



# THE Waitrose FOOD AND DRINK REPORT 2014

*‘Three things remain constant: Britons’ culinary curiosity, their love of good food and their desire to eat healthily’*

MARK PRICE, MANAGING DIRECTOR







# 2014: what we eat now

Our eating habits are changing, according to the latest findings from Waitrose. Based on insight from our retail experts, sales data and customer research, we have identified seven key trends, which provide a fascinating snapshot

**'Are you a time-poor shopper** or a global explorer? Do you dabble in flexitarianism? Or perhaps you're a weekend foodie? These are just some of the consumer trends we've identified for *The Waitrose Food and Drink Report 2014*.

Before we have an in-depth look at these trends, it is worth considering the broad economic factors that are shaping the way that Britons consume this year. Two seemingly contradictory themes stand out. First, 2014 has been another year of recovery for the UK economy. But second – and equally important – 2014 has been a

year in which consumers have refused to let go of the shopping habits they adopted during the recession.

Most macroeconomic indicators have moved in the right direction this year. In June, consumer confidence tipped into positive territory for the first time since March 2005. Inflation dropped to under 2% in the summer – this from a figure of over 5% three years ago – while unemployment has continued to fall. However, any gains have been hard won and the recovery remains tentative. For example, consumer confidence dipped back into negative territory in July, while in August the Bank of England halved its forecast for wages growth this year.

This hesitancy is being reflected in people's spending habits. They buy carefully, continuing to shop around for quality and value. However, they're also looking to treat themselves when appropriate. Despite the strong signs that people are feeling more positive, they have learnt from the recession: they have learnt different spending habits, they have learnt not to waste so much food and to carefully budget their finances.

Britain has become a lot thriftier, probably for the better. And that trend is here to stay. This continued caution goes hand-in-hand with the ongoing revolution in the way we shop. The twin pillars of convenience and technology mean that people shop more often, and shop in ways that suit them. Despite these changes and challenges, though, three things remain constant: Britons' culinary curiosity, their love of good food and their desire to eat healthily.

We are fast becoming a nation of foodies. Increasing numbers of people have moved from seeing eating as functional to seeing it as an experience to be relished and enjoyed. Today, more than ever before, people see food and cooking as a hobby. All these factors feed into how we eat in 2014.'

*Mark Price*

MARK PRICE, MANAGING DIRECTOR

**'The twin pillars of convenience and technology mean that people shop more often, and shop in ways that suit them'**

MARK PRICE, MANAGING DIRECTOR

## GOING UP WHAT WAS IN FAVOUR IN 2014



### HONEY

Honey sales at Waitrose have overtaken those of jam for the first time

### AUSTRIAN WINE

These dry and crisp whites are proving a big hit

### PREMIUM TEQUILA

It's no longer about slamming – sipping is the way to go

### FLOWER SPROUTS

Small and nutritious, this Brussels sprouts-and-kale cross has really taken off

### VENISON

A strongly flavoured meat, this is a 'rustic luxe' favourite

### STEVIA

This naturally sourced sugar substitute has been used in South America for centuries

### APPLE, KALE & LIME JUICE

Kale packs a low-sugar nutritional punch in this drink

### ALCOHOLIC ICE TEA

Vintage, adventurous and refreshing all at once

### CHICKEN KATSU CURRY

This Japanese dish is one of our most popular meal kits

### ETON MESS CUPCAKES

A deliciously indulgent twist on the perennial classic

### BONE MARROW

Popular with foodies, this is great roasted and served on toast with chopped parsley

### GREEN TEAS

Mirroring the late-90s coffee boom, green teas are having their moment in the spotlight

### US PALE ALE

Intense flavours from unique breweries strike a chord

## TRENDS

# 1. Time-poor shoppers

As life becomes busier and our time more precious, convenience shopping takes centre stage – but not at the expense of quality

**Grab-and-go convenience** eating is here to stay as time-poor shoppers increasingly switch to buying little and often. Britons are shopping locally and more frequently than ever before, with spending up in convenience stores and a quarter of us visiting one every day.\* Eight out of 10 shoppers travel less than a mile to their nearest shop, and six out of 10 of those trips are made on foot.

All of this has had an impact on what we eat today. 'People are shopping for now rather than for later in the week,' says Paul Yarrow, our Fresh Produce Technical Manager.

Meals themselves have become less planned and more spontaneous. 'There is less of an occasion around lunchtime. When people are in the supermarket they are grabbing hot snacks on the move,' says Jill Dewar, Head of Hospitality.

Accordingly, sales from our 'on the go' counters, such as breakfast, coffees and Danish pastries, are up 10%, while pre-prepared vegetables and Waitrose Cooks' Ingredients meal kits have also risen. 'Research shows that back in the 1980s, people would spend about an hour to prepare a meal,' says Clare Gough, Head of Customer Insight. 'Now it's around half that time.'

### WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

**'We know people are shopping at least twice as often as they were five years ago'**

MATTHEW FROST, HEAD OF GROCERY

**'Lunch on the go is fast becoming part of our everyday lives – our 28 shops at Welcome Break service stations sell 16% of all the sandwiches sold in Waitrose shops across the country, rising to 19% in the summer'**

SUZY WADSWORTH, WAITROSE WELCOME BREAK BUSINESS MANAGER

**'Time-poorness is here to stay. But one thing Waitrose customers are not prepared to compromise on is quality'**

MATTHEW FROST, HEAD OF GROCERY

### NUMBER CRUNCH

THE PERFECT SERVE – SALES OF OUR 'READY TO DRINK' ALCOHOLIC RANGE, SUCH AS GIN AND TONIC IN A CAN, JUMP **40%**

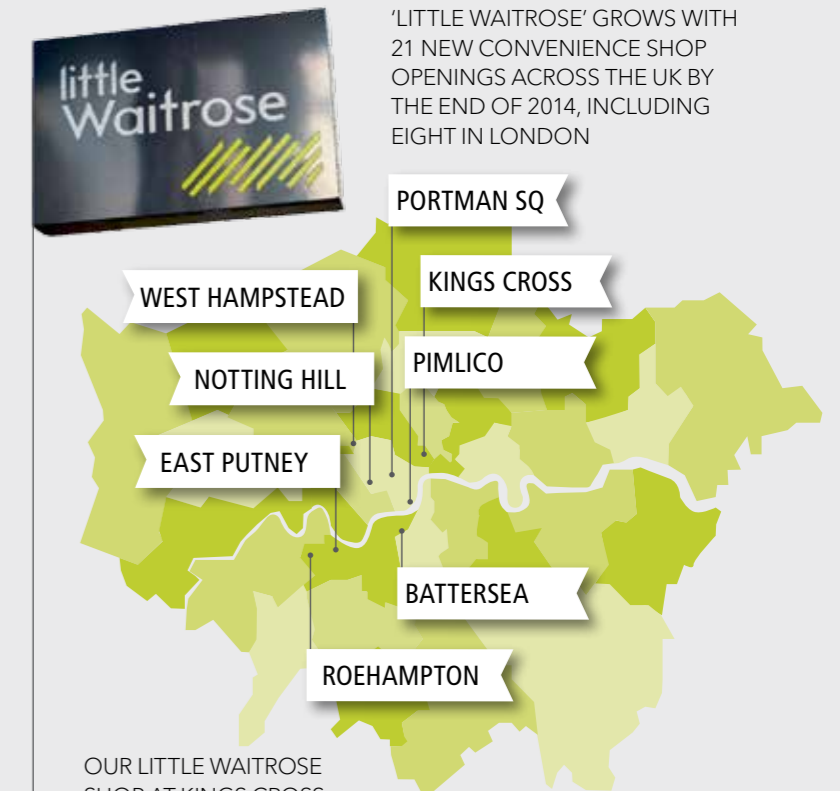
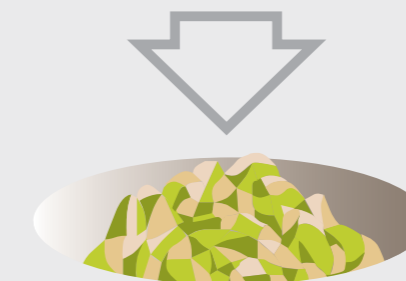
SALES OF MEXICAN MEAL KITS ARE 20% HIGHER, WHILE THAI MEAL KITS ARE UP **15%**

'ON THE GO' BREAKFAST PRODUCTS FROM OUR CAFES ARE RUNNING AT **10%** HIGHER THAN LAST YEAR

BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE BUYING LITTLE AND OFTEN, THE AMOUNT OF FOOD WE'RE THROWING OUT HAS FALLEN BY

**21%**

OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS †



'LITTLE WAITROSE' GROWS WITH 21 NEW CONVENIENCE SHOP OPENINGS ACROSS THE UK BY THE END OF 2014, INCLUDING EIGHT IN LONDON

OUR LITTLE WAITROSE SHOP AT KINGS CROSS FEATURES THE BIGGEST SELECTION OF OUR 'FOOD TO GO' RANGE



## News bites

### JANUARY

**1** As glasses are raised all over the UK to welcome in 2014, Champagne sales rise by **22%**, sparkling wine just behind at **19%**.

**2 - 30** New Year's resolutions become a priority, and sales of health snacks go up by **45%**, LOVE life you count... Special Choice cereal **47%**, salad **13%** and fish counter sales **26%**. Jalapeño chilli sales rise by **91%**, and Cooks' Ingredients Hot Chilli Sauce **150%** to help ward off the cold.

### 31 CHINESE NEW YEAR

Two weeks of festivities begin:

WOKS UP **45%**

STIR FRY KITS UP **100%**

RICE AND NOODLES UP **10%**



### FEBRUARY

**2** THE SUPER BOWL American Football is a sport designed to be watched on TV, lounging on a sofa with countless bowls of snacks. Accordingly, sales of dips go up **12%**, hand-cooked crisps rise **43%** and the American sport-watching snack of choice, popcorn, shifts a whopping extra **76%**. The 2014 final attracts the biggest US audience ever for a TV programme, at 111.5 million viewers – and in anybody's book, that's a lot of snacks.

### 14 VALENTINE'S DAY

Let's face it, 14 February is a diet cheat day, a day of pleasure. No one's calorie-counting here. Which is fortunate really, because nothing says 'I love you' quite like chocolate and bubbly, it seems. Valentine's Day sees a sales spike in Champagne at a cork-popping **30%**, with the more budget-conscious sparkling wine following on up **18%**. And to bring the 'diet day off' to a happily hedonistic end, our sales of chocolates shoot up **14%**.



### MARCH

**4** PANCAKE DAY Eggs up **16%** at this time of year is not something we'd crack a joke about. And the news that butterscotch sauce sales rise **100%**? Well, it must be a toss-up between that and the lemon juice.

**30** MOTHER'S DAY What thoughtful people. Sales of cards go up **30%**, and houseplants rise **26%**. The **23%** increase in ice-cream, though, tells a more indulgent tale!



### APRIL

**20** EASTER SUNDAY CHOCOLATE EASTER RANGES UP **49%**

WOODLAND FRIENDS CHOCOLATES UP **500%**

Also, cake decorating boosts icing sales by **78%**; Simnel cake-making fires marzipan up **290%**; and on the service counter, lamb sales increase by more than **300%**.



TRENDS

## 2. Global explorers

*Our taste buds have broader horizons nowadays and enjoy exciting flavours from all over the world*

The demand for new, exotic flavours knows no bounds – we've become a nation of adventurous global explorers.

'World cuisine is now no longer about countries, it is about individual states or regions within those countries,' says Matthew Frost, Head of Grocery. So instead of Indian food, we're just as likely to ask for Kerala or Goan dishes. And we've also adopted a mix-and-match approach, using ingredients associated with one country in dishes from another. Yuzu, a Japanese citrus fruit, is now often used in French dressings, and Kimchi, fermented cabbage from Korea, is employed as a burger dressing.

'Barriers are being broken down,' says Jonathan Moore, Waitrose's Executive Chef.

The explosion of street food is making people's tastes more eclectic. Our World Street Food course at The Waitrose Cookery School (which teaches customers how to make dishes such as Malaysian spiced monkfish and Greek spanakopita) is twice oversubscribed, with applicants having to join a waiting list.

Our taste buds' wanderlust extends to drinks, too. Sales of premium tequila have doubled and spiced rums from the West Indies have risen by a fifth.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

'We're seeing regional foods move across boundaries'

JONATHAN MOORE, EXECUTIVE CHEF

'In the future there'll be more exploration into flavours of the world and spirits from around the globe'

HERCELLE PEREZ TERRADO, BUYER, SPIRITS AND LIQUEURS

EXOTIC FRUIT SALES HAVE RISEN BY **81%** ONLINE



TRENDS

## 3. Weekend foodies

*Friends and family are taking more time to feast adventurously together on Saturday and Sunday*

Convenience rules during the week, but this year has seen the rise and rise of the adventurous weekend foodie. In a survey, four in 10 people say that weekends have become more of an 'event' in terms of what they eat, while a fifth of households are cooking for friends at weekends more often than they were even a year ago. 'At weekends, people want to share and enjoy food with others, while between Monday and Thursday it is more about buying quick and easy food,' says Sam Dickson, Head of Brand Development and Product Innovation.

Our customers tell us that there is a new pride about cooking at home at weekends. 'People are getting together a lot more. There is more scratch cooking. It's about the social side of food,' says Matthew Frost, Head of Grocery.

And inspired by online food blogs and TV shows such as *Great British Bake Off* and *Masterchef*, they're happy to experiment. 'Even if people are cooking from their traditional repertoire, they're putting a twist on it with slightly different ingredients,' says Jonathan Moore, our Executive Chef. We find that weekend foodies particularly splash out on the weekend after payday.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

'At weekends, people want to take more time over their cooking. They have become more adventurous'

JONATHAN MOORE, EXECUTIVE CHEF

'People are getting much more experimental with their cooking at weekends'

SAM DICKSON, HEAD OF BRAND DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCT INNOVATION

'As we come out of recession people are eager to try new things'

TRACEY ANDERSON, PRODUCT DEVELOPER

NUMBER CRUNCH

WE SURVEYED 1,000 PEOPLE IN LATE AUGUST:

A THIRD OF PEOPLE AGREE THAT WEEKENDS ARE ALL ABOUT 'SUSTENANCE AND SURVIVAL,'

...WHILE WEEKENDS ARE ABOUT 'EXPERIMENTING AND CELEBRATING WITH DELICIOUS FOOD'



ALMOST HALF OF US SAY WE'VE BECOME MORE ADVENTUROUS WITH WEEKEND COOKING IN RECENT YEARS

SIX IN 10 PEOPLE UNDER 24 FIT INTO THE 'WEEKEND FOODIE' CATEGORY

FOUR IN 10 PEOPLE SAY THAT, OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, WEEKENDS HAVE BECOME MORE OF AN 'EVENT' IN TERMS OF WHAT THEY EAT

ALMOST A THIRD OF PEOPLE UNDER 34 SAY THEY'RE COOKING FOR FRIENDS AT HOME AT THE WEEKEND MORE THAN THEY WERE JUST A YEAR AGO

TRENDS

## 4. Flexitarianism

*You don't have to be a vegetarian to enjoy meat-free dishes – particularly if they're healthy and taste great!*

Miss out on meat? Until recently, non-vegetarians would have scoffed at the idea of regularly having a vegetable-only lunch or evening meal. But not these days. There's been a huge surge in so-called flexitarianism, with shoppers opting for more veg and less protein. Meat-free Mondays are now the norm for increasing numbers. 'People are adding meat-free days or meat-free meals to their diets,' says Dr Jo Lunn, our Senior Nutritionist.

'There is a growing trend for the protein element of a dish to become less and less prevalent. Unlike before, now when people do this they don't feel like they're missing out,' says Jonathan Moore, our Executive Chef.

But flexitarianism can also mean meat-light meals. Shoppers are choosing a 'hero' vegetable – such as a stuffed mushroom or a spiced aubergine – and adding a sprinkling of bacon chunks or chorizo pieces.

To meet this growing demand we have launched new vegetable meals, such as our mushroom and spinach filo parcel and a new baby kale and butternut squash micro-steam pack to save time for our flexitarian shoppers. And move over carrot cake, vegetables are increasingly being used in desserts and cakes as an alternative to eggs and butter. Sweet potato brownies, anyone?

'Flexitarianism is an interesting new trend. It's not about going vegetarian – it's about accepting that a plant-based diet is good for health and can taste great,' says Lunn.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

'People are using cooking techniques associated with proteins – smoking, curing, pickling, fermenting – on vegetables'

JONATHAN MOORE, EXECUTIVE CHEF

'We are seeing a rise in vegetable dishes where people are choosing not to have a protein'

PAUL YARROW, TECHNICAL MANAGER

'Keen cooks are adding value to vegetables in really interesting ways'

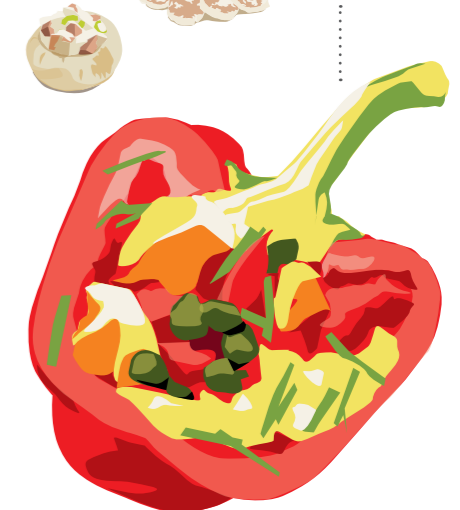
JONATHAN MOORE, EXECUTIVE CHEF

NUMBER CRUNCH

HALLOUMI SALES ARE UP BY **46%**

STUFFED MUSHROOMS SALES ARE UP BY **22%**

AND STUFFED PEPPERS UP BY **17%**



OUR RANGE OF FROZEN VEGETARIAN FOOD – WITH PRODUCTS SUCH AS BEAN BURGERS, NUT WELLINGTON, AND GOAT'S CHEESE TART – IS SEEING A SALES GROWTH OF

**140%** COMPARED TO 2013

## News bites

MAY

**3** BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND  
Ever optimistic about the weather, even after the wettest April ever, barbecue foods go up **81%** and barbecue fuel **74%**.

**10** EUROVISION SONG CONTEST  
The offbeat fun starts with party food and dips up **19%** and **37%** respectively. And Austrian wine shoots up **390%** after the victory of Austrian drag queen Conchita Wurst (pictured).



**24** CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL  
It stands to reason that world beer sales increase for the final of the world's highest-profile club football competition. The rise in vegetable crisps sales is not quite so explicable:

WORLD BEER UP **33%**

VEGETABLE CRISPS UP **43%**



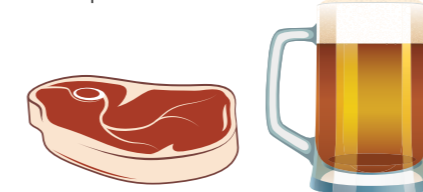
JUNE

**12** WORLD CUP STARTS  
Wine enthusiasts love Chilean and Argentinian wines, so what better time than the World Cup in Brazil for the rest of us to explore South American wines along with our football-watching snacks:

SOUTH AMERICAN WINE UP **50%**

FROZEN PIZZA UP **30%**

**15** FATHER'S DAY  
If the statistics are anything to go by, on his special day Dad is cooking outside (barbecue meat up **100%**) and drinking a beer (up **50%**). Oh, and an imported whiskey (up **50%**). And a Cognac, too (up **73%**). We don't have figures on what time he falls asleep on the sofa.



JULY

END OF TERM GIFTS  
It's that time of year when we thank the people educating our offspring: an increase in the sales of Champagne (**26%**), bottle gift bags (**44%**) and gift wrap (**29%**) suggests that teachers are doing a great job.

**5** TOUR DE FRANCE, UK  
The visit of the world's most famous bike race offers us the excuse to be more Gallic: croissants and pains au chocolat up **23%**, and French Emmental up **64%**.



**23** COMMONWEALTH GAMES OPENING CEREMONY  
Glasgow's Commonwealth Games is a huge hit, and one of the highlights proves to be people twirling and pirouetting dressed as Tunnock's Tea Cakes in the opening ceremony. Sales of the chocolate, biscuit and marshmallow snack dutifully rise by an impressive **62%**.





TRENDS

## 5. Permanently healthy

Interest in food and drink that's good for you has hit the mainstream thanks to great-tasting alternatives

**This is the year** healthy eating messages really have hit home. Sales of our free from dairy and wheat products have jumped 22%. While lower alcohol wines and sugar-free alternatives have also proved increasingly popular with health-conscious customers.

The reason? We no longer believe that eating healthily is a negative choice that has to involve tasteless food: 'The perception of healthy eating has become much more positive,' says Senior Nutritionist Dr Jo Lunn. 'Gluten-free bread, for example, was once seen as a poor substitute for real bread, but people no longer feel this way as the quality of these products is so good now. And it's not just those with intolerances or allergies who opt for "wheat-free" options. We're increasingly seeking out alternative grains as a nutritious and tasty way to broaden our diet.'

Hot topics for the Waitrose Nutrition Advice Service include weight loss, diabetes and sugar-free foods, specifically questions about which fruits are lower in sugar. Our newly launched range of fruit juices contains sugar alternative stevia, and vegetables such as kale, which help lower the sugar content.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

**'The aspect that underpins most of our courses is health, and we will be weaving more of it in next year'**

GORDON MCDERMOTT, COURSE MANAGER, THE WAITROSE COOKERY SCHOOL

**'People are living much longer and are much more aware of the dietary choices they make. Perhaps they have more of an eye to the future now'**

SAM DICKSON, HEAD OF BRAND DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCT INNOVATION

**'We have made huge strides in reducing sugar and fat'**

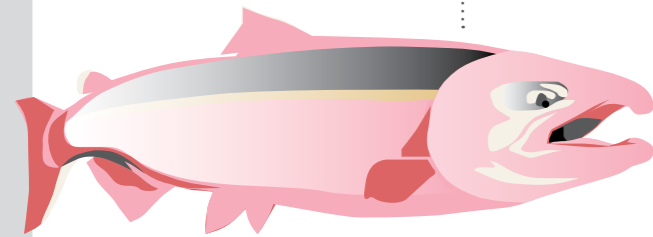
DR JO LUNN, SENIOR NUTRITIONIST

GLUTEN-FREE DIETS ARE ONE OF THE MOST SEARCHED TOPICS ON WAITROSE.COM

ALASKAN SALMON SALES ARE UP BY **35%**

COUSCOUS SALES ARE UP BY **14%** AND QUINOA BY **40%**

KALE SALES ARE UP **95%**



'FREE FROM' SALES RISE **22%**



**7.1 TONNES** - THE AMOUNT OF SUGAR WAITROSE IS SQUEEZING OUT OF ITS JUICES OVER THE COURSE OF THE YEAR

## News bites

### AUGUST

#### 6 THE GREAT BRITISH BAKE OFF RETURNS

The nation experiences the *Bake Off* effect. 'Lifts' are examined, 'soggy bottoms' debated, and shoppers respond to the fervour: glacé cherries are up **25%**, piping bags **14%** and cake tins **22%**. By the end of the month, baked Alaska - the dish behind the freezer furore - is in hot demand. Component parts of the dish fly off the shelves:



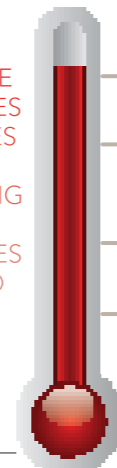
WAITROSE SERIOUSLY MADAGASCAN VANILLA ICE CREAM UP **129%**

AND WAITROSE SERIOUSLY WHITE CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM UP **140%**

CASTER SUGAR UP **10%** AND LARGE EGGS UP **37%**

VANILLA EXTRACT SALES RISE **26%**

### TEMPERATURE TRIGGERS



WHEN THE SUN COMES OUT, SALES OF THE FOLLOWING SUMMER FAVOURITES START TO SIZZLE:

- 28°C ICE-LOLLIES
- 26°C BOTTLED WATER
- 23°C BBQ MEAT
- 22°C ICE CREAM + FIZZY DRINKS

### SEPTEMBER

#### BACK TO SCHOOL

Summer ends and a new term is upon us, ushering in familiar routines. Stocking up on the classic lunchtime sandwich fillers sees tinned tuna sales leap **10%** and preserves **13%**.



TRENDS

## 6. Eat it, tweet it!

Social media has revolutionised the way we talk about food and drink

**Increasingly our food choices** are being influenced by social media, with millions now using Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to share food photos, blog posts and recipes (quinoa features in 540,000 posts on Instagram alone), and food trends can spread instantly.

'Because of social media, people are very aware of what's in products,' says Gordon McDermott, Course Manager at The Waitrose Cookery School, 'and they're learning more about ingredients.'

Waitrose is part of this online food revolution. In 2014, Twitter followers of @Waitrose have risen by three-quarters, while our Facebook 'likes' have increased by over 50%. We attracted thousands of Instagram followers within weeks of joining in the summer.

In July, for the first time, the number of customers getting in touch with us through social media overtook the number sending emails for the first time.

The most popular Waitrose-related topics on Twitter and Facebook include Heston, gluten-free, cheese, Mother's Day and coffee.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

**'The amount of inspiration I get from social media is fantastic'**

TRACEY ANDERSON, PRODUCT DEVELOPER

**'Technology is giving us exposure to a lot more things. And when you have seen a new product being developed from start to finish it's thrilling to watch customers talking about it on social media'**

SAM DICKSON, HEAD OF BRAND DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCT INNOVATION

**'Due to technology, everything is becoming more transparent, which benefits companies with clear, positive values like Waitrose'**

CLARE GOUGH, HEAD OF CUSTOMER INSIGHT



ONLINE WAITROSE FOOD ORDERS FROM TABLETS HAVE RISEN FROM 20% OF ALL ORDERS TO **26.5%**

ONLINE SALES ARE **40%** HIGHER YEAR-ON-YEAR

NUMBER CRUNCH

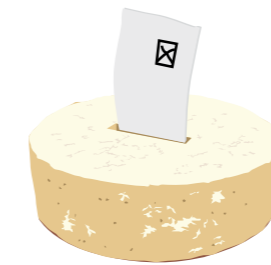
FOLLOWERS OF @WAITROSE HAVE RISEN **74%** OVER THE PAST YEAR

WE ATTRACTED **3,500** INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS WITHIN **THREE WEEKS** OF JOINING

FACEBOOK LIKES HAVE INCREASED BY **52%**

WE ASKED CUSTOMERS TO VOTE ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER FOR A NEW FLAVOUR OF CHEESE FOR OUR DELI COUNTERS AND RECEIVED **18,320** ONLINE VOTES. THE WINNER? BEETROOT AND HORSERADISH CHEDDAR

POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS INCLUDE: #FOODIE #ONTHETABLE #NOMNOM #YUMMY



TRENDS

## 7. Rustic luxe

People are more interested in simple, bold flavours and fuss-free good quality food cooked from the heart

**Back to basics is back:** increasingly, elaborate recipes are out, and simple, natural dishes are in. This new, stripped-back approach means that more and more, we're opting for straightforward unprocessed food. Products associated with Nordic cuisine - bold, clean, simple ingredients and strongly flavoured meats - are increasingly popular. 'People are using straightforward flavours to pack a punch,' says Dr Jo Lunn, Senior Nutritionist.

And the trend extends to how we entertain, too. Formal dinner parties have been replaced by relaxed, informal gatherings. People are serving food on sharing plates, using wooden boards instead of china dishes, and fingers rather than cutlery. 'It's a much more fresh and simple way of eating,' says Jonathan Moore, Waitrose's Executive Chef. And the trend reflects what is happening in the UK restaurant scene this year, where fine dining on starched tablecloths is giving way to stripped-back eateries that specialise in one key dish.

Rustic luxe is all about doing the basics well, and courses at The Waitrose Cookery School that focus on skills such as bread-making and how to cook The Perfect Steak (with triple-cooked chips and sublime béarnaise sauce) are increasingly popular. 'People are much more conscious of food and what's in it. They want simplicity,' says Gordon McDermott, Chef and Course Manager of the school.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

**'There's a real human desire to go back to a more natural, as-nature-intended place and be creative. The six-course dinner party has a role, but people are much more informal with food nowadays'**

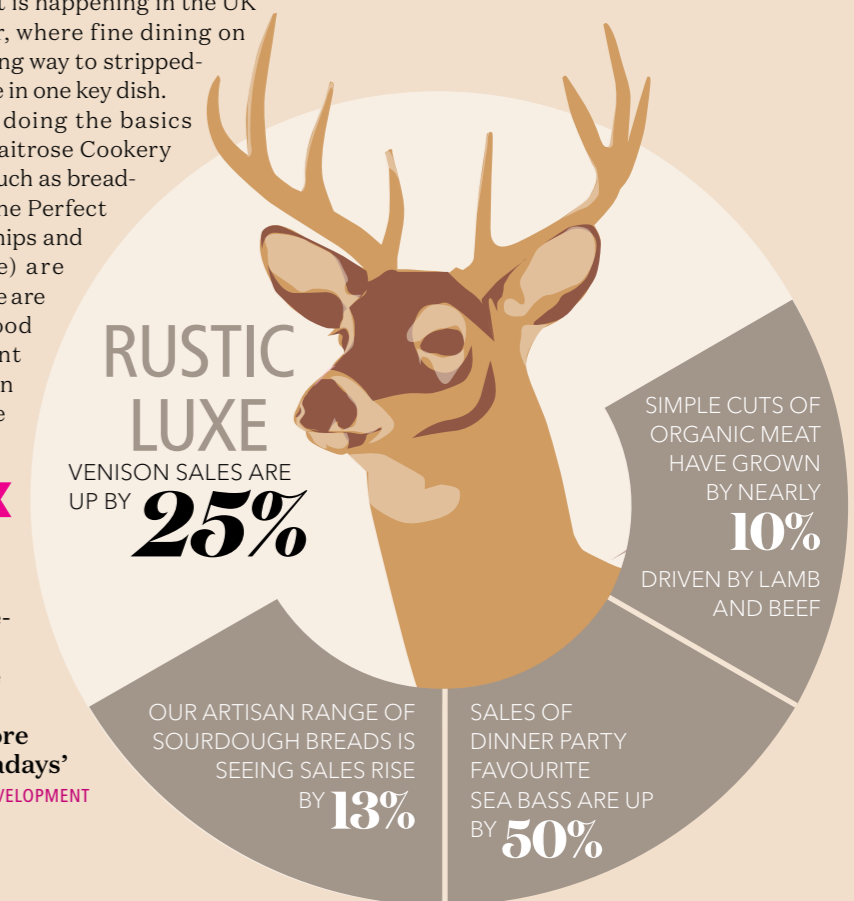
SAM DICKSON, HEAD OF BRAND DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCT INNOVATION

**'It's about betterment in the kitchen, but also keeping it simple'**

GORDON MCDERMOTT, COURSE MANAGER AT THE WAITROSE COOKERY SCHOOL

**'We are moving to a more craft-type finish to our food. Things look less perfect now and people like that. There may be a bit of jam oozing out of a doughnut, or a bit of pastry that is not folded perfectly'**

JONATHAN MOORE, EXECUTIVE CHEF



### CHRISTMAS TRENDS... WHAT WE'LL BE EATING THIS YEAR

This Christmas, we expect to sell **1,329 tonnes of potatoes**, which, without a team of little helpers, would take 12 years to peel. We also plan to sell enough of our **gingerbread houses** to build a **mile-long street**. And the **216,000 gammons** we think will be bought in December would stretch all the way from Buckingham Palace to Windsor Castle. Waitrose will join in the festivities by selling enough sparkling wine and Champagne to charge **8 million**

**glasses**, maybe to go with some of the **2.2 million slices of smoked salmon** that we hope to sell on Christmas Eve alone.

This year, Christmas will be all about being **perfectly imperfect**, with **crafted, personalised gifts** and mince pies oozing filling. And **Scandi-style decorations** will deck the halls to make Christmas 2014 a truly unique and memorable occasion.





# ... and what's our favourite tippie?



**At the forefront** of minds this year when it comes to drink choices are health, provenance and new, intense flavours. So, raise a glass to lighter white and rosé wines, craft beers and tequila.

A greater interest in health means there's been a slight move away from reds and rich, full-bodied wines to lighter and more refreshing lower alcohol varieties. Crisper, lighter wines are also easier to match with food, something we know people are increasingly keen to do. Sparkling wine also continues to sell well, while wines from Spain, France, Austria, Italy, the USA and South America are all having a good year.

Meanwhile, provenance has never been more important. Craft beers from the USA, such as Goose Island and Brooklyn Brewery, are continuing to rise in popularity. 'The real hits are the American lagers. It's about beers with intense flavours, it's about exploring,' says Kate Prall, Buyer for Beers and Ciders.

And when it comes to spirits, adventurous shoppers are also looking further afield, with sales of Indian, Japanese, Canadian and Welsh whiskies rising 235%. Spirit drinkers also want premium ingredients, an interesting back story to the brand, and bold, interesting flavours: lemongrass, ginger, botanicals and bitter flavours are particularly popular.

## Predictions for 2015



### Drink

Sales of sparkling wine will continue to fizzle as it becomes less and less likely to be saved just for special occasions. Tequila will continue to develop from a drink that people 'slam' to one they savour and appreciate. And drinkers will branch out, trying Japanese whisky and switching from the safe ground of Sauvignon Blanc to wines made from Albariño or Grüner Veltliner grape varieties. Even Riesling could make a comeback!

### Peruvian cuisine

The next big food trend? We're tipping Peruvian food - with its bold, simple flavours - and all things South American. Interest in Brazilian cuisine is expected to continue in the run-up to the Rio Olympics. 'Peruvian cuisine could get really big. In terms of ingredients, we are starting to see lacuma [a subtropical fruit native to the Peruvian Andes] being used a lot,' says Jonathan Moore, Waitrose's Executive Chef.



### Premiumisation

We will see our favourite snacks and drinks go upmarket next year. Customers can already enjoy über-special cupcakes - with Eton mess or premium jams - and we plan to delve further into this trend next year, launching new ready-to-drink cocktails with premium ingredients. There will also be premium, rebooted classics appearing on our shelves with surprising twists, such as doughnuts in different shapes and with gorgeous alternative fillings.

### Health and technology

Health and 'appiness' go together, as a growing number of food, health and fitness apps - including the new Apple Watch - allow shoppers to track key health indicators, or plan healthy meals, and share tips and recipes like never before. And specific health-related apps, for example to help diabetics keep tabs on their diet and blood sugar levels, will grow in popularity. 'Health will be a massive trend for the next 10 years,' says Sam Dickson, Head of Brand Development and Product Innovation.

### Back to the future

Classic recipes will get a rethink! We'll see 70s dinner party favourites such as beef bourguignon return, but with lighter ingredients. 'Rather than having a really rich beef stock and red wine, people might make it with a vegetable stock and a lighter wine,' says Jonathan Moore.

### How do we pick our wines?

'Wine buyers like us have tasted our way around the world many times, so we're probably not about to see another country burst onto the scene. With this in mind, we regularly revisit both the classic and less fashionable regions that might have been slightly forgotten in consumers' minds. A great example of this is the resurgence in Austrian wines we are currently seeing.'

*Pierpaolo Petrassi*



**'We leave no stone unturned. It's about finding genuine points of difference and value for money - at every price - in the wine we buy'**

**PIERPAOLO PETRASSI MW, HEAD OF BUYING, BEERS, WINES AND SPIRITS**

All sales data is compared to the same period over the previous year. For further information, please contact the Waitrose Press Office on 01344 825 080.