

Matters of taste

Feast your eyes on our selection of this season's food and drink highlights – from a delicatessen keeping French olive-oil production alive to a new British-Polish vodka drawing on 19th-century traditions.

BEAR FRUIT Maison Brémond 1830

The southeastern French region of Alpes-de-Haute-Provence is home to rugged hills and lavender fields. But it is the area's mild winters and hot summers that make it a good spot for olive cultivation. Gourmet delicatessen Maison Brémond 1830, whose *épiceries fines* (delis) are dotted across the region and stacked floor to ceiling with regional delights, is working hard to keep this tradition alive. "If you compare the level of olive oil production [in France] with Spain or Italy, it's about 200 times smaller," says Guillaume de Foucault, CEO of Maison Brémond 1830. "So it's very risky for small maisons to produce."

The same logic applies to other products too. But Maison Brémond 1830 works closely with Provençal makers to incentivise local production. Expect to find caramels with olive oil and salt flower from Camargue, and toasted almonds from Haute Provence. During the autumn months, the company also harvests olives to produce its own heritage oil. The mature variety, says De Foucault, is made for drizzling over chestnut soup, while the green, fruity type pairs well with vanilla ice cream. — CBA mb-1830.com



WARM WELCOME Café Marcella

Café Marcella has served beer and *bitterballen* to thirsty Amsterdamers since the 1800s. But a recent spruce-up by Studio Modijefsky has made the space feel even more inviting. "This has been a household venue for a long time," says interior designer Esther Stam. "So I wanted to work with old materials and techniques."

For the most part, Café Marcella's name and general concept has not changed much: it goes from serving coffee and bistro-style meals during the day to beer, cocktails and snacks until late at night. This autumn, patrons can eat in a cosy room that seats just over a dozen people. It's a great spot to hunker down with a glass of red. — SRO cafemarcella.nl



SOFTLY DOES IT Ghia

For French-born, Los Angeles-based entrepreneur Mélanie Masarin, who spent her summers in the south of France when she was growing up, drinking a well-mixed apéritif always felt like a way to bring people together.

"It was about sharing and enjoying the season," she says. But when Masarin decided to drink less alcohol, she realised that there were very few drinks that she could toast the day's achievements with.

So she made her own. Ghia is a warming raspberry-red aperitif that blends pure fruit extracts with botanicals such as ginger, rhubarb and rosemary. Named after an Italian carmaker and packaged in a custom ribbed bottle, the drink packs the same punch as an amaro but with none of the booze or added sugar. Masarin likes to blend one part Ghia with one part soda water. A slice of orange or a twist of lemon doesn't hurt either. — SRO drinkghia.com



DISTILLED IDEAS KAVKA

With his spirits brand, Kavka, British-Polish entrepreneur Jan Woroniecki has been drawing on his roots and embracing 19th-century Polish distilling traditions. His latest product, Kavka Orchard, was launched earlier this year: a blend of plum, apple and fine-grain spirits made in the Polish market town of Sandomierz. *Konfekt* caught up with him to find out more. — LMT

Why did you want to make your own vodka?

I got into the restaurant business 30 years ago. During that time, I've drunk and sold vast amounts of vodka and I always thought that there was an opening to create one that went back to the old-fashioned methods of production.

Why did you choose to distil Kavka in Sandomierz?

It is in the heart of the fruit-growing region, where apple and plum orchards stretch into the distance. It's an old-fashioned farming community with old varieties being grown that our distiller really tries to concentrate on because they give an extraordinary flavour.

What is unique about the flavour?

We blend rye and wheat spirits then add small quantities of aged pot-stilled fruit spirits. The apple is crisp and fresh, while the plum gives us the sweetness.

What is your preferred way to drink Kavka?

My favourite is a simple shot, preferably with some caviar. Then there's the vodka martini, which is the purest form of expression when it comes to vodka. kavkavodka.com

PHOTOGRAPHER: Andrea Pugotro, Samuel Schalch, STILL LIFE: Pelle Crépin

PRESSING AHEAD Gold Ölmühle

Oil aficionado and founder of natural oil brand Gold Ölmühle, Judith Ender is scooping rosehip seeds into the press when *Konfekt* visits her mill in Zürich's Kreis 3. To produce one litre of the precious oil, she must use 25kg of seeds but Ender maintains that it is worth it.

Unlike other extraction methods, cold-pressing uses no heat or added chemicals, resulting in a fragrant product that is 100 per cent natural and high in quality. "It's filled with the power of sunshine, fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and enzymes," says Ender. The sesame oil is a great flavour enhancer for rice and vegetable dishes. Linseed oil is delicious in salads and muesli – and, true to the mill's name, it has a golden hue — MZ goldoel.ch



DAILY PASTRY LE PETIT MARAIS

The scent of butter is heavy in the air when pastry chef Linda Seidemann (pictured, on right) pulls a fresh batch of pains au chocolat from the oven. Her bakery, Le Petit Marais, in Zürich's Altstetten neighbourhood, is a new addition to the city's ever-growing artisanal baking scene. Seidemann first entertained the idea of opening a pâtisserie when she was a teenager, before she had even studied baking. Now people come every day to get their pastry fix. Her trick? "Baked goods can be simple but they must be made with skill and care," she says. "It's a craft. The mixers help us with the dough. But essentially, everything else is made by hand and I want people to see that. And value it." — MZ lepetitmarais.ch

