

Courage to invest

THE SOTRE FAMILY HAS BECOME SUCCESSFULLY ESTABLISHED IN THE ROMANIAN MARKET WITH THE S.C. LIDAS S.R.L BAKERY, MINERS. THE COMPANY RELIES AT THE SAME TIME ON THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY FROM GERMANY



++ figure 1
The business is managed by the brothers Dan (left) and Liviu Sotre (right) here together with Roland Breimann, Area Sales Manager at WP

+ The Romanian town of Tulcea lies on the right bank of the Danube and is the capital city of the identically named district of Tulcea. The latter in turn borders on the Ukraine to the north and the Black Sea to the east. The Sotre family founded the S.C. Lidas S.R.L bakery in 1993 in the village of Miners close to the capital city of the district. The business, which also operates a mill alongside a bakery production plant, experienced difficult financial and family situations. However, the sons of the founder of the business, the current managing directors Dan and Liviu Sotre, gradually

succeeded in winning new clients. Thus nowadays the purchasers of the baked goods include supermarkets such as Billa, Real and Plus, but consumers will also find baked goods from Miners at filling stations (OMV). The bakery also operates its own network of sales outlets that are supplied by its own fleet of HGVs. The bakery's main baked product is called Franzella and is a white loaf weighing approx. 400 g that currently costs in Romania the equivalent of about EUR 0.90 per kg. In contrast to the prices of bread, energy prices are at a western European level. So for example a consumer



++ figure 2
The small baked goods have a shelf life of more than four weeks at a temperature of 6°C



++ figure 3
The WP Vacuspeed vacuum cooler bought in early 2012

must pay the equivalent of EUR 1.55 for a litre of premium motor fuel. On the other hand, however, wages are at a very low level. An oven operator (trained baker) earns around EUR 450 per month for an 8-hour working day.

More competitive

The Lidas bakery reached its capacity limit through gaining ever more new customers. Thus in early 2012 Dan and Liviu Sotre decided to renovate the factory and modernize the fleet of machinery. At the same time the Managing Directors attached importance to high-quality, long-lasting technology, so the brothers invested in two Matador MD 190 ovens, a Rototherm 1020, three Torero Store TS8 in-store baking ovens, a Thermador continuous oven with a length of 15 m and a width of 2.5 m, and a Vacuspeed vacuum cooler – all plant made by the WP BAKERYGROUP from Dinkelsbühl, Germany.

The aim was to cool down the pre-baked bakery products in the vacuum cooler, quickly and free from spoilage organisms. The baked goods now have a shelf life of more than four weeks at a storage temperature of 6°C, and due to the energy advantage they are competitive with conventional frozen goods. The small baked goods in particular are well received by customers, which is why in December 2012 the bakery made an additional investment in a Selecta bread roll plant from WP with an output capacity of 6.000 items to allow



++ figure 4

A new bread roll plant with a capacity of 6,000 items per hour produces Kaiser rolls and normal rolls which are cooled down using vacuum

production of the required amount of Kaiser rolls and split bread rolls.

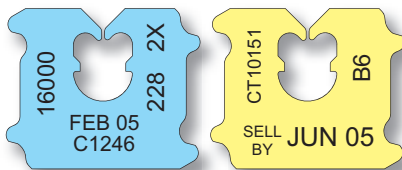
Today around 150 employees work in the business, 90 of them in the bakery. Every day they process approx. 8 t of wheat flour, which is milled in the company's own mill. Production continues round the clock, the bakery only being closed for approx. 12 h on Sunday. The bakery plans to grow and expand further in the future. At the same time the family focuses on high quality baked goods at prices to suit every budget. +++

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