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Spud checks

As if rising fish prices weren't enough to contend with there are early signs that, despite a bumper crop, potato quality could suffer. It's all down to poor conditions at harvest which are believed to have affected quality as crops went into store. Therefore, it's vital you check your potatoes when they first come in. Make it part of your everyday practise to check a bag when they are delivered using diastix (speak to Drywite or grab some from your local chemist - they are the same sticks doctors use to test patients' urine!) and do a fry test on a small batch. If you're not happy, speak to your supplier and ask for them to be replaced. A good relationship with your potato supplier will also help here and should avoid any problems going forward.

NEWS

- 4 NEWS**
Hot news from the frying trade
- 48 SPOTLIGHT**
Our regular round-up of what's happening in shops across the UK

INTERVIEWS

- 13 THE AMERICAN DREAM**
New Yorker Duane Dibartolomeo has turned around a dated Norwich chippy by focusing on value for money, new menu items and American hospitality
- 24 FACE YOUR FINANCES**
Ian Cass, managing director Forum of Private Business, encourages shop owners to get closer to their finances
- 36 UNSUNG HERO**
Alan McColm, co-owner, director and head coach at Real Food Cafe, Tyndrum, Perthshire
- 58 30 MINUTES WITH...**
... Tiffany Irvin, co-owner, The Fish Works, Largs, North Ayrshire

FEATURES

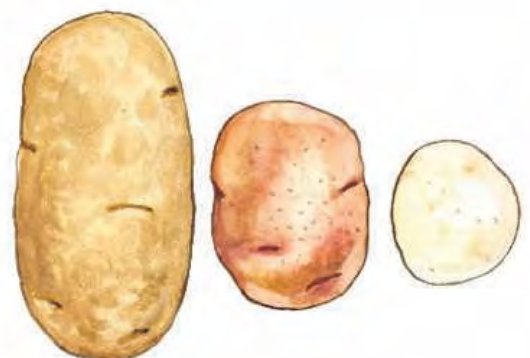
- 21 VEGGIE-MIGHT**
As the number of consumers avoiding meat continues to increase, more and more fish and chip shops are expanding their vegetarian options
- 31 MAKE PLANS**
As fish prices continue to climb, what can the industry do to prepare for rising costs?
- 34 LIQUID GOLD**
Fry Magazine went along to taste test a new cheese sauce from Ceres aimed at helping shops drive sales and, ultimately, profits

FEATURES

- 41 2018 NATIONAL FISH & CHIP AWARDS**
Catch up with all the winners from this year's National Fish & Chip Awards

REGULARS

- 16 WHAT'S NEW**
A round-up of all the latest products on the market
- 18 JOIN US**
Nick Miller of Millers in Haxby, York, takes up his first column as winner of the 2018 Fish & Chip Shop of the Year Award
- 28 MAINTENANCE ON MOBILES**
Profry's Paul Newbold offers advice on maintaining your mobile fish and chip van
- 38 PERFECT PETER**
Peter Calvert of Mister C's received a hero's welcome as he returned to Selby, North Yorkshire, with the Drywite Young Fish Frier of the Year trophy
- 52 INSURANCE**
Deep Blue's fish and chip restaurants in both Palma and Alicante airports are protected from the risk of a range fire by fire suppression systems and a Wrapped insurance policy



MILLERS MAKES FIRST PLAICE

After frying fish and chips for 77 years, Millers Fish & Chips in Haxby, York, has been named the UK's best fish and chip shop.

Father and son owners David and Nick Miller collected the accolade for Best Independent Fish & Chip Takeaway at the National Fish & Chip Awards in London last month.

The pair stormed into the final on their first time of entering the competition last year where they came third, but this year were able to convince a panel of industry experts that their shop was worthy of first place.

Nick Miller, who joined his father running the family business three years ago after a career in music, comments: "It feels absolutely amazing, it's actually indescribable what we're feeling right now.

"For Millers, this didn't just start last year, or even the year before that, we've been doing this for over 75 years so it's just brilliant to be able to bring the award home and do everyone proud. For us, fish and chips is all about family. But family doesn't stop with me and dad, it's our relatives, it's our staff, it's our customers, it's our community, it's our product. It's literally everything to us."

The pair put the shop's success down to a number of factors - sourcing local, sustainable ingredients, cooking to order and excellent staff, but ultimately, a passion for what they do. "You can buy the best quality ingredients but you have to believe in what you do, you have to have a passion for it and we genuinely do," adds Nick.

The restaurant and takeaway, where a regular haddock and chips costs £6.00, caters for a wide range of customers with a menu that includes not only traditional fish and chips but a gluten free offering, vegetarian options, kids meals, smaller portions and lunchtime specials. Its fish is all sustainably sourced with the haddock, cod and plaice all MSC certified, and food is cooked to order.

Nick adds: "I don't think we necessarily do things other shops don't do, we just do certain things differently. What we're trying to do is make fish and chips accessible to everyone, whether that's offering gluten free or delivering to the local care homes. We want people to enjoy fish and chips no matter what."

Commenting on how the industry has moved on since the Miller family first opened the shop over 75 years ago, Nick says: "A lot has changed, my great grandfather Joe Miller was rumbling potatoes into an old bath tub in 1940 and today we are taking payments from our phones!"



SELBY YOUNGSTER NAMED UK'S NUMBER ONE FRIER

Twenty-three year old Peter Calvert from Mister C's in Selby, North Yorkshire, has taken the title of Drywite Young Fish Frier of the Year in his first year of entering the competition.

Peter, who was a former trainee tank driver for the army until an injury made it impossible for him to return, has been working at Mister C's for the past five years. As shift manager, he is responsible for all aspects of the business from frying to carrying out food and safety checks to ensuring the quality of the end product is just right.

Commenting after collecting his trophy Peter said: "I put 100% in and to win, knowing everything I have put in to it, is just amazing,

"It's been challenging and a lot of the processes have put me out of my comfort zone. Writing press releases, doing Skype interviews and standing in front of top people in the industry and trying to impress them have been some of the most difficult things I've done in my life. But it's all been worth it.

"I wasn't 100% sure if I had done enough to win, I was just happy that I got into the top ten, so to make it to the top five and then win is absolutely unbelievable. It is a complete shock."

Although Peter admits he joined the industry by accident, he is keen to eliminate the stereotype among young people that working in a fish and chip shop is a dead-end job.

He adds: "I really want to push the fish and chips industry to the younger people. I did originally, years ago, think that it was a means to an end, but I quickly realised it's not. It's way more important.

"I've learned what goes on in the industry and seen the bigger picture. To push that to other young people and say this is something you can do without a college or university degree, but there's still plenty of opportunities to learn on the job through training courses, apprentices and competitions like this one, would be excellent.

"It's something I've found I have a really good knack for and I've just got better and better."

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Eastenders received numerous complaints this month after an episode saw fish and chip shop worker Masood charge a customer £17 for two pieces of fish and three portions of chips

Parc Lane Fish & Chips in Cardiff has had its application for a 24 hour trading licence turned down by the local council



CHIPPY CREATES EDIBLE FISH AND CHIPS BOUQUET

A Cheltenham chippy has created a bouquet made entirely from fish and chips for Valentine's Day.

Designed to be shared, the arrangement consists of a dozen potato roses and accompanying foliage fish goujons, hand-tied and presented beautifully in traditional newspaper.

The £15 bouquet was the work of development chef and founder of Simpsons Fish and Chips, Bonny Ritchie, who says: "Everyone knows that the real way to a person's heart is through their stomach, so we've put a little twist on the traditional bouquet of a dozen red roses this year by making them entirely edible. What better way to reel in your Valentine than with this tasty treat?"

NORWAY LAUNCHES 3 A WEEK CAMPAIGN

The Norwegian Seafood Council is to launch a 3 a week campaign in a bid to reverse a decline in seafood consumption.

The initiative, which is still in its infancy, aims to increase consumption by 20% by 2021. It follows statistics which reveal Norwegians are eating 15% less seafood than last year, with the decline especially noticeable among young consumers.

Renate Larsen, managing director at the Norwegian Seafood Council, says: "It is astounding that an average eighth grader today eats more sweets than fish and almost four times as much red meat as seafood."

OLLEY'S ACHIEVES GLUTEN FREE ACCREDITATION FROM COELIAC UK

A South London fish and chip shop has achieved Gluten Free (GF) accreditation from Coeliac UK, an accolade held by only 31 other chippies.

Olley's Fish Experience in Herne Hill achieved the accreditation following an audit of all aspects of preparing and serving gluten free food. This included staff training, communication with other staff and the gluten free customer, supply chain controls, storage, preparation and cooking and hygiene.

Olley's can now use the Coeliac UK GF symbol on its menus as well as in its restaurant and takeaway and in promotional material.

Harry Niazi, owner of Olley's Fish Experience, comments: "We've been successfully catering for gluten free customers for many years so are well-versed in the need to ensure they have safe gluten free options they can trust. However, we wanted to highlight our high standards to our customers, as we know it can be tricky for those who have to avoid gluten when eating out.

"Now customers are reassured from the moment they walk in the door that they can enjoy their meal and, more importantly, that they have a choice of safe options just the same as a regular customer would. We don't want anyone to feel left out, this makes fish and chips available to everyone."

Olley's offers gluten free fish and chips seven days a week.



POTATO STOCKS ARE HIGH BUT QUALITY IS MIXED, WARNS AHDB

A bumper crop of potatoes could be offset by quality issues, warns AHDB Potatoes as it releases its latest figures.

AHDB Potatoes, which represents potato growers, says GB potato stocks are up 23% on the previous season with levels for the end of November sitting at an estimated 3.6m tonnes. This is the highest level for this point in the season since 2011/12.

Amber Cottingham, analyst for AHDB Potatoes, said: "Last December we estimated the GB production figures to be up by around 15%, at 6.04m tonnes, so the increase in stocks held in store has been expected."

The high production in the 2017 growing season was the result of a 5% increase in planted area to 122,779ha coupled with one of the highest average yields on record (49.3t/ha).

With much of the season still to come, high production figures suggest that it is unlikely that potato supply will be as tight as it was over the previous two seasons.

However, AHDB warns this is dependent on crop quality and reports suggest there have been quality issues this season due to poor conditions at harvest.

Amber adds: "This could have affected quality as crops went into store, which could impact wastage in store, and actually lead to a faster drawdown in stocks."

KFE ANNOUNCES DATES FOR 2018 OPEN DAYS

Range manufacturer KFE will be running two free open days this year with the first one happening next month.

The open days will take place at its Peterborough-based showroom and will provide an opportunity to put a Kiremko high efficiency frying range to the test as well as gain valuable advice from its award-winning frying school trainers Gordon Hillan and Nigel Hodgson.

The KFE sales team will also be on hand to discuss how a new Kiremko can improve business, plus there will be opportunities for attendees to fry on the range themselves, check out its new Kiremko flat bottom chip pan and meet with representatives from Kerry Foods, T.Quality, Drywite and Portman Finance who will be offering advice and promotions.

The first open day will be held on Sunday 4th March with the second planned for Sunday 21st October.

Call KFE on 01778 380448 or email sales@kfeltd.co.uk to book a free place.

UK'S MOST TAKEAWAY-FRIENDLY CAR NAMED

The Kia Sportage has been named as the car that best fits the UK's needs for consuming takeaway meals, according to a survey by leasing specialist LeaseCar.

With a generous dashboard, four cup holders and a spacious footwell, the Kia Sportage can fit 23 Big Macs or 29 medium cokes, while still having space for 27 ketchup sachets.

The BMW 3 Series, which can hold 19 Signature Burgers and 11 Costa Grande cups, came second while the Nissan Qashqai polled third with 16 servings of medium fries along with 24 tomato sauce sachets.

The research considered a number of popular car models and assessed features such as the number of cup holders, dashboard depth and width, size of door pockets and whether they had trays and leather interior.

While the Kia Sportage was found to be the best allrounder, many other popular cars were found to have their own perks for different takeaway fans. For instance, if you're liable to spill your food, the leather interior of the BMW 3 series might be a better fit. And if the door pocket is your favourite place to stash your food, then the sizeable door pockets of the Fiat 500 would be a better choice.

The research also revealed how almost two-thirds (60%) of Brits find themselves eating in their cars at least once a month, while four out of 10 drivers admit to occasionally eating while on the move.

DIARY DATE

THE FISH FRYING & FAST FOOD SHOW 2018 WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE NAEC IN WARWICKSHIRE ON SUNDAY 7TH OCTOBER

HOPKINS SCOOP SALES RAISE £500 FOR CHARITY

Hopkins has helped raise £500 for The Fishermen's Mission after donating £2 from the sale of every portion chip scoop last year.

The money raised will go to help the 63,000 working and retired fishermen in the UK as well as families of fishermen who have been killed, injured or have been survivors of fishing boat accidents.

Hopkins portion chip scoops can be bought via its online shop or by calling the spares department on 0113 257 7934. Available in three different sizes - large 14oz portion scoop, medium 10oz portion scoop and small 6oz portion scoop - they are the brain child of Lesley Graves and Des Anastasiou from Burton Road Chippy in Lincoln who realised they were losing £300 a week on serving too large portions of chips. The bespoke chip scoops provide standard portion sizes to customers increasing margins and reducing waste.



WEBSITE HELPS PREPARE FOR SOFT DRINKS LEVY

Britvic has launched a new website to help shops prepare for the Soft Drinks Levy due to come into effect on 6th April.

As well as explaining the levy and why it's being introduced, www.sensationaldrinks.com includes a profit calculator so friers can work out the new retail selling price in order to maintain their current margin on the soft drinks they serve.

Friers can also find out how changing their range and optimising Britvic's sugar free offer can offset the effects of the levy.

As from Friday 6th April, drinks with over 5g sugar per 100ml will go up by 18p per litre, while those with 8g of sugar or more per 100ml will increase by 24p per litre. This means a 330ml can at the mid levy will see a 7p increase while the same can with the high levy applied will go up by 10p. Pure fruit juices and milk-based products are excluded from the levy.

Friers are being encouraged to follow the spirit of the levy and create price differentials between high sugar and low sugar drinks. Staff should also be educated on the products and facts in order to help nudge customers in the right direction.

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Scotland's Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham wants the plastic straw to be banned across Scotland by the end of 2019

The amount in pounds raised by The Fish Works in Largs on behalf of the families of two fishermen lost when their boat Nancy Glen sank off the West Coast of Scotland

ICELANDIC MONKFISH FISHERY GAINS MSC ACCREDITATION

The first MSC certified monkfish will soon be available to UK fish and chip shops after the Iceland Sustainable Fisheries (ISF) monkfish fishery gained certification.

It is the only fishery for this species to be certified and is the eighth occasion where ISF have been the first to have a new species certified in the MSC program.

The UK is the most important market for monkfish, taking over 60% of the export and about 70% of the total export is sold as fresh (tails).

Kristinn Hjálmarsson, project manager of ISF, says: "We are proud that monkfish is the latest addition to our MSC certified fisheries. The catch quantity is not much - only 853 tons this fishing year - which makes the cost of certification expensive per ton. However, that does not change the fact that we want to be sustainable. Size doesn't matter and neither does quantity. Hopefully, consumers will appreciate the effort to bring large and small quantity species from sustainable sources to their plate."

HUSBAND & WIFE CHIP SHOP BOSSES DISQUALIFIED

The husband and wife directors of a fish and chip franchise in Morden, London, have been disqualified from acting as company directors for seven years after failing to record all of their cash takings and under-declaring their VAT.

Tuncay and Leyla Saglam, who set up Mr Cod in 2008, owed more than £545,000 in arrears of VAT, PAYE and National Insurance Contributions, and Corporation Tax by the time the takeaway went into liquidation in 2016.

The disqualifications follow collaboration between the Insolvency Service and HMRC whose investigations established that the pair caused or allowed the company to submit inaccurate statutory VAT returns by the deliberate suppression of sales income being to their benefit.

Commenting on the disqualification, Lawrence Zussman, deputy head of investigations with the Insolvency Service said: "The periods of these disqualifications sends a clear message to other company directors that tax abuse of any kind, particularly when it comes to suppression of cash takings by directors will not be tolerated."

Mr Cod operates a number of fish and chip franchises in South East England specialising in fish and chicken. It was launched in 1979 by John Brewer, a previous director of Kentucky Fried Chicken.

CHIPPY FIRST TO BE FINED FOR FAILING TO DISPLAY HYGIENE RATING

A Belfast fish and chip shop is the first business in Northern Ireland to be prosecuted for failing to display its food hygiene rating.

Café Fish in Lisburn Road has been fined £250 and ordered to pay £120 legal costs for failure to display a valid food hygiene rating sticker.

At the time of the offence the premises was rated one, indicating "major improvement necessary" to comply with the food hygiene requirements.

Officers from Belfast City Council visited Café Fish on a number of occasions and repeatedly advised the owner of the need to display the rating before instigating legal proceedings.

Food hygiene ratings are awarded to food businesses following inspections by district council food safety officers. The ratings reflect the hygiene conditions found at the premises at the time of inspection. A rating of 0 means urgent improvement is necessary, with five meaning food hygiene standards are very good.

A valid rating must be displayed by law at or near all entrances to a food premises where it can be readily seen and easily read by customers before they enter the establishment when open for business.

Welcoming the fine, Mark O'Neill, senior food safety advisor at the Food Standards Agency, said: "This ruling sends a clear message to businesses that if they fail to display their food hygiene rating action will be taken, whether that be the serving of a fixed penalty notice or prosecution in a court of law."



The display of hygiene ratings is about helping consumers to make informed choices about where they eat. By failing to display their rating food businesses are breaking the law."

Café Fish now has a hygiene rating of four and the respective rating sticker is now being displayed.

RESTAURANT CONVICTED FOR BLOCKING SEWERS WITH FAT

A Shrewsbury restaurant has been prosecuted for blocking sewers with fat, oil and grease.

SCE Catering, trading as Saffron Cottage in Ford, had been pouring used cooking fat down the drain and into the sewer where it coagulated and caused the blockage. This resulted in the sewer overflowing into a local watercourse and causing a pollution.

Water company Severn Trent visited the premises on several occasions, and sent various letters, asking for grease traps to be installed and warning of the consequences, but the owners didn't comply.

Saffron Cottage pleaded guilty to the case brought against it by Severn Trent and has been fined a total of £9,266 at Telford Magistrates' Court.

This is only the third time such a case that has been brought in the UK and the second by Severn Trent to be successful.

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The American dream



Grosvenor Fish Bar in Norwich has struck the right balance, offering value for money, a warm welcome and a menu that satisfies both traditional fish and chip lovers and those looking for something different

While many in the fish and chip trade are born into the business, for Duane Dibartolomeo, a marketeer from New York, it was a chance meeting while in the Big Apple that had him hooked on fish and chips.

Meeting Christian Motta, whose parents

With Christian's parents forced out of retirement to run the business after the previous tenants ran it into the ground, Duane saw an opportunity. He comments: "I thought it would be a great project, just fix it up and sell it. I thought it would take a

For example, it still has a traditional fish and chip shop feel from the outside with its wooden shopfront, while inside wood and metal combine to give it a modern, industrial feel. It's downstairs where the real difference - and uniqueness of this place - is obvious.

"The customers appreciate the fact they have more choices but at the same time they can still get what they've always ordered."

owned Grosvenor Fish Bar in Norwich, Christian extended an invitation for Duane to visit when he was in the UK next time.

"I'd never heard of Norwich, I didn't even know where it was," says Duane, "but I went and I loved it, it's such a beautiful city and the people are so genuine."

few years to build up, but we fixed it up and people accepted us and it was everything we hoped it would be but didn't think would happen, but it did happen."

Six years on and it's a thriving chippy, unrecognisable in many respects to the shop the pair took over but with an air of familiarity.

With no windows, the pair have created a air raid style bunker for customers to take shelter in once they have placed their order at the till. "It is really unique and we get a lot of comments from customers who say they've never eaten anywhere like it. It stands us out, I guess," says Duane.



The biggest change, however, has been to the menu and it's this that is pulling in customers from all demographics. While customers can still order traditional fish and chips - which is what Christian's parents built the shop's success on - the pair have added modern twists in the form of a Waco Taco, which combines spicy steamed cod with salsa, lettuce and cheese, Bass with Sass, a crispy sea bass fillet wrap, and Looney Toony, tuna steak in a roll with lettuce and wasabi

the tacos. Yes, okay, cod and haddock are still our most popular items but, when you think about it, if you have a family or a party of six or eight not everyone wants cod and chips. There are so many different dietary concerns these days, so it helps to have these other things for people to choose between. The mackerel is doing really well, it's a strong taste so whereas the white fish is very mild, to have something so flavoursome is welcome. It also has a certain healthy reputation with

costs more money than fine, but customers know the main core is a fair price."

As well as forging links with the locals, Duane's also hit it off with the pub across the road and the owner allows Grosvenor to deliver food to its punters while enjoying a pint, something which Duane estimates adds about 15% to the shop's annual sales.

With Duane and Christian's efforts having doubled the shop's turnover since taking it over, Duane admits it wasn't an

"We don't want to be posh, we want to be what people think of when they go to a chip shop, just with a few more options."

mayo. There's even a Big Mack, a crispy mackerel fillet in a roll.

"We sort of kept the original menu but added to it," explains Duane. "We don't have pizzas or kebabs, so it's nothing too different to what customers had been used to, we just added different types of fish to what Christian's dad had been selling and cooked it in a different way. The customers appreciate the fact they have more choices but at the same time they can still get what they've always ordered."

What's made the menu really work for this area is the fact Duane has tapped into what the younger generation demand and what the high street is offering - tacos, wraps and burgers - and applied that thinking to fish, all the time still offering products that can be eaten on the go or taken back to the office.

"Customers are buying the wraps and

the Omega in there, people like that."

With Duane at the helm, customers are guaranteed a warm welcome - in fact he greets every one at the door - but it's not just his New York hospitality that's winning customers over, it's also the fact this place offers excellent value for money. While medium cod and chips sets customers back around £6.50, there's also an extensive specials menu which starts at £3.00 and never goes above £6.50. One of the most popular is it's five quid squid.

Duane adds: "We don't want to be posh, we want to be what people think of when they go to a chip shop, just with a few more options."

"We did sell halibut at one point, but it just kept going up in price - it went up to about £14 and we just couldn't do it. We want to keep satisfying what people think they will get at a fish and chip shop, at a fair price. And if we do have something that

instant uplift, adding: "Everything takes a little bit of time, but people here are really in to new things, they came in and saw what we were doing and little by little trade's been going up and up and up."

"I think as long as you have your core offering and keep true to that, it can't hurt to add things and experiment, don't be scared of that. We've done lots of things that didn't work but those that have gone well we've put on the menu."

As well as the customers, Duane and Christian have managed to satisfy their biggest critic, Christian's dad as Duane concludes: "His dad was like 'no you don't need a credit card machine, you don't need this, you don't need that'. He literally said no to everything, And now he comes in and says he's so glad we never listened to him. He's a big man for saying he likes our changes and admitting he was wrong!"

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Compact soft serve machine is Carpigiani's smallest yet

Carpigiani has launched its smallest ever soft serve ice cream machine.

The 161 Series has a footprint of just 300mm x 630mm x 850 mm (w/d/h) and includes a non-pasteurising model at under £5,500 and a self-pasteurising model at less than £6,500.

Despite its compact size, the 161 is able to produce up to 15kg per hour of soft serve ice cream or frozen yoghurt from an easy to fill, 5-litre tank. What's more it uses air cooled technology, which means the unit can be positioned directly next to another appliance, delivering even greater space efficiency on a limited countertop.

The Series also benefits from a stainless-steel counter top design, multifunctional display, standard 13-amp plug-and-go operation and remote monitoring and diagnostic software. The self pasteurising model has the added benefit of a 42 day cleaning cycle.

Carpigiani 01432 346 018 www.carpigiani.co.uk



Pep up your ice cream with Peach Melba

Ideal for shops looking to refresh their menus ready for the summer is New Forest Ice Cream's new Peach Melba Clotted Cream Ice Cream.

Combining a clotted cream base with real raspberry pieces and a juicy peach ripple, the new flavour is free from artificial colours and flavourings, is nut free and suitable for vegetarians.

Available in 4ltr and 4.75ltr catering tubs, Peach Melba Clotted Cream can be served in a cone, a tub or alongside desserts.

A percentage of the sales from Peach Melba Clotted Cream Ice Cream is being donated to New Forest Trust, a conservation charity set up to protect The New Forest.

New Forest Ice Cream 01590 647611 www.newforesticecream.com



FriFri offers more choice with free-standing fryers

FriFri has added a twin-tank, free-standing fryer to each of its Super Easy, Basic + and Vision ranges, capable of producing over 60kg of chips or fried food per hour.

All feature adaptive cooking technology which automatically adjusts the cooking time to suit batch quantity, virtually eliminating the risk of human error. LiftFri basket lifts can be specified to lower and raise the baskets automatically at the beginning and end of the cooking program.

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Activated charcoal colours food and drink

With black coloured food and drink making a big statement at the moment, whether it's batter, ice cream or pizza crusts, KitchenLab UK has launched Activated Charcoal Powder

Made by heating organic coconut shells to extremely high temperatures until they are carbonised, the charcoal powder has no flavour, odour or aftertaste so will have no detrimental effect on food or drink. It is reported to have certain health benefits, however, as it traps toxins and chemicals, preventing them from being absorbed by the body.

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THE VOICE



Join us

Nick Miller calls for shops to join Millers on its journey as the newly crowned winners of Fish & Chip Shop of the Year 2018

When we think back to the chilly morning we left for the National Fish & Chip Awards from Haxby, it's hard to describe how we were feeling as a family. From the moment that our names were called out as the winners of the Fish & Chip Shop of the Year Award we were absolutely overwhelmed and, quite honestly, we still are!

From the messages of congratulations from our industry friends and regular customers, to a flurry of national media coverage, to new customers travelling hundreds of miles to visit us, the last few weeks have been such a whirlwind. There are so many people to thank who have helped and encouraged us on our journey to the 2018 awards, but we think that the best way we can show our gratitude is by doing our industry proud as ambassadors and delivering on the promises that we made to the judges, our customers and to ourselves.

The Millers of today is a very different shop

than it was a few years ago, and there is no reason why more shops can't also transform the way they run, and realise their biggest ambitions, too. It is our aim to roll up our sleeves and make sure that we work tirelessly to encourage more shops to see their potential and to begin their journey to the awards.

One of our biggest priorities is making sure that we spread the word about the awards and the fantastic work we all, as shops and wider industry, put in to keep pushing ourselves and to build a strong future.

As in previous years, the awards ceremony was incredible - not least as so many previous winners came back to mark their 30th year. It was so inspiring to hear about the great work being delivered by shops the length and breadth of the country, and that's the story we want to play our part in telling.

We are absolutely honoured to join those previous winners in holding this prestigious

title. As many of them have noted in their columns for this magazine, quality and consistency are at the heart of delivering the highest standards in both product and service. We believe it's our job to not only continue to uphold these standards in our own shop, but to support others in doing so, and make sure that consumers here and overseas are left in no doubt that our industry is one to be proud of.

One of the key ways we intend to achieve this is by continuing to use video content and the power of social media as a key platform to reach a bigger audience than ever before throughout this year and beyond.

We have already been approached by documentary makers in Germany and Japan, so it's looking like there's going to be a lot going on for us to film! We would love for you to join us on our adventures throughout the year on our Millers YouTube channel and we promise that we'll keep you posted every step of the way.

Congratulations to our winners!

Well Done!
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Award **1ST PLACE**



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Award **2ND PLACE**



ANDREW HILLIER, HARBOURSIDE FISH & CHIPS

Drywite Young Fish Frier of the Year
Award **3RD PLACE**



MISTER C'S

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Veggie-might

As the vegetarian market flexes its muscles, fish and chip shops are beginning to offer new and exciting products to cater for this growing sector

According to a Mori report there are now more than half a million vegans and 1.14 million vegetarians in the UK, while the number of flexitarians - those opting for vegetarian or vegan options a few times a week - is also growing, with one in three saying they avoid meat 'most of the time'.

It's a trend that is very clear in retail

"Clearly many customers visit fish and chip shops to buy fish and chips or chicken and chips, or something similar, but very often within a group or a family there will be someone who is vegan or vegetarian."

Coopers Fish Bar in Coventry is one of the growing number of fish and chip shops which has shifted from simply "dabbling"

in the odd option to introducing a dedicated vegetarian menu. Owner Basi Basra has seen a sharp rise in sales, commenting: "I always had vegetarian options on the menu," says Basi, "but I was doing it in a little pan at the back of the shop and the customer would have to wait as the demand just wasn't there to dedicate a pan

Top Tip

Always check for hidden ingredients. Many gravies, for example, are made using beef, chicken or fish stock

with supermarkets dedicating more aisle space to meat and dairy free produce. But it's not only confined to retail, Just Eat reported a 987% increase in demand for vegetarian food across its partner restaurants in 2017 with a third now offering plant-based options on their menus.

With attitudes changing, is it possible for the fish and chip shop market to better cater for this growing market? Gordon Lauder, MD of frozen food distributor Central Foods, thinks so.

"With demand for vegan and vegetarian items growing, it makes good commercial sense for fish and chip shop owners to offer a good selection of non-meat items.

SPICE UP YOUR OFFERING WITH NEW VEGGIE PUKKA PIE

Launched just in time for British Pie Week (5th to 11th March) is Pukka's new veggie pie.

Veggie Tikka Masala with Chickpea and Spinach has been created to give a tastier choice for the sizeable and growing group of consumers that are embracing a meat free diet.

The pie, which has Vegetarian Society approval, includes a filling of chickpea and spinach cooked in a medium spiced Tikka Masala sauce encased in Pukka's signature light and flaky golden puff pastry case. It is distinguished from the rest of the range with a crimped lid and grey foil.

The launch is supported with marketing materials including A4 posters and window clingers.

Pukka Pies 0116 264 4004 www.pukkapies.co.uk

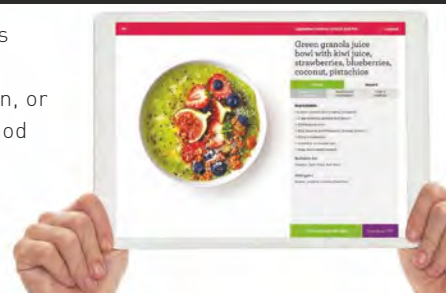


SOWING THE SEEDS FOR MENU IDEAS

Vegetarian Express, the UK's first and only dedicated plant-based foodservice business, has created the Seedbank, an online recipe service.

The extensive recipe collection can be filtered by meal occasion, world flavour inspiration, or main ingredient for example, and each dish features a full ingredient list and detailed method of preparation. Recipes can be downloaded and have been fully analysed nutritionally with allergen and diet sensitivities listed alongside. Everything from grab and go quick meals to fine dining dishes are included.

Vegetarian Express 01923 249714 www.vegetarianexpress.co.uk



on the range to vegetarian food.

"Where we are in Coventry we get a lot of students and they were asking more and more for vegetarian options or asking how we cook our food. The demand was there, so I thought let's do it properly."

Sourcing quality products such as soya burgers, halloumi burgers and vegetarian

added to its vegetarian option recently is Hird's Family Fisheries in Halifax, West Yorkshire. While things like halloumi, pineapple fritters and mac and cheese have been on the menu for a while, owner Adam Hird is experimenting with some signature dishes such as his Five a Day - five deep fried vegetables available individually for £1.60 or together for £2.50.

Looking at expanding the vegetarian offering, Millers is working on a vegetarian curry sauce and a halloumi burger. Nick adds: "We're fully embracing the vegetarian options now and looking what else we can do so that if there is a member of a family who is vegetarian, they can all enjoy a meal out together at Millers."

Top Tip

Don't assume that all drinks are vegetarian. Many wines and beers are not, as they use finings from animal ingredients.

sausages, dedicating a pan on the range and using separate utensils, it's taken Basi some time to get used to the new routine, adding: "It's not always ideal having to keep a pan free just for vegetarians as there are some shifts where we don't get any orders, but if that's the case I can cook chips in it."

The menu, which is promoted in the window, is proving popular and on a Friday night Coopers can get up to 20 vegetarian orders with the soya burger its best seller. Basi adds: "Having the vegetarians keeps the shop busier, it's driving custom and that increased trade is now making it easier to offer the vegetarian options."

Another shop which has

"We have found it is a growing market and there's more and more demand for vegetarian dishes. But it's not just vegetarians which are choosing these dishes, we find that customers are enjoying trying something different and new. And it's great for us too as we make better margins on the vegetables than the fish."

Using a dedicated pan on his three pan range for the veggie dishes, Adam has found most of the vegetarian dishes are suitable for the shop's gluten free customers as well, which helps him tap into another market at the same time.

At Millers in Haxby, York, its vegetarian menu evolved from offering gluten free options, as Nick explains: "We cook in beef dripping but when we started offering gluten free we added a vegetable oil pan as we found the liquid oil easier to manage as it wasn't solidified, so we didn't have to wait as long for it to heat up. We then found a lot of customers were asking for the vegetarian chips and it's developed from there really."

Again, it's not just vegetarians that are buying the meat free options, with many customers asking for the veggie items but cooked in beef dripping. Nick adds: "We give our customers all the information, tell them what we sell and how we cook it and then it's up to them to decide what they want to eat."

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Face your finances

Ian Cass, managing director at business support organisation Forum of Private Business, encourages shop owners to get closer to their finances

How competitive is it to set up a small business in today's climate?

It's never been easy to set one up, but when you're in the service industry it's even more difficult. The costs generally for small business owners - in terms of both money and time - have been getting a lot greater in recent years. You've got to consider additional things nowadays like the Living Wage and auto enrolment for pensions, while HMRC is looking at moving tax all digitally, so there are so many more things taking an owner/operator away from what they should be doing, which is running and developing their business.

How likely or unlikely is a small business to succeed today?

We know that the first three years are critical and, if a business can get through that, it's off to a great start. Generally speaking though, about 80% of entrepreneurs starting a business fail in the first 18 months and 50% of start-ups fail after operating for four years.

Why is the failure rate so high?

Firstly, it's not as easy as many people think to open and run their own business and, secondly, consecutive governments are placing more and more burdens on SME's while taking away some of the rewards that were there. For example, when you start out in business you

don't always know how much to pay yourself as you don't know how much is going to come in. What you used to be able to do was, at the end of the year if the business had done well, take a dividend and you would get a tax break on it, but the government closed the window on that. So there doesn't seem to be a lot of reward for displaying entrepreneurial spirit at the moment but an awful lot of burden being placed on small businesses.

What is the solution?

The government needs to get closer to the small business community. It treats all businesses as one size fits all and the reality is that small business makes up about 99% of British businesses in the economy and we have different issues that we face and different opportunities. One of the main ones is that the majority of us are owner/operated so the person that opens the business tends to be the person that deals with everything. Big businesses, on the other hand, have legal departments and HR teams so a lot of the changes the government make don't have much impact, but for small businesses those changes can have a huge impact.

What can a small businesses owner, like a fish and chip shop operator, do to get a good foothold?

The key is to get your research done at the start,

you honestly can't do enough research. Get your pricing right, be cheeky and talk to other chip shops to find out what they are doing. Look at the prices others are charging and know who you are going to be selling to. If you're near an office and you've got people going past on a Friday lunchtime, they are the people you want to be marketing to. You can't just go in, open up and expect everything to go well these days.

You mentioned pricing, how important is it that fish and chip shops get this right?

It's vital. You've got to be sure you're covering all your costs because, at the end of the day, you are in this to make a living, you're not a charity. It's surprising how a lot of people miss the small things. Say, for example, you don't allow for the wooden forks, that 20p profit suddenly becomes 15p. The number of people I see setting up small businesses that are surviving but not making anything is startling.

What costs need to be taken into account?

Business rates and rentals, capital equipment, decorating, staff, all items involved in the production process, so your cooking oil, fish, paper for wrapping, bags, everything should be written down. We call it COGS - cost of goods and services. If you're not sure of a price, overestimate it and allow yourself a margin. Even once you've done

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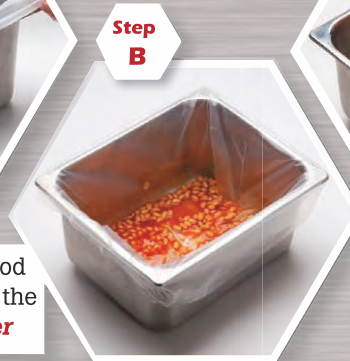
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that, add in a 5% contingency to allow for a mistake. Then make sure those numbers stack up. It's a lot easier to set your prices slightly too high and then reduce them than it is to set them too low and realise you didn't allow for a couple of costs. If you do then start trading and you find business is flying and you can buy in bigger quantities which brings the price down, fine, you've got a margin there that you can play with and you can start offering deals. There's nothing worse than underestimating things, your margin being tiny and, before you know it, you're not making anything.

How important is it for shop owners to be aware of cash flow?

It's so important as the life blood to the business is cash flow. There are some business owners that are not very close to that, they leave it all to the accountant, and I'm a great believer you should have a level of expertise so you can see your profit and loss, you can see downturns and upturns in trade. You've got to understand your books to be in control of your business. You can actually then start getting quite sophisticated in your business as you know when you've got peak people through your door and you know when you might want to get more in. If Friday and Saturday are fine but you've got a couple of nights a week that are a bit slow you don't want to be running a special offer on a Friday but you might on a quiet Wednesday. It just puts you in control.

What advice would you offer to help fish and chip shops stay in control of their cash flow?

Firstly, I would say don't try and deal with it completely on your own, so get a good accountant. If you can't afford an accountant,

look for a local bookkeeper. And then I would say keep a set of books yourself for eight or nine months. This is something I was told to do when I started up in business and, yes, it takes up time, but it means you have an understanding of what your accountant is talking about. And that gives you control over your business. There are some really good computer programmes available that can help you (HMRC is trying to get everyone to go digital anyway), but if you can do some of it yourself you'll understand the money that's going through the business and, because that is your main area of control, that's how you'll spot a problem should one arise.

How do you advise shops deal with VAT

If you're annual turnover is over £85,000 then you'll need to be VAT registered. If you've been paid the VAT, you're going to get charged it. There's no escape from it. In essence we are tax collectors for the government. If you put aside 16% of your taxable turnover, when the tax bill comes in, it's there. There's no point thinking there's loads of money coming in because some of that belongs to the government. It's not yours in the first place and that's how shop owners need to look at it. And, of course, build VAT into your pricing at the start - it should be one of the COGS I mentioned earlier.

Where can businesses get help with matters to do with tax?

Again, a good accountant, but I would also say speak to HMRC. A lot of people avoid them like the plague but they are the best experts in the whole area of tax. And, remember, if you are doing something wrong HMRC is going to see it - especially

with the move to digital tax - so don't be afraid to ask for help, they will make sure you get it right from the start.

You've talked a lot about digital tax, what is it and will it be a good thing?

The government wants business-related transactions to be recorded digitally so everyone will have their own tax record online and will be able to see in real time where they are in terms of their VAT return - and eventually income tax and national insurance too. It means there should be no surprises. If they get it right it could be very good as it would mean you would be able to do a lot of the work yourself rather than relying on an accountant, so you may be able to cut that cost out.

There were a lot of scare stories initially with businesses thinking there were being asked to do a quarterly tax return when it was actually a quarterly report, which if you're doing your VAT it's the same information, so it's very easy to give that information. The government is currently asking small businesses to get involved in a test to make sure it gets it right.

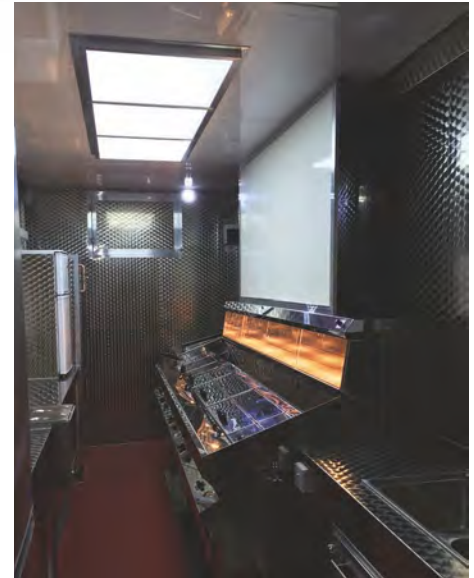
Do you have any final advice?

Be part of a community and get a support network around you. Think about joining a local trade association, you might even want to join the Forum, but get involved. Opening a fish and chip shop is hard work and when times are hard, there's nothing better than asking someone in the trade what they are doing. Even go and say hello to the other traders in your area and see how they are doing. Don't be isolated.

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Maintenance on mobiles



This month Paul Newbold talks about the importance of maintaining your mobile fish and chip van

With any business regular maintenance is needed for everything to run smoothly. If you have decided to run your own mobile fish and chip van then congratulations and welcome to the wonderful world of mobile frying, and hello to all existing mobile operators.

There are some amazing opportunities for you to look into. From village rounds to festivals and weddings, the possibilities are endless. The events available to these vans seem to be multiplying by the week. So, now we will talk about the importance of maintenance to look after the equipment that earns you thousands.

You may find the escalating demand for your product overshadow the thought for maintenance. With the increasing popularity for your route it is important to consider at what point do we need to maintain.

The key to having a successful business is to be vigilant of your equipment on a daily basis. A mobile fish and chip van is similar to a motor vehicle in the fact that it needs regular service intervals to help give you the best service.

You would not want to turn up to a pre booked wedding and face a potential bad

review because, for example, your generator battery was flat, someone has forgotten to refuel the generator or you have not had the range serviced!

The best way to organise your mobile fish and chip van is to have a simple maintenance/check list so at a glance so you are prepped to carry out the job as required. Here are some examples of some of the check lists we would apply:

Generator – On every generator we would check the oil on a daily basis, most certainly every week. Most generators

have a good long life. Always remember to check the consumption of electricity from your van/trailer and do not overload your generator.

LPG equipment on vehicle – It is law that you must have your LPG equipment tested and certified every year. There is also a misconception that because your LPG equipment is tested you've had your equipment serviced, this is not the case. You should have your LPG equipment serviced, minimum every six months. This is a very simple service in most cases and

All gas equipment used for catering purposes, including mobile and street food traders, must be installed, inspected and tested annually by a gas safe engineer

require a main services every 500 hours (although do please check your own generator service manual). If you oil service the generator and do the valve clearances, generally these will give you

could save you hundreds of pounds in lost trade in a saved breakdown.

For more in depth detail, please contact Paul Newbold at Profry on 01778342915 or visit www.profryltd.uk

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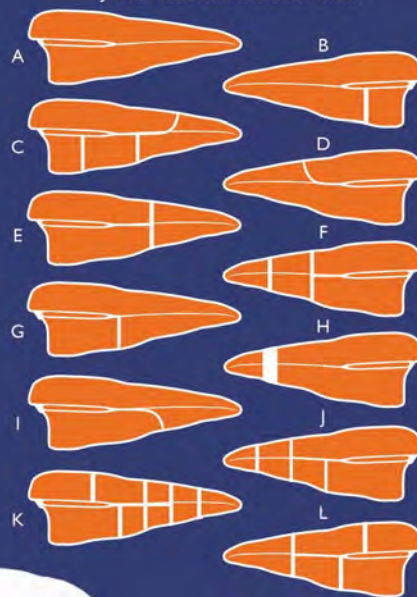
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Make plans

With it looking inevitable that the price of frozen at sea fillets will rise this year, fish and chip shop operators could be well-placed to plan for the increases now

It's a familiar story now, fish prices are on the increase. And that's despite good weather in January meaning catches have actually been pretty favourable - in fact most suppliers are reporting increased volumes for cod and haddock compared to the same month last year. However, prices it seems in January were far higher than the average for the whole of 2017.

Pushing up prices is the increased global demand for fish as we all continue to eat more, in particular China which is seeing a 20% rise in consumption. What's more, with demand for H&G (headed and gutted) increasing, more vessels are moving over to this format, putting pressure on the availability of frozen at sea fillets.

So, short of putting up prices, what can fish and chip shop operators do? Craig Maw, owner of Kingfisher Fish & Chips in Plymouth, recommends shops anticipate the price increase now and start making

plans, something he's doing by looking at the viability of pushing the lesser-known species of fish he has on the menu.

While Craig knows these won't be huge sellers he's hoping it will help take the pressure off his flagship species while creating awareness of other fish varieties. "I think it will be a challenge to sway people, they are normally programmed to choose cod or haddock, but we're looking at promoting MSC saith a bit more," explains Craig. "We already have it on the menu, but we're thinking about putting it on as a special."

Marketed at a price point lower than Kingfisher's cod and chips and giving away goujon samples to waiting customers is how Craig plans to win people over. "Saith is a member of the cod family so it fillets exactly the same way and fries exactly the same way. I know it's going to be hard as it's not as brilliant white as cod or haddock can be, but it's actually a beautiful fish and with your

eyes closed you'll be hard pushed to notice the difference."

Another shop owner who has seen prices increase is Nigel Hodgson of Hodgson's Chippy in Lancaster. He too advises operators to prepare now and recommends friers focus on their supply and also their prep, starting with sourcing a good FAS vessel whose quality you are very happy with. "Sometimes a block of fish may be a few pounds more expensive, yet you may get a better yield from this," Nigel explains. He also recommends keeping a check on the yield daily whilst preparing the fish to ensure consistent quantity and keeping knives sharp to maximise the yield.

Nigel also advocates introducing a "Lighter-Bite" mini fish meal which will give more profit and help to reduce the volume of fish being bought. "We sell a Mini-Fish meal, which includes half a fish, a half portion of chips plus a side of the customer's choice for £3.75," Nigel



explains. "A regular fish, chips and side is charged out at £6.35, therefore we are making £7.50 instead of the usual £6.35."

While Simon Walsh, owner of Tynemouth-based Longsands, is yet to experience a price rise, saying his prices have remained pretty consistent over the past year, he says one option available to friers is to bulk buy their fish. This means friers can budget their prices and retain that price for those months that prices are high. "I know some suppliers are more than happy to hold onto the fish for you if you pay for it upfront. They've made their money and the fish is sold, while you're guaranteed a stable price," Simon adds.

And, finally, don't overlook the possibility of using fresh fish. It's not always as expensive as people might think, something Garry Rosser, owner of The Scallop Shell in Bath, often finds. He comments: "I'm buying fresh hake at about £6-7 a kilo right now, which is cheaper than what I'm paying for frozen cod, and it's an absolutely beautiful fish. It's times like these we should remember we are an island and we have over 40 different species of fish to choose from. Frozen isn't the only choice."

If the latest Skippers Catch report from M&J Seafood is anything to go by this could be a viable option for some as it predicts good availability for fresh cod and haddock over the next two to three months due to improved weather and Norway having a strong fishing fleet. It anticipates prices could even ease, however, it warns the cod catch size will be on a larger side which means better price reductions will be on the larger portions.

And, of course, make sure your prices reflect what you're putting out, with Garry reminding friers: "It's not just the price of fish that's rising, all our costs are. So, providing we don't compromise on quality, we should be pricing fish and chips accordingly. People won't pay a premium price for rubbish, but they will pay a premium price for quality."

CREATE A BUZZ WITH SALMON AND DILL FISH CAKES



Over the last few years, customers have become savvier and more educated about the food they eat. Words like local, homemade, seasonal and sustainable have become the norm in the foodservice industry.

Nigel Hodgson, owner of Hodgson's Chippy in Lancaster, comments: "We can engage with our customers simply by using these "food movement buzzwords" on the specials board or a "landings board" if it's solely for fish. This is also a great way to help distinguish your brand and demonstrate to your customers that you have additional cooking skills to that of fish frying, but also that you are aware of what fish, vegetables or herbs are in season and you have the ability to use them."

A great way of introducing seasonal ingredients to the specials board, says Nigel, is to make your own fish cakes. "One of my most favoured fish cakes on the specials board is salmon and dill. Not only are these great to advertise when the salmon is fresh and in season, but you can also boast its low-fat and rich Omega-3 content."

Below is Nigel's recipe for the salmon and dill fish cake, which typically costs between 25-32p to make.

Ingredients

500g potato flake
250g fresh red salmon
250g haddock or cod
4 tsp tomato ketchup
2 tsp English mustard
2 heaped tbsp chopped parsley
2 heaped tbsp chopped dill
2 eggs beaten
Japanese breadcrumbs
Sea salt
Ground black pepper

Method

- Mix the potato flake mix with water to create a "tacky" crumb mixture.
- Finely chop the haddock or cod and the salmon before adding to the crumb mixture.
- Add in the chopped parsley and dill, then 1 teaspoon of sea salt and 1 teaspoon of ground black pepper.
- Add the tomato ketchup, followed by the English mustard and mix thoroughly to create a "tacky" mixture. Add more water/potato flake if required.
- Portion the mixture using weighing scales, an ice-cream scoop or a 4oz pea-cup.
- Mould into shape using a burger press.
- Place on a tray and freeze.
- Once frozen, flour, egg wash and breadcrumb and re-freeze.
- Cooking from frozen typically takes six minutes at 160°C.

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***Fry Magazine* went along to taste test a new cheese sauce from Ceres aimed at helping shops drive sales and, ultimately, profits**

more customers through the door. Well, actually, what we want are more customers through the door more often and spending more! But who would have thought a new cheese sauce could be part of the solution?

Developed by Ceres, Cheese Sauce Base Mix starts out as a powder that you add to water, heat and mix. Drop in your grated cheese of choice and it melts to form a thick, glossy, liquid cheese. It's literally as simple as that and, in fact, it's quicker to make than curry sauce or gravy and has the added bonus of not

requiring any specialist equipment.

Our chef for the day was Nick Damurakis, owner of Athena's in Bexhill-on-Sea, who demonstrated not just how easy Ceres's Cheese Sauce Base Mix is to use, but also its versatility. Pouring it over chips and pasta and on to burgers and hot dogs, each one Nick tailored further with additional ingredients - adding bacon to the chips for example, hash browns to the burgers and crispy onion bits to the hot dogs.

The verdict

Not only does the cheese sauce taste really creamy, but it has a silky, glossy texture that stays liquid even when it's cooled down. This means with every bite of chips, or every mouthful of burger, the customer tastes the cheese sauce. It's this attribute that makes it particularly good for dipping and stands up perfectly for shops offering delivery.

For us, the real beauty of this product,

There are over 700 different named cheeses produced in Britain

however, is the fact it works with any meltable cheese. You could use the cheapest, mildest cheddar from your local wholesaler and still get a great result. Alternatively, if you want to ramp it up, you could use a mature cheddar and get a really powerful punch. If you fancy a stronger colour, use a red Leicester, or if you work with local suppliers and you want to retain that provenance, you still can. Either way, it means shops can easily add a homemade item to their menu, giving something to really market. And that's what it's all about, bringing customer in through the door with a new, exciting product.

Stelios Theocharous, MD at Ceres, comments: "We're all about developing products that are quick and easy to use that any shop can add to their menu and which will ultimately drive greater sales and greater profits by being innovative.

"Our Cheese Sauce Base Mix answers the question "how do you get young people in who are bored of everything we offer now?". Cheese is a great addition to the menu, there's a real honesty about it and it's experiencing a real resurgence at the moment. It's an all rounder.

"Shops need to think about the generation of tomorrow and where we are going to be in ten years' time. Cheesy chips, sausages, burgers etc, all appeal to young kids. We have to think that we are here to serve the generation of tomorrow today, that way we have a business."

Ceres Cheese Sauce Base Mix is available in 10 x 500g pouches. One pouch makes 4kg of final melted cheese sauce. Once made up, the cheese sauce can be held in a bain marie or chilled and microwaved on demand.

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Towngate Fisheries	NFFF Quality Award 'Champion'
Malt and Anchor	Best Newcomer
Krispies	Marketing Innovation Award
Mark Drummond	The Outstanding Achievement Award by Seafish

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Name: Alan McGilm
Job title: Co-owner, director and head coach
At: The Real Food Cafe, Tyndrum, Perthshire
Age: 58

Nominated by:

Sarah Heward, co-owner of The Real Food Cafe, who says: "I am nominating Alan, my husband and business partner, because he has worked away in the background supporting me in all areas of this business over the past seven years, in particular dealing with the most difficult problems and people. He has helped me save the company from imminent collapse, including negotiating key deals with a new bank to help prevent it, successfully fight a protracted case in employment tribunal, deal with crippling theft and deception and helped me overcome employee illness and my dad's death. He deals with the complaints that I don't have the bandwidth and patience to deal with, in a professional and patient manner. And he has successfully coached me (no mean feat) and developed our team and organisation, introducing tools and techniques to better

equip ourselves to be the best we can be, something he works hard at in the business, week in, week out."

How long have you worked at The Real Food Cafe?

I've worked here for seven years. Sarah invited me to become a director in June 2010. I initially split my time evenly between my business coaching practice and the Café, but have gradually shifted all of my attention to running the Café with Sarah. I have little or no previous experience in catering or hospitality, other than 18 months' work in a bar as a student. The majority of my experience is in professional services with the most relevant being business strategy, change, growth, coaching and operational improvement.

What are your responsibilities?

I direct and manage most non-operational aspects of the Café including finance, planning, operational improvement and business change. In addition, I take care of most of the people and team matters, including management development, team-building, discipline and performance management, and I direct all HR activity. This is the most demanding and time consuming part of my responsibilities since we have a core team of over 20 people, rising to almost 30 in high season.

What's your favourite part of the job?

Problem solving and coaching, which are at the core of my skills and experience and are things I've always found come naturally. My management and leadership style is firmly based on a 'coaching' approach - "ask vs tell". As a result, we now have a very committed senior team, who understand how to use the basic tools to help themselves and their team members work towards continually improving their performance and taking pride in it!

What's your least favourite part of the job?

Having to roll my sleeves up and actually do the work I used to delegate (in a previous life). I'm also used to being the key decision-maker and I must be a bit of a handful for Sarah to work with! It can sometimes be difficult to relax and leave things behind us at work.

What is it that you like about working at The Real Food Cafe?

I love working with great people - our team and our customers. I love being part of (and contributing to) the success of a top-class business. There is no shortage of problems to solve.

How do you feel about being nominated as an unsung hero?

I'm very flattered! Without doubt, Sarah is the most talented (and sometimes awkward) entrepreneur I have ever worked with and I feel lucky to have met her and privileged to be part of such a special business.

Have you got someone in your team who often goes under the radar but without whom your business would not be the same? If you would like to see them featured here, e-mail helen@fry-online.co.uk with their name and why you would like to put them forward.





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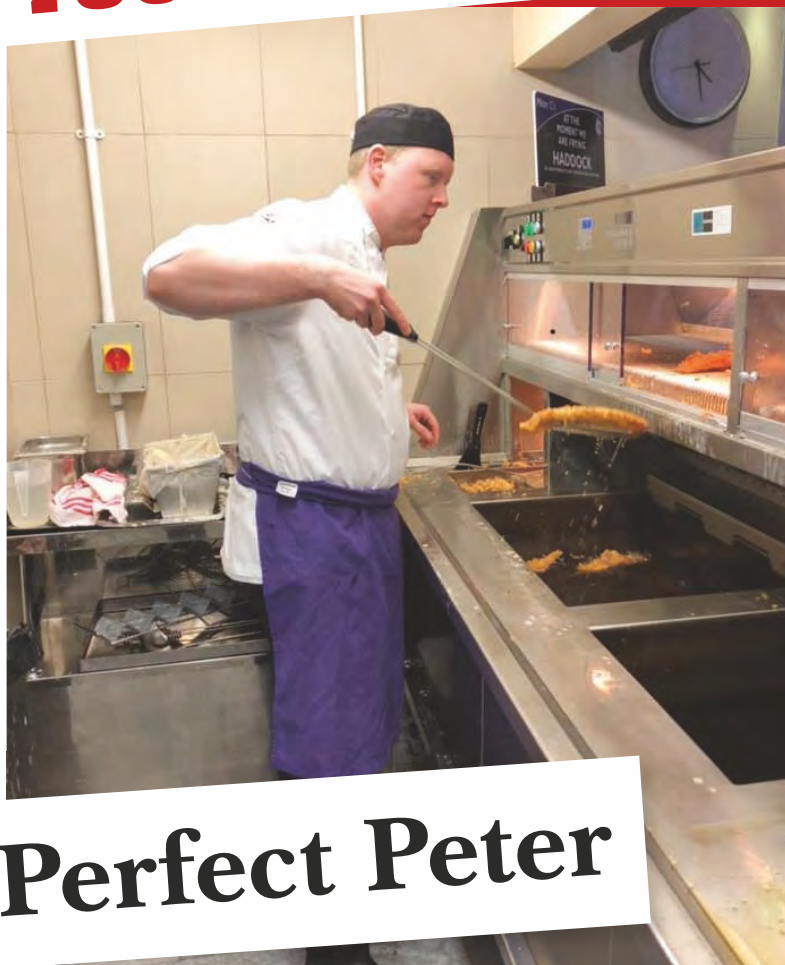
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Perfect Peter



Peter Calvert of Mister C's in Selby, North Yorkshire, takes on his first column for *Fry Magazine* after being crowned Drywite Young Fish Frier of the Year 2018

Winning the Drywite Young Fish Frier of the Year Award last month was just surreal. I remember being congratulated left, right, and centre, but it was nothing compared to returning home. First of all we had the journey back from London and we were, without doubt, the loudest on the train, drinking Champagne, cheering and just trying to let it sink in that I had won it.

When we got back to Selby we went straight to Mister C's and as I walked in all the staff and customers in the restaurant were applauding and cheering.

The next morning I expected it to be a dream but when I looked to see my winner's frying jacket I realised it wasn't. Seeing the Malcolm Lee trophy on top of the range with my name on it just made it even better. So many people were congratulating me from customers in the shop to other award winners to shop owners, which was amazing, I've been offered so much support for the coming year which is fantastic and will be invaluable.

Entering the competition has massively changed my perspective of the industry and has given me a much greater knowledge of

how things work. I've had the opportunity to network and connect with so many people who have been a massive inspiration to me. Talk to them about how their shops operate and what different methods they use has been a great eye-opener into how varied and unique each shop is. The competition has also given me a lot more confidence in what I do in the shop, knowing that if I can go through months of judging and become the Drywite Young Fish Frier of the Year, I can achieve anything but at the same time understanding the judge's comments and feedback after each round has enabled me to improve on areas that I could have done better so it's given me the chance to push myself further.

I wouldn't have been able to achieve all this, however, if it wasn't for Mark and Denise Corbally as well as Danny and Amy Horsley, the owners of Mister C's, so I would like to thank them for teaching, helping and supporting me all the way through the competition. From pointing out areas that I had to work on and improve, to pushing me to make sure all my work was at the highest possible standard.

The staff of Mister C's have also been the absolute best team of people that anyone could ask for and I am so grateful for their support. And finally, I want to thank my family. My mum has been a constant source of encouragement during the hardest times while my dad has been a fresh set of eyes helping to spot things I didn't originally see.

I've already completed my first duty, attending the Friar's Pride exhibition a few days ago. I was on the Drywite stand, explaining to other young friers why it's an amazing opportunity. Next, I will be at the Best Practice Day on 19th March and the Introduction Day on 4th April at the NFFF training academy in Leeds, so if anyone wants to see how the competition works they really should attend. I will also be attending the third round of judging for the 2019 competition, so that will be a great opportunity to help encourage future finalists at that stage.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the competition, please do contact me at the shop or via the Young Fish Friers website and I'll do my best to encourage you to enter!

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Foodservice



Fish, chip hooray

The 30th anniversary National Fish & Chip Awards took place in London last month celebrating everything that's great about fish and chips

Flicking through the brochure before this year's ceremony began provided a remarkable reminder of some of the competition's past winners - many looked a lot younger...and thinner back then but more importantly many are still in fish and chips today, doing what they love most. And a great number of them were at the awards that day including Toff's, which won the inaugural award 30 years ago.

In those 30 years the industry has grown considerably, it's had its challenges and it will continue to have more, no doubt. But as Seafish CEO Marcus Coleman took to the stage it was reassuring to hear that the industry is in good shape with consumption at its highest level since records began.

According to the latest Seafish data, fish and chip servings across UK foodservice are up 9% from the previous year, totalling just over 190 million portions a year (that's about 3.7m portions a week), with over half (103m) served up from independent fish and chip shops.

"And just when you thought your Fridays couldn't get any busier," said Marcus, "I'm here to tell you that Friday servings in independent fish and chip shops have experienced strong growth compared to two years ago. Up 2%. Now more than a quarter of your sales are on a Friday."

On that positive note it was time to welcome back Nigel Barden who has been the host four years in a row now. And while all eyes were on the takeaway award, the category that caught my attention this year was Best Restaurant with six incredible finalists. The calibre was so high, I can't imagine what it was like being a judge on that one. But there could only be one winner and the award went to The Pelican in Barnstaple, North Devon. Interestingly enough Best Newcomer went to a shop in the same region - Malt & Anchor in Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

As Nigel finally reached the Fish & Chip Shop of the Year Award it was probably one of

the most tense moments in the award's history when last year's second place Burton Road was announced as runners-up again this time, paving the way for Miller's in Haxby, York, to take the crown for 2018.

I think Philip Blakeman of Blakemans Sausages said it all when he presented Staff Training & Development Award to Penaluna's in Wales, adding: "Without good people in our business, we don't have a business."

In that room there was certainly a wealth of good people, people who make our industry great. And as Millers appeared on This Morning and BBC Radio 2 the following day, the fish and chips fever that was felt just 24 hours before was beginning to spread across the country, raising the profile of the industry as a whole. Which is what the awards ultimately aim to achieve.

Well done to everyone that entered, made the finals and won, and if you weren't at the awards, here's a run-down of all the winners.

DEDICATED Staff



Pictured left to right: Lee Penaluna, Philip Blakeman, Ellie Penaluna, John Penaluna and Nigel Barden.

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Lee Penaluna
Owner and Managing Director of
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2018 NATIONAL FISH & CHIP AWARDS



FISH & CHIP SHOP OF THE YEAR

Winner – Millers Fish & Chips, Haxby, York



FISH & CHIP SHOP OF THE YEAR

2nd place – Burton Road Chippy, Lincoln, Lincolnshire



INDEPENDENT FISH AND CHIP RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

The Pelican, Barnstaple, Devon

«

FISH & CHIP SHOP OF THE YEAR

3rd place – Harbourside Fish & Chips, Plymouth Devon

2018 NATIONAL FISH AND CHIP AWARDS



OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Mark Drummond, Towngate Fisheries, Idle, Bradford



BEST MOBILE FISH AND CHIP OPERATOR AWARD

Starchip Enterprise, Worcestershire



FROM FIELD TO FRIER AWARD

Mister C's, Selby, North Yorkshire



BEST FOODSERVICE OPERATOR AWARD

The Marcia Inn, Bishopthorpe, York, North Yorkshire



GOOD CATCH – THE SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD AWARD

Fish City, Belfast



HEALTHY EATING FISH AND CHIPS AWARD

Fish City, Belfast



MARKETING INNOVATION AWARD

Krispies Fish & Chips, Exmouth, Devon

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L-R Sam Parry, Peter Calvert, Charlie Collins, Magda Ganea & Andrew Hillier



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The Pelican, Barnstaple, Devon



FISH & CHIP FRIDAY - THE SCHOOL MEAL EDUCATION AWARD

Catering Services - North Tyneside Council



BEST NEWCOMER AWARD

Malt & Anchor, Cirencester, Gloucestershire



NFFF QUALITY AWARD CHAMPION AWARD

Towngate Fisheries, Idle, Bradford



STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Penaluna's Famous Fish & Chips, Hirwaun, Rhondda Cynon Taf



DRYWITE YOUNG FISH FRIER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Peter Calvert, Mister C's, Selby, North Yorkshire



BEST MULTIPLE FISH AND CHIP OPERATOR AWARD

The Good Catch, Cheshire, Manchester & Merseyside

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

In the spotlight showcases the latest developments in shops across the UK. From a complete refurbishment to an unusual species of fish on the menu, if it's new we'll cover it, hopefully providing inspiration and new ideas for everyone



Scotrange helps bring about change at Tron Cafe

Located in the small village of Tullibody near Stirling, Tron Cafe is a traditional fish and chip shop that hasn't changed much since Donald Drysdale opened it with his wife in 1971. That is until recently when daughter Gemma took to the helm.

First working in the shop bagging rolls when she was just nine, some 21 years later she could see it needed bringing up-to-date. Slowly convincing her dad too, last year they replaced the shopfront, then changed the tables and chairs and redecorated, which left only the range untouched.

Gemma comments: "My dad put in a new two pan range when he first took on the shop, I remember it cost £3,000 at the time. We've had it serviced and also converted in order to comply with current Gas Safe regulations and insurance requirements, but it was all the original pans.

"After every Colbecks show my dad would come back having spoken to Scotrange and say, "yes, I'm going to change the range", but then he'd think about shutting the shop - which he really hated doing, it didn't shut for anything - and the notion would pass. When we started doing up the shop, the range looked so old fashioned, it didn't fit in with everything and he finally agreed to a new one."

Built to Donald and Gemma's requirements with two pans, three stage filtration, curved glass that opens for easy cleaning, touch sensitive timer controls and LED laser cut Tron Cafe signs, their Scotrange was ready to be

Free chips if Scotland wins Six Nations

A fish and chip shop in Perthshire, Scotland, has pledged free chips to its customers if Scotland wins the 2018 Six Nations Championship.

Alan McColm and Sarah Heward, owners of the Real Food Cafe in Tyndrum, have made the promise of one free portion of chips per person ahead of the tournament kicking off this weekend.

Should Scotland triumph, hungry visitors will be able to claim their free portion from the popular roadside diner on Sunday 18th March between 11am and 8pm. They must simply say "AsOne Team Scotland" at the till.

Scotland last won the tournament in 1999 when there were only Five Nations in the tournament. Rugby fan Alan hopes that this incentive will help supporters get behind the team #AsOne and spur them on to an historic victory.

Alan comments: "Sarah and I are very community-focused and also big rugby fans. We enjoy supporting many local events and organisations, including Oban Lorne Mini-Rugby team, whose shirts carry our logo and who are fuelled on our nutritional fish and chips!

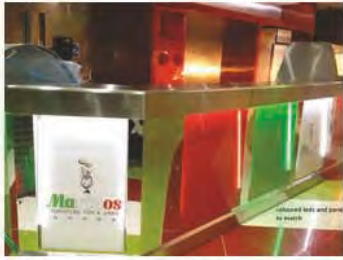
"After playing or watching a game of rugby there's nothing quite like warming up with some great fish and chips, so we thought what better way to celebrate Scotland winning than to share our chips with the nation!"



Blakemans to launch new Cumberland sausage

Staffordshire-based Blakemans is to produce a new Butchers' Select Cumberland sausage following success at a competition celebrating National Sausage Week.

The 80% meat Cumberland sausage took the runner-up prize in the Traditional category despite it being the first time Blakemans has entered an awards event of this kind. It will now go into production and will be available to customers in both chilled and pre-cooked versions.



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Chippy to champion trio of charities

A Lincolnshire-based fish and chip chain is hoping to raise a massive £30,000 for three charities to mark three decades in business.

The Elite Fish & Chip Company, a family-run and award-winning fish and chip business with outlets in Lincoln, Sleaford and Ruskington, has set itself a year to raise the money which will be split between the RAF Association, the RNLI and Sleaford Dementia Support.

Rachel Tweedale, director at the Elite Fish & Chip Company, said: "It was a remarkable achievement for us to raise £10,000 within just ten months for the Royal British Legion in 2016, after choosing it as our charity of the year.

"Two years on we've decided to raise the bar and saw this year as the perfect opportunity to not only make our fundraising target three times as big, but to also increase our efforts by opting to support three charities.

"It's a massive step up from our previous charity work, which is why we're urging our loyal customers to get behind us in any way they can to support these worthy causes."

In other news, The Elite Fish & Chip Company has been named East Midlands Family Business of the Year at the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) Celebrating Small Business Awards 2018.



installed in early January. Sadly, Donald didn't get to experience the new range he had become so excited about as he passed away the day before installation.

"It was such a shock to us all," says Gemma, "but I spoke to the girls in the shop and we all agreed to go ahead with the installation. Dad was so excited about it - and he wouldn't have wanted the shop to be closed for no reason! After it was installed, people were coming in and asking to see the new range as my dad had told everyone about it. It was such a big deal to everyone."

With the shop open for almost two months now, Gemma is confident her dad would have approved, adding: "At first my dad was of the opinion he couldn't see how a new range was going to make such a difference, but it does. We basket fry now and the chips are coming out so much drier and crispier. And the filtration is brilliant. It's much faster than doing it ourselves and the size of the scraps it removes is amazing. Whereas I was dumping oil every week, sometimes twice a week, now it's every couple of weeks. And even then I'm not dumping much, I'm topping up instead."

Grateful to Scotrange for their professionalism, help and understanding, Gemma adds: "I can't thank Scotrange enough. Nothing has been a problem for them at all. I needed help one night and they phoned me back at 10.30pm and talked me through what I was doing wrong and they worked from 5am until 11pm at night to get us back open after the install. My dad would have been so pleased."

Scotrange 01592 775269 www.scotrange.co.uk



Busy Oban fish and chip shop up for sale

Chartered surveyors DM Hall has a busy fish and chip shop for sale in Oban, Argyll, on the west coast of Scotland.

With a guide price of £550,000, George Street Restaurant is a 32 seater restaurant with adjacent takeaway, both of which were fully refurbished in 2013.

Described as being immaculately presented, the shop is in a busy trading position next to the waterfront and ferry terminal. The 25m² restaurant has a fully glazed frontage with a ground floor providing 12 covers and a 20m² mezzanine level offers a further 20 covers. The property details state sales for the year ending 31st March 2017 were £485,719, net of VAT, with "excellent/improving profit margins achieved".

Viewing is strictly by appointment and arrangements can be made by contacting Suzanne Lawrie on 0131 477 6000 or by e-mailing business.sales@dmhall.co.uk

Come fry with me



Deep Blue's fish and chip restaurants in both Palma and Alicante airports are protected from the risk of a range fire by fire suppression systems

Airfoods is a franchise business operating across eight Spanish airports - Alicante, Murcia, Barcelona, Madrid, Palma de Mallorca, Ibiza, Almería and Fuerteventura - hosting a range of world-renowned brands including Costa Coffee and Subway.

After conducting a thorough survey of the UK consumer market, Airfoods became aware of the desire from its customers to see high quality fish and chips amongst the selection of establishments already on offer. After researching the best fish and chip businesses in the UK, Airfoods was drawn towards Deep Blue, the Surrey-based operator of 30 takeaways and restaurants. During its investigations, Airfoods discovered that Deep Blue has provided high levels of consistency and efficient, friendly staff - a set of values that Airfoods aligns itself with. Deep Blue's commitment to maintaining high standards is linked to its sourcing of sustainable, good quality produce, placing a great emphasis on sourcing fish from well managed stocks and potatoes from British farms they've had a relationship with for many years.

Airfoods concluded that Deep Blue was guaranteed to be a successful addition to the Airfoods community, and so the two parties successfully entered into their first franchise agreement in Palma Airport, followed 18 months later by a larger unit in Alicante Airport.

Safety when operating in an airport is of paramount importance and the Spanish airport

authority, AENA, has instigated regulations under which Airfoods is required to fit fire suppression systems in order to combat the risk caused directly by frying ranges. This technology is highly effective in tackling the breakout of fire, destroying flames quickly and greatly helping to reduce the damage caused and it uses non-corrosive agents to fight fire, minimising the clean-up required after an incident.

It is widely believed that commercial landlords will soon begin to insist on similar levels of protection for their freehold investments as one in five businesses per year suffer major disruptions due to fire and 80% of these businesses will never reopen after the destruction.

Operators who install fire suppression systems will receive discounts if they purchase the 'Wrapped' insurance policy, a policy designed by the industry, for the industry. Wrapped offers industry specific conditions

that reflect the realities of operational practices within the industry, as well as a range of further features and benefits. For more information about Wrapped or a free no obligation quotation, talk to the Ryan's team today.

For Fire Suppression enquiries, contact 0345 2160300

At both airports, Kiremko frying ranges are in operation, complete with the required fire suppression systems. The quality and technology of Kiremko is recognised throughout Europe and although manufacturing is based in Holland, it has agents representing Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Switzerland and has installed equipment into Poland and Russia. It's Kiremko's knowledge and experience that supported Deep Blue in their international expansion.



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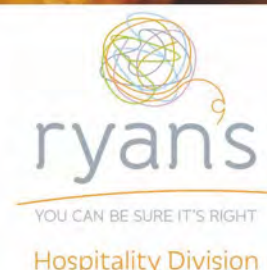
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30 MINUTES WITH...

TIFFANY IRVIN, CO-OWNER, THE FISH WORKS, LARGS, NORTH AYRSHIRE

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What would you like to change in our industry?

Being new to the industry there isn't a lot I would like to change. I haven't known an industry like it, everyone is so friendly and helpful. Our shop has been open since May 2017 (complete novices to fish and chips) and the support and tips we have had from other chip shop owners and agencies has been outstanding. I would like to help promote the understanding that fish and chips is not an 'unhealthy' takeaway and, if eaten as part of a healthy diet, can provide vitamin C, vitamins B6 and B12, some iron, zinc and calcium, as well as iodine, omega-3 fatty acid and dietary fibre.

How did you get into the industry?

I was originally a primary school teacher but took leave to have children and help run my husband's family business, an ice cream shop and sweetie shop on the seafront in Largs. We loved going to visit fish and chip shops as a family on our days off and one day made the decision to open our own one in the location of our sweet shop. We had to save money and plan for five years but, last year, we finally made it happen and it was one of the best decisions we have made.

If you could change jobs with anyone else for the day who would it be?

A top surgeon for the day. I know it would be really stressful but I work well under pressure and would love to do a job that really makes a difference to a person or family. Having the ability to save someone's life must be a gift.

What's your favourite film?

Forrest Gump. It has so many great life lessons in it but it's also just a great movie.

What was the first music single you bought?

Kylie Minogue's The Loco-Motion in 1988. Yes, feel free to laugh, but I was five and I remember being taken to buy the cassette so I could practice my dance moves before going to see her in concert.

Do you have a nickname?

I don't have a nickname - or not one I know about anyway! I'm pretty sure some of The Fish Works team may have called me a dragon when I have a breakdown on a busy day. But we have a great team and they know I appreciate them all so they let my meltdowns slide.

What did you want to be as a child?

A marine biologist right until it came to completing my UCAS form for uni, then I decided to go into software engineering! I'm still not sure what made me change my mind, maybe being 18 and thinking of the salary differences. At least I'm still doing my bit for the oceans by ensuring we use sustainably sourced fish in our shop.

If you could have anyone join your team who would it be?

KFE's Gordon Hillan. The man is a fountain of knowledge and he has been worth his weight in gold to us. I call him anytime we hit a problem or snag and he always has the answer. He has also introduced us to so many great people in the industry and through this we have so many new friends and people who are always here to give us advice.

What's your favourite food?

I feel like I should say fish and chips but I am a steak and chips gal - and you can't beat some pepper sauce!

What sports team do you support?

My husband and two sons support Liverpool so I wouldn't dream of supporting another team.

If you could meet anyone in the world, dead or alive, who would it be and what would you ask them?

Marvin Gaye and I would ask him if there was any chance of him singing Got To Give It Up. It's my all time favourite song and I would love to hear the man himself sing it live.

If you were Prime Minister for a day what's the first thing you would do?

I would definitely try to help small businesses more. Everyday you hear about large companies finding loopholes to avoid paying tax and a multitude of other things, while small local businesses that employ local people and use local suppliers are being dragged over the coals trying to make it all fit.

If you could go back in time what year would you choose?

The early '70s as my sister and I were brought up listening to soul and Motown, so I reckon I would have had the best time.

What question would you like to ask our next "30 minutes with"?

If you could travel anywhere in the world where would you go?





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