

slice

from the Baking Industry Association
for cafés, caterers and bakeries



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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

President, Pie Group
Brendan Williams 03 455 8375
brendan@bianz.co.nz

Vice President, Partners
Michael Gray 04 232 4233
michael@bianz.co.nz

Bartercard
Jason Heaven 06 844 2401
jason@bianz.co.nz

Competitions
Mike Meaclem 021 225 3748
mike@bianz.co.nz

Treasurer, Membership
Craig Rust 03 964 6565
craig@bianz.co.nz

Training
Thomas Thomas 04 296 1244
thomas@bianz.co.nz

Executive Officer
Belinda Jeursen 03 349 0663
PO Box 29 265 Fax 03 349 0664
Christchurch 8540 0800 NZBAKE
Email admin@bianz.co.nz

Members' Freeline 0800 NZBAKE
(0800 69 22 53)

Life Members
Gary Cameron Woodville
Graham Heaven Napier

Bakery Employers'
Legal Helpline
McPhail Gibson & Zwart 03 365 2345

Associates
Annette Campbell, compliance matters

Magazine Editor
David Tossman 04 801 9942
Fax 04 801 9962
Email davidt@bianz.co.nz
Deputy Editor Belinda Jeursen

Website www.bianz.co.nz

Advertisers and contributors –

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From the Office

BIANZ EXECUTIVE OFFICER
BELINDA JEURSEN REPORTS

Germany

BIANZ President Brendan Williams and I recently had the pleasure of meeting the iba International Trade Fair management team in Sydney. They hosted a presentation about this major event taking place in Munich from 16–21 September 2012.

Everyone I know who has been to iba has found it a fantastic experience from both a business and social perspective. But they all stress the need to be well organised in advance and have a good idea of what it is you want to see and do, as the scale of the event makes it impossible to do it all.

We're hoping to get BIANZ members and other bakery and café owners to iba in 2012. We will be able to help you plan your trip so that you make the most of the time you are there and achieve your business goals while having a lot of fun with like-minded people.

See page 26 for more information about this amazing trade fair, and for an English version of the iba website see <http://www.iba.de/en/home/>

Australia

While we were in Sydney, we took the opportunity to meet up again with representatives of the Baking Associations of Australia: Tony Smith my counterpart for the New South Wales BAA, Andrew O'Hara from Victoria, and Stewart Latter, also from New South Wales.

We are all keen to forge a productive working relationship between our associations and to get our members together for a mutually beneficial event, either here in New Zealand or in Australia.

We face many of the same issues and challenges and have a lot we can share in the way of knowledge and skills. Watch this space for future developments.

Auckland

Christmas always comes about a month too early for me. Somehow we've barely recovered from BakeNZ 2011 and we are into the silly season and planning madly for the Christmas edition of *Slice* and the next BakeNZ event.

BIANZ will be at Fine Foods again in 2012, with a bigger stand, more baking demonstrations, master classes and competitions, as well as our AGM and Annual Awards Dinner. We learned a lot from our first very successful Fine Food show and will be making the most of our experience in 2010 to ensure 2012 is even better.

We are currently looking at all our options for teaming up with other stakeholders to bring baking to the fore at the show and make a lasting impact on all those who pass through.

Please diarise 17–19 June 2012 and look for information in upcoming issues of *Slice*. We look forward to seeing you there.

A big year

Thank you to all our members, buying partners, suppliers and other stakeholders for your support in 2011. It's been a big year for many of us, one we would not wish to repeat, and there are still challenges ahead, but it has also brought out the best in people and that gave us encouragement when it was sorely needed.

I wish you a safe and happy festive season and I look forward to working with and for you in 2012.

Worth Knowing

Summer Leave

Public holidays are celebrated on the day they fall unless the employer and employee agree in writing to transfer their observance to another working day, or where Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Day and 2 January fall on either a Saturday or Sunday.

If these public holidays fall on either a Saturday or Sunday, employees who normally work on these days celebrate the public holiday then – for employees who don't normally work Saturday or Sunday – the public holiday is transferred to the Monday or Tuesday respectively. To help you decide whether an employee is entitled to take the public holiday you will need to determine if it falls on an otherwise working day. The Department of Labour has an Online Holiday tool that can help you with this: www.dol.govt.nz/holiday-tool. Once you have worked out if the day is an otherwise working day you can use chart on our website to determine which day the public holiday will be taken.

For more information about public holidays and what to pay for a public holiday go to www.dol.govt.nz/er/holidaysandleave/publicolidays

BIANZ members can access more information about holiday leave entitlements in the Members Only section of the BIANZ website.



New Members

The association welcomes these new members

The Wakefield Bakery
Chocolate Earth
Fresh To Go Bakery
Wild Wheat Limited
Red Barn Bakery Café

Nelson
Auckland
Christchurch
Auckland
Whakatane

From the President

BRENDAN WILLIAMS KEEPS IN TOUCH



Another year has almost run its course and what a year it's been. New Zealanders are still dining out on the glorious Rugby World Cup win, but I fear 2011 will go down in history for other reasons.

Harold Camping, the obviously quite mad religious radio host in the US, predicted the end of the world would come to us in 2011. I'm not the sort to spend time listening to these US nutters, but each time there was an earthquake, flood, drought, tsunami, fall of a maniacal Middle Eastern dictatorship, finance company bail-out, European country meltdown or credit downgrade, I couldn't help but think that, if this wasn't the end of the world, I wouldn't like to be around when it finally does implode.

On a more positive note, the BIANZ put on a very good show in Napier and continues to develop its presence as the voice of the bakery and café owner in our fair country.

Belinda and David do a sterling job of putting our magazine *Slice* together and over the course of 2012, the BIANZ Executive will be putting more time and resources into building our magazine into a solid revenue stream to help us to help you.

Belinda and I had the privilege recently of meeting a delegation from iba – the biggest baking trade show in the world.

I haven't had the pleasure of attending one myself but those I have met who have previously made it to Munich all have plans to get back. There is plenty of information in this issue of *Slice* regarding the special experience we are putting together for the benefit of our members. I suggest that if you are serious about growing your business and learning the latest in global thought, then a trip to iba is a must.

As the time this issue goes to press, members of your Executive will be meeting with the organisers of the 2012 Fine Foods show in Auckland to ensure we expand on the massive presence we had there in 2010. We are working closely with our suppliers and stakeholders to ensure we further extend the profile of our organisation and our ability to attract new entrants to our industry and young people into our workforce.

Thank you to all our members, buying partners, suppliers and other stakeholders for your support in 2011. I wish you a safe and happy festive season and I look forward to seeing you again in 2012.

Yours in baking,

Brendan Williams


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Letter to the editor

What's happening to our pies?

(In reply to Gary Cameron's article in *Slice* Issue 10)

Having been a five-pie-a-week eater and sometimes also having one for Sunday night's tea, and been involved in the baking industry for over 50 years (now retired), I totally agree with Gary's comments.

As I travel, I'm constantly looking for a bakery that I haven't been to before, in my search for a pie that leaves me with a desire to call on them again. These types of bakeries are few and far between. When I do find one, I tend to call on them on my way back home to put some of their pies in my freezer.

I prefer steak or chicken pies, but I find so many of these pies have limited amounts of meat or chicken in them. I have actually seen the bakers counting to make sure they don't put too many bits in. And so many pies today have gravy that is black in colour and too thick.

To me a memorable pie would be as follows: reasonable amount of meat/chicken, gravy that is not too cluggy, seasoning that lasts longer than the pie, a base that is baked through, and pastry on top that is not left on the table after each bite.

I wonder how many bakers taste their own pies!

As Gary says, a good pie is remembered long after price is forgotten. I'm always looking for that pie that could make that baker win the Bakels Supreme Pie Award.

Regards,

Howard Smith

New executive member

Craig Rust was elected to the executive committee of the BIANZ at the annual general meeting in Napier in August. He was appointed to the membership and treasurer portfolios at the committee's subsequent first meeting.

Craig and his wife Janine own Divine Cakes & Desserts, a Christchurch-based commercial bakery and retail operation. Janine is the CEO of the company and runs the business on the day-to-day activities while Craig acts as the director and financial controller.

Divine Cakes & Desserts has grown significantly over the last six years and is now operating their own purpose-built commercial bakery, four retail cakes shops, a specialty wedding/celebration shop and various wholesale clients.

Craig is also a well-known business consultant having formed Business Innovators Ltd in 2002, a business development consultancy practice based in Christchurch.



Business Innovators specialises in providing strategic business growth, finance and management advice to a wide range of businesses in New Zealand.

From the Vice President

Customer loyalty is something that every business needs. It's what makes up the goodwill value in our businesses. But how do we, as business owners, encourage customers to be loyal and treat our business as if it is their shop?

Ideally they will regard you as the only baker they want to visit. They'll develop a sense of ownership.

With all the online deal sites out there, there is almost a cult following of people looking for a bargain.

Loyalty programs are nothing new but it is almost essential to have a program in place. It has been shown that customers will frequent a business with a loyalty programme of some sort four times as often as otherwise.

It is as easy as having a card with a smiley face stamp or having an integrated credit-card-like system that works with your point of sale system.

Michael Gray Reports

A good system will store customer information such as their preferred coffee order, frequency of visits and date of birth so you can wish them a happy birthday and offer a complimentary item.

In our business we have just moved to an integrated system and our customers are embracing it. It is great to be able to track spending habits and encourage redemption.

I want a one hundred percent redemption rate because this will tell me that the system works.

If you don't have a loyalty system I encourage you to do so.

I love hearing customers say 'our bakery' as if they own it, and a loyalty program helps encourage that. It will give your business a competitive edge and help to build customers for life.

Training Thomas Thomas reports

Training has made more significant leaps forward since I wrote for the last issue of *Slice*.

The most significant of these is with Competenz and the appointment of Peter Rood as a specialist bakery advisor. This is a great sign for the industry as to how serious Competenz is about providing a service to our industry.

On behalf of the BIANZ we welcome Peter Rood to his role and we look forward to working with him.

The second leap is the survey Competenz is running to establish the type of training that they can provide above and beyond what they are already doing. This is a chance for you to tell them what they are doing right and wrong, so I would encourage all our members to complete the survey.

BIANZ Back at Fine Food 2012

After a highly successful show in 2010, BIANZ is proud to announce we will be back showcasing baking at Fine Food New Zealand in 2012. We'll be bringing competitions, demonstrations, master classes and live bake-offs to the show, along with our gingerbread house, where BIANZ members will be able to stop and have a drink, network with other members, or just put their feet up for a few minutes.

Bakery World will be where it's all happening. The **New Zealand Bakery of the Year Competition** will be back, with all entered product on display and live judging on the opening day of the show. **The Weston Milling Trainee of the Year Competition** will see live bake-offs between the country's most talented young bakery trainees, and we're looking forward to fantastic demos from professional bakers and maybe even a celebrity or two!

Fine Food is an opportunity to see and taste thousands of new national and international food and beverage ideas, try out the latest equipment and speak to the professionals in your industry all in one place. The show includes sections on food, foodservice equipment, hospitality equipment and new products, services, and cutting-edge ideas.

Fine Food New Zealand has already proven itself the most comprehensive event held for the New Zealand food and foodservice industries, with high levels of satisfaction reported from exhibitors and visitors alike.

BIANZ will be hosting its AGM on-site and our popular Annual Awards Dinner will be held in Auckland at a venue to be confirmed. Look out for more information in the next issue of *Slice*, on the BIANZ website, or visit the Fine Food website www.finefood.co.nz



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Perfection at last

Chains like McDonald's are committed to gastronomic perfection. And by perfection they mean utter uniformity. Most fast food giants have strict specifications for their suppliers to make sure that no



unique or distinguishing features creep in, right down to the placement of sesame seeds on the buns.

To meet those exacting standards, the bakers at Flowers Foods in Thomasville, Georgia, inspect their freshly baked buns manually using callipers and a colorimeter. But with a production line that runs at about 1,000 bpm (buns per minute), a slipup could require trashing hundreds of kilos of blemished carbs.

Engineers at the Georgia Tech Research Institute have devised a system for inspecting breadstuffs automatically, using image-processing technology.

A camera trained on the production line captures an image of each bun, and software analyses its colour to determine whether it's over- or underbaked, then adjusts the oven accordingly.

The program also checks the bun's shape and diameter and the distribution of garnishes, like sesame seeds or a cornmeal dusting. Ovenmaker BakeTech is working to commercialize the prototype, which has been saving Flowers Food's buns for the past year.

May you never get stuck with a unique baked good again.

Artisan being stolen?

The *Los Angeles Times* noted recently that the word artisan is losing its prestige. The article was prompted by Domino's Pizza introducing its Artisan Pizza line in 5000 outlets across the USA.

"In the food world, 'artisan' used to mean a meticulously handcrafted product, made in small batches," said *LA Times* commentator Tiffany Hsu. "No more." Domino's joined the trend of major companies in describing products as artisan, said Ms Hsu.

"Wendy's has its Artisan Egg Sandwich, Ralph's Markets offers Private Selection Artisan Breads and Starbucks sells Artisan Breakfast Sandwiches."

The word artisan comes from the Italian 'artigiano'. It was coined back in the 16th century to refer to a skilled craftsman who carved or otherwise hand-tooled an item.

But the food industry has fallen in love with the term to the point that the Panera Bread chain advertises "artisan fast food".

"The word 'artisan' has been so co-opted by industry and marketing that it no longer really means artisan," said renowned baker and author Peter Reinhart, who wrote a book about pizza, *American Pie*.

Domino's Pizza Inc. launched its artisan line with heavy promotions but Russell Weiner, its chief marketing officer, conceded that the new pizzas do not use the specialty flours or wood-fired ovens associated with artisan baking.

But the company defended the use of the word because of the ingredients used. There is feta cheese on one of the offerings instead of the usual mozzarella or Parmesan. Tuscan salami tops another in place of pepperoni.

They're "pizzas you have with a bottle of wine," Weiner said. "It's something where, before we launched, people would have laughed at us and wouldn't have believed we could do it."

Josh Viertel, president of Slow Food USA, an advocacy group for healthful eating, said he doesn't automatically object to large-scale production being termed artisan. But it's nearly impossible, he said, for a nationwide company to use another hallmark of artisan – locally sourced ingredients.

"I have no problems with the scale, but it's really hard to fake authenticity," Viertel said. "Domino's is diluting the meaning of the word."

But introducing a new product can be tricky. At the same time Domino's wants to be known as artisan, it's also trying to avoid alienating customers who like their conventional pizzas and don't have much use for foodies and their terminology.

Despite the name of the product line, the pizza boxes state in large letters: "We're Not Artisans." The printed message goes on to say, "We don't wear black berets, cook with wood-fired ovens or apprentice with the masters in Italy."

Weiner said the company wanted to make it clear it's not "being snobs or pernickety."

"The only thing artisan about the pizzas is the taste and fact that they're handmade," he said, "but there won't be attitude."

Dean doing Singapore

Unstoppable Kiwi go-getter Dean Brettschneider, the self-styled "global baker", has taken on Singapore with his latest venture: Baker & Cook, an up-market artisan bakery/restaurant.

The new business's website indicates that there will be a bakery and cooking school incorporated, and that this is the first of a planned international chain of Baker & Cook stores.

He is also opening an artisan bakery soon in Copenhagen. The Baker & Spice operation which Dean is involved in now has four stores across Shanghai.

Apart from seeking staff for the new Singapore business, Dean is finishing his tenth book, this one on pies, and doing consulting and training work in Europe.

Sell-by-date past its use-by-date

The British government is requiring the "sell-by" date on food packaging to be removed in a bid to cut the \$24bn worth of food needlessly binned in the UK every year.

Packaging should only carry "use by" or "best before" dates, according to new government guidance, while "sell by" and "display until" labels currently used by supermarkets will be removed to deter shoppers from throwing away good food.

"Use-by" labels should only be used if food could be unsafe to eat after that date, while "best before" dates should show the product is no longer at its best but is still safe to consume, the advice states.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs produced the guidance in consultation with the food industry, consumer groups, regulators, and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP).

According to WRAP, 5.3m tonnes of still-edible food is thrown away each year, costing the average consumer more than \$100 a month. Research shows confusing food labelling is a significant factor.

US consumers both scrimping and spending

Consumers at all income levels have been splurging on indulgences while paring many humdrum household expenses, according to US industry data for the last year. According to the *New York Times*, many retailers also report that while fripperies like purses and perfumes are best sellers, they cannot get shoppers interested in basics like diapers, socks and vacuum bags.

Consumer psychologists say that in this uncertain economy – coming after one of the worst recessions in generations – it is just too hard being good all the time.

"People have a limited supply of energy to put toward controlling their urges," Kathleen D. Vohs, a professor of marketing at the University of Minnesota, said. Ms Vohs studies spending behavior at the university's Carlson School of Management.

Many of the products selling briskly are not high-priced, but they could be on a party supply list: premixed cocktails and coolers, cheesecake, cosmetics and wine. Meanwhile, sales of staples like batteries, bleach and fertiliser have declined sharply.



An essential purchase

Economists say the spending does not translate into a broader shift in consumer confidence. "The toughest businesses, frankly, have been in the middle of the basics assortments," Myron E. Ullman III, chairman and chief executive of J. C. Penney, told investors last month,

One thriving category in the treat-yourself economy has been cheesecake, with sales rising 22 percent in the last year, according to the SymphonyIRI data.

At Junior's Cheesecake, a Brooklyn-based restaurant and cheesecake store, a co-founder, Alan Rosen, said sales at the 61-year-old company were increasing again after dropping for the first time ever during the recession.

Europain focuses on innovation

Registration is now open for Europain 2012, taking place on 3–7 March in Paris. The event is expected to attract 1,000 exhibitors and brands, and 85,000 visitors.

Showcasing a variety of equipment, layout solutions, raw materials and food products for industrial and artisan baking and pastry making, the exhibition will focus on key trends including organic products, creative pastry making, bread as a health food, and new social venues for bakeries.

Several competitions also will take place during the five-day show. The finals of the Bakery World Cup will feature 36 bakers from 12 countries. The three members of each national team will each take part in a final challenge according to their speciality: baking, pastry, and the artistic centerpiece.

Dough conditioning for the clean label crowd

As US consumers continue to alter their perception of what constitutes health and seek simpler sounding ingredients, suppliers aiming for a cleaner label are replacing dough conditioners with enzymatic systems.

These enzymes can be used to offer an oxidative effect similar to the ascorbic acid or potassium bromate they replace, according to Tom Lehmann, director, bakery assistance, AIB International, Manhattan, Kansas.

The United States Food and Drug Administration considers enzymes to be processing aids. Since they don't survive the baking process, they do not need to be listed on the ingredient label.

Other ways are also being sought to get rid of "chemical sounding" ingredients. "Consumers are asking, 'Why are you putting chemicals in my bread? If I can't pronounce it, why should I eat it?'" Lehmann says.

Additives such as emulsifiers and dough conditioners are commonly found on lists of unacceptable ingredients published by health-focused retailers such as Whole Foods Market and Trader Joe's.

more news and views

Chocolate show comes a cropper

Models often have enough trouble trying to stay on their sky-scraping heels on the catwalk without having to worry about suffering a wardrobe malfunction.



But French TV presenter Karine Ferri, revealed a little more than she intended to at the opening show of the Salon du Chocolat in Paris.

Ms Ferri initially tried to stop her clothing from crumbling, but then just embraced her new mini skirt which exposed the tops of her stockings. She still looked positively overdressed compared to her fellow walkers who made their way down the confectionery-scattered catwalk though.



Former Miss France, Cindy Fabre, wore a gladiator-style bikini and singer and porn star Clara Morgane's bra was made out of a few well-placed cherries. The stunning Tiga To's dress featured a huge bottom made out of chocolate on the back – as did Morgane's

Men got in on the action too, in a slightly more covered up – but equally flamboyant – way. French figure skater Philippe Candeloro dressed up as a giant chocolate ice cream.

Newsreader Jean-Philippe Doux dressed as a circus ringleader in an over-sized bow-tie and tails all made of chocolate.

The fashion show marked the beginning of the 17th Salon du Chocolat at Porte de Versailles in Paris, a yearly trade fair for the international chocolate industry.



Bakery opens restaurant

French bakery Poilâne is to launch a restaurant in London next month, with the opening of Cuisine de Bar by Poilâne in Chelsea.

The all-day restaurant will be the first dining venue from the bakery in London, following the original Parisian establishment which opened 15 years ago in St Germain des Prés.

The 80-cover restaurant will serve a breakfast menu of classic French dishes, including croissants, eggs and freshly prepared tartines, as well as lunch and dinner options such as savoury tartines, available with a salad, a glass of wine and tea or coffee for under £15.

Cuisine de Bar by Poilâne will also serve afternoon tea and customers will also be able to purchase items to take away. Interiors will feature an eating bar, where chefs will make fresh tartines to order.

Yarrows on positive track

Taranaki baking business Yarrows (The Bakers) has been sold by receivers BDO to one of the founding family brothers, John Yarrow.

John Yarrow had originally sold his stake in the business to his brother Paul in 2005, resulting in a legal fight within the family, eventually settled out of court.

The sale, which also included a solvent Rotorua company, Gilles Bakery, was for an undisclosed sum and followed a five-month search for a buyer by accounting firm BDO, who were appointed receivers in May.

"The sale will help to secure the future of the businesses in both Manaia and Rotorua which is an excellent result for customers, suppliers, staff and local communities alike," said receiver Brian Mayo-Smith. "Other companies in the Yarrows Group operating in Australia are unaffected and continue to trade as normal."

Yarrows (The Bakers) 2011 is owned by John and Rosaleen Yarrow.

Some 45 employees lost their jobs in a post-receivership restructuring, but another 100 kept their jobs at the Manaia plant near Stratford in Taranaki, to allow the business to trade on, attracting what BDO said in August was "considerable interest."

The business has been in the Yarrow family for three generations.

John Yarrow told the *Taranaki Daily News* that "We'll run a leaner management [team] than it was in the past."

"I would like to get it back to where it used to be," he said.

The Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU) welcomed the sale of the troubled business to Mr and Mrs Yarrow. EPMU lead organiser Wayne Ruscoe said the new contract was fair. "The staff were so rapt to see him there."

Boys' baking app wins award



Chris Jung and Cameron Stevenson.

Two boys from Medbury School in Christchurch built a baking app for Apple computers to take an award at the Canterbury Westland Science and Technology Fair this year. The achievement results from the school's involvement in the Royal Society's CREST scheme.

Medbury is a private primary school for boys from Years 1 to 8.

The year seven boys, Cameron Stevenson and Chris Jung, worked together to develop the Apple app. They began their project by experimenting with ingredients to produce the 'perfect' muffin, cupcake or cake. The app allows the baker to select both the appropriate ingredient quantities and optimum baking time to achieve the best result.

The boys impressed the judges at the fair and were awarded second overall for the Year 7 Technology category.

They also received recognition from the Baking Industry Research Trust and received prizes from a Christchurch computer technology firm called SLI Systems.

SLI Systems invited the boys back to their premises to share their exciting work with other computer engineers at the company.

The Royal Society, in making its awards, said that it is "encouraging to see our younger students successfully engaging in activities that promote higher learning through practical science and technology."

The BIANZ too extends its congratulations to Cameron and Chris for their hard work and success and to their teacher, TIC Science, Jan Taylor.

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more news and views

Milk of human kindness?

Ice cream lovers got a bit churned up recently when it was revealed that human breast milk ice cream had gone on sale at a London gelateria called Icecreamists.

Some thought the idea of frozen mama's milk sounded delicious. Others expressed concern over the ethics and health considerations of offering it to adults.

The ice cream, named 'Baby Gaga' perhaps for its controversial appeal, was hailed as 'delicious' by consumers and sold out within hours of going on sale for £14 (\$28) a scoop.

But the scheme was frozen in its tracks only days later when health officials from Westminster Council seized the product amid concern that the milk used hadn't been adequately screened. The future for 'Baby Gaga' is so far unclear, but more than 200 women have offered to put their hands to the breastpump to ensure future stocks.

Big retailers losing face

Big store chains in the US use Facebook pages to reach out to customers, but when customers reach back with complaints, many go unanswered, a new study shows.

Retailers did not respond to 65% of complaints and questions on their Facebook pages during a five-day period in September, according to Joshua March, chief executive officer of Conversocial, a firm that helps companies interact with customers on social media.

The results are from a just-completed study called "Who's Ignoring Their Customers? A Survey of the Largest US Retailers and Their Use of Social Media".

"A lot of them probably set up these Facebook pages as marketing channels and have not considered them as customer service channels," March told Reuters.

According to March, some retailers appeared to not monitor their Facebook pages for complaints or concerns at all, while some showed good service. A large group, including Wal-Mart Stores Inc and Macy's Inc, are somewhere in the middle, he said.

Forty-one percent of the queries that Wal-Mart received on its Facebook page went unanswered, March said, while 35% went unanswered on the Macy's page. Yet some "missed" complaints or queries might have just been a matter of the retailer dealing individually with the customer, rather than in the public space of the Facebook wall.

"Because complaints often involve credit/customer account or employment matters, our first step is typically to request the complainant email us outside of the social space with details of their issue," Macy's spokeswoman Holly Thomas said. "We aim first and foremost to protect our customers' privacy by handling offline."

Macy's is committed to reaching out to all customers who raise a complaint, she added. But solving the problem "offline" means that people looking at Facebook only see the complaint, not the resolution. "When we speak to customers that are doing it well, they realise they need to keep as much of the discussion on Facebook as possible," March said.

Your money or your cupcakes!

A mystery businessman offered a £220 (\$440) or 100 cupcake reward for anyone with information about a woman who went berserk in a bakers because her favourite sweet treat had sold out.

The unknown woman is alleged to have caused £400 worth of damage in front of her two young sons after being told that the Sweet Tooth fairy cakes she craved had sold out.

The damage was caused to Sugarswirlz cake shop in Cardiff, Wales.

Food prices fall in spring

Statistics NZ have reported that food prices fell slightly over in October with an overall decrease of 1.3%. The most significant decreases during October were for lettuce (down 37%), and tomatoes (down 29%). Cheese was down 4%. Significant price increases were seen from lamb (up 9%), and potatoes (up 8%). Bananas also increased in price and apples were 8% more expensive than in September.

Fruit and vegetable prices have fallen by 9% this year. Lower prices were recorded for tomatoes (29%), lettuce (35%), broccoli (40%), and avocados (52%). Since the beginning of the year coffee has increased by 19% and bread by 6%. Restaurant meals increased by 7%.

Big choux to fill

In a feat of massive proportions, Original Cream Puffs and the Wisconsin Bakers Association (WBA) set the Guinness World Record for the world's largest cream puff during the 2011 Wisconsin State Fair in Milwaukee.

"It's not something I ever hope to have to do again," laughs Dave Schmidt, Certified Master Baker and executive director of the WBA.

After much trial and error, the temperamental pâte à choux was baked for 6.5 hours at 205°C in a deck oven converted to propane gas. It took Schmidt and a fellow team member 45 minutes to carefully split the shell without cracking it before filling the pastry with whipped cream made from 57 litres of cream. The record-setting cream puff was almost a metre wide, 200 mm high and weighed 57 kg.

"It's really cool and one of those things you put on your resume as a highlight of your career – though it was the ugliest piece of pastry I've ever made in my life," Schmidt said.

NEW products

Satin Ice Rolled Fondant

Golden Bridge is pleased to announce Satin Ice Rolled Fondant is now available.



As America's leading rolled fondant cake icing, Satin Ice adds a satin-smooth, elegant finish to any cake and has a delicious mellow vanilla flavour.

Available in a variety of colours, Satin Ice makes it easy for you to achieve a consistent coloured icing, perfect for your application. Preferred for its ease of use, ability to be rolled super thin and not requiring any cornflour or icing sugar when rolling, Satin Ice ensures no drying out and wastage which saves you time and money.

Endorsed by leading cake decorators like Buddy Valastro (Cake Boss), Mercedes Strachwsky, Ron Ben-Israel and more, Satin Ice is a proven product which you can trust. Contact us on 0800 GO 4 GOLD for more information about where to buy and about our new cake decorating courses and demonstrations.

Putting the squeeze on

A new food preservation technique keeps food healthy without freezing, microwaves, high energy radiation, heat or chemicals. V M Balasubramaniam, a food engineer at Ohio State University, is subjecting food to some 6,000 times normal atmospheric pressure.

No ordinary pressure cooker can achieve such compression. Balasubramaniam employs a special pressure chamber originally designed to make industrial diamonds. He seals food in a plastic bag and drops it into a compartment filled with water. Pressure is applied progressively over a two-minute period. After five minutes the pressure is released. Dinner is served.

Something surprising happens to many foods when subjected to this sort of megapressure: nothing. The compression causes no odd tastes, textures, or appearances. Raw meat takes on a brownish tinge but solid, liquid, or gooey foods (such as potatoes and tomato sauce) or foods that are sliced flat (like ham or salmon) are none the worse for wear. Bacteria stay perfectly intact too – except that they are quite dead. The process is known as ultra high-pressure processing (UHP) and is being commercialised now.

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Gary Cameron considers

The good old days (yeah right)



In the early days of the Baking Society (as the BIANZ was called) a large proportion of the executive committee work was the National Bakers' Award negotiations between the bread bakers (ourselves representing the employers) and the union, representing the bakers and, separately, the cake shop assistants. The baker negotiations were held in Wellington while the cake shop assistants' awards were negotiated in Christchurch.

The Wellington meetings could last from two to five days. Their length was due in part to the union getting some government subsidies for travel and accommodation, which meant they could hold meetings at little cost to themselves, so speed was not an issue. But with Norman West, our ever-attentive national secretary, keeping a beady eye on us regarding our expenses, we certainly wanted to get things tidied up as soon as possible.

These meetings were a bear pit. The meeting room held a long table and we sat on one side with the facilitator waiting at the head for the union people to appear. (They always came in late.)

The union organisers would troop in, dump a bundle of documents on the table saying these are our demands, and that would set the tone for the day.

After a quick skim through and comments from both sides, usually heated and mostly unpleasant, we would retreat to our appointed room to dissect the 30 to 40 clauses one-by-one and write up our responses to each demand. A lot of these were window-dressing niggles but some were serious and had to be worked through.

The mostly serious usually was the percentage increase in wages which both sides were aware would be in the 4%–7% range. But if the union claimed say 20% we would offer 3% and so it went on day after day.

The talks were not helped by some antics in the workplace. For example an award clause stated that the company shall provide hot water, tea, milk and sugar. So one smart-ass boss stated that hot water was available in the tap and if his staff wanted boiling water he suggested they buy their own jug. With friends like that ...

And we spent hours over whether coffee should be supplied. As employers, most of us did but some members would fight not to include this. So it went on and on, fighting over petty things.

Many other silly things were done and all they achieved was to give the union ammunition to throw at us. And rightly so. One large bakery created a system with toilet rolls. Each employee was issued with a roll on Monday and if it was used before the

next Monday the employee had to take the core tube to the office and sign for a new one. Great staff relations.

But some in the union were just plain feral. If you gave them a Rolls Royce it would be the wrong colour.

Having personally been called a wealthy grasping Boss and accused of sending kids down coal mines and up chimneys and other unspeakable acts, I took exception and attempted to reach over and remonstrate with this clown. For this I got a yellow card and a coffee break from the facilitator.

Meal money was another hot topic. It was usually paid after two hours overtime. Ray Walker, our president, reckoned that many employees dragged out the hours, held their hands out for the pay then sneaked off eating our pies and rolls.

Under the National Awards system, demarcation was rife. Shop assistants were not allowed to help in the bakery, drivers were not allowed to pack orders, and so on. It created a them-and-us mentality and made it very hard to build a team atmosphere.

The National Awards system also meant that if you had an exceptional baker you had to be creative to pay him (always him) above award rates without having to also pay the same to a baker who turned

up three or four days a week to eat lunch.

The Cake Shop Assistants were a mixed bunch. At one meeting in Christchurch the union lady had a rough day with us. Getting a bit flustered she came back to the room and accepted a 4% offer which she had previously rejected when the offer on the table was 5.2%. A stunned silence then André Glenn (I think it was) said quietly "sign the bloody document QUICK!"

As an aside, one of the toughest union organisers and I sat on the New Zealand Apprenticeship Committee for years and he was brilliant at working for and helping young people in our trade and we managed without a cross word between us.

Just another part of the good old days. Not all good. Not all bad. Same as today really.

Cheers

Gary

PS Congratulations to the executive committee, Heaven's Bakery, competitors and attendees at the Napier conference. A very good show. Well done Guys and Girls. The future looks good.

Bulletproof your Business

Craig Rust, bakery owner and business consultant, looks at how to survive current threats and uncertainties.



Craig Rust
Business Innovators

Is your business bulletproof? Operating a business in the current economy creates a large number of issues which must be confronted immediately just to survive, let alone grow.

If we reflect on the last 18 months in business we have had to navigate a global economic crisis, a national economic crisis and then some natural and un-natural disasters.

However, on the bright side, interest rates have come down to a very low level, we have run a very successful rugby world cup, showcased our amazing country, and then to cap it all the All Blacks won the cup.

So what does this all mean for us as business owners? We are operating our businesses in a very uncertain economic period where we must be ready to change daily and get back to basics.

If we get the basics right we will survive this short period of uncertainty and then be in a position to capitalise on the good times ... when they arrive.

Let's have a look at some key business basics we need to get right:

- ★ Have a written business plan
- ★ Set financial budgets and targets (sales and profit)
- ★ Define your key target market
- ★ Refine your brand
- ★ Develop an effective team
- ★ Document your business systems and procedures
- ★ Start to work on your business rather than in it.

I know these are all things we have heard before but how many of us have actually invested the time to develop and maintain these in our businesses? If we do not invest the time in developing these we will not get the returns in the future.

The most important fundamental mind-shift we must make is to start to be proactive in business rather than reactive. There are new opportunities which arise daily if we are looking, so get out there and try something new.

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Are pies improved?

by Kai Hong Tai
National Heart Foundation

A recent study of 31 mince pies produced by independent bakeries in Auckland showed they were more expensive, heavier and contained less fat and sodium per 100 grams of pie weight than pies sampled from the same bakeries in 2007 (see table below for details).

New Zealanders consume a total of 70 million pies each year. In 2007, fat and sodium contents in sampled mince pies were above The Pie Group's criteria for fat which is 10% and for sodium 350 mg/100 g, respectively.

In order to reduce a pie's contribution of fat and sodium to diets and to increase the availability of healthier options of pies in the local community, The Pie Group developed the 'How to Make Better Pies' guidelines in 2010.

Average	2007	2011
Price	\$2.10	\$2.70
Pie Weight (g)	216	242
Fat (g/100 g)	14.8	11.9
Sodium(mg/100 g)	516	392

healthier pies has also been promoted through media, food trade magazines and Baking Expos.

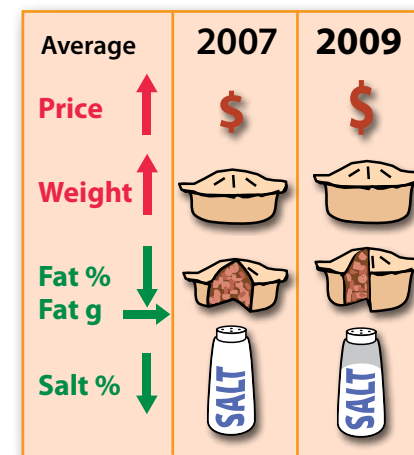
To reduce the total fat content in a pie, reducing only the fat ratio is not sufficient as pie size also needs to be reduced.

For example, one of the sampled pies had reduced its fat ratio from 15.2% to 11.3%, but had an increase in pie size from 220 grams to 295 grams. So, despite this considerable reduction in fat ratio, consumers still consume the same amount of fat (33 grams) from this pie.

Consuming too much of lower-fat foods can still add up to too many calories. A 200-gram portion-control pie should be considered. Reducing portion size coupled it with a price reduction can improve your profit as well.

The recent study's results are pleasing in that progress has clearly been made, particularly with reducing sodium, but it shows also that there is still quite a way to go, especially when it comes to reducing fat intake.

Pies have improved but they could be better still.



Salt levels drop in Kiwi bread

Kiwi bakers are leading trans-Tasman efforts to lessen sodium levels in bread according to a paper by researchers in Auckland and Sydney released in September. The researchers at The University of Auckland and the George Institute for Global Health revealed their findings in the Medical Journal of Australia.

Dr Helen Eyles from The University of Auckland's Clinical Trials Research Unit said: "Bread is the largest contributor to dietary sodium intake in both Australia and New Zealand, and excess sodium can cause blood pressure to rise over time, greatly increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease."

The study assessed the effectiveness of collaboration between the Australian Division of World Action on Salt and Health and the Heart Foundation in New Zealand with food manufacturers to voluntarily reduce sodium levels in breads between 2007 and 2010.

Nutrition information data was collected from packaged breads sold at Pak'n'Save and Foodtown/Countdown supermarkets in New Zealand, and Coles and Woolworths in Australia over the four-year period.

Findings showed the proportion of Australian bread products meeting the Australian maximum level target of 400mg/100g increased from 29% in 2007 to 50% in 2010. Despite this, there was no change in the average sodium concentration of all breads over that time.

In comparison, there were improvements in both the proportion of New Zealand bread products meeting the New Zealand Heart Foundation target and the overall mean sodium level in New Zealand breads.

In 2007 49% of breads met the Heart Foundation target; by 2010 this had risen to 90%.

Associate Professor Cliona Ni Mhurchu says: "With an average decrease of 30 mg/100 g in the sodium content of New Zealand breads over the past four years, there is likely to have been a small but important drop in the amount of sodium consumed by New Zealanders.

"On the whole, our data shows that while non-government organisations' engagement with the food industry can have some positive impact in lowering sodium there remains substantial room for further improvement and a need for continued action with greater involvement by more sectors of the food industry.

Associate Professor Cliona Ni Mhurchu added: "Strong government leadership has been a central feature of the successful ongoing salt reduction programmes abroad, such as in the UK, Finland, the United States and Canada."

Events calendar

What	When	Where
36th Winter Fancy Food Show North America's largest specialty food and beverage marketplace	16-18 January 2012	San Francisco, USA
Sigep 33rd International Exhibition for artisan production of gelato, pastry, confectionery and bakery.	21-25 January 2012	Rimini, Italy
Gulfood Exhibition	20-23 February 2012	Dubai, UAE
EUROPEAN & INTERSUC	3-7 March 2012	Paris
Hokitika Wildfoods Festival	10 March 2012	Hokitika
Bakery China	10-12 May 2012	Shanghai New International Expo Centre
Gluten Free Food & Allergy Show	9-10 June 2012	ASB Show-grounds Auckland
fine NEW ZEALAND food	17-19 June 2012	ASB Show-grounds Auckland
BAKING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND Bakenz 2012 Bakery of the Year Competition Weston Milling Trainee of the Year Competition BIANZ Annual Conference	17-19 June 2012	ASB Show-grounds Auckland
iba World Market for Baking	16-21 September 2012	Munich

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Café goods price survey

This survey was run via the internet from late October to mid-November 2011. A total of 31 cafe-bakeries took part, 13 in the South Island, seven in the major centres, the rest in provincial centres and smaller towns.

The two major events of the year have been the Christchurch earthquake and the Rugby World Cup tournament. Strangely, the Rugby World Cup, while hardly a disaster, had little or no reported good effect on cafes and some even suffered as it disrupted normal business.

The Christchurch earthquakes seem to have affected insurance costs nationwide.



Comments

Participants were asked to comment on business in general or this survey in particular.

“Bloody tough at the moment. Despite three RWC matches in town no appreciable increase in business.

“Sales definitely down on last year and the Rugby World Cup really did nothing for us, a small influx on days either side of games in Invercargill, but tourism numbers in general way down on previous years during the period of the World Cup and up until this week. Just starting to see more tourists now.

“RWC meant that customer count was down, local regular customers were not shopping with us. It was the same effect as a Lotto jackpotting but going for six weeks. Business overall is flat. No growth is recorded. Customer spend has stayed constant, just not the volume. Prices are tight. Margins are small. Getting good staff still hard.

“Still bloody tough, good to see some price decreases in cheese, butter, milk, sugar will help..

“Very easy survey, only took 1 minute of my time. :)

“This survey has been a great indication of pricing – especially separating the North and South Islands.

“Taranaki still good for us. No real decline here.

“Business is great, only one week on from the footy and no sign of slowing down at either site.

“Very fickle but should be right after the election. RWC didn't have any spin-off at all if not a decrease.

“Business better now than six months ago. Tourists through on a regular basis appears to be improving again. The insurance cost though! Especially for older buildings, astronomical. Overheads are a lot higher than 12 months ago. Have to keep an eye on costings and keep prices up as much as possible.

Survey thanks to:

Ambrosia Patisserie & Bakery
Andres Pies
Arrowtown Bakery/Cafe
Artisan by Rangiora Bakery
Batemans
Blanchfields Bakery
Breads of Europe Limited
Buttercup Bakery & Cafe
Copenhagen Bakery
Coro Pies
Dads' Pies Ltd
Darfield Bakery
Eats Cafe & Bakery
Fiordland Bakery
Jackson Bakery
Kapiti Cakes And Bakery
KB's bakery
Kiss and Bake Up Ltd
Lens Pies/Rob's Hot Bread Shop
Marlow Pies
Nada Bakery
Oslers Bakery
Paris Berlin Organic Bakery
Rob's Patisserie
Sugar and Spice Bakery
Sydenham Bakery Limited
Ten O'clock Cookie Bakery Cafe
The Bakery
The Famous Sheffield Pie Shop
The Little Cake Kitchen
Waikanae Hot Bread

Survey participant prize draw: The Christmas hamper goes to Darfield Bakery.

Product	Average	Median	Highest	Lowest
Caramel slice or similar	\$2.91	\$3.00	\$4.50	\$1.40
Mince savoury	\$1.78	\$1.80	\$3.00	\$0.60
Packet of shortbread	\$5.79	\$5.50	\$8.75	\$2.80
Club sandwich	\$3.49	\$3.35	\$6.00	\$1.60
Slice of cheesecake	\$4.40	\$4.65	\$6.50	\$1.40
Vegetarian muffin	\$3.28	\$3.50	\$5.00	\$1.65
A fruit tart	\$3.86	\$3.88	\$5.50	\$2.50
Decorated gingerbread man	\$2.98	\$3.00	\$4.50	\$1.00
American brownie	\$3.11	\$3.15	\$4.50	\$0.90
Piece of carrot cake	\$4.01	\$3.80	\$6.50	\$2.20
Biscotto	\$1.89	\$2.00	\$2.50	\$1.17
Mini-quiche	\$3.90	\$4.00	\$5.50	\$1.80
Hot cross buns each (2012)	\$1.67	\$1.50	\$4.00	\$0.80
Most popular cooked breakfast	\$14.22	\$14.50	\$19.90	\$6.50
Hot chocolate	\$4.05	\$4.00	\$5.50	\$3.20
Smoothie	\$5.08	\$5.00	\$6.20	\$4.00
Flat white espresso	\$3.90	\$3.90	\$4.50	\$3.20
Branded bottled water 750ml	\$3.26	\$3.20	\$4.20	\$2.20

Notes: Some responses were so radically out of line that they were eliminated as probably erroneous. One Christchurch business that is currently closed because of the earthquakes gave prices they would expect to be charging. Median prices are often a better indication of what is typical than the mean average.

New Products

Participants were asked what new products they have introduced in the last year.

Teza iced tea
Wild berry doughnuts
Several varieties of meat pies
Traveller pie – oblong shape similar to sausage roll
Pide sandwich
Christmas stollen
Packs of mini-donuts
Brioche
Sourdoughs
Spinach and silverbeet filo with cream cheese
Sushi
Rugby supporters' pie – venison portobello
Seafood chowder
World cup pies
Various fruit pies
Bacon baskets (gluten free)
Frozen unfinished cakes, sponges
Fugli doughnuts
Artisan breads
Chocolate chunk cookie

A comparison

The last survey of these goods and sorts of businesses was in November 2008. Cafe goods prices have risen an average of 13 percent over that period.

Product	2011 Ave	2008 Ave
Caramel slice	\$2.91	\$2.46
Mince savoury	\$1.78	\$1.68
Packet of shortbread	\$5.79	\$5.30
Club sandwich	\$3.49	\$2.48
Cheesecake slice	\$4.40	\$3.77
Vegetarian muffin	\$3.28	\$2.84
Fruit tart	\$3.86	\$3.87
Decorated gingerbread man	\$2.98	\$2.68
American brownie	\$3.11	\$2.92
Carrot cake	\$4.01	\$3.38
Mini quiche	\$3.90	\$3.45
Hot cross bun	\$1.67	\$1.55
Most popular cooked breakfast	\$14.22	\$12.55
Hot chocolate	\$4.05	\$3.63
Bottle of branded water	\$3.26	\$3.14

Cooked breakfast

Answers to the questions “What is your most popular cooked breakfast and what price is it?”

Poached eggs on rye:	\$17.00	Bacon and eggs with toast:	\$11.00
Eggs Benedict (3 cafes):	\$16.50	Full bacon and eggs:	\$14.50
(with bacon)	\$12.60	Eggs, bacon, sausage, mushroom, tomato, onions:	\$15.00



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Does success have fewer ingredients?

Is the smaller number of ingredients in artisan bread behind the consumer trend away from sliced white?

Cynthia Daley takes a look

The city

Ah, fresh white sliced bread. You just can't beat it, right?

Well it seems many consumers would beg to differ. Sales of packaged white bread are declining while sales of artisan breads are rising.

I visited two very different operations to find out why this is happening and how they have bought into this changing market.



Teresa and Paul work the dough

It's 6am in Freeman's Bay, Auckland, and at Victoria Park New World a handful of bakers are just starting their day, rather later than most bakers. That is because their product sells best when freshly baked and even still warm.

Eight months ago, under the guidance of longtime BIANZ member Paul Hansen, the supermarket opened its artisan specialty bread section offering small batches of European-style bread baked on demand throughout the day.

Using a sourdough starter developed by Champion Flour's Mike Turlej, the bakery produces a minimum of five traditional loaves and buns (pain au levain, variations of flavoured batard, ciabatta, half baguette, sourdough grain and seed, and pavé), increasing the selection on busier week-days and the weekend.

Artisan bread making is technically challenging, says Paul. The process is slower than for "ordinary" breads because a longer fermentation – up to 72 hours in controlled conditions – is required to mature the flavours.



Suril with the finished baguettes

The dough goes through more hands-on work with three stages of storing and turning, and its delicate structure can easily be affected by atmospheric conditions. Therefore in training the bakers, who learn every aspect of the bake, Paul says it was important to be very specific in detail. "The challenge is to get the same product and the same quality every time. They need to understand the dough; when you get it right the dough talks to you."

Paul describes artisan bread as 'clean label' due to the small number of ingredients

required. While a typical bulk-produced white loaf contains about 11 ingredients including 'number' ingredients, the pain au levain has seven ingredients. That is part of its appeal.

Paul also points out that our culture is moving to a more European-style of dining and this is reflected in the seasonal changes in the bread sold at Victoria Park New World – heavier breads are popular in winter for accompanying soups and casseroles, bread for sandwiches, barbecue fare and brunches is more popular as the weather warms up.



Rhonda packs the bread

Paul's advice to anyone considering adding artisan bread to their range is: "Understand your market and recognise what your customer wants and what you can tempt them with."

The town

In Pukekohe, a township south of Auckland, baker Albert Psaros has recently opened Albert's Kitchen, a retail outlet for his artisan bread which he aims to develop into a specialty foodstore.



Albert's Kitchen – Mukesh and Albert hand form the loaves.

The bread is baked overnight away from the shop and then sold wholesale to Auckland cafes, restaurants, specialty foodstores, farmers' markets and now his own outlet.

Originally an IT specialist, Albert came to New Zealand from the UK in 2002 with his family and discovered the bread here was "horrible".

Albert comes from a Greek family. His father was a restaurateur, so Albert grew up around food and knowing what good bread should taste like. After all, Greeks eat more bread than any other culture. "And everything about Greek culture revolves around the kitchen really, it's all about food." Back in the UK, Italian and French influences too meant a good supply of quality artisan bread.

Albert says when considering the bakery, it wasn't going to be enough to just make a good product. "It had to be made really well, it had to taste exquisite."

He developed his own sourdough starter and uses a long fermentation period,

usually 48 hours, to allow the dough to mature and the lactobacilli probiotic bacteria to add flavour and improve proving quality.

The hands-on operation takes around 12 hours for Albert and his assistant baker, Mukesh, to produce the next day's order. Currently they produce 20 different loaves – some seriously artisan like seed loaves and pain au levain, others with broader appeal such as his garlic focaccia.

Albert sees himself as the innovator who drives the business through his passion for quality good food; his point of difference is authenticity and his adventurous ideas for products.

He wants people to feel comfortable in his shop and get to know the baker. "The way we set up Albert's Kitchen was really important. We priced our bread to be accessible because we didn't want to put people off by being exclusive. That's really important because we are a working ordinary family ourselves so we made quality our point of difference, not price."



Albert's Kitchen breads.



Albert with wife Adrienne and two of their five children, son Zac and daughter Hope.

Consumer needs and expectations

Both bakeries in this article researched their market demographics before going artisan.

They looked at:

- **Cultural make up of the area.** Albert Psaros found a lot of German and Dutch people in Pukekohe who would travel as far as the North Shore for German-style bread.
- **Its economy.** Paul Hansen found that people in the trendy Victoria Park New World catchment were already buying artisan bread, so to encourage them to buy it at the New World bakery the price had to be competitive.
- **Who their competition was?**
- **How people already bought artisan bread** – as a treat for the weekend or as a regular staple.
- **The time of day most bread sold.** At Victoria Park New World, people start buying bread and products such as croissants as soon as the supermarket opens. The aroma of fresh-baked bread and the theatre of seeing the breadmaking attract impulse sales throughout the day.
- **What the consumer is looking for.** Both bakeries know quality is essential but it is also important that the bread contains only natural ingredients.

Paul has seen an increase in demand for seasonal bread and has had requests for slicing the bread.

Albert offers a range of serious artisan breads and others with broader appeal. He creates uniquely flavoured breads that no-one else is doing and people love their point of difference.
- **How they can extend their market.** Victoria Park New World supplies to its deli for making sandwiches, sells to some cafes, sells packs of bread/buns, and uses its website to get customer feedback and suggestions.

Albert provides tastings, sells wholesale and at farmers' markets, and introduces consumers to his bread through stalls at family event days at local schools. He intends to keep extending his range of bread and also add some Greek festive baked goods.

Milk's *leap* towards immortality

Why a small amount of good cheese is better than a hunk of junk.

By Belinda Jeursen

Photo by Hilary Lakeman

Stilton, Munster, Roquefort, Pont l'Évêque, Wensleydale, Emmentaler, Gruyere, Gouda, Caerphilly, Raclette, Brie, Camembert – sweet, sour, nutty, hard, soft, crumbling, smooth, creamy, blue, strong, mild – it's hard to believe all these unique products all start out as milk.

Cheese in its various forms has been part of the human diet in most parts of the world for a very long time. Sadly, cheese making went through a low patch in the last century with increased mechanisation, legislation, changed farming methods and pasteurisation.

In New Zealand and much of the old British Empire, cheese was cheddar and cheddar was cheese, in two flavours: mild or tasty. That was that. Processed and blue cheese appeared in the 1950s, then in the 1960s plastic wrapping and the bigger block appeared along with supermarkets. But it wasn't until about the 1980s that other varieties of cheese could be imported in any quantity, extending our knowledge and taste.

Luckily for us cheese addicts, there's been a real surge in the art of cheese making lately in Europe and here in New Zealand. A large assortment of very fine cheeses are now made all over

the country and are readily available everywhere, from speciality stores to supermarkets.

Old methods for cheese making are being revived and there is renewed focus on hand-made products that are allowed to mature and develop flavour and character. Like bread making, cheese making is becoming a popular hobby, with mixed success, and there are courses and kits galore at the moment.

The cheesemonger's advantage

As a point of interest, a cheesemonger buys and sells cheeses. They specialise in the art of affinage or cheese maturing – they do not make cheese themselves but buy it from the makers and ripen it to its optimum state for eating. Some cheeses can be sold immediately while others may be first ripened for up to two years.

Buying cheese directly from a cheese maker or cheesemonger rather than off the shelf has a number of advantages. You can sample the cheese before you buy, ask for exactly the amount you require, and it is freshly cut rather than having been stored in plastic for an unknown length of time.

The cheese maker or cheesemonger will

also be able to answer any questions you have and make recommendations.

Café offerings

Sometimes the best meals are the simplest ones, and good cheese can be the basis of a variety of excellent café offerings. Here are some ideas for serving cheese as part of your menu:

A cheese platter – as a light lunch or antipasto. Serve it with cured meats, pickles, dried or fresh fruit or nuts.

A ploughman's lunch – a good cheddar or other hard English cheese, served with pickled onions, fresh, crusty white bread, a dark-malt-vinegar-based chutney such as Branston Pickle, and even a small side salad to make it go further.

Cheese as a dessert – oatcakes served with a selection of hard, soft and blue cheeses and sweet condiments such as quince paste. (See my recipe in this issue for oatcakes.)

Filled rolls – Sarah Aspinwall of Canterbury Cheesemongers says, "Make cheese the star in a filled roll or sandwich. If you are using good cheese, don't overwhelm it with other fillers – just lettuce, tomato and ham is enough."

Of course, cheese is also used as a filling and topping in many other items sold in bakeries and cafés – scones, tarts, pies, quiches, twists, muffins. Using a good quality cheese appropriate to the product makes a big difference to the taste of the end product.

Making it work for you

If you do want to serve cheese in your café or bakery:

- You will need to keep in stock at least one of each of a hard, soft and blue cheese. You can offer a platter with all three or just the preferred cheese.
- Buy smaller amounts of cheese more often so that it remains fresh and appealing. It is worth finding a good cheese supplier who understands your needs. They can probably keep large amounts of cheese better than you can in specially humidified conditions to prevent it from drying out.
- Some cheese is seasonal so you need to be flexible in your choices. Goat's cheese is prevalent in spring and summer while the harder cheeses are more available in winter.
- Identify a member of staff who loves cheese and is prepared to take responsibility for looking after it. Teach them to trim the cheese if it gets "tired" and scrappy, but don't waste the trimmings – you can use them in tarts, cheese twists, scones etc.
- Find a local supplier and buy local cheeses if you can – this is a great selling point and ensures the cheese is in peak condition when you buy it. If you can't buy the cheese you want direct, find a distributor in your area.
- Keep the cheese you buy in a poly box or cardboard box in the same area of your fridge as the vegetables

to take advantage of the humid environment. Keep it well wrapped in wax wrap or preferably baking paper, and then cling film or foil.

- Cheese is best served at room temperature. This can be a challenge when you have no idea how many people are likely to order it. Take out enough for just one or two servings or what you think you might need. Don't get the whole lot out to warm up.
- If you run out and are in a rush to warm cheese up quickly, leave it in a warm part of the kitchen for five minutes before serving. It should never be served straight from the fridge.
- Remember that soft and blue cheese should not be served to pregnant women or those with compromised immune systems such as the sick or very elderly as they could be affected by listeria monocytogene and e-coli. However, hard cheese, including unpasteurised hard cheeses, can be safely eaten by anyone.

Good cheese isn't cheap, but a small amount of well made cheese has more flavour and goes further than cheap tasteless mass produced cheese.

If the price of imported cheeses makes you or your customers wince, buy local.

There are some brilliant cheeses being made in New Zealand. Any market or deli worth its salt will sell locally-made cheeses that are suitably priced and usually delicious.

The New Zealand Specialist Cheesemakers Association has a very useful website with lots of information about cheese and a list of members all over New Zealand, making it very easy to find a local maker and/or supplier. See www.nzscs.org.nz

Photo by Hilary Lakeman

Types of cheeses – a basic guide

Fresh white cheeses: the simplest kind of cheese with a soft, smooth or curdy texture e.g. kwark, goats' curd.

Bloomy rind cheeses: have a soft white covering e.g. Camembert, Brie.

Washed rind cheeses: always smell stronger than they taste, and range from mild to very strong in taste, washed in brine or wine (or alcohol)

and turned to develop a slightly reddish, moist exterior e.g. Munster, Livarot, Pont-l'Évêque, Kapiti Ramara.

Hard Cheeses: Vary from sweet nutty Dutch and Swiss-style to the savoury and crumbly English-style cheeses. Cheddar is the most well known of these; other examples are Gouda, Edam, Cheshire, Gruyere, Emmentaler. Also sheep and goat mountain cheeses such as Feta from the Southern Mediterranean.

Blue cheeses: Roquefort is the most famous of these. Also Stilton, Gorgonzola, and good old New Zealand blue under various labels. Often creamy texture but sometimes hard and crumbly, and usually quite strong tasting cheese with blue veins running through it.

Sharp bitter taste indicates a blue cheese is under-ripe – you are looking for sweetness here.

Growing industry skills is our priority

Competenz
SKILLS FOR INDUSTRY

Competenz training update

As a key part of its efforts to improve the number of people training in and completing baking qualifications, industry training organisation Competenz has appointed **Peter Rood** in its newly-created Baking Specialist role.



Peter Rood

Here's a quick word from Peter on his new role, industry experience, and projects he is currently overseeing to support industry growth.

Hi everyone

Right now I'm a few months into my role working with all baking sector stakeholders, and I'm loving it. It's my job to plan and implement strategies to help industry meet its current and future skills gaps.

Recently Competenz research showed eight percent more skilled bakers are currently needed in industry, and that gap is set to grow unless we plan now to get more young people entering this trade, especially at the apprentice level.

This is where I come in. I'm here to ensure Competenz gains a better understanding of where it should focus to get more people working in the baking trade, completing their qualifications, and being equipped with the skills needed by the industry.

I'm a fifth-generation baker and 35 people in my family have enjoyed fulfilling careers in baking over the last 120 years. I personally have enjoyed close to 25 years in this industry, both here and abroad.

Throughout my baking career I've trained and assessed many apprentices, and I'm really committed to ensuring we're better equipped to grow this industry with more skilled, passionate young bakers.

I started out in my father's bakery – Dorothy's Patisserie in Cuba Street, Wellington. After completing my craft

baking apprenticeship there, I travelled across Europe honing my skills further working in hotels and patisseries, and eventually specialising as a chef de partie.

More recently, I ran my own business – Rembrandt's Patisserie and Chocolaterie in Remuera, Auckland. Before starting with Competenz I was a

chef tutor at the Auckland Hotel and Chef School.

I really believe in lifelong learning, so I'm also currently completing my graduate diploma in tertiary teaching to complement my training advisory, assessment, and advocacy of all things baking.

My focus right now is on what current employers and learners have to say about the training they're involved or engaged in. At the grassroots this will mean more engagement with high schools to improve the vocational training pathway from school into industry-based training and baking careers.

I welcome anyone involved in the baking industry to contact me any time to discuss any training-related matters that will help us to grow our skill base.

Baking Apprenticeship Survey

A survey is currently underway to gather your feedback on the baking apprenticeship system. All BIANZ members will be contacted and given the chance to share your views, so we can assess your employers' needs and wants to make the baking apprenticeship training system even better.

We're also keen to find out what your future staffing needs might look like and how this should influence the development of apprentice training, to meet your current and future skills needs.

An independent research company, New River, is conducting this survey on behalf

of Competenz. We'll collate the results and share the key findings with you all as soon as we can.

Everyone who takes part in the online survey will go into the draw to win a copy of Julie Le Clerc's book *Favourite Cakes*, plus a case of wine – thank you in advance for your contributions.

Skills for Growth encourages apprentice training.

Skills for Growth is a Ministry of Social Development initiative to invest in the upskilling of young employees aged 16 to 24 years. Employers can be eligible to receive \$5,000 towards the costs of training new permanent young employees to industry standards, which is paid out as follows:

- \$1,000 when the young person has a confirmed job and a training plan is developed
- \$3,000 after 13 weeks' work and training
- \$1,000 at the completion of 12 months' employment, provided the employee is still working towards achieving the qualification identified in their training plan.

To qualify, employers must commit to supporting the young person to achieve a Level 2 or higher qualification on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework, and able to employ them for the full duration of their training.

Baking apprenticeships are linked to a Level 4 qualification, so employers who are interested in this opportunity should automatically qualify.

If you've been thinking about taking on a new apprentice and could do with some financial support to make it happen, feel free to contact me and we'll help get you started.

Peter Rood – Baking Specialist
Competenz
Ph: 09 539 9869
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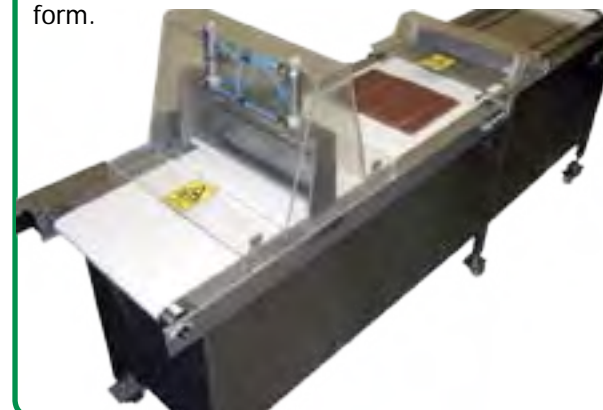
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The team at Agnew Engineering Services wish all our friends in the baking industry a great Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.



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Cocoa rush

THE CHINA SYNDROME

Higher prices likely to stay as demand outstrips supply

Hundreds of millions of new consumers in Asia and elsewhere are boosting demand for chocolate cakes, biscuits, drinks and ice cream. This is increasing demand for cocoa, but it is also changing the cocoa market, according to a special report from Reuters.

When a cocoa bean is processed it makes roughly equal parts butter and powder. The butter goes into melt-in-your-mouth products, as well as soaps and cosmetics. The powder is used in cakes, biscuits and drinks.

Until recently, suppliers had so much extra powder it was sometimes burned in boilers as a fuel. But over the last two years, powder prices have more than doubled; grinders can barely keep up.

"In recent years powder demand has definitely outpaced butter demand, which has been based on the fact that most of the applications in emerging countries are powder-based," Jos de Loor, managing director of cocoa and chocolate at U.S. agribusiness Cargill, told Reuters.

Global chocolate sales rose 2 percent to \$US83.2 billion in 2010, according to market research firm Mintel. This was helped by growth in places such as China, where sales rose 21 percent to \$US976 million, and Indonesia -- the biggest chocolate-eaters in South East Asia -- where sales climbed 26 percent to \$US888 million.

Importantly, it was demand for powder which rose fastest. Singapore-based Petra Foods Limited, the world's third-largest supplier of cocoa ingredients, estimates annual global cocoa butter consumption is now between 900,000 and 1 million tonnes, an increase from 850,000-900,000 tonnes two years ago. Demand for powder has risen faster, to 1.1-1.2 million tons from 800,000-850,000 two years ago.

"In the past, emerging markets grew a lot but they were very small, so they didn't affect the world market that much," says Marcelo Melchior, head of confectionery at Nestle SA, the world's biggest food group. "But now they are gaining critical mass and are continuing to grow, so it's influencing the total market."

In some ways, the cocoa business is turning full circle. Chocolate first came to Europe from Latin America as a drink. Since 1828, when the Dutch worked out how to extract cocoa butter, chocolate products like bars, pralines and pastilles have been in the ascendant.

People in North America and western Europe have been eating solid chocolate for more than a hundred years since it was sold to the public in mid-1800s Britain.

Now emerging markets -- particularly in Asia -- are driving a taste for lighter treats.

"If you consider eastern Europe and Latin America, the markets are much more established in the cocoa taste than in Asia," Nestle's Melchior told Reuters. "Culturally people are not as used to this flavour."

Sweet tooth

You can plot the two-speed cocoa economy on a map. In the rich world, growth in chocolate sales is in the single digits according to Nestle. A bar of chocolate may be an affordable luxury, but it is proving less recession-proof than popular wisdom would have it.

In emerging markets, though, growth is well into the double digits. In many parts of Asia, Latin America and eastern Europe, consumers' first taste of chocolate is typically through milder products based on cocoa powder rather than chocolate bars.

"A Kit Kat can be considered a lot of chocolate for the consumers in some emerging markets while in Europe it's considered a lighter product," said Melchior.

Marc Donaldson, director of cocoa sustainability at Petra Foods, which has over 50 percent of the chocolate market in Indonesia, points out that powder products are "generally more within their budgets."

Melting moments

That could change. Higher prices for cocoa powder are probably here to stay. Global cocoa demand is on course to outstrip supply in 2011/12, as aging trees and a lack of investment in some of the world's top producers limit production. Cargill has said that with average annual cocoa demand growth of 2.5-3 percent -- around 100,000 extra tons of cocoa per year -- there are likely to be serious supply concerns in the next few years.

And it's powder that's poised to feel the squeeze most. Emerging market consumers might eventually develop a taste for richer, butter-based products, but that will take time. The hot climate, lack of widespread refrigeration and unreliable supply chains in a market such as India, for instance, make it a lot harder to keep butter-based products in good condition.

"In cooler climates such as in eastern Europe, consumers have migrated from powder products to chocolate confectionery. In warm places like Asia and the Middle East, the migration to chocolate probably will be much less because chocolate melts in your hand," Steven Haws, of cocoa research firm Commodities Risk Analysis told Reuters.

The melt-factor can change how a product is made. Nestle's Melchior says his company sometimes uses vegetable oil instead of cocoa butter in some markets, because it raises a product's melting point so it can be more widely distributed.

When Kraft Foods Inc bought British chocolate maker Cadbury in 2010, it gave the U.S. giant a foothold in India, where Cadbury was the largest confectioner. One of the first products Kraft launched there was Oreo biscuits -- a powder-based product.

Butter mountains

But it's more than a story of increased demand for cocoa powder. Earlier this year, fighting in top cocoa producer Ivory Coast ignited fears of supply disruptions, and cocoa prices rallied to their highest in 32 years in March.

Meanwhile the tough competitive environment for confectioners is hitting butter demand. Chocolate-makers have trimmed products to avoid having to pass on higher costs to consumers. Earlier this year Kraft quietly reduced the size of its Toblerone by one triangle and shrunk

the iconic Cadbury Dairy Milk bar by two squares to 120 grams.

"When a manufacturer reduces the size of a bar or the count in a bag, its action immediately reduces by a large amount the quantity of cocoa butter that the manufacturer buys," said analyst Haws.

He estimates a massive 150,000 tons of butter is stored around the world at present: working stocks are usually between 20,000 and 40,000 tons. As a general rule, powder and butter can both be stored for up to 18 months.

"Some people have suggested that butter will find other uses if its price falls to \$US1500 a ton. This might include replacing palm oil in some applications. However, that price is more than \$US1500 away," Haws said.

Cocoa locomotive

At the moment, just 10 percent of the world's cocoa is consumed in emerging markets, against 30 percent in North America and 40 percent in western Europe, according to Jonathan Parkman, joint head of agriculture at brokerage Marex Spectron.

But in the future emerging markets "will continue to be the locomotive of growth. Cocoa

demand has closely followed global GDP for over 50 years and we expect this to continue," said Petra Foods' Donaldson.

The cocoa business has already gone through enormous changes over the centuries, reflecting broad historical shifts. For instance, even though cocoa was originally found in South America, as Europeans consumed more they increasingly used their newly colonized lands in Africa to grow the crop. Since the start of the 20th century, Africa has been the world's biggest cocoa producer.

The swelling middle class in China have seen their choice explode in recent years. Li Peng Fei, a middle-school teacher in Beijing, loves "dark chocolate; Dove and Ferrero are my favorites. When I was a child, the variety of food in China was not as abundant as today. My mum would buy me some cheap candies made of chocolate with alcohol in them. Now I prefer to buy ice cream and we have more choices."

As she eats more chocolate, expect prices to rise and the way the industry works to change again.

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In addition the trip will offer an "add-on" at the front – a two night stop in San Francisco to visit the famous sourdough bread bakeries, as well as sightseeing in the exciting "City by the Bay". Messe Reps. & Travel are the representative of iba in New Zealand and are highly experienced at organising trips such as this to trade fairs in Europe and the US. They will ensure you get the best deals on travel and accommodation.

Whatever the size of your business there are numerous benefits to seeing a trade fair like this and travelling in the company of like-minded members of the baking industry. Ask anyone who has been to iba and they will tell you what a memorable experience it was and how it benefited their business. Visit the iba website for more information <http://www.iba.de/en/home/>

Look for more information in the next issue of Slice coming to you in February 2012 or contact the BIANZ office to register your interest.



Armin Werner (CEO German Bakers Confederation), Dieter Dohr (Chairman of the Board of GHM – organisers of iba), Brendan Williams and Belinda Jeursen (BIANZ), Peter Becker (President of German Central Bakery Association), and Robert Laing (Messe Reps. & Travel).



Commodity Report

from Brooke Holdings



Dried Fruits

The Turkish **sultana** crop suffered from rain during drying and although overall tonnage may not have been affected some quality deterioration occurred. As a consequence prices for Turkish sultanas rose but the general prognosis points to lower prices again after the Christmas demand abates.

Similarly US **raisin** prices are firmer reflecting a slower growing season and some rain during the drying period. The withdrawal of the export subsidy earlier in the year caused prices of US raisins to firm and uncertainty about continuing availability has caused prices to remain firm. However as with Turkish vine fruit, prices of US raisins could ease once Christmas demand finishes and concerns about ongoing availability abate.

Greek **currants** are on offer but prices are up by around 20 percent on last season. Many processors are unable to supply unless orders are prepaid which makes trading difficult.

Brooke Holdings is holding good stocks of choice grade South African currants at competitive prices. New Season's South African currants won't be available for shipment until April 2012.

Nuts

Cashews. This market is hard to read although recently prices eased slightly. Demand in Europe and America has dropped by around 10%–12% however demand from India and China is on the increase. Overall the market still remains static.

Almonds. A large crop in the US and if demand doesn't match availability prices should ease back. However September shipments were well up, indicating sustained strong demand at present. If demand falters we could see prices drop after Christmas.

Walnuts. Here demand is continuing to outstrip supply and consequently prices remain firm. The US walnut crop was late and bad weather affected quality resulting in offers from this source being limited. It is unlikely that there will be any hint of price relief until early in the new year.

Pecans. The US crop may be up slightly but the South African crop is down at less than 75% of expectation. Chinese demand for pecans continues and so prices remain high. However new plantings should see pecan prices drop. South Africa anticipates doubling its pecan crop in the next 2–3 years. Once the initial hype has evaporated, pecan prices should come down in 2012.

Pistachios. A disappointing crop in Iran coupled with a smaller crop in the USA has resulted in continuing firm prices – in the short term at least. It is estimated that the world supply of pistachios will be in the vicinity of 10%–15% lower this season although demand has taken a hit and so could counter the effects of the reduced availability.



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Cake decorators wow in Blenheim

by David Tossman

The work on display at the New Zealand Cake Decorators Guild conference in Blenheim in October would impress many a professional baker. The guild's 25th annual conference drew about 300 cake decorators from around the country to the Marlborough Convention Centre.

The New Zealand Cake Decorators Guild was formed in 1986 and is the parent body for 41 Cake Decorating Guilds and Clubs throughout New Zealand.

Current membership stands at 923, a number growing each month, and includes professionals, teachers and hobbyists.

The enthusiasm of members is borne out by the fact that 25-35% of the members attend the guild's Annual Conference weekends, held alternately in the South and North Islands.

Suppliers represented at the Blenheim event, including Bakels and Golden Bridge, had a field day with some massive orders from groups of these small operators. They do go through a heap of sugary stuff.

The set piece for this year's conference competition was a Casablanca lily. Guilds throughout the country entered in the hope of impressing the panel of judges.

The conference featured talks and demonstrations by Betty Debnam from Tasmania, Pam Archibald from Victoria, Raewin Kelly from Gisborne, and Toba Garrett from the Institute of Culinary Education in New York.

A 30-year veteran of the cake decorating industry, Ms Garrett said the calibre of cake decorations on display at the conference was extraordinary.

She told The Marlborough Express that cakes were becoming a fashion item, especially for brides, who often wanted their wedding cake to match their dress.

Reality TV shows such as Ace of Cakes and Cake Boss, which are set in bakeries specialising in cake decorating, had grown its popularity, she said.

Marlborough Guild president Frances Dalton-Hayward said Ms Garrett was one of her favourite decorators and she jumped at the chance to invite her.

Many of the items might be beyond most professionals, not because of the skill or equipment required but because the huge amount of time involved, including one can imagine much trial and error, would probably be impossible to charge for in a realistic commercial manner.

One can only gaze in wonder and admire some of this work, not only for its skill and ingenuity but also in many cases the imagination and creativity revealed.



Some of the Casablanca lilies in the set piece section



Marlborough themed cake by Joanne Holdaway. Note the sugarwork goblet.



Part of Waitakere's African themed work



Big boys' toys work from Wanganui



Joanna Holdaway with her icing-skate



Marvellous green-lipped mussels



A trophy on a largish scale



One of the many vineyard-themed plaques, this from the Nelson guild



The New Plymouth Guild's vineyard plaque

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by Roy West, Southern Hospitality

Danish for “to love”, Elske is a European-style bakery and patisserie and the latest addition to the Newmarket’s growing foodie precinct.

Elske’s artisan Danish and European offerings are the work of Michelin-star Danish pastry chef Kristina Jensen.

With 20 years experience as a pastry chef, Kristina has worked extensively throughout Europe, and describes her style as Danish-inspired European.

Kristina makes her own croissants. Not a lot of bakeries make their own here, and she starts her breads naturally with her own rye and grape starters, which she says gives them more flavour.

There’s no cutting corners with her pastry, which are all hand-made using real butter and meticulously folded layer upon layer. Piping is also done by hand.

Anyone pondering which to sample can also watch Kristina and her team hard at work in their kitchen next door, through a floor to ceiling glass wall. A nice touch, though most would be hard pressed to catch them for their 2am starts.

There was no cutting corners with equipment either. Elske has installed Revent equipment: a two-rack prover, a single rack oven and a two-deck oven.

“The equipment that we installed has been great. It is user friendly and helps us to keep costs down and quality high by producing a consistent product,” says Mark Tilson, Operations Director.

Visitors to the Kingdon Street site can choose to take away or eat-in at the front of house café, which also serves European breakfasts and lunch offerings in the form of French baguettes and sandwiches, and of course, good coffee.



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Confessions of a French Baker

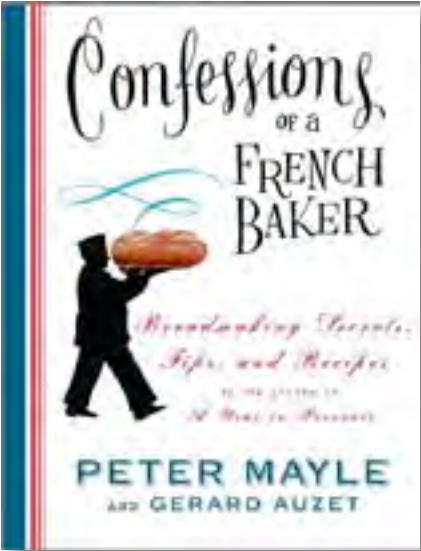
Peter Mayle Random House ISBN: 0-316-73015-7

Somewhere in the middle of this book Peter Mayle writes: "People who are truly expert at what they do tend to suffer from a disarming form of modesty."

Mayle is a great fan of French living and French bread, and in this book writes about one particular baker: Gerard Auzet from Cavaillon. You certainly pick up the admiration Peter has for Gerard, his products and his craft.

Furthermore, the over-the-top praise you find in so many cooking and baking books these days is missing, which makes it a pleasure the read right through the 120-odd pages.

It is a wonderfully varied read. We do get some very visual descriptions of the breads Gerard makes, the tools used (guess what is used to slash the baguettes), the boulangerie and the family history of bakers the Auzets have brought into this world.



It must have been an interesting life being a travelling baker in the later half of the 19th century, as Gerard's great-grandfather was.

Peter Mayle laces his book with other unusual historical facts. I loved his little spill on bakers who produced substandard bread in 14th century Avignon.

I bet if the penalty of removing most of the baker's clothes, binding them to their shop and encouraging the passers-by to hit them with a stick were still applied, the quality of bread in New Zealand would improve dramatically!

Besides history, Peter and Gerard introduce us to the rather interesting concept of 56, an important number in French bread baking. Why? You have to read the book.

We also get treated to a selection of recipes, all breads Gerard sells in his bakery. They may need a little tweaking before they can be made commercially, as all of them – whether plain, savoury, sweet or enriched – use the same ratio of yeast to flour and the same timings. This is my only negative point about this book.

I suspect Peter has changed some of the original work methods to make them somewhat more home-baker-friendly.

As a bonus at the end of the book there is a list of wine and bread matches so you can enjoy the fermented products in perfect combination.

What Einstein Told His Cook 2

Robert L. Wolke W. W. Norton & Co ISBN: 0-393-05869-7

This is another excellent book by Robert L. Wolke. He continues his scientific experiments with the same enthusiasm and humour as in his first volume of the same title.

If you ever wondered:

- Does eating ice cream in hot weather really cool one off?
- Why do onions make me really cry?
- What exactly are trans-fats?
- Should herbs be added at the beginning or the end of cooking?

... and much more, you get the answers from Robert in a readable, understandable and often humorous way.



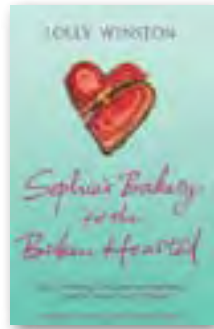
The chapters are only a few pages each and often have the bonus of a recipe or more information attached. All the questions explained come from Robert's column, *Food 101*, in the *Washington Post*. This is probably why the questions are so varied and the answers so readable.

I really enjoyed the explanation on why a stone base bakes better bread than a metal one. Most of us may have a fair idea why this is so, but read Robert's explanation (pages 395–397) and you may learn something new.

Sophie's Bakery for the Broken Hearted

Lolly Winston Arrow ISBN: 0-09-947145-0

Should you find time to relax at the beach (what?) and feel like reading for entertainment only, you may want to get hold of *Sophie's Bakery for the Broken Hearted*, advertised as "a stunning novel of love, grief and baking."



Be warned: the title promises more about bakery than the content delivers. You're halfway through the book before Sophie is even touching any food for commercial purposes and another few pages before she sets up her bakery. Once this is done you wonder if you want to emigrate to the States. It seems a rather relaxed place to run a bakery. If you're looking for inspiration for new products, a savoury-cheesy quiche is as far as the imagination of the author goes, so don't expect too much there either.

But if you are into how people cope with grief and joy, how people relate (or not) to each other, and if you enjoy seeing the world through other's eyes, you will find this book worthwhile. Sophie, a thirty-something woman from Silicon Valley, has to cope with her husband's death and find a way to deal with life in general again.

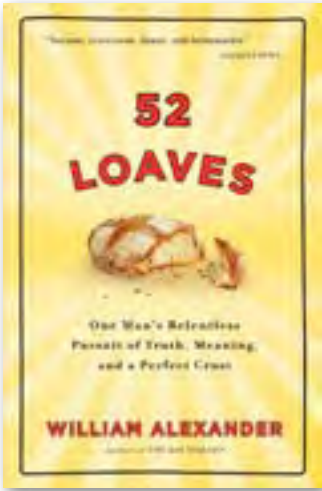
The beginning of the book focuses on Sophie's not-as-expected-from-society coping attempts. Then it moves on to her change of scene, initiated by the loss of her job. Finally she starts to come to terms with life. That's when the bakery is on its way. The book finishes in a rather Disneyish style.

52 Loaves
One Man's Relentless Pursuit of Truth, Meaning, and a Perfect Crust

William Alexander Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill 2010 ISBN 978-1-56512-583-4

I ordered this book online not knowing what to expect, but 52 *Loaves'* combination of obsessive bread making, philosophy and travel had me hooked. This is one man's mission to recreate a loaf of "peasant bread" he once tasted.

Despite not being a trained or even experienced home baker, or perhaps naively because of this, William Alexander decides he wants to bake bread from scratch, literally starting with growing his own wheat, and stopping at nothing until he has baked the perfect loaf.



And so he bakes the same loaf every week for a year, slowly refining his recipe. He grows wheat and makes his own flour – cue broken spades and frayed tempers.

He visits a yeast factory, takes lessons at the Ritz, enters a State fair competition, bakes in communal ovens, borrows starters, goes to a medieval French monastery, and builds an oven in his backyard – cue hernia and neck strain. His journey takes him from America to Morocco, Paris, Normandy and back again.

On a deeper level he wants to know why human beings respond so instinctively to the smell of freshly baked bread, and delves into every possible corner of bread making in the process – the history, the science, its cultural significance – and it is never boring.

The bread baking story is set against a backdrop of family, relationships and spiritual enquiry. It remains light hearted even though it deals with a lot of facts and some fairly weighty questions about life, the universe and everything.

A lot of the baking science will be old hat to seasoned bakers but his enthusiasm is infectious, his approach humble, and his telling of the tale highly amusing and startlingly honest – the story flies along from one misadventure to another.

What is most appealing though is how self-deprecating he is – there is never a hint of boasting here – only a real sense of achievement and joy when he gets it right, or consternation when he doesn't. It's not often an author is so likeable and anyone who has baked bread, professionally or not, will relate to his experiences.

Alexander captures precisely the fascinating blend of science, art, skill and instinct that makes baking so addictive and satisfying.

His book kept me awake until midnight on more than one occasion and my own little bread obsession has been reignited. Anyone for an imperfect baguette?

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- STEVEN SANTOROMITO, HEAD CHEF, GRAND HOTEL, SKYCITY AUCKLAND



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- PAUL JOBIN, EXECUTIVE CHEF - RESTAURANTS SKYCITY AUCKLAND



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Recipe

Vanilla Panna Cotta, Strawberries & Manuka Honey Tartlets



Recipes by Marcus Braun courtesy of Nestlé Professional

Manuka honey & Grand Marnier punching syrup

Ingredients

80 g	Manuka honey
30 g	Granulated sugar
180 g	Water
40 g	Grand Marnier

Method

1. Bring all of the ingredients to the boil and then simmer for 2 minutes.
2. Allow the syrup to cool before punching the cut discs of vanilla sponge.

Assembly

1. Blind bake chocolate sweet pastry tartlet cases.
2. Cut discs of vanilla sponge to fit inside the chocolate pastry cases leaving a 10mm edge to fit the sliced strawberries around the inside of the tartlet.
3. Fill each baked chocolate pastry tartlet case to halfway with the **NESTLÉ Panna Cotta** and pour the remainder of it into prepared moulds and set both of these in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour.
4. Punch the cut discs of vanilla sponge with the Manuka Honey & Grand Marnier Punching Syrup and place on top of the **NESTLÉ Panna Cotta** that has been set in the base of the chocolate tartlet cases.
5. Remove the set moulded **NESTLÉ Panna Cotta** from the moulds and place on top of the punched sponge discs - then decorate the tartlets with glazed sliced strawberries and garnish to suit.

NESTLÉ Panna Cotta dessert mix

Yields approx. 12 × tartlets

Ingredients

150 grams	NESTLÉ Panna Cotta dessert mix
500 ml	Cream
500 ml	Milk

Method

1. Bring the cream and milk to the boil.
2. Remove the milk and cream from the heat and whisk in the **NESTLÉ Panna Cotta dessert mix** until fully dissolved.
3. Pour into moulds and place into the refrigerator to set for at least 1 hour before turning out of the mould and serving.



Pass rounds



Café ideas from Barker's

These are great little items for groups and catering situations.

- 30 Van Dyck blinis *
- 50 g **Barker's Sundried Tomato & Olive Chutney**
- 10 Salami slices
- Garnish with coriander
- 50 g **Barker's Red Pepper & Chilli Jelly**
- 10 Lebanese cucumber slices
- 20 g **Barker's Lemon Curd**
- 40 g Mayonnaise
- 10 Mussels
- Lemon rind

Mix Barker's Lemon Curd with mayonnaise, top with a mussel and garnish with lemon rind.

* Barker's suggest using Van Dyck blinis, available from many suppliers nationwide. They keep well frozen. Alternatively you can make your own. See <http://bianz.co.nz/bakery-cakes-muffins/blinis.html> for a recipe.



Recipe

Baked Chocolate Cheesecake

Recipe from *Café Cakes* (2003) by Sue Zydenbos and Belinda Jeursen



Ingredients

Base	
Plain digestive biscuits	300 g
Butter	100 g
Castor sugar	25 g
Filling	
Softened Cream Cheese	500 g
Eggs – lightly beaten	2
Castor Sugar	280 g
Cocoa Powder	50 g
Vanilla Essence	5 ml

Topping	
Sour Cream	250 g
Castor Sugar	30 g
Vanilla Essence	2.5 ml

Decoration (optional)

Chocolate Hail
Cream

Method

1. Melt butter and stir in sugar. Crush biscuits and mix in.
2. Press into a 36 cm diameter spring form tin and chill. Blend cream cheese with castor sugar, beaten eggs, sieved cocoa and vanilla essence.
3. Pour onto base and bake at 170°C for 35 minutes or until firm.
4. Allow to cool.
5. Mix the sour cream, castor sugar and vanilla essence thoroughly and then pour over the filling.
6. Bake at 170°C for 10 minutes.
7. Allow to cool then decorate.



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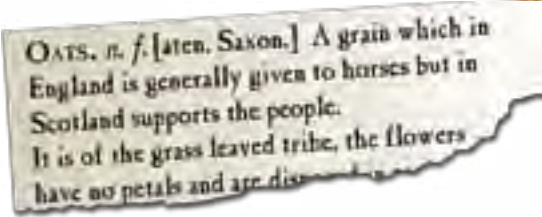
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Oatcakes

by Belinda Jeursen



Samuel Johnson, writing his dictionary 250 years ago, expressed a poor opinion of oats (and of Scots), and implied that oats were only good enough for horses – a serious lapse of judgement really because oatcakes are an excellent companion to cheese. Their plain but distinctive taste allows the full flavours of the cheese to come through and their slightly gritty texture provides a pleasing contrast with the creaminess of the cheese.

Oatcakes and a small selection of cheese make the basis of an uncomplicated but very satisfying café lunch, quick snack or dessert. Warmed oatcakes also go very well with jam or honey for breakfast.

Oatcakes are not just a Scottish thing – oats were popular in England, Ireland and Wales when fine white flour was still a luxury. Back then oatcakes were cooked on a griddle, set next to the fire to harden then stored in a barrel of oatmeal, airtight containers not being freely available at the time.

Traditional Scottish oatcakes are baked in a flat circle which is then cut into quarters or triangles, but they can be made in any shape and size using a biscuit cutter.

They are ridiculously easy, cheap and quick to make and keep very well. Most modern recipes use a combination of flour and oatmeal or rolled oats – it’s really a matter of what sort of texture you prefer.

Rolled oats mixed with wholemeal flour give a chewier, chunkier finish quite different to that achieved using white flour and finely ground oatmeal. If you want a finer finish but can’t source oatmeal just whizz rolled oats in your food processor.

Some recipes use self-raising flour and omit the baking powder. They mostly add brown sugar and use butter, fat and/or milk as well as hot water to give the oatcakes a bit more flavour.

Some recipes also add egg and this gives the oatcakes a lovely golden colour.

You can make them as plain or tasty as you like by adding parmesan cheese, seeds such as linseed or sesame and even ground nuts, either in the mixture or on top before baking. Or you could add a spice such as cinnamon to give them a different flavour more suited to eating with sweet condiments.

Roll them out thinner for a crisper finish or leave them slightly thicker for a dense, crumbly effect (probably better for the warm breakfast option). Some recipes recommend flipping them halfway through baking to achieve an even colour, but I prefer to leave mine with a distinct top and bottom. These days oatcakes are mostly baked in the oven, not on a griddle, for about 25–30 minutes.

For a traditional recipe try Jane Grigson’s *English Food* (Penguin 1992). For a more modern version, Jo Seagar’s book *The Cook School Recipes* (Random House 2008) has a very good recipe for flaxseed oatcakes.

Dean Brettschneider does a great new take on these in his book *Taste – Baking with Flavour* (Random House 2005) with Oatmeal Parmesan Biscuits, and Nigella Lawson features them in *How To Be A Domestic Goddess* (Chatto & Windus 2000), although I find her oatcakes a bit too plain and lacking in colour, unusual for her.



Tiramisu

by Malcolm Cook,
courtesy of NZ Bakels



Tiramisu is an Italian dessert also known as Tuscan Trifle.

The main ingredients are cream, coffee, liquor, sugar, cocoa, sponge fingers and mascarpone cheese.

Mascarpone cheese is made from high fat cream coagulated with citric acid, acidic acid, lemon juice or vinegar. It is creamy white in colour, fresh in flavour and I would say it is not heavy but rather has body.

Tiramisu should taste creamy, with a hit of coffee and marsala as you bite into the sponge in the centre and the flavour shouldn’t linger very long in your mouth.

Recipe

Gelatine	5 g
Cold Water	60 g
Marsala	280 g
Egg Whites	× 2
Fresh Cream	500 g
Castor Sugar	50 g
Mascarpone Cheese	460 g
Egg Yolks	× 6
Castor Sugar	170 g

Method

1. Soak the gelatine in the cold water for 10 minutes. Combine marsala and gelatine mix and heat or microwave until dissolved.
2. Whisk the egg whites to a soft peak.
3. Whisk the fresh cream and 50 g sugar until it just starts to thicken, no more

4. Smooth and soften the mascarpone.
5. Warm the egg yolks and 170 g sugar and then whisk until thick.
6. Combine the cream and mascarpone, then fold through the yolks followed by the warm gelatine mix. This should be done by hand to prevent loss of volume.
7. Lastly fold through the egg whites and blend until smooth.

Coffee Syrup

Boiling Water	200 g
Castor Sugar	250 g
Bakels Coffee Paste	10 g

Dissolve all of the ingredients together and let cool before using.

My individual desserts

Assembly

1. Heat **NZ Bakels Chockex** to 40–45°C and lightly coat or brush the inside of a silicone mould. Once set give a second thin coat. At this temperature the **Chockex** will have a good gloss and no streaks.
2. Once the cases are set they will push out of the moulds easily.
3. Half fill the cases with the tiramisu cream and place a sponge disk on top of the cream.
4. Soak the sponge disk with a coffee syrup and fill the case with the remaining tiramisu.



Brighter baking



Hints and tips from Holger Schinz
of Sunbeam Cakes in Melbourne, Victoria



Coconut de Tres Leches

- Desiccated coconut 800 g
- Sweetened condensed milk 400 g
- Sour cream 200 g
- Fresh cream 250 g
- Vanilla essence 10 g

All in, do not overmix. You may have to add a bit more cream.

Use small ice cream scoop (35 ml volume).

Bake at 160°C till light colour.

Cool and dip in dark or white chocolate.



Tiroler Brezel

This is a product similar to chocolate spiders (fried noodles and chocolate) that is selling well and has a good shelf life.

- Baked wheat pretzels 200 g
- White chocolate, melted 550 g

Combine both. (Try not to break them!)

Set 7 chocolate coated pretzels in a flower pattern on silicon paper. (Note: you can use pretzel sticks and make a haystack from this mixture.)

This works well – sweet & salty!

Pecan and Cherry Xmas Slice

Recipe by Gerard Frost
from Weston Milling



Ingredients

Group	Raw Material	Gross
1	Maximus Flour	0.650 kg
1	Brown Sugar	0.250 kg
1	WM Vege Cake Marg	0.540 kg
1	Pecan Meal	0.500 kg
2	Brown Sugar	0.600 kg
2	WM Vege Cake Marg	0.400 kg
2	Golden Syrup	0.200 kg
2	Cream	0.100 kg
2	Pecans (chopped)	0.500 kg
2	Red Cherries (chopped)	0.150 kg
2	Green Cherries (chopped)	0.150 kg

Method

Base (Group 1)

- Heat oven to 180°C.
- Place Group 1 in a mixing bowl fitted with a beater, combine together, pin down into tray and bake at 180°C for approx. 20mins until golden.

Topping (Group 2)

- Melt WM Cake Margarine on medium heat, and then add sugar, golden syrup and cream, mix, then bring to boil. Turn off heat and stir till cooled slightly.
- Stir in pecans then keep warm until ready to use.
- Once the base has been baked, let it sit for 5 mins then pour filling over the top evenly.
- Bake for 15 mins, add cherries and cool completely.



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