

# Boughton's COFFEE HOUSE



Scoop Malone, the trade's finest reporter, brings you another magazine full of trade news and issues!

Caffe Culture Preview 2014

## Campaigns against coffee shops begin to grow

A local referendum has supported a campaign to stop the 'uncontrolled growth' of coffee shops and similar food-based businesses in a Sussex town.

The Arundel 'neighbourhood plan' seeks to restrict the conversions of retail units into food and drink use. It is reported to be one of thirteen such plans being developed across the country.

Among its policies, the Arundel plan includes "resisting proposals for the change of use of existing retail premises in the primary shopping frontage to any other use until such a time that the number of A1 uses comprises at least 80 per cent of the total number of units".

This, say the plan organisers, reflects the view of local people that "too many food and drink outlets in the town centre will undermine the function of the town centre – to provide shops and services for the local community".

Elsewhere, the developer of a proposed redesigned shopping centre in St Albans has promised to listen to similar concerns.

The local civic society says that the current tenants of an historic retail property at the front of the site are due to move inside the redeveloped centre, and has raised concerns over who the next tenants might be.

A spokesman for the developer responded to them with the interesting phrase that the premises "won't become a coffee shop".



This building is, believe it or not, a coffee shop. It is Café Dreamy, in south Korea, built as a two-storey cafe in the likeness of a Rolleiflex camera. It is a twin business, in that it also includes a camera museum. Among the furnishing details are paper towel dispensers made to look like rolls of film.

## Accreditations 'not just a prize', says BSA

The Beverage Standards Association café accreditation scheme has a new leader – and he's a café operator. Gordon Howell, of the Northern Academy of Coffee and the Attic and Harlequin coffee houses in York, will now be the front man of the assessments which seek to recognise best practice in the beverage world. One of his first jobs will be to underline the value of the project.

As the BSA itself readily agrees, the scheme continues to be misunderstood by many people.

"We have heard that some people still they think of it as 'a prize', not as an 'accreditation!', chairman Martyn Herriott told us. "We now have to lead with the explanation of a 'trade accreditation'."

This is an extremely realistic observation – in a trade which is plagued by countless awards schemes, many of them quite meaningless, the BSA almost certainly failed to explain its scheme well when it was launched.

The concept is of a grading system, borrowed from the Michelin Star prin-

ciple, but judged in 'cups', in the BSA's terminology.

The theory is that the number of 'cups' displayed outside a café should advise customers that the venue has been assessed by mystery shoppers and found to be brewing its drinks in accordance with the trade's idea of best practice.

Unfortunately, the real meaning got lost, perhaps because the BSA did also give awards, for 'best espresso', and so on.

"We shall continue with the best-drink prizes, because people do like these things," Martyn Herriott told us. "However, we will now concentrate

more on the assessments, with new ideas such as 'raising the bar'.

"This is for those café owners who have asked: 'how do I get from three cups up to four?' However, we have realised that they did not come back to us to ask for guidance on this.

"So we shall bring in a new concept of helping those who wish to become even better, and guiding them to the training which will help them do it.

"We will have more than 30 assessors out judging this year – we're still the only trade association that goes out and does mystery shopping to measure trade standards!"

## Big trade response to Parkinson's awareness appeal

There has been a remarkable response from coffee houses to a promotion in support of Parkinson's Awareness Week – 250 cafes across the UK responded to the offer of a free campaign pack in which Vegware, the eco-cup supplier, provided 800 branded napkins and an awareness poster.

The crime writer Ian Rankin, inventor of the Rebus character, was invited to support the campaign and appeared at Kiki's Café in Edinburgh to speak about it and to call for consideration for possible sufferers in coffee houses and other busy public places.

He said: "people can think that older folk are 'just a bit doddery', and in fact, if they have Parkinson's, it can take them a lot more time to do things... and if those around them think they should be doing them faster, that will just make the person more stressed. Just be a bit more appreciative of the problem, and give these people a bit more time."



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Costa has reportedly apologised to a busker in Uckfield, Sussex, for refusing him a cup of tap water on a hot day. The musician told his local paper that he had forgotten to take a bottle of water and asked Costa Coffee for some tap water, and even showed his loyalty card - but was refused for not buying anything to go with it. The chain later said it had reminded the store that policy is to provide tap water on request.

There has apparently been a big row in Hartlepool over an alcohol licence-extension application by a cafe within a cemetery. The cafe wanted to serve alcohol after 6.30, for gardening talks and wine-tasting events in summer - a councillor said a cemetery should be 'a place of peace, not entertainment'.

Society Café of Bath is opening a second site, opposite the Guildhall. Owner Adrian Campbell-Howard says the development is because his first site is so busy.

An Israeli coffee business in New York has invented an app called Cups, which has grouped 28 cafes together in offering unlimited drinks to subscribers who pay around \$45 a month. The aim is to achieve 200 participating cafes in the city. The app developers say that there are several safeguards against a subscriber abusing the service, such as a time limit between purchases. The cafes receive around half their usual price for a coffee, but apparently like the system because the customers

tend to buy a lot of add-on impulse items.

A 'coffee shop rebrand' in Holmfirth has reportedly achieved £54,000 of takings in its first week: a pub which has been re-launched as the Old Bridge Inn and Coffee House took about as third as much again as the previous record over the past fourteen years. The new food and beverage operation apparently contributed nearly £49,000.

Origin Coffee of Cornwall has created home-brewing courses, run by head trainer Dave Jones. It covers brewing methods other than espresso, and examines the performance of different brew methods.

The newest range of coffee machine cleaner products has come from Diversey, the producer of 'cleaning solutions for business', from hospitals to catering. The Suma Cafe range carries Halal and Kosher certifications (this apparently is because many cleansing products have some animal ingredient).

A midlands Costa, at the Roadchef services in Norton Canes, expects to serve the equivalent of the entire population of Birmingham this year. It is, in volume, Costa's biggest site.

Inmates at Brixton London prison are to learn coffee-making skills in the new Bad Boys' Bakery café, an extension of the bakery project begun with help from chef Gordon Ramsay. One former inmate is already running a street food business on the outside.



When was the last time you saw a customer puffing away at a coffee-house counter? This picture was taken in mid-April, at the Vape coffee house and e-cigarette bar in east London. Curiously, they do not just sell e-cigarettes, but rent them - you can hire an e-cigarette at £15 per hour, to puff on while having a coffee. The e-cigarette concept relies on a vast number of flavoured 'e-liquids', ranging from Cuban tobacco to absinthe, bubblegum and even custard. Coffee is by Union Hand-Roasted (but not yet available as an e-cigarette).

## Latte art might never be the same again...



What's odd about this latte art? Yes – it's in colour! It's by Alex Sargeant of Strangers coffee house in Norwich. "I simply used liquid food colouring with steamed milk added," he told us. "You have to choose the right one though, as some colours are very acidic and will curdle the milk."

Starbucks has reported reduced losses for its British operation - down to just £20,465,123 in the year to 29 September. Turnover dropped to £399,405,183 from £413,392,826 the year before, its first ever drop in sales. Starbucks reported gross profit up 13% to £79,759,753 and gross margin up to twenty per cent, a rise of almost three per cent - however, of course, Starbucks has its own inter-company payments, which change everything! The number of stores decreased to 549 at the year-end, of which 157 are licensed and 57 franchised; the number of staff fell by around a thousand to 7,726. We are sorry to report that the pay of the highest-paid director also fell, to a mere £268,582.

## Londoners vote for coffee shops

The London Coffee Stop awards, voted for by 18,000 Londoners, have named White Mulberries, of St Katherine's Dock as the city's top coffee house.

The 'best new coffee shop' was The Wren, at St Nicholas Cole Abbey, a church destroyed in the great fire of 1666 – the site was restored by the architect Sir Christopher Wren.

Believe it or not, there were awards for London's Coolest Baristas (Black Box) and London's Coolest Coffee Shop on Social Media (Four Corners) – those titles were not to be taken entirely seriously, we were advised.

An interesting section was the 'best coffee shop for out-of-office workers'... the chap who thought up the awards is the author of *Out of Office*, who works from coffee shops and runs a website for people "who want to live an awesome life without having to go to an office for forty hours every single week." The winner was Timberryard of Covent Garden.

Square Mile was the best roaster, and Harris and Hoole the best chain. Look Mum, No Hands was the best cycle cafe, and Artisan of Putney had the best cakes.

## The Neapolitan culture of coffee - now available here in the UK!



This is the Muki mug - when filled with hot liquid, it displays photos on an e-paper screen. A Finnish roaster invented it with an advertising agency; the heat of the liquid powers the display long enough to receive an image uploaded from a smartphone.

A group of artists propose to open Honest Coffee, a non-profit coffee shop, in Manchester after achieving their investment target through the Kickstarter website. The Future Artists Co-operative group want to open a cafe and working space in an empty shop, and had already raised £15,000, three-quarters of what they needed – they now expect to open in July.

The West Bromwich Albion football club want to open a coffee shop – it owns the nearby Hawthorns pub, which has become dilapidated and vandalised since its closure, but has now lodged plans for a drive-through coffee shop.

Swedish students have developed a biometric payment system that works by the customer placing their palm on a screen. They came up with the idea after realising how long card transactions can take. Fifteen stores and cafes on their campus now use the system.

An unusual coffee importer has cropped up in Yeovil – it is Tri UK, the UK's largest triathlon equipment retailer and mail order specialist, which has its own Kona coffee house, formed after owner Chris Boon was training in Hawaii and enjoyed the coffee. He says that the café is rare in offering pure single-origin Kona, not as part of a blend.

The *Telegraph* has reported the success of a Costa branch manager, who saved £250 a month into his employer's share plan for five years – when the scheme matured this year, the value of the shares had risen to £94,599.

The Welsh coffee roaster Ferrari is to open a coffee school to prepare students for the City & Guilds examination. The company is moving to larger premises, where it intends to open a retail outlet and allow members of the public to see the roasting operations.

The Old Stables tea rooms, Hay on Wye, has won a gold award at the Countryside Alliance awards – Rachel and Mike Carnell won the 'local food' category of the Welsh regional awards. The Old Stables is a re-opened version of a café that a relative used to run.

## FOR SALE

Bunn Trifecta - bought last year, but spankin' bright and ready for a new home. Price: £ 2,450.00 + vat. There is a tea brewer cylinder as well as one for coffee. Colour is a Cool Grey (shade number 49)

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ianb@coffee-house.org.uk



*The St Austell Brewery, which recently launched its own in-house Brewer & Bean coffee brand, has now created a branded coffee at a hotel in Newquay. The coffee shop is separate from the hotel's existing bar and restaurant. The brewery offers in-house and takeaway coffee at its managed pubs, and now reportedly has plans for more coffee-dedicated outlets.*

## Nespresso warned about its attitude to compatible products

**Nespresso France has finally bowed to pressure about its attitude to compatible coffee capsules – the brand may now be forced to accept that compatible capsules are something which consumers may be allowed to choose.**

A French court has ruled in favour of two other brands who argued that it is unfair practice for Nespresso to use labels that warn consumers not to use other brands' pods, and to keep modifying machines to make compatible products work badly. In response, Nespresso has promised to 'lift the barriers to entry and development'.

The agreement applies only in France, where the company has more than three quarters of the market, but may affect the industry worldwide, because there are similar cases going on in other countries.

Nestlé, which owns Nespresso, reached an agreement with France's anti-trust authorities to extend the guarantee on its single-serving coffee machines to customers who use pods other than its own.

"It appears that Nespresso may have abused its dominant position by tying the purchase of its capsules to that of its coffee machines, with no fair justification, de facto ousting rival capsule makers," said the Autorité de la Concurrence.

It has been pointed out that while Nestle has spent a fortune in fighting these cases, it has lost a great many of them.

The market for capsules compatible with nespresso machines has been one of the coffee trade's biggest growth sectors in recent years – this ruling may mean that even more coffee brands may enter the market.

The daily press has had fun with the idea that EU bureaucracy has extended to coffee brewing – a new energy-saving rule says that domestic filter coffee machines will have to go into standby mode five minutes after the pot has finished brewing. Machines with non-insulated jugs will be allowed 40 minutes. The anti-Europe campaigners have criticised the EU for 'condemning us to cold coffee', but in fact, the bureaucrats might have done us a favour... the trade could make great positive publicity of the question of how long filter coffee can be left – this Euro ruling could finally mean the end of stewed coffee in pubs!

Shoreditch Grind will have a sister brand, Soho Grind. This will be an all-day and late night espresso bar – in the evening, a wall slides back to reveal a hidden bar serving a cocktail list that will include the espresso martini and, oddly, a Hot Flat White Russian.

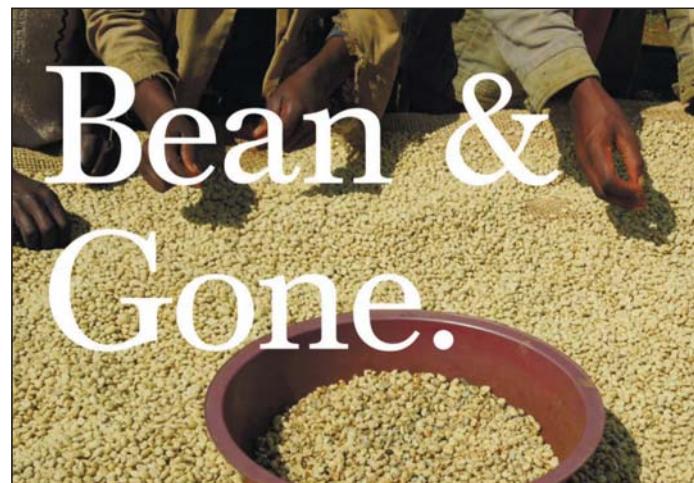
Also in London, Soho now has a radio station broadcasting from a coffee shop. Customers are invited to come in for coffee and watch the radio team in action at Soho Radio London in Great Windmill Street.

The Conti espresso machine distributorship has moved to a new warehouse in Royston, Herts.

Coffee Republic has reported that six new UK franchisees have signed up in the last quarter. The most recent opening was in Slough.



*This handy customer service was spotted by Claire of Breckland Orchard soft drinks – at the Rodmersham cafe, free air for cyclists who buy a drink.*



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This year's London Coffee Festival has reported attendance figures which have taken the trade quite by surprise. Over the course of four days, the event drew 22,000 visitors, of which a quite remarkable 8,034 registered themselves as being trade visitors.

This figure was so surprising that we invited the organisers to confirm it.

"We are sure, and have double-checked," came the response. "The number of industry professionals quoted excludes the 834 consumers who bought tickets for the Thursday and Friday, and includes those scanned on the door with trade tickets, the SCAE guest list, and those who got trade tickets on the door."

"We take great care in trying to separate the two 'trade' days from the two consumer days, and we only give the registration promotional code to those we feel are genuinely in the industry."

As was expected, a big draw at the event was the final stages of the UK barista championships, in which Maxwell Colonna-Dashwood of Bath took the title - he is of course also a former holder of the title.

He took the title as a clear winner on 669.5 points, well ahead of Dale Harris (643), and then Estelle Bright of Caravan. The reigning champ, John Gordon, was fourth, ahead of Joe Meagher of Flat Caps Coffee, just half a point ahead of a very notable performance by Don Altizo of Baxter Storey - a barista from a contract catering company taking sixth place in the national championships may be thought to bear out what his employer has been saying about the rising standard of coffee in some sectors of the contract world.

Maxwell's café, Colonna and Small, took several titles this weekend - he also took the prizes for best espresso and best cappuccino of the finals, while his colleague Sebastian Stephenson became the Brewer's Cup champ.



In the other related contests held at the festival, the UK Coffee In Good Spirits title went to David Jameson of Union Hand Roasted Coffee.

This is the contest in which entrants may use alcohol, and he created the Orange Custard Martini, described as "a way to capitalise on some of the lesser-used, dormant bottles which lurk malevolently at the back of the shelf!"

# Many curious new products at the London Coffee Fest

An all-robusta speciality coffee, the first specialist decaf range, a whisky coffee, and the British debut of the Steampunk



Dhan Bahadur Tamang, who managed to win two separate latte art contests in one weekend!

It features Advocaat, Grand Marnier and espresso shaken together with Madagascan chocolate flakes and served with an orange zest rim. The result is a thick, viscous custardy body with the underlying acidity of the coffee balanced by the sweetness of the liqueurs. (There is no actual custard content, so far as we can tell!)

The Union Hand Roasted prize of a trip to origin, presented to the best-performing barista making a first appearance in competition, was won by Imogen Ludman from Six Eight Kafe in Birmingham.

"Her signature theme was 'Imogen's Sweet Shop,'" we were told by Devinder Dhallu, the owner of Six Eight. "The espresso was mixed with sherbet and with candy floss made during the routine. The contents were stirred with homemade cascara lollipops that had been dipped in cascara and then coated with cherry flavoured sugar.

"Cascara is like a herbal tea made from the dried coffee cherry (of which the seed is the actual coffee bean). Each cascara tastes different, very similar to how different coffee beans taste. It is highly caffeinated and so it is like rocket fuel... we will be serving it at the café brewed as cold brew and seeing how it goes!"

Perhaps the most notable individual performance of the weekend, but one

which was missed by all the organisers until we pointed it out to them, was that of Dhan Bahadur Tamang of the Caracoli coffee house in Hampshire.

As the UK's reigning latte art champ, he had entered again for the official latte art contest which was being run at the festival, offering the winner a trip to Rimini to compete in the world finals. However, elsewhere in the show was a side attraction on the Cravendale milk stand, offering a trip to coffee origin in Peru.

Without the organisers of either contest noticing... he won both!



One of the major achievements of this year's UK championship was the standard of judging, remarked organiser Steve Leighton.

"The thing that made me most proud was that the judges made the right decision, a correct decision, and that everybody knew it. The judging was absolutely impeccable. Not one competitor has said anything against the judges... and that's an achievement to be proud of!"

This may sound an odd thing to claim as an achievement, but as in many contests, in sport and business, the standard of barista contest judging has long come in for criticism. There have been allegations of favouritism, of nods and winks between judges and entrants, and inconsistencies in scoring.

This year, said Leighton firmly, the judging was clearly of a high and consistent standard, which all entrants observed and respected.



Several fascinating new product launches were held at the festival, and one of the most unusual was from Lavazza. Almost all Italian coffee is a blend of arabica and robusta, giving the country's distinctive espresso taste... but surprisingly, Lavazza came up with a single-origin coffee, the limited-edition Kafa from Ethiopia.

There is a story behind it, we learned.

It seems that Giuseppe Lavazza himself travelled to Ethiopia, where he became fascinated by this forest-grown coffee, of which relatively low quantities are grown. Believing that the growers of the region were doing an important job which should be preserved... he bought the entire crop.

Lavazza reckoned that the coffee is too good to be blended, and so for the



Imogen Ludman, winner of the Union prize for the best performance by a newcomer to the barista championships

first time marketed a branded single-origin product.

It is not expected that Lavazza will go any deeper into single-origin coffee, but to mark this one, the brand then hosted a 'coffee experience' for members of the Slow Food UK Chef Alliance, with a view to giving several top chefs a lesson in great coffee!

An extremely unusual coffee was available for tasting from



Coffee 'custard' - the winning Good Spirits drink by David Jameson

Roundsquare, the Ayrshire - this was whisky coffee, in which the flavouring was achieved by using a combination of smokery and aged whisky casks. The coffee is a Peruvian, organic and shade-grown at high altitude. The Scottish roaster purpose-built a smoker, and experimented with various types of wood as fuel until they discovered that using oak chippings soaked in Arran single malt gave the coffee a suitably distinctive flavour.

Rather unusually, the roaster is proposing to sell the beans in glass bottles.

Two quite defiant coffee arguments could be heard at the London festival, and curiously, they were at stands

  
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barely ten feet apart. One was an argument in favour of robusta, and the other was probably the first-ever true 'branded range' of decaffeinated coffee.

There has been a recent renewal of interest in robusta coffee as a decent product in its own right, instead of just a cheap filler for espresso blends - one of the American coffee writers recently published an impassioned argument for more respect to be given to the bean, and now the Black Sheep roaster has come up with its all-robusta coffee, which is already brewed and sold at its own café in east London.

"You look around the coffee trade and see a lot of well-dressed people and fine machines... all doing the same things!" the brand's Max Dubiel told us. "But robusta has a lot of attributes that arabica does not have - it has a higher protein level, so it mixes better with milk, and also with soy milk."

"It has less seasonality than arabica, so it is more consistent in quality than your average light-roast coffee. It's easier to mess an arabica up, but not this - it's a very forgiving coffee. We have even created a good Black Sheep robusta martini!

"Visitors have been surprised at this concept. It's interesting that many of them looked us up specifically to come and try this, and what they were expecting was something that tasted like rubber tyres... they didn't expect something tasting like dark chocolate!"

"But we have had one or two saying 'it's not my taste', and we accept that."

The coffee has already been road-tested to some degree.

"In our café in Camden high street, we have customers who know nothing about arabica or robusta - but they do like what we serve. We have tested this product on our own customers, and we are now getting three or four new trade customers a month."

The new decaffeinated range was being shown by Guy Wilmot, well known for his work with the Sea Island exotic coffee imports, and for launching the Marley rastafarian coffee from Jamaica. The new Decadent Decaf features single-origins from Ethiopia, Costa Rica, Indonesia and Kenya, and an espresso blend. It is all decaffeinated using the Swiss Water method.

"We realised that nobody else had really addressed the question of decaf. The one problem we have come up against is that it's not a cheap coffee... so we shall start it off as we did with Sea Island and with Marley coffee, launching it in retail... we'll get our retail footsoldiers working first."

"This could be the mouse that roared!"

An eye-catching sight was Mulmar's introduction of the Steampunk machine from America, demonstrated by Walter Bombeck, the inventor's brother. This extremely unusual



*Two defiantly-unusual launches - the all-robusta and the all-decaf range*

machine won the American trade's 'best new product' award.

The concept is based on the siphon brewer, which is highly-respected as a brewing method and certainly visually fascinating, but is criticised by some baristas as being time-consuming and perhaps inconsistent. The inventor, who owns both a café and a roastery, believed that his customers would simply not wait for the time a siphon takes, and wondered whether he could effectively combine the principle with the attributes of a programmable espresso machine.

The result uses four brewing groups instead of the siphon's usual one chamber, and allows for brewing parameters to be recorded and 'remembered'.



*The Steampunk*

"What we have now is an automated siphon machine," Walter Bombeck told us. "It is fully programmable for the temperature, volume and brewing time, and the timing of the agitation. It is the same principle as the siphon, except that the inconsistencies have now been removed."

The machine uses a tamper, which a normal siphon does not - but this had to be a specially-built long-handled tamper which reaches down inside the vertical brewing chambers.

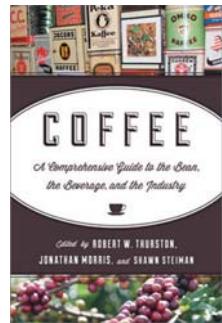
It has been speculated that a barista should be able to turn out drinks at the rate of around one a minute.

# The world of coffee - in just 63 chapters!

Every time you think that no more can be written on our subject, up pops yet another 'definitive guide', and the latest is "Coffee: A Comprehensive Guide to the Bean, the Beverage, and the Industry", a real heavyweight of 400 pages or so.

This work is compiled by three known names – Robert W. Thurston is a professor of history with a track record of writing about coffee, who is also a coffee shop owner in Ohio. Shawn Steiman is a coffee scientist in Hawaii, and Jonathan Morris is a professor of modern history in the UK who writes and lectures on coffee matters.

It could be argued that sixty-three chapters is a bit much - but the authors do point out that they consider the work to be 'a handbook', and so using the book as a dip-in becomes perfectly legitimate. One problem with the format is that because there is a vast number of contributors, all of whom are essentially writing essays, the whole thing can get a bit wordy, and some sections are a bit on the pompous side, as you might expect from such chapter titles as 'the ecology of taste', and 'speciality coffee and class in the United States'.



The title 'the competing languages of coffee - signs, narratives and symbols' is an exception... this is by one of the true greats of coffee tasting and writing, Kenneth Davids of America, and is a witty and informative look at the images and language used to sell speciality coffee over the last fifty years, and includes such jaw-dropping insights as the practice of certain brands having marketed coffee under the name of a specific farm or estate, for greater credibility... when that estate is fictional, and doesn't exist.

There are good debates of terms such as 'organic' - it is pointed out that some coffee farms which are not completely 'organic' are still teeming with wildlife, and that the judicious use of synthetic compounds is not harmful. In principle, argues a writer, everyone is for 'organic coffee', which is coffee produced without chemicals' - but then everything is made of chemicals, so it is the question of which chemicals, and how they are produced and used, which is the important thing.

(Elsewhere it is noted that organic coffee farmers have the highest levels of productivity. Organic Fairtrade-certified farmers have the lowest productivity, but receive the highest farm-gate price... and yet their overall profitability is lower.)

There is an interesting suggestion on the link between climate change and the coffee-borer pest - shade-grown coffee areas, it is suggested, can achieve a reduction of 34 per cent in the rate of increase of the pest, and thus, shade-grown coffee seems to be the best currently-available strategy to combat the borer.

Insights into the situations at origin are fascinating, as the one provided by a Guatemalan farmer, who says "the government has never provided any policy or support for coffee farmers who want to invest or succeed", and also refers to civil war guerrillas, who would demand 'war taxes' – maybe the whole crop. With regard to certified coffee, he makes one comment which really should make people sit up: "we have no certification, but are working on it. Corruption is everywhere in Guatemala, and certifying coffee is no exception..."

The current trend for 'direct trade' receives a good argumentative chapter, not least when put against another chapter which suggests that Fairtrade farmers actually receive lower farm-gate prices than non-Fairtrade farmers. "The coffee industry has been eating itself from the bottom up for many decades, creating a dysfunctional economy that discourages quality production, suppresses upward mobility for the farmer, and puts roasters in a position where they are marketing style rather than substance. Direct trade is a solution to this tragic reality."

This is a massive book, in which some sections work better than others. Typically, some producer country profiles are interesting, and some consumer country profiles are tedious.

The book also has its pseudos-corner moments - "the third wave defines the barista as studied educator". Good heavens!

But when it works, as it does the majority of the time, this book works very well indeed.

\*

"*Coffee: The bean, the beverage, and the industry*", is published by Rowman and Littlefield, at £34.95. ISBN 978-1-4422-1440-8



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There are several exhibitions competing for the attention of the café trade; the longest-established, Caffe Culture, returns to Olympia in London this month, and presents products and services to the trade in the traditional manner of trade shows.

And there lies the difference. Within the space of a few weeks, we have the London Coffee Festival, still seen as the new-kid show although three years old, followed by the Hotellympia show for the catering trade, followed by Caffe Culture.

This year, the London fest drew a quite astonishing figure of over twenty thousand, the majority of whom were consumers enjoying a hip and cool East London event in an extremely crowded atmosphere of coffee, food, and very loud music.

(We were worried about the DR Wakefield stand, which was attempting to present serious coffee talks barely fifteen feet from the ear-splitting artisan barista stand... but, Wakefield reports, they managed it: "it was very loud indeed, but our master classes were very well received and attended. We were pleased with the level of interaction that took place on the stand right from the first day".)

Caffe Culture has only achieved a five-figure visitor figure once – that was the year it hosted the world barista championships, and there was a certain amount of disquiet about the noise and razzamatazz of the barista and consumer community who made up at least half of the visitor figure.

(This is, it turns out, a quite serious trend... there have been several cases recently of figures in the mainstream coffee trade saying they are tired of a concentration on the scruffy-barista sector, and repeating the old observation that the vast majority of coffee is sold in another kind of surroundings altogether).

So, what Caffe Culture has to do now is marry the needs of 'what is happening now', with the needs of those who want to do practical business in surroundings where they can hear themselves think.

Will the show achieve that this year?

Nobody in the media has dared ask Caffe Culture about the success of its rival... so we did!

"Our intention is not to emulate the London Coffee festival," replied event director Cheryl Carroll cheerfully but carefully. "But, we have to make Caffe Culture a lot friendlier. A mistake we have made in the past is that we addressed it as a 'corporate' show, and the audience is not entirely a corporate one."

"OK, the London Coffee festival is now the place to be seen - but is it the place to do business? Caffe Culture is probably the place to do business better... the places to be seen may not be the ones with the ultimate buying audience."

One 'place to do business' at this

# This show's on the road!

Why has this year's Caffe Culture taken such an interest in the 'street food' phenomenon?



Working the street - Nick Friedman in full flow

year's show will be a curious one... it is the networking café, which will be inspired by an interior designer. Now, normally, that description would be enough to put visitors off... but this one has a track record and is quite famous in design circles.

It is Shaun Clarkson of the Pitfield Café in East London (of course!) which is best described as a combination of retail store, exhibition space, a cafe and a restaurant. His status is such that Marriott hotels, working on



Peter Sidwell

their 'travel brilliantly' project which seeks to improve worldwide hotel experiences, chose the Pitfield café as a venue for part of their research into 'innovation in everyday life'.

"This will be in the heart of the show," explains Cheryl Carroll. "It should inspire a lot of people to think: 'yes, this might be what I want my café to look like...'"

Without a doubt, Caffe Culture has spotted two trends this year that café operators will want to know about.

The 'street food' movement has been growing for several years now, and has turned into a 'community' of its own.

Certainly, a large amount of coffee has been sold on the street for a long time, with some mobile traders making a big success of it, and some making an appalling failure... there has been a certain curiosity from some bricks-and-mortar café traders who

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"I've got nothing to do with coffee except drinking it," he told us. "I'm giving a short talk on street food, what it's about, and some of the things to think about before getting in to street food as a business. It isn't an in-depth lecture, or a recruitment drive for street trading. It'll be more of an overview of certain big questions to consider."

The second major feature which fits current trends is a series of displays and talks on artisan food and baking in particular.

This, we are told, is inspired by requests from café operators themselves, who know all about the concept with regard to beverages, but are interested to see how far the concept extends into practical café operation.

This, we are told, will be a quite clearly separate section of the show, featuring some very specialist local suppliers who would not normally be seen at a venue like Olympia, and one of the major speakers will be Peter Sidwell, who presents Britain's Best Bakery on TV, and has his own café in Cumbria and bakery school.

What has this to do with coffee?

The artisan bread revolution has been a parallel to the rise of good coffee, although perhaps with a higher public profile. More independent coffee shop owners want to get in on this, because they have seen some of the prices being achieved for specialist breads.

Although the supermarket sector is in a bread price war, the speciality sector is such that the £5 loaf has been seen... and we thought that was high, until we heard of the £10 loaf!

Coffee shop owners might be in a perfect position to get in on this, and Sidwell will be offering ideas on how an independent can take on the big chains, using "a strategy that they cannot compete with".

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## La Cimbali D6

There are certain rules in speciality coffee which, to many people in the industry, are items which everybody should know and understand... but it is often forgotten that not everybody knows them to start with. Add to that the curiosity that certain of those rules have been quite deliberately bent in recent years, and it becomes clear that constantly questioning the principles becomes an important thing.

Rob Ward of La Cimbali has been involved with a lot of testing at the machine company's R&D department in Milan, and has been working on assessing the role a grinder plays in the quality and taste of the finished coffee drink. This is a subject which can be taken to varying degrees – for the everyday working barista, there are various generalisations about grinding which will suit the high street café, so long as the barista diligently sticks to them.

However, it is not difficult to see that in the modern coffee sector, those generalisations can run into difficulty – as La Cimbali points out, traditional Italian espresso is based on a formula which involves around 7gm of ground coffee, and today's artisan cafes will be working on recipes which involve shots anywhere from 15gm to 22gm, or even more.

It follows, says Cimbali, that the traditional rules are being constantly challenged, but that one principle still remains true – once a café operator has defined a recipe for a coffee, the

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The new Fiamma from Qualitasse

## Machines - everyone is talking brew precision

drink served has to stay faithful to that recipe, which involves continual grind checks, continual dosing checks, water volume checks, and all the other variables.

All this, Cimbali explains, goes to make up the reasoning behind the creation of its Perfect Grinding System, which this year appears on a super-automatic bean-to-cup machine for the first time.

In the PGS, the grinder is automatically monitored and adjusted through the working day, something which human staff should always do, but can forget in a busy shift.

The reasoning behind all this will be something which Rob Ward himself will be on hand to discuss.

### Qualitasse D20

A well-known trade supplier is making a slightly unexpected appearance at the show to shout about the new UK agency it has taken on – Qualitasse has taken on the distribution here for Fiamma, the Portuguese espresso equipment which it describes as 'bullet-proof'.

Qualitasse has been working on a policy of buying direct from manufacturers for over thirty years, and discovered Fiamma about fifteen years ago. The company's MD, Brian Layton MD, bought many of them in the 1990s, and reports that they "never went wrong."

The reason that he has now decided to take on a formal agency deal is because he believes that Fiamma genuinely does continue to innovate – by contrast, says Qualitasse, there are brands whose idea of 'new' is a redesigned side panel, some flashing lights, and a huge price hike!

The Fiamma range has a series of sizes from machines for the small pub or café, up to the Prestige with its large boiler, for the really busy café.

This, says Qualitasse, has features which future-proof it as far as can be expected – there is an MB range, referring to multi-boiler, which means a large steam boiler and a smaller boiler per group. So the 2-group has three boilers and the 3-group has four boilers, with the group boilers working independently of the steam boiler.

"Other advantages of multi-boilers are energy control," says Qualitasse. "On a quiet day, you can switch a group boiler off to save energy. If the machine is left for a period of time, it will go into eco mode to reduce main boiler temperature, which significantly saves on power consumption."

"These electronics even send power from boiler to boiler, but never all at the same time. This means that it avoids pulling current for all boilers and just focuses on the ones that need it. This adds up to a very eco-efficient machine with group temperature stability within a fraction of a degree."

The use of individual boilers for the

groups, says the company, comes in useful for those cafes who use different coffees at the same time, maybe a house blend and a 'guest' – the Pacific MB allows for the different groups to be set at the appropriate temperatures for each coffee. Settings and adjustments are done by touch-screen.

There are new 'cool touch' steam arms, and a standard cup size of 'tall' with hinged shelves for brewing into espresso cups.

### Schaerer J24

A feature to look for from this well-known Swiss coffee machine maker is the Flavour Point system. "It is a balanced interplay between coffee, milk and the other ingredients such as cocoa and syrup which will give operators enormous freedom in creating their own beverage specialties," says the company. "Once these are composed, they can be easily reproduced with consistent quality. The particular mixture of syrup, milk and coffee can be programmed for each beverage and stored – it has become easier than ever before to consistently prepare exotic recipes."

Another feature is a fully-automatic milk system which features four different steam systems for milk foaming, texturing and heating – the milk foam quality can be individually set for when beverages are dispensed automatically.

### Sielaff G30

This German maker of top-end bean-to-cup espresso machines is launching its Siamonie model. This is a development of the Piacere model, which has been the company's best seller for several years.

The new model uses top quality components, largely made in-house, and offers 34 programmable drink selections from ristretto to long black. The fresh milk module has a choice of push-button or touch screen operation, for ease of use by catering staff. The Siamonie range starts with the entry level model, the Siamonie Mono, with a list price below £5,500.

### Fresh Cup E26

This is Verde Coffee, which has a couple of interesting equipment-related items – there is a new reduced-price espresso machine start-up package, which is intended to include everything new operators need to get them going; there is also a chance to see the Quality Espresso Q10 grinder, which features a large colour screen for easier setting and programming.

The interesting new ingredient on show is Reybar, a Spanish hot chocolate powder created to be easy to use with an espresso machine, but equally can be heated in a microwave. A feature of the product, says the supplier, is that it can be 'as thick as you want it', and therefore is suitable for

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making a dipping sauce or for using in milky drinks.



*The Synchro from Teknomat*

#### Drury F10

It was a few years ago that Drury launched its Cuidado coffee, a blend from farms certified by the Rainforest Alliance. The word means 'care' in Spanish. This year there will be a premium espresso version, Cuidado Riserva.

Tastings will be brewed on a Rancilio Classe 9 Xcelcius espresso machine - this is Rancilio's most technologically-advanced machine, featuring the unusual 'temperature profiling' feature. This is still not widely understood, but there will be the opportunity for trade visitors to experiment and try it for themselves. The latest models of Ceado grinders will be on show.

#### Teknomat H8

Teknomat says it has a new Synchro espresso machine range which is 'stunning'. The Synchro machines are made by BFC/Royal in northern Italy and are, says the importer, "quite simply unique in today's UK market - the machines are reliable, offer all the high-end features that baristas demand and

with a choice of striking colour options are sure to stand out from the crowd."

Design and colour are the most immediately striking features, says the supplier: "it has a choice of colour schemes not offered by many other traditional espresso machine ranges. In red and orange it appears modern and funky, in white it is a hi-tech status symbol and in chrome (special order only), it is retro. Black is also available for the more conservative sites."

In espresso machines, says Teknomat, you get what you pay for, and claims a 'superior build quality' for the Synchro. "Its solid construction utilises quality tooling and materials, and corners are not cut in order to reduce costs. The copper used in the boiler is thicker than in lesser-quality and lower-cost machines, and the group heads are the traditional four-kilo brass heads rather than the 1.8 kilo copies substituted in cheaper machines. All metalwork is done in-house to ensure quality."

The Synchro uses elongated heat exchangers for greater thermal stability at the group head, and each group has its own independent boiler, allowing different water temperatures to be dispensed from each group head.

Teknomat will also be showing the Joe Frex range of barista tools, gadgets and cleansers. The range is German, and the distributor describes the engineering of the products as 'meticulous'. We are advised to look out for the 'unusual yet practical' cleaning brushes, and the delightful addition of 'some interesting spoons', including a weighing spoon and timer, and a latte art set.

## Lotus - more than you might think

#### Lotus B25

The big question about Lotus, and perhaps the only question about the brand, is whether the trade knows exactly what the company does. Certainly, everyone knows the Lotus biscuit as the 'original caramelised biscuit', which is to be found on the saucer in a quite vast number of beverage operations.

There has been a recent curious bit of rebranding, which has seen the biscuit become Biscoff (that's 'biscuits for coffee!') and this has been followed by the interesting claim that 'we have literally thousands of consumers who will choose one coffee shop or hotel over another, purely because it offers a complimentary Lotus Biscoff' (yes, we have asked for confirmation of this bold claim!).

All this marketing and PR-speak rather deflects attention from the fact that there is more to the brand than might be realised. A few years ago, Lotus introduced the ground version of the biscuit, literally a 'crumb' product, which really should have been promoted more widely for its use in baking, cheesecakes, and the like; it remains a very good idea.

Something we have only recently come across is a rather larger version of the product - this is a twin-pack of two biscuits, each of which is at least twice the size of the familiar saucer-side biscuit, and might be considered a considerably more satisfying bite. There is also, and this product has hardly been spoken about at all, a chocolate-topped version - we rather recommend that visitors make a point of asking to try it.



*The big one, in a twin pack.*

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**Artisan Biscuits A4**  
Byron Bay K6

One of the most successful products in the café sector in recent years has been the large-format cookie. The pioneer in this was the Byron Bay product from Australia, which was launched here through Beyond the Bean, so successfully that some cafes even devised and offered their own 'cookie and cuppa' deals.

However, the working arrangement between those two companies ceased a few weeks ago, and Byron Bay announced that it would now supply the café trade direct.

At almost exactly the same time, the Artisan Biscuits company, which already has its own track record with the trade, launched the similar-looking San Francisco Mission Cookie, commenting on its rivals' situation only to say: "our launch coincides, happily for us, with the subsequent gap in the market this creates."

And now, equally happily for the trade, the opportunity to compare the products arises at Caffe Culture, because both cookies are on show.

Is the Mission Cookie a copy of the Australian product?

"I guess it seems audacious to put ourselves up so close to Byron Bay, but it's no different from Walkers against Patterson Aran and Campbells – they all make all-butter shortbread!" responded Artisan Biscuits.

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## The strange case of the competing cookies

"Yes, we have matched existing flavours - that is because they are popular and because we thought we could do a better job. However, we have innovated too, like our blueberry and cranberry cookie made with all-American fruit."

There is, it is said, a difference between the Aussie-style cookie and the American-style cookie; Artisan says that its Mission product is 'soft-eating in the true American style, not dry and biscuity'.

(The Byron Bay product, of course, underwent a certain Anglicisation of format to suit our market, when it began baking over here a few years ago).

A further complication of the situation is that Artisan already has its Fine

Cookie Company product... which again appears to be more or less the same product.

"In terms of quality and delivery they are equal," Artisan Biscuits told us. "The flavours are different in all but one case, and the pricing is identical.

"Where they differ is in emotion and positioning. The Fine Cookie Co is 'American Graffiti, Levi jeans, Mustang cars, diners, mom and pop and picket fences – Mission is 'San Francisco Latino, cool and funky'. It all depends which brand personality suits your café... if you are more classic, then that's Fine Cookie Co, if you are more 'edgy' then it's Mission."

Another extremely curious item from Artisan Biscuits will be the arrival of the intriguingly-named Brutti e Buoni ('ugly, but good') biscuits from Italy. These are light, sweet, and crunchy nut biscuits which were first made in 1878 by a pastry chef from Lombardy. He built such a reputation that he had royal customers, and the mayor of Turin personally helped him register a

trademark.

Over a century later, an antique recipe-book was discovered, containing not just the original patented recipe for the known biscuits, but an additional cinnamon recipe which had been lost to the family. The product has now been revived with the addition of a new dark chocolate chip version.

Byron Bay will be appearing on the same stand as Falcon, who are also the importers of Big Train, the massive Californian range of easy-to-prepare blended drinks. Falcon will be sampling hot chai lattes, iced frappes and fruit smoothies.

Byron Bay has said that it will focus on a core range of seven café cookies, two individual-wrapped products and five gluten-free single-wrapped cookies. A new retail range of gluten-free cookies and gluten-free crisp-breads has been proposed for this year.

"In short, the new products are more in line with the original Australian product," says the company. "Key recipe changes include the use of raw sugars, removal of all starches, as well as a more 'cakey' texture and handmade look."

The two new flavours to be sampled at the show are cranberry and oat crunch and salted caramel shortbread.

### Seruni G39

Rather unusually, there is a direct representative of a coffee farm at this year's show. This exhibitor is the representative of a hundred-hectare coffee plantation in Indonesia, which, equally unusually, produces both arabica and robusta. The producers are looking for a distributor in the UK and Ireland.

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## Put questions about your water quality

### Pentair G20

If there was ever any doubt about the importance of water quality in the preparation of good coffee, the subject has come back to attention this year. The reigning UK barista champ has emerged as a specific student of the subject, and even lectured the judges on it in this year's contest!

This means that the specialist water-treatment companies should now be all the more prepared for serious questioning on the subject... and Pentair will be putting themselves up for questioning at this year's show.

Pentair will want to talk about Claris Ultra - this is its 2014 range of water-conditioning cartridges which are intended to reduce the equipment service and maintenance costs that result from poor water quality - every café operator knows the cost of a de-scale! Pentair says the new product gives the lowest cost-per-litre of treated water when measured against competing systems. It is, the company says, currently the only water treatment solution approved for use throughout Europe for both hot and cold water applications.

As Pentair quite correctly points out, the great problem the trade faces is one of balance. What is called 'aggressive water' attacks brewing equipment to a horrifying degree, and as this magazine pointed out some months back, the general state of the water across the UK is nowhere near as good as we would like it for the safety of our machines. On the one hand, mineral content can be good for taste and flavour extraction; on the other hand, it causes scale problems. Pentair will be demonstrating the Claris Ultra Duoblend valve technology, which it says provides consistent and precise adjustment and control of water hardness, allowing the beverage operator the optimum water mineral balance.

## Monin D30

A refreshingly new attitude to flavoured syrups can be found by quizzing Monin at this year's show. All syrup brands will always bang on about their choice of flavours, and offer recipes, but very few have dug down into the demographics of the flavour market... perhaps the only brand to have done any research as such was Taylerson's, a few years ago.

Monin's interest follows the fairly impressive performance of its new flavour studio in east London, right by the heart of the cool coffee scene. In its first months, the studio has hosted a number of creative flavour sessions for both big-name clients, and independent café owners as well – and the ideas which have arisen have inspired Monin to search for even more light-bulb moments with regard to flavour. And that in turn has brought up the question of market demographics.

"We have always said that we're not here to sell an operator a bottle of syrup, we're here to help them make products which they can sell," remarks Monin's Darril Ling.

"The main thing is that the coffee business is not all about coffee. The consumer no longer wants to just go to a pub or a café 'for a coffee'.

"We need to help our trade customers appreciate what more can be done and yes, now that we have opened this studio, we see operators having light-bulb moments – this often happens with the independents who don't have in-house facilities to experiment in, unlike the chains.

"The owner of an Australian themed café came here on one of our independents' days, and she had a Eureka moment. It was the concept of 'handcrafted lemonade'.

"We have a sweet and sour mixer, which is a standard bar product... she realised that with a blender and a real lemon, she could create a very good quality home-made lemonade, good enough to sell at a high price.

"She knew 'handcrafted' drink has been a trend, and although she had seen all the frappes and the popular favourite blended drinks, this discovery was, for her, something nobody

## Da Vinci / Kerry D12

This is the famous flavoured syrup brand, but the theme of this year's appearance is for Da Vinci Gourmet to be seen alongside its sister brand, Kerrymaid, to show what can be done with a range of products to achieve variation and personalisation.

Da Vinci will also promote its smoothies, demonstrating how they can be used in conjunction with its syrups - the result, says the brand, is the opportunity to create an easily-achievable yet high-impact soft drinks menu. Try the recipes which involve 'tropicalia', suggests Da Vinci - this is the term being used to describe products promoted to capitalise on the World Cup in Brazil.

Frozen yogurt is a product which has made some gentle advances in the market, with some companies doing well with it, and others suffering spectacular failure. However, the concept is now sufficiently established for Kerry to start debating the question of how operators make the most of it. Kerrymaid's UHT frozen yogurt mix is put forward as a minimum-fuss, maximum-profit opportunity for cafés - flavouring the mix with syrups and topping the finished product with the range of Da Vinci Gourmet drizzle sauces is eye-catching and easy, says the brand.

# The sweet tastes of flavour sectors

else was doing.

"Now, for the indie who says 'I want that light-bulb moment', the answer is, come along! It's good when we have several people at the same time... one wholesaler contacted all his customers and brought ten in each day for two days.

"This really is the way forward, and is something we must do more of... The studio's here, so use it!"

Something which has occupied Monin's creative thinking there has been the question of the 'sweet' drink, which can take on several meanings.

In the latest example, Monin was one of the various syrup brands used by competitors in the TUCO university barista contest. Many entrants chose to create recipes inspired by cakes and desserts, with the result that the judges were served several raspberry ripples featuring white chocolate syrups, Black Forest gateau drinks, Victoria sponge drinks, cherry-cake drinks, Turkish Delight drinks, a Jaffa cake drink, and even a liquorice drink.

Some of them were uncomfortably naturally sweet, which oddly, started Monin thinking about demographics.

"There certainly has been a trend for sweet cake-based drinks, but it is one to be careful with.

"First, you can find that too sweet a drink is not a pleasant experience for the customer... or at least, for one kind of customer.

"The important thing to think about is that if you have a raspberry and white hot chocolate, there is one generation which is more inclined to buy it than another. Any cafe business may be creating drinks for different generations... the cake and dessert-themed drinks may not be a product for the middle-aged customer!

"The market for this is probably female, probably aged ten and upwards, and for this customer, the product has to have a certain sweetness.



James Coston

"It is not a product for the geeks – but sometimes, it is very good to stand back from the purist fans, and take a look at the other markets."

How do you research such markets?

"The concept of holding a tasting event for teenagers might be a brilliant idea – the 14/15-year-olds have a high disposable income, it's a challenging market, and so I'm up for working on this with anyone who wants to. We could achieve good first-

*"The main thing is that the coffee business is not all about coffee..."*

- Darril Ling

hand primary research, and we could all learn a lot from it."

There is more that the new Monin studio has been usefully studying – typically, the concept that all similarly-named flavours are not the same.

Several cherry-flavoured drinks have come up in recent competitions, and certain proprietary flavours are extremely sickly... they taste like cough medicine used to.

"There is no doubt about this," respond Monin. "There are different things that people think of as 'cherry flavour', which is why we now have more than one."

"This again goes back to tastes going in generations – for many of us, the way our mothers made treacle tart, or Yorkshire pudding, is the way we think of it for the rest of our lives... but tastes change."

"So... what now is the reference point for any flavour?"

The concept of a liquorice-flavoured

coffee drink cropping up in competition, and it was one which used a Monin syrup, was one which intrigued the brand's mixologist, James Coston.

"This is a 'Marmite' flavour – you love it or hate it. For most of us, a hint of it works best, giving an aftertaste or an undertaste."

"It works well with strawberry and raspberry, and vanilla, but you may find that you are only using 5ml of the liquorice against 15ml of the other. More experimentally, it goes with choc-chip cookie!"

"Again, this is a product for the 10-14 generation – you could create a liquorice lemonade product."

"This is a typical example of how the possibilities of syrups only hit you when you see them in the flesh, and try them. Then it can be a question of what works for your own customers – a pink grapefruit may work well in one pub, not in the next."

"It's thinking about this that makes certain operators change from always just having the four standard syrups on the back bar, to being the kind of customer that comes to us every six months wanting ideas for their new summer and winter menus."

## Shott A13

Shott, of New Zealand, is a new name in flavourings here, but in seven years the brand has become a leader in its home market, and is now developing through Australia and Asia.

One of Shott's main flavours is lemon, ginger and honey. The problem with this flavour, says the brand, is that cafes who try to make this classic combination from scratch often hit problems with consistency.

"We've conducted research about what people are looking for when they don't want a coffee," says the brand. "They want complex and adult-oriented, caffeine-free drinks that are hard to replicate at home and therefore are something to look forward to at a coffee shop."

"Lemon, ginger and honey is a hero product, as it appeals to adult taste buds of all ages, is caffeine free, is good hot or cold, and is hard to replicate at home or work."

We recently sampled 4,000, and the response was overwhelmingly positive."



Shott will also be showing its Hot Chocolate Complements. These are flavours which again fall into the category of complex, adult oriented, caffeine-free drinks that the customer can not easily make for themselves. The flavours, which are said to work well with any good hot chocolate base, are Gingerbread Bite, Flamed Orange, and Wild Peppermint.

## Beyond The Bean E14

One of the interesting features of this distributor's series of useful Drinking Thinking brochures is a quite vast amount of time it devotes to testing the ideas it puts forward for uses of its products.

Rather than being a box-shifting distributor, the unspoken message between the lines of its catalogues is: 'we've experimented and tested the recipes, and they work!'

At this year's show, the company will be discussing its re-invention of the 'selection box' concept.

Some years ago, the company looked at the phenomenon of seasonal flavoured drinks, most notably the gingerbread and pumpkin lattes pioneered by Starbucks, and to help the independent café compete without too much trouble, created an offer.

The theory was that café operators do not have the time to spend thinking up their own signature drinks, so the boxes contained everything needed for tested and proven drinks which could be offered as house specials, with some simple recipe cards, and

## Artis E7

Artis is generally known as a supplier of tableware, and the intriguing new product which will be on show this year is the cast-iron oriental teapot.



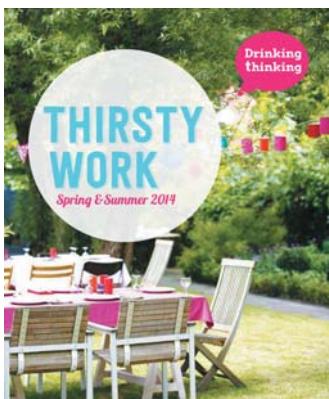
This, says the company, is 'bang on trend', and is suitable both for serving tea and for contemporary cocktails. The red cast iron teapot is in two sizes - a 33cl single-serving size, and a one-litre group service size. There are optional removable stainless steel mesh filters.

Other things we have discovered in the new Artis catalogue are the concept of 'drinking jam jars' - we have already reported on cafes serving beverages in such things, but have never seen them in a trade catalogue before. And we do particularly like the curious ceramic animal which decorates the front of their catalogue (and our front page).

This is 'Plato', one of a collection of sculptures made from Artis products, and it will be making a personal appearance.



# A selection box of blended drinks



Beyond the Bean's latest ideas book

point-of-sale material.

The idea took off like a rocket.

This year's development of the idea forms part of the new 'Thirsty Work' summer catalogue, and the boxes will give cafes a quick way to get more out of their business in frappes, smoothies, and flavours.

This, says the company, is now a very serious business - in summer, frappes can account for 15 per cent of a cafe's sales.

"Looking at how much the chains promote their blended drinks, and talking to customers about their own experience, we see how huge a market it is... and it can be pushed more," says Beyond the Bean's Helen Ostle. "It is easy, and it's a product you can sell for £2.50-£3.00."

"The big cafes have seen this, and plastered their promotions everywhere. Small cafes can do the same - you just have to talk about it."

The Bumper Blended Beverage Box contains four litres of mango smoothie and strawberry smoothie bases, two kilos of cookie and cream frappe mix, two kilos of vanilla bean frappe, toppings, recipes and POS material. The Super Cool Syrups box features four syrups which are not the usual standard ones, and recipes which will even show an operator how to create a Brazilian Iced Tea as a World Cup promotion.

Each box, it is reckoned, holds enough product to make perhaps 130 drinks, while still being offered at a special price.

"The café owner may not have the time to experiment with new ideas," says Helen Ostle, "but we know our products inside out, and we have done the work - here are the ideas, the syrups, the recipes and the point-of-sale."

"But if you do have time to experiment, you'll find it's a great team-building exercise, and the big thing about the smoothies and frappes box is that they mix and match - they work on their own, or in any combination."

Among the new ideas under the Sweetbird brand are some more iced tea syrups. These are unusual flavours - cucumber and mint, and watermelon, on green tea bases.

"Operators are always surprised at how easy a tea syrup is... you just dilute, present, and sell at a huge margin. With these, you can brew a larger amount in a jug, present it nicely, and you get a Pimms effect, but it hasn't taken you any time at all."

"I'm also told that the cucumber and mint goes well with gin..."

A surprising new Sweetbird product is its lemonade. This is not entirely conventional - there is a familiar cloudy lemonade, but also the unusual watermelon and rosemary, and a blueberry and mint.

"We're amazed at how much people have liked the new flavours... and you can freeze them into ice cubes, and I'm told the blueberry one also works very well with gin!"

And there are additional ideas which may not work for all cafes, but which might be the spark of an inspiration in certain settings - typically, the Sweetbird smoothie ice lollies using a 50/50 smoothie/water mix.

Cubes made from the rosemary and watermelon lemonade make a considerable point of difference to a summer cocktail, suggests Beyond the Bean.

## Italian Beverage Company F4

This supplier has recently worked on becoming a much more 'retail friendly' brand, says the founder, Sheldon Flax.

The aim has been to transform its Simply range from a trade-only product, which was produced to be kept behind the counter, to one that operators would be happy to display in full view.

The new re-design will be on all Simply product lines and will appear gradually throughout 2014-2015. There will also now be a collection of lines that can be sold directly to the public - this will include 250ml and 50ml flavour syrups, and a new range of seven fruity sauces. New syrups in show will be pear, tropical, forest fruit, cranberry, blackberry, apricot, peach and pineapple. There will be four new flavoured tea syrups and seven new flavoured sauces.



## Planglow D5

Planglow is a packaging company which in recent years has made the practical development into product labelling, to the degree that it now comes to the show describing itself as a 'labelling and ticketing expert'.

All its products are designed to be overprinted by the retailer, using just an inkjet or laser printer, and the company's Label Logic software. Although the deli tickets do not need a laminated covering, Planglow does now have ticket protectors, in rolls of self-adhesive laminate film; these offer a wipe-clean facility.

Planglow will show its Natural Deli paper, designed to parcel up sandwiches and baked goods, hot dogs, burgers and wraps. The paper can also be twisted into a cone to hold popcorn, sweets and other treats.

## Quickfire Tableware A16

This is the company which saw a need from cafes for branded ceramic cups in relatively small quantities, and approached that market more enthusiastically than any other company had previously done.

This year, says company head Simon Martin, there is a new and convenient deal. "Our starter pack or 'bundle' is perfectly aimed at small, independent coffee shops. It gives them exactly the quantity they need to get started, with their logo, at a great price. All they need to do is tell us when they are opening and we'll get in touch with them two months before the date to start the process of signing off the decoration. That's the crockery box ticked!"

"We will also be launching special offers to help existing coffee shops change their plain set of cups to a new branded set."



## Lola's Cupcakes C30

Curiously, this company is not entirely devoted to cupcakes - the interesting aspect of this presentation is that the company already has several retail units in London, and already has a reputation... but is completely new to wholesale and trade supply.

"We now want to serve chilled cakes in London, and frozen elsewhere," the company tells us. "We do large cakes, cheesecakes, and cupcakes. We will never be the cheapest - we're not price-orientated. We're the kind of cake company which will only use butter, not margarine. We're a bit higher than 'wholesale cakes', but you should also see the result in your selling price."



### Pipers K20

It is, believe it or not, ten years since Pipers Crisps opened up in the building next door to the Lincoln and York roaster in Lincolnshire (we got a ticking-off at the time for reporting 'roaster turns to frying'!).

It has now achieved a customer base of around 5,000, has won a 'best savoury snack brand' award for two years running, and has maintained its policy of not supplying supermarkets, so that independent outlets can still use the brand as a point of difference.

However, what has long intrigued us is the practical use of gourmet crisps. The crisp, as a generic product, has turned into a side dish - you get them served beside paninis, and served with a cheese baguette. Usually, it's a sad little salad and the cheapest of mass-produced crisps - but for a caterer who believes in attention to detail, is it possible to 'match' your crisps on the side with the filling in the Panini, and would it spark customers' interest and help a cafe make a name for being 'a little bit special'?

We put the question to Alex Albone, the founder and top man of Pipers.

Pipers is seeing more and more café owners and publicans serving the brand as part of their food offering, he responded. Anglesey sea salt or Karnataka black pepper and sea salt varieties are popular choices to accompany food.

The clever choice might be to serve spicy Kirkby Malham chorizo crisps with a ham-filled panini or a quiche Lorraine, or Lye Cross cheddar and onion or Wissington spicy tomato crisps alongside a cheese and tomato sandwich, or a pizza slice. The cost-effectiveness comes from using the 'sharing bags' rather than the 40gm packs.

### The Handmade Cake Co. E6

This creative trade supplier made rather a name for itself recently by making a bold move in gluten-free bakery - it created an entirely new bakeshop in its headquarters, dedicated to the gluten-free product.

There is a surprising new product to be sampled at Caffe Culture, something the company describes as 'a new cake that is very much of the moment... a toffee popcorn slice'. Popcorn, says the company 'has never been so trendy'.

### Ecoffee Cup C12

The concept of the biodegradable disposable takeaway cup continues to be debated, and more recently, so does the concept of the reusable takeaway cup. What is unusual about the appearance of the Ecoffee cup is that it covers both sectors - it is a reusable cup made as an organic, biodegradable product.

In appearance, the product appears to be some form of plastic, and is certainly remarkably rigid - but it is not plastic. It is made from bamboo fibre.

All of the rivals currently competing for the reusable takeaway cup market work on more or less the same argument - that disposable 'paper' cups are an environmental nightmare. Their argument is that consumers who bring their own takeaway cup are being environmentally sensitive.

The big question is - do the consumers actually agree? Is there consumer demand for a product like this? Is there any evidence to show that people like this kind of product, as opposed to a paper cup which they can throw away?

"It's a fair question, to which we can only offer an anecdotal response, backed up from some fairly impressive sales figures," replies the company's David McLagan.

"Every retailer we have sold these to, bar say five per cent, has reordered multiple times, some every couple of weeks. We have done bespoke designs for a number of PLCs and have been very heartened by their response to the environmental message, and we have also been commissioned by the Eden Project in Cornwall to create a bespoke Ecoffee Cup for them. They did their own eco-analysis of our product, from energy used in manufacture, through to ease of disposal, and deemed it the most ecologically sound.

"We want to make the reusable coffee cup a ubiquitous style item, and Ecoffee Cup offers the market something genuinely different in a lot of ways, not just another bit of white plastic or silicon. The fact that it is "different" in feel, weight, and environmental message, makes us believe that we are indeed on to something that people genuinely like.

"So clearly people see a real need for reusable coffee cups, but do they like the current breed of reusables? KeepCup suggest they sell 850,000 units per year; the answer must be an unreserved 'yes', that consumers like the concept."

Is there any kind of 'taste characteristic' to a non-paper re-usable cup? Many people say that they don't like the taste, feel, or sensation of reusable drinking vessels - one of the big names in the sector has derided this idea, but it is a fact.

"Because Ecoffee Cup is made from bamboo fibre (and some wood fibre), it has a tactile, matte feel to it. When

## The re-usable takeaway cup made from bamboo!



practical margin for the seller, and what is a practical minimum order quantity?

"Paper cups are super cheap, a no-brainer for the bottom line, especially when times are tough. However, the loyalty market and a competitive zeal amongst cafe owners dictates the desire to try new things and offer their customers something different.

"The wholesale price of Ecoffee Cup is £2.85, with a RRP of £8. As we see more and more cafes look to non-coffee/ food revenue, we believe our contemporary style and simple message fits perfectly with a cafe product mix - especially as Christmas gifts and value-adds."

### Benders G7

Benders, which styles itself 'the UK's only dedicated manufacturer of paper hot cups', will be launching its new Garda embossed takeaway cup, and will be promoting its custom print service for bespoke promotional and branding messages.

The creative use of takeaway cup printing is something which has been discussed for a long time now, and it will be interesting to see what suggestions Benders brings.



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### Drink Me Chai E15

This is of course the pioneer of the concept of the powdered chai, and later an enthusiastic supporter of the relatively new concept of the chai latte.

This, says founder Amanda Hamilton, continues to be a growing business - her wholesaler business went up 63 per cent last year. It is, she says, the speciality, niche and premium products such as chai latte which have performed well over the last few years, being regarded as a non-essential treat, yet one which consumers will not give up. Continuing feedback from the trade, says the company, says that a 24gm measure is now regarded as the right dose for a 12oz cup, that customers are happy with this serving size, and that food-service outlets now charge between £1.90 and £2.30 for a 12oz Drink Me Chai.

### Novus Tea C15

Novus has decided that its job is to do more than just sell tea. The brand has said that its role is now also to supply support services to help its trade customers serve tea profitably.

As a result, the company wants to talk about menu ideas, business, personalised branding and effective point of sale displays. Novus has now won twelve Great Taste awards, and has

extended its range into herbals, and such unusual items as Persian Pomegranate and a spicy rooibos. Its tea is offered in three formats; whole leaf pyramids in individual envelopes, pyramid bags in resealable pouches and loose leaf.



### Teapigs K22

There are still many who have yet to get entirely into the subject of matcha, the Japanese organic green tea which is, unusually, supplied as ground to a powder.

It is widely regarded as an extremely healthy thing, and Teapigs, which pioneered the product about six years ago, has been doing some research with people who took it for a two-week period in January - various benefits were reported, from energy to hair and nail improvement. The thing about matcha is that it does not have to be taken as a green tea - it can be served as a latte, or added to juices and smoothies.

# Instant furnishing for the coffee house

### Pubstuff J24

It is a very strange thing, but at trade shows, displays of furniture can often be quite distressingly uninspiring. It was largely for this reason that our hearts leapt to see the arrival at Caffe Culture of Pubstuff, a delightfully argumentative company which has a long track record in the pub trade.

In that sector, Pubstuff pioneered a couple of what came to be familiar ideas - the first was that renovated furniture can play a very useful role in fitting out a hospitality business.

Having made a name with this, Pubstuff then went entirely against its original renovation principle, and began designing and manufacturing its own furniture - with the bizarre consideration that it had to construct new furniture which was up to the standard of its second-hand furniture!

This paradox, explains director Sally Huband, came about because of the remarkably high quality of used furniture which it had 'reclaimed' from the big pub chains.

"Good contract furniture is very strong, because it's said that six months' use in a pub is the equivalent to six years in a house," she explained. "We only took in used furniture from big managed pubs, because those owners bought the very best quality furniture at the beginning of its life, and didn't leave it too long before they refurbished."

The second concept that Pubstuff pioneered was the 'bundle', a collection of furniture which allowed a pub to be outfitted in one step.

By talking to pubs every day, and now doing so with cafes, the company found it was predicting furnishing trends well in advance, and began designing its bundled furniture to suit.

In the pub sector, a typical success was of the 'snug bundle', which would change a corner of a pub at a realistic price - two Chesterfields in real leather and a couple of single chairs in faux leather. The coffee shop parallel, says Sally Huband, is of the window-dressing technique.

"One recent trend has been the success of soft furnishing in cafes, particularly inside the big windows, which are made to look so great that people go and sit there first, which makes the cafe look busy.

"We have designed a new range for this market. As we designed it and have it made for us, our prices are significantly better than any competitor... one of the reasons we have been winners in a recession is because our prices are right."

One of the company's major launches for Caffe Culture is its new Dover chair. This is upholstered in heavy-



The Dover chair

duty hessian-type fabric, in a random print fabric in a flag design. This, says Pubstuff, is an extremely comfortable and unique chair.

"The new Xavier is both indoor and outdoor furniture. Good industrial-look furniture, in a Victorian burnished bronze look - again, our own design."

The café trade bundles are made to Pubstuff's own design, but the renovated furniture part continues as a secondary part of its service.

"We have a lot of vintage 'statement' furniture - drawer-leaf tables, proper church pews, and so on, which are used as 'middle of the room' items. In the main, these are usually the wrong size for what would be considered 'efficient' furniture, but they're used as eye-catchers, and you build your café round them."

(The old church furniture has already been reclaimed once in its lifetime - Pubstuff obtained it from managed houses in the pub trade. "We haven't quite got round to ransacking churches for furniture yet!" laughs Sally Huband.)

The concept of 'bundles' is matched with another plagiarised idea, says Pubstuff cheerfully - the Amazon concept of breathtakingly quick delivery.

"The idea of order today, get it tomorrow, is for those who finish painting the pub or cafe, get ready to open up and then think: 'hey, we haven't got any chairs'... it still happens!"

### Lynx Purchasing B24

A curiosity of the cafe sector is that, unlike other retail markets, there are no centralised purchasing organisations, or 'buying groups'.

Lynx Purchasing is rather unusual in stepping up and saying that it believes the success of the coffee-shop sector can be helped by cafe operators being linked with group suppliers offering products at advantageous prices.

Interestingly, Lynx publishes a quarterly price analysis and forecast which says what it has seen happening to prices in the past year, and what it suggests will happen to cafe staples in the near future.



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## Breckland Orchard K35

Claire Martinsen, inventor of the 'posh pop' concept at Breckland Orchard, was recently quoted as saying that soft drink service has to become 'more about 2014 than 2004'.

The point she was making was that things are moving in the world of soft drinks – the manufacturers see the changes, the consumers see the changes, but many parts of the catering trade do not. As a result, many cafes, pubs and restaurants still have not seen a new world beyond Coke and orange juice.

"Adult soft drinks are the dynamic and growing sector in the market, but foodservice operators have been slow to realise the changing consumer landscape," says Claire.

"It would be quite unacceptable to offer a cup of instant coffee in 2014... but operators still present the same range of soft drinks as they did ten years ago. Colas and fruit juices by the huge multinational brands still remain the cornerstone of a 'soft drinks menu' in many outlets."

What the consumer actually demands involves a distinct shift, says Claire Martinsen.

"The world of soft drinks has been changing with the rapid rise in popularity of 'adult' soft drinks. These drinks are meeting modern consumer

## Soft drink offers ten years out of date are not good enough!



needs in a way that the big long-established ones just don't – more sophisticated flavours, better and well-chosen ingredients, production by small independent family-owned firms, and a clearly 'different' offer.

"In a sea of mediocre ranges, these drinks make an outlet stand out, and drive increased loyalty from non-drinkers, who are surprised but delighted to find them, and they encourage a more 'family' market.

Two new varieties of Posh Pop will be launched at Caffe Culture – elderflower and rhubarb and ginger.

Elderflower has turned into a must-have on a soft drinks menu, and Breckland Orchard's new one is gently carbonated, and lower in sugar. The rhubarb and ginger posh pop is based on the cordial of the same flavour that won two stars at the Great Taste Awards.

### Belvoir Fruit Farms J26

Big trends in the soft drinks sector concern 'premiumisation', which is also a big enthusiasm for Belvoir, the drinks company based on a big fruit farm.

The three best sellers for Belvoir in the café sector have recently been the 250ml glass bottles of elderflower pressé, raspberry lemonade and ginger beer, and elderflower is a particular favourite of Belvoir, which has ninety acres of land growing the flowers. It has just brought out a lighter version of its elderflower pressé, and says that the key to the product is that flower and fruit drinks can be used in more than one way - elderflower cordial, like rhubarb and strawberry, and raspberry and rose, will all serve as a 'more interesting soft drink', or can be used to make cocktails, or to create a new kind of spritzer. And food matching works, says Belvoir, even in some unusual forms - elderflower pressé goes remarkably well with fish and chips. A new introduction will be the appearance of that presse in a can, for traders who prefer not to stock glass bottles.

### Coldpress L54

There is a difference in manufacturing technique which distinguishes this smoothie supplier - Coldpress is the company which adopted the

High-Pressure Processing technique as an alternative to the familiar pasteurisation, arguing that the heat-based process results in flavour notes and nutrients being 'cooked off'.

In contrast, says company founder Andrew Gibb, his process allows more of the distinct flavour notes of fruit to come through in the final product.

### Zacely K26

Zacely wants to be seen as innovators in the speciality tea sector, and will show new products in its Wild Monk, tea 'pockets' and tea concentrate ranges.

Wild Monk is a brand of easy-to-prepare bubble tea brewed from a powder - no machinery or blenders required. Wild Monk drinks use a fruit powder and pack of pre-made juice 'pobbles', requiring only a quick shake in Zacely's plastic cocktail shaker before serving.

Teaforia tea concentrates have been created to offer a broader and more exotic range of hot and iced teas. There are unusual flavours: high mountain oolong, Assam with strawberry, jasmine green with passionfruit and oolong with Peach. They can be served hot, iced, or as tea lattes, created by combining the concentrate with steamed milk.

The 'tea pocket' product may be interesting - these are described as unique, highly-concentrated blends of high grade tea that can create up to two litres of iced tea.

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The continuing debate over wi-fi in independent coffee shops has now taken a distinct turn against the use of computers – it is reported from America that more coffee shops are banning laptop use, in a campaign to try and re-establish the idea of a community meeting place. The sign pictured is from the August First café in Vermont, and the blackboard message was spotted in London! This has apparently caused vast argument between laptop users who say they buy enough to warrant using tables the way they want, and café owners who report seeing customers walk out because they cannot find a vacant table because of laptop use.



We are delighted to report that the Coffee Bean in Washington, USA, has had its dartboard returned with a note of apology. The theft was caught on video and widely shared on social media. The board was put on the wall of the café with the offer of a free drink to any customer hitting a bullseye.

In the Dumbo area of New York (we're serious – it stands for Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass!) they have come up with another reusable takeaway cup idea. The Good To Go cups are plastic, and are sold for \$5, and the key part is the lid. If the customer is unable to keep the cup, and has to chuck it into an approved recycling bin, they hold on to the lid, which proves their membership of the scheme, and qualifies them for a discount on future drinks.

Believe it or not, the picture below is the official motif for the promotion of the Scottish Aeropress Championship, to be held in Glasgow on May 11th at The Old Hairdressers, organized by Lisa Lawson of Dear Green coffee roasters. (Just to show that we know these things, Dear Green Place is the original



## Kaldi

meaning of Ghlaschu, or 'Glasgow', and is also the title of one of 'Scotland's best hundred books of all time' – the author was a friend of ours).

Many café owners have complained about adverse ratings on the Trip Advisor review website, but a super exchange on Twitter this month brought up a new idea. It went like this: "marvellous review of X café in Oxford!" to which someone responded: "Shhh! I say we give it one star on Trip Advisor and keep it to ourselves!"

Are the Welsh the UK's biggest fans of straight espresso shots? The Y Pantri cafe in Llanberis, Snowdonia, has been voted the best coffee shop in the area by readers of the local paper, the *Daily Post*. Thirty-seven cafes were nominated by readers, and 2,000 votes cast. Oddly, the paper then reported: 'we ran a poll to get a flavour of North Wales' favourite type of coffee – espresso took 50 per cent of the vote, from latte and cappuccino in joint second place'. We questioned this, but have failed to achieve any clarification.



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