



P R E S S R E L E A S E



Mellifera's bio Truffle honey is among the Great Taste winners of 2019

Great Taste, the world's most coveted food and drink awards, has announced its stars of 2019. Out of 12,772 products sent in from over 100 different countries, **the Bulgarian company Mellifera was awarded a 1-star Great Taste award, which means judges dubbed it a food that delivers fantastic flavour for its bio certified Truffle honey – a pure acacia honey flavoured with real truffle slivers.**

Judged by over 500 of the most demanding palates, belonging to food critics, chefs, cooks, restaurateurs, buyers, retailers and producers, as well as a whole host of food writers and journalists, Great Taste is widely acknowledged as the most respected food accreditation scheme for artisan and speciality food producers. As well as a badge of honour, the unmistakeable black and gold Great Taste label is a signpost to a wonderful tasting product, which has been discovered through hours and hours of blind tasting by hundreds of judges.

Mrs. Biljana Lowndes-Nikolova, Owner of Mellifera and a Master Beekeeper, explains: “I’ve seen the Great Taste Awards logo on very exquisite and gourmet products around the world and I’ve always thought that for a small artisanal company from the Balkans earning such label would be more than a tough mission. Yet, now I am on a quest to let the world know of the supreme quality of the Bulgarian honey and this award comes as a proof of this fact.”

According to the jury the awarded Truffle honey “delivers a lovely woody earthy flavour that has length”. “A subtle but definite truffle nose created with suitable restraint. A successful combination.”

Recognised as a stamp of excellence among consumers and retailers alike, Great Taste values taste above all else, with no regard for branding and packaging. Whether it is vinegar, granola, bacon or cheese being judged, all products are removed from their wrapper, jar, box or bottle before being tasted. The judges then savour, confer and re-taste to decide which products are worthy of a 1-, 2- or 3-star award.

There were 12,772 entries into Great Taste this year and of those products, 208 have been awarded a 3-star, 1,326 received a 2-star and 3,409 were awarded a 1-star accolade. The panel of judges this year included; cook, writer and champion of sustainable food, Melissa Hemsley, MasterChef 2018 champion, author, Olia Hercules, chef and food writer, Gill Meller, Kavi Thakar from Dishoom, food writer and stylist, Georgina Hayden and author and chef, Zoe Adjonyoh, as well as food buyers from Selfridges, Fortnum & Mason, Sourced Market and Partridges. These esteemed palates have together tasted and re-judged the 3-star winners to finally agree on the Golden Fork Trophy winners and the Great Taste 2019 Supreme Champion.

Great Taste 2019 will reach its exciting finale on Sunday 1 September, when the world of fine food gathers at the InterContinental Park Lane Hotel, London to find out the Great Taste Golden Fork trophy winners for each region, with the final applause reserved for the Great Taste Supreme Champion 2019.

Date: August 1st 2019

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Notes for editors:

What is Great Taste?

Great Taste is the largest and most trusted accreditation scheme for fine food and drink. Established in 1994, it encourages and mentors artisan food producers, offering a unique benchmarking and product evaluation service leading to an independent accreditation that enables small food and drink businesses to compete against supermarket premium own label brands.

Since 1994 over 146,000 products have been assessed. This year 12,772 products were blind tasted by panels of specialists: top chefs, food writers, influencers, food critics, restaurateurs and fine food retailers.

Great Taste ratings

3-star: Extraordinarily tasty foods – less than 3% of products are awarded a 3-star each year

2-star: Above and beyond delicious.

1-star: A food that delivers fantastic flavour.

What are Great Taste judges looking for?

They're looking for great texture and appearance. They judge the quality of ingredients and how well the maker has put the food or drink together. But above all, they are looking for truly great taste.

How do they work?

Each team of three to four judges blind tastes around 25 products per session, discussing each product as a coordinating food writer transcribes their comments directly onto the Great Taste website, which producers access after judging is completed. Over the years, numerous food businesses, start-ups and well-established producers have been advised how to modify their foods and have subsequently gone on to achieve Great Taste stars. Any product that is deemed worthy of a 1-, 2- or 3-star Great Taste award is moved around multiple judging tables by a team of arbitrators before the final award is given. If judges feel that a product needs some adjustment, and is therefore not likely to receive an award, the food or drink gets a second chance on a referral table, where another team blind tastes and deliberates. For a Great Taste 3-star award, the vast majority in the room - which can be as many as 30-40 experts - must agree that the food or drink delivers that indescribable 'wow' factor.

What should consumers look for?

The logo. The Great Taste symbol is their guarantee a product has been through a rigorous and independent judging process. It's not about smart packaging or clever marketing – it's all about taste.