

Flapjackery!

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PHOTOGRAPHS JULIA MARTIN

Apple and Blackcurrant Flapjack

These may be flapjacks, but not as you know them. Ordinary flapjacks are traybakes made of oats mixed with buttery brown sugar and syrup. Flapjacks made by Flapjackery, a bakery exclusively dedicated to these treats, are gooey, chewy, luxurious and flavoursome flapjacks layered with fudge, brownies, or blackcurrant, then topped with luscious Belgian chocolate or perhaps yogurt, swirled with raspberries or topped with crumble.

'Oats themselves are quite neutral and can stand up to some punchy, exciting flavours,' said Carol Myott, one of the two partners in this fledgling business. 'Our most popular ones are Blackcurrant and Apple, and Millionaires Caramel Fudge Flapjack. At Exeter University our regular customers really like Salted Caramel Brownie or the more adventurous flavour of Burnt Caramel and Sea Salt Flapjack. We normally have around thirty amazing flavours in stock. But there are a few we won't be repeating: Key Lime Pie for instance.

'We also ring the changes with seasonal flavours. This autumn we have Blackcurrant with Liquorice, and Sticky Toffee Pudding. At Christmas it will be Chocolate Mint, a chocolate flapjack layered with mint fondant and smothered in dark Belgian chocolate, and a Mince Pie Flapjack packed full of brandied fruit and Christmas spices, finished with a dusting of icing sugar.'

Carol and her business partner Sally Jenkin met about six years ago when Sally then managed the Tavistock Country Market that Carol joined as one of the cooperative members. Carol explained, 'There were originally around twelve of us. We sold everything: pies, quiches, cakes, pasties – and flapjacks.



Chocolate Orange Flapjack

'Then two years ago we took a long look at each other. No one was doing luxury, flavoured flapjacks beyond putting a bit of dried fruit or seeds into the mix. We never intended to start a business, but we had hit on something that had real potential and we have run along to catch up with it ever since. We have been very lucky as the business has evolved to be luxury flapjacks – this was not our original plan!

'We did our homework. We tested the ratio of jumbo versus normal oats, whether people wanted crunchy or chewy, with tastings at the Tavistock market. (Chewy it is, by the way.) Then we devised our amazing flavours. We get our ideas by monitoring trends in the food world and from what we think our discerning customers would like.

'Of course we use only the best ingredients for our flapjacks. Our butter is all from the Westcountry, our oats come from a specialised oat mill in Cheshire and

our brown sugar is fair trade. Wherever we can we use local products.

'Although when we started we were still baking at home and selling at local markets and food fairs, we now attend shows like the Good Food Show at Birmingham NEC and Hampton Court, the Countryfile Show at Blenheim Palace and food festivals from Cardiff to Glasgow. But we still attend the Royal William Yard Good Food Market in Plymouth on the first Sunday of the month.'

It has been a meteoric rise for Flapjackery. Sally and Carol have come a long way from their home kitchens to the bakery on the outskirts of Tavistock in just two years. The Flapjackery prowess has been recognised with a business grant from the Greater Dartmoor LEAF project to help them on their way to bigger things (see *In the News DM127 summer 2017*). 'Thanks to our grant, we've been able to double our production with some new kit and more staff, but we still stir all the basic flapjack



ABOVE Peanut Butter Brownie Flapjack RIGHT Cherry Bakewell Flapjack

mixture by hand. And we have the muscles to prove it!' says Carol.

Sally adds, 'Our staff are key to the whole enterprise. We work really well as a team, from mixing and baking to packing, and the all-important sales at markets and fairs. We work seamlessly as one unit.

'As a result of the grant we have started doing more wholesale business and are beginning to attend the big trade shows. We think our luxury flapjacks particularly suit coffee shops. But we haven't forgotten our local community and currently our flapjacks are served at Dukes Coffee Shop in the Pannier Market here in Tavistock.'

As to plans for the future Carol bubbles with ideas. 'We are in the process of upping our online sales through our website and are newly listed with www.notonthehighstreet.com. We offer a choice of two selection boxes. They make a great gift for that difficult someone, and are perfect for sharing.

'We are also supplying the successful www.themotherbox.co.uk, a gift box service for pregnant women or new mothers. Our Ginger Flapjack is brilliant for helping to settle morning sickness and appears in their Early Pregnancy Box. The Pregnancy and Birth Box includes a flapjack for energy boost, while their popular Postnatal and New Mother boxes both contain a Lactation Flapjack, chosen because our flapjacks can support breast milk production.

'Next we want to start a subscription service. You will be able to buy a monthly supply of flapjacks for three months, six months or under an annual membership. For this we hope to have a seasonal selection box with some surprise varieties, or your own choice each month. All our flapjacks have a one-month shelf life, but if you want to keep them longer they are individually wrapped ready for the freezer.'

Is it too early to put in an order for Christmas? ■

To order a selection box or for more information see www.flapjackery.co.uk, tel: (01822) 258008 or email: enquiries@flapjackery.co.uk.

Nourish Festival 2017: A Feast for the Soul Friday 1–Saturday 2 September Bovey Tracey

Cliché or not, this will be the biggest and best Nourish Festival yet. New this year is the Nourish Gin Festival with the growing band of South West's distilleries showing off their botanicals. One of the newest gins on the block is Black Dog Gin from Dartmoor Distillery (an offshoot of Teignworthy Brewery). Says John Lawton of Teignworthy, 'We make small batch gin with a pot still in the Maltings. Our first gin, Black Dog, has a lemony base with botanicals from the moorland and hedgerows. We shall be handing out samples of gin and tonic at the Festival so you can try it for yourself.' For the full funky gin experience visit Fizz Bizz, little sister to the ever-popular Lemon Jelli coffee and waffle vans; their retro cocktail bar is hidden in back of a vintage Citroen (prosecco also on tap).

Want to prove your prowess in the kitchen? Enter the Bovey Bake Off with all the cakes produced going to charity.

Fifty food and drink producers will be joined by two dozen exciting street food vendors vying for the Devon Life Street Food producer of the year. Sarah James, organiser and one of last year's judges, said, 'I didn't realise how hard it would be to eat my way through ALL the gorgeous street food available. It was a not-so-humble burger that blew me away last year. I wonder what it will be this year?'

There will be a brilliant crafts from the selected makers' exhibition in the Methodist Church and lively music from Superlocrian in the Baptist Church lunchtime concert. On the street you can hear jazz, gypsy and folk music. The Devon Guild of Craftsmen has curated an exhibition of the best work from their members just in time for the Festival.

Kicking it all off in musical style will be Steven Isserlis, one of the world's great cellists, on Friday evening, playing three Mozart Cello Suites. The Saturday evening concert introduces pianist Noriko Ogawa. She also will play Mozart with her typical elegance, contrasting with the relentless full-throttle power which concludes Prokofiev's 7th Sonata. Listen out for a magical work by Yoshiro Kanno in which Noriko is also required to play steel chopsticks!

