

## Great Taste Supreme Champion 2020 announced

### P R E S S R E L E A S E



**Free range pork crowned Supreme Champion, as ethical farming produces truly Great Taste**

### **Great Taste Supreme Champion 2020 announced**

Great Taste, the world's most trusted food and drink awards, has reached its grand finale for 2020, with the top honour of **Great Taste Supreme Champion** presented to **Redhill Farm Free Range Pork** near Gainsborough in Lincolnshire for its **Free Range Pork Shoulder**.

Ethically farmed to the highest welfare standards by Jane and Terry Tomlinson, Redhill Farm's Free Range Pork Shoulder impressed the judges with its "flavour reflecting how the animal has been treated with love, care and attention." Providing their Duroc cross pigs with everything they need to enjoy a natural, stress-free life, Jane and Terry are also dedicated to ensuring that nothing unnecessary is imposed on their animals, as they spend their days roaming and rooting around the farm.

Having won Great Taste awards consecutively for the past 17 years, also landing the Golden Fork from East Anglia and the Midlands in 2014 and the Golden Fork from the Midlands in both 2019 and 2020, Redhill Farm has produced consistently high levels of quality, year in, year out. Now earning the ultimate seal of approval from some of the world's most demanding palates, who revelled in the Pork Shoulder's "tremendous character", describing it as "crunchy and fatty with a delicate sweetness, but an almost grunting porkiness", the Lincolnshire-based farm has been rewarded for the extra time, effort and care that has gone into the farming, production and selling of its free range pork.

Committed to working only with likeminded partners, who value quality, provenance and authenticity, Redhill Farm is highly selective about who it supplies and continues to sell most of its produce in person at local farmers markets and through its two shops; the aptly named 'Shop on the Farm' and the recently opened 'Shop in the Bail' in the centre of Lincoln, which has been named as a finalist two years running in the Guild of Fine Food's Shop of the Year competition. Through this comprehensive approach to the production and selling of its pork, this year's Great Taste Supreme Champion plans to remain an ethical small business that delivers quality from farming through to retail.

Jane Tomlinson, managing director of Redhill Farm Free Range Pork, commented: “We enter Great Taste each year to prove our quality and to prove it consistently year in, year out... in our quest to stand out from the crowd. I think with this award we may just have finally achieved that!”

John Farrand, managing director of the Guild of Fine Food, organisers of Great Taste, added: “Jane and Terry Tomlinson are truly worthy winners of the Supreme Champion accolade, having consistently achieved Great Taste stars and trophies over many years, raising their game along the way to reach the very top of the pile. As uncertainty continues regarding food safety and animal welfare standards post-Brexit and the nation continues to take a closer look at where its food comes from throughout the COVID-19 crisis, this win for Redhill Farm serves as a timely reminder of what our best farmers are doing to feed us, care for their animals and nurture their patch of land. Going above and beyond free range standards, Redhill Farm has produced a joint of pork that rose above 12,776 other products to take the top prize, which should give those in power some food for thought. 2020 has seen unprecedented challenges thrown at folk in food and drink, whether they’re producers, retailers – or awards schemes for that matter – but this is a rare moment to celebrate and savour.”

Having impressed at every stage of the blind-tasted judging process, as a record-breaking 12,777 entries were assessed over 14 weeks of remote judging and socially distanced judging sessions, the Free Range Pork Shoulder was crowned Great Taste Supreme Champion 2020 during the virtual Great Taste Golden Fork award ceremony on Thursday 22 October.

Taking place across the Guild of Fine Food’s social media channels and website, the online event brought together food lovers, producers, retailers, buyers and chefs to discover this year’s stars of food and drink, providing a vital boost for the industry as the nation moves towards the most important Christmas period in a generation. Held later in the year than usual, after the lockdown interrupted judging just one week into the schedule, the Golden Fork trophy announcements are the final instalment in a Great Taste calendar that has been reinvented at every stage, in order to stimulate much-needed consumer support for independent retail and hospitality over the challenging months ahead.

This year’s panel of judges included; cook, writer and champion of sustainable food, Melissa Hemsley, cook, writer, stylist and voice of modern vegetarian cooking, Anna Jones, celebrated Spanish chef, José Pizarro, Kavi Thakrar from Dishoom, food writer and cook, Xanthe Clay, and baker and author, Martha Collison, as well as food buyers from Selfridges, Fortnum & Mason and Waitrose. These esteemed palates tasted and re-judged the 3-star winners to finally agree on the Golden Fork trophy winners and the Great Taste 2020 Supreme Champion.



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John Farrand, managing director of the Guild of Fine Food, organisers of Great Taste, is also available for comment.

**The full list of Great Taste 2020 Golden Fork trophies:**

**Golden Fork from London & the South East, sponsored by Stoke Park**



**Bermondsey Street Bees for Royal Albert Dock Honey**

**Golden Fork from East Anglia**

**Alder Tree for Blackcurrant Fruit Cream Ice**

**Golden Fork from the Midlands**

**Redhill Farm Free Range Pork for Free Range Pork Shoulder**

**Golden Fork from the North of England, sponsored by Fine Food Show North**

**The Lost Barn Coffee Roasters for Bloomsbury Blend**

**Golden Fork from Scotland**

**Tayport Distillery for 1992 Raspberry Liqueur**

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

**Craic Foods for Black Garlic & Porcini Sea Salt**

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

**Ummera Smoked Products for Smoked Irish Organic Salmon**

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

**Wenallt Hive for Honey Vinegar with Raspberries**



**Golden Fork from the South West**, sponsored by **Bishop Fleming**

**Capreolus Fine Foods** for **Smoked Pancetta**

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

**Anchoas Hazas** for **Anchoas Hazas | Anchovies** (Spain)

**Ambient Product of the Year**

**Melira** for **Pine Honey with Chios Mastic** (Greece)

**Nigel Barden Heritage Award**, sponsored by **Dunbia**

**Bespoke Brewing Co** for **Money For Old Rope 4.8% Stout**

**Great Taste Startisan of the Year**, sponsored by **Partridges London**

**Mountain Honeys** for **Hilltop Heather Honey**

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

**Jamones Juan Pedro Domecq** for **Jamon de Bellota 100% Iberico Pata Negra** (Spain)

**Small Artisan Producer of the Year**

**Standout Chocolate** for **Haiti Cap-Haïtien 70%**, **Belize Maya Mountain 70%**, **Guatemala Lachuá 70%**, **Peru Urubamba 70%** and **Spruce Shoots** (Sweden)

**Contribution to Fine Food**, sponsored by the **Guild of Fine Food**

**Andy and Kathy Swinscoe** from **The Courtyard Dairy**



## **Great Taste Supreme Champion 2020**

### **Redhill Farm Free Range Pork for Free Range Pork Shoulder**

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#### **Notes for editors:**

#### **Facts and figures about Great Taste 2020:**

- Great Taste is widely acknowledged as the most respected food accreditation scheme for artisan and speciality food producers
- A record breaking 12,777 different products were entered in 2020
- Entries were sent in from 106 different countries, including Estonia, Greece, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Madagascar, the Philippines, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, the USA and Vietnam
- 144 judges took part this year. Less than usual, due to the pandemic and to ensure social distancing in both locations. However, the same number of judging layers were applied, to maintain the rigorous and robust process. Judges included the most demanding palates, belonging to food critics, chefs, restaurateurs, retail buyers, cooks, producers and a host of food writers, journalists and social media influencers
- Judging took place over a total of 14 weeks. Having begun as planned in March 2020, the process was then halted due to COVID-19. Judging resumed in early May, when remote judging was able to take place in judges' homes, before Great Taste returned to the judging rooms in both Dorset and London during July

- Judging took place at the following locations:
  - Guild HQ in Gillingham, Dorset, as well several other Dorset venues
  - The Guild of Fine Food's London home, No. 42 Southwark Street, SE1
  - The homes of regular judges, as Great Taste continued during lockdown
- **3,818 awarded 1-star**
- **1,294 awarded 2-star**
- **205 awarded 3-star**

## What is Great Taste?

Great Taste, founded in 1994 and organised by the Guild of Fine Food, has judged over 158,000 products in the last 27 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.

## Great Taste ratings

**3-star:** Extraordinarily tasty foods – around 1.5% of products are awarded a 3-star each year – don't leave the shop without buying it!

**2-star:** Above and beyond delicious – 10% of entries will achieve this rating

**1-star:** A food that delivers fantastic flavour. Approximately 30% of entries will achieve this rating each year.

## What are Great Taste judges looking for?

They're looking for great texture and appearance. They judge the quality of ingredients and how well the maker has put the food or drink together. But above all, they are looking for truly great taste.

## How did the judging work this year?

Great Taste has grown and is trusted because of the rigour of its judging process. With the challenges of lockdown, and then social distancing, the Guild of Fine Food had to adapt the judging process to ensure that every entry went through enough judging layers to reach a fair rating and generate constructive feedback for the producers.

After a week of normal judging ahead of lockdown, the Guild of Fine Food quickly had to establish a way in which to judge the remaining 12,000 products. In early May, a remote judging system was established, with entries consolidated at the Guild of Fine Food's HQ in Dorset and then sent to smaller groups of judges, working remotely and sharing the experience over Zoom. This ensured that a similar number of experts assessed every food and drink product. This remote judging suited ambient, cheese and some cured products, but judges needed to get back into the judging room in early July to tackle products which require cooking, as well as frozen puddings and other logistically challenging entries. Great Taste had fewer experts in both the London and Gillingham judging locations, so the food was passed through more teams to, again, achieve the critical number of palates to ensure that the judging criteria was met and feedback was provided. 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.

In line with previous years, tea and coffee were judged in specialist facilities to ensure correct preparation. Following the considerable efforts of the Great Taste team, the judges and the flexibility of the food producers who entered, the results and thorough feedback on each product, whether award winner or not, were published only seven weeks after the originally planned results date – and are now available for retailers and consumers to discover for themselves.

### **What do the stars mean for producers?**

Recognised as a reliable stamp of excellence among consumers, retailers and major food buyers alike, Great Taste success can be the gateway to exciting opportunities for food and drink producers. As well as seeing an uplift in sales and revenue, award-winning producers also get to enjoy raised awareness by appearing in the Great Taste book, a unique directory used by many food retailers, supplying samples for high profile events and exhibiting as part of Great Taste Markets at events including RHS Hampton Court Flower Show, CarFest and Countryfile Live. Receiving a 3-, 2- or 1-star rating for products really puts producers on the map, while opening doors to investment and export opportunities.

### **What should consumers look for?**

The logo. The Great Taste symbol 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.

### **October 2020**