

Wiltshire companies delight at 'Oscar' wins

Josephine Murray reports on seven Wiltshire companies that have won Great Taste Awards (the Oscars of the food industry).

ENGLISH WILD boar salami, ginger-flavoured beer and maple caramel sauce were among the Wiltshire-made food products which won at this year's Great Taste Awards.

Seven Wiltshire companies won golds in the national awards, run by the Guild of Fine Food and known as the food industry's Oscars. They were The Real Boar Company, My Secret Kitchen, Keystone Brewery, Malmesbury Syrups, Coombe Castle International and The Tricklement Company.

Of the 4,753 products which entered, 1,124 won gold, most receiving a one-star

Above: Coombe Castle International's award-winning strawberry creme fraiche; Below: Award-winning beers from Keystone Brewery



grading for their general excellence in taste, texture and flavour. Two stars were awarded to 220 products and just 72 got three – a mark that shows the judges considered them faultless.

Bob Farrand, of the Guild of Fine Food, said: "These awards have been running for 15 years now and are a recognised mark of

excellence that consumers can trust and rely on. Every food awarded a gold has been through three layers of judging and to achieve three stars, the foods have been tasted on at least six occasions by a total of 22 experts."

The three-star gold award-winning foods were judged for a fourth time by a panel of foodies, including chef Mark Hix, Alex James, farmer and bass player with Blur, food critic Charles Campion, BBC Radio 2's Nigel Barden and Wiltshire food writer Tom Parker Bowles. The panel selected this year's major award-winners, including the Supreme Champion 2008, which will be announced at Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington, London, on September 8.

The Real Boar Company's wild boar salami with red wine was one of the most successful Wiltshire entrants, with a gold three-star award. Boar farmer Simon Gaskell says: "I am absolutely delighted; the boar are the stars and Andrew



and Charlie, our butchers, make a mean salami! It is very exciting to have the product recognised. Our range of salamis have been so well received by delis and chefs alike. This was the first time we've entered and the first salami we did. We now have two."

The boar are ethically farmed in 20 acres of mixed woodland and grasses near Chippenham. The company also makes chorizo, sausages, loin and haunch which is supplied to shops including Harvey Nichols and Michelin starred restaurants including Whatley Manor. Wild boar salami with red wine is now in with a chance of being declared nationwide supreme champion.

My Secret Kitchen was the other Wiltshire producer whose hard work, innovation and delicious tastes won it three stars for its Maple Caramel Sauce and two stars for its Balsamic Reduction.

Perhaps the most unusual of the county's winners, the Ashton Keynes-based firm is the UK's first nationwide food and drink tasting company, set up just over a year ago by husband and wife team Clare and Phil Moran. The Maple Caramel Sauce can be drizzled over brownies, pancakes, rice pudding or cheesecake.

Phil says: "Imagine your favourite toffees made into pourable, liquid heaven – and made all the more delicious by a hint of warm maple syrup. That's the reason for the success." The Balsamic Reduction is made from balsamic vinegar, sugar and concentrated pomegranate juice – with no artificial thickeners.

The Morans took the idea of direct selling at home, but instead of lingerie or Tupperware,

the party host invites their friends round to try new foods. Developed by Clare, the company's products are designed to be used to create different dishes and include Lavender Shortbread, Kashmir Curd and Red Pepper Cheese Ball. My Secret Kitchen is always looking for people to host tastings or become a consultant. See the contacts panel for more information.

Malmesbury-based sauce and chutney-maker Tricklements was a big winner with a total of nine gold awards: one star each for Balsamic Vinaigrette, Strong Horseradish and Cream, Onion Marmalade, Apple and Sage Jelly, Farmhouse Pickle, Mayonnaise, Apricot and Ginger Chutney and Spicy Tomato Sauce and two stars for Organic Honey and Mustard Vinaigrette.

Warminster cereals producer Pertwood Organic won one star each for its 500g and single portion pack of Organic Granola Sultanas and Nuts. Like the company's other mueslis, porridges and cereals, the granola is made from 100 per cent wheat-free, organic British-grown grains, including oats grown on Pertwood's farm.

As well as selling its cereals to shops such as Harvey Nichols, Pertwood supplies its single-portion packs to hotels and the Eurostar. Look out for its latest cereal creation: banana and walnut muesli.

Strawberry crême fraiche was a one-star winner for The Devon Cream Company, part of Corsham cream and cheese company Coombe Castle International. Maria Pocock

says: "This is the first product we've entered into the awards and we're really pleased to have won. It's a blend of real strawberries and crême fraiche, made with cream from the West Country. It can be served with any dessert to make it a bit sweeter, from pancakes to meringues. It's good for breakfast cereal too. We're an export company and hope this win will help us break into the British market."

'The company makes a goats' milk butter'

The company also makes a goats' milk and a cows' milk butter, a range of cheeses including blue and soft varieties and Stilton, as well as clotted cream, double cream and oatcakes.

Husband and wife team Alasdair and Charlotte Large are celebrating wins for three of the beers made by their Salisbury-based company, Keystone Brewery. Large One Best Bitter and Porter both won two stars, while their Gold Spice beer got one star. Alasdair

Above: Warminster-based cereals producer Pertwood Organics' granola; Below: John Taylerson of Taylerson's Malmesbury Syrups says the syrups are liquid heaven





Further information

The Real Boar Company

Near Chippenham
Tel: 01249 782861
www.therealboar.co.uk

My Secret Kitchen

The Willows, Kent End,
Ashton Keynes, SN6 6PF
Tel: 0845 094 5319
www.mysecretkitchen.co.uk

Coombe Castle International

Ingoldmells Court, Edinburgh Way,
Leafield, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 9XN
Tel: 01225 812712
www.coombecastle.com

The Tracklement Company

Whitewalls, Easton Grey, Malmesbury,
Wiltshire, SN16 0RD
Tel: 01666 827 044
www.tracklements.co.uk

Pertwood Organic Cereals Company

Lord's Hill Barn, Longbridge Deverill,
Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 7DY
Tel: 01985 217770
www.pertwood.co.uk

Taylerson's Malmesbury Syrups

Park Farm, The Green, Oaksey,
Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 9SD
Tel: 01666 577 379
www.malmesburysyrups.co.uk

Keystone Brewery

The Old Carpenters Workshop, Berwick St
Leonard, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP3 5SN
Tel: 01747 820426 or 01747 870307
www.keystonebrewery.co.uk

says: "We are delighted, not only with three golds but to be the only brewery in this year's competition to gain five stars."

Alasdair and Charlotte set up the brewery in 2006 at Berwick St Leonard just outside Tisbury, taking the beautiful Fonthill arch as inspiration for the name. Charlotte looks after sales and marketing while Alasdair brews the traditional southern English, multi-award-winning beers using barley grown in the fields around the brewery, English hops, and water from the local aquifer. The brewing process is assisted by hot water supplied by solar water heating panels on the brewery roof.

foods as well as coffee. Taylerson's Malmesbury Syrups suggest pouring it over porridge, muesli, yoghurt, ice cream and sorbets. Cooks can add them to rice puddings, custards and cakes – even dressings and marinades. Flavours include espresso, hazelnut and fine vanilla.

The company also makes frappés in flavours such as mint chocolate and banoffee, which can be mixed with crushed ice and syrup for a refreshing drink. Customers include Selfridges and Waitrose.

Above: Simon Gaskell's farmed boar and the three-star award-winning boar and red wine salami

Below: Guests at a My Secret Kitchen tasting; their balsamic reduction, a two-star winner

‘Alasdair brews beers using barley grown in fields near the brewery’

Over in Malmesbury there was a two-star win for Taylerson's Malmesbury Syrups' Amaretto Flavour Syrup. John Taylerson, who started the business in April last year, says: "After 16 months of starting the business, to win a two-star gold in such a competition is great, but the work goes on with new flavours and formats. We have just launched the much-awaited natural ginger flavour and anticipate it will be just as popular".

A big seller in Europe and the US, flavoured syrups are designed to be added to all kinds of

