

# News

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# County's great taste wins a



Paul and Emily Munse, with Wessex Mill's Producers of the Year 2018 prize. Picture: Ed Nix



Cheese from The Creamery in Nettlebed, which believes it is the first UK company to age cheese in hay

## Harrison Jones

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**FOOD and drink stars from across Oxfordshire have tasted success in the prestigious UK Great Taste Awards 2019.**

Some 25 county companies, producing everything from 'heritage gin' to organic orange flavoured olive oil, won a total of 65 awards.

And on Sunday, at a glitzy event at London's InterContinental Park Lane Hotel, the Great Taste Golden Fork trophy winners will be announced for each region nationwide, before crowning a Great Taste Supreme Champion 2019.

Great Taste, dubbed the 'world's most coveted food and drink awards', handed out five 3-star awards in Oxfordshire - meaning a blind tasting panel of experts deemed the products 'extraordinarily tasty'.

Wantage's Wessex Mill scooped two of those, alongside eight other awards.

The organisation's Emily Munsey said: "We were

# buffet of prizes

**TASTY:** County's fine food and drink recognised at Great Taste Awards

thrilled to win two three star awards this year for our Six Seed Bread Flour and Wessex Cobber Bread Flour. It's a great testament to the excellent quality of local wheat we use and the hard work of our staff."

Other 3 star winners were Nettlebed Creamery, near Wallingford, which was recognised for its organic semi-hard Withridge cheese.

Founder Rose Grimond said it was a 'huge achievement' since she believes they could be the first UK company to age cheese in hay.

She labelled the award 'a triumphant testament to the terroir of Oxfordshire and proof that a small team, dedicated to the pursuit of quality, can achieve the highest accolades'.

Elsewhere, Zoe Haynes, owner and chocolatier at Watlington's Tutu Delicious, said: "We are over the moon to receive 3 stars for our Liquorice Caramel."

"The Great Taste stars are so iconic in the artisan food industry and are a beacon for

excellence we are honoured to be among the top food products for 2019."

Waterperry Farm Shop's Lois Selmes added that she was 'absolutely thrilled' to see the village shop near Thame pick up a 3 star award for its beef and ale pie - and a 1 star for its 50-day dry aged sirloin steak, reared on site.

Other big winners included Witney's Whittard of Chelsea, which clocked up seven prizes, New Milton's Olives Direct Ltd, which scooped five, and Berinsfield's Delicioso, which took four.

Valerie Diederichs, founder of Oxford's Team Tea, which managed a six-prize haul, said: "I am delighted and honoured. (This) will inspire us to grow our selection further."

Oxford based Food Tech business Modern Baker - which co-founder Melissa Sharp says is 'tackling one of diet-related chronic illness that's crippling healthcare globally to tune of trillions' - took three one star awards.



The Oxford Artisan Distillery's picked up three awards, including for its Ashmolean Dry Gin