



Great Taste announces Supreme Champion 2017

Smoked products rise to the top, as Great Taste announces Supreme Champion 2017

Out of 12,366 products entered into Great Taste 2017, the top honour of **Great Taste Supreme Champion** has been awarded to a **Smoked Black Pudding**, a brand new product from **Hugh Maguire** of Meath in Ireland. Celebrating the very best in food and drink, Great Taste, the world's most coveted food awards, reached its grand finale at the Great Taste Golden Fork Award Dinner held on Monday 4 September at the InterContinental London Park Lane Hotel, where over 350 guests from the world of fine food gathered to hear the results of many months of rigorous judging.

Made from fresh pig's blood and containing no artificial preservatives, this traditional black pudding is smoked over beechwood chippings for 45-minutes and boasts a "gentle pepper warmth, saliva-inducing aroma and careful use of smoke, which whooshes across the tongue and works in perfect harmony". First generation butcher, Hugh Maguire, who started the business in 1991, took inspiration from his travels around Europe and installed a smokehouse at the craft butcher shop upon his return. Great Taste judges were in awe of this "tender" smoked black pudding and asked, "why has no one ever smoked black pudding before? Genius."

With over 100 smoked products picking up Great Taste awards this year, the UK and Ireland has clearly found an appetite for playing with fire. Among this year's other top trophy winners, Macneil's Smokehouse from Droitwich scooped the Great Taste Golden Fork for the best food or drink in the Midlands for its "moist, juicy and sweet" Smoked Mackerel, while Inverawe Smokehouses from Taynuilt picked up the Great Taste Golden Fork for the best food or drink from Scotland for its "stand out" Smoked Trout, during an evening when smoked products really did rise to the occasion.

John Farrand, managing director of the Guild of Fine Food, explains: "This Smoked Black Pudding really does encapsulate what Great Taste is all about; a simple, rather humble product made using good honest ingredients, with a dash of innovation and well measured twist thrown in to excite the palate. We have seen many smoked products achieve outstanding Great Taste results this year, aside from those going home with Golden Forks, which reflects a wider movement among producers who are embracing this nostalgic way of preserving and cooking to create truly exceptional food."

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The full list of Golden Fork trophies for 2017

Charcuterie Product of the Year sponsored by **Fine Food Digest**

Ispini Charcuterie for **Rosemary & Thyme Bresaola**

Golden Fork for Best Imported Food sponsored by **Speciality & Fine Food Fair**

Eulogia of Sparta for **Heather Honey**



Nigel Barden Heritage Award sponsored by **Diverse Fine Food**

Mrs Kirkham's for **Lancashire Cheese**

Ambient Product of the Year sponsored by **Petty Wood & Co**

The Artisan Kitchen for **Seville Orange Marmalade**

Golden Fork from Ireland sponsored by **Bord Bia**

Hugh Maguire for **Smoked Black Pudding**

Golden Fork from Northern Ireland sponsored by **Invest Northern Ireland**

Hannan Meats for **Sweet Cured Bacon Rack**

Golden Fork from the Midlands sponsored by **Aga Rangemaster**

Macneil's Smokehouse for **Smoked Mackerel**

Golden Fork from the South West sponsored by **InkREADible Labels**

Sandford Orchards for **St Louis Dry Hopped Cider**

Golden Fork from Wales sponsored by **Food and Drink Wales**

Coedcanlas for **Organic Welsh Blackcurrant Jam**

Golden Fork from Scotland sponsored by **Scotland Food & Drink**

Inverawe Smokehouses for **Smoked Trout**

Golden Fork from East Anglia sponsored by **Harrods**

Thursday Cottage for **National Trust Sour Cherry Curd**

Golden Fork from the North of England sponsored by **Cress Co**

Isle of Man Creamery for **Whey Butter**

Golden Fork from London & the South East sponsored by **Rowcliffe**

La Tua Pasta for **Handmade Tortelloni Burrata & Black Truffle**

Small Artisan Producer of the Year sponsored by **Selfridges**

Fortes Ice Cream

Great Taste Producer of the Year sponsored by **Partridges**

Swoon

Great Taste Shop of the Year sponsored by **Hotel Indigo** and supported by **delicious.**

Delicatessen – Delilah Fine Foods, Leicester

Farm Shop – The Gog Farm Shop, Cambridge

What is Great Taste?

Great Taste, founded in 1994 and organised by The Guild of Fine Food, has judged over 122,000 products in the last 23 years; each one has been blind-tasted by a team of judges who are dedicated to finding the most exquisite tasting food and drink regardless of branding or packaging. The panel of judges this year included; chef, food writer and author, Gill Meller, MasterChef judge and restaurant critic, Charles Champion, author and Zoe's Ghana Kitchen chef, Zoe Adjonyoh, baker, Tom Herbert, and food writer and baking columnist, Martha Collison, as well as food buyers from Fortnum & Mason, Selfridges, and Harvey Nichols. These esteemed palates have together tasted and re-judged the 3-star winners to finally agree on the 2017 Top 50 Foods, the Golden Fork Trophy winners and the Great Taste 2017 Supreme Champion.

Facts and figures about Great Taste 2017:

- Great Taste is widely acknowledged as the most respected food accreditation scheme for artisan and speciality food producers.
- A record breaking 12,366 different products were entered in 2017.
- Over 500 of the most demanding palates, belonging to food critics, chefs, restaurateurs, cooks, producers and a host of food writers and journalists blind taste each product
- Judging took place across the UK at the following locations:
 - Guild HQ in Gillingham, Dorset, as well several other Dorset venues.
 - The Guild of Fine Food's newly opened second home, No. 42 Southwark Street, London, as well as other London venues.
 - Llandrillo College, Nr Colwyn Bay, as part of this year's Great Taste Roadshow, seeing Great Taste visit North Wales for the very first time.
- **3,171 awarded 1-star**
- **1,011 awarded 2-star**
- **165 awarded 3-star**

As the judges searched for the stars of 2017, waste was kept to a minimum, with unused products being donated to local food banks and hampers made up of excess products for local businesses to raffle in aid of charities. The Guild of Fine Food also donates surplus computer equipment, used to record the judges' comments, to community-based projects across the UK, which are then refurbished and used to facilitate after school clubs and many other initiatives designed to support underprivileged families.

What are Great Taste judges looking for?

Above all they are looking for **truly great taste**. Yes, they take into account texture, appearance and of course quality ingredients; they like a good aroma, a decent bite to a sausage, a smooth lemon curd, crunchy rich pastry, but everything comes back to the taste. Is it really, truly great?

How do they work?

Each team of four judges blind-tastes around 25 products per session, discussing each product as a coordinating food writer transcribes their comments directly onto the Great Taste website which producers access after judging is completed. Over the years, numerous food businesses, start-ups and well established producers have been advised how to modify their foods and have subsequently gone on to achieve Great Taste stars. Food or drink that is deemed worthy of Great Taste stars is also tasted by a team of arbitrators, who taste, confer and agree on the final award given. If judges feel that a product needs some adjustment, and therefore not likely to receive an award, the food or drink gets a second chance on a referral table, where another team, blind-tastes and deliberates. For a Great Taste 3-star award, the vast majority in the room – which can be as many as 30-40 experts – must agree that the food or drink delivers that indescribable ‘wow’ factor.

What should consumers look for?

The black and gold logo. The Great Taste seal is their guarantee a product has been through a rigorous and independent judging process. It’s not about smart packaging or clever marketing – it’s all about taste.

??? EXQUISITE. WOW! TASTE THAT ?? OUTSTANDING ? SIMPLY DELICIOUS

Images are available to view in the [press room](#) on the Guild of Fine Food website and high resolution images are available from amy@freshlygroundpr.co.uk.

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www.gff.co.uk

www.greatasteawards.co.uk

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