

The delight is in the detail

Small is big in the food and drink world right now. Why? Because small producers consistently prove themselves to be leaders in the taste pack, and willing to take an unrivalled level of care and attention – from which we can all reap the benefits

You just need to look at the success of local food markets to know we are enjoying a real romance with the wares of the small producer. It's not some trendy fad either. Small producers are synonymous with good ethics, passion and attention to detail. This, in turn, translates into great-tasting produce, which never goes out of fashion. Here, two such producers discuss the ethos behind their business



J A Tesha, coffee grower, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania

J A Tesha is a member of the Fairtrade Kilimanjaro Native Co-operative Union (KNCU) in Moshi on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro – the oldest co-operative in Africa, on the highest mountain in Africa. The coffee Tesha cultivates is used in Cafédirect's Kilimanjaro Roast & Ground.

He has been working with coffee all of his life. "Since I was born," grins Tesha. He manages the four-acre farm 300 metres up the slopes with his wife, tending to his coffee plants, cows and bananas with equal care. "Small producers have

so many advantages, but the biggest is the amount of attention we pay. I'm here every day and because we are small, we are easy to manage," he explains.

The soil is special, he says. "The volcano plays an important part and contributes to the coffee's intense aroma. Plus we never add any chemicals, just manure from the farm and compost from the trees.

"The greatest satisfaction for me is knowing that the fair prices I get for my coffee means I can take care of my family; that makes life better. And that makes the best cup of coffee."



CRISTIAN BARNETT © COUNTRY LIVING MAGAZINE (UK), The National Magazine Company Limited

Alex Gooch, baker, Alex Gooch's Organics, Hay-on-Wye, Powys

It was while working as the head chef at Penrhos Court, in Herefordshire, that Alex Gooch got the bread bug. Inspired by the hotel's founder, Daphne Lambert, he started playing around with wild yeasts and slow fermentation. Now he has started up a bakery of his own, Alex Gooch's Organics, winning awards for his artisan breads that include an apple and pumpkinseed rye sourdough.

"It's all about the long fermentation," explains Gooch, who has 40 different kinds of bread in his repertoire, from rye to brioche, and makes around 15 different

styles of loaf each night – 300 in all, which get hungrily snapped up by local delis and restaurants.

"By only doing that number of loaves I'm totally in control over what is going on," says Gooch, who uses organic flour from Shipton Mill and Sharpham Farm. "I'm not just looking for consistency in the flour, it's about other qualities too, such as certain flavours," he explains.

"I love everything about bread. It's always changing; it's an art form. My recipes are only a rough guideline, every bag of flour is different. And don't get me started on the leaven – it is something alive. It's inspiring," he says.

DIRECT TO YOU

The best-tasting coffee starts with the best growers. That's why Cafédirect only sources directly from small-scale growers for its award-winning hot drinks. And because it's Cafédirect, you can rest assured that people and the planet come first, creating the perfect blend of taste and ethics.



Explore a world of taste at guardian.co.uk/cafedirect-taste