



**Croydon
Food Group**



**WELCOME TO YOUR SECOND NEWSLETTER
February 2009**

**With your help we will be featuring your stories here in
future editions; e-mail your copy to us at
info@thecroydonfoodgroup.co.uk**

Welcome to our second edition of the newsletter, thank you to all those who provided feedback on Issue One and an extra thank you to all of you who provided copy for this issue.

In a period of cutbacks, redundancies and closures it is heartening to see positive attitudes in addressing the challenges ahead; from adventurous menu pricing to new investments in premises and production. Research by The Design Council repeatedly shows that it is the bold and courageous that best survive downturns and recessions and who emerge at the end in a strong position to benefit from the opportunities a re-growth offers those who plan to succeed.

Membership continues to grow and we are very near to our first year's target. Attendances at the group's workshops are increasing, the last workshop on food hygiene standards at The Casablanca Café was well attended and had excellent feedback. We have also set up an on-line community for the Croydon Food Group in Face book for the sharing of ideas, advice and news so please sign up. All you need to do is join Face book and then type "The Croydon Food Group" in the search box in the top right hand corner of the home page.

A new Fish and Grill Restaurant in South Croydon at

Almost a year following the success of 'Le Cassoulet' Chef Malcolm John took over the Smollenski site in South Croydon to open 'Fish and Grill', a contemporary yet cosy British Brasserie.

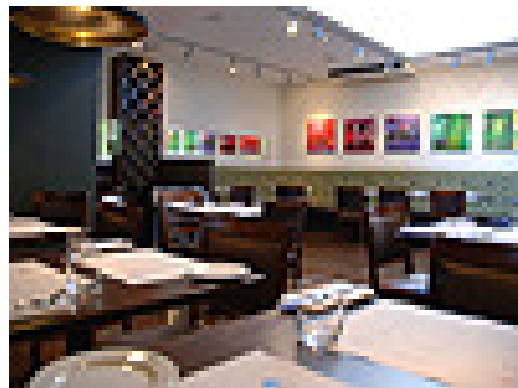
Chef John started his career at the De Vere Hotel as a commis chef in 1982, trained with The Savoy Group for six years before moving to the Strenuous Hotel, Positano, in Italy. In 1995 Chef John became Executive sous chef at The Café Royal, working alongside Herbert Berger. He worked as Head Chef, St. Quentin, Knightsbridge and the Blue Bird Private Members Club both for two years before opening Le Vacherin as Chef Patron. Le Cassoulet opened their doors in February 2008 as Chef John's second venture to exceptional reviews and outstanding comments from the residents of South Croydon and was awarded Best Local Restaurant Award from Time Out in 2008.

"With the success of Le Cassoulet I'm hoping to change the image of Croydon and bring new diners into the area." says chef John.

Once inside Fish and Grill you'll discover a refreshingly light and airy feel and enjoy a Guinness, a lager on tap or a glass of wine - the wine list extends to 60 bins—

the bar before being shown to your table. The fresh fish bar, showcasing a striking selection of fish and shell fish, greets customers to the split level restaurant. Creative lighting, simple prints, wooden tables with no tablecloths, oak floors, exposed brickwork and leather banquettes create a very welcoming yet smart atmosphere.

The emphasis is definitely on fresh fish and crustaceans sourced from the south coast and Cornwall. The menu is priced to suit all budgets, with starters ranging from £4.95 to £9.95 and mains from £9.95 to £32.00



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CRO 1DP

Tel: 020-8774 4060

Email: malcolmjohn@fishandgrill.co.uk

Web site: www.fishandgrill.co.uk

Changes to the National Minimum Wage from 6 April 2009

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) rules have been with us for some years and require minimum rates of pay for certain workers. The government is now getting tough with those who do not pay the NMW. From 6 April 2009, a new automatic penalty will be raised on employers where HMRC find NMW arrears. Penalties will range from £100 to £5,000 in addition to any arrears of pay owed to the workers. The most serious cases could lead to a criminal sentence or an unlimited fine.

Several changes are also being made to the powers of investigating officers such as the ability to remove NMW records from an employer's premises. To read more about the NMW rules please see the links below.

Internet links: [HMRC - National Minimum Wage](#)
www.berr.gov.uk



Health-conscious shoppers who opt for ready-to-eat seeds could be putting themselves at risk of food poisoning.

A small proportion of the snacks have been found to be contaminated with salmonella or Ecolab, which can pose a particular threat to the elderly.

The Health Protection Agency said it was a 'serious' concern. Unlike other foods that can harbour germs, such as chicken, seeds are uncooked and therefore the bugs are not killed off before they are eaten.

Experts from local councils and the HPA examined 3,735 packets of seeds between October 2007 and March last year.

Twenty-two were unsafe because of salmonella contamination and 56 contained 'unsatisfactory' levels of Ecolab. The figures suggest that one in every 50 people who eats one of the products tested could fall ill.

Dr Jim McLaughlin of the HPA said: 'When seed crops are grown they can be exposed to a wide range of bacteria from many sources, including soil, manure, irrigation water, wild birds and animals.

'Seeds may also become contaminated during the drying process.

The Croydon Food Group Steering Committee Meeting minutes

Meeting: Croydon Food Group Steering Group
Date & Time: Tuesday 27 January, 3.00 -5.00 p.m.
Place: Peppertons, 25 Selhurst Road, London SE25 5PP
Present: Celestine Agbo; Rachel Petzig; Alex Santos; Max Brookman; Nathaniel Maxwell; Paul Wayne Gregory; Hicham Abbad; Shivani Bhandari; Stephen Robinson; Mike Turnham, Pamela Frazer, Vinod Bhandari
Apolo gies: Colette Emeruwa, Deborah Carr

Welcome and Introductions

Celestine Agbo welcomed everyone to the second steering group meeting. The agenda was accepted by those present.

Croydon Food Group progress

The food group is having difficulty getting people to attend events. Last week's 'Scores on the Doors' event was fairly poorly attended with approximately 50% no shows.

The first mail out for the next meeting to be held on 25th February 2009 at Casablanca Cafe is scheduled for Friday 31st January. The topic is Food Safety Management Procedures.

The start timing has been changed to 16.00 to facilitate attendance by parents collecting their children from school. Raft will have to do follow up by telephone to ensure and assess the anticipated numbers. Then perhaps some of the steering group members could do a final follow up to ensure that people who say they will attend, do actually turn up.

It was noted that the District Centre Managers from Croydon Enterprise should also be emailed.

A comment was also made that there should be a short introduction at the beginning of each event to highlight the benefits and aims of the Croydon Food Group and what other events there will be going forward.

Discussion on the benefits of belonging to The Croydon Food Group and the aspirations of the current members of the Interim Steering Group were catalogued as:

Networking

Business support services

Shoulder to cry on

Peer advice

Events specific for food businesses to enhance marketing

Information exchange/sharing

Moving towards better quality of food products

Tendering for Croydon Council business

Local catering business

Regulatory requirements

Food Portal Creation

Business Mentoring

Show case products

Joint marketing

Securing Olympic business

Croydon Food Festival

Angela Reed of Croydon Business has indicated that she aims to start planning the next Croydon Food Festival in February. She has stated that she appreciated our support last year and the feedback from participants was good, therefore she would like the Croydon Food Group to be involved from the outset this time. This means that we may be able to achieve a bigger level of involvement from our members and for us to be able to put forward suggestions for events.

Newsletter

The first Croydon Food Group newsletter was sent out in December. For this first one, it was necessary to put together a lot of information on general food issues gleaned from diverse sources. There has been very little feedback but it is felt that it is important to try

and focus on Croydon centred issues.

We are therefore seeking content from the membership. For instance, Paul of Paul Wayne Gregory and Alex from Dos Santos foods are both moving factories. It would be good to have their insights into the challenges they have faced undertaking this change.

Other themes can include;
What happens in a recession
Healthy options in food- especially for lunchtime menus
The latest research reports – these are often available from the British Library.

The deadline for draft copy is Mid February.

Interim Steering Group Management Committee

Several members agreed that if they are given a list of names and contact details, they will target other businesses in their area.

Pamela Frazer agreed to divide up the target list and distribute this among the group.

Membership forms given to all present to pursue new members.

A suggestion was made to set up The Croydon Food Group on the Face Book to increase membership and lend virtual networking/ support to the group.

AOB

Croydon Business has requested a proposal from RAFT to continue supporting The Croydon Food Group for 2009-2011.

Suggestions from members about what they wanted to get out of the Croydon Food Group included the following:

Networking

Event to showcase different types of food and market these.

Information exchange

Business mentoring

Advice, support to achieve better quality

Developing opportunities for contracts

Linked websites

Getting answers to problems.

Joint marketing

Cross selling

MailOnline

By [Olinka Koster](#)

Last updated at 10:28 PM on 25th February 2009



Cadbury has bucked the economic gloom with a 30 per cent rise in annual profits as consumers turn to chocolate treats during the recession. In a record year for the company, sales of its biggest brands, Dairy Milk chocolate and Trident gum, grew by 11 per cent.

Todd Stitzer, chief executive of Cadbury, said that when times are tough, people buy affordable treats. Another of its brands, Halls cough drops, saw a 9 per cent rise in sales. He said the company was also benefiting from a 'stay at home' culture as consumers shunned nights out in favour of nights in to save money.

'Chocolate and chewing gum are performing well as consumers seek to comfort themselves with brands they are familiar with,' he said.

However, Cadbury admitted it was not immune from the economic downturn and would hit the lower end of its 4 to 6 per cent revenue target for this year.

'We've consistently said that we are recession resilient, not recession proof,' added Mr Stitzer. The company posted pre-tax profits of £559million, up from £430million a year ago.

The success was partly down to a strong uptake of its chewing gum brands, which include Trident, Dentyne and Hollywood. Gum sales jumped 10 per cent globally, and were particularly strong in Europe.

Some concluded the increase in gum-chewing was down to consumers becoming increasingly nerve-racked during the recession

[Restaurant News February 2009](#)

London restaurant tears up the bills for its customers

A London restaurant is tearing up its bills and asking customers to just pay what they think their food and service is worth.

Peter Ilic, owner of the Little

Bay restaurant group, will not present a single food bill to diners at his Farringdon Road restaurant during February.

"It's entirely up to each customer whether they give £100 or a penny. All I'm asking is they pay me what they think the food and service is worth," said Peter, who has run restaurants in London for more than 26 years.

Little Bay is renowned for serving fresh, hearty meals at incredibly good prices in its trademark opulent surroundings. The February menu at Little Bay Farringdon includes ingredients which wouldn't be out of place at Michelin starred establishments including foie gras, smoked salmon, caviar and fillet steak. Customers will also be treated to Little Bay's famous live opera.

Peter said: "It just seemed the right thing to do with everyone under the cosh and feeling pretty miserable. We have seen so many more City folk

workers coming into the restaurant lately, looking for a better value lunch. We're well known for serving great food at very competitive prices and this is the ultimate value for money meal."

"Pay what you think it's worth" will be available for the whole of February at Little Bay Farringdon. While drinks are not included in the offer, tap water will be freely available. To reserve a table, customers should call 0207 278 1234. Little Bay Farringdon is located at 171 Farringdon Road, EC1R 3AL.

There are four Little Bay restaurants throughout London:

Belsize Road, Kilburn NW6;
York Road, Battersea SW11;
Selsdon Road, Croydon, CR2; and
Farringdon Road EC1.



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