On the Boil

JUNE 2024

Helping you buy better

Fresh ideas

to help you make good buying decisions

In this issue...

MY PURCHASING PARTNER

On the Boil

DECEMBER 2023

Fresh ideas
to help you make good buying decisions

In this issue...

Call your MPP contact for some very special prices...

My Purchasing Partner has clients in over 1,300 locations across the UK. This makes us one of the leading companies in our sector and able to negotiate national terms for our local clients, delivering unbeatable prices.

If you want great products at even better prices, feel free to contact us on:

info@mypurchasingpartner.co.uk
or 0800 1216440

Thank you for your continued support.

Market News

Summary

Food inflation, now at 2.9%, may be falling, which is good news, but businesses across the food supply chain will be feeling the heat on prices for some time to come. The GBP vs US$ and Euro exchange rates remain fairly stable at the moment but the newly announced election means that uncertainty will continue for now.

Food

Food inflation is at its lowest level since July 2022, partly driven by falls in oils and dairy categories. However, the price of vegetables remains stubbornly high.

Packaging

Whilst overall packaging costs are falling, we are monitoring the impact of shipping challenges, which may push up costs.

Utilities

Business energy costs are expected to continue to fall throughout 2024 despite the end of the price cap in April.

We are monitoring this closely and continue to work with energy partners to offer reasonable energy rates.

Freight

Attacks on commercial shipping vessels travelling through the Red Sea, just south of the Suez Canal has led to a number of shipping groups halting or rerouting traffic. This is causing some disruption and is expected to have even greater impact the longer the conflict goes on.

Staff

Investment in care home staff development has been welcomed, however, the minimum salary requirement for a UK skilled worker visa has risen since April from £26,200 to £38,700. Around 95% of the 8,500 visas issued to skilled chefs and managers in 2022 would fall short of the higher salary threshold, UKHospitality has warned.

Did you know...

WE HAVE
2000+
sites in the UK from large groups to independent sites.

WE HAVE SAVED OVER
£35.5m
for our clients since our inception in 2012.

THE AVERAGE SAVING PER SITE IS
10.3%
based upon a range of products and services across all sectors.

Contact your MPP representative to discover the very best prices

Meet your Team...

Casey Stack
Purchasing Support Executive

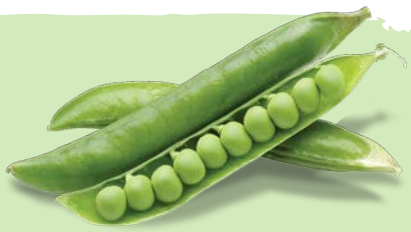
How long have you worked in the industry?
I have 2 years' experience of vehicle purchasing and am enjoying my move to catering.

What is your favourite cuisine?
Lasagne with chunky home cooked chips and garlic bread.

What product do you think that everyone should know about?
Sea Moss Gel – it works wonders for overall health and immunity.

How do you spend your free time? – Getting outdoors with my dog Murph, meditating and reading self-help books.

Favourite music
I love listening to all types of music including music without lyrics.



Best place in the world is...
Wales (and Ibiza, the beaches are stunning!).

What motivates you to do things?
Helping others, kindness costs nothing and in the crazy world we live in, knowing that I've made even a small difference to someone's day is enough for me.

Did you know?
I moved to England from Glasgow at 4 years old – wish I still had the accent.

'Do something you'll thank yourself for later.'

SAM - MASTER CHEF AND MASTER JUDGE!

Our own master chef, Sam 'Gregg' Tippins excelled himself late last year at the inaugural chef challenge run by care home group, Maria Mallaband. Designed to recognise the 'awesome' talents of their in-house chefs, their kitchen maestros were challenged to design their perfect care home menu. Sam had a fantastic day tasting the different dishes and commenting 'Gregg' style!

CHEERS! CARE HOME WINE TASTING WITH MPP

Many of us enjoy a glass of wine with dinner but how do you choose what you serve? Wine tasting is the answer!

Our clients love it and we're always happy to oblige with a personalised session to help you choose. Why not consider wine tasting with residents and their families? It's a great event to offer as an 'extra', it presents a wonderful opportunity to socialise and it's a fun way to narrow down a preferred range by the group.

CARE HOME STAFF INVESTMENT

The UK Government has announced plans to invest and develop the domestic care workforce.

The Minister of State for the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) announced that for the first time there will be a national care career structure, with defined roles and professional development. £50 million will support a new accredited qualification that recognises care work and the introduction of apprenticeships and digital training. The UK Care sector is worth £50.3 billion a year, employs 1.8 million people and has around 165,000 vacancies - with a staff turnover of 29%.

SUSTAINABLE FISH CHOICES

Traditional foods are currently popular and this includes classics such as fish pie and one pot seafood stews. A recent Direct Seafoods survey shows that 76% of respondents want to eat UK fish and crave a dock-to-dish experience. We fully support this sustainable trend as it not only reduces food miles, it supports local fishmongers and communities. Read Our 2024 Food Trends article for more insights.

PROMOTIONAL WEEKS JUNE-AUGUST 2024

June

15TH - 21ST NATIONAL PICNIC WEEK
20TH WORLD TAPAS DAY
28TH NATIONAL CREAM TEA DAY

July

7TH WORLD CHOCOLATE DAY
10TH BRITISH BLUEBERRY DAY
16TH NATIONAL CHERRY DAY
29TH NATIONAL LASAGNE DAY

August

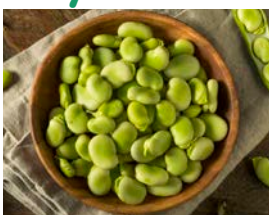
9TH NATIONAL RICE PUDDING DAY
11TH NATIONAL BAKEWELL TART DAY
12-18TH AFTERNOON TEA WEEK
31 AUGUST INTERNATIONAL BACON DAY

Great British seasonal produce

BEST TO BUY OR HARVEST

Vegetables

Asparagus



Broad Beans

Cavolo Nero

Fruit

Blackcurrants

Cherries

TWININGS Tea Time

The Great British tradition of a cup of tea is an important part of care home life. To celebrate National Tea Day earlier this year, Sophie Slade from My Purchasing Partner organised for a representative from Twinings Tea to visit care home residents to take part in a unique series of tea parties.

Residents had a fantastic time, enjoying a short talk about the history of Twinings and tea in the UK, joining in with a quiz, and sampling a range of tea blends including botanical teas, accompanied by the traditional tea loaf of course! Residents were encouraged to rate the tea flavours, sharing their favourites, and to reminisce about memorable times that they had enjoyed a cup of tea in the past. Naturally, there was a lot of discussion about how to make the perfect cup of tea!

With approximately 60 billion cups consumed a year across the UK, tea remains an integral part of our daily life for many of us and is a great way to encourage socialising. Drinking tea is also one of the ways to ensure that we stay hydrated.

Development Chef Annika James, at Oakland Care, the owners of ten care homes visited by Twinings, explains. *"A fundamental care need for our residents is ensuring that they consume enough fluids every day. Hydration is important particularly in our older age, as the way that our body manages water changes. By offering a diverse range of teas we help alleviate this challenge and support the intake of vitamins, minerals, or natural botanical ingredients present in many teas, which benefits everyday wellbeing as well as minimising other health risks."*

Maplewood Court Care Home, Maidstone

The firm favourite at Maplewood Court was the English Breakfast, followed by Peppermint. The Raspberry Revive was popular too, with around half the residents trying a glass. They liked the delicate flavour and the fact it can be served hot or cold.

Oakland Care Homes

Twinings visited all ten Oakland homes including Beechwood Grove and Hastings Court Care Homes. The Raspberry Revive was very popular with residents as the Twinings visit coincided with a warm, sunny day! After the visit, the residents put their tea making skills to the test by making tea for visitors from East Sussex Fire and Rescue.

Osbern House Care Home, Gillingham

The residents here enjoyed a short quiz - the Chef had made a tea loaf, which looked and smelt amazing.

DOWN AT THE Market

FOCUS ON... Cherries

Cherries are closely related to plums, peaches, nectarines and apricots, and are considered native to the British Isles (possibly thanks to the Romans!) The British exported the cherry tree to America, which is now the second largest cherry producer in the world after Turkey. The British cherry season was traditionally short but advances in farming techniques have extended the season from June to September.

Cherries are frequently found at the end of a meal, either in cakes, puddings, or pies. The Black Forest gâteau is a traditional favourite, whilst a contemporary take comes from pairing cherries with vanilla in a panna cotta or clafoutis.

Our top tip

Keep cherries unwashed, as moisture will accelerate spoilage, and store them in the fridge or a cool, dark place.

Keep the stems on them too!
Use cherries in savoury dishes to offset rich and fatty meat such as pork, venison or pigeon.

Too many cherries? Flash freeze them in a single layer on a backing sheet for at least two hours.

Flapjack Mauchester tart

Thanks to The Hairy Bikers for this recipe - a sweet, cherry filled delight perfect for dessert or a tasty treat.

Serves 8
Prep time 2 hrs including cooling time
Cooking time 10-30 mins

Photo: ©Hairy Bikers

Ingredients

For the base:
- 75g/2¾oz butter
- 50g/1¾oz light soft brown sugar
- 1 tbsp (25g/1oz) golden syrup
- 175g/6oz porridge oats
- 50g/1¾oz flour
- 1 free-range egg, beaten
- Salt

For the custard:
- 500ml/18fl oz milk
- 250ml/9fl oz double or whipping cream
- 1 vanilla pod, split lengthways, seeds scraped out
- 5 free-range egg yolks
- 100g/3½oz caster sugar
- 50g/1¾oz cornflour or custard powder

To assemble:
- 5 tbsp raspberry jam
- Fresh raspberries (optional)
- 35g/1¼oz desiccated coconut
- Fresh or maraschino cherries

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190C/170C Fan/Gas 5. Line a 20cm/8in square (preferably loose-based) brownie tin with baking paper.
2. Base: melt butter, sugar and golden syrup in a pan with a pinch of salt. Remove from the heat, beat in the oats, then the flour and egg. Tip into tin. With cold hands, pat the mixture making it even. Bake for ~15 mins until set. Leave to cool.
3. Custard: heat milk and cream with the vanilla until almost boiling. Leave to cool. Beat egg yolks and sugar until thick and creamy, then beat into cornflour/custard powder. Pour milk mixture into egg mixture, whisking continuously.
4. Return to pan. Stir over a medium–low heat until starts to thicken. Whisk constantly until it bubbles and thickens considerably. Cool to room temperature, whisking regularly to prevent a skin.
5. To assemble: spread jam over the flapjack base. Dot raspberries, if using, add custard, smoothing with palette knife. Sprinkle with coconut and decorate with cherries. Chill for at least 2 hours until completely set.
6. Cut into slices and serve.

The food trends we're seeing in 2024

It's time to awaken the senses

As spring slowly departs and summer is on the horizon, we're still facing high costs for food, energy, labour. There's a sense of optimism tinged with frustration in the air, particularly with an election on the way. But people are still embracing a love of life and good food, wanting to spend time with people they like whilst enjoying comforting, filling favourites. Against this backdrop, we're seeing some very strong food trends appearing in 2024 - take a look!

Nostalgia on a plate

When life seems tough, there's nothing like food that transports you back to the past. Retro dishes, such as meatloaf, prawn cocktails, winter stews, and trifles are suddenly appealing again. In 2024, the trend is to jazz up the basic dish by adding a 'premium' ingredient such as a grilled king prawn to the cocktail, a dash of colour to macaroni cheese, or parsnip crisps to the top of the meatloaf. Consider serving your nostalgic food on vintage crockery - or use retro cocktail glasses to serve accompanying drinks. Anything that adds a sense of fun to the traditional plate.

Add a signature twist

2024 continues the concept of adding a signature twist to your dishes. Popular twists this year include combining sweet and savoury. Fruit in meat dishes is not a new concept but a recent trend is to use pickled or fermented fruit. Or add umami to bring depth and flavour.

This is the intensely savoury flavour found in Asia cuisine that includes miso, koji, truffle salt, mushroom powder and seaweed. Colour is another way to add a twist - consider the bright shades of beetroot, baked red pepper hummus, matcha or spinach, for example.

Sharing is caring

Sharing platters are a great way to encourage convivial conversation over great food, and they work well in multiple settings. Mealtimes can become fluid because portions can be snack size or full size, depending on the number of plates served, and they are perceived as delivering great value for money for any paying diner. Sharing plates mean a simplified service for the kitchen and an attention-grabbing visual for social media.

Any food works well on a sharing platter - from Chinese dim sum, vegetable and vegan offers, Middle Eastern mezze to Spanish tapas.

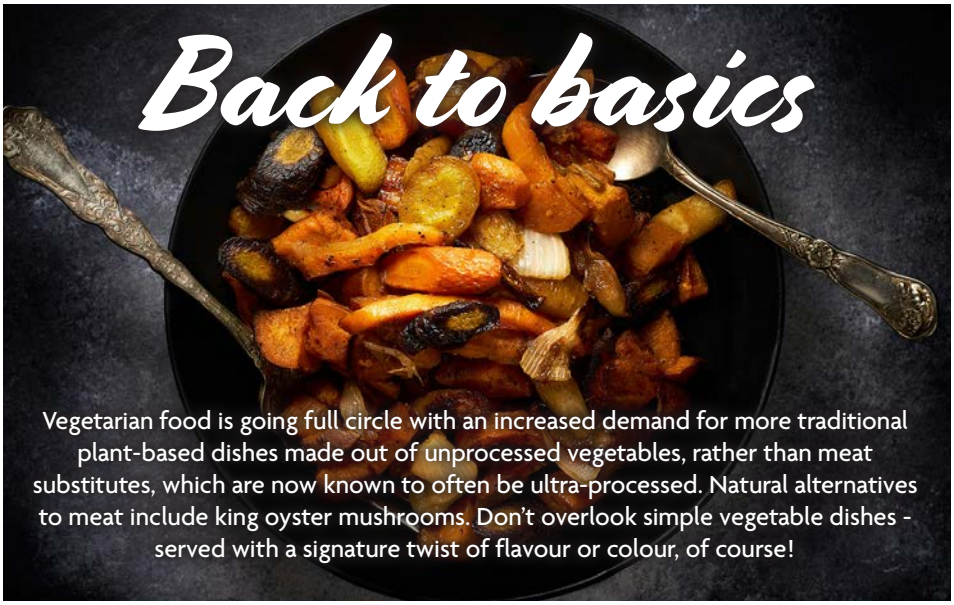
There's been a huge rise in demand for hot sauces too as a quick flavour hit to food. Maybe extra heat isn't right for your diners but can you add an equally memorable taste hit? If not chillies, then maybe fermented foods such as kimchi or flavoured honey - or maybe add a flavour where it's not expected, such as in a salad or served with bread?

Tiktok trends - Little treats

The TikTok phenomenon of little treats gained popularity in 2023 and is continuing this year. A smaller serving of a cake or desert has become popular as part of the lifestyle by which people reward themselves as they go about their day. A treat and a burst of instant gratification - a small comfort in a gloomy world!

Bite sized portions work well in most settings and work well to satisfy any sweet cravings whilst limiting portion sizes.

Back to basics



Vegetarian food is going full circle with an increased demand for more traditional plant-based dishes made out of unprocessed vegetables, rather than meat substitutes, which are now known to often be ultra-processed. Natural alternatives to meat include king oyster mushrooms. Don't overlook simple vegetable dishes - served with a signature twist of flavour or colour, of course!

You can't beat a bean!

We've loved baked beans for many years but 2024 is the year of the butter bean, cannellini, chickpea and other legumes. Beans are sustainable, packed with protein, and have a naturally long shelf life without harsh preservatives, and are filling - perfect for when you need to do more with less. Add to soups and stews, top with potato or other vegetables, or create spreads and dips.

We're backing hash

Hash browns are back on the menu but not always for breakfast. The versatile hash brown is the perfect foundation for many meals, whatever the time of day. Present it in different shapes and sizes and add a contemporary twist in the topping. Choose a veggie mix, simple mayo and fried onions, or even poached mixed fruits - or if you really want to go smart, then consider crab or cavier.

Pile on the Pine

As ingredient costs rise, then foraging for food regains its popularity. On the menu this year is the humble pine needle, which is being found in dishes and drinks including ice cream and cocktails. Pine may be found all over the UK throughout the year. Blitz it to add to sugar to be used in bakes and toppings or add their citrusy, woody flavour to salt for curing or infuse them into vinegars or oils.

Reach for the snacks!

Two thirds of adults admit to snacking at least once a day - that's a lot of munching and a lot of opportunities to make better food choices.

Nuts, dried fruit and fresh veggies are all great choices, can add valuable fibre and micronutrients to the diet and are easy to choose when they're pre-packaged into handy grab and go bags, bars, and flapjacks. If you don't make your own, then talk to us about seriously tasty ready-made options - including gluten free.

Watch the dough

Upscale bakeries have surged in number across UK cities as eye-catching laminated breads, sourdoughs and bagels have caught the imagination of the public. Change up your croissant fillings, invent more hybrids, such as a cronut (croissant/doughnut) or cruffin (croissant/muffin) and deep fill sandwiches packed with gourmet elements to excite your diners, cost effectively!

If you are looking for particular ingredients or flavour combinations in your kitchens, do let us know! Our team of chefs are on hand with a menu of ideas and our network of suppliers have everything you need to create nutritious and memorable meals.

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- Higher education, colleges and university
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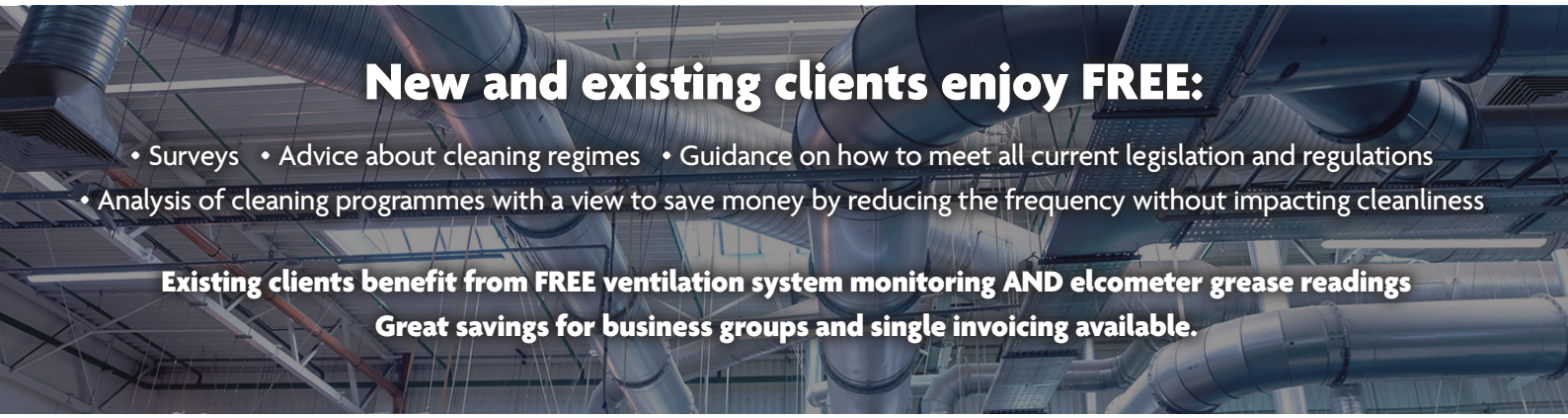
- Hotels 5* independent hotels, hotel groups and privately owned hotels
- Care homes and independent living
- Hospitals both NHS and private hospitals.



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Existing clients benefit from FREE ventilation system monitoring AND elcometer grease readings
Great savings for business groups and single invoicing available.

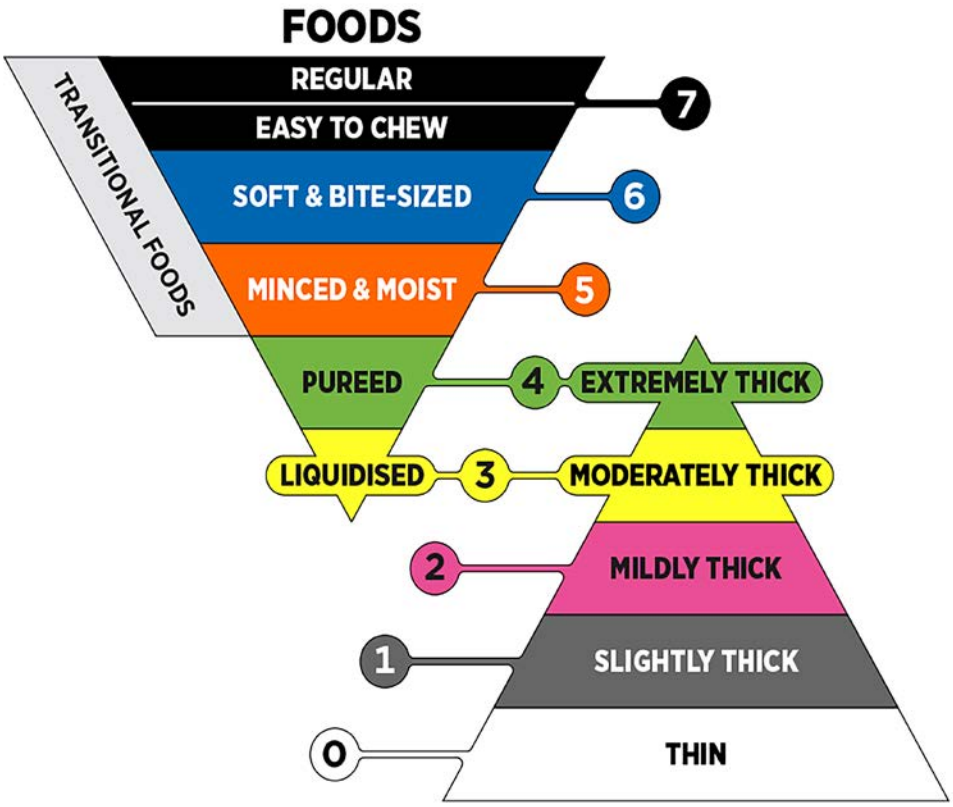
Contact My Purchasing Partner to find out more!

Contact your MPP representative to discover the very best prices

Are you aware of the IDDSI framework?

The IDDSI framework provides a common terminology for describing food textures and drink thickness to improve the safety of people with swallowing difficulties. The framework is being adopted globally and both professionals and suppliers are working hard to share this information widely in order to protect and support those with dysphagia.

IDDSI
International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative



Some care home residents have dysphagia, which means a problem with swallowing. The problem may be with certain foods or textures or the person may not be able to swallow at all. Dysphagia may be caused by certain medicines or a condition, such as acid reflux or a stroke.

Signs of dysphagia include:
- coughing or choking when eating or drinking
- bringing food back up, sometimes through the nose
- a feeling that food is stuck in your throat or chest
- a gurgly, wet-sounding voice when eating or drinking.

A speech and language therapist or a dietician are the best professionals to approach for advice about the best diet for someone with dysphagia.

A practical demonstration of the IDDSI Framework

The framework provides good descriptions of the levels of food, but what do these mean in practice? Let's take a look in more detail.

Texture level 4 - Pureed food

Pureed foods should have a smooth and consistent texture so they are easy to swallow and digest with minimal effort. Examples of pureed foods include mashed potatoes, smooth creamy soups, and puddings that have been made by blending or pureeing to a smooth and uniform consistency. Pureed food should be tasty so don't forget the seasoning!

Texture level 5 - Minced and moist food

Prepared by finely chopping or mincing the ingredients to a uniform size, these foods need added moisture to make them easier to swallow. Use cooking techniques that retain moisture, such as braising, steaming, or poaching to lock in the natural juices and prevent the food from drying out. Examples include finely diced chicken, minced tuna salad, and meatloaf, mixed with mayonnaise or gravy to create a soft and cohesive texture. Add flavours with herbs, spices and other seasonings.

Texture level 6 - Soft and bite-sized foods

This is traditional food that is soft and pre-cut into bite-sized pieces, and should need some chewing effort to be consumed. Examples include fish, braised meat, chopped soft fruit such as mango, peaches or banana, and vegetables. Food should be cooked with liquid or served with a sauce or butter to help with chewing.

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For more information about United Coffee Company please contact: william@united-coffee.co.uk