

COUNTRY *Culinaire*

NEWS FROM TRISH...



Hello, and thank you for choosing one of our desserts. I'm Trish Gibson, the person behind the Country Culinaire range and I thought you might be interested to know a bit more about us. We're based in Hawke's Bay, a region of New Zealand famous for its sunshine and food and wine and we're part of a growing community of small producers: people driven by a passion for handcrafted quality food with real old-fashioned flavour.

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MOST INVITING

You will probably think me strange, suggesting this, but if you are coming to Hawke's Bay, you must visit the New World supermarket in Hastings. They have recently completed a major renovation of the store and it is now one of the best supermarkets I've visited. I particularly like the way they have done the fruit and vege section... everything is presented so well. Another reason I like the store is that the owners are really supportive of New Zealand producers and Hawke's Bay producers in particular. You'll find all our products there and those of many of the other local food and wine producers. Thanks Brian and Richard Lucas.



White Clover

Some good news from the farm... a lot of the white clover has survived and is growing again. Chances are, you've never given a thought to the grass that grows on New Zealand farms, but these days a lot of science goes into creating the right mix of seed. White clover is an important ingredient, not only because it has high feed value for the animals, but especially because it fixes nitrogen in the soil and so helps the other grasses grow. After two years of drought, my husband Barrie was very relieved to see the white clover come away again this spring. The rain in March was just enough to keep it alive. That's good news and with the lower exchange rate, he's not in clover exactly, but certainly more positive than he was.



ENTERPRISING Bianca

Here's a young woman to watch. A few years ago, we employed a third-former from Hastings Girls High School, Bianca Burns, to help out during the school holidays. She washed dishes, and weighed out ingredients for us - and really impressed me with her positive attitude. Now, she is in Year 13 and she phoned recently to say she was participating in the Young Enterprise Scheme. YES is a learning experience in which senior secondary school students form a company and develop products which they market and sell.

Her team had developed a range of vinaigrettes and Bianca wondered if I could give them some advice? I was happy to, of course, and later I was thrilled to hear that they won a National Award for Excellence.

Congratulations, Bianca - I am sure you will go far.



HERE ARE SOME OF THE RECENT EMAILS WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO ADD TO THE WALL IN THE LUNCH ROOM...



I'm a regular customer of your yummy pavlova roulades. Even though I do make a good pavlova roll, it is a lot quicker and easier to buy them. Anyway, yesterday I purchased your new chocolate and raspberry dessert as I had guests for dinner. Absolutely divine!!!!

(from Susan in Dunedin)

I'm one of those customers who loves your desserts, although to be honest I only tried them two weeks ago. Wish you all the best and keep making yummy desserts!

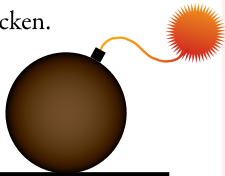
(from Lynda in Christchurch)

FINALIST



FOOD AWARDS

Did you know that the food industry is New Zealand's largest manufacturing sector by output and that earnings from our value-added food and beverage exports now exceed \$8 billion per annum? To support innovation and excellence in food, Massey University sponsor the bi-annual food awards. We were finalists again this year with our chocolate and raspberry pudding (and we have won four awards in the past). It was fun to be at the dinner and great to see what people are up to. Tegel won the premier award this year, for a ready-to-eat roast chicken. (for other winners go to foodawards.massey.ac.nz)



Demonstration bombs out

Something I really enjoy is travelling NZ, doing in-store demonstrations and meeting customers. In August, we were in Central Otago. First at Mediterranean Market ('the finest gourmet supermarket in Queenstown' - every town should have one!), at Wakatipu New World and at Wanaka New World. Unfortunately, the demonstration in Wanaka was cut short - by a bomb scare! Instead of serving product samples, as I intended, I spent two hours standing outside on the footpath with staff and customers while the building was searched. The wonderful people at the nearby Mint Bar brought us drinks as we stood in the sunshine - a lovely gesture. Guess it means we'll just have to go back to that beautiful part of the country.

Your sticky date pudding has just rounded off our Friday night meal... a satisfying taste of homemade 'comfort food' with real style on a winter's night. I couldn't wait for a special occasion and nor could my teenage daughters. Thanks!!

(from Alicja in Blenheim)



SCARBOROUGH FAIR

If you read our last newsletter, you will have seen a magazine photo of me in an apron made by Scarborough Fair. Well, here's some more about them. They are a group of Southland farming women who get together in the old Sunday School hall at Hedgehope (near Winton). They make a large range of kitchen ware - oven mitts, tea cosies and aprons - as well as lavender products and items for babies. Call them on 03-230 6030 to find a stockist in your area.



Tall Poppy

Like most people, I had heard about the earrings and short skirts, but I didn't know much more about Christine Rankin and her career until I picked up her just-published autobiography, "Light the Flame". It's some story: she went from a solo mother of two in her mid-twenties, to the Chief Executive of WINZ in her early 40s, with 6000 staff and a budget of \$580 million. Then, of course, it all came crashing down, but she survived and is now a motivational speaker, career change specialist and child abuse prevention advocate. On one level it's quite inspirational, but the way she was treated - people's attitudes towards her - sadden and annoy me.

