Meatsnacks Group Is Among the Great Taste Winners of 2017 With Their Jerky and Biltong

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Great Taste, the world's most coveted food awards, which celebrates the very best in food and drink, has announced the Great Taste stars of 2017. Out of over 12,300 products to be judged, the Meatsnacks Group was awarded two 1-star Great Taste awards, which means judges dubbed it simply delicious for its Wild West Honey BBQ Beef Jerky and Cruga Biltong Original. About the jerky the judges commented, 'Great appearance. Sweet on the palate, but not too chewy'. On the biltong they said 'A nicely even cut which has a very good chew and a delicate spicing. The balance works well with meat. Simple but effective.'

Judged by over 500 of the most demanding palates, belonging to food critics, chefs, cooks, restaurateurs and producers, as well as a whole host of food writers and journalists, Great Taste is widely acknowledged as the most respected food accreditation scheme for artisan and speciality food producers. As well as a badge of honour, the unmistakeable black and gold Great Taste label is a signpost to a wonderful tasting product, which has been discovered through hours and hours of blind-tasting by hundreds of judges.

'Having won our first Great Taste Award last year this spurred us on to gain recognition for other brands in our range. I am immensely proud of the team with gaining two awards this year for both Wild West jerky and Cruga biltong. It's a testament to their commitment to producing the best jerky and biltong,' explains James Newitt, Managing Director.

The Meatsnacks Group makes its jerky from beef silverside. From their facility in the Highlands of Scotland, the meat is prepared by hand, which is then marinated for 24 hours, slowly cooked and smoked.

The biltong is made using select cuts of beef silverside, to a traditional South African blend, which is sliced and air dried in their custom designed drying room. The biltong is then hand-picked using a traditional skill brought from South Africa.

Recognised as a stamp of excellence among consumers and retailers alike, Great Taste values taste above all else, with no regard for branding and packaging. Whether it is gin, biscuits, sausages or coffee being judged, all products are removed from their wrapper, jar, box or bottle before being tasted. The judges then savour, confer and re-taste to decide which products are worthy of a 1-, 2- or 3-star award.

There were 12,366 Great Taste entries this year and of those products, 165 have been awarded a 3-star, 1,011 received a 2-star and 3,171 were awarded a 1-star accolade. The panel of judges included; chef, food writer and author, Gill Meller, MasterChef judge and restaurant critic, Charles Campion, author and chef, Zoe Adjonyoh, baker, Tom Herbert, and food writer and baking columnist Martha Collison as well as food buyers from Fortnum & Mason, Selfridges, and Harvey Nichols. These esteemed palates have together tasted and re-judged the 3-star winners to finally agree on the 2017 Top 50 Foods, the Golden Fork Trophy winners and the 2017 Supreme Champion.

Great Taste 2017 will reach its exciting finale on Monday 4 September, when the world of fine food gathers at the Intercontinental Park Lane Hotel, London to find out the Golden Fork winners for each region at an Awards Dinner, with the final applause reserved for the Great Taste Supreme Champion 2017.

Date: 2nd August 2017

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Notes for editors:

What is Great Taste?

Great Taste is the largest and most trusted accreditation scheme for fine food and drink. Established in 1994, it encourages and mentors artisan food producers, offering a unique benchmarking and product evaluation service leading to an independent accreditation that enables small food and drink businesses to compete against supermarket premium own label brands.

Since 1994 over 122,300 products have been assessed. This year 12,366 products were blind-tasted by panels of specialists: top chefs, cookery writers, food critics, restaurateurs and fine food retailers.

What are Great Taste judges looking for?

They're looking for great texture and appearance. They judge the quality of ingredients and how well the maker has put the food or drink together. But above all, they are looking for truly great taste.

??? EXQUISITE. WOW! TASTE THAT ?? OUTSTANDING ? SIMPLY DELICIOUS

How do they work?

Each team of three to four judges blind-tastes around 25 products per session, discussing each product as a coordinating food writer transcribes their comments directly onto the Great Taste website, which producers access after judging is completed. Over the years, numerous food businesses, start-ups and well-established producers have been advised how to modify their foods and have subsequently gone on to achieve Great Taste stars. Food or drink that is deemed worthy of Great Taste stars is also tasted by a team of arbitrators, who taste, confer and agree on the final award given. If judges feel that a product needs some adjustment, and is therefore not likely to receive an award, the food or drink gets a second chance on a referral table, where another team blind-tastes and deliberates. For a Great Taste 3-star award, the vast majority in the room - which can be as many as 30-40 experts - must agree that the food or drink delivers that indescribable 'wow' factor.

What should consumers look for?

The logo. The Great Taste symbol is their guarantee a product has been through a rigorous and independent judging process. It's not about smart packaging or clever marketing – it's all about taste.

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