



TAKE FIVE

Chef Stephen Gilchrist can afford to smile. The Shop 3 Bistro he runs with his partner Kathryn Curtis just won the *Crumbs* Award for Best Newcomer – and they're about to open a new gaff . . .

Congratulations on winning Best Newcomer at the *Crumbs* Awards!

Thank you, we were very surprised. There are so many great new businesses in Bristol; we were so lucky to be chosen.

Tell us a bit about your chef background and cooking style

I've been cooking for 26 years, in London, New Zealand and now Bristol. My experience ranges from top London city restaurants to five-star hotels, boutique vineyard restaurants, and small, independent family-run businesses. I love honest, rustic, tasty cooking inspired by great produce.

Please sum up the philosophy and aims of Shop 3 Bistro

Our aim is to be a friendly neighbourhood bistro serving exciting, moderately priced cuisine. Our philosophy is to serve food and drinks influenced by as many foraged and locally grown ingredients as possible.

What are you foraging at the moment?

This is our favourite time of year for foraging. Last week in the kitchen we've been working with crab apples, sea cabbage, rowanberries, hawthorn and wild chervil.

Why did you feel that Bristol was the right place to open a restaurant?

We were excited to come back to the UK, we wanted to live somewhere in touch with the countryside and with the vibrancy of a city. Bristol is the perfect mix and full of energy and ideas.

Have you found the local food scene to be supportive? Where do you go for a meal on a rare night off?

The restaurant community in Bristol is amazing, the calibre of restaurants in Bristol



is extremely high. Our favourite place to go for a date is Paco Tapas at Casamia.

What kind of food do you cook for family and friends, and what's your go-to simple dinner for two?

On the rare occasion we cook for family, we cook whatever is great in their garden. Simple dinner for two: gyoza, chicken karaage, rice and miso.

When we visited we were intrigued by the chocolate and mushroom dessert. Do you have any more unusual combos to tempt us on the current or up-and-coming menus?

Right now we are serving duck egg with bottarga and seabuckthorn. We've got a delicious pork gel with bacon ice cream and oyster mayo, coming up on our pre-Christmas menu. . .

www.shop3bistro.co.uk
www.otira.co.uk

STOP PRESS: look out for Stephen and Kathryn's second opening, *Otira* – a restaurant and tapas bar inspired by Stephen's life and travels – which will be joining the burgeoning foodie scene on Chandos Road



FRYING TONIGHT

We know! We think B Block sounds like a prison drama, too. In fact, it's a new all-day restaurant specialising in authentic wood-fired pizzas, quality coffee and local produce, and it's due to open this month in Keynsham.

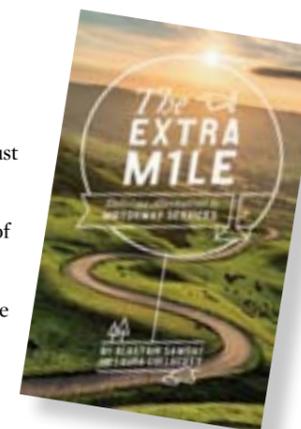
Yes, Keynsham. B Block is part of the much-vaunted new Chocolate Quarter currently being developed on the site of the former Frys, then subsequently Cadbury's, chocolate factory. The restaurant will open for breakfast and lunch on 6 and 7 November, and for dinner service from 8 November. The name and style of the restaurant highlights the building's heritage; housed within one of the original factory buildings, the 60-cover diner is styled with bespoke furniture, salvaged light fittings, ironwork and reclaimed decorative items to create a stripped-back industrial feel.

For more: www.b-blockpizza.co.uk

MILES BETTER

No-one really likes a Little Chef, so why not go the Extra Mile to find a better alternative? A book of the same name is just about to be published by Alastair Sawday under their new imprint Printslinger; its aim is to point motorists in the direction of delicious, quirky, organic and sustainable local alternatives to overpriced motorway fare. The book costs £12.99 and is available on pre-order with a 10% discount; one for the Santa wishlist, perhaps?

For more: www.centralbooks.com



THE NEVER-ENDING STORY

. . . and that's totally fine by us, as we're massive fans of Luke Hasell and his award-winning Story Farm. Luke is due to open his new butchers, Meat Box, in the final two units at Cargo 2 on 4 November.

"Meat Box is all about ethically sourced meat, that's traceable and damn tasty to boot," he says.

"We'll be able to provide that last-minute outdoor reared pork chop for your dinner, or a hand-cut and rolled organic joint for Sunday lunch, or a Christmas ham like you've never tasted. We'll be sourcing the best pasture-fed, outdoor reared and organic meat alongside charcuterie and hams from Bristol and Somerset's finest." You can order by email or text the team – website orders are coming soon. If you call before 2pm you can collect your order on your way home from work.

For more: www.meatboxbristol.co.uk



FOOD OF LOVE

A new co-production for Bristol Old Vic! The historic theatre has announced a partnership with top local catering company Fosters, that will come into effect on the completion of the theatre's multi-million pound redevelopment in 2018. The two organisations will create a new catering and events space in King Street, with the centrepiece being the historic Coopers' Hall, which has done time as everything from a Quaker's Meeting House to a fruit warehouse. For the past 45 years it's been the mezzanine of Bristol Old Vic's FOH, and will be returned to its Georgian splendour as a public space for hire. Bookings are already open for those who want to be one of the first through the doors.

For more: www.bristololdvic.org.uk/events-and-catering



INDEPENDENTS DAY

To celebrate the launch of the latest collection of independent businesses at Cargo 2, Wapping Wharf is hosting a Patio Party on 10 November between 6-9 pm. You can bob about to sounds from funk and soul DJs Gold Diggers, while you pick up a pint, discuss the filthiness levels of a burger, tuck in to a pizza or purchase a steak. There are artisan bread and cakes from The Assembly Bakery, craft beers from The Beer Necessities, burgers and lemonade from Squeezed, local produce from Meat Box, pizzas from Pizzarova and plenty of stuff from the retail guys, too.

For more: www.wappingwharf.co.uk





CAFÉ SOCIETY
Stan Cullimore



CEREAL KILLER

The former guitarist of '80s indie rock band The Housemartins has since turned journalist and travel writer, and has somehow ended up writing a food column for us. Starting, appropriately enough, with breakfast . . .

Who in their right mind would open a cafe that sells porridge and pretty much nothing else? It has to be the act of a genius.

Or someone who has misunderstood the basic principles of capitalism. That's what I initially thought about The Porridge Project, which does exactly what it says on the front door. Sells cooked oats.

There again, why not? Bristol is hipster central these days. You can't walk into a café without seeing complicated facial hair in the kitchen or stepping on sourdough crumbs.

It was only a matter of time before this happened. Every niche is being filled; we've had cereal cafés, and waffle wagons. This is just a logical progression.

But here's the thing. When I made my way down Lodge Street, the steep cobbled road that takes you to Colston Hall's back door, I was ready to sneer. To shake my head at such foolishness, maybe even make a snippy comment or two.

First impressions were mixed. The place ticks all the postmodernist décor boxes. Industrial kitsch shelving and coarse chipboard flooring. No surprises there. The menu is short, sweet and simple, which is always a good sign. It covers the bases. Any reasonable person will

find something that tickles their oaty tastebuds; if not, they do requests.

Being a reasonable person, I ordered coffee and a bowl of Goldilock, Stock and Two Smoking Bananas, or similar. Taking my tasty coffee to a table by the door, I noticed the bags of oats on standby, the countertop machine that mills oats to order and the lazy sunshine dappling the walls. All of which felt good. Very good.

Then I noticed the neighbours, and things got even better. They were musicians and the like, scurrying around as they prepared for an evening's show at Colston's. An unexpected pleasure. Weird clothes, exotic hair and petulant strops; and that was just the roadies. It was like being backstage at a reality show. I couldn't tear my eyes away from them.

Until the café owner brought my Goldilocks bowl to the table. It looked mighty fine. Picture perfect. But full disclosure time: I am married to a Scot. One of the benefits of this is that she makes very tasty porridge – which is surprisingly rare. For such a simple dish, it is strangely difficult to make correctly. I can't tell you how many times I have endured professionally made bowls of lumpy oat slop that I wouldn't feed to my dog – and my dog eats socks.

Obviously, the proof of the porridge is in the eating. So I ate it. Every last bit. I can report that it was exquisite. Perfect. The very best I have ever had in a commercial setting. Top-notch product.

So, in conclusion, I think this place may just be an act of genius. It delivers perfect porridge, classy coffee and a floor show that is worth the price of admission alone. More power to their porridge-pumping elbows.



It's rumoured that they'll still serve you even if you don't have a Macbook and glasses

www.stancullimore.com

www.facebook.com/bristolporridgeproject