Britain's Inspiring Food And Drink Stars Garlanded At The House Of Commons

Friday 7 November, 2014

Last night, Thursday 6 November 2014, at a reception at the House of Commons packed with the some of the greatest names of the British food and drink scene, including judges Julian Metcalfe of Pret a Manger, Lord Bilimoria of Cobra Beer and Chantal Coady OBE of Rococo Chocolate, as well as Sam Parker of Business is GREAT Britain, **Stephen Rapoport**, founder of **Pact Coffee** was announced the first-ever **Investec Food & Drink Entrepreneur of the Year**.

The British food and drink scene is one of the most vibrant in the world, and a major contributor to the UK's economy. Worth £92bn annually and employing over 400,000 people, with exports at more than £18bn and rising, it is a sector that is continually innovating.

Investec Food & Drink Entrepreneur of the Year was launched by The Food Awards Company and partnered with the Business is GREAT Britain campaign, to showcase innovation in the sector and to celebrate the person behind the brand.

From an outstanding field of hundreds of entrants, ranging from **Simon Smith** of**The Saucy Fish Company** to **Jenny Dawson** of **Rubies in the Rubble**, the judges selected Stephen Rapoport of Pact Coffee as the overall winner for which he was presented with a trophy and cheque for £5,000 by legendary entrepreneur**Luke Johnson** (Pizza Express, Patisserie Valerie, Feng Sushi).

Founded by Rapoport in 2011, Pact is a coffee subscription service with a difference, helping afficionados and explorers alike to find fresher, better-tasting coffee, matched to their tastes and style of coffee drinking. Using a simple online questionnaire, customer preferences are quickly established whilst preserving the flexibility to adapt the service to suit changing needs.

After selling his start up Crashpadders to Airbnb, coffee devotee Rapoport finally followed his wife's advice to, "Stop thinking like an investor and launch a business**you** will love!" He set up Pact with backing from Connect Ventures, Taavet Hinrikus, co-founder of TransferWise and #1 employee at Skype; Robin Klein of Index Ventures; and Rowan Gormley, founder of Naked Wines. Started in Rapoport's kitchen sealing coffee bags with hair straighteners, in just two years, he has taken Pact from an 8-person operation to 35, increased operating profit by a factor of 30 and shows no signs of slowing down.

The judges praised Rapoport, "for genuinely differentiating in crowded market place and having the courage to try something that hasn't been done before. Having the insight to hook onto the coffee consumption trend with a value added and truly innovative route to market enabling different marketing channels to be explored. Great branding and online presence that further differentiates the offer. Very well done!"

James Stirling of Investec, said: "As a bank that is not afraid to be out of the ordinary, Investec shares your entrepreneurial spirit. We are delighted to be sponsoring these awards which celebrate entrepreneurialism in the Food & Drink sectors. Britain has a rich heritage in producing world–beaters in this industry, and it really looks like that tradition is alive and well."

For further information, photographs and interview requests, please contact: Sue Richmond 07708 690707 or email: sue@kenyon-communications.com

Editors' Notes:

- Headline sponsor is Investec, an international specialist bank that provides a diverse range of financial products and services to a niche client base in three principal markets: the United Kingdom, South Africa and Australia, as well as certain other countries. We work with entrepreneurs to build highly specialised financial solutions that adapt to their changing personal and business banking needs www.investec.co.uk
- Partner to the awards is Business is GREAT/Britain is GREATwww.greatbusiness.gov.uk
- Celebratory toast is Chapel Down, creating world class, distinctive and award-winning wines in the Garden of England www.chapeldown.com

Media:



Related Sectors:

Business & Finance :: Food & Drink ::

Scan Me:

- Media partner is Waitrose Weekend
- Partner charity is The Kids Company www.kidsco.org.uk and their campaign Plate Pledge www.kidscoplatepledge.org fighting child hunger in London
- Follow on Twitter @fooddrinkstar

Company Contact:

_

Pressat Wire

E. support[@]pressat.co.uk

View Online

Additional Assets:

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.wire.pressat.co.uk