

Wizardwords

PORTFOLIO

Facing down fatigue

Chronic tiredness and fatigue have dogged the nation big time, writes **Denise Barrett**, and never more so since the spectre of COVID and its myriad of implications



There once was a popular acronym, TATT, meaning 'tired all the time'. But nowadays, the condition is much more nuanced. For a start, tiredness can be psychological or physiological. And nothing has brought anxiety, tiredness, even exhaustion, to the fore like the COVID-19 pandemic. The aptly named 'coronacoaster' and its attendant emotional ups and downs has a lot to answer for.

So-called long COVID with its potentially never-ending symptoms is indiscriminate. Psychologist Evelyn Montgomery is an expert in mood nutrition and a COVID-19 survivor. She says that in her own coronacoaster she is grateful not to have been hospitalized and indeed to have survived. It took a while for her to garner the mental energy to get out of the mindset of victim and into the mindset of survivor. Admirably, Montgomery 'bio-hacked' her own recovery and now wants to help others.

Nutritional psychology

While supplementation is commonly taken for physical health and wellbeing, the 'nutritional psychology' movement is taking hold and being advocated by Montgomery. She has stepped up to the plate and curated a collection of science-backed, 100% active, bioavailable mood nutrition supplements designed to support and nurture mental health.

She initially trialled the supplements with her patients in her psychotherapy practice and the results were so powerful that she set out to fine-tune the ingredients and develop the formulas with the intention of shifting the conventional view on supplementation for mental wellbeing. There are four dedicated products in the 360M+E (Montgomery+Evelyn) range,



including: Energy ME: Essential, for tiredness; and Happy ME: Essential, for depression.

Socially jetlagged

It isn't rocket science that tiredness is exacerbated by poor sleep. Research during the lockdowns has shed new light on one of the pillars of sleep science — the phenomenon known as 'social jetlag' — and has brought fresh focus to the importance of sleep quality, as well as quantity. Put simply, social jetlag is the difference between the times we sleep and the times our biological clocks want to us to sleep.

According to Puresstientiel, makers of evidence-based, clinically proven essential oil products, as COVID blurs the boundaries between work and home, the bedroom and the office, workdays and weekends, it is becoming harder to define and separate different aspects of our daily lives.

Dr Chris Etheridge, medical herbalist and advisor to Puresstientiel, says that coronavirus has also made us all acutely aware of the importance of respiratory health, and provides an important reminder of the way that breathing patterns can impact sleep patterns and how sleep patterns can influence our breathing. And there is compelling evidence that social jet lag triggers negative changes to the cardiovascular

system and increases levels of stress hormones.

Just breathe

Sleep apnoea is when your breathing stops and starts

“Another cause for concern is that patients who suffer from sleep apnoea seem to be more at risk if they contract COVID-19”

while you sleep. The most common type is called obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA). Sunrise, the company behind the diagnostic home-based sleep test, are drumming up apnoea awareness. Laurent Martinot, CEO and co-founder, comments:

“Our findings show that despite studies concluding sleep disordered breathing concerns affect 49% of men and 23% of women aged 40 and above, there is a real lack of knowledge when it comes to sleep apnoea. If left untreated, the condition can lead to a range of serious health conditions from depression and changes in mood to diabetes, hypertension and a higher chance of having a stroke. Another cause for concern is that patients who suffer from sleep apnoea seem to be more at risk if they contract COVID-19.”

Euan MacLennan, herbal director at Pukka Herbs, adds: “Sleep supports the proteins and cells of your immune system to detect and destroy bugs and germs. It also helps to reduce stress, support

FIGHTING FIBROMYALGIA

A new peer-reviewed pilot study published in *Pain Medicine* shows that supplementation with Pycnogenol may support reduction of symptoms associated with fibromyalgia. According to natural health physician Dr Fred Pescatore, fibromyalgia is a chronic and debilitating condition that causes severe widespread pain throughout the body, often categorized by chronic fatigue, muscle and joint pain, cognitive

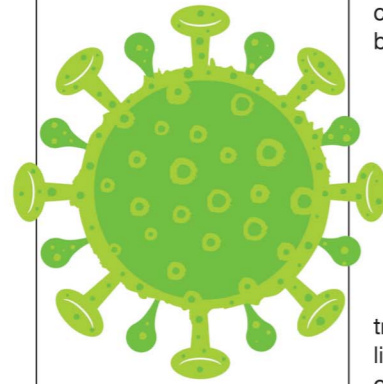
and mood disturbances and irritable bowel syndrome. “It is not clear what causes the pain associated with fibromyalgia,” says Pescatore, “yet we know oxidative stress is a key contributing factor.”

Pycnogenol is a natural plant extract originating from the bark of the maritime pine and is found to contain a unique combination of properties. Pycnogenol is distributed exclusively worldwide by Horphag Research.

mental wellbeing and improve heart health." To address quality sleep hygiene, Pukka has developed a range of products such as Night Time tea, Night Time Berry tea and Night Time capsules – a new addition to the range, containing a restorative blend of organic berries, chamomile, valerian and echinacea. Just launched is a new sleep product from the Aqua Herbs tincture range, Chamomile Relax, joined by Pukka's latest tea blend, Fresh Start, to kick-start the mornings in a refreshing, caffeine-free way.

Gut keeping you up?

Gut health expert Camilla Gray, nutritional therapist at Optibac, says good quality sleep is also correlated with a larger amount of bacterial diversity in our guts. "Generally," says Gray, "those who have a high diversity of microbes in the gut are considered the healthiest. So, if you have low diversity, it may mean that you are at risk of experiencing poor sleep. Modern day factors can



reduce the diversity of gut bacteria but it's also believed that our gut bacteria have their own circadian rhythm."

Gray suggests eating no later than 8pm with a meal rich in carbohydrates that can help to encourage the body to produce serotonin. Serotonin is a chemical precursor to melatonin, the main hormone involved in sleep, so Gray recommends eating foods that can help manufacture it. Serotonin is made from a constituent of protein called tryptophan, found in foods like fish, turkey, chicken, cottage cheese, beans, avocados and bananas.

Making scents

Weleda has harnessed 'the power of nature' to launch new Aroma Showers, a range of four mood-enhancing, spa-worthy preparations inspired by the scents of the natural world and their proven aromatherapeutic benefits. "Fragrances have a unique effect on us: not only do

CORONASOMNIA

Emily Simpson is nutritional expert and product development technologist at BetterYou. "Now more than ever," she says, "in the midst of so-called coronasomnia, it's imperative that people are aware of the common vitamin or mineral deficiencies, such as magnesium, which can affect our ability to sleep. An important factor in how our body manages its sleep cycle, a magnesium deficiency can affect not only our ability to fall asleep but the quality of sleep we're able to achieve. Magnesium

promotes relaxation of the muscles by binding to and stimulating the gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) receptors in our brain and nervous system, which helps the brain switch off in preparation for sleep. Adding a supplement or transdermal magnesium product to our daily routines will help to elevate levels of this important nutrient, promoting overall wellbeing, relaxation and helping to overcome sleepless nights.

"Vegans and vegetarians," says Simpson, "may experience nutritional gaps from cutting out certain food groups. This can be particularly pertinent when it comes to feelings of tiredness and fatigue, as energy-enhancing B vitamins are mainly found in foods from animal sources. Taking a B vitamin supplement can correct deficiencies and raise energy levels."



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they evoke memories, but they also affect our wellbeing," says Dr Leo Zängerle, head of Weleda fragrance development. "Many plants contain essential oils that can revitalize, harmonize or calm the body, mind and spirit." Two of the variants especially relevant to the category are Energy and Relax.

Rescue – a Nelson's brand – has a new collection designed to help prepare for sleep, balance mood and focus the mind. The products combine signature Rescue essences with a fusion of natural ingredients including saffron, CBD, ashwagandha, ginkgo biloba and passionflower. The collection is available in a number of formats including a balm, capsules and spray.

Swedish brand WellBeMed has developed WellBeSleep, a range of products to savour before bedtime. Offered in Shot and Bar variants, they contain lemon balm and hops.

Aromatherapy Sleep Stones from CorinCraft are created from natural volcanic rock infused with organic

essential oils of lavender and chamomile to fill the bedroom with fragrant, sleep-enhancing aromas.

And, Naturopathica has targeted nutrition for vegans, vegetarians and flexitarians with products such as Vegan Life Fatigue Fighter capsules that include guarana, ginseng, iron and a vitamin B complex.

So, how are tiredness products faring in the stores? Nishma and Vimal Shah run Pure Health in Southgate, North London, offering a comprehensive selection for a healthy, balanced lifestyle. Nishma reports: "We have been supporting our customers on-going to deal with sleep and stress issues brought on by COVID. Really popular products are chamomile tea, lavender essential oil and BetterYou Magnesium Sleep Spray. Beta glucan supplements by Solgar and Viridian have been popular to maintain immune health, while those suffering from fatigue and the after-effects of COVID have really benefitted from ginseng and ashwagandha supplements."

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Hot Stocks

Be silent

Expertly developed to prepare the body and mind for a deep, peaceful sleep, the B Silent collection from Bamford comprises four products to encourage sleep-promoting bedtime rituals: B Silent Night-Time Bath Concentrate for unwinding; B Silent Organic Body Oil, containing St John's wort for deep relaxation; B Silent Organic Night-Time Temple Balm with calming *Cannabis sativa* and poppy seed oil; and B Silent Night-Time Pillow Mist, to soothe and relax the mind.

Nourishing nights

The potent herbal blend in Organic Apoteke's Nourishing Night Tea helps the body wind down from a busy day, soothes the senses and aids digestion. Key organic ingredients

include: chamomile leaf and flower to reduce symptoms of anxiety; lavender flowers to prepare the mind for sleep; and passion flower to reduce stomach acidity.

Mindful mask

As comforting and indulgent as a pair of cashmere socks, the velvety-soft Luna Eye mask from Sensory Retreats is infused with lavender to promote a peaceful night's sleep. Heating up in just one second, the warmth continues for 25 minutes, encouraging a peaceful transition into slumber. £1

is donated to Mind for every box purchased.

Fatigue Fighter

The Vegan Life range from Naturopathica features Fatigue Fighter, an easily absorbed plant-based source of iron which helps with energy metabolism and cognitive function. Housed in eco-friendly packaging, the 30 capsules are vegan-friendly and contain ginseng and guarana alongside a B complex formula.



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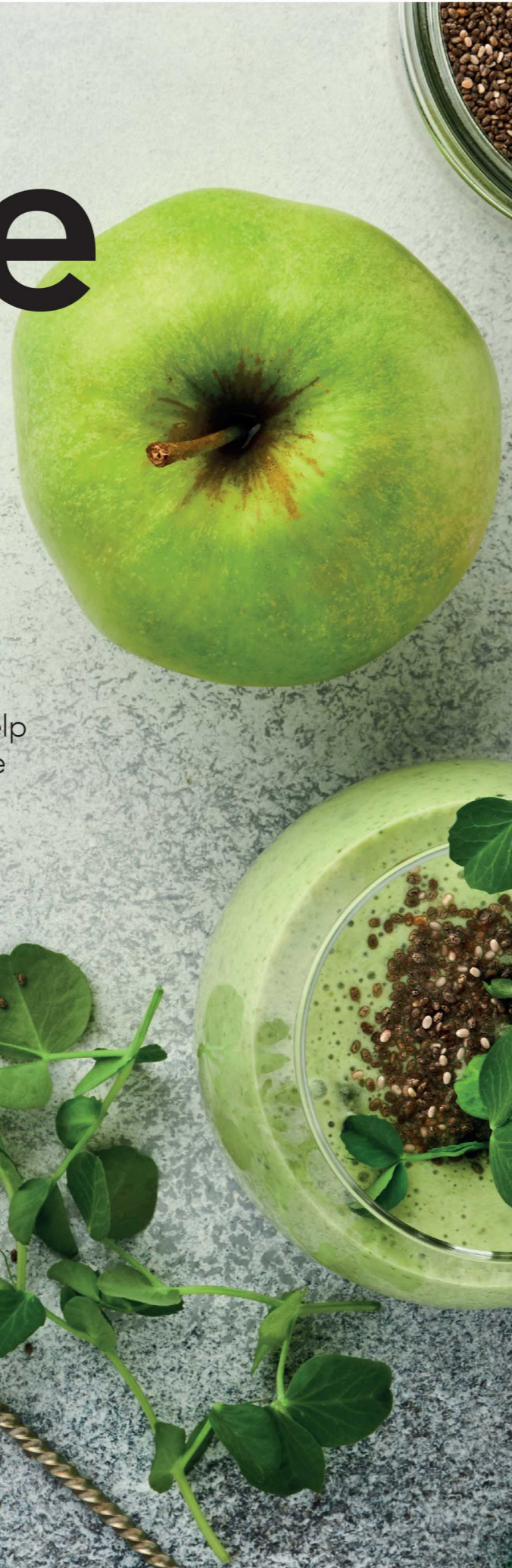
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Slimline tonic

There's a new dawn beckoning in the slimming and detox category, writes **Denise Barrett**; the harsher methods of previous regimes are giving way to a balanced, cleansing approach of smart nutrition to help us reboot from lockdown sofa snacks and prep for the Christmas season



This 'new dawn' will have its work cut out to address the landscape of health conditions engendered by COVID-19. The major issue here is obesity, but also its collateral damage such as diabetes and psychologically rooted problems like eating disorders.

Some of the stats reported in the media are sobering reading. In February, *Obesity*, the research journal of the Obesity Society, published a landmark study titled *The Impact of COVID-19 Stay-At-Home Orders on Health Behaviors in Adults*. It concluded that during lockdown, weight gain has affected 33% of people with obesity compared with 25% of people with a healthy weight and 21% of those who are overweight.

The aim of this study was to quantify changes in habitual dietary behaviours, physical activity, sleep, sedentary behaviours and mental health – before and during the initial peak of the pandemic. It was found that during the pandemic, overall scores for healthy eating increased owing to less eating out and more home cooking. Sedentary leisure behaviours increased,

while time spent in physical activity declined.

Anxiety scores increased during the pandemic and the magnitude of increase was significantly greater in people with obesity. Anxiety was reported in 27.5% of the total

“Diet is no longer about preparing for swimsuit season, it is a tool for wellbeing ... to achieve broader goals of feeling healthy”

sample compared with 33.4% in participants with obesity.

The study concluded: “The pandemic has produced significant health effects, well beyond the virus itself. Government mandates together with fear of contracting the virus have significantly impacted lifestyle behaviours alongside declines in mental health. These deleterious impacts have disproportionately affected individuals with obesity.”

The vulnerable young

In July, BBC online reported on the rise of eating disorders with an investigation that found the number of young people hospitalized with the

condition in England rose during the pandemic. Data obtained from NHS Digital showed that the number of under-20s admitted over the past year topped 3,200 – nearly 50% higher than in 2019-20.

Mental health charities said the pandemic, and lockdowns in particular, have had a devastating impact on vulnerable young people, increasing their anxiety and isolation. This has led to more people developing eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia – and deterioration in many youngsters with existing diagnoses.

Tom Quinn from Beat reported a huge increase in demand for the charity's helpline, with many talking about increased anxiety, isolation and lack of support as factors, while Emma Thomas, chief executive of Young Minds, said the pandemic has left many young people 'isolated, uncertain about the future and less in control'.

Natural innovators

Back in May the so-called new dawn of 'dieting' referred to earlier was headlined in a piece by online trends reporter *Food Navigator*, which stated: 'Diet is no

longer about preparing for swimsuit season, it is a tool for wellbeing ... to achieve broader goals of feeling healthy and high-functioning'.

That ethos is quintessentially captured by organic brand Purearth. Co-founded by raw food expert Tenna Annette, the company uses a mix of highly potent superfoods created using an infusion of adaptogens, medicinal mushrooms, Ayurvedic herbs, tonics and raw cold-pressed juices designed to help support overall health and liver function. Annette thinks creatively about future trends and considers herself 'an agitator for change'.

Purearth began back in 2012 with a supply of organic fruit and veg from the farmers' market and a home juicer. But now, says Annette, juice cleanses have really arrived. “Previously, consumers associated detoxing and juice cleanses with weight loss. But the new cleanses are not targeted just to shed the pounds. Now, a more holistic approach is taken with many 'smart', bespoke juice cleanses on the market. Juice cleanses can improve alkaline levels, alleviate fatigue and boost immunity. They can aid preparation for conceiving, remove heavy metals from the body, improve skin health and balance hormones.

“The pandemic has shifted our focus. We are approached more and more by people who want to reset their digestive system or generally boost their health. The new attitude to weight loss is more holistic, even preventative. It's geared to being healthy – to withstand



what the pandemic might throw our way, rather than being just about aesthetics.”

Core strategy

British Apples & Pears is a new initiative that gets right to the core of post-COVID weight management. It’s a cooperative of apple and pear growers who are working together to supply a high quality and sustainably grown British crop. Registered nutritionist Rob Hobson has partnered with the co-op to promote the Happy Apple plan, reaping the benefits of eating an apple before a meal as part of a healthy diet. Hobson maintains the Plan is a simple way to lose extra ‘COVID and Christmas’ pounds this winter. “Consuming an apple before a meal will help to increase the overall fibre content and help you feel full and satisfied for longer. You’ll also benefit from the apples’ healthy flavonoids.”

Pectin, the fibre found in apples helps to regulate

“Juice cleanses can improve alkaline levels, alleviate fatigue and boost immunity”

bacteria in the gut, which may help to suppress weight gain and fat accumulation in the body. High water-density foods are effective in helping weight loss, and apples are made up of 86% water.

Proven and popular

Most people take probiotics to boost their gut and immune health, but ProVen Probiotics ShapeLine has also shown consistent weight-loss benefits across two clinical trials involving nearly 300 participants. The most recent (second) study of 70 overweight participants aged 45-65 resulted in a substantial average reduction of 3.2kg simply by participants taking one capsule of ShapeLine a day, with no changes to diet, exercise or lifestyle

ProVen produces a range of probiotic supplements developed for different life stages, all of which contain the Lab4 (ShapeLine) group of friendly bacteria combined with vitamins, minerals and

KETO TRENDING

The ketogenic diet is catching the zeitgeist as a very low-carbohydrate regime designed to induce ketosis – a metabolic state in which the body uses fat as fuel instead of carbs. This can cause significant reductions in blood sugar and insulin levels, which along with increased ketones (a type of chemical that the liver produces when it breaks down fats) has been shown to generate health benefits.

Newly rebranded keto snack producer Fatt reports that the sector is growing at an accelerated rate. Fatt originally found success under its previous name, FattBar, but believes the repositioning

will increase the brand’s impact on consumers and retailers.

The company offers gluten-free, all-natural, low-carb and low-sugar keto products and claims it is the only

keto brand on the market that is entirely sweetener-free. The rebrand is comprehensive, including packaging, website, social media identity and brand personality. Fatt founder Hannah Sutter sums up: “The Fatt rebrand is bold and disruptive and has been designed to have a strong on-shelf presence and debunk the multitude of confusing diet myths, while clearly communicating the products’ functional and nutritional benefits.”



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We all remember the 5-A-Day campaign which was launched by the Government way back in March 2003 to arouse public awareness of the benefits of plentiful fruits and vegetables within our diet. You could say it was a precursor to something far more directional and exotic – a celebration of the core nutrient values of a group of high performance, rainbow-coloured superfoods.

These particular superfoods get their bright, signature colouration – reds, yellows, oranges, greens and purples – from phytochemicals, which are natural bioactive compounds. In fact, the more vibrantly coloured fruit and vegetables are, the richer they are in health-giving vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants. What's more, they look super tempting on the plate.

The new superfood buzz is around anthocyanins, a name derived from the Greek words for 'flower' and 'dark blue'. These uber-level antioxidants are found in high concentrations in blueberries and blackberries, and they give the fruit their rich red, purple, and blue pigment.

Designer tomatoes

Anthocyanins are lauded for their antioxidant, antiviral and antibacterial qualities. Aubergines, red cabbage, blackcurrants and cherries all have anthocyanins, as do pomegranates, plums and prunes. Readers of the *Sunday Times* may recently have caught a highly researched article on gene editing. It reported that the John Innes Centre – an international research base in Norfolk specializing in plant and microbial science – has developed futuristic 'purple tomatoes' enriched with high-level anthocyanins. The scientists found that the enhanced tomatoes have twice the normal shelf life and when fed to cancer-prone mice, extended their life span by an average of 30%.



Colour pop

That old childhood adage 'eat up your greens' has moved on, writes **Denise Barrett**, to a new generation of rainbow-coloured superfoods

Deep purple
Fleur Cushman heads up the food supplements brand CurraNZ (that's code for "Anthocyanins play an important role in sports nutrition, with the potential to improve performance and mitigate ... exercise-induced oxidative stress")

New Zealand blackcurrants). A native of New Zealand, Cushman has lived in the UK for over 20 years, but grew up inspired by her father, the natural health pioneer and pharmacist Mike Cushman, who shared

with her his passion for the purple fruit.

New Zealand blackcurrants are certainly having their moment in the sun. But what's so special about this purple fruit? "New Zealand provides the perfect growing conditions for blackcurrants, with its hot summers and cold winters, great soil, pristine air and pure water. But a crucial factor is the strong ultraviolet sunlight, which boosts the anthocyanin concentrations in the fruit, thereby increasing the purple pigments. The result is a fruit containing a higher phenolic density than berries grown elsewhere in the world," says Cushman.

Many New Zealand blackcurrants are destined for juicing and jam products, but CurraNZ uses a cultivar that yields a particularly high amount of anthocyanin in preference to its juicing or flavour qualities. "Our special fruit," she continues, "has about twice the anthocyanin concentration of blueberries and 1.5 times that of European-grown blackcurrants. Not only do blackcurrant anthocyanins stimulate the body's own antioxidant defence systems, but they have one of the most potent capacities for fighting free radical activity in the body."

First-line defence

Cushman explains the pro-active benefits in CurraNZ: "Our blackcurrant anthocyanins possess a 'holy trinity' of physiological actions for health and wellbeing: they are natural anti-inflammatories, potent antioxidants, and vasodilators. In fact, the combination of these actions translates into a multitude of sport and health-promoting functions, resulting in 27 peer-reviewed studies published since 2014.

"New Zealand blackcurrants help manage inflammation in the right way at the right time. By supporting the immune system they boost the body's first-line defences to help reduce 'opportunistic' infections. In fact, it's the immune-boosting properties of CurraNZ that's one of the most common pieces of feedback we receive – notably a reduction in infections, cold and flu."

Superberries

'Superberry' brand Haskapa was founded by husband-and-wife team Dr Evie Kemp and Simon Fineman (a 'green' entrepreneur). They grow haskap berries on their farm in Nova Scotia, Canada, and have spent many years researching the benefits of these rare fruits. Kemp and Fineman discovered that freeze-drying haskap berries preserved their uniquely tangy flavour and naturally high levels of anthocyanins, resulting in a delicious

product with science-backed health benefits.

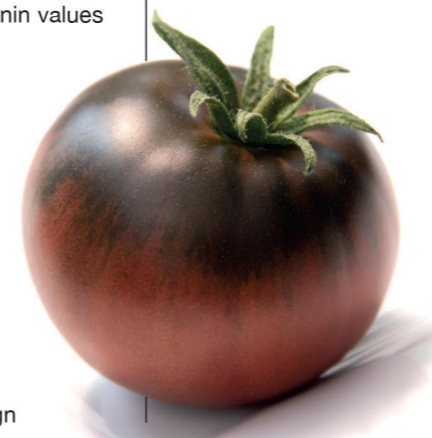
Anthocyanins play an important role in sports nutrition, with the potential to improve performance and mitigate the development of exercise-induced oxidative stress. Their anti-inflammatory effects may also have a role to play in improving exercise recovery.

Haskapa Berry Powder is made exclusively from tangy, plump, juicy haskap berries that feature vibrant blue skins and deep crimson flesh – as depicted in a series of recipe cards produced by the brand this spring – which, say Kemp and Fineman, gives them one of the highest recorded anthocyanin values of any berry.

Are they listening?

The health food sector has campaigns aplenty, but how effective are they?

Jenni Gordon, BANT-registered nutritional therapist, comments on the success of nutritional campaign



SUPERFOODS IN-STORE

"With us, superfoods really took off a few years ago with the rise in popularity of the Nutribullet," explains John Frisby, owner of Food for Living in Kent, and chairman of the Health Food Institute (HFI). "After the initial surge in sales things settled down but recently the interest has grown once again. Customers are more aware of the nutritional benefits now and tend to know what they want.

"Our superfood section replaced what was our protein (bodybuilding) space. Demand for the bodybuilding products disappeared a few years ago and that market was replaced by a more aware consumer. Cacao products are probably our most popular superfoods, along with green foods such as spirulina."

Fairhaven Wholefoods in Hertfordshire has been trading as a vegetarian

store for 40 years. Co-owner Tressa Timms says the store's customers, particularly the younger demographic, are keen to identify new trends – including superfoods. "We've definitely seen a rise in young people who are more aware of the health benefits of a diet rich in fruit and vegetables. This is particularly evident in the smoothie area, where powdered superfoods can be added to a smoothie recipe along with fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables for a highly nutritious and easily digestible meal."

Along with Fairhaven's best-selling own-brand wholefoods – Spirulina, Wheatgrass, Barley Grass, Moringa Super-Leaf Powder – Naturya Organic Superberries Breakfast Boost and the Superfoods range are also popular.

work in getting people to actively and mindfully eat a rainbow of superfoods on a daily basis: "I am optimistic these campaigns can raise awareness, provoke questions and sometimes instigate an action. There has been a lot of research around the health benefits of a plant-based diet and a 2018 review found that following this kind of regime can help both pre- and type 2 diabetics to lose weight, reduce their medication and improve their metabolic markers.

"However," adds Gordon, "I feel the fundamental wake-up call is sometimes lost. Campaigns such as the recent National Vegetarian Week mirror exactly what I frequently see with my own clients. It's common to see processed meat substitutes or starchy carbohydrates such as pasta, pastry and bread remain the main focus of meals, rather than a step-up in the consumption of fruit and vegetables. Sadly, it feels like a missed opportunity. Hopefully though, with more educational campaigns, consumers will get the message."

GREENS TO GO

Green powders have really caught the zeitgeist as an easy-to-use dietary supplement that helps busy people reach their RDA of vitamins and minerals. From Seagreens by Oceans of Goodness to Raw Living's Organic Chlorella Powder, canny brands have seized the opportunity to market green superfood powders to on-the-go health-conscious consumers who want to maximize their vegetable intake.

The powders are designed to deliver optimum servings of superfood vegetables through the convenience of a drink or smoothie, and there is a plethora to choose from.

Uberfood from Best-care provides a full nutrient complement in its vibrant packs made from natural, organic sources with all the phytonutrients for maximum absorption and benefit. Freeze-dried whole ingredients are used, not just juice powders, which means the syner-

gistic nutrients are preserved in the process. Uberfood's rainbow properties include spirulina, chlorella, wheatgrass, lucuma, turmeric, goji berry and blueberry.

Not everyone is totally sold on broccoli, but family business Golden Greens is offering a solution: 10g of its Organic Broccoli Powder is equivalent to 100g of fresh broccoli that's high in dietary fibre, rich in iron and gluten-free.



Hot Stocks

Hot pod

Compatible with Nespresso coffee machines and 100% compostable, the new Immunity Health Pods from Rejuvenation Water combine turmeric and beetroot with prebiotic plant fibre, amino acids and vitamins C, D and E, offering the consumer gut health and immunity benefits direct from their home coffee machine.

The superflower

Hibiscus – known as 'the superflower' – is an 'ancient symbol of beauty and source of wellbeing' according to Aduna, whose Hibiscus Superfood Powder came to market in January. The 100% natural powder is made from the nutrient-rich dried calyx of the vibrant pink *Hibiscus sabdariffa* and has a tangy flavour similar to pomegranate.

Superfood skincare

Surplus food waste turned natural beauty by-product, Beauty Cleanse Skincare's Cabbage + Cranberry + Hemp Anti-Pollution Deep Cleansing Oil & Makeup Remover is a 'juice cleanse for city skin'. It uses hemp and cranberry seeds – nutrient-dense superfood by-products – to gently dissolve make-up, pollution, SPF and sweat.

The lion's roar

This 'brain health superfood' from Om delivers support for memory, nerve health, focus, mood and creativity. Certified USDA Organic and non-GMO, each serving of Lion's Mane Organic Mushroom Powder is packed with potent lion's mane and organic myceliated oats and can be blended into smoothies and coffee.



EVERYTHING IN THE GARDEN

All is looking lovely at Weleda. A mounting catalogue of awards, the 30th anniversary of a hero product and the September launch of a new Almond Sensitive Skin Body Care range to complement the Almond facial care line. **Denise Barrett** looks at the iconic botanical brand.

Weleda has a lot to smile about. Its Calendula Nappy Change Cream, which is a top seller for pharmacies, has just celebrated its 30th birthday. New awards continue to pile in, and the hugely popular range of Almond Sensitive Skin facial care is joined by a newly launched bodycare line that like its counterpart is specially formulated for sensitive skin.

The Weleda range, often packaged to reflect the botanical ingredients within (pale pink and white for almond, orange for calendula), has an array of USPs in terms of heritage, ethical criteria and world-class R&D and production.

I asked Jayn Sterland, Weleda's Commercial Director, to define and qualify what sets the brand apart. "The main point of difference from other natural cosmetic brands is that at Weleda we grow most of our own ingredients, and 84% of Weleda's plant ingredients are organic, and biodynamic where possible.

"Also, our entire natural and organic cosmetics range is NATRUE-certified either purely natural or organic. So the brand is very genuine and our products have great authenticity. Everything is manufactured to pharmaceutical standards, even the cosmetics, because Weleda makes licensed medicines – and we can't have double standards."



HOME GROWN

In the UK Weleda manufactures mainly medicines, with just half a dozen body care products or cosmetics. So the gardens look very different to Weleda growing sites in other parts of the world, as things are

grown on a smaller scale.

"You don't need fields of plants to make a homeopathic medicine" says Jayn, "but the gardens are Demeter-certified, which indicates the highest biodynamic standard." On that note, I asked Jayn to talk through some of the terminology connected to the Weleda brand and its discipline.

"The NATRUE standard is definitely one



Collecting Calendula flowers in the Weleda gardens

you can trust, wherever you are in the world. First founded in 2007, NATRUE provides an established international cosmetics and skincare standard that you can find on packs in the UK, across Europe, and worldwide from Japan to the USA. The NATRUE label is global – the mark of absolute quality and authenticity. So, consumers can see at a glance whether a product is truly natural, and know that the ingredients will be top quality and free from artificial colours, fragrances and preservatives such as parabens.

"Biodynamic agriculture is a more 'holistic' form of organic growing, developed from the work of scientist and philosopher Dr Rudolf Steiner. Biodynamic farmers strive to create a diversified, balanced farm ecosystem that

generates health and fertility as much as possible from within the farm itself. It is a spiritual-ethical-ecological approach to bring life back into the soil, so that the farm produce has increased life force, vitality, and nutritional value.

"In 1928 the Demeter Symbol, which signifies the highest level of biodynamics, was introduced and the first standards for Demeter quality control formulated. In Greek mythology, Demeter was the goddess of corn, grain, and the harvest.

"Finally, Weleda comes under the tongue-twisting discipline of Anthroposophic medicine, which is an extension to conventional medicine and was developed from the work of Rudolf Steiner and Dr Ita Wegman. It is a holistic

THE STORY BEHIND THE BRAND

approach, looking not just at the illness itself but at the human being as a whole. It aims to stimulate the natural healing forces of the individual and to bring mind, body and spirit into balance."

MEDICINES AT ITS HEART

Weleda's very roots are in medicines and the company continues to make them to this day. The new Stress Relief Spray, Dry Skin & Eczema Relief Spray and Cold Relief Spray offer great opportunities to the pharmacy. They are part of an innovative line of six indicated Homeopathic Oral Sprays designed to relieve the symptoms of everyday common ailments. The range, registered with the new NR (National Rules) criteria, was five years in development and is manufactured in the UK using only natural ingredients and organically grown plants.

The sprays are easy to use, convenient to carry around and deliver an effective, accurate dose. Stress Relief Spray is formulated for temporary relief of mild stress, irritability and tension and is a support mechanism that is particularly helpful for young adults dealing with anxiety and pressure in the run-up to exams, for example. It contains a home grown biodynamic tincture of Chamomile combined with Small Pasque Flower, which is also known as Peace Flower and is traditionally used in homeopathy to bring calm to life.

Dry Skin & Eczema Relief Spray ticks every box for easing discomfort of itchy or flaky patches of skin and soothing the irritation of eczema and dermatitis. It contains 6x potency of the homeopathic remedy Graphites and is prepared by hand using traditional methods at Weleda's Derbyshire manufacturing site, by a team of skilled pharmacists and dispensers. In the UK, eczema now affects one in five children and one in 10 adults. A holistic approach using natural remedies is growing in popularity as parents look for alternative solutions to topical steroids.

To arm the pharmacy in readiness for the winter-cold season, Cold Relief Spray is for the relief of the common cold and associated cough and related flu-like symptoms. It combines established homeopathic remedy *Allium cepa*, or red onion (used in homeopathic tradition to relieve the streaming eyes and nose that often accompany a cold), *Drosera* or common sundew (commonly prescribed for nasty chesty or spasmodic coughs and hoarseness) and *Gelsemium* or yellow jasmine (which is traditionally used to relieve head colds that cause flushed, clammy and other flu-like symptoms such as sneezing, catarrh, sore throat and achy feeling in the neck and limbs.)



30 GOLDEN YEARS

- A tube of Calendula Nappy Change Cream sells every 10 seconds.
- 243 tonnes of nappy cream are made each year – that works out at over 225 million applications!
- Weleda nappy cream has won 30 awards in the UK alone in the last 10 years.
- Weleda uses over seven tonnes of fresh calendula flowers in the baby care range.
- Weleda has been making baby skincare products since 1959.
- Weleda has the widest range of natural baby care products on the market.



IN THE PINK

Beautifully presented in pale pink and white packaging, Weleda's brand new Almond Sensitive Skin Body Care range (launching September) has been formulated to augment the facial range and is also designed to soothe and protect super-sensitive skin. The trio of variants are Almond Sensitive Skin Body Lotion, Almond Sensitive Skin Body Wash and Almond Sensitive Skin Hand Cream. Each is subtly scented with essential oil of bitter almond, creating a marzipan mellowness to gently soothe the senses. All three products have been dermatologically tested for suitability for sensitive skin prone to irritation and are free from synthetic ingredients, mineral oils, artificial additives, preservatives and parabens.

Weleda almond oil is cold-pressed from organic crops grown in Spain, from orchards



sprawling over 100,000 acres of Valencian countryside. It is one of the largest almond cultivation sites in Europe. Here, Weleda's almond partners, a cooperative of farmers passionate about organics, yield 3,000 tons of top quality almonds.

These three new products are based on a sound rationale.

WHY ALMOND OIL?

- Almond oil is one of the most valuable oils for skin care; it is extremely well tolerated, delicate, light, mild and especially skin-friendly.
- The almond kernel contains around 40-60% fatty oil. The high content of unsaturated fatty acids improves the skin's barrier function and protects it from drying out by preventing water loss.
- When applied to the skin, almond oil spreads easily and is quickly absorbed, leaving the skin smooth.

"From time to time, skin can become more sensitive than usual", says Jayn Sterland.

"Whether upset-prone teenage skin, hyper sensitive pregnant skin, or just a drier than normal phase caused by hormonal or health changes. A high and rising percentage of the population suffers from sensitive skin, irrespective of age, gender or ethnicity.

"It is important to adapt your skincare regime to address this. Skin is often more sensitive when it is drier, so it may need extra nourishment and protection. Our Almond Sensitive Skin collection can help calm a temporary flare-up. We have specifically formulated the range to soothe very sensitive skin, calm skin prone to irritation, provide long-lasting moisturisation and reduce that uncomfortable feeling of tightness."

WELEDA FACTFILE

■ Weleda's fascinating history began in 1921 with a hospital and a pharmaceutical laboratory founded by a Dutch doctor, an Austrian philosopher/scientist (Rudolph Steiner) and a chemist/pharmacist from Munich. It is now a worldwide enterprise for health.

■ Now the number one brand for natural and organic cosmetics (NOC) in Europe and the largest manufacturer of NOC and Anthroposophic natural medicines globally. It operates in over 50 countries worldwide and produces medicines and cosmetics across eight manufacturing sites including Germany, France, Switzerland, UK, New Zealand, Brazil, Argentina and Holland.

■ Employing over 1900 co-workers, Weleda creates, manufactures and distributes thousands of natural remedies from nappy cream to mistletoe cancer therapies.

■ With a 2015 turnover in excess of €350 million, Weleda is "still owned by its founders and always will be".

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A class act

Homeopathic company **Nelsons** enjoys a century-and-a-half of celebrated tradition. **Denise Barrett** visits its unique pharmacy deep in the heart of London's Mayfair.

Nelsons Homeopathic Pharmacy recently held a press reception in London, followed by the premiere of the stage production of *Fatal Attraction*, based on the notorious 1980s movie starring Michael Douglas and a bunny-boiling Glenn Close.

In stylish reflection, Nelsons has pinpointed six Bach Original Flower Essences that address the turbulent emotions encountered by the *Fatal Attraction* characters – ones that are actually experienced by everyday mortals: Pine (guilt and blame), Agrimony (masking with a smile), Holly (revenge, suspicion), Rock Rose (overwhelming fear or terror), Cherry Plum (fear of loss of control) and Century (hard to say “no”).

In fact, Nelsons research shows that a third of marriages may need to cope with the aftermath of an affair, but unlike in the 1980s movie, the stage version's hapless adulterer (and, eventually, his wife) have more than just phone calls to contend with following his one-night stand. They're totally overwhelmed by a barrage of sinister texts and emails.

RESCUE ME

Rescue Remedy is perhaps the most distinctive of all the Nelsons brands. It is the quintessential desert island product. Rescue is based on the combination of five definitive Bach Original Flower Essences – Star of Bethlehem, Clematis, Impatiens, Rock Rose and Cherry Plum. Used by millions of people around the world, it can be used any time, anywhere, and is suitable for all. There are several, amazingly convenient formats:

- Rescue Remedy, which comes in a dropper or a spray
- Liquid Melts, which quickly dissolve on the tongue
- Rescue Night, to help switch off at bedtime
- Rescue Gummy Stars, suitable for children aged two plus and adults
- Rescue Pastilles, in a handy snap-fast tin
- Rescue Chewing Gum, in zesty orange and elderflower flavour



■ Rescue Cream, for 24-hour intensive moisturising

■ Rescue Balm, designed to soothe dry, cracked lips

OASIS OF CALM

Nelsons Homeopathic Pharmacy is a tranquil environment in Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, in the heart of London's Mayfair. The Pharmacy aims to provide the utmost customer service and the clinic offers a therapeutic and tranquil environment where clients can seek advice from Nelsons' team of medical and registered practitioners.

Practitioners include qualified homeopaths, registered homeopaths, acupuncturists, osteopaths and craniosacral and yoga therapists.

Service is personal, simple and time-efficient. The Pharmacy offers a hand-dispensed homeopathic prescription service for doctors and professional homeopaths from a vast, original bank of homeopathic remedies and mother tinctures. All potencies and substances are prepared to order.

Nelsons Homeopathic Pharmacy sells the Nelsons portfolio of products for everyday ailments, such as Rescue Remedy, Bach Original Flower Remedies, Nelsons Arnica, Spatone and Nelsons Travella and Pollenna.

The Pharmacy team is also kept up to speed with synergistic brands and products from like-minded manufacturers such as OptiBac Probiotics, Higher Nature and Moogoo.



Susanne Haar, General Manager Nelsons Homeopathic Pharmacy



DID YOU KNOW?

Homeopathy originates from the Greek words *homeo*, meaning similar, and *pathos*, meaning suffering – and is based on the theory that you can treat 'like with like'. This principle was recognised by Hippocrates as early as the fifth century.

The design of the Pharmacy is classic, pristine and high-end, from the arched, vintage bay windows to the unique interior with its natural wood floors and beautiful period-style display cabinets.

The whole effect is of a modern, spacious apothecary, with a bronze bust of founding figure Samuel Hahnemann casting a watchful eye from the back of the store.

PUMPING IRON

Nelsons works with three high-profile sportswomen. In the tennis arena with world record holder Martina Hingis and 2014 World Junior No.1 Belinda Bencic. And on the track, with Pro-cyclist and Olympic gold medalist Joanna Rowsell MBE.

Joanna has been using iron-rich Spatone Apple for three years as an essential part of her training regime. "It's vital that I focus on my iron intake to ensure my energy levels are at their optimum during training and on a race day," she says.

Nutritionist Emma Wight-Boycott explains why iron is so important for athletes: "Iron plays a pivotal role in the human body by facilitating the transportation of oxygen, energy release and the normal functioning of the immune system. Runners have the extra challenge of iron loss through foot strike haemolysis – a breakdown of red blood cells when the foot hits the ground."

Spatone Apple contains iron-rich water sourced from the

Welsh mountains of Snowdonia National Park. It comes in 28 one-a-day sachets.

After pounding the court, Martina Hingis and Belinda Bencic find Nelsons Arnica Cooling Gel invaluable. Non-greasy and easily absorbed by the skin, it combines the refreshing sensation of grapefruit oil and menthol to cool and soothe the skin.

HERE COMES SUMMER

Nelsons OTC homeopathy is very popular in summertime, when the Pollenna and Travella brands come into their own. According to a 2013 survey commissioned by Nelsons, as the summer season begins, a quarter of the population are affected by hay fever symptoms such as itchy eyes, runny noses and bouts of sneezing fits. Not only that, the season is arriving earlier, with trees beginning to pollenate in February.

Pollenna blends a unique selection of homeopathic remedies specifically to help bring gentle and soothing relief. It's non-drowsy and suitable for all the family.

For consumers inclined to travel nausea, Nelsons Travella contains a combination of seven homeopathic remedies specifically chosen to help soothe travel sickness, and, crucially, doesn't cause drowsiness. ■



Tennis icons – world record holder Martina Hingis and 2014 World Junior No.1 Belinda Bencic.



Robert Wilson and Patrick Wilson

A LENGTHY HISTORY

Nelsons' history begins with the founding father of homeopathy, Samuel Hahnemann. In 1860, his disciple Ernst Louis Armbrecht moved to London, where he opened a homeopathic pharmacy and practised while studying Hahnemann's work.

Ernst married Charlotte Nelson in 1866 and soon after, began trading as Armbrecht, Nelson & Co, later to be abbreviated to A. Nelson & Co.

Today, Nelsons is Europe's oldest, and the UK's largest, manufacturer of homeopathic remedies.

The company is wholly owned by the Wilson family. Dick Wilson, who had a long-standing passion and commitment to complementary medicine, took over the company in the 1970s. In 1981, he pioneered the production of the first Nelsons range of OTC homeopathic remedies and developed Nelsons into an international leader in its field.

The company is run today by Dick's eldest son, Robert, and his brother Patrick, from Nelsons' head office and manufacturing plants in Wimbledon, London. The patented brands are sold in over 60 countries worldwide and include Rescue, Bach Original Flower Remedies, Arnica, Teetha, Nelsons Homeopathy, Spatone and Nelsons Pure & Clear.

INSIDE BEAUTY

Nelsons has just launched Sulfur 30c pillules. Sulphur is a medicinal product within the homeopathic tradition for the relief of pimples and spots associated with mild acne, as well as skin prone to eczema and irritation.



THE PERFECT TRIO

[READ MORE](#)

Revitacell presents three hero products that work in perfect synergy, combining pure ingredients with the state-of-the-art stem cell science.

A defining, one-stop facial skincare regime that's all you need to beautify the skin. As is often with perfection, less is more.



Yes, can do

Celebrity chef, James Martin, thinks foodies should abandon their prejudices about canned food. It's flexible, environmentally-friendly and often highly nutritious, he tells Denise Barrett. What's more, he says, it's a great way of introducing children to basic cooking skills



It's in the can!

Omega-3 fats

Salmon, pilchards, herring

Vitamin E

Tuna, salmon, prawns

Vitamin D

Sardines, salmon, mackerel

Vitamin C

Canned strawberries, blackcurrants, asparagus, tomatoes, pineapple

Folic acid

Canned broad beans, black-eyed beans

Thiamin

Canned chilli, chick peas, black-eyed beans

Calcium

Canned macaroni cheese, spinach, sardines

Vitamin A

Canned carrots, spinach, apricot, mango

Riboflavin

Canned rice pudding, asparagus, macaroni cheese

Iron

Canned corn beef, baked beans, red kidney beans, meatballs in tomato sauce

James Martin may have acquired a reputation as the poster boy of celebrity chefs, but in the kitchen, or when he's talking work, he's entirely focused and professional. When I ask him if his looks ever affected his being taken seriously, his no-nonsense, Yorkshire-born response is instant: "I've been in the industry for 25 years. I've been there, done it and got the T-shirt. In this business, there's no bullshit and those that don't shape up fall flat on their arse."

Like Jamie Oliver, Martin is passionate about getting kids to eat healthily, and like Gordon Ramsay, he doesn't mince his words. Like a lamb to the slaughter I ask him how he felt about feeding children omega-3 supplements to enhance their concentration. "That's bollocks" he says, "give 'em tinned sardines!"

The early reference to tinned, or canned food is not coincidental. Martin is backing the Off The Shelf campaign, developed in conjunction with food education charity Focus on Food. It unashamedly draws on the convenience and versatility of canned foods, which often, unfairly, gets a bad press. It's also captured the zeitgeist; a marketing strapline (from associate sponsors Canned Foods UK) reads 'cfUK' in a droll nod to French Connection's household name, though ill-judged, signature. The initiative highlights two important benefits of many canned foods: their nutritious quality (Martin is a long-time advocate for this reason) and the recyclability of the container.

By Royal appointment

Martin started young. His belief that parents should educate their kids on healthy eating from when they are little stems from his own personal experience, and is, he says, "the nub of the Off The Shelf campaign". Martin's father managed the catering at Castle Howard and young Martin helped him in the kitchens. In fact, he actually cooked a meal for the Queen Mother at the tender age of 12. "She likes home-cooked food, and I cooked her favourite — rack of lamb followed by meringue and ice-cream," says Martin.

So what exactly is tasty, nutritious and, as the Off The Shelf promotional material reads, convenient? "Sweetcorn

“If English tomatoes aren't in season, don't buy the air-miles ones, open a can or a jar!”

is excellent," says Martin "so are lentils, pulses, beans and of course the staple, tomatoes". He has very strong views on tomatoes. "The other day I saw half a dozen cherry toms from Holland for a daft price. It's crazy — if English tomatoes aren't in season, don't buy the air-miles ones, open a can or a jar!"

I ask him about the universal favourite, baked beans: "Actually, I prefer tinned haricots beans, although I've got my own vegetable garden for when they're in season, but I do make my own baked beans dish. I stir in soy sauce and chilli and brown sugar, to make 'barbecue baked beans'. There's another bean dish I make too, 'magic bean soup',

which I make from canned tomatoes and borlotti beans. Kids love it. And don't forget Banoffi pie. What's a staple ingredient? Condensed milk of course — out of a tin."

Get real

Martin thinks we've become too snobbish about tinned foods, and he's completely upfront about the fact that he regards cans as indispensable on his cruise ship restaurant: "We use canned foods for convenience as an adjunct to meals. Fresh food isn't always available when you're in the middle of the ocean!"

His views are coloured too by a stint working in France where Mediterranean diet rules. "We'd have tinned

olives, pulses, tomatoes, haricots and puy lentils." He also has strong views on organic: "I can't bear this air miles crap. Even if it is organic. How do we know how far it's travelled! Food should come out of the ground, as local as possible. But I do think the Soil Association is doing a great job supporting the farmers and championing local produce."

Catch 'em young

Focus on Food (chaired by Prue Leith, OBE) is a food education support programme. Each year it teaches over 20,000 children to cook in UK schools on its cooking buses — kitchens housed inside expandable lorries, which visit schools and communities giving youngsters aged four to 19 cooking lessons, while training their teachers to teach cooking.

Martin, like many other chefs, gives his time to support Focus on Food. On the cooking buses, kids will try anything from the amazing ingredients on offer, experimenting happily with anchovies and olives. The buses are on the road throughout the year, and if they're not helping schools they visit and support groups and organisations. Focus on Food's campaign director, Anita Cormac, is realistic about the enormous demand for the buses: "If they hitched up at every school or community needing our support — the journey would take seven years!" she says.

But, Martin believes that things are improving: "The positive side is that kids are more aware as more attention is focused where it matters. We need to get the dinner ladies educated too. In an ideal world dinner ladies would be trained chefs.

"Instead of shedloads being spent on research studies with school kids and fish oils, why don't they spend the time and money teaching kids about a basic balanced diet of fish, meat and vegetables?"

Martin's opinion aside, the consensus is that grass roots, hands-on cooking and food education has been sidelined, and technology dominates with lessons being based around the commercial angle of design and manufacture. "But," he says, "it's brilliant that the Off the Shelf initiative is working to turn this around." ●



NATURAL TRADE BROKERS NEWS

JULY / AUGUST 2019

Our July issue is just chock-full of goodies. The front-page slot goes to ever-popular Ricola, and inside we've a vibrant new brand catchily named Pulsin. There's a must-read column on merchandising know-how from Theresa on page eight and some amazing exclusive promos for the benefit of you and your customers. Enjoy!



Denise Barrett
Editor

ROOTED IN NATURE



S MALL IS BEAUTIFUL WITH RICOLA, THE SUGAR-FREE ICON OF THE CONFECTIONERY WORLD



With their nifty flip-top packs and kaleidoscope of sugar-free flavours, Ricola are instantly recognizable and merchandise perfectly in store. Alpine fresh, they're made with a blend of 13 herbs cultivated with care in the pure air of the Swiss mountain regions without the use of artificial fertilisers or pesticides. There's a refreshingly different range of flavours, from multi award winners LemonMint and Elderflower to moreish Liquorice and Mountain Mint and smooth, luxurious Herbal Caramel. These impulse products really provide an enticing visual rainbow for customers at the till point.

A family company, Ricola have been creating herbal confectionery since 1930 and their core focus, the values of innovation, quality and sustainability, are still as fresh and relevant almost 90 years on. Ricola believes passionately in the power of nature to support daily wellbeing. They communicate this clearly with their marketing, particularly their 'Wish you well' campaign, where they aim to make moments of calm and appreciation possible for everyone, every day. "From taking time to enjoy a moment with a Ricola Elderflower on the daily commute, to soaking up wellbeing tips on our Instagram feed, the Wish you well message is designed to make a positive difference to your day", says Ricola. Ingeniously, for an extra measure of happiness, each newly designed Ricola pack features a positive, feel-good message when you open the lid.

TRAVEL BUDDIES

Ricola's unique pocket-sized packs are the perfect travel or on-the-go companions. "Stock up on these Swiss travel buddies", Ricola says, "to set your summer sales soaring and your customers coming back for more." (Ricola has a very loyal fan base.) And if our sublime picture of hikers enjoying an alpine mountain scene has aroused your wanderlust, go follow the dream and visit www.ricola.com to enter the 'Win a trip to Switzerland' competition. Bon voyage!



REALLY PULSIN!

Co-founders Simon Ashburner, Nick Bildner and Ben Lewis launched our new award winning brand Pulsin in 2007 with the shared view that everyone should have easy access to healthy foods without a compromise on taste. So, Pulsin products are crafted using the finest natural ingredients to maintain energy levels, increase protein intake and provide guilt-free snacking. Pulsin contains the optimum blend of pea and rice protein to provide all the required essential amino acids and the new to the range Peanut Choc Protein Booster and Caramel Choc & Peanut Protein Booster provide the perfect plant-based pre or post-workout protein boost.



CHOCOLATE OSCARS



Artisan chocolatier Booja-Booja has scooped four Academy of Chocolate Awards, proving that its dairy free chocolate truffles more than stand up to the test against the very best, conventional chocolate creations. The Academy of Chocolate Awards evaluates the world's finest chocolates on appearance, depth of aroma and flavour complexity within a range of categories. Booja-Booja won Bronze for its Hazelnut Crunch, Almond Salted Caramel, Around

Midnight Espresso and Fine de Champagne Organic Chocolate Truffles. Three other truffle flavours, Dark Ecuadorian, Toffee Strudel and Honeycomb Caramel were awarded commendations. "Each truffle is hand made by artisan chocolatiers. Carefully crafted chocolate ganache is enrobed with a thin chocolate shell resulting in an exquisite chocolate experience", shares Booja-Booja.



Here's to a successful Ice Cream promotion on the 500ml! We're offering a 10% discount to encourage consumer sales – ask your sales team for the 10% off stickers.

POP A PASTELI

Sunita has a long history of producing sesame products and still works closely today with the same family producers in Greece. Ranges include organic halva and sesame bars, or 'pasteli' in Greek. Halva is a traditional Mediterranean snack created from tahini. Sunita don't use sugar, so their tahini is sweetened with honey, grape juice or coconut syrup. Usually eaten after dinner with a coffee, halva is packed full of protein and calcium so can also be enjoyed as a snack throughout the day. Sunita sesame bars are purely sesame seeds and honey. Again, full of protein and calcium, they can be eaten at breakfast or as a daytime snack on the go. Their natural honey content gives a slow release of energy, so perfect during exercise or as a pick-me-up between meals. New to the range – vegan Organic Sesame & Coconut bar! (Still to be listed in some wholesalers.)



Sunita®



WINNING TORTILLAS

Summer's the perfect time to crack open some tasty packs of The Real Coconut Tortilla Chips. They're ideal for beach parties (there's even a beach barbecue flavour, see our pic), lunchboxes and alfresco dining. Thicker than your average tortilla, they're also perfect as part of a main meal. You can sprinkle them in salads to add crunch and as a base for tacos. With a subtle coconut flavour, these winning tortilla chips are high in fibre and protein and they're free of gluten, grain, dairy and refined sugar and suitable for vegans.

The Real
COCONUT
BY DANIELLA HUNTER

MARVELLOUS MAGNESIUM

Wassen has two magnesium-based products designed to help support a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle. **Wassen Magnesium-OK** is a unique one-a-day nutritional supplement especially for women to help support general health and vitality throughout the monthly cycle. It contains a balanced combination of six important minerals and eight vitamins including Vitamin B6, which contributes to the regulation of hormonal activity, and magnesium, which has been proven to help contribute

to reduce tiredness and fatigue. Also introducing **Wassen Magnesium-B**, which is specially formulated to provide 300mg of Magnesium, which contributes to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue and healthy energy release. Magnesium-B also contains Vitamins B6, B12, Riboflavin (B2), Pantothenic Acid (B5) plus Folic Acid that can help with the reduction of tiredness and fatigue, while the Vitamin B5 helps keep mental performance at its best.

* Please note these products should not be taken together.



Wassen®



NATURAL TRADE BROKERS **NEWS**

MAY / JUNE 2019

As I write, the weathermen are promising 23° and bluebells are springing up. What better time, then, to bask in a front page of warmth courtesy of Green People and their fabulous sun care range. Dive on in and have a great start to the season, we've got the perfect choice of brands to launch you on your way!



Denise Barrett
Editor



GREEN PEOPLE'S BACKSTORY, LIKE THAT OF MANY PIONEERING AND PASSIONATE COMPANIES, DERIVES FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. FOUNDER CHARLOTTE VOETZ HAS A BACKGROUND IN NURSING, PHARMACOLOGY AND BOTANICAL MEDICINE.

When Charlotte's daughter Sandra was small, she suffered from eczema and allergies and that motivated Charlotte to garner her knowledge and create an organic, holistic beauty range that was kind to the skin and catered for people of all ages. After extensive research, Green People was born. Now, it's an iconic brand. It's won stacks of awards (over 250 since 2001), it is super gentle on the skin, cruelty free and certified organic. It's kind to the environment and responsibly sourced.

Each year, ten per cent of its net profit is donated to eco charitable causes.

MARINE FRIENDLY

One of only a few sun lotions worldwide that are truly reef safe and non-toxic to marine life, Green People's brand new sun range is relaunching with easy-wear formulas and in new carbon-negative sugar cane

packaging, which features raw material from sugar cane deemed inferior for food production. The full-size SPF15 and SPF30 and Organic Children SPF30 and 100ml Sun Lotions are the first across the range to feature this new packaging.

UVA radiation, says Green People, accounts for 90% of the symptoms of premature ageing.

Reassuringly these skin-loving products blend antioxidant-rich plants including edelweiss, green tea and rosemary that work together to support the skin's immune system and help to maintain collagen and elastin. A beautiful way to stay 'safe in the sun'!



Charlotte, Sandra and pooch Saffie



WINDOW COMP!

GP is launching a nationwide competition during June and July challenging stores to find the most novel, vibrant ways to display its sun care range. **First prize:** £300 vouchers and three GP goody bags worth £75 to share with your team. **Second Prize:** £200 vouchers and two goody bags worth £50. **Third prize:** £100 vouchers and two goody bags worth £50. *Ask your sales team member for window display pack.*

SMARTER PASTA

Explore Cuisine loves to discover colourful, organic foods that are tasty, simple to prepare and full of plant-based goodness. They're committed to trading fairly and organic farming, and through their Food to Thrive Foundation provide education and empowerment to communities in the developing world. Flavourful dishes to welcome the new season include Chickpea Fusilli or Mung Bean Rotini, as shown in our pics. It's 'the Smarter Way to Pasta!'



GINSENG POWER

Power Ginseng is produced by family-run business Power Health. Ginseng is an adaptogenic herb thought to produce a 'balancing' effect on the body. Being multifunctional it's especially helpful during strenuous exercise, for women during the menopause, students revising for exams, for fatigue sufferers, and as a libido enhancer. It helps clear the head, boost the mood and restore memory at times of stress. Power Health uses only the best four to six year old root in their products, which are generally regarded as the most potent Korean ginseng in the world.



DELIZIOSO!! isola BIO

Isola Bio is an Italian range of organic plant-based milks. Each drink is nurtured from seed on farmlands across Italy by a team of 35 farmers. With a fully sustainable production site, these luxurious drinks offer clean recipes for optimum nutrition and are perfect on cereal, in tea and coffee and for baking, cooking and smoothies. Recently rebranded with new UK-facing packs, there's a variant for everyone, including Almond, Rice & Coconut and Rice & Hazelnut, and by popular demand, new Oat milk, a favourite with coffee lovers. Organic, vegan, GM free and kosher with gluten-free options.



NATURAL HEALING

Comvita's Medihoney natural skincare range with sterilised medical grade manuka honey helps care for sensitive, dry or eczema prone skin. It's clinically proven to support the healing of wound and skin infections, whilst the aloe vera and chamomile

Cream moisturises and soothes irritated skin. With its natural antibacterial properties, Wound Gel promotes wound healing and reduces the risk of infection. One product three actions! It heals, cleans and protects and supports healing of wounds and mosquito bites



SPECIAL DEALS

Medihoney range 5+1. 100ml Elixirs: Buy one get one free

SAVOUR A PUFF

Our fabulous new brand SHORE aims to create an edible seaweed industry that's one hundred per cent sustainable, good for the coastal environment and benefits local communities. How does it do that? Using hand-harvested Scottish seaweed as the core ingredient, Shore makes healthy plant-based snacks that are nutritious, vegan

and gluten free and made with seaweed from sustainable sources. Super tasty, crunchy and less than 100 calories per bag, Puffs come in Sea Salt & Balsamic, Thai Chilli, Lime, Coconut & Chilli and Sweet & Smoky flavours. SHORE will delight your customers shopping for innovative, delicious plant-based products! Speak to your NTB sales team about introductory promotion!



DROP. FIZZ. DRINK.

NUUN is all about healthy hydration: drinking more water and benefitting from the vital electrolytes and sodium. Now that summer's on the way and we hit the great outdoors, this is particularly relevant. NUUN hydrates better than just water alone. It comes in two fizzy variants powered with vitamins, minerals & electrolytes: VITAMINS for daily health and ACTIVE BOOST for sports and exercise. Flavours include Blueberry Pomegranate, Lemon Lime, Strawberry Melon and Wild Berry.



BATHROOM BEAUTIES

Following the successful launch of Biomed toothpaste, SPLAT is launching a range of Biomed mouthwash in the UK and Ireland. Biomed is designed to provide effective and natural plaque removal, protection against tooth decay, enamel strengthening, gum care and long-lasting fresh breath. The beautifully presented variants include Citrus Fresh, Super White, Sensitive and Gum Well. Each Biomed product is tested in Switzerland and contains an individual set of 12 natural ingredients to achieve best possible results. They're reassuringly free from SLS, parabens, fluoride, triclosan and aggressive whiteners.



‘Hello beautiful’

This confident greeting is used by **MyChelle**, an American prestige skincare brand that’s now blossoming over here

The very elegant MyChelle Dermaceuticals range was created not in France, as its name may suggest, but in Colorado, USA. The company’s founder was unimpressed with the efficacy of products on the market, and began making skincare formulations from her kitchen.

The company’s tagline is ‘seeded in science and rooted in nature’. “That captures the ethos of the brand perfectly,” says Nigel Barton, Managing Director of Eterno Naturals, who distributes MyChelle in the UK.

“MyChelle’s singular goal” says Nigel, “is to prove that natural skincare can be as effective, if not more so, than the synthetically produced big skincare brands. The ‘seeded in science’ tagline is more than just hearsay – and our unique 3D skin imaging system Skin Scan demonstrates the proof.”

BESPOKE DIAGNOSIS

“The crucial thing which really makes MyChelle stand out in the market is Skin Scan”, says Nigel. “It complements the product range and is an amazing support tool for our retailers.” Skin Scan is a state-of-the-art diagnostic device utilised professionally in-store by MyChelle’s qualified beauty advisors.



“We scan customers,” says Nigel, “devise a bespoke skincare programme, ask them to come back in two to three months for a re-scan, and this is where positive results show and we prove our products work. We hold Skin Scan events, too, and participating stores and pharmacies have achieved unprecedented sales of skincare in a single event.”

SUPER-CHARGED SKIN SERUMS

MyChelle has one the most extensive selections of super-charged Serums, designed to penetrate and work deep in the skin to actively deliver results. (In America, MyChelle owns 17% of the

BELIEVE THE SPIN

SPINS is the leading US data analysis company specialising in the natural lifestyle sector. News just in confirms that MyChelle is a leader in natural facial skincare with key market share in facial creams, eye products and serums. Within the fastest growing sensitive skincare category, MyChelle has 23% share, double that of any other brand. But the UK isn’t left behind. Already, the brand is in Selfridges, John Bell & Croyden, Bliss Pharmacy, Wholefoods and other leading stores. MyChelle is currently reported to be the fastest growing facial skincare range here, and Nigel Barton reports: “We have stores who confirm that our sales are outstripping those of other natural brands longer established in the market place”

“We would love to be in more pharmacies, though” says Nigel. “Also, we’re just about to launch into the Ireland market, which we are really excited about. “Come and see us at Olympia, he says, “and we’ll tell you more.”

Eterno Naturals is showcasing MyChelle on stand 4071, Natural & Organic Products Europe.

Facial Serums category, double that of any other brand.)

■ Across the brand, MyChelle skincare is formulated with high quality bioactive dermatological grade ingredients for optimum efficacy and beautiful results.

■ MyChelle was the first to include chirally correct, anti-ageing peptides (clinically proven bioactives and plant stem cells) into its natural formulations. Additionally, MyChelle products are free of phthalates, parabens, fragrances and artificial colours.

■ Products are formulated to deliver targeted results across a spectrum of skin types and conditions that include blemishes, hyperpigmentation, photo ageing and inflammation.

ENHANCING THE PHARMACY

“We think MyChelle sits very well in the holistic pharmacy environment, and that synergy is very important to us,” says Nigel Barton. “We understand that each store is unique and we take this into consideration when recommending our brands.”

MyChelle variants come in pristine colour-coded packaging, which highlights skin type and skincare concerns, making unified, effective merchandising. To make things even easier for the consumer, products are grouped into categories and suggested daily regimes.

In-store, products are supported with a range of POS, consumer literature and training material for both pharmacy staff and customer. The company can also provide in-store training, education and demos to build brand awareness and ensure products are appropriately endorsed and promoted.

“Importantly”, says Nigel, “for pharmacies with an online store, we can supply images, banners and copy to seamlessly upload on to their web site. We can also supply compelling content for e-news articles and online blogs.”



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Pure, simple and glamorous

The Organic Pharmacy is a retail phenomenon where beauty meets science. Yet it stays totally true to the brand name at its heart. **Denise Barrett** met creator **Margo Marrone** at her flagship London store.

In the West End's Great Marlborough Street, a stone's throw from the bustle of Oxford Circus, is an oasis of tranquillity dedicated to holistic beauty and wellbeing. The Organic Pharmacy flagship store may now be one of nine worldwide but its original concept, way ahead of its time, remains unwavering.

The Organic Pharmacy was created by husband and wife Margo and Franco Marrone. Everything about the place reflects their personal, immaculate taste, from the therapeutic products and their packaging, the glossy website and the interior design of the stores. It's a clean, unified identity.

Margo Marrone is a qualified pharmacist and homeopath, specialising in herbal medicine and nutrition, and Franco is a designer. It's a perfect marriage of talents.

The products on display are offset beautifully by the store interiors – all pale, neutral walls, embellished frosted glass and blonde wood floors. The high-tech shelves and display chests have a minimalist 'medicine cabinet' touch, with homeopathy bottles filed under 'Dispensary'.



EAT IT, DRINK IT, PUT IT ON YOUR FACE!

Margo's funky new kid on the block is Glamour Food, a sumptuous face and bodycare collection anchored temptingly by Glamour Food Beauty Chocolate, a chocolate bar rich in antioxidant Goji, Açai and Blueberry.

"The inspiration behind Glamour Food," Margo enthuses, "was to create healthy food, free from sugar and additives but based on highly nutritious ingredients that pack as many powerful antioxidants and nutrients as possible to feed the body in a delicious, nutritious way."

"Our first product, Glamour Food Chocolate delivers a powerful 4500 Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC) per bar. Knowing how efficacious chocolate and berries are, I wanted to combine the same amazing ingredients into a skincare range that was totally natural with food-grade ingredients to feed the skin the same nutrients we were putting inside the body."

Glamour Food is perfect for the person who cares holistically about themselves and wants really clean products for everyday beautiful skin. "Imagine all the scrumptious ingredients of our Glamour Food Beauty Chocolate in your skincare," says Margo.

This alchemic mix includes include Dark Chocolate, Pomegranate, Blueberries, Açai and Goji berries, Caramel, Coconut and Shea Butter.



Franco (left) and Margo Marrone (third from left) with some of the team

RED-CARPET STORE

The West End of London is a global destination. Theatreland is nearby and Regent and Bond Street a stones-throw for retail therapy.

With this in mind, I asked Margo about her customer demographic: "Our W1 store is a great location to spot celebrities. Natalie Portman, Katy Perry, Anne Hathaway and Marion Cotillard have visited. Our typical demographic is women aged 25-55, some working or living in the area and, of course, tourists."

All this is artfully complemented by warm, ambient lighting. You could be in any metropolitan city anywhere in the world. That's all down to Franco's creative genius.

DAMASCENE MOMENT

Margo's story began over 25 years ago. "I was a Saturday girl in my local pharmacy," she says, "and I was enthralled by the rows and rows of amber bottles. I watched person after person come in and ask the pharmacist for help with their various ailments and was captivated as he expertly blended medicines from the amber bottles lining those shelves."

She decided to study pharmacy and six years later began a career as a pharmacist, specialising in herbal medicine and nutrition.

"It wasn't until several years later that I discovered homeopathy, a discipline that completely changed my life and that of my family. As a homeopathic pharmacist I was able to embark on a journey that ultimately led me to create The Organic Pharmacy, along with my husband, Franco."

"The catalyst was when I was pregnant with my daughter. After reading an article by Samuel Epstein (*Safe Shopper's Bible*) I was horrified to find that ingredients found in a lot of skincare products on the market could prove carcinogenic. So I set about creating my own concept that met my criteria of no artificial preservatives, colourants, fragrances, petrochemicals or harsh detergents."

"I also wanted to create a venue where people could walk in off the street as they

do with a conventional pharmacy. We'd offer professional, one-to-one advice on homeopathic and herbal remedies instead of an OTC product from one of the big drug companies. At the same time, I wanted to offer organic and alternative treatments with 21st century appeal and I wanted to present them in an environment that was calming, sophisticated, yet modern.

"Franco and I came up with The Organic Pharmacy, and opened our first store in Chelsea in 2002. What is wonderful, though," adds Margo, "is that this was 12 years ago and it is extraordinary how so many conventional pharmacies have since 'gone holistic' – the very audience that will be reading this article in *Natural Pharmacy Magazine*."

THE WHOLE PICTURE

The Organic Pharmacy manufactures all its products in its factory in London. Own-brand categories include skin, face, body, bath, hair, sun, mother & baby, essential oils, homeopathy, tinctures, multi-blend supplements, scented candles, gifts and cosmetics, labeled Organic Glam.

This range is inspired by Margo's love of iconic looks from the movies, channeling



A PLACE TO CHILL

A concept like The Organic Pharmacy would be incomplete without a spa. The Clinic and Beauty Rooms offer award-winning treatments, from Health Assessment to signature Organic Facial. "I wanted the spa to reflect our ethos," says Margo. "Treatments that transport the client into a world of relaxation while delivering the ultimate facials and body treatments, using our organic preparations. I love combining the latest natural high-tech ingredients in our formulations, so that after an appointment, clients leave with a calm, glowing skin."

LUXE, BESPOKE, HAND-MADE

These magic words define Bespoke Elixir Treatment, the brand new Organic Pharmacy concept exclusive to Selfridges. The antithesis of 'one size fits all', each 'treatment' is created after a one-to-one consultation with the Organic Pharmacy therapist and hand-made on the spot.

"Actually," says Margo, "Organic Pharmacy skin care originally started out as a bespoke treatment. I was formulating and dispensing medicinal creams to help customers' skin conditions. The potions worked so well that they became the basis of our skin care range. Bespoke Elixir specifically looks at ageing. If a woman in her 40s presents with pigmentation, blemishes and dehydration – we have a one-stop cream now."

Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and Sophia Loren's smoky, sexy eyes. "Elegant, classic and timeless," Margo says, "with easy to wear colours reminiscent of a lost glamour."

I asked Margo about the significance of nutritional supplements (she stocks Higher Nature and Viridian alongside her own brand) and how she believes they work in synergy with the topical and beauty care ranges.

"Our cells, organs and body need certain nutrients to support basic daily functions but also specific imbalances. Supplying these nutrients in a synergistic formula using plant-based nutrients and specific extracts enhances bioavailability. Our organs function optimally and cells can repair efficiently."

"We've also noticed, not surprisingly, a surge in anti-ageing products," says Margo. Her favourites are Rose plus Brightening Complex and Rose plus Marine collagen. "They work so well to restore clarity, reduce wrinkles and, basically, make the skin look younger."

And Margo's personal favourite product? "Definitely Antioxidant Face Firming Serum."

Let it grow...

Nourkrin® has beautifully addressed the sensitive issue of hair loss. **Denise Barrett** charts the company's growth and its campaigns to drive positive awareness for sufferers.



Nourkrin is a huge brand with a global presence. It's a part of the Pharma Medico portfolio, a Denmark-based company 'dedicated to improving the wellbeing and life quality of people suffering from skin conditions and hair growth disorders'. It's also been bestowed the World Trichology Society Gold Medal – the only hair supplement in the world to be recognised.

Chris Keeble joined Pharma Medico in October 2012 as Chief Executive Officer for the United Kingdom and Europe. He has been working in the Pharmacy and Health Food industry for over 25 years. "Nourkrin® came to provenance in early 2000," he says. "Men started buying it first, for themselves not their partners. So, to address a market niche, the women-specific product was developed."

EMPATHY AT WORK

Underneath this corporate armour lies a distinct empathy with what Nourkrin's products are all about – the company truly understands the emotional and morale-dependent relationship that an individual has with their hair.

Both Chris Keeble and Dr Omar Milhem, scientific team member at Pharma Medico, are no exception. At a recent press conference, to announce Nourkrin's National Hair Aware Campaign, they shared some personal insights: "I have four daughters", joked Chris, "and when they're all having a bad hair day, I leave the house!"

Fellow presenter Dr Milhem gave a personal testimonial. At 38, he has a full head of glossy hair, as you will see from his picture. "In my late twenties, I started shedding," he said. "When I paid my annual visit to see my mother, who lives abroad, she said, 'Son, your hair is thinning at the crown'. She's my walking litmus test!"

"So, I started taking Nourkrin five years ago, and the results are here for you to see." (He bowed, helpfully). Thanks to his mother, the doctor started supplementing in time and got his hair thickness back at the crown.

Dr Milhem, PhD MRPharmS GPhC, is a great raconteur. To demonstrate how testosterone production can affect hair growth, he shared another, rather more sobering anecdote about a case study of a pair of male identical twins.

"One of the boys had a serious accident," he told us, "which left

him castrated. With no testosterone being produced, he maintained a full head of hair. His twin, however, thanks to the presence of the male hormone testosterone, which in turn is converted to dihydrotestosterone (DHT), by an enzyme in the scalp, suffered hair loss."

WHAT'S TO BLAME?

Several factors can contribute to hair-thinning or loss, Nourkrin says, which include ageing, hormone changes, menopause, polycystic ovary syndrome, thyroid conditions and even Vitamin D deficiency. Also, lifestyle issues such as stress, crash diets, poor nutrition habits and over-styling. There are also genetic links for some people.

Nourkrin has conducted successful clinical studies published in leading UK peer-reviewed journals, in which users experienced highly significant results. The brand adheres to the criteria of integrity and quality and is bounded by pharmaceutical protocols in terms of R&D and manufacture. International regulation is complied with totally. As Chris Keeble says, "We aim for perfection".

Nourkrin clinical trials have shown:

- A significant decrease of thinning hair.
- 35.7% increase in new hair growth after six months.
- 83.3% of subjects saw an improvement after just four months.
- 92% of subjects experienced an improvement after six months.
- 85% of subjects were completely satisfied with the results after six months.

In a consumer trial, where 3,000 Nourkrin users were questioned, 90% experienced a visible improvement in their hair after following the Nourkrin programme.

HAIR-AWARE

This year, Nourkrin marks over 20 years of expertise in the hair growth sector. To celebrate, the company has rolled out a comprehensive series of

well-executed awareness campaigns. National Hair Awareness Campaign 2014 is a public awareness initiative to address the taboo of hair-thinning and hair loss and to encourage people to seek help and understand that they are certainly not alone with this issue.

It's backed to the hilt with an investment of £1m which includes TV, radio and print advertising and will be reaching over 35 million people nationwide. It's supported by a PR programme, plus targeted mailings to hair and beauty therapists, pharmacists, GPs and trichology specialists. The campaign also features its own dedicated website that is generic, and totally unbranded.

PHARMACY SUPPORT

Nourkrin provides counter display units that house product and consumer information, shelf-talkers, window posters, showcards and large dummy display cartons.

There's also extensive literature for staff and consumer, including succinct, informative leaflets. The '20 Minute Training Guide' is the ideal tool for staff to help them understand about hair loss or thinning and encourage empathy with customers and clients.

The Hair Awareness Campaign project works in synergy with a series of thoughtful educational initiatives. Written material is targeted specifically at the general practitioner, community pharmacist, health store retailer, practitioner, hairdresser (the ultimate confidante for women) and beauty therapist.

This follows on the heels of a 2013 GP Survey entitled 'Don't suffer in silence' that revealed that only a small percentage of patients spoke to their doctor about hair loss and, surprisingly, many had an unsympathetic reaction, and were even derided for asking.

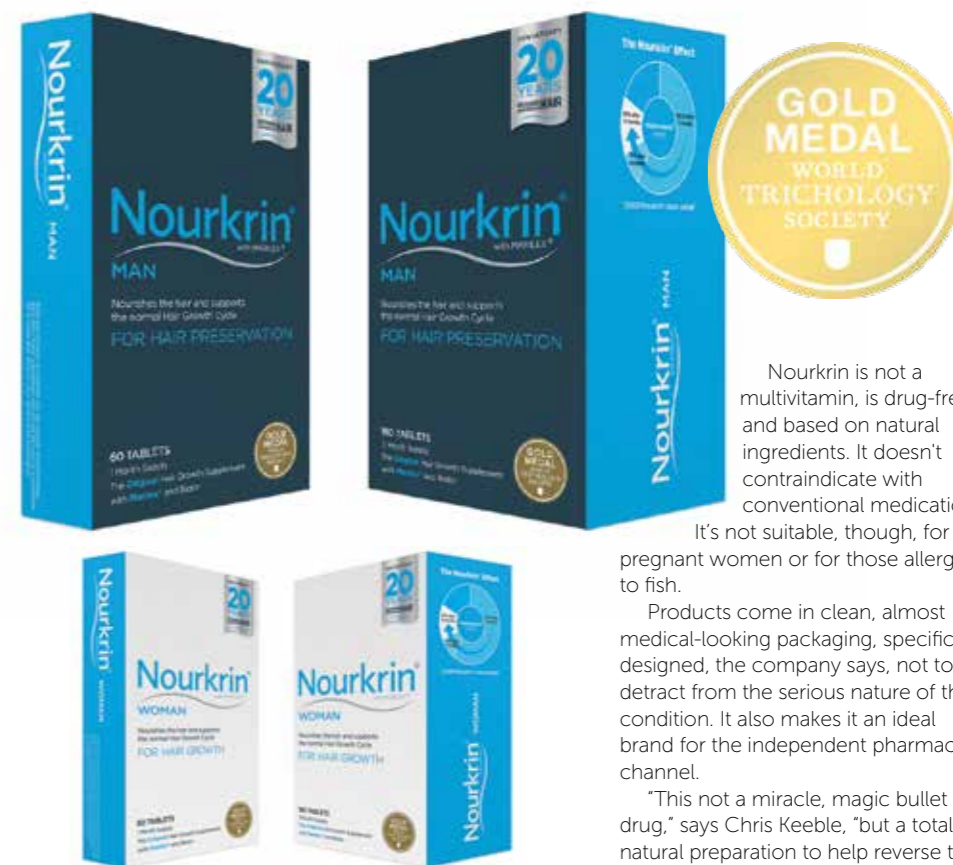
To redress the balance, there is an informative 2014 poster campaign running throughout Britain's waiting rooms. The document is written by two leading professors – Dr Jan Wadstein MD, Associate Professor at Lund University and Dr Erling Thom PhD of Stanford University – and will explain the science behind Nourkrin.

HOW DOES NOURKRIN WORK?

Nourkrin has been specifically formulated to include the unique property Marilex, exclusive to Pharma Medico, which contains ingredients that are proven to influence the hair growth cycle and in particular by influencing hairs in the Anagen and Telogen phases. This dual effect sends out direct signals for the hair to grow.

HAIR-RAISING INSIGHTS

- Nourkrin research shows that nearly two in three women and eighty per cent of all men will experience hair loss or thinning at some time in their lives.
- At any given time, forty per cent of women and fifty per cent of men between the ages of 30 and 60 will be experiencing either hair-thinning or loss.
- Male pattern baldness and female pattern loss are believed to be the most common conditions.
- British men are the most likely in Europe to worry about balding, but the least likely to do anything about it.
- Almost half of sufferers declared they would spend their life savings to regain a full head of hair
- Sixty five per cent feel hair loss has negatively impacted on their self-confidence.
- Thirty per cent of all British women turn to their hairdresser on how to hide the problem cosmetically.



Nourkrin is not a multivitamin, is drug-free and based on natural ingredients. It doesn't contraindicate with conventional medication.

It's not suitable, though, for pregnant women or for those allergic to fish.

Products come in clean, almost medical-looking packaging, specifically designed, the company says, not to detract from the serious nature of the condition. It also makes it an ideal brand for the independent pharmacy channel.

"This not a miracle, magic bullet drug," says Chris Keeble, "but a totally natural preparation to help reverse the hair loss process, and normalise the hair cycle." ■

CROWNING GLORY

The good news for women is it's never too late to go on a course of Nourkrin. The product is relatively expensive, "but", says Chris Keeble, "We have found that women will sacrifice other things to meet the cost of the product to achieve a head of healthy hair. For women, the appearance of their hair is central to their morale, self-confidence and self-esteem. Our absolute value is in our USPs – the raw material of Marilex – exclusively developed for Nourkrin by Pharma Medico – and our scientific research and studies.



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THE MAGIC TOUCH

The success of ActiPatch can be measured in many ways – not least by the vibrant customer testimonials on the company’s website. **Denise Barrett** looks beyond the fan base...

Nothing to lose but your pain” is not a strapline that’s been crafted by a copywriter. It was in fact written by Tom Dundon of Darlington, County Durham, and it’s part of his personal endorsement on the ActiPatch website.

ActiPatch worked wonders for Tom’s knees (it even got him joining his wife on shopping trips!). And he’s among friends. There are dozens like him, all with their photographs, to guarantee authenticity.

They are united in one cause. They have found a unique and effective product that has taken on Big Pharma and delivered them safe, powerful musculoskeletal pain relief that is natural, drug-free and devoid of side effects.

NO PAIN ALL GAIN

ActiPatch is a patented, clinically proven microelectronic medical device that reduces musculoskeletal pain. It decreases the brain’s perception of pain by stimulating peripheral sensory nerves, without tingling or sensation – a groundbreaking process known as neuromodulation.

ActiPatch also reduces inflammation and local pain sensitivity. The lightweight, wafer-thin device is easy to wear and is affixed over the joint or muscle area that is painful. The device has no off-target effects and has a mechanism of action completely different and independent of conventional drug therapy.

It’s particularly effective for chronic musculoskeletal conditions such as back and knee problems, muscle pain, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and fibromyalgia. Being drug-free, it can be safely used by people with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension and asthma without any side effects or drug interactions.

ActiPatch provides 720 hours (30 days continuous treatment) of long-lasting and effective pain relief. A large consumer survey backs this up. A study of chronic musculoskeletal pain sufferers who responded

to ActiPatch treatment demonstrated that average overall pain reduction was 39% – or 55% reduction with use of the product over seven days.

NO TENS REQUIRED

TENS stands for transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation. It works by causing a skin sensation that partially masks pain, but as soon as the unit is switched off, the pain returns to full intensity. TENS has no effect on underlying acute or chronic inflammation that causes or contributes to the pain. ActiPatch reduces pain by decreasing inflammation and decreasing perception of pain by the brain, a form of non-invasive neuromodulation. The device’s combined mechanisms of action provide a much greater degree of pain relief than TENS, without any uncomfortable sensations and the relief lasting many hours after the device is switched off.



TOP OF THEIR GAME

ActiPatch is a product of the American company BioElectronics Corporation, a leader in bioelectronics technology which develops, manufactures and markets safe, highly efficacious and cost beneficial medical devices for chronic pain.

There are 12 BioElectronics team members based in the Maryland, US, head office covering executive, marketing, sales, clinical, engineering and admin roles.

These competitively priced analgesics, says the company, provide superior pain relief compared to hot or cold therapies and common high-risk pain medications: “Globally, we are developing strong OTC brands that reflect a



new, profound market segment of products for the back, knee, and other musculoskeletal problems.”

BioElectronics’ technology platform is a “pipeline of new product opportunities.” In 2009, the company received a Wall Street Journal Technology Innovation Award.

POWER OF RESEARCH

Research is at the heart of BioElectronics’ criteria and the company marries core values of science and R&D with world-class business, finance and marketing acumen. This is reflected in the company’s crack management team, who each brings a unique specialism to the table.

Dr. Ian Rawe is Director of Clinical Research. He has a PhD in Biophysics and spent 15 years conducting research at Harvard Medical School. He comprehensively designs and implements clinical trials using BioElectronics technology and specialises in publishing follow-up peer reviewed studies.

Studies have been published in peer-reviewed journals on postoperative pain, chronic musculoskeletal pain and the healing

THE STORY BEHIND THE BRAND

of chronic wounds. There are a number of high quality clinical studies being conducted and more publications will be forthcoming this year.

Complementing the ongoing clinical trials is research being conducted by the company on a registry of ActiPatch users. Data from this research shows that ActiPatch is a viable long term pain management solution for many individuals, enabling them to self-manage their pain and reduce their dependence on medications including NSAIDs and strong narcotic-based pain drugs. Decreased and manageable chronic pain and fewer side effects from drugs carry through with 85% of individuals reporting an improvement in their quality of life.



THE SEVEN-DAY PLAN

The man charged with building ActiPatch brand awareness is Marketing Manager Ben Fichter (pictured), who is responsible for internet based sales, the company's websites,

social media management and public relations. Ben has enjoyed great success promoting the ingenious 'Seven-Day Trial' programme, which was a joint effort devised by members of the ActiPatch team.

He reports: "The demand for ActiPatch, strategically positioned as a new pain therapy device, has been especially driven by the Seven-Day strategy. Initially, people were hesitant to purchase the device, and so the company decided to make a seven-day version available that allowed them to test run it for a small amount of outlay. Once they tried it, they were sold!"

The Seven-Day campaign has been consolidated with TV advertising, social media, targeted advertising in pain charity magazines, and sponsorships. The ActiPatch Facebook page has over 20,000 likes and has developed a strong following.

"Significant progress has been made on building our profile," says Ben, "and over 40,000 trial devices have been sent to consumers." Consumer data shows that 64% who trial the Seven-Day programme go on to purchase the 30-Day ActiPatch device, and numbers are increasing each month.

There are now plans afoot to provide introductory training to pharmacists. Posters are also available for independent pharmacists, along with dedicated leaflets for the practitioner and consumer.

WHERE TO WATCH

Check out the series of ActiPatch commercials airing on ITV3, Fox, Universal, SyFy, Movies 24, SKY, and various local stations. The three different commercials each run for 60 seconds. The campaign launched in late December and is planned to run until the end of 2015. Visit www.youtube.com/user/ActiPatchRelief/videos

RENAISSANCE MAN



Dr. Deepak Kotak

Based in London, Dr. Deepak Kotak is Executive Vice President of BioElectronics. He is heavily involved in operations in the EU and UK but also in many other parts of the world outside North America.

Something of a polymath, Deepak draws on a background of medicine, law and business. He feels that his skillset "most definitely" enhances his corporate role.

"The healthcare business requires a multitude of skills and perspectives," he says. "Being able to employ experience from a variety of backgrounds enables me to be part of cross-functional teams as well as leading in the various roles that I undertake. Law is always useful for business – but there is a bit of a paradox at play here as lawyers are not renowned for entrepreneurship!"

Deepak's remit includes business development for ActiPatch in consumer health and he has a polyfunctional role in BioElectronics, including medical affairs and regulatory submissions as well as negotiating agreements with strategic partners and distributors.

He says his academic medical training, though, is key. "I used to be a consultant in Intensive Care, Trauma and Anaesthesia at King's College Hospital, London. I left some years ago but still practise as an anaesthetist to maintain my medical registration. Clinical practice keeps me at the leading edge and my entrepreneurial streak encourages a broad perspective, so I can maximise the potential applications of our technology.

"ActiPatch is a new paradigm in musculoskeletal pain treatment. It provides better pain relief than the current systemic or local therapies, is absolutely safe and provides value for money.

"It's helped me too," he says. "I'd been in denial about my hip stiffness and pain and even with exercise and stretching, I found that I was having trouble sleeping. I've been using ActiPatch as a localised therapy with positive results, rather than resorting to drugs that upset my stomach."



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MAGIC FROM THE ORIENT

Red Reishi mushrooms have carved a healthy niche down at Planet Organic. Buyer **Al Overton** reveals how an exclusive Japanese product made this possible.



The relationship between Mikei and Planet Organic works incredibly well. We're a small chain of health supermarkets with six outlets in London and a trading website. We were the first stores to be certified by the Soil Association and our product standards have always been the very cornerstone of what we do.

We see ourselves as a one-stop shop, specially tailored for our customers. We've got groceries, chilled foods, organic fruit and veg, health and bodycare departments and in-store coffee and juice bar.

The breadth of our product range and the uncluttered ambiance of the stores mark us out. This is what attracted Mikei and why they originally approached us. This is a prestige product, which demands a landscape that will do it justice.

Importantly, we have educated team members on board to promote and sell product and a switched-on customer base that is happy to pay more for quality supplements that work efficaciously.

Red Reishi is a medicinal mushroom considered in the East to be nature's most powerful and beneficial adaptogen. While we are just learning about its benefits in the

West, it has been part of Traditional Chinese Medicine for over 4000 years. These are herbs that work well at preventing illness, rather than – as in the Western tradition – being therapeutic or even curative.

Mikei encapsulates these qualities with the benefit of authenticity and purity, along with proven sales in its home market. The product is autonomous and not part of large variant selection, but the luxury element of the packaging, together with the speciality of the company, seems to have hit a chord with our customers.

Interestingly, although our staff is briefed to communicate Mikei's benefits to our customers, I think most of our sales have come from consumers tapping into an underlying awareness and fascination of the benefits of Reishi mushrooms.

When we started selling Mikei it was the only Reishi on the shelves, and was competing against ginseng-type products, some of which were also quite premium. But the signature packaging speaks for itself and stands out vividly on display. We are trusted to stock only the best quality products – if customers are sold on the benefits of Reishi, then they are going to



select Mikei. It does not need leaflets or POS as the Mikei packaging communicates the authenticity and quality of the product.

With a high cash margin, even one sale is highly viable. With Mikei, there's the added bonus of strong repeat purchase, with customers understanding its efficacy and using it long-term, making Mikei one of best-selling herbal supplements from a value point of view.

How would I sum up our joint success? Time and familiarity. We have been selling Mikei at Planet Organic for over five years now and the repeat purchases keep coming.

For us, it's a product with X-Factor.

Product website: www.mikei.co.uk

Distribution inquiries:

Haon Ltd. (Tel: 020 7481 1777)

Planet Organic: www.planetorganic.com

RAW ENERGY

Surrey firebrand Alan Martin has broken the mould with his Food For Thought stores in Kingston and Guildford. Here, he tells **Denise Barrett** just how he went about carving that niche.

We caught up with Alan Martin in a happy but messy "foodie mood", making vegan versions of well known confections such as Mars and Snickers.



Alan Martin prepares to make a batch of Vegan 'Snickers' bars.

I have a favourite personal mantra inspired by Food For Thought: "If this environment has the wherewithal to inspire the desire within you, this environment has the wherewithal to deliver it to you – no exceptions."

In other words, my life changed when I 'stopped going to work' and opened my two stores. I've always loved what I do and do what I love. And I've mostly been in retail. But Food For Thought was something else.

I'm a pretty off the wall guy (ask anyone in the natural health industry) but I'm deadly serious about our two stores. And about our suppliers, our customers and our staff. In fact we set out from the beginning to create and deliver not only a fabulous lifestyle experience, but to break the 'independent retailer' mould.

And I think we may have cracked it.

Let me give you a taste of my day. This morning I got up really early, showered and had



Testing, testing



Rawsome! The finished product

breakfast, which usually consists of fruit and some kind of smoothie loaded with superfoods. My smoothie of the week is water melon and goji berry, with all that wonderful citrulline. Had a quick flick through my emails, checked our Facebook page then decided to make a video.

I fancied making a quick tasty vegan snack, with tortilla chips, mixed beans, olive pasta sauce, vegusto vegan sausage and vegan cheese. So I headed straight for the kitchen (I am lucky to have a house with loads of space, over four floors) then a quick trip to Kingston Food For Thought. Back I came, armed with the ingredients, prepared the snacks, shot and edited the video and uploaded it to YouTube. Then the prepared snacks went to the store for tasting on our now legendary sampling table. So, there's my

first marketing exercise to share with you: Create a delicious, dedicated space in-store!

ON ANOTHER PLANET?

I am lucky to live in the middle of town and when I step outside the house I'm surrounded by the vibrant historic backdrop of the market place in Kingston. It's called 'the jewel in Kingston's crown'. So I know I am blessed but I put a lot back, so the karma is good.

Now, if I'm visiting our other store, in Guildford, I can immerse myself in another historic town (also in Surrey) but also soak up the countryside. With this, who would want the daily grind of commuting?

I may be a retail animal, but I'm very creative, and I like to see some 'theatre' on the shop floor. In the welcoming section of both stores, we allot a creative space: the impressive wooden table in Kingston that I mentioned earlier, which is brilliant for promotions, displays and tastings, and some funky decorated tables in Guildford.

I'm really into raw food, so it's great to be able to demonstrate the goodies. I'm actually working on a raw vegan 'Mars' bar recipe at the moment (renamed my Curiosity Bar, geddit?), and the joke is I'm going to send it to my (equally Scottish) brother up in deepest West Lothian, to deep-fry it. He's already told me he was inspired to start making smoothies after he and his wife Nicky stayed with us a few weeks ago. My brother's idea of a smoothie turned out to be a Mars bar and Irn-Bru version. He's a maverick Martin too – and has a passion for writing. He's working on his second book on football and has bought a house because it's near a UFO hot spot! *Quelle famille*; you couldn't make it up.

LET ME ENTERTAIN YOU

Back at the display table, I'm working on a new idea, and this is where we really get 'theatrical'. I'm auditioning solo acoustic musicians to come and perform over the lunchtime period for our customers, to create ambience in-store. There are a lot of really good buskers in Kingston, and who knows we may discover the next Robbie Williams! And we might not have far to search with our own industry's talented Bertel from Windmill Organics on our Kingston doorstep.

I like to think of Food For Thought as kind of installation art, with the products and our wonderful dedicated staff making it all happen. Incidentally, this isn't all altruism, I am quick to identify an opportunity for PR and marketing and Food For Thought has a prolific Facebook and Twitter following.

I also see Food For Thought as a platform and even a launch pad for artisan and indie

companies. I love scouting for what's new and quirky and not necessarily tried and tested.

Food For Thought is a kind of organic barometer for our marketplace. We are very busy in the stores, so I can afford to do it while indulging myself at the same time. We have guest spots, too: Justin, who comes in and prepares delicious raw vegan food, spends one day a week in each store. We have a lot of fun together creating recipes, making sure they work, taste good and are practical and sensible.

But, this is punk health and I am a punk nutritionist! I have labelled Justin 'Just Incredible', because he makes just incredible raw food. We also have Carrie doing a day a week in each store creating more theatre, from whacky electrical devices, to whipping up BonPom* Soul Drink to creating a French Bistro in-store for sampling of the Vegusto range of vegan foods.

Raw talent at the Kingston Food Festival

For me, nothing could be better than rustling up a tasty raw vegan rice pilaf at the Kingston Food Festival with the Big Food Market and the Live Food Show in the town centre, just outside our store.

The show, rated among the top five Food Festivals by the Sunday Telegraph, ran on a weekend in August. Food writer Andrew Kay acted as compere and we were up against chefs from leading multiples like Zizzi, Las Iguanas and Frankie and Benny's as well as other independents like Cappadocia and Riverside Vegetaria.

Dedicated foodie Andrew was, he said, "very keen to try the raw food being processed on stage by Food For Thought." There was a five-minute challenge at the end of every chef's presentation when Andrew picked four or five items for the chef to create something, a kind of mini Ready Steady Cook.

There was a brief moment when I thought I might be going from raw food vegan to preparing a meal with ingredients that still had a pulse. I needn't have worried – he kept to the spirit of what I was doing and I beat the clock, managing to make my dish in three minutes, best time of the weekend!

**BonPom is Alan's first foray into manufacture – see page 25*

THE HOLLAND & BARRETT FACTOR

I have always had a flair for retail, it really is in my blood. I started out running John Menzies newsagent stores in my native Scotland. I was brought to London to 'Menzify' some branches in the Smoke. I immediately knew this was where I was meant to be. One day, emerging from Bond Street underground station, I spied a health food store bearing the name Holland & Barrett. Now this was the time when H&B were pioneering and cutting edge. There were millions of people milling around waiting for the personal appearance of the late, great, Rod Brennan from Blackmores, the renowned Australian company.

Rod advised me on my diet and it changed my life. No wheat, dairy, red meat or eggs, all irritants to my asthmatic condition. He also advised me on supplementation. Soon, I felt better and then much better. My Road to Damascus! I was hooked. So, goodbye to John Menzies and hello to H&B and managing their flagship store (at the time) in Bond Street Tube Station.

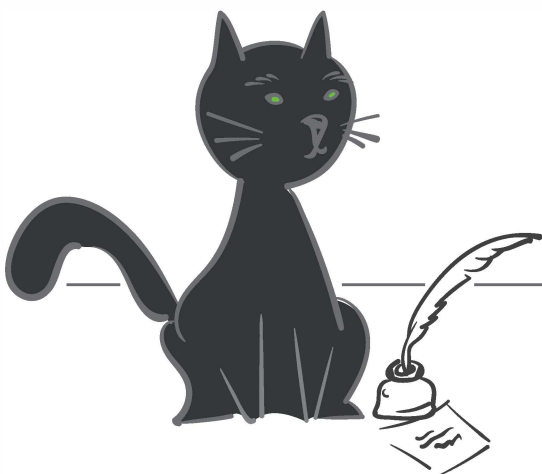
Multitasking as ever, in between all this, I had bought into the upmarket convenience store Cullen's franchise opportunity. I had three branches under my belt, which I sold in the late 1990s. Fast-forwarding to 2008, two stores in Surrey called Food For Thought needed some general rescuing and some TLC. I bought the stores with my business partner Rob, and, luckily, we have never looked back.

EMBRACING THE VISION

What did we have at the beginning of all that, apart from dented bank accounts? Vision! And the fabulous thing was that all the staff from both stores wanted to stay for the journey. We gained two stores and around 20 staff. Everyone embraced the change. Lisa, my manager at Kingston, has run the store now for around 12 years and Alja, now managing Guildford, has been with the company for over six years. Since 2008, despite credit crunch, recession and double dips, the only doubling we are doing is in turnover! We've also kept many, many customers, but have attracted a new customer dynamic of both sexes in the mid 20s to early 30s age range.

The core of my retail philosophy is engage, be generous, be aware, be imaginative and be brave. Put things out there. We've done work with Kingston University and Kingston College. And by the time you read this we will have shared food and given books away for Humanitarian Day (August 19).

Also important: visualise. Create the seeds of the process and see it through.



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