# **Trend spot**

Pineapple salad servers, £24, oliverbonas.com



# Raising the steaks

Massaging meat won't do – for a truly

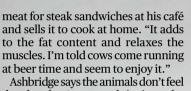
tender slab of beef you need to get the

cows drunk, says Susannah Butter

HEN it comes to beer, six pints sounds like a lot to drink. But for Charles Ashbridge it is the magic number. The farmer feeds that volume to his Dexter cows every day - in the evening, mind, they aren't complete animals – and the result is some of the most tender, complex-tasting steak I have eaten. It won't make you drunk, though you might end up cleverer because the creamy yellow fat surrounding the lean pink centre is rich in Omega-3 oils, which are said to boost brain function.

If the £195/kg Wagyu beef that London chefs are going wild for had been invented in England rather than Japan, the result would be a steak rather like this one.

Chef Luke Mackay, at Brompton Food Market, has cooked me a rare T-bone, with salt, pepper and a dab of olive oil. It is firmer than other steaks



drunk – they're around six times the size of people – "but beer is an acquired taste, just as it is for humans. No one thinks their first pint is amazing."

with hay that Mackay says "smells like

Ashbridge has been rearing cattle on the family farm, Taste Tradition in Cold Kirby, Yorkshire, since he was six. He says his method is influenced by the tender, marbled Wagyu and Kobe beef. "Dexter is some of the besttasting beef I've had, so I wondered if I could enhance the flavour with beer from a local brewery, Hambleton Ales." The cows line their stomachs herbs de Provence" and start on the beer when they are 18 months old.

Mackay has pictures of the cows on his phone to show customers. He says it is the best beef he has tasted in his 15 years as a chef, cooking for Bill Clinton, novelist Sebastian Faulks and Gary Lineker. "It has a brilliant Maillard reaction," he says, referring to the chemical effect between amino acids and reducing sugars that creates flavour. "The texture is firmer; the meat is buttery and rich. Customers comment on the difference in taste between beer-fed and normal meat.

On the bone it lasts three weeks and off it is fine to eat for around four days. It isn't cheap, at £8.50 for a 250g sirloin steak. Ashbridge says it is 25 per cent more expensive to produce but there is value in good-quality meat.

Continued on Page 32



# London's best **Arti-jams**

Even Miuccia Prada has fallen for artisan jam. The designer eats it with cheese, on black bread (obvs). Here in London we are jamming, adding it to cocktails, desserts and curries. Totes j-amaze.

### Strawberry and pepper

Made by Catherine Piddington, a wonderful jambassador. Years of experimenting have led to fantastic

combinations - this one has a kick that peps up both sweet and savoury dishes. Apricot and rosemary is also worth trying.

£6, piddingtonjam.co.uk

# **Hot banana**

A versatile jam, subtly spiced with ginger and chilli. It's ethical too – makers Rubies in the Rubble use surplus fruits and vegetables to reduce waste. Jamie Oliver is a fan and commissioned a London piccalilli from them.



PIDDINGTO

£3.69, rubiesintherubble.com

# **Berry and** liquorice jam

This Clerkenwellmade concoction is berry good indeed. It contains whole raspberries, blueberries and gooseberries. The

Modern Pantry recommends using it in a martini.

£5.50, themodernpantry.co.uk

# **Bermondsey** bramble

Stewed in south London, this is a subtle, delicate number with a beautiful label. £4.20, england preserves.co.uk



# **Apricot and** passion fruit jam

A terrifically tropical take on a classic. £5.20, ottolenghi. co.uk

Susannah Butter









# Continued from Page 31

**London Life** 

Mackay acknowledges that "lots of us can't afford stunning meat every day". His solution is to eat less but spend more. "Ask your butcher where the meat is from and if they don't know don't buy it."

Mackay is the only person serving this boozy beef in London at the moment, so snap some up before it becomes the new Wagyu.

@susannahbutter

# Steaks on a plate

Do you age your steak by exposing it to air, keep it wrapped up, or just serve extremely lean? Here are the best ways to beef up your cut.

# 180-day aged steak

It takes six months to reach its tender, gamey best. It is kept chilled but exposed to air, allowing it to mature in a similar way to a good cheese.

Goodman Canary Wharf, 3 South Ouav Square, E14, goodmanrestaurants.com

## 90-day aged Danish steak

When Francis Cardenau and Jesper Boelskifte, the Michelin-starred "rock stars" of Danish restaurants, came to London, they brought their favourite meat with them. They believe 90 days is the optimum duration for beef enzymes to break down and taste fantastic. MASH, 77 Brewer Street, W1, mashsteak.co.uk

# 70-day aged steak

Chef Stevie Parle ages whole loins of Galloway beef for 70 days. Try the sirloin with marrowbone bread sauce and lovage liquor.

CRAFT LONDON, Peninsula Square, Greenwich Peninsula, SE10, craftlondon.co.uk

### 55-day aged steak

Add bone marrow gravy or anchovy hollandaise.

Hawksmoor, across London, thehawksmoor.com

# Wet-aged Wagyu steak

Is wet or dry ageing best? This wet option is coal-cooked and available as a sirloin or d-rump.

M, 2&3 Threadneedle Walk, 60 Threadneedle Street, EC2. mrestaurants.co.uk

## Minute steak

For a healthy protein fix head to this LAinspired restaurant for the Muscle Beach - a minute steak served with a poached egg, spinach and sweet potato hash. Bel-Air, 54 Paul Street, EC2, bel-air.co



London is choc full of sweet treats for Easter. Time for a taste test of the very best eggs, says **Susannah Butter** 



Grown-up choc with salted caramel.

£14/£8, williamcurley.com



Paul A Young large dark egg An intense cocoa fix made in London. £39, paulayoung.co.uk



Prestat polka-dot egg A real egg shell with hazelnut inside. £3.95, prestat.co.uk



Claridge's Easter egg Perfect for a milky sugar high. £60, claridges.co.uk



Carluccio's egg in a pasta nest Complete with chocolate pasta. £15.95, carluccios.com



Amelia Rope sea salt caramel eggs The pale lemon sea salt caramel is close to perfect. £9.99, ameliarope.com



Zen egg by Nobu Inspired by Japanese gardens. £30, noburestaurants.com/london



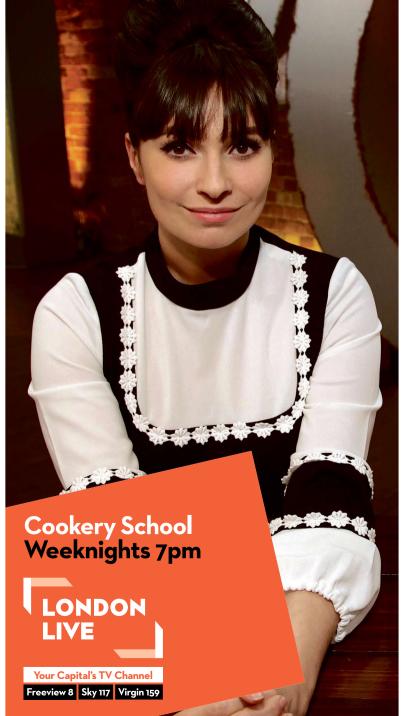
Organic dark chocolate egg Bittersweet tones and plenty of cocoa. £14, daylesford.com



Milk chocolate chicken Buttery with a honeyed taste £9.95, paul-uk.com



Pierre Marcolini milk Pop Art egg Delicate Belgian chocolate, done well. £33, marcolini-eboutique.com



# **Tomorrow**







The new TV gadgets PLUS meet the vapists