

Boughton's

COFFEE HOUSE



August 2013

Is cheap tea bad for us?

Scientists at the University of Derby have criticised 'supermarket tea', and have urged brands to state their fluoride concentration as part of the nutritional information put on food packaging.

Their research paper says that UK supermarket economy teas contain an excessive amount of fluoride. It is widely acknowledged that fluoride in very small amounts is beneficial, but it is also widely believed that an excess of fluoride is bad for health.

It is equally well recorded that fluoride occurs to a greater degree in 'older' tea leaves than in 'young' leaves.

In quality terms, young leaves are the classic 'two top leaves and a bud', which human pickers select, a process which is considered a sign of quality.

The 'older' leaves are the ones lower down the plant, and it is generally accepted that 'cheap' teas in supermarkets will contain leaves harvested by mechanical methods, which capture growth from all parts of the plant.

The researchers discovered that a far greater amount of fluoride was discovered in economy teas, and also that fluoride concentrations in tea-bags were significantly higher than in loose-leaf tea. They concluded that economy supermarket tea is notably older and composed of the less desirable leaves.

They said that consumers who drink a litre of cheap tea a day will take in 6mg of fluoride, which is in excess of an American figure which suggests that the highest daily intake should be 4mg per day. They reported cases of tea drinkers consuming between 1.4 litres and 3.8 litres daily of 'the least expensive store brand', and noted that these drinkers suffered greatly from bone diseases.

Although the researchers reported testing thirty-eight tea products from supermarkets, the choice was a little surprising – there were own-label teas from Asda, Euroshopper, Morrisons, Sainsbury, Tesco and Waitrose, but some giant tea brand names were relatively absent.

The tea industry response was predictable, criticising the research.



This super picture is by Brendan Murphy, a very well-known photographer and former picture editor of the *Irish News*. It is part of a new exhibition at the Red Barn gallery in Belfast, which features images taken in and around the city's cafes. The exhibition catalogue says that his work "makes the city seem alive and thriving as a place, not of conflict, but of camaraderie, consumption, chat and enjoyment... it was the advent of new cafes, tea-rooms and coffee shops that seemed to best symbolise the spirit of a reborn city centre."

Takeaway cup recyclers claim a breakthrough

The takeaway coffee cup market came to prominence in the national news last month with a claim that took many by surprise – not only did the James Cropper paper company say that it had created a plant thought to be the first to recycle disposable coffee cups into high quality paper products, it had a visit from the Queen to inspect the work.

The press reported that the Cropper company had spent four years and £5 million 'to crack a problem which had vexed Starbucks', reporting that virtually all the two billion paper coffee cups served in Britain every year are lined with a layer of plastic that makes them unsuitable for conventional recycling.

The cup trade was not impressed.

One cup manufacturer told *Coffee House*: "they are not the first". Another said: "it is widely accepted that the recycling of paper cups is feasible, that the material in paper cups is of a high quality, and that mills do exist in the UK that can handle the material. The issues surrounding recycling relate more to the recovery of the cups."

A third pointed out that in December 2008 the Paper Cup Recovery and Recycling Group reported a successful cup recycling trial in which virtually all the fibre from standard polyethylene-coated paper cups was successfully extracted and converted into high quality tissue fibre for use in products such as facial and toilet tissues. The mill involved said it would take all the cups

it could get – but again, the problem was that the main recovery operation collapsed.

Coffee House put a direct question to the Cropper company: what exactly have they done that is so special?

"The technology is certainly not unique," came the acknowledgement. "The unique element is that James Cropper have made a tailored investment set up with specific capacity to handle coffee cup recycling into high quality papers. Cropper's investment can handle large quantities of coffee cups."

Cup recovery has always been the massive hurdle – recycling technology is useless unless discarded cups are available. One newspaper story did say that Cropper 'has signed deals with major fast food and coffee outlets to supply cups to the plant', which will be very impressive, if those businesses do have a way to recover cups.

However, Cropper would only tell us that they are still in discussions about this, and would not say with whom.

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If you are one of the many new readers who join us each month – welcome to the cafe trade's top news magazine!

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The Food Brands Group, creator of the Percol brand, has been acquired by the Swedish coffee roaster Lofbergs Lila. The Swedish company has a known intent to expand across Europe, and has already bought the British company Red Cup, which supplies coffee and coffee machines to offices and workplaces. The corporate specialist who acted for Food Brands in the sale has said that they spoke to potential purchasers from 14 countries.

It is nothing new for retailers to channel the smell of coffee through their shops, and indeed to direct it outside into the path of shoppers - but Belgian university researchers have now concluded that the smell of chocolate, in a bookshop, inspires customers to buy romantic novels and cookery books. When customers smelled chocolate, they were six times more likely to buy a romantic book, and the aroma of chocolate had 'a positive influence on general approach behaviour and a negative impact on goal-directed behaviour in the store'. (That means they were more likely to browse). Curiously, the study was funded by the Belgian government.

Costa Coffee has now appointed a "brand and innovation director". She is Carol Welch, who has held similar positions at PepsiCo, at Cadbury Schweppes, and Green & Blacks.

Costa managing director Chris Rogers has spoken of 'ambitious plans to double the size of the business to £2 billion in the next five years' and that finding 'new and exciting ways to innovate our products

and services' will be vital.

An unusual tea room in Somerset has been saved. The East Coker Tearooms, near Yeovil, was for many years allied with Mencap, used for giving work experience and life skills to its students - one local review said that 'visitors are completely unaware that the tearooms are not what they seem - only after chatting either with the staff or regulars in the know, does it become apparent that this is a classroom successfully disguised as a tea shop'. Mencap has decided not to renew its lease, but after the landlord reported being inundated with comments from villagers who did not want to see their café close, he has now offered a lease to Allan and Sue Steele, of Othery near Bridgwater.

The National Trust is involved in an unusual tea-room experience in Wallington, a stately home in Northumberland. The area was home to a large number of wartime evacuees, and one room has now been transformed into a 1940s tea room, furnished exactly as it would have been at the time - no tablecloths, no matching crockery, and a mish-mash of furniture, much of it dating from wartime, and some donated by local families. On the walls are pictures of the evacuees. However, there is a story behind the café name, Tea The Trevelyan Way. In the 1940s, the house was the home of Lady Mary Trevelyan, and as the evacuees' parents were allowed to visit them regularly, she hit on the idea of selling them tea and cake for two old pence a time. She wrote in her diary that "I made a tidy profit on the transaction".

Free cups scheme begins to grow

The rather unusual Cappuccino Ads company in Scotland now has over one hundred cafes in Edinburgh and Glasgow taking part in its takeaway cup scheme.

The business model is that an advertiser books space on the cups, and can specify the geographical areas in which they want to distribute - the company prints and distributes the cups to partner cafes, who effectively get their takeaway cups for nothing.

"Everyone is happy," says the company's Ian LeBruce. "Advertisers get their message out, and the coffee shops get free cups. It's cost-effective as the cups are distributed to the advertisers' targeted demographics, as opposed to something like flyers where a large percentage are wasted on people who will never be customers.

"It has been mostly smaller companies advertising so far, but we are in talks with a few big corporate names at the moment."

One of its most notable projects has been a recent series of cups bearing the photograph of a missing student.

Cappuccino Ads chooses to use cups from the local company Vegware, which promotes a very environmentally-conscious model. It might have been expected that an advertising business would select a cheaper option.

"Unfortunately, they are one of the most expensive choices on the market," acknowledges Ian LeBruce. "However, we're passionate about the



The cups which supported the attempt to find a missing girl

environmental aspect, and so we're happy to cut down our margin.

"There's no need for a sleeve, so the advertiser's message is free for the whole world to see, and as they manufacture in Ireland, their carbon footprint is less than cups that come in from China."

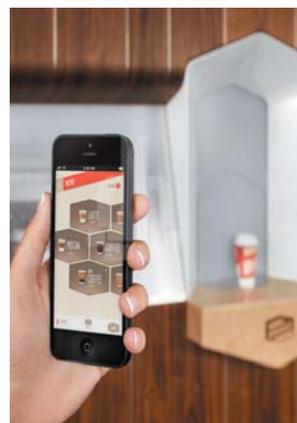
Greggs - not seizing the moment for coffee shops after all

The bakery chain Greggs has said it will not continue with the national development of its Moments coffee-house concept, which attracted a vast amount of trade attention and which appears to have traded well in pilot sites.

The company, which has 1,690 sites, has reported that like-for-like sales dropped 3.2 per cent in the first five weeks of the second half of 2013, reversing an improving trend seen in the second quarter. Pre-tax profit was down £4.6 million to £11.4 million.

The chain has recently extended opening hours and has worked on updating its product range. However, the chief executive has said that 'there is no question that customer preferences are shifting', and that he will spend the next two years re-shaping the business to suit.

"Whilst we have been encouraged by initial sales at Greggs Moment, we have decided to concentrate our efforts to compete in the coffee market by developing Greggs shops with seats alongside our own coffee offer. We have learned much about the coffee market from this trial, and this will be built into our Greggs offer as we move forward in this important area. We will aim to incorporate the existing Moment shops, wherever possible, back into the core Greggs estate."



We have reported before on the coffee machines from the American technology company Briggo, and this is the latest - it is the 'coffee haus smart kiosk' which is said to look and smell like a coffee shop, but is directly integrated with a smartphone app and web service that lets customers order their own drinks, including precise customisation, and to set the exact time they wish to pick up their drink. The system will automatically send a text message when the order is ready, and it is suggested that this will eliminate queues. There is the option for walk-up customers to order through a touch screen display.

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Espresso machine safety – cafes still ‘don’t get it’

Another business has been set up to highlight the requirement for caterers with espresso machines to comply with the legal requirement for pressure vessel tests – and the man behind it has made the well-known observation that most coffee-house owners still do not bother.

"Coffee shops just don't get it," says Gary Bryan, who has formed Espresso Check. "Their attitude is that they don't need to comply... because nobody has made them do so."

There is, he suggests, still a general laxity towards coffee machine maintenance in all catering outlets.

"Pubs and restaurants don't comply with the pressure-vessel regulations, they don't get their water filters changed, and more and more engineers are telling me of customers not even having their machines serviced.

"The environmental health departments are meant to be enforcing the regulations but most officers haven't even heard of them. Every food outlet gets an annual visit, but they never check the espresso machine."

Elsewhere, Mark Allen of Espresso Test, the man who wrote the formal scheme of inspections which is now also used by Espresso Service engineers, has published on his website (www.espressotest.co.uk) a simplified version of the regulations which tells operators in simple terms what they need to know and do.

He says that practices around the beverage trade continue to surprise him. "This has somewhat shocked me – I have spoken before of the cowboys who really have no clue about coffee machine safety, and of inspection reports which are simply shocking, and often contain the wrong information.

"We all now know so much more about this situation than we did some years ago. There really are no grey areas any more!"

The engineer Richard Norman of Mad About Coffee confirms the general attitude with a recent story of a pub client: "It was an old 3-group. They didn't want a service last year because they couldn't afford it - this month they called and said 'it's making funny noises and steam is coming out of it'. The safety had gone off, the anti-vacuum valve had sealed shut, and the pressure switch had fused shut. They said 'can you do a quick fix?' and I refused to do anything but a full job – it's my reputation on the line. They asked what they could do with it, and I said 'there's the bin...'"

(Readers will know that we are probably the only trade magazine to have reported and followed up the investigations which followed the explosion of three years ago. We have it on good authority that there will be further news on this subject very soon).

There has been a new British twist to the subject of espresso capsules designed to work in Nespresso machines. Court cases have been going on for years across Europe, with Nespresso seeking to protect itself as the only maker of capsules to fit its machines – and the latest ones are being made in the UK.

They come from CafePod of South London, which now has its product listed in Waitrose and Morrisons supermarkets.

According to one of the co-founders, Peter Grainger, he saw compatible capsules in South Africa, and realised that there was as yet no comparable market in Britain. There have been some compatible capsules imported to the UK, but CafePod says it is now the first British product to be listed in major supermarkets.

The company name may be new, but several known names from the coffee trade are involved – John Thompson, once of Taylors and recently of the London School of Coffee, is a consultant; so is Mike Riley, also once of Taylors and now of the coffee importer Falcon; and the manufacturing equipment is sited at the Lincoln and York roaster.

Only last month, we reported Lavazza's view on capsules as a

Nespresso-fit capsules now made in the UK



major new asset for the general hospitality trade.

"There has been a decent-sized interest in a compatible product, because Nespresso's machine penetration in offices, boardrooms, hotel rooms, and B&B's, is growing rapidly," agrees Peter Grainger. "These markets are now looking for choice."

The range of capsules is not described in detail - the products are offered only as 'intense', 'smooth', light and lively' or a decaf version.

"The matter of descriptions is difficult," John Thompson tells us. "In the coffee world, people want to know about provenance and flavour – for most other people,

'intense' and 'smooth' is quite enough."

That, he says, is an important indicator of what the capsule market has done – it has brought a vast amount of 'new' espresso drinks in from outside the conventional coffee market.

"This is an evolutionary market. People are moving to capsules from other places, so the single-serve machines do not compete with the existing coffee scene, but are adding to it."

The eco-friendliness of capsules is a fraught subject. A roaster in Canada says it has almost devised the first completely compostable and biodegradable compatible coffee capsule, but has said that there are already 'billions' of single-cup capsules in landfill and that "people are concerned about the waste created by single-serve cups – waste is probably the biggest barrier and biggest obstacle to purchasing a capsule brewer." It is said elsewhere that a Swiss company achieved a certified biodegradable coffee capsule last year, and CafePod says it is 'well on the way' to a fully-recyclable product.



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There has been a fair amount of online complaint from the canal-boating fraternity following a row over the Stenson Lock coffee house, a canal-side café in south Derbyshire. The building is a renovated 200-year-old lock-keeper's house, owned by the co-owner of a local marina. When his external canopy was damaged by high winds, he replaced it, but a complaint was made to the local authority, who decided that the structure was 'generally appropriate in scale and overall form, but interrupted views from various aspects within the conservation area'. The owner said that he may now close the facility, even though it had long provided free parking and public toilets, even for canal visitors who did not use the coffee shop. Online forums populated by 'gongoozlers' (canal enthusiasts!) have been furious.

Paddy and Scott's has opened three branded in-house corporate cafes in offices of the phone company TalkTalk. In a deal with Albacore contract caterers in Scotland, there will be nine more branded workplace coffee areas over the next six months. The brand has also cropped up in the Palace of Holyrood House café in Edinburgh.

An unusual new business in Norfolk is a mobile and pop-up vintage afternoon tea party service. This is More Tea, Vicar?, run by Anne Gillion, who will set up a full afternoon tea, with fine china and glassware, at any kind of venue or event, from birthdays to funerals. "The cost of setting up a

tearoom in this climate is pretty steep, so this way of catering makes sense," she has said.

A long-running battle in the Lake District has ended with the likely demolition of a well-known tea-room - after 25 years, the family running the Lakeside Tea Gardens in Keswick will not now be given a renewal of their lease when it runs out in October. Five years ago, the local council gave the land on which the tearoom sits to the neighbouring Theatre by the Lake, which is a major tourist attraction - this has now allowed the theatre to proceed with plans to open its own cafe. The tea-room tenant has pointed out that his business has been running since 1928, under only three managers in all that time, and that the local council should have protected it as part of the town's heritage; the theatre says the tea-room is 'in a poor state of repair' and has to be replaced.

Boston Tea Party, the growing south-western coffee-house chain, will open its fifth cafe in Bristol in September, and will also expand its original branch in the city. That first site in Park St will take on upstairs space rented from a neighbouring bookshop, and will double both its inside space and its garden area. The chain also has stores in Barnstaple, Birmingham, Bath, Exeter, Honiton, Ringwood, Worcester and Salisbury, and has now joined the Sustainable Restaurant Association.

The caffeine detector kit

A Singapore company claims to have invented a fluorescent 'detector kit' to tell consumers the caffeine content of any beverage. The Caffeine Orange actually changes the colour of the drink according to caffeine content.

There is, we are told, a rather more important scientific consideration than simply letting consumers measure their drinks: it is reported that 'caffeine can also be used as a proxy to indicate that water has been contaminated with human waste... therefore, detecting caffeine concentration is a real public health concern'.

Scientists from Singapore and South Korea say they have created a simpler way of detecting caffeine content than was possible before. A laser pointer is shone on a sample. If there is no caffeine, the laser light remains green; if caffeine is present, it turns orange.



Apparently it can measure volumes down to less than a trillionth of a litre.

One writer has already suggested that coffee house staff will now be tormented by onsite inspections by consumers.

Coffee shops suffer surprise closures

There has been some puzzlement in Swindon over the sudden closure of the well-regarded local Cafelicious coffee house. The local paper reported the closure after seven years' trading, and the café's website simply states 'we have closed permanently'. Owner Barry Cook had won several awards in that time, most recently becoming one of the first venues to be awarded an Eat With Confidence badge by Swindon Council, recognising excellence in hygiene and customer service.

The Snobs coffee shop, which opened last year inside Ipswich town hall and was generally regarded as a success, is also to be a surprise closure. It is reported that the council wanted 'a more formal agreement', which involved a big increase in rent. The operators decided not to bid, and announced on Facebook: 'we are hanging up our milk jugs, turning off our grinders and saying farewell. From the bottom of our coffee cups, thank you'. The council has said that the replacement operator will be an independent business.

Many café owners know the difference between the romance of running a food business and the financial reality... and now consumers in Wilmslow know as well, following a final declaration by a company going out of business.

A popular chocolatier posted a

breakdown of his finances in the shop window to show why he was being forced to close - the notice demonstrated how an annual rent of a thousand pounds a week, annual tax of around £41,000, and other costs meant that although he might take £4,000 in a good week, his personal income was £100. He will continue to make chocolate, working from part of a relative's shop in Macclesfield.



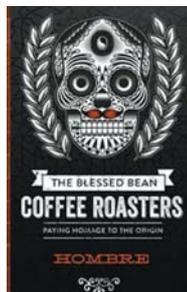
This really is one for Star Wars fans - it is the Yoda crocheted takeaway coffee cup holder and is on sale in the US, from some people called Cuddlefish Crafts. All about the coffee, is it...

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An Australian roaster claims that there is a distinct difference between male and female preferences in coffee, and has created blends for each gender - the Blessed Bean has produced Hombre, an 'adventurous and courageous blend, with notes of deep chocolate, hazelnut, and a touch of tobacco, reliable to the last drop' for men, and the Senorita (notes of fruit, milk chocolate and caramel, well rounded with an aftertaste of desire) for women. The brand says that it performed 700 taste tests with customers to achieve the results... not surprisingly, the roaster has also been quick to claim that there is a tongue-in-cheek element to his product notes.

This is Boughton's Coffee House

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Sowden produces the new filter coffee pot

The Sowden brand of coffee and tea brewers, which are designed by a Yorkshireman living in Milan, is to launch a collection of products to be used in café settings for both serving and for retail sale. The new pot has been considered a replacement for the table cafetiere, although it does not work on the same principle.

The Sowden SoftBrew works on generally the same principle as the suspended filter basket used in some teapots – the brew water is allowed to flow through the coffee grounds or tea leaves, which remain in the basket for easier removal.

The major difference between this and a cafetiere, says the maker, is that there is no pressure on the coffee grounds. Sowden has remarked that "we would not compare our coffee pots with the Aeropress or any other method of brewing which presses the coffee, thus extracting some of the undesirable elements of the coffee grounds."

There is a matching tea model, with some small design differences.

One American reviewer has said that he did have to work at finding the right grind and the right brew time, but when he got it right, he preferred it to a cafetiere. That reviewer also made the interesting points that he could remove the filter basket to avoid stewing, and also that the ceramic was better for heat retention than the glass or plastic of a cafetiere.

Although the product is to launch here in September, there are some already in trade use.

"We have shipped thousands of tea and coffee pots worldwide and we have already shipped hundreds into



the UK including to a large London restaurant chain and a small chain of tea shops in Cardiff. The attraction to them was the simplicity of use, the attractive design and the fact that our tea and coffee pots come in a variety of sizes and colours – the teashop in Cardiff wanted brown pots with orange lids which (perhaps surprisingly) are very popular."

That Cardiff site is the well-known Waterloo, run by Kasim Ali. It is both a tea-shop and a trade wholesaler of tea.

The Sowden products are quite high in price, but there is a very unusual suggestion of removing risk for those who retail the products.

"Consumer prices go up to £70, and we would expect a retailer to buy at a discount of 40-50 per cent," the company tells us. "We will be announcing a programme for the smaller retailer whereby we provide a small consignment buffer stock of products which they do not have to pay for; they only pay when they sell one and replace the stock item they have sold.

"Therefore there is no financial risk to the retailer - all he has to do is provide a small amount of space for displaying the products."



Can you see what this espresso is being brewed into? A café owner in Newquay has begun a new way of serving – everything comes in jam jars. The Jam Jar Café serves everything, from salads to deserts, in jam jars – we had thought that hot drinks would be an exception, and then we saw a photograph of a jar under the portafilter spout!

Natvia, the Australian-made sweetener which has been a sponsor of the barista championships for some recent years, is now formally launching in the UK.

The product, which is described as 'a healthy alternative to sugar' and as 'a sweetener that actually tastes like sugar', is made from the stevia plant, grown on Natvia's own farms and blended with a naturally occurring nectar found in melons and grapes.

The product can be used in the same way as sugar, either to sweeten beverages or for cooking. The makers claim that it avoids the 'unpleasant aftertaste or carcinogenic risks often associated with sweeteners'. As it has no calories and is low in carbohydrates, it is promoted as good for diabetics and those looking for a generally healthier lifestyle.

The brand says that the product was created with baristas in mind, and to give a sweet and clean addition to coffee. It is used in 25,000 Australian cafes.

The Robert Roberts coffee company of Belfast has come up with a new 'super-strong' retail coffee which carries images of the local shipyards - the company said that "research has shown that using local landmarks on our packaging is a big hit with customers", and indeed the city's Tesco branches have taken the product.

World Coffee Events, which runs the world barista championships, has made the slightly predictable move of an 'all-star' contest at the HOST show in Milan this October. Past world champions will be invited to perform 'an on-demand signature beverage performance', with the public acting as judges.

A café owner in Brighton has demanded that local authorities give more consideration to small business owners when planning road works – the local press reports that careless planning of consecutive works has left one street 'so uninviting that people wouldn't walk up the road' for eighteen months. The latest complaint came after a café took just £8 on what would normally have been a busy summer Sunday.

Following last month's news of Kelly Holmes opening a coffee house, we now have news that Manchester United stars Ryan Giggs and Gary Neville will open Café Football in the city, to be followed by Hotel Football.

Coffee#1 of south Wales is opening its 32nd site - this is in Leominster, in the former Three Horse Shoes Inn.

Costa has been quoted as 'evaluating' the town.

The Otley chamber of trade in Yorkshire has created a prize with which to highlight and promote the standard of its twenty local cafes - the Copper Kettle award is described as a good-natured contest in which a local old people's group did the tasting and judging. The first winner was Joanne Wood, owner of Yum!

The Madhatters of Kimberley, Notts, has been named the area's best child-friendly café in a survey by the childcare store Mamas and Papas. The owner, Nygel Stevenson, has said that an important part of his café design is that he does not use separate childrens' areas – kids are encouraged to use the same sofas and tables as their parents.

The key to a coffee business is a good site – Grant Gibson of Kookaburra Coffee has opened up at one of Oxford's park-and-ride car parks, which doubles as a pick-up point for long-distance buses. He told the local paper: "I've been chasing the spot in Thornhill for a long time. When they first built the park-and-ride there, I thought it would be a great spot for a coffee shop." He also has a spot at a commuter railway station.

The name of the Blue Beagle coffee house in Los Angeles turns out to have an unexpected second meaning - the roaster-retailer café doubles as a care home for beagles rescued from test work in local laboratories.

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Starbucks has announced its best ever performance in the latest quarter: global revenue is up 13 per cent to \$3.7 billion. It now has 19,000 stores around the world. In the UK, says Starbucks, it 'performed well'. "As part of our efforts to return to profitability, we have closed another eight stores, bringing the total number of closures for the year to 48. We continue to deliver on our strategy of relocating unprofitable stores to more cost effective locations. We are also increasing our reliance on franchised and licensed stores, which are more profitable, and have opened a further nine."

Two of the expected Christmas blends are ready – Drury's Christmas tea will be available in pyramid bags, but as a limited edition, and will only go on sale at the beginning of November. It is a blend of black tea with apple, orange and Christmas spices, described as 'warmly aromatic and spicy, with the rich scent of cinnamon and cloves'. Notably, and unusually for a fruit infusion, it is a tea designed to be served with milk. Catering packs of 100 will be priced at £16.20, and an order for two packs brings a free airtight storage and display jar. Cherizena has launched the 2013 version of its usual limited edition Christmas coffee. It features Colombian coffee with a combination of rum, hazelnut, cinnamon, vanilla, orange and pecan nut flavours. It can be supplied to the trade as an own-label product.

The Seda cup company is investing £18 million over the next five years at its South Wales site. This will create 70 new jobs and new equipment, and the company has spoken of an additional manufacturing unit to meet growing demand.

Caber Coffee of Aberdeen has made charitable grants to five social enterprises, as the latest stage in its Ethyco project. Caber says that the coffee under this brand takes the benefits of Fairtrade to a new level – as well as supporting the communities where the product is grown, a percentage of the sales revenue is re-invested in British social enterprise projects. The latest five recipients include a community food initiative, a childcare project, work to promote inclusion and community participation for adults with disabilities and additional support needs, and a project which recycles, restores and redistributes used furniture, giving work to individuals who face barriers to mainstream employment.

The Handmade Cake Company recently predicted that there would soon be an issue concerning cakes required to be made with rapeseed oil, not palm oil. We haven't seen evidence of it in the UK yet, but the company's Simon Law reports seeing it happening on the continent: "it's happening, but seems to be a bigger issue in France than the UK - we have been asked by a major French

customer to remove all palm oil from the major product we supply them, and while I was in France, I saw that the major French sliced bread brand (yes they do have one!) had a big splash on the pack saying that it was free from palm oil."

There has been a row in Bradford on Avon, where several café owners have resigned their membership of the town's tourist information centre, which opened its own café.

The centre said that it opened the café to make its operations self-sufficient after funding cuts, but a local caterer said that the tourism authority did so without any communication with local traders over what was a clear conflict of interests. One café owner enquired whether the café had obtained change-of-use permission – the tourist board said that as its bureau "is still 75 per cent a tourist information centre", no change-of-use permission was needed.

Another rock musician has become involved in a coffee brand - Joey Kramer, the drummer with Aerosmith, has launched an organic coffee line called Rockin' & Roastin', which will appear in local supermarkets in New England. Rather unusually for a coffee brand, he has the name plastered all over his tour bus. He told an American paper: "I think most people don't realise that the coffee that they drink is not only not gourmet, but in a lot of cases, it's not really even that good at all."

The Pull-Brew-Melt event, which features coffee, tea and chocolate, in the garden centre at Waddesdon, Buckinghamshire, will run this year on 28th & 29th September.

Benefit Tea of Bristol has picked an unusual new office - it is working from a 45ft barge moored in the local marina. The company is the importer of Ranong mulberry tea, a Thai product. It turns out that several local businesses have taken up the same idea - the head of the tea company has remarked that conventional offices are noisy, without much of a view, whereas a boat is quiet and more private.



There has been a big row in the US, where Starbucks has found itself in the middle of the pro-gun and anti-gun campaigns – the 'right to carry guns' lobby has now taken to using Starbucks cafes as venues for their meetings, and have now also begun some 'Starbucks Appreciation Days', recognising that the chain has not exercised its right, as a property owner, to ban guns on its premises. This, really, is the pro-gun badge.

Make the most of tea, says Ferris-Lay

Malcolm Ferris-Lay, former managing director of the Williamson tea company, has now created his own consultancy business, MFLT, to help caterers make the most of tea.

There is, it has often been pointed out, a vast missed opportunity in the sector - too many beverage operators think that tea is 'easy', and miss the opportunity for upselling.

"Our course consists of a day's training in most things related to tea," he tells us. "We concentrate very heavily on tasting various teas and how they should be served - if the server has no idea as to what teas taste like, how can they offer suggestions and advise the guest? Another consideration is the menu and how it should be presented together with what should appear on it."

"A solid understanding is important to make the most of tea. The most important thing is the guest's experience - it should be so special that they tell their friends how wonderful your place is."

"Having staff who can answer most

tea-related questions is always a bonus... and with the low cost of even good-quality teas, they can now always say: 'if you do not enjoy that one, I can change it.'"

While it is the case that 'afternoon tea' is seeing a revival, many in the trade have observed that there are several legitimate variations on the idea - the posh hotel afternoon tea does not have to be the same one at a tea shop or even a pub.

"I am not precious when it comes to tea. While I work with five-star hotels, I do even more work with tearooms - I have even worked with a council-run tea room which has increased its sales dramatically and won an award."

"What has made the 'great coffee' sector applies also to tea - choose quality and make it correctly."

Segafredo supports Welsh rugby

The Segafredo Zanetti coffee brand, which is part of the largest privately owned coffee company in the world, has taken on rugby sponsorship - its logo will now feature on the shirt of the Ospreys, the top rugby team. Segafredo is now also official coffee supplier to the Liberty stadium in Swansea, which the Ospreys share with the premier league football team, although they are not involved in this deal.

Both sides made the standard statement about being 'delighted', but one of the more interesting aspects of the matter is that the coffee company's barista trainer has been to the rugby club to teach the team, among whom are several famous internationals, how to make coffee.

Although Segafredo's British base is in Edinburgh, at the Brodie's roaster, sales director Brian McGregor says that sponsorship in Wales is no surprise.

"We are fairly prominent in south Wales, because of our active distributor there, who we acquired last

December. Our brand will now appear throughout the Liberty stadium, where we are now the official supplier. Stadium catering is a very challenging business - it's a really heavy involvement for us."

Rugby continues to have a regular association with beverages. The Jika Jika coffee bar in Bath was begun by rugby internationals; and when the St Helens rugby league team took sponsorship from Ty-Phoo, it was quickly pointed out that one of their biggest supporters is the comedian who appears with a woolly monkey in the PG Tips advertisements!

Vast coffee giveaways in Canada

Following the recent fad for 'coffee in suspense', there has now been a quite extraordinary surge of high-value generosity in Canada.

In Edmonton, an anonymous customer spent nearly \$900 on Monday on large coffees that were handed out until the payment expired on Tuesday. The staff say that the man arrived in the late afternoon, asked how many coffees the site sold in a day, and then ordered 500 large coffees to be given away, and paid the \$859 bill with his debit card. The staff asked the reason for the gesture, but he gave no information. Then the same happened again, in Chestermere, Red Deer, Calgary, Ottawa and London (Ontario). Three of the donations, totalling \$2,300, happened within the space of an hour. A Tim Hortons spokesman said that they knew of a dozen such occurrences. In High River, a town which has recently been hit by severe flooding, a similar gesture was made by an anonymous donor.

Vicars café-bistro of Bradford has created a Veg-Ex scheme in which local allotment holders respond to a regular notice of items required - in return for their donations, they receive vouchers for use in the café. Manager Matthew Adams says he recently went a month without having to buy a lettuce as a result, and that local growers are contributing far more than he expected - and are happy with the deal. (The name comes from the founders of the café, both reverends!) In a rather similar vein, the founders of GroCycle in Exeter believe that their new model of a sustainable urban mushroom farm will eventually spread throughout Britain - and a major aspect of it is the use of spent grounds from coffee shops. The founders explain that while most mushrooms are normally grown entirely on sawdust, coffee grounds are far better.

The Seaways café of Fridaythorpe, the highest village on the Yorkshire Wolds, has now celebrated twenty years as a motorbikers' café, and has converted its engineering workshop into the Bike Shed, a café decorated with motorcycle memorabilia.

Many cafes have attractive external flower beds and displays - but, according to the Lancashire press, Stuart Cuniiffe of the Naked Bean in Oldham has gone one better. He has made practical use of the previously-unused raised flower beds outside his café and on his sun terrace, which have been turned into vegetable beds and herb gardens. As part of the business's work with community groups, volunteers from the local University of the Third Age maintain the crops, for use in the café.

In an interesting judgment from north London, a serial thief who stole mobile phones in pubs and coffee shops has been banned from all such venues in Islington and Camden. The ASBO from the local magistrates' court prevents the woman "from entering any pub, including high street coffee chains Starbucks, Costa Coffee, Café Nero and Prêt A Manger".

Costa had a dramatic opening in Porthmadog last month - at 9.30am on the first morning, bailiffs arrived and turned off the water supply while customers were waiting to be served. The water company said that they were chasing unpaid bills from the former operator, a pub... and the bailiffs clearly didn't tell the difference between a pub and a coffee shop!

There has been a terse response to recent news from the British Hospitality Association, which has said that the UK's hospitality industry is to be a major factor in job creation in this country, with major players having pledged to generate more than 30,000 job opportunities for young people by 2015. The TUC has complained that four in every five newly-created jobs pay £7.95 per hour or less.

An extremely curious case has been reported by the press in Kenya, which suggests that over the past nine years, coffee growers have lost £377 million to coffee traders through what appears to be an allowed practice. According to the local press, a taskforce report by the Coffee Board of Kenya has blamed dealers "who have not purchased a single bag of coffee, but whose main business is to collect free coffee samples for subsequent sale." The report suggests that at auction, dealers are entitled to collect a certain amount of free coffee samples per lot. On average, there are about 500 lots per auction, and forty auctions a year - the total, it is alleged, comes to more than five tonnes of free coffee annually. Some time ago, it is reported, it was decided that anyone collecting samples would now have to pay a fee - but that has never been put into effect.

The owners of an Enfield coffee shop which has made a name for itself in its support for local business and community projects have now decided to open another café... 160 miles away. Karen Mercer and Gunter Hollenstein of My Coffee Stop on platform one of Enfield Chase station are expanding to Shepton Mallet, in Somerset. This, it turns out, is slightly farther away than they had intended. "We originally thought we would go further up the railway line," Karen told her local paper, "but we have been looking and looking but didn't find anywhere. We thought we should search back in Enfield, looked in Barnet, looked in the whole of London and then eventually the UK." The answer came in a former sweet-shop in Shepton Mallet. In Enfield, My Coffee Stop showcases the work of local artists, supports a theatre company, hosts networking and social media sessions for local businesses, and has compiled the area's Fairtrade directory.

This is the second story like this we have had in eight months.

The owners of a café in Stony Mountain, Canada, have covered their floor with old pennies, no longer in circulation - it took twelve people three days to cover just over 600 square feet, using 197,365 coins. According to the café owner, buying the coins and doing the work cost about the same as he would have paid for conventional flooring. Last November, a woman in Garfield, Pennsylvania, used a quarter of a million pennies to cover an 800 sq.ft. retail site. The owner, a qualified tattooist, said that she worked out that it would be cheaper to glue real money down than buy flooring tiles. It took three weeks to lay the entire floor, and her helpers were 'paid' in free tattoos.

A very unusual cake can be found at a new vintage tea room in Wellingborough. This is Ria's Rosy Lee Tea Room, run by Ria Chambers, who has been an enthusiastic baker for some time. The unusual item is cattern cake, which is spiced with cinnamon, lightly fruited and flavoured with caraway seeds - this item was traditionally made by Nottingham lace-makers for their special feast day, and the recipe goes back to Tudor days. The name comes from either Catherine of Aragon, who was imprisoned locally, and destroyed all of her lace so that she could commission more to support the local industry, or from St. Catherine, patron of spinners and lace-makers.

A new coffee house in Seaham, in the north-east, is themed around the local mining industry. The Lamp Room, run by Melanie Wood, has launched a competition to find vintage mining photographs to decorate the main wall of the café. She has said that all her family worked in the mines, and that the café honours the area's working heritage.

New ideas for barista events in north and south

There has been another surge in imaginative regional coffee events, and from both ends of the country at once.

In the south-west, a café-bar which has one of the most desirable beach settings in the UK will host the Master of the Brew 2013. This barista contest will be held at five cafés in Falmouth, and the final will be held at the Gyllyngvase Beach Café, a coffee-shop which sits right on the edge of the town's biggest tourist beach.

The event has been devised by Lucy Gregory of the Gylly Beach café, and has a charitable aim - entrants are asked to pay a fee of £5, and spectators will be asked to make small donations, all of which will go to the work of Shelterbox, a Cornish charity which is a pioneer in quick-response relief work worldwide.

The sponsors are Origin, the Cornish coffee roaster, La Marzocco, and Espresso Solutions. The cafes taking part are the Gylly Beach itself, Espressini, the Courtyard Deli (recently featured on TV's *Hungry Sailors*), Picnic, and Good Vibes - they have all built their own reputations on the local coffee scene. The contest runs through August and September, with a final on October 4th.

The contest owes something to the 'ultimate barista challenge' contests which have taken place in the USA.

Five different challenges have been designed to test the entrants across all areas of coffee brewing and tasting, and the barista with the most points at the end of the five rounds will win the title Master of the Brew 2013.

In Edinburgh, the Coffee Jam events are continuing, David Freeman of Freemans Coffee tells us.

"The Edinburgh Coffee Jam started as a result of the Glasgow Coffee Jam, which is now in its second year - we have held five in Edinburgh, and what we do is invite (mostly by social media) baristas, owners, customers, Joe Public, anyone and everyone to come down and network in a coffee environment.

"There is always a theme that is coffee-based, and we volunteer to move the Jam around Edinburgh's various venues hosting without charge. It's a great opportunity for everyone to meet and share ideas, be enthused by new ideas, and get to know one another better.

"We have a great community of shops now and want to continue to build the relationships and also expose the public to good coffee and information along the way."

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A rather notable first birthday has occurred this month – it is the anniversary of the news that the giant Tesco would be going into partnership with the Tolley family of Taylor Street Baristas, to form an entirely new coffee-shop chain. This was to be Harris and Hoole, which instantly inspired not just vast trade debate, but criticism amounting to fury – even a year on, it is still common to find online Tweets and blogs written by people complaining that 'they have just discovered that what they thought to be an independent coffee shop is part of Tesco'.

It is a rather delicate distinction. Tesco is indeed involved, and it has generally been reported that the giant is a 'non-controlling' shareholder. (Records we have seen do suggest that there may be an exact half-and-half share in one part of the operation).

As the Tolleys' roaster observed a year ago, it is probably the name of Tesco which has been the cause of the gripes. Had virtually any other major retail name decided to back a new chain of coffee houses, nobody would have said a word, but Tesco, with its image of putting small-town traders out of business, is widely seen as the devil incarnate of the high street.

And yet, as some other players in the coffee trade have acknowledged, which of them would have turned down a similar offer from a wealthy partner?

The three Tolleys (two brothers and a sister) have themselves been widely held up as examples of the Antipodean invasion of the British coffee culture – indeed they are Aussies, but they were also here before the others from down under.

"My mum's English, so we have a lot of family here," Nick Tolley told us. "I went to business school in France, graduated in 2004, and thought it was too soon to go home. So I popped over to London to see family, and very quickly concluded that I didn't want to work for anyone else."

At that time, the move towards speciality coffee on the high street had begun, but not in a big way. There was not yet a large number of Aussie or Kiwi players in London, and the east end was yet to become the centre of the speciality coffee world.

"At the time, you could count the top coffee places on two fingers – Flat White and Monmouth," recalls Nick. "And Flat White was using Monmouth's coffee!"

"My brother Andrew was here too, at a loose end. Our sister Laura was in Sydney, but she had met an English guy, so it wasn't too hard to persuade her to work with us here."

Their first shop was opened in Richmond, under the Taylor Street Baristas name (because the three had all lived in Taylor Street in Sydney).

Until recently, it was still common for some Australians, though not all, to proclaim how they had opened up here because the standard of coffee in the

The value of ritual

One year on, the co-founder of the UK's most controversial coffee shop chain tells us what makes the success of Harris and Hoole



UK was so bad. Then the attitude changed, and the image of 'the Aussie boys are here to save the world!' has softened into a rather more respectful attitude towards the UK's domestic scene.

What really has been the Australian influence on the British coffee-house market?

Nick Tolley takes the view that the old slogan of 'it's all about the coffee', is really well wide of the mark. The secret of a successful coffee house business lies somewhere else, he thinks.

"I am not the geek of the family," he tells us. "Andrew is the coffee man,

and customer didn't occur here before, but I do think that it was the Australian influence that made it more widespread.

"Today, when I'm explaining the success of Taylor Street to our new staff, I tell them that people may come to us at first for the coffee, but that they come back for everything else, the little things like the barista saying 'how are your kids?' or 'I love your shoes!'"

"We are now blessed with the situation of having lines of customers waiting outside our stores. I think a lot of it is down to the fact that these customers know that when they get to the

“ My interest, and I think this is the big thing about what the whole Antipodean influence brings, has always been in the 'ritual' of coffee... part of me says that this is the aspect of café management that I find most interesting. ”

and I think he ranks among the top five baristas here. He has a scientific approach to coffee which is important to both Taylor Street and Harris and Hoole.

"My interest, and I think this is the big thing about what the whole Antipodean influence brings, has always been in the 'ritual' of coffee.

"I believe this is what customers find so appealing. I wish I could put my finger on it, but I think it's in the relaxed nature of the customer service.

"Don't get me wrong – I'm not saying that jocular familiarity between barista

front of the line, they're going to have a chin-wag with the barista... they know this, they expect it, and they like it.

"Having been a customer myself, and having always valued this aspect of coffee-houses from that side of the counter, I find it valuable now to understand that our customers do like this. By contrast, I know a number of people who tell me that they won't go to certain cafés because they know the coffee is great, but they just don't like the vibe.

"Part of me says that this is the aspect of café management that I find most interesting.

"Looking at it in a crude commercial way – it's the ritual that makes the customer stick. Anyone can crop up next door to you with great coffee, and they do... but it's the ritual that touches their heart as well as their tastebuds."

Nick Tolley gives a slightly embarrassed grin at our challenge that he has just said something which sounds like a Starbucks press release. "Well, Starbucks worked on the same principle, of course – they were selling 'the third place' as much as the coffee.

"Starbucks have led the way in a lot of very important issues – the reason they call their staff 'partners' is because of what they did in giving staff shares and healthcare, in a society where that is such a big issue."

Starbucks is the world example of a corporate attitude to coffee. What has caused so much outrage over Harris and Hoole is the allegation that this chain is a corporate masquerading as an independent.

One of the very earliest pieces of national press coverage centred on this in a big way. It was a sustained attack from a national daily, which persisted in demanding to know why Harris and Hoole did not carry a Tesco logo on its signage. That interview, Nick Tolley told us at the time, was one of the most unpleasant experiences he has ever encountered in business.

Does it still annoy him to be berated in print and online?

There are, he says mildly, bigger aspects of the whole question, which are matters that the coffee trade will understand better than campaigning reporters. Those who run high street coffee bars every day understand the tricky balance of commercial realities and ideals.

"I still remember that interview... I even remember the reporter's name!"

"But does it still grate? Does it still upset me? I don't know what to feel about it... I think it is sad because it has kept some people away from the business, and yes, I do believe there are people who struggle with the idea of Tesco being involved with a coffee shop.

"But I have just as many stories of people who say they found the idea challenging at first, but have accepted it.

"It is also interesting that there are a number of people in the speciality coffee community who have a vested interest in how this will play out... and there have been many encouraging comments from them."

Why does the coffee sector have such an interest?

"Because there is little escaping that

we are going to have a big impact on the whole sector.

"One school of thought sees us as a threat, while the other says that a high tide raises all boats, and that we will take consumers up the value chain."

Harris and Hoole, argues Tolley, is no more of a threat than any other coffee shop, independent or chain, opening up in an area where a coffee business already exists. Every cafe owner knows that competition will always appear – it is the attitude of their response which makes the difference.

"Somebody, and it was a barista, said that if Starbucks closes you down, you have nobody to blame but yourself. Someone else said, recently, that if you don't think you can do something better than the others, you shouldn't be in the business."

(Readers may forgive us for pointing out that this was in our last issue – it was a roaster quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald Good Cafe Guide*).

"When Taylor Street looked for sites, we deliberately went in beside Starbucks, and we are still prepared to do that as Harris and Hoole.

"Starbucks appeared at one site without spitting distance of us, and people said 'you must be really p***ed off'. We said no, there's no point in trying to hide, and by contrast, people will see just how good we are.

"Eight months later, they closed, and we still had the lines outside."

It is not, of course, all one-way traffic. Harris and Hoole is about to experience its first closure, in a town where its arrival caused consternation.

"Yes, we faced a bit of angst when we took on a Clintons site in Whitstable...part of Whitstable was not excited to see us! We are now disposing of that lease.

"We genuinely thought we could bring something new to the area, and I believe sincerely that we could have made a positive contribution... but operationally, it was too challenging."

That is because of the way that Harris and Hoole operates.

"We like to build around geographic clusters, which makes things easier. Each cluster has a central kitchen, from which we can do centrally-made good food, and which also helps us keep a local 'feel'. The ideal is to put the central kitchen to the rear of one café, if we can.

"Whitstable was a satellite too far away. It was not part of a convenient cluster, so we couldn't keep the local promise."

Parts of the trade will gloat.

"Yes, I know there will be comments from certain parts of the trade," returns Tolley equably. "There are companies who, on principle, keep a loss-making shop rather than close it... well, this is as much my money as Tesco's, and I'm not throwing good money after bad!

"The culture of our business is that you should not be afraid of making

“ I pinch myself to confirm that we have retained our values – the reconciliation of scale with core values is going to be a very interesting thing to watch.”



mistakes, but you should be prepared to learn from them quickly. We did Whitstable sincerely, but we couldn't do it the way we wanted.

"Future sites will depend on having the cluster."

Does this mean that if Harris and Hoole turns up in a major provincial city, then it will not do so with a single site – it will arrive as a cluster and open several sites, half a dozen at a time?

"Not in one town!" laughs Tolley. "The Amersham cluster probably covers a thirty-mile radius."

If the rising tide does raise all boats, has Harris and Hoole yet achieved anything in bringing quality coffee to the Tesco masses? There has long been talk about opening Harris and Hoole cafes within Tesco stores.

The idea was always more than just giving Tesco decent coffee, says Tolley. By itself, Taylor Street Baristas was unlikely to make any big headway on to the national high street, and Tesco was unlikely to achieve a decent cafe chain business without a credible partner.

"I love Taylor Street to bits, but it was never going to be a high street business... I have always said that you need a map and a compass to find a Taylor Street, because they're all tucked away down alleyways.

"It was quite serendipitous that I was chatting about this to a friend of a friend, and that conversation led to them introducing us to Tesco. Tesco themselves were never just interested in 'a Tesco coffee shop' – they knew they weren't coffee people, but what they did recognise was the existence of the quality barista market.

"Ten years ago, convenience was the biggest factor in coffee, by a country mile – now, quality is on a par with convenience as the biggest driver. Tesco saw this and realised that they had to get ahead of the game."

However, Harris and Hoole will appear inside Tesco stores, and the biggest incidence of this is just about to occur.

This is the massive new Tesco store in Watford, which property experts have touted as the blueprint for giant stores of the future – the theory is that all the shopping 'sheds' have lost so much business to online ordering, they now have to re-think what they offer under a physical roof. The new Watford store will include a Harris and Hoole, a Giraffe café (now owned by Tesco) and a Euphorium bakery, in which Tesco

has a stake in a very similar way to their deal with the Tolleys.

"At London Bridge, we already have a Harris and Hoole within a Tesco Metro. It's really in a basement below the Tesco, but we have a shopfront at street level, and it's very busy. But the Watford store is just massive."

Such growth has an effect down the supply line, remarks Tolley. As Harris and Hoole, he has stuck with sourcing coffee from Union Hand-Roasted, who supplied the Taylor Street Baristas business.

For a roaster, he observes, getting the work for a rapidly-growing chain may appear to be a great move, but has its challenges.

"We love their philosophy on direct trade – we take a lot of comfort from the way that Union approach farmers.

"Now, Harris and Hoole has gone from zero to twenty shops in a year, and so the operational challenges for Union have been big. It affects the number of farms they have had to find

and follow through with – this could have left them very exposed, and indeed, we actually once were in danger of running out. Such are the challenges of speciality coffee, and in direct trade, those challenges can have an effect that goes right to farm level. Fortunately, there is a great deal of trust between ourselves and Union."

This matter of genuine direct trade is a counter to the accusations that Harris and Hoole is not a genuine independent.

The argument is that if Tesco had exercised its real muscle as a buying machine, it could have forced the Tolleys to source from a giant roaster at peanuts per kilo. As this did not happen, runs the argument, it follows that Harris and Hoole is indeed run on lines more akin to the conventional 'indie'.

"There has been a lot of criticism of Harris and Hoole as a 'faux independent', which hurts a bit," reflects Nick Tolley. "The fact remains that in terms of our approach to coffee and to the business, Harris and Hoole shares a lot with independents.

"Yes, I do pinch myself to confirm that we have retained our values. Yes, we are going to be a very big business, but our aspirations will always be to 'think small'.

"And yes, there will be a lot of tensions over this – the reconciliation of scale with core values is going to be a very interesting thing to watch."

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It is the time for more ethical coffee promotions – next month, the Rainforest Alliance week will be followed by the Fairtrade Foundation's coffee-themed fortnight.

The thing we always complain about is that the ethical certifying organisations rarely put any worthwhile muscle behind supporting the coffee trade - they make many worthy noises, but when it comes down to it, there's little more help than a few downloadable posters.

It is a year since John Steel took over as the top man of Cafedirect – and at the time, he told us that the brand had been too quiet in recent years, and it was time to get back to campaigning. Does this apply to this autumn's promotions?

"It does - Fairtrade has come a long way, but it is the way that Fairtrade and other accreditations behave in the future which will be important to their success. We believe that Fairtrade know that change needs to be made in the way they work and talk... we've certainly been pointing it out to them!

"We ourselves have got into campaigning mode - we said we needed to be more gutsy, and we're now doing things we would not have dared to do before. We've got 140,000 'friends of Cafedirect' online, we've got a lot to campaign about, and we now know that when we come up with topics, these people react.

"These people believe that what we do is important, and that we really are involved in social enterprise. After a year in the job, I'm still amazed that

The next big fight...

Ethical sourcing in coffee has attracted a lot of attention... but it is in the tea sector that the effort is desperately needed, says Cafedirect

people listen to us the way they do - but we have to make more of it.

"We recently asked them about our tea business, and we had a phenomenal response. A little bit of successful campaigning so far has given us the nerve to do more."

How does Cafedirect rate the current interest of the consumer in ethical sourcing matters? Every so often Fairtrade releases the latest figure of people who recognise the Mark - but is this enough?

"There is a danger of greenwash and label-wash. The real answer is not in the Fairtrade label, nor in the Rainforest Alliance label - it is in business behaviour. What you do is more important than what's on your label.

"You can see this in practice in the modern coffee houses of Shoreditch - labels are not as good as people in explaining what the supply chain is doing."

To Steel's great amusement, his brand is based right in the centre of the cool coffee area of East London. Cafedirect may not be seen by these people as a cool brand, but it offers him some wonderful first-hand market research.

"We are a mainstream brand, based



in the middle of the artisan coffee area, and we are enthusiastic about the local artisan coffee houses. We're not seen as part of their community, but essentially, we're both on the same side.

"Foodservice is important in ethical sourcing, in that it is easier to get to the market through the staff who talk to the consumers. If you go into the cafes in Shoreditch, you'll find that they know about their own practices, and if you ask a question with regard to their coffee sourcing, you're going to get an answer.

"In the rest of foodservice, it really is not a big step to move from having the label to talking about the sourcing the way these people can. The Sustainable Restaurant Association is doing well in breaking down the matter of sustainability and ethics so that caterers can see clearly where they could be.

"It is very sad if everyone just sits there with ethical boxes to be ticked and says 'OK, we've done that...' But we have now spoken to more hotels and restaurants who quite clearly are now living and breathing this - they are now clearly interested on a higher level than 'we want a Fairtrade logo'.

"There is a future in this!"

The immediate future in ethical sourcing is likely to be a focus on tea. There has recently been greater attention to the situation of tea farmers and worker - Oxfam did a big report on wages at plantations, and Cafedirect has just produced its own report, based on direct talks with producers.

"Our tea has struggled for years... it's doing better this year, but at a cost to us. The problem is that the coffee market is used to a consumer interest in provenance that continues to drive a more sustainable business model.

"In tea, which needs this interest hugely, the big brands rely on gimmickry rather than provenance. In coffee, the ethic helps the rich tapestry of the scene... you don't get that in tea.

"We were involved in the Oxfam report, we are involved with smallholders and co-ops, and we find that Cafedirect does have a profound and beneficial effect on them... but we have to find a way of doing something very different here, because this is now in a very tough place.

"Fairtrade has had an impact, but Fairtrade is less than ten per cent of the tea market. Value along the supply route needs to be improved."

What that means, says Cafedirect, is that the issue of 'direct trade' is even more vital than in coffee - the tea supply chain just has too many people in the middle taking a cut.

As a result, there is a big mis-match in the finances - the cost of growing tea has risen by 94 per cent in five years, the average cost of living for farmers has risen, and the cost of fertiliser has doubled. Wages for farmhands have gone up, and yet younger hands are leaving the farms for other work, so plucking is left to the older people, who cannot manage it.

However, what the farmers receive has gone up by only 25 per cent... and the price on the supermarket shelf has risen by only 3.8 per cent.

It is just this price pressure, says Cafedirect, which is responsible for tea quality falling - the farmers know perfectly well that 'two leaves and a bud' is the right plucking practice for quality, but if they can't afford to pick the right way, they must fall back on the mechanised 'hedge-trimming' practice, which means that twigs and all kinds of other rubbish ends up in the tea. At worst, the farmers will give up the land for other use.

"Smallholders breaking down the legacy of plantations is the only way to do it," observes John Steel. "You need to change both the balance of power in the supply chain, and the perception of the ethics. We need the big players to change - but for the big players, the incentive to do so is low.

"This is the hardest battleground - this is the next big fight."

This is Scoop Malone, the most active writer and reporter in the hot beverage trade. Nobody reports the trade like Scoop! You can read his work in Coffee House, the trade's favourite news magazine, every month by mail for a subscription of just £25.

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The 'artisan' image of cold drinks for the summer is of hand-made items in which every ingredient is carefully prepared... but in a busy café, a convenient starting point makes a lot of practical sense. For shakes and 'thicker' cold drinks, today's modern magic ingredient is the 'base', which is generally a powder.

Look at these carefully, says barista trainer Paul Meikle-Janney, who demonstrates them for the Da Vinci brand - they really can be a godsend to a coffee-house owner in summer, so it's well worth spending a few minutes to decide which you like to work with.

"For a quick solution for flavoured cold drinks, you'll do well to look at the options for neutral frappe bases.

"If you want a 'thickshake', you have three options: a frappe powder, an ice-cream mix, or ice-cream itself. Many people don't think of ice-cream mix, but the stuff you get in a tetrapak makes a great frappe base! I use the Kerrymaid Angelito ice-cream mix in demonstrations.

"A frappe powder is very easy in that it is a long-life product, and it blends down quickly with a cup of ice - a spoonful of powder, a slug of milk, and a flavour, and there you are. If you don't want to use frappe powder, use the ice-cream powder, which is basically a light vanilla custard thing... which is all ice-cream is, a kind of frozen custard.

"This is all dead easy!"

Responding to a summer's day

As the heatwave comes and goes, the wise cafe owner will already have made plans for an instant summer drinks menu – and it will involve quick-to-make drinks from items already in stock



Heavy branding from Dinkum's Shmoo - but look to its sister products for a working base. And what is the relevance of a Kerry ice-cream powder? It turns out to make a good frappe base!

Which flavours work well?

"Remember - sometimes the simple things are the very best ideas.

"For a thickshake type of drink, a sauce can work best - chocolate sauces and strawberry sauces work well.

"My current favourite is chai syrup - Da Vinci chai as a cold thickshake-type drink has a mature complexity to it...

this is not a kids' drink, it has a thick adult taste. Take a cup of ice, and fill the remaining space with milk; chuck it into a blender with a spoonful of frappe powder, and two or three pumps of chai syrup.

"The flavours to avoid are anything too acidic - be very careful of lemon and limes. Da Vinci has a great high-content passion fruit syrup, which is too sharp to mix with a dairy product,

but then if you use it with lemonade or mineral water, you get a great easy, quick, drink for which you can charge a decent amount.

"I remember years ago working in a French-style café, doing a citron presse - it was essentially nothing more than lemon, mineral water, and a gum syrup, and they charged a fortune for it... but it was a great 'image' drink. The simple ideas can be the best!"

He is not the only one to recommend a chai flavour in a cold summer drink. Not surprisingly, Amanda Hamilton at Drink Me Chai has been experimenting to see how her powders work.

An extremely quick one, she says, is her peppermint and chocolate summer cooler, which uses peppermint chai powder. Put ice in a glass and add fresh mint, then three heaped table-spoons of peppermint chai latte powder into a blender with 300 ml milk and a shot of Monin chocolate syrup - thirty seconds later, pour the result over the crushed ice and mint. There is also a coffee-shop item called a Dirty Chai, which is essentially a shot of espresso combined with a spiced chai tea. This, says Amanda, translates itself very conveniently into an iced drink: "we did a Dirty Chai which combines our pow-

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dered chai with a shot of espresso, an iced green tea, vanilla ice cream and lychee syrup!"

Another product which makes a good neutral base comes from a specialist milkshake supplier - this is Iglooh, the 'ultimate neutral base mix for cold and iced beverages', from Dinkum, the branded shake supplier. Part of the standard Dinkum deal is that it supplies its own branded 'mix in the cup' machine for shakes, but Iglooh can be used on its own as a base.

"We have tested it with strawberry, banana, apple, raspberry, blackberry and mango - we have not yet gone down the route of combining two different flavours but we guess strawberry and banana will work well with it," says the company.



Simple, straightforward, completely uncomplicated... and profitable. A chai frappe from Da Vinci

The use of Iglooh away from the Dinkum machine is interesting. The main Dinkum concept is of a heavily-branded shake offer, with the branding spread across machine, cups and point-of-sale material - it was probably the first to offer café owners such a professionally branded approach to shakes. In the machine, Iglooh with milk and a flavoured syrup, sauce, puree or flavoured ice cream allows for a variety of customised drinks. But Iglooh also works in a conventional blender - so what's the difference? It is in the volume of the blended result, says the company.

"Using a Dinkum mixer will generate a 50 per cent volume increase, whereas a blender would only generate about 20 per cent volume increase."

Dinkum has just changed from plastic tubs to composite tubs for its Shmoo product. "Not only do they look much more upmarket, they promote impulse purchasing through the strong visual impact - and the new tub also clearly shows pictorial mixing instructions which helps to reinforce the correct mixing procedure."

At Beyond the Bean, Joanne Fairweather notes that the distinction between shakes and frappes is still a bit blurred. A frappe originally had some coffee content - now, oddly, some mixes suggest adding an extra shot of espresso, and some include no coffee content at all.

"In this trade, a frappe is a blended iced drink which 'traditionally' has a coffee ingredient, and we have three which do," she remarks. "The frappe has gone the way of having no coffee ingredient as suppliers try to appeal to consumers who don't like coffee, and that's why you now see strawberry and caramel 'frappes' on a neutral base.

"Ideally, a frappe would involve a cold espresso, but that isn't always convenient for a coffee shop to do, and that's why our three coffee ones are helpful."

Many people say that 'neutral' bases are the things to start off with when creating a new drink. However, the Zuma idea turns this on its head - seven flavoured bases are intended to give the operator a head start.

"Yes - and what was very interesting at the Caffe Culture show was the number of people who said to us that this gave them ideas they could actually use in their business, for menu drinks that don't take fifteen minutes.

"Most places can use these bases as a standalone drink. Then, come the summer, you start adding syrups to the base. Vanilla is still the best-seller, and it's the one you can do most things with.

"The cookies and cream base (which has won an international award) was designed to stand up on its own, and it has no coffee content. I played around with it, and one of the things I found was that strawberry worked with it as a kind of 'strawberry cheesecake' drink. A lot of inspiration for drinks can come from desserts - the 'how to turn a dessert into a cold drink' is a big subject.

"You can also enhance the sticky toffee frappe base. Some cafes use banana with it, and you get a banoffee. I would think that nutty flavour would enhance it, too.

"What you really need is for no ingredient to overpower everything else. We recommend a certain ratio of ice to liquid, with milk to bind it, but don't go too far - so you could have an extra shot of espresso for a 12oz drink. You don't normally see a 'strong frappe' as a menu option, but it's perfectly possible."

As usual, Beyond the Bean has produced a booklet of summer drinks ideas, and two of the recipes are entitled 'shakes', but start off with frappe mixes. In which case - why are they not frappes? It is because of the volume of milk.

"You are changing the quantities of ice and milk - more milk, less ice. Having said that, a frappe mix in a shake is perfectly legitimate, it works well, and it means you're using a product you've already got. From my point of view, I think that the extra milk might lose you some colour, but that's because we don't use artificial colourings."

This brings in the interesting question of how well Sweetbird flavoured

Continues on next page...

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Continued from previous page

syrups work with milk shakes. Many flavour brands say the very best way to select a syrup is to taste it in milk, because milk is a good neutral carrier - others say certain flavoured syrups will curdle milk. "We don't have any problems with curdling. There are some flavours, like orange, which can curdle if you overheat your milk - it's the heat in the milk which is the problem."

Another curious recommendation from Beyond the Bean is the use of chocolate for summer drinks.

The method is the conventional hot chocolate one of a paste with hot water, but then using cold milk. This opens up the options of an entire menu from a very light chocolate to a really

thick and dark result.

"There are dozens of options for working with chocolate. Not everyone has a blender for making a frappe, but I've just made an iced chocolate mocha in the same way as a hot chocolate - espresso, coconut syrup, and hot chocolate powder, mixed it into a paste, topped it up with cold milk, and added ice - not a blender in sight!

"Blending isn't convenient for everybody, but like this, you can make up jugs full. And you can devise a cold chocolate menu, going from white to very dark, just the same way as a hot chocolate menu.

"You can have one chocolate menu for winter, and another one for summer."

For cold drinks, don't forget what fruit teas can do...

"With any British café, you know that today may be glorious and tomorrow it may pour," says Paul Maxwell at the London Tea Company. "So, as long as you pick basic ingredients which can be consumed hot or cold, you can be very flexible. Modern tea-bags mean you can look at the forecast, look at the morning, and decide - you can now adapt your menu very quickly and still keep a very good quality."

Using flavoured teas and fruit infusions to create an instant 'special' for a hot day is not difficult. It just takes a little planning in advance so that you know how to approach it.

"Do you brew hot or cold? Depends how you want to do it - a hot brew extracts the flavour quicker, and maybe makes the flavour more pronounced, but then you have to cool it back down. Cold brew is not so intense a flavour, and can take longer. So there is a decision to be made in advance on how you're going to do it.

"For a café, brew at least a litre and a half in advance. Most customers won't ask for it in the morning, so you can prepare it and put it aside for when they ask for it at lunch or mid-afternoon. Then you can just add ice and garnish.

"You can do what some chains have done - brew it and then put it in the chiller for the customer to select and bring to the counter, where you add the ice and garnish. In the States, the way is to put ice in the jars, the top on, shake, and then hand it over."

There are certain fruit teas which work well as a cold drink.

"Through the hot-brew process, you can achieve very good cold drinks with redberry, white tea with elderflower and apricot, or peppermint with spearmint and strawberry.



The modern fruit tea pouch leads to all kinds of summer drink ideas...

turous, try a blackcurrant, raspberry and cinnamon.

"With the redberry hot brew, you get the raspberry and strawberry flavours coming through; brew cold, and you get more tart notes. But don't brew for too long, or teas can go bitter.

"The white tea, brewed hot, will give you the tea and lemongrass notes... cold, the apricot comes through more.

"There are changes in characteristics, so you have to experiment, and make sure you and your staff know what the result is going to be! Just like coffee or smoothies, if the team know what the result tastes like, and know it's good, they'll get behind it and sell it."

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No time to relax for cafe owners...

The London coffee scene is still reckoned to be the best in Europe, and maybe in the world. There is still vast opportunity for running good coffee-shops here - but the model may be changing, and it is becoming all the more important for café owners to look around them carefully, and watch what they are offering and how they are approaching the customer.

The viewpoint comes from one of our best-respected baristas... who, oddly, runs a cafe in what might be considered a suicidally unpromising site.

If 'location' is the mantra of the retail experts, then it's no surprise that most coffee shop owners seek to start up in shopping streets, where there is a good chance of existing footfall.

By remarkable contrast, one of the UK's very best coffee houses is to be found in a long, straight street which has flats and offices along one side, while the other side is dominated by the blankly unattractive back wall of one of the greatest medical institutions of the world - it is the Great Ormond Street children's hospital in London, and opposite it is one single retail business.

This is The Espresso Room, run by one of the UK's top training baristas, Ben Townsend. It is tiny, it is in what retail experts would consider to be entirely the wrong location, and yet the latest edition of the Vespertine Independent Coffee Book called it "the best pound-for-pound" coffee shop in London". Why?

"He's not talking currency, he's talking about punching above our weight!" laughs Ben Townsend. "In space and room... we just don't have any!

"This is a low-footfall site, because we're not in a shopping street, but our queue is fairly constant. We created a coffee market here. We didn't come here because there was an existing market - we made it. Starbucks came in, and closed... a classic case of a recession clearing out the dead wood."

In that same café guide book, it was Townsend himself, as a respected trainer, who was asked to write the general introduction. He wrote:



"London seems to be rapidly developing its own identity within speciality coffee".

This could be taken as a proud bit of chest-thumping... or as a sign of change on the way.

"The London 'coffee identity' is a combination of the milk-driven heritage of the Australians and the New Zealanders, and the lighter roast of Scandinavia. What London has done is put the two together - the London coffee identity fits between the two."

And yet, for all it is said that London is now the coffee capital of the world, there are still business casualties, and difficulties for even the best quality coffee shops. This is why change is in the air.

"It is, very much so. That's why, after several years of experimentation, the business model which is emerging is the food-driven, medium size coffee business. Notes in Covent Garden has done this very well without losing focus (Notes is in the theatre district of London - it combines a quality coffee-



This may be a little ambitious for the average coffee-house on a hot day, but it's certainly classy - this is the flat white served at Fortnum and Mason. That's a real miniature ice-cream cone in the holder clipped to the saucer.

house atmosphere with quality food, a bookshop and a CD shop).

"In Melbourne, you will get great coffee, and restaurant-quality, chef-made, food. Here, you 'expect' to compromise on the standard of the food in a coffee shop.

"And the cup cost, relative to the general cost of living, is cheap in London. The consumer may not think so, but then they haven't benchmarked it. A flat white in Australia is about £4; in South Korea, Japan, or Norway, the price point is about two-thirds of the barista's hourly wage... here, it's a quarter to third. That means either our baristas are overpaid, which they are certainly not, or our drinks are ridiculously cheap."

He also wrote, in the same book, that the pace of change in speciality coffee has led to the danger of the trade outpacing the public's expectations, and outpacing the trade's own ability to communicate its new offerings effectively.

"Technically, the consumer does not know the difference between an Americano and a filter, and here we are, offering them a siphon or an Aeropress, and expecting them to choose! We are expecting the customer to choose between our own esoteric methods!

"What we have to do is take the consumer with us, and that will take patience and the right attitude. If you think the public are there to be 'educated', you're going to lose them - the public doesn't work for us, we work for them, and this applies to every café, and every single transaction. The word 'relationship' is bandied around a lot, but at café level, this is where it really happens.

"What is remarkable about the cafe trade now is that you now have to get everything right. I don't know of many kinds of business where you have to excel at every single aspect of what you do... there is now no room for slacking in the coffee business. The reason that people entering the business don't realise this is because they see cafes as a consumer sees them.

"This is hard work on behalf of the coffee industry - but it's meaningful, and it's enjoyable.

"It's certainly far more so than doing telesales about double glazing...!"

There are usually two kinds of café guide book - there are the ones written by enthusiasts, which can often contain all kinds of incredible drivel, and there are the ones by people who have a connection with the beverage trade... which occasionally are no better.

And what they tell you about cafes can vary radically - it is quite true that one beverage trade body stopped talking to us because we had the nerve to suggest that their café reviews were too vague and generalist to be of any practical use!

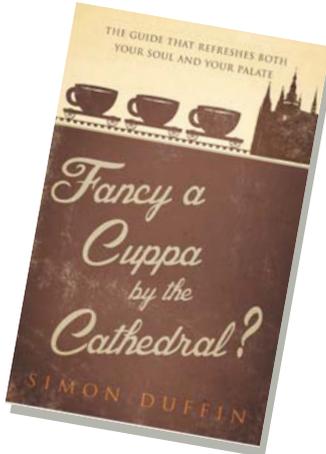
But... a guide book written by an enthusiast rather than a trade expert can actually do us all some good. It is the 'how others see us' syndrome, and it can often guide the professionals to how better to serve the consumers.

Fancy a Cuppa By The Cathedral? is a new e-book by Simon Duffin of Yorkshire, and it steers a very entertaining fresh path between café guide and tourist guide. The author, who is the author of two previous 'cuppa' books, is an enthusiast on cathedrals, and visited 110 of them, reporting on each from either a secular or religious viewpoint, depending on which attitude brought out the best story.

But then, just like any tourist would, he went looking for tea or coffee, and brought very much the same attitude to reporting on the cafes which are reasonably close to each cathedral. In this, he has picked a genuinely interesting selection of tea-rooms and coffee-houses, but better still, he actually did some research - he has done his best to speak to the owners of every tea room and coffee shop he visited, and has taken the trouble to look into the history of each business.

The stories of the cathedrals are fascinating in themselves - which one holds Queen Victoria's bricklaying trowel and mallet? Which has a prayer book made by prisoners of war, out of rice paper? Which features a sculpture of the Virgin Mary based on a girl the sculptor saw waiting at a bus top (and she's still alive!) In which cathedral did Dr Who sign the visitors' book? Why is a pomegranate left on Catherine of Aragon's tomb in Peterborough on the anniversary of her death? Which cathedral has a stained glass of an angel with a football rattle? (Perhaps not a difficult one - think of the north-west city with two cathedrals!)

Cappuccino at the cathedral



A guide book written by an enthusiast can do us good...

It is when the author turns his attention to beverages that things get equally entertaining, beginning some quite reasonable observations - there are, he suggests, four basic types of tea room in the UK today. There is a 'new wave', trying to take tea where coffee has recently gone; there is the vintage or retro, 'run by funky, slightly edgy young women, often harking back to the atmosphere of the 1920s-40s'; there is the 'historical', typically in a fantastic mediaeval building, but with a variable attitude to beverages - the writer says he walks out when he finds the best they can do is supermarket tea. The fourth, he observes, is the 'caff' - 'I long for the day when these places go out of business'.

Another couple of interesting observations, which will not come as a great surprise to the trade, are that he rarely expects to go for a coffee in a place

which styles itself a tea-room - and yet, he often finds a coffee house the best place for a tea. It is, says the author, now actually easier to find a decent cup of coffee in most UK towns than it is to find a good cup of tea. (Indeed, some of the cities reviewed in this book are dismissed with the damning phrase: 'sadly, we didn't find anywhere we can recommend for tea in Aldershot' (or Ayr or Guildford, or a few other places!)

A good feature is the 'what's the story?' paragraph which follows each café entry. This is where the writer speaks to either the owner or the head barista in each café, and although we confess to raising eyebrows a couple of times at complimentary references to certain suppliers, the various tales are certainly entertaining - he was guided to 'the best decaf he's ever had' was at Really Rather Good in Bury St Edmunds (but he doesn't say whose coffee it was), and we enjoyed the discovery of Mars Bar scones in Derry.

We rather liked the sound of Guinness and chocolate cake, and are intrigued to find that it crops up on menus from the northern isles to the west country. And very loyally to its local sporting son, the Beech Tree in Dunblane created an Andy Murray commemorative scone!

This may not be a guide for the coffee geek - but it quite certainly is superbly entertaining, and as such it does a lot more for the image of our trade than many 'specialist' books.

Fancy a Cuppa By the Cathedral?
By Simon Duffin, published by Troubador Publishing.

eISBN: 9781783068685.



A lot has been said about the Guardian newspaper's new coffee house in East London. Its theme, reasonably enough, is 'communication'. It's a 'data-driven' coffee house in which their journalists can do interviews, and where each table has an i-Pad showing the Guardian's digital content. It's a pleasant enough working space, although some reviewers have branded it 'sterile', and the coffee and baristas are provided by the Nude roastery, no less. One major feature is this big four-screen data board which shows, among other things, the make-up of the day's blend, and even the day's coffee sales. And tweets from the Guardiancoffee hashtag are displayed, too... generally, they say things like 'great coffee today at the Guardian cafe'. One very famous men's glossy magazine claims to have discovered that these tweets are 'moderated', by having posted several mischievously satirical ones which appeared on the wall board... and then, remarkably, disappeared.

The Attibassi coffee shop in Chichester may now be expanding, having become the latest brand to prove the theory that a retail site can be extremely useful for supporting trade distribution.

"We have been distributing Attibassi in the UK since 2010, mainly through an online trade website," Marc Perry of Fiandre tells us. "Last year we decided a flagship Attibassi coffee shop would be a good way to promote the coffee and get people drinking it, and this is starting to look like the strongest business module for us... there are plans to expand next year.

"The coffee has been very popular in the shop - we have been here a year now and it has gone from strength to strength. The blend we use, Crema D'oro (a 70 per cent Arabica certified blend) is a very smooth coffee, and has the flavour to really come through in milk-based drinks.

"As a result of this we are looking to expand with both new distributors and direct supply, and also more Attibassi coffee shops."



Strange goings-on captured on in-store CCTV images

It's amazing what your CCTV picks up, isn't it – Karl Purdy, the owner of Coffee Angels in Dublin, scored a hundred thousand views on YouTube when he posted images of someone walking off with his tip jar.

When his staff noticed the missing jar, they called Karl, who reviewed his security images. The film clearly shows a man talking on his phone by the counter while the barista makes coffee, with her back to him – the man can be seen picking up a silver jug and placing it in his bag, turning and leaving. (We have obscured his face - on YouTube, Karl did not!)



The café owner said he posted the footage online "as a warning to other cafes in the area, so they can keep an eye out." He suggested that the thief may be making a habit of this, and indeed two other coffee houses in the area responded that they had also suffered tip thefts.

In an equally fascinating piece of CCTV record, a tea-based haunting has been reported in a Whitstable shop, which has also published its footage on YouTube. The film appears to clearly show a box of tea moving itself from a shelf and hanging in mid-air, right next to a shopper who seems oblivious to it.

When a lady visiting a coffee shop in Glendora, California, saw two masked men with guns, she called the police, and a full armed force turned out... to discover that the two suspects were actors taking part in a film shoot, and the 'weapons' were soft pellet guns. When commanded to drop his gun, one terrified actor froze, and was unable to do so, which police later pointed out could have ended up in him being shot. The filmmakers had forgotten about getting a permit and informing the police of what they were going to: "that's a kinda important thing to remember," said the local police chief.

We have often pointed out the difficulties in getting tea and coffee taken seriously on TV. The most recent experience comes from the well-known barista trainer Robert Henry, who was invited on a TV personality's show to talk about coffee, and spent 40 minutes showing the directors all about espresso, grinders, and milk texturing. "Then the director pulled out a camping stove and whisk, and asked us to make coffee," he told us. "We refused." Admirably, the star herself actually said to the director: "how can we just do this s**t, when Robert's just showed us all this great coffee?"

A nice little project by a coffee shop in Shreveport, USA, is Grounds for Hounds, a fundraiser for an animal health cause. The event involves a general animal get-together in the



Kaldi

café, and is not the first the café has run – believe it or not, it used to run a dog-owners' time called 'yappy hour'!

In a remarkable trademark case, a French company has attempted to claim rights to the name 'rooibos', which is generally regarded as a generic name for the bush 'tea' grown in South Africa. Three-quarters of the South African rooibos exports come to Europe. This is not the first such case – there was one in America in 2005, and another in France just last year. This time, the South African Rooibos Council had to move quickly to counter the French trademark application, which involved a clever protectionist trick – it found out about the application with only four days before the hearing, and then discovered that objections to a trademark request in France can only be submitted in French!

Stay one step ahead of the season

It may seem like a way off, but before too long Autumn will be with us. It's time to start thinking about refreshing those menus.



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