

The final word on fine food

## TRIED & TESTED

### BODHA ROSE AND CARDAMOM

Thanks to the growing alcohol moderation movement (hello, Dry January participants!), the drinks sector is poised for a refresh. Mocktails, low and no beverages and grown-up soft drinks are spilling into the market with fantastic flavours and innovative ideas, and Bodha is no different. Crafted with Damask rose and fragrant cardamom, plus botanical extracts, this drink is indulgence in a can. Plus, they were designed to be enjoyed alongside pan-Asian and Middle Eastern food, so customers will have a brand new tittle to try on their curry nights.



[bodhadrinks.co.uk](http://bodhadrinks.co.uk)

### BEPPS POPPED BBQ

It might be January, but I'm already daydreaming ahead to summer picnics and sunny gatherings with friends and family (British weather dependent). Of course, that means thinking about the contents of my picnic basket too, and I already have a flavourful inclusion in BEPPS Popped BBQ. Named after one

of their primary ingredients, black eyed peas, BEPPS are not only full of tangy, rich barbecue flavour, but they are also vegan, gluten-free and 90 calories or less per serving, making them a perfect stock for health-conscious shoppers.



### ST MAUR ELDERFLOWER LIQUEUR

It's always a pleasure to discover an artisanal alternative to a favourite food or drink, so I was delighted to discover St Maur: an elderflower liqueur made using elderflowers gathered from the producers' – The Earl and Countess of Yarmouth – ancient family-owned woodland in Warwickshire. This tittle is beautifully balanced with notes of red fruit and is pleasingly versatile, and is just as delicious used as the star of a cocktail as it is topped with sparkling wine for a simple, party-ready drink.



[beppssnacks.com](http://beppssnacks.com)  
[drinkstmaur.com](http://drinkstmaur.com)

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



## THE ITALIAN UPSSELL

We explore how retailers can boost their Italian food and drink sales in 2022

It's the time of year for resolutions and goal-setting sessions, and for diets and healthy eating pledges. When consumers swear off chocolate and indulgences and vow to eat their vegetables, cut down on takeaways and cook meals at home. Out, once again, come the bulky bags of dried pasta and the jars of rich ragu. As a simple, flavourful dish, it's hard to think of a better option.

Maybe your customers are some of the many UK shoppers who pushed the boat out with a pizza oven this year, or they could be experimenting in making their own pasta. These new-to-them recipes are easy to indulge in January as there are so many ingredients which suit the annual health-kick. Waitrose's 2022 Food & Drink Report sung the praises of tinned fish as sales of mackerel and anchovies both jumped 17% over the last year, while tuna sales shot up 500% during the first half of 2020, thanks to the product's versatility and simplicity – just pop open and pop in your pasta.

With many consumers feeling the bite of price inflation, it's time to shout about the benefits of authentic Italian products. Despite price pressures, consumers have still shown an inclination

to support small businesses and upgrade their purchases where they can – for instance, forking out on the flavour of Italy through brands like Mutti.

The proof is in the pudding – or pasta. Explain clearly what makes a product like artisan olive oil so special, offer a taste with a hunk of freshly baked bread, and your customers will be coming back for more. Retailers can also sing the praises of superfood-rich Mediterranean diets, which are shown to reduce the risk of developing conditions like high blood pressure and cholesterol as well as heart disease. Showing customers that healthy eating doesn't have to be flavourless will go down a treat this time of year. Explain just how easy it is to turn an Italian dish vegan and you'll win the favour of Veganuary followers, too.

Italian cuisine is endlessly flexible and whatever the season or reason, consumers will keep coming back to their favourites. By showing them why fine food shop products stand head and shoulders above anything they could find at a supermarket, retailers will win loyal customers for 2022.

Are you passionate about Italian food and drink? Get in touch via [courtney.goldsmith@aceville.co.uk](mailto:courtney.goldsmith@aceville.co.uk).

## THE INDEPENDENT SHOPPER

Tomas Gormley, co-owner and joint head chef of Heron, Leith

Heron is a relaxed fine dining restaurant serving an a la carte menu, with views looking out to the Water of Leith and the Firth of Forth beyond. After starting a pop-up fine dining home delivery service in the pandemic called Bad Seeds, my business partner Sam Yorke and I decided to open our very own restaurant where we could both be head chefs. We came to visit a restaurant space on The Shore and immediately knew this was the perfect home for Heron.

We describe our approach to using ingredients as farm to table. We are so lucky to have such an inspiring roster of passionate



producers in our local area who are disrupting traditional supply chains and selling direct to restaurants.

We know where our meat, cheeses and fresh produce are coming from because we have been able to visit our suppliers before opening and discuss new product launches, seasonal varieties and create a menu inspired by our surroundings.

Having worked in Edinburgh restaurants before launching our own, both Sam and I were lucky to already have great relationships with local growers, fisherman, butchers and farmers. For example, our shellfish, lobster and crab come from Dunbar just a short drive down the

east coast from Belhaven Lobster. They're a small company, and we were introduced by a mutual friend who was seriously impressed by their ethics and product. It's the best seafood we tasted.

The Free Company is a small regenerative farm based in the Pentland Hills just within the city limits. Run by three friends, they are moving away from traditional farming methods to regenerative practices to improve the quality of produce, whilst protecting and preserving the landscape. Our meat suppliers, MacDuff Butchers, invited us to their abattoir, and it was great as a chef to see how butchers work to break down a carcass for the best quality cuts for us to prepare in the restaurant. They champion unusual cuts of meat. In East Lothian, Phantassie Organic Farm provides our tomatoes, summer squash and courgettes. We've had great support from East Coast Cured, whose charcuterie jungle curing room is less than a mile from the restaurant, and our bread comes from Company Bakery, one of the best in Edinburgh.

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ITALIAN DURUM WHEAT PASTA



ITALIAN GLUTEN FREE PASTA

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