

Boughton's

COFFEE HOUSE

As always, we offer more relevant and entertaining trade news than any coffee trade paper has ever attempted!

April/May 2015



A new world for Scoop Malone

We have now reached the twelfth anniversary of this super little news magazine, which is without doubt the most entertaining news service in the hot-drinks trade.

(And the editor has now reached fifty-one years of news writing!)

We are moving on...

This is the last printed issue of Coffee House... and we emphasise the word 'printed'.

From next month, our news service and magazine will be published online only, at www.coffee-house.org.uk

This means we will probably offer you an even wider and more comprehensive news service and an even more entertaining magazine, because being free of the constraints of print paging will give us the freedom for more in-depth news and interviews. Our well-known and popular news updates & newsflashes will of course continue.

And there will be no more subscription fees!

We look forward to seeing you again next month, through our website, our newsfeed blog, our Twitter feed, and our news update e-mails.

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The Tregothnan tea company of Cornwall, the UK's first commercially-viable tea plantation, has created a puzzle with its giant teapot, with which it marked the availability of its tea on First Great Western trains. Plantation director Jonathan Jones (right), had taken 'the world's largest fully-functioning tea-pot' on a service from Paddington to Cornwall to host a 'quintessentially English tea party'. But the teapot is four feet in diameter, and the doors of modern trains are not wide enough. The puzzle is... how did they get the teapot on to the train?

Meanwhile, another train company is upgrading its coffee offer – see page 3.



British tamper maker surprises the whole barista world

The UK barista champion, Maxwell Colonna-Dashwood of Bath, has come fifth in the world barista championships at Seattle. It was his third attempt to take the world title, and in doing so, his presentation to the watching coffee world has had the interesting effect of propelling another British operator to international fame – Maxwell's use of the Push tamper, created by Peter Southern of Clockwork Espresso in Durham, excited so much interest that the inventor's website crashed through heavy traffic.

The Push is said to guarantee a perfectly level coffee bed, at a constant depth set to very fine tolerances and locked to 'incredible accuracy'. It is also promoted as allowing a safer and more natural posture whilst tamping, and the immediately-apparent feature of it is that it has no handle.

The side of the tamper has a scale, and by rotating the top of the tamper, the base rises and falls to be fixed at the selected point with an Allen key. The tamper is about the size and shape of an ice-hockey puck, and can be held conveniently between fingers and thumb.

There is an odd story behind its invention.

"The company I work for has a very nice commercial espresso machine in the office," Peter Southern told us. "I have worked as a barista before, so I



The Push tamper has no handle

could make great coffee for myself, and everyone else asked me to show them how to do it.

"The great problem was that their tamping was never straight – so I set about designing a tamper which would always give a level result."

In traditional barista work, he says, consistency of tamp is down to the barista's skill – and yet, in closely analysing videos of top baristas, he found that even champions can be inconsistent in the way they tamp. Part of the problem was the working angle dictated by the familiar upward handle.

"There had to be a better way," he told us.

Having designed the prototype of

the 'flat' tamper, he showed his work to the UK champ over Skype.

"I held the tamper up to the camera to show him how it worked, and he said 'can I have one?' He had some suggestions, so I worked all weekend at the lathe, getting his measurements correct to the millimetre, and he said 'I'll use it in competition'."

The reaction when Maxwell used it in the world championships was quite extreme. Those around the world watching the contest on video link kept posting comments online, asking about the strange new tamper; the inventor himself, who was in Seattle helping Maxwell prepare for the contest, referred all enquirers to his Push website, which crashed under the level of traffic.

There is no word as to when the Push will be on general sale. Peter Southern has filed the patent, but is not being rushed into production, distribution agreements or pricing.

"Making it is not a problem, although as it is certainly a high-end product, manufactured to incredible tolerances, it cannot be made by just anyone... it is a British-made product, and always will be.

"That said, I do want the pricing to allow it to get it in the hands of as many people as possible."

For the moment, he is simply accepting 'expressions of interest'.

caffè culture

SHOW 13-14 MAY 2015 OLYMPIA LONDON

It is time for the trade's main exhibition, the Caffe Culture show at Olympia. Our preview of the highlights starts on page 5

The Cafe2U mobile coffee chain has, rather unusually, named triple winners in its annual barista contest - Peter & Kirsty Boyce, of Cafe2U in Norwich, and Antonio Petrosino of Merton and Croydon shared the title. Antonio won 'best cappuccino' in the 2012 BSA awards.

The staff of the Greensmith and Thackway coffee shop in Scarborough had a surprise last month when the retail guru Mary Portas, the BBC's Queen of Shops, popped in. She was at a local book festival, and let owners Josh Kermode and Jack Siddons tell her about their vision for the café. The duo later reported that the guru was 'genuinely interested', and did pass on some pieces of business advice.

The Boston Tea Party chain is involved in a project with the college in Plymouth and the local Jobcentre, in which a new café will help jobless youngsters into employment. The college and the coffee chain have created a bespoke training course, and the first 16 trainees are now undergoing their inductions.

The Coffee#1 chain has opened its 50th café, and has reported like-for-like sales up by 9.2 per cent over last year. The 50th site is in Fareham, and the chief executive of parent company Brain's said that he now intends to aim for a hundred sites.

The Velopresso coffee trike, the one in which the grinder is operated by a novel arrangement of foot-pedal and chain, has been awarded the

Constructor's Challenge prize at the Bristol Arnolifini gallery, as part of the Bespoked bicycle trade show. Velopresso's Amos Field Reid tells us: "Our new Mk2 trikes are even more beautiful and resolved than the Mk1 model. We took the first two of a batch of 20 to Bristol for the exhibition with the Look Mum No Hands team operating, and they were received amazingly well by public and trade alike. We are currently completing the first orders of the Mk2 trike, shipping in May."

Bewley's, the big Irish coffee roaster, has continued its programme of acquisitions in the UK by taking over Peros, the UK's largest distributor of Fairtrade beverages and snacks to foodservice. This is the third acquisition by Bewley's in a relatively short period of time. It first took the Darlington's company of London, and then the Bolling roastery in Yorkshire. In acquiring Peros, it takes over the biggest distributor of the Cafedirect brand... for which Bewley is also the roaster. We have enquired whether this means it will effectively be selling the same coffee and buying it back again, to which we received only the response: 'these are interesting times...!'

Costa suspended millions of its Coffee Club Card online accounts after a security breach affected what was thought to be a few hundred users, who had reported 'unusual activity' on their accounts. Costa contacted all members and re-set all passwords.



Costa has opened what it calls the first 'zero energy' coffee shop, at the Wrekin retail park in Telford. Costa leases the building, in which zero energy is achieved by construction techniques in which the energy required to heat and cool the building is minimised, by a timber frame, with wood from sustainable forests, instead of a steel frame; a soft wood façade with energy-retention properties keeps more heat in during the winter but keeps the interior cool in summer. The structure was built facing the best way for optimum levels of sun.

HSE - has it been pushed into action?

Pressure from the coffee trade has led to some progress in the matter of espresso-machine inspection and certification guidance.

Following wide trade criticism of the Health and Safety Executive's actions following the Sainsbury's explosion of five years ago, and the recent surprising actions of a local authority which appeared to be trying to scare caterers into proper maintenance and inspection habits instead of helping them do so, we can now report that a campaign by this magazine has led to the matter being referred by Norman Lamb MP to the Secretary of State responsible for the HSE. However, of course, with an election coming up, we do not expect any action.

And yet, in complaining to this magazine about our recent reports (!) the HSE has mentioned that it is 'currently developing a research proposal to focus on the integrity and safety provisions relating to small pressure vessels... as a result of discussions with stakeholders as part of the consultation process on the review of PSSR2000...'

Although this rather vague official-speak amounts mainly to 'thinking about thinking about doing something', several players in the trade have expressed approval - but have worried that the reference to 'stakeholders' might not include representation from the coffee trade. We have asked if the coffee trade will be invited to take part, but have had no response.

Miko sets up artisan roastery and brand

Miko, the big European company which created Puro Fairtrade coffee, has come up with Freehand, a non-Fairtrade item - the brand allows Miko to explore wider and more unusual origins, which will be roasted in a newly set-up roastery at Cornish Coffee.

"This falls within the artisan segment of the market," Miko's Andy Orchard told us. "This is not a big boy roaster pretending to be a small one, but is about empowering and supporting passionate people within our company who want to try their hand at small scale roasting."

"A couple of years ago, I began creating a new brand that would allow us as a company to return to our roots... more artisan flair, more mistakes, more learning, more perfecting, more flavour. It is the segment of the industry I often see represented by people with big beards and sleeve tattoos, and within this niche a bit too much ego can be observed and a lot less soul, so with Freehand I am hoping to restore a better balance."

"I am still in love with the concept of



Fairtrade - I have spent enough time with farmers to know it makes a huge difference to their way of life. But removing the constraint of certifications allows Freehand freedom to explore the world's coffee farms."

Bag designs and point-of-sale material are designed to attract the consumer's interest to the origin being brewed.

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On-train coffee - getting slowly better?

Virgin Trains have been extremely coy about their recent decision to switch on-board coffee supplies to a blend called Aroma, created at Caffè Nero's roastery in London.

Virgin has told us that 'coffee fans should not have to compromise on quality because they're on the move', and although it is using bean-to-cup machines, its staff have been trained by Caffè Nero both on coffee-making skills and about the background of harvesting, processing and blending. However, Virgin declined to comment on why train companies in general have tended to serve poor coffee, or on whether they now expect an increase in their coffee sales as a result of moving to higher quality. (Virgin's own statement says they 'collectively sell 900,000 cups of coffee annually across 300 daily services' - which is relatively few coffees per journey.)



Elsewhere on the train network, the Scotrail group moved over to Cafeology a few years ago, and that brand's Bryan Unkles has observed that Scotrail were quick to realise that they had to compete in quality with the new coffee bars cropping up at every station - and that, as a result, the train company's coffee sales are now 'considerable'.

The first-ever winner of the UK Tea Brewers' contest is Andrew Tolley, one of the founders of Taylor Street Baristas and of Harris & Hoole. At the contest in Cardiff, devised by Waterloo Teas, he beat second-placed Yann Chalmers of 3FE in Dublin and third-placed Ruth Hampson of Bean and Bud, in Harrogate.



The entrants were given two challenges - in the first round, they were handed three teas and asked to work out what kind of teas they were, and how to brew them. Those who progressed to the final had to serve the judges two teas of their own choice, and deliver a 15-minute presentation on those teas.

Lavazza has continued its campaign to champion the cause of good coffee in restaurants, by starting a series of lunchtime sessions for chefs, hosted by a food writer, Matthew Fort. The idea, Lavazza tells us candidly, is that 'chefs listen to each other more than they are likely to listen to us', and so the brand decided to host a series of lunches and let them get on with it. We are told that the conversation turns to coffee sooner or later... and, we are told, there has already been one case of a Michelin-starred chef berating another, of similar high status, for buying coffee on price! We were extremely entertained by a report of the discussion, which reportedly included the notable phrase: "you're already selling at £4 a cup - who's going to notice if you put it up to £4.20 to let you buy some good coffee?" An excellent question!

As more roasters and cafes set up barista courses aimed at consumers, American analysts have concluded that coffee training is not just a profit-making activity in its own right, but does lead to 'brand loyalty' on the part of those who go through it. One American café owner says he has now developed his simple starter course into a three-hour session, and a brief survey has suggested that prices now range between \$35 and \$295 a class, although one café does offer a lesson in cupping for just five dollars.

An additional benefit has also been reported - it's an aid to recruitment, as a surprising number of trainees turn out to become employees.

Aussie barista threatened with deportation

At exactly the same moment as immigration emerged as a major factor in the election campaigns, the Home Office has come in for criticism for its threat to deport the co-owner of a coffee shop in Swindon. Within a couple of weeks of the threat, 3,600 people signed an online petition to protest against the ruling.

Jacky Collyer, of Darkroom Espresso, is Australian, and moved here from Melbourne in 2011 before marrying her British husband. She is now threatened with deportation because she has failed to meet the minimum income threshold set in an immigration law which came into effect in 2012.

She has appealed against the decision, and is allowed to stay while waiting for the authorities to respond. One of the options suggested to her concerns making use of EU law - if the couple move to another EU country and stay there working for a minimum of three months, Andy would then be allowed to come back under the freedom of movement laws, and as a family member to him, Jacky would be entitled to stay here.

But to do so, it has been pointed out, they would either have to close Darkroom Espresso or find someone to manage it for them in the meantime.

Another dog-themed coffee shop has opened - the K9 Plus 1 café of Barry Island has been opened by a cat-lover, who simply did not like seeing other businesses where dogs had to be left outside. The new business drew a queue of dog owners on its opening day.

A public protest in Norwich has led to an about-turn by the BBC, to the benefit of a park coffee house. The operator of the cafe at Earlham Park was told they would have to close for the Radio One Big Weekend, because the café sits within the area that the BBC had ruled should be cordoned off as a security zone. Several thousand people signed a petition in protest, and the council leader came to an agreement with the BBC which now allows the café to open. With a crowd of 50,000 expected, the café would have lost its biggest-ever potential trading day.

Kokoa Collection has won an award for its disc drinking chocolate pieces at a very convenient time. Paul Eagles took the gold award in the 'unflavoured drinking chocolate' category of this year's Academy of Chocolate awards, and won it for his Dark Haiti product... a couple of weeks before he flies to Haiti to meet the farmers. Now he will have something to show them!

A cafe owner in Oklahoma has been praised for her response to a homeless person she saw searching through her rubbish bins. She erected a sign saying: "to the person going through our trash - you're a human being and worth more than a meal from a dumpster. Please come in during operating hours for a sandwich at no charge. No questions asked." She told her local paper that when she saw the person searching for thrown-out food, "my heart sank". That person has not come forward, but the café owner has now set up a campaign to donate food to shelters for the homeless.

Ape About Coffee, which has been running a mobile coffee bike around Bristol for three years, has opened its first espresso bar in partnership with conjunction with Paper Arts, which exists to 'help talented individuals make a living through creativity'. Visitors to the new cafe can have a coffee alongside the latest exhibition in the on-site gallery. The coffee is from James Gourmet Coffee.

The newest combination of coffee house and bike shop has celebrated its opening day with the irresistible combination of free coffee and free beer. The Bike Shed of Barnstaple also served 450 coffees on its first day, we are told. The café serves coffee from Crankhouse of Exeter.

Meanwhile, in Saffron Walden, Bicicletta Coffee con Velo opened at the beginning of April, and appears to have even served a coffee to chef Jamie Oliver during early trading. A neat service from this café is that

they will lend a padlock and chain for a bike to be secured outside while the customer is on the premises.

Drury Tea has created three new recipes in its pyramid tea-bag range, two of them unusual - they are Genmai cha, the kind with popped brown rice, and a green tea with black cherry (described as 'definitely without milk'). The third is a decaf breakfast tea.

An entirely new use for pyramid tea-bags has come from the beer trade. An American company is using them for 'beer-enhancing sachets', which include a blend of top-class hops. When infused into a cheaper beer, they add body and flavour. Each sachet can be used four times.

The pub and bar operator TCG is investing in its coffee offer with a range of new menu items - a vanilla mocha, hazelnut latte and iced frappés. The recipes have been created by Cafeology, and will be available in 40 pubs and bars. TCG's latest in-house barista contest is under way, and requires staff to submit a recipe for a new seasonal coffee or hot chocolate drink, which they will be required to make in front of judges.

The Cornish pioneer of craft roasting in the far south-west is coming to the east end - in May, Origin will open up in a 1,000sq.ft. space in Shoreditch that will serve as a flagship coffee shop, barista training facility and technical support base for London customers. Origin is also to open a new coffee shop offering at the Exchange in Penzance.

There is a big change coming to the world barista championship, which will probably affect the national contests. In the fifteen years that the championships have been running, competitors have had a set time to brew and serve four espressos, four cappuccinos, and four signature drinks of their own recipe. Now, following the lead of some in-house contests, the cappuccino course is replaced with a new 'milk drink' round, allowing contestants the choice of what they will serve.

The new chief executive of the Beverage Standards Association is Steve Slark, managing director of European Water Care, who tells us that he intends to grow the organisation into 'the largest and most respected association in the beverage industry'. He succeeds Martyn Herriott of CBS. "I would endeavour to grow the member base to become the largest and most respected association in the beverage industry, 'run by the members for the collective good of the members'," he says. "I have seen too many industries where the many can be railroaded along by a few loud or well-resourced players to the detriment of the bulk of the industry. Often, good ideas and innovations are lost in their noise, but the BSA can offer everyone a voice."

Starbucks has claimed that 99 per cent of its coffee is now ethically sourced. That figure includes coffee which is Fairtrade-certified, but also coffee which is covered by CAFÉ, Coffee And Farmer Equity Practices, which is Starbucks' own certification.

Coffee Republic will double its British stores this year - it currently has 24 coffee bars, and is in the middle of its fastest growth since 2009.

The company which converts red phone boxes into coffee 'shops' is expanding again - Thinking Outside the Box has applied to convert a pair of phone boxes in one of Norwich's historic streets, one to serve coffee and one to sell ice-cream. A share of profits go to a local charity in each city where converted boxes work.

Suki Tea will now be on sale in Marks & Spencer stores, which has taken on the Belfast Brew blend, a breakfast tea of 90 per cent Assam.

Cafeology, the Fairtrade coffee supplier, has its bird-friendly coffee shortlisted for the Sustainable Business Awards, run by the *Guardian*.

Carvetii Coffee of Cumberland has begun a project to raise thousands of pounds in support of its local air ambulance, and has already raised £930 from one single event. At shows and festivals, they invite the customer not to pay them, but to put something in the charity box instead.

An unidentified coffee company has lodged an application to build a roastery on the 12-acre site of a former Basildon car parts factory.

A cafe owner in Hartlepool has had metal wheelchair ramps at her front door stolen, in broad daylight. The owner of Gladys' Tea Room wheeled a disabled customer out, left the ramps in place for a few minutes, and returned to find them gone.

An unusual barista vacancy has attracted more than 40 applications - Groundwork North Wales sought a barista to cycle the coastal path between Old Colwyn and Rhyl and serve partly as a barista and partly as a tourist guide. Candidates are required to prove their ability to control a large coffee trike over a distance of up to five miles a day.

Ferrari's Coffee of Bridgend has been bought out of administration. It entered insolvency proceedings on 6 March after being ordered to pay a quarter of a million pounds in settlement of a claim by a Dutch green coffee supplier, and was bought by the recently-formed Coffee Mocha Ltd, also of Bridgend, on the same day. The administrator said: "the sale of the business through a pre-packaged administration will achieve a better result for creditors than would have been possible through a cessation of trade and liquidation of the company."

The most costly capsule in the world

Cru Café of London has offered what it says is the world's priciest box of Nespresso-compatible coffee capsules, at £25 for two dozen. The coffee is a limited-edition San Cristobal Island (Galapagos) and Cru said: "nobody has put coffee of this quality into a capsule before".

Cru coffee claims a recyclable pod 'that can be thrown out with your regular recycling'. Asked for confirmation of that status, the company told us: "our capsule is recyclable with the caveat that the foil and the grounds need to be removed before you put it in the recycling. Our new biodegradable capsule will be rolled out in coming weeks".

Meanwhile, in America, Club Coffee announced 'the world's first 100-per-cent compostable single-serve capsule'. The PurPod100 is made from renewable, bio-based and compostable materials, and the ring of the pod is made using coffee chaff, which is normally discarded during roasting.

In Singapore, designer Eason Chow created an edible coffee capsule that fully dissolves into a cup of coffee, creating no waste at all. A hard layer of sugar holds everything together, and melts away as it heats up, but it requires a special machine.

The rise in single-serve capsules means that the USA, as a country, is using less coffee. About 27 per cent of consumers own single-serve coffee brewers, and capsules now account for 12 per cent of coffee sold in America by volume (but 36 per cent by value). However, because less coffee is left undrunk in a pot or cafetiere, less coffee is being wasted. One businessman told an American paper: "the coffee market has lost its biggest consumer - the kitchen sink."



Three students from a university in America have invented a new kind of combined tea brewer and mug, using magnets to fix the steeping chamber under the lid. Users put loose-leaf tea in the steeper, put it in the water-filled vessel and turn it upside-down. When it is done, they turn it over again, and now the magnets hold the steeper above the level of the water, avoiding 'stewing'. The product, Imbue, was begun as a project to help pay for some student fees. At a launch event held in the college, the first 150 produced all sold out. The students are launching a Kickstarter campaign to pay for tooling costs and a full production run.

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The biggest cafe-related show in the annual calendar will re-appear at London's Olympia this month. We take a look at our favourite products and launches, from a collection which this year covers many different, and some unexpected, but relevant, sectors to the cafe trade.

La Cimbali and a series of new ideas

In recent years, it has become noticeable how the Italian espresso machine brand of La Cimbali (C32) has carefully and steadily asserted itself and increased its reputation as a maker which comes up with new ideas – and at this year's show it is quite clear that the brand intends to have a whole line-up of them on display.

A major technology to be shown is Cimbali's 'Perfect Grinding System'.

It has long been appreciated that the grinder is an absolutely vital part of coffee preparation, but it is not always understood by general catering staff that grinder performance has to be monitored (it doesn't help when representatives of certain big coffee brands tell café owners "I've adjusted your grinder – don't touch it until I come back next time!")

Of course, if humidity or a similar problem affects the beans, then the grinder has to be adjusted, and many everyday café staff do not know how.

The point of PGS is that the equipment monitors itself – if the espresso machine measures its own shots and finds they are too long or too short, then it tells the grinder to adjust itself accordingly, using a wireless link.

That technology will now appear widely across the La Cimbali range of traditional machines and then super-automatics.

Cimbali will also be wanting to discuss Thermodrive, which allows an individual water temperature to be set for each group, and the concept of pressure-profiling, and there is also an improved automatic milk system which offers new possibilities in the control of milk frothing and texturing.

Cimbali claims to have achieved something that its rivals have not, in replicating the quality of hand-crafted cappuccino and latte milk... sadly, we are not allowed to know the secret, except that it is all to do with keeping the milk controlled while it is being heated, and involves "taking special care of any pressure drops or restrictions within the delivery system".

La Cimbali also appears at the show as machine supplier to the Coffee in Good Spirits competition, the one in which baristas are invited to devise recipes which combine coffee and an alcohol.

The event will feature the M100 espresso coffee machines and on-demand grinders, and the same set-up will appear on the company's stand, so visitors can try out the same format as the competitors are using.

The WMF hybrid makes its trade debut

Caffe Culture will be the trade's first general chance to see a remarkable machine which we previewed recently – at D34, there is the WMF espresso machine which is both a bean-to-cup and a traditional espresso machine.

It is what the company calls an entirely new kind of hybrid, a super-automatic with wide control over brewing parameters, yet which allows those automatic processes to be overridden and the entire brewing process to be manually operated.

The notable visual aspect of the machine is that, unlike virtually every other bean-to-cup, it features a working portafilter basket and handle. In automatic mode, this basket is filled from an internal bean hopper and grinder, and in manual mode, filled by the barista in the normal manner.

According to WMF, there is a logic for such a hybrid.

"There are places which will not give house room to bean-to-cups which have the same, standard utilitarian look, so this is deliberately made to be used as a manual espresso machine,



but can be used as a fully-auto for consistency at speed."

This means that when there is a queue, the operator can remove the work of grinding, basket-filling and tamping, speeding up the entire production rate.

The concept has been widely tested in real use – McCafe in Germany began testing it at a very early development stage, several years ago.

Franke and Schaerer are two of the topmost brands in fully-autos, and both are at this year's show.

Schaerer (E25) will launch a new milk system designed to give the operator 'total control' of the texture and temperature of the foam. The result, in the bold claim of the Swiss manufacturer, is 'the best ever lattes, flat whites and cappuccinos'. The Schaerer range of espresso systems is marketed in the UK by Caffeine Ltd.

Meanwhile, the new Franke A200 'plug and play' coffee system is marketed under the tag 'it just doesn't get any easier!'

This is specifically developed for easy operation and to keep work effort to a minimum; it guides users through its process step by step with its simple instructions and device illustrations. All drink recipes can be defined using a touchscreen and then called up again later, and the machine features Franke's Foammaster system.

An entirely new departure for Franke is its move to capsules. It is launching two capsule machines under the brand K-fee Professional, working with capsules from Krüger. They are not capsules which are compatible with any other machine, but there is the facility for coffee roasters to fill the capsules with their own blends.

Water problems - the talking goes on!

The matter of water treatment in cafes continues to be an extremely fraught subject, with even some of the big names in the industry accusing each other of dodgy science and unsupportable claims.

One of the really big world names in the subject is Pentair (E21), which will be wanting to discuss the concept of 'total water management' in beverage service, and to discuss with café owners exactly how best to handle their local water supply.

This will encompass solutions from cartridge systems to reverse osmosis, in which the brand has a new collection of upgradeable compact systems, said to offer significant water and energy savings.

Monarch (A35) is a family-owned company which says it was the very first company in the UK to offer bespoke filter systems against bad tastes, odours and hard water scale.

The new Scaleout SP100 system is, the company says, arguably the most effective filter system available to prevent hard scale up to 600ppm.

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The most famous French coffee brand of all is arriving in the UK this year, and Caffe Culture will be the first chance for most of the trade to sample coffees by Cafés Richard, now being distributed here by Udal Supplies (G38).

The decision to take on such a famous name was, says Udal's Danny Watson, a strategic decision which turned out to have a big business potential.

"As a business, we have trialled several coffees without success. With so many major brands, artisan and independent coffee roasters all trying to make their mark, we thought we would just be another player in an already saturated market, and what could we possibly offer that is not already available in the UK?"

"Then by chance we discovered Cafés Richard.

"Cafés Richard have been roasting coffee for over 60 years and include Comptoir Richard, a premium tea range. They have a state-of-the-art facility, a training facility, a dedicated multi-award team, are available in over thirty countries, and have a loyal customer base.

"After all this we realised that there was no French brand available in the UK - and yet there are around four hundred thousand French citizens living in London alone. There are many French restaurant chains and French-styled coffee houses and eating houses here, but in the main they serve Italian coffee.

"And then we realised that with the brand's extraordinary success in the Middle East Asian market, its name would work positively with the UK's multicultural society."

In France, the brand dominates the Parisian catering market with an estimated 75 per cent market share.

The potential of ice-cream in the coffee shop

Really, what is the value of the ice-cream sector to the coffee-house trade? This will be the subject of debate at South Street (stand AA107), a brand which has been through the whole question itself, having begun as a café owner in Isleworth which started selling its own homemade artisan ice cream and then quickly discovered that demand was sufficient for the founders to create a formal wholesale business. All this has happened within a couple of years, so the product now comes to Caffe Culture as still quite a new business.

"There are several reasons why ice cream works well in a coffee shop," general manager Janine Cording told us. "If you offer a good coffee and ice cream selection, then you meet the needs of both adults and children - each can relax because they are happy with what they have been served.

"And once the children realise that they will get a great ice cream in a particular coffee shop they will be very keen to go there again... you should never underestimate the positive effect of a whining child, and as children do not regard ice cream as a seasonal product, they will influence their parents during the winter, too."

The founder of South Street, Rowan Joyce, has seen the effects of this in her own café, which is described as being relaxed and welcoming, 'a bit boho and shabby chic', and interested in community work with reading groups, a dementia support group, mindfulness classes and a knitting group, and a small gift shop and gallery which supports local artists and 'creatives'.

"In our own cafe we have hugely increased footfall by having a good selection of ice cream available," reports Janine Cording. "This is partly because of the 'happy child' factor, but also because our ice cream is local and homemade - customers like the fact that the ice cream is made here on the premises.

"We know that the wholesale clients we supply also feel confident that they know the source of the product and that they can come and see it being made - in the interests of 'transparency', our workshop has a huge glass window, so anyone who is passing by or stares inside can see the whole



manufacturing process."

The market, she says, is wide.

"It has multi-generational appeal, so it is good to have some more adult flavours on offer. We sell a lot of coffee and burnt orange, rum and raisin and sticky toffee pudding flavours to the grown-ups in the cafe."

And it is fairly easy to handle.

"The only piece of equipment needed is a display cabinet - ideally, ice cream should not be served straight from a freezer as that is too cold to scoop and has less flavour. An ice cream cabinet has good 'eye appeal' and looks enticing and interesting... a small one costs around £500 and doesn't take up too much room.

"Ice cream has a life of three months, but in practice, never sits around for that long. Typically, we have a turnover of three or four days for a 5-litre napoli (this is what the ice cream pans are traditionally called).

"Ice cream has a good profit margin - our wholesale clients pay £25 for a 5-litre container and typically get 40 scoops from each pan. Even as an affordable treat, with our children's scoops starting at £1 and an adult scoop costing £2, it is a good return on investment."



Sterck is a Dorset-based maker of aprons to their own design. They are, the company tells us, "definitely not run of the mill," and the company's recent business has developed because of demand from coffee shops who want something a bit different... and beside the aprons, tea cosies like this one!

What is the difference between a good tea pyramid and an average one (there being no cheap ones)?

Tea Packs, at B95, is a specialist contract tea packer, and not only does it have the capability to produce the currently-popular pyramid bags, it has a range of pyramid bags in outer envelopes.

"We specialise in pyramid bags, and we pack for some relatively large companies and one café chain," director Sean Daffey told us. "There are probably only two tea brands here who can do pyramid bags for themselves - most brands prefer not to pack because these are not easy machines to run, and are not fast. They may pack at 50-60 bags a minute, against 450 a minute for flat bags, or two thousand a minute for the very cheap bags.

"The quality sector of the pyramid bags is in the mesh material. There are some companies which use a non-woven material that is similar to paper; some use nylon pyramids, but the majority now use biodegradable pyramids. This is an expensive material, and there is a differential of 10-15 per cent between the two. But more caterers are now willing to pay more for a decent bag."

Tightpac (A32) is a company we have highlighted before - it is the largest range of vacuum-sealed containers in the world, using a patented vacuum open and close system that acts exactly the same way as a one-way degassing valve, allowing natural gasses to escape without allowing oxygen in. It is, says the company cheerfully, probably the first time that the hip coffee sector has called a storage container 'really cool!' The interesting things about these containers are that they keep both dry and wet goods fresh twice as long as the average container.

Story (A66) offers a range of fruit pressés specifically developed for the foodservice sector. These are a blend of fruit juice and sparkling mineral water, bottled at source, are all light and refreshing, and most importantly, the company tells us, are not available from any of the mainstream retailers - which means a café has something exclusive to offer without any known price points!

Rosy Lee, the rhyming slang phrase for tea, is the brand which features a Pearly King on its packs and is, as might be expected, a fairly hearty everyday blend of Assam and Kenyan. The company says, challengingly: "unlike some other tea companies, we don't produce a bewildering range of blends that hardly ever get bought and rarely get drunk. We're sticking to what people want most, and most British tea drinkers are after a brilliant black tea."

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There have been many variations on the idea of the coffee-mug carrying tray, and the one which appears at this year's show was devised rather by accident, by a yachtsman who saw difficulties in making four mugs of coffee in a galley and then carrying them topsides.

David Trotter came ashore from one trip determined to find an answer. He developed the Muggi tray, which securely holds most shapes and sizes of mugs, cups and tumblers and will catch any unwanted spillages. It has four non-slip rubber feet which makes it suitable for just about any slippery surface, and is intended to be carried in one hand.

The product is suggested as a retail sale by café owners to anyone who spends time outdoors, from caravanners to picnickers, at a suggested price of £9.95.

Eurofood Brands (C15/16) is best known for being the British distributor of Illy coffee, but will show Vedrenne flavoured syrups from the fruit-growing area of Burgundy, France. The brand refers to itself as 'the world's most awarded liqueurs'.

A world 'first' in hot drinks

Everybody likes to hear about an unusual and original offering in the hot beverage sector – and the world 'first' from Lisa Gawthorne at Bravura (A37) will divide opinions quite radically.

It is, believe it or not, the world's first peanut butter hot beverage.

The Peanut Hottie is offered as an alternative to hot chocolate or malted options in the general sector of 'comforting hot drinks', and was created by accident, when the inventor came in from a gym session, swallowed a spoonful of peanut butter, followed it with a cup of tea... and clicked to the idea of peanut as a hot drink.

"Hot peanut butter turned out to be delicious," Lisa told us. "But creating the sensation took eighteen months of hard graft to get the formula. We heavily researched everything with consumers to make sure it tasted just how they expected."

Peanut Hottie is an 'add water' drink. It is rated at 83 calories per cup, is caffeine free in its original form, is suitable for vegetarians and contains no artificial additives or colours. It is available in tubs or single-serve sachets, and such are the requirements of modern labelling that packs have to contain the caution that the product contains peanuts!

A rather unexpected aspect of the product is that early users have been testing it in some unusual ways. So far, it has been used in muffins,



cheesecakes, cookies, and even less likely, in stir fries, curries, pancakes, ratatouille, and even a martini.



Time has stood still at Quickfire, says the company's Simon Martin cheerfully: "zero inflation started here, because we are offering the same deal as we did last year – a starter pack with enough custom-printed crockery for a 24-seat café, including cups, saucers, plates and bowls, for £395 including delivery."

Also making a re-appearance is the Old Queen promotion, with Martin's highly-irreverent illustration of Queen Victoria with coffee cups balanced on her massive bosom. Quickfire (A11) was apparently so surprised that this picture caused no offence last time that it is trying again...

The concept of matcha continues to grow. This is the powdered green tea from Japan which is promoted as having quite remarkable nutritional properties, because the tea leaves are fully digested, whereas other tea leaves are infused and deliver only some of their qualities to the brew water.

The pioneer of matcha has been Teapigs (AA95), who says demand amongst consumers is growing even faster than the company expected, and that it is notable that celebrities and athletes have started speaking about it. As a result, this is a very good time to be offering it in a catering business.

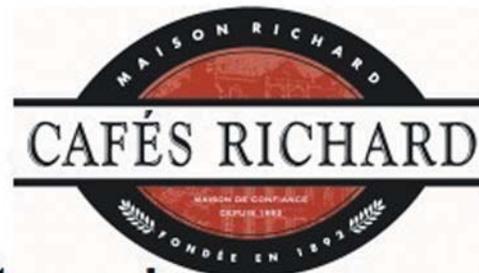
Teapigs matcha is now available in an extremely wide range of packaging sizes, which go from tiny three-gramme giveaway sample packs to 80gm catering tins.

The 30gm tins, says the brand, return an extremely high retail selling price, up to £25.

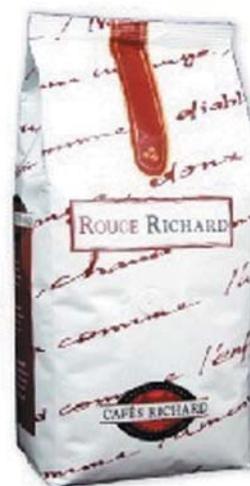
Novus (C42) will introduce organic Tsuki matcha, and beside it will show its new spicy rooibos, the other popular 'healthy' beverage.

Rooibos is not a leaf tea, but is the product of a south African bush, which is processed into a form which delivers a very tea-like beverage, but high in antioxidants, low in tannin, and caffeine-free.

The Novus product gets its spiciness from the use of Brazilian red pepper, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, and orange.



Udal Supplies are looking for partners in launching Cafés Richard in to the UK. As an introductory offer we will be supplying 1 free 70cl bottle of Monin Syrup with every 1kg of coffee purchased for the first three months. The Prestigious brand of Cafés Richard includes a full Coffee and Tea programme.



One of the important jobs for the modern soft-drink maker is to address the need for the credible adult soft drink, says Cawston Press (F16).

"We believe that people want more grown-up soft drinks, hence the trend towards the likes of ginger beer and the more delicate flavours associated with elderflower," says the brand's Cluny Brown. "So our two new sparkling can flavours are a ginger beer and an elderflower lemonade.

"When we develop our drinks we want the hero to be the flavour of the fruit or vegetables, rather than the sweetness – traditionally, carbonated drinks give you a hit of sugar, and a big flavour that's hard to associate with actual fruit.

"Our ginger beer has two types of ginger, to achieve a fruity, complex ginger flavour with decent 'bite'. Then, we have half the sugar of the market-leading ginger beer, which makes a big difference in refreshment."

Cawston Press has also moved into the vegetable drink sector, with several interesting blends. Radiant Roots combines beetroot, carrot, apple and ginger, and Sweet Greens, which is apple, pear, cucumber and lettuce. The Sunshine Blend looks like a 'health' drink might be expected to - a carrot-tomato soup colour. But the use of apple and orange in with the carrot and celery produces a surprisingly palatable taste.

Soft drinks - new adult styles

A new champagne alternative makes its appearance... and so does a hangover cure

The pioneer of the concept of vegetable-based soft drinks will be at Caffe Culture – it was James White (E42) who actively promoted the idea of beetroot as a soft drink, to the degree that the Welsh international rugby team actually took the product on... and then so did premier league football and cycling teams, and several Olympic teams.

It was White who experimented with the idea of an 'adult tomato juice', and created the spicy Big Tom, which has actually been awarded a Royal Warrant. This has turned out to have additional uses - it can be drunk on its own, used as the base for soup, and even a sorbet.

This year it will showcase its Manic Organics and the rather odd Great Uncle Cornelius range. This collection, illustrated by a character with a wonderful moustache in the manner of a modern barista, is made up of a spiced ginger, a refreshing ginger, and a 'lemon refresher'. The spiced ginger, we are told, can be drunk hot or cold, and works well with a splash of whisky as a Ginger Mac.

Luscombe (B2) will be showing an intriguing soft drink which it first



The ginger and wasabi from Rocks

devised for this year's Valentine's Day, as a non-alcoholic alternative to champagne – it is the Damascene Rose Bubbly.

This is a 'delicate, fragrant' bubbly which the maker (getting perhaps slightly over-excited) says is 'a celebration of the majestic rose of the Orient', which is a reference to the history of the Damascus rose, a symbol of beauty and love, and the invention of rose water by a scientist in what was then Persia, almost a thousand years ago. In the Luscombe recipe, the water is combined with Muscat grape juice, Sicilian lemon and spring water. It has been suggested that the small bottle retails at up to £2, but served in a glass at table, anything up to £4.

Another interesting item to be sampled is the new Madagascan vanilla soda, a very creamy drink made with organic Muscat grape juice, spring water, organic Madagascan vanilla extract, and organic Sicilian lemon.

What is the ideal drink for the coffee-house to serve as a hangover cure? It is, oddly, a product from one of the country's best-known producers of natural and flavoured mineral water.

This year is the 25th anniversary of Radnor Hills (D40) which proposes to mark the year with a tour of fifty food and drinks expos around the country, with the intention of getting one million people to taste the brand's drinks.

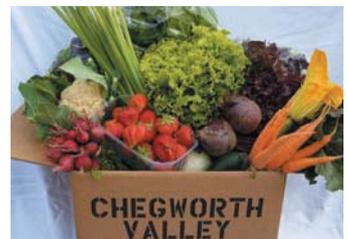
An entirely different product from Radnor Hills is Pro Iso, created when a nutritionist and an Olympic gold sprinter approached the company with the idea of an isotonic drink (the kind of drink created to restore the sugar and salt balance of athletes after exercise) which would taste better than other such 'functional' drinks.

This one, it has been found, has a useful secondary benefit. "Pro Iso contains fructose, which can aid the liver in breaking down alcohol, and can help with replacing fluid loss through the diuretic effect of alcohol," says the nutritionist. "So you serve them one bottle to drink before bed, and then another upon rising, to help restore the body's balance."

Rocks (E11) is a Devon producer of

soft drinks, which takes a gently argumentative approach to its work, saying "we take an old-school approach to making our drinks, and we hope visitors will find it refreshing that there's still a business in Britain that cherishes simple traditions and offers drinks as they should be made... nothing in there that you wouldn't trust. Fruit plus sugar plus water equals a lovely glassful of fruity refreshment!"

There are some slightly unusual flavours - sparkling wasabi and ginger, strawberry and blackcurrant, blackcurrant and elderflower, raspberry and lime, and a pink lemonade.



One of the most unexpected sights of all at a soft drinks stand may well be at Chegworth Valley (AM4) where the brand will be showing, believe it or not, fruit and veg. It is to show the depth of the brand's status as a grower of its own ingredients.

"We're seeing that the interest and need for local, seasonal produce is growing and growing," marketing manager Vikki Wright told us. "We see that consumers expect the offering in a coffee shop should reflect and change with the seasons.

"A really simple way to do this, without having to redevelop your whole menu, is to offer an eye-catching salad made up with in-season leaves.

"Our home farm is only 40 miles outside London, and during the summer months all of our leaves are picked to order and delivered next day. We are able to offer trade customers an almost-unrivalled freshness, and we can also advise on which leaves are tasting the best at a particular time."

In its fruit juices, Chegworth Valley also now refers to the 'seasonal' aspect, in which flavours may change according to the crops.

"We have always prided ourselves that we make our juices using hand-selected fruit which is pressed in small batches on the farm. Our whole ethos is to use the very best-tasting fruit and this is reflected through the flavours in our juices, so these may vary from batch to batch."

A new juice product which might be available to taste at the show is an apple and ginger juice which is expected to work both as a hot drink in winter, and with ice in summer.

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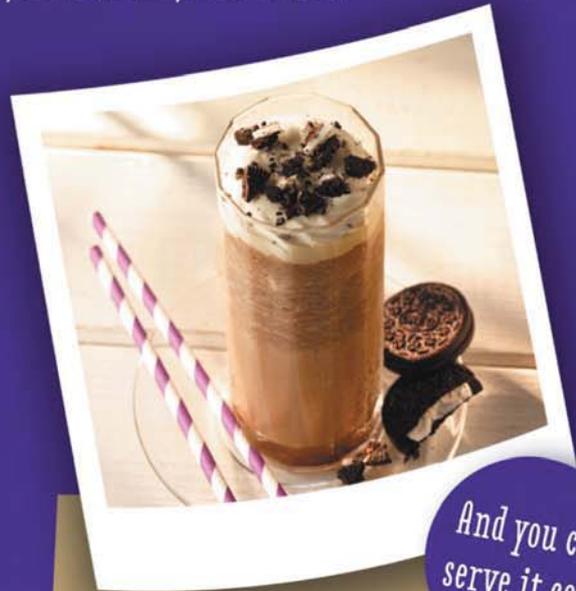
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How to make money from the flavoured meringue

The meringue, it has been suggested, is an under-exploited item in the coffee-house world. Whether this is down to the effort of making them, or an uncertainty as to how they should be most profitably used in the café environment, is still up for discussion – which is why Meranz is proposing to debate the matter with visitors at their stand (C51).

Meranz comes from a husband and wife team who have experimented with the different meringue recipes from different countries – Swiss ones are slow-baked, and the French recipe gives a slightly softer texture. They decided to work with hand-separated free-range egg whites, which is a laborious process but is reckoned to give a better result. (The yolks are pasteurised and sold to chefs who demand free range liquid-egg).



A box of Meranz Bites

The new products on show are 'nests' and 'bites'. The bite-sized ones come in packs of six, in quite a vast number of flavours.

The 'nests' can be filled with cream and berries to create a 'house special' dessert. The big advantage here, says the supplier, is speed – they can be crushed, sprinkled, or drizzled with fruit, compotes, cream or a thick sauce, with little effort. "They really do offer a simple, versatile dessert

option, with strong margins and incredible plate appeal," the makers told us.

From the same company comes something we have seen before in the coffee-house trade – the miniature layer sponge cake. Tweeners are three inches high, filled with curds, buttercreams and compotes, and were originally intended to be 'sharing' cakes, but the company has found that they sell well in boxes of four.

Marketing the marshmallows

Among a notably interesting set of new arrivals in the subject of cafe snacks at this year's show, we find two players whose interests are in the use of marshmallow – Baru (C98) and Crème d'or / Bonny Mallow (B44)

In coffee-house use, marshmallow is usually seen as a topping on a hot chocolate, but Baru believes that the product can be sold as a quite high-priced takeaway snack, and has created an entire range of flavoured bars.

The bars for counter-top impulse sale are coated in either milk or dark Belgian chocolate, and topped with sea salt caramel, or chocolate chai latte, or 'crunchy cashew'. The fillings are referred to as 'marshmallow cloud-s' and include honey and ground vanilla pods for a soft and light effect. The selling price is around £1.50.

Baru will also be showing individually wrapped marshmallows which are either served beside a hot drink, or after a meal.

Similarly, says Baru, its Chocolate Hippos are a fun alternative to the standard saucer-side biscuit – these are individually wrapped hippo-shaped milk and dark chocolates. An extremely unusual item is the drinking chocolate shapes range, which slowly melt into hot chocolate.

Marshmallow is also the star product from Bonny Mallow, which has created one range of ready-to-eat sweet snacks, and one range of melts, which are cubes or dippers which can be stirred into hot chocolate or coffee.

The Big Cube is literally positioned on the top of a hot chocolate or Americano, for the customer to stir in with a spoon; typical flavours are vanilla, spearmint and chocolate and blood orange with chocolate. The



Dipper is formed of two mallow cubes on a stirrer, and again the customer stirs them into the drink. The dessert cubes are to be positioned on top of ice-cream and similar items.

The strawberry and vanilla marshmallow flavours won a two-star in the Great Taste awards.

A lot has been said about the desirability of reusable coffee cups, and a new arrival is the E-Coffee 12oz bamboo fibre cup (C41) an improved version of a product first made in 14oz. The new one has a thicker silicone grip, as well as a new fully-sealable silicone lid.

The product is made from organic, bio-degradable bamboo fibre, and the company argues that it is the most environmentally-sustainable reusable coffee cup on the market. Among its fans is the Eden Project environmental centre in Cornwall.



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The macaroon, or macaron, is a familiar sight in the coffee houses on the continent, where the product often makes for a very colourful counter display.

It has not been taken up to such a degree in the UK, but Ganache Macaron (AM3) says that when the product has an attractive collection of flavours, and has the extremely novel feature of customised illustration on the top surface, then it can be sold at a very desirable retail price.

"They can be sold as an eat-in or take-away item. They can be sold in-house as a treat with teas and coffees, and also as a dessert.

"We offer a wide variety of flavours from hazelnut and dark chocolate, which complement coffee, to vanilla, pistachio and Earl Grey which go down great with a nice milky tea. Fruity flavours like lemon, blackcurrant and lime are a fantastic pairing with white wine, champagne and summery cocktails."

The selling price is surprisingly high - the plain 'classic' macarons can be sold for £1.50- £1.80 each and the personalised ones have been sold for £2.50.

"We can place any images, photos, logos, text or designs on our macarons. Our team will convert the design into an edible image using a thin layer of icing printed in edible ink, each design is personally handled to create the best quality print, and the result is a completely unique treat.

"There is no minimum order in flavours from our current range, and

The profit potential of personalised snacks



Personalised macarons and the Soho Joe gingerbread man



no minimum order per design - the one rule of thumb is that the quality of the image provided will dictate the quality of the edible print, and as the size of the print is 1.5in in diameter, less 'busy' images work best.

"There is a lead time of two working days for orders of less than 50 personalised macarons and 5-10 working days for orders up to two thousand."

The idea of the decorated gingerbread man character is not unknown

in the coffee trade. But what is not so widely known is that the creation of personalised gingerbread characters is practical for the individual coffee shop... and that there is a factory dedicated to the subject.

This is Image on Food (B51) in Shropshire, where Sarah Hopcroft employs three dozen staff in decorating gingerbread.

"I love this business and wish I had more time to shout about it!" she told Coffee House. "We pride ourselves on our ability to create ideas for any occasion or event, and our products are hand-decorated."

The customer base includes some notable coffee names.

"We supplied Coffee Republic when they first opened, Starbucks from day one of their first fifty shops in the UK, and we have supplied Costa.

We work with smaller independent stores, and with a number of Esquires cafes. We supply Soho Coffee with their Gingerbread Flo and Joe, who have a change of clothes depending on the season. We supplied Muffin Break with their 'muffin man'."

Popcorn, as a snack product, may be rather bigger than generally thought - Propercorn's sales more than tripled to over £5.5m last year. As such, says the brand, this is a significant snack product for the café trade to take an interest in.

The brand (AB84) was formed four years ago out of a desire to create a popcorn with a difference, although packaged and flavoured much in the same way as crisps. The flavours which now figure in the range are a 'fiery' Worcester sauce with sun-dried tomato, a lightly sea-salted, a sour cream with black pepper, a 'sweet and salty' and sweet coconut with vanilla.

Ten Acre (E6) is a supplier of both crisps and premium popcorn. The brand is centred around the curious identity of a series of wacky characters in a fictional village, which has even been given its own website, and the odd story of a secret area of popcorn trees in remote south America.

Weird characters aside, the flavours in the popcorn range are sour cream and chive, lime and sea salt, fennel and lemon, and the unusual wasabi with a mustard punch.

Also covered in the same fictional village scenario are Ten Acre crisps, showing an equal amount of eccentricity in their names. The Day Sweet and Sour Became Friends won a prize at this show last year. The flavours, so far as we can work out from the odd names, are cheese and onion, salt and vinegar, sweet chilli, sweet and sour and we think, odd though it sounds, chicken soup.



The cookie and traybake markets are now extremely crowded - what is the aspect of a snack which would make a coffee-house owner say: 'yes, that's the one I want to sell'?

"Most coffee house owners are always looking at offering something out of the ordinary that cannot be found in supermarkets or high street coffee chains," Mark Stack of Yum Yum Bros (A1) told us. "Our Ndulge cookies are all butter and not margarine-based like most other cookies, which increases our quality and taste.

"Our Oh My Goodness cereal bars are great-tasting, which is quite unusual - from experience, we know that most gluten-free bars are not the greatest tasting ones in the world.

"Our uniqueness is in regard to the allergy-free sector. Most cereal bars these days have nuts in them, along with dairy. Our bars vary their allergy statements from having two bars (Appletastic and Merry Berry) that are nut, dairy, gluten and wheat-free, to three bars (Brownie, Buttery and Fruity Oat) that are gluten, wheat and nut free.

"We also have our original three nut and dairy-free bars, so our range allows a large proportion of the market to be covered."

Traybakes of Cumbria (AM13) was formed when Justine Carruthers thought of the market for quality hand-made cakes, and converted a redundant dairy on her farm on Hadrian's Wall into a bakery.

What was originally a small range of flapjacks from that farmyard has now turned into a larger range of traybakes from a purpose-built factory in Penrith, but it is still a family-owned business, and the principle is still to produce handmade tray bakes in small batches using traditional recipes and baking skills, on an artisan basis.

Traybakes for catering are offered in service trays cut into 12, 14 or 15 portions, or, as other bakers in the sector have done, Traybakes has seen a demand for a range of individually wrapped, branded retail packs, which have taken the brand to a number of high end independent retailers such as delicatessens, farm shops, cafes and tourist destinations, such as Chatsworth House.

The brand says their range is constantly reviewed - any weaker-selling lines are replaced with new ones, which need to show consistently good sales for several months on trial before being fully listed. This, says Traybakes, means that its trade clients always receive products which have a track record of good sales.

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Just how important is the matter of gluten-free foods to the café operator? We have heard the research, which says that the gluten-free market has more than doubled in the last two years, and that the vast majority of sales are to non-coeliac consumers... but what does this mean inside the coffee-house?

Visitors to the show should be able to avoid the usual marketing-speak on the subject by talking to Denise Thomas, a cake-lover who founded Sin (AB80) after being diagnosed as gluten-intolerant, and then becoming "fed up with buying rubbish gluten free foods". She remains stridently critical of what is available in the general market for gluten-sensitive customers.

"We recently carried out market research on what is available," she told us, "and I was shocked at the quality of the cakes... still!"

"Free-from products are the fastest-growing food sector in the country, and brands are generally very dry and tasteless, and only available in multipacks. I find it shocking, and have become tired of being handed second-rate alternatives.

"When I'm in a café, I don't want dry, unappealing cakes. I want taste, texture, moistness and pleasure. That is the point of cake... it makes people happy!"

Her alternatives were made for her own pleasure before being turned into a commercial business. There are traybakes for cafes, but notably, Sin

Creating the better product

Makers in two snack sectors were dissatisfied with products on the market... so they went out to supply better ones



A better gluten-free slice from Sin, and the alternative to sawdust porridge from Wolfy's



cakes are packed for retail in what is called 'the little black box', with single-serving portions both seal-wrapped and protected by sturdy outers.

"We wanted to elevate the status of gluten-free cakes, and when we first launched the 'little black box', our sales went up by four hundred per cent, and continue to rise – we never ever expected that both customers and the trade would respond so brilliantly to it. The 'little black box' was also a very strong reason why British

Airways wanted our cakes."

Also in the snack sector, porridge is a product which has been tested several times in the coffee-house trade - there are some which serve it in the bowl at breakfast, and some on rail stations sell it as a made up 'to go' product for commuters. But none of these, says Kitchen Garden (B86), have achieved the status of a 'real' oat porridge in a takeaway container.

"Our core business is jams and chutneys," the company's Barbara Moinet told us. "Our big new brand is Wolfy's porridge pots, and what we've done with porridge is different from anyone else."

There are several unusual aspects to it, not least the unique packaging.

"It is made of proper oats in a little soup-type pot, and inside that is a separate pot holding your jam. A proper jam makes all the difference... and being jam makers, we have the real thing, which puts us a notch above the others."

Typically, this is a product which is sold to commuters.

"You pour hot water in, and it is 'instant' in the sense that it is made quickly, but it is not instant in the

sense of sacrificing quality for speed... this is not a 'sawdust in a microwave' porridge!

"Nor is it a bought-in product - we blend the oats ourselves, in an adapted concrete mixer, so this is a true artisan product."

There are several likely sales routes for the coffee-house.

"There is eat-in, and two kinds of takeaway business. One is the kind in which the porridge is made up hot and sold to the customer to eat immediately, and there is the kind where the pack is sold to be made up elsewhere.

"We have been told by those who have big queues of commuters at railway stations that our porridge does not make up as quickly as the sawdust kind, but it is a far better product, and there is more of it, which is why you sell at a higher price.

"You might sell it for the make-it-up-elsewhere market. This could be the morning market that comes in for a latte and a muffin to take away, and now adds a porridge to have at work.

"Wolfy's is a porridge for those who don't want to sell the same one as everyone else, and not the cheap porridge sold in the supermarket."

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The subject of soy milk in café use continues to be debated, and by a quirk of positioning, two potential suppliers are virtually next door to each other at this year's show. Alpro is at A81 and Community Foods is at A95.

The famous name in the sector is Alpro, which has challengingly said that this issue is 'not all about the coffee', and indeed, is not all about one kind of soy product, either.

Alpro's position is that the café owner will do well to look past the simple issue of non-dairy milk, and to think where business can be gained from all the various customers who do not, for whatever reason, drink cows' milk. Alpro makes a vast range of 'plant-based drinks', which means it can use soya, almond, coconut, hazelnut, rice or oats in what are presented as alternatives to dairy-based milks and creams.

By looking across this range, says Alpro, the coffee bar operator can enhance their menu throughout the day and indeed seasonally through the year, and build loyalty from those customers who seek various 'free-from' foods.

Nearby, Community Foods makes its debut at the show with Bonsoy, a soy-based milk product which has recently gained both positive and adverse publicity. The product is growing in sales through the health food trade, and Community Foods has done work with baristas to find out

The practicality of soy and non-dairy milks



how well the milk works in practical coffee use.

The reaction, we are told, is that in taste the milk is 'creamy' and 'without the aftertaste you get with some other soya milks'. It has been found that Bonsoy handles steaming well, being found to thicken and get creamier as it is steamed, which can be done at a slightly lower temperature and for a shorter length of time than is usual. The froth holds its body well for latte art, we are told.

It is a source of vegetable protein, very low in fat, is low in cholesterol and is organic, gluten free and suitable for vegetarians.

However, there was a scare in the international press last year, when it was very widely reported that the

Australian courts had heard a 'class action' case raised by 500 people complaining about the alleged effects of soy milk.

It turned out that high levels of iodine had entered some soy milk through a naturally-occurring feature of a Japanese seaweed ingredient; the situation was first highlighted in 2009, and earlier this year a fund of \$25 million was created to be distributed to claimants.

However, says Bonsoy, their soy milk was re-formulated in 2010 to avoid the use of that ingredient, and the reformulated product has been tested and approved by the relevant authorities.

Qualitasse and the coffee passport

Qualitasse, at stand D42, is the Basingstoke company which has recently been putting in a lot of work to reinforce its status as a supplier of coffee, machines, and training.

It was at a recent Caffe Culture show that the company unveiled its Anvil coffee brand, and also had a lot to say in praise of the Fiamma machine range, which it had discovered in Portugal – and this year, with the company now holding the status of UK distributor, it is Fiamma machines which are the star of the stand.

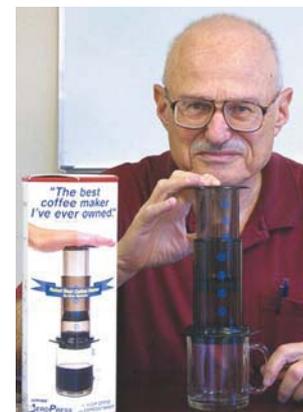
"We have a new machine called the Compass Dual Boiler," the company tells us. "The Compass fits in between the standard configuration Prestige, with its single 12-litre boiler, and the Pacific Multi-boiler, with a larger boiler for water and steam and individual boilers for each group.

"With the new Compass, we are looking to achieve great temperature stability. The machine is designed for high volume usage but at a selling price less than many standard, single boiler machines."

Qualitasse has also extended its own training programme to an impressive degree, and now handles everything from basic barista courses to sensory appreciation and 'starting a coffee shop' sessions.

This year, the company introduces the Qualitasse Coffee Passport, which focuses on the essential things that everyone in coffee catering must know.

"It's all well and good spending hours practising milk texturing and latte art," says Qualitasse, "but we are on a mission to make everyone understand the basics – a clean machine, fresh coffee, correctly set-up grinder."



One of the simplest and most popular brewing methods in the coffee world has been around for several years, yet is only now receiving an amount of international razzamatazz. This is the Aeropress, the simple manual system which is quick, always attracts attention in a café or restaurant, and is widely said to produce a clean and full-bodied coffee.

And yet, there are many caterers who have either never heard of the item, or have heard of it but not used it... and so, TKC (F13) will be demonstrating and discussing the full use of the Aeropress at this year's show.

The surprising thing about the Aeropress is that it is at one and the same time both simple and complex. There actually are championships, with competitors taking their recipes to remarkable degrees of precision in the grammage of coffee and water, precise temperature to half a degree, and steeping time to within a couple of seconds.

And there is much debate over the virtues of the 'inverted' method, the one in which the kit is turned upside down for the first half of the brew. Some baristas say it improves the brew, others say it does not.

According to Alan Adler (pictured), the Californian inventor who devised the product, the Aeropress offers the choice of being simple or complex – the trick, as in any kind of coffee brewing, is just to find your preferred recipe of water temperature, grind, water-to-coffee ratio and brew time. The inventor himself says that the best recipes stay close to his recommended water temperature of 80C.

At Caffe Culture, TKC's Sam Neilson will probably demonstrate some of the recipes from recent competitions, but probably not the inverted method.

"We try to sing from the same song sheet as the Americans, where Alan Adler recently said that what make the Aeropress taste good is the short steep time, and that he thinks the inverted method makes a more bitter coffee.

"We have looked at demonstrating the inverted methods, but after carrying out a risk assessment we decided it killed the fun and simplicity of the Aeropress."

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Plenty of demonstrations in the flavoured syrup sector

The use of flavoured syrups continues to expand in the coffee-shop market, and several players say they are going to have a lot to talk about this year... including one previously unheard-of product!

The Theatre of Great Tastes will make its re-appearance from Da Vinci (F31), with the brand working on its idea of a menu of seasonal recipes, and a star barista showing exactly how each item can be brought to life in a practical cafe situation. There will be a 'recipe of the hour' feature.

Da Vinci's view is that the brand should be able to discuss with cafe owners both drink creation, and meaningful point-of-sale promotion.

At the same time, Da Vinci will be sampling its Kerrymaid frozen yogurt mix. This is a product which is widely thought to still be on the way up in café use, and Da Vinci argues that using the frozen yogurt mix in combination with syrups and drizzle sauces can take a cafe's summer menu into whole new directions.

Monin, we are told, will have 'a really cool' split stand at the show - one half of C35 will be decked out as a Parisian artisan café, and the other half as a 1950s-style milkshake and lemonade bar.

There are two new products worth sampling, and one is a 'first'. This is the tonka bean syrup, which we too had never heard of - it turns out to be a South American seed with vanilla and caramel flavours, that has in the past been used as a vanilla substitute and also as a perfume ingredient.

It is used by pastry chefs for things like crème brûlées and macaroons, but works equally well with coffees, chocolate drinks, milkshakes and frappes. The tonka is said to be expensive and difficult to get hold of, which is why the facility of having it as a syrup from a known brand is useful.

Monin will also be showing its new lemonade mix, the idea of which is to allow cafes to produce a homemade-style lemonade drink. It is a Sicilian lemon cloudy concentrate, to be mixed with still or sparkling water.

There is an interesting, and perhaps unexpected, chance to sample some ideas for chocolate flavours at the Marimba stand (G45). This is the company which has promoted chocolate 'melts', and of the use of flake chocolate for drinking.

What is not so widely known is that Marimba also has its own British range of flavoured syrups.

"We are the 'manufacturer' of the syrups in the sense that they are made to our recipe, exclusively for us, under contract by Samuelson's," Marimba told us. "We credit them on the label of every bottle, and as far as we know, Samuelson's do not make flavour syrups for anyone else, as their own business concentrates on soft drinks and cordials."

There are five flavours, all of which

are intended to work with Marimba's chocolates - hazelnut praline, chilli, natural mint, cerisette cherry (a black cherry with undertones of almond) and salted caramel.

"All five flavours work well in our milk and dark chocolate, and the white chocolate hazelnut praline mocha is superb," says Marimba. "The shot of espresso adds a bitterness to the sweet white hot chocolate and the hazelnut praline syrup finishes it off perfectly."

"The chilli syrup in dark chocolate is a favourite as a winter warmer, and the cerisette cherry and salted caramel are our best-sellers."

Are these likely to work profitably in the coffee-house context?

"An advantage we have is that we run our own small cafe. This gives us an opportunity to trial every product on paying customers - some of our regulars have been trying our hot chocolate ideas for years, and they always offer us honest feedback."



How important is the concept of the frozen yogurt to the coffee-house trade? It is an idea which marketeers continually say is going to be big, but which has yet to really take off.

However, say the founders of Lick (stand D95), the product works when it is done properly, and they say they have proved it. The founders, Ky and Owain, set up in business together while they were still at school, and then moved to Brighton to open the UK's first frozen yogurt café. That café successfully operated from 2008 until the partners closed it to allow them to concentrate on trade supply.

Key to success, they say, is a high yogurt content, not a product "like an ice-cream with yogurt added".

In this, a novel feature has now been created - the founders invented a new method of keeping frozen yogurt creamy for storage at home.

How popular and marketable can the concept of frozen yogurt (what the fans refer to as 'fro-yo') actually be? A clue comes from the experience of the Lick partners when they closed their Brighton yogurt café to concentrate on the retail tub.

They decided to throw a closing party with live music... and five thousand people turned up.

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COCONUT mocha frappé

INGREDIENTS 12oz/360ml

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DaVinci Gourmet Coconut Syrup	2 pumps
Milk	100ml
Ice	fill cup
DaVinci Gourmet Chocolate Sauce	to decorate
Whipped Cream	to top

DIRECTIONS

FILL cup with ice and add to blender
ADD milk, frappé powder, syrup and blend on high
FILL cup with mixture, decorate with whipped cream and chocolate sauce

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*BBC/Allegria (including raw materials, overheads and taxes, based on an average selling price of €3.45)



Kaldi

Starbucks came in for a vast amount of international derision in late April, when the computer system controlling the tills in all its American stores went down (in their corporate language, it was a 'point of sale register outage!')

Baristas across America handed out free drinks because they were unable to process card payments or loyalty cards, although some stores accepted cash from customers who had it... in this regard, what really drew criticism from the coffee trade was the realisation that some staff had to give away drinks for free because they simply did not know the price of them – they are too used to simply tapping details

into a screen and letting the system do the work.

More than one British café operator expressed surprise that American store staff appear to know so little about the pricing of the items they sell, that they were unable to revert to a manual system.

There has also been much criticism of the remark by Pret a Manger's top man that his staff are empowered to offer free drinks to customers they like or find attractive. The chief executive, Clive Schlee, said that instead of introducing a loyalty card, his chain had introduced the idea of giving away a certain number of hot drinks or food every week, and that a quite remarkable 28 per cent of customers had received something free.

His throwaway comment that staff might decide 'I like the guy in that tie' or 'I fancy that girl or that boy', had one predictable result, in that a couple of newspapers immediately sent reporters out to see how they got on with trying to get free drinks. However, other commentators made the more interesting attempt to analyse Pret's position, and general opinion seems to be that it is a bad idea.

One paper quoted a 'brand psychologist', whatever that is, making the reasonable comment that Pret's CEO had ruined the appeal of seemingly spontaneous gestures and acts of

kindness, and suggested that when consumers realise that such a gesture is part of company policy, 'suddenly it doesn't ring true'. He made the comment that a loyalty card was more fair, in that customers know exactly where they stand.

A writer for the *Telegraph* added that all those who have never received a freebie might now feel resentful. Other critics said that Pret had created a PR disaster by showing the brand to be 'potentially discriminatory', and that the brand 'risked a backlash from the 72 per cent of us who have never had a freebie from them'.

Not surprisingly, it was also reported that Pret's staff had been re-briefed following the announcement, but it was also noted that staff might now find the general public being more polite as a result. "Power has been handed to the baristas!" said one.

The SpaceX supply ship arrived at the International Space Station in the middle of April, and successfully delivered the world's first espresso machine designed for astronauts.

The specially designed machine was intended for the Italian astronaut Samantha Cristoforetti, who has been drinking instant coffee since her mission began in November. She had to wait three months for the arrival of the promised espresso machine, because of the delay caused by the explosion

of a previous supply craft, and had this trip not turned up on time, she would have missed it completely, because she is due to fly home in a few weeks' time.

Perhaps unfairly, rather less international media attention was given to the launch of a rocket by Little Italy of Buckingham, celebrating its 10th year in business.

Little Italy has several bars on railway stations, and wanted to do something 'spectacular'. So they launched a branded takeaway cup into space, using a weather balloon and a camera protected in insulation blocks lined with handwarmers to stop it freezing in near-space temperatures. The balloon reached 105,000ft (about 20 miles) before bursting, freefalling back to Earth at 150 mph, and landing by parachute on a golf course.

The chain's Simon Keeley confirmed that he sought prior clearance from the Civil Aviation Authority – who thought he was a crank caller.

Kaldi looks forward to meeting all his followers next month in his new status as an online writer, and also notes that it is now six years since he published his well-received first book on the odd and entertaining sides of the coffee trade. Another one may well follow... !

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