

FROM THE CATERFOOD BUYING GROUP

INFUSE

AUTUMN 2025



TURN UP THE HEAT

WARM DRINKS WITH
A BOOZY KICK

GET THE PARTY STARTED

OUR ULTIMATE
CELEBRATION GUIDE

HOW TO FEED GEN Z

WHAT STUDENTS
REALLY WANT

WALDRONS

PÂTISSERIE

Exceptional patisserie handcrafted in the heart of Devon

For over 40 years, our family-run business has been crafting exceptional patisserie by blending rich heritage and history with modern innovation. Our range includes gluten-free and vegan options, low-sugar alternatives and our innovative freezer-to-table products – designed to be served straight from the freezer without compromising on quality or taste. All our products are freeze-thaw stable, perfectly suited to today's diverse tastes and dietary needs.

Experience timeless quality, passion and craftsmanship in every bite.



Party season starts earlier every year and whether you're building set menus for private dining, planning canapés by the hundred, or finding ways to bring a celebratory feel to your daily offering, this issue serves up tips, ideas and expert advice to help you navigate the busy months ahead.

Great menus are built on quality suppliers and this issue, we shine a light on nine Caterfood Buying Group producers flying the flag for incredible British food and drink.

Unleash the potential of the small but mighty frozen pea with our three dishes that prove just how versatile they can be, while the humble crumble gets the star treatment with our three anything-but-ordinary takes on the classic.

Need plant-based ideas that deliver on flavour? Eight chefs share the vegan dishes they love the most. And for those catering to a younger crowd, we look at how Gen Z is reshaping the future of dining in higher education.

Wherever autumn takes you, we hope this issue offers inspiration, advice and delicious food that quietly steals the show.

The Infuse Team x

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**GOOD,
BETTER, BEST**

Embrace cosy season
with our utterly irresistible
trio of crumbles



8

**WE LIKE
TO PARTY**

Celebration season is
go! Read our tips for an
autumn that sparkles



35

**KITCHEN
CHAMPIONS**

Three standout dishes using
every kitchen's ultimate
everyday star: frozen peas



The Hot List

Your guide to everything fresh on the food scene...



Get social

Your go-to food magazine is now live on social media! From behind-the-scenes bites to sizzling chef interviews, scroll-stopping dishes, plus tips fresh from the test kitchen, there's so much more to feast on. Follow us on Instagram for a taste of what's next in food culture. Got something you w/ant to share? We'd love to see your creations! Tag us at [@caterfoodbuyinggroup](#) and use [#yourinfuse](#)



New heights

The incredible Caterfood Buying Group team recently conquered the Three Peaks Challenge, battling extreme weather and incredible heights to raise over £13,000 for Magic Breakfast UK. "A huge thank you and congratulations to the whole team for being true breakfast heroes and making such a powerful impact," says Hanfia Ilyas, Community and Events Manager at Magic Breakfast. "This fantastic sum will provide over 46,500 nutritious breakfasts, helping children and young people start their school day ready to learn." [magicbreakfast.com](#)

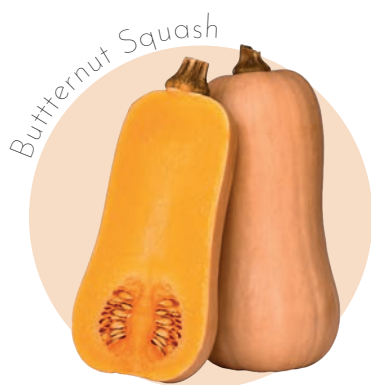
Pure imagination

Looking to elevate your plating game? Imaginative Cuisine offers fresh, vegan products designed to inspire creativity and precision. From Airspuma Culinary Foam to Gastropaint, their range is made for chefs who want to plate with purpose. Already loved by top kitchens across the UK, these incredible products are redefining how food is presented, one purposeful brushstroke at a time. [imaginativecuisine.com](#)



EAT THE SEASON

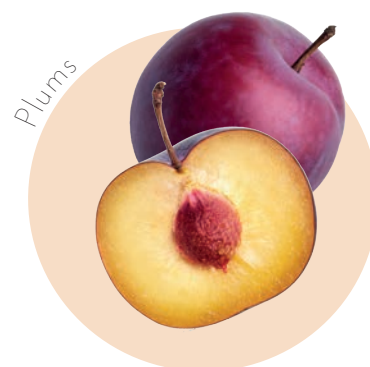
A spotlight on the best of the autumn harvest



Naturally sweet with a smooth, velvety texture, this popular squash lends itself perfectly to hearty seasonal dishes, such as soups, risottos and warm salads. Pair with spices like cinnamon, nutmeg and sage for a hit of autumn comfort.



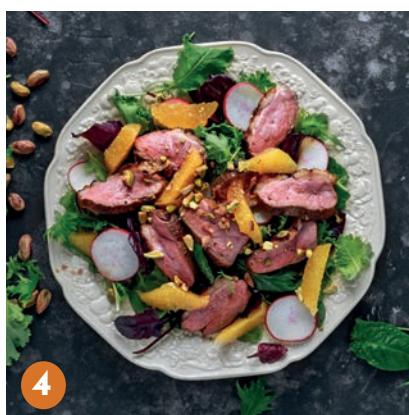
Fresh corn is at its sweetest towards the end of the summer season and it's perhaps at its most delicious when roasted simply on the cob. Smother it with garlic and parsley or chilli and lime for a delicious extra kick.



Tarts, galettes, cobblers, crumbles, pies, pastries, puddings, jams and jellies: there are so many tasty ways to go with this sweet little stone fruit. Try combining plums with ground almonds for an unforgettable crumble cake.

5 ways to use... Gressingham Duck

This succulent showstopper brings star power to any plate. With its crisp skin and bold, gamey flavour it's a chef's favourite for good reason - indulgent, flavour-packed and surprisingly versatile.



Images: Adobe Stock

1. Spicy Vietnamese pho with crispy duck, bean sprouts, soft-boiled egg and fresh mint
2. Duck noodle stir fry with oyster sauce
3. Crispy roast duck with orange and rosemary
4. Duck breast salad with radishes, orange segments and crushed pistachios
5. Confit duck leg with pumpkin risotto

FOOD FIGHT BAGELS

Choose from
seven bagel
flavours in the
New Yorker
Bagels
range



1st

PLAIN BAGEL



APPLE CINNAMON
RAISIN BAGEL

BAGEL
RATING

10

A hole in one!

A New York City staple! This hand-rolled bagel has a glossy, golden crust and a chewy centre that you can't help but sink your teeth into. Try it topped with smooth cream cheese and smoked salmon for a classic combo that always wins.

With a hint of freshly-baked apple pie, this soft, sweet bagel is a comforting autumnal treat. Try it toasted and topped with strips of crispy, streaky bacon for a brilliant brunch or go simple with a schmear of salty butter.

BAGEL
RATING

8

Core blimey!



KITCHEN QUICK-FIRE

Q&A

HOWARD MILTON,
EXECUTIVE CHEF,
RIDLEY HALL

The most rewarding part
of leading a kitchen?

Seeing younger chefs develop, in skill and knowledge, but also in palate development, as the chef's instinct kicks in and they learn tasting and seasoning as a true skill.

An ingredient you can't
live without

Garlic, with shallots coming in close second.

Any trends you're
excited about?

Efficiency, sustainability and eradicating waste – the options now available are, for me, just as interesting as the next food trend on the scene.

Your secret to efficiency

I run a fun, informal kitchen. We work hard and standards never fall, because everyone is happy and wants to be here.

Advice to new chefs

You only get out what you put in. Learning and training is the investment you have to make in order to succeed. It won't happen overnight, and you'll never stop learning or improving, but don't give up! Ask questions, write down as much as possible – an idea you like, a garnish that caught your eye, a half-scribbled recipe made just after service. All of these things will help shape the chef you become. ■

TRENDING NOW

HOT HONEY

'Swicy' flavours are here to warm up the colder months with their moreish sweet-heat. Time to pour hot honey over everything...



STICKY HOT HONEY CHICKEN

Slather crispy fried chicken wings and legs with a warm glaze made from spicy honey, garlic and vinegar. The sticky-sweet coating packs a fiery kick, perfect for festive menus, sharing plates or crowd-pleasing canapés with a bold twist. Guaranteed to please.



HOT HONEY CAMEMBERT WITH STICKY FIGS

Balance the saltiness of an ordinary cheeseboard with the sugary warmth of hot honey. Try it poured over a baked sharing camembert; the unexpected spiciness cuts through the creamy molten centre perfectly. For more cheeseboard tips, turn to p15.



PEPPERONI PIZZA AND HOT HONEY DRIZZLE

Hot honey trickled over a wood-fired pizza adds a bold, surprising twist that's lighting up menus up and down the country. It pairs particularly well with meat, so update reliable favourites such as Hawaiian or classic pepperoni with a sweet, spicy kick.

A close-up, low-angle shot of a rustic, light-colored ceramic bowl filled with thick-cut, golden-brown roasted potatoes. Wisps of white steam rise from the potatoes, suggesting they are hot. The background is softly blurred, showing a traditional roast dinner on a wooden table, including a large roasted meat joint, green vegetables, and a cup of tea or coffee. The lighting is warm and directional, creating a cozy, inviting atmosphere.

Traditional Roast Potatoes
From frozen to fork in 25 mins!

BANNISTERS
YORKSHIRE FAMILY FARM





GET THE PARTY STARTED

From showstopping spreads to standout set menus, here's how to own the festive rush

Welcome to party season! There's never been a better time to turn up the sparkle and serve something celebratory, crowd-pleasing and just a little unexpected. Get your menu right and the festive period becomes more than just busy – it's a golden opportunity to spread joy, build customer loyalty and boost your bottom line.

However, today's party food

expectations are higher than ever. Think luxurious charcuterie boards with serious visual appeal and a growing demand for comforting, nostalgic favourites with dietary inclusivity baked in.

Whether your venue suits a slick set menu for seamless service, a bold à la carte bursting with seasonal flavour, or a groaning grazing table that covers all bases, we've got tips to help your festive offering shine. ►

FEAST

for the eyes

Is there anything more inviting than a long table overflowing with festive favourites?

“Party food is the perfect excuse to graze, mingle and try a bit of everything,” says Jayne Baron, Director at Vol (volauvents.co.uk). “There’s a joy in seeing a beautifully laid-out platter; it invites people in.”

From a catering perspective, a grazing table is also incredibly practical. Party season is full of diverse groups, with different ages, dietary needs, cultural preferences and the occasional fussy eater thrown in. Many elements on a buffet table can be batch cooked, pre-prepped and then clearly labelled with dietary information, allowing guests to build their own dream plate that perfectly suits their tastes and needs.

The ‘grazing craze’ on social media has also had a huge impact on commercial buffets, with aesthetic sharing boards taking centre stage over the traditional bland dips and dry cocktail sausages. Think

The grazing craze on social media has had a huge impact on commercial buffets



artfully-arranged assortments of deli favourites scattered with little luxe touches like smoked almonds or juicy nocellara olives.

However, it’s not all about new crazes – old favourites are trending once again, too. “I love seeing things like devilled eggs, cheese straws and skewers with pickled onions, cheddar and pineapple making a cheeky return,” says Jayne. And while retro favourites will always have a prized place on the buffet table, it’s the new, clever twists on them that make a spread sing. Elevate cheese and pineapple skewers with manchego and pineapple chilli jam or smother cocktail sausages in a sticky mulled wine glaze for something extra. Whether you lean classic or contemporary, the principle is the same: bite-sized food that delivers big flavour is always a winner.

Essential

PARTY FOOD
CHEAT SHEET

1

Ensure your menus can adapt to different group sizes and settings. Consider set menus, sharing platters and finger food options.

2

To manage peak demand, batch cook and freeze items such as sauces, soups, doughs and pastries. You'll thank yourself later.

3

Incorporate little touches of luxury alongside budget-friendly ingredients. For example, combine a root vegetable soup with a drizzle of flavourful truffle oil.

4

Party season is busy. Book any additional staff, equipment and suppliers well in advance.

5

Design a festive menu that uses overlapping ingredients across multiple dishes to cut down on prep time, food waste and storage needs.

6

Build yourself a buffer by incorporating ingredients with longer shelf lives, such as dried fruits, chestnuts and cured meats.

7

Use vacuum-sealed portions or pre-measured containers for sauces, soups, and marinades. This makes them easier to reheat and serve with consistency.

8

Grazing boards and buffet-style set-ups offer high visual impact with less need for service staff. "Don't be afraid of colour on a buffet table," advises Jayne. "Use fresh herbs, edible flowers, jewel-toned beetroot or salmon roe for a vibrant touch."

9

Plant-based options are in higher demand than ever. Ensure your vegan main is just as well-thought through and irresistible as the meat option.

10

Choose dishes that hold well, reheat evenly, and plate consistently. Avoid items that require last-minute frying or fussy plating.

SET THE STANDARD



Don't offer a seasonal set menu? It might be time for a rethink. With the right strategy, a set menu can increase revenue and improve efficiency, all while delivering plenty of perks for both you and your guests.

With fewer dishes to create, your kitchen can become a well-oiled machine, speeding up turn times, reducing waste and refining every plate. Diners also enjoy the quicker turnaround and simpler ordering, especially when it comes to the painful process of splitting

the bill in a larger group.

Set menus let you showcase star dishes and festive favourites, while also giving you the chance to trial exciting new offerings, test bold flavour combinations, and discover potential future hits. Add-ons like wine pairings or an introductory cocktail are brilliant upsell opportunities, and it's easy to build in dishes that cater to a range of dietary needs.

If you find the approach works for you, don't just save it for party season. Roll out a set menu year-round and reap the rewards! ►

A FRESH START



Want to impress diners right from the off? You'll need a starter that's intriguing, enticing and the ideal warm-up for a showstopping main. From the kitchen's perspective, it needs to be quick to prep, easy to plate beautifully, and offer a good margin

Need some inspiration? Have a look at these delicious ideas and trust us – no one will be saving themselves for pudding... ■



1. Cauliflower velouté with roasted hazelnuts and sage
2. Hasselback roast beetroots with tahini and a herb dressing
3. Seared scallops with parsnip purée and pickled apple
4. Chicken liver pâté and pomegranate sprinkles

★★
CATERFOOD
SELECT

sublime scottish salmon



Caterfood Select Farmed Atlantic Frozen Salmon Fillets

These vibrant and perfectly pink Scottish salmon fillets have been specially selected for their superior taste and quality. Deep-skinned and boneless, each fillet is packed fresh (without brine) and frozen, to lock in the natural freshness and flavour. The Caterfood Select salmon offers you a truly fantastic product.

10 x 140g - 170g | 10 x 170-200g | 10 x 200 - 230g

Speak with your Area Sales Manager or Telesales Representative for more information.

CATERFOODBG.CO.UK

*images are for illustrative purposes only



NEW 12-TRAY RING DONUTS

MORE VARIETY. LESS WASTE.

WHY CHOOSE THE 12-TRAY FORMAT?

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PORTION PLANNING**

**MINIMISES WASTE
& OVERSTOCKING**

**IDEAL FOR VIBRANT
DISPLAY COUNTERS**

**FASTER TURNOVER
FRESHER OFFERING**

**EASY MULTI-FLAVOUR
SELECTION**



**FRESH FORMAT.
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Introducing our flexible new 12-tray donut pack – designed for foodservice pros who need choice, speed, and control.

Whether you're managing a café counter or a quick-service outlet, this new format delivers all the flavour you love with none of the excess.

ALSO AVAILABLE IN 24 & 48 CASES



These larger formats are perfect for: Buffets, Large-Scale catering and high traffic outlets.

12 BOX

4250899 Berry White
4250724 Strawjelly Jam
4250719 Nutzilla
4250720 Choc Almighty
4250636 Goldenfry
4251196 Lemon Squeezy

24 BOX

2104886 Nutty Zafari
2104777 Spectaculous
2104776 Berry White
2104798 Caramazing
2104786 Belgiyummy
2104787 Queen V

48 BOX

4250887 Coconutti
4250995 Raspberry Bliss
4250968 Goldenfry
2104797 Strawjelly Jam
2104841 Choc Almighty
2104840 Funfetti 56G
2104781 Spectaculous
2104780 Nutty Zafari
2104778 Berry White
2104792 Nutzilla
2104782 Belgiyummy
2104793 Caramazing
2104791 Queen V
2104779 Crushed Candy
2104790 White
4251032 Pinkie
4251157 Passionista
Lemon Squeezy



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How to build the perfect CHEESEBOARD

Craft a cheeseboard that's as beautiful as it is delicious,
with a balance of bold, creamy, salty and sweet

Feeling Blue

It can be divisive, but a flavourful mould-ripened cheese will add some tang. Stilton is a festive classic, but Gorgonzola, Roquefort and Brinkworth Blue all deliver salty deliciousness.

The Big Cheese

A crowd-pleasing hard cheese is the foundation of any good board, so opt for a generous slab. Try Keens Mature, Cornish Gouda or the iconic Wookey Hole Cave Aged Cheddar.

Freshen Up

Cut through all the creaminess with the addition of something fresh. Plump figs, sticks of celery, a bunch of grapes (pop them in the freezer for extra crispness), apple slices or dried fruit will bring the zing.

TOP TIP

Take cheese out of the fridge an hour before serving to allow its flavour to develop



Soft Spot

Camembert, Bath Soft, Cenarth Brie or a tangy goat's cheese – such as Cerney Pyramid – are all delicious, squidgy soft cheese options.

Going Crackers

To really showcase your cheese, you'll need a good base to work from. A variety of artisan crackers, slices of sourdough or grissini will provide some satisfying substance.

Jam Packed

Chutney offsets heaviness with a welcome hit of spice. Add at least one dollop to your cheeseboard along with something a little more unexpected, such as quince cheese or hot honey.

Crunch Time

For added texture, a scatter of nuts (walnuts, almonds and pistachios are always winners), salty olives or acidic cornichons all provide that much-needed crunch.

HOMEGROWN *Heroes*



To celebrate British Food Fortnight, we're putting the spotlight on nine incredible producers bringing local ingredients and exceptional flavour to the table...

From weird and wonderful New Forest mushrooms to juicy vine-ripened tomatoes grown in East Yorkshire, British produce has never been more vibrant and Caterfood Buying Group's suppliers are leading the charge. In honour of British Food Fortnight, from 26th September to 12th October, we're spotlighting nine incredible producers bringing fresh, seasonal and regional ingredients to menus across the UK.



**HERBS UNLIMITED,
NORTH YORKSHIRE**

herbsunlimited.co.uk

Situated on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales, this family-run farm grows speciality herbs and edible flowers that are often harvested and delivered within 12 hours. Fresh, flavour-filled leaves and vibrant blooms arrive kitchen-ready, adding fragrance, colour and seasonal flair to plates year round.



**BAARDA,
EAST YORKSHIRE**

growcoltd.co.uk

This multi-generational business has been innovating since the 1940s – today, it grows tomatoes and cucumbers in ultra-efficient glasshouses powered by biomass. Crisp, consistent and full of flavour, Baarda's produce is a great fit for chefs looking to champion low-impact, British-grown ingredients. ▶



JOHN PENNY & SONS, LEEDS

@johnpennymeat

Five generations of farming knowledge goes into every cut from John Penny & Sons. A family business based in Yorkshire, the company supplies premium British beef, lamb and pork – reared on their own land and sourced from trusted local farms. This means full traceability, lower food miles and quality that only comes from knowing exactly where your meat is from.

NEW FOREST MUSHROOMS, HAMPSHIRE

newforestmushrooms.co.uk

From lion's mane to shiitake, these wonderfully diverse mushrooms are grown sustainably in the New Forest and picked at their prime for incredible freshness and depth of flavour. Alongside cultivated varieties, a seasonal offering of wild mushrooms and British truffles makes New Forest Mushrooms a standout source for chefs wanting to go beyond the ordinary.



B&F POTATOES, NORTH YORKSHIRE

bfpotatoes.co.uk

This independent family farm grows more than a dozen varieties of potatoes across 1,500 acres. From creamy types perfect for mashing to red potatoes brilliant for jackets, every crop of spuds is grown, graded and packed on-site – with BRC certification and Red Tractor assurance to guarantee quality from field to fork.



SPECIALITY BREADS, KENT

specialitybreads.co.uk

From pillowy focaccia and crisp ciabatta to golden burger buns and seeded rolls, everything at this bakery is handmade in small batches. Using traditional techniques and quality wildfarmed flour, the team hand-shapes each loaf before freezing at peak freshness.



POSKITT CARROTS, EAST YORKSHIRE

poskittcarrots.co.uk

One of the UK's biggest carrot producers, this family-run farm grows more than 50,000 tonnes of them each year – along with pumpkins, parsnips, potatoes and swede. All crops are grown, washed, packed and distributed from a single site, giving full supply chain control and year-round consistency. It's root veg, done brilliantly!

DEVON RUM COMPANY, DEVON

devonrumcompany.com

Blended with soft Devon spring water, Caribbean rums and whole spices, these small-batch, award-winning rums bring rich, golden warmth to drinks menus. Bold but beautifully smooth, they're perfect in cocktails, alcohol-filled desserts or served neat.

The business is also proudly carbon-negative, offsetting its footprint by planting trees in Dartmoor and beyond.



CORNISH SEA SALT, CORNWALL

cornishseasalt.co.uk

Harvested from the mineral-rich, protected waters of the Lizard Peninsula off the Cornish coast, Cornish Sea Salt uses centuries-old techniques to produce hand-finished sea salt flakes. Available in a number of varieties and blends, the brand's salts are known for their clean, crisp flavour that's prized by chefs. ■





GOOD, BETTER, BEST

CRUMBLE

Give the humble crumble a flavour revamp to create three
standout stars for your autumn dessert menu



APPLE AND BLACKBERRY CRUMBLE

Serves 8 **Prep** 25 mins **Cook** 40 mins

Whether you're making the most of late-summer berries or raiding the freezer, this crumble is an autumn superstar. Our brown butter topping takes the flavour up a notch, so it's worth taking the time to include this step.

- 1kg Bramley apples, peeled, cored and roughly chopped
- 300g fresh or frozen blackberries
- 75g maple syrup
- ½ a lemon, juiced
- 2 whole star anise
- 150g unsalted butter
- 200g plain flour
- 100g rolled oats
- 100g soft brown sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch of sea salt

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (Gas Mark 4). Grease your baking dish with butter.
2. Combine the apples, blackberries, maple syrup, lemon juice and star anise in a saucepan and cook gently over a medium heat for 5 to 7 minutes, until the fruit begins to soften and release its juices. Remove the star anise, then transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish and spread out evenly.
3. In a small saucepan, melt the butter over a medium heat. Cook for 5 to 6 minutes, swirling occasionally, until the milk solids turn golden brown and it has

a nutty aroma. Remove from the heat and leave to cool slightly.

4. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, oats, sugar, cinnamon and salt. Pour in the cooled brown butter and stir with a fork until clumps form and the mixture resembles moist, golden rubble.

5. Sprinkle the crumble mixture over the fruit, but don't press it down – keeping it loose will give you maximum crunch. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until golden and bubbling.

6. Serve warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or double cream. ▶

MANGO, CARDAMOM & COCONUT CRUMBLE

Serves 8 **Prep** 20 mins **Cook** 30 mins

This sunshine-inspired, vegan pudding puts a tropical twist on a classic crumble, combining sweet mangoes, fragrant cardamom and nutty toasted coconut.

- 1.2 kg fresh mango chunks
- Caramelised mango slices from 1 large ripe mango
- 1 lime, zest only
- 6 cardamom pods, seeds crushed
- 100g Caterfood Select desiccated coconut
- 200g plain flour
- 150g plant-based butter
- 100g demerara sugar

- 1.** Preheat the oven to 180°C (Gas Mark 4). Grease a medium-sized baking dish with plant-based butter.
- 2.** In a large bowl, combine the mango chunks, lime zest and cardamom pods. Gently fold in half of the caramelised mango slices. Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish and spread out evenly.
- 3.** In a separate bowl, mix the

coconut, flour and sugar together. Add the butter and rub in with your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

- 4.** Sprinkle the crumble topping evenly over the fruit, then bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until golden and bubbling at the edges.

- 5.** Serve warm with plant-based ice cream or coconut yoghurt.

NUTS FOR FLAVOUR

Toast your coconut in a dry pan for 2-3 minutes to add extra sweetness and crunch

BETTER

PEAR, GINGER & WALNUT CRUMBLE

Serves 8 Prep 40 mins Cook 35 mins

This cosy dessert brings together the mellow sweetness of ripe pears, the gentle heat of ginger and the earthy richness of walnuts.

For the caramelised walnuts:

- 200g Caterfood Select halved walnuts
- 100g granulated sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch of sea salt

For the caramelised pears:

- 30g unsalted butter
- 2 tbsp soft brown sugar
- 2 conference pears, halved

For the fruit base:

- 1.5kg conference pears, peeled and roughly chopped
- 100g stem ginger, finely chopped
- 1 lemon, zest only
- 100ml maple syrup

For the topping:

- 200g rolled oats
- 150g Caterfood Select walnut pieces
- 150g Caterfood Select ground almonds
- 100g soft brown sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 150g cold coconut oil

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (Gas Mark 4). Grease a medium-sized baking dish with butter.

2. Toast the walnut halves in a dry pan over a medium heat, stirring constantly, for 2 to 3 minutes. Tip into a bowl and set aside.

3. Place the pan back on the heat then add the sugar, cinnamon, salt and 2 tablespoons of cold water. Stir until the sugar has dissolved and the mixture starts to bubble.

4. Add the toasted walnuts to the pan and stir to coat. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the liquid thickens and starts to crystallise.

Meanwhile, line a baking tray with baking paper or a silicone mat. Scrape the walnuts onto the tray. Leave to cool completely.

5. Melt the butter in a griddle pan over a medium heat. Add the pear halves and sprinkle over the soft brown sugar. Cook for 5-7 minutes, turning occasionally, until soft, golden and caramelised, and then set aside.

6. In a large mixing bowl, combine the chopped conference pears, stem ginger, lemon zest, and maple syrup. Transfer the mixture to the baking dish.

7. To make the crumble topping, mix together the oats, chopped walnuts, ground almonds, sugar and cinnamon. Add the coconut oil and rub everything together with your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

8. Scatter the crumble topping over the fruit without pressing down, then arrange the caramelised pear halves on top.

9. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until golden and bubbling.

10. Finish with a handful of the caramelised walnuts and serve warm with crème anglaise. ■





WARM UP YOUR ROASTS THIS SEASON WITH COLMAN'S THE NATION'S FAVOURITE MUSTARD*



AS THE NIGHTS DRAW IN AND ROASTS TAKE CENTRE STAGE, GIVE YOUR CUSTOMERS THE COMFORTING, BOLD FLAVOUR THEY CRAVE WITH COLMAN'S MUSTARD – THE PERFECT PARTNER TO WINTER WARMERS.



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Food
Solutions

*IRI Sales Out Aggregated UK Wholesaler Values sales L52w November 2022

Three months *in food*

Serving up essential culinary
dates for your diary

SEPTEMBER

1st-30th

SOURDOUGH SEPTEMBER

Crumpets, pancakes, pizza bases and scones – there's so much more to sourdough than a simple loaf.

1st-7th

ZERO WASTE WEEK

Set some ambitious targets for your kitchen to reduce landfill and get the most out of produce.

9th-10th

SPECIALITY & FINE FOOD FAIR

Olympia London

specialityandfinefoodfairs.co.uk

26th

WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING

By Macmillan Cancer Support

Offer your support to one of the biggest fundraising events of the year by hosting a coffee morning, serving cakes or volunteering your kitchen equipment to help to raise funds.

30th Sept - 1st Oct

STREET FOOD BUSINESS EXPO

Excel London

streetfoodexpo.co.uk

30th Sept - 1st Oct

CAFFÈ CULTURE 2025

Business Design Centre, London

caffecultureshow.com

OCTOBER

1st-7th

NATIONAL VEGETARIAN WEEK

Why not put veg front and centre of your menu this week? Squash risottos and spricy root veg casseroles are both seasonal and delicious.

1st

CATER EXPO

Hosted by Turner Price

Connexin Live Arena

caterexpo.co.uk/cater-expo-hull

8th

HARVEST FOOD SHOW

Leonardo Hotel, Southampton

harvestfinefoods.co.uk

14th

EAT 2025

With Thomas Ridley Foodservice

Newmarket Racecourse

thomasridley.co.uk/eat-trade-show

25th

WORLD PASTA DAY

Carb load your menu with a delicious variety of pasta shapes, or get hands-on with a pasta-making workshop. Delizioso!

31st

HALLOWEEN

Make the most of spooky season with frightfully fun foodie creations: eyeball spaghetti, ghost meringues and pumpkin spice everything.

NOVEMBER

1st

WORLD VEGAN DAY

Give your dishes a vegan overhaul. Chickpeas, lentils, beans and mushrooms are all magnificent meaty substitutes. Turn the page for more plant-based ideas from chefs.

5th

BONFIRE NIGHT

Toffee apples, hot dogs and warming drinks sum up the Bonfire Night mood. Turn to p44 for comforting hot beverage inspiration.

14th

WORLD DIABETES DAY

With diet playing a key role in both prevention and management of diabetes, this awareness day offers an opportunity to create balanced, low-sugar dishes that don't compromise on flavour or presentation.

27th-30th

GOOD FOOD SHOW WINTER

NEC Birmingham

goodfoodshow.com/winter

27th

THANKSGIVING

The American holiday marks the season's first festive feast, so why not embrace it with classic dishes like pumpkin pie or candied yams for a true taste of the US of A? ■



THE POWER (AND JOY) OF PLANTS

From comfort food to crowd-pleasers, eight chefs celebrate the vegan dishes they love most

Veganism has come a long way in recent years and so have customer expectations. Where once a token plant-based dish was enough to satiate customer appetite, today's diners are looking for thoughtful, varied menus packed with good-looking dishes with serious flavour. Whether it's for health, sustainability, ethics or simple curiosity, more people than ever are embracing a meat-free lifestyle, and it's essential that foodservice providers keep pace.

The best plant-based dishes are a celebration of great ingredients cooked well. Plates with personality and soul, where the vegan label is secondary to its excellent flavour. From clever twists on the classics to veg-led creations with bold spice or standout texture, the latest raft of meat-free dishes is proving plants can more than hold their own.

In this issue, eight chefs share the vegan dishes they love to cook and eat. Say hello to plant-based cooking with purpose and plenty of joy...



BEN CHAPLINHEAD CHEF
THE BLACK FRIAR, SALFORD

"At The Black Friar, we're especially proud of our Aubergine Chouka Curry, brand new to

our summer menu. The smoked baby aubergine brings a rich, earthy depth that we love working with and the pomegranate yoghurt cuts through with a fresh, tangy lift. Paired with crispy puri bread, it's bold, vibrant and everything you want a summer vegan dish to be. We created it to celebrate seasonal flavours in a way that feels comforting but still bright. It's been a joy to see our guests respond so warmly to it and it's quickly become a team favourite."

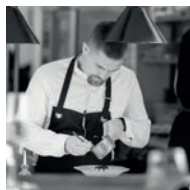
theblackfriarsalford.co.uk

SUHEL AHMEDDIRECTOR
TOWER TANDOOR, LONDON

"Our Tadka Dal has been on the menu at Tower Tandoori since the 1970s. It's one of those timeless

dishes that's quietly evolved without ever losing its roots. We cook it with slow-simmered lentils, tempered with garlic, cumin and Kashmiri chilli in rich vegetable ghee, so it's fully vegan but bursting with flavour. I've always felt that great vegan food doesn't need to imitate meat, it just needs to be honest and delicious. This dish is exactly that. I've grown up around it, and it still brings comfort to me every time I eat it."

towertandoori.co.uk

GREG LAMBERTFOOD DIRECTOR
SIX ROOFTOP, GATESHEAD

"My current favourite vegan dish features crispy portobello mushrooms, sticky ginger, chilli rice

and steamed greens. It's something I make at home occasionally when I want something fresh but comforting.

I love it because it ticks all the boxes for me. The mushrooms are battered, so they have a crispy bite to them, but inside they are soft, 'meaty' and moist. The rice is clean and fragrant from the pickled ginger and fermented chilli. The greens add some extra crunch and freshness. It takes less than 20 minutes to put together and it's super low cost, too. I've been making this version for about a year now, since I had a dish very similar at one of my favourite restaurants near where I live, Omni." sixbaltic.com

EBONY WILLIAMSVEGAN INFLUENCER
EAT WITH EBS

"My go-to dish that I have veganised has to be Bajan sweetbread. A true taste of home that instantly

takes me back to family gatherings and Christmas mornings in Barbados. Rich with coconut, warm spices and a hint of sweetness, it's soft yet satisfyingly dense. It also pairs lovely with a cup of tea in the morning or as an after-dinner treat. I love sharing it to show that Caribbean food can be vegan-friendly without losing its soul. When making it in my kitchen in London, that first bite feels like being in Barbados!" [@eatwithEbs](https://twitter.com/eatwithEbs)

HOWARD MILTONEXECUTIVE HEAD CHEF
RIDLEY HALL

"Our version of Imam biyaldi is a light but hearty lunch that's absolutely delicious. It's an

aubergine that's scored, seasoned with salt, cumin and cinnamon and roasted. The pulp is scraped out, chopped and mixed with a slow-cooked mixture of red onion, tomato and red pepper, seasoned with Aleppo chilli, pomegranate molasses, red wine vinegar, fresh mint and coriander, stuffed back into the skins and baked, then served with simple flatbreads and a cucumber and mint salad. I love it because there's nothing there that's not meant to be and it's not a vegan version of another dish." ridley.cam.ac.uk

NATALIE JEWELLEXPORT MANAGER AND
EXECUTIVE CHEF

"My favourite vegan dish to eat and cook especially during the autumn, is a smoked tofu stew

with sautéed seasonable mushrooms and a plant based demi-glace. With seasonal products and organic tofu you know exactly what you're eating and the ingredients are good for your body and soul. It's the perfect taste of the season as it's earthy and warm. For me, a dish with a beautiful sauce that I can eat with a spoon and artisan bread is unbeatable."

BOBBY GEETHACHEF AND FOUNDER
KERALA CANTEN

"Our jackfruit biriyani isn't just a dish; it's a personal passion project. Working with Head Chef Abdullah,

we were inspired by the rich aromatic biryanis of South India and we wanted a plant-based version that truly shines. To achieve this, we use tender, young jackfruit – a staple in Kerala, and a fruit we had many trees of in my ancestral home. It masterfully mimics the texture of meat, absorbing complex layers of spice and fragrance from the basmati rice, fresh herbs, coconut yoghurt and vegan ghee. It's now a beloved staple on our menu and testament to how incredibly vibrant and satisfying vegan cuisine can be." keralacanteen.com

NEIL MOORE-MCCARTHYDEVELOPMENT CHEF
TURNER PRICE

"As a Scotsman living in Yorkshire, one of the biggest vegan challenges I find is fish and chips. My take?

Tempura battered banana blossom. Served with ultra crunch 18mm skin-on fries, mushy peas and chunky homemade tartare sauce, of course." ■



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TASTE MAKERS



Every issue we shine a light on the people powering the Caterfood Buying Group's success. In this edition, we're chatting to a Warehouse Supervisor at South Lincs who values teamwork above anything else; and an Executive Assistant and Events Coordinator who shares her top tips for managing two demanding roles





GILES FRANKLIN

WAREHOUSE SUPERVISOR

SOUTH LINC'S

With over a decade at South Lincs Foodservice, Giles talks to us about raising standards, championing his team and how the next big game changer is just around the corner



Can you tell us about your career path at South Lincs?

Joining South Lincs 11 years ago was a no-brainer: I enjoy looking after a team and everyone told me that South Lincs has a proper family feel, which really suits my management style. I believe that treating people how I want to be treated always gives the best results. Once I had settled in my role as a supervisor, I was given the stock control operation to oversee. I really enjoy this part of my role as it's where we have made the biggest difference over the years.

How has South Lincs evolved since you began?

Over the years, the growth of Caterfood Buying Group has made everything more professional – we have improved processes and better support and training. Yet, somehow, it still has that family-run feel. The next big step for our warehouse is a new operating system coming in before the end of the year. It'll be the biggest game changer for how things work in all the time I've been here.

Giles takes pride in keeping the warehouse running smoothly and the team motivated

What does a typical day look like for you?

Every day is different and I'm lucky to have a very experienced team where everyone knows their role inside out. I might spend the day in the warehouse working alongside the team, taking deliveries, replenishing, stock taking and doing warehouse admin. At other times, I'm focusing on planning, wages, staff reviews, team briefs and anything else that's thrown my way. Some days the list feels endless, but I prefer being busy as it makes the day more interesting.

What's the best bit about your job?

It's really satisfying to see people develop their skills, which is often most noticeable when a team member changes roles from the warehouse to stock control. To see them develop and perform at a really high standard makes all the effort worthwhile. It's not just about training, it's often about the mindset change of why the small details are so important. It's great to help make that difference.

What career achievement are you most proud of?

I am really proud of the improvements we have made to stock control – we've gone from an almost non-existent stock control to a well-organised system. I also introduced our 'ownership of area', which gives each team member total control of a section, where they can make changes and try new things. I am a great believer that we have to trust our teams to do what's best for our customers. This has worked really well and the difference shows when walking around our warehouse. On a more fun note, I enjoy gathering my team for a barbecue and pizza party at my house every year. It's my way of saying thank you for everything.

What's your dream meal after a tough day?

It's got to be a big, fat, dirty burger with all the extras – including Lotus Biscoff sauce and crumbs – with chunky chips. Or desserts, lots and lots of desserts. Anything that's no good for me, but tastes amazing!



NAOMI FUDGE

**EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT &
EVENTS COORDINATOR**
CATERFOOD BUYING GROUP

Juggling two demanding roles with precision, Naomi shares her secrets to staying organised, the fun of planning large-scale events and why an amazing team makes it all possible

Tell us about your role

As an Executive Assistant to our MD, Phil Atyeo, I manage inboxes and diaries, coordinate meetings, book travel, prepare presentations and documents, and support our senior team. On the Group Events Coordinator side, I have managed our central events for over two years and was recently given the opportunity to expand this across the Caterfood Buying Group.

How do you juggle the two sides of your job?

Having two very demanding roles is a balancing act, but I'm incredibly passionate about both, which really helps. The key is to prioritise, and thankfully I have an incredible team of talented people who I can lean on for support, whether that means taking the pressure off on event days or being there to listen and give advice.

Any organisation tips?

Lists! They are your best friend and a visual reminder of tasks to be done, but also of what you have

completed. There's nothing more rewarding than ticking jobs off a long to-do list when you're feeling like you're not making progress. I love colour coding to keep track of everything, and my personal favourite for events – spreadsheets! I love a formula that links, colour codes, corrects or counts data.

What's the best bit about your job at CFBG?

Working with some genuinely incredible and talented people. Planning our events wouldn't be possible without a supportive team that helps bring my vision to life. In my Executive Assistant role I am very fortunate to work with our MD who I have a great working relationship with. The most rewarding part is seeing events come together and hearing good feedback from suppliers and delegates about their experience.

Your proudest achievement?

Planning our 2024 Winter Conference. It was the first conference that I planned from

Lists, colour coding and a well-crafted spreadsheet are Naomi's secret weapons for managing her busy role

start to finish, and I loved every moment of it, even the stressful parts! Planning an event for 260 people that's comprised of a conference, trade show and awards evening is no easy task but seeing everyone's faces when they walked in was just amazing. My aim with any successful event is for everyone to have a great time, so when that happens, it fills me with pride.

Can you tell us more about the 2025 Winter Conference?

Our 2025 Winter Conference will be held at Celtic Manor in Wales on the 9th and 10th of December for almost 300 attendees. This year's theme is very much top secret, but what I can say is planning is underway and further details will be released soon. It's definitely not one to be missed!

What's your dream meal after a tough day?

Honestly, it's got to be any meal that I don't have to cook! A takeaway curry would be the perfect end to a busy day. ■

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*Censuswide survey of 250 UK chefs, November 2024



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KITCHEN CHAMPIONS

PEAS

Sweet, practical, budget-friendly and loved by many, the humble frozen pea is a miniature powerhouse. Rediscover your love of the little green veg with our three delicious recipes... ►



PEA AND LEMON RISOTTO WITH PARMESAN CRISP

Serves 4

Prep 10 minutes

Cook 30 minutes

This creamy dish is the perfect way to hero the small but mighty frozen pea. They add a fresh contrast to the richness of rice, while lemon zest lifts the whole plate. Finished with a crisp bite of golden Parmesan for texture, it's an easy but impressive option for any menu.

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 300g Arborio rice
- 100ml dry white wine
- Approx 800ml vegetable stock (add more as needed)
- Grated Parmesan cheese, for both risotto and crisps (approx. 80g total)
- 200g Caterfood Select Fancy Peas
- Zest of 1 lemon

1. In a large pan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook gently until soft and translucent, about 5–7 minutes.

2. Stir in the Arborio rice and cook for 1–2 minutes until it is well coated and slightly translucent around the edges.

3. Pour in the white wine and allow it to simmer until almost fully absorbed.

4. Begin adding the hot stock, one ladle at a time, stirring frequently. Continue this process for 15–18 minutes until the rice is al dente and creamy.

5. Preheat the oven to 200°C (Gas Mark 6). On a lined baking tray, place four 1tbsp mounds of grated Parmesan and flatten into thin discs. Bake for 5–7 minutes until golden and crisp. Cool before lifting.

6. Stir the frozen peas and lemon zest into the risotto during the last 5 minutes of cooking. Season with salt and pepper.

7. Spoon into warm bowls or plates. Garnish with Parmesan crisp.





GARDEN PEA VELOUTÉ WITH MINT OIL & CRÈME FRAÎCHE

Serves 4-6 **Prep** 10 mins **Cook** 15 mins

Elegant yet simple, this vivid green dish makes a sophisticated starter or light lunch. Frozen peas are complemented by crêpe fraîche and a drizzle of homemade mint oil – a great way to add colour and lift without overpowering the flavour.

- 20g unsalted butter
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 500g Caterfood Select Fancy Peas
- 500ml vegetable stock
- Handful of mint leaves
- 50ml good-quality olive oil
- Crêpe fraîche

For the croutons

- 2 slices of sourdough bread, cubed
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Pinch of sea salt

1. In a medium pan, melt the butter over a gentle heat. Add the shallot and sweat until it is translucent and soft, about 3–4 minutes, without allowing it to brown.

2. Add the frozen garden peas to the pan and stir for 1–2 minutes. Pour in the hot vegetable stock and bring to a gentle simmer. Cook for 8–10 minutes until the peas are tender but still bright green.

3. Remove the pan from the heat and blend until completely smooth. For an ultra-silky texture, pass through a fine mesh sieve or chinois. Season to taste with salt and white pepper.

4. Add back to the pan and warm gently, avoiding boiling.

5. To make mint oil, blend mint leaves with olive oil until smooth. For a clearer oil, strain through muslin or a fine sieve.

6. For the croutons, toss the cubed bread with olive oil and a pinch of sea salt. Bake at 200°C (Gas Mark 6) for 8–10 minutes until golden and crisp.

7. Ladle the velouté into warm serving bowls and drizzle with mint oil. Top with a small quenelle of crêpe fraîche. Garnish with mint and croutons. ►



“

Blanch the frozen peas for 30–60 seconds, then cool quickly to keep them sweet and vibrant. Add at the end of cooking to preserve flavour and colour.

Phil Clark: Business Development Chef, Harvest

CRISPY PEA AND FETA FRITTERS

Serves Makes 12-16 fritters

Prep 15 minutes

Cook 15 minutes

Peas take centre stage in these colourful fritters. Naturally gluten-free thanks to chickpea flour, they're quick to batch, easy to prep ahead and ideal for small plates or sharing boards. Sweet peas are well balanced by salty feta and zingy herbs, and the addition of a punchy yoghurt dip ties everything together.

For the fritters

- 300g Caterfood Select Fancy Peas
- 100g feta cheese, crumbled
- ½ red onion, finely sliced
- 50g chickpea flour
- 1 medium egg
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh mint
- Vegetable oil, for shallow frying

For the herbed yoghurt:

- 150g Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh dill
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- Zest of ½ lemon

1. Cook the frozen peas in boiling water for 2–3 minutes until tender. Drain and cool under cold running water. Lightly mash with a fork, leaving some texture.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine the mashed peas, crumbled feta, sliced red onion, chickpea flour and egg. Add in the chopped herbs and season generously with salt and pepper. Mix together until a thick batter forms. If the mixture is too wet, add a little more flour to bind.
3. Heat a shallow layer of oil in a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. Drop spoonfuls of the batter into the pan and flatten slightly. Fry for 2–3 minutes per side until crisp and golden brown. Work in batches and avoid overcrowding.
4. For the herbed yoghurt, stir together Greek yoghurt, chopped dill, lemon juice and optional zest in a small bowl. Season to taste. Chill until ready to serve.
5. Plate the fritters with a generous dollop of herbed yoghurt on top. ■





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Catering for Gen Z

With an appetite for diverse, inclusive and globally-minded meals, today's students are more discerning than ever. Here's how to cater for Generation Z, both on and off campus

It's a stereotype that's survived decades: the penny-pinching uni student who scrapes by on pot noodles and beans on toast. But that narrative's getting stale. More savvy and adventurous than ever, today's students prioritise healthy, varied meals, while still keeping an eye on value. Meat-free diets are at an all-time high, eco-consciousness is top of the agenda, and social media has ramped up the desire for cool-looking bites.

For university caterers, the shift brings both a challenge and an opportunity. Serve food that's fast,

Delivery apps offer a competitive range of meal options for students

"We're living in an age of instant gratification"

inclusive and full of flavour and students will keep coming back for more. Get it wrong and risk losing them to delivery apps.

TRENDING TASTES

With 84%* of Gen Z (those born, roughly, between 1997–2012) having tried at least one viral food trend and 70%** using TikTok for inspiration, it's no surprise that social media plays a huge role



in shaping tastes. Instant access to global recipes has made this generation more open than ever to culturally diverse food, and the more eye-catching, the better. #Foodporn still rules, with creamy pastas, gooey puds and vibrant salads and smoothies getting the most clicks on social.

So, what's trending? Sweet treats are always in – from chocolate and pistachio desserts inspired by Dubai cafés to matcha-laced drinks and bakes. Eastern flavours are also big, with fluffy bao buns and classic student staples like extra spicy Korean ramen popping up all over TikTok. Gen Z also loves a playful twist on the familiar: 'Marry Me Chicken' (Tuscan chicken's spicy cousin) is everywhere, and the viral rise of model Gigi Hadid's 'vodka pasta' proves any dish can blow up with a big enough name behind it.

TECH IS KING

We're living in an age of instant gratification, and the only way to stay competitive is to be tech-savvy. After all, when your next meal is just one click away on a delivery app, is the Student Union really going to scratch that itch? Tap into the Gen Z mindset and think 'phone first'. Does your cafeteria offer a mobile app in the App Store and Google Play? Does it allow students to browse the menu and place an order from the comfort of their dorm? Consider integrating a loyalty scheme into the app, where users can rack up points and earn themselves a free meal and drink on campus, or discounts on selected products. It's a great way to reward customers for using the service, set goal posts and encourage repeat business.

On-site tech matters too – mobile payments should be ►

*Attest **Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board

79%

of Gen Z goes meatless
once a week*

77%

of Gen Z are more
attracted to restaurants
with adventurous,
global cuisine**

75%

of Gen Z adults (18-28)
are more likely to choose
multiple starters and skip
the main†

*Supermarket News **Unilever †Cadbury



In the limelight

Southampton Uni scooped the 2025 University Catering Award at the PSC Awards, thanks to affordable £1 cereal breakfasts, an expanded plant-based and allergen-friendly menu, a £6,000 donation to the student food bank and a Cooking School that's boosting young adults' confidence in the kitchen. With plans to develop a vegetable patch, promote reusable cups and roll out energy-efficient vending machines, it's a brilliant example of how student-focused catering can be affordable, inclusive and sustainability-driven.



Build your
menu around
cost-effective
ingredients,
like noodles



More than a meal

Loughborough College is a shining example of hands-on campus catering. With tasting panels, co-created menus and social events that celebrate various cultures and cuisines, plus thoughtful touches like a self-serve salad bar, the team is finding fun, smart ways to give students agency when it comes to healthy eating.

"Compared to 10 years ago, where traditional canteen staples dominated, today's students expect more choice, transparency around ingredients and innovation – whether that's in the form of global street food, build-your-own bowls, or healthy grab-and-go snacks," says the college's Head of Catering, Lisa Cockerton.

With this in mind, the team plans to offer even more customisable options in the near future, like DIY salad and rice boxes, a bigger plant-based on-the-go range and a focus on functional foods that are designed to support concentration, energy and mental health.

"Catering will no longer just be about feeding students – it will be about supporting their success, both academically and personally."

Support students by offering nutritious and inclusive menu options

seamless and smart use of QR codes can turn printed posters and table talkers into instant gateways to menus, offers and allergen info.

DIVERSE DIETS

From plant-based to protein-packed, gluten-free to dairy-free, today's young adults are highly self-aware when it comes to their dietary needs and won't settle for a half-baked menu. Dazzle them with a breadth of tasty, genuinely inclusive options (no token gestures) and introduce seasonal twists to keep things fresh. Provide dairy alternatives for that all-important coffee list, and don't be afraid to brag about your sustainability credentials.

And remember: it's not only the students who are here to learn! Invite feedback through online surveys to spot gaps and fine-tune your menu – a prize draw is a great way to boost response rates. Want to go further? Launch a competition to give students the chance to see a dish they've suggested on the menu.

BUDGET BITES

With tuition fees and living costs climbing all the time, affordability is paramount in higher education catering. It can feel like walking a tightrope – serving food that's nutritious, varied, on-trend, sustainable and budget-friendly. Start by building your menu around cost-effective, long-life staples like rice, pasta, noodles, legumes, eggs, tinned goods and frozen veg – all versatile, globally relevant, and ideal for batch cooking. Saving on the basics gives you room to invest in bold, higher-impact ingredients that will elevate your offer and keep Gen Z students engaged.

Alongside hearty hot meals, provide a good choice of grab-and-go options. Sandwiches, wraps, salads, fruit, popcorn, yoghurt and granola pots are all affordable light bites. Streamline service with contactless self-checkouts and app ordering and make sure well-stocked, energy-efficient vending machines keep things running beyond the nine-to-five. ■

crispy crunchy coating



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HOT *topic*

Turn up the heat with boozy, warm tipples made for toasting

BUTTERED UP

Like butter beer but for grown-ups, hot buttered rum is an indulgent classic that combines dark rum, spiced butter and hot water to create a smooth, silky drink that's as soothing as it is satisfying.



SOME LIKE IT HOT

Who said hot chocolate was just for kids? Mexico's version is rich, spicy and made for sweet-toothed grown-ups. Blend milk, Kokoa Collection's 100% pure cocoa, melted chocolate, a hint of cinnamon, a pinch of chilli and a shot of gold tequila, bourbon or dark rum to liven things up.



ALPINE BOMB

Italy's answer to eggnog, a Bombardino is a luscious yellow après-ski drink served in a small glass. It's traditionally made with equal measures of Advocaat (or any egg liqueur) and brandy or rum. It's then heated and finished with a swirl of whipped cream and a dusting of cinnamon.





Alcohol
Free

GOLDEN WONDER

A hot ginger and turmeric root tea is a delicious, alcohol-free addition to cold-weather beverage menus that taps into the health-conscious boom. It's anti-inflammatory, immune-boosting and comforting enough to rival any boozy counterpart.

TWELFTH NIGHT TOAST

A comforting, crowd-pleasing drink after a frosty walk, Wassail Punch is made by mulling cider (or apple juice for non-drinkers) with cloves, apples, cinnamon, lemon, orange, ginger and star anise. Serve in mugs, keep it warm in the pan and let the aroma draw in the crowds.



MULL IT OVER

Undeniably the drink of winter, mulled wine is a no-brainer to entice customers in from the cold. A festive favourite, it blends red wine, spices, citrus, and a splash of brandy. Ideal for making in big batches over the Christmas season. ■

ZeusFOOD

Food & Beverage Packaging

Zeus Food and Caterfood are embarking on an exciting journey, united in our mission to reduce costs, consolidate ranges, and provide **responsible** food packaging solutions

Our focus is on responsible food packaging solutions, with our experienced team dedicated to assisting your business in making smart packaging choices. We offer comprehensive packaging reviews, considering the entire packaging lifecycle and its impact on your customers. We prioritise food safety, the nature of your food products, and packaging functionality, which can drive product development or streamline product ranges.

In today's social media-driven age, packaging plays a crucial role as consumers share their experiences on-line. We can support by designing visually appealing packaging that is so "instagrammable," by offering customer branded options for various food-to-go items, from cups, mealboxes to even sandwich wedges.



"Packaging is a valuable resource, far from being mere waste. It serves as a potent tool for brand promotion, communicates positive messages, boosts revenue, and reduces food waste by extending shelf life and protecting products. Food packaging is integral to the product, enhancing its value."

Andrew Dorney
Head of Zeus Food UK



Next issue...

Kick off a confident 2026 with our winter issue. We reveal the trends set to shape the year ahead, plus bring you seasonal recipes, expert insight and chef-approved tips.

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LAST LICK OF THE SPOON *with*

HARRI WILLIAMS

Executive Chef at luxury country hotel Carden Park, Harri Williams talks about the influence of growing up with a baker mum and farmer dad, and why he's passionate about investing in the chefs of the future

What sparked your love of food?

My mum has owned a bakery for over 30 years, and I was raised on a farm, so I've always respected the farming process – from rearing livestock to harvesting crops – and that translates into my approach to cooking. When you grow up witnessing the care that goes into food production, it gives you a real appreciation for quality ingredients and the people behind them.

What does a typical day in the kitchen look like?

Carden Park is a large resort with multiple kitchens and dining outlets, so no two days are the same. We might be cooking for guests on a relaxing break, or catering for large-scale corporate events or weddings. Supported by our Head Chef, Cyril Gabriel, I oversee the food

offering across the entire estate. I train and support our amazing kitchen teams, source fresh local produce, develop menus and work closely with local suppliers. It's a very dynamic role, and that's what keeps it exciting.

How would you describe the food offering at Carden Park?

Incredibly diverse – and that's something we're really proud of. From elegant fine dining to more relaxed dishes, we cater to a wide range of tastes and occasions. But the one thread that runs through everything is a commitment to quality, seasonality and local sourcing. Whether you're having a three-course dinner at The Vines or grabbing lunch after a round of golf, the attention to detail, fresh ingredients and passion are the same.

What's your favourite dish on the menu right now and why?

I'm really enjoying the Glazed Quail Breast at The Vines. Served with a confit leg, cherries, baby gem, artichokes and a rich cherry jus, it's refined, seasonal and a great example of the kind of dish we aim to create – clean, bold and colourful.

What's one thing you'd change about the industry?

Recruiting young talent continues to be a challenge, which is why we've invested in apprentice programmes here at Carden Park. We want to support and develop the next generation of chefs, not just in terms of technical skills, but also by giving them the confidence and foundation to build a lasting career in the industry.

Which ingredients are you loving at the moment?

I'm really enjoying working with Isle of Wight tomatoes – they're full of flavour, naturally sweet and incredibly versatile. They're a brilliant example of how British produce can rival anything from abroad. I'm also a big fan of Welsh lamb; it's such a high-quality ingredient, full of depth and character, and we're lucky to have the suppliers so close to us.

What's the biggest mistake you see in kitchens?

Chefs not tasting their food. It sounds basic, but it's fundamental. You can have perfect technique and the best ingredients, but if you're not constantly tasting and adjusting, you won't hit the mark. Achieving the right balance of flavours only comes with consistent tasting and fine-tuning.

What's next for Carden Park?

We're completing a full refurbishment across the estate to enhance the guest experience. From a culinary perspective, we're continuing to push ourselves – refining our menus, developing our team and building even stronger relationships with local producers.

What advice would you give to young chefs just starting out?

I'd always recommend starting with an apprenticeship in a traditional kitchen. You'll learn the foundations and build a work ethic that will serve you throughout your career. Find a mentor you respect, stay curious and don't rush. The best chefs are those who take the time to understand the craft, stay humble and never stop learning. cardenpark.co.uk ■

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