



Trade news, insight and comment from the Beverage Standards Association

No. 4, December 2019

It's time for tea!

The pioneer of the UK's coffee exhibition now gives us a show dedicated to tea

The Beverage Standards Association has given its enthusiastic backing to the launch of the London Tea Show, a new trade exhibition which will take place at the Business Design Centre in London on 24-25 March next year. In the most practical sense, it is time for tea.

"The great thing about tea as a catering product is that it works profitably on several levels, and all sections of the hospitality trade can win with it," remarked Steve Slark, chairman of the Beverage Standards Association. "The greatest media publicity always goes to the 'afternoon tea' sector, which is dominated by the ritzy London hotels; however, tea is a business opportunity which translates to several levels.

"Afternoon tea at the Ritz will be £60 next year, and a bit higher at the Savoy, and many good regional hotels do profitable business at £20 or a little over. But I have also seen 'afternoon tea' successfully promoted at a corner café, offering sandwiches and scones with cream and jam, at well under £10 - and they made money from it!

"Tea is also a product which can be creatively promoted at the 'classic English cuppa' end of the market. There is a great opportunity for selling really good tea, served in proper china from a proper Brown Betty, at a more profitable price.

"And now, of course, green tea and chai have established themselves, iced tea is beginning to gain ground, and the fruit and herbal infusions market has just exploded."

Event organiser Elliot Gard has told us: "The UK Tea Academy people came to us to suggest a show; it seems to be the time to do one as a



standalone event. To do it in four months is an exciting project, but there is an appetite for it, so we'll do it. We're not making any outrageous claims, but we do believe a thousand visitors over two days is do-able."

Some players in the tea market have suggested that yet another trade show is slicing their budget too thinly; others see some potential. At Teapigs, Andy Byron said: "Tea has often played second fiddle to coffee. If tea brands and speakers are given a decent platform to talk about how the industry is dealing with sustainability issues, provenance and up-to-date consumer tea trends while all the while championing great tea, then I would hope it's a success."

Twinnings told us: "As we see the tea market hurtling towards an annual growth of 8.9 per cent, a dedicated tea exhibition will allow the industry to showcase the trends and new products that will help operators to deliver exceptional drinks and experiences to their customers."

Alan Pirret of Novus remarked: "Any initiative that raises expectations of tea quality among consumers and providers should be applauded. The sooner we move away from poor tea experiences, the better!"

This, suggests the Beverage Standards Association, is where a dedicated exhibition and talking-shop is timely, for focussing the trade's attention on how to work best with our national drink.

The London Tea Show is organised by Living Media Events, the organisers of Caffe Culture, in partnership with the UK Tea Academy. There is a 10 per cent discount for BSA members wishing to exhibit.

Further information: 020 7688 5201.

Also in this issue:



Christmas selling ideas for those who have forgotten to plan!

and
Reading the tea leaves...



The best holiday job of the year was created by the beverage trade last month - the extremely classy Daffodil Hotel in Grasmere (think Wordsworth!) offered £100 and a night's stay in return for one day's work. The job was to taste their afternoon tea menu: really!

The hotel's afternoon tea menu for December is a festive one, featuring turkey and bacon sliders, Rudolph's cranberry frosted nose, a coconut snowman, a chocolate and pistachio Christmas tree, festive wreath cookies, cranberry and orange scones, red velvet and peppermint whoopee pies, and a festive Turkish Delight rosé prosecco. The hotel's pastry chef says she wants to make sure it is the best Christmas afternoon tea in the country, hence the invitation for someone to provide a very detailed critique of the work.

The Daffodil told us that they have picked a winner... we're waiting to see how the tasting goes.

Be careful of sensitive baristas...!

The owner of a Dublin café has come in for criticism after people took his humorous vacancy advertisement the wrong way... although many in the trade may think that he has identified a certain kind of staff member very neatly.

He advertised for 'an experienced snowflake', and among the qualities he listed for the job were the ability to feel they need not work as part of a team, should be able to take offence from the most innocuous things imaginable, have extensive experience in using a smartphone and be attached to their phones throughout their shift, and be able to work without looking up at customers, except for much selfie-taking. A typical candidate, the advertisement suggested, should have five years' experience of being a millennial, possess no resilience whatsoever, but have much over-confidence and naïve ambition, and considerable self-righteousness and indignation, capable of much commenting on social media about anything in their job that upsets them. The advertisement ended: 'if any part of this job advert offends, then you have the job already!'

The owner was forced to apologise after complaints about his ad... which probably proved his point.

A comedy film about barista contests

It had to happen, sooner or later... there is a film about barista championships. It is Higher Grounds, which has already been given a preview screening in America, and we know very little about it... except that the producers do seem to have taken advice from the world barista championship people, and then added a fair amount of artistic licence to it. Curiously, the plot is a bit vague: the original casting director's brief some months back said it would be 'a comedic short film about an alien invader who becomes smitten with a barista working at a diner', but the latest word says it is a comedy about a vegan café owner trying to save her café by taking her team of misfit staff to the championships in a bid to win a huge cash prize. As has been pointed out, the barista contests don't have a cash prize of any kind, but that's artistic licence for you.

Waitrose has introduced an eco-friendly fuel for log-burners - it is Coffee Logs, which are said to burn 20 per cent hotter and longer than dry wood, and emit 80 per cent less carbon. Each log is made from the equivalent of 25 cups of recycled used coffee grounds, which is processed by BioBean.

Starbucks has made a quite typical comment about its new dress code for baristas. The big change is that employees will now be able to wear one small facial piercing. Explaining this, Starbucks told *Business Insider*: "we believe the Starbucks Experience is best delivered when partners can bring their whole selves to work."

Growth in the British coffee shop market slowed last year, comes the rather surprising report from Allegra. Most European markets grew by five per cent or so, with Romania galloping up at 28 per cent growth - but the UK grew by only 0.9 per cent. Four other European markets decreased slightly.

Another café owner has got into trouble for a laptop ban - the owner of a coffee shop in Belsize Park objected to those who 'camp' on a table for long periods, preventing others from getting a seat. She asked people to refrain from doing so at weekends, and then found herself accused online of 'bullying'. The café owner told her local paper that she is one of several café owners who regret that 'people just don't talk in cafes any more...'

Yorkshire Tea has doubled its campaign to plant a million trees by the year 2020 - it has achieved a total of 2,155,067 in five years. The Yorkshire Tree initiative, in partnership with the Woodland Trust, originally sought to provide half a million trees in the UK, and half a million in tea growing regions of Kenya. In the end, the Kenyans received three times as many as planned. Taylors of Harrogate has been involved in tree-planting ideas for the past thirty years, and says it will continue with new projects.

Barista-free and cash-free cafes grow

A new cash-free coffee business in America claims to be faster and cheaper than Starbucks, and takes no cash. It is a 'mobiles only' app-based business, and promises 'the easiest cup of coffee ever'.

The process is partly unique, and partly inspired by the similar Chinese business Luckin, which has grown to thousands of sites. The customer downloads the app, creates a profile, uploads a picture (so baristas can recognise them), and sets up a payment method; they can then place an order remotely. When the order is sent to the baristas, the app generates a ticket number for the customer to give on collection.

An American news organisation tested it - they placed an order, and started a stopwatch; their two drinks were ready for collection in under two minutes.

Bandit's sites are tiny: the footprint is 11 feet square.

And a robotic coffee bar has opened at San Jose airport in California. The Café X is said to be 'purpose-built to address the pain points of today's typical airport coffee experience'. The robot (pictured) is capable of taking and making ten orders simultaneously within minutes, without mistakes, and the robotic arm also serves pastries and other accessories. The company founder said he had the idea after waiting half an hour to be served at an airport coffee kiosk.



Clever ideas on takeaway cups

An Australian organisation which exists to help coffee houses do business in a sustainable way has now grown to 4,400 café members in six years.

Responsible Cafes was founded by a group of people who collected litter from beaches and progressed to issues such as re-usable cups. Cafes who take part are given posters and information sheets to show to customers.

One member café, from a very small town in Victoria, has received international coverage for its work in recycling milk cartons into coffee trays. When Coffee Tatura posted a picture of their work on Facebook, it was shared by six thousand people – twice the population of their own town.

In the UK, a recycling scheme in Leeds has recovered 1.2 million takeaway cups in a year.

The city has 180 brightly-coloured cup bins positioned round the city, bearing the very Yorkshire message : 'cups - nowt else!' The scheme's organisers say eight out of ten recyclable products still go in the wrong bin.

A Dublin coffee shop, Bread 41, has taken a bold step – the company will only serve takeaway coffees in the customer's own cup. After a trial run of 'Keep Cup Mondays', this will now become everyday policy. The cafe used to sell around 180 takeaway coffees a day; that fell with the initial refusal to provide cups, but sales recovered as customers accepted the idea.

The Which? organisation has published comparative savings from cafes which give a discount for the use of the customer's cup. It has also published a video on the use of the Costa Coffee Clever Cup, which has a chip in its base which allows contactless payments at Costa.

The milk-box coffee trays



The Italians have applied for World Heritage recognition for espresso coffee! A group modestly entitled The Consortium for the Safeguarding of Traditional Italian Espresso Coffee has put an application to Unesco saying that espresso is not only a distinctive beverage but an integral part of the country's cultural heritage. Italy has a track record in this – two years ago, it successfully applied for Neapolitan pizza-making to be recognised as a part of the world's 'Intangible Cultural Heritage'.



Unocup, the folded-paper takeaway cup which requires no lid, has raised well over the crowdfund amount it sought to pay for its further development. The cup's folding design is rather similar to a takeaway food box; it has taken three years and 800 prototypes before finding a 'non-spill, easily-foldable, comfortable-to-drink-from cup for mass-production using existing cup-making machinery'. Users can either drink from Unocup's spout ('designed to fit your lips perfectly and create the smoothest drinking experience'), or unfold the top and drink from the rim.

An extremely odd coffee company has launched in Bristol – Bubbles and Beans is a mobile prosecco and coffee bar, built on a tuk-tuk chassis. The target is in wedding receptions and corporate events, and the owner crowdfunded £10,000 to launch, with support from NatWest's Back Her Business initiative, which aims to help more female entrepreneurs get started.

Chairman's comment:

Reading the tea-leaves for 2020

Do the trade gurus' business predictions ever get it right?

An end-of-year custom which always intrigues me is the habit of magazine writers to peer into a crystal ball and say what is going to happen in our trade next year. We had no end of coffee and tea-related predictions a year ago... I wonder, were any of them right? And what will come next year?

One of my favourite forecasters is James Hoffman, the UK's first world barista champ, whose annual forecast is always well-informed. He said that 2019 would bring big developments in coffee packaging - he said beside the explosion of interest in people concerned about environmental impact, "coffee has picked up a reputation for being a wasteful thing." And I think he was probably right, because we certainly have seen coffee suppliers working on this.

James' prediction about non-dairy milk was entertaining - he forecast that the big one this year would be hemp milk, which I believe makes a super microfoam, and is environmentally wonderful - apparently the cannabis plant breathes in four times as much carbon dioxide as trees do. Well... we've certainly seen an increase in interest in CBD, and the Good Hemp company launched a 'barista seed milk' last month, but so far I haven't seen a hemp milk on a café menu.

And James also predicted the return of dark-roasted coffee this year. The idea of dark roast has often been criticised, and Starbucks was always pilloried for it, and so it became fashionable for coffee roasters to roast light, but James suggested this would change. He suggested that people who like drinking dark roasts would complain that all the best coffees go into light roasts, and would start asking why can't they have great quality coffees, roasted the way they like. And I think he may well be right - indeed, speakers at one 2019 event also suggested darker-roasted coffee would be key to 'converting' the average coffee drinker into greater appreciation of speciality coffee.

What else did people predict for 2019, and were they right?

Many predictions for this year were... well, predictable. Some expected a rise in bulletproof coffee in 2019; this is the one which blends coffee with butter or coconut oil, said to give the drinker an energy boost while part of a low-carb/high-fat diet. But a Guardian writer dismissed it as: "in its full buttery form, bulletproof is coffee as fuel and not as pleasure."

Most also expected nitrogen-infused coffee to grow as a premium option, served either hot or cold, and I suppose it did. And yes, cold-brew coffee did grow rapidly, as predicted - one research said it became the second-fastest growing coffee drink in the UK.



Will 'hard coffee' be big? This is Jagermeister's product

I did see a forecast about the 'most daring' trend of 2019, which was to be egg coffee. This is coffee with a froth topping made of whipped raw egg yolk and sweetened condensed milk; I have heard it said that the result is rather like tiramisu. In the same way, we were told to expect growth in cheese tea: no, it's not what you think. Again, the cheese element is a foamy topping, made of cream cheese, whipped cream, and milk.

We were also warned to expect growth in 'superfood' coffee - that is, with added powders such as medicinal mushrooms, turmeric and so on, to 'raise the mood, increase stamina and even have anti-ageing effects'. Rather like as used in smoothies for several years past. Tetley say that demand for 'functional' drinks with enhanced health benefits will have a compound annual growth rate of 5.5 per cent over the next few years, and I am now told that four tea brands out of five reported that 'wellness' tea, intended to relax, to wake up, or detox, are their best performers this year.

Tetley also recommended kombucha as a 2019 trend because it provides 'new texture and sensory experiences'. It's an ancient elixir produced by fermenting sweetened tea with a 'symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast', and has indeed appeared this year in a variety of beverages. I haven't taken to it, but experts tell me that "although the first sip can be a challenge to the uninitiated, many find the body craves more due to its nutrient-rich profile." A usefully addictive product, if it works!

So what are the pundits predicting for 2020?

One big trend said to arrive from the USA is 'hard coffee'

- literally, caffeine and alcohol. Coors produced an 'iced coffee blonde-style beer' in the US, and we have already seen such things as Jagermeister introducing its cold-brew coffee drink just a few weeks ago - reviews appear to have been good. One newspaper has just selected its best half-dozen hard coffees, which shows the growth of the sector... there is even a Fairtrade one. We have of course seen several coffee beers in the UK, but always produced as a novelty. Beside this, we are told that coffee cocktails will be appearing on more menus - typically, the coffee negroni, which is not actually a new idea, but one which will increase in popularity.

An interesting prediction is the continuing increase in coffee sales to younger customers, specifically the 13-18 age group. This, we are told, is an international trend - the American scientific journal "Annals of Internal Medicine", no less, has said that across the world, youngsters are becoming coffee drinkers at a faster pace than previous generations. It's an interesting marketing prediction, which some say will lead to the creation of new coffee drinks, mainly sweeter and creamier ones.

(A prediction elsewhere may fit this - it is said that café design will become more simplistic, but will feature more 'group' tables for either socialising or as business meeting-places.)



The Goth Latte
(pic by Miko)

One younger group may take to a different idea in black coffee - the Goth Latte. I'm told that the creation of a black latte, to match the goth barista's lipstick and nail varnish, is an effective way to draw a crowd, as in the early days of latte art. The blackness comes from food-grade activated charcoal.

The younger generation, the 25-34s, are predicted to be 2020's major growth area for tea - half of them drink fruit tea or herbal tea, will also drink green tea, and are interested in speciality black teas. The younger group is also reported to be interested in the concept of pairing tea with food, as an alternative to wine.

A prediction I particularly like for 2020 is the development of cold-foam drinks. Starbucks and Costa have put these on their menus, and Caffè Nero has worked with Beyond the Bean and Blendtec to create a new way of making it, turning cold skimmed milk into a mousse-like cold foam in 18 seconds. Frankly, I have been expecting cold-foam drinks to take off for years, ever since I saw a demonstration of them by the Franke machine company. These, I do believe, will be worth watching when the weather gets hot.

In the same way, Monin syrups tell me that now that iced tea is familiar in the UK, fizzy iced teas will gain momentum for the summer.

A final prediction interests me. We have already had 'waves' of coffee - I believe we are now supposed to be in the 'fifth wave' - and I was interested to see the forecast

from the World Tea Expo in Las Vegas that we are heading for 'the new wave of tea'.

This is partly 'wellness' tea - tea designed for activity, stress management and pain relief, enabled by such ingredients as CBD. "The future tastes awesome!" said one speaker.

Several speakers warned that we are going to have to introduce better information of origin on tea, just as happened with coffee - farm details, including the farmers' names, the farm location and terroir, including tasting profile notes. It's possible for classy single-origins, I suppose, but a lot of our black tea is pretty much multi-blended.

Indeed, one speaker said: "the connoisseur culture that exists in the wine industry dwarfs the culture that exists in tea, and the main difference is access to provenance. Wine is packaged in a bottle and labelled, and provenance is known... but provenance is typically concealed for tea, and one doesn't have to look far to discover many companies selling teas made by the same producer under different names, and no doubt falsifying place of origin.

"When the name and the specific location of the producer is shared with the consumer, we'll see marked growth in a connoisseur culture surrounding tea."

And if that happens, the tea market in 2020 might make the quantum leap that coffee did.

- Steve Slark, BSA Chairman

Change Please, the social enterprise which works to take homeless people off the streets and train them for employment as baristas, has reported one fascinating success story - one of its trainees, who used to sleep in station waiting rooms, has progressed to the first-class lounge... after finishing his training, he has been hired by Virgin Trains as their in-house barista at Euston. The train company has now hired thirty baristas from the training enterprise.

A coffee house in Yorkshire is hosting its Christmas art exhibition of work by Bradford Arts and Crafts Network. One of the artists featured has said: "my aim is to free myself from the rigidity of composition and contact the creative unconscious as a form of psychic improvisation in unstructured space." Customers will probably need a coffee after that.

The local press in Somerset has been reporting the success of The Coffee House, which has just celebrated its tenth birthday in Weston-super-Mare. In saying that the difference between an independent coffee house and a chain is that the indie is grateful for the business of every customer, the owner remarked that as part of its thank-you to regulars, they will double-stamp loyalty cards on the café's birthday. She added the delightful observation: "people never check their change but they always check their loyalty card!"

The big brands all plan their Christmas menus and their special seasonal drinks months in advance – the average caterer doesn't have that luxury. What do you do when you find that Christmas is suddenly on top of you?

Your last-minute 'special'

If the autumn season has been just so busy that you haven't prepared a Christmas 'special', how easy is it to come up with a profitable idea at the last moment? How can you create an immediately-practical 'house special' to go on a blackboard, ideally with ingredients already to hand, which will take 90 seconds or less to prepare, and will be attention-getting and profitable?

"Essentially, you've already got it all in stock," says Darril Ling of Dandelion, who distributes Routin 1883 syrups. "You will have chocolate in stock, cinnamon powder, and some syrups, so for no investment at all, you may already be there... you can even create your own stencil for the topping with a bit of cardboard and scissors.

"All you have to do is create a drink which is more indulgent in December than you would serve in January.

"Dressing it up is the whole key. Remember, Starbucks didn't invent the Christmas drink - they just smartened it up, gave it a name, photographed it, and sold it as a new idea.

"Syrups are the ingredient which allow you to upgrade a drink to a 'special' - and in one way they can be very profitable in themselves. Put a wrap around your display bottle, and say 'take home a bottle of your favourite flavour, cheaper from us than Amazon', and they'll go!"

Use what you have and be clever by dusting a hot chocolate or cappuccino, cinnamon or nutmeg, says Brad Wright at Marimba hot chocolates. "Flavours already in stock can be used - white chocolate, an Irish syrup and an espresso becomes a White Irish Mocha."

You can use seasonal tea, says Allan Pirret of Novus Tea. "Our chocolate and vanilla, spicy rooibos and spiced chai, our white mulled wine tea, beetroot and apple, or turmeric citrus, are all going to give you a unique house special. The chocolate and vanilla is still very much a 'tea', but blending black leaf teas with cocoa bean and vanilla, gives a



The Rudolph, by Monin – hot chocolate, milk, Black Forest syrup, and whipped cream. The antlers are pretzels, and the nose is, we think, a glace cherry!

very different taste experience from a hot chocolate. The white mulled wine is a delightful and vibrant taste with a lemon zest finish and subtle hints of Christmas spices - a real winter warmer."

You can even add flavoured syrups to tea, says Twinings - a creamy Candy Latte would be a peppermint tea with a shot of vanilla syrup, topped with foamed milk. The London Fog would also be a useful seasonal special, and this is Earl Grey with a shot of vanilla syrup and foamed milk, maybe with edible glitter garnish.

Have you thought of gluhwein, asks Teapigs. This has become one of their seasonal best-sellers - "we would describe it as a fruitier version of traditional British mulled wine. The hibiscus and berries make it a bit tarter, compared to the sometimes overly-clove-riddled versions you sometimes get."

A Christmassy fragrance will grab the customers' attention, says Teapigs. The herbal infusion scents of cinnamon, cloves, ginger, winter fruits and berries wafting through a shop can inspire the ideal customer response - "I'll have what they are having!"

It is all well worth the effort, says Lee Hyde at Monin syrups - customers are reckoned to pay at least 12 per cent more for a Christmas-themed drink.

"Keep a specials menu simple, because too much choice confuses the customers and slows down service. But think outside of the box to to encourage incremental spend - drinks such as Frosty the Snowman or Rudolph can use pre-prepared decorations which you have to hand to put on, or provide a tray of goodies such as chocolate drops, pretzels and marshmallows and let them decorate their own!"

"And showcase them - big point-of-sale notices, social media, and menu boards are really important."

You may not have to either create the drinks or do the promotion all by yourself, suggests Gary McGann at Beyond the Bean. "Go to sweetbird.com for recipe ideas - put in the flavours you already have, and it will generate a recipe for you. Then get your local school to design a poster, and maybe donate some free drinks in return - this will spread the word for you."

And don't stop at Christmas, says Teapigs – once you've established a reputation for your specials, carry on with your 'tea of the week' and 'latte of the week' - your customers will come to expect ideas from you.

Gingerbread lattes - 'smelling like window cleaner and tasting worse'!

Not all Christmas drinks in coffee houses are wonderful – so says a reviewer from the Huffington Post online newspaper, who visited Costa, Starbucks, Caffe Nero, Pret and Eat to sample their seasonal specials, and reported that "while there are some absolute flavour favourites, there were also a few we'd advise you to miss."

Café Nero did rather well in the ratings - they have offered a 'build your own' feature, and the Caramelised Almond Hot Chocolate with whipped cream and 'golden crunchy bits' was judged the best hot chocolate drink. Allowing for the cost of the extras, this came to £3.40. One reviewer said: "it's like a hot chocolate with Amaretto, minus the alcohol."



The most disappointing hot chocolate, said the reviewers, was Starbucks' Toasted Marshmallow Hot Chocolate, at £3.10. "Essentially a standard hot chocolate with a toasted marshmallow topping – once you've devoured the topping, which happens after a couple of sips, you can't really differentiate this from any other hot chocolate."

The best coffee was reported to be Costa's Irish Velvet Latte, at £3.30. You can have a choice of latte, cappuccino, or hot chocolate, any of them infused with caramel and vanilla, giving a Baileys-like sensation. There is a chocolate star on top - the reviewer warned to eat that first, or it will melt.

Costa also provided the runner-up in this section, with a Festive Spiced Cappuccino, featuring cinnamon, nutmeg and star anise. The reviewer said "I drank this whole drink and it wasn't too sickly, which is rare for a festive coffee."

At the other end of the scale, the Huffington Post said that all chains' gingerbread lattes failed their taste test, one of them 'smelling like window cleaner and tasting worse'.

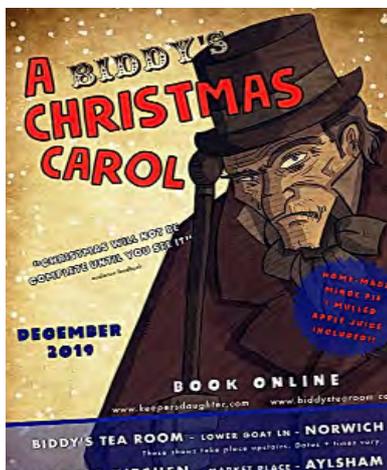
The tea shop as fringe panto theatre

Some wonderful seasonal promotion is by Biddy's tea shops of Norfolk. They have a troupe of two actors, but several puppets, putting on A Christmas Carol inside the tea-rooms themselves, across a couple of weeks before Christmas.

The owner, Charlie Buchan, told us that 550 tickets are available at £10, and that by the end of November he had sold well over half of them.

Biddy's is the latest British tea-room to take up the offer of a short residency inside a Tokyo department store. The usual arrangement is for the Japanese to try and recreate the appearance of the British café, and for the Brits to do the cooking.

Biddy's decided on Bakewell tarts and scones, and were told to expect to make and sell an average of a thousand scones a day over a two-week period - and doubled that figure. "On average we were selling 2,000 scones per day compared to 200 Bakewells," Charlie told us. "But the Japanese don't have much access to raspberries - so the jam was a challenge!"



The Scottish taste for fried snacks has been legendary ever since they invented the deep-fried Mars bar - and now an Edinburgh café has the equivalent Christmas pudding. To their great credit, the Piccante has also introduced a 'pay it forward' scheme, so customers can donate a meal to the homeless.

According to Action on Sugar, the high street chains are putting a 'shocking' amount of sweetness into the season's drinks. The organisation measured the sugar and calorie content of 124 hot chocolates and 79 seasonal lattes, and reported that a quarter of those previously assessed in 2016 now contained more sugar. A nutritionist from Action on Sugar said: "It is shocking that so many high street coffee chains are wilfully putting their customers' health at risk."

The concept of the tea advent calendar is not new; tea-bags can be made to fit neatly behind the 'windows'. This year, even PG Tips has got in on the act, with a 48-bag item selling at Sainsburys for £7. However, this is nothing compared to the Fortnum and Mason tea calendar, which has 24 different teas, for £25 - and this too is cheaper than the Whittards tea calendar, with 94 bags for £42. And this in turn is dwarfed by the Fortnum and Mason cracker set, which has no plastic novelties inside, but vouchers for champagne afternoon tea and the like... six crackers for five thousand quid.

A BSA ready-reference directory...

refer to the BSA website for more details of these companies

3M Water Filtration Division	01344 858000	www.3m.co.uk/filtration
Allpure Filters	01252 519955	www.allpurefilters.com
Arden Coffee	01246 25 28 32	www.iwantacoffeemachine.com
Barry Callebaut	01244 370500	www.barrycallebautvending.co.uk
Brita	01869365840	www.brita.co.uk
Bryan Stockley Consultancy	01507 466990	http://www.bscs-ltd.co.uk
BWT	07831382929	www.bwt-uk.co.uk
Café 2U	0845 6444 708	www.cafe2u.co.uk
Caffeica	01993 776753	www.caffeica.co.uk
Cimbali	020 82387100	www.cimbaliuk.com
Clockwork Coffee	01753 548 009	www.clockwork-coffee.co.uk
Coffea Arabica	07766533157	www.coffeaarabica.co.uk
Coffee 1652	01744762919	www.coffee1652.co.uk
Coffee Care	01756 794 811	www.coffeecare.co.uk
Coffee Classics	0844 800 5387	www.coffeeclassics.co.uk
Coffee Origin Trips	07802 299054	www.coffeeorigintrips.com
Coffee Perfection	+353 01 825 3981	coffeeperfection.ie
Coffeeman Devon	01803 873759	www.coffeemandevon.co.uk
CoffeTek	01275 844471	www.coffetek.co.uk
Coffix Ltd	01530 242800	www.coffix.com
Coffox Ltd T/A Cafesuccess		www.cafesuccesshub.com
Complete Beverage Solutions	01635 877173	www.cbs-beverages.co.uk
Cornish Coffee (Miko)	01209 215555	www.cornishcoffee.co.uk
Edgumbes	01243 555775	www.edgumbes.co.uk
Espresso Services	0141 425 1083	www.espressoservices.co.uk
Espresso Solutions	01293 769825	www.espresso-solutions.co.uk
European WaterCare	01279 780268	www.watercare.co.uk
Farrer's	01539 720020	www.farrerscoffee.co.uk
Fracino	0121 328 5757	www.fracino.com
GMS Espresso	01494 484319	www.gmsespresso.com
H2O Direct	01892 669628	www.h2odirect.co.uk
Inglehurst Foods	01420 563 413	www.inglehurst.co.uk
Kimbo	0208 743 8959	www.kimbo.co.uk
Kokoa Collection	0208 8832660	www.kokoacollection.co.uk
LF Spare Parts Ltd	01285 861625	www.lfspareparts724.com
M*A*D Training Solutions	07768 884693	www.coffeetraining.co.uk
Miko	0800 496 39 39	www.miko.co.uk
Pentair Water Belgium	+32 (0)14 283 504	www.pentairfoodservice.com
Plantation Coffee	01733 830875	www.plantationcoffee.co.uk
Pumphreys Coffee	0191 4144 510	www.pumphreys.co.uk
Qualitasse	01256 300050	www.qualitasse.co.uk
R.W Stokes	01522 512548	www.stokes-coffee.co.uk
Rainforest Alliance	00 31 20 422 8856	www.rainforest-alliance.org
RBC East Midlands		www.rbcem.co.uk
Rcoffee	0161 448 9171	www.rcoffee.co.uk
Rhode Island Coffee	01204 702 338	www.rhodeislandcoffee.co.uk
Robert Mallerman		www.spray-dryer.com
Speciality Tea Academy UK	07976517128	www.ukteaacademy.co.uk
	01283 712332	www.bartonmarina.co.uk
The Black & White Coffee Co	01205 460700	www.southlincsfoodservice.co.uk
The Brew Group	0845 450 0500	www.caffesociety.co.uk
The Coffee Cart Company	01432 278626	www.coffeecartcompany.co.uk
The London School of Coffee	0208 439 7981	www.londonschoolofcoffee.com
The Office Coffee Company	020 3763 4035	www.office-coffee.co.uk
The Proton Group	01924 892 834	www.proton-group.co.uk
Total Refreshment Solutions/Arumba	0131 448 0666	www.arumba-coffee.co.uk
Voyager Coffee	01364 644440	www.voyagercoffee.co.uk



Extract Coffee Roasters of Bristol has continued its charity-based coffee project - the Strong Man and Strong Woman espressos, launched in November, will put £1 per kilo to Empire Fighting Chance, a gym which gets young people off the streets and teaches them discipline through sport.

It began when the founders spotted two young men dealing drugs next to the Empire boxing gym; they invited the lads inside to discuss their problems, and the upshot was a regular training session for kids off the streets.

The new coffee will also support Hotel School in London, which teaches hospitality skills to homeless and vulnerable people and finds them sustainable employment.

A coffee house in Grimsby has been forced to close for a weekend by an unusual flood. When the owner called the emergency services for help, they realised the water was coming from an upstairs flat, to which they needed access - but the occupant immediately fled. They discovered that the water came from the irrigation arrangement of a cannabis factory.

There has been a sequel to the latest story of Starbucks staff writing strange names on customers' cups. When a policeman ordered coffees for his squad, the barista wrote 'pig' on the cup as identification. In the ensuing row, Starbucks apologised and fired the barista.

And then the Black Rifle Coffee Company said that it would provide the officer and his colleagues with free coffee, saying: "we always back the blues - they won't be needing to go anywhere for coffee for a while."



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