

TASTE OF SURREY

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Surrey foods enjoy the taste of success

SUCCULENT meats, traditional ales and award winning condiments are just a handful of products Surrey can be proud of.

There are a number of motives for buying local produce but the best reason is flavour – food that doesn't travel so far is fresher.

Farmer's markets, like the one in Guildford, are becoming increasingly popular as more people ditch heavily packaged supermarket foods in favour of quality Surrey produce, including fresh fish, fruit and vegetables, flowers, cakes and even pet food.

One local company that has gone from strength to strength since it was set up last year is Le Mesurier with its extensive range of chutneys, relishes, sauces and mayonnaises.

Hand made by Patrick Le Mesurier and business partner Alison Karran-Smith at their unit in Abinger Hammer, the products recreate the tastes, textures and colours more usually found in Michelin-starred establishments.

The range includes staples such as piccailili, mango chutney and their famous barbecue sauce, which has recently won a Great Taste award 2009 for the second year, as well as more obscure products like pear, tomato and saffron chutney.

"Our products are not about being cutesy cutesy, they are locally sourced and have very distinctive bold flavours," said Alison.

"Patrick chops up all the fresh ingredients, which are bought from local businesses as much as possible, for example the apple cider vinegar comes from Mr Whiteheads in Hampshire."

Everything that goes into the Le Mesurier sauces can be seen through the bottle and instead of looking and tasting artificial, like so many national brands, they are bursting with natural flavours.

Patrick added: "Branstons for example is very popular but has a very strong vinegar flavour."

On the label of each product there are suggestions on what foods would complement it best – extremely handy for the more unusual items like the peach and rosemary chutney.

Born and raised in Godalming, Patrick trained and worked as a chef for the Roux Brothers for eight years in London at La Gavroche and then at The Point in New York.

Returning to the UK in the late 1990s he owned and ran The Royal Oak pub/dining room in Woodchester, Gloucestershire, which won Newcomer of the Year Award in the *Which? Good Pub Guide* 1999.

From 2005 as an independent condiments consultant he was involved in the design and manufacture of the new range of chutneys for a leading independent foodhall in London.

While Patrick is responsible for product design, quality control and manufacturing the products,



Alison Karran-Smith and Patrick Le Mesurier of Le Mesurier in Abinger Hammer.



Alison, a lawyer by profession, takes care of the commercial and legal affairs of the business.

Working from a 750ft unit at Home Farm, Patrick says he can make up to 1,000 units a day.

"I am developing new recipes all the time," he said, "and being more inventive with the products. Then I make about three or four batches for a tasting panel to trial."

He added: "If people are not going out to eat as much, we can give them restaurant quality food at home."

The Le Mesurier range currently features 26 products – four sauces, ten chutneys, six relishes and six mayonnaises.

The products are available at shops in Surrey including Denbies Wine Estate at Dorking, Kingfisher Farm Shop at Abinger Hammer and Fanny's Farm Shop in Merstham.

They are also sold in farmers' markets including Guildford, Cranleigh, and Ripley and have recently been taken on by Kingston's Bentalls Centre.

For more information or to make an online order visit the website at www.lemesuriers.com or call 01306 737006.

The Cheesebox in Haslemere and quality farm shops such as Applegarth in Grayshott and Secretts in Milford.

Before setting up Crosbies, the couple ran the restaurant and bar at Richard Branson's record label V2 for nine years.

"Everything we bake is handmade with the highest quality ingredients such as free range eggs and organic Belgian chocolate," said Chris. "Claire is very particular about what she will and won't put in her products – after all, our tastes buds are very sensitive and we are about quality, not being cheap."

He added: "It took us a good two years to perfect our brownies. It is a development of a recipe that Claire had been using for years, which was part design and part accident but the kick was finding the chocolate."

Other popular favourites include carrot cake, lemon drizzle cake and flapjacks. Crosbies also make celebration and wedding cakes on commission. For more information call Crosbies on 01428 681888.



Clare and Chris Crosbie of Crosbies Cakes in Wormley.

IF singer Tom Jones' word is anything to go by then you haven't lived until you have tried the Welsh tea-cake made by Crosbies in Wormley.

In fact the *Delilah* star was so bowled over by Claire Crosbie's Bara Brith Welsh tea bread that he personally contacted her and requested a batch be sent out to his LA home.

And he is not the only one that has been impressed by Claire's baking skills. Last year Crosbies scooped a gold star for their double chocolate brownies at the Great Taste Awards.

The independent catering company is run by Claire and her husband Chris and supplies delicatessens such as

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