

Published in Doncopolitan Magazine Issue #33 Spring 2019

Female Foodies

by Vicky Prior

I interviewed three local food producers about what it's like being a woman in business, and got them to predict food trends for 2019. Here's what they had to say.

Bethany at The Hygge Hut

Tucked into Cavendish Court, The Hygge (pronounced hoo-gah) Hut is the perfect place to grab a bacon sandwich to go. It was set up a year ago by Bethany and her mum, who both love Scandinavian food. Following customer feedback, Bethany increased the number of British dishes on the menu, but still keeps a range of Scandinavian inspired desserts and salads.

The Hygge Hut grows every day, using local produce from KD Davis, Jam Horse and Toppings Pies. Bethany has always been surrounded by strong female role models, and having her mum around helps a lot. She has noticed a lot of female entrepreneurs in food, and thinks that as the feminist movement grows, so will the number of female led businesses.

Bethany has seen a big rise in artisan baking, which is minimalist but still flavoursome. The Hygge trend is not going anywhere, and coffee culture is growing, especially in student areas. Bethany thinks the Cultural Quarter development has helped encourage younger people into Doncaster, with new businesses opening up to cater for them.

Rachel at Jam Horse

Rachel believes women in Doncaster are more entrepreneurial because the Council is led by a female team, Jo Miller and Mayor Ros Jones. Local food producers Ajika , Rumba and Caribbean Kitchen are all led by women and regularly collaborate with Rachel.

Jam Horse recently expanded from a jams and preserves company, selling through markets and local stockists, to having its own shop on Scot Lane. Business is good, with an uptick in orders from Rachel's existing 40 stockists over Christmas helping out the shop startup. Rachel has been careful to thoroughly research expansion opportunities, with a seemingly dream offer from a large retailer turning out to be a lot of work for very little profit. Support from Business Doncaster and Public Health at the council has been excellent. Rachel uses K.D. Davis for all her fruit and veg.

For food trends, Rachel predicts a rise in people using black garlic. Kombucha and botanicals are very popular, and the trend for adding alcohol into products, particularly gin, isn't slowing down. Rachel is developing a lemon curd with gin and a blood orange and prosecco conserve, which I have selflessly volunteered to taste test on behalf of Doncopolitan when it's ready.

Zoey at Guilt Furrie Vegan

Zoey decided to open Guilt Furrie Vegan, a cafe, because of a base instinct to care for and feed people. She believes veganism is a lifestyle choice and wanted to introduce a new way of cooking and eating to Doncaster. Her location in Doncaster Market, surrounded by

butchers and fishmongers, might seem unusual, her ethos of making something out of nothing and using seasonal produce fits in with the aims of the other market traders. She buys produce from K.D. Davis and also Tasty Flavours, who are near neighbours in the market.

Although Zoey hasn't always been vegan, she has always loved food and was inspired by her mother and the holidays abroad they had together trying different cuisines. Japanese and Asian dishes are being added to the menu, to try and get away from the ubiquitous falafel! It took Zoey an incredible one month from signing the lease to opening, with all the equipment and furniture being pre-loved and either cheap or gifted.

Vegan food has been embraced by major retailers, but some meat eaters still don't think they can eat it too! We agree that labelling dishes as vegan makes them niche and can put meat eaters off from trying tasty food. Zoey thinks overall people will reduce meat in their diet, and so calls her alternative products by the name of the meat they are replacing for familiarity, but hopes to phase this out.