

June 2017

# What's next for coffee shop food menus?

Fierce competition between coffee shop operators has raised the bar when it comes to offering the best quality coffee. The next frontier is coffee shop food menus that give consumers the innovative experience they want. So in our new food menu report, Sarah Hartnett, pastry chef and UCC Coffee UK & Ireland chef ambassador takes a fresh look at coffee shop menus to explore how food and coffee work together to create an elevated experience, to give operators the edge over competitors and maximise profitability.

**Sarah Hartnett**

*UCC Coffee UK & Ireland  
chef ambassador*

*Pastry chef formerly of Claridge's  
and Sheraton Park Lane*

*Fellow of the Royal Academy  
of Culinary Arts*



## Stale coffee shop food menus leave consumers unsatisfied

With coffee shops competing to excel across the board and quality coffee increasingly available anytime, anyplace, operators are going beyond coffee to create a point of difference. Innovative and exciting menus are a key success factor for coffee shops - the battle to attract and retain customers will be fought on food.

The UK is a world leader in hospitality, breaking ground and shaping food trends that traverse sectors and borders. Despite our impressive coffee culture, this is not always reflected in coffee shops.

The lack of innovation on coffee shop menus leaves UK venues lagging behind the global hospitality industry. For example, the Nordic countries are seeing considered and diverse food offers create an all-round heightened and more memorable coffee experience. It's time to raise the bar.

OVER **2/3**   
CONSUMERS  
BUY COFFEE  
SHOP FOOD  
REGULARLY

**SATISFACTION**  
WITH COFFEE SHOP FOOD  
QUALITY IS DECLINING

  
**INNOVATIVE  
& EXCITING FOOD  
= KEY SUCCESS  
FACTOR**

## Create to elevate

People want to buy food and stay on site to eat. Operators aren't just selling a coffee – they're selling an experience. Venues that elevate the experience beyond coffee, with well-paired, innovative and on-trend food offers, will cement their reputation as a great destination. And people will be willing to pay.

Carefully paired sweet snacks can change the experience. Try pairing ThreeSixty's Cuban Cumanayagua with my recipe for salted peanut butter brownies. The nuttiness of the brownies

really heightens the coffee taste notes of roasted peanuts and cinder toffee. It's about being inventive and offering something fresh and enticing that sidesteps the norm.

The recipes I've developed with UCC Coffee include a traditional Irish Tea Brack – a small tweak of ingredient takes it from clashing to complementing the exact same coffee when paired with the ThreeSixty's Ethiopian Yirgacheffe.

And with Louie Mio coffee, I've explored how milk-based coffee can harmonise with specific sweet products, to develop a Hazelnut Praline Financier with toasted sablage. With the coffee's taste notes of dark, chocolate fudge through milk, you don't know where the coffee ends and the cake begins. Exploring how different the food experience can be when it harmonises with coffee gets you thinking differently about the experience.

# 3/4

CONSUMERS EAT & DRINK  
ON THE PREMISES



1/3 CONSUMERS WOULD PAY MORE  
FOR QUALITY FOOD



FOOD PRICE IMPACTS ALMOST  
1/2 COFFEE SHOP VISITS

## Time to rethink your food?



CHOOSE CAKES  
OR PASTRIES  
WHEN ORDERING FOOD  
WITH THEIR COFFEE



BREAKFAST PRODUCTS  
MOST IN DEMAND



MEAL TIMES GREATER  
MOTIVATOR THAN SNACKING

TOP FOODS PURCHASED WITH COFFEE

- 1 CAKES
- 2 SANDWICHES
- 3 PASTRIES

TOP CAKES PURCHASED WITH COFFEE

- 1 CHOCOLATE
- 2 CARROT
- 3 CHEESECAKE



There are no surprises when it comes to the top foods and cakes purchased with coffee, but when was the last time anyone challenged the norm? For instance a chocolate cake, the number one choice, won't necessarily work well with the coffee served. And a carrot cake and almond croissant wouldn't both match the same

coffee. These popular choices have been the same year in, year out – are they what consumers really want or is it because that's what's available? We have to be prepared to offer twists and encourage people to try something new. Proactively recommending a pairing at the point of order could be a simple start.

## And have you thought about your coffee?

When teaming up coffee and food, the impact of roast profile can't be overestimated.

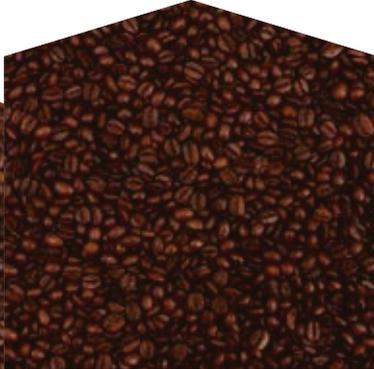
Gareth Davies, head of coffee excellence, UCC Coffee UK & Ireland explains: "The way your customers choose a snack or a dessert comes down to the taste – the decision is based on the experience they are craving when they reach the counter or at the end of a meal and how it's going to make them feel. Operators need to ensure this craving is met in the context of coffee by understanding the basics of drink types for example a flat white versus black filter, and roast profile from light to dark. The latter is a topic which is often overlooked but it is absolutely central to how your coffee tastes. If we look at the successful coffee operators in the UK and Ireland, the medium-darker roasts are winning hands down. Without exception, this is where the UK and Ireland consumer palette is.

"When we roast coffee, we're essentially cooking it to a light, medium or dark profile. Much like a steak, the difference in cooking time will define the flavour, texture and aroma your customers will experience. Understand this idea and you can tailor your coffee and food offers to your customers' preferences, meeting their needs, tastes and expectations while offering them something complementary and different that works.

"We have made coffee unnecessarily complex as the market has grown, but in reality achieving a great tasting coffee isn't difficult. It's a recipe to be followed with primarily three ingredients; coffee, water and milk, and we can't lose sight of that."



## How the roast profile affects taste

			
ROAST PROFILE	LIGHT	MEDIUM	DARK
CHARACTERISTIC	Part cooked High acidity Cooked fruit flavour	Balanced acidity and sugar Sugar starts to caramelise Sweetness more pronounced	Acidity removed Low sweetness Sugar caramelised which leads to bitter notes
WHERE	Trendy artisanal – seen in specialists	Increasingly more popular – starting to see on high street	Most popular on high street
FLAVOUR ANECDOTE	"A punnet of ripe raspberries and you pick the unripe one."  Like choosing lemon sorbet	"You pick a ripe cherry from a punnet of sharp cherries."  Like choosing apple crumble with sweet custard	"Picking a really ripe blueberry from a punnet of sharp ones."  Like choosing a dark chocolate torte

Move over indulgence, health is here

**INDULGENCE  
ON THE DECLINE**

**HEALTHIER FOOD  
= KEY SUCCESS FACTOR**



**1/7 MISSED FOOD SALES  
OPPORTUNITIES**  
DUE TO LACK OF HEALTHY OPTIONS

**1/3** REGULARLY BUY HEALTHIER  
**FOOD WITH COFFEE**

MOST SOUGHT AFTER MENU ADDITIONS

- 1 HEALTHIER / FRESH SALADS
- 2 FRUIT
- 3 FRESHLY MADE SANDWICHES
- 4 HEALTHIER SAVOURY
- 5 FRESH / HOMEMADE SOUP



Healthy options are more in demand than ever. The health and wellbeing trend is high in customers' priorities and it's important to meet their expectations. Whether it's healthier protein focused snacks, smaller portion sizes or nutritional transparency for more indulgent items – cater for the health conscious and calorie counting consumers.

## The coffee and food opportunity

The key to a successful food offer isn't necessarily about changing menus completely, it's ensuring each product fits into the wider experience. Have you something for the health conscious, the indulgers and the mealtime customers? And most importantly – does it bring out the best in your coffee? Actively paired food choices can accentuate and harmonise with your coffee's flavours.

Pairing food to coffee can be as simple as a minor tweak in ingredient or garnish to complement the flavour notes of both products.

Ultimately, consistent and tasty coffee, great food, and friendly, efficient service should all work together to create one great customer experience.



## In practice

To celebrate the launch of UCC Coffee's Grand Crü Composition No.2 at the European Coffee Symposium, we worked together to customise sweet snacks by Easy Food A/S to complement and accentuate flavours. It's a great example of how coffee can work with cakes to help sell more and elevate the experience.



### GRAND CRÜ COMPOSITION NO.2

Double Espresso

*Brown Sugar. Dark Cherry.  
60% Cocoa.*

*Paired with a Cacao  
Wholegrain 'Short'.*

*Madagascan 65% chocolate  
glaze, roasted mini cocoa nibs  
and shimmered gold lustre.*

The cacao flavours surge through the wholegrain snack accentuating the chocolate chips, affording great balance with the brown sugar and cocoa notes of the espresso.



### GRAND CRÜ COMPOSITION NO.2

Piccolo

*Caramel. Spiced Biscuit.  
60% Cocoa.*

*Paired with a Brown  
Sugar 'Short'.*

*Caramelised hazelnut  
sablage and gold flakes.*

The creamy caramel flavours of the coffee are enhanced by the roasted caramelised nuts and rich brown sugar, as the 'short' melts into a smooth dough to finish.



Sources:  
Allegra World Coffee Portal – UK Retail Coffee Shop Market – Strategic Analysis, December 2016<sup>®</sup> Corporate Licence  
Allegra World Coffee Portal – Allegra Coffee Track Q2 2016

UCC Coffee UK & Ireland partnered with Sarah Hartnett to inspire operators to think differently about food and coffee.  
To find out more contact Gareth Davies - [gareth.davies@ucc-coffee.co.uk](mailto:gareth.davies@ucc-coffee.co.uk)