



What's for supper? Seafood soup By Barry George

INGREDIENTS TO SERVE 2

1 onion, finely sliced
1 stick celery, finely sliced
Butter
Olive oil
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon dried oregano
3 bay leaves
1 tablespoon tomato purée
400g good-quality tinned chopped tomatoes
Small pinch cayenne pepper
250g mixed fish (at The Hive Beach Cafe, we use coley, smoked haddock and salmon), roughly chopped

The most famous dish at the Hive Beach Cafe (in Burton Bradstock, West Dorset), our seafood soup has been on the menu since Day One, and it's every bit as popular with our customers today as it was back then – especially when the weather is cold outside and they've just completed a long, blustery walk along the beach.

As winter warmers go, this delicious combination of fresh and smoked fish, tomatoes and herbs, served with warm crusty bread, simply can't be beaten. People have come from far and wide to sample it, and will – we're sure – continue to do so for years to come.

Sweat the onion and celery in a large pan with a knob of butter and a drizzle of olive oil until soft. Add the thyme, oregano and bay leaves and cook for around 1 minute.

Put in the tomato purée and cook for another couple of minutes, then pour in the tomatoes and cayenne pepper (feel free to add another pinch or two if you like your soup spicy), and bring up to a gentle simmer.

Add the mixed fish to the pan and bring it back to a simmer, until the fish has cooked through. If the soup is too thick, simply add a little water.

Check for seasoning, then serve hot with plenty of warm crusty bread.

Taken from 'The Hive Beach Café Cookbook', edited by Rufus Purdy (Bristlebird Books, £16.99, hivcookbook.co.uk).
Photograph by Graham Whiffen

It has slick decor, exotic cocktails and regular gig nights – but The Brink serves no alcohol. So is Britain's first modern dry bar any fun? **Will Dean** investigates

Make mine a cranberry crush

Even for those who do drink alcohol and want to have a night off the juice, most bars – and especially pubs – struggle to offer more than the usual selection of fizzy drinks and a few bottled mixers. And as for bottled fresh orange juice? “The devil's work,” a non-drinking friend assures me. The growth of premium soft drinks, such as Fentimans' range, has made the situation a little better, but for those who can't drink or don't want to drink – an evening in the pub necking lime sodas or pints of Coke can be about as appealing as, well, a bloated stomach full of sugar and caffeine.

It's particularly hard for those in recovery, where the temptation to crack and join in on the round of beers can have a devastating personal impact.

Which makes it all the more surprising that it's taken so long for something like The Brink – Britain's first modern dry bar – to open. Located on the quiet, cobbled Parr Street, the venue is off the beaten track but minutes away from the rest of Liverpool city centre's heavy drinking bars and nightclubs.

Recent Local Alcohol Profiles in England (Lape) figures released by the Centre for Public Health at Liverpool John Moores University ranked Liverpool as one of the worst cities for alcohol abuse in England. It came bottom of the rankings, 326 out of 326, in five of the Lape categories.

Taking just two of them, the city had more than 3,800 alcohol-related hospital admissions for both men and women this year (not including visits to A&E) – Leeds, a city with a similar-sized population and an equally vibrant nightlife had 2,289. Deaths from chronic liver disease and other alcohol-specific causes are also well above local and national averages.

Sharp Liverpool, part of the charity Action on Addiction, works with people in the city with alcohol and substance abuse problems. One of its major problems, says Sharp's head of service, Jacquie Johnston-Lynch, is that people trying to tackle their problem were being sent to clean themselves up and then put straight back into their normal routines. “Before Sharp there was just detox. You'd send people in [for treatment] but they wouldn't get help afterwards. There wasn't a community,” says Johnston-Lynch.

Johnston-Lynch – whose own interest in helping those with alcohol problems stems from her brother's death at the hands of a drunk driver in 1992 – had the idea for The Brink in 2008. Two years of building and fundraising with Action on Addiction and the local Department of Health allowed the bar to open its doors on 29 September.

“**THE BIGGEST SELLER IS BUNDABERG – IT LOOKS LIKE PINK CHAMPAGNE**”

The key thing for both the charity and the team working in the bar – which includes chef Tom Gill, who previously ran the kitchen at the city's now-closed Everyman Bistro – was to make the bar work as a space not just for those in recovery, but for the general public. To do this – and *ipso facto* make the bar



High and dry: The Brink bar in Liverpool was set up to cater to people recovering from alcohol addiction, but now attracts a wider clientele
COLIN MCFHERSON

sustainable – they had to make a drinks menu that is as varied and as interesting as possible.

The result is a drinks menu that features items such as traditional pop from the Oldham firm Mawson's, Peter Spanton's range of bitters and tonics and shots of cordials made by Mister Fitzpatrick's (who, incidentally, run one of the last remaining temperance bars in the country, in Rawtenstall, Lancashire).

There are also smoothies, juices, teas and coffees and virgin cocktails such as the “Driver's Dream” (apple and pineapple juices; lemongrass tonic; elderflower and bramley apple). Most cost no more than £2.20 and waiters are trained to match soft drinks with Gill's meals.

“The biggest seller,” Johnston-Lynch says, “is Bundaberg – an Australian drink that's lemon and lime bitters. It looks like pink champagne, and it's got a really strong aftertaste that people seem to love.”

So how have Liverpool's other drinkers reacted to the bar? Some customers who've already been drinking have quickly excused themselves, according to Johnston-Lynch, but only because, upon learning that it's a dry bar, they didn't want to be in there smelling of booze. Others have come in looking for beer, ended up having a drink and then been spotted coming back a few days later for food.

Meanwhile, just after its opening, six burly rugby players came in looking for six Budweisers. The staff – most of whom are in recovery themselves – explained the concept and told their own stories and the end result was that the lads stuck a tenner in the tips jar.

Apart from the lack of alcohol, The Brink runs like any other bar. It opens late, hosts gigs and late-night booze-free raves, too. Its potential to fill the pub-shaped void in post-detox drinkers' lives is huge. So is it an enterprise that could be replicated in other major cities?

Johnston-Lynch thinks so: “We're now being approached by lots of people saying, ‘We want one in our area’ – people from Bristol, Blackpool, Barnsley, Manchester, Birmingham – we've had people saying, ‘we want your help to start something like that here.’”

“At the moment we're just spreading the knowledge but if in a year's time we're still getting lots of requests and we're doing well – we'd probably look at social franchising.”

It's certainly an idea that ought to spread. Adventurous new drinks, low security costs, new demographics previously put off by noisy, boozy city centre bars? We'll drink to that.



My life in food... Giorgio Locatelli

Giorgio Locatelli is the chef-patron of the Michelin-starred Locanda Locatelli in London's Mayfair. His latest cookbook is *Made in Sicily* (Harper Collins, £30)

What are your most and least used pieces of kitchen kit?

My knives are never far from me. I'm in love with them, really. I buy all Japanese. They make by far the best in the world. I have one guy who I visit whenever I'm in Tokyo. I buy so many whenever I go there. What I never use is a microwave. They are crap. A really terrible way of cooking things.

If you had only £10 to spend on food, where would you spend it and on what?

I'd go to a market. Perhaps Borough Market. I'd try and pick up some pheasant. I'd pan fry the breasts and serve them with some glazed carrots. The liver I'd serve on crostini. And the rest of the bird I'd use to make ravioli. I'd like to use everything if it was my last £10 in the world.

What do you eat for comfort?

I don't really have one comfort food. I have lots of little desires, my tiny comforts. Marshmallows, for instance. We started making them five or six weeks ago in the restaurant. If you were to test my blood you'd see I've been eating them every day, I'm full of sugar. I'm an addict.

If you could eat only bread or potatoes for the rest of your life, which would you choose?

I would choose bread. I would happily live off large Italian loaves for ever. We Italians love bread more than potatoes. My father is well known for putting bread rolls in his pockets whenever he goes to a Chinese restaurant. But I do still like potatoes. Spuntas especially, as I use them for my gnocchi. King Edwards are also very good – they are perfect for salads.

What's your desert island recipe?

Spaghetti with tomato sauce. It is a simple dish, but the flavour is to die for. Spaghetti is very difficult to make as you have to dry the dough at exactly the right temperature for the correct amount of time. So I buy mine from Verrigni. Before I prepared the pasta, I'd cook some tomatoes in a little olive oil on a low heat for about an hour. I'd use good quality tomatoes and at the very end would add some salt and basil. It makes a really good sauce. I'd spoon it onto the cooked pasta. Delicious.

What's your favourite cookbook?

Pellegrino Artusi's *The Science of Cooking and the Art of Eating Well* is



'I WOULD HAPPILY LIVE OFF LARGE ITALIAN LOAVES FOR EVER'

a fantastic book. It was really the first Italian cookbook. Before 1891, when it was published, there weren't any “Italian” cookbooks *per se*. Artusi brought it all together into a single cuisine. I give it as a present to the chefs who come to work for me in my kitchens.

Who taught you to cook?

So many people. Some taught me organisation, some how to run a business, others how to run a kitchen. My grandmother inspired

me, though. She used to cook lunch on Tuesday afternoons for my extended family in the restaurant. It was always beautiful – so fresh, never anything but totally delicious.

What advice would you give to aspiring chefs?

Keep it simple and nice and fresh. And avoid showing off at all costs – that isn't what it's all about. Cooking is about sincerity and balance and, most of all, about wanting to give something to someone else.