets growing consumer demand for regional, artisan breads with practical appeal for modern foodservice.

# NEW

# UK'S FASTEST GROWING SNACK BRAND



✓ NATURAL FLAVOURING

✓ POWERED BY PULSES

✓ UNDER 150 KCALS

*aah!*  
**PERFECT**

*flavours for every taste*



**The No.1 Best Selling Gravy\***

[www.premierfoodservice.co.uk](http://www.premierfoodservice.co.uk)

\*Source: Circana Foodservice data (c52% Coverage); 52we 05.04.24; Value sales





# BANG BANG

## Chicken

SERVES 4

## INGREDIENTS

- 200g Country Range Easy Cook Wholegrain Brown Rice
- 50g Country Range Plain Flour
- 1 tsp Country Range Crushed Chillies (or more if you like it hot)
- 4 chicken breasts
- 2 eggs (beaten)
- 1 red onion
- 1 red and 1 green pepper
- Handful of sliced spring onions



## METHOD

1. Dice chicken breast into equal portions. Dip in egg and coat in flour, place in the air fryer until cooked through.
2. Cook a portion of brown rice until it is nice and fluffy. For perfect rice, allow to simmer and do not stir.
3. Prepare vegetables and fry off peppers and red onion until golden.
4. Simply plate up your cooked rice into a bowl and add peppers mixed with a sprinkle of chilli flakes.
5. Place chicken on top of rice and add spring onion.
6. Our children like it to be served with grilled corn on the cob.

For more information or to donate, visit  
<https://www.weareyoungstars.com/donate>

Following a trip to Africa, David McClean came home with the aim of raising money for the community he had visited as a way of giving something back. With his 14-year-old son Luke keen to help, they set about planning and putting on a special show with children from the local area.

It was a huge success, but it also highlighted the lack of safe spaces and activities for local children. Passionate about making a difference, teenage Luke took the lead and while training to be a professional chef, he gave his spare time to the local community.

Twenty years later, YoungStars Community Hub has helped thousands of local children. Now a community interest company, Luke and his team run youth clubs, providing a wide range of activities for 5-16 year olds including sports, computer games, arts and craft, theatre, sensory challenges and cooking classes.

"First and foremost, it's about providing a safe, inclusive and fun environment for children to socialise and play but it's also about offering opportunities for them to learn, grow, and for many, to get a hot meal," says Luke. "Teaching kids about food, nutrition and cooking gives me huge joy and teaches crucial life skills. One member of our team first came to us as a 7-year-old and is now one of our directors."

The enterprise relies on donations and funding to continue its work but is launching a community café this year.

"It will be a key factor in bringing in some much-needed funds but it will also be a great way of providing work experience to the youngsters and offering a space and affordable hot food to other members of the community, especially the older generations."

LUKE AND THE  
YOUNGSTARS TEAM





macphie



## Designed to simplify your back of house

- A glossy velvet demi-glace sauce with a rich meaty flavour and a hint of tomato, tolerant to a range of added ingredients
- Perfect as a base for classic brown sauces – Diane, Madeira, onion and Bordelaise
- Versatile in application, minimal skill set required
- Holds inclusions to produce a variety of on-trend applications
- Microwave, hob, kettle, bain-marie, hot-cabinet-stable
- Part of the savoury sauce range, vegan certified plant-based version available
- Available in 12 x 1 litre Tetra Pak®



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FIVE WAYS TO USE

**Country  
Range**  
*Created for the makers*

# 5 ways to use

## SUNDRIED TOMATOES

### SOUP OF SUMMER

Nothing says summer like the fragrance and flavour of fresh tomatoes and basil. I like to add a few roughly chopped sundried tomatoes to my soup to add another layer of flavour and texture.

### BRILLIANT BRUSCHETTA

A twist on your classic bruschetta, I like to dice some sundried tomatoes and add them along with fresh cherry tomatoes on top of a generous layer of ricotta cheese.

### STAND OUT SANDWICHES

Gone are the days of boring, insipid sandwiches. Now it's about a slice of luxury and my favourite would have to be an open ciabatta sandwich loaded with melted mozzarella, pesto, balsamic and sundried tomatoes.

### CREAMY CHICKEN

Whether it's to have with pasta or silky buttery mash, I love sundried tomatoes alongside chicken in a rich, creamy sauce with basil and parmesan. It's a winner whatever the season.

### HEAVENLY HUMMUS

Hummus is such a versatile ingredient and can be used in all manner of summer snacks, starters or sandwiches. To add a little glitter and colour to the hummus proceedings, I like to infuse my hummus with sundried tomatoes.

This is great to go with a sharing board or for a range of dips.

**Country Range  
Sundried Tomatoes**  
Pack Size: 6 x 1kg >>



With an appetite for cooking fostered at a young age in the kitchen, Kelly Dowle joined one of Cheshire's most unique eating establishments – Nantwich Bookshop & Coffee Lounge - in 2022.

Initially training and working in the education sector and childcare, Kelly craved for the chance to showcase her kitchen creativity so did an about turn and followed her passion for food.

Now a vital cog in the successful family-run business, which is based in a unique, 16th century timber-framed town centre premises, Kelly runs the kitchen, serving an eclectic mix of British classics alongside some South African specials.

Here are Kelly's five ways with Sundried Tomatoes.



### Sundried Tomato Hummus



#### INGREDIENTS

- 60g Country Range Sundried Tomatoes
- 400g Country Range Chick Peas - drained but keep brine
- 1 tsp Country Range Smoked Paprika
- 1 tsp Country Range Ground Cumin
- A few large basil leaves
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp tahini
- 1 garlic clove
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper to taste

**SERVES  
4-6**

#### METHOD

1. Add all ingredients into a food processor and blend whilst slowly adding chick pea water until you get to the consistency that you like.
2. Scrape into a serving bowl and swirl some of the oil from the bottle of sundried tomatoes over with some basil leaves as garnish.

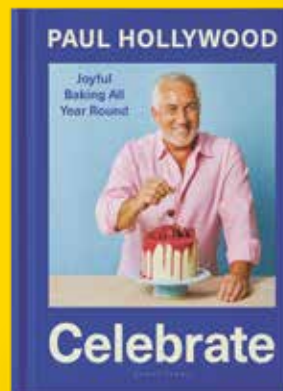
# The Country Club

Exclusively for customers of the Country Range Group

## JOYFUL BAKING ALL YEAR ROUND

From Bake Off legend and seasoned pro baker Paul Hollywood, this dazzling new cookbook guides you through show-stopping bakes and your next family favourite. Organised by season – and including bonus chapters on party food and cakes – it features over 100 irresistible recipes like Mini Chocolate Logs, Strawberry Heart Scones, Pumpkin-Spiced Macarons, and handheld beef pies. Filled with fool-proof methods and vibrant photography, it's the perfect companion for creating unforgettable treats year-round.

For your chance to win, enter online or send an email titled 'Joyful Baking' along with your name, contact details and name of your Country Range Group wholesaler to [competitions@stirupmagazine.co.uk](mailto:competitions@stirupmagazine.co.uk).



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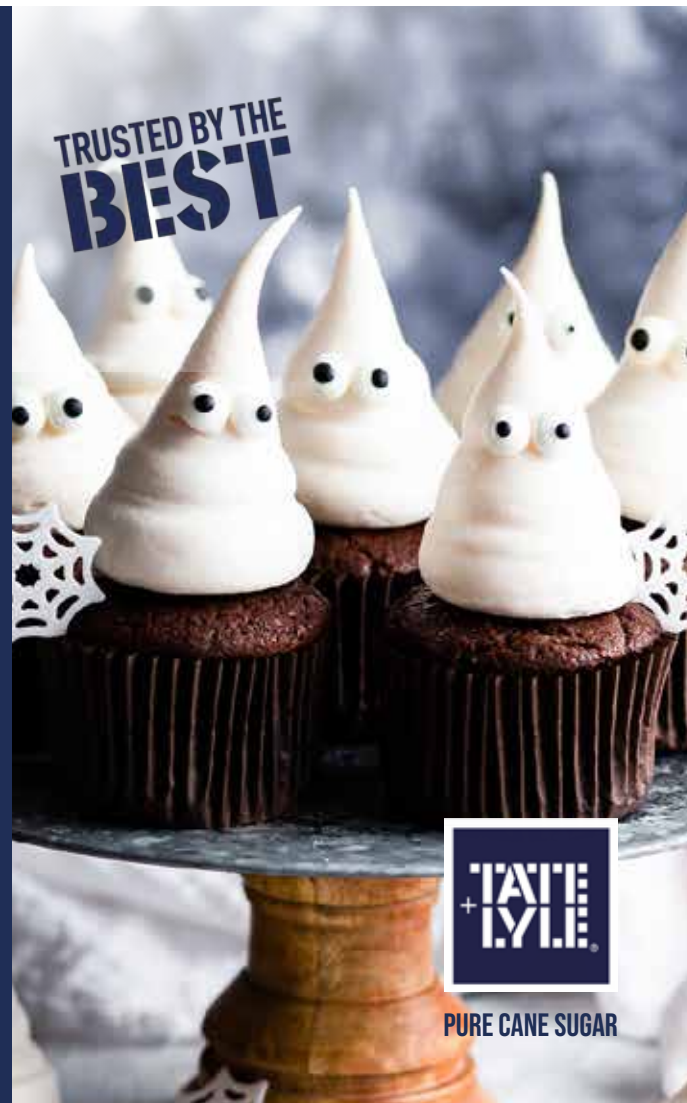
Closing date for the competition is 30th September 2025. All winners will be notified by 31st October 2025. Postal entries can be sent to: Country Range Group, 4 & 5 Jupiter House, Mercury Rise, Altham Business Park, Altham, Lancashire, BB5 5BY. Full terms and conditions can be found at: [www.stirupmagazine.co.uk/about](http://www.stirupmagazine.co.uk/about)

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