

## Vibrant vinegars from the South East make a splash at Great Taste

Following more than 65 days of judging, the results of the world's most coveted food awards, Great Taste, have been released, with many producers in the South East now celebrating. Out of a record breaking 12,634 products to be judged in 2018, 4,653 were awarded a highly prized Great Taste accolade and a remarkable 581 are based in the South East.

Great Taste 3-star winners from the South East include; a “jammy and syrupy” Raspberry Vinegar from Chipping Norton-based Womersley Fruit & Herb Vinegars, which received high praise for its versatility and “nice delicate natural raspberry flavour”; a sprightly and “well balanced” Sushi Ginger Vinegar from the Middlesex-based Vinegar Shed, made with white Pineau des Charentes, fresh and confit ginger, lime zest and fleur de sel; and a sweet and sticky Dark Balsamic (Crema) from Fino Olive Oil in Oxfordshire, which is “rich and treacly” with lots of Pedro Ximenez and deep caramel notes shining through.

While these producers revel in their success and begin displaying the unmistakable gold and black Great Taste logo, with 1-, 2- or 3- stars, on their award-winning products, they will wait with much anticipation to see if they also scoop the top awards for their region. These final honours, including the Great Taste 2018 Supreme Champion, will be announced at the Great Taste Golden Fork Dinner on Sunday 2 September, to be held at the InterContinental Park Lane Hotel, London.

Recognised as a stamp of excellence among consumers and retailers alike, Great Taste, organised by the Guild of Fine Food, values taste above all else, with no regard for branding or packaging. Whether it is vinegar, granola, bacon or cheese being judged, all products are removed from their wrapper, jar, box or bottle before being tasted. The judges then savour, confer and re-taste to decide which products are worthy of a 1-, 2- or 3-star award.

The panel of judges this year included; MasterChef 2018 champion, Kenny Tutt, chef and food writer, Elly Curshen, eco chef and food writer, Tom Hunt, author and chef, Zoe Adjonyoh, baker Tom Herbert, author and blogger, Izy Hossack, and baker and recipe writer, Martha Collison, as well as food buyers from Harrods, Selfridges and Sourced Market. These esteemed palates have together tasted and re-judged the 3-star winners to finally agree on the Golden Fork Trophy winners and the Great Taste 2018 Supreme Champion.

Details of this year's winners can be found at [www.greatasteawards.co.uk](http://www.greatasteawards.co.uk) and a wide range of award

winning products are available to buy in delis, farm shops and independent retail outlets across the country.

**Facts and figures about Great Taste 2018:**

- Great Taste is widely acknowledged as the most respected food accreditation scheme for artisan and speciality food producers
- A record breaking 12,634 different products were entered in 2018
- Over 500 of the most demanding palates, belonging to food critics, chefs, restaurateurs, cooks, producers and a host of food writers, journalists and social media influencers, blind taste each product
- 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
- **3,254 awarded 1-star**
- **1,207 awarded 2-star**
- **192 awarded 3-star**

As the judges searched for the stars of 2018, 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. No plastic plates or cutlery were used during the judging rounds, reducing plastic waste by almost 100%. 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.

**[A full list of all regional winners is available from amy@freshlygroundpr.co.uk.](mailto:amy@freshlygroundpr.co.uk)**

**[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.](#)**