

# Boughton's

## COFFEE HOUSE



... as always, more relevant and entertaining trade news than any coffee trade paper has ever attempted!

March 2015

## Machine safety - a clumsy letter by a council scares cafe owners

The fraught question of espresso machine safety and the pressure vessel regulations has arisen again, with a quite surprising independent project by a Scottish local authority. The Environmental Health Department of Aberdeen has now come in for criticism for the phrasing of a circular it has sent to local catering and hospitality businesses – the document contains a warning that 'if a steam coffee machine fails in use it can seriously injure or kill nearby people'.

The letter is accompanied by a questionnaire and a warning that failure to complete and return the item 'will result in an inspection being carried out to ensure your compliance with the legislation'.

A supplier of machines and coffee to the hospitality trade in the north of Scotland tells us that he has been shown the letter by many of his customers, who have been scared by it.

"It mentions that we're going to die horrible painful deaths at the hands of rampaging and exploding coffee machines," he told *Coffee House* in some exasperation. "We have been warned... is it any wonder our customers are so agitated?"

"We've been actively going around our customer base assisting them with the directions. The lady I spoke to at the council, who was nice enough, said she was 'helping' small coffee shops adhere to the letter of the law. I suggested that, whilst correct, she had actually frightened many!"

"Another sad thing is many caterers are now phoning their insurers, who also don't have a clue what they are asking about!"

Clearly, what Aberdeen intended to do was to advise caterers using espresso machines (although the authority only refers to 'steam coffee machines') about the rule which says that such machines are covered by pressure vessel regulations, and are

therefore required to be regularly inspected in an approved way.

Our readers will recall that this was the subject of a recent Health and Safety Executive investigation, on which we were the only medium to report. A major aspect of that situation was the coffee trade's criticism of the HSE for failing to issue any coherent guidance to the catering trade, or indeed to local health offices, on the

*"The authorities have now gone from silence to scaremongering in one step..."*  
- Louie Salvoni

subject of the regulations.

When questioned, the Aberdeen Environmental Health Department told us that their letter had been sent on their own initiative, not as a result of any guidance from the HSE.

"The mailshot was sent to all known businesses within Aberdeenshire that have coffee making machines that operate under steam and could be considered a 'pressure system' as defined by the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000," we were told.

"What brought about this mailshot was that environmental health officers, whilst visiting premises, found that owners had little or no knowledge as to their legal requirement to have a written scheme of examination for their coffee making machines."

Although the coffee trade acknowledges that catering businesses must know about, and keep to, the requirements of PSSR2000, there has been criticism over what is seen as Aberdeen's heavy-handed and tactless approach.

"Aberdeenshire Council appear to

have suddenly acknowledged the PSSR regulations that were sprung on us a few hours ago in 2000," said one supplier to the trade. "After the letter was sent out, our phone was red-hot with panicky café and restaurant owners looking for assistance in organising written schemes of examination.

"Instead of looking at this logically and reviewing each individual site's requirements at the time of the next visit, the council have written a blanket letter... even to sites where the coffee machine may not apply!"

"Unsurprisingly this has caused a few wobbles... if their letter could have included a few helpful hints and tips, rather than a few poorly photocopied pages from the PSSR handbook, and maybe a quick how-to guide in simple writing, using language that would not worry the catering community, they could have come across as a guiding light, a helping hand."

Entirely separately from the letter by Aberdeen, the Health and Safety Executive has now told us that it will 'develop a research proposal to focus on small pressure vessels, including cafe boilers' (that is the term it always uses for espresso machines).

However, the HSE has again said that different authorities are responsible for different aspects of the overall situation. By contrast, what the coffee trade has been demanding is that they get together and agree a common message.

At Espresso Service, the national chain of service engineers, managing director Louie Salvoni says he will continue to press all the authorities to come up with an agreed set of guidelines for commercial espresso machines, for caterers and environmental health departments to follow.

With regard to the Aberdeen letter, Salvoni commented: 'the authorities have now gone from complete silence to scaremongering in one step...'

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A typically irreverent notice found on the outer wall of Street Coffee in Bermondsey, London

**NELSON**  
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BB's Coffee and Muffins has a new owner – the chain has been sold for a sum believed to be in the region of £7 million. The new owner is a consortium of investors assembled by Brentwood Investments, and this group of investors includes the chain's existing top management, and even a nephew of the previous owner. "The strategic plan is for us to expand the business adding a further 40 company and franchise shops over the coming years," chief executive Andrew Moyes told us. "We are looking to open an additional 8 company shops across the UK and Ireland in the next twelve months, in shopping centres, plus more franchise shops with our existing franchise partners."

The Ground espresso bars of Northern Ireland have created a fundraising campaign to support the Honduran farmers who grow the coffee the chain uses. Following a visit to origin, the chain has set up a year-long campaign in which the company will seek to raise \$25,800 to create an educational hub for the Capucas co-operative and two teaching staff. Illiteracy is a big issue in the area. Ground now has 13 cafes and instore concessions.

Cornish Coffee, which is a division of Miko UK, has created two blends to mark the recent installation of the company's new roastery. One of the two new blends is Freehand, which the company describes as "an artisan, high grade coffee aimed at the increasingly knowledgeable and

demanding operators". It is a seasonal blend, made up of beans from Guatemala, Rwanda and South America. The signature blend is Hand Roasted in Cornwall, a medium-bodied espresso.

The law firm Keeble Hawson has reported that it helped secure a court order for damages and costs worth more than £250,000 for Dutch businessman Hans Kersten after a Cardiff high court ruled in his favour in a complex case involving imported coffee beans. Judge Keyser ruled that Ferrari's Coffee of Wales should pay Mr Kersten a six-figure sum in damages for the use of 62 tonnes of coffee beans, together with what is likely to amount to a further six figure sum in costs. According to the law firm, the matter was a 'particularly complex international case' that had taken several years to bring to court, and involved the testimony of expert coffee brokers to value high-quality beans.

The 918 Coffee Co of Gillingham, Dorset, has devised a new hyper-local brand as part of a plan to support the local air ambulance service. Managing director Justin Cornelius has created 918 Community Coffee, in which each pack is labelled with the name of the town or village it was purchased from. For every bag sold, 918 will donate 10p to the air ambulance service, and is looking to promote the local coffee in all kinds of regional outlet from post offices to camp sites.

## Cafe operators optimistic, but need more work on healthy options

**There have been two quite different reports of customers' loyalty to coffee shops, in the findings of two separate research projects.**

According to the research from the organisers of the Caffe Culture show, operators of independent coffee shops are currently happy with business. Almost sixty per cent of them experienced improved business last year, and 92 per cent are confident and optimistic about this year's performance. Four-fifths of them expect turnover to grow, and just over half of them expect staffing to go up.

Rather interestingly, over ninety per cent of café owners propose to invest in their business this year, and a quarter of them are willing to spend over £10,000 on equipment, marketing, and training. Their major goals are more customers, higher margins, and wider product ranges.

The question of customer loyalty has arisen in two different research projects. The Caffe Culture one says that 35 per cent of operators serve a main customer base which visits them daily. A larger figure, 48 per cent, reports that their main business comes from customers who visit two or three times a week, and thirteen per cent of trade is down to those who call in once a week.

This is generally in accord with what the coffee trade likes to think is the pattern of consumer visits.

However, international research house Market Force has come up with a different finding. These researchers questioned 4,500 consumers in

January, asking them to rate their satisfaction with their last experience at a given coffee shop and their likelihood to recommend it to others. Although 43 per cent were 'highly satisfied' with the coffee shop experience, Market Force found that customers did not visit as regularly as the industry would like to think.

Of the 4,500 questioned, only fifteen per cent said that they had visited any coffee shop ten times or more in the preceding ninety days. Of the rest, the next highest figure, but well under ten per cent, said they had visited only once, twice or three times in the previous 90 days.

The two surveys did more or less concur on matters of service.

The Caffe Culture research said that 83 per cent wanted to provide 'great' customer service, and Market Force reported that 43 per cent of consumers expressed themselves as 'highly satisfied' with their coffee shop experience.

Of the cafes named as performing best in matters of service, in what Market Force called a 'composite loyalty index', the highest scorer was Pret a Manger, followed at some distance by Greggs (the big three coffee chains were only a percentage point or two behind that).

Market Force noted that customers want coffee houses to do better on healthy-food items, and operators told the Caffe Culture survey exactly the same, with café owners predicting that the biggest consumer trend in the year ahead will be the demand for healthy and intolerance-friendly products.

A third survey has said the same thing as well. The organisers of the Free From exhibition, to be held in Barcelona in June cite research from Mintel saying that the 'free from' category is still remarkably undeveloped in the 'to-go' sector.

Mintel suggests that the 'free from' market is to grow by more than 50 per cent by 2019, a likely performance supported by the appearance of hundreds of such products from supermarkets under their own labels.

Around four in ten British families have someone who avoids specific foods or ingredients, says Mintel. In response, around 10 per cent of all recent food and drink launches in the UK included a gluten-free claim, which is about half the figure from America. (Launches catering for the lactose-intolerant turn out to be much less common.)

It is reported that one third of those who seek out 'free from' food and drink want a wider choice of products, and that the takeaway sector in particular is viewed by customers as being short on such choices.



It has been second time lucky for this curious product - it is the Cafflano, which failed at first to produce investment through a crowdfunding site, but then came back seeking £1,000, and raised pledges of £31,000 from 658 backers. The Cafflano is made by Beanscorp of Korea, which has designed an all-in system for filter brewing – it is a portable flask or cup system which features a hand-operated ceramic grinder, and a drip filter. The various items all screw together to form an item just over seven inches tall. It has made its debut in the far East and is expected to be on show at the London Coffee Festival in April.

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

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## JDs price-fights on coffee again

Yet another discount coffee campaign has been launched by the JD Wetherspoon pub chain, which is now aiming to triple its sales of breakfast and coffee by cutting prices.

The announcement by chairman Tim Martin came as he reported a slight fall in pre-tax profit to £37.5 million, and it was not received enthusiastically by financial analysts – one commented sharply that 'more discounting equals more downgrades'. However, Tim Martin told the Reuters agency that breakfast and coffee are the big growth areas for pubs, and that he proposes to now offer a small filter coffee, with refill, for 99p and a cooked breakfast at £2.99.

Wetherspoon already sells about 50 million coffees and 24 million breakfasts a year. There is research which says that Wetherspoon already does more breakfast trade than Caffè Nero or Pret A Manger, and the chain will offer its low prices from 8am to 2pm daily at 880 pubs.

## Canadians make 'tea' from coffee

An entirely new product idea, coffee-leaf tea, is being marketed on a commercial basis in Canada. The thinking behind the new product is that in tea, it is the leaf of the plant which is processed for brewing, whereas in coffee, it is the fruit, and the leaf is not used, except for compost.

Two young French Canadians decided to test the potential of processing coffee leaves for drinking, and produced what is described as a 'delicious, clean-tasting tea' that is low in caffeine, on a par with decaf coffee, and surprisingly high in polyphenols and antioxidants, more so even than green tea.

The resulting product is now marketed under the brand name Wize Monkey, and the inventors suggest that it will help coffee farmers because selling both coffee leaves and beans gives a second source of income, and one which continues beyond the coffee harvest.

They have trialed the idea with a Nicaraguan farmer, whose name now appears on their products, but have found that the idea requires different trees – a farmer cannot harvest leaves and beans from the same plant. However, Wize Monkey believes that many farmers will turn certain plants over for 'tea' alone, if that makes a higher return.



Opinions from various British coffee importers have not all been entirely approving.

Several of them have referred to the already-known tea-like beverage produced from dried coffee cherry pulp, known as cascara, but one has described it as 'pretty disgusting'.

The DR Wakefield company tell us they have taken part in a coffee-leaf project in Kenya, which produced a tea-like beverage they called 'toffee', but report that it was a non-starter, and proved not to be sustainable in production.

## Ringtons looks to grow its coffee business

Expansion of the Ringtons factory in Newcastle is reported to involve a new emphasis on coffee.

The brand is best known for its tea, and particularly for its doorstep delivery services, which still continue in many areas.

However, its trade division already does a large amount of coffee business to catering clients, and has spoken of 'targetting the wider coffee market, where we expect significant volume growth'.

Ringtons has recently reported a turnover of £50.1 million, and is in the

process of a three-year expansion plan for its factory.

The company has said that this will allow for the relocation and development of its roastery.

Ringtons has also spoken of plans to develop its franchise outlets, particularly in the south. It has five established franchise vans along the south coast and will add six new ones this year in Devon, Somerset and Dorset.



This is a new Rocky Road hot chocolate, devised by Kelly Holmes' Café 1809 in Hildenborough. It features Kokoa Collection's 70 per cent Ecuador chocolate, and according to Dame Kelly herself: "dark chocolate with marshmallows, broken oat and sultana cookies, chocolate sauce... and toasted marshmallow syrup."

Barista Brothers in Plymouth have been granted permission to open a 24-hour café in an area close to some 'student hotspots', after applicant Steven Bartlett said the new outlet would provide a welcome alternative for those who do not want to drink alcohol. However, critics have observed that he also applied for an alcohol licence, which was granted.

A quite charming story from Belfast concerns a nine-year-old girl who has recently been cast for one of the main roles in a production of Cats. She mentioned to barista Anthony Gillen of Brown's Coffee Company that she was hoping to win the part – and for the next five months, right up to the production, every time she made her weekly visit to the café, he created a different latte art cat for her. He created 19 in all, including famous cats from books, films and musicals, from Top Cat to Tigger.

Daisy's coffee shop of Sonning Common has moved to nearby Peppard, where it is now in the former Dog Inn, and has thus been rebranded Daisy's At The Dog. The coffee shop had previously been based at the Herb Farm, where it was opened by Boris Johnson.

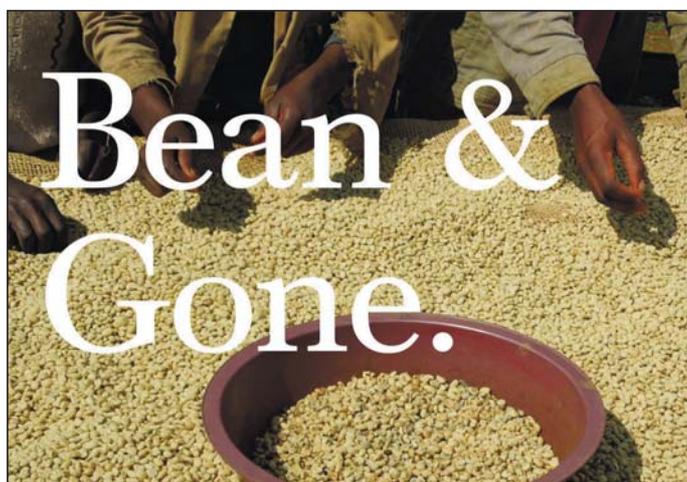
The modern trend for businesses which operate as coffee bars in the daytime and cocktail bars in the evening has developed with the opening of the Filter and Fox in Liverpool. The founders are barmen from local restaurants, and propose

to offer a 'chilled-out' coffee shop in the daytime, before moving onto cocktails and wine later on, and will also offer an outlet for guest craft beers.

A sixth-form student from Saffron Walden has launched his own online coffee company – Carline's Coffee Company is operated by 17-year-old Killian Carline, who is currently studying for his AS levels and runs the business in his spare time.

The Drury Tea and Coffee Co has been given a display plaque by the Living Wage Foundation, to mark its support for the concept. The company, which is currently fitting out its new roaster in Woolwich, has committed to pay both in-house staff and contractors a sum which is 'significantly higher' than the current national minimum wage, saying that from the employer's point of view, a fair wage benefits both staff retention and productivity.

London bakery Foxcroft & Ginger has launched the latest hybrid snack cake – the Cruffin – is part-croissant and part-muffin, and follows the Cronut and similar curiosities. Cruffins are made with a sourdough croissant mix, hand-folded using French butter, but instead of using a traditional croissant mould, the pastries are then baked into a muffin shape, allowing space for fillings. The aim is to be crunchy and flaky on the outside and soft on the inside. Fillings include a Snickers-like mix of nuts and caramel. Price is £2.70.



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Northampton is to receive 'one of the largest Starbucks sites in the UK', it has been announced in a presentation on the Northampton Alive regeneration programme. Eight more Starbucks outlets are to open at various locations across Northampton.

The new Brew & Bake coffee shop in Cheltenham appears to be likely to serve some healthy items - it has been formed by two runners, who are members of the delightfully-named Almost Athletes Running Club, and who came up with the concept for a coffee shop business during one of their training runs.

Costa Coffee has won approval for a cafe in Fakenham, Norfolk, despite several objections, and will convert two empty retail premises. As we reported recently, the council had noted that the town now has thirty coffee-serving outlets in a relatively small area, but reportedly made the indecisive comment that "we shall have to see how it all works out."

The Suffolk coffee brand Paddy and Scott's, which supplies to corporate clients and offices around the UK, will open its third branded cafe in its home area soon - the brand has created a partnership with the East of England Co-operative store on Hadleigh's high street to create a 65-seat space which has been designed with all types of user in mind. There will be a 'community table', intended for local groups or business people, there will be an area for laptop users, and a 'living room' area as a more casual space.

Yorkshire Tea has taken on the Gruffalo, the subject of a best-selling children's book, as the character supporting its Yorkshire Tree initiative. This involves the planting of a million trees, half of them in Yorkshire and half in Kenya, where it sources tea, in partnership with the Woodland Trust charity. The brand is creating a Gruffalo-themed campaign which will visit ten schools and help them plant trees.

The local paper in Stroud has reported on an ingenious energy-saving project by a local resident, who has created a solar-powered kettle. He created it from a sheet of polished stainless steel worked into a parabola curve, which reflects sunlight to a focal point in the centre. It will collect heat all year round, says the inventor - but is not yet ready for café use, as it takes twenty minutes to produce enough boiled water for

two mugs.

Beatons Tearooms & Bookshop, the combined cafe and bookseller chain founded in Wiltshire five years ago, is to open its third venue, in Chester. This will be a franchised business, to be run by someone who says he was inspired to open after a visit to Beatons first outlet, in Tisbury, Wiltshire. He said: "when I discovered Beatons, I found a place where you are made to feel special the moment you walk in - loose-leaf teas, home-made cakes plus a book selection is a magic formula". The chain takes its name from the fashion photographer Cecil Beaton, who lived near Tisbury. It will open its fourth site in Berkshire this year.

A campaign between an MP and a disabled constituent has achieved improved access to a Starbucks cafe in Golders Green, London. The disabled man has a continuing problem with steps and heavy doors at the entrance to cafes, and is often required to sit outside. With the backing of his MP, he successfully persuaded Starbucks to create an access ramp. Last year, on the same street, Caffe Nero introduced a temporary ramp after a similar campaign. The customer says he has spoken to every shopkeeper on the street - "some people said yes, some were rude and arrogant."

Greggs has said that coffee was its fastest-growing product category during 2014, with sales of £1 million a week during the run-up to Christmas.

The Italian coffee house chain Ca'puccino has opened its sixth British site, on Tottenham Court Road, London. The brand has also signed an agreement to franchise the business in the UAE, with five sites in Dubai and five in Abu Dhabi.

The closure of the Delapre Abbey tea rooms in Northampton has reportedly been the subject of a 1,200-signature petition, and disagreement over the performance of the facility. Northampton Borough Council had reportedly planned to move the cafe from a site by a picturesque walled garden area, to make way for renovation, and it was then announced that a decision had been made to close the tea rooms down, due to three years of 'operating at a loss'. Councillors have complained that this was not so, and that the Charities Commission website shows the tea rooms made a £5,639 profit last year.

## Healthy fast food for Starbucks

**Pod, the 'healthy fast food' chain which has twenty sites in London, is to continue and develop its work with Starbucks after recent trials showed that customers preferred its food to the chain's own.**

Pod was created when the founder had a heart problem ten years ago, and decide to create a cafe selling truly nutritious and healthy food 'to go', a concept which he still considers to be unusual and different on the high street.

He now has 21 sites in London, and Starbucks began a trial period last September, replacing its own food with Pod-branded products in three cafes.

Speaking at a Propel conference recently, Pod founder Tim Hall said that his products had sold well, and in 'significantly higher quantities' than Starbucks own-branded food had done in those three sites, and that he had been impressed by the degree to which Starbucks had responded by asking for advice on changing cus-

tomers' perceptions about food in a Starbucks cafe.

Tim Hall suggested that this is likely to be a future trend - such a partnership allows for expansion for other small specialist producer businesses, in situations where the smaller producer could no longer afford to increase their own sites because of the level of high-street rents.

He also predicted that consumer demand for healthier products is at the beginning of a new stage: "customers are now almost ahead of retailers in looking for something new."

"We are at the beginning of this trend. I can't imagine a single town in the UK where consumers won't want to try healthy food or try innovative, interesting recipes."

## £10 per pot for Scottish-grown tea

**One of Scotland's classiest hotels has begun promoting afternoon tea featuring the nation's own domestic crop - at £10 per pot.**

The Balmoral, which is an historic five-star railway hotel that dominates one end of Edinburgh's main street, is now serving white smoked tea, grown by the Wee Tea Plantation at the Dalreoch estate in Perthshire. Tea from the Dalreoch estate has also just won a gold standard award at the Salon du The awards in Paris.

Dalreoch has something in common with Britain's other tea plantation, Tregothnan in Cornwall, in that it has proved that a crop which is normally at home in India or China can thrive here if the conditions are right - Tregothnan has said that its micro-climate is remarkably similar to that of Darjeeling, and the founders of Dalreoch have discovered that once they have brought tea plants to a certain level of maturity, they can handle the relatively cold conditions of central Scotland.

Tam O'Braan, owner of the Wee Tea Plantation, has said that his smoked white tea is unique - grown in a rich peaty glen, it has a flavour not dissimilar to a peaty malt whisky.

In the Balmoral's Palm Court, guests

A bold claim has been made by a Starbucks franchisee applying to open in Ormskirk. He told the council that Starbucks is the most important site on the high street: "A survey of customers in Pinner revealed that 23 per cent were visiting for shopping, 14 per cent for leisure/tourism, 14.5 per cent for work... and 27 per cent were in the area primarily to visit Starbucks. And 45 per cent visited the centre more often since Starbucks opened." Starbucks has not responded to our query on whether it seriously claims that more people come to high streets for Starbucks than any other reason.

are served either the White Cream Tea with sweet heather honey scones and home-made lemon curd, or the Smoked White Cream Tea served with savoury dill scones, Balvenie smoked salmon and cream cheese.

A tin of Dalreoch loose leaf from Fortnum & Mason is £35 for 15 grams.



**The Wicked Coffee Company has adopted the 'proudly serving...' strategy, as a means to both assert its value to the trade and also give independent coffee houses and other caterers the opportunity to take advantage of a fully 'branded' appearance.**

Wicked's managing director Fergus Walsh, has said that many businesses operating in retail, leisure, education and many other sectors have seen the opportunity to build business with good coffee, and this will give them the chance to offer a fully professional-looking coffee service to show against the high street chain names, while also promoting a Fairtrade aspect.

Wicked says that the 'Proudly Serving' offer is a package of its coffee and other beverages, snacks, equipment and merchandising, with staff training and support, and a simple audit system to help clients to maintain standards in sites where coffee may not be the core business.



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**EGRO**  
SWISS COFFEE TECHNOLOGY

A lot has been said recently about the similarities or differences between 'baristas' and 'barmen', and one of the most fascinating new books to appear on coffee comes from a writer who, slightly unusually, has worked on both sides.

He is Tristan Stephenson, who recently has become known in the cocktail world for his work with Fluid Movement, a 'breakthrough events and consultancy company for the drinks industry', which has been involved in the opening of such bars as Purl, VOC, and The Worship Street Whistling Shop ('combining the charm of Victorian squalor with the elegance of grand gin palaces!')

These are the kind of bars which have led the modern trend for cocktails in London – and 'cocktails', in the modern sense, means drinks priced in double figures!

He is already the author of *The Curious Bartender: The Artistry & Alchemy of Creating the Perfect Cocktails*, and *The Curious Bartender: An Odyssey of Whiskies*.

His link with coffee dates from around ten years ago, when he set up the bar at Jamie Oliver's Fifteen restaurant in Cornwall, with a free rein to experiment with food and drink pairings, and while there he took part in the 2009 UK barista championship, finishing third, which was no disgrace at all behind champion Gwilym Davies, who went on to semi-legendary status in the coffee world.

Tristan also successfully harvested, processed, roasted and brewed the first cup of UK-grown coffee, which came from the Eden Project, the remarkable environmental centre which houses the world's largest indoor rainforest. The entire Eden harvest was only 150gm, but it was the first tree-to-cup project in Britain.

He has now come up with the third book in his series, *The Curious Barista*.

In this magazine a few months ago, Marco Arrigo of Illy coffee, who now has the Termini bar in Old Compton St, made the point that he hires barmen, not baristas, and cited various differences between the two breeds – he found barmen more respectful of ingredients. Is there a difference in outlook between the two species?

"I would argue that baristas have a far greater respect over the ingredients that they use, be it coffee, water, milk," Tristan told us. "However, it's a much smaller range of ingredients than that of a bartender, so it's a bit unfair to draw any comparisons."

What degree of interest is shown in coffee by cocktail barmen, and how much is quality coffee currently a feature of the cocktail bar scene?

"Not a great deal, but it is getting there, which is one reason for this book. Bartenders are taking a greater interest, and bar operators are too, as a means of making the most out of a

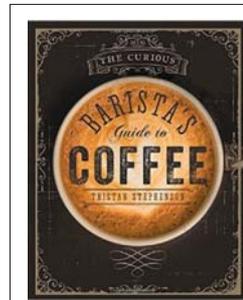
# The curious barista...

One of the country's top cocktail barmen continues his interest in coffee with a new book – in which he creates the credible pumpkin latte and reverses the convention of the Irish Coffee



venue by attracting day and night-time trade. The likes of Tailor Made (a combined micro-roastery, coffee house and cocktail bar in Athens) may be a glimpse into the future of cocktail-and-coffee offerings, but I still think we are a way off yet."

The new work is both a history and a recipe book. It spends over a hundred pages discussing the origins and evolution of coffee, brewing methods, and so on, which will not be new to any barista, even though they are entertainingly written.



“ You can execute the pumpkin latte in a lazy manner, and it will be a crowd-pleaser... but execute it with an eye for detail, and you have a genuinely fantastic drink. ”

For the experienced barista, the most intriguing part of the book may be the recipe section in which, surprisingly, Tristan even addresses a drink which has become something of a figure of fun in the coffee trade – the pumpkin spice latte, as pioneered by Starbucks. What was it that inspired Tristan to 're-engineer' the concept into a credible drink?

"It's an incredibly popular drink, but exactly the sort of thing that the speciality section of the industry detests," he agreed. "Including a recipe for it, and making it tasty, is a tongue-in-cheek celebration of coffee in all its various guises."

Tristan's pumpkin spice latte recipe begins with a swingeing criticism of the original: 'delve into the inner workings of this drink, and you find a harrowing tale of high-fructose corn syrup, caramel colourings, condensed milk, and liberal helpings of sugar at

every available opportunity, synthesised spice flavourings, and below-par espresso'.

Nevertheless, he acknowledges, the appeal of the drink is obvious – warmth, sweetness and caffeine, aimed at a market wrapped up for Christmas shopping.

In the Stephenson form, the drink is transformed.

"You can execute it in a lazy manner, and it will be a crowd-pleaser... but execute it with an eye for detail, and you have a genuinely fantastic drink."

His version involves a home-made pumpkin spice sauce, involving star anise, ginger, nutmeg, pepper, orange peel, and even some optional dark rum. His whipped cream features maple syrup and pumpkin seed oil; his spice mix features cinnamon, mace, ginger and pepper.

This is all a world away from brewing a latte, adding a shot of branded syrup and squirting on some aerosol cream... and that is why the Starbucks version is two or three pounds, and a cocktail bartender's version would be in double figures!

Among Tristan's recipes, we also

'abomination', in which all nuances and subtleties of taste are lost, to the degree that no amount of cream will save it.

His solution is to reverse the classic recipe, using warm whisky-flavoured cream on top of chilled coffee.

"I prefer the idea of sipping warm cream and finding cold coffee underneath. The 'cold cream and hot coffee' Irish coffee is not a great drink, and most of us end up burning our lips on the coffee. With warm, sweet, whiskified, cream on top you get a kind of warm Bailey's, and underneath is the sweetened cold brew."

An interesting and useful aspect to it, he notes, is that by making the two elements in advance, they can be stored in a fridge and the drink built to order, simply by warming the whisky cream gently before laying it on top of the coffee.

His coffee ice-cream is another rebellion against accepted and familiar flavours, with Tristan complaining that most modern such products are 'made from some deplorable concentrate, covered up by generous helpings of sugar, fat, and other ungodly seasonings'.

A rather famous cake-making actress once told us that even she resorted to using instant coffee in her recipes for ease of use, and to avoid overpowering the rest of the ingredients; however, Tristan opts for 100ml of real espresso per two litres of ice-cream.

"Strength-wise, this ends up about the same as a cappuccino in terms of milk/coffee proportions. Sweetness of course accentuates certain aspects of the coffee, and it ends up about right to my taste. Espresso is fine for this kind of thing, there are various thickeners in there that counteract the dilution that it gives to the batter."

Perhaps most extremely usefully, in his section on brewing methods, Tristan gives generous space to the Aeropress, even discussing in detail the inverted method.

Is Aeropress a product or method well suited to use in bars and restaurants?

"No more than any other method. If a much bigger one were available it could prove a useful tool for large scale macerations behind the bar... we did adapt one once to help produce 'caviar' spherification pearls en masse – which actually worked quite well!"

*The Curious Barista's Guide to Coffee is published by Ryland Peters, at £16.99*



## Coffee from the keg

A coffee company in Tampa, Florida, has created a pressure-brewed iced coffee, which is in some cases delivered from a traditional grocery bike with a large basket on the front.

The point of the drink, according to Commune and Co, is that the climate in Florida is humid all year round, leading to a demand for cold-brew and iced coffee which is higher than anywhere else.

So the company has devised a method of dispensing coffee from something like a nitro beer tap, or delivering it in a 'growler', which is a kind of flask, very similar to a traditional British cider jug, which is used in America for take-out sales of beer from craft breweries.

According to the inventors, conventional cold-brew coffee "gives you an over-caFFEinated, flat, concentrate and leaves you feeling like you just drank 12oz of syrup".

Their system, which they believe to be unique, is of coffee brewed in large batches at a cold temperature, dispensed in a system very much like keg beer. As with some stouts and creamy beers, the 'nitro' pressure system delivers a drink with a head, rather more like a Guinness than a crema.

This method, claims the inventor, Joel Davis, brings out sufficiently more flavour to allow a more clear distinction between coffees of different origins.

Although Commune has plans for a static café, the first business was as a one-man mobile cafe, using a 'utility tricycle' with a customised wooden platform holding the keg, with beer taps poking out the top. The first time he pedalled it around his home town, the police pulled him over on suspicion of illegally selling beer on the street.



Another variation on an old product, to produce a new idea. The Cupclip is created from the old 'bulldog' paper clip, still familiar in offices.

# World coffee shortage - the answer is in your grinder

The future of coffee has been the subject of two attention-getting topics in recent weeks - one press report has repeated the warning that the world's supplies of coffee will run out, and the other makes the quite original point that at café level, we are wasting vast amounts of coffee, and economy for the entire industry is in the hands of the individual barista.

The question of the world's coffee supplies running out through climate change is not new, but recent press reports say that the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew has now begun 'a desperate bid' to find a new bean which will survive global warming. It is reported that Kew's new science strategy for the next five years includes a project to find a bean which will survive global warming and still taste acceptable, and that it has 124 species to investigate.

However, it is also reported that Kew faces funding cuts, and may not be able to afford to send scientists out into the field, so it may have to rely on 'partner agencies', and the support of companies like Sainsbury's and Starbucks.

Meanwhile, the Australian barista champion Matt Perger has re-stated an argument he gave in a Tamper Tantrum presentation last year, in which he argued that if all baristas and equipment makers paid more attention to the correct grinding and extraction of coffee, we could save the equivalent of twenty billion cups a year. This would offset problems of availability, and save individual cafes vast amounts on their buying costs.

"More people are drinking coffee, and less are growing it," he said. "Demand is up, and supply is down. I propose a way to be more efficient."

"An even extraction of coffee will improve taste, and has the advantage that you get more flavour from the same amount... or, you make more cups with same amount of beans."

"This is being efficient, and making more of the world's limited supply."

He has suggested some remarkable figures. If the world produces 140 million bags of coffee a year, then discounting the 40 million bags which go to make instant coffee, we end up with 4.8 billion kilos of roasted coffee, or maybe 240 billion cups.

"Most of these are extracted pretty unevenly," he argues. "If everyone got a measly two per cent better extraction, we would make 21.5 billion extra cups in a year, eleven per cent more."

"It's ridiculous - it means that nine per cent of the world's coffee production could disappear, and we could still meet demand. The whole country of Colombia could go on strike and we'd still be fine."

For the individual café owner, he says, this becomes very meaningful.

This, he argues, becomes meaningful right at high-street level.

"Consider a café using 50 kilos a

week, or brewing about 2,500 cups. To them, extracting more evenly would give the café 250 more coffees per week - that may make the difference between bankruptcy and profit."



A variation on the crowdfunding trend comes with the Handground grinder. The inventors, not satisfied with existing manual coffee grinders on the market, ran a contest for the design of a better one, then put the winner up for funding on Kickstarter - and raised four times the \$35,000 production costs they had sought.

The grinder will have a 100gm capacity and 20 different grind settings, priced at maybe £100.

According to the Local Data Company, the research house which monitors the performance of the national high streets, chain stores in general 'continue their retreat', but independent shopkeepers only just opened more stores than they closed last year.

The growth sectors are barbers, beauty salons, mobile phone shops, and tobacconists/e-cigarette shops, while clothing shops, newsagents, and pubs are reported as 'sectors in decline'. The café and tea-room sector was reported to have grown by only 1.38 per cent, in that 91 more opened than closed in 2014.

However, the High Street Tracker from the insurance broker Simply Business says that coffee shops and food stores are 'leading the rise of independent retailers', being the most popular independent store to open.

The world cocoa situation is now so bad that 'chocolate is too cheap to be sustainable', according to the 2015 Cocoa Barometer, a project by European organisations working for sustainable cocoa production.

The cocoa supply chain is increasingly dominated by a select group of large corporations, say the writers of the Barometer.

West African cocoa farmers in particular live well below globally-defined poverty levels, to the degree that farmers on the Ivory Coast now need to quadruple their current earnings just to reach the global poverty line of \$2 a day.

New for 2015

# Posh Pop Lighter

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Breckland Orchard

AWARD WINNING POSH POP

It has been a few weeks for discussion of various aspects of the syrup market, particularly the age range of customers who choose syrups, and the breadth of use of the product, in both hot and cold drinks.

The big surprise in the sector has been the re-appearance of the sugar company Tate and Lyle, which made its first entry into the coffee world around twelve years ago, but which then largely dropped out of sight. The brand has re-launched with three of the most standard flavours, and half a dozen new ones to follow shortly.

The brand has brought out its vanilla, caramel and hazelnut syrups with the slightly surprising suggestion that flavoured coffees appeal most to the younger audience, citing some general research saying that over half of the under-35s want to try something new in a coffee house, and suggesting that flavoured syrups are for 'foodservice outlets looking to make the most of this trend', and that the brand will 'attract new consumers into the indulgent coffee and beverage market'.

The surprising aspect of this, of course, is that while syrups are acknowledged to have a big marketing benefit, and can quickly assist the production of many drinks, from shakes and smoothies to frappes and Italian sodas, the younger market is far from being the only target – research by Taylerson's Malmesbury Syrups just a couple of years ago confirmed that a remarkably high number of over-60s have chosen to drink flavoured coffees.

That still applies, Taylerson told us: "that they have different preferences for flavours, too - we can see this from our large direct consumer base. We see flavours such as amaretto being preferred by older people, and flavours such as hazelnut and ginger are popular. Younger people will seek out new seasonal flavours."

Da Vinci says that its own research shows that around 15 per cent of adults of all ages drink a coffee flavoured with syrup every month, and that the opportunity is not just confined to younger consumers.

Beyond the Bean, creator of the Sweetbird syrups range, says "we have seen other research which says

# Syrups and the over-sixties

## Flavoured coffees have a wider appeal than may be expected – and can transform cold milk drinks as well



Coming soon from Taylerson's Malmesbury Syrups - coconut

that 26 per cent of beverage drinkers under the age of 34 frequently request syrup as an extra. Our own research shows that customisation is very important to 43 per cent of consumers – so you do have to make sure there are lots of options. We have recently had massive success with our Peanut Butter syrup and Salted Caramel syrup."

Tate and Lyle will be following the first three fairly standard flavours with five more in April – chocolate, spiced chai, strawberry, raspberry and mango. The brand says that all of these are made with pure cane sugar and no artificial colourings and that the range carries the Fairtrade mark and are certified Kosher. The syrups are in 750ml plastic bottles with an 18-month shelf life; the biggest wholesaler of flavoured syrups, Cream Supplies, is offering them at a launch price of £2.99.

The second point which has come up for discussion this month was inspired by the new trend for cereal and porridge cafes.

The Cereal Bar in Kingston on Thames has opened with a menu of cereals which features the entire UK stock of an American one, Hershey's Cookies 'n' Cream. However, their Facebook page makes a reference to them serving fifteen flavours of milk,

and beside this is a picture of Monin syrups.

How well do our familiar branded syrups work with cold milk for such a use?

"Most of Monin syrups mix well in milk, but some of our more citrus syrups such as Lemon Pie, Lime and so on do not mix as well - citrus and milk do not mix," remarked the brand's James Coston, with the brand adding that they had not seen such a use before.

Elsewhere, two cereal cafes were in a local race to be the first to open in Manchester: Black Milk Cereal Dive opened first in an indoor market off Short Street, and Cereal Central MCR continues to say it is 'coming soon'. The founder of Black Milk has rather generously said that a clustering of similar businesses will be a good thing for promoting the concept. He too is offering cereals served with flavoured milk, including squid ink, from which the café gets its name.

Elsewhere, Moo'd Cereal House in Headingley, Leeds, has been opened by two partners who say they were first with the cereal café idea. They pour their milk from an old ale pump.

Speaking to a local student newspaper, they said that they came up with the idea while students in Leeds, and registered their business before Cereal Killers in London, the one which achieved all the press coverage for starting the trend.

Moo'd were one of the first customers for artisan-roasted single origin coffees from Nino Di Rienzo at Casa Espresso in Bradford.

How well do the syrup brands work with cold milk for cereals?

"It's a misconception that beverage syrups are limited to use in hot beverages," Da Vinci told us. "Our syrups are designed for use in both hot and cold applications. As the syrups can be used to flavour cold milk, it's also possible for outlets as diverse as the latest cereal cafés to use the products

to create different milk combinations, for sipping through a straw. By doing so, they'll be able to extend their offer for children beyond the packaged ready-to-drink flavoured milks."

Syrups can also be used in coffee drinks other than the obvious latte, says Da Vinci – in some cases, the flavour can transform a familiar drink.

"Espresso con panna is a good example – add Da Vinci chocolate syrup to cream in a whipper and use that to top the espresso."



**Sweetbird, from Beyond the Bean, has put together its latest 'selection box' of flavours and recipes, this time to cater for the spring and summer trades in iced teas, a sector which has taken some time to grow in the UK, but which does continue to expand.**

The new Sweetbird box will be available from May, and offers three one-litre bottles each of its peach and cucumber and mint flavours. The concept is that an iced tea can now be made virtually instantly, using three pumps of syrup with still or sparkling water for a 12oz drink. For this selection box, Sweetbird has included two clear jugs to be filled with pre-made iced tea to act as a counter display, syrup pumps, and now a sticker for the side of the jugs to monitor how much is being made.

The range has six other flavours of iced tea syrup - chai, original iced tea, jasmine lime, passionfruit lemon, raspberry and watermelon green tea.

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There has been a bit of a fad or trend for some cafes to serve certain drinks in old jam jars. The Artis tableware company has seen this, and has come out with a specific stock product, with the convenient addition of a handle.

Lavazza has announced a wholly-biodegradable coffee capsule that is made, we are told, from thistles. It has long been known that the rise of coffee capsules has created an ethical problem for the industry - capsule sales are in billions, but the majority of coffee capsules are not reclaimed or recycled.

The compostable one will be shown this year, beside other new commercial applications for coffee waste in products such as ink, odour-control clothing, cosmetics, stove pellets and as the growing medium for mushrooms, a practice already seen in the UK.



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\*Source: Sensory testing for T&L Sugars Ltd 2014

"We are sorry to announce that we have re-engineered coffee production... we have eliminated all the steps, so now it doesn't matter who you hire, you can now have 'hand-made' coffee made automatically."

That was the opening statement of the WMF brand at the launch of an extremely unusual new espresso machine, which made its debut in March - it is what the company calls an entirely new kind of hybrid espresso machine, a super-automatic with a remarkable amount of control over brewing parameters, yet with the appearance of a traditional espresso machine, and the facility for the automatic processes to be over-riden and the entire brewing process to be manually operated.

The result, says the company's national account manager Richard Wylie, is the WMF Espresso, which gives all the appearance and theatre of a traditional machine, yet with the efficiency, consistency and speed of an automatic bean-to-cup machine.

It is certainly true that the machine appears at first sight to be a traditional machine - it features a fully-operational traditional portafilter, whereas many bean-to-cup machines tend to look very much the same kind of vertical boxes on which the main visual feature is a collection of push-buttons (indeed, WMF makes machines which fit that description).

So why should such a hybrid exist? There is, says WMF, a distinct market.

"There are places which will not give house room to a bean-to-cup, or to bean-to-cups which have the same, standard utilitarian look - but this is deliberately made to look and work like a traditional machine, it can be used as a manual espresso machine, and it can be used as a fully-automatic for consistency at speed... it is a new era in coffee-production for the operator who wants a traditional machine, but needs to know that their machine is working to high standards all the time."

That, of course, is a claim which is worth investigation - it is very close to the tired old cliché of 'a perfect espresso every time', a statement which actually does still crop up from certain machine makers.

No, says Richard Wylie, that is not the claim. WMF does not propose to tell coffee operators what a 'perfect' drink is - WMF proposes to let the operator decide on the recipe of their ideal drink, and then let the machine keep delivering it.

"Everyone's interpretation of a 'perfect espresso' is different. It is not for the machine supplier to dictate to the beverage operator what is 'perfect' for their café. This has to be defined by the café owner or beverage operator, who should know what they want to achieve, and we are saying that the ideal drink is a matter for discussion between us and the client, and that between us we set this machine to deliver it."

# WMF launches its hybrid espresso machine

## The new machine which acts as a fully-automatic bean-to-cup machine or a traditional espresso brewer



The WMF has portafilters - which the operator can fill manually, or not

One of the most important aspects is that the operator can effectively decide how much of the work he wants the machine to do, and WMF suggests that just by removing the work of grinding, basket-filling and tamping, the rate of coffees which can be produced in a busy period can rise appreciably.

In its automatic mode, the obvious difference with the WMF Espresso is that the barista does not fill the brew-basket in the normal way.

The barista puts the portafilter in position, but it is empty - there is a sensor in it which tells the machine which size of brew basket is being used, and the machine says to itself:

the individual operator expects to give him his 'perfect' espresso, while staying within generally-accepted parameters... not all operators want to brew a 21gm shot in one hit, when they're doing 200 lattes in a lunchtime!

"You set your preferred gramme throw, you set the water volume, you set the tamp pressure, and you set the pre-infusion and the temperature."

How good is the built-in grinder?

"The grinder is not an off-the-shelf one, nor is it one taken from another of our machines - it is a grinder made to our specifications. Again, you have to live with some percentages and tolerances, and while measuring every dose to one-tenth of a gramme is fine



“ There are places which will not give house room to bean-to-cups which have the standard utilitarian look - but this is made to look and work like a traditional, or to be used as a fully-automatic for consistency at speed — Richard Wylie ”

'he's put the single basket in, so according to the instructions set by the operator, that means I need to grind and deliver eight grammes'.

This goes from hopper to grinder and down again into the basket, where the espresso is brewed in the normal way. One brewed, the barista removes the portafilter to 'knock-out' the spent grounds in the conventional manner.

"A lot of this is new," says Richard Wylie. "This machine identifies whether you have put a single or double basket in. Both are 53mm baskets, and the single is for 8-11gm of ground coffee, the double for 11-16gm."

"The choice of basket sizes came from testing, in accordance with what

for geeks, we have designed this to be correct for the real practical world.

"As we all know, you can set a grinder, and the atmosphere will change the result. So, this machine monitors the shot in accordance with what you have programmed it to do, and it will tell you 'too fine' or 'too coarse', in relation to what you have told it to do."

The machine does not adjust the grind automatically, but displays a message to the barista saying to adjust a notch coarser or finer.

But if the operator wishes to bypass the automatic functions completely, perhaps to brew a 'guest' coffee or a pre-ground one, then the portafilter

can be used in the normal way.

"There is an over-ride button - you can use a pre-ground coffee, an espresso pod or coffee from an external grinder. You place the ground coffee in the portafilter, tap it level, insert it into the group head, and then the tamping and pre-programmed procedure begins."

This, and the other controls, are dialled in using fingertip dragging on a fruit-machine kind of visual display. These are very similar to modern phone controls, and WMF envisages users saying 'yes, we know how to do that...'

The fully-automatic brewing involves several unusual aspects. One is that the two bean hoppers are not sited above the machine in the normal way, but are positioned inside the machine casing, and are filled by sliding back the cup-warmer tray on the top. This of course means that the internal hoppers and grinder are much closer to the brewhead than is usual, and so WMF has avoided overheating by giving each hopper individually air-cooling.

"We do not want to second-roast the beans," explains Richard Wylie. "This was considered extremely important - if your beans heat up, your whole quality goes."

Inside the box, the mechanics and electrics are relatively familiar from a traditional machine - there is a three-litre boiler, fitted vertically with a heat exchanger for each group, which means that this is a bean-to-cup machine which comes under the pressure-vessel regulations. There is an insulated jacket on the boiler, which WMF reckons is more common on a bean-to-cup than a traditional, but otherwise the components are familiar, and an espresso engineer looking inside will recognise what is going on.

The idea, WMF's managing director Marcus Gansloser confirmed to us, has already undergone much practical testing in the field.

"This idea is five or six years old, and we started testing them four years ago. McCafe in Germany began testing it at a very early development stage, and they liked it. We have since tested it in places from bakeries to hotels, so it is being launched with several years' working experience behind it."

"You can spend from £3,000 to £10,000 on a bean-to-cup, and you can spend from one thousand to fifteen thousand on a traditional - this machine is probably comparable in price to buying a high-level traditional machine with two good grinders."

# 'Posh pop' begins a no-sugar soft drinks campaign

Breckland Orchard, the creator of the 'posh pop' collection of drinks which is familiar to the coffee house trade, has launched a 'super low calorie' range, with no added sugar.

"There's no getting away from the fact that consumers want the option of drinks which contain the bare minimum of sugar, if any at all," remarks the company's managing director, Claire Martinsen. "I've observed a big rise in the backlash to sugar, fuelled by headlines such as 'sweet poison – why sugar is ruining our health' (that was from the *Telegraph*), and the start of 2015 saw a raft of 'sugar free' cookery books.

"There has also been the rise in the popularity of the 5:2 diet, which precludes sugars in order to reduce calorie intake on the two 'fasting' days.

"With all the talk about 'sugar' it seems as though soft drinks have become the easy target. There's not a similar discussion for example about the amount of sugars in 'fat free' yoghurts, which can have more sugar than a can of Coke!

"I honestly think that the backlash against soft drinks is out of control, but similarly I think we need to recognise that there are people who have been actively avoiding the whole of the premium soft drinks offer, and I am hoping that Posh Pop Lighter will bring them back in."

The current Breckland Orchard range is made with a spring water base and is limited in the use of sugar, but the new Posh Pop Lighter products are designed for those for whom 'no sugar' is the absolute preference.

"We've been bringing lower sugar varieties to market over the past two years. Our Elderflower posh pop contains 7.3gm per 100ml, and only 80 calories per bottle.



Breckland necks show calorie ratings

"What we've chosen to do with the new range is remove added sugar completely. The sugar that remains is the naturally-occurring sugar from the fruit juice that we use. This means that the calories are ultra-low – none in the elderflower, three in the ginger beer, and five in the cloudy lemonade.

"We've tried to match the flavours of the drinks as close as we possibly can to the regular posh pop range, and the initial feedback from consumers has been great with reactions like: 'I don't let the kids have fizzy drinks because of the sugar, but I will now!'"



**A coffee house in Buffalo, north of New York, features an innovative heating system which keeps customers warm as they sit.**

It is a built-in masonry heater which doubles as a bench seat. The seat is positioned next to a conventional log-burning fire, and the flue from the fire runs horizontally just below the stone seat top. The unusual aspect of this is that the heated seat is 15ft long, and many heating experts said that such a flue could not work, because the smoke would 'stagnate' in the middle. The solution took two years of research, and it is now said that the building can be heated for 24 hours following a single, hour-long burn.

Vegware, the Scottish eco-packaging company with business in takeaway coffee cups, is relaunching its project to help catering businesses handle their food waste better, either to avoid landfill waste fees or because some local authorities now demand separate food waste recycling. The Vegware Food Waste Network maps all food waste services in the UK by postcode, as a 'matchmaking' service to help caterers to locate their nearest centre.



A crowdfunding campaign backing 'the world's first plantable coffee cup' has achieved double the amount of investment that its creators were seeking. The Reduce Reuse Grow concept involves a takeaway coffee cup which has native seeds embedded within the material, thus allowing it to be used for local reforestation – instead of discarding the cup, the consumer soaks it in water for five minutes and can then plant it. The inventor, from California, sought \$10,000 and has received pledges of over double that, from 600 investors.

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Several brands have instigated large training programmes for the staff of their big clients – one of the biggest was Lavazza's training course for the JD Wetherspoon pub chain, and Kimbo has also done similar training work in pubs.

The hotel market remains a bit of a puzzle in this respect. Hotel coffee is traditionally slated for its quality, but a brand which has made a definite move to improve things there is one of the biggest traditional names of all – it is Douwe Egberts, which has created the Sensational Coffee Programme, a contest which has succeeded in achieving director-level interest at the Millennium Copthorne group.

It is, marketing manager Martyn Bell agrees, an interesting case of a long-established name coming up with something that shakes up an important section of the trade – Douwe Egberts is not a brand which is seen in the hipster coffee bars, and not expected to be a mover and shaker.

"Where do we stand in the coffee market? It depends how you look at it – the artisans are the part of the modern market thought to be continuously exploring ideas, they get the publicity, we love them, and they are very important to us for tracking trends... but it's a very limited sector.

"The market which is growing is perhaps one level down from 'artisan' cafes. This is a sector which does value quality coffee, doesn't want to keep training its staff on this week's seasonal blend, but does want a nice, consistent front-of-house espresso.

"We are very strong in this sector. Maybe the three blends we have in the UK for this do relatively small business – that is, we do twenty tonnes of the Piazza d'Oro Forza blend a year.

"But it is an international brand that sells a lot, and we thought it really should be promoted more widely in the UK... potentially, to coffee shops as well as hotels, but certainly to those mainstream caterers who want a consistent quality and don't want to change all the time."

To what degree might this be Douwe Egberts saying: think of us again, take a fresh look at an established name?

"The intention was to promote three good blends, not to suggest that our brand needs rejuvenating... however, there are still a lot of people who associate Douwe Egberts with instant coffee, and there are also many who see us as a roast-and-ground brand, not as a wholebean brand.

"So yes, there may be many potential users in the catering trade who haven't linked with the idea of us as a supplier of good espresso coffee."

The idea of getting this appreciated in the mainstream catering world recently led to the idea of the Sensational Coffee Programme, which aims to show hoteliers and similar businesses that 'great' coffee is within their grasp.

"This idea grew up in partnership

# Sensational coffee for hotels

## One of the biggest traditional names in coffee is behind a scheme to bring speciality-quality coffee to the hotel trade



*The Berryccino, launched on the Millennium Copthorne menu after the Douwe Egberts programme*



with clients, in discussing the concept that we can supply the best coffee in the world, but if the machine isn't clean and the barista's rubbish, you are not going to get a good result.

"For the catering customer, this programme becomes an indication, all round their business, that they are taking coffee seriously... it involves bringing management-level food and beverage managers into our premises to learn about coffee, and they in turn allocate a barista in each hotel to take on responsibility.

"We had started work on it before we came on board with Millennium Copthorne, but we spoke about it when negotiating with them and they were really interested in developing it."



“ Coffee is a subject in which everybody can make a great one... if they want to

– Martyn Bell

With that hotel chain, it aroused immediate interest at director level.

"The operations director got it, immediately and absolutely. He sees the value of quality and of theatre, and he sees that coffee is a subject in which everybody can make a great one... if they want to do it.

"When he took it up, we found that the Sensational Coffee Programme and the in-house barista contest we ran with it really worked in engaging their staff. Both their management and the staff at serving level bought into it, absolutely... we now see people at serving level who are very actively engaged, and when we mystery-shop, we can see the results in the improvement in what we are served."

Mystery-shopper auditing is a major part of the Programme, and when good work is seen, it is rewarded on the spot – if the barista delivers a great coffee, they are given a £10 gift

voucher there and then, and the names of all voucher winners are seen by the senior European vice-president of the hotel chain.

On the other hand, a below-par drink brings that barista a training session.

The Millennium Copthorne in-house contest went down well, with the winner getting £500 worth of holiday vouchers and their signature drink added to the hot beverages menu across the hotel brand's estate. Miroslav Fabry, of the hotel in Mayfair, London, won with a presentation that included his Berryccino.

This was created by extracting an espresso, and transferring it to a glass beaker which was submerged in a flask of ice thus chilling the coffee without diluting it (a technique which

also cropped up in this year's UK barista championships). This espresso was mixed with fruit syrup and then poured into a glass, a spoonful of fruit puree was added to the espresso, and the drink was topped with cream.

Do Millennium Copthorne say anything to their guests to endorse the quality of the coffee their staff are now producing?

"For many hotels, coffee has not been a key marketing issue, but they do see that to have point-of-sale material saying that they are proud of their coffee, and take care with it, does give the guest the assurance that the hotel is likely to take care over everything else, as well.

"And I do think that hotel guests do now pick up on the buzz among staff who take care.

"Yes, there is still the feeling that coffee in some five-star hotels is not of the quality you would get from an arti-

san coffee shop. But the opportunity is there for them to do better with coffee – every hotel has a bar, but not every hotel has a coffee shop. There is still a lot for some of them to learn."

Does this situation suggest that the Programme will be copied by Douwe's other big hospitality clients?

Not just the big ones, returns Martyn Bell readily. "The Sensational Coffee Programme has become a very significant thing, but how much further can we develop it?

"The next practical level might be to get coffee training to the level of the ten-bedroom, two-star hotels.

"The pub example is also interesting – with a few exceptions, nobody seems to have really got hold of coffee in the licensed trade. We still do not see any feeling of a big shift towards morning opening, or of people thinking the pub is the place to go for coffee. Yet they must see their customers shifting elsewhere..."

Development beside coffee is happening everywhere, observes Martyn Bell.

"Coffee is a bringing-people-together thing, which is now coming to a head with the coffee shop becoming more of a social hub, and we see more coffee shops now acting as cafes during the day and turning into licensed premises in the evening.

"My hope is that this is the spark which will re-generate the high street. I agree, as others have said, that it's crazy to see so many coffee bars stop serving in the late afternoon – if you have that extra hook, you can bring people into a traditional café after hours, and a limited wine menu of a couple of good reds and whites is something that people will accept."

What of the hotels?

"The artisan cafes gave a richer overall coffee experience, which the chains responded to. Between them, the artisans and the chains shaped the market in which the consumer now recognises 'good coffee'.

"It was harder for the hotel chains to concentrate on coffee, because they have to maintain high standards across their whole service, of which coffee had been a relatively small part, but it is now steadily rising up their agenda... when I present to hotel clients, I now get a more articulate response about coffee than I would have got just five years ago.

"So this is definitely moving. I don't yet see many hotels getting into arguments about origins or light roasts, but I do see them now considering the consistency of their coffee quality.

"This is a notable step forward."

There was a close finish to this year's UK barista championship – Maxwell Colonna-Dashwood of Colonna and Small's in Bath retained his title, making a tally of three championship wins in all, but he did so by the narrowest of margins, beating Dale Harris of Has Bean Coffee by just one point.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of this year's contest was the achievement of the third-placed and seventh-placed baristas. Third place went to Jana Slamova, a barista from the contract caterer Baxter Storey, the first time that anyone from a company outside the dedicated specialist coffee trade has achieved such a high position... and her company colleague Don Alizzo finished in seventh place, missing a place in the final by just three points.

Jana Slamova is head barista at the contract caterer's operation in the GE Capital site in London, and she also trains baristas in Baxter Storey's internal coffee academy.

These performances have been taken as confirmation that 'great coffee' is no longer confined to the specialist coffee trade, and Baxter Storey's achievement is expected to send out a message to the wider corporate and contract catering world about the standard of drinks which the public will now expect from caterers previously not considered 'coffee specialists'.

Tim Sturk, who is in charge of coffee matters at Baxter Storey, has in the past referred to contract caterers as 'the invisible people of the coffee industry'. That, he has agreed with us, is a description which probably no longer applies.

The award for 'best espresso' and 'best signature drink' in the final both went to Dale Harris; the award for 'best cappuccino' was won by the champ, Maxwell.

In the Aeropress championships, which were also held in recent weeks,

The very newest coffee supplier on the market is run by a couple of familiar names – it is Modern Standard Coffee, set up by Lynsey Harley, formerly a barista trainer for Drury, and then with UCC and Falcon, and Mel Smith, who has worked in private roasting, and was head of procurement for the WRVS.

"Not to point out the obvious," Lynsey told us, "we are two women running a coffee business, which is somewhat unheard of. I think more women ought to give running a business a go, and we are both fortunate to have made this step."

"We want to bring speciality coffee to a wider audience – high street operators, restaurants, hotels and contract caterers. We enable better coffee to be accessible to this market, and have already found a great customer in Five Guys, who are serving easily the best coffee out of a high street burger chain."

## Contract caterer baristas steal the show again



Pariwartan Napal from Imperial College London took this year's TUCO championship.

the Scottish title was taken by Claire Wallace of Machina Espresso, and the English champ is Paulina 'Panda' Miczka from Kaffeine in London. Both win a trip to Seattle to compete in the world finals.

It has been a remarkably busy season for private barista championships elsewhere... but, notably, there have been some fine prizes on offer.

Kitti Horti, from Peyton and Byrne's Royal Academy of Arts site has won a trip to origin in Rwanda.

Peyton & Byrne is a catering company that runs cafés in nine outlets across London such as the Wallace Collection, the National Gallery, and the Royal Academy of Arts. It also has six bakeries.

The contest was devised by Mozzo Coffee, and required each finalist to prepare four espressos in three minutes, four lattes in five minutes and four signature drinks in ten – perhaps not the most demanding timings of all barista contests.

However, Kitti Horti took the prize with the Nociolino signature drink. This was a small Italian-inspired drink in which 'a spongy cloud of milk hides aromatic coffee delightfully combined with hazelnut cream', and was inspired by a similar drink made by the famous Il Professore of Naples. It is espresso with a home-made hazelnut and chocolate cream, topped with cold frothed milk.

Pariwartan Napal from Imperial College London took this year's title at the University Caterers' Organisation championship - he was a runner-up last year.

His Smooth Passion drink was made up of espresso, cream, passion fruit bubbles, lime zest, vanilla extract and star anise.

We would be rather more respectful of the Marks and Spencer barista contest if their publicity department had not gone over the top about it.

This did feature some impressive performances, not least that 113 baristas put themselves forward for the event, all going through an application process which involved making a two-minute video to display latte art skills. That indeed shows quite a level of commitment.

This year's champion is Sam Harries

of Haverfordwest, whose signature drink was a salted caramel and pecan iced Frappuccino.

According to Marks and Spencer, the champion said: "Before working at M&S I didn't know how versatile and creative coffee could be. Since working at the Haverfordwest store I have had the opportunity to develop a real appreciation of the drink and experiment with both flavours and designs, from original syrup combinations to decorative latte art."

A runner-up was barista Leah Thornewill from M&S in Winchester, who made a ginger beer iced coffee as her signature drink.

By quite remarkable coincidence, she is supposed to have told her local paper: "Before working at M&S I didn't know how versatile and creative coffee could be. Since working at the Winchester store I have had the opportunity to develop a real appreciation of the drink and experiment with both flavours and designs, from original syrup combinations to decorative latte art."

This quite remarkable similarity in their views has been echoed by the party line of their managers. We are apparently invited to believe that the Haverfordwest branch manager told his local paper: "Sam is a hugely passionate employee and his work is outstanding. He was a natural choice to put forward for this award and the entire store has been behind him throughout the award process. It is wonderful to have a local go so far in a nationally recognised award ceremony and we are proud to be able to nurture his flourishing talent."

Believe it or not, the relevant manager at M&S in Winchester told her local paper: "Leah is a hugely passionate employee and her work is beautiful. She was a natural choice to put forward for this award and the entire store has been behind her throughout the award process. It is wonderful to have a local girl go so far in a nationally recognised award ceremony and we are proud to be able to nurture her flourishing talent."

M&S must be extremely proud to have staff and managers who toe the party line so faithfully, changing only one word between them!



The new UK barista champ, Maxwell Colonna-Dashwood, is one of eight international title-holders to be part of an endorsement and development programme for Urnex, the internationally-known brand of cleansers for coffee machines.

Urnex has created what it calls 'a grassroots incubator program for global barista champions', which means they select several national champion baristas and 'support their talents' – in practical terms, this means the baristas will receive 'a significant amount of money for their time and effort' and will be featured in advertisements 'allowing them to build their own personal brands'.

In return, these champions are to collaborate with Urnex with endorsements, and will help in product development work and brainstorming, and will be expected to 'help educate the specialty coffee community and reiterate the importance of properly maintained, clean coffee equipment and its impact on taste'.

With what is perhaps admirable open-ness from a manufacturer, Urnex has said that in return, it hopes to learn from the baristas' perspectives on the importance of coffee machine cleaning.

The Irish cocktail trade has marked the launch of the Dublin Whiskey Festival with a contest looking for the Best Irish Coffee. Ten of Dublin's baristas and bartenders met in the finals, working with coffee supplied by the Dublin roaster 3FE, whose Colin Harmon, four times the Irish barista champion, was one of the judges.

The distiller Teeling supplied single-malt and single-grain whiskeys.

It was a barista who came out on top - Tom Stafford of Vice Coffee in Dublin created a drink with a double espresso, 35ml of the single malt, and 18ml of a brown sugar syrup. He won a year's supply of coffee, and a special bottling off the pot stills at the Teeling Distillery.



The Coffee Masters contest will be held at the London Coffee Festival, 30 March-3 May.

This winter, a beachfront coffee house in Norfolk won a very unusual award – the Beach Café of Wells-next-the-Sea was voted the winner of the Kennel Club's annual 'Be Dog Friendly' awards.

The awards, which are based on public votes, recognise those who cater for what the Kennel Club calls 'our canine comrades'. The Beach Café was described by one voter as: 'the most dog friendly place I know... open all year round, friendly and helpful, with great facilities, much loved by all dog owners who visit'.

The matter of dog-friendliness in the café trade has been growing in awareness, with the realisation that catering for dogs also means catering for the owners who spend the money.

The DoggiePubs organisation has a list of over five thousand British dog-friendly pubs, all nominated by customers, and the Dog-Friendly Britain campaign created a window sticker for cafes to use to show a 'pets welcome' policy.

The founders of that organisation told Coffee House that "millions of us routinely walk past cafes and coffee houses because we are pretty sure that our dogs, and therefore ourselves, will not be welcome... as business people ourselves, it makes us wonder how many millions in turnover British caterers are losing because they exclude dog owners."

On the other hand, some venues still haven't got it – and there are still cases of cafes claiming that they cannot admit dogs due to health regulations or even to obscure EU rules, which don't exist.

At the Beach Café, which is part of a massive stately home estate which is also notable for a series of open-air concerts featuring the likes of Status Quo, Elton John and Jools Holland, the dog-themed policy has been driven by general manager Alan Miller.

"When I first started this, I hadn't been in catering for long, and I wondered if I was going too far down the dog route. But a consultant, Chris Brown from Turpin Smale, said: 'there are eight million dog owners in Britain - if you're going to do it, be the best'.

"And catering for groups of customers, whether they're hikers or cyclists or dog-owners, is always a good thing. Identifying any 'group' of customers is a good thing."

His first idea was quite simple – to highlight refreshment for dogs which was more than just one bowl of water. His second idea was Wash and Wag, a self-service dog-washing facility, for families who have just come from the quite massive sandy beach which is barely fifty yards from the cafe's front door... and this idea rocketed the Beach Café to attention in the dog-owning world.

"I didn't know about anything like the Kennel Club's awards when I started our own K9 drinking club," Alan Miller told us. "But we knew that happy

# Catering for the canines

How important can the dog-friendly market be for a coffee house? A beach cafe on the east coast has specialised in it, and seen its reputation rocket



Identifying any 'group' of customers is a good thing...

- Alan Miller

dogs mean happy customers, and we knew that there had to be a better way than just one dog bowl... and it was amazing how fast it worked. We began to get positive feedback straight away.

"We stumbled on some of the ideas, which is how we came up with the Wash and Wag facility. The response to the Wash and Wag facility was also unbelievable, so much so that we've now had to buy a new one.

"The humour makes people talk about it... the shopkeepers in the town now get tourists asking for 'the café with the dog-wash'.

"It's a free service, but so many people asked 'how much to use it?', we put a charity box in for the local lifeboat, and that raised a thousand pounds very quickly."



Once the momentum begins, says Alan Miller, a reputation can be built quickly, but it has to be carefully managed.

"Word-of-mouth is always a good thing, but what is important is doing something to start that word-of-mouth going. A 'fun' image is good image, but you still have to work at getting it right.

"And you need investment, and patience – Holkham Hall estate, which is owned by Viscount Coke, is supportive of us. Something like the dog-wash doesn't come cheap, because it's of proper industrial quality, but the estate has invested in it.

"Then we began talking about the idea of whether we could start a dog club. When you join, you get the

chance to win a hamper from Pooch's, who are local dog-treat makers... we got to 1,800 members very quickly.

"The dog-friendly associations began to support us. We now have 'bark' meet-ups which walk round the woods next to the café, which are part of the Holkham estate... the paths through the woods were not originally designed for dog-walking, but just became so."

The dog club now has its own Dog of the Year award.

"If you take a picture of your dog at the café, and it has to be taken here on the premises, then you can send it to us, and we put them all up for a vote on Facebook. We get a load of entries – this year's competition has only just started, and we've got seventy entries so far.

“ Word-of-mouth is always a good thing, but what is important is doing something to start that word-of-mouth going... ”

- Alan Miller

"Dog pictures are great for getting attention, and you really know your place works when people start taking pictures of it."

The increase in the cafe's reputation was illustrated by one voter in the Kennel Club awards, who commented that they had been visiting the beach for twenty years, and that the café had changed from "the place we went to because 'it was there', to a place we make a point of visiting."

The latest development has been into retailing – a little corner of the café is turned over to dog treats, dog coats and the like.

"The retail side really has improved, so much so that we're going to have to give it more space. We began with a

retail display for dog treats, and that got to the stage where we put an order in to Pooch's, and they said we must have it wrong, it was too big. We said no, we haven't, the sales have gone crazy!"

The best-sellers in dog accessories are Ruff and Tumble dog-drying towels, and these are not cheap - they go from around £20 to over £60. It shows, says Alan Miller, that careful targeting to the right market brings results. Having a gigantic sandy beach next door does help, but the concentration on dog owners has turned the cafe from a summer attraction to a realistic all-year business.

"At first, nobody expected the café to be open and busy in the winter. Now, between April to December, we sell 32,000 ice-creams and 20,000 bottles of water. The money from the first and last ice-creams of the day go into a box for a day-care centre, and that raises hundreds."

That brings even more new ideas.

"There are three things a beach café is always asked: where are the toilets, can we have change for the car park, and do you sell chips? So we're starting a chip shack – no food, no fish, just chips. Keep it simple and good!"

The practicalities of dog-management are not a worry.

"Dog peace and dog mess is a consideration," acknowledges Alan Miller. "At first, one of my staff was worried, but you find that dog owners tend to police each other... some of them go crazy if another owner doesn't pick mess up."

A popular themed café tends to help overcome staffing problems.

"When people see what a good place is all about, they often say they would like to work here. We shall now put up a sign advertising our vacancies, which means that people will come to the counter to ask, and we can see them face-to-face.

"Our staffing tends to have to be very heavy in the summer, and we also find that if you can get a good core of predominantly young people, and their friends, and then their friends of friends, then you'll get better staff than you will by advertising.

"At the end of the season, we let the staff decide what they would like to do for a party. Their eyes light up when we invite them to decide, and that alone keeps their enthusiasm going for another couple of weeks.

"If things like this mean you can get the same people coming back to you from university every year, that becomes a very valuable thing."

An extremely novel kind of coffee service has been created in Montreal, Canada. The Chirpee service is based on the idea that offices lose a vast amount of time on doing the coffee run to nearby coffee shops - so the service offers to take an order by text, collect the coffees from whatever café the customer stipulates, and deliver them for the menu price plus a \$3 service charge. At the moment, the service is available in a fairly limited business area of the city, but it has plans to expand.

The newest cycling café to be planned is BiciCletta - Coffee con Velo, offering 'a cycling shop and hang-out space' at the former Evergreen florist site on Market Walk, Saffron Walden, a site for which the pizza chain Domino's was refused permission last year. It will have a big screen for watching cycling, a cafe and a focus on cycling apparel. Cycling clubs are invited to use the premises, and a group cycling from Lands End to John O'Groats has already been in touch to say they will use the café as a stop-off point. Coffee is by Hot Numbers of Cambridge.

Clink, the café chain which works inside prisons to give inmates work experience in coffee and general catering, will open its fourth site in a women's prison, at HMP Styal in Cheshire. To begin with, 30 prisoners will train for City and Guilds NVQs. The Clink at HMP Styal will be similar to one at HMP Cardiff, in that it is sited within the prison grounds but outside the prison walls, and will be open to the public. The Clink charity aims to have ten cafes working within two years.

Bruce Brown and Luke Jackson, who run Bruce and Luke's coffee roastery company in Carlisle, have undertaken an odd charity project to raise money for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust - they climbed Cumbria's highest peak, Scafell Pike, carrying a 60-kilo coffee sack. The intention was to reach the summit, get out a camping stove, roast some beans in a wok, grind them and offer all their fellow-climbers some coffee. The idea came from an advertisement in which a group took a giant inflatable Wispa chocolate bar to the top of a mountain.

The Boston Tea Party chain is to open its latest café at Sutton Harbour in Plymouth, in Jamaica House, a listed building. The cafe will seat 150 people, and 30 outside.

The trend for 'selfie' pictures has been turned to charitable advantage by the Lavender Fields tearoom in Keighley. Customers are invited to take photos of themselves on their mobile phones, and send them to the café's Twitter account. Participants get a discount in the café, which gives a donation for each picture to Cancer Research UK and the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

## Edinburgh coffee house will serve dinner to film star Clooney

**There is never anything wrong in reaching for the stars... you might just catch one, as has happened with a café in Edinburgh. The actor George Clooney, better known in the coffee world for his Nespresso advertising, is to visit the Social Bite café in Edinburgh later this year, following an invitation from the owners.**

The Social Bite is a very unusual social enterprise - the owners Josh Littlejohn and Alice Thompson have a staff roster of whom one in four is homeless, they use food created by a Michelin-starred chef, send all profits to charity, and run projects in which customers are invited to donate food and drink to the homeless.

They have extended the 'suspended coffee' system to allow consumers to donate 'suspended' food and drink through their website, and achieved a notable success at Christmas, when they attempted to raise enough support to pay for 800 meals for the homeless. Within ten hours of launching the appeal they had funded 7,000 food vouchers at £5 each, and went on to raise enough for 35,000 plates.

George Clooney will visit the café to

eat, an event which has been turned into another fund-raiser with customers invited to pay £5 for the chance to win a seat at the table, and will go on to deliver the keynote address at the Scottish Business Awards, an event which was co-founded by Littlejohn.

The homeless people who are employed by the cafes are assisted with their health, their hygiene, their accommodation, receive a wage, and 'are helped to build a different life'. In return, Josh Littlejohn has said, they become some of his best employees.

Social Bite's coffee is sourced from Rwanda, as part of the project created by Sir Tom Hunter a few years ago, and supported by Bill Clinton. Early in March, Sir Tom was in the country for the opening of a new roaster, and Josh Littlejohn was there as well.

## Cafes Richard launches in the UK

**One of the most famous French coffee brands is now becoming available to the British trade - the Cafes Richard brand is being distributed here by Udal Supplies of Sevenoaks.**

Cafés Richard has been roasting since 1892, and claims that two and a half million cups of its coffee are served every day across 35 countries; it has its own chain of retail outlets in France, and this year one member of its staff won the French latte art championship, having already won the country's barista championship twice, and another won the country's cup-tasting contest for the third time.

According to Danny Watson of Udal, there is a market in the UK for a French brand.

"With so many major brands, artisan and independent coffee roasters all trying to make their mark, we were wondering what we could bring to the British trade that was new - we have trialled many coffees without success, and by chance, we discovered Cafes Richard. It has a loyal customer base in 35 countries, and also has a premium tea range.

"We realised that there was no French brand available in the UK, and yet there are 400,000 French citizens living in London alone! There are many French restaurant chains and French-styled coffee houses and eating houses but in the main, they serve Italian coffee. With Cafes Richard's extraordinary success in the Middle East and Asian markets, we can only expect that their arrival here will work positively with the UK's multicultural society.

"Cafés Richard has more than twenty blends - the three leading ones are Florio, a dark roast with notes of dark



chocolate, Perlé Noir, which is full-bodied with notes of gingerbread and fruit, and Rouge Richard, the original blend, which remains to this day the favourite coffee served in the cafés of Paris."



**The Bean Brothers roastery of Huddersfield has decided to create its own charitable foundation to support coffee growers in Ethiopia.**

Jeremy and James Perkins recently travelled out to the Sidamo and Yirgacheffe regions to see growing conditions for themselves (and help sort beans, above)

The brothers had said that while they already pay a premium price for beans, they wanted to find out how much good Fairtrade and similar initiatives were doing. From the trip they concluded that while Fairtrade is doing some good, there are still problems with drinking water supply and shortages of food, and that more direct work is needed.

Bean Brothers will now take a percentage of income from each bag of coffee sold and put it in a fund which will pay directly for help in growing communities.

A strange complaint has been raised in Colombia - after the opening of the first of a proposed fifty Starbucks' stores, a row has blown up over the coffee being used by the chain.

According to a coffee-workers association, Starbucks has not kept to a promise that it would sell only Colombian-grown coffee in its cafes.

Members of the coffee trade say they found coffee from Malawi, Hawaii and Panama in the cafes, and are not pleased. Starbucks in return has reportedly said that it promised to brew only locally-produced coffees in its Colombian stores, but did not make any such promise with regard to its retail products.

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# Kaldi

Almost incredibly, Nescafé has announced that it is 'on the hunt for Britain's first coffee connoisseur'. The brand is running a series of online coffee themed questions over six weeks – as an example, the first one was 'what colour is the coffee flower?' The winner will have a 'once in a lifetime luxury trip to Milan, the birthplace of coffee'. How they know the winner will never go to Milan again, or indeed why Milan is the birthplace of coffee, we have not asked; nor indeed why Britain, a land which has produced world barista champions, is thought to have as yet no coffee connoisseurs.



There has been a vast amount of media interest in the claim by KFC that it has introduced the first edible coffee cup, quite appallingly entitled the Scoff-ee cup.

The Scoff-ee cups are launched to mark the launch of Seattle's Best Coffee across its KFC's British branches. It is made from biscuit, wrapped in sugar paper and lined with a layer of white chocolate, which, it is said, keeps the coffee hot and the cup crispy. As the chocolate layer melts, the biscuit slowly softens, melting in the mouth, but not the hand.

The cups were created in partnership with some food scientists called The Robin Collective and are infused with different scents, such as coconut sun cream, freshly-cut grass and wild flowers. Of course, it is not a new idea - the Scoff-ee bears a remarkable resemblance to something Lavazza invented five or six years ago.



We have often reported on the ineptitude of those who attempt to steal from coffee shops, and the latest example of criminal stupidity comes from the Artisan Lounge in Ayr.

The would-be robbers have been described as 'Laurel and Hardy-esque' by the café's owner, who has seen CCTV recordings showing that the intruders who broke in to his business spent five hours on the premises, repeatedly looked in a till which had no money in it, and in the end, took only £2.50 from the tip jar.

The thieves did not notice thousands of pounds of artworks on the walls, very expensive stereo equipment, and even a top range drone flyer. The café owner said: "several thousands of pounds' worth of art for sale on the walls was even priced, so was pretty hard to miss." He added later: "despite the best efforts of the two witless imbeciles who trashed our premises, we are delighted to be able to announce that we re-opened very quickly."



McDonald's has launched a first-of-its-kind advertising schedule on Channel 4, promoting the full range of McCafé beverages. It is called a 'hyper-contextual' campaign, in that it shows people drinking in a McCafé, while talking about the programme which has just been shown. In advertising-speak, the advertiser says: "certain executions will have an 'as live'



The McCafé twins - 'real' customers?

feel as the contributors react to content the viewer has just seen, embedding McCafé into these key TV moments". Oddly, the publicity for the campaign twice refers to 'real people enjoying their favourite McCafé beverage' and 'the contributors are real-life McDonald's customers'. By contrast, the agency who made the ads refers to 'our cast of great characters', which might mean an entirely different thing... are these really 'real customers'?



Outside the Chocolate Cafe in Ramsbottom...

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