

UK: more than just toast

CONTINENTAL EUROPEANS OFTEN TURN THEIR NOSES UP WHEN TALKING ABOUT THE BRITISH BAKED GOODS MARKET. THAT'S A SLIGHTLY PREMATURE JUDGEMENT, EVEN IF THE UK BREAD MARKET IS STILL DOMINATED BY CHEAP SLICED TOAST BREAD FROM THE SUPERMARKET

++ table 1: Top 10 bakery chains in the UK in 2012 (by number of shops)

rank	company	headquarters	turnover 2012 (in m GBP)	number of shops	change of the number of shops compared to the previous year
1	Greggs PLC	Newcastle-upon-Tyne	734.6	1,671	100
2	Sayers the Bakers Ltd.	Bolton	45.5	161	8
3	Coopland & Son	Scarborough	35.0	146	20
4	Patisserie Holdings	Birmingham	58.0	98	10
5	Cooplands (Doncaster) Ltd.	Doncaster	18.0	85	0
6	Greenhalgh's Craft Bakery	Bolton	16.0	62	2
7	Wm. Stephen (Bakers) Ltd.	Dunfermline	6.5	56	9
8	Birds of Derby	Derby	21.0	55	1
9	WT Warren & Son	Cornwall	11.0	51	-7
10	Percy Ingle Bakeries Ltd.	London	12.0	50	1

source: British Baker

+ The reason is that on the one hand there is a British baking tradition which achieves much more than cotton-soft bases for cold meats and salad, and that's not just since the TV series "The Great British Bake Off" has been tracking down the indigenous baking tradition. The BBC has run the series since 2010, and it's rather like a baking competition in which professionals such as Paul Hollywood, Mel Giedroyc or Sue Perkins act as the jury. In addition to the baking competition, the broadcast, each episode of which lasts 60 min, goes on the trail of clues in the country, e.g. to Bakewell (pudding/pie), Scone Palace, Sandwich or Mousehole, a fishing village in Cornwall where an annual festival is held for "Stargazy Pie", which consists of fish, eggs and potatoes in the dough. A number of participants in the series, including the winners in the first three seasons, have since turned their passion for baking into a profession. It's another way of generating young talent for the profession.

On the other hand the British are well ahead in mixing and marketing baked goods in catering and out-of-home sales, while constantly discovering new routes and opportunities at the same time. One example of this is the island's biggest baked goods chain store, Greggs plc based in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, which now has nearly 1,700 branches and a turnover of GBP 734.6m, equivalent to around EUR 870.4m at the current conversion rate. Greggs used to specialize in small shops in 1-A locations that originally sold mainly pies and pastries to take away, but today also offers "artisan

bread" and pizzas baked on the spot. But that's not all. Because customers are best collected where they are situated, whether geographically or in relation to their needs, the company has since developed both its own coffee shop chain called "Greggs Moment" and also a concept for motorway service stations. Greggs also recently started supplying frozen baked products to the retail group Iceland Foods Ltd., Deeside.

This way of thinking in various different sales channels also occurs with other groups, and is probably a direct result of knowing that the 1-A locations in the above-mentioned town centres are not exhausted until the company's own brand nameplate is prominently displayed at every other street corner. The coffee shop chain Costa Coffee based in Dunstable (2012 turnover: GBP 734m, equivalent to EUR 869.7m, 1,552 locations) now sells its coffee together with baked goods in pubs, hotels, service stations and filling stations. Starbucks (Starbucks Coffee Corp., Seattle, USA) and Subway (SUBWAY, Milford, USA) are also moving into motorway service stations.

However, the omnipresence of the big chains also leaves room for smaller groups or family businesses like Sayers the Bakers Ltd. based in Bolton with 161 branches, Coopland & Son (Scarborough) Ltd in Scarborough with 146 shops, 20 of them opened in 2012, Patisserie Valerie (from British Patisserie Holdings, Birmingham) with 98 locations (10 of them newly opened in 2012) or the family bakery Wenzels The Bakers Ltd based in London. The latter opened six new shops in the city

last year and plans to expand its network of branches from the current 25 to 60 locations after it has moved into a new production facility. Parson Bakery based in Bristol expanded its network of branches in 2012 by 10 to the present 34. The fastest growing in the industry in 2012 also included RT Stuart Ltd in the Scottish town of Buckhaven, which also operates butcher's shops as well as baker's shops. RT Stuart expanded in 2012 from 17 to 33 outlets and increased sales to GBP 4.8m (approx. EUR 5.7m). Of course there are also exceptions like Peters Bakery, which operated 61 shops in the north-east of the country and had to declare insolvency last year. Others, such as the Scottish bakery Mathiesons Bakery Ltd., Larbert, have closed 20 of their 28 shops.

Anyone who travels to London would do well to look into one or other of the shops, regardless of whether the sign above it now says coffee shop or bakery. For example Apostrophe at No. 19 Baker Street, where high quality baked products with a slight French accent are served in a cosmopolitan atmos-

phere. Another alternative is the Euphorium Bakery, 202 Upper Street, which specializes in artisan bread and cakes, which are also served in the supermarket chain Tesco PLC in Kensington. The Islington-based bakery also has counters under its own brand names situated in a few "Tesco Express" convenience stores. Of course one should also not miss Jamie Oliver's Italian-inspired bakery at London's Gatwick Airport, and the new Greggs shops simply have to be seen. The Breadstall in Northcote Road or on Clapham Common serves wonderful mini-pies. Anyone who wants to sample British organic baked products is in good hands at the Flour Power City Bakery, whose products are on offer at numerous farmer's markets, e.g. at the Stoney St. Borough Market near London Bridge. When the appetite for cakes etc. tempts England's queen of cookery Nigella Lawson, she makes for Konditor & Cook, 22 Cornwall Road, reached via the Waterloo tube. A journey through the rest of the country with the senses alert is also worthwhile, regardless of whether or not the focus is on bakeries. +++

++ table 2: Top 20 bakery chains in the UK in 2012 (by turnover)

rank	company	headquarters	turnover 2012 (in m GBP)	change compared to previous year (in m GBP)	website
1	Greggs PLC	Newcastle-upon-Tyne	734.6	+33.6	www.greggs.co.uk
2	Sayers the Bakers Ltd.	Bolton	45.5	+4.7	www.sayersthebakers.co.uk
3	Coopland & Son	Scarborough	35.0	+5.0	www.cooplans-bakery.co.uk
4	Patisserie Holdings	Birmingham	58.0	+12.0	www.patisserie-valerie.co.uk
5	Le Pain Quotidien Ltd.	London	26.4*	+4.7	www.lepainquotidien.co.uk
6	Paul UK	London	23.5	+1.6	www.paul-uk.com
7	West Cornwall Pasty Co.	Helston, Cornwall	21.2	unknown	www.westcornwallpasty.co.uk
8	Birds of Derby	Derby	21.0	+1.5	www.birdsbakery.com
9	Cooplans (Doncaster) Ltd.	Doncaster	18.0	-3.0	www.cooplans.co.uk
10	Baguette Express	Haddington	18.0	±0.0	www.baguette-express.co.uk
11	Greenhalgh's Craft Bakery	Bolton	16.0	+0.5	www.greenhalghs.com
12	Thomas Auld & Sons	Greenock	15.0	-0.4	www.aulds.co.uk
13	Muffin Break	Cambridge	14.0	unknown	www.muffinbreak.co.uk
14	S.M. Bayne & Co Ltd. (Orwell Bakery)	Lochore, Fife	13.8	unknown	
15	Waterfields (Leigh) Ltd.	Leigh	13.5	±0.0	www.waterfields-bakers.co.uk
16	Simmons Bakers	Hatfield	13.5	±0.0	www.simmonsbakers.com
17	Percy Ingle Bakeries Ltd.	London	12.0	±0.0	www.percy-ingle.co.uk
18	Thomas of York Ltd.	Helmsley	11.7	±0.0	www.thomasthebaker.co.uk
19	W.T. Warren & Son	Cornwall	11.0	-1.5	www.warrensbakery.co.uk
20	Apostrophe	London	10.5	+2.0	www.apostropheuk.com

* turnover 2011